

# Baptist and Reflector

Historical Commission  
Nashville, Tennessee

September 28, 1994

VOL. 160 ■ NO. 39

STATEWIDE EDITION

■ **this week's news**

**national —**

- Mississippi College trustees change way trustees are elected. — Page 3
- Harassment guidelines pulled by EEOC. — Page 3
- Oct. 2 is launch day for 1995 evangelism campaign. — Page 4
- Stay-at-home mothers say they made the right decision for them. — Page 8

**state —**

- New Sunday School lesson writers begin commentaries. — Page 3
- East Tennessee churches celebrate 100-year anniversaries. — Page 6
- Bo Childs is president-elect of Tennessee Baptist Foundation. — Page 6

## SBC Executive Committee meets in Nashville

*There's hope, future for SBC 'if,' Henry says*

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — There's hope and a future for the Southern Baptist Convention if Southern Baptists remember, recommit, and refocus, said SBC President Jim Henry.

In his first address to SBC Executive Committee members Sept. 19, the native Tennessean said he has received nearly a 1,000 letters, the majority from people he does not know.

One theme kept coming through, Henry said. "Is there any hope? Do you think we're going to make it? Do you think we can move ahead? Do you think there's a chance? And, that was coming from not only pastors, but a lot of laypeople," he said.

In his talk to the Executive Committee, Henry also announced that Church of Christ minister Barry McCarty will not be the SBC parliamentarian next year. Only Southern Baptist parliamentarians will be used, Henry said.

Using Jeremiah 29:11-13 as his text, the pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., said, "We do have a hope and a future, first of all, if we'll remember." He noted the word "remember" is found 366 times in the Old Testament. "God is constantly calling his people to re-



**AT THE CONCLUSION** of the SBC Executive Committee meeting in Nashville Sept. 20, Cecil Sims, executive director of the Northwest Convention, left, and Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Seminary, center, talk with Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla. As president of the SBC, Henry also is a member of the committee. — Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen

member the importance of remembering him."

As Southern Baptists move toward their 150th year in 1995, the timing could not be better, Henry said.

"It is a time to recall the great men and women of faith, the crucial decisions, the events that forged us and made us unique among the religious groups in this land. We've been through the crucible many times. Individuals and groups have splintered off and left us and became tributaries or disappeared from the landscape.

"But the mainstream of Southern Baptists has continued steadfastly forward. History is a great teacher. Our mistakes should not be repeated.

Our successes we should learn from. If we don't learn from our errors, we're doomed to repeat them. But if we mark the light-houses, we can still find the way in the stormy seas that assail us, externally, and internally."

The former Two Rivers Church, Nashville, pastor told Executive Committee members, "We must remember that we cannot overlook our polity.

"By our nature we exist to serve the churches. It is a trickle-down philosophy. The flow comes from the churches down, not the other way around."

The second word if there's to be a hope and future for Southern Baptists is recommit, Henry said.

— See *There's*, page 2

**Executive Committee urges caution in CP change in states**

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, concerned about possible changes in the historic Cooperative Program relationship with several states, urged extreme caution in any departure from "this God-given and time honored approach to funding a world mission strategy."

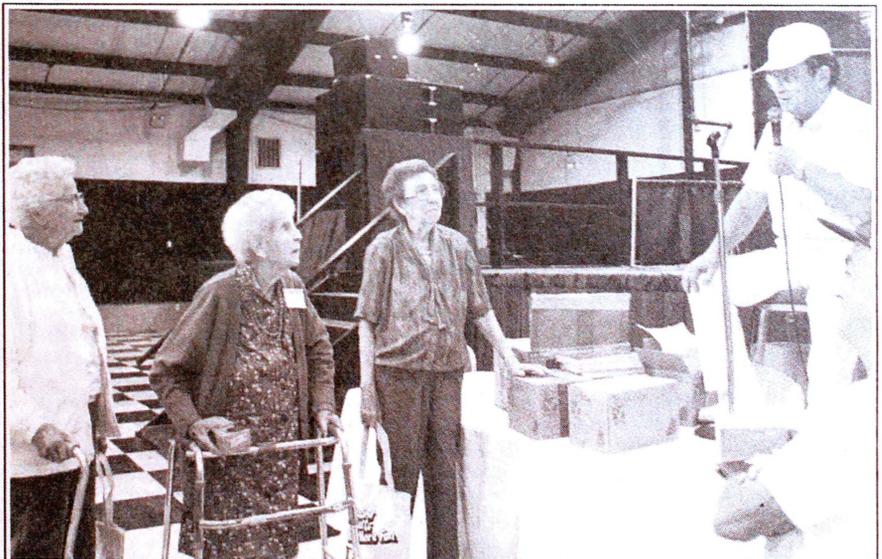
In other business, the committee asked for copies of contracts the SBC Annuity Board (AB) has with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and heard requests from 19 agencies for more than \$146 million from the 1995-96 SBC Program Allocation Budget.

The CP resolution, carefully worded but pointed in its concern, was approved by the committee during its meeting last week. Several state conventions will consider allowing changes in the traditional state-SBC Cooperative Program in annual meetings this fall.

Texas and North Carolina will consider plans which offer churches opportunity to give to state and other mission causes called "Cooperative Program" but not include the SBC. However, no state convention is — See Executive, page 2

### 1,100 senior adults gather

From left, Mattie Fay Steele, 91, First Church, Tullahoma; Elsie Allen, 96, First Church, Nashville; and Mamie Donoho, 90, Eastland Church, Nashville; were the oldest participants at last week's 20th annual Tennessee Senior Adult Conference in Pigeon Forge. The three women received gifts and some teasing from Johnnie Hall, top right, of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and an assistant. Please see page 7 for a story and more photos of the conference.



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- **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
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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

## There's hope and future ...

— Continued from page 1

Henry cited several commitments Southern Baptists must make, including one to the Cooperative Program.

"I know you won't find that word (Cooperative Program) in a Bible dictionary. It was not in the Ark of the Covenant with the stone tablets or Aaron's budding rod. But it has been the pot of manna that has fed the most successful underwriting of missions, evangelism, seminary education, and church planting in church history."

Noting there are some through the SBC that are looking at the Cooperative Program with a mind to change it.

"But change only if it will better facilitate accomplishing God's purpose," he said. "Any restructuring, renaming, or re-engineering of this structure we've named the Cooperative Program since 1925 must be done on the basis of enlarging its output in a meaningful way and not decreasing it."

He said it is time to deal with this. "It's time for our leaders to lead. Our state leadership needs to speak up and be counted. Our state papers need to write up. Our associations need to stand up. Our churches need to move up in dollars and percentages."

"And, our pastors need to lead the way. For too long, some of us in leadership or who aspire to leadership have given lip service," Henry said.

Citing "time, energy, and resources" used in defending biblical integrity, Henry noted the same effort should be used in supporting "the vehicle that is our

prime delivery system for that same good truth to be disseminated in this nation and around the world."

Another commitment Southern Baptists must make, Henry said, is to cooperation and trust.

"Control must become anathema to us. All things must have perimeters. These perimeters have been set by the convention and they are clear and healthy," Henry said.

He noted Southern Baptists have been drinking "from a deep well of mutual trust" that "by and large is still in place."

The letters he has received tell of a deep love for the SBC and the writers' hearts are concerned about its future, he said. The fact that only a few hundred out of 39,000 churches have opted out of the SBC shows that love is entrenched.

He cautioned, however, that "hundreds stand on the brink. They're committed to Christ,

his church and our convention. ... but their desires of more openness, more of an opportunity to participate, and know that they're heard — we must see that that trust is earned again and kept."

As part of that trust, Henry said he is moving away from Barry McCarty as parliamentarian.

"I have written Barry and I've called him and thanked him for the excellent work that he did at a critical time in our denomination. But now we need to move on. We need to move on, and this is one way that we're saying we're moving on to the future. We're moving on in trust. We're moving on because we believe the best is yet."

Henry also said Southern Baptists must recommit to "talking with and not shouting at each other."

"We have brothers and sisters in Christ who have been unfairly judged and labeled because at some point they did not dot every 'i' or cross every 't.' This intolerance has burned bridges, rather than building them. It has caused anger, hostility, and anxiety. This is not in the spirit of Jesus Christ," Henry said.

Finally, Henry said, to bring hope in the future there must be a refocus. "Let us constantly remind ourselves to keep the main thing the main thing."

He called for Southern Baptists to "get off our personal soapboxes" that while focusing on things that are important, they often "result in tying the hands of our institutional leadership and keep them in a sense of guerrilla warfare, taxing their creativity and energy, while a lost world could care less."

Henry concluded by referring to an article, written by *Baptist and Reflector* editor Wm. Fletcher Allen about former missionary Bill Berry who died recently.

Allen wrote that when visiting Berry once, Berry urged him "to take the mission, brother, and Godspeed," Henry said.

"Bill Berry, the warrior, has gone home. But he made this world a better place. And it's the Bill Berrys, the men and the women in our pews, this great army of Southern Baptists who are telling us afresh and anew, 'Take the message and Godspeed.'"

Henry said God has promised to give his people plans for hope and a future. "The best is yet. I'm committed to it. I believe you are. Now let's show the world and our fellow Southern Baptists that we mean it," he said. □

## Executive Committee urges ...

— Continued from page 1 mentioned in the four-paragraph resolution.

The resolution seeks to remind state conventions that CP funds have never been used to fund organizations "having no accountability to state conventions or the SBC," and it asks the states to inform constituents "of the variances of theology and doctrine being embraced and espoused by some groups identifying themselves as Southern Baptists ..."

Several committee members said it was a pointed reference to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Also, the 80-member committee voted to request the AB to provide the committee with a written report of "all involvement with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, including copies of all contracts with the CBF, by the February 1995 Executive Committee meeting."

The AB services the CBF with a retirement and protection plan similar to plans with SBC boards and agencies. The CBF, a three-year-old organization of moderate Southern Baptists critical of SBC leadership, had been sending funds to SBC agencies, until the agencies were directed during the June SBC annual meeting to no longer accept those funds.

Although it was not clear what the Executive Committee would do with the report, there is an apparent interest by some members to persuade the AB to discontinue business with the CBF. An AB spokesman at the Executive Committee meeting declined to speculate on how the board would respond.

Current AB policies allow it to service organizations which are connected in some way with Southern Baptists, like Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, but not controlled by a Southern Baptist national or state entity.

September is when the Executive Committee hears the first request from SBC agencies for Cooperative Program funding for next year's budget. The committee will recommend a 1995-96 SBC Program Allocation Budget to the June 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta.

The 19 requests totaled \$146.3 million, which is more



**ROBERT WILSON, left, retiring executive director of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan after 23 years, was honored Sept. 20 by the Executive Committee with a resolution and plaque presented by Morris Chapman. — Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen**

than 7 percent above the 1994-95 budget of \$136.5 million. Heading the list were the Christian Life Commission, asking for a 28.5 percent increase, and the Radio and Television Commission, seeking 27.6 percent more.

In another matter involving the AB, the president and trustee chairman of the AB promised cooperative efforts on the issue of abortion to members of the SBC Executive Committee during the first session.

The commitments were voiced prior to unanimous committee approval of a motion requesting AB trustees to add abortion providers and companies making contributions to abortion providers to the list of investments prohibited under board policy. Current board policy prohibits investments in the liquor, tobacco, gambling, and pornography industries. Atop the list of pro-lifers' concerns are companies contributing to Planned Parenthood.

The committee's action marked the fourth time in a year it has discussed the question of AB investment policy regarding abortion-related stocks.

AB President Paul Powell told committee members, "You've asked us to study it, to consider it, and that's what we're willing to do." But, he noted, the committee's recommendation will become board policy only if AB trustees adopt it.

"We agree with what you're trying to do," said trustee chairman Richard Scott, who is dean of Baylor University's business school in Waco, Texas, and has been chairman of the AB trustee investment committee for several years.

"We're going to do the best that we can to try to live up to the spirit of what you're doing," Scott said. "But you need to recognize and work with us on the fact it's a lot easier to say it than it is to operationalize it." □

# Trustees alter Mississippi College's convention ties

Baptist Press

CLINTON, Miss. — Mississippi College's board of trustees amended the college charter Sept. 22 to alter the selection of trustees for the 168-year-old Baptist-related institution.

Trustee spokesmen likened the action to moves by other Baptist universities like Baylor in Waco, Texas, and Furman in Greenville, S.C., and most recently Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., in making trustee selection a board responsibility. Prior to the charter change, the 15 members of the college's board of trustees were selected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention at its annual meeting each fall.

Under the charter change, effective immediately, the board will have 24 members, all of whom must be Baptists, with six of them still named by the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Terms will be staggered by three-year terms.

Four pastors on the board of trustees issued a statement after the action, objecting, "... we deplore this action. We were completely left out of the process of trusteeship. We feel betrayed and violated. We consider both the process and the action totally unacceptable and in no way

do we concur with or condone this action." The statement was signed by Jimmy Porter, McComb; Gordon Sansing, Vicksburg; Frank Gunn, Biloxi; and Eddie Hamilton, Jackson.

In addition, the Mississippi Baptist Convention executive committee held a special called meeting Sept. 23 after the trustees' announcement. The committee released a statement that, "Everyone was shocked and saddened," noting that no Mississippi Baptist Convention officials had any prior knowledge of such possible action. The executive committee said it will continue "closely monitoring events and prayerfully considering our position. We will keep Mississippi Baptists informed as events unfold, but have no further statement at this time."

The convention budgeted more than \$2 million in 1994 for operating and capital expenditures at the college.

Board chairman Henry Vickery of Greenville, acknowledged in a prepared statement the trustee vote "was not unanimous," but contended denominational politics weighed as the primary factor in the trustee takeover of the trustee selection process.

"For several years, we as trustees have felt the uneasiness among Baptist institu-

tions and Baptist churches that unfortunately are affected by denominational politics," Vickery said. "Our charter did not protect the institution sufficiently from outside influences. The trustees felt that it was our responsibility to provide the necessary insulation for Mississippi College from the potential actions of various factions that could compromise our ability to serve all Baptists."

Vickery described the legal side of the action by saying, "Mississippi College was organized in 1826 as a self-contained, legal, non-profit corporation. Consistent with Mississippi law applicable to non-profit corporations, the board of trustees exercised its power to change the charter of the corporation to modify the selection process for the board of trustees."

College President Howell Todd, who was hired March 15, was not appraised of any trustee selection discussions prior to his hiring, Vickery said. "He was informed of the board's interest only in recent days, when we asked him not to take a position," Vickery said. "We did not want anyone on any side to be critical of him, since this decision was not his and he had no part in it. He indicated he would abide by and support whatever action the board approved," he added. □

## EEOC pulls harassment guidelines

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has withdrawn proposed guidelines on workplace harassment in response to congressional orders and widespread public protest of their potential impact on religious expression.

When the commissioners recently voted 3-0 to pull the guidelines, it ended for the time being a controversial battle which began with their proposal in October 1993. When concerns were raised about their effect on religious freedom on the job, the EEOC received more than 100,000 comments in four months' time, the largest volume in the agency's history.

In August, Congress passed legislation directing the EEOC to remove religion as a category from the guidelines. The commission's response was to withdraw the entire guidelines.

The public protest and overwhelming Senate opposition "helped the EEOC to decide that these one-size-fits-all harassment guidelines were not a very good idea — at least not right now, just before election time," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. He cautioned, however, the EEOC could develop new proposed guidelines in the future. □

## NOBTS trustees accept Georgia site; act on SBC motions

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary trustees voted Sept. 13 to accept the gift of an entire church complex in Decatur, Ga., to house its north Georgia theological program.

Seminary administrators told trustees that declining membership at Columbia Drive Church had made maintenance of the church's sizable property difficult and the congregation was willing to donate the property with the understanding they be allowed to

continue worshipping there.

The seminary's north Georgia center has been meeting at Roswell Street Church in Roswell since 1978, said seminary President Landrum Leavell. School officials said the Columbia Drive property is debt-free, with estimated annual upkeep costs to the seminary of \$75,000-\$100,000.

In other business, trustees addressed a motion referred from the June 1994 Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando, calling upon the convention's seminaries not to use Cooperative Program funds to ed-

ucate students whose churches do not contribute through the Southern Baptist funding channel.

Trustee chairman Ed Johnson of Florida reported the seminary already was in compliance, and trustees affirmed the motion as seminary policy.

Trustees also acted on a recommendation concerning funds contributed to SBC agencies through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an organization of Southern Baptist moderates. Johnson noted the seminary has stopped accepting funds from the CBF.

In other business, trustees elected Ohio native Robert L. Hamblin as professor of evangelism and named him to the new Max and Bonnie Thornhill Chair of Evangelism, the seminary's second fully funded chair of evangelism.

Hamblin, 66, had 25 years of pastoral experience before he began teaching. The Union University graduate is a former professor at New Orleans and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He was vice president for evangelism at the Home Mission Board from 1982-88. □

### At Central Bearden, Knoxville

## SBC President Jim Henry to speak at centennial celebration

KNOXVILLE — Central Church, Bearden, will observe its centennial celebration Oct. 2-5.

Special guests during the week are SBC President Jim Henry; Harold Bryson, Baptist Sunday School Board consultant; Henry Chiles, pastor emeritus of Central Bearden; Bill Bruster, former pastor and now director of the western region of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; Congressman Jimmy Duncan; Knoxville Mayor Victor Ashe; and Knox Country Association Director of Missions Walter Taylor.

Henry, pastor of First

Church, Orlando, Fla., and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will preach in the centennial worship service on Tuesday, Oct. 4, at 7 p.m.

**Knoxville area pastors and ministers are invited to attend a special reception to meet the new SBC president at the church from 5-6 p.m.**

Bruster will speak on Sunday Oct. 2 during the morning worship service; Bryson on Monday, Oct. 3, and Chiles on Wednesday, Oct. 5.

For more information, call the church office at (615) 588-0586. □

## New writers enlisted for Sunday School commentaries

Three new writers have been enlisted to write the Oct.-Dec. Sunday School lesson commentaries.

Memphis pastor Ray W. Fullilove of Poplar Avenue Church will write the Bible Book series.

Fullilove holds a bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College, Clinton; a master of divinity from New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary; and a doctor of ministry degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary.

A native of Mississippi, Fullilove is a retired U.S. Navy chaplain. He has been pastor of Poplar Avenue for six years.

Fullilove and his wife, Bobbie, have one son, Wesley.



DEAN



FULLILOVE



HOWARD

Samuel D. Dean, pastor of First Church, Clinton, since 1977, will write the Convention Uniform series.

The Green County native earned his B.A. degree from Tusculum College, Greeneville; his M.Div. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; and a doctor of divinity degree from Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

Dean has served in many areas of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He currently

is a trustee of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation.

Dean and his wife, Marie, have two children, Chris and Kelly.

Writing the Life and Work series will be Elizabeth Howard, a member of Cumberland Homestead Church, Crossville, where she teaches Sunday School.

Howard is a former high school English teacher, but now concentrates on writing. She has published poetry and fiction. She also has written devotions for *encounter!*, a publication of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Howard holds a B.A. from Belmont University, Nashville, and an M.A. from Vanderbilt University, Nashville. □

# Clinton orders Justice Department to drop its stance in tithing dispute

Compiled from news reports

WASHINGTON — Acting on orders from President Bill Clinton, the Justice Department has withdrawn its argument that a Minnesota church must turn over tithes given by a couple headed for bankruptcy.

The department had argued in a federal appeals court brief that under bankruptcy laws, the \$13,450 donated by Bruce and Nancy Young to Crystal Evangelical Free Church actually belongs to their creditors and should be recovered from the church.

Particularly troubling to religious groups was the Justice Department's insistence that recovering the funds from the church would not violate a new religious freedom law designed to enhance protections for religious practice.

Signed into law in November by President Clinton, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act restored a legal standard that permits government to restrict religious practice only when it can show a compelling reason.

Senior administration officials said Clinton's "exceptional interest" in RFRA prompted the rare action of ordering the Justice Department to abandon its position in the case. The department withdrew from the case the day before it was sched-

uled for argument in the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Clinton's action is consistent with his record of support of RFRA, said senior administration officials, who noted that the president's remarks when he signed the bill were more than routine.

Top officials said the president's view is reflected in his statement at the signing that, "Government should be held to a very high level of proof before it interferes with someone's free exercise of religion."

Religious organizations that had challenged the department's stance quickly praised the administration's reversal.

"President Clinton has proven that he is sincerely committed to meaningful legal protection for religious exercise," said Steve McFarland, director of the Christian Legal Society's Center for Law and Religious Freedom. "The administration has told government lawyers nationwide that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is not a toothless tiger."

The CLS, along with other religious groups including the Baptist Joint Committee and the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, had filed a friend-of-the-court brief siding with the church. In addition, attorneys for those organizations and three prominent law school professors met with high adminis-

tration officials in June to discuss application of RFRA.

BJC General Counsel Brent Walker commended the administration for "doing the right thing."

"It takes courage to admit a mistake and reverse a legal argument," Walker said. "This is further proof that President Clinton cares deeply about the free exercise of religion and spiritual values."

Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Christian Life Commission, said, "The president has our praise and gratitude for calling off Janet Reno's assault against RFRA. This proves that the president does not want RFRA to become a dead letter at the hands of his own Justice Department."

"However, we had asked the president to go further," Whitehead said of Clinton's Sept. 15 announcement. "Rather than just withdrawing from the case, Justice should have stayed in the case and supported RFRA."

"The Department of Justice is no longer fighting against RFRA, but it doesn't deserve the Medal of Honor just for being AWOL in the battle for religious freedom," he said. "RFRA is under attack, and we hope the White House will actively engage the effort to rescue and revive RFRA." □ — Compiled from Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press reports

## First simultaneous witness effort to launch this Sunday

By Sarah Zimmerman  
For Baptist Press

ATLANTA — This Sunday, Oct. 2, is "Evangelize the Lost Launch Day" to prepare for Southern Baptists' first simultaneous personal soul-winning effort.

"Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" is the theme of the witnessing emphasis scheduled Jan. 9 to March 9 next year. Southern Baptists are asked to share their faith at least 60 times in those 60 days, said Thad Hamilton, Home Mission Board director of personal evangelism and co-chairman of the Here's Hope national steering committee.

On Oct. 2,

pastors are asked to commit to the spring project, Hamilton said. Church

members are asked to sign up Oct. 9. People are encouraged to commit to the project in October to allow time for witness training, he said.

Southern Baptists have had simultaneous revivals, but never attempted a concurrent effort for individuals to share their faith, Hamilton said.

The personal witnessing thrust will be followed by revivals from March 12 to Sept. 30. The revivals will "capture the momentum" created by 60 days of soul-winning and give new Christians a chance to make their decision public, said Richard Harris, HMB director of mass evangelism and Here's Hope co-chairman.

Many people who are witnessed to during the 60 days may not make a decision for Christ at the time, but they may be ready to make a commitment during a revival, Harris said.

Information to help prepare for the soul-winning effort and revivals has been mailed to each church. A catalog listing resources from advertising strategies to new witnessing tracts also has been mailed to churches, associations, and state conventions. For additional catalogs, call 1-800-755-1995 and request item 511-57F.

Several evangelism leaders have made lists of 60 ways to share the Gospel in 60 days. Some of the suggestions are:

■ Give a lost friend a Christian music cassette and a Gospel tract.

■ Write a lost friend a note and share your desire for him to know Jesus.

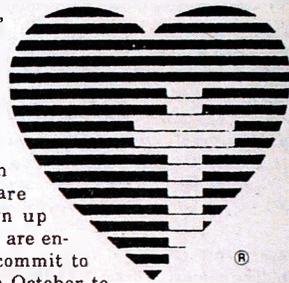
■ Call new neighbors and ask them to have coffee at your house. Invite them to attend your church's next social event.

■ Sponsor a free car wash and tell each person about the cleansing power of the Gospel.

■ Invite lost friends to a Valentine's Day banquet. Ask the pastor to speak on the love of a mate, the love of a family, and the love of Christ.

■ Tell a lost friend that you have made a commitment to share Jesus with someone every day for 60 days. Ask the friend to listen to your testimony and offer suggestions on how to improve it.

■ Host a backyard Bible club at your home for neighborhood children. □



## Georgia executive committee keeps CP funding; changes gift categories

By William Neal  
For Baptist Press

ATLANTA — The Georgia Baptist Convention's executive committee reaffirmed its support of the Cooperative Program, while adopting a proposal designed to help diffuse an ongoing conflict over how mission gifts to the convention are reported.

In a long meeting Sept. 13, characterized by good will and unanimous votes, the executive committee adopted a proposed 1995 Cooperative Program budget for Georgia, subject to approval by the GBC at its annual meeting in Macon Nov. 14-16.

The record CP budget of \$34.6 million was approved without opposition. It calls for an increase of 2.74 percent over the '94 budget and continues the 50/50 split between national and state causes, after taking out approximately 10 percent of the overall budget for shared responsibilities. This continues to represent the most generous percentage of gifts going to national causes among all the state conventions related to the SBC, Georgia officials said.

The issue of how to report missions gifts through the convention was addressed in a recommendation from the Committee To

Study Harmony and Cooperation, which was appointed late last year in response to a motion made at the 1993 GBC. Floyd Roebuck, pastor of First Church, Rome, Ga., had called for the study after questions had been raised over what constituted a cooperating Georgia Baptist church.

The 1993 Committee on Nominations announced last fall it would not consider any Georgia Baptist for inclusion on boards and committees of the convention and its institutions unless those individuals were members of churches that gave at least 7 percent of undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program. That requirement in effect eliminated over half the churches of the convention and the members of those congregations from consideration.

In a report presented as information to the executive committee and to be presented to the GBC meeting in Macon, the Harmony and Cooperation Committee reaffirmed the stand of the convention on the total autonomy of the local church. While referring to the convention's historic commitment to the Cooperative Program as "the principal channel of financial support of Baptist work at home and abroad," the report goes on to state: "We recognize

the tremendous responsibility of the Committee on Nominations and the GBC to select for nomination the very finest leadership available from all Georgia Baptist churches to serve in the elected positions of the convention. Further, we ask the Committee on Nominations to always seek to reflect the diversity within the convention in its choice of nominees, and we affirm the concept that all Georgia Baptists are worthy of consideration to serve in Georgia Baptist life."

The study committee recommended and the executive committee approved a change in the way mission gifts through the convention are reported. In the past gifts from churches were basically reported in two columns: one for Cooperative Program and another for total gifts, with designated CP gifts noted as "restricted" and the particular exclusions listed.

In the future gifts will be listed in four columns: 1) Cooperative Program, 2) Designated Cooperative Program Causes (without listing particular restrictions), 3) Other Mission Gifts (which includes special offerings, and designated gifts such as those going to the Children's Homes), and 4) Total Gifts. □

# New commitment needed for giving, serving

■ one word more  
By Wm. Fletcher Allen  
editor

At this time of year, some church members may be putting in overtime, working against the calendar and the clock.

Much of the work assignment for nominating committees and deacon selection committees has been done already in some Tennessee Baptist churches, but others have "miles to go before they sleep."

Tired old cliches about avoiding membership on the nominating committee are signs of the times. Church members realize the difficulties often encountered by committees as they seek to fill positions for church ministry. When this happens, it is doubly hard to get cooperation from prospects.

Commitment, real Christian commitment is absolutely necessary in accepting responsibilities. It is always easy to dodge work/ministry by confessing lack of commitment. Too often, nominating committees hear the prospect saying, "I just can't commit myself to that right now."

So, what is the answer?

The majority of church members would agree that church ministry is vital to the spiritual growth and wellbeing of the church. The majority probably also would agree that the deacon selection process is

of utmost importance to the church.

Why do these committees often find it difficult to find people to serve as teachers, chairpersons, committee members, officers, deacons, and workers of all types?

Here are some of the reasons given for not accepting a ministry of the church:

**Heavy work load:** Whether at church, at home, or at work, this may be a valid reason for saying "no." However, if the person already has a heavy load in any of these areas, the person may need to learn how to prioritize time. Perhaps more work can be done within the same time frame if each area of work has a priority. A good session with time management could help also.

**Doesn't know how, or "that is not my preference."** It is true to say that God brings together in each church body a group of Christians who are spiritually gifted to do what is necessary for the spiritual growth of the church.

Blackaby and King's *Experiencing God* bears witness to this. The gifts are there within the body, but the gifted must be committed to the discipline of servanthood. Perhaps this is one of the anomalies of Christian life. It is a compelling need then that churches rethink the role of ser-

vanthood. If it is misunderstood or minimized, the body of Christ suffers. The words of Christ in Mark 10:43-44 give an accurate portrayal of the Christian who understands commitment and service.

Christ is the role model. It is a pitiful thing for any Christian to think that Christ would give an example to us and then excuse us for not following his leadership in that example of commitment.

**I've done my share; let someone else do it:** Fine. Just sit around and be served. Think of this, however. What if every church member takes that attitude?

There are other excuses given, and there are good reasons in individual cases where persons cannot serve.

But a good dose of conscientious commitment will heal many of the selfish and lazy attitudes that creep into every congregation.

Nominating committees and the deacon selection process are not easy tasks. The people who serve in these capacities should be prayer warriors who seek God's will first. The church as a body must stand by them, pray with them, affirm them as they work. Pastors are the leaders in this vital but often neglected work.

Healthy churches have a foundation of deep commitment to service and reaching people for Christ. □

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

## It's good anywhere

Evangelism is the thrust of the Gospel all around the world. In Tennessee and wherever there are lost people, the word and the Living Word must be shared.

On my computer, one of the windows carries the command of "save." Any items, any news articles that have been entered into the computer will be preserved as they were written or edited.

They are safe from alteration unless it is done by the computer operator.

A second and similar command is "save as." It allows the operator to place a name, a title on the item that is being saved. Neither the original item nor its title can be changed — except by the operator.

That's what salvation is. God saves us and puts the name "Christian" or "Saved Person" on us. No one can change that.

Unlike the articles entered into the computer, we can alter our names and change our stories. By the grace of God, and his mercy, with accuracy we will still be called Christian. Because we are living beings, we can change ourselves, but God won't let us go.

On the other hand, if the computer operator touches the command button named "delete," that information is lost (unless the operator has second thoughts and strikes the "undo typing" command).

Evangelism is the thrust of the Gospel everywhere. We know it here in Tennessee. Jeff Christopherson, pastor of First Baptist Church, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, knows it. His congregation bought a bowling alley and transformed it into a church house. Eryk Skozen, pastor of Tarnow Baptist Church, Tarnow, Poland, knows it. His people are bold enough to preach on street corners to unbelievers.

Tennessee Baptists will have opportunity to link up with these two and others like them if partnerships with Canada and Poland are approved. Add our longtime partner Michigan and this can be some team! ☺



ALLEN

# Families need real talk

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

■ families matter  
By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

Since most of us have been talking since the age of two, it would seem that we would be

fairly well accomplished in the area of communication.

Many might cite the old adage, "Practice makes perfect." I once heard someone reply, "Practice doesn't always make perfect. If you practice it wrong, practice only makes permanent."

I am afraid that many of the couples that I have seen have been practicing it all wrong and the habitual patterns of ineffective communication are well entrenched.

In our age of advanced technology and rapidly expanding horizons of knowledge base, we are often taught that only the pertinent facts are important.

When we think about communicating with family, we tend to keep the communication on a surface factual level. We can talk about experiences, appliances that need repair, or jobs that need doing around the house. With the emphasis on essential facts, we find it difficult to openly express our feelings.

One of the homework assignments that I started giving couples in therapy is to spend 15 minutes at least five days a week talking and sharing. I also stipulated that they

could not talk about facts, but they should focus on dreams, feelings, and aspirations.

Couples kept coming back to me, saying that they could not talk that long about such a limited subject.

In order to facilitate better communication, I now make the assignment a little more specific.

I still ask them to spend 15 minutes in conversation. I give them two conversation primers. "Tell me three things you enjoyed today and why you enjoyed them."

This statement should be followed by silence on the questioner's part that allows and demands response from the partner.

It is couched so that it will elicit positive encouraging information from both speaker and listener.

The other primer is "Tell me three things that happened to you today and how you felt about them." This statement should elicit communication at a very affective level.

My wife is a natural communicator. She took the initiative in our marriage to make sure that we were communicating.

I remember that often early in our marriage after we had finished the evening meal she would initiate some of these deep level conversations.

She would share her dreams and plans and then ask me about mine. At first I thought she had slipped a cog or two.

I soon came to realize that we were sharing parts of each other that very few couples whom I talked with knew about each other. This led to us sharing everything with each other.

She became my best friend, most trusted advisor, and most intimate companion. She also asked my opinion about things in her life and listened like she was paying attention to the answer.

I would like to encourage couples to try this simple little exercise and see if it does not improve the depth of your marriage relationship. □

Readers are invited to share questions or problems for discussion in Dr. Barkley's column in the Baptist and Reflector. Questions for discussion can be mailed to the newspaper's office in Brentwood.

## Start with a smile

Publisher to aspiring author: "I read your manuscript. It has some good material and some original material."

Author: "Then you will publish it?"

Publisher: "No. You see, the good material is not original, and the original material is not good."

## Take this thought

Have you ever been caught between extremes? If so, you know how Jesus felt. He was too liberal for the extreme right wing Pharisees and too conservative for the extreme left wing Sadducees. That's why he was crucified. Both groups hated him. With strongly opposite viewpoints, the truth is between the two.

## Memorize this Scripture

"He that is not with me is against me" (Luke 11:23) ... "he that is not against us is for us" (Luke 9:50).

## Pray this prayer

Lord help me realize the value of an open mind. Lead me to realize the truth from you is like the open mouth. We must close it on something solid so we can be truly fed. □



BARKLEY

## East Tennessee churches celebrate centennial anniversaries



**DEACON CHAIRMAN** Raymond Burnett holds the plow as members of First Church, Lenoir City, break ground for the future.

### FBC, Lenoir City, breaks ground for future

First Church, Lenoir City, has come a long way since it was first established in 1894 with 16 charter members.

The Loudon County Association church now has a membership in excess of 2,100 members.

In recognizing its past accomplishments, church members also saw the

need for preparing for the future.

After the morning worship service on Sept. 11, members moved to its new 26-acre site which houses an old factory. Members broke ground to signify the remodeling of that old building into educational space. That, according to Jack Bowden, chairman of the Centennial Committee, will be followed by a new sanctuary.

Bowden said the renovation is expected to take 18 months. The church's existing facility will be sold, he said.

Former pastor Charles Sullivan, now executive director of the Baptist State Convention of Indiana, spoke at the morning service and groundbreaking.

He told members that the groundbreaking "is the answer to God's call for the 21st century." □ — Lonnie Wilkey



**PARTICIPANTS IN THE** 100th anniversary celebration at First Church were, from left, Raymond Burnett, Charles Sullivan, Bill Wilkinson, and Jack Bowden.

### Morrisetts Chapel Church members reflect on 100-year history in Hawkins County

Members of Morrisetts Chapel Church in Whitesburg celebrated the church's 100th anniversary Aug. 28.

The Hawkins County church, a member of Holston Valley Association, was organized in April 1894 under the leadership of George W. Carr. Until March 1896 it was known as Lee's Chapel.

The first meeting house was a log structure constructed in 1876 by ex-slave labor for church and school use by R.M. Morrisett.

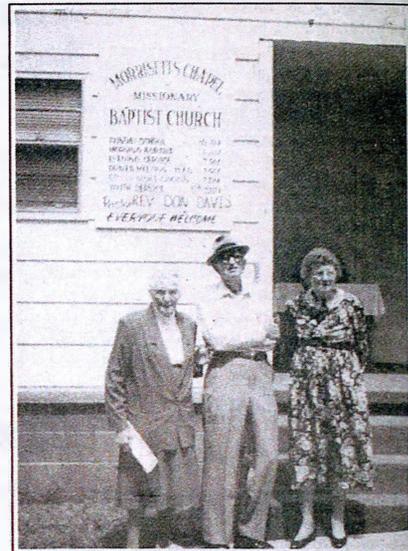
The site for the building was equally convenient to Lee Valley and Grassy Valley in the community.

In 1961 the church's present sanctuary was extended and four Sunday School rooms and a

porch were added. Several improvements have been added since, including a fellowship hall that has been constructed.

The church has had 26 pastors in its 100-year history including current pastor Don Davis.

The church has grown from seven charter members to 170. It has an average Sunday School attendance of 55. □



**PASTOR DON DAVIS**, second from right, welcomed former pastors to the centennial celebration at Morrisetts Chapel. From left are, Paul Clevinger, Randall Burton, Davis, Rex Russell, and Forrest Shropshire.

**FANNIE BOWMAN** left, the oldest member at Morrisetts Chapel Church, is joined by the two people who hold the longest membership at the church, 69 years — Hugh Price and Winnie Bowman.

## Foundation trustees elect Childs

For Baptist and Reflector

**BRENTWOOD** — W.L. "Bo" Childs has been chosen as president-elect of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation.

He will assume the position of president-treasurer of the Foundation upon the retirement of Earl H. Wilson, on or before April 1, 1995.

Childs joined the Tennessee Baptist Foundation staff as vice president for estate planning in July 1993. He came to the post from the Northwest Baptist Foundation in Portland, Ore., where he served as executive director-treasurer for four years. He is a seasoned Foundation professional, having also served the Baptist Foundation of Alabama as vice president for development and later vice president for administration.

The Alabama native was educated in the public school system of Mobile. He received his

undergraduate degree in accounting from Auburn University. He earned a master of divinity degree with a major in Biblical studies from New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. Childs also is a graduate of the College for Financial Planning, Denver, Colo.

He also is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and has met the rigorous experience and ethical requirements of the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards.

Childs and his wife, Elizabeth, have three children and three grandchildren. □



**BO CHILDS** and his wife, Elizabeth, are congratulated by Foundation President Earl Wilson, right, and trustee chairman Bruce Hammond of Brook Hollow Church, Nashville.

## Daily prayer requests for Chile/Tennessee Partnership



September—

- 28** — The Bostons are preparing to leave Chile and come to the states on furlough. May their time away from the field refresh and renew them.
- 29** — As Diann Bailey celebrates her birthday today in Santiago, we ask God use her gift of teaching to inspire and motivate her seminary students.
- 30** — May the Pastor's Wives Support Group of the Central Coast Association be strengthened as they meet to encourage each other and learn how to be more effective in their husband's ministries.

October—

- 1** — Our Tennessee volunteers are gathering for orientation.
- 2** — Missionary Archie Jones Sr. is on his final furlough in North Carolina before retiring.
- 3** — God's guidance on the Chilean churches in a biblical worship style that would exalt Christ, result in souls being saved, and strengthen believers in their Christian walk.
- 4** — Missions of the Central Coast Association need to be encouraged and actively move toward constituting into Baptist churches.

**Breaks record for attendance in one annual meeting**

## Record 1,100 of state's senior adults gather

**PIGEON FORGE** — The 20th annual Tennessee Senior Adult Conference drew a record attendance of 1,100 — the most to attend one annual meeting. Seniors traveled from four states and 86 churches to Pigeon Forge Sept. 21-23 to study the Bible with James Porch, executive director, Tennessee Baptist Convention, prepare for living by attending small group conferences, and worship through music led by David and Linda Ford of Nashville.

The seniors also got into the act by performing in a talent show, displaying their crafts in a craft show, and bantering with Johnnie Hall of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, who honored special seniors and distributed door prizes. During free time most participants hopped onto church vans and buses which took them shopping in the many speciality shops and outlet malls of the area or on a tour of the Great Smoky National Park.

### Bible study

Porch led the conferees to study Romans 8 and its message that people can claim victory over several obstacles of life.

People will experience weakness and

opposition, but Christians can overcome them, said Porch.

Weaknesses encountered in life range from spiritual needs to moral and physical infirmities, he noted.

One way God helps is through spirit-aided prayer, explained Porch. The Holy Spirit "aids our weaknesses," he

said. And when one doesn't know what to request from God, the spirit will direct him or her. One shouldn't presume to know what is best, just as Jesus did not presume.

"Usually I've found that his vision for me is better than I could ever envision," said Porch.

Don't shortchange prayer by allowing it to become only a mental exercise, he continued. One must remember God is compassionate. "He feels as we feel," he said.

Verse 28 of this chapter is often misunderstood, continued Porch, because people overlook the subject of the verse — God. In other words, he said, God makes all things work together for good, etc.

In addition, to fully interpret this verse, one also must consider God's timing and sovereignty, he stated.

In addition to spirit-aided prayer, Christians can turn to God's covenant of love with us to conquer weakness, said Porch.

Today's society is contract-based rather than covenant-based, he explained. Even in personal relationships, people tend to contract with others for their needs. A covenant is based totally on trust.

"Until we as Baptists get trust back into our vocabulary and get control out, we're not going to get on

with the missionary calling we have," said Porch.

Christians also must struggle against opposition in life, he noted.

He told how he faced opposition which came during a stressful period of his life — his wife was fighting cancer and his son was a baby.

He encouraged people to try to deal with those opposing them. That may not be considered a Christian action, said Porch, but it's better to deal with unresolved sin, which can "take a lot of the quality out of life."

Christians are promised abundant life, he reminded, which God provided by giving his son.

Revenge doesn't lead to abundant life, suggested Porch. Seeking revenge is motivated by the fact that "many of us are still caught up in a lot of legalism which is man's attempt to satisfy God for his sins," said Porch. Instead of turning to legalism, Christians should simply repent, he noted.

A final promise from Romans 8 is that God maintains a constant vigilance — interceding for us, reported Porch.

"While there is opposition there is victory, even possibly to the point of the grace of God bringing reconciliation. Don't shut the door. It can happen," he concluded. □



**COMPARING PHOTOS OF GRANDCHILDREN** are Mary Ford, left, Woodmont Church, Nashville, and Nellie Bolton, First Church, Lawrenceburg.



**PAUSING DURING CONVERSATION** are, from left, James Porch; Bob Cook, conference leader who is retired from the Florida Baptist Convention; Mrs. Cook; and Lem Wade, Glenwood Church, Nashville.



**SINGING DURING THE TALENT SHOW** is the senior adult choir — the XYZ (Extra Years of Zest) Choir — of Glenwood Church, Nashville. It is led by Evelyn Rader.



**LEADING A CONFERENCE** is Dennis Lyle, retired worker of the Nashville Baptist Association who is employed by the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.



**EXERCISING DURING A CONFERENCE** on fitness are, from left, Artie Todd, Jewell Warren, and Lois Argo, all of First Church, Trezevant. Members of the seniors group wore a t-shirt bearing its name.

# Stay-at-home mothers say choice makes sense

Compiled from news reports

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — "There's no place like home" is more than Dorothy's most famous line in "The Wizard of Oz." It also describes the attitude among many former working mothers.

The percentage of women in the work force between the ages of 25 and 44 is dropping for the first time in more than 25 years. The decline is most pronounced in the 20- to 24-year-old age group, where the level of working women has slipped to 70 percent from 75 percent since 1989.

This national trend is being debated by demographers, economists, feminists, and traditionalists. But women who are part of the trend say it makes sense.

Alana Stump is one. The former church secretary here had worked for nine years before she decided to be a stay-at-home mother for her infant son. That was about a year and a half ago and Stump says she doesn't regret her decision.

"Staying home with my son has worked very well. I love being at home

with him. I wanted to see my baby take his first step and roll over for the first time. I just couldn't leave him with someone I didn't know," she said.

This aversion to day care is shared by many young mothers, and it appears to be a factor causing the exodus from the workplace.

Susan Doyle of Birmingham, Ala., has been a stay-at-home mother since July 8 when she quit her job handling news and media relations for Woman's Missionary Union to stay home with her seven-month-old daughter.

"We weren't going to do day care," Doyle said. "I feel like she's my No. 1 priority. I felt like God had given her to us, and it was important for me to fulfill my responsibilities with her and see she was raised with the background I want her to have. I don't feel I can delegate that responsibility to someone else."

Doyle wants her daughter to have the same strong family network she had while growing up. "My mother was always home. I remember the secure feeling that gave me," she said.

Leaving the work force was not a quick decision for either woman, in part because of the question of finances. In a recent article in Barron's financial weekly, economist Richard Hokenson identified the traditional one-paycheck family as the fastest-growing household unit.

In the 1990s, Hokenson said, households with "more time than money" are replacing families that have "more money than time" as women bow out of the work force to spend more time with their children.

"Quitting my job to stay at home with our son was something I had been praying about," Stump said. "I didn't think at first we could handle it financially, but I really felt it was

what the Lord wanted me to do."

Stump said the decision has been the right one for her family. "For us, life has been a lot better. Things work themselves out. You can find a way to live on what you make," she said.

Another couple who made that step of faith was Lonell and Mark Camp of Villa Rica, Ga.

Last July Lonell Camp quit her job of 12 years to spend more time with her daughter, Alexandra (Alex).

After a great deal of consideration, Camp said she had to decide that Alex is "more important than that job and that paycheck. We thought about it, prayed about it, and cried about it, and I quit," she said.

Though the Camps' income dropped by 30 to 40 percent after she quit, the financial adjustments have been challenging, but not impossible, Camp said, adding "the Lord has provided for us."

She knows other young couples are struggling with the

same issue. "Several couples I know want to quit," she noted. "Many feel they have to have two incomes, that they can't quit."

"You have to have faith. You just make that step, and God has a way of providing for you," Camp said.

According to the Barron's article, the working mom actually may not be making that much money. In the article Hokenson said an estimated 80 cents of every dollar earned by the average working mother goes to child care, meals at work, gas, and clothing. This factor influences many women to leave the workplace, because for many, going to work just doesn't pay off.

While Madison Avenue is debating how the trend will affect purchasing habits of American families, the stay-at-home trend has implications for religious organizations. All three women agree staying at home has given them more time to be involved in their churches in recent months.

"Deciding to be a stay-at-home mom has absolutely made a difference in my church life," said Doyle. "My church involvement was almost non-existent. For example, on Wednesday evenings, I didn't want to pick her up right after work and then just take her straight to the nursery at church," she said.

Besides the time factor, Stump said her energy level kept her from a more active church life.

"Before, when I worked, at the end of the day I just wanted to relax. Now I can go to mission groups, even during the day. Not working has freed me up to do that," she said.

□ — This story was compiled from a Baptist Press story by Keith Hinson and an Associated Baptist Press story by Debbie Von Behren.

# Parenting aging parents brings stress, choices

By Charles Willis  
For Baptist Press

GLORIETA, N.M. — Parenting one's aging parents brings understandable stress and a wide range of decisions to people who may still be rearing their own children, a writer and consultant couple told participants during a recent meeting at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

Neil Knierim, pastoral care consultant in the Baptist Sunday School Board's pastor-staff leadership department, and his wife, Vickie, a writer and conference leader, said the strain of additional responsibility weighs differently on church staff couples.

"You don't have weekends, since you have to be at the church," Knierim observed, "and most of you don't minister where your parents live."

Yet in addition to meeting the expectations of other church staff people and the congregation, couples in ministry increasingly find themselves challenged also to meet the needs of their children, their parents, their spouse, and themselves. Those same expectations could apply to others who are dealing with aging parents as well.

Needs vary among family members, conference participants confirmed. They cited common needs of love, encouragement, attention, and time, but noted children need security, guidance, and protection, among other unique factors.

Aging parents seek independence, service (transportation for food and medical services), contact, the need to be needed, and help in planning for future life changes.

Spouses need time alone and together, recreation, support, and physical needs met.

And individuals, they said, also need time alone for their own interests, time with their spouse, and time with friends.

Mrs. Knierim said key words related to those needs include responsibility, prevention, sacrifice, compromise, control, demand, guilt, burnout, balance, stress, priorities, limitations, understanding, and expectations.

Participants suggested, out of their experiences, that responsibility means everyone in the home needs to have a job, including older members who may still be able to perform a

task that they are known for, such as meal preparation.

Prevention comes into play when family members talk about how life will change as older persons need to be parented. Participants suggested talking with children specifically about those changes, pointing to joys as well as challenges.

Sacrifice and compromise are present in any situation involving more than one person, they agreed.

Control and demand issues surround all parties involved, including families and even employers. Family members and employers expect to have first place in our lives, they agreed.

Guilt — regretting acts or lack of action — can affect health, participants noted, and burnout can happen to people who become "weary in well-doing."

The words "balance" and "stress" led conferees to say, "you can't be all things to all people." They concluded people must rely on God to help them weigh choices to achieve balance in life.

Understanding and expectations are important among family members who need to be aware and acknowledge gratefully when some people carry a greater load in helping parents.

Knierim said aging parents use techniques to manipulate for attention, particularly visits requiring travel time.

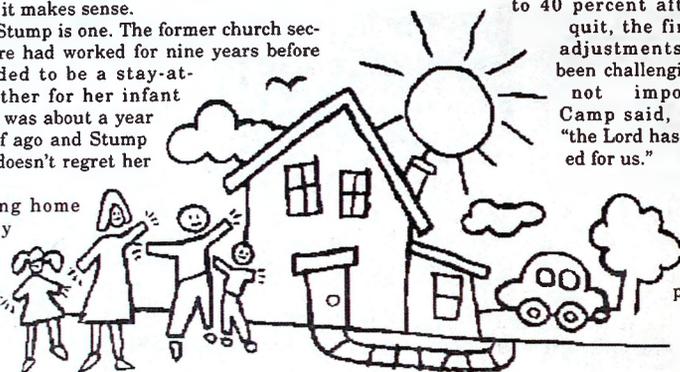
"We have a choice," he said. "There may be those who are nearby who can help us assess the validity of the need rather than just our reacting."

"Be cautious of emotional pull. We make decisions based on emotion differently from those we do based on fact," he continued. Distance and time may not be a luxury. Decide if an immediate trip is wise or if a visit later would be more helpful.

He suggested evaluating your ability, based on personal skills.

"There are some things we cannot do for our parents, but we can determine who else can meet a specific need," he said.

Communicate your intentions to everyone affected, he urged, and "pray for wisdom and direction. Distance is a barrier that can be overcome through God. He can comfort, encourage, and heal our parents and he can guide me to know how to respond." □



# TenneScene ■ the people, their work

## ■ the leaders

■ **Ricky Clark**, associate pastor/music, St. Andrew Church, Panama City, Fla., has been called as minister of music, West Jackson Church, Jackson. The graduate of Union University, Jackson, has

**CLARK**

served on the staff of the First Church, Humboldt, where he also was ordained, and Hillcrest Church, Jackson. He is a graduate of New Orleans Baptist

theological Seminary.

■ **Ivan Raley**, retired pastor, Grassland Heights Church, Franklin, has been named interim vice president, Middle Tennessee Region, Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. He follows Jerry Blasingame. Raley will supervise the Franklin campus and Clarksville Alternative Home.

■ **Joe Wright Jr.**, pastor, Bentonia Church, Bentonia, Miss., has been called as pastor of First Church, McMinnville, effective Oct. 9. He is a graduate of the Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Miss. **Carroll Owen**, a retired Tennessee Baptist Con-

vention worker, has led the church as interim pastor.

■ **Springfield Church**, Springfield, has called **John D. Laida**, retired pastor, First Church, Clarksville, as interim pastor, effective Oct. 2.

■ **First Church, Tullahoma**, has called **Steve C. Carreker**, pastor, First Church, Boone, N.C., as pastor, effective Nov. 6. Carreker is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., where he earned the doctor of ministry degree; Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich., where he earned a master of education and counseling psychology; and Mercer University, Atlanta, Ga. He has served churches in Kentucky and Georgia.



**BREAKING GROUND FOR THE NEW SANCTUARY** of Miston Church, Bogota, are, from left, Eddie Blair; Stanley Blair; Joe Naylor, director of missions, Dyer Baptist Association; Walter Nale; Ricky Baggett; Albert Nale; and Carmon Dennison, pastor. The new sanctuary will seat 140 people and include a pastor's study and baptistry. The ceremony was held Aug. 28.

Nashville, has begun a contemporary worship service which is held weekly on Sundays at 8:30 a.m.

■ **Faith Church, Bartlett**, will hold a ground breaking and land dedication ceremony Oct. 2 at 4 p.m. at its new location, 3755 German-town Road in Bartlett.

■ As a result of a revival at **First Church, Lawrenceburg**, 27 people made professions of faith, in addition to many other decisions. Harold Hunter of Nashville was the evangelist.

■ The Florida Boys, a music group, will perform Oct. 6 at 7 p.m. at **Hillcrest Church, Lebanon**.

■ Homecoming will be held Oct. 30 at **Ridgeview Church, Chattanooga**. Activities include a luncheon and afternoon service at 2 p.m.

■ **Mill Creek Church, Nashville**, will be led in revival by Phil Glisson, evangelist, Leewood Church, Memphis. It will be Oct. 27-30.

■ **Liberty Church, McEwen**, has started an addition to the church's building which will add space for classrooms.

■ **Temple Church, Old Hickory**, will host Wayne Barber, a host of "Precept Upon Precept" instructional videos. He will teach Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 from Ephesians.

## ■ the churches

■ **Dotson Memorial Church, Maryville**, will hold revival Oct. 23-26. Phil Glisson, evangelist, Leewood Church, Memphis, will lead it.

■ The annual Homecoming of **Mount View Church, Antioch**, will be Oct. 2. James Bond, a former pastor, will speak during morning worship services. The service also will include the ordination of Bryan Carr and Tony Thurman as deacons. A luncheon will follow.

■ **Haywood Hills Church,**



**WITH A VIEW OF THE FUTURE A NOTE** representing debt of Meridian Church, Jackson, has just been burned by, from left, Max Hart Jr., Jerry England, Linda England, Faye Hart, and Bill Wheat. The church also initiated a building program and burned another note on Sept. 18, which was the 41st anniversary of the church. The building program is for a 600-seat sanctuary and family life center.

perched high on a 3,000 foot cliff. Accessibility comes via a terrifying ride in a swaying basket that is pulled by several strong monks. One American tourist became quite nervous halfway up the cliff when he noticed the rope

was old and frayed. In an attempt to find comfort for his fears, he asked the attending monk how often they replaced the rope. The monk responded "Whenever it breaks!"

"Don't fix it if it ain't broke" is a useful philosophy for some things but not for personal faith, relationships, and health. Daily, we should nurture our faith through Bible study and prayer and weekly in worship with God's people. We should be constantly nurturing personal relationships. Our health needs daily care. Don't wait until it's broken. Nurture your faith, relation-

ships, and health all the time. □

## Seeking God

By Ernest E. James, pastor  
First Church, Bolivar

An astronomer was in conversation with a preacher who wanted the brilliant scientist to think about God. The astronomer just shrugged him off saying, "Preacher, I have a very simple theology: just do good and love your neighbor as yourself."

To which the preacher answered, "Yes, and I have a very simple astronomy: 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star.'"

Many people have this kind of theology; this kind of concept about God and how we please him. The truth is that many have fabricated their own ideas about God and have not allowed him to speak for himself. They need to hear what God says about himself and our relationship with him. That's why we need to witness concerning the truth of the Gospel and to testify how Jesus Christ has changed our lives. □

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.

# Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

## Nurturing needed

By S. Ray Jones, director of missions  
Big Hatchie Baptist Association

In Portugal there is a monastery

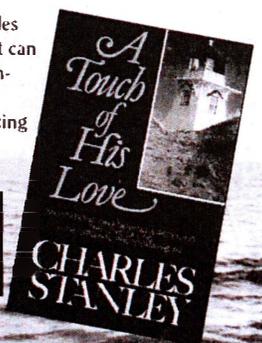
## Have You Ever Wondered, Does God Really Love Me?

In *A Touch of His Love*, Dr. Charles Stanley shows how the love of Christ can transform your life. Dr. Stanley combines original photography with 31 moving devotions to show the amazing power of God's boundless love.

For *A Touch of His Love*, or any of Dr. Stanley's other devotionals in this series, visit your favorite bookstore today.



Zondervan Publishing House



# Author of new SBC history sees a people of faith and hope

By Charles Richardson  
For Baptist Press

ABILENE, Texas — Southern Baptists, "for all their biases and weaknesses, are a people of faith and hope," concludes the author of the sesquicentennial history of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jesse C. Fletcher, chancellor and Connally professor of missions at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, has written *The Southern Baptist Convention, A Sesquicentennial History*, published by Broadman &

Holman Publishers and released in September. Fletcher is a former pastor of **First Church, Knoxville**.

"The history is the way we were and how we got to be who we are," Fletcher said in an interview. The 467-page narrative includes one chapter titled "The Battle for the Gavel, 1979-90," detailing the denomination's "conservative resurgence" beginning with the election of Adrian Rogers as SBC president in June 1979.

He described that event as "not the end of a campaign, but

the beginning of one," adding: "It soon became obvious this controversy would be different from anything Southern Baptists had experienced."

Recognizing the difficulty of writing a history in connection with controversy, Fletcher wrote in his introduction: "Be-

cause of the political climate and the author's determined effort to avoid undue bias, only materials published or collected in libraries have been used."

He said SBC annuals were "primary" sources for much of the history. Other materials used included Baptist state pa-

per articles, journals and periodicals, and collections of letters and papers of "the principal players," Fletcher said.

The book is available from Baptist Book Stores at an introductory price of \$23.97 through Dec. 31. After Jan. 1 the cost will be \$29.99. □

## Union hosts West Tennessee pastors

The West Tennessee Pastors Conference will meet Oct. 4 at Union University in Jackson.

Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, will be the speaker.

The conference begins at 10 a.m. with fellowship time in the university's new Student Union Building cafeteria. The program will begin at 10:45 a.m. in the Harvey Lecture Hall.

A complimentary lunch will be served at noon. □

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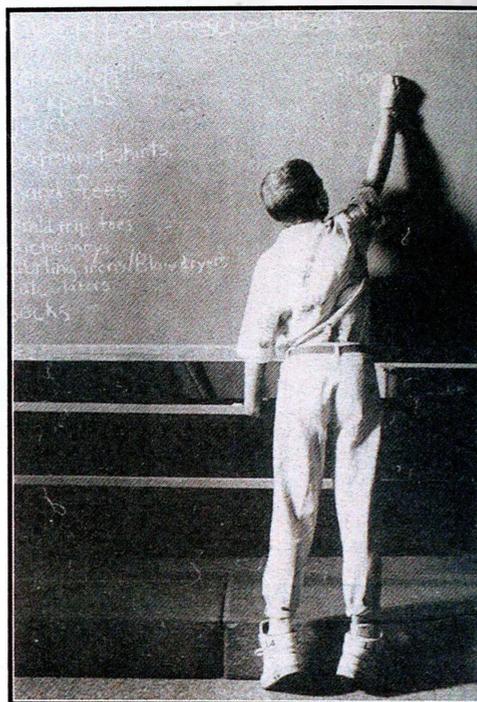
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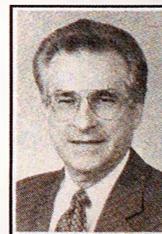
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# ■ Sunday School lesson commentary

## God's redemptive purpose

By Ray Fullilove

Both Ephesians and Philippians were written by the Apostle Paul to the saints of God in Ephesus and Philippi.

In both books, there is the teaching of doctrine, the stress of discipline, and the expression of praise. In Ephesians, "the Queen of the epistles," we find the foundations which last forever for the saints of God and note the believer's justification in Jesus. In Philippians, we are inspired with a faith which keeps us singing and rejoices in our joy in Jesus.

We center our attention this week on God's redemptive purpose in Christ found in the first chapter of Ephesians.

### God's presence — in God, the Father — vv. 1-6

In the opening verses, the Apostle Paul identifies himself as the anointed author of this letter of love (v. 1), to whom he is addressing, and with an inspiring salutation (v. 2). With inspired insight, Paul expresses his praise as to the redeeming purpose of God, the Father, toward the saints of God (v. 3). This is indicated in God's choice for us (v. 4), initiated in God's love toward us (v. 5), inspired by God's will concerning us, and illustrated in God's grace revealed in Jesus Christ who accepts us as we are that we may become as he is (v. 6).

### God's power — in God, the Son — vv. 7-12

Though God may have chosen us in his plan, centered his love toward us in his predestination, and consumed us with his forgiving grace in his pleasure; still, every person must choose God's redemption, by faith, in Jesus Christ.

In this redemption, we receive the forgiving grace of God in Jesus Christ with amazement (v. 7), with abounding revelation (v. 8), and with abundant reward (vv. 9-12).

### God's promise — in the Holy Spirit — vv. 13-14

The redemptive purpose of God toward us is assured by God's promise of the Holy Spirit. This Promised One (John 16:7-16) becomes personal in our conversion as we hear the Word of God with conviction, trust in Jesus Christ with our commitment, and are sealed with confidence in our redemption until Jesus comes (vv. 13-14).

### Our praise — vv. 15-23

Having lifted the hearts of these saints of God with the fundamental fact of their faith, Paul inspires them with praise.

The result of our redemption in Christ always produces praise. It will be revealed in our witness (vv. 15-16), in our wisdom of the Word of God (vv. 17-19), and with the wonder of the power and the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives (vv. 20-23).

In this opening chapter, Paul reveals to us the heart of his theology compressed in chapters

1-3 of Ephesians. It makes us feel as if we are walking on holy ground and inspires us to stay on the higher ground of faith to sing again and again: "I want to live above the world, tho' Satan's darts at me are hurled; for faith has caught the joyful sound, the song of saints on higher ground."

Aren't we glad that the salvation that we have in Jesus gives us a song to sing! □ — Ray Fullilove is pastor of Poplar Avenue Church, Memphis.

## Bible Book Series for Oct. 2 Focal Passage Ephesians 1:3-14, 18b-23

## Master designer, master design

By Elizabeth Howard

Perhaps you have examined a tapestry in a museum, marveled at the intricate design, the variety of color, the tiny threads.

Tapestries were usually woven by guilds or schools or families, skilled workers spending many months on a single design; but before the first thread was woven into the cloth, a master designer, an artist, had a vision of the finished work and made sketches for the workers to follow.

In the same way, God designed the universe and spoke the word that brought it into being. He followed a plan, creating the universe bit by bit, color by color, just as the skilled workers created the tapestry.

### Light in a dark void — vv. 1-4

In the beginning, the earth was void and dark, but God, the master designer, had a vision of the finished work of art. He was there, moving over the waters.

The first thread woven into his tapestry was light, a dominant color in his design. Later, Jesus, the Light of the World, came to save God's creation from the darkness of sin. Each Christian is a lamp set on a lampstand to shed light in the world.

Scientists tell us light is the source of life. Once light was created, the rest of the creation followed in order, according to God's logic. He divided light from darkness, created Heaven and Earth, land and sea, the heavenly bodies, fish and birds, the beasts of the earth. As he finished each step in the design, he evaluated it and saw that it was good.

### Humankind in God's image — vv. 26-28

## Life and Work Series for Oct. 2 Focal Passage Genesis 1:1-4, 26-31

A human being, though a mammal, bearing many of the same characteristics as other mammals, is the only creature made in the image of God.

Each person has a spirit, the most God-like characteristic, for God is spirit. Human beings, male and female, have intelligence, reason, and unique creative talents. Each has the ability to make moral choices, choosing good or evil, and is accountable for the choices made.

Human beings have dominion over the other creatures, but along with dominion comes responsibility for preserving and protecting God's creation. As stewards, we will one day have to answer to God for the way we have used or abused the earth's resources.

### Sustenance for God's creation — vv. 29-31

Even before human beings were created, God planned for their sustenance. A great variety of trees and plants provided the food, not only for human beings but also for the other creatures. They also bore seeds, ensuring crop after crop, season after season.

After the sixth day of creation, God again evaluated what he had made, and pronounced it "very good." Humankind, the master design, was the last thread in his tapestry; his work of creation was complete. □ — Elizabeth Howard is a member of Cumberland Homestead Church, Crossville.

## Convention Uniform Series for Oct. 2 Focal Passage Judges 2:11-19

## Israel's tragic pattern of life

By Samuel Dean

The young man seemed to be sincere when he stated, "I bet I've been saved a hundred times." He would make a profession of faith, do something wrong, and start all over again with a new profession of faith.

During the times of the Judges, Israel vacillated between faithfulness and rebellion toward God. In the destruction following their rebellion, judges arose to call them back to faithfulness in the covenant (v. 16). With the death of a judge the people turned back toward other gods, and the cycle was repeated (vv. 18-19).

Note that Israel's problem started when another generation after Joshua "did not know the Lord or the works which he had done for Israel" (v. 10). The succeeding generation was poorly taught or did not appreciate God and what he had done for them.

It is one thing to experience something; it is another to be informed about it. History has much to teach us, but few want to become serious students.

Parents will tell their children about what it was like growing up years ago. The children will sometimes respond, "I don't want to hear about those antique days."

It is our responsibility to teach adequately the succeeding generation with the hope that the reality of God will be sensed and embraced.

An empty mind and an uncommitted heart will make one vulnerable to temptation. At times Israel did not know God and did not have the knowledge of him. They were poorly prepared to deal with the temptations awaiting them.

The lack of knowledge of God made the Israelites vulnerable in the Caananite culture. Since the Israelites were not able at first to capture all of the land promised, they had to live among the Caananites and their pagan practices.

Their big challenge came with the god, Baal, an agricultural deity. The Caananites were successful farmers. The Israelites had been nomadic people and were not skilled in raising crops. The temptation came to follow the farming techniques of their neighbors who attributed their success to Baal.

The cultic myth in the Caananite religion had Baal dying and coming back to life again, coinciding with the cessation and commencement of the seasonal rains. The followers of Baal believed that humans should imitate the sexual actions of Baal and his female companion, Astarte, to ensure agricultural fertility. Having sex with a female temple prostitute was an act of worship that aided agricultural success.

The worship of Baal was in stark contrast with the worship of Yahweh, God of Israel. The religion of Baal emphasized sympathetic magic that was devoid of ethical concerns. The God of the covenant was ethical, calling the people to just relationships. The dilemma before the people was choosing between a god of success and hedonistic indulgences or a god of ethical concerns. Tragically, Israel succumbed.

The text of our lesson raises some questions for us to ponder:

1. How effectively are we teaching our faith to the generation? Or, what are we learning from the revelation of God that we have received?

2. Do the gods of success cause us to water down our ethical sensitivity?

3. Are we allowing our culture to captivate our sense of discipleship?

Perhaps, we should make a verse of a hymn our prayer: "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love; here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above." □ — Samuel Dean is pastor of First Church, Clinton.

## Crime bill targets child pornography

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The crime bill signed into law Sept. 13 by President Bill Clinton includes measures targeting overseas child prostitution and the importation of child pornography into this country.

The new law penalizes Americans who travel in foreign lands for the purpose of having sexual relations with children under the age of 18.

The law also prohibits the production, possession, and distribution of any visual material depicting a minor involved in a sexually explicit act, when such material is intended for importation into the United States. □

## Smith helps dedicate chair at Southeastern

Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Southern Baptist evangelist Bailey Smith preached Sept. 6 in the dedicatory service of the chair of evangelism named in his honor at Southeastern

Baptist Theological Seminary. Southeastern's board of trustees voted to establish the Bailey Smith Chair of Evangelism last March in response to a \$1 million endowment given for that purpose.

In his sermon, Smith encouraged his listeners to "heed the Great Commission. You don't spell go, P-R-A-Y; you don't spell go, G-I-V-E; you spell go, G-O," Smith said, adding that it is hypocritical to be concerned about world missions and then to ignore your lost neighbors. □

## BSU director's ordination leads to associational action

Baptist Press

DALLAS — The executive board of Galveston Association recently voted to request the transfer of Raye Nell Dyer as director of the Baptist Student Union at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

The action, on a 29-10 vote with one abstention, came after the association's BSU advisory committee reported it felt

Dyer and the association had "irreconcilable differences" growing out of the process of her ordination to the Gospel ministry.

Although salaries and benefits of BSU directors are paid by the state convention (the association provides program funds), the directors must be approved locally and require continued local endorsement, said Jack Greever, director of the division of student work for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Greever said he planned to talk with Dyer about a new place of service, but would have to have her permission before he could place her at another school.

Dyer said she is willing to think and pray about any options. □

## Hunt kicks off prayer focus at Southwestern

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH — Prayer specialist T.W. Hunt recently kicked off Prayer Focus Week at the seminary with four chapel messages urging students and faculty to "pray big-

ger" than ever.

A former Southwestern professor now employed by the Baptist Sunday School Board, Hunt reminded students "God himself takes the initiative in prayer. It is he who comes to us. He reveals himself expecting some kind of response from us."

Hunt based much of his prayer lesson on his discoveries from transcribing every prayer found in the Bible. □

## Midweek block party yields 65 conversions

Baptist Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — More than 450 people attended a school of evangelism sponsored by the Home Mission Board Sept. 6-9 in Santa Clara. But what pleased organizers even more was what happened at an evangelistic block party held in conjunction with the school.

In just two hours 65 people made professions of faith in Jesus Christ at the midweek block party.

Bill Sims, California Southern Baptist Convention evangelism associate, said holding the event on a Wednesday af-

ternoon was unusual. Block parties normally work better on weekends, he said.

Organizers candidly admitted they were "pleasantly surprised" by the 65 professions of faith and scores of prospects identified. But they were especially encouraged to learn firsthand that weekends are not the only time block parties can be effective.

As a result Sims and Toby Frost, associate director of mass evangelism at the HMB, expect a lot more of the evangelistic efforts in the future.

"Almost everyone who helped conduct this one plans to hold block parties in their own communities," Frost said. □

## St. Amant returns to New Orleans

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — A distinguished church historian has returned to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

C. Penrose St. Amant will serve as visiting professor of church history during the 1994-95 academic year at the school where he first began his seminary teaching. □

## Outside 'refugee spotlight,' Baptists aid Rwandans in Tanzania

Baptist Press

KARAGWE, Tanzania — The 125,000 Rwandan refugees huddled in this corner of Tanzania don't even rate a dot on the news maps. Most reporters focus on the much larger numbers of refugees in Zaire, with an occasional glance at camps in Ngara, Tanzania, to the south.

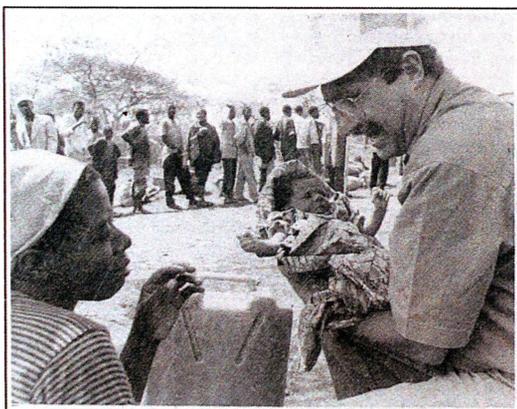
But Hutu people fearing death in Rwanda haven't forgotten Karagwe. It's a safe haven — if they can slip past army patrols, make it through the jungle, and bring enough money to buy a spot on a wooden boat that probably leaks.

Karagwe is one of two places where Southern Baptists fund and staff relief operations for Rwandan refugees. The other is in high-profile Goma, Zaire.

A team of Tanzanian Baptists, FMB volunteers, and Florida Baptist Convention volunteers work in Karagwe ministering to a variety of needs. — Craig Bird



**BAPTIST PASTOR** Kanyarwanda Sylvester, above, prays with a group of about 30 refugees who publicly came forward for help meeting spiritual needs during a recent worship service for Rwandans at the Kagenyi Refugee Camp in Karagwe, Tanzania. **AT RIGHT**, Southern Baptist missionary and refugee worker Rob Moor, who has seen far too many dead Rwandan babies, enjoys a few moments of holding a healthy infant while encouraging her mother. — Photos by P. Kevin Morley



**ABOVE**, a leaking, overloaded wooden boat ride through a crocodile-infested swamp is the last danger for Rwandan Hutus fleeing Tutsi soldiers for northwestern Tanzania. **BELOW**, perhaps nothing typifies refugee life as much as standing in line for food, medical treatment, and various other reasons.

