

# Baptist and Reflector

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## SBC messengers elect Young, vote to study freemasonry

### Process begun to change constitution

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

INDIANAPOLIS — Messengers to the 135th annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention here June 9-11 elected Ed Young as president, began a process to change its constitution for the first time, roundly applauded U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle's message on Christian home values, and cut its last thin ties with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The convention, in its first meeting in Indianapolis, registered 17,986 messengers, the smallest registration since 17,101 messengers attended the 1984 meeting in Kansas City.

Messengers approved the SBC operating budget of \$4,211,070 for 1992-93 as recommended by the Executive Committee, and the Cooperative Program allocation budget of \$140,200,395. The latter amount is allocated to SBC boards, commissions, seminaries, and agencies. Harold Bennett, Executive Committee president, who retires in October, gave his last report.

Young, pastor of Second Church in Houston, won the top office by a 62 percent margin over Jess Moody, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Church, Chatsworth, Calif., (21 percent), and Nelson Price, pastor of Roswell Street Church, Marietta, Ga. The three nominees are described as theological "conservatives."

Price served as SBC first vice president 1991-92 and both he and Moody had announced for the post several

### Crossover Indianapolis

## Evangelism efforts gain converts

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — More than 1000 people made professions of faith as Christian witnesses saturated Indiana prior to the Southern Baptist Convention June 9-11 annual meeting.

"I'm thrilled and elated," with the report of 1024 professions of faith, said Alvin Reid, director of evangelism for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. He noted Indiana Baptists reported 3100 baptisms last year.

The evangelistic blitz, dubbed "Crossover Indianapolis," also helped Indiana reach its goal of starting 52 churches this year. The 52nd congregation began meeting June 7.

Nashvillian Bill Cox, volunteer coordinator of the event, was proud of the about 1000 Indianans, who volunteered. They were helped by about 300 other volunteers.

Nearly 200 churches statewide held simultaneous revivals the week before the convention. Calvary Church, New

months ago. Young was supported by "conservative" leaders.

Bob Hamblin noted in nominating Price for the presidency that his church gives ten percent to the Cooperative Program. After the three nominations, a messenger asked for the percentages of the two other candidates' churches. President Morris Chapman ruled that information about each candidate is at the discretion of the nominator, and added that it was not germane to the question.

Lee Porter, registration secretary for the past 15 years and until recently a Nashvillian, won re-election over Bob Bender of Oklahoma with 61.9 percent of the vote. His margin last year was 17 votes. Nashville businessman David Atchison was re-elected recording secretary without opposition.

Tennessee had the fifth highest number of messengers at the Hoosier Dome meeting with 1350. The top four were Georgia and Kentucky, 1550; North Carolina, 1500; and Texas, 1450.

In other action, messengers overwhelmingly endorsed a constitutional amendment saying churches approving homosexual behavior are "not in friendly cooperation" and thus not eligible to send messengers to annual meetings nor contribute financially to the Cooperative Program. A second vote next year can make legal the amendment.

### Freemasonry study

Rejecting a motion to initiate a convention committee to study

Castle, for example, had 32 professions of faith during its first three nights of revival services.

The 1024 professions of faith include those made during revival services and a one-day door-to-door soul-winning campaign June 6 before the convention.

During the door-to-door campaign, volunteers contacted 13,900 homes and discovered 1950 prospects for local churches.

The professions of faith include 192 from street-witnessing efforts in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, 93 from three block parties in Indianapolis, 44 during a Saturday evening rally, and six as a result of a specialized newspaper mailed to 150,000 Indianapolis residents.

The total figure is more than double the 411 professions of faith made during last year's pre-convention witnessing blitz in Atlanta.



INDIANAPOLIS MESSENGERS — The Roy Fowlers, left, and the Roy Fowlers, right, were among the 1350 Tennessee Baptists at the SBC. Roy is pastor of Highland Heights Church, Memphis, while brother Roy is director of missions for the McMinn-Meigs Association.

Freemasonry and its possible conflicts with Southern Baptist beliefs, messengers directed the Interfaith Witness Department of the Home Mission Board to make the study.

The HMB twice before has declined such a study when it was referred to the Atlanta-based board. Chapman, when questioned by a messenger about the two rejections, said this action is a directive for the HMB.

HMB President Larry Lewis was disappointed in the action. In a later interview he said the board would do as instructed by messengers. He added, "Any position we take, either pro or against Masons, or neutral, will generate a certain amount of ire and wrath and thus hurt missions."

The Freemasonry issue was brought to the convention by Larry Holly, a former Sunday School Board trustee who circulated several thousand copies of a booklet stating some of the conflicts he sees. The physician said the SBC should provide local churches information relating to not accepting Masons in leadership positions.

### No more BJC ties

SBC action cut the last ties with the Baptist Joint Committee, the Washington-based religious liberty agency. The 56-year relationship ended when messengers rejected a request from the BJC for binding arbitration to settle a dispute over ownership of a \$300,000 account on deposit with the Southern Baptist Foundation in Nashville.

The 28-year-old capital needs account, bearing the BJC name, was also claimed by the SBC Executive Committee as property of the convention. The BJC has received interest from the account through the years and depended on it for sustenance, along with contributions from ten other Baptist groups and some Southern Baptist churches and state conventions. The SBC has been the major contributor. The fund had been created in 1964 apparently to fund BJC office space in Washington.

The vote was virtually unchallenged

— and the arbitration offer was handily rejected. When the recommendation to redistribute the funds came to the floor, Executive Committee member J. C. Mitchell of Florida spoke for arbitration settlement.

"In the spirit of Matthew 18, the spirit of reconciliation," he said, "it would be well for this convention to accept. Even if we lose, it says a good deal about our image."

Other members argued the money belonged to the SBC and that the convention had never relinquished control of the fund.

On Monday June 8 BJC counsel Oliver Thomas briefly addressed the Executive Committee, giving officially the offer of arbitration. He later said "as an attorney" he would be negligent in not telling the BJC board to file suit for the \$300,000.

Thomas explained that the \$300,000 is — SBC, page 5



FAMILY TIME — Evangelist Phil Glisson of Leawood Church, Memphis, and his wife Teresa, brought son Jonathan to his first convention.

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**Editorials****Far-reaching SBC decisions, but we're not 'out of woods'**

What the Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis lacked in size, it compensated with substance. There were fewer messengers than at any time since 1984, but those present took dramatic and far-reaching positions — and took the convention along with them on several occasions.

Messengers admired the message from Vice President Dan Quayle. They also voted for the first time ever to amend the SBC constitution, removed the last ties with the Baptist Joint Committee, and directed the Home Mission Board to study Freemasonry. The convention elected a "conservative" president for the fourteenth consecutive year. Some business sessions and institutions' reports were sparsely attended, and messengers seemed not to know how to accept the strong message of Foreign Mission Board President Keith Parks.

The evangelism "blitz," door-to-door witnessing for Crossover Indianapolis, was a highlight of Baptists at work. Bill Cox of First Church, Donelson, coordinated the effort which netted more than a thousand decisions for Christ. Other Tennesseans also were involved.

Morris Chapman, concluding his second term as president before taking over as president of the Executive Committee in Nashville this October, was fair in presiding over convention business.

There were mixed reports on the status of Bold Mission Thrust. Some goals have been achieved, others seem close, and some vital mission efforts appear to be doomed.

For the second straight year, there was no presidential candidate by the so-called "moderate" group of Southern Baptists.

Although there was some nit-picking, rancor was noticeably absent. That could be because "conservatives" remain firmly in control, and/or attendance of "moderates" continues to decline.

The presence of a paid parliamentarian of another faith still is not wise to many Baptists. We won't use his compensation for the main reason — it is sufficient to say that Baptists are qualified to do the job, giving the convention less regimentation.

A closer look and some important actions of the 135th session of the Southern Baptist Convention:

- The nation's vice president's presence and message won plaudits from most messengers. Giving the welcoming address, Dan Quayle majored on traditional moral values and placed strong em-

phasis on Christian homes. He is right to do so. It is refreshing to hear politicians speak to this issue and give it credence. Vice President Quayle is speaking that message in many places. We appreciate and endorse his message — but question the presence of politicians, especially during an election year, on a denominational platform.

- In disavowing homosexuality as approved by two Southern Baptist churches, messengers took widely-accepted action. We support the move against homosexuality as most Southern Baptists certainly do.

The two churches officially acted on ordination and marriage involving homosexuals. This is repugnant. However, we agree with the statement by James Guenther, convention attorney, that an amendment to the constitution is not necessary. We understand the Executive Committee's desire to send the strongest possible message by amending, but it opens the door to making it easier to exclude other individuals or groups — possibly without sound reason. Guenther said the constitution already provides the authority to do what was necessary.

A precedent will be set if messengers approve the change again next year — thus amending the constitution for the very first time.

- It was the same old story as the convention dealt the Baptist Joint Committee a staggering blow. In question was \$300,000 which apparently had been set aside years ago for use of the BJC for office space in Washington.

The money was entrusted to the Southern Baptist Foundation. Last year the BJC asked for the \$300,000 with construction in mind. A study determined that the SBC owns the fund — not the BJC.

The Executive Committee recommended to the SBC that the money be reallocated; the convention agreed. As a result, final ties are cut with the BJC, a longtime faithful friend and helper for Baptists in religious liberty issues; and the BJC's financial status is severely crippled.

Two things can yet happen. There may be a legal suit by the BJC to regain control of the \$300,000. And more Baptist churches may contribute to the Baptist Joint Committee. Convention messengers last year made the Christian Life Commission the Southern Baptist intercessor in religious liberty issues.

- Directing the Home Mission Board's Inter-

faith Witness Department to study Freemasonry may become a sticky issue. The HMB already has declined two requests for studying the group. President Larry Lewis now has the task of responding next year with a report to SBC messengers. He doesn't appear to be happy about the directive, and furthermore, if the study is not satisfactory to Larry Holly, he is likely to continue pressing the issue. This may be a no-win situation.

- Ed Young, pastor of Second Church, Houston, is the seventh different president in the consecutive line of "conservatives." He has pledged to be more inclusive in his appointments and nominations. This has been the crux of the situation facing "moderates" since the 1979 election. They have been largely excluded from representation through the appointment process and have not won any major office by election.

Some of the presidents have said the tent would be broadened, but there has been no noticeable difference.

We hope and pray this exclusivism will end. There can be no doubt about "conservative" control in the Southern Baptist Convention, and reconciliation is vital if we are to grow spiritually and in numbers sufficiently to accomplish what God wants Southern Baptists to accomplish through Bold Mission Thrust.

- Keith Parks, at the risk of further estrangement, spoke truth that we all need to hear — carefully. He assessed the past decade and the disarray in which we live. He enumerated causes and effects. He spoke from a broken heart, one that beats for missions.

Parks pointed to the unfeeling actions from the extreme right and the extreme left. We heard the heart-cry of many Southern Baptists. Whatever damage has been done and whoever contributed to it, it must be replaced with God's love working in our hearts. Perhaps this can be the catalyst for healing. What could not be done by the Peace Committee, what cannot be done by mandate or cold and unfeeling hearts — can be done by obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

President Young said it best. There must be no more "us" and "them." There must be only "we," working together for the Living Lord. May the 1992 convention truly be a turning point for Southern Baptists. As Keith Parks poignantly reminded us, we desperately need all the family. — WFA

**Messengers vote to sever final ties with BJCPA**

By Linda Lawson

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Final ties between the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs were severed June 9.

Messengers to the SBC's annual meeting voted to end the 50-year relationship with the Washington-based religious liberty organization of ten Baptist bodies.

Convention messengers in 1991 ended SBC funding of the BJC, which had been the subject of controversy among Southern Baptists in recent years.

At one time, Southern Baptists provided more than 50 percent of BJC funding.

Messengers also defeated a substitute motion calling for binding arbitration to settle a dispute with the BJC over a \$300,000 capital fund. Instead, messengers approved recommendations from its Executive Committee expressing appreciation for the arbitration proposal, authorizing payment of interest from the fund to the BJC, claiming the principal for the SBC, and authorizing the Executive Committee to use the principal as it deems appropriate.

The fund was authorized by 1964 convention messengers to provide office space for the BJC, the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, and the

Baptist World Alliance. Over the years, the funds were held in trust by the Southern Baptist Foundation and more than \$600,000 in interest was paid to the BJC.

In 1991 the BJC requested the money to buy a building in Washington. The money also was claimed by the SBC Christian Life Commission, which now has offices in Washington and carries out citizenship and religious liberty assignments for the SBC.

The Executive Committee voted by a two-to-one margin June 8 to reject the proposal for arbitration that would have been facilitated by the former executive director of the Christian Legal

**Arbitration ruled out**

Society. BJC general counsel Oliver Thomas described arbitration as "simple, inexpensive, and Scriptural."

Executive Committee member J. C. Mitchell of Winter Park, Fla., proposed the substitute motion that garnered only scattered messenger support.

"In the spirit of conciliation, it would be well for this convention to accept this proposal," Mitchell said. "Even if we lose, it would say a lot about our image." Mitchell estimated 30 Executive Committee members did not

vote when they considered the proposal.

Rex Terry, Executive Committee member from Fort Smith, Ark., opposed Mitchell's motion. "It was the Executive Committee's determination that there had never been a gift (to the BJC) but only a conditional allocation. The money belongs to the Southern Baptist Convention."

After the vote to allow reallocation of the \$300,000, Executive Committee chairman David Hankins, pastor of Trinity Church in Lake Charles, La., said a report on reallocation will be forthcoming.

In a news conference after convention action, Thomas said he would recommend that his board file suit in Washington against the Southern Baptist Convention. He declined to predict the decision of the board, which meets the first week of October.

"We have time to make a careful, deliberate decision at that time," he said.

Thomas estimated litigation would cost the SBC more than \$300,000 and noted the BJC has retained the firm of Powell and Goldstein to handle the matter.

In other recommendations from the Executive Committee, messengers adopted without discussion a 1992-93

Cooperative Program allocation budget of \$140,200,395, a reduction of 0.36 percent from 1991-92. They also adopted a 1992-93 SBC operating budget of \$4.2 million.

A bylaw revision allowing SBC entities to request the removal of trustees for excessive unexcused absences also passed without discussion.

Also adopted were program statement revisions for the Executive Committee, Woman's Missionary Union, and Christian Life Commission, along with amendments and restatement of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary articles of incorporation.

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# Young captures presidency over two candidates

By Connie Davis

INDIANAPOLIS — Ed Young, pastor of Second Church, Houston was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention while in a less predictable outcome, former Tennessean Lee Porter was re-elected as registration secretary.

Porter's 15-year tenure seemed threatened when he was re-elected last year by 17 votes. He resigned as an employee of the Baptist Sunday School Board in 1991 after he reportedly criticized the "conservative" movement in the convention. Porter is associate pastor of St. Andrew Church in Panama City, Fla.

Young, the candidate endorsed by numerous conservative leaders, was elected president over two other conservatives running for the office.

Young ran against Jess Moody, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Church in Chatsworth, Calif., and Nelson Price, pastor of Roswell Street Church in Marietta, Ga.

Young received 62 percent of the vote, while Moody garnered 21.7 and Price 16.3 percent.

Jay Strack, a Texas evangelist, was elected first vice president without opposition and Joe Aulds, evangelist of Ruston, La., was elected second vice president after a runoff with Glen Molete, pastor of First Church, Pikeville, Ky.

Tennessean Tom Mooty, pastor of First Church, Wartburg, was one of

five nominated for the post including Allen Speer, co-pastor, First Southern Church, Alton, Ill., and Benny King, pastor, First Church, Fenton, Mo.

The evening runoff June 9 was ruled invalid because a quorum wasn't present.

Tennessean David Atchison was re-elected as recording secretary. He was nominated by Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, where he is a member. Sutton noted Atchison has left the business world to lead religious conferences.

Porter was nominated for registration secretary by Doug Metzger, chairman of the Tellers Committee, who said Porter believes he is called by God to that role. Porter defeated Bob Bender, pastor, First Church, Ada, Okla., by 61.9 to 38 percent.

Young, who was nominated by Joel Gregory, pastor, First Church, Dallas, Texas, has been pastor of Second Church since 1978 when it had 4431 members. The church now has more than 18,000 members and led the SBC in baptisms in 1990, said Gregory.

Comedian Jerry Clower nominated Moody for president, saying Moody loves people on both sides of the SBC controversy.

In traveling across the United States to speak, Clower said he constantly meets laypeople who want to stop the SBC friction which he called a pastor's fight.



**SBC OFFICERS** — Elected as officers of the Southern Baptist Convention during annual session were, from left, David Atchison, Nashville, recording secretary; Lee Porter, Panama City, Fla., registration secretary; Joe Aulds, Ruston, La., second vice president; and Ed Young, Houston, president. First vice president Jay Strack of Dallas was unavailable for photo.

"There are 39,000 of ya'll (pastors) but there are 15 million of us and we want it stopped," Clower said.

Price was nominated by Bob Hamblin of Harrisburg Church in Tupelo, Miss. Price was first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention 1991-92.

Hamblin said Price's church contributes ten percent of its income to the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist fund for national and international missions and ministries.

After the nominations, Chris Whaley, pastor of First Church, Beverly Hills,

Fla., asked how much the churches of the other nominees give to the CP.

SBC President Morris Chapman, presiding at the session, said information about each candidate is presented at the discretion of the person making the nomination.

A February story in the *Baptist Standard*, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, reported that Young's church gives 2.35 percent of its total receipts to the Cooperative Program, based on the Uniform Church Letter. — Sarah Zimmerman contributed to this story.

# SBC declares two N.C. churches not 'in friendly cooperation'

By Linda Lawson

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — The Southern Baptist Convention voted overwhelmingly June 9 to declare two North Carolina churches not in cooperation with the SBC and to withdraw fellowship from the congregations. The churches have taken recent actions favorable to homosexuality.

The vote by messengers attending the convention's 135th meeting was termed a "historic event."

Messengers also endorsed with virtually no opposition a constitutional amendment declaring churches approving homosexual behavior "not in friendly cooperation" and, therefore, not eligible to send messengers to annual convention meetings.

The amendment requires approval by SBC messengers again in 1993.

Pullen Memorial Church, Raleigh voted in March to bless the "union" of two homosexual males. In April, Binkley Memorial Church, Chapel Hill, voted to license a homosexual to the ministry.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina voted May 20 to oust the two churches. The Raleigh Association disfellowshipped Pullen church on May 5. Binkley church has not been affiliated with its association.

The recommendation from the SBC Executive Committee declared the actions of the two churches "contrary to the teachings of the Bible on human sexuality and the sanctity of the family and are offensive to Southern Baptists."

"In taking this action," the recommendation continued, "the Southern Baptist Convention also fervently prays that these churches will respond to the teachings of Holy Scripture by rescinding their actions related to

avowed homosexuals while continuing to pray for God's saving grace and healing power in the lives of homosexuals and continuing to minister redemptively to homosexuals."

Jim Guenther, general counsel for

the Executive Committee, called the action a "historic event. It is the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention when, in the exercise of the convention's autonomy, it has determined it will look to the faith

and practice of a church to determine if it is in friendly cooperation."

Guenther said approval of the motion and the constitutional amendment will require a review of the bylaws spelling out how messengers are credentialed.

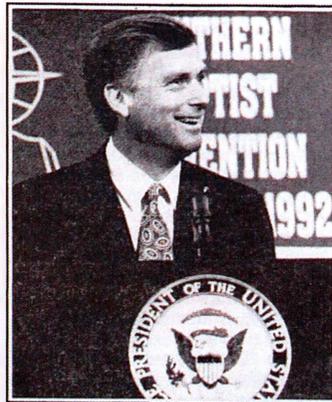
# Quayle speaks up for values, families

By Lonnie Wilkey

INDIANAPOLIS — Vice President Dan Quayle lauded Southern Baptists for keeping Christian values alive during the opening session of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Quayle, who was on hand to welcome SBC messengers to his native state, was interrupted several times during his speech on family and moral values by standing ovations.

Moral values are still alive, Quayle declared. "They live in our



VICE PRESIDENT DAN QUAYLE

thousands of Southern Baptist churches and in other places of worship across America," he said.

The vice president has been the center of media controversy since criticizing the TV situation comedy "Murphy Brown" for portraying a lack of moral values.

"As I discovered recently, to appeal to our country's enduring, basic moral values is to invite the scorn and laughter of the elite culture.

"Talk about right and wrong, and they'll try to mock us in newsrooms, sitcom studios, and faculty lounges across America. But in the heart of America, in the home and workplaces and churches, the message is heard. A sense of moral decency runs deep in the American people," he said.

Discussions are needed on the importance of moral values, the vice president observed.

"It's time that we Americans speak out for what we believe in and what we stand for. It is time we Americans stand up for our values, stand up for America, and say that America is great because of our people and our values."

Quayle discounted the notion that people who talk of values and who defend the traditional family are intolerant.

"Let us be clear. We defend the

rights of all Americans. We are for compassion and tolerance. We are, after all, commanded to love our neighbor.

"But we do not believe that being compassionate and tolerant means abandoning our standards of right or wrong, good or bad. We do not think tolerance requires abandoning our belief in the family," he said.

In introducing Quayle to the messengers, SBC President Morris Chapman thanked him for speaking out in favor of morality.

"Thank you for standing up for the unborn who cannot stand up for themselves. Thank you for raising the conscience of this nation to the importance of the family," he said.

Chapman noted "it is a sad day when a nation allows a situation comedy to trivialize tragedy. Satan knows that whatever a nation laughs at can never again be taken seriously," he said.

SBC Executive Committee President Harold C. Bennett presented Quayle a resolution of appreciation commending the vice president for his stand on values.

Calling criticism of Quayle's statements about values "outrageous abuse," the resolution thanked Quayle for his "forthright statement on the sanctity of marriage."

## President's address

**'Denomination of destiny' must go up the mountain**

By *Connie J. Umstead, news assistant*  
 INDIANAPOLIS — Southern Baptist Convention President Morris H. Chapman told Southern Baptists "it's time to move" up the mountain.

During his presidential address June 9, Chapman, pastor of First Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, and newly elected president-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, said, "Southern Baptists are not a people called to skirt mountains; we are a people, a convention, a denomination of destiny. 'He has placed before us opportunities our forebears could never envision,' Chapman continued.

He noted that the world is at a crucial point in history. Formerly Christian nations in the West are being swept with secularism, "while newly-opened nations in the East cry for spiritual nourishment and witness," he said.

"Suddenly we are no longer peering over the Berlin Wall," Chapman observed. While other faiths are "marching double-time" into Moscow to reach the people, "God has blazed a way through the wilderness of communism," he said. Southern Baptists must move to preach the Gospel in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Chapman believes the need of people

to hear the Gospel is as great in America.

"While the Romanian government is bringing Bibles into the classroom, in America we are banning the Bible from the classroom," Chapman said.

America, according to Chapman, is in a state of cultural and spiritual decay. "For a revival to sweep this nation, half-hearted prayers of cold-hearted people will not do," Chapman emphasized.

He suggested that Southern Baptists "stand on the shoulders of giants" such as George W. Truett and Herschel Hobbs, builders and leaders of the denomination; E. Y. Mullins and Lee Scarborough, theologian-statesmen; and mission workers Baker James Cauthen, Theron Rankin, Lottie Moon, and Bill Wallace.

The founders of the convention in 1845 and the authors of the 1919 Fraternal Address called on others to join them in helping preach the Gospel. "Those Southern Baptists of old stated boldly that cooperation was on the basis of conviction . . . not at its expense," Chapman said.

He contends God did not promise Southern Baptists they would achieve certain statistics or accomplish certain programs, "We are promised the blessings of God if we share the Gospel

and minister in Jesus' name until he returns," Chapman said. "Let us never forget that our marching orders come from above."

The president asserted the convention is not fragmented now, and will not be in the future as long as Southern Baptists preach the Gospel.

Referring to some congregations who have left the denomination, Chapman said, "We offer no word of censure, rebuke, or retribution. Know this: We will not be angry, but we will not be deterred from the mission God has called us to accomplish for his glory."

He urged all members of the SBC and the citizens of the world to "go up and over the mountain toward the promised land."

Addressing some of the issues that have affected the SBC and its entities, Chapman had specific messages for the churches, state conventions, Woman's Missionary Union, educational institutions, and Southern Baptists all over the world.

He urged the churches to protect the purity of the congregation and give Jesus pre-eminence in all church matters.

"Guard your witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ," Chapman said. "Do not join or approve those who would reject clear Biblical teachings."

The state conventions, as "sister bodies," must work together in home and foreign missions, Chapman maintained, and seminaries must "give theological leadership for the renewal of this denomination."

Regarding Baptist colleges and universities, Chapman said Baptists have had more success founding them than keeping them. "Show us that being a Baptist university means more than Baptists founding the institution and supporting it financially," he urged.

He stressed that WMU must stay true to their founding vision of having a missionary spirit and collecting missions funds to be distributed by the Southern Baptist Convention. "You have been a bulwark of support for Southern Baptist missions and an example to all of missionary commitment. Do not falter now," Chapman said.

He asked Southern Baptists to work together to guard "the integrity of Baptist witness."

"Southern Baptists have been a mountain-climbing people driven by a commitment the world will never understand. It is our turn to take the high ground . . . our time for putting our lives on the line," Chapman concluded.

**Propagation of Gospel 'primary purpose' of SBC, Parks says**

By *Sarah Zimmerman*

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — In the last of his 13 annual reports as president of the Foreign Mission Board, Keith Parks called on Southern Baptists to replace the controversy that he said has hindered the spread of the Gospel with love and balance.

"Has the controversy accelerated our purpose of sharing the Gospel with the world?" Parks asked during the Foreign Mission Board report to the Southern Baptist Convention. "I would have to answer, 'No.'"

Parks, who will retire Oct. 30 after 38 years of mission service and nearly 13 years as FMB president, was interrupted by applause numerous times during his speech. At other times people left the auditorium.

Parks noted that the propagation of the Gospel is the primary purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The shift of high attendance (at SBC annual meetings) from mission programs to the presidential election and business meetings has to raise the question of whether those of us who are messengers still place this as the highest priority," Parks said.

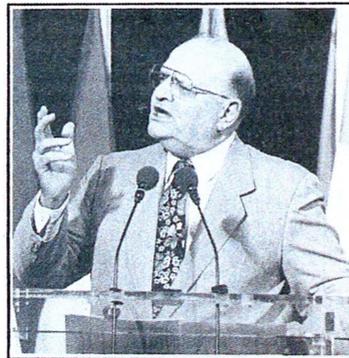
By 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 10, 17,976 messengers had registered for the meeting in Indianapolis. Less than half of those attended the FMB report Wednesday. The Tuesday evening report of the Home Mission Board followed a vice presidential runoff election when less than 4400 messengers were present.

The controversy is a "deterrent to and a distraction from" sharing the Gospel, Parks said.

Parks cited unreached Bold Mission Thrust goals. Two of the goals, 10,000 volunteers serving in foreign missions and career missionaries serving in 125 countries, have been met but he said it is unlikely the other measurable goals will be reached without divine inter-

vention and a change of attitudes.

Parks noted fewer people are seeking career missionary appointments. Although the 1991 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions reached a record of \$81.3 million, financial support of missions is not adequate to sustain growth.



**LAST REPORT** — Keith Parks presents final report as FMB president.

"We are killing our worldwide witness," Parks said. "The most distinctive characteristic of Christianity is love. We are not demonstrating love even to the whole Southern Baptist family and we so desperately need to do so."

The Southern Baptist Convention has always been a mix of worship styles, Parks noted. He said a denomination that is focused on control enforced by intimidation will "impoverish our riches and destroy our balance. . . . It will jeopardize our future and risk (going toward) the unfortunate extremes."

Parks said no one has questioned his commitment to "sound, Biblical theology" and to the Bible as a "holy book from God."

Foreign missionaries are "the finest among us" in sound theology and con-

sistent lifestyles, Parks added. "Anyone who questions them speaks either from ignorance, prejudice, or malice," he claimed.

Opportunities to share the Gospel around the world are beyond imagination, Parks said. He said he fears Southern Baptists have become so short on love that God will pass them by and use another group to reach the world.

For Southern Baptists to fulfill their evangelistic purpose will require a strong, unquestioned commitment to missions by opinion-makers, Parks said. It also will require that elected officers deliberately bring missions to the center stage of the SBC.

It also is essential for pastors of trend-setting churches to consider a

personal call to missions and to lead their churches to be generous supporters of missions, Parks said.

Missions giving by churches of one, two, or three percent of their budget will not "support our primary purpose nor challenge us to get serious" about missions, Parks said.

"Giving \$11 per year per Baptist won't do it," Parks said. "One of every 4000 of us going as a missionary won't do it."

"What will it require?" Parks asked. "No more than Jesus said. Death to self as individuals, as a church, as a denomination."

"The window of opportunity is now, and it will not last long, maybe three or five years," Parks said. "We must go through that door now."

**Young hopes to be 'bridge-builder'**

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Edwin Young, newly elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said it's time to "put down the guns and go fishing again."

The road to healing in the SBC controversy is through evangelism and missions, Young said at a news conference shortly after his election on the first day of the convention's June 9-11 meeting in Indianapolis. Young is pastor of Second Church in Houston.

"We need to put a kingdom goal out there and say to all who can rally around that, 'Come on Southern Baptists, we're ready to move forward.'"

Young, 55, said he believes he can be a bridge-builder by appointing persons to serve on key committees, "seeking wisdom and input from everybody," including institutional leaders.

The Laurel, Miss., native said Southern Baptists need to involve more blacks, Hispanics, and ethnic language groups in leadership roles. Young's 18,000-member congregation has about 1500 ethnic members.

Young said he does not believe in ordaining women but does believe in the development and use of all members' spiritual gifts "inside God's Word."

Another positive healing step, he said, would be to do away with "pejorative labels" such as fundamentalist, moderate, and liberal.

"I'm a Southern Baptist, Bible-believing preacher. Let's throw away all those labels."

Young said his church gives between two and three percent to the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' fund for national and international missions and ministries. The *Baptist Standard*, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, reported in February Young's church gave 2.35 percent of its receipts to the Cooperative Program, based on the Uniform Church Letter.

"We will seek to raise our gifts to missions for all causes," Young said. He said churches can double their gifts to missions by applying "spiritual goals" to personalize missions giving.

# SBC messengers elect Young, vote to . . .

— Continued from page 1  
the major asset of the BJC and "times would be extremely tough" without such funding.

SBC Attorney James Guenther said in the Executive Committee meeting he strongly believed any suit could be won by the Executive Committee.

James Dunn, BJC executive director, said in a statement later. "The Southern Baptist Convention herself suffered the larger loss when she denied the BJC our capital needs fund. The BJC did indeed lose our only reserve fund, \$300,000, and we must appeal to local congregations to offset this loss."

The Executive Committee had studied the account for several months, and had concluded along with legal counsel, that the committee could not make a decision on relinquishing the funds nor on arbitration, and brought the matter to the convention.

### Quayle 'rings the bell'

Vice President Dan Quayle, an Indian, greeted SBC messengers with emphasis on traditional family values. "Talk about right and wrong," he said, "and they will mock us in newsrooms, sitcom studios, and faculty lounges across America. Moral values are what the American people care the most about."

Referring to secular media reaction

to his recent statements about a TV show involving a single unwed mother, he said, "This is what I say about the media elite, I wear their scorn as a badge of honor."

### Chapman, Young speak

In his presidential message, Morris Chapman said the SBC is not fragmented as some have said because the Gospel is preached. "To those churches who join a new movement and move away, we offer no word of censure, rebuke, or retribution. Know this: We will not be angry but we will not be deterred from the mission God has called us to accomplish for his glory."

See next week's *Baptist and Reflector* for more stories and photos from the Southern Baptist Convention.

Later in the convention, messengers endorsed a motion to include the president's address in the 1992 SBC annual, even as he presided.

In a news conference after his election, new president Ed Young called for healing among Southern Baptists and unity in evangelism and missions, saying it is time "to put down the guns and go fishing again."

Young said he intends to seek

## HMB instructed to study Masons

By David Winfrey

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention instructed its Home Mission Board interfaith witness department to study Masons, rejecting a motion to form an ad hoc committee to investigate the secret fraternal group.

"I'm disappointed," said Larry Holly, a messenger and Beaumont, Texas, physician who introduced the motion calling for a committee to study Freemasonry and report back at next year's convention in Houston.

In the June 10 morning business session, messengers were debating that motion when Alvin Rowe III, pastor of First Church, Rockledge, Fla., moved to amend the motion to instruct the HMB study the matter instead.

Home Mission Board trustees have twice rejected studying Freemasonry when the SBC referred the matter to them for consideration after previous conventions. The June 10 action now officially instructs the board to study Freemasonry.

Without debate on Rowe's amendment, it passed overwhelmingly and the motion also passed by an equally large margin.

"I'm just going to pray and trust the Home Mission Board will deal with it," Holly told Baptist Press, adding he hopes to have some input to the committee. "If their report doesn't deal with it with integrity and honesty, we'll come back and amend their report."

Holly said he spent about \$8000 in unsolicited donations to publish a 58-page booklet titled *The Southern Baptist Convention and Freemasonry*.

In his book, Holly contends the Masonic lodge's true purpose is worship of Satan who, Holly claims, is the god of the lodge.

"Let every Southern Baptist beware, who having bowed his knee to the Masonic altar, has thereby betrayed the Lord," the book states.

Holly also contends Freemasonry

demands toleration of other religions counter to Christianity.

Holly said he is not opposed to Masons being church members but believes they should not be allowed in positions of leadership.

After the vote, the grand master of Masons for the state of Oklahoma issued a statement lauding Masonic contributions to charities, communities, and personal development.

"Masonry is an important influence for good in Oklahoma," said the statement by Allan D. Large. "We are not in competition with any group, certainly not with any faith, but believe that each person has a moral and ethical responsibility to make the world a better, more nurturing place."

A Baptist VIEWpoll last year found 14 percent of Southern Baptist pastors interviewed were or had been members of a Masonic lodge.

"It would be a waste of time and needed funds to investigate a fraternity that's been well known for years and years," Fred McPeake of Knoxville, a director of the Scottish Rite of Masons in several East Tennessee counties, told messengers.

"It's not a religion, nor a substitute religion, nor a false religion, and the vast majority of Masons know that."

"I am disappointed in the decision," said HMB President Larry Lewis after messengers voted for the HMB to study Masons rather than form a special committee to study the fraternal organization.

Lewis said sending the issue back to the Home Mission Board is "another attempt (by messengers) to not deal with the issue but refer it to an agency."

"Any position we take — either pro Masons or against Masons or neutral — will generate a certain amount of ire and wrath and thus hurt missions," Lewis said.

Yet Lewis said the HMB will do as the messengers instructed.

"wisdom and input from everybody" in his SBC committee appointments and to involve more ethnics among leadership. He also urged Southern Baptists to cease labeling others as "fundamentalists, moderates, liberals."

A challenge to Paul Pressler's nomination as a trustee of the Foreign Mission Board failed despite the pre-convention request by "conservative" leaders to Pressler to withdraw as a nominee.

One of the leaders of the "conservative" resurgence for the past decade, and recently retired as a Texas appeals court judge, Pressler had just finished two four-year terms on the SBC Executive Committee.

Cleeta John Rogers of Oklahoma nominated his brother Eugene Rogers of Dallas to replace Pressler. Committee on Nominations member Stan Coffey supported the Pressler nomination. He noted his work in "bringing Southern Baptists back to their historic roots," and said "this is a way we can thank him."

Pressler won easily and the entire slate of board and commission nominees was approved.

### Missions boards reports

Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis called Southern Baptist volunteers the "legs and feet" of mission work. During his annual report to the convention he said more than 69,000 Southern Baptists volunteered at least one week to home mission service in 1991. He urged messengers to listen to that "still, small voice," referred to in I Kings 19:12, that may be calling them to missions service. He reported 1027 U.S. church starts, ending a decade in which the convention has averaged 1000 church starts for ten

straight years.

The present 4922 home missionaries put the SBC on target for the Bold Mission Thrust goal of 5000 by the year 2000, he said.

FMB president Keith Parks, in his last annual report, called on Southern Baptists to replace with love the controversy he said has hindered the spread of the Gospel.

Parks, who will retire Oct. 30 after 38 years of mission service and almost 13 years as FMB president, said, "The shift of high attendance (at SBC meetings) from mission programs to the presidential election and business meetings has to raise the question of whether those of us who are messengers still place this as the highest priority."

During his report several missionaries gave testimonies. Numerous messengers came to the front at a time of commitment at the report's conclusion.

In "Crossover Indianapolis" pre-SBC evangelistic activities in the city and elsewhere in Indiana, local Baptists along with other messengers recorded more than 1000 professions of faith in Christ in door-to-door and street witnessing.

Dallas evangelist Jay Strack was unopposed for the first vice presidential post. Evangelist Joe Aulds of Ruston, La., won a runoff for second vice president. Tom Mooty, pastor of First Church, Wartburg, was one of five nominees.

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church, Dallas, was named to preach the annual sermon when the convention meets next year in Houston June 15-17. Bob Mowrey, pastor of Park Avenue Church, Nashville, is the alternate.

## One Word More By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

When he knocked on the door I knew he was in trouble.

I had a problem. I had to find a way to help him get out of his difficulty.

We had bought a house in a new developing neighborhood. We had settled in, despite monsoon rains which inundated the surroundings and made the unpaved clay road leading up the hill almost impossible to traverse.

Somehow he had skillfully driven his truck loaded with bricks up that hill; that showed spunk.

On the construction site of a new home his trouble began. Ours was the only home occupied on that hillside, and we were his first and last resort, perhaps his only hope.

He had noticed, near the end of the day, that even though his load of bricks had been unloaded, his truck wheels were steadily miring in the mud. He couldn't budge that monster.

It was frustrating to him, I think, because he was a good driver and had worked hard at getting his load delivered.

He stood at the door and pathetically told his story. I knew most of it because I had seen him early that morning, and had noticed him again when day was done.

His story was simple and I understood. He had had strict instructions to deliver the bricks and return to the home office in a neighboring city

three hours away. He said his boss was a hard man, not given to accepting excuses or reasons for not fulfilling duties.

He said he didn't know what to do. We called his boss on the phone, and I explained to him the dilemma. It's not your driver's fault, I told him, he's done a hard day's work and shouldn't be scolded for what mud has done to his truck.

We reached an agreement. Betty and I fed the driver and offered him a place to sleep. He declined, saying he would sleep in the cab, "guarding" his truck.

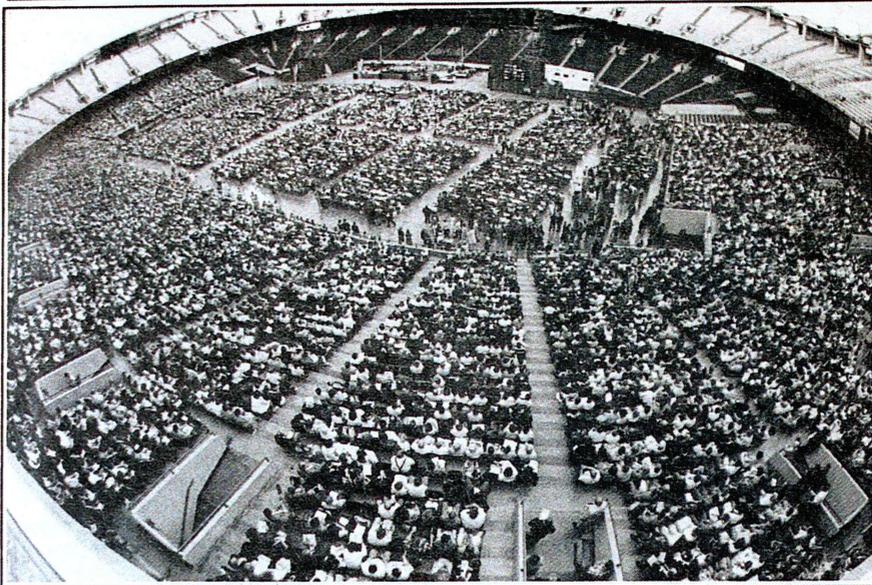
He was relieved to know that his boss could be kind, and willing for him to stay overnight without penalty. He agreed to send help the next day.

With an abundance of gratitude, the driver went back to the truck, well fed and appreciative of friendly folks. It was apparent he hadn't been exposed to many such people. Gestures of kindness were not commonplace to him.

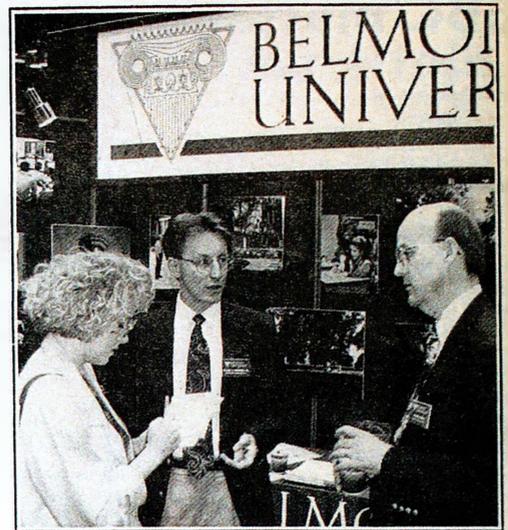
I felt good — and amazed that God provides answers when willingness is evident. "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me."



ALLEN



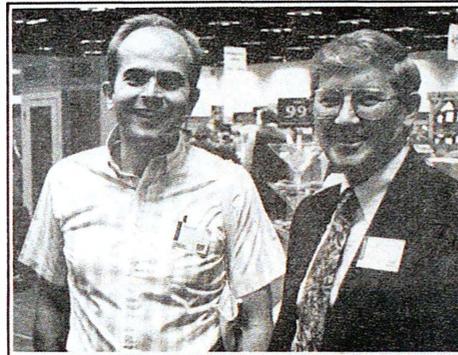
**CONVERGING ON THE** Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis were more than 17,700 messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention.



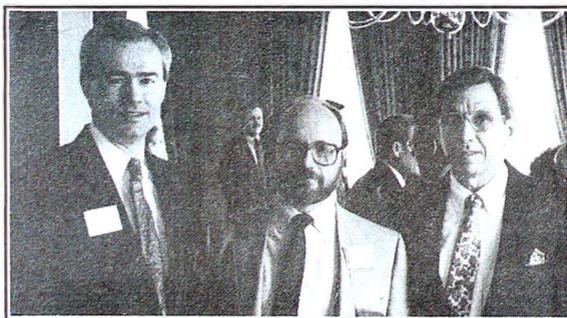
**BAPTIST AND REFLECTOR** staff member Connie Umstead, left, talks with Claude Presnell Jr., middle, and David Smith, both of Belmont University.



**CHATTANOOGA PASTOR** Fred Steelman, center, Red Bank Church, and his wife meet former Tennessee pastor Charles Sullivan, executive director, Indiana Baptist Convention.



◀ **GALE HARTLEY**, pastor, East Side Church, Elizabethton, and Director of Missions Bob Polk, Watauga Association.



◀ **ATTENDING THE UNION UNIVERSITY** dinner were, from left, Joe Jernigan, pastor, Boulevard Church, Memphis; Mike Keenum, Boulevard Church; and Raymond Boston, pastor, First Church, Dyersburg.



▶ **AT THE CARSON-NEWMAN COLLEGE** exhibit were, from left, A. B. Coyle, C-N vice president of development, Joan Coyle, and Doyle Wallace, First Church, Morristown.



**REGISTERING** are Bill Robbins, pastor, Allen Church, Brownsville, and his wife.



**PASTORS** Don Mathis, left, Salem Church, Liberty, and Ric Lee, Auburn Church, Auburntown.



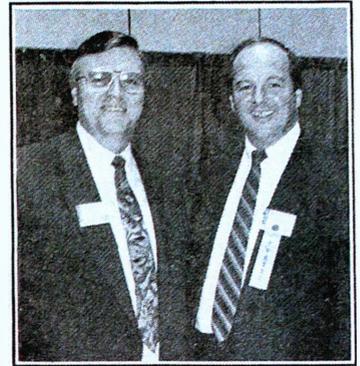
**TENNESSEE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** representatives, from left, John Wallace, First Church, Morristown, and Joe Warwick, Knoxville, who just rotated off the committee.



**NASHVILLE PASTOR** Raymond Langlois, left, Judson Church, visits with Director of Missions Ira Perkins, center, Big Hatchie Association, and his son, Roger Perkins, a pastor in Alabama.



**CLEVELAND REPRESENTATIVES** Reed Wright, pastor, Maple Street Church, Cleveland, and his wife, Doris Ann.



**FROM BIG EMORY ASSOCIATION** are Tom Mooty, pastor, First Church, Wartburg, and Mike Winters, pastor, Walnut Hill Church, Harriman.

## Messengers worship, learn, discuss, vote, fellowship



**DIRECTORS OF MISSIONS**, from left, John Churchman, Chilhowee Association; Charles Earl, Holston Valley Association; and Emery Farmer, New Salem Association.



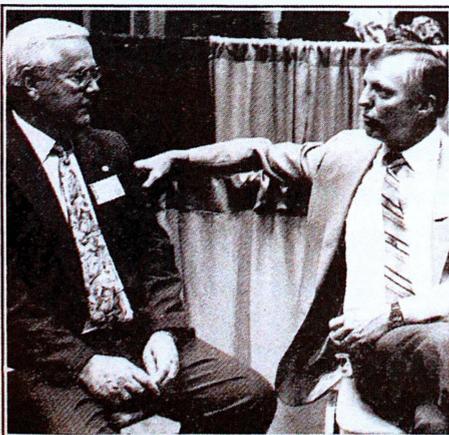
**GWEN GUY**, wife of Pastor Dwight Guy, Forest Hill Church, Maryville, browses in the book store.



**SOLOIST** Caryl Kitchens of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, sings with choir of Calvary Church, Knoxville.



◀ **VISITING** are, from left, Howard Olive, pastor, Monte Vista Church, Maryville; Ray Sorrells, pastor, First Church Erwin; and Bill Powell, retired director of missions, Watauga Association.



◀ **CARSON-NEWMAN COLLEGE** representative Don Mitchell, left, and Bill Marr, pastor, Lincoya Hills Church, Nashville.



**IN THE EXHIBIT AREA** are, from left, John Adams, Union University; Robbie Adams; Kelea and Gayle Alexander, formerly of Tennessee; and Betty and Paul Woodford, pastor, First Church, Lewisburg.

# SBC Pastors' Conference targets issues Baptists face

By Joni B. Hannigan

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Preachers from across the nation addressed worship, the Christian walk, witness, and spiritual warfare as they interpreted the "The Church in the 21st Century" theme at the 1992 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference.

Speakers at the June 7-8 meeting in the Hoosier Dome rallied around the Bible, proclaiming their insights into many current political and social issues facing Southern Baptists. The conference preceded the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 9-11.

"We hear about ... how society is going down the tubes," said pastor Mike Hamlet of First Church, Spartanburg, S.C. "It's time to stop talking about it and time to start doing something about it."

The changes start at the top, said many of the speakers, exhorting listeners to be examples.

"No church is going to rise above its leadership," said Larry Thompson, pastor of Dauhpin Way Church, Mobile, Ala. Leaders "must be willing to take risks, not chances," Thompson emphasized.

James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., noted, "If you fight this world on their battleground, you will lose every time. You can't argue anyone into heaven. Great preaching doesn't complicate the simple, but simplifies the complicated."

Many of the speakers advocated change, but outlined parameters.

Evangelist Jay Strack of Dallas compared the church body to a biological system, saying, "A single cell in the body does whatever is best for the en-

tire body." But when a cell "mutinies," he said, "this is what medical experts call cancer."

Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church, Bossier City, La., questioned listeners about why they don't get out more.

"Why are Southern Baptist churches not more like good news clubs, spreading the word of Jesus Christ?"

Megachurch pastor Bill Hybels from Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago, echoed that same sentiment.

"Lost people don't feel loved by Christians very often," Hybels said, and he asked if any listeners had recently invited a non-Christian from their neighborhood or community over for a visit or out to dinner.

Ed Young, pastor of Houston's Second Church, decried the need for change in the church. "We do not marry methods," Young said. "The church needs to learn again how to be a friend to sinners, how to be all things to all people without compromising one syllable of God's Word."

Several speakers addressed homosexuality, a hot issue among many Southern Baptists.

"We don't have to be held hostage to homosexual lobbyists anymore because we have a standard that supercedes," said Anthony Evans, pastor of predominantly black Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, Dallas.

Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., talked about the moral decline in America, noting, "When I was in school, if they found a guy with a condom ... they kicked him out. Today they give condoms out in school."

On homosexuality, Henry said, "Whenever I tell a person who is practicing a gay lifestyle he is wrong, I'm



**NEW OFFICERS** — Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference officers elected by acclamation at their annual meeting June 8 are, from left: John Yarborough, Tabernacle Church, Cartersville, Ga., secretary-treasurer; Fred Lowery, First Church, Bossier City, La., president; and Jack Millwood, First Church, North Mobile, Ala., vice president.

not gay-bashing. I love him and care for him and don't want him to hurt himself."

Joel Gregory, pastor of First Church, Dallas, spoke of spiritual warfare in the fight against the "strong bones of indifference" to spiritual matters. He cited a recent poll in which 25 percent of Americans claim to be Christian while 24 percent claim to be other and 51 percent said, "I don't care," he recounted. Prayer and praise is what is needed to fight the battle, Gregory said.

Pastor Adrian Rogers of Bellevue Church, Cordova, talked about the message of "worship" found in Psalm 22 and told listeners to keep in mind: "The Bible has but one hero, but one villain, and but one message. And the hero is Jesus, and the villain is Satan, and

the message is Jesus saves!"

Something "glorious" happens in reading the verses, Rogers said, pointing to Jesus as "the one who is prophet, priest, and king."

Other speakers at the conference were O. S. Hawkins, pastor of First Church, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Kenneth Cooper, physician and founder of Cooper Fitness Center of Dallas, and Joseph Stowell, president, Moody's Bible Institute, Chicago.

Officers elected by acclamation for 1993 were Fred Lowery, pastor, First Church, Bossier City, La., president; Jack Millwood, pastor, First Church, North Mobile, Ala., vice president; and John Yarborough, pastor, Tabernacle Church, Cartersville, Ga., secretary-treasurer.

# WMU challenged to 'look beyond differences'

INDIANAPOLIS — More than 2500 women and men at the opening sessions of the annual meeting of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union were admonished to be ready to change methods to meet needs of a rapidly changing world and to look beyond differences between people.

WMU, a women's mission education auxiliary, was among several denominational organizations meeting prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

WMU honored Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks, who is retiring earlier than planned, and

heard national WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien say enough is enough to those who led the 15-million member denomination through a 12-year controversy.

Speaking to more than 2500 men and women at the WMU annual meeting June 7-8 in Indianapolis, O'Brien drew applause on several occasions and a standing ovation at the end of her remarks.

"No longer can we put missions on the back burner while the pot of denominational enmity and dissension boils over," O'Brien said. "It is enough. No longer can we be silent

when we see anger and distrust tearing the heart out of our denomination.

"It is time to confront our brothers with our impatience with divisiveness, with our refusal to play little games when there are those dying in sin because of our lack of faithfulness. It is enough."

Throughout its 104 years, WMU has had many opportunities to rally around causes which affect women — labor laws, voting, and women's rights, O'Brien said. However, WMU has never strayed from the course of missions, she said.

Therefore, WMU has earned the right to be heard in the missions arena, O'Brien said. "We have demonstrated our faithfulness to the missions cause in many notable ways, not the least of which is by raising \$1.7 billion for the evangelization of the world."

A hospital chaplain told the women and men that as WMU members share Christ with the world, they are going to have to look beyond differences between themselves and others.

Ann Griffith of Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City, endorsed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, spends much of her time working with HIV positive and AIDS patients.

She told the story of AIDS victim "J" who recently died with the virus.

J called for a chaplain shortly after arriving at the hospital. The first thing he told Griffith was that he didn't go to church. "They don't really want me there," J told her. "You know, they

don't understand people like me. But I do believe in God."

J was just one searcher seeking a place with God, she said. There are many others. Searchers can even be found suffering silently in church.

The WMU executive board announced the R. Keith Parks Scholarship Fund with an initial endowment of \$25,000.

Also, Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, were given a quilt made by Southern Baptist foreign missionaries and Brazil Baptists. In appreciation for the quilt and Parks, participants at the annual meeting in Indianapolis gave \$3047 toward the 1992 Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions.

Parks addressed the group June 8 during the closing session of their annual meeting. Parks will retire from the board Oct. 30.

The true, God-given Gospel will require a faith which expresses itself through love, not through enslavement, exclusiveness, fighting, anger, and controversy, he said.

"Any time religious leaders, be they Baptist preachers or whoever, begin to add laws as requirements to a Gospel of grace, the truth of the Gospel is at stake for all the peoples of the world," he said. "Today's orthodoxy may be tomorrow's heresy. It is inconceivable that anyone could claim to know all 100 percent of God's truth."

The true Gospel also is a Gospel of grace and not a Gospel of law, Parks said. — Susan Todd Doyle



**QUILT PRESENTATION** — Dellanna O'Brien, left, executive director of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, presents a quilt to retiring Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, during WMU's annual meeting.

# TenneScene

... from Santa Fe to Brush Creek,  
and on to Powder Springs ...

## Leadership . . .

Christina Bowers recently accepted the duties of children and youth director at First Church, Mountain City.

Members of Powder Branch Church, Johnson City, elected David Mauldin as associate pastor to work with youth.

Mike Garrett is serving as pastor of Meridian Church, Crossville.

Chalk Level Church, Camden, called Danny French as associate pastor in charge of music and youth. His home church, First Church, Dickson, will ordain him to the ministry July 12.

Beech Park Church, Oliver Springs, has called Gary L. Smith as pastor. He will begin his duties June 28. He most recently served as interim pastor at Ridgeview Church, Knoxville.

The choir of Haywood Hills Church, Nashville, has produced a commemorative recording, "Celebrating 30 Years Together: Our Favorite Musical Memories," in honor of Pastor Roger Shelton's 30-year ministry.

Samuel D. Dean, pastor of First Church, Clinton, has been awarded an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City. He is a past chairman of the college's board of trustees.

Mike Young has been called as bivocational pastor of Salem Church, Dayton, following six months of service as interim pastor. He has served in Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and was Baptist campus minister at Chattanooga State Technical Community College. He is currently employed as a Bible history teacher in the Chattanooga public school system.

Young is a graduate of University of Tennessee, Chattanooga; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; and International Bible Institute and Seminary.

Raymond L. Clubb is the new pastor of Temple Church, Old Hickory. He served as pastor of Bethel Church, Parrottsville, since 1988. He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas; and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.

Fairview Church, Obion, recently called Guy Merryman as pastor.

Larry Bullard is serving as interim pastor of St. Joseph Church, St. Joseph.

Pine Grove Church, Five Points, called John Stair as pastor.

Ric Lee recently accepted the pastorate of Auburn Church, Auburntown.

## People . . .

Lori Clark, Germantown, has been chosen to serve as fine arts coordinator on the 1992-93 executive council of the Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union in Starkville. She is a BSU student missionary this summer in Vancouver, Canada.

## Ordinations . . .

David McCarver has been ordained as deacon at Raleigh Church, Memphis.

Green River Church, Waynesboro, recently ordained James Kelley as deacon.

Ricky Miller will be ordained to the Gospel ministry June 28 at First Church, Norris.

## Associations . . .

Five churches in Beech River Association will celebrate the 150th anniversary of their constitution this year reported Doyle Neal, director of missions. They are First Church, Union Church, and Ridge Grove Church, all in Lexington; Bear Creek Church, Parsons; and New Hope Church, Decaturville. Observing its 125th anniversary this year is Mount Ararat Church, Darden.

## Missions . . .

The youth choir of First Church, Kingston, recently completed a choir mission tour in Virginia. Not only did the choir perform at several Virginia churches, they also built a heavy lumber playground at the Eastover Plantation Baptist Retreat Center.

The youth group at First Church, Jefferson City, has plans to join with a church in Maryland for a two-week mission exchange project. The first

week will be spent doing Appalachian outreach work and the second week will be spent working in inner-city Washington, D.C.

Two student summer missionaries have been given assignments in Riverside Association. Merri Rowan, Milan, is a sophomore at Union University, Jackson. Heather Garrison is a junior at Memphis State University. Both women are available to lead in Vacation Bible School, mission activities, youth and children outings, and surveying.

Members of Silver Springs Church, Mt. Juliet, will leave June 24 for a mission trip to Bay Area Association in Michigan. After doing construction and survey work and leading in Vacation Bible School, the volunteer missionaries will return July 1.

Ralonda Dittmar, Commerce, Texas, will be a Home Mission Board summer missionary at Green River Church, Waynesboro, during June, July, and August. Mike Kemper is pastor.

Two members of First Church, Knoxville, will spend their summers as missionaries. Garner Dewey, a native of Costa Rica, will work with Arab and Israeli youth in camps in Israel June-August. Mary Beth Hill, a Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., student left June 8 for Alaska to work in Vacation Bible School, youth camps, and Backyard Bible Clubs in Ketchikan, Juneau, and the surrounding islands.

The chapel choir of Central Church, Fountain City, Knoxville, began a music/mission tour in Myrtle Beach, N.C. June 12. During the week, they led Bible clubs; performed at churches, shopping malls, and campgrounds; and sang songs in Spanish and ministered through mimes and puppets at the migrant mission of Pleasant View Church, Nichols, N.C.

Several members of Central Church, Johnson City, will be involved in volunteer missions during the summer months. Thirty youth and adults will be in New Underwood, S.D., June 18-28 teaching Vacation Bible School at First Church. Another volunteer team of youth will lead day camps at camp-



**COUPLE HONORED** — Carson-Newman College President Cordell Maddox and his wife, Brona, were honored recently for 15 years of service to the college. The couple were given gifts and a commendation at the college's annual Faculty Honors Banquet.

grounds in Myrtle Beach, S.C., Aug. 3-7.

## Churches . . .

Members of First Church, Knoxville, helped other residents of Knox County celebrate the county's 200th anniversary June 14. After hearing selections of early Christian music sung by the choir on the front steps of First Church, the congregation walked to the courthouse where the church first met.

A remodeling project at Beck Mountain Church, Elizabethton, was recently completed. The old building was turned into a fellowship hall and additional classrooms. Bob Reed is interim pastor.

Members of Trace Creek Church, New Johnsonville, dedicated their new auditorium June 14. Open house for former members and friends will be June 28, 2-4 p.m. Charles E. Gibbs Jr., is pastor.

## Revivals . . .

D. L. Lowrie, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, will lead revival June 26-28 at East Side Church, Elizabethton. Gil Moody will direct music.

## Cummings earns doctorate

Randall M. Cummings, pastor, First Church, Ripley, earned the doctor of ministry degree May 15 from New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

It was reported by NOBTS he earned the master of divinity degree.



**SUMMER WORKERS** — Six summer missionaries have been appointed by the TBC Sunday School Department to serve across the state in different associations to conduct Vacation Bible Schools and Backyard Bible Clubs. The students recently attended an intensive training clinic at the Baptist Center led by Lyn Brasfield, who is coordinating the project, and Cindy Franks of the TBC Discipleship Training Department. From left, front row, Andrea Nix, First Church, Shelbyville; Leigh Williams, First Church, Dyersburg; Kristi Bible, Bible's Chapel, Midway; Brasfield, back row, Allan Meguiar, Neely's Bend Church, Nashville; Joshua Horne, Nashville; Franks; and Jason Pearson, Liberty Church, Nashville.

## Daily prayer requests for Chile/Tennessee Partnership — June



Prayer requests have come for specific needs and for several undated requests in the Chile/Tennessee Partnership Mission.

18 — Missionary Steve Cook on his birthday and as he begins furlough in North Carolina.

19 — WMU members attending Chile orientation session today preparing for service in August.

20 — Tennessee BSU team now serving in Puerto Varas/Puerto Montt doing construction work.

21 — Pray Psalm 18:32 for missionary Cecille Hicks Grossman in Arica on her birthday.

22 — The membership of El Sembrador Church in Temuco. The church was robbed of almost every thing of value recently. The church also serves as a school for about 250 students.

23 — Jimmy Moore of University of Tennessee, Martin, and Charlie Worthy of Union University as they work on construction on a Chilean church.

24 — Charles Alexander, mission chairman of the missionaries in Chile on his birthday.

# SSB restructures; personnel changes to be announced

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP) — In the continuing process of restructuring the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, President James T. Draper Jr. has announced names of 18 components to report directly to vice presidents of the board's four operational areas.

He told employees during a June 5 assembly he expects to announce personnel for the 18 components by the end of June. Both the restructured organization and personnel will be recommended to trustees who meet Aug. 17-19 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.



DRAPER

On May 22, Draper announced the formation of four operational areas and persons to head each — corporate services to be led by Michael Arrington; church growth and programs, Gene Mims; trade and retail markets, Charles Wilson; and finance and administration, E. V. King.

"I know this information is not all you want to know," Draper told employees. "We are doing our best to let you know every step we take."

The restructuring process has been guided by employees through four task forces and numerous surveys and interviews, Draper said. The changes represent the greatest number of changes at one time in the board's history.

Draper said the restructured organization reduces the number of persons at the vice presidential level from seven when he became president in August 1991 to four, a 42 percent reduction.

The new structure also creates three independent strategic operating units — church growth and programs, Baptist Book Stores, and trade publishing. To allow each to be "as independent as they can be with full resources for doing their work," Draper said a number of services will be decentralized to support the units, including marketing, sales, customer service, accounting, and purchasing.

Church growth and services will include four divisions — church growth and Sunday School, discipleship and family development, worship and church music, and church programs services.

Trade and retail markets will include two divisions and one department reporting to Wilson — book store and trade publishing divisions, and the direct marketing department.

Corporate services will include five departments — communications and denominational relations, marketing research, strategic planning and coordination, information systems, and Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) conference centers.

Finance and administration also will have five departments — business and finance, production services, property management, distribution, and human resources.

"Keep in mind that there will be additional department positions at the next level of the organization," Draper

said. "They will be finalized after the leaders of these 18 positions are in place and give input. No function has been eliminated."

In filling the 18 positions, Draper said: "We are looking first within the Sunday School Board. In situations where we do not find a good fit internally, we will go outside for candidates."

He urged employees to be flexible and cooperative amid the changes and to pray for one another.

"By working together under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, I am convinced we will equip and enable individual Christians to reach people with the Gospel of Christ," Draper said.

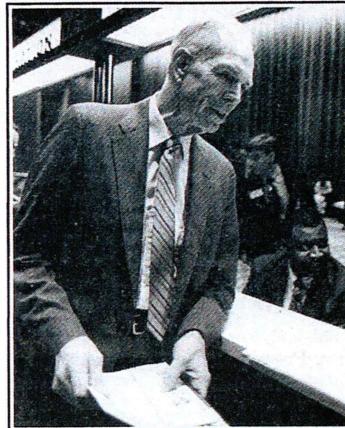
## Michigan executive director makes history

By Art Toalston

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — The 900,000th messenger in the Southern Baptist Convention's 147-year history registered Sunday night, June 7, at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis.

"This is absolutely amazing," said Lee Porter, SBC registration secretary, as Robert Wilson, executive director of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, walked into the registration area. "It is totally amazing." Porter repeated of the coincidence of a Southern Baptist denominational worker being the convention's 900,000th messenger.

Wilson and his wife, Reatha, were registered by Willie Feats, a member of Sunnyside Road Church, Indianapolis and an Army sergeant at nearby Fort Harrison. Feats, a native of Lanett, Ala., is one of 200 local Baptist volunteers working the convention's registration booths.



WILSON

Moments earlier, Porter had flagged down another couple but, it turned out, the husband had registered earlier and was accompanying his wife to the registration area. Thus she was the 899,999th local church representative to the convention.

Wilson has been executive director of the Michigan convention since 1970 and a convention staff member 35 years. The state convention encompasses 48,000 Baptists in 247 churches and 55 missions.

Wilson said he has attended the SBC every year since the 1957 meeting in Chicago except the 1988 session in San Antonio when, just days earlier, the roof of the Michigan convention's headquarters in Southfield collapsed. In

placing a new roof on the building, workers unknowingly had piled materials atop the facility to the point of collapse.

Porter, SBC registration secretary since 1977, reviewed the growth of messenger numbers since 293 messengers were registered at the first meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 in Augusta, Ga.

Cumulative messenger totals reached 100,000 at the 1929 SBC meeting in Memphis; 200,000 in 1950 in Chicago; 300,000 in 1960 in Miami Beach; 400,000 in 1967 again in Miami Beach; 500,000 in 1975 a third time in Miami Beach; 600,000 in 1980 in St. Louis; 700,000 in 1985 in Dallas; and 800,000 in 1988 in San Antonio.



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## TeamTalk

By D. L. Lowrie

A name should mean something. When a church chooses to call itself "Missionary Baptist," this should say something about the faith and the practice of the church. Yet as I looked over the missions giving report from our churches in the *Baptist and Reflector*, I made a startling discovery. Many of our churches who have the name "Missionary" gave nothing to missions during the whole year. How can this be?



LOWRIE

Is it because they do not want to give their money to something they can't see? Evidently not! Television programs have received millions from members of these churches without any real proof that they are being translated into real ministries.

Is it because they see needs at home? We must remember that this great commission specifies "all nations." Any church that is not involved in missions beyond itself is a disobedient church.

We need to either change our name or change our practice. It would be better to change our practice. Your church can do this by receiving an offering for foreign missions this month, and by giving a part of your weekly church income to world missions through the Cooperative Program. Let's put some meaning into the name "Missionary Baptist."

It is a joy to serve the greatest Missionary of them all, the Lord Jesus Christ, with you. May God help us to serve Him worthily.

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# Paul's final plea

By Jerry L. Glisson, pastor emeritus; Leawood Church, Memphis

Becoming one's best, according to the world's thinking, is becoming successful. Too often the church's best is measured by success. Paul's concept of success involved becoming one's best through the work of God. The Corinthian church had problems. They attempted to be successful even when it meant stepping on, around, or over someone. Paul's standard of excellence was different.

**Demonstrate sacrificial love (ch. 12:14-19)**

Paul was unwilling to be a burden to the Corinthians. He was going to visit them again and still not be a burden. He did not desire their money, but he wanted their surrender to Christ (v. 14). He loved the Corinthian church members so much that he was willing to spend his own money and pour out his life for them (vv. 14-15). His love was like a parent's love (v. 14). And Christ knew his love from them (v. 19).

**Denounce divisive behavior (ch. 12:20-21)**

Since he was apprehensive about the

unconfessed sins in the body of believers at Corinth, Paul enumerated the sins again. They were "sins of disposition" (quarreling, jealousy, explosive tempers, strifes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, and disturbances (v. 20). "Sensual sins," such as impurity, immorality, and sensuality were even worse. If such were still present, then Paul and the church would be embarrassed and grieved once he arrived. Such sins hurt the church.

**Delineate truth's authority (ch. 13:1-4)**  
 Dictatorial methods of unrighteous leaders to settle problems will not work. The instructions of Jesus need to be followed. Members who have a difference should attempt to find a solution before involving the leaders (Matthew 18:15-20). As a result of Paul's approach, he had been declared weak by his critics. And weakness to the critics meant that Paul did not have the power of God in his life. He could not delineate truth's authority. He was too weak. Paul refuted these accusations by promising to show God's

power upon his arrival. It would not be dictatorial, but it would be the same as Christ Jesus had portrayed on the cross. Truth could be portrayed accurately by the power of God in the life of Jesus or in the life of Paul.

**BIBLE BOOK**  
**June 21 Lesson**  
 Basic Passage: II Corinthians 12:14-13:14

**Determine faith's depth (ch. 13:5-7)**  
 "Examine yourselves" was Paul's word to the Corinthians. Quit bragging. Let your faith show itself. (Study James.) Paul said to determine your faith's depth, ask yourselves some questions and truthfully answer them. Are you really saved? Are you experiencing the power of Christ within you more and more? Are you just pretending to be a Christian? Do you really live as though you are not saved? (v. 5). Paul could say he had passed the test. And it was his prayer that they could pass the test regardless of how they felt about him (v. 7).

**Develop an encouraging spirit (ch. 13:8-10)**

Paul was an encourager. He had no desire to offend, hurt, or cause anyone to stumble. His desire was for the Corinthians to become mature Christians, equipped and ready for service. But he did not sit around wishing for their maturity; he prayed for them. He did not enjoy scolding and punishing them, but his joy came in seeing their edification (being built up).

**Design a peaceful fellowship (ch. 13:11-14)**

Even when Paul was closing his letter, he gave words of instructions. Becoming one's best requires instructions and obedience. As the Corinthians obeyed, the promise of God to be with them in love and peace would be fulfilled. As a part of the plan there were some conditions for having such fellowship with Him and with one another; namely, practice being mature, be encouraged, live in harmony and peace, and keep on being friendly to one another (vv. 11-12). God's love, Christ's grace, and fellowship with the Spirit will result.

# Jonah sulks and God saves

By Ron Mouser, minister of education; Central Church, Fountain City, Knoxville

While inside the great fish, Jonah had time to reflect on his condition. The prayer he uttered is contained in chapter two. In the midst of his distress, Jonah became keenly aware of God's mercy and deliverance. His prayer ended with the realization that the source of salvation is God. After Jonah was delivered from the belly of the fish, God gave Jonah a second opportunity, saying, "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." This time Jonah was obedient and began to proclaim God's message.

Hearing the message, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned," the people believed. The impact of this change of attitude reached the country's leader. As an expression of his repentance, the king replaced his royal garments with sackcloth and sat in ashes. The actions of the king and the people of Nineveh were an indication they had heeded the Word of God. As a

result, God "... had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction He had threatened."

This response should have brought rejoicing in heaven and joy to the heart of Jonah. Instead, Jonah's persistent prejudice expressed itself again. From the lips of this frustrated prophet proceeded the proverbial, "I told you so." Jonah's accusatory statement was reflective of harbored hostility. Jonah was disturbed that his enemy would be saved and that his reputation as a prophet would be questioned. After all, his message had been one of doom. God cut through all the subterfuge to the heart of the issue when He asked, "Have you any right to be angry?"

Angered and filled with disappointment, Jonah went to a place east of the city to sulk. Jonah sat and waited to see what would happen to Nineveh. As he sat, God made a vine grow over Jonah's head to protect him from the

heat. The next day a worm destroyed the vine and the anger of the sage was intensified. God asked a second penetrating question, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?"

The book of Jonah ends with God pointing out that the prophet had a displaced priority system. The redemptive response by the people of Nineveh was far more important than a withered vine. Jonah could not deal with his prejudice toward the Assyrians. As a result, he became angry at God. In response to Jonah's misguided concern for a vine, the book closes with God posing the poignant question, "Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

Much of the content of the account of Jonah and his response to the call of God are disturbing. Much about the prophet's attitude is a direct contradiction to God's purpose. The Old Testament message of missions should remind us that God's forgiveness is for

anyone who seeks Him in true repentance. The messenger of the Gospel must identify with God's purpose of redemption, regardless of the human barriers of social stigma or prejudice. Jonah should have learned that the child of God cannot escape God's call to evangelism. Often, Christians prefer the restrictive environment of the fish's belly instead of open fields white unto harvest. God has called us to share His love and concern for the lost.

**CONVENTION UNIFORM**  
**June 21 Lesson**  
 Basic Passage: Jonah 3-4

Finally, the prophet should have realized that God is concerned for all people. Jonah got the cart before the horse. He asked the wrong questions. His concern was with losing face rather than selfless service. Christians, like this Old Testament character, limit the power and purpose of God by a vision clouded with petty jealousy and personal prejudice, and by a lack of loving concern of the disenfranchised.

# Rich yet poor

By Sharon Herrington, layperson; Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage

We are often chided, "If you look hard enough and long enough, you can find something good about a person or a situation." Obviously the church at Laodicea must have been the exception to the rule, because Christ Himself could not find any commendation for this church. The Laodicean church spoken of in Revelation 3:14-22 was the only church of the seven churches addressed which was given no commendation. Even the Sardis church had a faithful few.

The cities in which the seven churches flourished were unique in their makeup and personality. Laodicea was a wealthy center for the worship of the god of medicine. The city produced famous black wool garments and equally famous eye salve among its other wealth-producing ventures. This church was known as the rich-poor church because its members were

"rich in potential, yet poor in spirit and performance," according to writer Herschel Hobbs.

Finding no commendation, Christ began immediately with the accusation that the Laodicean church was neither hot nor cold, neither on fire for the Lord nor cold and indifferent. This accusation reminds us of churches today filled with average Americans who are blessed of God and are rich when compared to the people of the Third World nations. Many of us are content to let our money buy ministry for others or buy our portion of responsibility in the church. We are well meaning, luke-warm Christians who are certainly not cold or indifferent to Christ, but we are not spiritually sensitive to the needs of our surrounding community. Many of us are spiritually blind, thinking all is well.

Have you ever drunk coffee at room

temperature? Coffee needs to be served either piping hot or iced. Coffee experts would think room-temperature coffee disgusting and would reject it. Christ said to the Laodicean church, "I would thou wert cold or hot ... I will spew thee out of my mouth," (vv. 15-16).

Christ offers hope and redemption to this church through His exhortation in verses 18-19. He identified with the wealthy banking trade of the city when He encouraged them to "buy of me ... ." He identified with the black wool garment industry by offering "white raiment" symbolizing purity. He identified with the famous eye salve produced in Laodicea by encouraging them to try His prescription for spiritual renewal and vision.

**LIFE AND WORK**  
**June 21 Lesson**  
 Basic Passage: Revelation 3:14-22

True love is willing to rebuke and chasten in order that one's potential might be met, (v. 19). Then in verse 20, we see that spiritual union with

Christ, which produces the flame within the heart, sets the atmosphere for Christ to sup with us instead of His spewing us out of His mouth.

Christ's words to the church at Laodicea bring several affirmations to mind. First, I am very thankful for persons in churches who use their wealth of resources and their monetary blessings to extend God's kingdom, relieve suffering, and provide the financial backing for God's work in the local church. Because I have been on the receiving end so many times I have felt the relief that these persons' unselfishness can bring.

Second, we all must keep in mind that investing our lives in Christ — buying into Him — yields sweet dividends we really do not deserve.

Third, we must express our gratitude to God that He deals redemptively with each one of us. I am thankful He has had mercy on me and offered me hope to reach His potential for my life when really He should have spewed me out of His mouth.

To retire Oct. 1

## Bennett's love for Southern Baptists remains strong

By Art Toalston

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — "I love Southern Baptists. I love Jesus Christ," Harold C. Bennett said when he stepped into the role of president-treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee in 1979.

Those loves remained strong during Bennett's 13-year tenure — but they were put to the test by a sweeping transition within the Southern Baptist Convention toward deeper conservatism in its Biblical base and its stance on such issues as abortion and prayer in public schools.

Bennett is to retire Oct. 1 but will remain with the Executive Committee until Dec. 31 to assist president-treasurer-elect Morris Chapman, who begins work with the SBC coordinating body June 15. He was honored with a resolution of appreciation from the Executive Committee June 8 and a reception at the Southern Baptist Convention June 9.

Throughout the years of change, marked by controversy across the SBC and more than a decade of divided votes in annual convention presidential elections, Bennett kept a steady course. "My commitment," he says, "has been to be fair and to work with all of our constituency."

Jimmy Draper, SBC president from 1982-84 and current president of the Sunday School Board, said Bennett "worked very well with the conservative leadership as well as the moderate leadership in this time of transition. I think he's given us stability in these 13 years."

During his two terms as SBC president, Draper said he received good counsel from Bennett. "But he wouldn't force it on me. He always made suggestions for me to consider. 'I felt he wanted me to succeed,'" Draper said. "I think he viewed that as part of his job. I think most people will tell you he's fair, (he's) a very



HAROLD AND PHYLLIS BENNETT

strong, positive, consistent leader and he's good at what he does."

As president-treasurer, Bennett is the Executive Committee's chief staff assistant in its role of coordinating SBC affairs between annual convention sessions (those not specifically assigned to other SBC agencies); distributing and accounting for Southern Baptists' giving through the \$140-million Cooperative Program for national and international ministries; and spearheading SBC public relations.

Bennett and the 21-member Executive Committee staff he directs also provide staff support and background materials needed by other SBC committees as well as making the vast array of arrangements necessary for each year's convention meeting.

"He is a master of detail," said Ernest Mosley, Executive Committee executive vice president and former

executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association. Bennett traces his fondness for detail to a year he worked as an FBI clerk in Washington after high school. He first worked in the print shop then the photo lab, "where we did lots of photographing of evidence sent in from crime scenes all over the country. It was exacting work. In fact, everything the FBI did was precise. Looking back, I see how this experience tilted me toward a love of details and statistics."

Apart from SBC controversy and details, Bennett is buoyed by positive memories from his work in one of the convention's key leadership posts. "There are so many highlights," he reflected, topped by Southern Baptists' progress in Bold Mission Thrust and an \$8 million, seven-story office building in Nashville housing the Executive Committee and six other SBC commissions or organizations.

"I really feel there has been good progress" in Bold Mission Thrust, the effort launched in 1976 to stir Southern Baptists toward a key role in sharing the Gospel worldwide by the year 2000. Without BMT, and coordination provided by Executive Committee, Bennett believes "we would have slipped back instead of going forward."

Southern Baptist churches across the country have increased by nine percent during BMT and church-type missions by 181 percent, Bennett recounted. SBC membership is up by 18 percent and Sunday School enrollment by ten percent. The SBC Cooperative Program has almost doubled. The number of foreign missionaries has increased 48 percent, home missionaries by 98 percent.

"The report of Bold Mission Thrust for the period 1976-1991," Bennett said, "is cause for thanksgiving to God for his blessings."

Bennett also has a deeply personal stake in Bold Mission Thrust: His

daughter Cynthia and her husband, Paul Howard, are new Southern Baptist missionaries to the African country of Swaziland. Bennett and his wife, Phyllis, also have two older married sons, Jeff, a Florida businessman, and Scott, a professor of music (organ) and German at Union University in Jackson.

When Bennett assumed the Executive Committee president-treasurer's job in 1979, he was "experientially equipped for the job," Mosley recounted. Bennett had been executive secretary-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention since 1967; director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas' missions division, 1965-67; secretary of the Home Mission Board's metropolitan missions department, 1962-65; and superintendent of new work for the Sunday School Board's Sunday School department, 1960-62. He has been pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas, and North Carolina.

He sensed a call to the ministry during 1943-45 service as a stateside-based Navy pilot. Stationed at Corpus Christi, Texas, at the time, he was alone in his room writing a letter to his mother when he felt an "inner, compelling, overwhelming call. It surprised me, for I'd never thought of myself as a minister."

Describing the work of a pastor as "God's greatest and highest calling," Bennett said, "I really felt I would be a pastor all my life, because God had called me in a very special way to the ministry and I assumed all along that meant the pastorate." But, he said, he chose to measure his ministry opportunities by a Bible passage he first heard as a boy in Asheville, N.C., Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

## Speakers urge forgiveness at national prayer conference

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Southern Baptists must forgive one another and begin praying for one another for God to let them be part of spiritual awakenings in the world today, according to speakers at the National Prayer Conference prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Do you realize how tragic it is that we can't agree to pray with or for one another?" asked James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

Bob Dixon, executive director of Texas Baptist Men, said, "The great need of Southern Baptists, if God is going to let them be part of what he's do-

ing, is to have his forgiveness. According to his Book, the forgiveness will not come till we forgive one another."

Decrying the distrust, anger, and hostility that has characterized the attitudes of many Southern Baptists toward each other during the controversy of recent years, Draper pled for Baptists to pray together.

"There's enough prayer power in this room tonight to loose the power of God on Southern Baptists," Draper told the group of state prayer coordinators.

Chastising Southern Baptists for learning how to do religion without the power of God, Draper said, "When we

spend more time strategizing and planning than we do praying, we're saying we can do it better than God."

There are signs people are praying in that 300 churches have been involved in the SBC's Watchmen National Prayer Alert this year in which churches commit to pray one hour a week in an around-the-clock prayer chain, Draper said.

"We're going to extend it another year," he said.

Another positive sign in America, he said, is, "People are seeking God, wanting God. They're tired of church and denominations and religious charlatans but not tired of God. There's never been a time when this country is more receptive to things of God than today." — Orville Scott

## Jewish Southern Baptists form fellowship

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — A small group of Southern Baptists with a large vision for establishing culturally Jewish congregations throughout the United States adopted a constitution and bylaws and voted to incorporate into an official organization June 8.

The Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship also elected a new slate of officers and projected plans to grow into an umbrella organization within the Southern Baptist Convention to facilitate ministries to Jewish people.

The fellowship will escalate plans to form "Messianic congregations" and

maintain a clearinghouse for information and exchange of methods and approaches to bring Jews to faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

Jerry Young, a Jewish Southern Baptist from Henderson, Texas, was elected president at the group's third annual meeting prior to the annual sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis.

The fellowship cooperates with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board through the board's interfaith witness and language missions departments.



EARLY BIRDS — James W. and Avo Taylor of Springfield Church, Springfield, had front row seats to hear Vice President Dan Quayle during the opening session of the Southern Baptist Convention.