

Baptist and Reflector

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Liberian violence continues; Baptist missionaries grieve

By Donald D. Martin

LOME, Togo (BP) — Stripped of clothing and standing at gunpoint in a churchyard, a Liberian Baptist pastor and others were asked, "Who of you knows Jesus?"

The question was posed by an armed rebel — part of a force that captured the port city of Brewerville, Liberia, during last summer's rebel march toward Liberia's besieged capital, Monrovia. As they combed the captured area, a band of rebels found a small group of refugees hiding in a church.

The rebel leader ordered the huddled group outside and told them to undress. Among the refugees was the pastor, his wife, and their four children. The family had escaped Monrovia and walked north to Brewerville. There they had hoped to evacuate by ship to safety.

Both the pastor and his wife answered the question. Yes, they knew Jesus. At this the leader motioned them from the group, turned to his men and ordered the family shot.

When he heard the order, one rebel

soldier balked. Another soldier who recognized the pastor said, "Take your family, get your clothes and go."

But at this the pastor balked. He looked to the group of refugees and said, "But they are my family also. I cannot leave without them."

The rebel leader paused and then said, "OK, all of you go."

The refugees eventually boarded a boat for Ghana and there found food and shelter in a refugee camp.

Jane Park, a Southern Baptist missionary nurse, heard the pastor's story while helping at the Ghana refugee camp. Mrs. Park and her husband, James, of Paducah, Ky., are temporarily assigned to the Baptist seminary in Ghana. In Liberia, Park taught at Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Park was the seminary nurse. The Liberian pastor was a recent graduate of the seminary and one of Park's students.

His story and others were shared during a meeting of Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to Liberia but displaced because of the fighting there. Many of the stories ended in tragedy.



TRUSTEE ORIENTATION — Henry West, right, talks with the Ronnie Wylies at last week's session in Brentwood for newly elected trustees of TBC entities. A retired pastor, West is a trustee for Baptist Health Care Systems, Memphis. Ronnie Wylie is on the Committee on Boards.

Others spoke of courage and strength. The missionaries met in Lome, Togo, Nov. 12-16 not only to share news but to grieve for lost Christian brothers and sisters and pray for Liberia's future. The group of about 40 missionaries also discussed where they will go from here.

"It was a beginning," said Billy Bullington, West Africa area director for

the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. "Some (missionaries) have been able to handle what has happened in Liberia. For others the deep hurt and loss of friends and relationships in Liberia, not to mention the loss of their mission family, is just now coming to the surface and it's very painful."

Fighting continues in Liberia as
(Continued on page 5)

SBC plans to send 700 volunteers to Kazakhstan

By Marty Croll

ALMA-ATA, U.S.S.R. (BP) — Three separate environmental calamities in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan present an open door for Southern Baptists to help people who have long been hidden from the eyes of the West.

Through their service organization, Cooperative Services International, Southern Baptists plan to send up to 700 volunteers to Kazakhstan next summer to provide assistance in many

fields. It could be the largest Southern Baptist volunteer group ever to participate in a single overseas project. Southern Baptists also have begun to ship a series of huge containers of food and nutritional supplements to the beleaguered area.

Much of the assistance during the project, scheduled June 20-July 8, 1991, will focus on the heavily Muslim people living along the fringes of the Aral Sea, where over-draining of upstream

rivers has caused water to recede from the shoreline. Forty percent of the seabed has turned to salty dust.

Other support will go to an area surrounding a nuclear testing site and to an earthquake-stricken region.

Because the region has long been out of contact with the West, most Kazakhs have never met a Christian.

"How we respond to their needs gives rise to the question, 'Why?' and we can answer them, 'Jesus Christ,'" said John Cheyne, who administers Southern Baptists' overseas hunger and disaster relief funds. Cheyne traveled to the area in September at the invitation of the Golden Apple, a group set up to help Kazakhstan by fostering exchanges between the Kazakhs and other cultures.

Cattle and sheep — lifeblood to the economy of Kazakh farmers and

herders descended from the ancient Turks — still graze on the hillsides near where the Soviet government is believed to have staged atomic tests similar to the ones the United States conducted in the American western deserts.

Disfigured children inhabit the village of Sarzhal, near where underground atomic blasts reportedly were vented into the air. In Sarzhal, a collective farm project with some 35,000 people, Cheyne visited the home of a 40-year-old woman and was told her dwarf-like appearance resulted from radiation exposure.

Kazakh leaders told Cheyne nuclear testing dangers were not evident for some time. They thought other factors caused growing malformation and mental disorders in the region. More
(Continued on page 5)



PRAYER RETREAT — Last weekend's prayer retreat at the Baptist Center, Brentwood, first of its type, was sponsored by the TBC Brotherhood Department. Among participants were, from left, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Conley, and Mr. and Mrs. Roy Davis. Conley is director of missions for Sequatchie Valley Association, and Davis for Cumberland Plateau. D. L. Lowrie, Ralph Bethea, and Don Miller, were speakers.

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No big bang

TBC budget year starts slowly

The 1990-91 budget year did not begin with a bang for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

November Cooperative Program gifts were more than \$500,000 below those of November 1989, or \$1,758,698.84.

The TBC is only a month into the budget year. The report reveals that convention giving was \$506,572.39 (22.36 percent) under last November's receipts.

Discussing the November report with Executive Board staff leaders at the monthly meeting on Monday, D. L. Lowrie reminded them, "We realize one month does not deter-

mine the budget."

He also encouraged staff members and churches across Tennessee to "boost the Cooperative Program — it is our lifeline to do the work assigned to us in missions, evangelism, and all we do."

Lowrie, TBC executive director/treasurer, said that October 1989 was a "five-Sunday" month, making November 1989 "a great month in receipts."

Budget needs for this year thus far (November) amounted to \$2,233,155. Receipts were \$474,456.16 under the budget, or 21.25 percent.

Editorials**Convention attendance slumps — but TBC was calm**

Last year more than 2000 messengers gathered in Knoxville for the 115th session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The 2031 was the most ever to attend, it was a record for attendance.

In total membership, Tennessee churches are exceeded only by Texas, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama — with 1,100,000 members.

We have discovered from these and other numbers that Tennessee Baptists may not be fickle — but they certainly are part of an enigma. Why were there only 1740 messengers at the November convention in Nashville?

Moderators of meetings sometimes are accused of praying for small audiences. Lack of inspiring speakers sometimes may be the culprit. Even the weather is given as a reason for poor attendance.

But none of these was true when Tennessee Baptists held their recent annual meeting. Everything pointed to good attendance. The weather was perfect. The meeting was in the middle of the state. A superb group of speakers was on hand. There was even a hint of controversy.

However, we missed. It is the duty and purpose of the *Baptist and Reflector* to report the convention — just as we report other events and happenings. We are pleased to do that — but nothing is like being there.

News from other state conventions reports huge crowds. In almost a dozen states, attendance records were smashed — including Texas, Kansas, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky,

Louisiana.

Another factor reminds us that apparently controversy or the promise of a "fight" among messengers increases attendance. In several state convention sessions, there was debate about the Cooperative Program and alternate funding, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, and relationships between conventions and their colleges and universities.

We also have noticed that even in those states where debate was strong on certain issues — the attitude seemed better than in more recent years. Tennessee did not have controversy, and there was evidence of accord returning even in diversity.

We are grateful for the calm and the absence of rancorous dissent, but more important than calm is willingness to strongly debate when it is necessary. Our purpose must always be for God's will to be paramount.

While looking at the enigma of Tennessee's low attendance when compared to other state conventions, we can hope also that it is a phenomenon of great significance. We hope that it is not caused by lack of interest, a fatalistic outlook that "I won't get my way," or that the individual messenger is not needed and/or heard. The convention cannot hear all views, cannot be diverse in discovery, cannot represent all Tennessee Baptists — if representation is limited to a few numbers speaking for one or two views.

A formula for a convention that is well-

attended, where opinions are adequately aired, where there is discussion without discord, can be achieved. Maybe we have found a way to relate honestly without dissension.

Some ideas for that kind of convention:

- Practice the fellowship of good traditional Baptist beliefs.
- Honor the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Believer.
- Realize that the Cooperative Program is not a program in itself — it is a cooperative effort by thousands of churches and millions of Baptists to spread the Gospel, to live the Gospel, to be the Gospel at work.
- Protect the separation of church and state.
- Encourage honest scholarship among us.
- Do not fear dissent; do not relish it.
- Allow the Holy Spirit freedom to work in the lives of all believers.
- Let God be God, speaking and acting for Himself.
- Let the Bible speak for itself — as we study and live by it.

We need not dwell in despair over low attendance — but we do need to encourage more and more Baptists to share the responsibility given to messengers. It is our duty.

We don't need controversy to entice high numbers, but we need to be informed, to participate, to give of ourselves. — WFA

What's read all over? Your state Baptist newspaper

Though many Southern Baptist leaders are trying to develop paths to peace, conflict lingers. Prayer meetings and discussions have taken place in recent days, and some of the state convention annual meetings seemed peaceful and harmonious.

However, there are still at least two "sides" claiming allegiance from Southern Baptists. Each "side" has a publication giving one friendly view of the situation. Each publication usually publishes only one "side."

This is a sound reason to encourage Tennessee Baptists to read their own state paper regularly and with open minds. The *Baptist and Reflector* is the only valid window overlooking Baptist work in Tennessee, across the Southern Baptist Convention —

and beyond.

Different from other publications sometimes available in Tennessee, the *Baptist and Reflector* presents both "sides" of the news. The paper does not ignore views from either "side." Each seems to think we favor the other.

In recent weeks, several churches have begun exploring the Church Page Plan, the Three Months Trial Plan, and/or the Every Family Plan for subscribing. Others have made inquiries. We expect some of these to join a subscription plan very soon.

The *Baptist and Reflector* tells readers about events and people, churches and associations, Partnership Missions, and Cooperative Program causes. What's more, Cooperative Program funds from Ten-

nessee churches support the paper.

The *Baptist and Reflector*, and its predecessors, has been faithful to its Tennessee constituency for 155 years. That makes us family!

Production of the paper is expensive. Yet it costs the subscriber less than fifteen cents a week. We will need help from our subscribers early in 1991 when the U. S. Postal Service puts in place an astounding 25 to 30 percent postage increase. Look for the paper's subscription rates to increase by \$1.00.

The *Baptist and Reflector*, even at the new rate, will remain inexpensive, and will maintain its strict adherence to quality in news coverage and production. We are proud to be a part of the Tennessee Baptist team. — WFA

Bible includes principles for stress reduction, counselor says

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP) — While the Bible does not contain warnings about the dangers of cholesterol or the need for aerobic exercise, it does include examples and guidelines for living healthy lives and coping effectively with an overload of stress.

"There are some things we ought to do — eat properly, exercise, relax, and get enough sleep — that are Biblical," said Joe Richardson, personnel counselor in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's human resources department. He also is the author of *The Christian and Stress*, an equipping center module produced by the board's Discipleship Training department.

He cited New Testament references to the human body as a temple and to the body as a living sacrifice which he said emphasize the importance of healthy habits.

Richardson also noted that the lifestyles of early Christians were much more conducive to good health and stress reduction. For example, he noted that during the week before his crucifixion, Jesus spent his days in Jerusalem and his nights in the village of Bethany, two miles east of Jerusalem. Therefore, Jesus walked at least four miles each day.

"Their daily existence was one of ex-

ercise," he said. "Exercise makes you better able to deal with stress."

He also cited the incident in Jesus' life when, after a day of dealing with large crowds, He got on a boat with His disciples. When a storm came up on the sea, Jesus was asleep.

"My guess is that Jesus was exhausted from dealing with the demands of a huge crowd," said Richardson. "These incidents point up the Biblical nature of good health habits. We just don't normally think of the Bible teaching us about eating, sleeping, and exercise habits."

In addition to reducing stress through applying principles of good health, Richardson emphasized that Christians have the added advantage of direct access to God.

"There are times when we feel forsaken and alone when we are in the midst of problems," said Richardson. "God hasn't withdrawn from us. We have withdrawn from him. Our feelings of aloneness can be turned around if we ask his forgiveness and his presence. That is a resource non-Christians don't have."

Christians are responsible "to act Christlike in their relationships with brothers and sisters struggling with stress, to help them find peace," he noted.

"Instead, we may add to their stress by being critical," he added.

Christians will make progress toward reducing their stress levels by daily Bible study, prayer, and other disciplines to grow in their understanding of the relevance of their faith to daily living, said Richardson.

"We need to understand how what we study on Sundays applies to Thursday mornings," said Richardson.

"Christianity is witnessing and Bible study and prayer and ministry, but it is also parenting and working and living."

"One of the most important things Christians often have to learn in dealing with an overload of stress is how to say no," Richardson observed.

Also, they need to differentiate between situations that can be changed and those which cannot. If change is possible, actions may include reducing the noise, removing the danger, or leaving the scene to move to a less stressful situation, said Richardson.

Other possible actions may include learning to better manage commitments, and dealing more positively with overcommitments.

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Church conflict leads to pastor's termination, study shows

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE (BP) — In Southern Baptist churches the most common way to resolve serious conflict is to force out the pastor, according to new research released by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

In a survey conducted by the board's corporate planning and research department, more than 1000 directors of missions were contacted for information about churches which had been involved in serious conflict within the past three years.

Leaders of the churches were then asked to respond about how they dealt with conflict, how they managed conflict, and who were the primary resource people in local churches for working through problems.

Nine out of ten pastors in churches which experience serious conflict are forced to leave, according to the survey results released by Norris Smith, forced termination consultant in the board's church administration department. He presented findings to state Baptist convention church administration consultants during their annual meeting Nov. 15-16 in Nashville.

The most common procedure for dealing with church conflict is to turn the problems over to the deacons, according to 63 percent of respondents. A distant second was committees, with 13 percent. A significant 11 percent reported they usually ignore conflict and "hope it will go away in time."

"Pastors can model conflict management," Smith advised, "but that needs to be taught early in their training in college and seminary."

When asked how pastors could improve their abilities to prevent conflict, 62 percent of the church leaders responded that a "clearer understanding of the church's people and the way they prefer to do things" is the number one need. Second was "better communication skills," with 58 percent.

"One difficulty comes with the perception of being pastor of the church instead of pastor of the people," explained Smith. "For the first few months, a pastor should spend time finding out who it is he has been called to lead, especially in the areas of economics, culture, and emotions."

"When church members get the idea the pastor accepts them as they are

and is not trying to reshape them into some image he got in a classroom, they start to trust him," Smith continued.

"Knowledge of the people creates understanding and ushers in tolerance and patience, out of which trust can emerge," he added.

A theme of "better understanding" of primary areas of church life emerged in the responses listing ways to help avoid serious conflict with staff members.

The top suggestion from lay church leaders to staff members on avoiding conflict was a better understanding of how to handle conflict without disaster, with 63 percent. A close second, with 60 percent, was New Testament teachings on Christian relationships.

When asked about factors which had led to the serious conflict, only one received a majority from the respondents. Personality conflicts, with 58 percent, was listed most often, followed by failure of pastor or staff to measure up to expectations of the congregation, 46 percent; who's going to run the church, 42 percent; pastoral

leadership style — too authoritarian, 41 percent; and pastoral leadership — too weak, 34 percent.

Results of church conflicts in nine out of ten churches included the departure of the pastor. The departure of church members ranked second, 84 percent. Two other highly ranked results were withholding tithes and offerings, with 54 percent, and resignation of some lay leaders, 42 percent.

"There are too many divisions within church families where churches are not working through the conflict," Smith said. "Instead of working through the conflict, the resolution is just quitting."

"Pastors need to show a genuine appreciation for the leadership of the church, which has a history of sacrifice and giving," he continued. "The pastor is not in an adversarial role, but a servant role."

"Keep the pulpit free of conflict management," he advised pastors. "Discussing the conflict from the pulpit infuriates those involved and confuses those who don't know about it."

Seminary professor advocates negotiation in Middle East conflict

By Pat Cole

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — "Making war or doing nothing" are not the only alternatives for resolving the current conflict in the Middle East, emphasized a Southern Baptist ethicist.

Glen Stassen, professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., said he believes the United States should begin negotiations with Iraq to end the tensions.

"The first principle in making peace is that you have got to talk," said Stassen, an expert on peacemaking and disarmament issues and author of the book *Journey into Peacemaking*. "I think it is unwise for us (the U.S.) to simply demand of Iraq that they get out as an unconditional surrender. . . . Instead we should be talking with Iraq about how they will get out of Kuwait."

The second principle for peacemaking is to "affirm each side's valid interests," said Stassen at a November ethics luncheon on the seminary campus devoted to the Middle East crisis.

Philippines hit hard by typhoon

MANILA, Philippines (BP) — Baptists and missionaries in the Philippines are trying to determine how to aid the people hit hardest by "Super" Typhoon Mike.

Hurricane-strength winds slammed into northern Mindanao and the Central Visayan Islands Nov. 13. At least 326 people died and more than one million others were reported homeless.

Philippine President Corazon Aquino declared nearly half of the country's 73 provinces disaster areas after the typhoon. Initial estimates said more than 36,800 houses and thousands of acres of crops were damaged or destroyed.

Southern Baptist missionaries were attending a meeting in Davao when the storm hit and were out of affected areas. Some experienced difficulty in returning to their homes. No deaths among Philippine Baptist families have been reported, but missionaries are still trying to reach remote church-

The United States is rightfully concerned about the availability of the region's oil supply and the aggressive tendencies of Iraq, he said: "The United States doesn't want this aggressor to get the power of oil, nuclear and chemical weapons, and an army of a million men which it can use to dominate other countries."

On the other hand, he said, Iraq's legitimate interests include disputed oil claims with Kuwait and Iraq's need for a seaport. Stassen proposed that the United States push the Kuwaiti government to agree to international arbitration by the World Court or the Arab League to solve the oil dispute. He also suggested that Kuwait consent to lease two small islands to Iraq which block that nation's access to the sea.

Stassen said negotiations with Iraq should deal with the country's stockpile of chemical weapons and its nuclear capabilities. Iraq must guarantee it will decrease its chemical weapons and not build nuclear weapons, he said, adding that these

es to check on families there.

In Cebu, the country's second major commercial and transport center after Manila, electricity and telephones will be out for one to two months. Water supplies are scarce, and food is being brought in by boat and plane. Gas for cooking also is scarce; most people have switched to charcoal or firewood. Reports indicate long lines for water, kerosene, and gasoline, which is being rationed.

Two of three Baptist churches in the Cebu area were completely destroyed. Nazareth Baptist Church in Minglinilla and Kalawisan Baptist Church on Mac-tan Island were blown down and flooded.

"Government agencies, non-government organizations, and even private individuals do not know where and how to start relief operations," said Sampaguita Juarez, Baptist World Aid supervisor on the island of Panay. "Everybody is affected," he said.

promises should be enforced by inspection. He suggested that Iraq decrease its chemical stockpile at the same rate the U.S. and Soviet Union are talking about decreasing their stockpiles.

The United States also could facilitate peace in the Middle East by helping to ensure the Kuwaiti government will abide by its promise of holding parliamentary elections, said Stassen. While acknowledging Saddam Hussein's history of aggression against other nations and his responsibility for the assassination of internal political enemies, Stassen also said the Iraqi leader is perceived by many Arabs as championing the interests of the com-

mon people. Therefore, he said, Hussein has an interest in increased democracy for Kuwait, a nation now governed by a monarch. A Kuwaiti parliament would provide Kuwaiti citizens more voice in their government and would let Hussein "save face as he gets out" of Kuwait, he said.

The Middle East situation could prove pivotal in the formation of the post Cold War era, Stassen said: "The super powers no longer dominate. We now have regional powers, a multipolar world. We are shaping the world in which we will live. It is crucial how we solve the problem in the Middle East."

In Sunday School

Tennessee Baptists seek leadership training

Tennessee Baptists are showing a continuing interest in gaining skills to be more effective Sunday School leaders, statistics show.

According to figures released by the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Sunday School Department, 5339 people participated in the department's 1990 regional Sunday School leadership training conferences, held earlier this fall.

Last year, 4150 people attended the conferences, said Greer Ruble, director of the TBC Sunday School Department.

Regional conferences were held in Jackson, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis, Nashville, and Mount Carmel. Attendance in Knoxville and Nashville each exceeded 1000 participants.

Ruble cited several reasons for the increased attendance. "There is a greater desire to do a more effective job in teaching the Word of God," he said, adding that there also is "a greater emphasis on the Bible teaching program in TBC churches."

Ruble also noted there is more interest and involvement by directors of missions, pastors, ministers of education, Sunday School directors,

and others in Sunday School leadership positions.

A significant occurrence in Nashville, Ruble said, was the number of ethnics who participated. There were 93 ethnics in the conference at Two Rivers Church, compared to 51 last year, he said.

Sei-Hun Kim, catalytic language missionary for Nashville and Concord associations, observed Tennessee is the only state convention to provide age group conferences by native leaders.

Kim credited the large population of ethnics in Middle Tennessee as a factor in the number of ethnics who acquired training in Nashville. There are 35 different ethnic groups in Nashville and seven different groups in Murfreesboro, he observed.

Kim recently accepted an assignment with the TBC to devote up to five days per month in the area of ethnic leadership development. He is excited about his role with the state convention.

"My personal commitment is to help ethnic pastors first (to achieve training) and then to train their leaders," Kim said.

At Carson-Newman

Age, disability no obstacle for 67-year-old freshman

JEFFERSON CITY — The fact that she is a 67-year-old freshman at Carson-Newman College does not make Oneeda Plummer self-conscious. In fact, she is proud of it.

"I'm not ashamed of my age. I've worked hard to get to be 67 years old," she declares.

Plummer has endured several operations and a lot of pain since she twisted her spine in a fall 14 years ago. Although she was never supposed to lift more than three pounds after she was injured, Plummer has not slowed down.

Plummer is one of many adult students attending Carson-Newman this year. Adult students, defined as those over age 25, are the new growth market for colleges and universities.

Since last year, the number of adult students at Carson-Newman has increased more than 30 percent.

Higher education is focusing on attracting those who are going for second degrees or changing degrees, but

Hawkins accepts new ministry role

Fred Hawkins of Columbia has been named Saturn Project Coordinator for Tennessee Baptists' ministry to employees of the new Saturn automobile plant in Spring Hill. He assumed the role Nov. 12.

Hawkins, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil, will coordinate the work of churches in Alpha, Maury, Lawrence, Giles, New Duck River, Nashville, and Concord associations to minister to the 10,000 projected new residents of the area.

Based in Columbia, Hawkins can be reached at (615) 381-2189.

The ministry is sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention Missions Department and Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, based in Atlanta, Ga.

senior citizens also are beginning to take advantage of educational opportunities for personal growth and development.

Plummer acknowledged that before enrolling at C-N she "had never gotten out except to go to church." She is a member of Buffalo Grove Church in Jefferson City.

Returning to school represented a seemingly impossible task for someone who just received her GED in 1980.

When Plummer moved to Jefferson City in 1985 she heard about the Elderhostel program at C-N in which senior citizens participate in specially-designed courses.

The administrators of the program were so impressed with Plummer they asked her to help promote the program to others. Plummer was reluctant, however, because she did not feel confident in her ability to speak and write properly.

She told a few people that she wished she could take college English classes, but knew it was out of the question because of inadequate preparation, her age, and high costs.

A faculty member encouraged her, however, and Plummer discovered C-N offers classes for senior citizens for only \$10 per course, on a space available basis.

She still remembers her first day of class. Snow had blanketed the campus, making her walk from home more difficult and even frightening, considering her disability. In addition, the elevator was broken in the building where her class was held. "Just climbing the steps was intimidating," she recalls.

Her first book — Chaucer's poetry written in Middle English — also presented a challenge. But after several hours she gained "a handle" on it and is now a big Chaucer fan.

"I have gained a deeper appreciation of the Bible because the 14th-19th cen-



SENIOR STUDENT — Oneeda Plummer, left, a 67-year-old freshman at Carson-Newman College, enjoys a walk across campus with some of her younger classmates.

tury writers used the Bible as the basis for their writing," she observes.

Plummer has continued to take several other literature classes and has enjoyed working on class projects

Pistole Church calls Richard Lee as pastor

Pistole Church, Sparta, recently called Richard P. Lee as pastor.

Lee was pastor of Rover Church, Eagleville, for more than five years. He was ordained in 1982 at Richland Church, Nashville.

He earned a bachelor's degree in religion from Belmont College, Nashville.

He and his wife have two children.

with other students.

Plummer also has worked on several out-of-class projects, including a role in the Great Smoky Mountain Passion Play, directed by C-N professor John Welton.

And though Plummer was at first unsure of her ability to use the English language to promote the Elderhostel program, she has spoken since to groups of 250 people.

Now, Plummer is an educator as well as a student by teaching literacy classes. She wants others to share the feeling of independence and the opportunities that are available through education.

"I wish everyone understood how important education is," she says. — **Diann Oakley**

By Dec. 14

Christmas memories, feelings sought

The Dec. 19 Baptist and Reflector is the Christmas issue — and the last of the year.

The paper is published 51 times annually, and the publication schedule omits the Christmas week issue.

Readers are urged to express their hopes, memories, or other feelings about Christmas in the form of a letter. Use 150 words or less for your expressions and send them to the paper to arrive by Dec. 14.

One Word More By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

It was plain talk.

You would have agreed if you had been there. It caused not a little wonder and bewilderment. It caused some folks to reconsider their motives in life, their attitudes, their consecration to Christ.

And others never thought of it again.

It was a Sunday morning in a downtown Baptist church. Sunday School was over. The hour of worship began as usual. The congregation heard the announcements. Words from the Bible were read.

The choir sang a beautiful anthem about living the full Christian life and serving the Master to the hilt. There was the eloquent morning prayer. Deacons piously collected the offering.

The sermon was a good one. It touched on fences that needed repair, paths that needed straightening, directions that needed to be re-examined, vows that needed some strengthening.

It was a good sermon, but as usual, the entire congregation did not stay with the pastor. There was some fidgeting among children and some scribbled busily on church bulletins "to keep them out of mischief." Teenagers passed notes. Brother Green counted the light fixtures hanging over the choir and made a mental note that one was slightly out of kilter. Mrs. Smith thought how gaudy was the dress Mrs. Black wore.

Brother Brown harkened back to the announcement period and began think-

ing which excuse he would use to avoid Thursday night's visitation. His wife was pondering two or three juicy items she had heard earlier. Billy was anticipating some new video games. Twenty or thirty sports fans could only see yesterday's scoreboard announcing the home team's marvelous victory.

Several dozed comfortably.

The pastor concluded his message and gave an invitation for "those who would come to Jesus now." The choir began to sing. A man in tattered clothing came down the aisle and whispered to the pastor. The pastor nodded. And then the time for decision was past. The pastor stepped back and the man in ragged clothes turned and faced the crowd.

"Brothers and sisters," he said, piercing eyes ablaze and lips quivering, "brothers and sisters, we ought to be doers of the Word and not hearers only." He whirled quickly and faded into the stunned audience. One hand-shake from the people there, perhaps two. Some thought it to be a stunt forged by the pastor. Some said the man was a troublemaker.

And some didn't think about it at all — they were already on their way to lunch.



ALLEN

Our Readers Write

Appreciates support

I praise the Lord for a great 1990 Pastors' Conference and convention and thank you, the pastors, for honoring me with the privilege of serving as president of the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference.

I earnestly solicit your prayers and I pledge my prayerful commitment to putting together a Pastors' Conference which will encourage, strengthen, and inspire our pastors and provide a positive atmosphere for our 1991 convention. I in-

vite and welcome suggestions from all areas of our state with regard to the program.

Jackie Kay
Bartlett Church
5868 Stage Road
Bartlett 38134

Gracious helper

A special word of thanks is due to Vern Powers and his staff for their gracious spirit in serving Tennessee Baptists, and particularly the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference. Vern and his staff (Protection Plans) were responsible for the printing of the program for the conference, and provided a delicious meal between sessions for the officers and program personalities in the evening session.

Vern Powers has been a friend of pastors for many years. He has helped us make preparations for retirement and he has encouraged churches to take care of their servants. He also has expressed a concern for the spiritual well-being of pastors and has participated in the Pastors' Conference program each year by encouraging the officers and offering assistance. He truly has demonstrated a servant's heart.

Larry L. Gilmore
College Heights Church
2100 Nashville Pike
Gallatin 37066

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.

Religious leaders propose local film rating boards

WASHINGTON (BP) — The establishment of public film-ratings boards in communities and states throughout the country has been proposed as a way to correct an industry-run movie ratings system that has received increasing criticism.

The recommendation was presented by the National Coalition on Television Violence, a TV and movie advocacy group, and Good News Communications, a Christian ministry that rates films, on Nov. 16 to the National Conference on Film Ratings, sponsored by the groups. A wide range of organizations were represented at the meeting, including the American Academy of

Pediatrics, Women Against Pornography, the United States Catholic Conference, the National Council of Churches, the American Family Association, Focus on the Family, and the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The film-ratings conference was organized after the Motion Picture Association of America announced in September that it was replacing its X rating with a new NC-17 rating. Critics say the change enables movies to be featured in theaters that previously would not allow X-rated films and advertisements in newspapers that previously would not allow ads for X-

rated films.

The proposed public ratings system would consist of the following classifications, which would be assigned to movies after they were previewed by the board: All Ages, Parental Guidance, Not Permitted for Young Persons Under Age 13 (R-13), Not Permitted for Young Persons Under Age 16 (R-16), Not Permitted for Young Persons Under Age 18 (R-18), and Unrated or X-rated.

Advertising must include the board's rating and any symbols it attaches to the film. The symbols are: L (obscene language); S (sexual conduct); V, VV, VVV (increasing levels of violence); D (drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, portrayed positively); N (nudity); P (perversion), and A (adult situations).

"The local option is certainly one effective answer to what seems to be a trend of national standards reaching the lowest common denominator. Clearly, there are many, many, many communities across the country for whom such a lowest common denominator, East Coast and West Coast standard is going to be patently offensive, said Richard D. Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"What better way for parents to

receive some meaningful guidance on the suitability of films for themselves and their families than to have a rating constructed by their friends and neighbors. I applaud the efforts of those seeking to bring meaningful ratings standards back to the American film industry."

The proposed ratings also would be required to be placed on videotapes for rent or sale in the community.

Violators could be punished by a maximum fine of \$500.

Nashville churches hit by burglars

Burglars in the Nashville area have broken into 33 churches and stolen sound equipment from 17 churches in November, including Judson Church, which lost a year-old \$20,000 sound system, reported Metro police department's burglary division.

Double the number of break-ins reported in October, the burglaries amount to losses totalling \$50,000, Metro police noted.

Churches were accessed through windows and doors in late night or early morning hours. Stolen equipment includes sound systems, speakers, cassette players, microphones, and cassettes.

Military wife calls nation to prayer

ATLANTA (BP) — While her husband is on a mission for his country in Saudi Arabia, military wife Cassie McBride is on a mission at home.

McBride, a member of Mountain View Church, El Paso, Texas, is asking Americans to participate in a national Pray for Peace Day. McBride hopes that on Dec. 24 at 10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time Americans will join in simultaneous prayer for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Persian Gulf. The time will be 6 a.m. Christmas Day in Saudi Arabia.

McBride's husband, Darren, is a sergeant with the Third Armored Cavalry Forth Squadron HHT based at Fort Bliss, Texas. He has been stationed in the desert northwest of Al Jubail in Saudi Arabia since Sept. 29.

To initiate a nationwide day of prayer, McBride has contacted both

religious and secular organizations for support such as the National Prayer Embassy and several media affiliates.

"The Christian agencies have been receptive," she says. "I've got people praying all over the United States that the secular agencies will be, too."

McBride started her quest by contacting the Evelyn Christenson Ministries from a number on the back of the book *When a Woman Prays*, which she, and other Fort Bliss wives have been studying. From there she obtained numbers of other organizations to publicize her project.

"I really believe God's Word when two or more gather together he answers prayer," says McBride. "I believe if we pray for peace, whether Saddam Hussein or President Bush knows it, God is in control and can intercede in the decisions they make."

SBC plans to send 700 volunteers . . .

(Continued from page 1)
recently, however, signs of radiation poisoning such as cancer, leukemia, and pulmonary problems have become overwhelming.

The tragedy along the Aral Sea also was heartbreaking to Cheyne. "The people there suffer from a combination of hopeless desperation and fatalism," he said. Because of their traditional religious beliefs, they feel they must stay in the area despite the little hope they hold for the future.

As water flow into the sea has fallen

sharply, an estimated 40 percent of the sea's surface area and 60 percent of its volume have disappeared. Cheyne said. Without a change in the use of upstream waters that feed it, the sea could become a geographic memory in the next century, some experts say.

During much of the year, no water flows into the sea. Fish are dead, and with them the fishing industry that once fueled local economies. Large boats sit stranded atop desert-like stretches of sand, once the Aral Sea's bottom.

The adjoining countryside is a vast wasteland. Many species of animals have vanished. Scrub brush peppers endless mounds of salty sand. Trains of camels transport most of the supplies to the region. Water comes by truck.

In the earthquake devastation area, people have been able to make only limited attempts to prop up buildings left unsond with gaping cracks. Little, if any, rebuilding is evident. In some places people have welded metal braces like angle irons on the outside corners of concrete structures.

"They seem to have absolutely nothing to work with," Cheyne said.

The areas also seem to lack adequate medical facilities, he reported. One of the components in the upcoming Southern Baptist volunteer project calls for 50 health care professionals to work in Kazakhstan. Each will carry a footlocker of medical supplies to donate to the people.

Kazakh officials particularly want radiologists, infectious disease specialists, dentists, prosthetists, and nurses. Health volunteers will teach and work in hospitals and go into rural clinics.

Other requests for the volunteer project include 300 university students to make cultural presentations; 100 professionals to give seminars in such subjects as business, communications, management, law, banking, law enforcement, food, education, transportation, art, and music; 25 construction workers; 50 people to operate cultural and commercial display booths; and 175 specialists in the performing arts.

Liberia violence continues . . .

(Continued from page 1)
three groups vie for control of the nation. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia, led by Charles Taylor, controls the largest region. Another rebel group is led by Prince Yormie

Johnson, who broke away from Taylor. His troops now hold parts of Monrovia. The third group is a peacekeeping force sent into Liberia by the Economic Community of West African States. So far this multinational force has seen little success, but it has the support of Liberia's neighbors.

All three forces have occupied areas in and around Monrovia.

During the mission meeting, Bullington met with individual missionaries to discuss their future. Some plan to continue in temporary assignments they took after evacuating Liberia early in 1990. Others will commit to two- or three-year assignments in other African countries. A few missionaries have chosen permanent assignments in other countries.

Not all Southern Baptist missionaries have left Liberia. In Yekepa, a small town near the Guinea border, Earl and Jane Williams of West Monroe, La., and Knoxville, Tenn., are working with Lawrence and Alice Hardy of Savannah, Ga. They are distributing medicine and food and holding services.

In Mano River, near the Sierra Leone border, Ed and Fran Laughridge of Rock Hill, S.C., and Great Falls, S.C., have set up a small food distribution center and are conducting worship services.

The Foreign Mission Board has spent more than \$300,000 in food and medical relief in Liberia and neighboring countries since fighting broke out in December 1989. Missionary Bradley Brown plans to visit Liberian refugee camps to determine how Baptists can meet spiritual and physical needs.

Retired DOM dies

Harold Gregory, retired director of missions for Nashville Association, died Sunday night in Hendersonville.

Gregory retired in 1975 after serving in the position for almost 38 years. The funeral was scheduled for Wednesday at 10 a.m. at First Church, Hendersonville.

Hymns Baptists sing

'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus'

By William J. Reynolds

Louisa Stead stood on the beach with her four-year-old daughter and watched her husband drown as he tried to rescue a child in the waters off Long Island, New York.

The tragic death of her husband and her persistent health problems brought a testing time in her life. Out of these experiences came the writing of "'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus." Here is a statement of her faith inspired by her own confidence in God at a time of greatest sorrow and desperate need.

A native of Dover, England, she came to the United States in 1871. At a camp meeting in Urbana, Ohio, she felt the call to missionary service. Years later she and her daughter, Lily, went to the Cape Colony in South Africa, where she served for 15 years.

There she married Robert Wodehouse, a South African Methodist minister. They were later appointed to the Methodist Mission in Umtali, Southern Rhodesia, in 1901.

Ten years later Louisa Wodehouse retired, but she remained in Africa until her death in 1917; she died at her home in Penkridge, about 50 miles from Umtali. She was buried in a grave hewn out of solid rock on the side of Black Mountain near her home.

Her hymn is sung in many languages around the world as Christians express their praise of Jesus Christ and pray for "grace to trust Him more." — Reynolds is professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.



CHURCH CONSTITUTED — Hobson Pike Mission, Hermitage, was constituted as a church Nov. 11. Participating in the service were, from left, Pastor Carroll Owen, J. G. DeLacey, church treasurer; Clayton Gray, Sunday School director; D. L. Lowrie, TBC executive director; Bob Johnson, former pastor of LaGuarda Church, Lebanon, the sponsoring church; Vern Powers, TBC Protection Plans Department director; and Robert Agee, director of missions, Wilson County Association. Powers delivered the afternoon message.

— Photo by Barbara Owen

TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

Pollsters are always coming up with interesting statistics. Recently they came up with one that disturbs me. They estimate, based on their polls, that only four percent of the Christians tithe. They also estimate that the average giving is 2.3 percent.

This would not be so distressing if the poll was based on the actions of believers in one of the poor countries of the world. We are the richest group of Christians to ever live on the face of the earth. We waste more than most of the people of the world have to sustain life.



LOWRIE

What causes such an obvious problem? Lack of gratitude is primary. Tithing is an expression of gratitude. The tither wants to acknowledge to God gratitude for all that He has given. He or she knows that God is the source of every good and perfect

Church calls Dewey Masters

Dewey Masters has returned to Poplar Springs Church, Cookeville, as bivocational pastor.

Masters, who is a farmer, was ordained at Poplar Springs Church. He is a native of Overton County.

He and his wife, Lena Pearl, have three children and two grandchildren.

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gift. Greed is the other cause. Greed is an unhealthy love of things. The person who does not tithe wants to use the ten percent or a portion of it to secure more things. Usually they are things that the neighbors have already bought, but not things that are essential for life and happiness.

Paul was right, "the love of money is the root of all evil." It will even cause a person to knowingly disobey a Biblical precept, to appropriate for personal use that which belongs to God.

What would happen if every believer became a regular, consistent tither? The most important thing would be that God would open the windows of heaven and begin to pour out His blessings upon us. Who could ask for more?

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Association gatherings

Nashville Association

Messengers admitted Korean Church, Nashville, into the association and accepted the retirement announcement of Director of Missions Carl Duck, effective July 31, 1991. They also learned about ethnic ministries through a special presentation and commissioned about 80 mission volunteers to London, England.

The meeting was held Oct. 15-16 at Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville, and Forest Hills Church, Nashville.

Re-elected as officers were David George, pastor, Immanuel Church, Nashville, moderator; Kenneth Castleberry, pastor, Dalewood Church, Nashville, assistant moderator; Carl Duck, director of missions, treasurer; and E. Doyle Chatham, member, Inglewood Church, Nashville, clerk.

Hardeman County Association

Special events of the Hardeman County Association meeting Oct. 15-16 were the mission fair held in conjunction with the meeting and introduction of the associational Disaster Relief team. Messengers gathered at Silerton Church, Silerton, and First Church, Grand Junction.

Elected as officers were Doug Baker, pastor, Parrans Chapel Church, Bolivar, moderator; Jerry Winfield,

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pastor, First Church, Bolivar, assistant moderator; Wanda Young, member, Piney Grove Church, Henderson, treasurer; and Mary Louise Craft, member, Parrans Chapel Church, clerk.

Hiwassee Missionary Association

During its Oct. 26-27 meeting at Paint Rock Church, Philadelphia, the association elected the following officers: David Largen, pastor, Concord Church, Ten Mile, moderator; Dan Murphy, pastor, Paint Rock Church, Philadelphia, assistant moderator; Annebell Ogren, treasurer/clerk; and Karen Weaver, assistant treasurer/clerk.

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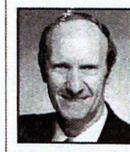
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Nashville team leads 138 Britons to Christ

A team of volunteer missionaries from Nashville Association recently concluded a mission trip to London, England, during which 138 professions of faith were recorded.

Carl Duck, Nashville Association executive director, said the London Association invited the group for a partnership evangelism mission under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Board.

Seventy-nine people representing 25 Nashville-area churches made the trip. They were divided into 16 teams and each team was assigned to a London church. Sixteen team members were pastors and the rest were lay people.

In addition to the 138 professions of faith, 118 people rededicated their lives to Christ and 18 made commitments to full-time service. Approximately 11,500 people attended the various services conducted by the teams.

Duck said the mission volunteers led worship services in their churches, gave testimonies, visited in the community, spoke in schools, and led holiday clubs for children.

"One of the wonderful things about volunteerism is that any person who loves the Lord and is committed to serve can be used of the Lord in touching lives," Duck said.

John Langlois, pastor of Lockeland Church, Nashville, and a team leader,



ENGLISH VBS — Clorene Robinson, member of Park Avenue Church, Nashville, and Jim Patton, pastor of First Church, Fairview, led a holiday club for children.

said his group of five volunteers "were busy from morning till night the whole time we were there."

Langlois recalled the story of a man who was a member of Woodford Church where his team was assigned. The man suffered from night blindness and could not drive his car at night. He was concerned about not being able to participate in the evening activities when the mission team from America arrived.

As the man prayed for the mission one evening, he asked God to heal him of his night blindness so he could help at night when the volunteers arrived.

"He didn't go out that night, but he

went out the next night and he could see as clearly as he ever had," Langlois said. "He felt it was an answered prayer and that the Lord had healed him."

Langlois said the man gave his testimony in some of the services during the week and was present at all the evening activities.

"It was delightful to get to know the British people. They were as warm and friendly as any people could be and it was heartwarming to see the same God we love being served across the sea as well," Langlois said. "They were so happy and devoted to their service," he added.



LONDON TEAM — Five Nashvillians served at Woodford Church. From left are Francis Clark, Tulip Grove Church; Bill and Liza Whitford, Woodmont Church; and John and Jacqueline Langlois, Lockeland Church.

However, the general reserve of the British people presented a challenge, Duck said.

"It is a difficult field in terms of evangelistic thrust. The response to the Gospel is limited," Duck said. "On the other hand, the people in the churches are warm and appreciative and have a genuine commitment to the Lord."

Team members were careful to respect the people's reservations.

"We tried not to superimpose any of our ideas with the thought of being superior to them. We tried to fit in with their plans and be flexible so we could be used to the maximum and convey the love of God," Duck said.

This is the third partnership mission trip to London Nashville Association has sponsored. The association also sponsored a trip to Korea in 1983.

Duck said the mission trips have expanded his missions vision and commitment to serve, and he believes they have positive effects in Nashville as well as London.

"As these people (the volunteers) share their testimonies, the churches in our association will be blessed and as a result our entire association will be strengthened," Duck said. — *Connie Umstead*

First Church, Clinton, marks sesquicentennial

CLINTON — Though not the oldest church in its eastern Tennessee area, First Church, Clinton, has celebrated its 150th anniversary with style, fervor, and the future in mind.

On the exact date of its founding, Nov. 7, the membership voted to approve a \$740,000 renovation project. Members began raising money for the project in February.

The church members also celebrated the sesquicentennial in less serious ways — all year long.

A highlight of the events, according to Terry Baker, minister of education, was Heritage Sunday held in October which was led by the senior adult organization. People dressed in clothing representing 1840 when the church was begun. A dinner on the

grounds and singing was held, said Baker.

Other special features included the historical display, he added. It could be viewed for a month. And despite the age of the church, its founding church, Bethel Church, Clinton, led a service Nov. 11 to culminate the experience.

Regular events of the church were held — with an anniversary twist. The son of R. C. Medaris, the founder of its first Sunday School who was pastor from 1917-19, addressed the senior adult group. XYZs. A Veterans' Recognition Sunday was held July 1.

Wooden nickels announcing the anniversary celebration have been distributed during the year. Also a pictorial directory was produced.

A historical perspective is not new to members. The historical display included the original charter, and the church boasts the possession and use of the bell from the original church building. It is rung every Sunday morning by a special education student, reported Baker.

But Pastor Samuel Dean capitalized on the anniversary to remind members of the church's traditions — including sacrifice of its members — which has led to the renovation plans.

Dean also portrayed a church founder to inform members. At that time members could be ousted from the church for swearing, dancing, or being absent from a business meeting, he shared.

Another format for history lessons was the church's newsletter, said Dean. It has included a historical feature written by member, Horace Wells, former owner of the city's newspaper, he explained.

"The younger generation does not have a sense of history. The church, family, nation, schools, need to tell them about their roots. This is the way you transmit values and have a sense of identity," said Dean. — *Connie Davis*



BEYOND 150 YEARS — Church trustees, from left, Carole Ann Earle, Jo Suggs, Jack Hutchins, John Cobb, Roy Leinart, contractor Kenneth Evans, and trustee Gerald Lankford, sign an agreement for a renovation project at the Nov. 7 birthday party before, photo to right, a visitor from the past, founding member John Jarnigan portrayed by Pastor Samuel Dean, surprises the crowd. — Photos by Connie Davis



Inman to serve church

First Church, Loudon, recently called Houston Inman as pastor.

Inman was pastor of Homestead Church, Crossville, for eight years. In addition, he served as pastor of First Church, South Pittsburg, and churches in Mississippi and Kentucky. He was also chaplain at Kentucky State Prison in Eddyville, Ky.

The Mississippi native was ordained in 1955 at Riverside Church, Clarksville. He earned a bachelor's degree at Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.; a master of divinity degree at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary; and a doctor of ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary, Jacksonville.

He and his wife, Sherlene, have two sons.

South Fulton church calls Bobby Robinson

Bobby Robinson has been called as pastor of Johnson's Grove Church, South Fulton.

The Mayfield, Ky., native was pastor of New Prospect Church, McKenzie, for more than three years.

He was ordained in 1986 at South Fulton Church, South Fulton, where he was junior pastor.

He and his wife, Sharon, have three children and one grandson.

'Tis the season to share blessings with little ones

This Christmas will be a very special one for many of the boys and girls at the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, but not solely because of the gifts or holiday activities.

"For a lot of our children, it's the first time they've heard the true Christmas story about the birth of Jesus," says Carol Dyer, a housemother on the Franklin TBCH campus. "They learn that Christmas really isn't just Santa and lights. It gives them a whole new perspective."

The focus on the Christ child and church activities helps the children change their vision of the

holiday. They learn that Christmas isn't all about "getting."

"We work hardest on the spirit of gratitude," explains Carol. "Instead of saying 'What am I going to get' we try to focus on being thankful, and on how to give of ourselves."

The children make presents, such as ceramic gifts, for their teachers and family members. They work on projects to help others, such as stacking wood for an elderly couple, or singing Christmas carols for senior citizens groups.

As hard as they work to help others enjoy the

holiday, the children also enjoy the many activities planned for them. From Memphis to Johnson City, friends of the Children's Homes are generous in providing gifts and parties for the boys and girls.

"We keep pretty busy during December, with all the things going on. And in a lot of ways, that's good, because it helps the children through a time that can be tough emotionally," says Carol.

It's because of the family focus of the holiday that Christmas can be a difficult time. Many are unable to return to their homes — because of past abuses or a number of other problems — and they became depressed about the continued separation from their family.

"Christmas is one of those times of the year when a child will 'mark time.' He'll think 'It's Christmas, and I'm still not with my family.' It brings the separation into focus, and that's tough for a child to cope with."

So the houseparents and social workers make an extra effort to talk with children about any feelings they may have about their families. One thing that helps is the daily routine of cottage life — and the extra excitement of Christmas activities — but admittedly, there are still some rough moments.

Some children benefit from the visiting family program. During the two-week break, a child who cannot return home can instead stay with a Baptist family. In Carol's cottage of eight children, two are able to go home to their families. The other six children are fortunate to have on-going relationships with visiting families, and will be staying with them during the holidays. Children without a visiting family stay on campus in a cottage that remains open.

"It's a wonderful break for the children, because they can experience a different environment, and have a change from our daily routine," says Carol.

Each TBCH campus has a list of clothing sizes and special needs for all the resident boys and girls. There is also a Christmas gift fund that allows the houseparents to buy a special present or toy for each child. For more information, please call:

Chattanooga — 615/892-2722

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The many joys of the holidays will be shared by more than 200 boys and girls this Christmas at the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.



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(Advertisement)

Gifts of talent are treasured in ministry to children

By Dr. Gerald L. Stow

TBCH Executive Director/Treasurer

We are greatly blessed at our Children's Homes with a fine staff of gifted individuals. I never cease to be amazed at the way God brings together the gifted persons we need to help our children.

On our West Tennessee campus, we needed someone to develop an on-going recreation and activities program. God touched Mark Vigus, a high school coach, and brought him to us.

At the Middle Tennessee campus, we needed someone who could fix washing machines, plumbing, dishwashers, air conditioners, and the Lord only knows what else. God brought us a man who could fix just

about anything — Dean Cole.

At East Tennessee, we needed someone who could work patiently and gently with younger children, and someone to help us make a garden. Bill and Betty Copeland responded to God's call and are singularly gifted to perform the tasks.

In the Northeast, we needed a person who could be both a houseparent and a social worker. Robert Rogers, uniquely qualified in both areas, responded to our work at Burrville.

In the Central Office, we needed someone who could help us tell the Good News of TBCH across the state. Carol Byrd, a talented journalist, responded.

These are gifts from our great God who helps us provide for the children.

This season always brings a great outpouring of gifts for the children. Gifts of toys, clothes, parties, and many other expressions of love are deeply appreciated. We are thankful that they are so blessed. But one great need is often overlooked. Were it not for the gifts of houseparents, social workers, secretaries, bookkeepers, other support and administrative staff, the children's needs would go unmet. For it is through these adult lives that God pours His love into the lives of our children. They are the ones who give wise counsel and loving guidance. Without them, our ministry could not exist.

As you think about giving this Christmas, I hope you will remember

that one of the greatest needs TBCH has is to adequately provide for our staff of gifted workers. We need adequate funding for salaries, health insurance, retirement and other vital staff needs. Our work with the children is a stressful work. We must not add to the stress of our staff a heavy concern over how to balance their personal family budgets. Please remember them as you make your gift list this year.

"For we are laborers together with God." 1 Corinthians 3:9

Gerald L. Stow

TenneScene

... North to south, from Cedar Hill to Spring Hill, on to Minor Hill ...

People ...

Churches ...

An original collection of orchestral and vocal Christmas music will be presented Dec. 16 at 7 p.m., at Lincocya Hills Church, Nashville. The orchestra will include members of the Nashville Symphony.

Members of First Church, Rockwood, celebrated the churches 100th anniversary Nov. 18.

Approximately 900 Hendersonville youth recently attended youth night held during a Kelly Green crusade at

Bivocational pastors to meet in Memphis

Southland Church in Memphis will be the site of two national meetings for bivocational pastors.

The Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers' Association will hold its first meeting Dec. 13, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Those attending that meeting are welcomed to stay Dec. 14-15 for the ninth annual meeting of the National Council for Bivocational Pastors.

Ernest Mosley, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, will deliver the keynote address on Dec. 14. Also, that evening, two bivocational pastors will be honored as "bivocational pastors of the year."

For additional information, contact Dale Holloway, 311 Gunter Road, Florence, Miss. 39073.

First Church, Hendersonville. More than 100 people made professions of faith after the worship service.

A Christmas pageant expected to draw 1500 people will be held at First Church, Huntingdon, Dec. 15-17. The two-act pageant will include a dramatic presentation of the life of Christ accompanied by the church choir and an orchestra. Ev Robertson, senior drama specialist at the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, will perform in the drama. Free tickets for "Celebrate Christmas - Home for Christmas" are available by contacting the church at (901) 986-5000.

Missions ...

Kathy and Dwain Brown, furloughing missionaries to French Guiana, recently shared slides picturing their work to members of Immanuel Church, Lawrenceburg.

Southside Church, Dyersburg, has been designated by the Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood Department as a disaster relief center. In the event of a disaster, the disaster relief van will set up at Southside Church to minister to the needs of the community. Some church members are currently being trained in CPR and first aid.

H. L. Champion recently began a church for the deaf in Nashville, named Heart Church. Signing will be provided for deaf people, but services will also be vocalized for the hearing.

Colleges ...

Don Mattingly has joined the faculty of Belmont College, Nashville, as a part-time professor in the youth and recreation ministry. He has worked in the youth and recreation area at the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, for 15 years, and is interim minister of education at Clearview Church, Franklin.

Hospital confinement does not stop deacon ordination at Memphis church

MEMPHIS - Members and staff of First Church, Memphis, have discovered that modern technology can be a wonderful tool for ministry.

For several years the deacons of First Church, Memphis, have visited homebound members and enabled them to participate in the Lord's Supper observance through television.

Members who are unable to attend are contacted during the week to see if they would like to participate in Communion. If they do, a deacon is assigned to take the bread and juice to them. The deacon worships with the homebound member with the full congregation on television and participates in the Lord's Supper at the appropriate time.

On Oct. 7, First Church, Memphis, found another way to make use of modern technology.

Five deacons were to be ordained that day, but one, Alvis Buchanan, was

unable to attend because he was confined to a bed at St. Francis Hospital in Memphis.

Henry Martin, assistant to the pastor at First Church, installed a telephone speaker in the hospital room and the church ordination service was broadcast via telephone.

Buchanan, despite his illness, insisted on leaving his bed in order to kneel beside it when it was time for the laying on of hands.

Deacon Milton C. Ray represented the fellowship and laid on hands, stating, "Brother Buchanan, upon request of our pastor, Earl C. Davis, and the chairman of deacons, Paul Howse, I welcome you, my brother, into the deacon body of First Baptist Church."

Word spread quickly on the hospital floor that a Baptist deacon had been ordained in a Catholic hospital, giving the new deacon an opportunity to witness about his beliefs. The "Catholic deacon" was a favorite among the nurses for several days before his discharge.

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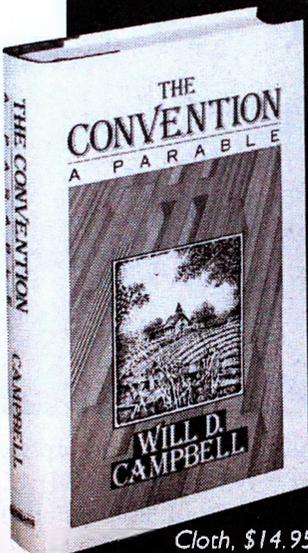
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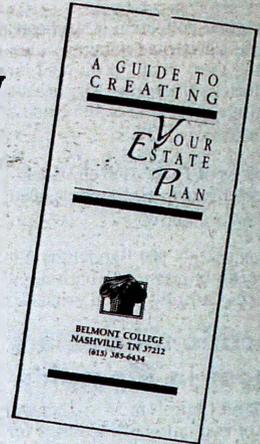
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Teaching about discipleship and mission

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

Jesus was born to die! Jesus came to the world knowing what God's will held in store for Him. This is not true for us. We grow, mature, and dream about future aspirations. Then we seek the education or skills to make those aspirations a reality.

Jesus was born to die! The cross was His destiny and Jerusalem was His destination. Thus, He began His journey to Jerusalem. Note that He did not take a direct route, rather an indirect one. Why? He still had some teaching to do.



LUNS福德

The setting

Our lesson last week left the disciples arguing about "power." Apparently they didn't have much love for one another or else they would not have allowed greed, envy, and pride to disturb their fellowship.

Jesus taught that greatness is compared to a little child in God's kingdom. A little child is seen as "helpless, dependent, without status, living by faith." Warren Wiersbe writes, "The only thing worse than a child trying to act like an adult is an adult acting like a child!"

The disciples lacked discipline. They argued with each other and were unloving toward those outside of their "intimate, exclusive" group (Luke 9:49-50). They sought to impress Jesus with their zeal for His name, but He was not impressed. Can this compare to us today?

Jesus taught

Jesus taught about discipleship. What is discipleship? It has been defined as, "Taking up a cross, dying to self." Three men were rejected as disciples. One loved his home; he had not counted the cost. The second wanted to assist in a funeral. The third kept looking back. He had the "I remember when syndrome."

There is nothing wrong with a fond

admiration for the past or for "tradition(s)" either in personal life or in our churches. However, if the past gets in the way of obedience, a command from God to march boldly in faith toward the future, it becomes sin! No wonder the laborers are few.

BIBLE BOOK
December 9 Lesson
Basic Passage: Luke 9:51-10:24

The role of a Christian

Luke 10 unveils a threefold ministry of every Christian. It seeks to answer, "What must a Christian do?"

First, every Christian is an ambassador for the Lord. This person is a representative for the one sending. It is important to note, since the "sender" cannot be everywhere at the same time, ambassadors are sent. As an ambassador for Christ, we are sent daily into the "market place(s)" of our life, knowing this is God's will and desire.

Every Christian is a neighbor. As a

neighbor, we can look for opportunities to show mercy in the name of Christ (Luke 10:25-37).

At the heart of ministry is our devotion to Christ. Every Christian is a worshiper, one who takes time to listen to His Word and commune with Him.

The role of the disciples included adventure. They not only represented Christ, they were also sent before Him to prepare for His coming. It was a difficult calling. Harvesting is hard work, and so is the task of commitment to visitation and reaching the lost.

The calling to serve required discipline and faith to do the job. There was an urgency about the work. They were ambassadors of peace, bringing healing to the sick, deliverance to the possessed, and the Good News of salvation to lost sinners.

Conclusion

What about you? Are you an ambassador marching boldly into the future with a mission? Or, are you looking for that substitute to take your place? Are you, are we a joy to Jesus Christ, or are we breaking His heart?

The Pharisee and the tax collector

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

Martin Luther prayed, "Dear Lord, although I am sure of my position, I am unable to sustain it without Thee. Help Thou me or I am lost."

How unlike the attitude expressed by Luther is the prayer of the Pharisee who stood in the temple to pray. He stood with pride to access God, but failed to understand that the only way to touch God's heart is through an attitude of brokenness and yieldedness to His will.

O. Hallsby said, "The more helpless you are, the better you are fitted to pray and the more answers to prayer you will experience."

This contrast in attitudes to prayer is pointed out in this week's lesson through this well-known parable of our

Lord. Through the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican, Jesus reveals the rewards of sincere prayer while warning of the folly and danger of pride-filled prayer.

The Pharisee (18:9-10)

Jesus usually presented His parables in a general way in order to strike at the heart of all who followed to listen to His teachings. On this occasion, He specifically pointed at the Pharisees revealing the emptiness of their pietistic religious gestures intended as genuine worship. Primary of these offerings was their attitude in prayer. Though their activity of consistent prayer was commendable, their self-righteous attitude negated their actions as false and self serving.

The publican (18:10)

The publican was presented as a figure in stark contrast to the recognized religious leader of the Pharisees. He was a Jewish officer of the hated Roman government. Most probably he

knew little by comparison of the law. But there was a hunger in his heart to experience peace which to this point had eluded him.

CONVENTION UNIFORM
December 9 Lesson
Basic Passage: 18:9-14

The prayers (18:11-13)

The Pharisee began to pray, with himself as the focus of his prayer, rather than God. Pride filled his heart and mind as he reminded God of all his "goodness." Although never required by God, the Pharisee fasted twice a week. In strict, legalistic observance of the law, this religious zealot tithed "all that I possess." He sensed that somehow this action was pleasing to God and would place him in favorable standing with a Holy God who honored obedience. Yet while he gloried in his exacting observance of ritual, he ignored the mean and self-

righteous attitude of his heart. His prayer reflected that he cared little of how God saw him, but cared greatly how he saw himself; and he satisfied himself.

The publican began to pray out of a broken heart. There were no good deeds or consistent observances of ritual to preface his approach to God. He focused upon God and saw himself in the light of God's holiness. He claimed no privileges, but cried out for God's grace and mercy. He trusted God to do for him what he could not do for himself. His prayer was heard and this contrite sinner experienced the peace of God. And he too was satisfied.

Conclusion

J. K. Maclean wrote, "If our petitions are in accordance with His will, and if we seek His glory in asking, the answers will come in ways that will astonish us and fill our hearts with songs of thanksgiving."

Divine Son

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

One of the biggest barriers Jesus faced in dealing with the religious leaders of His day was their conviction that they understood God completely. Their criticisms of Jesus most often had to do with His violation of what they thought God would or would not do.

They remind me of a cartoon which depicts Gabriel sounding the last trumpet while several preachers try to tell him it's not time yet.

In the passage for study this week, we have some of the Bible experts of the day telling the Son of God He is violating the command of God by breaking the Sabbath.



NAIL

Jesus' concern for human need

In Jesus' day a person who was diseased or physically handicapped was not permitted to worship with others in the Temple. He was considered cursed due to some unforgiven sin.

Jesus healed many people of such physical problems, but He did not heal them all. The ones who received physical healing were healed as "signs" of deeper spiritual realities.

Where religious men saw a sinner living in judgment of his sin, Jesus saw a sufferer being further victimized by those who should have offered help.

Much of Jesus' evangelizing began with meeting some physical need. It is often still the case that the church must begin its evangelizing by meeting a pressing material need.

Jesus' compassion was greeted with disapproval from those who "knew"

what God would have done. They were only concerned with the rules. Their hearts just weren't in their religion and the religion was not in their hearts.

LIFE AND WORK
December 9 Lesson
Basic Passage: John 5

Jesus' concern for the deepest human need

One of the greatest barriers to our being made whole is our unwillingness. Jesus dealt with this problem at the beginning of this event. He had the nerve to ask a man who had been lame for 38 years if he wanted to be well.

But that is an important question isn't it? In all of us there is some sort of lameness of spirit that needs to be made whole by Christ. Do we want to be made well? Or do we want things to go on as they always have?

In the text, Jesus moved on to deal with the man's deepest spiritual need after meeting his physical need. As churches and individual Christians we

must not allow our ministry to physical needs be our only ministry. We have not truly ministered to people if we have neglected their spiritual needs.

Doing the Father's work

Healing the man of his lameness on the Sabbath riled the religious leadership. Then Jesus went too far with them when He spoke of God as His own Father. In their minds this was the same as saying He was equal with God. He had uttered what, to their minds, was the highest blasphemy. The only way to handle blasphemy was to kill it.

But what Jesus said in v. 19 is what every child of God should be able to say in all honesty.

It is a fact that none of us can do any good thing of himself or herself. We don't have the ability to do right apart from God.

Then Jesus declared He does those things that God does. Oh, if it could be said of any of us that we do only those things that God does! May God help us, by Christ Jesus, to be that kind of child of His.

(BP) BRIEFLY

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

Maryland/Delaware Convention approves funds for BJCPA

DERWOOD, Md. — The Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware approved a plan for direct funding to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, elected a new president, and adopted a 1991 budget of \$4.7 million Nov. 12-14.

Attendance by messengers and registered visitors exceeded 1000 for the first time in the state convention's 154-year history. A total of 819 messengers and 186 visitors registered for the annual meeting, held at Redland Church, Derwood, Md.

Messengers voted 252-153 to adopt a recommendation of the convention's general mission board to restore funding cut in June by the Southern Baptist Convention to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The action calls for a lump sum of about \$4500 be sent directly to the Washington-based religious liberty watchdog agency. The allocation matches the amount of Maryland/Delaware Baptist Cooperative Program gifts that would have gone to the BJC between October 1990 and December 1991 had Southern Baptists not voted to reduce their level of funding to the BJC by 87.5 percent in the 1990-91 budget they adopted earlier this year in New Orleans. The funds earmarked for the BJC will be deducted from the half of budget surplus to be sent at year's end to the SBC. The remaining 50 percent of surplus funds will be built into future Maryland/Delaware budgets.

The convention elected Homer Carter, pastor of First Church, Rockville, Md., as its new president over Iris White, a layperson from South Columbia Church, Columbia. Two vice presidents were elected unopposed. Romelle Jones, a member of University Church, Baltimore, was chosen first vice president and Otis Doherty, pastor of Oglethorpe Church, Newark, Del., was chosen second vice president.

Louisiana messengers re-elect Lowery president

SHREVEPORT, La. — Louisiana Baptists sidestepped possible controversy during their 143rd annual state convention while agreeing to work together to reach their world and state for Christ. Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church, Bossier City, was elected by acclamation to a second one-year term as Louisiana Baptist Convention president last week. Mark Sutton, pastor of Brookwood Church, Shreveport, was elected first vice president, and Bendell Johnson, a physician from Fort Park Church, Shreveport, was elected second vice president.

The issue of abortion was at the forefront of convention business. On that issue, messengers overwhelmingly approved their strongest statement in history. The resolution asserts "abortion for reasons other than to save the life of the mother is a destruction of innocent human life contrary to the laws of God and leads to a contempt for all human life." The resolution also instructs the convention's committee on moral and social concerns to make abortion a top priority in its work.

A record 1895 messengers crowded into a main auditorium and overflow room at Summer Grove Church in Shreveport, seemingly set to battle over two items of tension. One involved a proposed charter restatement for Louisiana College, which was the result of a two-year study and consultant with college and convention counsels. School leaders said the restatement was needed as a matter of updating documents and was designed to strengthen convention-college ties. However, critics insisted the proposal was an effort to move the school from state convention control.

The second concerned a ten-year employment contract recently signed between Louisiana Baptist Message trustees and Editor Lynn Clayton. Supporters said the contract was needed to ensure continued freedom of the press in the state. Critics decried the move as unnecessary and unprecedented.

At the last minute, however, leaders of the two agencies in question acted to remove the items from convention consideration, both citing a hope to foster peace and harmony. Louisiana College President Robert Lynn delayed consideration of the charter proposal for one year, pending dialogue with Louisiana Baptists in the next 12 months. Clayton and newspaper trustees agreed to restudy their contract and also seek to dialog with and receive input from Louisiana Baptists in the process.

Illinois Baptists elect layperson as president

PEORIA, Ill. — Messengers to the 84th annual meeting of Illinois Baptist State Association elected layperson Rodney Osborn as IBSA president and conducted their business without discussion at the Continental Regency Hotel here Nov. 6-8. Osborn, a medical doctor from Peoria and IBSA vice president for the past two years, was the only person nominated to succeed outgoing president Charles West of Bethalto. Osborn is a member of Woodland Church, Peoria.

Charles Dampier, pastor of Herrin First Church, became IBSA vice president by receiving 268 votes to 146 for C. Ray Fuller, director of missions in Three Rivers Association.

Messengers approved a 1991 Cooperative Program goal of \$4,708,840, a one percent increase over 1990, and a CP distribution ratio of 59.75 percent to IBSA causes (\$2,813,532) and 40.25 percent to Southern Baptist Convention causes (\$1,895,308), the same ratio as 1990. Messengers also approved a \$6,298,290 general budget for 1991 (without a salary increase provision), about a third of a percent above 1990.

In addition, messengers approved 1991 anticipated Baptist Children's Home expenditures of \$890,810 and anticipated Baptist Student Center expenditures of \$612,613. Messengers also adopted a measure that would allow executive director Maurice Swinford to revise the 1991 budget, adjust the staff salary scale, and provide staff salary increases of up to five percent on Feb. 1, 1991. That measure was granted on the condition IBSA ends 1990 receiving more money than it spends in its general fund.

New Mexico convention has smooth sailing

ROSWELL, N. M. — The 78th annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico met Nov. 13-15 at First Church of Roswell. Total attendance was 755, with 444 messengers and 311 visitors.

Dean Mathis, pastor of Taylor Memorial Church, Hobbs, was elected new convention president. Charles Wilson, a layman from First Church, Carlsbad, was elected first vice president. Hilcias Barrios, pastor of Santa Fe Spanish Church, was chosen second vice president.

In business transacted during the annual meeting, a convention bylaw was approved to create a Christian Life Committee to deal with moral and social issues in the state; and total operating budget of \$5.3 million was adopted. Of that amount, \$2.6 million will be given by New Mexico Baptists.

The basic budget receipts will be divided on a 69.5-30.5 percent ratio with 69.5 percent of the budget going to causes in New Mexico. The remaining 30.5 percent will be given to SBC causes to fund the convention's missions and educational endeavors. This is the same ratio on which the convention operated last year.

Ohio Baptists elect first black president

PARMA, Ohio — Gary L. Frost, 36-year-old pastor of Rising Star Church, Youngstown, is the first black man ever elected president of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio. He was elected during the annual convention at Parma, a Cleveland suburb.

A Youngstown native, educated in Ohio, Frost was earlier a first vice president of the convention, and also had preached the convention sermon another year. The church he leads is in the top three churches in its association in Cooperative Program unified budget giving. The church also is believed to be the first black church in the SBC launched through a home missions planter, who preceded Frost.

Messengers adopted a total budget of \$5,735,451, of which \$3,587,009 is the goal for the Cooperative Program receipts from the churches. It will send 41.25 percent of Cooperative Program income to support Southern Baptist Convention missions and education endeavors.

California Baptists celebrate convention's 50th anniversary

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. — California Southern Baptists celebrated the 50th anniversary of the state convention Nov. 12-14 in a look at the past. Messengers approved a \$13 million budget and elected a San Bernardino pastor as president.

Rob Zinn, pastor of Immanuel Church in San Bernardino, was elected president. E. W. McCall, pastor of St. Stephens Missionary Church in La Puente, was elected first vice president, and June Tate, Huntington Beach Church in Huntington Beach, was elected second vice president.

Amid the pageantry, music, and reminiscing, messengers took care of the business although the anniversary celebration was the focal point. Only two resolutions were presented, and approved, with one urging California churches to give full support to the Cooperative Program unified budget.

Messenger registration totaled 1339. A total of 700 visitors also registered, for a total attendance of 2039 people. The convention's 1991 budget, five percent above the 1990 budget, includes 28.85 percent for the SBC Cooperative Program. That is an increase of 0.11 percent over last year. The percentage is based on a formula using the percentage of gifts channeled through the Cooperative Program from the budgets of California churches.

KNCSB has record crowd at annual meeting

WICHITA, Kan. — Having the mind of Christ will result in unity, Dave Sellars, president of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, said during the convention's 45th annual meeting in Wichita. The meeting was held Nov. 12-14 at Tyler Road Southern Church. About 375 people registered as messengers, representing 121 churches. The opening session on Monday night, Nov. 12, drew slightly more than 600 people, a record crowd for a KNCSB meeting.

Sellars, pastor of Northern Heights Church, Norfolk, Neb., was re-elected to a second term by acclamation. N. N. "Andy" Antonson, pastor of the host church, was re-elected as vice president. The KNCSB Executive Board elected Antonson to that position in February after the previous vice president moved out of state.

Messengers approved the 1991 budget of \$3,385,140. Cooperative Program receipts from Kansas-Nebraska churches are projected at \$1,788,024. KNCSB will send 32.25 percent to the national Cooperative Program, an increase of .25 percent from the 1990 budget.

Resolutions approved by messengers focused on moral issues affecting the family, support for the Cooperative Program, a call for prayer for troops in the Middle East, and a renewed pledge to cooperate with Southern Baptist boards, agencies, and insitutions.

Reighard and Pollard named chairs for Crossover Atlanta

ATLANTA — Dwight "Ike" Reighard and Frank Pollard have been named co-chairmen of Crossover Atlanta, an evangelistic effort in Atlanta prior to the 1991 Southern Baptist Convention. The two pastors were appointed by SBC President Morris Chapman, pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas. Their role will be to enlist churches from across the nation to become partners with Atlanta-area churches in the pre-convention evangelistic blitz.

Reighard is pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga., and served as chairman of the committee on order of business at last year's annual meeting. Pollard is pastor of First Church, Jackson, Miss.

In an address to the SBC Executive Committee in September, Chapman had proposed a program called Crossover America to evangelize the nation's cities. Chapman said he hopes Crossover Atlanta will be the first of many programs under the banner of Crossover America. The idea of "crossover" is to place Southern Baptists from all parts of the nation in evangelism projects in key cities, he said.

Crossover Atlanta will be a convention-wide project managed by the Home Mission Board's evangelism section.