

# Baptist and Reflector

July 6, 1994

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STATEWIDE EDITION

■ **this  
week's  
news**

## global —

- Baptists sign contract with United Nations to do refugee work with Rwandans. — Page 2

## national —

- BSSB set to proceed with changes regarding Sunday School promotion, literature. — Page 2
- Southeastern receives reaffirmation of accreditation from ATS. — Page 3
- Final figures are in from Cross Over Orlando; 776 people made professions of faith. — Page 3

## state —

- First Church, New Tazewell observes 100th anniversary. — Page 3
- Evangelist J. Harold Smith still going strong at age 84. — Page 4
- Tennessee Acteens enjoy first NAC. — Page 4

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Hear reports on fastest growing religion in U.S.

## Southern Baptist leaders consider Islam growth

By Connie Davis  
*Baptist and Reflector*

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Southern Baptists must reconsider stereotypes of Muslims formed by the World Trade Center bombing, Louis Farhkan's Nation of Islam, and Sadaam Hussein's holy war against the West if Christianity is going to adequately engage the other major global religion — Islam, speakers said at a Muslim Awareness Conference for denominational leaders.

The two world faiths, standing toe to toe in size with Christians numbering 985 million and Muslims about one billion, might be seen as equally vying for converts through evangelism. But in the U.S., Islam is the fastest growing religion, as is true in former Soviet Union republics and other countries.

Christianity has ignored Islam much of the time since its birth some 600 years after Christianity, but it can no longer afford to, George W. Braswell Jr., professor of mis-

sions and world religions, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, told the June 24-25 gathering of about 140 leaders at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly.

Militant only in some places, Islam is "nonetheless, aggressively expansionist worldwide," he said.

Instead of ignoring Muslims out of fear or prejudice, leaders, including several Muslims who have become Christians, encouraged "engagement" of Muslims.

Rochelle Davis, missionary in Detroit, Mich., explained he develops relationships with Muslims who attend a mosque located several blocks from the church where he serves. He also has formed friendships with Muslims through community development projects.

Davis said he is responding to the large number of African Americans "embracing" Islam. *Time* magazine has reported 42 percent of U.S. Muslims are African American, he cited.

"Set the groundwork to be-

gin a dialogue on something we can agree upon in religion. All are searching for the truth," said Davis.

The main reason Muslims are making such an impact on the U.S., said David King, former missionary in Lebanon, is the low moral standards in the U.S.

"They have so much ammunition in feeling that they are morally superior to Christians," said King, citing U.S. attitudes toward abortion, women's dress, and divorce as issues.

Christians must "engage" Muslims with love, both heads of the missions boards agreed. Jerry Rankin, president, Foreign Mission Board, stated, "We must be reminded these are people God loves," adding that prayer must be one of the main strategies.

President Larry Lewis of the Home Mission Board which co-sponsored the event with the Foreign Mission Board, told of a fellow airline traveler who was Muslim. During the trip he responded to Lewis' witness and became

a Christian.

"You love them," said Lewis. Speakers repeated another theme — contextualization.

Jimmey Draper, president, Baptist Sunday School Board, explained this strategy requires study of Muslim beliefs and understanding.

"We can reach the Muslim," he said, but Southern Baptists must be aware a Muslim "may not respond to the high-handed, hard-selling, typical Bible Belt evangelistic methods."

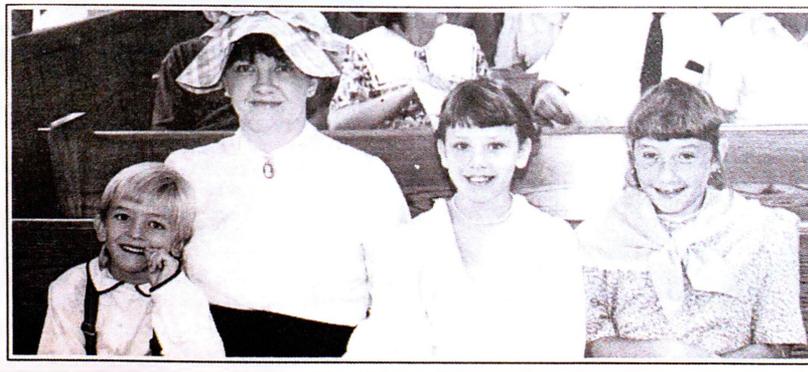
One plan which was announced during the meeting was the 1995 Year of Prayer for the Muslim Peoples. Accompanying the event will be materials and two prayer pilgrimages to the Muslim world and one in the U.S., announced Minette Drumwright, retired director of International Prayer Strategy. FMB. The Garden Tomb in Jerusalem will serve as the prayer center for observances by Christians, she added. □

(More coverage of the Muslim Awareness Conference will appear in next week's issue.)



## Hebron Church has June 26 centennial

Hebron Church, Middleton, celebrated its 100th anniversary June 26 with worship, a luncheon, and afternoon program featuring oldest members and former pastors. A Tennessee Baptist Historical Society plaque was presented by Wm. Fletcher Allen, morning speaker, to (photo at left) Pastor Jerry Drye, and centennial committee members Sam Howell and Margie Maxwell. Below, Jennifer Drye, pastor's wife, with their children Zachary and Meagan, and Martha Webb (right). Howell was committee chairman.



## Tennessee Baptists minister in Iron City following tornado

IRON CITY — Tennessee Baptist disaster relief workers ministered to residents of Iron City June 28-30 following a tornado which damaged or destroyed an estimated 80 percent of the community's homes.

The tornado struck the town, located near the Alabama state line, June 28.

A team of volunteers, led by former Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood Director Archie King, provided about 1,500 meals over a three-day period.

King led the team in the absence of TBC Brotherhood Director Cameron Byler, who is leading a team of mission volunteers in Albania.

Lawrence County Association Director of Missions J. C. Carpenter said the team met a tremendous need. "It was a blessing they were here," he said.

— See Tennessee, page 2

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- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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- **Office** — Baptist and Reflector, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
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## SS launch week, quarterly changes set

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A recommendation to move Sunday School launch week on the Southern Baptist Convention calendar from the last week in September to the first week in September, effective in 1995, was OK'd by SBC messengers.

The change was part of the denominational calendar committee report which messengers to the SBC approved during the annual meeting in Orlando.

A Baptist Sunday School Board request also has been approved by the SBC's inter-agency coordinating council to change BSSB quarterly release dates for Sunday School, Discipleship Training, and church

music curriculum to September-November, December-February, March-May and June-August. Periodicals will carry seasonal designations.

"From research and general input, we are finding a growing number of churches are changing their organizational promotion dates from the first Sunday in October to the beginning of school in September or the end of school in May or June," said Gene Mims, vice president of the board's church growth group. "Changing the quarterly release dates will accommodate either schedule."

To make quarterly release adjustment, literature for what would normally be the July-September 1995 quarter will be

published for July-August and called the summer issue.

"This change in periodical release dates for our three programs will allow churches to launch fall programs for Sunday School, Discipleship Training, and music at the same time," Mims said.

"We wanted to alert churches now about this change for planning purposes. We will be providing more detailed information just as soon as it is available through quarterly literature ordering material, *Facts and Trends*, other publications and through state convention and associational leaders," Mims said. "We want to do all we can to make this transition as smooth as possible." □

## Baptists, U.N. sign Rwandan refugee contract

Baptist Press

KARAGWE, Tanzania — A one-month contract signed in mid-June by Baptists and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees is setting the stage for possible long-term Baptist involvement with displaced Rwandans.

The Baptists' first assignment will be to survey "at risk" groups in refugee camps in Tanzania.

"After this initial project is completed the U.N. can decide if they want to work with us and we can decide if we want to work with them," said Southern Baptist missionary Larry Randolph. "Either way we are committed to ministry with the refugees, either inside the camps or outside."

Randolph joins 10 other Southern Baptist missionaries forced out of Rwanda by the blood bath set off there by ethnic hatred and civil war. After evacuating Rwanda they voted as a group to move to Tanzania to aid some of the thousands of Rwandan refugees who have fled there.

The Baptists hadn't even set up tents at their

base camp when the refugee camp director, a Catholic nun, asked them to help determine the needs of some newly arrived refugees.

In the hectic 16-hour days that followed, the Rwanda missionaries began distributing food — and using their language fluency to help other relief workers and Rwandan refugee leaders communicate, settle logistical problems, and do cultural trouble-shooting.

"Many of the Rwandan leaders said that was the first time they had ever understood what was happening in the camps and how things operated," missionary Stan Lee said. "Communication is a real problem since most of the relief workers speak only English or Swahili and the refugees speak Rwandan or some French."

"When we spoke their language and acted within their culture the refugees would laugh and clap," said missionary Diane Randolph. "Adults followed us around like children always follow strangers in African villages, and when we told them where we'd lived in Rwanda and how we had had to leave, they told us, 'You're Rwandan, you're Rwandan.'" □

## Tennessee Baptists ...

— Continued from page 1

Among the homes receiving damage was that of Charles Galleher, pastor of First Church, Iron City. In addition, his car was badly damaged. The church, however, was not damaged.

Carpenter noted that the association's pastors responded well, serving on three-hour, rotating shifts, counseling and ministering to people. "It's a sobering experience to move among those who have lost everything," Carpenter said.

Carpenter said area churches are continuing to assist with food to those in need.

King praised the efforts of those on his team and the many in Lawrence County who ministered to the Iron City residents. Assisting King with the disaster relief van were Richard Todd, Nashville; Bob Mayes, Franklin; Alton Brown, Nashville; and Bud Nunley, Murfreesboro, along with several people from the association. □

## Baptist Acteens send post cards to President

Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — President Bill Clinton will be getting a "picture postcard"-view of the country as soon as the U. S. Postal Service delivers more than 13,500 postcards Southern Baptist teenage girls are sending him.

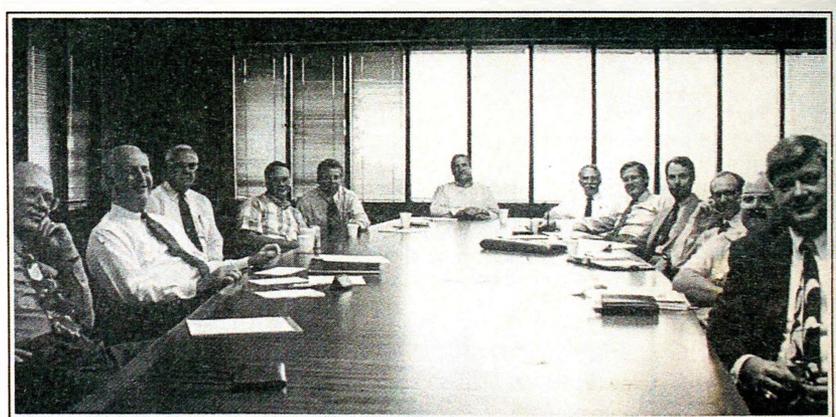
Clinton, also a Southern Baptist, will be receiving messages of encouragement and promises of prayer support from the Acteens.

The girls, who attended the June 21-24 National Acteens Convention in Birmingham, were asked to purchase the cards in their home states before coming to the convention.

NAC is held every five years under the auspices of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union. There were 1,181 registrants from Tennessee.

Girls lined the sidewalk to a temporary post office in the convention center set up by the staff of the city's downtown branch. Within six hours, the girls bought more than 13,000 stamps — most of them for the cards they were sending to the president.

Postal worker Mark Gilreath sold the stamps and manually stamped the cards with a special cancellation stamp designed for the event. □



### In-Service Guidance meeting

The Tennessee Baptist Convention Missions Department recently hosted and sponsored a meeting of In-Service Guidance people from state campuses. The meeting was co-sponsored by TBC Student Ministries Department and Belmont University. In-Service Guidance programs are developed to provide practical professional experience in an educational setting for ministerial students to study under the supervision of a certified supervisor, said Jere Phillips, TBC Missions Department director. The group met to discuss the formulation of a state In-Service Guidance conference and what is currently happening on campuses in Tennessee. From left, Jerry Self, Education Commission, SBC; Phillips; Don Mitchell and Jim Wilson, Carson-Newman College; Jim Alexander, Austin Peay State University; Adam Hall, UT-Martin; Joe Wiles, Tennessee Tech University; Ircel Harrison, TBC; Don Garner, Carson-Newman; Steven Simpler, Belmont University; Joe Hernandez, Home Mission Board; and Ron Mayes, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary.

## Enters agreement with FMB

# Education Commission complies with CBF directive

By Tim Fields  
For Baptist Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Members of the Southern Baptist Education Commission voted June 27 to comply with a motion passed earlier in the month by the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando, Fla., directing its agencies to decline funds channeled to them from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Commission members then adopted a reduced budget for 1994-95 to compensate for the projected \$8,000 in lost income.

In their annual meeting in Charleston, S.C., commissioners approved an operating budget for the fiscal year which begins Oct. 1 of \$569,451, down more than \$19,220 from the budget previously recommended by the commission's administrative committee.

The decreased budget reflects not only the loss of \$8,000 previously budgeted as income from CBF but an additional \$11,200 decline in projected revenue from the South-

ern Baptist Commission on American Baptist Theological Seminary. The Seminary Commission, along with the National Baptist Convention, has operated American Baptist College in Nashville since 1924. ABC is the only accredited four-year Bible college in the nation predominantly for African American students training for pastoral or other church-related vocations.

Stephen P. Carleton, executive director of the Education Commission and executive secretary of the Seminary Commission, told Education Commission members that American Baptist College, like many other private Christian schools, is struggling to survive financially.

"In past years the Seminary Commission has reimbursed the Education Commission approximately \$19,000 annually for services rendered to the ABC by the staff of the Education Commission," Carleton explained. Because of declining revenues from endowments and a severe financial crisis at the school, Carleton said he recommended a reduction in

the reimbursement from \$19,820 to \$8,600.

Prior to the vote on the CBF motion, Carleton told Education Commission members that in spite of the loss of income which would entail some hardships for the commission, he felt the agency should be a team player and comply with the wishes of the convention to refuse funds channeled to the agencies through CBF.

Jerry M. Henry, commission chairman and an Alabama pastor, reminded commissioners that the Education Commission would be the first SBC agency to deal with the CBF matter. "If there are individual churches that want to give to the Education Commission, we will receive money from those individual churches," Henry said, noting the agency's administrative committee recommended that the commission go along with the convention's directive on CBF funds.

As a result of the reduced funding, a secretarial staff position will remain unfilled.

In other action, the commission gave approval to Carleton to proceed with working out a

cooperative agreement with the Foreign Mission Board and Cooperative Services International Education Consortium (CSIEC) to provide office space and staff support for the president and a clerical person of CSIEC at the Education Commission offices in Nashville.

CSIEC is a consortium of 43 Southern Baptist colleges and universities which work with the FMB's Cooperative Services International program to coordinate exchange of professors and students and the establishment of satellite higher education programs predominantly in countries where missionaries are not allowed or are restricted.

Carleton said the FMB, CSIEC, and the Education Commission have completed draft agreements that would bring the proposal to reality if ratified by member schools of CSIEC in September.

Carleton said the venture is an "opportunity for two SBC agencies to cooperate in expanding the global outreach of Southern Baptists while strengthening missions and Baptist higher education." □

## ATS reaffirms SEBTS accreditation

Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary received official word June 28 that the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) has reaffirmed the accreditation of all degree programs and re-established the seminary as a member in good standing of ATS.

"We have addressed all the concerns which ATS identified two years ago, and we have gone through a one-year academic cycle since making the requested changes," said SEBTS President Paige Patterson.

Accreditation by a professional agency such as ATS gives an institution academic credibility and facilitates the transfer of academic credit and enables students to receive certain scholarships and vocational endorsements.

The seminary's regional accrediting agency, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, reaffirmed SEBTS last December. □

## Orlando evangelism efforts see 776 professions of faith

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Cross Over Orlando resulted in 776 professions of faith, according to final figures compiled by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's evangelism section.

The annual witnessing effort before the Southern Baptist Convention is designed to saturate the convention city with the Gospel and to aid local churches in reaching people for Christ, said Darrell Robinson, HMB vice president for evangelism.

The 776 professions of faith broke down as follows:

- 136 from street or perfor-

mance evangelism,

- 296 from block parties,
- 223 from door-to-door witnessing,
- 34 from evangelistic rallies, and
- 87 from "harvest Sunday" services in 40 churches that hosted a special speaker or activity.

In addition to the local impact, Cross Over also introduces visiting pastors and church leaders to innovative forms of witnessing, such as block parties and street evangelism.

During Cross Over, 4,866 Bibles were distributed and at least 1,201 people were trained to witness. □

## Hearn, Sharp share partnership duties

Responsibilities are being shared in the Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnership Missions Department.

TBC Partnership Missions Director Jarvis Hearn, who is retiring Dec. 31, will continue to relate to partnership work in Chile and Michigan until then.

Hearn's successor, Terry Sharp, who began duties July 1, will work in getting the new partnership with

Canada and a possible partnership with Poland "off the ground," said TBC Convention Ministries Division Director Bill Wilson.

Questions concerning Chile or Michigan should be directed to Hearn while anything concerning Canada or Poland should be routed to Sharp, Wilson said.

Sharp will assume duties related to Michigan beginning Jan. 1, 1995, Wilson said. □



## 100-year anniversary

FIRST CHURCH, New Tazewell observed its centennial anniversary June 26. In photo to left, Pastor Rick Garner, right, accepts a plaque from the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society from Cumberland Gap Director of Missions Bill Hazlewood. Below, Garner welcomed former pastors and SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman, who delivered the morning message, to the services. From left are Otha Winningham, Knoxville, Ralph Galyon, Alcoa; Garner, Charles Earl, Rogersville, and Chapman. The celebration included the dedication of new stained-glass windows in the sanctuary. The church was organized June 30, 1894. It has been in its present facility and location since 1964. The building has had several additions since. — Photos by Lonnie Wilkey



## 84-year-old evangelist has no plans to retire

By Jim Handley  
The Newport Plain Talk

NEWPORT — Newport may well be the home of one of the most prolific preachers of all time.

J. Harold Smith estimates that during his 62-year career, he has preached more than 68,000 sermons. He is presi-



J. HAROLD SMITH, seated, holds a plaque presented by Pastor Adam Sanders of Wilsonville Church.

dent of the Radio Bible Hour, which is based here.

In recognition of his 62-year ministry, Wilsonville Church, where Smith is a member, presented him a certificate of recognition recently.

Between his radio sermons and services to congregations, Smith has averaged six services daily since 1932. He began his radio ministry in 1935, and, at age 84, said he has no plans to retire.

He did resign his pastorate at age 65, but that enabled him to devote more attention to his radio ministry.

In addition, Smith still conducts Bible conferences, revivals, and radio rallies about 50 weeks a year. He has been featured on programs of TBC-sponsored events as well, including the State Evangelism Conference. □ — Handley is a staff writer for *The Newport Plain Talk*. Story used by permission.

## Thompson Station Acteens celebrate first year with trip to national convention

By Philip Poole  
For Baptist and Reflector

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — A group of Acteens from suburban Nashville celebrated their first year as an organization with a trip to the National Acteens Convention June 21-24 at Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center.

This is the first year for Acteens at Thompson Station Church, Thompson Station. The group spent the year raising money so they could attend the mission extravaganza held every five years and sponsored by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Seven of the 10 regular group members made the trip to Birmingham. They were part of the 1,181 Acteens from Tennessee attending NAC, which attracted almost 14,000 girls and leaders from 50 states and several foreign countries.

Acteens is a missions education organization for girls grades 7-12. The church pre-

viously had organized missions activities for children through grade 6.

Kristin Swarthout, 15, said the group did fund-raising events all year to help finance their trip.

At Christmas, the group sponsored a parents night out by providing babysitting services. When the church choir hosted a St. Patrick's Day dinner, the Acteens served and collected "tips" which were added to the trip fund. In addition, the girls sold carnations to church members on Valentine's Day and candy at a local shopping mall.

Leader Leighann McCoy, wife of the church's pastor, Tom McCoy, said the girls had discussed how NAC is a "once in a lifetime opportunity. They may not attend again, but they want to make sure that future Acteens in our church get to attend," she said.

McCoy said this year's Acteens group already is planning annual fund-raising activities that will fund fu-

ture NAC trips. "Some of these girls have sisters who will be Acteens some day. They want to make sure that their sisters and other girls have the same opportunity they have had this week. That's something that has impressed me," said McCoy, who is a former associate with Tennessee WMU.

The trip definitely made an impression on some of the young ladies who went.

Jessica Meier, 14, said it was exciting to be part of such a large group of girls.

"It will give me the courage to go back to school and try to be a better Christian. It helps to know that there are others who share the same struggle," she said.

Christel Brookshire, 15, echoed Meier.

"The conferences have given me a better understanding of how to do missions and how to deal with life's situations. We're all here for the same purpose," Brookshire said. □

## Trezevant church celebrates sesquicentennial

TREZEVANT — The congregation of this rural West Tennessee church spent some time remembering its 150-year history June 12 with the help of two "favorite sons."

Gordon Crocker, retired director of missions, Shelby County Association, and former missionary to Ecuador, and Paul Moore, a bivocational pastor who works for the Florida State Correctional System, spoke during the morning worship service.

Both men attended the church while growing up and thanked the congregation for the spiritual training they received which led them into the ministry.

Fair Mae Cox, who presented the church's history, reported Crocker spoke to the Carroll-Benton Association at age 12 after surrendering to the ministry. The year was 1934.



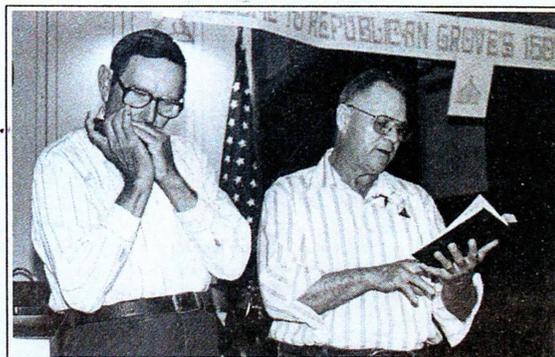
DRESSED IN A FORMER STYLE to celebrate the sesquicentennial are, from left, Peggy Conley and Jewell Bobo.

The Crockers were the first Baptist missionaries in Ecuador and served the association for 23 years.

It was also reported Republican Grove Church has ordained six ministers — all of whom are currently preaching. □



POSING WITH GUESTS Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Crocker, center and right, is Pastor Paul Merwin.



PERFORMING A SONG TO HONOR a deceased member are, from left, Vernon Bobo, playing harmonica, and Nelson Conley, music director, who is singing. — Photos by Connie Davis

## Daily prayer requests for Chile/Tennessee Partnership



July—

- 7 — Our MKs, in Santiago with their parents, are enjoying a rare time of being with their American friends.
- 8 — Mike and Annette Racey are teaching a discipleship class for new Christians at First Church, Temuco.
- 9 — Several churches are continuing to undergird and disciple the new converts from the April medical clinics in the Austral District.
- 10 — Missionary Eddie Graves is following up on the contacts made in June by the Baptist Student Union team at the university campus in Concepcion.
- 11 — Missionaries Gene and Jan Huckaby are helping the Luz y Vida Church, meeting at the Baptist School in Temuco, grow from mission to church status.
- 12 — Pray for the students who made decisions during the Spiritual Emphasis Week at the Baptist School.
- 13 — Retired missionary Ruby Parker is celebrating her birthday today.

# If the wind is too strong, adjust the sails

Someone has said that "we cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails." That is good advice.

On this page recently, the editorial expressed the feeling that many Baptists are tired. Hope and "tiredness" were evident during the June 14-16 Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando. There was a better attitude overall.

And, for the most part President Ed Young moderated with fairness and respect. It does seem that Cecil Sims' motion regarding Southwestern Seminary's trustees should have been voted on, since it was presented prior to the others. Instead it was sidelined, frustrating some messengers.

Though Jim Henry's election as president signals a new face at the top, there is no split in conservative leadership. Even so, some younger conservatives, such as Jack Graham, are emerging.

The Home Mission Board executive committee met just before the convention. The committee voted 12-9 to initiate a study of how the HMB should cooperate with "state conventions that channel designated funds to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and other non-SBC entities." Pardon us? Where will this lead? Does the HMB now want to instruct conventions and churches?

That was a prelude to the SBC action which specified that convention entities

could no longer receive money from CBF-related churches.

The Declaration of Independence, one of the great documents in the world, uses the phrase "We the people..." It's a good, definitive phrase.

For many years Baptists had that feeling about the SBC. People believed they invented the convention as a cooperative effort for ministry and that it existed for and because of the churches.

Perhaps naively, people believed that money sent from churches was well-intended, and always would be appreciated. The rub is that CBF churches have designated their gifts around the Executive Committee, thereby calling their motives to question.

Most Baptists have heard parents wisely advise, "Don't cut off your nose to spite your face," "Never look a gift horse in the mouth," and "Don't bite the hand that feeds you."

The Home Mission Board executive committee evidently is not taking that advice seriously, nor are the messengers who voted to eliminate at least one channel of giving money.

Cecil Ray, former executive director of the North Carolina Convention and now chairman of a Cooperative Program Missions Giving Study Committee in Texas, says the SBC action, while aimed at the CBF, "became a rebuke to the churches that still want to support SBC causes

but simply through other channels."

Says Ray, these churches are left with three choices: not to give the money at all, to designate the money through their own state convention to the same cause, or to designate the money directly to the desired SBC agency or ministry.

Local churches can do what they please with their money. They will find the best way to give it where they wish. But a major question is unanswered. Who will replace the approximately \$2 million that SBC boards had received from CBF churches? It's one thing to blithely assume that "someone" will give it. Who is it?

The entire situation is troublesome. Local churches are being told how not to give. And at least one mission board is going to look at how state conventions give their money.

Jim Henry's leadership may be tested early. If the convention wants to cut ties with CBF churches, deal with it openly. Draw the lines. But suppose the churches don't want to go? It is ironic that SBC messengers will refuse money from some Baptists but continue to dialogue and develop relationships with Catholics. Shouldn't there be dialogue among Southern Baptists? If we have come to a division, pettiness and backbiting must stop to assure the best solution.

There was much to applaud at the convention. But much work is yet to be done if sails are to be adjusted. □

## ■ one word more

By Wm. Fletcher Allen  
editor

### Left, right? Right

Directions are important.

A few times when I've asked for directions, the person would send me right instead of left, or left when right was right.

It's easy to suppose that people always have had the distinctions of left and right.

But that's not true. Someone in some place and at some point in history had to invent directions.

Some intelligent, inquisitive explorer got tired of pointing one way or the other — or



ALLEN

saying, "Turn by the spot where we lassoed the dinosaur." Or perhaps, put yourself where the tree stands by the waterfall and continue. Maybe a large rock had one jagged edge — that would be a landmark.

How did we come to say things such as "in front of" or "behind" or "this side," "that way"? I think that's when there was a lot of finger pointing and people got tired of it.

Maybe someone said it was impolite to point, and looked for a better solution.

There is a reason for left being left and right being right. I learned this trivia from an airline magazine. The origin stems from the differences in our two hands. For most people, the right hand is the stronger and more adept. It's used more.

So early words for the weaker hand and the stronger hand reflect this kind of bias.

"Left" originates from the Old English word "lyft," which means weak and useless.

The stronger hand is "right," an unabashedly positive word. And, nimble fingers indicate dexterity, coming from "dexter," a good Latin word meaning "right." We usually place our right hand on the Bible to swear.

So it happened that a "klutz" is someone who appears to have two left feet.

However it happened, everyone needs direction in life: right and wrong, left, right. I think it's important for us to remember that God made man and woman — with lefts and rights, and said they were good. I think also that He knows we need direction, physically, mentally, spiritually. ☪

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

## ■ just for today

By Fred Wood  
pastor emeritus  
Eudora Church, Memphis

### Start with a smile

Melvin (crying): "Daddy, I've lost my dog."

Daddy: "Don't cry. We'll put an ad in the paper."

Melvin (still crying): "That won't help. He can't read."

### Take this truth

Unfortunately many people can't read either. However, that is not the worst tragedy. A far greater one is that many people can read and won't. Much wisdom is available free in libraries. One who can read and will not read is no better off than one who can't read.

### Memorize this Scripture

"And Ezra...read...from the morning until midday" (Nehemiah 8:2-3).

### Pray this prayer

Lord, help me keep my mind open to new ideas, and experience the strength and joy that comes by entering the world of books. So many people have written good things. Make me aware of the treasures that are in books. □

# Adults can help children with grief

## ■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

Since death is an appointment we will all keep unless Jesus returns, it is inevitable that we will have to help our children face the issue. I think it is important that we deal with it honestly and openly.

Death is made more formidable to children when their parents and other adults treat the subject with "hush-hush" dread.

I know that not many parents want to begin the conversation at the breakfast table by saying something like, "Let's talk about death this morning."

The parent could begin to deal indirectly and effectively with the subject by offering children the opportunity to discuss the topic when they drive past a cemetery or when they see an appropriate report on television of the death of some well-known personality.

You might ask the child how he understands death or if he has any questions he would like to talk about.

Adults need not fear allowing children to see the real, genuine, wholesome expression of emotion at the death of

a loved one. In fact, it may be more difficult for children to deal with stoical silence than with a real outpouring of emotion.

The death of pets and plants or seasonal changes also offer parents a good opportunity to educate their children about the process of death before they face the traumatic crisis.

These real life situations offer real opportunities to give children good educational experiences with death.

Some are reluctant to have "funeral" services for the family goldfish, but these experiences give real insight for the child into the concepts of this unavoidable stage of life.

The euphemisms such as "passed away," "gone to sleep," and "departed" may be more harmful than helpful.

Children who have been told that grandpa went to sleep, and then see him being put in a box and buried in the ground may have trouble going to sleep for fear that the same

thing might happen to them.

Some children may feel guilt at the death of a loved one, especially if they had "wished" that person dead in a fit of anger once.

This type of guilt must be dealt with as quickly and effectively as possible. This is another instance when the pastor or counselor may need to be consulted.

In this day when death is treated so lightly in the news media and on the movie and television screens, I think it is imperative that we give our children a good Christian foundation for this difficult issue.

We can do this best as we face the issue squarely and deal with it thoroughly, openly, and honestly. □ — Readers may write or call Dr. Barkley with questions or comments. Appropriate comments can be printed in this column. Dr. Barkley may be reached at Union University, BMH Campus, 9999 Monroe, Memphis 38104; or at the Counseling Center, 6385 Stage Rd., Ste. 1, Bartlett 38134. — Editor



BARKLEY

## Thanks Southern Baptists

With all my heart I want to thank the Southern Baptists for the confidence that they've shown in me. When I felt led of God to allow my name to be placed in nomination, I said I was going to trust the sovereign will of God and the desires of the messengers.

I also want to thank so many who have been in prayer for my family in the loss of my father.

I will be sharing more information as we look to the future. I have not made any promises or appointments at this time. I am prayerfully asking God to guide me and I will consider all options. Please keep me, our officers Simon Tsoi and Gary Frost, and our beloved SBC in your prayers and before your people. I believe our best years are before us.

*Jim Henry, pastor  
First Church,  
Orlando, Fla.*

## Thanks expressed

It was an honor for me to be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando. To each of you who voted for me, my heartfelt thanks. To those of you who voted for Jir. Henry, he is my friend, a good and godly man, who has my prayers and full support as he leads us in these days. As chairman of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, I will work with Jim Henry as he leads us.

Let us unite and rally around the lordship of Christ and our Cooperative Program and together be light and salt in a dark world.

It is a blessing to be a Southern Baptist, and I join with you in praying that God will visit us with great revival. Jesus is Lord!

*Fred H. Wolfe, pastor  
Cottage Hill Baptist Church  
Mobile, Ala. 36691*

## Christians' job

I am writing in response to an article on page 2 in my June 8 *Baptist and Reflector*, "Could be major SBC issue." Is this the kind of issues that should be discussed at the convention? Is the world now with so few people that need to know Jesus Christ as their Savior, that we get in an argument on who should do it? Read Mark 9:38-40.

God loves us all; are we to do any less? I do not think so. Let us all get along in this sin-battered world. If not Christians, then who is going to?

*Eduard Ring  
Clarksville 37042*

## Additional SBC messenger responses

- The election of Jim Henry as president (a surprise winner over the past president's choice) sends the refreshing message that the SBC still belongs to Grass-Roots folks who vote their conscience. I praise God for that! Now let's all get back to kingdom work. — **Chuck McElhannon, pastor, Valley View Church, Nashville**
- Our convention is coming to a place of great harmony and love once again. Even though we had two conservatives running for president, and my man lost, I was pleased with what God taught us. That is, that no matter who the conservative, we are together in a direction that pleases most Southern Baptists. "May God stay the course with Jim Henry" is my prayer. — **Howard Hannah, pastor, Childs Memorial Church, Harriman**
- I felt that the atmosphere of the SBC was very positive. Ed Young was diplomatic and fair. The emphasis on True Love Waits was great. — **Hoyt Wilson, pastor, First Church, Lexington**
- I am pleased that the convention demonstrated the Christian desire to act and react in the spirit of love. Dr. Young conducted the sessions in fairness. I praise the Lord that we are moving forward with a new spirit and excitement. — **Oran Creasman, pastor, East-analee Church, Riceville**

## Position need

The Metro-East Baptist Association is looking to fill the position of director of church and community ministries by Jan. 1, 1995.

This person is to encourage and assist churches to be aware, to develop, and to provide community ministries as a means of sharing the love and redemptive message of Jesus Christ.

The package includes salary and housing, plus benefits. Call Dr. Tommy Cupples, director of missions, (618) 234-8515, or send résumés to Metro-East Baptist Association, 15 Longacre Drive, Fairview Heights, Ill. 62208.

*Personnel Committee  
Metro-East Baptist Association  
Fairview Heights, Ill. 62208*

## On religious liberty

The editorial on May 25 was appropriate but did not go far enough in realizing the true source of attacks on religious liberties. It is most unsettling that the threats are not coming from the "religious right," but from the very government sworn to protect the free expressions of religious views!

You state, "Have you been barred legally from talking about Christ to someone seated beside you on a plane or in a shop?" How about guidelines being considered by the EEOC which could bar religious expression in the work place?

Or what about the teenage boy in Georgia who was expelled for refusing to remove a shirt containing a Christian witness?

You also ask the question, "Has state or national government specified a state-sponsored church to which you

must pay taxes?" Does not the court which seizes the yearly tithe of a couple from a church, claiming they received no "tangible benefit" from their contributions constitute a form of tax control?

Or what about the removal of tax-exempt status from churches which actively support their religious views on so-called political issues such as abortion? For that matter, what does it say when the government forces me to support, with my tax money, that which I find totally contrary to the Word of God?

There is a problem with the separation of church and state in our time. But it seems the real problem lies in the state. I'm not nearly as concerned about a Muslim girl saying a prayer, as I am about the government's attempts to control the free ex-

pression of my faith!

*Kerry Walker, pastor  
Trinity Church  
Manchester 37355*

## Convention action

It is incorrect to report, as many have done, the Southern Baptist Convention violated local church autonomy when it decided to direct SBC boards, commissions, and institutions to not accept funds from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

It is correct to recognize the action strongly affirmed the autonomy of churches. It did more than that. The action affirmed the competence of churches in their ability to send to the CBF offices the money they wish to have used in support of the CBF and to send to the SBC entities the money they wish to have used in support of the nearly 9,000 home and foreign missionaries and the more than 9,000 seminary students preparing to serve as Southern Baptist church leaders and missionaries. The result of the action can be to strengthen the Cooperative Program and the unity of Southern Baptists.

*Ernest E. Mosley,  
executive vice president  
SBC Executive Committee  
Nashville 37203*

## Writer sees agenda

Nashville area Baptists should know the election of Jim Henry is no victory for moderates. The moderate wing of the SBC has little viable leadership, and seems obsessed with accuracy of scholarship rather than the hardball politics of the conservative wing.

## Classified

**WANTED:** Part-time minister of youth and music. Send resume to Barbara Riddle, chairman of search committee, Nolensville Church, P.O. Box 635, Nolensville, Tenn. 37135.

**NEEDED:** Bivocational music director. Salary is open. Send resume to Bethel View Church, 156 Mapleview Dr., Bristol, Tenn. 37620.

**WANTED:** Weekday Early Education Director in Hendersonville-area church for Tuesday and Thursday program. Call (615) 824-6154.

**ORGANIST:** Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, is seeking a bivocational organist. Please send all resumes to Evelyn Larson, 308 Overhill Dr., Old Hickory, Tenn., 37138.

Convention attendance was 20,364. With there being 37,000 SBC churches that's about 54 percent of one messenger per church.

The triumvirate of Criswell, Patterson, and Pressler merely counted heads years ago and organized full delegations from large churches. I know of no CBF attempt to organize the vast numbers of "no show" churches, though Tennessee messengers increased.

When conventions were telecast, I was of the opinion contested delegations smacked of pseudo-organizing by some conservative forces. Today I read of "cloning" of large churches, increasing conservative voting strength.

Contrary to present dialog, conservatives were not shut out in the past. Searches were made to find someone willing to serve as president. A political figure was once brought in.

If present autocratic leadership is to be replaced, all churches must elect independent messengers, with the pastor controlling only his one vote. CBF leadership seems as naive as Ross Perot, who seems to think new congressmen of the two parties will disenfranchise themselves and vote a Perot agenda.

The CBF seems to think present leadership will vote themselves out and disappear.

Ivory-tower thinking may be ideal sans politics, but certainly naive.

*William A. Vandiver  
Waverly 37185*

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# ■ Sunday School lesson commentary

## □ Job's anguished search for answers — Bible Book Series for July 10

By Carl Scarlett, pastor, Miracle Church, La Vergne

Job had been silent for seven days and nights, now it was time to face the reality of his earthly trouble.

Job begins to respond verbally what his inner feelings have been since his troubles began.

Job feels it would have been better if he had never been born. He would not be suffering, he would have never known grief and sorrow.

Job's laments in the presence



SCARLETT

of his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar allowed them to hear and sense what he was experiencing. It is normal to ask questions when we suffer and don't understand why, even if our closest friends don't understand our questions.

**Bildad's reaction to Job's questions — ch. 8: 2-8**

Bildad expresses his own opinion as to why Job was suffering. Bildad's opinion was that there had to be sin either in Job's life, the lives of his children, or perhaps both. Bildad insisted that it was wrong for Job to ask God why is this tragedy happening or

**Focal Passages**  
Job 3:2-3; 8:2-8;  
13:18-24; 14:13-16

why was he ever born?

All three of Job's friends tried to convince him that there was sin in his life and that Job's sufferings were a direct result of his sin.

Job knew this was not so but after being told this by his three closest friends he seemed to begin to doubt his own feelings.

**Job pleads for God to reveal his sins — ch. 13:18-24**

Job becomes his own defense attorney. He pleads his own case

before the throne of God. He believes God is big enough to accept any question he had, and with boldness Job asks God to come to his defense and to deliver him from his sufferings. Job honestly bares his soul to God and pleads to know if his sufferings had anything to do with the way he had lived his life.

**Job's question concerning life after death — ch. 14:13-16**

Job's despair had clouded his mind and he wasn't sure that he would ever have his questions answered in his lifetime or even after death. Job sensed that even though he didn't have all the answers he knew that

God's presence would always be with him and that God knew his every step through life and that there would be life after death. His hope was in God, and he knew that his God would lead him through all his sorrows and lead him to an everlasting hope. Job knew that God was in control of every situation. Job learned that the believer doesn't have to defend his faith, just live it and God will increase our faith even when the storms of life come our way. Even when our closest friends don't understand us, our hope is in Him who "sticketh closer than a brother!" □

## □ Leadership for meeting needs — Convention Uniform Series for July 10

By Randall Cummings, pastor, First Church, Ripley

A tragedy affecting the lives of professional and volunteer church workers is burnout. Dedication and ability do not make up for the wisdom needed to know how to spend our time. The work of God is not just that done in an official church role. This work



CUMMINGS

is also found in our family or personal responsibilities. These responsibilities may not seem as urgent, but certainly are more important. This lesson underscores the importance of doing God's work and doing it wisely.

**Gaining perspective**

After supplying water to meet the needs of the people and the battle with Amalek, Moses met Jethro, his father-in-law. Following a reunion between Moses and his family, Jethro

makes some observations on Moses' leadership burden.

Jethro was concerned about Moses' heavy judicial load. Moses was occupied from early morning until sundown as the people came to him to inquire of God and seek justice.

To Jethro this was a perplexing situation. Viewing the process as an outsider, Jethro had the perspective Moses had lost from being so long at the center of events. Jethro asks in an incredulous tone, "What is this thing that you are doing ..." (v. 14). Moses' matter-of-fact reply lets us see how blind the man of God had become. He is simply making himself available to the people when they come to inquire of God, or when there is a dispute to be settled, Moses says (vv. 15-16). Moses seems oblivious to the fact that these tasks occupy his entire day.

Ministers and church workers gladly throw themselves into the

work to which they believe God has called them. There is always more work to do than there are hours to do it. Too often they neglect their families, or personal development and recreation are put on a back burner. I have a "Saturday night syndrome." When I lie down to sleep Saturday, the things that didn't get done in the week come rushing to mind along with regret, their constant companion.

In his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey asks the reader to list the things he is not currently doing which would make a significant difference in his life if he would do them regularly. Then, with this list in mind, Covey tells the reader to ask, "Why not?" The answer is we all tend to neglect the truly important to focus on the urgent. The people's need for a judge was urgent, and Moses was burning his days to meet that need

Moses appears to have fallen into what Edward Bratcher called "the walk-on-water syndrome." A man of outstanding abilities and talents, Moses was too willing to fulfill whatever expectations the people had. Jethro could already see the warning signs of burnout. "You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people" (v. 17).

Doing kingdom work does not shield us from the hazards of burnout. Pastors, staffs, and volunteers have experienced burnout doing "God's work." Though God calls us to dedicated service, he does not call us to self-destruction.

**Busy-ness to leadership**

Jethro offered three suggestions to Moses. First, Jethro suggested Moses limit himself in his leadership responsibilities (v. 19). Moses was to focus on his responsibility to be the people's representative before God. This was a unique role that Moses

**Focal Passage**  
Exodus 18:13-25

alone could fill. Second, Jethro told Moses to focus on training the people on "the way they are to walk" (v. 20). Moses was told to deal more with prevention than correction. This parallels Paul's direction to pastors to equip believers, teaching them to minister to each other and the lost (Ephesians 4:12). Third, Moses' father-in-law suggested Moses select other able, trustworthy people to do the work of judging the people, reserving for himself the task of rendering major judgments (v. 21-22).

Moses' positive response to Jethro's voice of wisdom kept the nation from floundering with its leader under an unrealistic administrative load. Many Christian families today would benefit from the pastor father or the busy church-working parent to learn the same lessons. □

## □ Wronged yet forgiving — Life and Work Series for July 10

By Clay Frazier, retired pastor, Morristown

Of about 38,000 Southern Baptist Churches very few, if any, are free of grudges and unforgiving attitudes. Most churches and Christians do not deal with straying members, or people with a wounded spirit. The Corinthian church had many problems. Today we study the problems of church discipline and forgiveness. This generation of Baptists knows little about church discipline. Few modern day Baptists have participated in a service where discipline was exercised. It is most likely that Paul writes to the church at Corinth about the aftermath of the problem found in I Corinthians 5, that dealt with a man committing open fornication with his father's wife.



FRAZIER

**Why deal with the problem? — v. 23 — ch. 2:4**  
What is the right motive

when we seek to set things aright in the body of Christ? It was not a matter of personal satisfaction for Paul. In verse 23 it is clear he had delayed his visit to Corinth because of his reluctance to make them sad by rebuke. Often, I have seen situations in the church that have been prompted by a desire to vindicate self. That spirit will always lead to more trouble than the problem itself. It is evident that Paul had no such spirit. He calls upon God to witness his spirit and act. Paul continues in the same vein in chapter 2:1-4. He wants happiness for the church, not sadness. There must have been a certain kind of divine oughtness in the heart of Paul as he addressed this problem. He uses words like "much affliction," "anguish of heart," and "many tears" to describe his spirit as he approached the problem. At its best, church discipline and fellowship problems are sticky.

**What does trouble do? — v. 5**

It is very evident, but often

overlooked, that everything we are, we do, and we say affects others, affects the church. In verse 5, Paul again says it is not a personal matter; it is a "body" matter. The fellowship and the blessing of a church is a very delicate thing. A careless word on Monday may affect the body at worship next Sunday. I am afraid most Baptists do not realize that the sum total of their lives affects the sum total of the church. The power of the church is affected by every member. One member with unconfessed and unforsaken sin can short-circuit the blessings of God. One member with a grudge does affect the presence of God. When even one member withholds the tithes or his/her presence in worship, the whole church is affected to some degree. It is an awe-some thing to be a member of a New Testament Church. The spiritual bone, nerves, and muscles are so intertwined that a diseased cell, or a raw nerve or sore muscle affects the whole body.

**Focal Passages**  
II Corinthians 1:23 — 2:11

**Attitude of the offended**  
— vv. 6-8

The offender has been punished by the corporate body, the church (v. 6). The hurt of discipline by the church must not make the offender bitter ("swallowed up with over-much sorrow"). It must never be with a desire to hurt when a church or individual exercises correction or discipline. The offended must also have forgiveness. When we truly forgive, we will treat the forgiven as if he had never offended us. Someone defined forgiveness as the perfume that roses give when trampled underfoot. Our Lord on the cross makes it very clear as to the nature and essence of forgiveness. This Scripture indicates there should be no desire to hurt, a spirit of forgiveness, and a desire to comfort the offender. We should show our love for the one who has strayed. Once confronted, and repentance has

taken place, there must be a confirmation of love.

**Forgiveness for all — vv. 9-11**  
Paul was concerned (v. 9) that the church be obedient in regard to his instructions. It is very important for a church with fellowship problems to adhere to the scriptural pattern in dealing with the problem. The proof of sincerity is obedience. If a church or individual cannot or will not abide by the Scripture, the problem had better not be dealt with. There is one thing for sure; the parties involved must have forgiveness. All forgiveness is based in and on Christ Jesus (vv. 10-11). The tenth verse has the word "forgive" five times. All of us are in it together. We need God's forgiveness, each other's forgiveness, and the strength to forgive ourselves. Paul is aware that Satan is alert to our problems and will take advantage of every situation to bring hurt and disruption. Let us also be careful. Someone has said that a human is never more God-like than when he really forgives. □

## ■ the leaders

■ **Dale Ledbetter**, pastor of Sylvia Church, Dickson, and his wife recently were appointed to serve as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries to the Ukraine. Ledbetter is a native of Alabama, not Mississippi, as reported in the June 22 issue.

■ **Bob Mitchell**, pastor, Northside Church, Clarksville, has resigned to spend more time in evangelism and as chaplain of the Clarksville Police Department. Mitchell served the church for four years. He is retired from 30 years in the U.S. Army.



**THE PATTERSONS** stand in front of Second Church in Oradea, Romania.



**THE VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL KICKOFF PARADE** of Middle Creek Church, Oliver Springs, rolls down a country lane in Coalfield June 12. The next day more than 170 children enrolled for the two-week program which is led by Madge Jones, who has been VBS director for 32 years.

## ■ the churches

■ **Ashport Church, Ripley**, held homecoming on July 3. The new pastor, Champ Thomas Jr., brought the morning message. The New Believers Quartet sang in the afternoon.

■ **Moodyville Church, Byrdstown**, will hold revival July 10-13, which will be led by Gerald L. Stow, president/treasurer of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, Inc.

■ **French Broad Church, Dandridge**, held a note burning ceremony on May 22 to observe the debt-free status of its new fellowship hall and educational area.

■ A noteburning ceremony will be held by **Brotherton Church, Cookeville**, July 17, at 2 p.m. The church, which received a loan from the Tennessee Baptist Convention, paid it off in just four years.

## ■ the schools

■ The president of **Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour**, Walter Grubb, announces a position at HCBA — vice president for institutional advancement. This person will assume responsibility for the coordination of all academy fund-raising and all public relations efforts. Persons interested in the position may send a resume to Search Committee, HCBA, 202 Smothers Road, Seymour, Tenn. 37865.

## ■ the work

■ **James Patterson**, associate professor of church history, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, and his wife, Donna, recently worked in Oradea, Romania. James taught

classes at the Emmanuel Bible Institute, a four-year-old school with about 200 students. The Pattersons, who are members of Bartlett Church, Bartlett, also worshiped in Second Church, Oradea, where he brought greetings from Tennessee Baptists. Since the worship services in the church were filled to overflowing, a new sanctuary that will seat around 2,800 is under construction. "We were impressed by the vibrancy of Baptist life in Romania and the strides they are making in theological education," said James Patterson.

■ **Suzanne Frost** of First Church, Bolivar, and **Natasha Lindley**, Calvary Church, Jackson, were appointed as Home Mission Board sojourners. They are serving June 5 — July 16 in Matthews, N.C., in children's ministry and outreach.

■ This summer 215 Tennessee Acteens are serving on 26 **Acteens Activator** teams. Six teams are working in the state, 16 teams will serve in eight other states, and three will serve in other countries — Canada, Dominica, and Chile.



**FAITH CHURCH, LORETTO**, celebrated its 25th anniversary as a church on June 26. Among those in attendance were 16 of the church's 78 charter members along with Charles R. Inman, second from right on platform, who was the first pastor. Several people gave testimonies of the church's impact on their lives. In addition, current pastor Thom Tapp celebrated his first anniversary as pastor of the church.



**LEADING THE NOTEBURNING CEREMONY** of First Church, Lexington, on June 5 for its \$1.5 million addition are, from left, Ken Reed, chairman of the stewardship committee; Dan Miller, chairman of deacons; E. E. Hayes Jr., chairman of the long range planning committee; and Roy Miller, chairman of the building committee, while Hoyt Wilson, pastor, watches. The building was paid off in three years by a congregation which gives almost 14 percent to the Cooperative Program.



**BEING HONORED FOR LONG SERVICE** to Wilsonville Church, Newport, are, from left, front row, Janice Austin, 27 years; Marie Austin Green, 56 years; and Lorene McClanahan, 40 years; back row, J. L. Austin, 47 years; Wilma Austin, 29 years; Pauline Austin, 47 years, and Danzel "Bus" Austin, 42 years. — Photo from Newport Plain Talk



**BREAKING GROUND FOR THE FIRST BUILDING** of Comerstone Church, Jasper, are leaders, from left, Tommy Herd; Ken Cooper; Nathan Merrell; John Matthews; Carl Ivens, pastor; Charles Haynes; and John McCrary. The church will build a 5,046 square foot building which will include a worship center, offices, and educational wing on nine acres.