

Baptist and Reflector

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STATEWIDE EDITION

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

Spiritual awakening at SBC

Committee chairman Jim Henry issues 'wakeup' call to Baptists

Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., has issued a "wakeup" call to Southern Baptists.

As chairman of the Southern Baptist Spiritual Awakening Task Force, Henry asks Southern Baptists to help prepare for the "Call to Spiritual Awakening" session at the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta on the evening of June 5.

The time slot on Wednesday night has been yielded by the Home Mission Board for a time of spiritual awakening, according to Henry. "Our committee has asked every agency to enlist their prayer partners; we've written to every denomination and asked them to pray for Southern Baptists that night," he said.

Henry also said that Southern Baptist seminaries are "making it a matter of prayer in chapel and faculty meetings — and our missionaries are notified and praying."

Asking every messenger to be present, Henry added, "We are going to submit ourselves to the living Christ in a corporate session of praise, testimony, confession, and the reading of Scripture."

A part of the evening program, he said, will be used for confession of sins as individuals, churches, and as a nation. "Jonya Davis of our committee and a group from her church will serve as a clearing house to catalog these sins in three areas," he said, "not loving God wholeheartedly and not honoring Christ as Lord, not loving

other Christians as Christ loved the church, and loving the world more than the lost."

Henry asks Baptists to "send those sins you feel need to be confessed in the service to Jonya Davis, without specific names."

He believes churches should set aside the evening of June 5 as "a time of prayer for your church, our denomination, our nation, and the session in Atlanta." He asks churches to link up with the ACTS network. Directors of missions will have information on the program's format, he said.

The Davis address: Jonya Davis, P.O. Box 36, Russellville, Ark. 72801.



CONGRESS OFFICERS — Three Nashvillians were elected as officers of the annual state Royal Ambassador Congress. Officers are, from left, John Highsmith, president; Stephen Stewart, secretary; and Dana Mahone, missions activity leader. (See additional report on congress on page 4.) — Photo by Kenny Rains

RTVC begins operation of FamilyNet TV network

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission began operation of FamilyNet, a broadcast television faith and family network April 1. The network previously was owned by Old Time Gospel Hour and Liberty Broadcast Network of Lynchburg, Va. Both entities are a part of the ministry of Jerry Falwell.

The purchase was authorized by RTVC trustees in January.

The purchase will multiply the outreach of commission programming, said RTVC President Jack Johnson.

"FamilyNet is accessible to some ten to 12 millions not now being reached by the RTVC's ACTS network," Johnson said. "That means we can more than double the potential for

preaching the Gospel to the people of America."

A number of RTVC programs began airing on FamilyNet April 1, Johnson said, and others will be added later. He said "COPE," a live call-in counseling program, will be carried on both networks each afternoon. "Sunshine Factory," a children's program produced by RTVC personnel, will be on FamilyNet, along with "The Baptist Hour" and "Invitation to Life," a weekly evangelistic service.

The \$200,000 cash paid for FamilyNet came from funds reallocated by trustees from the 1990-91 fixed asset budget of the commission. No other cash payments are to be made, and no borrowed funds were required to complete the purchase, Johnson said.

As a part of the purchase, RTVC officials said, the "Old Time Gospel Hour" will be carried daily on both FamilyNet and ACTS. The air time used on the two networks will be charged against a \$3 million program time credit that will be amortized at

the regular rates charged other programmers on FamilyNet and ACTS, the officials said. At present rates, they said, the credit would be used completely in less than three years, and if rates are increased in the future, the increases would be passed along to "Old Time Gospel Hour."

The RTVC trustees were to consider Restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for FamilyNet at a scheduled meeting April 9, according to Johnson. "We will recommend the elected commissioners also form the board of directors of FamilyNet," Johnson said. "We want it clearly understood that both FamilyNet and ACTS are under the control of trustees elected by and responsible to the Southern Baptist Convention. There will be no outside directors, and no one other than the duly constituted commission trustees and personnel will have any control over the activities of the Radio-TV Commission, ACTS, or FamilyNet," Johnson said.

(See RTVC, page 5)

March SBC giving shows increase

NASHVILLE (BP) — The fourth highest total for a month and a six-month total which now exceeds the previous year were two of the marks set by Cooperative Program gifts received in March by the SBC Executive Committee.

The total received for the Cooperative Program unified budget for March was \$13,219,744, a 20.18 percent increase over March of 1990 (\$11,000,029). That is the fourth highest CP month total on record and compares to the budget need for a month of \$11,444,377.

"I am highly pleased that CP receipts for March exceeded \$13.2 million," said Harold C. Bennett, Executive Committee president/treasurer. "I commend all Southern Baptists for their commitment. This means that the state conventions had one of their highest months in CP mission receipts.

"We can only give as God blesses us . . . I hope we will give to world missions as God blesses us," Bennett said.

Halfway through the 1990-91 SBC budget year, CP receipts total \$71,543,354 compared to \$70,872,526 for the previous year six months. The 1990-91 basic operating budget need for six months was \$68,666,262.

However, designated gifts still lag, slightly, behind the previous year at the halfway mark. For March 1991, designated gifts totaled \$18,995,700 compared to \$15,071,959 in 1990. But the year-to-date total of \$78,221,160 is 2.15 percent below the corresponding period of last year of \$79,937,100.

Designated contributions include the Foreign Mission Board's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the Home Mission Board's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, and world hunger.



BRENTWOOD VISITORS — Clarence Stewart, left, Partnership Missions director for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, welcomed representatives from Chile who came to the Baptist Center in Brentwood April 5 for planning sessions concerning the Tennessee/Chile partnership which begins next January. From left, Victor Olivares and Moises and Haydee Pinto of the Chile Evangelical Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist missionaries Betty and Charles Alexander and Richard Poe.

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Editorials

Here and there — events that touch Baptist life

Several noteworthy events have happened recently in Tennessee and elsewhere, significant in content but not important for lengthy news reports. In most cases, a comment is sufficient.

News Event — Representatives of the Evangelical Chile Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Chile mission are visiting in Tennessee this week. The group arrived Friday and are leaving today. They met with TBC staff members, spoke in churches, and had planning and orientation sessions.

Representing Chilean Baptists are Moises and Haydee Pinto and Victor Olivares. Charles and Betty Alexander and Richard Poe represent the mission. Tom Vassar and James Cecil are from the Foreign Mission Board.

The Chileans are eager, as are Tennesseans, for the Chile-Tennessee Partnership Mission to begin. There are plans for a few projects this year as the Philippines Partnership winds down. Officially Tennessee Baptists begin working with Chile Baptists in January.

Religion Gains on Communism — According to Foreign Mission Board news, so many Communist Party members are attending religious services in China that in some places it is difficult to get party members together and have meetings. Wang Zhen, China's vice president, reportedly was alarmed about the speedy growth of religious faith in the countryside.

In one county in Hebei Province, 813 persons became Roman Catholics last year while only 270 joined the Communist Party. The winds of religious freedom often spark fires of Christian faith. Let's pray to that end in China and in similar situations.

A Paradox Reported — Last week's Baptist and Reflector reported that Cooperative Program gifts to the TBC budget are substantially below last year's total, almost \$1.3 million. On the other hand, SBC reports indicate overall CP giving is increasing.

For example, CP gifts for March for the SBC

were the fourth highest totals for a month, and the six months total is more than it was at the same time last year. What's true for the SBC is not necessarily true for some individual states, including Tennessee. However, we are confident that Tennessee Baptists will continue to recognize ministry needs and give accordingly.

Chile Missionaries — The Evangelical Chile Baptist Convention has sent out its first foreign missionaries. Juan and Maria Teresa Lara arrived last month in Ecuador as church planters in the coastal city of Esmeraldas.

There is excitement among Chile Baptists in this new venture in missions and evangelization.

Safety Legislation on Alcohol — Warning labels for the lethal characteristics of beverage alcohol have been sought by some Christian groups for years. Now bills requiring health and safety warnings have been introduced to Congress by Rep. Joseph Kennedy and Sen. Strom Thurmond.

Tennessee's Sen. Albert Gore is a co-sponsor of the warning legislation. It makes sense. The beer industry itself, and perhaps other connected industries, have advertising reminding drinkers to be careful about drinking and driving.

There is a seductive imagery about alcohol's "good" side, and proper warnings on labels will help refute such false claims. Americans in particular need to be re-educated about the dangers of beverage alcohol. Innocent and guilty by the millions have paid the price of that illusion, many with their lives.

Old Bugaboo Still Haunts Us — Do you have any rumors you want to pass along? Wait — before you tell it, make sure it passes some ageless tests: Is it true? Is it helpful? Is it necessary? Is it honest?

Baptists (and other well-meaning Christians) continue to pass around petitions that accuse Madalyn Murray O'Hair of trying to tweak Christianity's nose in a variety of ways. Most of the time, the rumor says she is trying to prevent religious broadcasting and telecasting. We have looked at the

history of the groundless and ridiculous rumor. It first appeared at least sixteen years ago. It is appalling to realize that Christians have spent millions of dollars fighting something that never existed!

Every year since 1975, Baptist editors (and others) have had to admonish church-goers against circulating such silly petitions. O'Hair never made any such effort — nor did anyone else. In 1968 O'Hair did call upon NASA to censure astronauts for reading the Bible from outer space. Her suits were dismissed.

But people have persisted in picking up a petition (RM-2493) that was filed about the same time by two Californians and quickly dismissed by the FCC. In April, 1982, FCC officials said, "There is no petition to ban religious programming currently before the Commission, nor has there been." The public affairs office said then (and still holds true to this), "You can save many thousands of hours of wasted effort and many thousands of dollars of taxpayers money by informing your readers of the facts of this situation."

Enough said? Certainly not. We will have to say it again before many months pass. But we urge pastors and church leaders to keep the focus on witness and evangelization — and there will be no time for copying and distributing false petitions. Make the main business of the church telling the story of Jesus Christ — in all the ways with which he has equipped us.

Death of Missionaries — Southern Baptist mission efforts lost two dedicated servants two weeks ago — a veteran who was murdered while trying to minister, and a young volunteer who died in her sleep. The death of Lynda Bethea in Kenya shocked Southern Baptists and the Christian community. She was killed in a meaningless rage by roadside robbers. Darla Lovell died in Uganda while asleep four days earlier. The youthful journeyman wanted to be a missionary fulltime. These two disciples will be missed because of their love for Christ — but their testimony lives on — forever. — WFA

New audiocassette targets teenagers with plan of salvation

NASHVILLE — It begins with rock music and a not-so-subtle message from Satan himself, but it ends with the plan of salvation and helps for new Christians.

"Do not listen to this tape. Do not listen to this tape," the "voice" of Satan warns on the new audiocassette produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. But teenagers are listening to the tape, and more importantly, they're giving it to their friends.

A new addition to the 24-Hour Counselor Series, "Gospel Tract" is an audio-drama presentation of the plan of salvation. Using contemporary music and characters ranging from a "surfer dude" to an "urban youth," the tape tells a story about teenagers looking for meaning in life. Listeners are confronted with how to find fulfill-

J. Paul Palmer dies

J. Paul Palmer died March 28 at Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis. He was 77 years old.

Pastor emeritus of Bennington Park Church, Memphis, Palmer also was pastor of Charjean Church and Poplar Avenue Church, Memphis, First Church, Alamo, and other churches in Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Michigan. He was a member of Beverly Hills Church, Memphis.

Palmer was buried March 30 at Forest Hills Cemetery East in Memphis.

He is survived by his wife, Flora, Memphis; daughter, Paulette McGlophin and two grandchildren.

ment and eternal security through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

"It occurred to us that we were still depending on tracts and other reading materials to reach lost teenagers outside the church," Richard Ross, youth ministry consultant in the BSSB's church administration department, said of a special work group of youth-related professionals that developed the idea for "Gospel Tract." Ross also serves as minister of youth at Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory.

"But this Nintendo, MTV generation of teenagers does not receive information primarily through reading. So, we decided to use a medium that they were already used to, and that is audio tapes.

"Teenagers listen to tapes themselves," explained Ross, compiler of the 24-Hour Counselor Series, "but there is also a phenomenon where teenagers very, very frequently pass tapes on to each other when they find a group or song that they like. So, it followed that a Christian teenager might find it a very natural, non-offensive way to pass along the Gospel simply by handing a tape to a friend.

Ross' observation is right on target, according to Aaron Dowdell, a member of the youth group at Ebenezer Church in Greenbrier.

"It just makes witnessing easier," Dowdell, a student at Greenbrier High School said of "Gospel Tract." "You can't always find the words to just walk up to somebody and talk to them (about Christ). But you can give

anybody a tape."

Dowdell already has used the tape to lead two schoolmates to Christ. "I just gave them copies of the tape, they listened to them at home and both of them became Christians," he said, adding the tape has increased his enthusiasm for evangelism.

Dowdell's twin brother, Andy, also gave the tape to a classmate. "She gave it back and told me she didn't want to listen to it. But I feel like I planted a seed," he said. "She knows if she ever wants to talk (about Christ) she can talk to me."

David Fields, youth minister at Ebenezer, said he believes "Gospel Tract" has the potential to "revolu-

tionize" youth evangelism.

"I know that sounds like an ambitious statement," Fields said, "but this tape makes the Gospel clear to teenagers by using a medium they understand."

Written by Robert Don Hughes, associate professor of communications and mass media at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., "Gospel Tract" targets teenagers with no church background.

Released in January and available at Baptist Book Stores, "Gospel Tract" is one of four new tapes in the 24-Hour Counselor Series. Other new volumes include "Date Rape," "Adoption," and "Shame-Bound Experiences."

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SBC leaders detail needs of environment

By Scott Collins

FORT-WORTH (BP) — The president of the Southern Baptist Convention, a state executive director, and an agency head urged Southern Baptists to take up the gauntlet and run with the message that God cares for the earth and therefore Christians should, too.

SBC President Morris Chapman told participants at the 24th annual Christian Life Commission seminar here Christians have an obligation to be salt and light on the environmental and ecological issues of the day.

Chapman, also pastor of First Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, said Southern Baptists need to be "obedient to our assignment from the Lord to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world."

That commitment, Chapman said, demands Baptists give "more than a passing reference" to ecology and environmental issues. Chapman said the seminar's theme, "Christians and the Environment: Finding a Biblical Balance Between Idolatry and Irresponsibilities" captures "the dilemma faced by Christians seeking to understand their Biblical responsibility. We are confronted by the duty to think and act Biblically in relation to God's creation," he said.

Chapman reminded conference participants the world is faced with "major challenges" regarding the environment. Seminar registration secretary Mary Tyler said the meeting, held at the Hyatt Regency

Hotel March 25-27, drew 91 registrants.

In outlining solutions for the problems, Chapman said the focus of Baptists must be on what the Bible says about the environment and God's creation. "God's word repeatedly underscores the theme of God's ownership of creation," Chapman said.

That awareness of God's ownership leads Christians to understand their role as stewards of creation, Chapman said.

"The Biblical concept of stewardship is essential in understanding how we are to be salt and light on the issue of the environment," he said. Chapman defined the steward as someone "entrusted with the property of another."

In another speech at the seminar, Richard D. Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, said evangelicals must repent past insensitivities and neglect toward the environment.

Land told seminar participants God will hold Christians accountable for how they use creation.

"I am more firmly convinced than ever that we face an ecological crisis and that God holds us accountable for

our stewardship of the creation and its resources that he has entrusted to our care," Land said.

Setting the tone for the three-day seminar, Land said there is "a distinctively Christian response to ecological concerns."

That response, he said, must be Biblically based rather than following the strategies of the New Age movement and others who "worship the creation rather than the Creator."

"For Baptists and other evangelicals, the only question is whether we will engage the issue and aggressively join the debate, or whether we will continue to leave the field to a largely secular environmentalist movement," Land said.

Numerous secular groups involved in the issue of the environment have exhibited tendencies that "should be of grave concern to Christians," Land said.

The Biblical approach to ecology begins with recognition of God as the Creator, Land said.

"If we believe that God is the Creator and that he has created everything for a purpose, then that in

itself has enormous implications for the environmental issue," Land said.

"We are stewards, not owners, of these (gifts of creation from God). God has provided us with all of the resources we need to carry out our partnership responsibility, and we are to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us," William M. Pinson, Jr., executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, told seminar participants.

He called upon Southern Baptists to focus resources on environmental care.

"This means the Biblical principles of stewardship should be applied to all of the resources God has provided," he said. "It also means that all aspects of our denomination should be brought to bear on the problems and opportunities, including individuals; churches; associations of churches; encampments; state convention entities such as school, children's homes, hospitals, and institutions for the aging; and national entities such as boards, commissions, seminaries, and other agencies. —Louis Moore of the Christian Life Commission staff also contributed to this story.

Survey team waits for entrance to Kuwait

RICHMOND (BP) — Still needing permission to enter Kuwait, a Christian survey team — comprised of Tennessee Maurice Graham, John Cheyne of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, and Jerry Zandstra, pastor of the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait — is now in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The team left the U.S. April 1 for the island nation of Bahrain in the Persian Gulf where they hoped to obtain visas to enter Kuwait.

Efforts to get the visas for Kuwait there apparently were unsuccessful, an FMB spokesman told the Baptist and Reflector April 8.

The team did, however, go on to Riyadh where they will reclaim the car Graham and his family used in Kuwait before the invasion. The car, bullet-riddled but with a new windshield, was used by a Texas Baptist couple and an

Australian to escape from Kuwait last August.

Exploring ways Southern Baptists and other Christians can meet the physical and emotional needs of foreign laborers stranded in Kuwait will be a high priority for the survey team, said Cheyne, who coordinates human needs ministry for the FMB.

An estimated 80,000 workers from Bangladesh, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, and other Third World countries endured the Iraqi occupation, Cheyne said.

"We don't know what their condition is," Cheyne said, or what food supplies, medical assistance, or emotional ministry they might need.

Once permission is granted to enter Kuwait, the drive normally takes about five hours, Graham said. "But I don't know what it will be under this kind of situation."

The team will pack the car with all the water and food they will need for a week's stay in Kuwait, along with such supplies as surgical masks to protect against polluted air from the hundreds of oil wells set ablaze by the Iraqis.

After the trip to Kuwait, Cheyne will visit Egypt and possibly Jordan to explore ministry opportunities among people made refugees by the war.

Already, Cheyne noted, the Foreign Mission Board has had numerous offers of assistance from various groups interested in helping.

Displaced people "are particularly receptive to compassionate concern and hence to the Gospel," Cheyne commented. "Ultimately some refugees may become instruments of the Lord to go back to their own people and share the Gospel." —Art Toalston

Annual observance

Prayer day set

May 2 has been set by the Congress of the United States as a National Day of Prayer. The theme for the 40th consecutive observance is "Prayer Works for America." President and Mrs. George Bush serve as honorary chairmen.

In 1952, by joint approval, both Houses of Congress called upon the President to set aside a day every year as a National Day of Prayer. Although national days of prayer have been part of American heritage since the first declared by the Continental Congress in 1775, Congress enacted legislation proclaiming the first Thursday of May each year as the day of prayer on the national calendar.

J. Gordon Henry, Murfreesboro, is Tennessee coordinator for the National Day of Prayer. He urges Tennesseans to become involved personally in observing the National Day of Prayer by taking five minutes at noon on May 2 to acknowledge and give thanks for blessings received from God through the years, recognize the need for personal and corporate renewal of moral values, and intercede both for the healing of our nation and for the guidance of governmental leaders.

A planning packet is available to interested individuals or churches from all denominations wishing to organize prayer meetings or other activities on the National Day of Prayer from J. Gordon Henry Ministries, 2114 Arrow Court, Murfreesboro, 37120, or telephone (615) 890-8384.

Baylor takes further steps to begin seminary

WACO (BP) — Baylor University's board of regents has approved the incorporation of the George W. Truett Theological Seminary and elected its first trustees.

The possibility of offering degree

Allen to address Historical Society

The Middle Tennessee Baptist Historical Society will meet April 30 at 11:30 a.m. in Belmont College's private dining room in the Gabhart Student Center.

The speaker will be Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor of the Baptist and Reflector and current president of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

Allen will address Tennessee Baptist news coverage during his tenure as editor of Tennessee's Baptist state newspaper.

The public is invited to attend. The cost of the meal is \$3.75.

programs and enrolling students on the Baylor campus was approved by the regents in a meeting Mar. 22. Earlier, the regents had reserved the Truett name, commemorating the ministry of the prominent Southern Baptist pastor and ardent advocate of religious liberty.

Truett, an 1897 Baylor graduate, was pastor of First Church, Dallas, for 47 years until his death in 1944.

Baylor could begin seminary operations if the regents determined the six Southern Baptist seminaries were being led away from their historic mission by extremist elements, according to President Herbert H. Reynolds.

The articles of incorporation provide for a 15-member, all-Southern Baptist board of trustees for the seminary, elected by Baylor's regents.

Elected trustees with terms expiring in 1991 were: Richard Bridges, pastor of First Church, Bowling, Green, Ky.; Gracie Hatfield Hilton, public relations counselor, Arlington, Texas; David C. Maddox, developer, Fullerton, Calif.; W. Winfred Moore, Baylor visiting

distinguished professor of religion; and Louis B. George, pastor, Mount Zion Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

Elected to terms expiring in 1992 were: James Flammig, pastor, First Church, Richmond, Va.; Finlay Graham, retired missionary, Dallas; Susie Grier Jaynes, church and civic leader, Waco; Daniel Rivera, vice chancellor for development, Texas State Technical Institute, Waco; and Dan Vestal, pastor, Dunwoody Church, Atlanta, Ga.

Elected to terms expiring in 1993 were: James A. Bowden, orthopedic surgeon, Waco; Gary L. Hearson, director of missions, Dallas Association; Jerold McBride, pastor, First Church, San Angelo, Texas; Sam Medina, attorney, Lubbock, Texas; and Joe Ratliff, pastor, Brentwood Church, Houston.

Incorporators of the Truett Seminary include: Robert B. Sloan, Baylor professor of religion and the George W. Truett Chair in Evangelism; Howard R. Dudgeon, Baylor treasurer; and W. Winfred Moore.



GENERAL SESSION — Congress participants hear weight lifter Paul Wren speak. — Photos by Kenny Rains

Royal Ambassadors/High School Baptist Young Men

RA Congress draws 1165

By Kenny Rains

NASHVILLE — Despite rain, snow, and chilling temperatures, 1165 Royal Ambassadors, High School Baptist Young Men, and their leaders from across the state gathered at Belmont College for the 37th annual Royal Ambassador Congress March 29-30.

Enthusiasm remained high as participants braved the weather for traditional congress events like the Five Kilometer Walk/Run for Missions.

"I want to show everyone I care about missions," said 13-year-old Eddie Lovin of Cedar Grove Church, Kingston, when asked why he participated in the event. He contributed the \$100 his sponsors had donated for missions. John Highsmith, 15, of Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, was the overall winner of the event.

Other water-logged but tough young men ignored the foul weather to compete in knot tying, tent pitching, log sawing, orienteering, and fire starting, all Campcraft Rodeo events. Other ac-

tivities were held indoors.

Crusader Royal Ambassador Curtis Mann of Pleasant View Church, Clarksville, was named overall champion of the RA Racer competition which included 602 handmade wooden cars.

One hundred and fifty young men received project awards for excellence. About 300 missions, campcraft, and handcraft projects were entered.

Speak Out winners were Lad Kris Daw, Central Church, Chattanooga; Crusader Andrew Grossholtz, Parkway Church, Goodlettsville; Pioneer David Lambert, Oak Street Church, Maryville; and High School Baptist Young Man Ezra Adams, First Church, Sevierville. Adams will represent Tennessee in the national competition.

The congress is more than interest activities for boys and young men. Bob Davison, program associate, Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood Department, said, "Those attending



RACING IN RAIN — Royal Ambassador Pioneers and High School Baptist Young Men gather at the starting line of the 5K Run/Walk for Missions.



SAWING AGAINST TIME — RA saws a log as quickly as he can in the Campcraft Rodeo competition.

this congress have come face to face with missions and our congress theme, "Teaching and Reaching All for Christ."

Davison further explained the congress offering of \$1826 will be used to provide materials for prison ministry and sports evangelism projects by Tennessee Brotherhood fellowships. Those attending the congress also learned about missions through more than 30 displays and over 20 missions conferences, many manned by missionaries, he added.

One of the highlights of the Friday night session was seeing 20 missionaries and mission volunteers in costume depicting the country, state, or focus of their ministry. Wade Watts, missionary to Peru and former Tennessee RA camp worker, shared, "God can use you to share Jesus Christ with a lost world."

Maurice Graham, missionary to Kuwait and hostage there prior to the Persian Gulf War, told the young men, "Missionaries start out as ordinary kids like you." He said despite his speech impediment God called him to serve as a missionary.

During the final session on Saturday, Paul Wren, Master Drugfree Power Lifting Champion, demonstrated his strength and gave his Christian testimony. During invitations led by Wren and Graham, 16 young men made spiritual decisions.

The congress was brought to a close by Nashvillian John Highsmith, who was elected as State Congress President. Other officers are Stephen Stewart of Woodmont Church, Nashville, secretary; and Dana Mahone, Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, state missions activity leader.

Our Readers Write

With gratitude

I wish to thank friends of the Tennessee Baptist Convention for their prayers and support during the two years my wife was ill with cancer, and kind expressions and love in her recent homegoing.

Dorothy went to be with Jesus on March 23. We were married for 60 years! So many helpful things were done for us, and I am grateful to the staff, Dr. Lowrie, the convention, Tennessee pastors, and churches.

W. B. Oakley
126 New Bethlehem Road
Dyer 38330

Accreditation idea

Many years ago, before all the strife we have had in the past decade, I questioned our seminaries being accredited by organizations outside our denomination. It is evident to me that they are not sympathetic to mainstream Southern Baptists. I have wondered if the organizations are even Christian.

I believe we could control ourselves. The majority of seminary students never attend other institutions; thus accredita-

tion is not important, as long as the students get a good theological education. Those wishing to attend other institutions, after attending our own, could do so at their own risk. I believe this group would be remarkably small.

I resent outside agencies telling us how to operate our seminaries.

Clay Frazier, pastor
Alpha Church
245 St. John Rd.
Morristown 37814

Questions FMB policy

I would like to speak on behalf of missionaries serving overseas under auspices of our Foreign Mission Board. A new policy covering termination of missionary personnel has recently been printed in the Manual for Overseas Personnel (Reference: MOP-201, MOP-202) and distributed to missionaries currently under appointment.

Twelve conditions considered as "career threatening" make up the bulk of the policy statement. These are relatively routine, covering such items as dishonesty, immorality, homosexuality, divorce, and "persistent insubordination in relation to supervisors and/or stated

policies."

With disbelief I read the concluding statement in the preamble to this list of career threatening conditions. It reads: "... they are not all-inclusive, and the Foreign Mission Board always retains the right to terminate any field personnel for any reason satisfactory to the board without disclosing to the person the reason for the termination."

No convention stateside agency or institution would even consider imposing such a policy on its employees. Why should the Foreign Mission Board do so? Must one surrender all rights and privileges to become a missionary? Do architects of this new policy really believe it will enhance the work of overseas missions? Are our missionaries less trustworthy than the rest of us? Are missionaries not entitled to know the reasons for their termination?

Missionaries I know are some of the most responsible, most capable, and most dedicated persons in the world. They deserve more freedom and trust than the new policy allows them. If missionaries can't be trusted, who can?

Page H. Kelley
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Union introduces 'First Step' program

West Tennessee high school students who have completed their freshman year will have an opportunity to enroll in progressive introductory college work through a new program being launched by Union University.

Titled "First Step," the venture will offer a total of four courses in two month-long terms and provide hands-on experience in a specialized area of study. Each summer term's course will provide up to seven hours credit toward a Union degree, said Carroll Griffin, assistant vice president for admissions.

The first term, a Summer Theatre Arts Workshop, is scheduled for June 6-July 3. It will consist of two morning classes with afternoons set aside for set building and rehearsals.

The second term, which will meet July 8-August 2, will focus on radio and television broadcasting.

Prospective applicants and their parents are encouraged to write the Union Admission Office or call collect at (901) 668-1818 for information about cost and procedures.

5.5 million American children are hungry, survey shows

ATLANTA (BP) — One of every eight American children under age 12 — 5.5 million — is hungry, according to a new comprehensive study of childhood hunger in the United States.

Millions more children are at risk of hunger, meaning one-fourth of America's children face food shortage, said the study conducted by the Washington-based Food Research and Action Center.

America's churches could help solve this problem if they would recognize the need and take action locally, said Nathan Porter, domestic hunger specialist with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"The extent of this problem is shocking," he said. "But it didn't become a fact today just because this study came out. What made it a reality is not the story. The reality has been there all along." If the study errs at all, Porter said, it estimates the number of hungry children too conservatively.

"The church should be reminded of the instance where the disciples tried to keep the children away from Jesus," he suggested. "Even though this may not be our intent, if churches do not target these families who are poor and children who are hungry we are doing the same thing as the disciples, keeping them away from Jesus and any hope for their survival.

"If we are not making an effort to discover where these children and their families are, if we are not equip-

ping our church workers and laity to minister to their needs and give them a witness to the Gospel, then we're totally ignoring what the church is all about."

The study was a three-year, \$1 million project involving door-to-door surveys in seven areas of the United States. Those surveyed were families with annual incomes representing 185 percent of the poverty level or less. This level is the point at which families qualify for free school lunches and food stamps.

In 1990, poverty level for a family of four was \$12,700. That means a family of four earning 185 percent of poverty level would make \$23,495.

Families with hungry children have average incomes 25 percent below the poverty line and spend nearly one-third of their incomes for food. These families spend an average of 68 cents per person per meal.

The largest expense such families face is housing, the study showed. While a typical American household spends 22 percent of its income for shelter, families with hungry children spend more than 60 percent of their income for shelter.

Porter said results of this study support the findings of other research on poverty and hunger in America: 23 percent of children under age six live in poverty, 78 percent of America's poverty-stricken are women and children, and one American child dies

every 53 minutes from the effects of poverty.

Contrary to popular belief, America's poor and hungry are not found primarily in cities, he added. In rural areas, an average of 18.5 percent of the population is poor, compared to a national average of 12 percent.

SBC hunger gifts continue decrease

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptists' hunger gifts in 1990 continued the downward spiral begun in 1985, according to figures released by the Southern Baptist Foreign and Home Mission Boards.

Southern Baptist contributions for domestic and foreign hunger in 1990 totaled \$7,780,072. This represents a decrease of 1.6 percent over similar giving in 1989.

In 1985, Southern Baptists gave \$11,830,146 to hunger ministries. That mark shattered the previous record high in 1984 of \$7,166,772.

Hunger gifts in 1986 dropped to \$9,089,279. Hunger contributions totaled \$8,931,339 in 1987, \$9,009,764 in 1988, and \$7,905,322 in 1989.

The Foreign Mission Board reported receipts of \$6,478,844, a decrease from \$6,613,785 in 1989. Receipts for domestic hunger through the Home Mission Board were \$1,301,228, a slight increase over \$1,291,537 in 1989.

The total figures for 1990 do not reflect receipts for general relief at the Foreign Mission Board. General relief

This is significant for Southern Baptists because the convention has more churches in rural areas than in metropolitan areas. Additionally, churches in comfortable suburban areas should be challenged to become allies with struggling inner city churches surrounded by poverty, he said.

funds go for projects which are not necessarily hunger specific, such as church repairs. Total figures also do not include hunger ministries that were utilized in local Baptist churches, associations, and state conventions.

"These figures are bad news. Hungry people everywhere will suffer more because we are giving less," said Robert Parham, associate director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, who coordinates awareness and action efforts on hunger issues among Southern Baptists.

"Some of us have blamed most of the downward spiral on the lack of media coverage of worldwide hunger," Parham said. "But after five years, we Southern Baptists ought to accept most of the responsibility for the drop. We must recapture the Biblical mandate: Feed the hungry!"

"The general recession, preoccupation with the war, and an increasing apathy toward the world's poor" are explanations for the decline in contributions, said John Cheyne, of the Foreign Mission Board.

Bivocational pastors gaining acceptance in SBC, leaders note

By Chip Alford

NASHVILLE (BP) — The acceptance of bivocational ministry is increasing in the Southern Baptist Convention, but not as quickly as the need for dual-career ministers, according to several SBC officials.

"The image of bivocational ministers is being lifted," said Dale Holloway, program consultant for bivocational ministries at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. "We're making progress, but it's much too slow."

Holloway contends one reason for the hesitancy of some Southern Baptists to embrace bivocational ministers is a misunderstanding of their background and training.

"Many people still see bivocational pastors as non-professional, eighth-grade dropouts, but that just isn't true," Holloway said. A denominational survey showed 37 percent of the 10,000 Southern Baptist bivocational pastors have 17 years or more of formal education. In addition, 38 percent were employed in secular jobs classified as "professional or managerial."

Churches led by bivocational pastors also tend to do well in baptism ratios, Sunday School enrollment, and attendance, Holloway said. For every 100 church members led by a bivocational pastor, a survey showed 4.3 people were baptized, 77.8 percent were

enrolled in Sunday School, and 45.6 percent attended regularly. For the same number led by a full-time pastor, 4.1 people were baptized, 76.9 percent were enrolled in Sunday School, and 43.3 percent attended regularly.

As education efforts continue, Holloway said acceptance of bivocational ministry is increasing among seminary students, full-time ministers, and church members.

A small but increasing number of students at SBC colleges and seminaries are preparing for careers in both the secular and ministerial arenas, according to David Bunch, assistant vice president for church extension at the Home Mission Board.

Conferences on bivocational ministry are being held on the associational, state, and convention-wide levels, and an SBC organization for bivocational ministers was formed last December. Convention agencies and institutions, state conventions, and local associations are also including bivocational ministry as part of their missions and evangelism strategies.

In addition to bivocational pastors, about 32,000 ministers of music are part time, volunteer, or bivocational, as are thousands of ministers of education, youth, children, and other church staff members.

Bunch cited several reasons for the slowly growing acceptance of bivocational ministry. Sagging economies and population shifts in some areas have left many Baptist churches unable to pay the salary of a full-time pastor. These churches are finding their needs can be met by bivocational ministers, Bunch said.

Another factor is the feeling among some ministers that bivocational ministry provides greater financial

security, Bunch said. Other ministers simply have other job skills they want to keep in use.

The contribution of bivocational ministers is vital to Southern Baptist church planting efforts, Bunch said, especially in newer convention areas.

D. G. McCoury, pastoral leadership consultant in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church administration department, said: "I've met some guys who start a church as a bivocational pastor, get the church to call someone else as pastor, and then go somewhere else and start another church. They really feel that this is their calling."

Despite the needs in newer convention areas, bivocational pastors are concentrated in the South. For example, more than 50 percent of pastors in Alabama are bivocational, according to Holloway.

"We're hoping some bivocational ministers will see this as a challenge," Holloway said. "There is a desperate need for church planters in the East, West, and North."

RTVC begins . . .

(continued from page 1)

Both networks will carry programs produced by many different church and denominational programmers.

"The Radio and Television Commission is committed to the Great Commission," Johnson said. "Our assignment is to proclaim the Gospel and we take that mission very seriously."

"The purchase of FamilyNet will open a door of opportunity that could enable us to touch as many as 25 percent of the television households in the United States, and that is a challenge we must meet," Johnson concluded.

Bethea family returns to United States

MOMBASA, Kenya (BP) — Southern Baptist missionary Ralph Bethea and his four children left Kenya April 3 for the United States, where his murdered wife, Lynda, was buried later in the week.

Her body was flown out of Kenya separately after being released by police officials investigating the killing.

She was beaten to death March 27 by robbers on a rural road in Kenya, according to her husband, also badly beaten as he tried to fight off the attackers. Local police initially reported four suspects had been arrested, but national police have since declined to comment on the case.

X-ray examinations of Bethea April 2 confirmed several cracked ribs and revealed a broken wrist. Bethea also is experiencing double vision. A CAT scan showed he sustained a slight concussion from blows to his head. He also suffered hip and shoulder injuries and numerous abrasions.

Funeral services were held April 5 at First Church in Tulsa, Okla., with a sunrise burial service in Tulsa on April 6. The Bethea family also attended a memorial service later that day at First Church in Euless, Texas. Additional memorial services are scheduled for April 12 at First Church, Jackson, Miss., and April 13 at Highview Church, Louisville, Ky.

Bethea and his children, Ralph III, 17; Joshua, 13; Luke, 12; and Lizette, 9, plan to spend time with his parents in Oklahoma and on a family farm in Mississippi and decide whether or not to return to Kenya.

The family is being accompanied to the United States by Joseph Maisha, pastor of the 4000-member Ushindi Baptist Church in Mombasa, and Bay Forrest, a Southern Baptist who teaches at Rift Valley Academy in Kenya, where the two older Bethea children attend school.

Knoxville pastors lead rescue of Liberian family

JEFFERSON CITY — The Carson-Newman College board of trustees passed a resolution to honor four Knoxville Baptist pastors for their involvement in the rescue and reunion of the family of Gabriel Swope, a native Liberian who is a graduate student at Carson-Newman.

All four pastors are Carson-Newman alumni. The resolution was presented by college president Cordell Maddox at the Knox County Association executive board meeting March 11 at Wallace Memorial Church.

Swope became friends with Bob Peek in 1977 while he was a student at Tennessee Wesleyan and Peek was pastor of East Athens Church. Bob and Willodene Peek, who are now in Knoxville, helped raise the money for Swope's missionary trips to Liberia.

Swope was imprisoned seven times in his native Liberia for his Christian beliefs. His father, a tribal chief, disowned him after he heard that Gabriel had become a Christian.

After studying at Morristown College and Tennessee Wesleyan College, he returned to his homeland and founded four churches and organized Christian youth groups. But the Liberian government sought him for leadership because of his education. When he refused, the government became suspicious.

In 1988, he was kidnapped, beaten, and thrown in a swamp. He was found by a passerby, and later escaped from the country disguised as a woman. However, his wife and children were still in Liberia.

Peek, who now serves as associate pastor at Ridgeview Church and chaplain at Rockwood Baptist Hospital, initiated an effort to reunite the family. He was joined by three pastors: Jerry Taylor, Ridgeview Church; Bill Hild, Ball Camp Church, and Dudley Cochrum, Glenwood Church.

After news of the Liberian civil war, Swope gave up hope that he would ever see his family again. But a phone call in October restored his optimism.

His wife, Carolann, had escaped with their children. However, he was unable to locate them. Hild turned to Southern Baptist missionary David Brown who was serving in Mann, Ivory Coast.

Brown promised to help, but his search to locate three people among some 200,000 was not an easy task. Hild helped raise money from nine Knoxville Baptist churches, bought plane tickets, corresponded with embassies and congressmen, and waited.

Meanwhile, Brown searched through refugee journals without success. Finally, a Liberian man said he knew Carolann's sister. In less than one hour

of looking, he had found the missing family.

They still needed a temporary passport. The Doe government had fallen, and most of the staff of the Liberian Embassy was arrested and charged for gun-running. Amid this dangerous situation, Lincoln Brownell stepped in and secured the passports. Brownell, a graduate of Southern Seminary, had been dean of students at the Liberian Baptist Seminary.

With a passport and return plane tickets in hand, Hild flew to the Ivory Coast to locate Carolann and bring her to safety. "Tens of thousands want to immigrate, and thousands are turned down. I believe what made the difference was an American person in a business suit who had come to Africa to get them," said Hild. Even then, the visa officer announced loudly that Carolann did not qualify. "I thought for a moment that the whole thing had fallen through."

But they finally made it home, and on Dec. 8, Gabriel and Carolann renewed their wedding vows at Ball Camp Church with Bob Peek officiating the ceremony. Bill Hild gave the bride away, and Jerry Taylor took part in an African tradition in which a friend wears the groom's shirt and speaks on his behalf.

The Swopes are now members of

Ridgeview Church, Gabriel is completing his education at Carson-Newman, the children are enrolled at an area school, and Carolann hopes to go to Carson-Newman when Gabriel finishes.

For now, they are still praying for the safety of Carolann's sisters and mother who are still in the Ivory Coast. Some of the money raised by the churches was donated to help provide for their needs in the refugee camp.

The nine Baptist churches which contributed to this effort were Valley Grove (Ball Camp), Ball Camp, Ridgeview, Galilee, Fairview, Glenwood, Inskip, Mount Harmony, and First Church, Powell. The Swopes are grateful to each of these churches, the pastors, and to Congressman John J. Duncan Jr., and his aides for helping them be a family again.

The resolution states: "We praise God for the miracles He worked through lives: for one man who endangered his own life for his Christian commitment, escaped persecution, and almost gave up hope that his wife and children had survived a massacre, and for one missionary who located them amid some 200,000 people, and finally, for four pastors who brought them together for a joyous and miraculous reunion."

Bob McCullough recalls 30-year tenure at church

By Melanie Tucker

MARYVILLE — Bob McCullough is better known as "preacher" to members of the community. He has spent the last 30 years pastoring Beech Grove Church in an age when the average stay at one church for

Collection funds Bibles for Soviet Union

NASHVILLE — More than 34,000 New Testaments in the Russian language will be distributed in the Soviet Union, thanks to funds raised at the 61 Baptist book stores. A book about salvation has been translated also.

The book stores recently concluded a collection campaign in connection with the Moscow Project, an interdenominational effort to place four million copies of Scriptures in the hands of Russian families by September. The project is sponsored by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association, in cooperation with the Christian Booksellers Association, Christian Book Literature International, and The International Bible Society.

Baptist book stores from coast to coast provided Moscow Project collection packets for interested customers. More than \$6800 was raised, and when matched by gifts from the International Bible Society, will provide 34,355 Russian-translated New Testaments.

What It Means to Be Born Again, has been translated for distribution in the Soviet Union. People planning to travel to the Soviet Union may want to share a book with someone.

The book will be available in the United States May 1 for a nominal cost. Baptist Book Stores should be stocked with it.

Southern Baptist pastors is two years. McCullough has lived in about 25 of the 50 states, is a World War II former

prisoner of war, a proud grandfather of five grandchildren, and says he doesn't spend too much time reminiscing about it all because he has too much work ahead.

McCullough is the senior pastor in Blount County and admits it was never his intention to take a church here. It was his plan to return to South Alabama after schooling was complete. He was living in Lakemont and attending the University of Tennessee in Knoxville as a graduate assistant in the department of philosophy when he joined Beech Grove as a member years ago. From there he went on to become the first paid song leader at Beech Grove and then answered the call to become pastor in February 1961.

"I guess they couldn't stand my singing," McCullough said.

When McCullough arrived at Beech Grove, there were about 80 members, most of the area was farmland, and New Topside Road where the church is located, didn't exist. "It was a little red building," McCullough said. The present sanctuary was constructed ten years after McCullough took the pastorate.

McCullough is very proud of his congregation which now totals about 700 on the membership rolls with an average weekly attendance of 400. He describes his flock as a young church where most of the members are age 40 and under.



McCULLOUGH

The youthfulness of the church just happened, McCullough said. He said the area around Beech Grove has grown tremendously in the past few years with new apartments, condominiums, and subdivisions dotted along New Topside Road. Most of those settling there are young families, the pastor noted.

And the fact Beech Grove is known for its youthful vitality suits McCullough fine. He said the many programs like Royal Ambassadors, Acteens, Girls in Action, and the children's extended Sunday School hour are what he is most proud of along with a strong college and career class.

McCullough believes he has an edge because of his longevity at Beech Grove. He is now marrying the children of couples he married years ago and said the 30 years as pastor has allowed him to form close bonds with members and nurture them as Christians.

"I would dread going someplace else," he admitted.

This longtime pastor of Blount County mixes his message of Christianity with laughter. The Lord had a good sense of humor and so should His congregation, McCullough said. "People ought to laugh a little."

McCullough and his wife, Lee, have three children, all of whom are married and part of Beech Grove Church.

The church continues to grow, and McCullough said with the completion of Pellissippi Parkway, Beech Grove will be in need of additional space. The church is undertaking a major building construction project for a family life center on the church property now. Fund raising is underway for the structure which will provide additional Sunday School rooms, nursery, and area for preschoolers.

"We are just bulging," McCullough said of the overcrowded classrooms. "When I have to counsel with people in the kitchen, that's crowded. But that's the kind of problem you like to have."

McCullough said he doesn't know where the 30 years have gone as he begins his 31st year at Beech Grove. Although he didn't intend to stay he says now he wouldn't want to be anywhere else. He said he won't retire now because of the beginning of the building program and will continue his ministry while his good health remains.

There are unchurched people McCullough has yet to meet and a congregation already there that has depended on him for the last three decades.

"There's too much to do now without looking back," the pastor said. — Tucker writes for The Daily Times in Maryville. Used with permission.

Holston Association, BSU honor Fred Witty

Fred S. Witty Jr., Baptist Student Union director at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, will retire July 31 after 40 years of campus ministry, including the last 35 at ETSU.

In recognition of Witty's service, Holston Association and the ETSU Baptist Student Union advisory committee will honor Witty at a banquet April 27 in the ETSU Culp Center Ballroom.

Reservations for the banquet are \$15 and may be sent to Sam Sorrells, Box 20080A, Johnson City, Tenn. 37614.

Tickets may be picked up at the door or at a welcoming coffee at the BSU from 5-6:45 p.m. The banquet begins at 7 p.m.

Tennessee/Philippines partnership changes association

Haywood Association sent four mission teams totaling 13 volunteers to serve with partner churches in the Philippines last month. Three teams led in evangelistic crusades, while one team helped to construct a church building. Team members lived in the homes of the Filipino people while serving with the Philippine Baptist churches to reach their people with the Gospel of Christ.

The teams were led by Charles Pratt, director of missions, Brownsville. Churches have been contributing gifts to purchase materials for the church building at Villasis Church, about 150 miles north of Manila on Luzon Island. Every church in the association, including a new Spanish mission, contributed gifts for the materials of the new building.

In addition to this project, a construction and evangelism team assisted the Pangarap Village Southern Baptist Church just outside Manila. That team put down a well and provided running water for the church and the pastor's residence. Cost of material for the Pangarap work was contributed by Allen Church near Brownsville. The team also worked on a new roof for the church at Pangarap and conducted an evangelistic crusade.

Lonnie Robinson from Allen Church said, "Anyone that desires to experience the fullness and the joy of the Christian faith should be open and obedient to the Lord in serving on a mission team." Robinson, who served in the Philippines on a team last year, added, "I was blessed more in my spiritual growth in the Lord than those that I ministered to in the Philippines."

Mission teams from Haywood Association also served in Villasis and



TEAM MEMBERS — Haywood Association recently sent 13 volunteers to the Philippines. From left, seated, Charles Pratt, Velma Nelson, Latonya Stewart, Billy Castellaw, and Mike Hopper. Standing, Bill Presley, Milton Black, Ray Ellington, Billy Cobb, Terry Brown, Lonnie Robinson, and Jerry Foster.

Pangarap Village in 1990.

Besides these two areas, other crusade teams served in Sison and Pozorrubio which are located about 200 miles north of Manila. These teams led in crusades at various churches and mission points around the villages nearby. One evangelism team lived in a home in Pozorrubio that was owned by a Filipino family who now live in Toone, Hardeman County. "It is a small world indeed," said Pratt, a member of Brownsville Church.

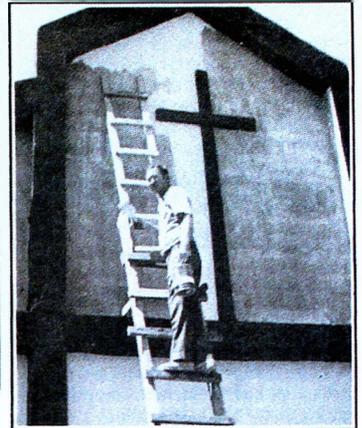
Each team reported preaching in several unusual places like rice fields, basketball courts, and open places where there were no church buildings. "It was an awesome experience to preach in locations where no man had ever preached the Gospel and where there were no churches of any kind," stated Pratt. He added, "It was a great joy to see people in their 60s and

80s accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord."

There were more than 585 professions of faith reported by the four teams with 135 other decisions during the two-week mission trip. Lonnie Robinson summed up the feelings of the group by saying, "To God be the glory for the great things he has done."

Latonya Stewart from Woodland Church, serving on her second Philippine mission trip, stated, "I am amazed at the openness of the Filipino people and their interest in the Gospel. Especially I was impressed with the maturity of the high school students as we shared the message of salvation and with the number that accepted Christ as their Savior, with tears in their eyes," added Stewart.

Milton Black, a member of Poplar Corner Church in Brownsville noted,



UP HIGH — Volunteer Terry Brown needed a long ladder for painting.

"This was a tremendous experience that deepened my faith in the Lord and our Southern Baptist work around the world." He added, "This was my first experience with a mission project but I surely would encourage anyone to go." Mike Hopper, a member of Holly Grove Church, said, "I really grew spiritually as I have never had to depend upon the Lord as I did in the Philippines."

The construction workers worked on the building during the day and led in worship services and Bible studies at night and on both Sundays. The volunteers were assisted by Filipino church members in constructing concrete and block walls. Before the crew departed they painted most of the inside walls and even part of the outside of the building.

On the final night three of the teams joined with four congregations at Villasis to dedicate the building and have a joint worship experience of celebration. Pratt delivered the message of dedication while other team members took part in the victory celebration of the new building. "It was a tremendous joy and honor for me to be able to return to Villasis Baptist," said Pratt. He served in the Villasis church last year with an evangelistic team.

The teams attempted to place the needs they recognized in some order of priority. Bill Presley of Brownsville Church observed, "There are many great needs among the Filipino people, but I believe the need for transportation for the pastors is one of the greatest we discovered." Some of the pastors don't have any means of getting from one church mission point to another, he said.

The association may try to help at least two pastors, said Pratt. It would cost about \$3000 to purchase two motorcycles with passenger carts, a reasonable and available means of transportation in the villages, Pratt added.

Other needs are Bibles in English and in their native languages.

Other team members who participated in the mission trip were Terry Brown, Holly Grove Church; Jerry Foster and Ray Ellington, Zion Church; Velma Nelson, Crossroads Church; Billy Cobb, First Church, Bells; Billy Castellaw, Poplar Corner Church; and Kim North, pastor of New Middleton Church, Gordonsville.

Tennessee students fund, commission missionaries

During the April 5-7 annual State Spring Conference for students, 360 students commissioned 46 of their peers as summer missionaries, pledging both spiritual and financial support.

Members of Baptist Student Unions on 33 state campuses have set a 1990-91 goal of \$94,575 to fund missions work,

which includes the 46 commissioned at this meeting and about 600 students who will participate in Special Projects Other Than Summer (SPOTS) missions teams during the year.

Other activities of the conference included messages by Esther Burroughs, national evangelism consultant, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board,

based in Atlanta, Ga.; Jerry Rankin, area director, Southern Asia and the Pacific, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.; and Nick Foster, minister to students, First Church, Knoxville. Numerous seminars and recreation activities were attended by students, including an orientation for the summer missionaries.

Tennessee college students commissioned for service

SUMMER — FOREIGN MISSIONS

Brazil
Tara Champion, Carson-Newman College
Cindy Foust, Union University
Jim Guthrie, University of Tennessee - Chattanooga
Shelma Kelly, Tennessee Technological University
Brad Lee, UT-Knoxville
Don Price, Rhodes College
Mark Slagle, UT-Memphis
Jennifer Stanfield, Carson-Newman
Lane Steele, Tennessee Tech
Brian Whaley, UT-Knoxville
Phan Lam, UT-Martin

Guam
Sherrill Miller, UT-Knoxville

Leningrad
Dan Rowland, Carson-Newman
Stan Smith, Middle Tennessee State University
James Tilton, Carson-Newman

Indiana
Stephen Dean, Belmont College

Kentucky
Lisa Branam, Maryville College

Louisiana
Tiffany Halliburton, MTSU

Michigan
Mike Ake, UT-Chattanooga
Christina Beeler, Carson-Newman
Denise Brown, Union
Tim King, Union
Jeana Lane, UT-Knoxville
Scott Lester, Cumberland University
Donna Simpson, UT-Chattanooga
Chase Peebles, Carson-Newman

New Jersey

SUMMER — TENNESSEE MISSIONS

Chattanooga
Barney Forman, Jackson State Community College
Anne Smith, Union

Franklin
Julie Justice, Lincoln Memorial
Darlene White, Hiwassee College

Gatlinburg
Jason Fisher, Memphis State
Rosetta Howard, Volunteer State Community College

Knoxville
Ginny Knott, Union
Nathan Dorrell, Motlow State Community College
Laura Powell, UT-Chattanooga

Memphis
Rachel Galyon, UT-Knoxville
Janeen Jones, Union

Millington
Carey Dyer, Union

SUMMER — HOME MISSIONS

Alaska
Jane Geggus, Union

California
Russ Quinn, Union

Canada
Charles Shields, Cleveland State Community College
Karen Thomas, Lincoln Memorial University

Colorado
Dacia Hall, Union

Florida
Kristy Gayton, Chattanooga State Technological Community College
Michael Hays, Memphis State University
Angela Potter, Memphis State

Volunteers, churches share joy of missions

Medical volunteers Jeanette Acres of Oneida and Debbie Greene of Cumberland Furnace have a lot in common despite not knowing each other before they participated in the health care trip to the Philippines in March.

Both are nurses and both shared a strong desire to participate in missions, yet they also faced financial limitations.

The two Baptist nurses, however, just happened to belong to churches whose members caught their zeal for missions and wanted to help.

While it is not uncommon for Tennessee Baptist churches to assist members who participate in volunteer missions, Cumberland Drive Church, Clarksville, and Bethlehem Church, Oneida, went "the extra mile."

Greene, of Cumberland Drive, readily admits she could not have made the trip without the support of her church family and other friends in Cumberland Association, who raised the entire amount needed for the trip.

Noting that she has always had a

desire to participate in missions since she was a teenager, Greene became excited when she learned about the medical project in the Philippines.

She began to pray about the trip and asked others to pray as well.

"Things began to fall in place. Doors were opened and emotional, prayerful, and financial support began to take place," Greene recalled.

Members sacrificed to assist Greene with her finances. One couple in the church, instead of giving each other Christmas gifts, used the entire amount they would have spent to give to Greene to use toward the trip.

Other members did similar things. The GAs at Cumberland Drive helped raise money as did RAs from the church and the association.

Cumberland Drive Pastor Gary Shockley noted the congregation rallied behind Greene with not only financial support, but prayer support as well.

"It has been a positive thing for our church," Shockley said, adding that it "has made some of our members more aware of what's going on in missions."

Jeanette Acres, a member of Bethlehem Church, Oneida, noted the "Lord chose this trip for me." She felt the call to go last July after listening to a message from TBC Partnership Missions Director Clarence Stewart who spoke at her church.

She noted the message came "exactly six years from the time of my rededication and full commitment of my life to the Lord."

After she made her decision to participate, church members took the initiative, Acres said.

She recalled that various Sunday School classes gave toward her trip as did the WMU. WMU members from other churches in New River Association also contributed, she said.

The church held a commissioning service for Acres before she left, and then took up a special offering. In all, the gifts provided about 50 percent of the funding for the trip, Acres said. A gift from her father amounted to most of the remainder of the amount needed, she added.

Clyde Martin, pastor of Bethlehem Church, said it was Acres' "obvious surrender to what God called her to do that led the church to support her emotionally and financially."

Martin also feels the church bonded

together. "I think and hope this made us even more missions minded," he said.

Acres noted the help she received reinforced her decision to go. "It proves again God's faithfulness to provide every detail," she said. — *Lonnie Wilkey*

Ardmore church calls David Neal as pastor

Cash Point Church, Ardmore, recently called David Neal as pastor.

The Indiana native served as pastor of a mission church in Slidell, La., for two years. He is a graduate of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

He was ordained in 1989 at First Church, Pulaski.

Neal and his wife, Melissa, have two children, Sarah, 10, and Stephen, 7.

CAMPUS MINISTER

Mars Hill College, a Baptist, liberal arts institution in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, invites applications for the position of campus minister. If interested, send complete vita and three references with complete addresses and phone numbers to: Dr. Joel F. Reed, Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, N.C. 28754.

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TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

I have just returned from Michigan from an annual visit to evaluate the Tennessee-Michigan Partnership. The brethren in Michigan are grateful for your contribution to the work of the Lord in their state.

A part of our meeting was at Columbia Avenue Church in Pontiac. This church has been one of the pillars of the work in Michigan. I noticed a plaque on the wall in which this church had been honored. At the time the recognition was made this church had started 30 congregations. They have started others since then.

As I thought about this, I realized I was standing in a great church. It would probably not make any list of great churches that the world would put together, but they would surely make our Lord's list. They have been



LOWRIE

like the church at Antioch — constantly sending people out to start churches. They have thought more of others than of themselves. This fits our Lord's definition of greatness.

One of the greatest benefits in our partnership is the encouragement that we give to churches like this. As they work to evangelize the near million people of their beautiful state, they need our prayers and assistance.

Has your church sent a team to Michigan? Let me encourage you to consider it. God has so richly blessed Tennessee Baptists that we need to share. Your church could help a church be born, could help a church grow, could help build a building, or find a special project that fits the gift of your church. If your church cannot send a team, you could become a part of a team from your association, or another church.

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The Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes provides an alternative to abortion at our Homes for Unwed Mothers. We know that there are children living today who would have been aborted, because their mothers have told us of their changed decisions.
This ministry to unwed mothers is only one of the many TBCH programs supported by the Mother's Day Offering. This year's goal of \$1,000,000 will provide about one-third of the funds needed to support the work of the Children's Homes.
Church leaders: it's not too late to order Mother's Day Offering materials. Please call our toll-free number, 1-800 624 8591.

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes
A Ministry of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

TenneScene

... Starting at Indian Mound, going south to Grinders Switch, and on to Iron City ...

Leadership ...

First Church, North Augusta, S.C., called Jane Griz as minister to senior adults effective April 2. She was interim minister of education at South Knoxville Church, Knoxville.

Steve Tiebout and Cami Conger, both students at Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, have been called as staff members of First Church, Monterey. Tiebout will be youth worker and Conger will serve as children's music worker.

The new associate minister of music and church growth at Broadway Church, Knoxville, is Tim Bounds. The native of Knoxville was an interim minister at the church. He is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

Churches ...

Buffat Heights Church, Knoxville, will observe its 20th anniversary April 14 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. The church was created when Oakland Street Church, Rogers Memorial Church, and Grace Memorial Church merged. K.V. Holt, David Sharp, Richard Crowley, and Jim Henry are former pastors. Henry, northeast regional director of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, will speak at the morning worship service.

Stewardship meetings

Eight regional church stewardship conferences will be held across Tennessee from April 15 through May 2. A conference for the central region was held April 9 at Clearview Church in Franklin.

The conferences, sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program and Stewardship Development Department, will be led by Archer Thorpe, department director.

All conferences, unless noted otherwise, begin at 10:30 a.m., local time, and go through noon. A meal is provided after each conference. The conference is open to pastors, church staff, and lay leaders.

Conferences are as follows:
Northwestern region: April 15,

A covered dish luncheon will be served in the fellowship hall following the morning service. The anniversary observance will include music by former ministers of music and the recognition of those who have been ordained by the church.

A homecoming was held March 30 on the tenth anniversary of Grace Church, Sparta, a new member of Union Association. Freddie Copeland and James Hutchings preached and "The Gospel Sounds" and "New Bethel Choir" performed.

Ridgeview Church, Knoxville, will break ground April 14 for a Family Life Center and Child Day Care Center.

Former members of Central Church, Johnson City, are invited to a homecoming and dinner on the ground April 21. The event will be a part of the Whole Life Festival at the church.

E. Glenn Hinson, professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., will speak at Rutledge Church, Rutledge, April 12-14 on "Christian Spirituality." A worship activity for children will be provided.

Associations ...

Madison-Chester Association, along

set across state

Beulah Association office
Southwestern region: April 16, Madison-Chester and Crockett Association office

Western region: April 18, Camp Cordova, 6-8:30 p.m., meal before
South Central region: April 22, Lawrence County Association office

Southeastern region: April 25, Hamilton County Association office

Eastern region: April 29, First Church, Concord

Northeastern region: April 30, Holston Association office

North Central region: May 2, First Church, Smithville

For additional information about these conferences contact Thorpe at (615) 371-2018.

with Haywood Association, and several other associations will build a home April 13 at Union University, Jackson, for furloughing missionaries. The one-day project is patterned after the associational building project of Haywood Association, reported Director of Missions Charles Pratt. The home would provide housing for missionaries who would teach at the school.

Revivals ...

Central Church of Bearden, Knoxville, will hold revival April 14-17. Charles Page will be evangelist and Dave Jones will be music evangelist.

Cumberland Drive Church, Clarksville, will hold revival April 14-19 led by D. L. Lowrie, Tennessee Baptist Convention executive director. The theme is "Telling the Good News." Special emphases include the family on Monday, battle of the missions banner on Tuesday, and adult/youth challenge on Friday.

During April 14-19 Daniel Bell, assistant pastor, Elliston Avenue Church, Memphis, will lead revival at Webb Church, Newport.

Wilson County Association reports revivals among the following churches. Churches, dates, and speakers are: Big Springs Chapel, Lebanon, April 15-21, Tim Shutt, evangelist; Southside Church, Lebanon, April 15-21, Thurman Seber; Hurricane Church, Lebanon, April 19-21, John C. Evans; Fairview Church, Lebanon, April 21-25, Jack Custer; Fellowship Church, Lebanon, April 22-26, Milton Hicks; Barton's Creek Church, Lebanon, April 28 to May 1, W. L. Baker; Cedar Grove Church, Lebanon, April 28 to May 2, Russ Stephens; Gladeville Church, Gladeville, May 5-12, James White.

James Maxwell of Georgia will lead revival April 14-19 at Scott Avenue Church, Cookeville.

First Church, Linden, will hold its second annual deaf revival April 14. Evangelist will be Carter Bearden of



NOTE BURNED — Eastside Church, Burns, experienced a significant milestone recently by burning the note on its building. The debt was retired 14 years early. Pictured are members of the original building committee. From left, Margie Chester, Charles Davis, Carl Nadine, Martha Murray, Henry Beard, and Doyle Pendergrass. Robert E. Hammer is pastor.

the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Bearden is deaf and will deliver the messages in sign language. Benny Cox of Memphis will voice interpret the messages which will be held at the regular morning service and again at 2 p.m. A meal will be served between the services.

Watauga Association reported the following churches will hold revival during April. Church names, dates, and leaders follow: Beck Mountain Church, Elizabethton, April 14-19, Clarence Phillips; Powder Branch Church, Johnson City, April 18-21, Haskel Ingram; Rittertown Church, Hampton, begins April 28, Clarence Phillips; and Sinking Creek Church, Johnson City, April 14-18, Benny Jackson.

The following churches in Beech River Association will hold revival during April: Bear Creek Church, Parsons, April 14-17, Don Whitt; Mt. Ararat Church, Darden, April 12-14, youth team from Union University; Jackson; Rock Hill Church, Lexington, April 12-14; and Salem Church, Parsons, April 14-19, Sammy Emison and Tony Holland.

Baptist Women hold 'get-together'

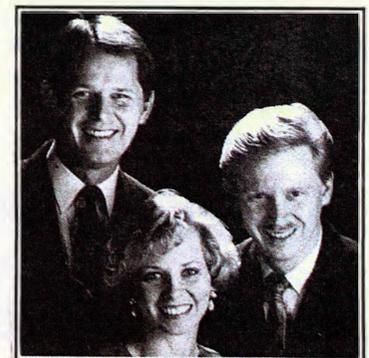
"Empowered for Today's World" will be the theme of the Get-Together for Baptist Women scheduled April 19-21 at the Gatlinburg Convention Center.

Four home and foreign missionaries will share personal experiences during the weekend meeting: Beverly Smothers, Holston Association, Johnson City; Rebekah Sumrall, Rochester, N.Y.; Dartha Babcock, Sierra Leone; and Edith Vaughn, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary from Brazil.

Music throughout the conference will be provided by The Alleys — Bob and Ron Alley and their sister, Vivian Alley Powell, natives of Chattanooga who have combined their musical talents to provide a new family music ministry. Ron Alley formerly worked in the Church Music Department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Nelda Seal, executive director of Louisiana WMU, will lead the Bible study during the meeting.

Conferences focus on helping women



THE ALLEYS

face today's concerns. A special conference for ministers' wives will be led by Alice Lowrie, wife of TBC Executive Director D. L. Lowrie.

The get-together begins on Friday at 8 p.m. and will conclude by 11 a.m. on Sunday. Registration fee is \$10.

For additional information, contact Tennessee WMU at (615) 371-2038.



BIVOCATIONAL PASTORS — Members of the Bivocational Pastors' Conference who recently met at Union University decided to form a permanent fellowship and elect officers. Wilburn Nelson, left, a Gibson County farmer and pastor of Chapel Hill Church, Milan, was elected president. Dwayne Ervin of Trezevant, center, owner of a Christian bookstore in Weakley County, was named secretary-treasurer. He is currently doing pulpit supply. Michael Powers, right, principal of Andrew Jackson Elementary School in Madison County and a resident of Jackson, was elected vice president. Powers is pastor of First Indian Church in Ripley.

Volunteers still needed for Crossover Atlanta project

ATLANTA (BP) — April 30 is the deadline for volunteers to sign up for Crossover Atlanta, the evangelistic effort preceding this year's annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Despite rumors that have circulated in some states, Crossover Atlanta has not been cancelled, said Bobby Sunderland, project manager and Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staff member.

In fact, the multi-faceted event recently has been expanded to include feeding Atlanta's homeless and poor from mobile disaster relief units,

Sunderland said. This ministry will be done by Baptist Men's groups from several state conventions.

The basic element of Crossover Atlanta is three days of door-to-door witnessing in eight metropolitan Atlanta associations. Additional projects include a one-day Soul Winning Encounter, street evangelism, construction of four to seven church buildings, and a telemarketing project to start a new congregation.

For the main evangelistic blitz, churches from outside the Atlanta area will team up with churches inside the Atlanta area. Due to coordination re-

quirements, churches planning to participate must send a letter of commitment to the HMB no later than April 30.

Churches or individuals willing to participate in Crossover Atlanta should write to Bobby Sunderland, Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30367.

Co-chairmen for Crossover Atlanta are Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, Miss., and Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga.

"There are many people in the Atlanta area who do not know Christ," Reighard said. Crossover Atlanta will give some of our churches a good deal of encouragement to reach out and touch their community, with the heightened awareness the Southern Baptist Convention will bring to Atlanta, he added.

Reighard said another reason for churches to participate in Crossover Atlanta is to prepare for Crossover Indianapolis, a similar project planned prior to the convention's 1992 annual meeting.

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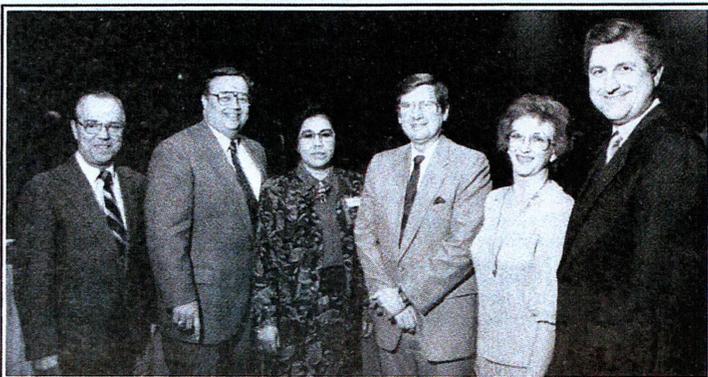
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NEW HMB OFFICERS — New officers of the Home Mission Board, pictured with HMB President Larry Lewis, are, from left, Johnny Jackson, vocational evangelist, Little Rock, Ark., chairman; Ron Phillips, pastor of Central Church, Hixson, first vice chairman; Linda Principe, member of First Church, Brandenburg, Ky., assistant secretary; Lewis; Alice Sanders, member of First Church, Bomberg, S.C., secretary; and Bob Curtis, pastor of Ballwin Church, St. Louis, Mo., second vice chairman.

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Prayer Breakfast Speaker

Dr. Richard D. Land is Executive Director-Treasurer of the Christian Life Commission, the Southern Baptist Convention's agency for "applied Christianity" (social and moral concerns). He has served in this position since his election in October, 1988.

Dr. Richard D. Land

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David's strength increases

By Robert Armour, retired director of missions; Troy

We stand in amazement as God's will is accomplished, in spite of circumstances. This was a time of war and rumors of war for the family of David and the family of Saul. The present and future looked very dark at times, but, as one of our missionaries said long ago, the future for David looked as bright as the promises of God.

The growing strength of David (v. 3) The circumstances of war usually contribute to the weakness of nations. David grew stronger while his enemy grew weaker. When the games of Joab and Abner developed into a full scale war at the pool of Gibeon, many may have said to David that this was tragic (ch. 2:11-17). It seems though, out of just such tragic type circumstances,

David's kingdom grew.
Abner's coalition with David (ch. 3:20-21)

Disagreements cause people to do strange things and so does a strong desire for power. It is difficult to determine which was the stronger influence in Abner's decision to approach David with the proposition of bringing the northern tribes under his rule. David accepted Abner's offer with one condition — that Michal be taken from her present husband and returned to David. Saul gave Michal to another man when David fled from him (1 Samuel 25:44). It was agreed and Abner and his men went away in peace (v. 21). David's life seems to have been one of striving to promote peace and harmony when possible.

Disagreement among leaders (ch. 3:27-29)

When Joab heard about David's agreement with Abner, he became very angry and killed Abner. It may have been that he saw a rival in Abner, for surely David would use Abner in a place of leadership. It may have also been that he wanted revenge for Abner's having killed his brother in battle (2 Samuel 2:18-23). Revenge can cause great men to do evil things.

BIBLE BOOK

April 14 Lesson

Basic Passage: 2 Samuel 3:1-4:12

David did not agree with this action of Joab, but the political situation seems to have been so delicate that David did not punish Joab. He did make sure everyone knew he and the tribe of Judah did not have anything to do with this treacherous deed. He also pronounced a curse upon Joab and his

family. He did not punish him physically, but turned him over to the wrath of God.

The murder of Ishbosheth (ch. 4:5-8) Recab and Baanah went into the house of Ishbosheth while he was taking a nap in the heat of the day and killed him. Thinking they would be rewarded for getting rid of one of Saul's descendants, they took his head to David. David had no sympathy for such deeds as he remembered an earlier instance of one claiming to have killed Saul himself. David had Recab and Baanah put to death. He cut off their feet and hands and hung them on a pole beside a busy pool in Hebron.

Conclusions: (1) God is trustworthy to work in our lives in his own way; (2) God's work does not depend on circumstances; (3) We cannot alter the course of God's actions by taking things into our own hands. We may bring tragedy to ourselves and others.

Spiritual gifts

By Omer Painter, director of missions; Tennessee Valley Association

In the first verses of this chapter, Paul implied the Corinthians had inquired about spiritual gifts. This evidently was an area of dissension and confusion in the church at Corinth. Paul told them there is one Holy Spirit who, out of sovereign grace, endows all believers with a variety of abilities to serve the same Lord by performing a variety of functions as they are energized by the one God (vv. 4-7). Although the Bible never mentions the word trinity, here we plainly have that concept: Spirit, Lord, God, the Three-in-One. As the persons of the Godhead operate in harmony and unity, so should the believers. All spiritual gifts are bestowed for the common good; that is, to bless and benefit everybody

(v. 7). No valid spiritual gift is ever for the exaltation or the selfish benefit of an individual believer.

God never expects us to do anything in serving Him that He will not equip us for and enable us to do. Paul gave several examples of the kind of abilities the Spirit of God gives to believers according to the Spirit's pleasure and purpose (vv. 8-11).

In verse 12, Paul again stressed the importance of Christian harmony by saying those who are in Christ are like a human body with its many limbs and organs, which make up one body. The Spirit immerses them into the one body of Christ and also indwells them without regard to their race, nationality, or social status.

Paul continued this analogy of the body and its various parts in explaining the proper use of spiritual gifts (vv. 14-20). Probably some of the Corinthians were boasting of their superior gifts. These verses stress there is unity, diversity, necessity, and interdependence of the members in a physical body and in Christ's body. Just as a body cannot function well or even exist without the members, the members cannot function apart from the body. The individual member does not have the option of denying the body and existing in isolation.

CONVENTION UNIFORM

April 14 Lesson

Basic Passage: 1 Corinthians 12:1-26

When Paul refers to the whole body as an eye or an ear, he is drawing a humorous verbal caricature. The very

idea would be ridiculous, but no more so than one church member acting all important. Each member is important, but no one member is more important than the rest of the body. All members complement one another and are necessary to a properly functioning healthy body. Some members may be inconspicuous or unattractive, but that does not mean they are unimportant, inferior, or insignificant.

God knew what He was doing when He "set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him" (v. 18). So He "tempered" or arranged "the body together . . . that there should be no schism" or division or discord "in the body; but that all members should have the same care one for another" (vv. 24-25). If one member hurts, all are hurting, but if one member is honored, all the members rejoice. And that's the way it should be in every church!

Introduction to Ephesians

By Nathan Holloway, pastor; Wrigley Church, Lyles

The letter was addressed to me. The return address told me it was from a missionary friend in Venezuela. I was so thrilled at the thought of what great news it would bear that I immediately tore into it before any other mail. With great joy I read every word. I searched for every bit of news about my friend. As I read, I was encouraged by what the Lord was doing among my Venezuelan brothers and sisters in Christ, just as I'm sure the Christians at Ephesus were thrilled, encouraged, and edified when they received Paul's letter to them.

Paul began his letter to the Ephesians with a "return address" and greetings (v. 1), and immediately asserted that his apostleship was derived "by the will of God." This left his readers, then and now, with the conclusion that he was not made an apostle by a group of men, a council, or a convention. Paul wanted it known his apostleship was by direct commission from Christ Himself, just as he shared so many times in his testimony. Without this commission, Paul's would have been "just another letter" or as we might say today, "junk mail!"

We note Paul addressed his letter not to a specific individual, but to the "saints." The usage of this word in itself probably served to edify the Ephesian Christians, since Paul had

spent considerable time among them no doubt teaching they were to be set apart from the world to serve God. Today the world has attached a sort of smug, snooty, holier-than-thou meaning to the word "saints."

Paul also labeled them as "faithful in Christ Jesus." Somehow, today, we have come to understand faith to be something we believe, but to Paul it meant much more. To be "faithful" was to believe so strongly as to take action on that belief. In other words, Paul was complimenting them for showing their faith by their works of righteousness. It is only these works that will stand the test of time and lead others to faith in Christ.

He continued (v. 2) expressing desire that the "grace" and "peace" of our Lord Jesus Christ dwell among the Ephesian brethren. Though Paul used the words often, he did not take their meaning lightly. As much as anyone, he understood the grace of God was the free and undeserved gift God gave us when He offered Jesus Christ for our sin. As one who had followed the law so closely all his life, Paul realized it was the acceptance of God's grace, not the law, that had brought salvation to him.

As an inevitable result of receiving God's grace, Paul came to understand the peace of God. If there is any one

thing that our world needs today in addition to salvation, it is peace. This was, no doubt, a need in the lives of the Ephesian Christians also. Many of the things that cause fear and unrest in our hearts and lives were present in that day also. We have no monopoly in our day on things that destroy the peace we so desire.

LIFE AND WORK

April 14 Lesson

Basic Passage: Ephesians 1:1-12; 6:19-24

When most of us conclude a letter, we do it with a couple of words or even a sentence. Not Paul. It is almost as if he loved the Ephesian Christians so much he could not bear to end his letter to them (ch. 6:19-24). He asked first for prayer for him that he might

be bold with his witness and testimony. It is a false assumption that a person is tempted less when he or she learns how to share a testimony. Quite the contrary is true. Just as Paul understood in his day, we must know that the more effective we become in service of God, the more temptation and persecution we must expect.

Once again Paul wished "peace" and "grace" to those who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The word "sincerity" in the King James Version comes from a word which means "undying" or "never ending." Thank you, Paul, for we today realize like our brothers and sisters in Ephesus did, that the grace and peace of God does abide in those who love Jesus with that kind of love.

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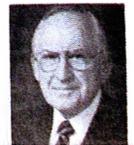
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HMB study identifies five church growth characteristics

By Mark Wingfield

ATLANTA (BP) — Five common traits characterize churches with high baptism rates and growing Sunday Schools, a Southern Baptist evangelism leader says.

Howard Ramsey, director of personal evangelism with the Home Mission Board, studied 25 growing Southern Baptist churches in a search for common characteristics, including two from Tennessee.

For the study, Ramsey isolated the 30 Southern Baptist churches which baptized more than 100 converts in 1989 and experienced at least a ten percent increase in average Sunday School attendance over the previous year. He interviewed representatives from 25 of

Peace Fellowship plans July meeting

MEMPHIS — The 1991 Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America's summer conference is scheduled for July 1-6 at Linfield College, Linfield, Ore.

Morning and evening programs will include Bible study, speakers, workshops, preaching, and music. "Be Not Afraid" is the theme with focus on Native American history and culture.

Afternoons will be free for family events.

Program leaders include William Baldrige, Mary Lin Hudson, Darrell Adams, George Williamson, and Clydia and Reaves Nahwooks. Several are Native Americans.

For conference costs and other information contact Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, 499 Patterson St., Memphis 38111, or call (901) 324-7675.

Belorussia churches aid radiation victims

RICHMOND (BP) — Baptists in the Soviet republic of Belorussia are trying to save a future generation of church leaders now suffering from nuclear radiation.

In the Belorussian republic, where heavy radiation fell from the Chernobyl nuclear reactor disaster nearly five years ago, Baptist churches are providing food for 1000 needy Chris-

those churches, including 20 on-site visits.

The churches range in size from 102 to 22,832 resident members, with average Sunday School attendance ranging from 60 to 5558. Their number of baptisms for 1989 ranged from 101 to 547.

Despite diversity of demographics, types of pastors, and worship styles, Ramsey identified five traits common to all the churches he studied.

1. Pastoral vision for growth. "Each of the pastors realized his vision must become the vision of the people for growth to be accomplished," Ramsey said. "When I interviewed lay people I found they shared the same vision and dreams of their pastor. They continually shared this excitement in their neighborhoods, at their workplaces, and in their daily walks with others."

2. High commitment level of leadership. "Every pastor, staff member, and core layperson I interviewed practiced a daily quiet time, gave well above the tithe of their income, witnessed regularly, and placed a higher priority on service to the Lord than on free time, position, or secular employment," Ramsey noted.

3. Exciting worship. "Regardless of the pastor's preaching style, the type of music used, or the length of the service, there is a sense of expectancy, and the services are exciting," Ramsey said. "Visitors are welcomed in different ways, but in every church visitors seemed to know they were welcome and felt free to participate in the service."

4. Flexibility and innovation. "Growing churches do not let location, lack of

space, condition of facilities, or limited finances blur their vision," he said. "Growing churches provide whatever activities and ministries are needed to make contact with all classes of people. Each church had a deep sense of caring and was people-oriented."

5. Evangelism. Ramsey said he found "a total commitment to evangelism, which expresses itself in one-to-one witnessing and worship services with an invitation carefully planned to call people to commitment. Although growing churches use a

variety of equipping methods for evangelism, the pastors always model personal evangelism and challenge lay-ty to share their faith, he said.

"I am convinced that the majority, if not all our churches, can grow if these five characteristics become the norm," Ramsey said. "Some can grow more rapidly and larger than others, but all can grow."

Churches Ramsey visited or talked with include: First Church, Millington, and Ridgeway Church, Memphis.

Hispanic design editor moved by home church's response in Mexico

By Ginny Whitehouse

NASHVILLE — In February when Javier Elizondo went back to his hometown church in Camarago, Mexico, just across the Rio Grande River, he discovered he knew the Sunday School lesson well — he had written it.

As design editor for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Hispanic Church Development Section, Elizondo wrote the Feb. 24 lesson, "How to Serve Jesus," which appeared in *El Interprete*, adult Sunday School lesson periodical in Spanish published by the board.

"When I got there, everybody had the pupil's pieces I had edited and the teacher was using her book," Elizondo said. "It was very moving."

The Camarago church was a mission born out of the efforts of Southern Baptists in Texas. At age 14, Elizondo was one of the first 11 believers to be baptized.

"The doctors often weep" as they hold the children in their arms "because they cannot help them," said Bykatyi, who discussed Belorussia's spiritual and physical needs during a visit to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., in March.

Medical facilities throughout the republic lack modern equipment and medicine to diagnose and treat cancer and other illnesses caused by radiation exposure, he said. In many cases, hospital labs have only a microscope.

Belorussia, with 12 million people, is north of the site in the Ukraine where the world's worst nuclear accident occurred in April 1986, sending large amounts of radiation into the air. Winds carried much of it over Belorussia. Radiation also was detected in numerous other countries.

Everyone in Belorussia was affected by Chernobyl fallout, Bykatyi said. He thinks two heart attacks he has had, for example, stem from the way radiation weakens a person's body. But with limited resources, Baptist churches can assist only children up to age seven, he said. Churches have no vitamins, he lamented, to supplement food and strengthen children's bodies.

Bykatyi, who has issued appeals to Christians in the West to assist in a range of undertakings, recounted the effect three large containers of donated medicine have had in Belorussia. The medicine, valued at \$600,000, was shipped by International Aid, an organization based in the Chicago area.

His aunt became a Christian after she allowed Vacation Bible School to be held in her home. "She helped with the Kool-Aid and heard the lessons and believed," he explained.

His mother, grandmother, and brother, who is now a pastor, all became Christians too.

Their town was poor and had no high school, though Elizondo's family could not have afforded tuition anyway. Elizondo and one of the other of the 11 original believers were sent to Valley Baptist Academy in Harlingen, Texas, on scholarship. He went on to Texas Tech University, Lubbock, and then to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

After earning a doctor of philosophy degree from Baylor University, Waco, Texas, Elizondo dreamed of becoming a missionary somewhere in Central or South America. But family health problems prevented Elizondo and his wife from being appointed.

Going home and seeing the results of his work confirmed his ministry as a design editor, Elizondo said.

"This is one way of God working out my call. Seeing my materials used in my church where I accepted the Lord reinforced that this is a mission opportunity," Elizondo said.

"That church in Mexico was the last thing on my mind when I wrote the lesson. It is encouraging to see how it applied to the struggles they had there. It showed the power the Gospel has when someone is there to interpret it."

Indonesian church destroyed by mob

JAKARTA, Indonesia (BP) — A mob of about 400 Indonesian villagers attacked and destroyed the meeting place of a small Baptist congregation in a Jakarta housing complex March 10.

Attackers used sledgehammers and lead pipes to break through the tile roof and batter down walls of the building before a scheduled service. They also damaged benches, tables, and chairs used for children's Sunday School classes.

"Praise the Lord! No one was there at the time," said Surbakty, the deacon who leads weekly worship services. "The attackers had murder in mind."

Church members who normally come early to set up for services had not arrived when the attack occurred. When Siregar, the property owner and a member of the church, arrived on his motor scooter, he searched frantically for a familiar face in the hostile crowd. Seeing none, he fled for his life.

Baptist Beliefs

By Herschel Hobbs

Security of the believer (I)

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whoseever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." — Galatians 5:4

This is a favorite verse to those who believe that you can be saved and then be lost again. However, the effort to sustain this view from this verse is to interpret it out of context. If this is



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what Paul means, then he contradicts everything else he says in this epistle.

Galatians was written to refute the Judaizers who said that to be saved Gentiles must first become Jews in religion by being circumcised and living by the Mosaic law — and then believe in Jesus for salvation.

Throughout this letter Paul contrasts salvation by law plus faith and salva-

tion by grace through faith (Galatians 5:1-6).

"Is become of no effect" translates a verb meaning to render inoperative. Christ is not in the business of saving people by law or legalism (even one's self-devised code of conduct; note "law," no definite article in Greek text). "Are justified" should read "seeking to be justified." For those seeking to be justified or declared righteous in the sphere of law, Christ has no part. It is an attempt at self-salvation.

Now what about "ye are fallen from grace?" A person is seeking to be saved. He must choose either the law way or the grace way; he cannot go both ways. If he chooses the law road he falls out of or away from the grace road. And Christ saves only by grace.

It is not a case of being in grace and then falling from grace. It means that such a person was never in grace.