

■ **this week's news**

global —

- Missionaries describe life in fear-packed Liberia. — See page 10
- Missionaries send Christmas greetings from overseas. — See page 5

national —

- Accrediting agency keeps Southeastern Seminary on probation. — See page 8
- Southern Seminary trustees call special meeting about professor. — See page 3
- Supreme Court refuses to hear abortion cases. — See page 3

state —

- Christmas stories provide tips for the holidays. — See pages 6-7

Leaders give challenge, Porch installed

New Executive Board meets, organizes

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor

Eighteen new members began working with committee assignments last week as the Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention met.

The entire board was organized at the Dec. 10-11 sessions.

The two-day meeting began with a retreat on Thursday after a brief plenary session and committee reviews.

Thursday evening included installation of James Porch as executive director/treasurer, and a prayer retreat led by T. W. Hunt, prayer consultant for the Sunday School Board.

Porch, who began work on Nov. 1, was charged to his new position by James L. Sullivan, retired Sunday School Board president, who is the father of Porch's wife Lynn.

The board, in its "election" meeting during the recent TBC Annual Meeting, chose Frank Samuels, Memphis pastor, as its president. Others chosen include David Crocker, Johnson City pastor, vice president; and Laurann Whetham, Luttrell, recording secretary.

The 100-member board was assigned committee positions by board officers and six other board members who comprised the nominating committee. The others include Gary Anderson, M. B. Howard, Leonard Markham, Dean Haun, Ron Owens, and Gary Watkins.

Named committee chairpersons: Budget and Program, Bobby Turner; Central Admin-

istration, Paul Moody; Christian Services, Earl McCosh; Church Programs, Diane Jordan; Convention Ministries, Wendell Boertje; and Education, Howard Kolb.

Jordan and Kolb are new to the chairs.

The six chairpersons plus a dozen at large members make up the Executive Committee of the board. Some of the at large members are named because of other positions.

Officers selected to Executive Committee leadership are David George, pastor of Immanuel Church, Nashville; and Joe Littlefield, pastor of White Station, Memphis.

The Executive Committee also functions as a board of directors for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Sullivan, in his charge to Porch, said he had "learned a few things" in 66 years in denominational ministry that he considered good advice, especially to leadership posts.

"Use the Bible fully and freely in your work," he said. "The Bible is a lamp and a light for all that you strive to do."

He added that good organization is necessary, but that "if you are aware of it, isn't working."

The position is a responsible assignment, he said, and calls for leadership by example.

Keep the home ties strong, he challenged, and "rely on God's leadership in the power of the Holy Spirit."

Porch responded that he had been fed from Sullivan's



STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS are, from left, Howard Kolb, Memphis, Education; Wendell Boertje, Knoxville, Convention Ministries; Diane Jordan, Talbot, Church Programs; David George, Nashville, Executive; Bobby Turner, Knoxville, Budget and Program; Paul Moody, Erin, Central Administrative; and Earl McCosh, Dandridge, Christian Services

wisdom for 30 years. "It's been a privilege."

He said his agenda is relationships. Baptists have developed relationships through the years, from the Philadelphia and Charleston associations to the Triennial Convention and Southern Baptist Convention.

He pointed to the birth of the Cooperative Program in 1925 and Bold Mission Thrust in 1976 as pivotal points in Baptist life.

"When is the next such date," he asked, "could it be now, can it come from our generation of Tennessee Baptist volunteers?"

"It can be now," he said. "This can be the place and the time to model the cooperative spirit and work together for the cause of Christ."

T. W. Hunt led board members in an intensive prayer study to conclude Thursday's actions. He discussed the power and authority of God as given to mankind — and put prayer in perspective to both.

"Jesus could offer his life as atonement for our sins because he was perfect," he said. Redeemed man has regained the authority to lead others to Christ. The group broke into prayer cells for the last part of the evening's emphasis.

Hunt underscored the truth that God calls out prayer warriors when he wants to do great works.

Leonard Markham, TBC president and board member, led the Friday plenary session with a devotional emphasizing — See New, page 2

FMB trustees continue toward leadership changes

By Robert O'Brien
For Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees continued moving toward a change of leadership, heard reports from the board's interim president and search committee chairman and agreed to employ a consulting firm to study the board's structure.

In a quiet Dec. 7-9 meeting, trustees also heard reports on missions opportunities ranging from Somalia to the former

Soviet Union, appointed 35 new foreign missionaries and heard a guest evangelist from North Carolina urge them to "plow on" in their task of world missions.

Evangelist Paul Tsika, apparently referring to the controversy that has beset the Southern Baptist Convention and the Foreign Mission Board, urged trustees to focus on the board's evangelistic goals.

"Forget what is behind and pay attention to the goal in the future," he said. "I'm an

avowed fundamentalist, but I don't go for the issue but for the propagation of the Gospel. The church is battling without discernment. We should focus on fighting to establish the Gospel."

Don Kammerdiener, addressing his first trustee meeting as interim president, presented an "interim agenda" as the board seeks a new president to replace R. Keith Parks. Trustees concluded Kammerdiener's report with standing applause.

Parks, who retired Oct. 31

because of disagreements with the board's direction, sat quietly in the audience as Kammerdiener spoke and the board conducted its business Dec. 9. He also attended the board's Dec. 8 missionary appointment service. Parks, who will become missions coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Feb. 1, told Baptist Press he attended because "I'm a Southern Baptist interested in world missions."

A search committee, appointed eight months ago to — See FMB, page 2

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FMB trustees continue move toward leadership changes

— Continued from page 1

find a new president, will hold a prayer retreat Jan. 7-9 and a regularly scheduled meeting Jan. 22 to continue to sift through some 70 names, according to committee chairman Joel Gregory. Reports indicate Kammerdiener, a board missionary and administrator for 30 years, is among those being considered.

Gregory, former pastor of First Church, Dallas, in an interview with Associated Baptist Press, categorically denied he would be the nominee.

Kammerdiener focused his interim agenda on relationships between staff, trustees, and missionaries; a philosophy of honest communications; an effort to "find the right balance" between career and volunteer missionaries; the role of trustees; and a continued worldwide missions thrust.

Noting that all who serve are "interim" because they have "only a brief and passing opportunity" in life, Kammerdiener urged staff, trustees, and missionaries to "seize the moment ... to be faithful and effective" in their work. "When I work for the Foreign Mission Board you may be certain that as far as I'm concerned ... (it's) the best mission board in the world."

Kammerdiener challenged each trustee to "become a denominational missions leader" who will support the board and its work through communications, action, prayer, and financial support.

On communications, Kammerdiener said the board is committed to telling the truth. "As a board we have nothing to fear from the truth. It's better for Baptists and others to understand the truth, even if it's not a pleasant truth, than

it is to be ignorant. ... Our credibility ... depends on our ability and willingness to tell the truth."

He expressed gratitude for the role of the board's professional communicators, but urged all trustees and staff to see themselves as communicators in the broad sense.

Trustees dealt with a variety of other matters:

The board action to hire a consulting firm began the process of studying the board's organization related to its purpose.

Trustee Lawson Swearingen of Louisiana, speaking to the recommendation, said the action was "not intended to criticize anything" (about the board's present organization) but to help the board determine "where we are, where we want to go and how to get there."

Board chairman John Jackson of California said he, three

other trustees, and four staff members will attend the meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union executive board in Birmingham Jan. 9 and at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly in Talledega, Ala., Jan. 10-13. A 17-member committee studying how the women's auxiliary will relate to all Southern Baptists, including the new Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, will bring recommendations at the meeting.

The other trustees attending will be Karen Gilbert and Phyllis Randall, both from Virginia, and Bill Blanchard of Tennessee, along with staff.

The board also honored retiring Americas vice president Betty Law and applauded reports from John Faulkner, area director for eastern and southern Africa, and Sam James, vice president for Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. □

New Executive Board meets, organizes

— Continued from page 1

Baptist relationships.

"What is our hearts' desire for Christmas?" he asked. He said that desire should include "sewing seeds of love and not discord and doing that which honors God and not ourselves."

"The desire of our hearts should be to bring together rather than to divide politically," Markham said. "Reverent honor to the One who calls us to serve him is what we should give," he added.

"Is it wrong to pray to God to bring us back together?" he asked. Persistent prayer, he said, should ask God to reclaim

Southern Baptists, and Tennessee Baptists.

"This board, this group of women and men can be the catalyst," he added. "The same God who brought Jesus from the dead, who enabled an older woman to have a special child, who enabled a young virgin to bear the Messiah — is always able."

The up-to-date financial report from Executive Director Porch showed a vast improvement from the first figures of November.

Cooperative Program gifts from the churches as of Dec. 11 put the budget year's total at

\$162,107 above last year's income at this point.

Looking to the next few months he said showed some changes in Executive Board staff. Martha Grove retires Dec. 31 as Accounting Department director but will stay on for a transitional period. James McDonald, Business Office director, also retires at the end of this month. Porch said both areas would be studied, probably with assistance from the Central Administrative Committee.

Most committees had only brief reports since the December meeting is mainly for orga-

nization and orientation.

Baptist hospitals gave brief summaries, as did Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes, Woman's Missionary Auxiliary, Tennessee Baptist Foundation, and the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Wendell Boertje, chairman of the Convention Ministries Committee, reported on the status of a working agreement with associations and directors of the missions. The board approved a statement which had been reviewed at the November meeting of missions directors. The Missions Department and the associations also are giving input, he said. It was noted that the agreement was a generic statement of cooperation and that each association could make suggestions for changes.

The three college presidents reported also.

Enrollment at Union University reached 2430 students, including 2009 on the Jackson campus, said Hyran Barefoot. The others students are at Baptist Memorial Health Care System at Memphis. Seventy percent of the students are from Tennessee.

Belmont's Bill Troutt reported that 72 percent of the Nashville university's 2866 students are from Tennessee. For the second year the schools of religion and nursing had record enrollment.

The fall also brought "exciting days" to Carson-Newman College, said Cordell Maddox. A new student center, under construction, should be complete by May, he said. There are 2100 students. □

There's no number 2493

— please stop with the petitions!

Chicken Little was wrong. The sky is not falling, the Redcoats are not coming, and the so-called Madalyn Murray O'Hair "petition" is false, ridiculous, and founded on easily disproved rumor.

Don't believe it, Tennessee Baptists. There never was an O'Hair "petition 2493" to implore the Federal Communications Commission to remove religious broadcasts from radio and TV.

Because people continue to believe the rumor (which has been around for about 17 years), Baptist state papers have had to refute the rumor over and over, wasting valuable space and time. It simply is not true.

The FCC has reported for years that O'Hair has never filed a petition with the agency, of any kind. The rumor has been circulating since

1975. Many Tennessee pastors have checked out the false story before allowing the petitions to be spread throughout the church and community.

The FCC also says that

The FCC's automated Information Service in Washington has a recorded message about the O'Hair rumor. Answered 24 hours a day, the number is (202) 632-7000.

since 1975 it has received more than 21 million signed letters about a threat that does not exist. So, if a million signed letters were needed to defeat such a petition, it would have been defeated 21 times already!

The FCC does say this about the alleged threat:

"A petition was filed with

the FCC on December 1975 by Jeremy Lansman and Lorenzo Milam, asking that the FCC 'freeze' applications for TV and FM channels reserved for educational stations. We routinely assigned it a rule making number — RM 2493.

"On Aug. 1, 1975, the FCC unanimously denied this petition, declaring that the First Amendment requires government agencies to take a neutral stance toward religious activity.

"In spite of this very clear ruling, many people still have not gotten the word that the petition has been denied."

Well-intentioned but careless efforts have kept O'Hair's name in prominence as news media and the FCC have battled the false petitions for 17 years. □ — Editor

Positive financial report highlights HMB meeting

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's executive committee received a positive financial report during its final meeting of the year.

"Thank the Lord for Southern Baptist faithfulness," said board chairman Ron Phillips, pastor, Central Church, Hixson, following the Dec. 8 report.

Bob Banks, HMB executive vice president, attributed the positive financial report to the strength of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions which was five percent above projections after the first week of December, favorable returns on investments, and a one-time return from the sale of

several investments.

The executive committee also filled five vacant staff positions. Elected to serve as director of marketing was John Head, presently director of development for the athletic program at Georgia State University in Atlanta. David Porter of Little Rock, Ark., was elected as associate director of marketing.

Timothy Norton, currently associate director of marketing, was elected associate director of church growth and associational evangelism.

Phillip Jones, currently director of the HMB's planning and services research department, was promoted to director of the research division. Reba Driver was promoted from associate

director of loan administration for the board's church loans division to director of loan administration.

The executive committee also approved appointment of 27 missions personnel and \$1.2 million in church loans for 24 churches, including sites for three new churches. The committee endorsed 57 new chaplains, bringing the Southern Baptist chaplaincy total to more than 2300.

HMB President Larry Lewis updated executive committee members on several items including development of construction plans for the agency's new headquarters building which is on schedule. Lewis also called Southern Baptists to

prayer for relief efforts in Somalia, particularly for U.S.

military personnel and Southern Baptist chaplains there. □

Decrease in baptisms expected

Baptist Press

SALT LAKE CITY — After four years of increases, baptisms in Southern Baptist churches are expected to be down five percent for the 1991-92 church year.

The report, based on information from state conventions, was presented during the winter meeting of state evangelism directors.

Jerry King, director of the TBC Evangelism Department, said he anticipates only a two

percent decrease among Tennessee churches. He hopes to have a final report by the state evangelism conference in January.

Clay Price, director of the HMB program research department, estimated baptisms in 1992 will total 377,000, down from 396,668 in 1991. It will still be the third-highest total in recent years, Price said.

The average number of annual baptisms from 1950 to 1991 is 383,036. □

Court refuses abortion cases, leaves Casey decision in control

By Tom Strode
For Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court's recent refusal to hear two abortion cases signaled inaction rather than

reinforcement of its crucial decision in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* earlier this year, a Southern Baptist lawyer said.

The court announced Dec. 7 it would not hear an appeal of

a lower court decision upholding a Mississippi law requiring a 24-hour waiting period and informed consent for women seeking abortions.

A week before, the court had announced in a 6-3 vote it

would not accept the appeal of a ruling striking down a Guam statute prohibiting most abortions. Four votes are required for the court to hear a case.

"The legal effect of a refusal to hear an appeal is much different from an affirmation of the lower court," said Michael Whitehead, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's general counsel. "These cases do not amount to

legal precedent upholding the decisions of the lower courts. A denial of the appeal is merely a decision to take no further action on the case.

"Casey is left as the controlling precedent. The court is likely to continue to avoid the abortion controversy for a while, letting Casey percolate through the lower courts and legislatures." □

Southern trustees called to special meeting

Compiled from news reports

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees were to have met Dec. 15 in a special meeting, apparently to consider a termination contract for ethics professor Paul Simmons.

Trustee chairman Wayne Allen, of Cordova, called the meeting but has refused to talk to the news media. The four-hour session, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Marriott Hotel near the Atlanta airport, was to be closed. No prior information about the meeting was released.

The trustees, sources have

told Baptist Press, will consider a contract buyout presented by the trustees' academic personnel committee. But, apparently, there is division among the trustees between those who want to pay to have Simmons leave and those who want the ethics professor to face formal charges of heresy (teaching contrary to the seminary's abstract of principles, its doctrinal guide).

Simmons, 56, has been a Southern faculty member 23 years but has been criticized for his recent support of abortion rights and homosexuality views. He is a tenured professor which means he could be fired only for heresy or violat-

ing his contract.

Simmons has said that he has not agreed to a buyout but is willing to listen.

The Southern professor said he had not received any notification of a possible buyout, or of the trustee meeting for that matter. "All I know is what I'm getting from the rumor mill," he said.

Asked about a possible package, Simmons said, "I don't know what it would be. The last we heard was they turned down a (buyout) proposal Roy (SBTS President Roy Honeycutt) put forward and had nothing in return. So I said, 'Let's move on and have hearings.'"

According to trustee sources, the earlier agreement rejected by the trustees offered Simmons a severance package estimated at up to \$650,000.

The size of the new offer is not known but trustee Jerry Johnson, who is against the buyout, and other trustees said it is less than the original offer.

"I'm open to listen to what they've got to offer," Simmons said. "But it's got to be acceptable. We're determined not to go away empty-handed or humiliated."

"Right now, I'm just waiting — again," he said. □

Compiled from Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press reports

Virginia group ponders future

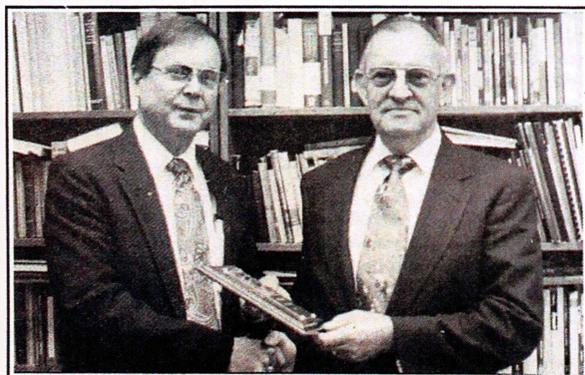
Baptist Press

HAMPTON, Va. — Voices of caution Dec. 1 challenged a movement to split Virginia's largest church denomination.

The 415 "conservative" Southern Baptists who attended a meeting at Liberty Church, Hampton, appeared to agree the Baptist General Association of Virginia no longer represents their views,

especially on moral issues such as abortion and homosexuality.

But while some spoke passionately for a split from the 169-year-old association, others warned against rash decisions. T. C. Pinckney of Alexandria, a lay leader, said Baptists from across the state will meet Jan. 28 in Lynchburg to vote on what to do. □



IRA PERKINS, right, accepts a plaque from John Adams, vice president for religious affairs at Union University, Jackson. Perkins, director of missions for Big Hatchie Association, received the "Outstanding Director of Missions" Award during the recent Missions Emphasis Week at Union. Perkins, who also has been pastor of churches in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi, has served Big Hatchie Association as DOM since 1976.

On becoming a Christian

Are you searching for the right thing to satisfy your desire for meaning and purpose in life? In reference to God, a wise man once said, "You have made us for yourself, and our souls are restless until they find their rest in You."

Only God can fill the void in anyone's life. The answer to your search is found in accepting Jesus as Savior and Lord. Here are some basic facts. The verses are found in the Bible:

1. **God loves you.** John 3:16; 1 John 4:8b-10.
2. **You are a sinner.** Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:10
3. **Sin separates you from God.** Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:23
4. **You can't save your-**

self. Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5

5. **God has removed the sin barrier through his Son, Jesus Christ.** Romans 5:8; 11 Corinthians 5:21

6. **You can receive Jesus Christ through faith.** Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9-10

7. **Through prayer, you can trust in Jesus Christ.** Admit that you are a sinner. Express sorrow, or repentance, for your sinfulness. Ask Christ to forgive your sins. Invite him into your life as Savior and Lord. Thank him for entering your life. Commit yourself to live for him! □

This has been adapted from Baptist Sunday School Board material, Nashville.

■ about letters to the editor

- Make it concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be edited for length.
- Name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Include address and phone number
- Avoid personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone.
- Send original copy. Form letters and "open" letters will not be published.
- Only one letter in a three-months period per writer will be published
- If letter does not conform, it will be returned.
- Opinions and ideas expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the **Baptist and Reflector** and its staff. □

Money's the thing

In my 42 years with Jesus, 38 of them teaching the Bible, I've seen pastors come and go. Those who saw themselves as diehard "conservatives" always wanted to control the church. Their intentions were good. The main thing these want control of is the money.

We all spend more of our income on ourselves than on the Lord's work and church leaders are no different. When the love of money creeps into the preachers the results are what many of us see happening now.

We cut money for our

places that do a service (schools, homes, missions) for our Lord Jesus. Now some are trying to scare the WMU because they are afraid more money will be taken out of their control. WMU leaders do not scare easily. My hope is they will follow the Lord and not the dictators. I believe they will because our ladies are a uniting, not dividing, force.

J. W. Glass
Lenoir City 37771

Against abortion

The presidential election left many pro-lifers discouraged and feeling helpless. Truth is now at the mercy of political pressures. We cannot change hearts and minds of pro-choice leaders without God. Our pro-life message must be based on God's Word. He is the only one who is perfect in justice and mercy.

The battle we fight is not against man, but against the power of sin. We need God's help, but we must also remember that he has already won the war. He has defeated sin at the cross of his son, Jesus. We have not yet seen victory over the murderous practice of abortion, but we can have faith that God will prevail. He uses even the twisted motives of the enemies to bring about his will.

The Bible tells the story of how Roman leaders crucified Christ. Was the death of Christ the end of Christianity? Not at all, the enemy did not count on the resurrection! God has everything in his hands. We cannot give up. The future of our country may be wrapped in the womb of a desperate young girl. We must continue

to spread the truth, even if the message goes unheard. Some will listen. God already knows those who will hear and those who will not. We must continue to be faithful to his work. Our dedication to this Holy War may well be the catalyst to sharpen the moral senses of the complacent. There is full assurance of victory for those who trust in God. This country was founded on Christian principles and it is "In God We Trust."

Suzanne Moore
Murfreesboro 37130

Parks' new job

Regarding Keith Parks' intent to accept the leadership of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's mission program (*Baptist and Reflector*, Dec. 2.), it appears we have another case of one who having claimed to be a "conservative" now "showing his true colors." It will be difficult to convince many skeptics that this was not a "pre-cut deal."

Many seem to have lost sight of the central issue in this lingering controversy concerning Parks' early retirement. Without specifics it essentially concerned the justified effort of our SBC leadership to prevent continued export of heresy to foreign shores.

A commendable effort is made by Parks to find Biblical support for his decision to join with the CBF. He makes a correct reference to the split up of Paul and Barnabas as making two missionary teams instead of one. However he fails to point out that they are never mentioned as being together in ministry again.

Obviously they knew the correct answer to the question "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). No doubt they were familiar with Leviticus 26:23-24 also. In any case they had courage and personal integrity to go separate ways.

We are in a theological gridlock in our convention. Regarding theological views "liberals" refuse to repent while "conservatives" declare they cannot and dare not repent.

Sooner or later we will have to face the fact that with our degree of disagreement we two cannot "walk together."

J. L. Miller, pastor
Open Door Chapel
Burns 37029

Dr. Parks retired at age 65, which may or may not have been considered early. — Editor

Committees work

I was disturbed to read the remarks made by Dr. Ed Young, SBC president, to the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference in the Nov. 25 *Baptist and Reflector*. He said if churches were to grow, methods would have to change and stated "I've never known a church anywhere, anytime that was committee-led that grew."

I'm privileged to be a member of Central Baptist Church of Johnson City. We have 1968 members and 33 working committees composed of three to nine members each. Approximately 200 persons are actively involved under the leadership of the Holy Spirit in seeing that the ministry of the church is carried out efficiently and effectively.

When necessary, recommendations are brought to the church body for a vote, thereby giving the entire church body the privilege of being involved in decision making. Not only are we growing but we are engaged in a \$2,500,000 building program.

Our fine Pastor, Dr. David W. Crocker, and our four other ministers work with and give support to all our committees and I am thankful for their leadership.

Dr. Young may have proposed other methods of "doing church" than through committees, but he did state that the church is a theocracy and not a democracy or monarchy. In my opinion, the committee-led church goes along with the idea of theocracy better in that God uses a wider base of persons through whom to speak.

Polly Price
Jonesborough 37659

Gratitude for help

In September 1991, I went through one of those heart-rending situations in a church. We call it "forced termination" in the ministry. God used that hurtful time in my life to redirect my ministry by having others minister to me and, at the same time, allowing me to continue my ministry with those in need.

During my "time off," I found myself with no income. After talking to friends at the associational office, I found out about the Minister's Emergency Fund. They were most gracious and offered the help needed. Thank you, Tennessee Baptists! As a result of other events, many other church members found themselves without a church home. After meeting in a home several weeks we began worshipping together.

We are now Covenant

Baptist Church. Because we are a new church the budget is strained. So we could continue to be well-informed Baptists, the *Baptist and Reflector* allowed us one year subscriptions for our membership. As a pastor, I want to say "Thank you," to our editor for helping a new work for our Lord.

John W. Burkett, pastor
Covenant Church
Chattanooga 37421

Long overdue

Recent action by the State Convention to create a committee to study the election processes for boards and committees is, in my opinion, long overdue.

In many instances, it appears the same pastors are elected to serve on the Executive Board term after term. Despite the one year lapse required after serving two successive terms, they are repeatedly returned to serve additional terms on the Executive Board. One could almost describe it as a virtual monopoly. This process seems grossly unfair and inequitable, and denies other equally capable pastors any involvement in the decision-making process on the state convention level.

Is it right that out-of-state pastors who come to serve churches in Tennessee be elected to the Executive Board after only a short time, while pastors who have ministered faithfully within the state for as long as 25 years are consistently ignored? The whole arrangement appears to be arbitrary, reeking with cronyism.

One possible solution might include a system of term limitations in which a person would be ineligible to serve after having served two successive terms. Another, with short term benefits, would be the resignations next summer of all Executive Board members who have served more than two terms in succession. This would open the way for new people to fill vacancies at the 1993 convention.

Ted J. Ingram
Knoxville 37917

TBC holiday hours

The Baptist Center in Brentwood will close at noon, Dec. 23, and all day Dec. 24-25, for Christmas.

Offices will be open Dec. 28-30 and will close Dec. 31-Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.

Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST.

The Baptist Center will reopen after the holidays on Monday, Jan. 4. □

Daily prayer requests for Chile/Tennessee Partnership



December -

- 18 — Pray for safety for Sherry and Ben Cochran and their four children who will travel to Chile to spend Christmas with missionary Caroline Jones who is Sherry's sister.
- 19 — Today is the birthday of missionary Linda Clark. Pray for her as she prepares devotionals for the National WMU Convention in January Linda asks us to pray for Second Baptist Church in Concepcion as there is a need for two new Sunday School classes.
- 20 — Pray for the Pastors' Wives group in Bio-Bio Association as they seek to support each other and their husbands' ministries.
- 21 — Remember Lois Hart, retired missionary to Chile, as she celebrates her birthday today.
- 22 — Pray for a group of young people who just completed discipleship classes at Parque Apoquindo Baptist Church in Santiago. Pray as they make decisions about their baptism and church membership.
- 23 — Pray that our missionaries in Chile will be effective managers of their time. There are so many needs and so few to meet them that it is very easy to overschedule their time and energies.

Bold Mission: seven years more until victory?

Christians should never surrender, nor even contemplate backing off when faced by disappointment or diversion.

Baptists, more so than most denominations, should know that.

What we know spiritually about temporary defeat is more than quoting an old axiom about "the tough who get going when the going gets tough."

Christ Jesus is our supreme model, a perfect image of the total man in a divine attitude. The Apostle Paul is merely one example of committed disciple "followership."

Therefore we have no standing ground when despair embraces us. There's a song which explains that the sun will come up tomorrow. It may have come from the Bible, because it says it quite plainly.

The fact is, we have seven more years before a new millennium moves in. What will Baptists do with seven years? Will we be muddlers or witnesses of the Word?

We overheard a young, but very astute mother telling her little girl that the world doesn't like whiners. The daughter had grumped and whined continually during the grocery shopping. Finally the mother had enough, and her patience was exhausted. So she quite calmly explained to the

youngster that the world votes thumbs down on whiners.

Some Tennessee Baptists may be tempted to whine or complain when the direction taken is not the direction they thought best. It is a compelling idea, and it seems easy to be captured by it.

However, our standards for Baptist living and giving should not allow us to be whiners even for a moment. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, saying something like this: "Check up on yourself; are you really Christian?"

C. T. Studd, the champion cricketer who became a selfless missionary to inland China at Christ's call, preferred that the victors when they come, would find his body by the wall where he'd struggled.

The recent annual meeting of Tennessee Baptists should be a signal for the downhearted. Though not perfect, it's a reminder of the power of prayer and the wisdom of cooperating. Evidence of so many lay people at work, including college students and children, was inspiring.

Hey, look at us now. There are yet seven years before the new millennium, another century. Will we rest on our accomplishments? Will we be complacent, cautious?

We shouldn't, because we have great opportunity to surpass whatever we have

done thus far. Look at some possibilities.

Little bits and pieces of renewal and revival are becoming evident all around us and in our midst. The spark lit by the Holy Spirit's work can send flames of revival leaping into heretofore unknown situations.

Do we dare to follow the Biblical advice of which Henry Blackaby fervently reminds us? Will we join Paul in becoming more than conquerors?

This kind of message often is not appreciated, and more often ignored. But as we continue to see God's answers to prayers for revival, we need to join him where he is working. We have a Bold Mission.

We believe Tennessee Baptist laity stand ready to take the day for Christ. The numbers of volunteers will increase. These men and women need to be harnessed for the positive leap forward.

When we really believe in the power of prayer and tap on to this holy energy, unheard things will happen:

There will be more witnessing by more witnesses. Resources will explode with generosity. Cooperation will be limitless. Unity will be guaranteed. Laity and clergy will join decisively. Cliques will disintegrate. Sides will not exist. The Bible will be studied and modeled. Christ will lead and be glorified. Tennessee will be won. □

■ one word more

By Wm. Fletcher Allen editor

Interim Christians

I read a story years ago about two men who struck it rich.

It is the sort of story that grabs attention, even from a fast-lane world. We are interested, and sometimes a little bit envious of someone who achieves, and we think we should share in the prize.

They journeyed from an East Coast state over to Arkansas, to try their hands in digging for precious stones.

If you believe in luck, perhaps the brothers were lucky. Luck isn't responsible for many things, however.

They found one of the largest gems ever discovered from that area. In fact, they were rich overnight.

These instant celebrities were besieged by long-lost friends and newsmen. Their first feeling was that they would still be the same men — but that interim period didn't last long.

I read a similar news item from another area, and the outcome was different.

Joe Kines, an assistant coach at the University of Arkansas was "elevated" to the position of interim coach

early in the season when the football team faltered. He was poised for success but he didn't get the head coaching job at season's end. Too many losses.

Someone else was hired. Of course he was asked whether he was disappointed.

He said he was, but he thought he'd get over it. "I'm just glad I'm not interim coach anymore," he said.

"You can call me anything you want, just don't call me interim," he said. "I don't want to be an interim anything. I've never been an interim husband, father, or Christian."

What? He's never been an interim Christian? Joe Kines sounds like an interesting person, one that understands the word "commitment."

In a world that's often flighty and awed by unworthy exploits of misguided people, it is truly refreshing to know about someone who doesn't want to be an interim Christian. What a lesson! □

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

■ just for today

By Fred Wood pastor emeritus Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile —

The nervous lady approaching surgery said, "Doctor, how long will it be after I am out of the anesthetic before I have normal intelligence?" The doctor smiled, "Lady, you're expecting a lot from the anesthetic!"

Take this truth with you —

Do people ever disappoint you? Is it because you have expected too much from them. Remember every human being, like the image of Nebechadnezzar dreamed, has "clay toes." Jesus is the only one who never fails or disillusions. Make him your ideal!

Memorize this Scripture —

"And looking up they saw no man, save Jesus only" (Matthew 17:8).

Pray this prayer —

Dear God, help me to love and appreciate my friends. Lead me to realize, however, that they are only human beings capable of error and sin. Show me that my best example must always be Jesus who is my Savior, my Lord, and my friend. For Jesus' sake. Amen. □

Letters to us from foreign missionaries

Christmas greetings from 'over there'

In keeping with the Christmas season, we are sharing letters from missionaries with our readers. We began using the letters last week, and will continue through Dec. 23. — Editor.

Brad and Becky Mitchell, Daniel and Andrew; Port Elizabeth, Republic of South Africa:

South Africa is an interesting place. We are adapting to new customs, and are well acquainted with our community of King William's Town.

We are well acquainted with the butchery and bakery and groceries. Daniel and Andrew are really at home. Each has come to understand the varied vocabulary.

We are struggling with our study of the Xhosa language, but are making progress. Daniel is doing great in Afrikaans.

The tragic fighting at Bisho in Ciskei in September was about half a mile from where we were at the time.

We are thankful for God's care and for your prayers. We are preparing for our move to Port Elizabeth [Dec. 7] and will continue language study there at the university. About midyear in 1993 we will begin our ministry and should have completed language study by then.

We have had many opportunities to minister, and have established a good relationship with Martha, the maid of our neighbor. She is very helpful.

As we come to the Christmas season, we especially want to ask you to remember to be faithful through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. This offering and the Cooperative Program enable us to live and prepare for ministry in South Africa. We need your prayers at all times.

We wish for you a blessed celebration of our Lord's birth.

Dwayne and **C**indy Thames, Sarah and Rachel; Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso:

The girls are growing fast. They attend the International School here.

Cindy began working at our mission center downtown in March. She helps the business manager/treasurer and the executive director with secretarial duties.

God's work is advancing here, with 1148 baptisms this past year. There are 135 churches and preaching points

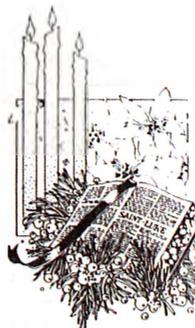
with 8990 members. Six new churches were started this year. We have 97 pastors. More than 19,000 people were enrolled in Bible Way Correspondence courses.

Sunday School is developing well, and churches are learning that it is a means of evangelism and outreach. We really need more pastors, and training for those we now have.

In addition to regular duties, Dwayne is helping translate study materials. Many good things are happening, and we thank the Lord for all.

Thank you for prayers and other blessings. We are partners with you on mission. Without your support, ministry would be impossible. Remember missions is a part of God's plan, and he calls all of us into service. You can be an active partner by praying, giving, and doing missions.

Remember the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. We hope your Christmas will be full of joy and peace as you prepare and celebrate our Lord's birth. □



ALLEN

Red-letter, reference, recorded — gift Bibles

By Mark Wingfield
For Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Christmas shoppers, beware: buying a Bible may not be as easy as it sounds.

In fact, gift-wrapping it may present fewer choices than selecting just the right translation and format.

Would you like the King James Version or New International Version? Genuine leather-bound or bonded leather? A children's Bible with pictures or a reference Bible with charts, maps, and cross-references? A "regular" Bible or a specialty Bible with specific applications for mothers, fathers, singles, youth, students, or recovering addicts? A printed Bible or one on computer disk or audio tape?

Standing in the Bible section of a bookstore, the choices seem almost endless.

Ben Williams has been selling Bibles at the Baptist Book Store in Louisville, Ky., for 12 years and, during that time, has seen a revolution in the product line.

"When I first started, you had a choice of King James, Scofield Reference, or Thompson Chain Reference," he recalled. "Those were the major choices."

Contemporary translations like the New International Version and New American Standard were just beginning to gain in popularity at the time. And specialty Bibles with applications to specific people groups were all but unheard of.

Today Bibles of all colors, sizes, and editions fill a 30-foot section of floor-to-ceiling shelves at the store.

"Most of the annotated Bibles are the ones selling now," Williams reported. "The footnotes make it a lot easier to understand."

Annotated Bibles include a variety of styles and translations, but generally feature extensive footnotes and Biblical references that expound upon the text, as well as cross-referenced background information.

The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Holman Bible division even produces a "Notetaker Bible" which features a notepad and pen holder as part of the Bible's leather cover. The "Notetaker" comes in left-handed and right-handed editions.

Among Bible translations, the most popular choice nationwide is the New Inter-

national Version, Williams said. The King James Version is second, with the New American Standard and New King James Version vying for third.

The Living Bible, which rose to popularity in the 1970s, is not as popular today, but still sells, he said.

Once the buyer decides what translation to purchase, he or she still faces a decision about what type of Bible is appropriate. "Each translation probably has 15 to 20 styles or models," Williams said.

These styles can be broken down into at least four broad categories:

■ **Standard Bibles** are the plain, no-frills Bibles. They sometimes include maps, limited footnoting, and perhaps a brief concordance.

■ **Study Bibles** might be called those with "the works." They usually include extensive footnoting and cross-references, maps, charts, historical background information, and sometimes character sketches of Biblical figures and authors.

■ **Application Bibles** are targeted to specific groups such as women, men, professionals, families, students, recovering addicts, or people facing grief. Interspersed amid the biblical text are practical applications of the truths taught there. For example, the Holman Family Bible includes helps for family devotionals and activities related to certain passages.

■ **Children's Bibles** now come with multiple options as well, ranging from what Williams calls "kiddie Bibles" with easy-to-read translations and bright pictures to the Adventure Bible, a study Bible for children.

A fifth category currently gaining in popularity is the computerized Bible. An expanding line of products are available that offer the entire Bible on disk for a personal computer, as well as quick access to concordances and cross-references.

Several companies produce hand-held electronic Bibles, about the size of a portable Nintendo game. These units allow users to search for a passage by verse number or subject and even allow for the addition of personal notes into the database.

However, computerized convenience has a price. The hand-held electronic Bibles sell for about \$200. □

■ helps for Is it dolls and Nintendo games

By Chip Alford
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — It's that time of year again. Time for starry-eyed children to dream dreams of Barbie dolls, action-packed Nintendo games and stockings full of candy

and surprises.

Christmas is just around the corner and, once again, many parents are struggling with how to communicate the real "reason for the season" to children preoccupied with toys, Christmas trees, and that white-bearded gentle-

man in a red suit.

"The key is to intentionally look for ways to bring up the birth of Christ during the year, to make it a part of your normal, everyday routine," said Morlee Maynard, manager of the preschool program section in the church growth-Sunday School division at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Maynard said she takes time to talk about God with her 5-year-old son, Jonathan, during his bedtime prayers.

"This is something we do year-round. That way (when Christmas arrives) Jesus is not somebody new. He's somebody we've been talking about all year."

Rusty Gilbert, pastor of Rocky Springs Church in Lisbon, La., said another key is to tie Jesus' birth to concrete holiday traditions children already know and understand, such as the giving and receiving of presents.

"They need to understand the Christmas event we are celebrating is God's gift to us of his only Son, and that he loves us because of who we are, not because of what we have done or haven't done (during the year)," he said.

Involving children in special projects or ministries during the holidays also can communicate to them the true holiday spirit, said Gilbert, father of three children, ages 5, 7, and 9.

"Every Christmas morning I go out and visit shut-ins, the homebound and anyone who has had a significant loss in their family in the last year. I take my family with me and



AMY (LEFT) AND SARA Haywood enjoy looking at Barbie dolls while their mother, Gayle, and younger sister, Laura Anne, search the shelves at a Franklin toy store.

— Photo by Jim Veneman

Bible-buying tips —

Consider these factors —

■ the person

Different people have different needs in a Bible. For example, a pastor or Sunday School teacher might want the added features of a study Bible, while a new Christian might want something easier to handle.

■ reading level

While a King James study Bible might be appropriate for someone with good reading skills, a simpler translation, such as the New Century Bible, might be better for someone who struggles with reading.

■ doctrine

Most Bibles with study materials emphasize some doctrinal perspective. Other Bibles, such as the Full Life Study Bible for charismatics, are designed specifically for certain faith groups. Some shopkeepers can match denominational preference to translations that will most likely complement the preaching of the pastors.

■ age

This could be a factor in selecting a translation, as older adults are more likely to want a translation they are familiar with while younger adults might be interested in some of the newer translations. The youngest readers, meanwhile, might do best with one of several Bibles especially for children.

■ binding

Bibles come in a variety of covers — most frequently genuine leather, bonded leather, hardback or paperback — and a variety of colors. Genuine leather is the top-of-the-line choice, made from parts of the animal. Bonded leather also comes from animal skins, but is composed of various skin parts compacted together.

■ price

For a good leather-bound Bible, plan to spend a minimum of \$40-\$50. Prices for study Bibles and application Bibles range from there to about \$125. □

Protect your 'temp'

Baptist Hospital, Nashville

The holiday season is upon us, and that means thousands of shoppers are out in full swing. For many people, holiday shopping can be a long and exhausting task that can lead to tired, aching feet.

"Holiday shopping can easily aggravate foot problems because people are on their feet for longer periods of time," said Dr. Robert V. Russell of the Baptist Hospital Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Center.

The Baptist Hospital Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Center offers the following tips to help alleviate holiday-weariness —

■ **Wear shoes for the occasion.** Low-heeled, comfortable shoes are the best.

■ **Wear socks or stockings that fit properly and absorb**

a Christmas celebration

b your children?

ve spend time with these people. We've prayed with them and we've cried with them. I think it is important for families to touch the life of somebody that you don't have to touch (during the holidays)," he said.

Gayle Haywood, minister of preschool and children at Brentwood Church and mother of three young girls, suggests involving children in holiday traditions at an early age.

"Establish some family traditions and help your children understand these are special activities you do only at Christmas because it is a time to celebrate the Lord's birth," she said.

"For example, we take one whole night each year for Christmas decorating. We've done it so often the girls have learned where everything goes.

"We put the nativity scene in the focal point of our room, low enough so the girls can play with it. And as we unwrap the pieces of the nativity scene, we talk about each character. They've broken some of the pieces, but I think it's important for it to be a hands-on thing for them, something they can play with. That helps them to learn about the Christmas story."

Some of the best ideas for teaching children about why we celebrate Christmas come from parents' own creativity and imagination, Haywood said. □

Activities for kids —

✿ Bake a birthday cake and have your children sing "Happy Birthday to Jesus."

✿ Place an Advent wreath of candles in your home and have children light each of the four candles as Christmas approaches. Explain that Advent is a time on the Christian calendar to give thanks for God's gift of Christ. This is a concrete way to keep children's attention focused on the approaching celebration of Christ's birth on Christmas Day.

✿ Let children participate in selecting, purchasing, and distributing gifts to the underprivileged. Use this as a chance to remind children God gave us Jesus, and Jesus was always giving to others.

✿ Let children design their own Christmas card based on the Christmas story.

✿ During the month of December, include your children in family devotions that focus on the Christmas story and the spirit of giving. Some churches publish Christmas devotional guides for families that include art drawn by children.

✿ Let children participate in planning your family's Christmas budget. This helps them to understand responsible spending and the idea that the value of a gift does not lie in its cost. Children could also be encouraged to make their own gifts, using crafts/art work.

✿ Let children give a "Christmas gift to missions" through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

✿ Let children help with the Christmas baking and deliver cakes/cookies/breads to family, friends, shut-ins, etc.

✿ Sing Christmas carols together.

✿ Make a Christmas chain with links for each day in the month of December made of strips of paper. On each link, write a prayer request and a note about a special event that will happen on that day or during the Christmas season. Take off one link every day. This keeps children focused on Christ during the holidays and offers a concrete reminder of the days before the holiday's arrival.

✿ Visit a living nativity scene.

✿ Attend church Christmas cantatas, pageants, dramas. Involve children in these productions when possible. □

Death gives new perspective on day

By Linda Lawson
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — At 7:30 on Christmas morning 1991, Dudley Singleton, Linda Singleton's husband of 28 years, died at home after a 10-month battle with a brain tumor.

Linda Singleton approaches the first anniversary of Dudley's death with the faith and characteristic realism that sustained her through his illness and death. She does not dread Christmas 1992.

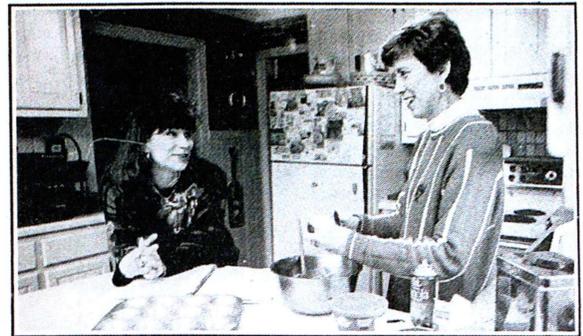
"People have said to me, 'Oh, how horrible that he died on Christmas day,'" Singleton, music consultant for the Tennessee Department of Education and a member of Crieve-wood Church in Nashville, reflected in a recent interview.

On the contrary, Singleton said she finds comfort in knowing, because the anniversary of her husband's death is also Christmas day, she will always be surrounded by family and friends.

Singleton believes she has gained strength not only from her faith in Christ but also from the way Dudley faced death while never giving up hope for life.

A veterinarian, he understood immediately upon receiving the diagnosis the gravity of his situation. He underwent surgery, experienced a "marvelous recovery," took radiation, chemotherapy, and then an experimental form of chemo.

Eight months after his February 1991 diagnosis, Dudley planned his own wake, invited friends and "held it early in order to actively participate — rather than just be present," Linda Singleton recalled. He also planned his memorial service, carefully selecting Scripture and music to make it a special time of worship.



MELANIE AND LINDA SINGLETON have been sustained by their faith and the support of friends in dealing with the death of their father and husband on Christmas day 1991. — Photo by Jim Vene-man

As Christmas 1991 approached and Dudley was becoming progressively weaker, he told Linda he still had some goals. While he did not tell her what the goals were, Linda believes one may have been to live until Christmas.

During December, he enjoyed the decorations and music of the holiday. The Singletons' daughter, Melanie, had quit her job and moved home to help care for her father and to brighten his days. Son Brett received a "humanitarian transfer" from the U.S. Navy to be with his father. Dudley's parents traveled regularly from their Huntsville, Ala., home to support their son and assist in his care.

"Strangely enough, we had a good year," Singleton told participants in the July 1992 Church Music Leadership Conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. "There was a clarity about life. Dudley was dying. God was ever present."

"We shared this realism with gratitude for the good life we had experienced together. We were surrounded by God's love manifested primarily

through the remarkable people who were willing to enter into our sorrow," she continued.

To Christians who may feel uncertain about how to minister to people experiencing grief during the holiday season, Singleton urges sending cards, visiting, and calling, not necessarily to talk about the pain but just to make the person aware that someone is there who cares.

"We should never underestimate the positive impact of cards and visits and food," she said. "For weeks after Dudley died, I could hardly wait to get home and check the mail to see who I might have heard from."

As the holidays approach, she is reminded of how ill Dudley was at this time last year. She also anticipates "hearing from lots of my friends."

Despite the pain and the grief, Singleton said at Glorieta: "I feel privileged to have been present and shared this intimate experience with my best friend of 33 years. I miss him greatly, and I miss his love for life that encouraged me for these many years."

"Sometimes I feel less whole because he was such an important part of me for so long and because he had many strengths I do not possess."

She described the time since her husband's diagnosis as "difficult, painful, lonely, and sometimes tiring. But, we have felt free to grieve precisely because of God's presence in our lives. Scripture, Christian tradition, and my own personal experience have assured me that I will not be abandoned and I am not alone."

"God's presence offers hope and joy even through painful loss." □

While shopping

shock. Be sure they do not increase the pressure of the shoe against your foot.

■ Feet swell as the day goes on. Shop early in the morning if possible. Elevate swollen feet after shopping.

■ If shopping all day, change shoes at midday if possible to help increase foot comfort.

■ For tired feet, a ten minute foot soak in warm epsom salt water will do wonders to revive your feet.

The Baptist Hospital Foot and Ankle Center is the region's first hospital-based center for the advanced treatment of foot and ankle problems.

A registered nurse is available to answer related questions at 284-FEET (3338). □

The Birth of Jesus

Find 12 words related to the birth of Jesus. All answers can be found in the second chapter of Luke.

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Tennessee students among record number of summer missionaries

By Chip Alford
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A record number of Southern Baptist college students were involved in semester and summer missions in 1992, and requests for student help in 1993 are expected to be even higher, according to reports given Dec. 2 at the state student directors meeting in Nashville.

Helen Wood, associate direc-

SEBTS remains on probation

Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, while recognizing Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's progress, has decided the seminary will remain on probation for one more year in order to observe the completion of one entire cycle of the self-assessment and long-range planning processes which have been set in place by the seminary.

President Paige Patterson indicated his "profound disappointment" in the decision but said he was not surprised. "I regret the necessity of the additional year of probation because of the monumental efforts and sacrifices of the

tor of the Foreign Mission Board's international service department, said 246 students served as semester and summer missionaries in 30 foreign countries in 1992 — the highest number in the agency's history. That number does not include 80 students who participated in short-term projects in Russia.

In Tennessee there were 37 BSU-sponsored missionaries last summer, said Ircel Har-

ison, director of the TBC Student Ministries Department. Many other students served in summer missions through other sources, such as the Home Mission Board, he added.

Five Tennessee colleges were in the top 100 schools in the nation in sending out summer missionaries — Belmont University, Carson-Newman College, Union University, Tennessee Tech, and University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Harrison said.

"This is a real high water mark for us," Wood said, offering congratulations to state student directors for their promotion of student missions.

Wood also reported 347 requests for student summer missionaries in 1993 have been received from the foreign mission field, including large requests for help from the Philippines, Australia, and Kazakhstan. To date, only 77 of the requests have been filled, she said.

entire seminary family to realize this goal as quickly as possible," said Patterson. "But I am encouraged by the Association's recognition of our significant progress and their offer of further assistance."

Patterson said he could understand the desire of SACS to observe one full year of testing the new evaluative procedures.

"The seminary will redouble its efforts to demonstrate the adequacy and effectiveness of our long- and short-term planning and evaluation programs," he said. □

Another positive missions report was given by Van Simmons, associate director of short-term volunteers at the Home Mission Board. Simmons said 1496 students were involved in summer missions work in the United States in 1992, up 100 from the previous year and the highest number since 1986. These summer missionaries — appointed through the HMB, Baptist Student Unions, local churches, and state conventions — led more than 3500 people to Christ during their three months of service, he said.

"I've had many student leaders tell me they've had more students interested in missions than ever before, and we're happy about that," Simmons said, adding he expected requests for student summer

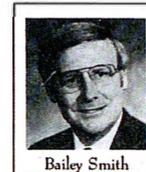
missionaries in the U.S. to be up next year as well.

Plans were unveiled for a new missions education package for college students — "Missions 101" — a joint venture of NSM, WMU, and the Brotherhood Commission.

The package will include a pull-out section on missions in the 1993-94 "Student Ministry Plan Book" and a special missions section in the August 1993 issue of *The Student* magazine, a ten-week Bible study called "Discovering the Heart of God," scheduled for release in the fall of 1993, and many other resources. □

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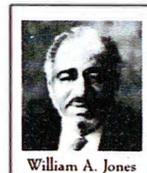
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TenneScene ■ the people, their work

■ the leaders

■ **Jerry Geho** has been called as pastor of Gum Springs Church, Lawrenceburg. He assumed the pastorate Dec. 13.

■ **Steve Wisner** recently accepted the minister of education position at Colonial Church, Memphis. He formerly served Ardmore Church, Memphis.

■ **Terry DuPont** is the new adult education minister at Central Church, Oak Ridge.

■ **Pomona Church, Dickson**, called **Donnie Craig** as pastor. Craig is returning to Tennessee and Pomona Church after being pastor of Riverview Church, Riverview, Mich. He was minister of music and youth at Pomona ten years ago, and has been pastor of First Church, Pinewood. He began his ministry Dec. 1.

■ **John Sevier Church, Knoxville**, called **Ezra Adams** as part-time music minister. He is a student at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

■ **Marc Bewley** is the new pastor of Pleasant Grove Church, Hixson.

■ Members of Friendship Church, Waynesboro, recently called a new pastor. **Paul Martin** assumed the pastorate Nov. 15.

■ **Doug Godfrey**, a student at Union University, Jackson, is the new youth director at Bethel Church, Greenfield.

■ **Falcon Church, Selmer**, called **Ivy Ellis** as pastor. He came to Tennessee from Eunice, La.

■ **Wilson Parker** is serving as interim pastor of First Church, Byrdstown.

■ **Park Road Church, Jamestown**, called **Robert Barefield** as pastor.

■ the people

■ **McMurray Roberts**, retired pastor of First Church, Strawberry Plains, died Nov. 18 in Knoxville. His name was inadvertently listed as **Robertson** in the Dec. 9 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

■ **Eastside Church, Martin**, ordained **Bill Osteen** to the deacon ministry Nov. 22.

■ **H. D. Luker** and **Toney Todd** were ordained as deacons at Bethlehem Church, West Point, Nov. 22.

■ **Norman White** was ordained to the Gospel ministry at Raleigh Church, Memphis.

■ **Lakeview Church, Selmer**, ordained **Joe Williams** to the Gospel ministry Nov. 29.

■ **Central Church, Hixson**,

ordained **Don Holland, Randy Johnson, David Thompson**, and **Steve Thurman** as deacons Dec. 6.

■ **Olen M. Law**, assistant vice president for development and director of planned giving at Union University, Jackson, will retire Dec. 31 after serving 16 years assisting Union University alumni and friends in planning charitable gifts. Law also formerly served as music director for Calvary Church, Jackson, First Church, Halls, and First Church, Alamo. He is a member of First Church, Jackson.

Nathan Bishop, a 1982 graduate of Union University, has been named the university's new director of planned giving. He was previously executive director of Youth Town, Inc., a youth home for boys and girls. Bishop has served as bivocational pastor for several churches in West Tennessee. He is a member of Bethel Church, Yorkville, where he is interim pastor.

■ **First Church, Rockwood**, ordained **Ed Winters** to the Gospel ministry Dec. 6. Winters is minister of youth and activities at Fellowship Church, Garner, N.C.

■ **Bill Goodwin** was ordained to the deacon ministry Nov. 15 at Rutledge Church, Rutledge.

■ **First Church, Jamestown**, recently honored three women of the church for special service. **Addie Smith** was recognized for attending Sunday School for 30 years without missing a Sunday. **Edna Copley** was honored for teaching Sunday School for more than 56 years, and **Lucille Hatfield** was recognized for 40 years of service as church clerk.

■ the churches

■ The choir of **Rock Springs Church, Greenbrier**, will present the Christmas musical "Bless That Won-

derful Name" Dec. 20 during morning worship. James Nash is director.

■ The youth of **West End Church, Knoxville**, will perform the Christmas play "The Real Story of the Night Before Christmas" Dec. 13, 7 p.m. The adult choir, led by **Arnold Lethgo**, will present Christmas music Dec. 20 at 7 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

■ **Dave Hyers**, minister of music at First Church, Concord, recently led a two-day conference on worship at **South Knoxville Church, Knoxville**.



SWEETWATER ASSOCIATION recently named **Lon Shoopman**, who has served as a pastor in the association for 17 years, as moderator. Pictured from left are **Gerald Atkins**, vice moderator; **Bennie Creel**, director of missions; **Shoopman**; **Robert Spradlin**, outgoing moderator; **Glenda Spradlin**, administrative assistant; and **Gary Chastain**, US-2 youth director.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

More like Barnabas

Allan Lockerman, pastor, First Church, Cleveland

A favorite of mine from the Bible is Barnabas. He had one of the most significant ministries in the New Testament. His was a ministry of encouragement.

Barnabas never wrote a great book in the Bible. As far as we know he never preached evangelistic sermons. Barnabas never pastored a mega church. But, Barnabas could lift you up when you were down. In fact, the name Barnabas means son of encouragement or consolation.

If you were to choose the ideal church member, Barnabas would be that person. I would not like to pastor a church of Simon Peters. If every member had the stubborn streak that Peter had, business meetings would be a nightmare. Neither would I like to pastor a church of Apostle Pauls. Theological debates would never cease. But I would love to pastor a church full of people like Barnabas, warm and friendly, people whose desire is to lift one another up. Barnabas is a good role model.

How can we be like Barnabas?

(1) We can pray for one another and let each other know

we are praying.

(2) We can visit one another and spend time in sharing in each other's lives. I would love to see a number of groups gathering together in the homes once or twice a month for a time of prayer and fellowship

(3) Take the initiative to meet people you do not know. Do not wait for people to come to you.

(4) Do practical things to help people in need. Write a letter, make a phone call, invite a friend out to lunch, or invite a new member of FBC to your home. The Bible says "...brothers encourage one another." □

Thanks for blessings

Gary Baker, pastor, First Church, Sweetwater

"Thank you — thank you so much!" Who of us doesn't love to hear those words said to us? When someone says "thank you" to me it is like a shot of adrenaline; it makes me want to do more; it creates a "warm fuzzy" feeling inside.

I have boxes and files in my office that contain every "thank you" note that I have received over my 22 years of ministry. I cherish them. I try to write thank you notes to others who do something special.

I hope you do the same.

Saying thanks to people is becoming a lost art that we need to recover.

Imagine how it must make God feel to hear us say, "Thank you — thank you so very much" to him. He has feelings, just like we do; it has to give him a lift to hear us say those words in genuine sincerity; it surely makes him want to do even more for us.

The poet declares:

"Does your Heavenly Father give you many blessings here below? Then on bended knee before him frankly, gladly tell him so!" □

What would Jesus do?

Russ Maples, pastor, Northview Church, Memphis

One of the most fascinating stories in the Bible concerning the Lord Jesus is related to us in John 2:13-17. This is the story of Jesus running the money-changers out of the temple. The key to the passage is verse 17 which explains why he drove them away. It tells us that Jesus was "consumed with a zeal for the house of the Lord."

He could not bear to see his Father's house profaned by the actions of those who attempted to use it for worldly motives.

The problem still exists today, but in a different form. A

few politicians and businessmen attempt to use church membership to advance their careers and further their network of contacts. Others often attempt to use the church as forum for their own personal, political, or social agendas.

How would Jesus deal with these individuals today? The same way he dealt with them in the first century temple. He would drive them out "with a scourge of small cords."

May we share his zeal for the house of God and as individuals take a personal oath that we will not bring earthly motives into our worship at Northview Church. □

Jesus' surprises

Jeff Jones, minister of youth, First Church, Martin

Jesus seemed to be full of surprises when he walked this earth. I am sure the disciples gave him a look of confusion when he would go against the flow. One thing that comes to mind is when he would pay attention to someone who seemed unimportant to the disciples.

Think of some of those times: the boy with the loaves and fishes, and the woman who was at the well, the lady who touched

the hem of his garment, the children whom the disciples tried to keep from Jesus, the wee little man named Zachaeus, the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her hair. All those insignificant people Jesus healed in his lifetime, and more. His disciples ignored these people and couldn't understand why he paid attention to them.

Where would you classify yourself? Do you tend to ignore people and consider them unimportant like the disciples or pay attention to them like Jesus? Who is it that you ignore? Notice, I didn't ask who ignores you. There are hurting people out in our city, in our schools, and other places who don't think Christ loves them because Christians don't show them any attention.

Who is the least among you? According to Jesus, when you have done things to the least among you, you've done it to him. That is the way we minister to Christ.

Be sure to focus on including and loving others who may not normally be included. In other words, surprise some of your friends by reaching beyond your small group to people who may be left out. □

Liberia's capital packed with refugees — and fear

By Donald D. Martin
For Baptist Press

MONROVIA, Liberia — Liberia's besieged capital has become a massive encampment lacking adequate food, water, or a cease-fire.

Since renewed fighting in the west African nation's civil war began in October, refugees seeking safety have flooded into Monrovia, swelling its population to nearly one million in a city built for only about 400,000 residents.

"Monrovia is a bloated and beleaguered city," explained Southern Baptist missionary Bradley Brown in a message sent via a United Nations satellite phone. "Conditions are often quite bad, with food, water, and sanitation being

problems," Brown said.

"Houses are filled beyond capacity with people. It's not unusual for 30 to 40 people to live in one house," added Brown's wife, Carolyn, of Atlanta. In churches and (refugee) centers there is only enough room for people to lay down to sleep."

Monrovia's refugees are waiting out the war, wandering the streets during the day, then squeezing into the overcrowded shelters and homes for the night, she said.

More than 2,000 people now live in three Monrovia Baptist churches and Ricks Institute, a local Baptist school, said Brown, from Marietta, Ga. The overcrowding is made worse by a 6 p.m. curfew that confines

people to the packed dwellings from dusk to dawn.

Food is in short supply, but relief groups are making sure no one starves, the missionary reported.

"The city is kept going by international relief agencies and NGOs (non-governmental organizations), but there are also a number of highly commendable Liberian relief agencies at work," he said.

Only three Southern Baptist missionaries remain in Liberia — the Browns and Kenneth Nicholson, from Magdalena, N.M. The missionaries have focused their own relief work on distributing supplementary packets containing hand and laundry soap, powdered milk, and canned fish to refugees at relief centers.

The city's overcrowding has made sanitation a growing problem; diseases spread quickly. In early November the Red Cross reported an outbreak of measles, which grew to at least 10,000 cases. The disease claimed the lives of many children and young people, Brown said.

Since the measles outbreak, U.N. medical relief flights have made it possible to launch an

extensive immunization campaign. Southern Baptist missionaries participated in the effort until the fighting forced most of the missionaries to leave the country.

The latest round of fighting began Oct. 15, when rebel leader Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) launched an attack on west African peacekeeping forces in Monrovia.

The civil war, which started Christmas Eve 1989, has cost the lives of some 60,000 people. Before the war more than 50 Southern Baptist mission-

aries worked in the country, which was founded by freed American slaves. The war forced most of the missionaries to evacuate in June 1990. In February 1991 six missionaries returned to Monrovia to set up relief ministries. The group had grown to 14 before the latest wave of violence.

"Even though it has been frightening at times, there has been a calm assurance that we are where we should be," said Mrs. Brown. "I feel that we should be here now to do what we can for the hurting, desperate people all about us." □

Rosenbaum accepts SSB positon

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Richard P. "Bucky" Rosenbaum, vice president for business and finance at the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, has resigned to become the director of operations for the Sunday School Board's trade publishing division.

Rosenbaum, 38, and a former board employee, will assume the newly created position Jan. 1. He will oversee purchasing and business functions for the board's trade publishing operations which

include Broadman Press, Holman Bible Publishers, Church Information System computer hardware and software, and other imprints.

Rosenbaum was employed by the board 11 years before joining the Executive Committee in December 1990.

A Tennessee native, Rosenbaum is a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City. He has done additional study, earning certification as a purchasing manager.

He is married to the former Joann Burnette. They have five children. □

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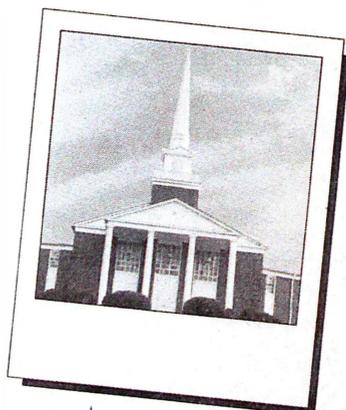
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■ Sunday School lesson commentary

□ The birth of the Savior— Bible Book Series for December 20

By Mike Kemper, pastor, Green River Church, Waynesboro

The circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus go against all the world expected from the birth of the Savior. Almighty God came to us in a baby, the humblest of form and circumstances; birthed in a stable, cradled in a manger! The fact that there was "no room for them in the inn" was typical of Jesus' life. There was "no room" in all the world, except finally on an "old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame." The Lord still seeks room in the hearts and lives of individuals, but more times than not, there is "no room" available!

The shepherds were the first to receive the announcement of the Savior's birth and the first invited to visit the newborn baby. These shepherds represent the common people of the world. They were not scholars, nor were they respected by so

called "good people." Shepherds generally were unable to keep the strict ceremonial law of hand-washing imposed by those "good people" because of their work with sheep. However, it was to these simple ones that God first invited to celebrate the coming of the Christ child.

To issue this invitation, the Lord sent "the angel of the Lord," probably Gabriel who had been dispatched to Zacharias and Mary. So that these shepherds might be certain this was an angel from heaven, they heard and saw "the glory of the Lord round about them," (v. 9). It was such as made the night as bright as day. They were frightened by such a happening, but the angel told them they need not fear because he was bringing good news "to all people" (v. 10), not only to the Jews and educated, wealthy, or

important people, but to all the people of the world. Jesus, the angel announced, is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One from God. He was the long awaited Savior, born in the very place where it was foretold He would be born, in "the city of David," (v. 11).

The angel gave them a "sign" (v. 12) to confirm their faith in this event. How will they be able to find this child in Bethlehem, which is now full of the descendants of David? They would find him "lying in a manger" where never a newborn babe had been laid before; not clothed in robes or beautiful gowns, but in humble "swaddling clothes." When God sent His Son into the world, He came in remarkable manner, that of humility. Later, when it was time for His departure, He again distinguished Himself as none other had done before, nor

has done since. Oh what a remarkable Savior He is!

Verses 13 and 14 are a doxology of praise. Congratulations are in order to all men, but praise and honor are due to God who is the highest. The angels didn't stay long, but returned from whence they came soon as they had finished their joyous

Basic Passage: Luke 2:1-40

assignment.

The shepherds consulted one another (v. 15) and said, "Let us go ... see this thing that is come to pass." They went immediately (v. 16). There they found "Mary and Joseph and the babe."

After they saw with their own eyes, they made known everywhere the story exactly as shown to them. The shepherds were ordinary men and none

suspected them of deceit. What they said was likely to be true, so those who heard wondered about it (v. 18). They were astonished that the Messiah would be born in a stable and not a palace, that the angels would bring this glorious news to shepherds and not chief priests. Amazing events had happened. Mary said little, "but kept these all these things in her heart," (v. 19). The shepherds continued to make public their experience. If others would not receive and believe their message, God could not blame them.

If only we would do our best to give the world the Christmas message. Even if the world would not receive it, we would still have done our best, as the shepherds did, "glorifying and praising God for all things that we have heard and seen." Joy to the world, the Lord has come! ☐

□ God's promise to the Gentiles — Convention Uniform Series for December 20

By Wes Ellis, retired pastor, Forest Hill Church, Germantown

This study looks again at the familiar Christmas story in the Gospel of Luke. The particular emphasis is on the hope which dawned upon the world of the Gentiles when Jesus was born. Luke was a Gentile writing to a Gentile friend (ch. 1:3) and naturally looked for the basis of that hope. The term "Gentile" designates anyone not a Jew. Jesus was born a Jew, but God sent Him as a "light for revelation to the Gentiles" also (ch. 2:32).

The story of the birth of John was intertwined with another. The angel announced to an unmarried girl that "You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus ... the Lord God will give him the throne of His father David ... His kingdom will never end," (ch. 1:26-56, NIV).

The wondrous baby (vv. 1-7)
Augustus ruled the Roman

Empire from 30 BC until 14 AD. The census he commanded, probably as a basis for future taxation, provided the occasion for the journey of Joseph and Mary from Nazareth, to Bethlehem, where Micah had foretold that the Messiah would be born (Micah 5:2).

"Because there was no room for them in the inn" (v. 7), the couple was accommodated in the stable where the child, was born. "Her firstborn" was Luke's way of saying that Mary had other children later (see Matthew 13:55-56). According to custom, the newborn child was rubbed with salt and wrapped in bands of cloth.

The worshipful reception (vv. 8-40)

Luke mentioned no supernatural light or angelic music at the stable, the coming of the Magi, or excitement or curiosity

by anyone. Matthew added some elements, but most was left to our imagination. Shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem received the announcement and heard the praise accompaniment by the angels. These despised common people who were not even allowed to participate in temple worship, were the only ones Luke mentioned who welcomed the Messiah.

The angel's message of "good news of great joy that will be for all the people," (v. 10) doubtless began with the Jews historically, but also encompassed all nations. Titles given to the child (v. 11) were in wide use among the Gentiles, but Luke redefined them in terms of Jesus ("the Lord is salvation," ch. 1:31 and ch. 2:21). And the angelic chorus sang of "peace to men on whom His favor rests" (v. 14), whether Jew or Gentile. By faith, follow-

ing the word of the angels, the simple shepherds found the baby and worshiped Him.

Notice the prominence that Luke gave to people of age: Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon (whose age is implied), and Anna. The latter two came into the story when the parents took Jesus to Jerusalem 40 days later for dedication. Ordinarily, a pigeon and a lamb would be offered, but poor families could offer two doves or pigeons. Simeon, described as "righteous and devout" and "waiting for the consolation of Israel," (ch. 2:25), had been assured by the Holy Spirit and was led by the Spirit to be there on that day. He recognized the Messiah in the arms of the young mother and praised God for the privilege that was his. There, too, was Anna the prophetess to acknowledge what God was doing and praise Him

for His deliverance through the coming of this child.

The universal hope

Many people thought of salvation in terms of national deliverance, believing God would send a David-like general to defeat their enemies. This was why Jesus avoided the title

Basic Passage: Luke 2:1-40

"Messiah" until the end of His ministry. Simeon shared the understanding of the salvation God provided through the Christ for "all people," (vv. 30-31), and specifically "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel," (v. 32).

Luke, a Gentile, must have been grateful, as should we, that the old, old story has a place for all of us. ☐

□ Providing the Savior — Life and Work Series for December 20

By James Hutson, pastor, First Church, Rockwood

When we come to the Christmas story in Matthew 1 and 2 and Luke 1 and 2, we stand on holy ground. The birth of Jesus is an event told and re-told, but it never grows old. The messianic expectation was fulfilled when God provided the Savior He had promised. In all the activities of the Christmas season, we must make every effort to be certain we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Birth of a child (vv. 6-7)

The language is so plain and simple. "The days were accomplished." The term of Mary's pregnancy was complete and it was time for her baby to be born. Every mother can identify with these words. "She laid him in a manger." The birth of this child

took place where the animals were kept. Mary and Joseph wrapped their newborn child in swaddling clothes," strips of cloth used to wrap a newborn baby.

"There was no room for them in the inn." You can make a case for or against the innkeeper. I believe the stronger case is that this man did the best he could under difficult circumstances. Though his inn was full, he provided a place that allowed as much privacy as possible.

This was no ordinary child being born in a manger in Bethlehem. God's own son — God Himself in human flesh — was coming to earth to save humankind from their sins, (Matthew 1:21).

Announcement of the angels (vv. 8-12)

As I read these verses, I am

reminded "that God's ways are not our ways." The shepherds were religious outcasts. They were ceremonially unclean. Yet it was to these ordinary people the message of joy was given.

The presence of the angel frightened them. This is a natural response to a supernatural event. The shepherds were told of the birth of the Savior in Bethlehem. The message of the angel was one of joy. In this announcement by the angel, the word joy and Savior become synonymous. The greatest need of every heart is forgiveness, and this newborn child would offer that forgiveness when He would offer Himself as a sacrifice for human sin.

Announcement by the angelic chorus (vv. 13-14)

If the shepherds were fright-

ened by one angel, they must have been petrified by the "multitude of the Heavenly Host." The message of the heavenly host expanded the message of the angel to include peace and good will. The birth of Jesus was to reveal the glory of heaven in human form and to bring peace to the hearts of all who would believe in Him.

Basic Passage: Luke 2:1-20

Shepherds go to Bethlehem (vv. 15-17)

Scripture indicates the shepherds quickly went to Bethlehem. "Let us now go to Bethlehem; they came with haste." They had no trouble finding the child which the angels had described to them.

There is no Biblical record of what the shepherds did when they got there. The Bible implies they just looked. Later, a few weeks, months, or even a couple of years, the wisemen would come bringing gifts and worshipping the child.

The best thing about the shepherds is they left the manger and told what they had seen and heard. The people who heard the shepherds "wondered" at their witness, (v. 18). The word does not suggest understanding. Neither does it imply the shepherds stopped telling what they had seen and heard. These simple men, beside Mary and Joseph, are the first recorded human witnesses to the coming of the Savior. The world still waits to hear about Jesus. ☐

Arson fire destroys association's first church building

Baptist Press

HANOVER, Mass. — The first Southern Baptist church building built in the ten-year history of the Greater Boston Association was destroyed in a Nov. 6 fire.

The arson-suspected fire destroyed the building of Fellowship Church, Hanover, which was built by volunteers from New England and across the Southern Baptist Convention, according to Pastor Neal Davidson.

The congregation is seeking a temporary site. No estimate of damages was given but church officials said the building was insured. □

LaFayette elected to lead Bible college

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Trustees of American Baptist Theological Seminary elected Bernard LaFayette Jr. as the college's president during a called board meeting in November.

LaFayette, 52, vice president for academic affairs at the college since 1987 and pastor of Progressive Church, Nashville, will assume the presidency immediately, succeeding Odell McGlothlin Sr., who retired in June.

The four-year Bible college is a joint venture of the Southern Baptist Convention

and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. It was founded in 1924 to provide liberal arts and theological education for black church leaders.

LaFayette holds degrees from ABC and Harvard University. □

Church historian Robert Baker dies

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Robert A. Baker, renowned as one of the leading church historians in the Southern Baptist Convention, died Nov. 15 at his home in Fort Worth. He was 81.

Baker was on the faculty of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth from 1942 until his retirement in 1981.

Baker's historical works include *The Story of the Sunday School Board*, published in 1966 which commemorated the 75th anniversary of the board, and *Tell the Generations Following*, published in 1983 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Southwestern Seminary. □

New York Baptists focus on missions

Baptist Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — The 23rd annual session of the Baptist Convention of New York culminated a year-long emphasis with the adoption of the "Albany Declaration" in a "MissionsFest" setting spon-

sored by the Foreign Mission Board.

The annual session followed simultaneous world mission conferences held in a majority of the churches in October.

In other business, the convention received a \$20,000 gift from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and authorized a campaign to raise a Great Commission endowment reserve fund. □

Indiana Baptists celebrate growth

Baptist Press

MUNCIE, Ind. — Dispensing with formal business in a matter of minutes, messengers to the 34th annual meeting of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana spent most of their time rejoicing over growth in the spiritual benchmarks of baptisms, missions, and giving.

A \$1,768,086 Cooperative Program budget was approved unanimously without discussion. Churches reported a 4.53 percent increase in the number of baptisms in the past year and surpassed a goal of starting 52 new works across the state.

Gifts to all Southern Baptist mission causes were reported to have increased over previous levels.

Messengers unanimously re-elected by acclamation their president, Clarence Brock, pastor of the host church, Old Town Hill, in Muncie. □



BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD President James T. Draper Jr., left, has a private word with James L. Sullivan, who retired from the same position in 1975. Sullivan recently delivered a message on changes in life during a retirement program for 159 SSB employees. — Photo by Jim Veneman

New Mexico Baptists express concerns

Baptist Press

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. — New Mexico Baptists appealed to President-elect Bill Clinton and Vice President-elect Al Gore "to reconsider their stated positions related to ... abortion and 'gay rights'" in a resolution adopted during their annual meeting.

Messengers also elected Tim Marrow, an Albuquerque pastor, as president and adopted a \$5.3 million budget for 1993, including an anticipated \$2.6 million in Cooperative Program giving. □

Arizona Baptists detail trustee process

Baptist Press

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Messengers to the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting adopted an amendment to their constitution detailing the trustee nomination process, elected Barry Norwood, pastor of First Southern Church, Prescott, as president, and adopted a \$26 million budget, including a Cooperative Program budget of \$2 million. □

Maryland/Deleware Baptists seek unity

Baptist Press

SILVER SPRING, Md. — Maryland/Deleware Baptists responded to pleas for reconciliation between Christians but exercised sharp disagreement over contested issues at their two-state convention's annual meeting.

Registration reached a record 987 messengers at the 157th session of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Deleware.

Dozens of messengers came forward at an invitation by

convention president Homer Carter, pastor of First Church, Rockville, Md., to commit themselves to seeking unity among Maryland/Deleware Baptists.

Debate over a resolution asking Woman's Missionary Union to change its policy regarding use of its camp tested that unity. The resolution ultimately was tabled.

Messengers elected Otis Doherty, pastor of Olgetown Church, Newark, Del., as new president by 65 votes. □

West Virginians boost CP giving

Baptist Press

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W. Va. — West Virginia Baptists hiked the percentage of their budget designated for the Cooperative Program by 0.5 percent during their annual meeting.

The new \$1.6 million budget includes 28 percent for the CP and is a \$40,000 increase over the 1992 budget.

Parkersburg pastor Harry Kinchen was elected convention president. □

Nevada Baptists maintain CP giving

Baptist Press

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — Messengers to the 14th annual meeting of the Nevada Baptist Fellowship approved a \$1.7 million budget, maintaining a 25 percent allocation to Southern Baptist national and international causes through the Cooperative Program.

The 1993 budget is roughly equal to the 1992 budget and includes a 3.5 percent salary increase for the 11-member convention staff.

John Randolph, pastor of Calvary Church, Elko, was elected president. □

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