

# Baptist and Reflector

VOL. 157/NO. 12/MARCH 20, 1991

STATEWIDE EDITION

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

## PraiSing II music unveils new hymnal for Southern Baptists

By Charles Willis

NASHVILLE (BP) — Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House was temporarily transformed into a cathedral as the words and music of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" filled the hall March 14 to start the unveiling of The Baptist Hymnal.

About 7500 Southern Baptists and guests from across the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Japan, Canada, Guam, and Puerto Rico attended two identical evening sessions concluding PraiSing II. The four-day music and worship celebration marked the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's centennial year, the church music department's 50th anniversary, and the hymnal's publication.

Congregational singing from souvenir editions of the hymnal was led by Wesley L. Forbis, hymnal editor and director of the board's church music department, and joined by singing groups from 17 states, The Centurymen, and an orchestra.

Southern Baptist Convention President Morris Chapman, pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, and member of the hymnal committee since its formation in 1987, was presented a copy of the hymnal.

W. Hines Sims, editor of Baptist Hymnal, 1956 edition, and Mark Edwards, president of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, also received presentation copies. William J. Reynolds, editor of Baptist Hymnal, 1975 edition, had planned to attend, but was recovering from knee surgery.

Gary Cook, vice president for church programs and services at the board, noted that the Ryman Auditorium, the first home of the Grand Ole Opry, had originally been a church. "This week, the Grand Ole Opry House has become a cathedral," he said.

Earlier in the week, PraiSing participants heard a concert dedicated to the memories of Oklahomans James D. Woodward, Paul and Judy Magar, and Mary June Tabor who were killed in a Jan. 14 airplane crash. The concert was given by the 216 musicians in the Oklahoma Singing Churchwomen and Singing Churchmen groups. Woodward, director of the Churchmen since its founding in 1961, had planned the concert to celebrate the new hymnal.

Southern Baptist entertainer Jerry Clower, widely known for his association with the Grand Ole Opry, said his musical heritage began with the



**AND CHILDREN TOO** — Two Baptist families sing during the final PraiSing II program March 14. From left, Pam Wilson with children Natalie and Marcus, First Church, Mexia, Texas; and Tony and Terri Wood of Westwood Church, Nashville, with Meredith and Leslie.

Broadman Hymnal published in 1940 and continues with the new hymnal "that is gonna give us a new enthusiasm and a new direction to stamp out negativism."

Clower said he believes Southern Baptists who are not choir members should "open the hymnbook and try to sing; listen to the words."

Soloists Karla Worley, Cynthia Clawson, Henrietta Davis, and David

Ford, along with choirs from Southern Baptist churches, seminaries, and colleges presented a wide range of musical styles from the new hymnal throughout the week.

Clawson said hymns have remained in the forefront of Southern Baptist worship because they provide classic lyrics easy to understand without "vain repetition. Hymns were the way (see PraiSing II, page 5)

## MissionsFest Tennessee scheduled April 26 at Carson-Newman

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

Last October the Tennessee Baptist Convention joined forces with the Foreign Mission Board to produce a foreign missions extravaganza in Memphis, MissionsFest Tennessee.

On the weekend of April 26-28, the two combine efforts again to give Ten-

nessee Baptists a second MissionsFest Tennessee "experience" at Carson-Newman College, and First Church, Jefferson City.

The three-day event is not a rerun, but a program filled with missions experiences with 43 missionaries, including several Tennesseans, on hand.

Maurice and Laurie Graham will bring the message for the Friday night program. Missionaries will speak in area churches on Sunday morning.

For specific presentation times, scheduling, and additional information about MissionsFest Tennessee, call Jim Wilson at Carson-Newman College, (615) 475-9061 or Diane Jordan at First Church, Jefferson City, (615) 475-3826.

The program format will differ from the October missions program. It will be in the form of a passport — as participants move from MissionShop to MissionShop, their passports will be stamped. Leaders of the TBC and the FMB will speak. D. L. Lowrie, TBC executive director, will welcome the participants at 7:30 on Friday night in a "Celebration of Commitment" at First Church, Jefferson City, adjacent to the Carson-Newman campus.

Keith Parks, FMB president, will speak following Lowrie, and again Saturday morning and evening.

MissionShops, or conferences, are scheduled on Saturday at First Church, in five categories. Participants may choose from among:

Missionaries and Their Work: Country Conferences, the Family in Missions, Understanding Missions Overseas.

Missions and the World Today: New Directions in Missions, Country Conferences, Understanding Missions Overseas.

Missions in the Church: Being a



PARKS



KAMMERDIENER

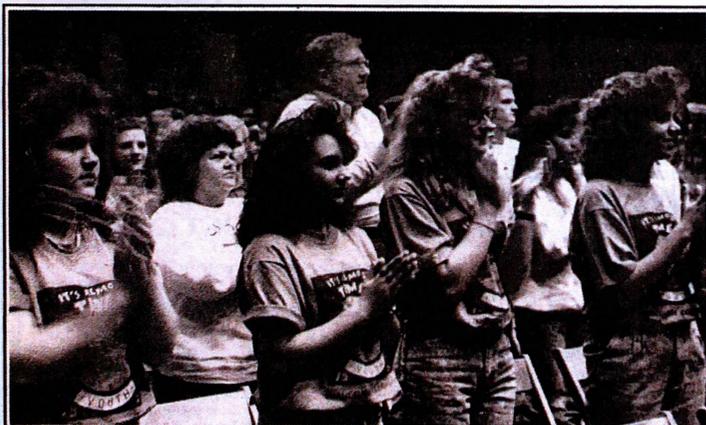


M. GRAHAM



L. GRAHAM

Great Commission Church, How to Have a Missions Fair in Your Church, A Logical Step En Route to Missions In- (see MissionsFest, page 5)



**JOINING 16,000** — Teens, from left, Tiana Clark, Jamie Newman, Lisa Williams, and Katherine Plemons, all of Parkburg Church, Pinson, clap to the beat of music at the Tennessee Youth Evangelism Conference. (See page 7) — Photo by Connie Davis

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### Medical team returns

Tennessee Baptists' first medical team to the Philippines returned home March 15.

The team treated about 8300 patients and there were approximately 1800 professions of faith.

Associate Editor Lonnie Wilkey traveled with the team. His reports on the trip will begin next week.

## Editorials

## New songs and old in a hymnal for Baptists

A significant event took place in Nashville last week, a happening of which all Southern Baptists can be proud.

PraiSing II, billed as "a jubilee celebration," brought joy to hearts of the thousands who came from Wyoming and Virginia, California and Massachusetts — and points between.

They came to dedicate and celebrate a new Baptist hymnal, a refined and expanded version of the 1975 edition published when Grady Cothen was Sunday School Board president, and William "Bill" Reynolds was Southern Baptists' music man and editor of the book. In 1975, PraiSing I gave proper sendoff to the new hymnal.

PraiSing II entertained and educated several thousand Baptists, who with their friends, took over Music City for four days. Participating choirs sang through every verse of every hymn in the new book — 2356 stanzas of 625 hymns. The marathon singing event took thirty hours. A few people endured through it all — from beginning to end.

There were concerts and performances, soloists and choirs, handbells and horns, nationally known singers and entertainers, state singing groups and seminarians.

Wesley Forbis is the "music man" of this decade and editor of the 1991 hymnal. Some have called it a hymnal for all Baptists.

The "Jubilation Celebration" featured artists such as Jerry Clower, Karla Worley, Max Lyall, Ragan Courtney, Cynthia Clawson, Buryl Red, Henrietta Davis, and many more.

But the real stars were the people who put together the hymnal as well as the smashing week

of singing and praising — the singers and performers from the churches, and the people who came to hear excellence and to give their best in listening and participating.

Music programs were presented at Nashville's area churches with persistent quality and dedication.

The book itself left out some hymns that made the 1975 edition a favorite. But those which were omitted were replaced by hymns which the editing group felt to be expressive in worship and praise and doctrinally Baptist. That is not to say the 1975 book did not possess the same attributes. But as times change along with the calendar, new music comes to the fore — and some old and forgotten hymns are rediscovered.

Wes Forbis was right when he said of the new hymnal, "We have some old texts with new tunes and some new texts with old tunes." And there are some old hymns with words and music that are unfamiliar to Southern Baptists.

The committee has made good selections.

On Thursday night, end of PraiSing II, as we listened to a great choir and orchestra, assisted by an appreciative audience, the music sung in churches of East, West, and Middle Tennessee caught our attention.

Without doubt, the new hymnal should fit well into the prayer, preaching, praise, and other ministries of Tennessee Baptist churches.

While songs such as "Do You Really Care?" and "It Only Takes a Spark" were left out, the selection committee included newcomers (but old hymns) such as "We Are God's People." That one,

some sixty years old, talks about the Lord willing us to be "a family diverse yet truly one" and giving our gifts to God.

One sung on Thursday night is "The Servant Song," from Australia, a sacred harp tune with words from our day. It sings about Christians being on earth to help each other, and being servants to each other.

"All Day Long" is an African folk hymn which expounds on the glory of walking and talking with Jesus "all day long." "This Is the Threefold Truth" reminds us that "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again."

Each hymn has a Scripture verse with the title, putting solid foundation on words and meaning. It is a good hymn book. Baptists should enjoy it. It is enough different to make it new — and enough like all our hymnals to keep the good and familiar old Baptist hymns as messengers for these days too.

No doubt there were some disagreements as the Baptist hymnal was being planned, put together, edited, and published. But it is significant for Baptists that any differences were minor — and settled in committees.

Our Baptist Hymnal has come to us without damaging our faith in each other, and without trying to inflict new language and concepts on us. We can be thankful that we have not paraded before the world any attempts to be like the world. Media presentations of Southern Baptists in this potentially divisive work has been laudatory.

We are yet a people who love to tell The Story!  
— WFA

## Seminary must be rescued from tenuous situation

The six Southern Baptist theological seminaries are under scrutiny, especially since the decade of the 1970's.

Since 1979 when the Southern Baptist Convention began a definitive swing toward a more conservative mood, the seminaries have been under fire, some more than others.

Most attention has been given to Southwestern, Southern, and Southeastern, as "conservatives" gained control of boards and committees.

In 1987 President Randall Lolley and several of his administrative staff resigned at Southeastern. The faculty has opposed leadership of the "conservative" board and the administration headed by President Lewis Drummond, mainly because of changes made in the process of electing faculty.

In their March 11-12 meeting, Southeastern trustees were told by Drummond that the ongoing study of Southeastern by two accrediting agencies had led him to some alarming conclusions.

He said the approach of the past was "right for

its day," and admitted little progress has been made on accreditation problems. Also he said the seminary's funding base is in serious condition. The seminary has not satisfied the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SCATS).

One trustee admitted that the seminary probably would be put on probation in May, and accused the faculty of blackmail and obstinacy.

A thorough account of the meeting, released by Baptist Press, is carried in this issue of the Baptist and Reflector.

The seminary is on "warning" status and could lose its accreditation as a theological seminary with high standards of the same agencies that accredit all our seminaries.

At the trustees' meeting, a lawsuit against ATS and SCATS was discussed, but dismissed. Such action would be devastating to the reputation of Southeastern and the Southern Baptist Convention. It also is ludicrous to consider forming an SBC ac-

crediting agency.

We cannot discuss here all arguments of each side of each issue, but we can make observations. The main issue clouding the seminary's accreditation apparently is the method of acquiring faculty members. The faculty believes it has been excluded from the process. The trustees believe they have the seminary moving on proper course.

Southeastern is in a serious position. With trustees and faculty at a stalemate, its credibility is at stake. Something must be done to rescue the seminary so it can effectively train and educate Southern Baptist students.

Boards of trust are elected by the convention to guide agencies and institutions in their purpose and operation. Logically this is the group that can determine Southeastern's future.

It may be trite to say, but administration, faculty, and trustees had better put together a solution that will save Southeastern. Time is short, and Southern Baptists want their seminary saved. — WFA

## Court agrees to hear FMB suit

RICHMOND (BP) — The Virginia Supreme Court has agreed to hear the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's appeal of a \$1.56 million judgment against it in a lawsuit brought by a former missionary to Africa.

The court also agreed to hear the former missionary's appeal of negligent breach of contract charges against the board that were dismissed prior to the July 1990 trial of her lawsuit in Richmond Circuit Court.

The former missionary, Diana Sue Wade, originally sought \$141 million from the Foreign Mission Board when she filed suit in behalf of her four children in April 1988 in Virginia, where the board is headquartered. Claims amounting to \$100 million of the \$141 million later were dismissed. At the conclusion of last July's five-day trial, a jury awarded the four children \$1.56 million in damages.

Wade filed her own lawsuit last

November seeking an additional \$5 million in damages from the board. The trial in that suit is scheduled to begin Aug. 12 in Richmond Circuit Court.

Wade has contended she and her children, now ages 18 to 23, suffered trauma because board officials learned her then-husband, G. Thomas Wade Jr., was sexually abusing their oldest daughter but did not disclose it to Wade. She contended her husband continued to abuse the daughter as well as two other daughters.

During last year's trial, Foreign Mission Board attorney Lewis T. Booker of Richmond argued board officials who handled the family's case acted reasonably under the circumstances.

The Wades were missionaries in Kenya and Botswana from 1976 until their departure from Africa in 1984. Wade, 41, and her children now live in Anchorage, Alaska.



TENNESSEE APRIL 26-28, 1991

Carson-Newman College and  
First Baptist Church, Jefferson City

## Baptist and Reflector

Newsjournal of Tennessee Baptist Convention  
Established in 1835

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Lonnie Wilkey, Associate Editor  
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Baptist and Reflector is published weekly except Christmas week by the Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn. 37027. Subscription prices: \$7.50 individual; clubs of ten or more, \$7.25; church budget plan, \$6.50 when sent to 50 percent or more of church homes. Second class postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780).

Space forbids printing of resolutions, obituaries, and poetry. Advertising rates on request.

Baptist and Reflector holds membership with Baptist Press (BP) news service of the Southern Baptist Convention. Telephone: (615) 371-2003.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Baptist and Reflector, P. O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024.

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## SEBTS trustees hear concerns about accreditation, finances

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Growing concerns from administrative officials were heard by trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary March 11-12, especially in matters of accreditation, enrollment, faculty, finances, and institutional confidence.

President Lewis A. Drummond, in an opening report, asked trustees for a "new approach."

"What I ask of you is to realize that the approach of the past was right for its day. Our situation, however, has changed. We have made little progress on accreditation issues, we are still perceived with suspicion, and our funding base has clearly reached a serious point.

"Nothing is more important than our theological and financial integrity. These are my responsibilities as president and I intend to resolve these concerns," Drummond read from a prepared statement which he later distributed to the group.

Southeastern Seminary was accredited by Association of Theological Schools in 1958 and by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1978. However both agencies have made probing visits to the campus since the resignation of President W. Randall Lolley in 1987.

The seminary is currently on "warning" status. Trustees seemed to expect it will be put on probation or completely lose its accreditation in 1991.

Robert D. Crowley, Rockville, Md., pastor and chairman of the instruction committee, accused the faculty of lackmud, of being obstinate, and of befuscling the issue and blocking steps taken in trying to preserve the accreditation of the seminary.

"It finally occurred to me that we're going to be put on probation in May. That is not totally inevitable, but from all that I can hear and learn, that probably going to happen. And if we

really don't keep . . . if the payments of blackmail don't really get much bigger, we might even go to the guillotine and get our heads cut off," said Crowley, past chairman of the full board.

The question of accreditation has been raised because of the procedure for acquiring faculty members. Some faculty claim they have been cut out of the process — often called shared governance — while the majority of the trustees claim they have been faithful to the requirements of the guiding documents of the seminary.

One motion, made by Kenneth L. Stevens, trustee from Michigan, called for legal counsel to ascertain the rights of the trustees. His motion failed by one vote. Earlier he had moved to seek legal action against ATS and/or SACS if they lifted accreditation.

Drummond and Academic Dean L. Russ Bush III advised against such action and the motion was modified to the extent that no legal action will be considered.

A special committee of Daniel E. Johnston, trustee from Virginia, William D. Delahoyde, from North Carolina, and Crowley will draft statements of ATS and SACS giving the trustees' perspective.

Upon recommendation from the board's executive committee, the trustees authorized the chairman to appoint a committee to deal with the decline in enrollment and the financial crisis if accreditation is lost. Chairman Roger W. Ellsworth, Illinois trustee, will report to the SBC Executive Committee the consequences of the loss of accreditation or probation.

Texas trustee James R. Deloach, former chairman of the board, said he "wanted more than a report" to the SBC Executive Committee.

"This thing is greater than Southeastern Seminary; it affects all Southern Baptists," Deloach said.

He offered a successful substitute motion which called for, if accreditation is lost:

- Withdrawal of all financial support from ATS and SACS.

- Request to all other SBC seminaries to withdraw support from ATS and SACS.

- Request to the SBC Executive Committee to look into an accrediting agency for Southern Baptist institutions.

Paul Fletcher, vice president for internal affairs, reported the seminary "is facing financial exigency in the reasonable immediate future. . . . We need to solve what I perceive as a reduction of financial resources — beginning perhaps as early as this year. In my opinion, we are at a crossroads. We must develop a plan now or deal with a more formidable financial crisis later."

The SBC Executive Committee has a special committee studying the allocation of funds for the seminaries and Drummond promised the trustees that "I intend to lobby for a system of fund-

ing that is not enrollment driven."

George Worrrell, vice president for external affairs which involves endowment and recruitment of students, told trustees there are three hindrances to a greater enrollment of students:

- Students passing the seminary by because of "the suspicion that we have not yet become as "conservative" as they would like for us to be."

- The retention of students is difficult. About 61 students did not return in the fall semester and 95 did not return in the spring.

- A great number of alumni and others have been detractors of admissions. "According to them, the seminary is not now what it was when they were attending. 'The Glory has departed.'"

Worrrell said applications were up about 50 percent from the fall of 1989. New student enrollment was up 28 percent over 1989. For the spring 1991, new student enrollment is up ten percent from spring 1990. However, overall enrollment is down 2.5 percent.

## Medical supplies sent to Peru

DALLAS (BP) — Working in cooperation with the Texas Baptist Men organization and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas is sending more than a half million dollars worth of donated medical supplies to Peru to treat victims of a cholera epidemic.

According to Ken Bowie, disaster relief coordinator for Southern Baptist missionaries in Peru, there have been more than 60,000 reported cases of cholera nationwide by March 8. About 600 new cases are being reported in Lima daily.

Luke Smith, a Southern Baptist missionary originally from Sweetwater, Texas, said there have been 1483 cases

of cholera in Cajamarca, where he works. There have been 960 hospitalized and 62 deaths due to cholera reported there, but the ministry of health estimates the reported figure is only about one-third of the actual deaths.

The shipment from Baylor is in addition to individual contributions secured by Danny Shaver, a ham radio operator and layman at Calvary Church, Pilot Point, Texas.

Working with Texas Baptist Men, Shaver sent about 40 cases of medical supplies on March 1. He sent a second shipment of 53 boxes — about 1000 pounds of I-V supplies and tetracycline tablets by air on March 8.

## Baptist Fellowship committee formulates organizational plans

By William Neal and R. Albert Mohler Jr.

ATLANTA (BP) — The Baptist Fellowship, to this point a coalition of moderate Southern Baptists, is making plans to solidify its organization by incorporating as a legal entity, establishing a commissioning agency for world missions, and developing a permanent Coordinating Council to replace its interim Steering Committee.

That steering committee, meeting in Atlanta March 7-9, announced what termed "significant decisions" for the future of The Fellowship. Committee members agreed on a statement of purpose, a proposed constitution and bylaws, a system of representation for a permanent council, and a working document that outlines the rationale for a proposed Missions Center.

"Our intention is not to start a new convention," said Daniel Vestal, Atlanta pastor who is chairman of the steering committee. "That is not our deliberate intention but I'm not going to be naive or dishonest and say that is not a possibility. But I do see a new association of Baptists that at this point is existing within the Southern Baptist Convention. What will happen in the future, only God knows."

When "moderates" met in Atlanta last August for their first convocation, they elected the 70 members of the in-

terim steering committee and approved an alternative missions funding program, the Baptist Cooperative Missions Program, Inc.

That fund accepts contributions from churches and individuals and distributes them to Baptist causes according to the contributor's directions. The process bypasses the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, which normally receives and disperses the national portion of Cooperative Program gifts. The plan, in effect, allows "moderates" to support selected SBC causes without contributing to programs or agencies with which they are in disagreement. In most cases the state conventions have continued to receive money from those churches through designated gifts.

According to printed material released by The Fellowship, about 125 churches have contributed about \$1 million to the Baptist Cooperative Missions Program to date. One official of the group projected the program would receive between \$4 and \$5 million during 1991. Most of that money has ended up going to SBC and state convention causes normally funded through the Cooperative Program. Under The Fellowship's new budget, some of that money is expected to go to support the proposed Missions Center and other expenses of The Fellowship.

All recommendations approved last

week by the steering committee are subject to approval by the convocation meeting May 9-11 at The Omni in Atlanta. Last year's meeting drew about 3000. About 10,000 are expected in May.

The Missions Center task force report said the proposed center is designed to equip "individuals and churches for involvement in the world mission of the church" and to "link or match individuals and congregations with needs and opportunities not being met by others." There was no clarification of what those needs might be.

Although plans for this Missions Center were vague as presented last week, the Missions Center task force is to provide specific recommendations for missions projects to the convocation in May. Officers of the steering committee were authorized to seek out an executive director for the Missions Center.

Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said he was "profoundly disappointed" The Fellowship proposed to establish a commissioning agency. "I see this as yet another issue that is divisive and will further kindle distrust in the Southern Baptist Convention."

Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks said he was not surprised The Fellowship has focused on mis-

sions, "since time and time again we have stated that missions is who we are as Southern Baptists." He also said he saw the proposed center in direct competition with the FMB though he said that step was "not unprecedented," citing large SBC churches which support and send out non-FMB missionaries. Parks said the move indicated "continued fragmentation" in the denomination.

However, "though the tendency will be to place the blame for this in one direction, it must be placed in two directions," Parks said. "I really wish that those who are in elected leadership in the SBC would reach out to be more inclusive to draw this group back in." He suggested the proposed center was the "inevitable result" of the denominational controversy.

Officials at Woman's Missionary Union responded with shock and surprise at the proposal the WMU be invited to participate with The Fellowship's Mission Center. "I do not know how to respond to this," said WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien. "We have had no contact with The Fellowship or with any individual" concerning the issue, she said.

Concerning the possibility of WMU involvement in the proposed center, O'Brien said it would have to be an "organizational decision."

## Phillips named vice chairman

## Campaign for 15,000 churches launched

ATLANTA (BP) — A campaign to start 15,000 Southern Baptist congregations in the next 10 years was launched by trustees of the Home Mission Board during their spring meeting.

In other action, trustees approved a nationwide "Key Church" concept, voted to phase out the positions for local board members, allocated additional funds from last year's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, elected officers, and approved minor restructuring for the Atlanta staff, including the addition of four new positions.

The "15,000 Campaign" was suggested by HMB President Larry Lewis and unanimously approved by trustees. It calls for a special emphasis on church starting, with a goal of starting 1,500 new congregations every year for ten years.

If successful, the campaign would assure that Southern Baptists meet their Bold Mission Thrust goal of having 50,000 churches and missions by the year 2000. Currently there are 43,419 churches and missions affiliated with the convention.

Lewis said reaching this goal will require Southern Baptists to start an average of four congregations per day nationwide. The current average of SBC church starts is slightly more than three per day.

Lewis compared the 15,000 Campaign to the 30,000 Movement executed by Southern Baptists in the 1950s.

"The 30,000 Movement caught the imagination of Southern Baptists and

## Language training moved to fall

The Regional Language Leadership Conference scheduled for April 12-13 at Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, by the Tennessee Baptist Convention Missions Department has been canceled.

Terry Sharp, new Missions Department associate, Tennessee Baptist Convention, announced a State Language Pastor/Leadership Conference will be held Oct. 11-12 in middle Tennessee.

challenged the whole denomination to respond to the need to establish new missions and churches," he said. "I believe the 15,000 Campaign could rally the same kind of excitement and enthusiasm among our people."

The Key Church concept is similar to a program developed by the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Details of implementing a nationwide key church emphasis were presented to state mission directors and state church extension directors during their annual meeting in February.

The strategy calls for enlisting key churches across America which will commit to start five new congregations per year. In many of these churches a staff person, sometimes to be called a minister of missions, would direct the project. Some of these staff positions would be funded jointly by the church, association, state convention, and HMB.

"My goal is for every great metropolitan area in America to have at least one and maybe several key churches," Lewis told trustees. "I believe this may prove to be one of our most effective strategies in evangelizing and congregationalizing America."

Trustees also dealt with a request from the SBC Executive Committee for a decision on continuing or deleting the role of local trustees. Local trustees were placed on all SBC boards at a time when travel to meetings was less convenient.

The HMB has had 12 local members. Four of those members completed the second of two possible four-year terms on the board with this meeting.

The original recommendation from the board's administrative committee was to eliminate local member positions as the remaining local trustees complete their current four-year terms. Trustee Marvin Capehart of Albuquerque, N.M., amended the motion to allow current local trustees to serve the full eight-year terms they anticipated when elected.

The motion passed as amended,

meaning the last of the HMB local trustees will complete their service in 1998 if renominated by the SBC Committee on Nominations. This change in the HMB's articles of incorporation must be approved by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

Trustees also voted to increase the HMB's 1991 budget by \$1.7 million, bringing the total annual budget to \$80.6 million. Primary funding for this increase will come from an average in 1990 Annie Armstrong gifts and from monies budgeted last year for projects that were delayed being implemented until this year.

New officers elected are Johnny Jackson, a vocational evangelist from Little Rock, Ark., chairman; Ron Phillips, pastor of Central Church in Hixson, first vice chairman; Bob Curtis, pastor of Ballwin Church in St. Louis, second vice chairman; Alice Sanders, member of First Church in Bamberg, S.C., secretary; and Linda Principe, member of First Church in Brandenburg, Ky., assistant secretary.

In other action, trustees:

- Elected James Smith to a new position as assistant to the president for partnership relations. Smith, who will retire this summer as president of the Brotherhood Commission, will be a Mission Service Corps volunteer but will receive a travel allowance from the HMB. His duties will include promoting partnership relations between associations, state conventions, and churches.

- Created a position of associate director of evangelism church growth to address the issue of plateaued and declining churches.

- Authorized the HMB executive committee to create a position for a director of planned giving.

- Created a new position for a director of editing services and elected Mary Branson, currently HMB materials editor, to that post.

## SSB, HMB appreciate long relationship

ATLANTA (BP) — In an exchange of plaques, presidents of two Southern Baptist Convention agencies expressed appreciation for more than 100 years of shared ministry.

Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, presented the J. B. Lawrence award to Lloyd Elder, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Elder, speaking during a chapel service for HMB employees, presented Lewis with a centennial award for the HMB's support of the Sunday School Board during its early publishing ministry.

"In every way, Lloyd Elder has been supportive of us as an agency and of me as a colleague. I couldn't have wanted for a more cooperative spirit," Lewis added.

"Larry Lewis is a Sunday School man to the core, and I revel in that," Elder said. "He's committed to the growth of the local church and reaching the lost."

The J. B. Lawrence award is named for the former HMB president who coined the phrase, "Trust the Lord and tell the people." Lewis said the award "stands for integrity in service and distinguished Christian commitment."

The Home Mission Board, then called the Domestic Mission Board, started with the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, Elder noted. Two seminary professors began the Sunday School Board in 1863, but 10 years later it consolidated into the work of the Domestic Mission Board.

Issac Tichenor, then president of the Home Mission Board, shared his dream of the convention having its own publishing house with J. M. Frost. Their dream became a reality in 1891 when the SBC approved creation of a new Sunday School Board.

The centennial plaque recognizes the HMB's early and continued support of the Sunday School Board, Elder said.

The two agencies "work together to start churches and disciple believers," Elder said. "That's not theory; that's shoe leather."

## Our Readers Write

## Doctrine study vital

I was delighted to read in our Baptist and Reflector that a Baptist Doctrine Study is being promoted in our churches. This will mean so much to new converts and I speak from my own experience.

When I was converted years ago at the age of 13, I was so excited to know Jesus as my Savior after having only known about Him, that I was thirsty for knowledge. I was curious as to why some of my childhood friends went to other denominations. I knew all of us were Christians, but — what was our difference? Was I in the right denomination?

I went to my father with my questions and he told me to ask the chairman of our deacons, Mr. Roy Myers, at Eastland Baptist Church (later president of Carson-Newman College). I went to Mr. Myers with my questions on Sunday night and he told me to let him think about this and he would get back to me Wednesday night. On Wednesday night Mr. Myers announced that, beginning the next Wednesday night, he was starting a Study Course for all new Christians on the book, "What Baptists Believe."

He was an excellent teacher, explain-

ing our doctrine and giving us the substantiating Scriptures. At the end of that course I knew, for a certainty, Baptist doctrine was my belief and today, at 82 years old, I'm still sure I'm a Baptist Christian.

How many Christians, today, are in our Baptist churches not really knowing what or why we believe as we do and will welcome these studies and be stronger Christians and church members.

Mrs. V. L. Culp  
1400 Kenesaw Ave. 23-A  
Knoxville 37919

## The English Bible

Mr. John Counts' letter in the Feb. 27 issue made reference to the King James Version of the Bible.

The King James "Version" of the Holy Bible, is in fact, a "translation." The King James Version was not the first translation of the Bible.

Between 1400 and 1611, there were at least ten major English translations. While some were translated from the original Greek, Latin, Aramaic, and Hebrew texts, some were translated from prior English translations. Among the most important translations before

the KJV were: Wycliffe Bible, 1400; Gutenberg Bible, 1456; Tyndale Bible, 1536; Cloverdale Bible, 1539; and Geneva Bible, 1560.

In 1603, King James of England commissioned a translation of the entire Bible into English. He gathered 54 great Bible scholars. The translation was first available in 1611. It is estimated, of the original text in the 1611 version, only 39 percent was unique to it alone.

It is a translation and isn't immune from errors and mistranslation. The 1613 printing showed 300 differences from the original 1611 printing. By 1760, it contained 30,000 new references and changes.

I strongly believe that all Scripture was given to man by divine inspiration from God Himself. It was written down by man in the language of the day. The language of the day was not 17th Century English that is used in the King James Version. The language that Jesus spoke and taught in was Aramaic.

I believe there are many good, and accurate, translations today that can help us better understand the Word of God. But our Bible; the Leather, cloth, or paper pages of printing, that have been compiled and assimilated by human

hands, is not in itself, Holy! But God's Word is! His Word cannot be destroyed like the paper pages of a Bible. His Word will endure forever.

David Newell  
10280-A Dayton Pike  
Soddy-Daisy 37379

## About the Bible

Two recent writers have said that God wrote the King James Bible. I had thought that the only writing God had done was when He wrote on the tablets of stone and on the wall.

If we are so shallow in our faith so that we can't read other Bibles, we are in deep trouble.

I also object to the (SBC Executive Committee's) lowering of retirement age from 60 to 58 while most of the givers have to labor until they are 65.

John Kitts  
Rt. 10, Box 255  
Powell 37849

• Action of the SBC Executive Committee last month in lowering employment retirement age meant only that the employee was eligible to receive his retirement portion. Other benefits such as insurance were not included. — Editor

# MissionsFest Tennessee scheduled April 26 at . . .

(Continued from page 1)  
 volvement (media libraries), Praying for Missions and Missionaries.

**Is God Calling You?:** Alternative International Service Corps Opportunities; Exploring Career and Associate Missionary Service; How to Be Involved in Missions Overseas, Short-Term Volunteer Missions.

**I Want to Experience Foreign Missions:** Changing Your World (high school youth only); Exploring the World 101 (high school and college youth); Global Walkaround; Film Festival.

Each area of the five MissionShops conferences will be led by a foreign missionary. They are scheduled so that each participant will have opportunity to attend more than one.

Activities are planned for children in grades one through six, called "Missions Can Be Fun." They will be held in the college gymnasium on Saturday 9 a.m. through 11:30, and continuing 1 p.m. through 5.

Registration will be taken from 4:30 through 7 p.m. Friday in the college gym and the foyer of First Church.

A Global Walkaround is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. in the college gym. The

video theatre (First Church) will present three missions videos as part of the walkaround.

High school youth will have a pizza party in the college gym at 5:00, followed by a youth conference on "Changing Your World."

A "Celebration of Commitment" in First Church's sanctuary gets underway at 7:30 p.m. Friday with music, missionary testimonies, intercessory prayer, a message and commitment. The flag processional will highlight the program.

College and youth students will participate in an ice cream "Missions Feast" on the college campus at 9:30 p.m.

The Saturday night program begins at 7:00. Missionaries will be presented prior to a joint covenant of commitment and dedication. Parks' closing message will be followed by a period of commitment.

Musicians and choirs come from area churches. Missionaries and Foreign Mission Board staff will speak in nearby churches on Sunday.

Missionaries participating in MissionsFest Tennessee April 26-28 include:

Europe, Middle East, and North Africa: Tom and Phyllis Baker, Laura Dallas, Chuck Fisher, and Charles and Carolyn Warford;

Middle East and North Africa: Harold and Dot Blankenship, Maurice and Laurie Graham, Edna Lindholm, James and Betty Smith;

Asia: John Conrad, Don and Joyce Heiss, James and Corinne Hollis, David and Kathy Weng;

Southern Asia and Pacific: Shelby Castlen;

The Americas: Kathy Brown, Burley and Ulene Cader, Bob and Ronnie Erwin, Virginia Oliver, Mack and Audrey



J. GIBSON



H. GIBSON



D. HEISS



J. HEISS

Shults;

**Middle America and Canada:** David and Joyce Harms, Stephen and Barbara Manuel;

**Africa, East and Southern:** Frank Baker, James and Harriett Gibson, James Musen;

**West Africa:** Bradley and Carolyn Brown; Don and Patsy Meier; Richard and Jeannette Smith, Moli.

Twenty-three FMB staff members, led by President Parks, will help foreign missionaries and participants to validate foreign missions with "hands-on" experience and conversations during the weekend.

According to Tennessee Baptist and FMB leaders in producing the program, there will "be something for everyone almost all of the time."

Missionaries involved in MissionsFest Tennessee with Tennessee **From Knoxville**

ties include:

Keith Parks, FMB president, native of Memphis; Mrs. Burley Cader, grew up near Cleveland and Carson-Newman College graduate, emeritus from Brazil; Maurice Graham, native of Shelbyville, Belmont College graduate, Liberia and Kuwait; Donald and Joyce Heiss, graduates of Carson-Newman, Japan;

James Gibson, native of Toone, Memphis State University graduate, former businessman in Memphis and Collierville, Tanzania; Harriett Gibson, native of Memphis, nurse in two Memphis hospitals, Tanzania;

Robert Erwin, hometown Knoxville, University of Tennessee graduate, Brazil; Kathryn Sneed Brown, native of Columbia, attended Columbia State Community College, French Guiana.

## Mid-Tennessee ministers schedule first meeting

The Mid-Tennessee Ministers' Fellowship meets March 28 at 11 a.m. at Belmont Heights Church, Nashville. It is the group's first meeting of the year.

James White, Church Administration Department of the Sunday School Board, is the speaker. Belmont College will host the group for lunch.

Randy Sledge, pastor of Riverdale Chapel, Murfreesboro, is president of the Fellowship.

## One Word More

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Two misplaced, or rather "out of place" children, were discovered this week. They came to my attention from very different locations. One I had known something about and she had been the subject of my prayers.

On March 13 a Nashville daily carried a story about "Little Miss 1565." Missing for 47 years, the body of the little girl was finally located and identified. She was the victim of a circus fire in Hartford, Connecticut.

She had died along with 167 others in the fire back in 1944. The mother was badly burned and a brother also died.

The family failed to identify the body of "Little Miss 1565" so she was buried with a marker bearing that quaint identification.

A persistent fire investigator, haunted by the photograph of the little body, doggedly worked on the case for the past nine years. He was determined to connect the proper name with "Little Miss 1565."

A surviving brother agreed with the investigating officer that she indeed was his sister. The mother also identified her from a photograph taken soon after the fire — she had suffocated.

On the day I read the poignant story about Eleanor Cook, I heard another amazing bit of news on the radio. A little girl, missing from her home in

Cleveland, Tennessee for two years, had been found.

Betty and I several years ago accepted a responsibility from the Lord to pray for missing children. We began collecting the names from the cards distributed with groceries and through advertisements in the mail. We have now about 75 for whom we pray daily — by name and photograph.

The little girl, almost six, was one who had been found — and restored to her family. Kelli Barr has come home! Eleanor Cook has been identified — and her family can rest.

We Christians need to develop for living lost people the concern displayed by the fire inspector, a persistence that will not be satisfied until they have met the Savior.

And we need to develop the prayer power that will link lost "children" with their loving father. I am happy, even joyful, that Kelli Barr has come home — and I am thanking the Lord that a caring inspector could not rest until he could tell a family that Eleanor Cook had already gone to her heavenly Father.



ALLEN

## Taylor selected 'student of the year'

KNOXVILLE (BP) — Arden Taylor knows connections, and now he sees how several events connected to result in his being named student of the year by the Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute.

Taylor was working as an electrician and part-time minister of youth four years ago when he felt called into full-time ministry. He knew he needed more education for his new role, but plans to attend seminary did not work out. Then another staff member at his church told him about the correspondence courses available from Seminary Extension. He began his first course in late 1986.

Four years and sixteen courses later he received the diploma in educational ministries. As a Southern Baptist engaged in an organized ministry, Taylor's diploma made him eligible for consideration as student of the year.

The staff of the Independent Study Institute selected Taylor from 18 finalists from 11 states. Jack Cunningham, Seminary Extension's director of undergraduate studies, presented the award at Chilhowee Hills Church in Knoxville where Taylor now is minister of education and

administration. Electrical connections are behind him now, but Arden Taylor still is plugged in to ministry and learning.

## Allen given dual role

Mary Allen, youth worker in the Discipleship Training Department for the Tennessee Baptist Convention is assuming added responsibilities as youth consultant for the Sunday School Department.

Allen will work with F. Greer Ruble and Johnnie Hall, department directors, in scheduling her work load for the two departments from April 1 through Oct. 31.

The Sunday School Department has been without a consultant in this area since the retirement of Lyn Brasfield in July of last year. This shared arrangement will help ease some budget limitations for the departments in that Allen's salary will be shared.

According to Allen, she will enlist workers and lead some conferences for Sunday School in addition to her work already scheduled for Discipleship Training. She will keep her office in the Discipleship Training Department.

## PraiSing II music unveils . . .

(Continued from page 1)  
 I learned theology."

Handbell ringers, brass instrumentalists, and full orchestras completed the musical offerings in daytime concerts and evening performances.

Rumiko Kikuchi, a student at Tokyo Baptist Theological Seminary, said, "Hymns help the people of Japan give response to God for the things He has given us. PraiSing II is a good opportunity for us to discover what to do with music in the future."

In a repeat feature, modeled after the original PraiSing which introduced the 1975 edition of the hymnal, church choirs and state singing groups par-

ticipated in a 30-hour, marathon sing-through-the-hymnal event at Two Rivers Baptist Church.

Jimmy McCaleb, a veteran bivocational music leader from Jackson, Miss., repeated his performance 16 years ago by sitting through the entire singthru of 2356 stanzas of all 625 hymns.

Hugh McElrath, professor of church music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., called the music of PraiSing II "a foretaste of heaven. We're going to be singing in heaven, so it's good to get some practice here below."

# Sunday Bible study may go outside walls: Piland

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP) — With Sunday School enrollment in Southern Baptist churches topping eight million in 1990, Harry Piland believes the time is right for churches to consider expanding their Sunday morning Bible study concept to include Bible study groups meeting away from the church building.

For 1990, the SBC Sunday School enrollment grew to 8,009,498, an increase of 73,483 or 0.9 percent over the 1989 total of 7,936,015.

"The mainline Sunday School is alive and well in Southern Baptist churches," said Piland, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Sunday School division. "Our opportunity is to build upon the mainline Sunday School by establishing Bible study groups away from the church to reach others."

Breakthrough — reaching large numbers of unchurched people with the Gospel — "really is possible," said Piland. "In spite of all the negative things in the world, I believe we're on the edge of breakthrough. People are looking for meaning in life. This is our great opportunity."

He cited First Church, Arlington, Texas, which is now conducting Sunday morning and evening Bible study groups in more than 100 apartment complexes in the Arlington area.

On the first Sunday in March, attendance in the Bible study groups meeting away from the church was 1476, while 1826 gathered at the church for Sunday School.

Tillie Burgin, who coordinates the Bible study groups, said it is vital that a church give strong emphasis to the ongoing Sunday School while also reaching out with Bible study and ministry to persons in the community.

"We take church to them," she said.

"Our groups don't have their own buildings, so the facilities may not be as nice. But we have the same message."

In another area, Piland said several states experienced turnarounds in enrollment in 1990. North Carolina registered a numerical enrollment gain of 6831 to a new total of 655,748 after four consecutive years of small decreases. North Carolina ranked fifth among state conventions in numerical gains behind Texas, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama.

Robert Stewart, director of the Sunday School department for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, said he believes one factor in the gain is an "increased awareness on the part of pastors that they have to be personally involved in planning and leading the Sunday School."

Sunday School leaders have a greater concern for training workers, and more and better training is available at the associational level through ASSISTeams, Stewart said. He also cited state convention leadership for making priority funds available to support Sunday School work and for stating the importance of strong Sunday Schools to the health of churches.

While enrollment is the basic standard for measuring Sunday School growth, Piland said he was encouraged that Sunday School average attendance increased by a higher percentage in 1990 than enrollment.

Average attendance grew from 3,802,216 in 1989 to 3,851,340 in 1990, for a gain of 49,214 or 1.3 percent. The 1990 attendance increase followed three years of attendance declines. Just over 48 percent of those enrolled in Sunday School attend on any given Sunday.

"If you're averaging close to 50 percent of your enrollment in attendance

each Sunday, you're probably touching about 80 percent of Sunday School members," said Piland.

"Expect a minimum of 50 percent attendance, but don't be satisfied with that," Piland urged. He said average attendance varies by regions of the country with attendance in the eastern United States generally slightly higher than in the West.

New York led all states with an average of 58.5 percent of members in attendance, followed by North Carolina (53.7) and West Virginia (52.8).

Churches can increase Sunday School attendance, not by gimmicks, but by training teachers to do a better job of preparation and applying Bible truths to life needs.

"If people gain insights from the Scripture study, apply the truths, and are involved in the session, attendance will increase," Piland said.

For the future, he urged churches to expand their vision for growth beyond their own facilities and traditional time frames.

## TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

I have been thinking about my conversation with Clell Whitaker last week. He is a deacon in a church in Somerset, Ky. He had stopped to help us when our car broke down on the interstate between Jellico and Careyville. We were grateful for his help.

When he discovered my relationship with Tennessee Baptists, he informed me of the purpose of his trip. He was on his way to the Baptist Book Store in Knoxville to get a copy of a book. He had a copy of the book he wanted in his car. I was delighted to see that it was a book Bill Harbin wrote while he was on our staff. It was written to help a church when it loses its pastor. Mr. Whitaker's church was without a pastor, and he was looking for help for the search committee.

Thank God for deacons who help

stranded preachers, and feel the need to get help for their church when they begin to look for a new pastor.

If Mr. Whitaker had been a deacon in a Tennessee church I would tell him about something to go along with the book. Aubrey Hay directs our Church-Ministers Relations Department and provides effective training for the pastor search committee. All you have to do is ask. He will probably give you a copy of Harbin's book as well. He will not find a pastor for you, but he will help you know how to find God's man for your church.

This department also befriends the pastors of our state. The department will never replace the Holy Spirit in placing pastors in the local church, but they will seek to be the instrument of the Holy Spirit in serving you.

You and I are sharing in a great work. I thank God for every member of this team.

By the way, we did get our car fixed after an eventful ride on a truck into LaFollette.



LOWRIE

# Black, white churches develop joint evangelism project

Allen Britton and Ronnie Mitchell often wondered why there is a distinction between black and white churches.

Individually they pondered for years the answers to that and similar questions. Isn't Christ all in all? Didn't Jesus say that His followers would be known by their love for each other? And don't we all want to reach the world for Christ?

The two men eventually became pastors in the Whitehaven community

of Memphis, identified as racially mixed and transitional.

Now their churches have joined in a pilot project of the Home Mission Board, trying a new way of doing evangelism in their area. According to Ronnie Mitchell, pastor of Graceland, the white Baptist church, "We are so excited that we would like to share the project with others. We already know it is going to be a blessing to both churches."

Through the friendship of the two

pastors, the pilot evangelism project was developed to begin to answer some consuming questions. Under the leadership of the pastors and staffs of the two churches, a project has been developed called "Outreach 91."

Outreach 91 is a cooperative effort between the two churches to survey and reach the entire Whitehaven community for Christ. There are approximately 20,000 residences in the Whitehaven community, and the churches plan to touch each residence with the Gospel before the project is completed.

A target area and date has been selected to begin the project and meetings are underway to prepare the 90 volunteers for the massive undertaking. The initial meeting involves a project overview, team assignments, team prayer, and fellowship.

The second meeting will be devoted totally to training for the April 13 survey. The two by two survey teams will be made up of a member from each church. The plan, according to the pastors, is to make a strong statement to the community that these two churches want to work together to change the world through the power of the Gospel.

In the survey, the teams will get information for further ministry, but they will also leave a packet of materials at each residence. The

packet will contain a New Testament provided by the Home Mission Board and a copy of the Baptist Faith and Message, a Gospel tract, church program brochures, and a needs survey to help each church develop ministries that will assist them in ministering more effectively to their community.

The churches agree that their primary interest is to let their community know that they genuinely care. Both churches believe in the future of the Whitehaven community. Survey information will be studied and distributed between the two churches according to the interest of the individual and the ability of the church to meet particular ministry needs.

Both pastors agree, "It is our desire to develop a model for other churches to follow in racially mixed communities. We realize that we do not have all the answers, and we are very realistic about the differences that exist, but we firmly believe that the love of God can overcome all differences. This thought is the foundation for our project."

Much of the "leg work" for the project is being done by the education ministers of the churches: Chris McNairy and Jim Palmer. "Each staff member and volunteer is committed to following the Lord's leadership in this unique evangelism project," says Mitchell.

## South Carolina's Rust will retire

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP) — Ray P. Rust, executive secretary-treasurer of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, announced his retirement plans effective Feb. 29, 1992.

Rust informed the convention's 85-member general board of his decision during their semi-annual meeting at White Oak Conference Center.

"With the development of our church growth emphasis that will be presented to the general board and later this year to the convention, we will have set our direction in programming for the next ten years," he said. "Our new office/resource center will be well under way and I will have completed ten years, to the day, as executive secretary."

Rust, who will be 66 in August, said

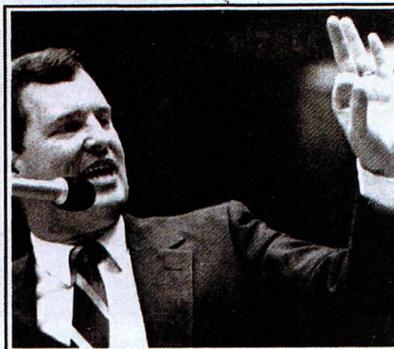
he wants to turn his attention to some matters of personal interest, including volunteer service on a church staff or short-term missionary service. He said he and his wife, Joy, will continue to live in Columbia.

A native of Shreveport, La., Rust assumed the position of executive secretary-treasurer March 1, 1982. Prior to that he was president of Anderson (S.C.) College for four years.

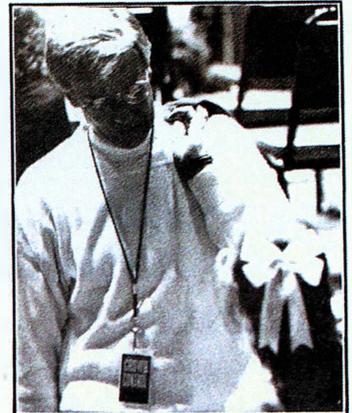
Edward M. Carney, pastor of Ashley River Baptist Church in Charleston, and president of the general board, said a search committee will be selected to recommend a replacement for Rust. The general board must recommend the candidate to the annual session of the convention in November.



**LEADING WORSHIP** — "These Three" members, from left, Becky Blackwell, Shane Parker, and Natalie Sumroll, sing as they lead the teens.



**SATURDAY SPEAKER** — Dean Finley makes a point.



**AFTER FRIDAY SESSION** — Rick Stanley visits with Linda Glisson, Leawood Church, Memphis.

**Largest Southern Baptist teen gathering**

# Thousands recommit their lives

By **Connie Davis**, assistant editor  
**NASHVILLE** — About 32,000 teens, many wearing T-shirts bearing the words "1991 Tennessee Youth Evangelism Conference" and slogans unique to their church group, converged last weekend on Nashville for the largest Southern Baptist gathering of teens.

Vans and buses bearing the names of Tennessee churches filled downtown streets and Vanderbilt University Friday and Saturday while teens attended back-to-back sessions at Vanderbilt Memorial Gymnasium. Each day's sessions were repeated because of the capacity of the gym.

Hundreds stood in the cavernous gym after accepting Christ and thousands stood to signify recommitment to God as both speakers emphasized the need for commitment among teens who are already Christians.

Evangelist Rick Stanley of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., contrasted conviction to convenience. Dean Finley called for "special forces" to combat the devil in the war for the lives of teenagers. Finley is from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board based in Atlanta, Ga.

Stanley, who is known because of his celebrity status as the step-brother of Elvis Presley, told the youth he had experienced drugs and fame, but "what moves me is Godliness and holiness."

Telling the story of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego, Stanley said they had "an attitude. When it came to the things of God, they would not give in," he said, noting they were opposing a whole nation.

"We've somehow gotten apologetic about Godliness and holiness because of peer pressure. It's nothing new folks."

He warned the youth they would face physical pressure if they stood by Christian convictions. He told of facing danger when some drunks harassed him and his family outside a hotel. Although he wanted to physically defend his family, he told them he was a Christian and he meant them no harm. Later the young men asked him for forgiveness, said Stanley.

Stanley criticized leaders who judge music by the terms, "If we don't like it, God can't use it." But he warned the youth if they're uncomfortable with

silence, they might be shutting out God.

"Being a Christian doesn't mean there's a Cadillac in every driveway and everything will be peachy keen. The problem with that is we're trying to make Jesus like us rather than us being like him."

Also, Christianity isn't "carrying a Bible as big as the New York City telephone book and saying turn or burn."

"I serve a Savior who wants to move into the heart of every teenager, every family . . . He wants to be there. He wants to be there."

"Life is hard," he said, noting in 1978 he lived in a trailer house, had only two speaking assignments, and had been shunned by family and friends for his convictions. "We can put a spiritual bandaid on it if we want. It won't make any difference. Life is hard."

Teens are asking what God will do for them, Stanley suggested. He will do for modern-day teens what he did for Daniel and his friends, he continued. "The preincarnate Son of God exploded right in front of them. You are that close to the incarnate God exploding in front of you."

"Give us the desire to be image bearers of Jesus Christ, not only as Savior but as example," said Stanley.

Dean Finley said his message was a "press briefing on how it's going in the war among us. Folks, the war is not over."

Each day, he cited, 6000 teens engage in sex outside of marriage, 2000 experience the divorce of their parents, 200 run away from home, 100 are abused, 400 are arrested for drunk driving, 200 are arrested for drug abuse, 12 commit suicide, and 360 carry a gun to school. He also reported baptisms among teens in America have fallen 41 per cent over the last 18 years.

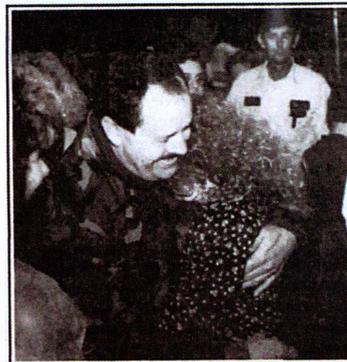
Although large numbers of Americans have died in war, the total is less than the 19 million babies who have been aborted since the 1973 ruling making abortion legal, said Finley.

"We face an enemy and the enemy is not Sadaam Hussein, but Satan is his name," he said, comparing Satan to a stealth bomber. Preachers don't like to talk about the devil, he said.

"He builds kingdoms like Sadaam Hussein, in the midst of them." Both try to generate fear.



**T-SHIRTED** — Butch Doyle, First Church, Oakland, sports one of many T-shirts worn to the conference.



**REUNION** — Lynn Moore, on a two-day pass from Washington D.C., where he has been stationed since Jan. 25, surprises his daughter, Tristy Moore, First Church, Jasper. Lynn Moore, from Chattanooga, near Jasper, is a member of a Nashville-based Air National Guard unit.

"When the devil reminds you of your past you need to remind him of his future."

Finley proclaimed, "Young person, it's not going to be alright. You're lost and you need to get out of the bunker."

Tennessee teens could make up a mighty army because one out of every seven is enrolled in a Southern Baptist Sunday School and one out of every 16 was attending this conference, noted Finley.

He compared America's high schools to countries in the U.S.S.R. "The walls are down in a new way."

"It's possible for the teenagers to take Tennessee this year."

During the remaining 70 days of school, teenagers can man two million sortis into the state's schools by carrying their Bible — a spiritual sword — into battle, Finley challenged.

Finley directed non-Christians interested in discussing their faith to

youth leaders. Then he asked teens willing to carry their Bible to school to stand. The crowd applauded after about half of the crowd stood. Lastly he asked leaders and youth to commit to gather on Sept. 11, "See You at the Pole Day," at a flagpole to pray for youth.

Wendy Reeves and Misty Gilliam of Corinth Church, Darden, both returned to the conference though their church's bus broke down several times last year. Both made professions of faith during a devotional period in the motel Friday night.

"I really like it. It's fun," said Reeves. Gilliam liked the Personal Witnessing Conferences held at local churches because "they showed kids doing skits and singing."

One of their leaders, Jerry Renfroe, said, "It's wonderful. I don't know of anything they could do to make it any better for the people they're trying to reach."

Ryan Robertson, Richard Tucker, and Ricky Fluharty of First Church, Clarksville, especially enjoyed Stanley and "These Three," the music group which performed, because both had participated in youth programs at the church.

"It's something to do," quipped Fluharty, who added, "It's fun being with friends and staying in the motel," noting he met some people staying in their motel from Toledo, Ohio.

"Any kind of spiritual growth is good really," said Tucker.

"You get to fellowship. It's a spiritual high," said Robertson. "I think it's just like amazing how you get so many people to do this."

The trio was looking forward to performing a skit with their youth group during a Personal Witnessing Conference at Judson Church, Nashville.

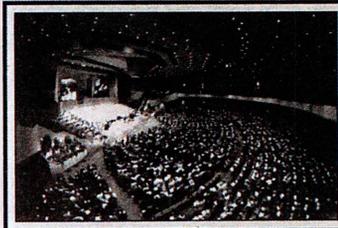
# NATIONWIDE BIBLE CONFERENCE

## BRIGHT LIGHT FOR DARK DAYS

### A CONFERENCE FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH

**April 17-21, 1991 • Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN**

- Seminars for Pastors, Deacons, Staff Members, Lay Leaders & Ladies
- Panel discussions • Workshops • Praise Worship Services



### CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



**W.A. Criswell**, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas



**Stephen Olford**, Encounter Ministries and the Institute for Biblical Preaching, Memphis, Tennessee



**John Phillips**, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, Illinois



**Darrell Gilyard**, Victory Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas



**Jerry Falwell**, Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia



**Joel Gregory**, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas



**Ron Dunn**, Lifestyle Ministries, Irving, Texas



**Jim Whitmire**, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee



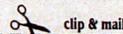
### AN INVITATION

A second Nationwide Bible Conference is being offered because of the many requests from the 1990 "Decade of Destiny" Conference. The 1991 theme is "Bright Light for Dark Days." Preachers and prophets are being assembled to proclaim His Word during these days which are becoming gloriously dark. Bellevue Church will host pastors, deacons, laymen, and wives from across our land for a time of superlative Bible preaching, panel discussions and practical workshops. In the Name of Jesus and with great anticipation, I invite you to this timely conference.

Adrian Rogers, Pastor

**FOR INFORMATION CALL**  
**901-385-5720**

or write  
Nationwide Bible Conference  
Bellevue Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1210  
Cordova, Tennessee 38018



### REGISTRATION INFORMATION: Nationwide Bible Conference • April 17-21, 1991

**Mail To:** Nationwide Bible Conference  
Bellevue Baptist Church  
P.O. Box 1210  
Cordova, Tennessee 38018

Name (Dr., Rev., Mr., Mrs., Miss) \_\_\_\_\_ (First) \_\_\_\_\_ (Middle Initial) \_\_\_\_\_ (Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Position \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name (if attending) \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Denomination \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (if lay person) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated arrival time \_\_\_\_\_

Flight # \_\_\_\_\_

**AIRLINE DISCOUNTS:** Special discounts on flights are available by calling Regal Travel at 1-800-562-2076. Please inform the travel agency that you are attending Bellevue's Bible Conference.

**PREREGISTRATION NOTICE:** While preregistration is not required to attend the conference, all who preregister by April 8 may purchase audio-cassette tapes of the conference sessions at a 50 percent reduction. Cut-off date for preregistration is Monday, April 8, 1991.

**CHILD CARE:** Child care for children ages birth through 3 is available by reservation. Call the conference office at (901) 385-5720.

# TenneScene

...Starting at Sharps Chapel, traveling west to Cottontown, and on to Reverie ...

## People ...

Friendship Church, Brookhaven, Miss., licensed Shay Bliss Berthelson, a member of Bellevue Church, Cordova, to the ministry.

Serving as chaplain at Veterans Hospital, Memphis, is Clint Oakley, retired pastor of Mountain Terrace Church, Memphis, and Wells Station Church, Memphis.

## Churches ...

"How Great Thou Art," a musical/drama, will be presented by Haywood Hills Church, Nashville, on Easter at 7 p.m. Guest soloist will be Ron Alley.

Holy Week will be observed at First Church, Nashville, March 25-28. The services will include a noon meal, music, and a message. Speakers from Nazarene, Episcopal, and Presbyterian churches will deliver messages.

The congregation of Grace Church, Springfield, will host the Gatlinburg Musical Passion Play, "The Day He Wore My Crown," March 29 at 5 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. It will be held at Springfield Middle School Auditorium. There is no admission charge, but a love offering will be accepted.

Easter sunrise service will be held on the shores of J. Percy Priest Lake March 31. The non-denominational sunrise service is being sponsored by Lincoya Hills Church, Nashville.

The service will begin at 5:15 a.m. at the Visitors Center at Percy Priest Dam.

## Leadership ...

Ken St. John has been called by First Church, Algood, as associate pastor. St. John is from California.

Pastor of Blue Ridge Park Church, Memphis, Sid Crawley, has retired after 12 years at the church. He also led a church in Goodwin, Ark.

John Bailey accepted the call of First Church, Memphis, to be minister of youth and recreation. Formerly he was on the church staff of Bluegrass

## Bellevue hosts five-day Bible conference

A nationwide Bible conference, billed as a conference for the whole church, will be held April 17-21 at Bellevue Church, Cordova (Memphis).

The meeting begins with registration at 1 p.m. Wednesday and concludes with worship services on Sunday. "Bright Light for Dark Days" is the conference theme.

Included in the five-day program are seminars for pastors, panel discussions, instruction for staff members and lay leaders, seminars for deacons, and worship. Linda Gregory, wife of Joel Gregory, pastor of First Church, Dallas, will speak to women participants.

Program personalities include W. A. Criswell, senior pastor of First Church, Dallas, and former Southern Baptist Convention president; Stephen Olford, president of Encounter Ministries and the Institute for Biblical Preaching;

Church, Hendersonville.

Shelby Drive Mission, Memphis, has a new minister of music, Victor Waits.

Interim minister of music of Eastwood Church, Memphis, is Charles Buckner.

David Sapp, student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, is music director at Lucy Church, Millington.

Allen Church, Brownsville, called Scott Story, a Union University student, as minister to youth and children.

Union Avenue Church, Memphis, has called as interim youth director, Van Spencer.

Central Emmanuel Church, Cookeville, has named Joe Pryor and his wife as youth department directors.

Darrell Henry, pastor, Hopewell Church, Cleveland, has resigned to lead a Georgia church.

Pastor of Brookhill Church, Etowah, R. B. Bryan, has retired after serving 12 years. Bryan also led the following churches in McMinn-Meigs Association of Baptists: New Zion Church, Athens; Idlewild Church, Athens; New Bethel Church, Etowah; and Cog Hill Church, Etowah. Clyde Crook has been elected to serve as interim pastor.

Serving as minister of music and activities at Ridgeview Church, Chattanooga, is Joseph W. Swinford, who is from Louisville, Ky. He began March 18.

## Missions ...

The Shelby County Association 1991 Hike for Home Missions for Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, Acteens, and Pioneers, will be March 23. Sponsors' pledges go to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions. The ten kilometer hike route is in Memphis.

Wade and Sherry Akins, missionaries to Brazil, are on the field and may be

John Phillips, longtime member of the preaching staff of Moody Bible Institute;

Darrell Gilyard, pastor of Victory Church, Richardson, Texas; Joel Gregory; Jerry Falwell, founder of Thomas Road Church, Lynchburg, Va., Liberty University, and Liberty Seminary;

Ron Dunn, president of Lifestyle Ministries; Jim Whitmire, senior minister of music at Bellevue Church; and Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church and former SBC president.

Music will be provided by the Bellevue choir and orchestra. There will be workshops featuring speakers and church staff.

Registration and housing information can be secured by contacting the church at (901) 385-5720. Child care is available by reservation.

contacted at Rua Ponte Nova 385, 31.110 Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil.

Fred and Nancy Campbell, are serving in Japan. Their address is 1-4-2 Nomizu, Chofu-shi, Tokyo 182, Japan.

On furlough from Brazil are Ken and Ginger Collier, who can be reached c/o Dalewood Church, 1586 McGavock Pike, Nashville, Tenn. 37216.

Missionaries to Namibia/SWA, Adney and Velma Cross, can be reached at Box 1467, Oshakati, 9000, Namibia/South West Africa.

The Japan address of Missionaries Charles and Chere Gafford, is 62-14 Aza Hirahata, Oaza Misawa, Misawashi 033, Japan.

Jim and Barbara Hampton, missionary associates to Korea, can be reached at Samick Beachtown Apt. 202-309, 148 Namchun-dong, Nam-ku, Pusan 608-010, Korea.

Missionaries to Brazil, Ira and Andrea Jones, are located at Caixa Postal 37785, 22642 Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil.

James and Anita Joseph, missionaries to Brazil, can be reached at Rua Saldanha da Gama, 81, Bairro Colegio Batista, 31.110 Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

## Colleges ...

Spring enrollment figures showed a continued increase at Belmont College, Nashville. A record of 2583 students from 42 states and 45 countries are currently taking classes in the school's undergraduate and graduate programs. The School of Nursing experienced a 36 percent increase, making it the largest increase among all the schools.

In addition, for the third consecutive year, Belmont College has been named to the Templeton Foundation Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges.

## About 1800 Acteens to meet in Gatlinburg

Missionaries, musicians, and Tennessee Acteens Panelists are on the program of the Tennessee Acteens Summit March 28-30 at the Gatlinburg Convention Center. About 1800 are expected.

The meeting, for girls in grades 7-12, will interpret the theme, "Mission: Possible."

Missionaries Nona Bickerstaff, New York; Dawn Hester, Georgia; Don and Joyce Heiss, Japan; and Steve and Dottie Babcock, Sierra Leone; will speak to plenary sessions and lead small group conferences.

Also leading the meeting are Acteens Panelists Kelli Cameron, First Church, Memphis; Becky Jordan, New Salem Church, Daisy; Janet Leech, First Church, Dickson; Jenice Pearson, South Clinton Church, Clinton; Ginny Vinson, First Church, Collierville; and Duffy Walls, Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville. Musicians David Bell, Dallas, and Paul Guffey, Nashville, will perform.

Conferences will include "Managing Time and Stress," "Is Missions for Me?" "Mission Action Workshops," "Dealing with Family Crises," and "In Search of a Date."

Of 814 public and private colleges and universities nominated for the 1991 Honor Roll, 108 were selected.

## Revivals ...

Bon Aqua Mission, Bon Aqua, will hold revival March 22-24. John Evans is the evangelist.

Bobby Sanders, pastor, Springville Church, Springville, will lead the March 24-29 spring revival of Bethlehem Church, Henry.

First Church, Big Sandy, will have revival services April 14-19, led by Roy Auvinsshine.

An April 1-5 spring revival will be held at Essary Springs Church, Pocahontas, with Smiley Mills, evangelist.

First Church, Pocahontas, has scheduled a revival for March 25-29.

Joe Stacker and Russell Newport will lead the March 27-31 revival at First Church, Kingston. The theme is "Walk with the Master."

Mount View Church, Antioch, is holding a revival April 7-10. Ken Clayton, Jerry Rankin, and Melody Clemons, all on the staff of Tulip Grove Church, Hermitage, are guest leaders.

Bud Gillett, pastor, First Church, Palmetto, Fla., and Mark Blair, minister of music, Bayside Church, Chattanooga, will lead revival services March 22-24 at Memorial Church, Hixson.

Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, will hold an international revival Aug. 24 and the church's Chinese Mission will have its annual Easter revival.

From March 29-31 Huron Church, Huron, will have a spring revival.

A revival is scheduled for March 24-28 at First Church, Bluff City. Evangelist is Phil Hoskins.



BELL



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An Acteens Activator commissioning and Studiaact recognition also will be held.

More information may be gained by contacting Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union at (615) 373-2255.

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# What is nature of church? doctrinal study asks

By William H. Stephens

Third of a three-part series

Polity may be the most boring word in the dictionary. It conjures up images of organizational charts, job descriptions, and tedious committee meetings.

That image has replaced the solidly Biblical debate which gave rise to congregationalism, the method of church government for which Baptists were imprisoned and even gave their lives.

The issue of polity is nothing less than the answer to the question, "How does Christ exercise lordship over His church?" The nature of the church is one of the most crucial issues facing Southern Baptists today.

The lordship of Christ is the topic for 1991 Baptist Doctrine Study sponsored by the Sunday School Board's Discipleship Training Department. It will be observed April 22-26 in many

churches.

The consistent conviction of Baptists throughout our history has been that Jesus seeks to exercise His lordship through the congregational method of church government, wherein each and every church member has an equal vote in decisions.

This position has been maintained by Baptists since the first recorded church formed in London in 1611, the same year the King James Version was published.

Only recently has the world seen Baptists shifting on this point. Since 1940, British Baptists have experimented with a variety of means of governing their churches, including the election of elders as the ruling body and reducing the pastor's leadership role.

In the United States within the last few years, the elder system has been

adopted by a number of Southern Baptist churches.

The rationale for the elder system is much the same as has been argued against Baptists throughout our history: Why should immature Christians and unredeemed church members determine the future of a church?

Why waste the great amount of time usually required to lead a church to make important decisions? Why not elect, or have the pastor appoint, a body of dedicated, proven disciples to make the church's decisions? The process is quicker and surer.

The answers given here to these questions are not different from those given traditionally throughout our history:

- The church is not a business; it is a school. This body was established by Jesus Christ for the purpose, among

others, of teaching believers to seek the mind of Christ. The discipline cannot be easily taught. It must be practiced — thus, the value of those protracted committee and business meetings.

- The congregational form is Biblical. Baptists have built their belief in congregationalism on the doctrine of the equality of all believers before God through Christ, typically called the priesthood of all believers. Whatever other groups have argued from Scripture on this point, Baptists have insisted that priesthood of all believers under Christ's lordship is the heart of the new covenant. Baptists have believed that the Bible's mandate must be given priority over practicality. Our option is not to do what is most efficient, but what is most Biblical.

- The heart and soul of Biblical congregationalism is priesthood of all believers, not autonomy of all believers. A priest is a religious official; all believers are religious officials. A priest does not vote his or her own mind; a priest seeks to know the mind of the High Priest and express that understanding. No priest ever hears the will of Christ perfectly. Too much sin, preconceptions, and human limitations distort the message Christ sends us. Thus, every priest must express his or her understanding humbly and humbly hear out the understandings of other priests. The goal is to negotiate, listen, speak, and debate until the group comes to know the mind of Christ on an issue.

- Any system which bypasses the tedious process of allowing every member an equal voice in a church's decision-making violates the new covenant of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

William H. Stephens is curriculum development coordinator in the Sunday School Board's Discipleship Training Department and co-author of "The Doctrine of Lordship," the 1991 Baptist Doctrine Study textbook.

## Court actions limit exercise of religion

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP) — Churches battling two municipal landmark ordinances suffered setbacks in March 4 actions by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The court's actions further demonstrated the impact of a 1990 ruling that watered down the high court's longstanding test protecting free exercise of religion.

Last year, the high court virtually abandoned its strict standard that required governmental agencies to demonstrate a compelling state interest before taking steps to curb religious freedom. In that case, Oregon v. Smith, the justices held that the state of Oregon need demonstrate only a reasonable interest, not a compelling interest, to deny members of the Native American Church the right to ingest peyote in religious ceremonies.

In one of its March 4 actions, the Supreme Court vacated a Washington Supreme Court ruling that the application of a Seattle landmarks preservation ordinance to churches violated the First Amendment's free exercise clause and the Washington state constitution. The case was sent back to Washington for reconsideration in light of the Smith case's "reasonableness" test.

Washington's Supreme Court had ruled prior to the Smith decision that Seattle's landmark preservation ordinance did not constitute a compelling state interest and that the application of the ordinance to First Covenant

Church over the church's objection violated its free exercise rights.

In another municipal landmark ordinance case, the high court declined to hear the appeal of a lower-court ruling against a New York City congregation that challenged that city's landmark statute.

The court let stand a ruling by the U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals that the landmark ordinance did not violate the free exercise rights unless the church is completely unable to carry out its religious mission in its existing facilities. The 2nd Circuit's ruling was appealed to the Supreme Court by St. Bartholomew's Church, which was seeking to replace an existing structure that had been designated for historic preservation.

"Washington was the first state to recognize that restrictions on a church's architecture are restrictions on religious freedom," said Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel Oliver S. Thomas. "That the Supreme Court would vacate this decision indicates how deeply the justices are committed to Smith's watered-down view of the free exercise clause. It underscores the urgent need for the Religious Freedom Restoration Act."

Thomas was referring to a legislative proposal that would restore the stricter compelling interest test. The measure was first introduced late

in the 101st Congress and expected soon to be reintroduced.

"Although unfortunate, neither decision was much of a surprise after Smith," said Baptist Joint Committee Associate General Counsel J. Brent Walker. "For all intents and purposes, the St. Bartholomew's litigation is over. But we hope the Washington Supreme Court will stick by its first decision and base its ruling squarely on state constitutional grounds, as the Supreme Courts of Massachusetts and Minnesota have done in free exercise cases.

"The Supreme Court action again points up the dire need to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act as soon as possible."

The two landmarking cases are Seattle, Wash. v. First Covenant Church of Seattle, and St. Bartholomew's v. New York City.

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# Jesus' crucifixion

By A. Ray Newcomb, pastor; First Church, Millington

Jesus was to carry His cross to the place of execution. His ordeal had taken its toll. He fell under the weight of the heavy cross. Simon, a Cyrenian, carried the cross to the place of execution.

The procession to the crucifixion was followed by a crowd. Among them were women who "bewailed and lamented Jesus." Jesus turned and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." The day will come when it will be said, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck." Jesus pointed to a time of coming judgment when men would cry unto the rocks to cover



**NEWCOMB**  
First, we look at the faith of the other malefactor. "Remember me

them. They came to the place of execution. The Greek name means the skull, suggesting the shape of the place. The Hebrew name is Golgotha. We call the place Calvary. It was here that Jesus was crucified between two "malefactors."

From the cross Jesus prayed for the Father to forgive those who crucified Him. The word "said" is an imperfect tense, showing that Jesus kept saying "Father forgive them."

A superscription was placed over the cross of Jesus. It read "This is the King of the Jews."

**Pardon (vv. 39-43)**  
First, we look at the skeptic who said, "If thou be the Son of God, save thyself and us." Save means to save from death on the cross. This thief had no sense of repentance and faith unto spiritual salvation.

Second, we look at the faith of the other malefactor. "Remember me

when thou comest into thy kingdom." He did not ask to be delivered from the cross, but he prayed for salvation from sin.

Third, we look at the Savior as He pardoned the sinner. What a joy the man must have felt when he heard Jesus say, "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise." On the cross, Jesus forgave the criminal who had simple faith in His words.

**Parting (vv. 44-49)**  
About the sixth hour, darkness covered the earth. Sometime during this darkness, Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Luke mentioned two strange phenomena: (1) The failure of the sunlight from noon to 3 p.m., and (2) the ripping of the curtain hanging between the holy place and the holy of holies in the temple. We know that "by the blood of Jesus" we have a "new and living way which He opened for us through the curtain" (Hebrews 10:19-20).

Jesus' last words are recorded in verse 6. "Father into thy hands I com-

**BIBLE BOOK**  
March 24 Lesson  
Basic Passage: Luke 23:26-56

mend my spirit." "Commend" renders a word meaning to place alongside. It was also a banking term meaning to place things on deposit for safe keeping to be used for an intended purpose. "And having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

The people at the cross reacted to the events they had witnessed. The centurion glorified God and said, "Certainly this was a righteous man."

Joseph, a member of the council who voted against Jesus' condemnation, asked Pilate if he could place Jesus' linen-wrapped body in a fresh cave.

The women, consistent followers of Jesus, prepared the ointments and spices before sundown, rested on the Sabbath, and tended to the body of Jesus the next day.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. He died an atoning death. He arose from the dead as a redemption for the sacrifice of the sins of mankind.

# Freedom and responsibility

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

It has always been interesting to me, as well as educational, to read the history of the churches I have served as pastor. In those often musty old record books I have discovered insights into the morals and Christian values of the past. Some of them are almost funny from this vantage point. But many of the incidents recorded have called me to some soul-searching about my own Christian values.

Excluding people from the church's fellowship seems to have been much more common in those earlier years of Baptist life. Some were excluded because they failed to contribute or attend church services for a certain period of time. Others were kicked out because they beat their mule or went to a ballgame on a Sunday



**NAIL**  
afternoon. The church in Corinth to which Paul wrote was having some struggle with their freedom in Christ as compared to their new responsibility as living witnesses to the truth of the Gospel. Some of the people had the notion their new faith set them free to live life without boundaries. Other equally devout persons believed this new freedom in Christ carried with it a deepened sense of responsibility.

Just what did their new faith mean in terms of moral and ethical responsibility? Just how free were they in Christ? How important was it to behave as though people were watching them and judging them?

**Stumbling block or stepping stone?**  
As Americans, we tend to think a great deal about our rights. We don't want anyone to infringe on our rights. These rights are a precious heritage from our forefathers.

But Paul warned of the danger of the weaker brother in our exercising our

rights. He understood the Christians' responsibility to be concerned about others.

If some activity or habit of ours is likely to cause a new believer or lost person to think less of our Lord, we have a responsibility to abstain from it. Even if this is an otherwise wholesome activity, Paul was willing to take the necessary steps to avoid offending.

**I may, but I won't**  
Many of us are proud of our sophistication. We have removed ourselves from some of the backward and naive ways of our parents and grandparents. We believe some of the prohibitions of earlier days are of little real value to the Christian. We feel we have outgrown some of the simple answers of our spiritual youth.

We decide we are free to do things once thought unsuitable for a Christian. But we overlook the impact our liberated lifestyle can have on weaker Christians.

**CONVENTION UNIFORM**  
March 24 Lesson  
Basic Passage: 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1

Paul put it in perspective for the folks in Corinth when he told them their enlightened lifestyle was ruining weaker brethren. He said that though he had the right, he would submit himself to the desires of others and deny his own pleasures.

**All things to all men**  
Paul's point was that Christians must take care that their actions do not cause others to stumble, or diminish the Gospel.

Paul gave the admonition to the Christians at Rome when he told them to be certain what they considered acceptable behavior is not thought of as evil (Romans 14:16).

It may seem we are putting ourselves at the mercy of unbelievers and weak believers and losing our freedom in Christ. Not so. This is a voluntary submission of our rights for the higher purpose of reaching and strengthening others in the faith.

We are set free in Christ, not to do as we please, but to do as He pleases.

# God's Son crucified

By John C. Compton, pastor; Oak Grove Church, Mount Carmel

The greatest story ever told is the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is about the greatest love man has ever known. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," (John 15:13). "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," (Romans 5:8). Thank God, Christ died for our sins!

Christ was crucified even though no fault was found in Him (v. 6). Pilate understood the crimes Jesus was accused of did not fit the character of the innocent man who stood before him. Pilate had interrogated other insurrectionists and revolutionaries, but he was convinced Jesus was certainly not one of them. Therefore, Pilate



**COMPTON**  
declared Jesus an innocent man. "I find no fault in Him." Christ died for our sins "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," (1 Peter 3:18). If we had died for our sins we would simply be dead sinners. Praise God, Christ did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Christ was crucified because of pride (v. 7). The religious leaders loathed the one they should have loved. Their religious pride rejected the Son of God. The one person they should have received with open arms they rejected with closed fists. Pride made the devil the devil and pride makes little devils out of men. It is pride which keeps men from humbling themselves before Christ and having their sins washed away.

Christ was crucified because He did not try to come down from the cross (v. 18). The execution squad humiliated Him by stripping Him of all clothing and leading Him to the place

of the skull. Voluntarily He laid down on that cross on the ground. The soldiers did not have to wrestle Him down like they did every other man they crucified. He voluntarily stretched one arm on the cross beam and allowed a pencil size spike to be hammered through, tearing tendons and flesh. One hand already throbbing with pain, He stretched forth the other hand. Then the super size spike smashed through the bones and the tendons of the arches in His feet. Then four soldiers began to lift up the cross. What was once painful became almost unbearable. The full weight of His body pulled on pierced hands. Suddenly the cross dropped three feet into the hole, the severe jar bringing unspeakable pain. Add to the loss of blood, impeded breathing, and straining heart is the mockery of those who crucified Him. "Miracle man, do a miracle and come down from the cross."

**LIFE AND WORK**  
March 24 Lesson  
Basic Passage: John 19

Despite the pain, Jesus never whimpered. He never begged for mercy. He never pled to be released or asked to come down. Jesus knew had He come down, we would never have known the free pardon of sin. Had He come down, heaven could not be our eternal home. Thank God, Jesus did not try to come down from the cross.

Christ was crucified between two thieves (v. 18). He came to save the two men next to Him, also. One mocked Him. The other trusted Him. These two thieves teach us that not all persons will trust Jesus as their Savior. We should not be surprised when people reject that they are the object of the greatest love story ever told. Though some will reject Christ, we must tell every person near and far why Jesus was crucified. Let's show our gratitude to Christ's crucifixion by being faithful in sharing the good news that He is alive and wants to live in people's hearts.

# Career missionaries begin work with Welsh Baptists

By Mike Creswell

BRIDGEND, Wales (BP) — Southern Baptist career missionaries have begun working for the first time in Wales, starting in one of the largest housing developments in Europe.

Missionaries Bill and Lucy Pat Curl, appointed last October, are cooperating with Welsh Baptists on ministry in the Brackla housing development. The Curls, who live in Brackla, have visited all the Baptist churches in the area and found a warm welcome.

"We've been treated royally by these people," said Mrs. Curl. She added that many have kidded them about leaving warm Florida for Wales, which is in the throes of one of the harshest winters in years. Curl, of Louisville, Ky., was associate pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., from 1972-90. Mrs. Curl, of Georgetown, Ky., was accompanist and choral director.

Brackla is in the Bridgend area, between the larger cities of Swansea and Cardiff in southern Wales. It is a principal industrial area, boasting Ford and Sony factories along with dozens of smaller industries.

"That was just a bare hillside ten years ago," said Ian Burley, slowing his car during a tour of Brackla, called a "housing estate" in Wales. Burley, evangelism director for the Baptist Union of Wales, pointed to a hillside dotted with clusters of houses stretching to the horizon. Houses throughout the complex are in all stages of construction; others, already completed, bristle with "For Sale" signs.

Housing units in Bridgend range from stand-alone houses to condominium-type attached units, from basic bungalows for retirees to luxury homes. The housing market is in a slump in most of Britain, but construction continues here.

Motioning toward yet-unpaved dirt roads slicing through former farmland, Burley said, "You see those fields there? That's the site of a new school." It will be the third for the area. He wondered aloud if Baptists can get permission to use a school as a meeting place. A medical clinic and a small but busy shopping center with a supermarket and pharmacy have been built.

The mammoth development taking

## High school men hear Jerry Clower

GATLINBURG — "God hasn't ever made a mistake, and he's never going to make one with you."

Christian entertainer Jerry Clower drove that point home again and again to more than 500 High School Baptist Young Men at their national rally and training event March 1-3 here.

Clower interwove his message that "Christianity works" with his well-known tales of growing to manhood with sidekick "Marselle Ledbetter," moving his audience of youth from gales of laughter to rapt attention.

"I love you all because you're not a bunch of pessimists," Clower continued. "Negativism can kill us graveyard dead. It can ruin nations, it can lose wars, it can destroy marriages, it can bust up churches."

Clower told the youth, who participate in the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission's missions education program for young men in grades 10 through 12, to be willing to

shape at Bridgend is the second-largest private housing development in Europe since World War II, Burley said. It already houses 10,000 residents in about a square mile. To Burley, an energetic and creative man, the situation spells missions with a capital M.

But meeting such a challenge is hard for Welsh Baptists, who have about 70 pastors to serve more than 30,000 members spread among 600 churches. About 7000 members are in English-language churches. The others are part of some 20 percent of the population who speak the lilting Welsh tongue.

## Northern Ireland churches

# Pastor analyzes Irish turmoil

NASHVILLE (BP) — Dublin Baptist Pastor Robert Dunlop believes churches are "part of the problem and therefore must be part of the solution" to the conflict in Northern Ireland today.

It is simplistic to say the troubles in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland are religious or theological in nature, he says. But it is just as naive to say religion is not a factor, he says.

The turmoil in Northern Ireland is often presented as a battle between the minority Catholics and the majority Protestants. In the Republic of Ireland, the conflict is often seen as between a tiny minority (4 percent) of Protestants and a huge majority (96 percent) of Catholics. Ireland is an island one-third the size of Texas that contains a total of 4.4 million people in the two countries of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Dunlop pictures the Irish turmoil as a combination of complex cultural, social, political, and religious dimensions, coupled with fierce terrorism and extensive racketeering.

Nevertheless, Dunlop said he believes the focus needs to be on finding a solution to a way out of the conflict rather than finger-pointing to try to show who or what is to blame for the continuing battle there. He says he believes churches, including Southern Baptist congregations in the United States, can play a part in working toward a solution to the turmoil in Nor-

thern Ireland.

Dunlop encourages churches to support Co-operation Ireland, a non-political, multidominational organization that concentrates on building personal relationships between participants on the different sides in Ireland.

"Co-operation Ireland is more than an idea or a concept — it is a working entity which has already accomplished a lot in bringing healing through cooperative effort," he says.

Started in 1979 by Irish businessman Brendan O'Regan, Co-operation Ireland today has an annual operating budget of \$1 million, and includes a number of programs for youth and adults. Those programs arrange exchange visits and promote other bridge-building means to help Protestants and Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland get to know one another — often for the first time.

Specifically, Dunlop encouraged Southern Baptist churches to take an active interest in finding a peaceful solution to the Irish conflict by doing the following:

- Praying for a peaceful solution to the Irish conflict.
- "Twinning" with an Irish Baptist congregation.
- Finding out the facts about the conflict and refusing to accept simplistic explanations or solutions.
- Emphasizing the need in every area of life for Christians to be salt and light in the world.

"We Baptists, with our understanding of local church and a commitment to a free church in a free state, should be ideally poised to offer a creative vision of life and society where God's order is taken seriously and Biblical righteousness is not only theological and personal but also social and communal," he says.

"The fact is that some of our (pastors) are not able to retire because of the needs and the demands, and they just have to keep working on and on," said Burley. In recent years the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has sent two-year mission workers to help churches in several locations.

Baptists organized their first church in Wales in 1649 and attained their greatest numbers in the last century. But their ranks have fallen in recent decades, reflecting chaotic social and economic upheavals that have swept Wales. Most coal mines, once the

economic backbone, have closed. A sharp decline in spiritual life has accompanied the economic decline, as many Welsh have abandoned church ties.

As population centers have shifted, many Baptist churches gradually have closed during recent years. Burley admitted the idea of launching a ministry in the new development took some getting used to for some church leaders.

The economic boom around Bridgend caught Baptists by surprise; they hesitated too long on buying property within the estate borders. Now they may be unable to buy church property there at any price. Bar owners moved faster, Burley noted, pointing out two well-established "public houses."

Circling to one side of the development, Burley pointed across a railroad track to clusters of small factories where many Brackla residents work. One small factory makes shoes, another candy, a third furniture. He believes chaplaincy programs could be started in such industries. Other Brackla residents commute to jobs in Swansea or Cardiff, a half-hour drive away.

Hope Baptist Church in Bridgend, led by pastor David Hughes, is the closest English-speaking Baptist congregation to Brackla. Ruhamah Baptist Church, a Welsh-speaking congregation, also meets in Bridgend. Three other English-speaking churches gather in outlying areas. Visiting area churches during a snowy February has been a real adventure, Curl noted, as many mountain passes have been closed by snowfall.

Hughes and other pastors are "very keen" for ministry support from the new missionaries because local church workers are overwhelmed by needs, Burley confirmed. Although the pastor has had contacts with residents in the new development for weddings, funerals and an occasional crisis, "He has no way of following up," Burley said. "He's absolutely worked to death."

Already Curl has been called on to lead a funeral, which has led to good contacts with an unchurched family.

"At this point we're still surveying, prayerfully trying to get a feel for the needs of the community," Curl said. "Initially, we're looking to minister to needs we find, probably establishing Bible studies and other ministries." New Christians will be directed toward existing churches for now, he said.

"Awesome possibilities are everywhere and countless needs can be met by a ministering church. Christians in the area have a tremendous sense something must be done. We're discovering many godly people who want revival."

Ministry will not primarily be preaching, but rather "person-to-person caring," said Burley, who will help coordinate the Curls' work.

While statistics may show many residents are church members, Burley dismisses such figures. "A high percentage claim church affiliation, but they're not active anywhere and don't go anywhere," he explained.

Christians need to move quickly in such an environment, he believes. Already, cult groups have sent workers into the area to get a foothold.