

Baptist and Reflector

January 26, 1994

VOL. 160 ■ NO. 4

STATEWIDE EDITION

■ *this week's news*

global —

- Iranian Christian escapes execution. — Page 3
- Record crowds hear Billy Graham in Japan. — Page 8

national —

- CLC issues framework to judge health care reforms. — Page 8

state —

- Knoxville church doubles Lottie Moon goal. — Page 2
- Alternative home dedicated in Clarksville on Sanctity of Life Sunday. — Page 3
- Prisoner finds 'freedom' through discipleship courses. — Page 7

Hazardous weather shuts down conference

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — A winter snow/ice storm that blanketed most of Tennessee forced cancellation of the 1994 State Evangelism Conference Jan. 17-18 at Two Rivers Church.

According to Jerry King, director of evangelism for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, it was the first time the Evangelism Conference has had to be postponed.

King said he made the deci-

sion, along with TBC Executive Director James Porch, early on Jan. 17.

"Through prayer we believe we made the proper decision. We had to think in terms of people's lives," King said, referring to the potential danger of hazardous roads.

Relying on phone calls to radio and television stations throughout the state, most people received word about the cancellation.

About 30 brave souls, however, made it to Two Rivers Church, Monday afternoon.

Jerry Reagan, a layman from First Church, Halls, drove in on Monday from Memphis. The normally three-hour or so drive took about six hours, he said. "We thought about going back home," he admitted, but chose to forge ahead. Some of those who came on Monday had arrived over the weekend.

To accommodate those who did come, King had a "mini" Evangelism Conference. Both W. A. Criswell and Herschel Hobbs, two of the featured speakers, had arrived in Nashville on Sunday afternoon before the bad weather hit. The two Southern Baptist stalwarts, both former presidents



VETERAN SOUTHERN BAPTIST pastors Herschel Hobbs, right, and W. A. Criswell, second from right, received an icy welcome to Nashville last week. Although the State Evangelism Conference was cancelled they both preached for those who braved the weather and had not gotten word about the cancellation. They were welcomed to Two Rivers Church by Jerry King, left. TBC Evangelism Department director, and Julian Suggs, TBC Church Music Department director.

Conference to be rescheduled

The 1994 State Evangelism Conference will be rescheduled, according to Jerry King, TBC Evangelism Department director.

King said he is working with TBC Executive Director James Porch and Convention Ministries Division Director Bill Wilson to find a suitable date, which will be announced later.

King said the original program personnel would be invited back as their schedules will permit. □

of the Southern Baptist Convention, agreed to each preach a sermon on Monday afternoon for those who showed up. Music evangelist Jim McNeil was in attendance, and he led singing and performed special music, accompanied by Mark Caruth, minister of music at Lockeland Church, Nashville.

Hobbs encouraged pastors to be like Paul and be willing

to share the message of Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth.

He noted some pastors have deviated from preaching the Gospel of Christ for a "social" Gospel.

But, Hobbs said, "if we don't preach Jesus Christ, we don't have any message.

"We have but one message — See Hazardous, page 2

Snow, ice challenge Baptist and Reflector

So you have been wondering about it?

How was the *Baptist and Reflector* printed on schedule last week, the week of the deep freeze, and snow and ice storm in Tennessee?

Not willing to risk being kyoed by the approaching winter storm, the paper's staff gathered at the Brentwood office on Jan. 16 (Sunday) and completed the paper so that it arrived at the print shop on Monday right on schedule.

With that foresight and willingness to try the "impossible," a skeleton crew put the last few pages together.

The issue was special, featuring stories, editorial, and other articles related to the lottery/gambling question that could come to the floor of the Tennessee state senate at any time. We wanted this particular issue to be well-done, informative, and we wanted it

to reach our readers on schedule. It did.

So if the paper was tardy at your house last week, remember that it was delivered to the postal center on time.

The staff finished production on several of the church page editions on Sunday, completed the features, news articles, and makeup for the statewide edition, and did all necessary proofreading.

But the day wasn't without problems. We got along fine with the writing and production, but other surprises were in store for us.

About 10 a.m. the fire alarm in the building sounded. We carefully scurried around, sniffing for smoke, looking for fire.

The culprit was a broken sprinkler in the fire alarm system near the main entrance. Firemen from the Brentwood district arrived

quickly, went to work on the sprinkler and controlling the water, and shut off the alarm.

It took a hunk of time from our already busy schedule to assist the firemen, to get the alarm emergency crew to replace the sprinkler, reset the alarm, and turn things back to normal.

So the *Baptist and Reflector* kept its good record of publishing on schedule.

However, despite our best efforts, some subscribers may not have received a paper because of a computer error in printing the mailing list. For those subscribers, we will send a paper upon request.

"A stitch in time" and "a word to the wise" proved true for us. The storm battered the area Monday and Tuesday, and it was Wednesday before roads were even partially cleared. □ — Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Baptists aid quake victims in Southern California

From Baptist Press reports

LOS ANGELES — Baptist disaster crews in several states responded Jan. 17 to assist victims of Southern California's worst earthquake in 20 years. Feeding units operated by the California Southern Baptist Convention were among the first relief crews on the scene, arriving on-site in the Los Angeles area less than 24 hours after the earthquake hit.

The 6.6 Richter Scale earthquake that struck the San Fernando Valley in northwest Los Angeles caused more than 40 deaths and damage estimated in the billions of dollars.

Two California Baptist feeding units and one cleanup unit were activated Monday after the earthquake struck. — See Baptists, page 2

MOVING? Cut out and mail address label and new address to Baptist and Reflector, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024

1-800-05410-0127
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL COMMISSION
1901 COMMERCIAL ST SUITE 400
NASHVILLE TN 37203

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
- **Subscribe to the Baptist and Reflector** for one year and receive 51 copies. Family or individual subscription - \$7.50, clubs of 10 or more subscriptions - \$7.25, church (more than 50 percent of families) - \$6.50. Send check/money order to address listed below.
- **To contribute a news item**, call or write the Editor; Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor; or Connie Davis, assistant editor.
- **To advertise** - Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor
- **For billing and subscription list questions** - Betty Williams, bookkeeper
- **For information about trial subscription plan** for church or association edition - Lonnie Wilkey, Connie Davis, or Susie Edwards, administrative secretary
- **For information about local church edition** - The Editor, or Mary Nimmo, church pages coordinator
- **For production answers** - Gina Dykeman, news and production assistant
- **Publisher** - Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board
- **Board of directors:** David George, chairman; Joe Littlefield, vice chairman; Mickey Basham, Christine Bess, David Crocker, Russ Dunham, Gary Gerhardt, Dean Haun, Diane Jordan, Howard Kolb, Leonard Markham, Paul Moody, Ray Newcomb, Don Owens, Richard Patton, Mike Thrower, Gary Watkins, Laurann Whetham, and Larry Williams
- **Office - Baptist and Reflector**, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
Mailing address - P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
Phone - (615) 371-2003.
FAX - (615) 371-2080
- **Membership** - Southern Baptist Press Association
- **Address changes** - Baptist and Reflector, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- **Postmaster** - Second class postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780)
- **Frequency of issue** - The paper is published weekly except for Christmas week.



Printed on recycled paper

Baptists aid quake victims in Southern ...

— Continued from page 1

A short time later, 12-man disaster relief crews from Texas, Missouri, and Oklahoma Baptists were mobilized and en route.

Meanwhile, the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission also placed Arkansas and Louisiana disaster relief workers on alert for possible deployment.

The Home Mission Board contributed \$15,000 in hunger relief money and \$15,000 in disaster relief funds to the California Southern Baptist Convention.

Hunger relief funds are from designated gifts, not Co-operative Program or Annie Armstrong gifts. They are spent only on food. Disaster relief is part of the Home Mission Board's general budget and it is spent for items such as bedding and prescription medicines.

Although California convention offices were closed for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Jan. 17, disaster relief crews responded within hours of the pre-dawn earthquake. Don Hargis, CSBC men's ministries department and Brotherhood director, coordinated the California convention's disaster relief efforts.

American Red Cross offi-

cial who provided overall earthquake relief coordination in the stricken area requested the CSBC's largest feeding rig, which can provide 10,000 meals a day, be initially set up at San Fernando Valley Red Cross Center in Van Nuys.

The convention's second unit, based in Orange County south of the area hardest hit by the tremor, was moved to Shepherd of the Hills Church in Porter Ranch, near some of the heaviest damage.

The two units combined served 33,000 meals Jan. 20.

Logistics continued to be a problem. Officials were reporting that a four-mile trip could take as long as an hour, and the traffic congestion hampered delivery of supplies to the feeding units.

Local building officials were beginning to condemn homes and commercial buildings, putting more people on the streets. With rain and colder weather expected over the weekend, an increase in shelter populations and a greater need for mass feeding was anticipated.

With feeding and relief operations likely to last up to a month after the earthquake, money and volunteers will be needed in large numbers to help cope with the difficult af-

termath, Hargis said.

It is possible Southern Baptist's feeding operations may continue that long because "there are a lot of people out there hurting bad because they don't have places to live and don't know what they will do," he said.

Volunteer crews to help pre-

pare meals are needed, Hargis said. Interested volunteers should call the CSBC in Fresno at (209) 229-9533, ext. 255.

Persons wishing to make donations may send contributions designated for disaster relief to the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104. □

Knoxville church doubles \$50,000 Lottie Moon Christmas offering goal

First Church, Concord, Knoxville, is on pace to exceed its \$50,000 goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering by more than \$50,000.

The church, which gave about \$41,000 to the LMCO last year, set a goal of \$50,000 for 1993-94, said H. Ernest Woodby, business administrator at the church.

Surprisingly, the church did not do anything unusual, Woodby said.

Traditionally, the church has a March for Missions Sunday in December, he said. Ladies bring in flags representing countries with Southern Baptist missionaries, he said. Then, as the organist played, people brought their offerings to the

front of the church.

Woodby noted that Pastor Doug Sager, who is completing his first year at the church, challenged members to exceed or beat the set goal.

The only thing different, Woodby said, was the interjection of pledges. People were told that if they could not give that Sunday they could pledge an amount to be given by Jan. 31, 1994.

As of Jan. 17, the church had received \$92,364 in cash and an additional \$8,683 in pledges for a grand total of \$101,047.

The response was phenomenal, Woodby said. "The Holy Spirit was really working that morning." □

Hazardous weather shuts down ...

— Continued from page 1

and it's a simple message. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and ye shall be saved," said Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City.

He urged the pastors to lead people to believe what the Bible says, trust it to God for their salvation, commit their lives to God, and witness for him.

Hobbs said the message is so simple some people miss it. "But it's the only Gospel that

will save you," he reminded those in attendance.

Criswell entitled his sermon, "They Say," basing his message on II Corinthians and Nehemiah.

He noted that when he was a student at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, fellow students told him he better change his style of preaching or "no church of consequence will ever call you."

Criswell, however, finally came to the conclusion, "When

you stand up to preach, preach as you feel in your heart."

He noted that a person must use his own style. He related that George W. Truett, his predecessor at First Church, Dallas, where he is senior pastor, "was most sedate. ... He never gestured or moved."

In contrast, his style is to holler, scream, and move around, said Criswell, who will observe his 50th anniversary at the Dallas church later this year. "No one to this day has ever compared me to Dr. Truett," he laughed.

During his ministry Criswell said he has been confronted by those who say something can't be done because it's never been done here

before and that winning worldly, sinful people to Jesus is impossible.

Criswell often has proved "they say" wrong. At a small country church in Chickasha, Okla., where he once was pastor, the most they had ever had in Sunday School was 60 people. He challenged the church to have 100 one Sunday, but "they said" it could not be done.

Criswell went out knocking on doors and inviting people. On the Sunday set aside for 100 in Sunday School, 365 people showed up, Criswell said.

"Don't model your ministry according to what 'they' say. Follow the will of the Lord in your heart and life. God will bless it," Criswell affirmed. □



ALCOA EVANGELIST Henry Linginfelter, left, visits with pastors Allen Davis, center, of Piney Flats Church, Piney Flats, and Michael Oaks, pastor of Harmony Church, Jonesborough. They were among about 30 people who braved the snow and ice and showed up for the State Evangelism Conference at Two Rivers Church.

Tennessee Acteen named to national panel

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Carrie-Ann Segraves of Huntingdon has been named to the 1994 Acteens National Advisory Panel.

Segraves was selected from more than 100 teenage Acteen members nationwide who applied to serve on the eight-member panel.

Selections are based on scholastic achievement, school and church activities, and ac-

complishments in StudiAct, the individual achievement plan for Acteens.

Segraves, 17, is a member of First Church, Huntingdon.

Her duties as a panelist will be writing for *Accent* and participating in state and association WMU-related meetings. She will also serve as a page at the WMU and SBC annual meetings in Orlando, Fla., in June. □

Cumberland churches, TBCH dedicate alternative home

CLARKSVILLE — Sanctity of Life Sunday had special significance for members of Cumberland Association churches and the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

On Jan. 16, the day set aside on the Southern Baptist Convention calendar for the sanctity of life emphasis, association members gathered at First Church, Clarksville, for a Sanctity of Life Rally and to dedicate Cumberland Association's Alternative Home for unwed mothers.

According to a recent report, 17 teenagers become pregnant every day in Tennessee. The report, published by the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, stated that nearly 50 percent of all junior high students had experienced sex. That number rose to 70 percent by the senior year.

Association leaders emphasize they do not condone the unwed pregnancies, yet they are quick not to condemn. It is a way Baptists can say "we care," said Verlon Moore, pastor of Hilldale Church, Clarksville.

"This is a crucial need that we have identified and want to address," said Wesley Pitts, director of missions for the association.

Moore added, "Talk is

cheap. Anybody can say, 'I'm against abortions.'

"The walk is costly. It involves sacrifice," he said, adding that the Alternative Home will provide an option other than abortion for an unwed mother.

Moore, a former trustee of TBCH, said Hilldale members voted to give the house to TBCH specifically for the ministry. The church has owned the house for about 10 years, Moore said.

Although Hilldale, which is providing the home for the ministry, was instrumental in initiating the ministry, the other churches in the association have taken hold of the project, said Moore.

Many of the association's churches have put the ministry into their budget and will be sending funds through the association, he said.

The home has already been furnished and many items have been donated through churches and their members, Moore said.

The home will be operated by Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, which already operates two similar ministries in Greeneville and Brentwood.

"Most of the girls we serve today keep their babies," said TBCH President Gerald Stow.

The alternative homes insure "the baby has adequate prenatal care and that the mother has a safe, loving environment in which to decide what plan she should make for herself and child," he added.

For those who choose to give up their babies for adoption, the TBCH provides complete, legal adoption services.

"Several times this year we have not been able to serve girls from this area because of a lack of space," Stow said.

"This new facility will meet a growing need for a four county area in northern Middle Tennessee," he said.

The Clarksville home will be under direction of resident house parents and TBCH social worker Debbie Sorenson.

Potential houseparents are being interviewed and the home will be in operation as soon as they are selected, Sorenson said.

She said the home would be cooperating with other agencies in the community in accepting references.

The Clarksville Alternative Home has three bedrooms and will operate under a family-type environment with two girls sharing one bedroom and a third girl having the second bedroom. The third bedroom will be used by the housepar-



VERLON MOORE, left, presents keys to new Alternative Home in Clarksville to Gerald Stow, president of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes and social worker Debbie Sorenson as Cumberland Association director of missions Wesley Pitts observes.

ents, Sorenson said.

Stow said TBCH is looking forward to working with the Cumberland churches.

"We have been involved in this type of ministry since 1985 and have witnessed the hand of God reconciling the lives of these young women and their families," he said.

During the program, a testimony was given by Lee Haney, a college student at the University of Tennessee-Martin.

She currently is the reigning Miss Milan No-Till and will compete in the upcoming Miss Tennessee Pageant.

She was adopted after being born to a 17-year-old girl.

"Had my birth mother not chosen adoption, I might not be standing in front of you today," she said. "I am a product of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes."

Other program participants other than Stow, Pitts, and Moore, included Cumberland Association pastors Kim Allen, Little West Fork Church; David Atherton, Kenwood Church; Roger Freeman, First Church; and Bobby Kail, Crossland Avenue Church. □
— Compiled from news sources

Iranian Christian released; execution said to be canceled

Baptist Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — A man condemned to death by an Iranian court for converting to Christianity was abruptly released Sunday, Jan. 16, just two days before he was to have been executed.

Two days later the Iranian, Mehdi Dibaj, was reportedly in Tehran, Iran's capital, where Christians met him, "singing songs of jubilation and thanking God for his release," according to Iranian Christian leaders in Europe.

But joy was tempered by the fact that his release was conditional. He was released "with attachment and that the court is investigating his case," according to the Iranian state

news agency. Iranian Christian leaders in Europe who have followed the case said Dibaj is still subject to recall by police at any time.

Dibaj, an Assemblies of God evangelist, had spent nine years in prison for becoming a Christian several decades ago. He spent the night of his release in Sari, the city in north-eastern Iran where he had been imprisoned.

Iranian officials deny Dibaj faced execution. Christians have followed Dibaj's case throughout the nine years he was in prison, including two years spent in solitary confinement without lights in a 3-foot by 3-foot cell.

The Iranian news agency quoted sources in Iran's Judi-

cial Forces as stating, "The propaganda of the Western media claiming that a death sentence has been issued for Mehdi Dibaj is untrue. ... His (Dibaj's) convictions are not so much that they should result in his execution."

The chief of Iran's Judicial Forces, Ayatollah Yazdi, said "claims about an execution order are totally groundless."

Iranian Christians say that account does not tally with the facts. They earlier released Dibaj's case number, verdict number, and court number in trying to rally support for him.

In response, the U.S. State Department, called on Iran to abide by human rights agreements in regards to Dibaj. Human rights agencies also took

up his case and called for Christians in many countries to pray for him and write appeals for his release.

Dibaj was "overcome with joy," and "expressed his deep-

est gratitude to the Lord for his release and to all churches and Christians for their solid support and prayer which resulted in his release," one Christian leader said. □

Conference on gambling set

The National Coalition on Gambling is sponsoring a conference on "Drawing the Line on Gambling" Feb. 11-12 in Nashville.

The conference will be held at Clubhouse Inn and Conference Center, 920 Broadway, beginning with registration at 11 a. m., Feb. 11.

The conference concludes at noon Saturday. The United Tennessee League, headed by Waymon Jones, is helping with the event.

Resource speakers include

Frank Kelley, attorney general of Michigan for 31 years; John Kindt, University of Illinois professor; and Tom Spampinato, Raleigh, N. C., a recovering addictive gambler.

There is a registration fee, and individuals should make their reservations at the Nashville inn.

More information is available from the National Coalition on Gambling, 2376 Lakeside Drive, Birmingham, Ala. 35244, telephone (205) 985-9062. □

Michigan Baptists receive disaster relief unit

Baptist Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — When the next disaster occurs, Michigan Baptist volunteers will be ready to respond with hot meals and recovery teams working from their own relief unit — furnished by North Carolina Baptists.

The 18-wheel, tractor-trailer unit was presented to representatives of the Michigan

Baptist Brotherhood organization at the North Carolina Baptist Men's Convention Jan. 15 in Winston-Salem.

North Carolina Baptist Men recently acquired and equipped a new unit that will provide a more versatile approach to the state convention's disaster relief feeding ministry.

"North Carolina Baptist men learned of the need for a

disaster relief unit in Michigan through the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission," said Richard Brunson, state Baptist Men's director.

"What we are doing is enabling another state convention to be able to respond to disasters and minister to people in the same manner North Carolina Baptist Men have been ministering in recent years," Brunson said. □

IRS ruling correction

In the article "New IRS ruling on charitable gifts" Jan. 19, there were two errors. The correct figure is \$250 (for which church donors must have a receipt from the church), and the fourth paragraph should read:

The receipt must be in writing, and must identify the donor by name. (A Social Security number is not required). A separate acknowledgement need not be given for each contribution, but if a quarterly or year-end statement is given, each contribution ought to be separately listed.

Readers should contact an IRS office, a tax preparer, or other specialists for more information. □

■ 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. □

Special message from TBC president

Dear Tennessee Baptists,
I am concerned about Tennessee Legislative bill SJR-025 Lottery. This bill will be discussed this session of the Senate. If the bill passes, a referendum will be placed on the November ballot for a vote to remove the lottery prohibition from the state constitution.

I urge you to call your senator and voice your opposition to this bill. We do not need a lottery or any gambling in Tennessee.

I ask every Christian in Tennessee to oppose gambling because:

1. A lottery is not a painless method of taxation.

It is gambling, plain and simple. The Bible says covetousness is one of the deadly sins. To want something for nothing is to covet. To train a whole generation of adults and young people that a lottery is all right, is to teach them the Bible is not true.

2. A lottery is not an easy way to raise money for education.

The tax dollar comes from the pocket of every taxpayer. It takes from \$1 to \$2 per \$100 to raise and maintain taxation. It takes from \$55 to \$60 per \$100 to raise and maintain a lottery.

To raise a needed \$200 million for education, \$600 million must be raised. This means \$350 million would go for promotion and salaries of lottery employees.

3. To vote for a lottery is the "Robin Hood" principle in reverse.

When people buy lottery tickets they are hoping for a bonanza. Chances of winning a large sum of money are less than those of being hit by lightning. Instead of taking from the rich and giving to the poor, the lottery takes from the poor and pads the pockets of the rich.

4. The lottery advances a false sense of hope.

Who is to stop a welfare family from putting their whole welfare check on lottery tickets every month, with hopes of hitting it big?

5. The promise is that a lottery will replace raised taxes.

In states where the lottery has been legal for three years or more, every state has come back to the voters for additional taxes. The lottery makes enormous promises which cannot be kept.

We should not make our government an agent of the gambling business. We should not

teach our children that gambling is all right, that something for nothing is best. We must not establish another enormous state government bureaucracy to administer a lottery.

We must not put money above character, greed above morals, or dollars above conscience.

If you agree, call your senator and voice your objection to the bill.

Ray Newcomb
president, TBC
Millington 38053

major influence in American society. Sitting in my father-in-law's den recently I was appalled at a 20/20 segment on ABC on the "success" of the controversial program entitled *NYPD Blue*. For the first time I saw nudity and heard vulgarity I had never heard on television. Another program aired on CBS entitled "Other Mothers — The Story of A Family" tried to convince viewers that homosexuality is a normal, acceptable lifestyle. Homosexual characters were "good guys" and those holding the traditional view of family were "bad guys."

I encourage Christians to participate in "The Great American TV Turn-Off Day" on May 1. What an opportunity to do something creative in the family as an alternative to viewing the immoral lifestyle of the world. I challenge each pastor to promote this special day in your churches. Let's stand together against immorality and for decency and traditional moral and biblical values.

Richard Holloman
pastor, First Church
Monterey 38574

Great TV turn-off

Our local newspaper reported action taken by over 4,000 messengers at the North Carolina Baptist Convention.

Messengers voted unanimously to set May 1 as "The Great American TV Turn-Off Day" to protest violence and moral depravity on many television shows.

This will not put the television industry out of business. However, by participating we can register displeasure of television programming. This would provide opportunity for pastors and church leaders to challenge Christians concerning their television watching habits.

The television industry is a

The futility of church schisms

Church splits could be humorous if they were not so serious. For

instance, there was a West Tennessee pioneer church which had just finished its new log meeting place when an itinerate preacher came by to lead them in worship.

The builders had forgotten to fix a place for the preacher to hang his broad brim hat. He ended up holding it when he preached.

One thoughtful member proceeded to put a peg on the wall near the pulpit. A less compassionate member raised the question of its having been done without church permission.

An argument ensued and the church split into two distinct factions — Pegs and Anti-Pegs. They ended up with two pegs, one authorized and the other unauthorized.

So it goes with church schisms. Worse leads to worse.

More often antagonistic groups get into arguments like my wife's young sisters when she was babysitting. With contorted faces and angry snarls they were nose to nose making faces and vicious sounds at each other. When asked what they were arguing about they answered almost in unison,

■ a historical view

By James Sullivan, retired president, BSSB

"We don't have a subject, we just like to argue."

When an argumentative spirit prevails, people don't have to have a subject, even in churches and denominations. They will usually find one totally different from the underlying problem causing the controversy.

Trying to settle church disputes with emotional outbursts is much like trying to extinguish a flame with gasoline.

The unfortunate thing is that many good and innocent people get caught up in the conflagration and can't ever figure out exactly why, and what happened.

There are always people who try to pour everyone else into their preconceived mold. Life just does not work out that way. All of us are different and will remain that way whatever we may try to do to change it.

Consider the lingering individual differences among Christ's 12 disciples. Some were impulsive like Peter. Others were firebrands like John, or cool and calculated

like the tax collector Matthew.

All were different, and Jesus did not try to alter that fact. God had

made them that way and each was called to serve according to his temperament and ability.

When division start in a religious body, they are hard to stop.

In one city a local pastor drove me by six separate churches within a mile of each other which had all started out as one church. One split off from another and another split from them. They split and split until they were six separate bodies.

The only real change they made was that now the congregations were so small that the obstreperous ones were close enough to argue eyeball to eyeball.

The ultimate end of such logic is that each person will have to be a church unto himself because all are different from everyone else. Then each person, because of the spirit he has engendered, will end up hating himself with nowhere to go and that was where the trouble was all the time. The biggest critics are usually the ones with the most faults and are the last to learn it. □

Daily prayer requests for Chile/Tennessee Partnership



January —

- 26 — Pastor Urbana Gomez will be leaving Second Church in Iquique to pastor the Nueva Jerusalem Church in Antofagasta. Pray for the two churches in Iquique who will be pastorless.
- 27 — Praise God for giving missionary Phyllis Walker the wonderful privilege of telling the Chileans about his plan for their lives and for giving Phyllis the power and special ability to do it well. (Ephesians 3:7)
- 28 — Praise God for giving missionary Mike Dietz the wonderful privilege of telling the Chileans about his plan for their lives and for giving Mike the power and special ability to do it well. (Ephesians 3:7)
- 29 — Belia Perez is director of the Baptist Clinic in Antofagasta. Pray for her and those who serve with her.
- 30 — The following churches are pastorless: Ebenezer and El Sembrador in the Central Valley; Manatitu de Vida, Redentor, and Beth-El churches of Temuco; First Church of Villarrica; and First Church of Pucon.
- 31 — Nine women have finished a seven-week Bible study which laid down the groundwork for the Community Bible Study in March, said Sherra Armstrong. Pray the Lord would lead these women to a facility to rent in a central location of Santiago.

February —

- 1 — Missionary Clara Brincefield as she has recently returned to Chile after coming to the states for the holidays when her mother died unexpectedly and her father was diagnosed with cancer. She will carry major responsibility of a Tennessee team Feb. 2-14. Pray for her stamina and emotional well-being.

Moving conference date can boost evangelism

In the past few years, the State Evangelism Conference has met with all kinds of weather conditions. The dates in January have seen torrential rains, threats of tornadoes, bitter cold, snow and ice, plus a lot of very good weather.

Everyone who has attended the conference, at least in recent years, remembers some difficult driving conditions. The planners also have unsettling days, concerned about timing.

This year's conference was to have been reminiscent of bygone days when the "big guns" were speaking and attendance was soaring.

The snow and ice storm, coupled with dangerously low temperature, stymied the two-day event. Herschel Hobbs and W. A. Criswell did spend some time with about thirty hardy souls Monday afternoon, gave an interview to the *Baptist and Reflector*, and went back home.

The State Evangelism Conference merits a good time slot on the denominational calendar and it always should have good speakers.

Tennessee Baptists can benefit from a conference that includes messages and workshops on lay witnessing, pulpit and pew evangelism, and Bible studies that emphasize these topics. It has been tried, and now could be time for another attempt.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention has an interest in how evangelism works in the

associations and in the churches, how lay people get involved, and what are the best methods in helping churches move toward an evangelistic lifestyle.

Jerry King, TBC evangelism director, and his predecessors, have been instrumental in keeping evangelism at the forefront of church action. King is trying to find a suitable date this spring for the postponed 1994 conference to be rescheduled.

It may be difficult to find an acceptable date for 1994. And it won't be easy to find a new time frame for permanent scheduling. But the situation demands innovative ideas and plans.

Denominational schedules will have to be studied. New dates for future years will involve compromising.

It's true that hundreds of pastors attend

the State Evangelism Conference annually, but lay people also need evangelism workshops and messages.

The very strong word *evangelism* has impact on the regular planning in most churches. This involves positive change even at church level. Conferences of the future may include "how to" and teaching workshops, thus attracting lay people.

Most pastors probably would welcome a session to provide help for lay people in visiting, witnessing, speaking, and other evangelizing for Christ. However, the laity must want to learn and to do.

King is enthusiastic about evangelism of the future (and the conference itself). Difficulties don't alter his determination. He's looking for dependable dates and weather to match. The rest will come in time. □

■ one word more
By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

Liberty's no statue

Liberty, I think, is not a statue, and freedom is not something shipped across the land by rail or air.

Intangible, liberty is inside every human heart, and freedom seeks to dwell in every thought.

When Emma Lazarus penned "The New Colossus" for the dedication of the Statue of Liberty, she struck the most sensitive chords. She wrote about liberty, and the welcome

that broken and distressed people should receive when they come to America.



ALLEN

She was saying their dreams could be realized in a nation birthed by men and women who had either lost their freedom or had it severely abused.

She called the Statue of Liberty, "Mother of Exiles."

People can be exiles for many reasons. And they can be poor in many ways. Coming to America does not ensure escape from trials nor from pocketbook poverty. But freedom here is not only pursued, it is always possible.

About twenty of us waited one night last week at Nashville's great airport. We wanted to welcome the remaining two members of our Ukrainian family, the Arkhipenkos.

They were grandmother and granddaughter, both close relatives of the four already here. Their journey had been almost two years in the making.

When they arrived, there were tears and smiles, much chattering and laughing, and there were hugs and kisses.

They probably had not seen the Statue of Liberty. They may not have heard of the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, nor the Declaration of Independence. They have not registered to vote, nor do they speak English.

All those will come. But for now, they have been adequately welcomed by a warm and loving church family — and their relatives. Lydia, the grandmother, smiled and kissed and hugged all of us — several times.

Those gestures of "family" were reciprocated, and they know they are home. God's people know love's meaning. □

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Relationships in the family: a place to start

We pledged in December to make families a top priority for this paper, especially in 1994.

What's so unique about 1994? Well, it's the year in which we're living. We can do something with that.

In the weeks and months ahead the *Baptist and Reflector* plans to emphasize ways to strengthen families. And we begin by affirming the idea and structure of families.

It's popular sometimes to ridicule Christian family life in America, but old-fashion values are never outdated.

Values from the Bible, Christian insights from parents and grandparents are always "in style." What are some things worthy of focus?

How about family prayer and devotion time, regular worship and Bible study attendance, love in the home expressed openly and frequently, parental guidance and discipline, stressing positive living, letting everyone speak, spreading laughter and joy, enjoying serendipities. There's more, later.

For now, it's a beginning. Look at your family. What do you need to do? □

■ just for today
By Fred Wood pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

The pet shop owner explained: "The blue parrot that speaks four languages sells for \$1,000. The red one that speaks six languages sells for \$2,000. The orange one doesn't talk but costs \$5,000."

The customer exclaimed "Why \$5,000 for the orange one? What does he do?"

The owner smiled, "We don't know, but the other two call him 'boss.'"

Take this truth

The early Christians held tenaciously to one creed, "Jesus is Lord." Examine his teachings closely, and you will find he gave few lessons on how to speak. He emphasized the importance of hearing.

We live in a world of noise. The important things come to us in the still small voice.

Memorize this Scripture

"The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning unto his lips" (Proverbs 6:23).

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to realize I am not learning anything when I'm talking. Amen! □

It's important to discover your family

Who are those people who live in the same house with me?
I eat at the same

table with them, occasionally. We sleep together, one even in the same bed.

We take trips together. We play together. We fuss and fight. We laugh.

But what do I really know or understand about them? What do they know about me?

As I got started in counseling years ago, the assumption was that pre-marital counseling did little or no good.

The basis for that argument was that "love was blind and half deaf" and the young couple would not "see" or "hear" anything about the object of their love that they chose to deny.

Most counselors now will agree that part of the problem was the content of the counseling as much as the attitude of the prospective mates.

Counseling that majored on helping couples take a realistic look at each other, warts and all, was found to be very productive. One of the most rewarding experiences that I have is talking with couples for whom I have performed the wedding and pre-marital counseling and have them refer to things they learned about each

■ families matter
By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

other in those sessions which contributed to the strength of their marriages.

In a quiet moment of contemplation, not immediately after your last fight, try to sketch an emotional picture of your family.

This can easily be done by trying to make some decisions about where you would place family members in a continuum of traits.

I suggest 10 or so possible traits. Use it for family members:

Most of the time, I would describe (person's name) as: uptight or easy going, pessimistic or optimistic, insensitive or sensitive, reserved or expressive, dependent or decisive, impulsive or organized, critical or caring, argumentative or accepting, introverted or extroverted, rational or emotional.

You then might make a list for each member of your family and for yourself.

You could then try to develop

a strategy to facilitate the way that you might use this understanding of self and family to relate better to each other.

I'll warn some who may want to seek professional help with significant issues that surface during such evaluations.

There is an old saying that "familiarity breeds contempt." It's my experience that it is assumed familiarity that causes the problem.

Military experience helped me understand how to spell the word "assume" and what it makes out of you and me.

Let's make the intentional choice to discover our families and stop assuming that we know each other. □

Readers are invited to contact Dr. Barkley with questions concerning family relationships and/or conflict problems at The Counseling Center, 6385 Stage Rd., Ste. 1, Bartlett, Tenn., 38134. — Editor



BARKLEY

House vote

In the article "Senators consider removal of lottery prohibition" in last week's *Baptist and Reflector*, the paper was given the wrong House of Representatives vote on removal of the lottery prohibition. The House approved it by a 3-1 margin. □

Criswell, Hobbs: seminary classmates, old friends

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Herschel Hobbs. W. A. Criswell. When historians look back 100 years from now at this era in Southern Baptist life, those two names will be prominently mentioned. Many Southern Baptists today, however, probably do not know how closely tied those two men are.

For almost 50 years, Criswell, 84, has served at First Church, Dallas, first as pastor, now as senior pastor. The church, under his leadership, is the largest Southern Baptist church in the world.

Hobbs, 86, is one of the most recognizable names in Southern Baptist life. The pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., he has written Sunday School commentaries for 25 years and is widely regarded as a theologian. Both men have written numerous books.

The two Southern Baptist "giants," as they have been described by Tennessee Baptist Convention Evangelism director Jerry King, were in Nashville last week for the State Evangelism Conference, which ultimately was cancelled

because of a snow/ice storm.

Following a "mini" Evangelism Conference session in which they each preached for the approximately 30 people who had not learned the conference was cancelled, the two were interviewed by the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Criswell is widely known for his stance in the "conservative" movement within the Southern Baptist Convention. Hobbs disdains labels and says he tries to stay "down the middle."

Hobbs emphasized he and Criswell believe the same thing. "There's not a bit of difference in our faith," he said. "We are both conservative in theology. We're where Southern Baptists have always stood — down the middle."

That aside, there is no doubt of the mutual admiration and respect each holds for the other.

"I don't have a better friend among preachers than W. A. Criswell," Hobbs said.

"I love Herschel Hobbs as much as if he were my own brother," Criswell responded.

The two met in 1931 when both were students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Despite being two years older, Hobbs

was a year behind Criswell at seminary.

Their friendship developed then and grew through the years. Both have held revivals at each other's churches.

Hobbs recalled a time he led a January Bible Study on the book of Amos at First Church, Dallas, one Sunday night. That night the church had 19 additions, more than they had that morning when another well-known Southern Baptist preached — Billy Graham.

Hobbs said Graham commented on the different number of conversions. Hobbs, laughing, said, "I told him that just shows I'm a better evangelist."

When asked how the two men are alike, Criswell responded, "Both of us have given our lives to the pastoral ministry."

He noted both of them had opportunities to move to other areas of work including serving as president of a seminary.

"God called Herschel Hobbs to be a pastor, preacher, pulpiteer, and expositor. The same thing has characterized my life," Criswell said.

Both men said they never



OLD FRIENDS W. A. Criswell, left, and Herschel Hobbs reminisced during a visit to Nashville last week.

had any doubts that God wanted them in a pastoral ministry. In his autobiography, Hobbs wrote: "If I had 10,000 lives to live, I would want to be a pastor in every one of them." Criswell responds: "God called me to be a pastor when I was a little boy."

Each has a favorite story about the other.

Criswell related Hobbs drove the "get-a-way" car when he and his wife were married in Louisville. He said two of their friends were going to stop the car. One of them tried to grab the keys and Hobbs wrestled him to the ground. "When I came out to the car there was Hobbs rolling on the ground, fighting," Criswell laughed, noting that Herschel "won" the battle.

Hobbs recalled that he and Criswell wrote frequently during their early ministry. "In our early days we moved around a bit," he said.

At that time George W. Truett was approaching retirement as pastor of First Church, Dallas. Hobbs said he and another friend had decided Criswell was the man "to fill the bill" at that church.

During those times Criswell would get offers from other churches and would write to

Hobbs for advice. He usually responded, "Leave it alone, God has something bigger." Hobbs said Criswell would turn it down and pass Hobbs' name along to the church.

Finally, Hobbs said, Criswell was invited to preach at First Church, Dallas, and he was called as pastor. "I got a penny postcard the next day (after he was called). All it said was, 'Dallas First called last night. Pray that I have the strength to do the work.'"

Hobbs' was at the Dallas church later and related that story. "I told them every other time he turned down the job and gave me a shot. This time the rascal didn't," he laughed.

The two veterans have some advice for young pastors today.

Young ministers should give themselves to two things, Criswell said.

First, pray and study to be the best expositor of God's Word that you can be.

Second, he said, commit yourself and then lead your people to minister to people who are hurting and lost.

"We need that preacher to be God's messenger and we need him to minister to people," Criswell said.

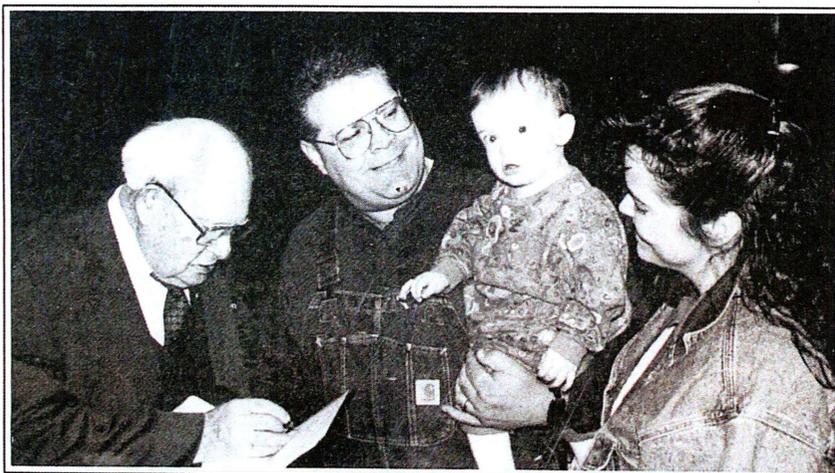
"Amen," Hobbs echoed. He added one thing. "Don't stop studying." He and Criswell agreed that one of the major reasons the average tenure of a Southern Baptist pastor at one church is a little over two years is because they quit studying and become "dry and empty."

And since both are still going strong in their 80s, it's safe to assume their wells are far from being dry.

Though the two men are 100 miles apart, they remain close. With a straight face, Hobbs says that on a clear day, when the window is open and the wind is blowing from the south, he "can still hear W. A. preach." □



PEOPLE WHO MADE it to the State Evangelism Conference had opportunity to speak personally to nationally known pastors Herschel Hobbs and W. A. Criswell. In photo to left, Criswell, left, chats with Donald Cobb, center, pastor, First Church, Livingston, and Fred Deerstone, a layman from East-side Church, Greeneville. Below, Hobbs signs a Bible for David Reeves, pastor of Harmony Church, Whiteville, and his daughter, Samanitha, and wife, Terri. — Photos by Lonnie Wilkey



W. C. Summar dies in Columbia

W. C. Summar, retired Baptist pastor and former director of the Cooperative Program and Stewardship Department of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, died Jan. 17 at his home in Columbia. He was 83.

A native of Warren County, Summar was a graduate of Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He served as pastor of First Church, Selmer, First Church, Franklin, and Robertsville Church, Oak Ridge.

Following his retirement, Summar and his wife were sent by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board as missionaries in Blantyre, Malawi, East Africa.

Summar is survived by his wife, Bessie, a son, and two grandchildren. □

Christian disciples working 'behind the walls:' prisoner

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

At the age of 24 Mark Cunningham became a Christian. Three years later he committed the crime which put him in prison with a 20-year sentence.

Cunningham explains he didn't really understand Christianity until he committed that crime because he hadn't learned "on the outside" what he learned in a discipleship course at Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary in Petros.

That discipleship course — MasterLife — and several others made such a difference in his life Cunningham agreed to speak to the thousands of Baptists attending the Tennessee Baptist Convention annual meeting last year in Nashville.

"God really started working in my life and he still is," said Cunningham.

He and the other prisoners at Brushy Mountain had access to many religious experiences, explained Cunningham. Many groups come into prisons to lead services, revivals, and studies, he reported. They represent all mainline denominations — both Christians, Jewish, and Muslim — and even sects, he said.

But when a MasterLife course was offered, he thought

it sounded different. And it was.

Although it was to be restricted to a small group, the word spread as those in the course talked about the study, said Cunningham. More joined it. Ray Maynard, the leader, stretched the guidelines for the course, which advises small groups, to accommodate from 15-20 men in the group at Brushy Mountain.

The time spent weekly in the study was an escape from regular prison life, he described. Generally prisoners aren't sociable and many encourage strife, he described.

But people who didn't get along with each other attended the study and began to understand each other over the six-month period of the course, reported Cunningham.

"All of us (taking the course) had been saved. But we needed something to bring us together for fellowship. That means so much in a correctional facility," he said.

"For a bunch of convicts to get together and fellowship and just praise the Lord, it was a new experience," said Cunningham.

Maynard was one reason for the success of the course, he reported. None of the prisoners doubted his commitment. A di-

rector of missions in Union Association based in Sparta, Maynard drove 180 miles each evening to lead them.

Maynard also has the gift of making people, "even prisoners," said Cunningham, feel loved. "You feel that no matter what you've done, he's your best friend," he explained. Maynard's attitudes made the men feel comfortable enough to share, he added, which is an integral part of discipleship courses.

Maynard, who is Tennessee Baptist Convention prison ministry consultant, also was inclusive, added Cunningham. Some groups which lead religious meetings have a "you and us" approach, he said. "With Ray it was always us," he continued.

Cunningham went on to take Experiencing God and Making Peace With Your Past, other discipleship courses published by the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

"I've grown more as a Christian while I have been locked up than when I was on the street," he said.

It's understandable, said Cunningham. Living the Christian faith is harder "on the outside" because of the many temptations.

But he's looking forward to



MARK CUNNINGHAM, left, visits with his counselor Hal Robinson, pastor and founder, Mount Moriah Community Baptist Church, Nashville, at Nashville Community Service Center.

freedom. Cunningham, who was transferred to Tennessee Department of Corrections Nashville Community Service Center, was considered for parole Jan. 10 after serving nearly five years. He was turned down.

So now he will serve two more years before being considered again.

He was disappointed, but not discouraged, he said.

"No matter what happened, God was in charge and he has a plan for my life and I just have to be receptive to it."

Now he has a daily quiet time with God and looks for evidences of God in his and oth-

er's lives.

Cunningham, who works at the Veterans Cemetery in Nashville, said he doesn't have the gift of teaching, but he encourages the men he works and lives with.

Although he might be in the minority as a Christian, he isn't alone, he said. Many prison officials are Christians, he added.

When his dad died, an official encouraged him and helped him regularly contact his family, he said.

"Most of the men in here need the Lord Jesus in their lives. That's the only hope for them," he said. □

Union, Brazilian schools begins exchange

By Keith Currey
Union University

JACKSON — What may seem like chance encounters can be life changing. An encounter between the Apostle Philip and an Ethiopian changed the Ethiopian's life.

Pastor Jose Almada-de-Abreu and a Southern Baptist missionary had what many might term a chance encounter. An exchange program between Tennessee's Union University and Brazil's Colegio Baptista Minero resulted.

Two years ago at a state convention the pastor, who also is a member of Brazil's Baptist Education Board, discussed with missionary Wade Akins, the desire of Colegio Baptista Minero to begin a university. Its 8,400 students are limited to elementary and secondary education

studies.

Akins, who has been involved with Jackson's Englewood Church, recommended Union University for an exchange program.



UNION UNIVERSITY GRADUATE Phillip Ryan, right, instructs a Brazilian student in an English class in Jackson. The class is the first exchange between Union University and Colegio Baptista Minero in Brazil.

Soon Union University President Hyran Barefoot was visiting the school's campus in Belo-Horizonte. The exchange program was agreed upon by officials at both schools.

The exchange program became a reality this month with an intensive English course. Thirty students, faculty, and family members from Colegio Baptista Minero traveled to Union Jan. 4 to participate.

"We are attempting to put language into everyday situations instead of simply teaching textbook English," said Phillip Ryan, the course's instructor and a 1991 Union graduate.

The group is receiving 90 hours of classroom instruction during the three-week course. Student instructors have been enlisted to assist with three levels of study.

In addition to class-

room instruction, the students have experienced American culture through field trips and activities.

The group has joined campus activities enthusiastically. They especially enjoyed their first college basketball game. When the Union cheerleaders were unable to outcheer the group from Brazil, they gave up and turned over cheerleading duties to the Brazilian students.

Members of the Brazilian group also are sharing their language and culture with Jackson residents. They are teaching a Portuguese class, which several area church members are attending.

While many possibilities exist for the exchange of language, culture, and ideas between the two schools, the students realize the need for sharing in spiritual matters.

"I am learning many things here, but mainly how to love my American brothers and sisters," said Monica Brum, who teaches English courses at Colegio Baptista Minero. "Learning English comes second." □

Correctional Institutions

Volunteers are needed to teach discipline courses

- Tiptonville — Lake County Regional Correctional Facility and Northwest Correctional Center
- Henning — Fort Pillow Prison and Farm and West Tennessee High Security Facility
- Millington — Federal Prison Camp
- Only — Turney Center Industrial Prison and Farm
- Clifton — South Central Correctional Facility and Wayne County Boot Camp
- Nashville — Lois M. DeBerry Special Needs Facility, Rivardend Maximum Security Institution, Tennessee Prison for Women, and Tennessee Women's Prison Annex
- Tullahoma — Tennessee Correction Academy (Training Center)
- Pikeville — Southeastern Tennessee State Regional Correctional Facility
- Wartburg — Morgan County Regional Correctional Facility
- Petros — Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary
- Mountain City — Northeast Correctional Center
- Roan Mountain — Carter County Work Camp

(Service centers and reception centers are not listed. Short stays by prisoners restrict ministry.)

CLC issues moral framework for health care proposals

By Tom Strode
Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Describing Christians as "morally obligated" to address health care reform, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has issued documents outlining an ethical and theological framework by which to judge all such reform proposals.

The documents, "Health Care Reform: A Moral Preamble" and "Health Care Reform: A Statement of Concerns," were formulated and issued by the CLC after a Jan. 18 consultation in Washington sponsored by the agency. The private consultation featured medical ethicists, health care workers, and Southern Baptist agency representatives.

The CLC documents also specifically criticize aspects of President Clinton's proposal which the CLC says endanger the sanctity of human life, religious liberty, the physician-patient relationship, family rela-

tionships, and the ministry of Southern Baptist churches and agencies.

"We feel a special responsibility to address health care reform because President Clinton is a member of a Southern Baptist congregation," CLC Executive Director Richard Land said at a Jan. 19 news conference, "and many Southern Baptists are deeply opposed to numerous elements of the president's proposed agenda on health care reforms."

The documents will be used as an "interpretative and evaluative grid through which all proposed health care reform legislation will be analyzed and critiqued," Land said. The

CLC is not supporting one proposal over another, he said.

The CLC, which plans to distribute the documents to all SBC pastors, hopes Southern Baptists will use the statements to impact their senators and representatives, thereby moving health care reform in a direction satisfactory to the commission, Land said.

"We would love to have four or five plans that emerge as sort of hybrid proposals that all (meet) our criteria with equal satisfaction," he said.

While the "Moral Preamble" provides a theological and philosophical framework for addressing health care, the "Statement of Concerns" speci-

fies six fundamental concerns it has about the president's plan and those proposed by others.

The CLC previously had announced its opposition to the president's proposal as long as it included abortion coverage.

The commission also expressed concern about health care at the end of life. It will "contest any plan which opens the door to or actively promotes euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide as a method of reducing medical expenditures near the end of life," the statement says.

On religious liberty, the document says, "It is embarrassing that a president who claims the Baptist heritage of religious freedom would consider so violating the con-

sciences of millions of pro-life Americans by forcing them to pay for abortion with their taxes."

It also calls Clinton's proposal of a "conscience clause" allowing some health plans not to cover abortion "merely smoke and mirrors," because the president also has acknowledged taxes and employer contributions, apparently even from those morally opposed, would underwrite abortions indirectly.

The other four concerns expressed in the "Statement" were allocation of limited resources, effect on Southern Baptist churches and agencies, violation of family relationships, and revamping of traditional physician/patient relationship. □

Mississippi teen dies in Honduras

Baptist Press

TELA, Honduras — Southern Baptist volunteer Bradley Boatner, 17, of Brandon, Miss., died instantly Jan. 18 in a truck accident on an unpaved mountain road near Tela, Honduras.

Boatner, the only child of Gary and Paula Boatner of Brandon, was a member of Park Place Church in Brandon. It was his second trip to Honduras as a mission volunteer.

The crash also critically injured four other Mississippi Baptist volunteers — David Sneed, a dentist from Eupora, Miss.; Anthony Presley, a dentist from Florence, Miss.; Danny Clifton, an optometrist from Louisville, Miss.; and Doug Phillips, pastor of Blackwater Church in Daleville, Miss.

After initial treatment in a Tela hospital, they were evacuated by helicopter early Jan. 19 to a hospital in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, said Southern Baptist missionary Glenna Stamps in a telephone interview.

A total of 17 volunteers, mostly medical professionals, suffered injuries ranging from minor to severe in the accident, said Peggy Moore, of Byram, Miss. Her husband, Delton, a pharmacist, shared a room with Boatner on the trip. Those with minor injuries were treated and released.

Nine Hondurans, including a mother and her infant, also were injured but none required hospitalization, said Stamps' husband, Stanley.

Most of the volunteers were riding in the back of an open cattle truck when the driver swerved toward the road's edge to avoid hitting an oncoming car, Mrs. Stamps said. Heavy rains had softened the road and its shoulder gave way, causing the truck to crash down an embankment.

Part of the 35-member volunteer team was traveling in another vehicle not involved in the accident, Mrs. Stamps added. The volunteers, who included several non-Southern Baptists, were from Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana. □

Peace group praises Wal-Mart handgun move

Baptist Press

MEMPHIS — A group which includes members of 12 Baptist conventions has praised the Wal-Mart Corp. for its decision to stop selling handguns in its stores.

The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, founded in 1984 as a network linking Baptists involved in justice and peace issues and based in Memphis, wrote Wal-Mart's president and has urged other Baptists to send letters as well.

"We know that guns do not cause the epidemic of violence now inflicting our nation," BPFNA Executive Director Ken Sehested wrote in his letter to Wal-Mart. "Something deeper is at work. But the easy availability of handguns dramatically increases the potential for destruction.

"There are over 270,000 registered gun dealers in the U.S. We have more gun dealers than we have gas stations. Your company's decision is a step in the right direction to bring this outrageous reality under control," Sehested wrote.

A letter also was sent to the president of K mart Corp. urging his company to follow suit, Sehested said. According to BPFNA, the companies are believed to be the two largest sellers of firearms in the United States. □

Record Japanese crowds hear Graham

Baptist Press

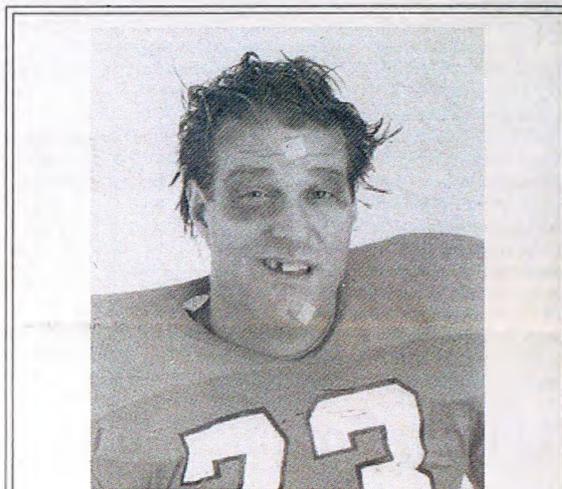
TOKYO — Evangelist Billy Graham spoke to the largest gathering of Christians in the history of Japan as he concluded a Jan. 13-16 Mission 94 crusade in the Tokyo Dome.

A crowd of 45,000 people filled the dome Jan. 15 with the service broadcast to nearly 60 satellite centers across the country. Graham, a Southern Baptist, spoke to the largest gathering of Christians — and the most people at one time to hear the Gospel — in Japan, offi-

cial said.

Crowds averaged 31,250 during the four-day crusade with an average of 3,025 who came forward at Graham's invitation to make a commitment to Jesus Christ. A 40 percent response from men — unusual in Japanese culture — was particularly significant, Graham association leaders said.

Each of the mission meetings was translated into five languages — Korean, Indonesian, Mandarin, Portuguese, and Spanish — by way of low-power FM transmission. □



Because Life Is A Contact Sport

Going through life without proper protection is like playing football without a helmet. Even when you are prepared, life can lay some pretty nasty licks on you. Without proper protection, some of these hits can sideline you for years, both financially and physically. With the new Personal Security Program you choose the protection you need at a price that fits your budget. Design the program you want, with the coverage you choose. Then, get back into the game knowing you have protection.

ANNUITY BOARD OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

2101 Cedar Springs Rd. • P.O. Box 2190 • Dallas, Texas 75221-2190 • 1-800-262-0511
Serving Those Who Serve the Lord

TenneScene ■ the people, their work

■ the leaders

■ **Greg Bowers**, pastor, Eastwood Church, Memphis, has been called as pastor of First Church, Portland. He is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He also has served churches as pastor in Texas and Oklahoma.

■ **Michael Driver**, pastor, Blue Springs Church, Rutledge, has been called to serve Roebuck Park Church, Birmingham, Ala., as associate pastor/administrator. His last Sunday in Rutledge will be Jan. 30.

■ **Greg Baker** has been called as minister of children and youth at Harmony Church, Whiteville, effective Jan. 9.

■ First Church, Niota, has called **Phillip Holmes**, minister of music and education, First Church, Brewton, Ala., as pastor. **Ansell Baker**, retired pastor, First Church, Athens, has been interim pastor.

■ Ninth Street Church, Erwin, ordained **Ralph Grant Bridges** and **Richard Douglas Clark** as deacons Jan. 16.

■ **Fred Steelman** and his wife were honored by Red Bank Church, Chattanooga,

Jan. 16 for their 20 years of service. Steelman is pastor of the church.

■ the churches

■ **Audubon Park Church, Memphis**, is holding a "Walking Through Tennessee for His Glory" event for state missions. Senior adults are encouraged to log 500 miles, the distance across the state between Memphis and Bristol. Donations given in support of the walkers will be forwarded to the offering.

■ **First Church, Jefferson City**, will hold a program April 16-17 entitled "The Recovery of Joy." It will be led by Ken Chafin.

■ **Bethlehem Church, Westpoint**, which has 135 resident members, gave \$2,512 to the foreign missions offering, which was above its goal for the sixth consecutive year.

■ the schools

■ **Union University, Jackson**, will offer four courses this spring toward the Master of Divinity degree. The courses are a part of the Seminary Studies program of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Courses meet Feb. 14 - May 16. On Mondays the following



L. THOMAS STRONG III signs articles and statements at a chapel service of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary on his hiring as assistant professor of theological studies, School of Christian Training. He is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, and Royal Ambassador officer. He is the son of Tommy and Shirley Strong, managers, Camp Linden.

courses will meet — Introduction to Missiology, Introduction to New Testament, Part 2, The Ministry of Proclamation. The other class, Hebrew, will meet on Thursdays. For more information, contact John Adams, (901) 661-5160.

■ The annual West Tennessee Pastors and Wives Valentine Banquet will be Feb. 8 at **Union University, Jackson**. Reservations must be made by Feb. 4 by contacting the office of religious affairs at (901) 661-5160.



ZION HILL CHURCH, FRIENDSHIP, leaders burn the church's note on remodeling completed in 1992. From left, Wayne Laster, trustee and deacon; Kenneth Skelton, pastor; and Don McCanness, trustee, participate in the ceremony which was held in November. A bequest by late member Bryan Clark of \$23,500 helped retire the debt for remodeling, which cost \$70,000.



WARREN GREGORY, right, deacon at Judson Church, Nashville, represents many Tennesseans who received Baptist Sunday School Board Study Course awards last year. Tennessee ranked number two in the area of Sunday School work among state Baptist conventions in number of diplomas and certificates of specialization earned and number five in total awards made. Greer Ruble, Tennessee Baptist Convention Sunday School Department director, presents the award to Gregory, who earned a diploma.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

The Gospel according to "Me"

Virgil Presley, pastor
Curve Church, Ripley

If asked to name the Gospels, one more than likely would say, "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."

However in doing so they would fail to mention the "Me gospel." The "Me gospel" is more important than the word of God for those with the "Me gospel."

Let's look at the following verse, Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching."

Now let's see how the "Me gospel" is applied here and in other ways:

■ My desire and interests are more important than obeying God's Word concerning church attendance. I will go to church only when I want to, even if that

means once a week.

■ I won't go to church because I don't think the people are friendly. Where does it say in the Word of God for one to miss church for this reason? Mark it down in red color, the person who gives this excuse is not friendly himself or herself.

■ I don't get anything out of the service. Again, may I ask, where does it read in God's Word to miss church for this excuse, and it is an excuse, is it not?

You mean a person says, "I don't get anything out of meeting God's people, attending church with my family and friends, Sunday School, the reading of God's Word, prayer, songs of praise to Jesus Christ, the preaching, giving. Think about it — have you ever known a corpse to get anything out of any service in church?"

■ Because someone hurt my feelings and I don't go to that church anymore. When? Something like 10 to 15 years ago. What did they do? Well, I don't really remember.

The "Me gospel" doesn't stop them from going to the same

grocery store, barber shop or beauty shop, ball game, flea mart, funeral home, or a thousand other places, but it does stop them from going to the House of God? Why? I believe "We" all know — don't "We!"

The list is endless. Which "gospel" do you live by? Is it found in the Word of God or in you.

I hope to meet you in church Sunday. □

Rescue in a restaurant

Tom Lewis, minister of education
Leawood Church, Memphis

I had the most exciting lunch I've had in months. The food at the major restaurant was only mediocre, but the entertainment was riveting.

A young man was perched on a ladder by the front door attempting to change a light bulb. I wondered why anyone would place a ladder in front of an entrance at one of the

busiest times of the day causing the patrons to squeeze by, but that goes to show what I know about restaurant management.

What really caught my attention was the light bulb that was missing the metal end. Did you ever have one break on you like that? Well, we got them out. Right?

But unlike the average person, the young man was attempting to unscrew the base of the light bulb with his bare hands while the lights were still on. I held my breath as I watched from across the room. I knew he wasn't going to die. He was on one of those fiberglass ladders. That is, unless the shock sent him through the plate glass doors or he had a weak heart. Mine was getting weaker by the minute.

His attempt proved futile and the assistant manager, a young woman, proved extremely helpful. She handed him a long screwdriver which he promptly inserted into the socket. I held my breath as long as I could, but I couldn't stand it any longer. I guess it

was the teacher/father roles, or the Type A personality that caused me to make a dash across the room.

After explaining what could happen to him if he held the screwdriver just right, I calmly suggested it might be prudent to first turn off the light and then use a non conductor to remove the base (just in case another assistant manager had done the original wiring).

Every day we are surrounded by people who are toying with spiritual death. Maybe it's time we jumped up and intervened. □

Articles included in "Tennessee Sampler — views, insights" are written by Tennessee Baptist church and associational leaders. The articles are chosen for publication from newsletters of churches and associations. The *Baptist and Reflector* does not necessarily concur with the views expressed.

Mongolian court overturns part of law limiting Christians

Baptist Press

HONG KONG — The Mongolian Constitutional Court has overturned parts of a new law that would severely restrict Christian activities in Mongolia, according to Christians present at the Jan. 10 court hearing.

In its written decision issued Jan. 12, the court ruled several sections of the law un-

constitutional — including restrictions barring Christian work outside the church buildings and foreigners spreading their faith — because they violate basic human rights.

Reportedly retained, however, are provisions giving Buddhism a chief place in Mongolian religious life, forbidding Christian worship in state-owned buildings, and giving the government control of the

number of clergy.

"Christians, according to the presiding judge, should have the same rights as any other religion in Mongolia (although) Buddhism should still be considered the pre-eminent religion in Mongolia and recognized as such," reported one

Christian observer.

"Foreigners are free to practice their beliefs and may even be involved in religious activity. To what degree we may evangelize is still not clear," the observer said. The court decision returns the law to the Mongolian Parliament, which

passed it, for review and affirmation or rejection.

"There is still the possibility the (parliament) will reject the decision or make other changes. The law would then again be referred to another constitutional court," the ob-

North central states host commissioning

Baptist Press

OAK BROOK, Ill. — More than 700 leaders from the seven north central states witnessed a Home Mission Board commissioning service and heard challenges to win their states to Christ in their triennial meeting in Oak Brook Jan. 11-13.

They represented five state conventions — Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota-Wisconsin, and Ohio — and

one state fellowship — Iowa — and met as part of the 19-year-old North Central States Missions Thrust.

The laymen, church starters, pastors, directors of missions, and state leaders also heard testimonies from their peers and participated in several how-to seminars, but the keynote service of the three-day rally was the commissioning service for 47 newly-appointed home missionaries. □

Fellowship receives \$11 million in '93

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA — The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship took in \$11.2 million in 1993 — a 53 percent increase over the previous year's receipts.

A record month of contributions in December boosted the Fellowship well over its own

income projection of \$10 million for the year, according to preliminary year-end figures from the Atlanta-based group.

The Fellowship is a three-year-old organization of Southern Baptist "moderates." Income has increased from \$4.5 million in 1991 to \$7.3 million in 1992. □

BOWLING UNITED INDUSTRIES
Lights Baptisries Signs
1-800-473-6688
Box 2250 • Danville, VA 24541
FAX: 804-822-2210

Meeting the unique needs of ministers...
RESUMES prepared by
MINISTRY SUPPORT SERVICE
Confidentiality and Satisfaction Guaranteed
Call 1-800-879-7038
for a free consultation and quote

Call for free BROCHURE
BAPTISTRIES
HEATERS, PUMPS
FACTORY DIRECT
TOLL FREE NATIONWIDE
1-800-251-0679
FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.
3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

A & O CHURCH FURNITURE
4971 HARVEY RD. • P.O. BOX 1053
JAMESTOWN, NORTH CAROLINA 27282
— PEW —
UPHOLSTERING
1 (800) 523-9058
NC 1 (800) 222-7895
REFINISHING

CLASSIFIED
CHOIR DIRECTOR SEARCH:
Sneedville First Church has immediate opening for part-time, bivocational adult choir director. Hours and salary negotiable. Send resume with qualifications to: Sneedville FBC, Route 2, Box 71, Sneedville, Tenn., 37869.

Call toll-free anytime ... 1-800-473-6688
We're built on a strong foundation of over 3800 churches.
Church Interiors of Nashville
New PEWS REFINISHING UPHOLSTERING
Stained Glass Steeples Baptistries Loose Reversible Cushions
Lighting and Complete Renovations
Free! Estimates and Interior Design Consultation

Inspirational Travel 1994
Escorted by Rev. John Adkerson

Tour HL # 46 11 Days — Holy Land — March 4
Optional Extn.: Egypt or Paris

Tour HL # 47 9 Days — Holy Land and Egypt — June 4
Optional Extn.: Rome

Tour BI # 3 14 Days — British Isles & Ireland — June 28

Tour SP # 4 16 Days — Australia & New Zealand — Sept. 21

Pastors: Call for TOUR HOST information.
Contact: John Adkerson
P.O. Box 451174, Atlanta, GA 30345
Phone: (404) 414-1950

John Adkerson
Hosted 77 tours to 67 countries worldwide.
"Nothing Beats Experience"

Home With A Heart Home With A Heart

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

COOPERATION

Education is more than just acquiring book knowledge: It's gaining social skills, learning how to receive help and to give help, building a bond of trust and respect.

These are skills that last a lifetime, the very same virtues of cooperation that help join all of the people involved with the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes—from our many church sponsors to the teachers and students—into a single body, united in Christ.

Cooperation. It's part of who we are at the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes—shaping young lives with Christ's love for more than 100 years.

Dr. Gerald L. Stow,
President/Treasurer

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes
TBCH Central Office
5001 Maryland Way
Brentwood, TN 37027
615-371-2000

Home With A Heart Home With A Heart

■ Sunday School lesson commentary

□ Jesus: The way to new birth — Bible Book Series for January 30

By Edward North, pastor, First Church, Humboldt

The Gospel of John records 17 private interviews our Lord had with individuals. The dialogue with Nicodemus is the most highly developed in all the Gospels. Its richness for us is incalculable.

The essentiality of the new birth — vv. 1-7

Nicodemus was a man of authority, noble character, and religious commitment. But, even this good man needed the new birth. Indeed, in verse seven, Jesus insists that it is a "must" (a moral and spiritual necessity) for all ("You" is plural).

The need in Nicodemus' life is underscored by the fact that he "came to Jesus by night." A number of plausible, practical reasons may be given for this nocturnal visit.

But, remember John's penchant for underlying themes? One of his favorite themes is the conflict between darkness and light. The "night" suggests the spiritual blackness enveloping Nicodemus' soul. Despite his moral and religious uprightness, he was lost in the darkness of sin. He came to Jesus in search of light.

The key Greek word is properly rendered "born again," but may be better understood here as "begotten from above." Nicodemus needed what only the Father above could give him. Nicodemus interprets the word in his own mind as a second natural birth, and is skeptical that such a thing could occur.

Jesus explains that he must be "born of water and the Spirit."

The meaning of "water" is the subject of endless debate, colored by individual theological persuasions. The most natural interpretation, growing out of the passage itself, is that it refers to physical birth. The point is that one not only has a physical birth, but must have a spiritual birth, which only the Spirit of God can effect. Jesus' concluding explanation, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (v. 6), seals it for me.

Apart from the new birth no one can become a part of the kingdom of God. It is absolutely essential.

Experiencing the new birth — vv. 14-21

The critical issue for Nicodemus and for us is how one may experience the new birth. In this glorious passage Jesus details the process. First, there is the operation of God's love. Only a love so unconditional that it encompasses the world, so generous that it "gave his only begotten Son," and so forgiving that the Son came not to condemn, but to save, could radically change a person.

Focal Passages John 3:1-7, 14-21

Second, there is the redemptive sacrifice of Christ on the cross, pictured in Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness (v. 14) The phrase "even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" is a

reference to the cross where Jesus died for our forgiveness.

Finally, there is the exercise of faith. Those who believe will not perish or be condemned, but have everlasting life. Just as the Hebrews in the wilderness were not healed by simply looking at a brass serpent on a pole, but through faith in the provisions of God, so we are saved by accepting in faith Christ's finished work on the cross.

Through faith in our loving Father's redemption in Christ we are born again and begin to share in the Father's life. (Eternal life is present and future.) There is evidence in the Scriptures that Nicodemus was, in fact, born again, and came to share in that life (John 7:50f; 19:38f). □

□ Jesus tells parables about the lost — Convention Uniform Series for January 30

By Ken Clayton, pastor, Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory

In Luke 15, Jesus tells parables about a lost sheep (vv. 4-7), a lost coin (vv. 8-10), and a lost son (vv. 11-32). The word "parable" literally means "placing alongside." The story was alongside Jesus' teaching as an illustration in life of that teaching. Someone has called parables, "earthly stories with heavenly meanings." Each parable in Luke 15 illustrates the Heavenly Father's concern for the lost, and the great joy he feels "over one sinner who repents" (v. 10).

The third story, our focal passage, is about a father who has a worthless son, not unlike the tax collectors and sinners who listened to and welcomed Jesus. Jesus' critics, the Pharisees, felt these people were

Focal Passage Luke 15:11-24

hopelessly lost and faulted Jesus for associating with them. But Jesus' parable reveals a Father who loves, waits, and welcomes every sinner who returns.

A lost son — vv. 11-12

As the parable begins the son is already lost to the father. There is a definite estrangement between the son and the father. Normally, the firstborn son would inherit the property and continue as head of the family clan at the father's death. The other sons would receive a monetary settlement at their father's death.

The younger son, in effect, was saying: "You are dead to me. I want my inheritance now!" The father, heartbroken, consented to his son's wishes. Our Heavenly Father has given to us freewill and so often we learn the lessons of life the hard way.

A repentant son — vv. 13-19

The son gathered his possessions and journeyed to a "far country." He removed himself from all the old restraints, and began to waste his life in "riotous living" (v. 13). Some first grade Sunday School boys were puzzled as to what that meant, but finally decided he spent all his money on candy! When all his resources were gone, he was forced to do the

most horrible work imaginable for a Jew — feeding hogs (v. 15). Finally he realized his situation. Even servants in his father's house were better off than he was. He determined to go home and began to rehearse his repent speech, including the idea that he would be happy to just be a servant and not a son (vv. 17-19).

A waiting father — vv. 20-24

The most important character in Jesus' story was the father. The father must have been really waiting and looking, because he sees the son a "great way off" (v. 20). In compassion and forgiving love, the father ran to his son. Older Oriental men of position never ran. That was beneath their

dignity. The son is able only to complete half of his repentant speech before being interrupted by his father (v. 21). The father calls for all the things that would symbolize that his son was being restored to full sonship. No work clothes, instead a son's robe — no bare feet like the slaves, instead the shoes of a son were given to him. The ring of authority and ownership was placed on his finger (v. 22). There was a great celebration, because the lost son had returned to his father (vv. 23-24). The father represents our Heavenly Father, who waits for the sinner to return home. Our Heavenly Father waits with arms outstretched to welcome all who will come to Him. □

□ How can I say thank you? — Life and Work Series for January 30

By Charles Bryan, pastor, Central Church, Alcoa

One of the many lessons that Trish and I feel responsible to teach our children is to say "please," "thank you," and "you're welcome." We feel this is important because we want our children to be grateful for what they receive, rather than thinking they are suppose to get what they receive. As I think of the difference between the attitudes I want my children to have, I see a contrast in the attitudes of Simon, who felt he deserved special status because he was a Pharisee, and the "sinner" woman who was thankful for what Jesus had done for her, in this week's lesson.

As our lesson opens with verses 36-38, we find Jesus in the home of Simon for dinner. While there, Jesus has his feet washed and anointed by a woman. Let us note several things from these verses. First, Jesus was sharing fellowship with a Pharisee even as he had

with sinners (ch. 5:30), thus showing no partiality. Second, it seems odd that this woman could just walk right into the dinner, but the custom allowed people to come and view social gatherings. However, her kind (sinners) was not exactly welcome in a Pharisee's home. Third, the guests leaned on couches with their feet outstretched from the table so it was easy for the woman to stand behind Jesus and anoint his feet. Fourth, it was shameful for a woman to let her hair down in public, but she was more concerned with honoring Jesus than with protocol. While these notes are important, the greatest lesson of these verses is that this woman committed an act of gratitude for Jesus. What can we do to show our gratitude to God?

In verse 39, we find Jesus being criticized for his actions. If he had been a "politically correct" prophet, he would

Focal Passages Luke 7:36-39, 44-50

have sent this woman away and not allowed her to touch him. Jesus was aware of his host's thoughts and responded with the parable of the two debtors, in which one owes 10 times as much as the other, but neither is able to pay. Both debts are forgiven (ch. 7:40-42). Jesus asked the Pharisee who would respond with greater love, and the Pharisee answered, "The one who was forgiven the most" (v. 43).

In verses 44-47, Jesus contrasts the actions of Simon and the woman. Jesus asked Simon, "Do you see this woman?" Of course, Simon did not; but Jesus began to show him that the woman's actions far exceeded Simon's. When a guest arrived at a person's home, there were three things that the host customarily did for his

guest. He was to provide water for the guest to wash his feet; he was to greet his guest with a kiss on the cheek or hand; and he was to honor his guest by anointing his head with oil. Simon had done none of these, but this "sinner" had done much more. She had washed and dried Jesus' feet with her tears and hair, a very personal act of affection. She had lavished kiss upon kiss on the feet of Jesus, a sign of deep respect, not just greeting. And she anointed his feet, not his head, with a very expensive and precious ointment. She did all of this because she was appreciative for what Jesus had already done for her. From her actions, it appears that Jesus had encountered this woman previously and had already forgiven her sins. Now she sought Jesus out at Simon's home to say thank you for his forgiveness. Because of Jesus' previous actions toward her, we can

better understand the woman's actions toward Jesus. In contrast, we see Simon who showed little love toward Jesus because he had allowed Jesus to do little for him.

In the final verses of our lesson, Jesus begins by reassuring the woman that she had been forgiven and that the forgiveness would continue. He was not forgiving her because of her actions toward him, but was reassuring her that she had already been forgiven and that it would have a lasting effect in spite of what Simon and others might think. Our lesson concludes with Jesus telling the woman her faith had saved her. She believed in who Jesus was and in his ability to forgive her. She departed with his peace and a grateful heart.

Have you said thank you to God lately? Have you shown him you are grateful? Why not take the time to do so right now? □

Miller presented as director of new division at BSSB

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Michael D. Miller, director of the church growth division for the California Southern Baptist Convention since 1991, has been presented in a letter to Baptist Sunday School Board trustees as the candidate to direct a new BSSB division.

Gene Mims, vice president of the board's church growth group, said Miller is anticipated to become director of the division, which has been tentatively named the church leadership, ministry, and worship division, on Feb. 1, pending responses from trustees to a letter mailed in mid-December.

While trustee approval is not required for filling a division-level position, Mims said input from trustees is "critical" because the leadership role is "a strategic position relating to church staffs."

The new division will include the church leadership and church music ministries departments, Genevox Music Group, and ethnic and black church growth component.

Miller is a native of Oklahoma City, Okla., and holds degrees from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and Talbot Theological Seminary, Los Angeles. □

HMB's Bunch to lead Colorado Baptists

Baptist Press

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Longtime Home Mission Board administrator David T. Bunch was elected as the new executive director of the Colorado Baptist General Convention in a special convention meeting Jan. 11.

The 60-year-old Bunch received an "overwhelming affirmative vote," according to one Colorado Baptist staffer who attended the session at Bellevue Church in Colorado Springs. An official count of messengers had not been compiled as of Jan. 12.

The Missouri native has been assistant vice president of the HMB's extension section since 1989. He joined the HMB staff in 1978 as director of the Mission Service Corps, a position he held for nine years. □

Baptist college enrollment up for 12th consecutive year

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist-related colleges and universities showed an overall increase in fall enrollment for the 12th consecutive year, according to figures released by the Southern Baptist Education Commission.

Enrollment figures for the 1993 fall semester show 120,329 students attended Southern Baptist colleges and universities, a 4.1 percent increase over the 1992 total of 115,595.

The enrollment figures include both full-time and part-time students in college credit courses but do not include students enrolled in non-credit courses.

Shorter College in Rome, Ga., had the largest percentage increase with 43.7 percent, followed by Missouri Baptist College, St. Louis, 26.8 percent; and North Greenville College, Tigerville, S.C., 25.6 percent.

Baylor University in Waco, Texas, remains the largest Southern Baptist university with 12,194 students.

Enrollment for Tennessee colleges follows: Belmont University, 2,871, up .2 percent; Carson-Newman College, 2,126, up 5.1 percent; and Union University, 2,339, up .1 percent. □

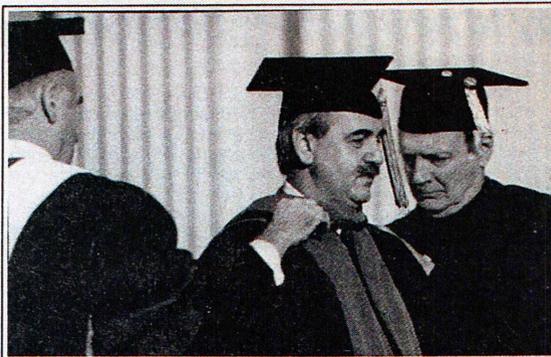
Duduit to lead PR at Southern Seminary

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Michael Duduit has been named director of public relations at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In the newly created post, Duduit will supervise the seminary's news and publications programs. He previously served Southern Seminary as director of communications from 1984-87. While a student in the 1970s he worked as news director. He currently is an adjunct professor of Christian preaching.

Last summer he resigned from a staff position at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., to return to Louisville to assume major responsibilities as executive director of the American Academy of Ministry, an interdenominational professional association for ministers, and as editor of *Preaching* magazine. He will continue to serve in those roles in addition to his new responsibilities with Southern. □



RUSSIAN BAPTIST LEADER Sergei Nicolaev, center, senior pastor of the Temple of the Gospel Church in St. Petersburg, received his doctor of ministry hood during commencement services at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in December. Hooding Nicolaev are William Tolar, vice president for academic affairs and provost, left, and Jimmie Nelson, associate dean of the School of Theology. Nicolaev became the first Russian Baptist to earn a doctorate from the seminary.

Pittman to head FMB public affairs

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Sam Pittman has been named executive director of public affairs for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Pittman, 64, a 20-year veteran with the board, will continue his long-term responsibilities for relationships with other Southern Baptist Convention entities, state conventions, associations, and churches.

He also administers the board's Cooperative Program emphasis and supervises public affairs staff who work to enhance relationships with Southern Baptists and other Christian groups.

The Greenville, S.C., native has been acting executive director of public affairs since November 1992, when Zeb Moss returned to missionary service in Africa.

Before that, Pittman had been associate executive director since 1989. □

Johnson to lead Olympics ministry

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Atlanta International Ministries (AIM '96) has elected Linda Faye Johnson to direct the Baptist ministry efforts related to the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996.

Johnson, director of resort ministries for the Greater Orlando (Florida) Baptist Association, will assume duties as director in mid-February. □

Jury rules in favor of Illinois association

Baptist Press

JOLIET, Ill. — A Will County Jury returned a verdict in favor of the Illinois Baptist State Association in mid-December in a lawsuit that arose out of a 1990 explosion at the IBSA disaster relief unit set up in tornado-damaged Crest Hill.

Scott Sharp, a propane company employee who was refilling the relief unit's tank and was burned in the explosion, alleged in his suit against IBSA that agents of the association were guilty of "willful and wanton misconduct."

The jury's decision, in effect, indicated Sharp was more responsible for the explosion than were Baptist volunteers working at the site. Therefore, Sharp was awarded no compensation for damages. □

Australian Baptist leader killed in wreck

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Ollwyn C. Abbott, National Secretary of the Baptist Union of Australia, was killed in a car accident Jan. 10, while driving from Brisbane to Melbourne.

He and his wife, Winsome, were returning from a convention.

Mrs. Abbott is currently in the Grafton, New South Wales, hospital suffering from a broken arm and severe bruises. Doctors are concerned about internal bleeding.

Abbott was a tireless worker in the local church, the state and national Baptist unions, and at the national level, said Tony Cupit, director of Evangelism and Education and Study and Research for the Baptist World Alliance. □

Argentine evangelicals can run for president

Baptist Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina — Argentina's Congress has passed a bill calling for constitutional changes allowing evangelicals to run for president for the first time.

The proposed changes will end a requirement that the country's president and vice president be Roman Catholic.

Argentines will elect a constitutional assembly April 10 charged with reforming the country's 140-year-old constitution.

Arnoldo Canclini, an Argentine Baptist historian and pastor, cautioned, however, that the changes aren't very significant for evangelicals, who have pushed for constitutional reforms for many years.

Compared to other religious liberty issues not addressed by the changes, "this is not really very important," said Canclini, president of the National Evangelical Commission for Constitutional Reform. □

Southern hosts 38th annual conference

Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — College students from across the South and Midwest will converge on the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Feb. 25-27 for the school's 38th annual Student Missions Conference.

Speakers include Southern Baptist medical missionary Sam Cannata, and Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

For more information, contact the seminary's Student Missions Office at 1 (800) 626-5525. □

Former TBC pastor announces retirement as college president

Hannibal-LaGrange College

HANNIBAL, Mo. — Paul Brown, president of Hannibal-LaGrange College since 1987, will retire June 30 as president.

Brown has been at the college since 1976.

The Arkansas native who was reared in Mississippi is a former pastor of Oakhaven Church, Memphis. He also was pastor of churches in Mississippi.

Brown is married to the former Connie Smith of Carthage. They have four grown children and two grandchildren. □