

Baptist and Reflector

July 12, 1995

VOL. 161 ■ NO. 27

STATEWIDE EDITION

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

Zambian Baptist leader rejects solution

Baptist Press

LUSAKA, Zambia — With the public backing of Zambia's vice president, representatives of more than half of the churches in the Baptist Convention of Zambia met and asked the convention's executive secretary to withdraw her letter blocking work permits for missionaries.

But the executive secretary, M.B. Kamuwanga, has refused, calling the June 23 meeting illegal and "another skillfully masterminded attempt at destroying the convention structure."

The three pastors who car-

ried the request from the meeting to the executive secretary are now seeking an appointment with Brigadier General G. Miyanda, Zambia's vice president, whose dramatic visit to the meeting resulted in the action the executive secretary is rejecting.

Meanwhile, missionaries apparently are still being granted one-month extensions on their work permits while immigration officials study the case.

Zambians at the meeting accepted an apology from Southern Baptist missionaries over misunderstanding and hurt caused by a court case which

arose during the two-year-old struggle. The struggle began when the executive secretary and a newly-elected executive committee wrote to the immigration office and asked for approval power over any new work permits granted to Southern Baptist missionaries. The mission objected since it is registered separately and the convention has never had that power in the 25 years the two groups have worked together.

If the dispute is not resolved, there could be only four Southern Baptist missionary couples in Zambia by December. □

SBC education agency seeks time to phase out

Baptist Press

SAN ANTONIO — Members of the Southern Baptist Education Commission, whose agency is slated for dissolution by the convention's comprehensive reorganization plan, voted to petition the SBC Executive Committee to allow the commission until the year 2000 to phase itself out of existence.

Commission members met on the heels of the Southern Baptist Convention where messengers June 20 approved "The Covenant for a New Century," which combines 19 agencies into 12 and calls for the total disbandment of the

Education Commission and its programs. The commission, which was established in 1915, is charged with serving and promoting Southern Baptist-related colleges and schools.

Commission members spent nearly five hours discussing the reorganization plan and presented two resolutions directed to the SBC Executive Committee.

The first resolution petitions the Executive Committee "to allow the Education Commission until the year 2000 to phase itself out of existence in an orderly and businesslike manner in order to arrange for the continuation of its valuable and useful programs for the

benefit of the Southern Baptist Convention and Baptists everywhere. □

The second resolution addresses the disposition of more than \$600,000 in loan endowments currently used to help professors at Southern Baptist-related colleges and schools pursue doctoral and postdoctoral education. The loans may be repaid in service and become scholarships if professors continue to teach at their institutions.

Education Commission Executive Director Stephen Carleton said time is needed so the agency can "help the Association of (Southern Baptist) — See SBC, page 2

Nominations sought for top TBC pastors

BRENTWOOD — Nominations for Bivocational Pastor of the Year and Small Church Pastor of the Year in Tennessee will be accepted through Sept. 1.

A bivocational pastor must have a full-time job in addition to his ministry to qualify for the award. The small church pastor must serve full-time in a church with an average Sunday School attendance of less than 100. Both must have held their positions within the last calendar year.

Awards will be given to pastors in each major region of the state. Recipients will be chosen by the selection subcommittee of the TBC Convention Ministries Committee, chaired by Randall Rogers of First Church, Gordonsville.

Recipients will be honored during the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention which meets Nov. 14-15 at the Hamilton County Convention Center in Chattanooga.

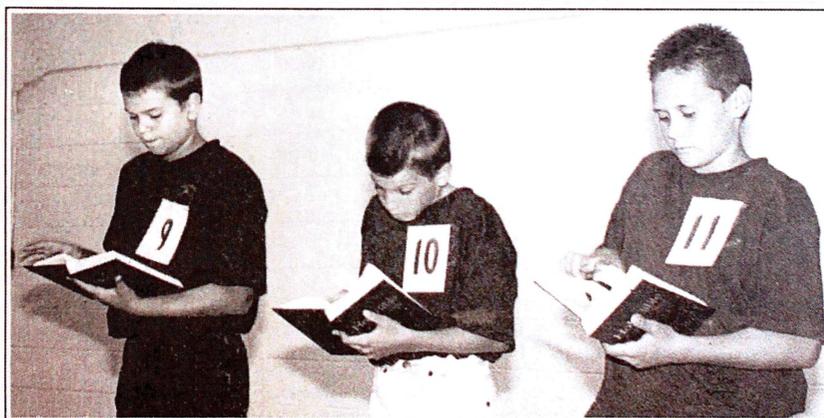
Application forms for nominations may be obtained from local Baptist associations. Mail completed forms to Convention Ministries Division, TBC, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024. □

TBC gifts still ahead for year

BRENTWOOD — After eight months of the Tennessee Baptist Convention budget year, Tennessee Baptists have given \$17,996,750 through the Cooperative Program.

Gifts are \$1,230,866 or 7.34 percent over the same period last year and are \$540,328 over budget needs, according to TBC Executive Director James Porch.

"We still think it's going to be a budget-meeting year," Porch said, expressing hope that July also will be a good month for CP gifts. "We appreciate the sacrificial giving of our Tennessee Baptist churches," Porch said. □



Bible drill competition

Hurriedly flipping through their Bibles to find a passage during the state Bible drill are, from left, Jean Fontenot, Matthew Ferguson, and Isaiah Craig of First Church, Loretto. — See story and additional photos on page 7.

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SBC education agency seeks ...

— Continued from page 1
Colleges and Schools as they find ways to pick up some of what the Education Commission has been doing."

Among the commission's programs is the Cooperative Services International Education Consortium which currently includes 300 educational exchange programs predominantly in what the Foreign Mission Board calls "World A" countries where traditional missionaries are not allowed. Commissioners discussed a wide-array of possibilities to keep CSIEC alive including asking the FMB to follow-through with a previously announced plan to provide \$30,000 annually for CSIEC funding and perhaps to even increase that amount.

Other programs slated for transfer include a representa-

tive voice in Washington to speak to governmental issues such as student financial aid "without which the colleges cannot exist," *The Southern Baptist Educator*, a publication sent to more than 11,000 educators and convention leaders; a placement service; administration of several loan and scholarship funds, and various workshops.

M.O. Owens Jr., a new commission member from Gastonia, N.C., said although he basically had been in favor of the concept of restructuring, "one of the things that has bothered me is the fact that action was taken without sitting down and working through all the problems that will be and are created."

Owens said he believes the Executive Committee would be responsive to the need for

more time and an extension of the budget to work out a transition of those important tasks to other entities, especially since none of the Education Commission programs were being assigned to other SBC agencies as in the case of the other small agencies. "I can tell you they do not know what's going on (in the individual agencies). They have not taken into account all of the terrible things that can happen and are happening. We need to sit down with them eye to eye and explain why we need this transition time," he said.

The resolution on the loan funds requests the Executive Committee "to honor the donors' intent" by continuing to provide Southern Baptist college professors doctoral and postdoctoral assistance. □

Young celebrates 40 years of ministry

WALLAND — Raymond Young, pastor of Miller's Cove Church, Walland, was honored by his church July 8 for 40 years of ministry.

Young entered the ministry on July 15, 1955.



YOUNG

Other Tennessee pastorates include Southside Church, Johnson City; Algood Church, Algood; Loveland Church, Knoxville; and Oak Street Church, Maryville. He also was pastor of Admarch Church, Pennington Gap, Va.

Young and his wife, Bonnie, have two children and four grandchildren. □

Supreme Court provides protection for religious expression

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court struck twin blows against what it perceived as discrimination based on religion on the final day of the 1994-95 term, ruling in two cases the Constitution provides protection for religious expression equal to that afforded other forms of speech.

In a 5-4 decision June 29 in the *Rosenberger v. University of Virginia* case, the justices ruled a Christian magazine was entitled to student activities fees to pay for its costs if other organizations and publications also received such support.

The court ruled by a 7-2 vote in *Capitol Square Review v. Pinette* a state government could not prohibit a privately sponsored religious display on public land where other private displays are allowed.

In both cases, the majority said the First Amendment's clause prohibiting the government from establishing religion was not violated in permitting free speech or the free exercise of religion.

Advocates on both sides expressed dissatisfaction with the decisions, however. For some supporters of strict separation of church and state, the rulings were disastrous. For some advocates of government accommodation of religious expression,

the opinions did not go far enough.

"I think the wall of separation between church and state took two direct mortar shots today in these two church-state decisions," said Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

"It was the iron curtain of religious intolerance that took two hits today, not Thomas Jefferson's wall," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "Strict separationists have erected an iron curtain of religious intolerance, and they want to pass it off as Thomas Jefferson's wall of church-state separation."

The 5-4 vote in *Rosenberger* "means we are just one vote away from religious apartheid," Whitehead said. "We are one vote away from a judicial amendment to free speech and free exercise that singles out religious speech for censorship and discrimination, all in the name of church-state separation."

In the more tightly contested *University of Virginia* case, the school rejected a request from an approved Christian student organization to pay the printing of its publication, *Wide Awake*, because the group was religious. Using fees assessed from all full-time students, the university funded 118 groups and 16 other publica-

tions. Among the groups were Muslim and Jewish associations, but the university said it funded them as cultural, rather than religious, groups.

Both lower federal courts sided with the school. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the school's action violated free speech rights but said the discrimination was justified in order to maintain the separation of church and state.

In the majority opinion, Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy said the university would not establish religion by paying the Christian publication's printing bills.

Ron Rosenberger, who formally edited *Wide Awake* and brought the suit, said, the court "has clearly upheld a free marketplace of ideas on our nation's campuses, and I'm delighted with that opinion."

Brent Walker of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs said his organization was "very disappointed" with the ruling. "I think it cuts against the continued vitality of our religious liberty in this country. For the first time, the Supreme Court has expressly sanctioned the use of public dollars to pay for the expression of religion. He noted that while editors of the publication were entitled to public access to state facilities "they're not entitled to equal advancement through the expenditure of tax dollars." □

More volunteers needed for Canada

BRENTWOOD — Additional construction teams are needed for a building project on Prince Edward Island in Canada.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood Department, through volunteers, is constructing a building for Community Baptist Church in Charlotte-town on Prince Edward Island.

The project, now underway, is being extended. For more information, call the TBC Partnership Missions Office at (615) 371-2021. □

Fellowship's fifth general assembly slated for July 20-22

FORT WORTH, Texas — The fifth annual general assembly of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meets July 20-22 at Tarrant County Convention Center here.

Born out of controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention, the Fellowship is a network of Baptist churches and individuals with a priority on global missions. CBF lists 1,377 contributing churches and receipts of \$11.2 million in 1994.

Thursday evening's opening session features a series of presentations on four historic Baptist freedoms — Bible freedom, soul freedom, church

freedom, and religious freedoms — all drawn from the shared commitments outlined in a new mission statement to be presented at the meeting.

Speakers include Russell Dilday, interim dean at Baylor University's Truett Seminary; Molly Marshall, visiting professor at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.; Sam Medina, an attorney and bivocational pastor from Lubbock, Texas; Texas evangelist Richard Jackson; and CBF coordinator Cecil Sherman.

In addition to a keynote address on Friday evening by author and speaker Tony Cam-

polo, there will be an update on CBF missions endeavors by Global Missions coordinator R. Keith Parks and an introduction to CBF's 16 new missionaries.

"Come to Joy," drawn from Psalm 126, marks the theme for this year's assembly. Other highlights include the presentation of a 1600-word mission statement, a proposed \$13 million budget, and nominees for the Coordinating Council, a decision-making body made up of 76 persons representing CBF's membership. There also will be a series of "breakout" sessions addressing practical issues. □

Cumberland celebrates addition of African American church

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

CLARKSVILLE — Cumberland Association's second African American church was constituted June 25 during the morning worship service.

That afternoon, the congregation of Greater Missionary Church experienced another milestone in its brief history as members broke ground for a new facility about a mile from its present site.

The church, which was started in 1993 as a mission of Little West Fork Church, has been meeting in the old sanctuary of Little West Fork and will continue to do so until the new facility is complete.

Pastor Willie Freeman noted that there were three people in the service on his first Sunday at the then mission on Sept. 6, 1993. It has since grown to a membership of 230.

"It's been a struggle," Freeman acknowledged. "But the Lord has blessed."

Church members purchased the four-acre tract for \$50,000. And, with the assistance of a

\$25,000 grant from the Tennessee Baptist Convention Missions Department, the land is debt-free. Freeman said they hope to begin construction on the 500-seat auditorium which will include educational and fellowship space soon.

During the groundbreaking service, members were challenged by several speakers to continue meeting the needs of people in the community.

Continue to be ministry and missions minded and to pray, Cumberland Association Director of Missions Wesley Pitts said.

Kim Allen, pastor of Little West Fork Church, the sponsoring church, reminded members of their beginning. "What happens when a vision becomes a reality is evidenced here today," he said.

Allen emphasized what cooperation had accomplished.

"You've seen the results of cooperative dollars," he said. "Cooperatively, this has happened because we believe in missions," he added.

Allen noted that last year a garden was on the site where



PARTICIPANTS IN THE groundbreaking ceremony of Greater Missionary Church, Clarksville, included, from left, Wesley Pitts, director of missions, Cumberland Association; Pastor Willie Freeman; Kim Allen, pastor, Little West Fork Church, Clarksville; James Porch, TBC Executive Director; and Larry Kirk, TBC Missions Department.

the groundbreaking was being held. "It produced a lot of fruit," he said. Now on this site, a building "will spring forward with God's people," Allen said, challenging them to bear forth a different kind of fruit.

Two representatives of the Tennessee Baptist Convention also were on hand — Executive Director James Porch and Larry Kirk of the Missions Department. "Today the TBC is a bit more complete than it was ear-

lier," Porch told the Greater Missionary congregation.

"It's my desire that as you continue ministering here the Kingdom of God will grow and people will come to know Jesus as Savior," he said. □

Supreme Court dismisses prayer ban, leaves confusion on issue

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court set aside a lower-court ruling against student-initiated graduation prayer, but did nothing to clarify the status of the practice nationally in a recent action.

The justices' June 26 decision in Joint School District v. Harris vacated a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' ruling and ordered the lower court to dis-

miss the case as moot, apparently because the student filing the suit has graduated.

The appeals court had overturned a federal court decision by ruling student-determined, student-led prayer at a high school graduation was a violation of the First Amendment's establishment clause. A Grangeville, Idaho, high school had allowed senior students to make decisions about their graduation ceremony. The class voted to have

an invocation and benediction. A dissenting senior filed suit.

The court's action dismisses a ruling which was binding on the nine western states which compose the Ninth Circuit, but it has no effect on the rest of the country. A mixture of decisions has followed the Supreme Court's 1992 Lee v. Weisman opinion, which struck down school-controlled graduation prayer.

"The Supreme Court continues to give mixed signals at the busy intersec-

tion of church and state, where prayer and public schools often collide," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Church-state representatives on both sides of the issue agreed the court's failure to accept the case was unfortunate. Steve McFarland of the Christian Legal Society noted the action "leaves educators in the West and in most states in the fog." □

Oakley marks half century of evangelism

For Baptist and Reflector

DYER — First Church, Dyer, recently held W.B. Oakley Day to honor Oakley for his 50 years of evangelism in Tennessee, Michigan, and other states.

The octogenarian has preached more than 15,000 sermons in his career, and conducted nearly 900 revivals and crusades. "Revivals are the best part of all," he says.

Reflecting on his years, Oakley noted one lesson he would have each human learn: "Treat everyone alike. That will solve lots of problems."

An estimated 200 people came to the reception held in Oakley's honor. He was given a book of letters, money trees, and love offerings.

Oakley served several

churches as pastor and served almost 15 years as secretary of evangelism and stewardship for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. For the past 20 years he has been a vocational evangelist.

Oakley entered the Gospel ministry in 1946. He is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

Union presented the 85-

year-old evangelist with the doctor of divinity degree in 1991. □



EVANGELIST W.B. OAKLEY and his wife, Juanita, were surprised when Oakley was honored recently at First Church, Dyer, for 50 years of evangelism.

SBC Cooperative Program gifts up for June and year-to-date

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for the month of June rose 16.84 percent above the same month a year ago and pushed the fiscal year-to-date totals more than 2.5 percent above the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

June 1995 gifts totaled \$12,719,960 compared to June 1994 of \$10,886,499, or an increase of \$1,833,461. After nine months of the SBC fiscal year, the total CP gifts stand at \$109,314,279, compared to the previous year's total of \$106,599,758, or an increase of 2.55 percent or \$2,714,520.

Designated gifts also rose in

June, a whopping 35.25 percent over the previous year's June: \$15,919,773 compared to \$11,770,875. The totals for the fiscal year-to-date for designated gifts now stands at 2.09 percent of the previous year's total: \$121,703,728, compared to \$119,209,105.

The SBC program allocation budget runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30. The monthly budget requirement is \$11,378,310.

The SBC Cooperative Program total includes undesignated receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions, and fellowships for distribution according to the 1994-95 program allocation budget. Chapman called the gifts for June and the year "very encouraging." □

■ about letters to the editor

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

Thanks for help

Recovery from our New Orleans area flood of May 8 - 9, is well underway. We appreciate the prayers and support of Tennessee Baptists at a time when you also suffered disaster. We especially appreciate the work of the Tennessee Baptist Brotherhood Disaster Unit under the leadership of Cameron Byler and Curtis Fowler. They were on site in New Orleans May 13 and prepared more meals than any other kitchen. We are grateful that the cooperative work of Southern Baptists helped make our recovery quick and that the Spirit of Christ was shown in a time of need.

J.R. Blakeney
Director of Church Programs
Baptist Assn. of Greater
New Orleans
New Orleans, La. 70122

New logo

In light of the 1995 SBC vote to oppose the nomination of Dr. Foster as U. S. Surgeon General, and the immediate telegram to presidential hopeful Sen. Phil Gramm, and the number of other politically partisan votes of past years, I must inquire if there is any validity to the rumor that re-designing of the logo of the convention will feature an elephant's head super-imposed upon an open Bible.

Jack L. Carver, pastor
First Church
Madison 37115

Small churches

Small Southern Baptist churches lack materials adapted for them. This problem should be addressed.

I am a member of Cartwright First Church, 40 members strong. Since teaching children's classes the past few years, I have learned that although churches of 100 members comprise approximately 70 percent of Southern Baptist churches, everything is arranged for churches of more than 100 members. Sunday School books, resource kits, and seminars cover teaching large classes of specific age groups with at least two teachers and larger budgets.

In contrast, small churches usually have small classes with low budgets and one teacher. And like classes in many small churches, Cartwright's preschool class is combined, with a wide age group (four children ages 2-5).

The Baptist Book Store doesn't have materials tailored for such a preschool class. I attended a seminar with some other teachers from Cartwright, and each teacher mentioned that seminars were geared toward big churches.

Such problems anger and frustrate me and other teachers I know. I hope these attitudes and problems can be corrected. Small churches play an important role in Southern Baptist life.

Phyllis Chaffin
Whitwell 37397

Self-serving?

With all the problems and needs facing our world I find it disturbing that all Southern Baptists can find to do during the convention was to "celebrate 150th, honor Graham, repent racism, vote change." The time has come for us to recognize that we may be serving ourselves rather than God.

Wade Campbell, pastor
Mt. Zion Church
Liberty 37095

Tokyo pastor

Kanto Plains Baptist Church (SBC) Tokyo, Japan is seeking a pastor. This is an English-speaking church with primary emphasis on ministry to Japanese nationals and American military. The candidate must be willing to lead, equip, and encourage lay ministries of members. Willingness to learn basic Japanese language is recommended. Contact the Southern Baptist FMB (804) 353-0151 or Eric Hinton at PSC 78 Box 1205; APO AP 96326 (.32 cent stamp only) or call 011-81-3117-57-2390.

Eric Hinton
APO AP 96326
Tokyo

Another apology?

Many people were so pleased that messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta were in an apologizing mood in passing the long overdue resolution against racism. Equally overdue is an apology to women for past and present discrimination!

Dillard A. Mynatt
Gatlinburg 37738

Teaching methods

Regarding the article "Traditional Teaching Methods" (May 31), there are two points I differ with from a Biblical standpoint.

Memorization, when it applies to Scripture, is biblically sound. "Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them ..." (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). "I have hidden your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11). These are just two passages which seem to indicate that memorization is important.

A system of rewards and punishments is a principle which is evident throughout the Bible as God teaches his people lessons of godliness. In Deuteronomy 11 and Leviticus 26, God sets before the people blessings and curses. And still before us today is the reward of heaven or the eternal punishment of hell. Parents use a system of rewards and punishments to instill lessons of obedience in their children. So, if such a system is good enough for God and good enough for parents, it seems like such a technique should work in the classroom.

Sherena Flowers Arrington
Kingsport 37665

Vote of thanks

Thank you for the great work you do in keeping Tennessee Baptist folks "up to date." I'm 76 years old, and still vitally interested in Sunday School information. Down thru the years I had the privilege of serving as General Sunday School Superintendent of three churches — Centennial Church, Lockeland, and Inglewood.

But I've been a Two Rivers member since 1974; Jim Henry was my pastor for three years before he moved to Orlando. My only daughter graduated from Belmont, Southern Seminary and served two years as a home missionary.

Keep up the good work!
Thomas Dennison
Madison 37115

Appreciate camp

Our son Clifton attended Camp Challenge at Camp Cor-

dova a few weeks ago and had a wonderful time. He didn't want to leave when I came back for him. Fifteen years ago (when we lived in Missouri) Clif went to a camp for the handicapped and had a terrible experience. I never let him go again. I met a sweet lady named Margaret Mason. She assured me that Clif would be well taken care of.

He was! From his counselor, Sam Lea, he gained confidence in himself. From Mr. and Mrs. Tom Petersen he was treated with respect. From Kevin Wendt, he overcame his fear of water and went into the pool. From Janet Howard he learned more about Jesus and the love of God. From Diana Howard, his physical needs were met, and from Margaret Mason he, and all other "Special Campers," got love and attention, — even though her handicapped daughter was ill and unable to attend camp. She was there as director as she promised.

Thank God and Shelby Association for the camp. We really appreciate our precious son being able to have the experience.

Doris and Wayne Pike
Memphis 38115

Saying it right

There is a popular phrase used in some churches that does not communicate that a person is saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Using the phrase "Give your life to Jesus" when teaching people how to be saved is a mistake that can confuse a lost person.

Eternal life is a free gift we receive (John 1:12) by trusting in Jesus as our Savior. You don't "give" anything for a free gift. There is nothing in any individual's life they can "give" to Jesus to save them from

their sins. This is why Jesus gave himself for our sins (Galatians 1:4).

Using the phrase "Give your life to Jesus" when teaching people how to be saved can make a lost person think they have to give Jesus something to be saved. The lost person may think they have to give Jesus their service, time, money, good works, etc., to be saved. This phrase can lead to a misunderstanding of the genuine Gospel and lead a lost person into a works Gospel.

Teaching a lost person how to be saved is very important and demands clarity. We are not saved by a "trade-in" or exchange of our life. We need to ensure that we communicate that eternal life is a free gift and that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Tom Lusk
Clarksville 37043

Seeking DOM

Nominations for the position of associational director of missions for the Genesee Baptist Association in Flint, Mich., are now being accepted.

Please send nominations to Roy G. Adams, Search Committee Chairman, 10158 S. State Road, Goodrich, Mich., 48438. Please enclose a cover letter with the resume of the person being nominated.

Nominations will be received through Sept. 15.

Roy G. Adams
Goodrich, Mich., 48438

Green Light delayed

Due to the recent Fourth of July holiday and vacation schedules, the August issue of the *Green Light* will be delayed.

The target date for the mailing is July 15. □

Daily Partnership Prayer Requests July

- 12 — Pray for Vacation Bible Schools and Backyard Bible Clubs being conducted this summer in Canada.
- 13 — Pray for Mr. and Mrs. Richard Mann of Jackson as they teach English in Cieszyn, Poland.
- 14 — Pray for those attending camps and conferences at Bambi Lake, Mich., and their leaders this summer.
- 15 — Pray for the team from Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville, as they return from doing construction and painting in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.
- 16 — Pray for members of Salem Church, Knoxville, as they minister at Celebration Church, Ray, Mich.
- 17 — Pray for the team from Two Rivers Church, Nashville, as they travel today to Calgary to lead in VBS.
- 18 — Pray for the team from First Church, Crossville, leading VBS this week at Oakland Woods Church in Clarkston, Mich.



When others doubt motives and sincerity

Now that messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention two weeks ago have passed a resolution of confession and repentance for racism, quite a few folks are adding their individual interpretations.

In short, many are saying, Southern Baptists, you haven't done enough. Or, why are you doing this now?

This is a peculiar twist. Hardly had messengers voted when some naysayers (most of whom appear to be outsiders) began challenging whether there was sincerity in the action. National news media people are having a great time speculating and second-guessing.

Critics and skeptics should understand that messengers speak only for themselves, and resolutions are not binding on anyone. Resolutions only express the heart and mind of those present and voting, but they usually have strong support.

The Southern Baptist Convention is not a church. It does not have an official hierarchy. It cannot make any local Baptist church do anything, nor does it try. The SBC doesn't own any church buildings, nor souls. But it does act for messengers and churches in some ways.

The Southern Baptist Convention is a cooperative effort by about 15 million people, nearly 40,000 churches, and 39 fellowships and state conventions who choose to combine prayers, money, and actions.

These efforts result in ministries, missions and evangelism all around the

world. It is no wonder that it has taken 150 years for Southern Baptists to talk openly about confession, repentance, and regret. But let us also remember our heritage founded in missions.

So, while a resolution may be passed by those in attendance at any convention, it is not binding — except through the common thread of cooperation in Christ's love. That usually makes Southern Baptists want to cooperate in effecting good and common causes.

We believe most Southern Baptists and Tennessee Baptists agree with the resolution of confession and repentance. Racism is a serious matter and cannot be condoned by any group.

The intent of the resolution should have been voiced long ago. It has been done, and we need to move on. It took courage to draft the paper. Though it is overdue, it has been accomplished.

Identifying Southern Baptists might help critics to understand who we are and why we are different from other denominations — and other faiths.

In his report to the SBC in 1964 — certainly a year when the heart of Americans was being tested sorely — Baker James Cauthen, Foreign Mission Board executive secretary, said something about us.

"The world may not understand us," he said. "The world may see us in convention assembled as we differ as brethren one from the other. For Bap-

tists differ. You couldn't be Baptists without having varieties of points of view, which we do well to honor one the other as sincere men and women of God.

"But let us demonstrate to a world that may not understand — there can be diversity of opinion but great wonderful united brotherhood that binds the convention together like an army that cannot be dissolved."

The statement on racism may not be the view of all Southern Baptists. And those who approve of the statement may not always abide by its words.

And, though it was difficult to forge such a confession, Southern Baptists realize it will be more difficult to live it.

Those who question our strength of purpose can continue pointing their fingers in disdain. Let those without sin begin their stone throwing. We are not responsible for what others think.

In truth, in order to be the people God intends for us to be, Southern Baptists yet have other statements of repentance to make. And admitting imperfection and regret certainly will make us more able to repent, and turn back to a loving God who calls us to himself.

Those of whom we ask forgiveness, those who wait for us to stumble again, please accept the heartfelt words of the resolution on racism.

And then, putting aside all rancor, guilt, and hurt, join in the great work of leading lost souls to salvation by confessing Jesus Christ as savior and lord.

It is time to move on. □

■ one word more
By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

The ultimate gift

Don't you tire of misplaced superlative accolades?

A person in the business world makes the deal of the century. The athlete makes a "perfect" play. The actress makes a spectacular contribution to drama. Really?

What is the ultimate, the extraordinary, the spectacular, the fantastic? Who is to say?

And now we have Mary Ima Lindsey, a lifelong resident of Wayne County, Tennessee.

Miss Mary probably will not be mentioned except on this page and perhaps in her local newspaper. She didn't want praise or honor.

But those around her noticed; those she cared for will remember her.

Miss Mary died at 93 on a warm September day last year, and she gave what I call the ultimate gift.

She was a rural elementary school teacher who demonstrated her love for people after her death.

She chose to buy with her savings some happiness for causes that were worthy. Her will decreed that more than \$70,000 be donated to several Baptist causes.

Her gift of income will help in sending home and foreign missionaries. She will help educate students at Union University, Belmont University, and Carson-Newman College.

A portion of her estate was given to Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. Students at Harrison-Chilhowee Academy also will get a lift from Miss Mary Ima.

Her keen interest in Bible study is reflected in a gift to the American Bible Society.

Extraordinary. Spectacular. Fantastic. The ultimate gift.

For more than 40 years she was postmistress and rural mail carrier in Wayne County.

She taught Sunday School and was active in the ongoing ministry of Lutts Missionary Church.

So I am saying bravo to Mary Ima Lindsey, hats off, and some great big smiley faces. Bless you, dear lady!

Her ultimate gift is like those of other folks who make the interest of others more important than their own. □



ALLEN

■ just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Cliff, watching the news: "Bet \$10 that fellow won't jump like he's threatening to do." Carl: "I say he will." Cliff (later): "Well, he did jump. Here's your ten bucks." Carl: "I can't take your money. I saw it on the early news." Cliff: "I did, too, but I didn't think he'd do it again."

Take this truth

Some people insist on learning the hard way. Some never learn! You don't have to make the same mistakes others make. You can study the lives of people and profit from their errors and benefit from their right choices.

Memorize this Scripture

"When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:9).

Pray this prayer

Help me to remember that every experience can help me as I live daily. □

Christ's mind in life's milieu

A woman hurrying to make connecting flights bought some cookies and sat down to read her newspaper. Later she noticed the gentleman across from her eating her cookies. She pulled the bag closer. Soon she heard the rustling again and saw the man taking her last cookie, breaking it and pushing half across the table to her while gulping down the other half. While getting ready to board her plane, she looked in her purse for her boarding pass and found her unopened bag of cookies. Somewhere in the airport there was a kind and considerate man wondering about that pushy woman who insisted on sharing his cookies.

Our assumptions may cause us to reach wrong conclusions about someone else's actions. We can guard against feeling absurd after the fact. This is the CAN-DO approach to life. There are always convening events to these series of mistaken events. We make actual responses to these convening events. These actual responses generate negative thinking, and can only be corrected by

■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor

Divine interventions.

The convening events are the situations that we all get into sometimes. It could be our own fault. At other times it is someone else's fault. The problem usually starts when the convening event is misunderstood, like ownership of the bag of cookies. We normally look at the event as the cause for our feelings and actions, but it is often our perception of the event rather than the event itself.

The actual response is a mixture of emotions, behaviors, and physiological responses to our perception of the convening events. It was not just cookies; it was "her cookies." That perception made the difference in the emotional feelings of consternation, contempt, and confusion that emerged in her. Her perception caused her to pull the bag closer. No doubt her blood pressure and pulse rate were both elevated.

The actual response to the

convening event reinforces the negative thinking. Our natural assumption is that

the convening event (the man eating the cookies) causes the actual response (the feelings, behaviors and physiological responses). Jesus tells us that "as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Negative thinking generated by actual responses to convening events of our lives is a powerful tool that Satan uses to control many Christians. By placing certain events in our lives and helping us to misinterpret them, he is able to control our thoughts and behaviors.

Divine interpretation is the only way that most of us will be able to overcome this onslaught of Satan. We must ask God to give us wisdom not to jump to conclusions. This may be the only exercise that some Christians ever get.

You can develop this CAN-DO lifestyle when you allow God to develop the mind of Christ in you in the midst of the milieu of life. □



BARKLEY

Belmont athletes use sports as outreach tool in Poland

By Clara Brincefield
For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — A team of 10 Belmont University student athletes and two counselors recently returned from a two-week sports evangelism trip to Warsaw, Poland.

Team members returned a little weary but changed from an experience of a lifetime.

The first two days of the trip featured "getting to know you" conversations with Polish high school students and a few encounters on the basketball court. After that the Belmont students were ready to sit down and share their faith, one on one, with their new friends.

Interest increased daily as

they bonded with young people of a different culture where Catholicism is the major religion. Very few of the Polish young people had any knowledge of the Bible or how to pray. Belmont students soon learned that the Polish youth wanted to practice English, learn more about U.S. culture, and talk about spiritual matters. One Polish student who had listened attentively to the plan of salvation returned later wanting "to hear it again."

Belmont athletes conducted basketball clinics each afternoon and played Polish professional teams in the evening.

At half-time, Polish Baptist seminary students translated as the Belmont players gave their testimonies.

A special music concert was held one night during the second week for local high school students. During the service the entire Belmont team sang "Shine Jesus Shine" in English and in Polish, after which a Polish Baptist evangelist delivered a message. During the invitation, approximately 30 students came forward to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of their lives. Belmont students rejoiced with their new brothers and sisters in Christ.

On the last Sunday at the newest and second Baptist church in Warsaw, there were at least 50 high school students present for the service and as many as 30 filled out cards requesting Bible study classes.

Southern Baptist missionary Mark Edworthy was more than pleased as he rejoiced at the end of that service. The church which meets at the high school was formed just last year with the help of national leaders and Polish Baptist seminary students.

The Belmont sports evangelism team provided a new and interesting outreach for the new church.

All-American basketball player Kerry West amazed the Polish teams and crowds with his depth and accuracy of his long-range shooting. But it was his testimony of how his father's death devastated his life when he was a high school student that



CLARA BRINCEFIELD, far left, a former missionary to Chile, and Betty Wiseman, fourth from left on back row, a professor at Belmont University, Nashville, recently accompanied 10 Belmont athletes on a sports evangelism project in Warsaw, Poland. The Belmont student-athletes included Abbey Benton, Jeff Bryan, Rob Cook, Kevin Fields, Amber Gibbs, Jennifer Mathis, Jeff McGinnis, Keith Tenpenny, Wendy Truitt, and Kerry West.

caught their attention.

He told of his personal struggle to overcome his anger and frustration and how he finally turned it over to God and found peace.

Six-foot, six-inch Jeff Bryan, a member of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, said the experience was life-changing.

"God used my personal struggles as a college student to prepare me for opportunities to relate to and witness to the youth in Warsaw. I have so much. ... I am so lucky. I will never be the same."

Coach Betty Wiseman, a member of Brentwood Church, Brentwood, observed, "We will

never know the impact of this missions endeavor. Only God knows that.

"But it was so awesome to see how God opened up these 10 students and allowed them to be free in their witness, without fear of failure.

"My prayer is that they will continue to share openly with their peers on campus and in their personal lives what God has taught them in these two weeks. It was a joy to watch them and be with them in action.

"They allowed Jesus to shine in their lives." □ — Brincefield is a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Chile.



BELMONT ATHLETES show techniques of basketball to Polish high school students in Warsaw. The Belmont team conducted clinics during the day and played Polish professional teams in the evenings. They gave testimonies during halftime of games.

Presented to former missionary

Big Hatchie WMU raises funds for special computer

For Baptist and Reflector

COVINGTON — Annie Sue Clift, a Southern Baptist missionary nurse in Japan and Yemen from 1961-73 recently was presented a voice-activated computer from the Woman's Missionary Union of Big Hatchie Association.

Clift returned to the United States in 1973 to attend her father's funeral. Her mother became seriously ill requiring special care and Clift had to take special leave to care for her mother. She dreamed of one day returning to the mission field.

However, in 1991 Clift was

in an automobile accident which left her legs paralyzed. She also has very limited use of her hands.

Yvonne Clay, wife of Elim Church Pastor Jimmy Clay and a friend of Clift, had listened to her stories of her missions experiences and thought it would be nice if they were recorded in print.

Clay shared that thought with her daughter, Shari Herron, mission action director for Big Hatchie Association. She then presented the idea to the Big Hatchie WMU who voted to adopt the project.

They raised money to buy the voice activated computer with the help of First Church, Martin, where Clift is a member.

Upon receiving the computer, Clift said, "Now I can challenge others for missions through my writings even though I have to spend practically all my time in bed." □



PRESENTING THE COMPUTER to Annie Sue Clift is Martha Haynes, left, WMU director for Big Hatchie Association and Shari Herron, center, WMU missions action director for Big Hatchie.



Inmates complete 'Experiencing God'

Eight inmates of the Morgan County Regional Correctional Facility in Wartburg recently were given diplomas and an Experiencing God Bible for completing the Experiencing God course. The course was taught by fellow inmate George Killingsworth, second from left, back row. Making the presentations were TBC Discipleship Training Director Johnnie Hall, far right, and Steve Hewlett, left on back row, Public Service Commissioner for Tennessee and a member of Judson Church, Nashville. The Discipleship Training Department provided the materials and the Bibles with funds from the Golden State Missions Offering. A Bible also was presented to the warden and Chaplain Dean Yancey in recognition for their support of the work at the prison. Prisoners earning diplomas were John Mark Davis, Billy Donaldson, Joseph R. Duclos, Larry Kelley, Robert Smith, Ernest Walker, James Watson, and James Woodmancy.

■ Tennessee features

Bible drillers prove knowledge at competition

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

WINCHESTER — To compete in a church, associational, or regional Tennessee Bible drill competition, youth and children don't just rifle pages of Bibles with nimble fingers in search of certain verses. The children are prepared to quote 25 Bible verses, find Scripture passages when given a descriptive term, and find the 66 books of the Bible and name the books preceding and following that book.

This year, 1,266 children and 187 youth competed in Tennessee Bible Drills, reported Cindy Franks of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The drill competitions are led by the TBC Discipleship Training Department.

State competition for children is held at eight regional drills and one at-large drill. Children are subdued as they register and wait for the drills at the south central regional competition June 29 at First Church, Winchester. Sponsors whisper encouraging words. One such sponsor is Lewis Thomas, minister of youth and music, New Prospect Church, Lawrenceburg.

He is especially proud of two of the church's competitors who became drillers because of backyard Bible clubs led by youth across the city. Four of the clubs, which meet weekly, are held at day care centers and one is held in a government-subsidized housing area, explains Thomas. The youngsters are brought to church activities by bus.

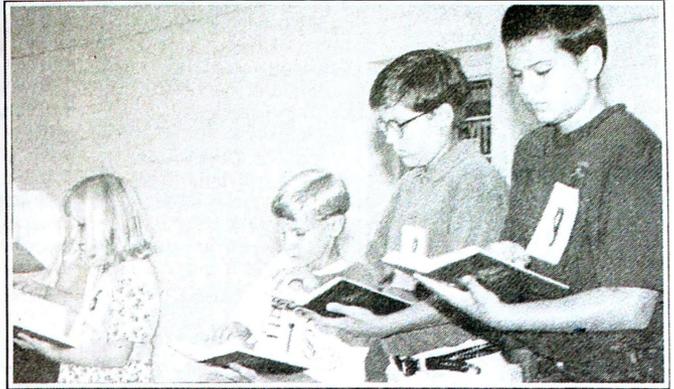
"These kids are just so faithful. When the bus gets there, they're there," he says. As a result of the community outreach, the church has become racially integrated and two young people have been baptized by the church, he added.

Thomas's enthusiasm is matched by that of Fanny Williams and Marcella Luffman of Eva's Chapel Church, Copper's Branch. The sisters have worked with drillers in Lawrence County Association since competition started there around 1960.

Another participant with a long history is Catherine Prewitt of the drill staff from Bellevue Church, Cordova. Prewitt, who was a staff member of the church, began working with drillers about 25 years ago. Her husband, Thurman, who is retired from the staff of Shelby County Association, serves as chairperson of the judges for the event. □ — Each year the paper highlights a different regional Bible drill.



DISCUSSING WHILE APPLAUDING some of the drillers from their church are Fanny Williams, left, and Marcella Luffman of Eva's Chapel Church, Copper's Branch. — Photos by Connie Davis



STEPPING FORWARD TO SHOW he's found the selection is Jean Fontenot, right, of First Church, Loretto. Still searching are, from left, Bethanie Springer, Faith Church, Loretto; Brent Allred, Friendship Church, Culleoka; and Jay Robinson, Friendship Church.



JEREMIAH HAMILTON of First Church, Manchester, answers Mary Allen's question while his mother, Susie, listens. Allen is a member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Discipleship Training staff leading the competition.



CLARA SILLIMAN of the TBC drill staff from Turkey Creek Church, Savannah, presents an award to Jay Robinson of Friendship Church, Culleoka, while Brent Allred of Friendship Church watches.



VISITING AFTER THE COMPETITION are, from left, Patti Fleming of Southside Church, Shelbyville, and Thurman and Catherine Prewitt of the TBC drill staff from Bellevue Church, Cordova. Mrs. Prewitt has helped lead Bible drill competition in Tennessee for more than 25 years.

Eloise Cauthen dies
Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Eloise Glass Cauthen, 85, wife of the late Baker James Cauthen who led Southern Baptist foreign missions through some of its most dramatic growth between 1952-79, died June 29.

She was born in China to Southern Baptist missionaries Wiley B. and Eunice Taylor Glass, and later returned to China as a missionary with her husband, where they served until he was called to lead the Foreign Mission Board. □

Union University commissions 158 summer missionaries

For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Union University's student ministries department recently celebrated another banner year, thanks to the efforts of university students, faculty, and staff.

Students again met the university's 1994-95 missions goal of \$58,540, raising \$61,200 to date. The 1994-95 total kept pace with past efforts of the students, who have raised more than \$300,000 for various missions-related causes since 1990.

"It's amazing to look back on this year and see what God

has done," said John Adams, vice president for religious affairs. "We've been blessed with campus-wide participation in the past, and it keeps getting better."

The Union family continued to support missions not only with their money, but also with their time. A total of 1,153 Union students, faculty, and staff participated in missions projects, and the university commissioned a record 158 summer missionaries who are serving in fields ranging from Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes to undisclosed World A countries where regular mis-

sionaries are not allowed.

"The best advice I can give you as a summer missionary is this: as best as you are able, be like Jesus," Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis told the students at the commissioning service. "Learn to have the compassion that Jesus had. When you face a certain situation, say, 'Lord, what would you do?'"

Special ministry and revival teams are sent out by Union to raise money for the summer missions goal. In addition to supporting the cause of missions, the teams were on mission themselves. Last year, the

school's various ministries resulted in 1,526 known decisions for Christ, including 1,236 professions of faith.

"The key to our success this year was the number of students who got their hands dirty and made an effort to change some lives," said Bryan Currie, director of Impact, a drama ministry team and member of First Church, Smyrna.

"Ultimately, the desire to serve God will please him more than numbers and money. God definitely smiled as he looked upon the work completed this year," Currie added. □

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DOM SEARCH: Cumberland Gap Association will accept resumes for the position of Director of Missions through July 31. Resumes may be sent to Danny White, chairman, 710 Robin Drive, New Tazewell, Tenn., 37825.

NEEDED: Part-time minister of education wanted for church with 450-500 in Sunday School. Position would be approximately 20-30 hours per week. Send resume to Personnel Committee, First Church, Joelton, P.O. Box 86, Joelton, TN 37080.

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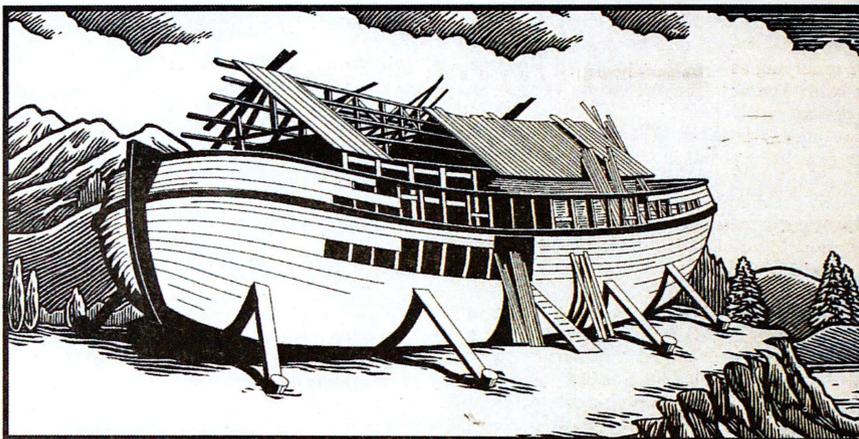
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TenneScene ■ the people, their work

■ the people

■ **Linda Cagle**, First Church, South Pittsburg, is directing a children's day camp in Worcester, Mass., during July. Her assignment is through the Home Mission Board.

Furman University, Greenville, S.C. and **Stan Gibson**, attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, are serving as intern to college/career, intern to high school students, and intern to junior high students, respectively, at First Church, Cleveland, this summer.

■ **Jerry P. Bowman** has moved to Memphis, after serving as pastor in Missouri. He is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton; Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.; and International Seminary, Plymouth, Fla. He can be contacted at (901) 789-3179.

■ **Randy Chunn** of Millington has begun serving as minister of youth and assistant to the pastor at First Church, Monterey. Chunn is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, and is completing a degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

■ Memorial Church, Clarks-ville, has called **Dwayne Smith**, student at Austin Peay State University, Clarks-ville, as associate pastor. Smith was recently ordained by S l a y d e n Church, Slayden. Johnnie Hall of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Wesley Pitts, director of

missions, Cumberland Association, spoke at the ordination service.

■ Walnut Grove Church, Memphis, has called **Charles Smith** as minister of music. Smith formerly served Cherry Road Church, Memphis, and Toone Church, Toone.

■ Retired Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Director **Tom Madden** has been called as interim pastor of Powell's Chapel Church, Murfreesboro.

■ **Jackie Kay** has resigned as pastor of Bartlett Church, Bartlett, after eight years of service, effective June 30. Kay has served six years as a trustee at Union University, Jackson; two years as chairman of the board of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes; and as a member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Special Study Committee. Kay also served as president of the TBC Pastors' Conference and as a member of the Christian Life Commission. Kay is presently available for pulpit supply and/or interim work and may be reached at (901) 386-4412 or 873-1986.

■ death

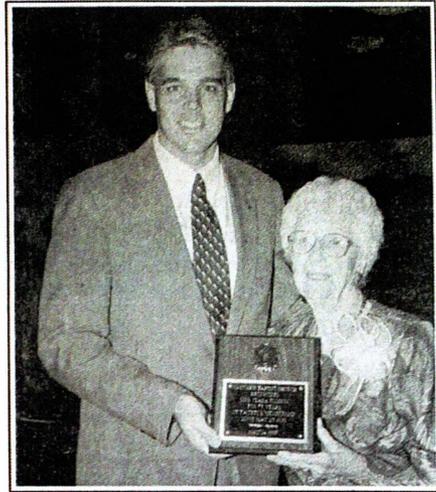
■ **Wesley Pauline Moore**, 80, wife of James Moore of Rienzi, Miss., died June 19 after a short illness. James Moore has been pastor of New Hope Church, Pocahontas, for the past 10 years, and is a former director of missions. The couple were married 55 years.

■ the churches

■ **Mossy Grove Church, Harriman**, will celebrate Homecoming activities July 16 which will include a luncheon.

■ **Stones River Church, Smyrna**, is holding Vacation Bible School July 16-20. A VBS parade will be July 15.

■ **Temple Church, Old Hickory**, celebrated 50 years of ministry July 1-2. Former pastors Darryl Harris and



RECEIVING A PLAQUE from her pastor, Scott Cagle, for more than 50 years of faithful membership at Calvary Church, Lenior City, is Clara Ellison. Ellison has taught Sunday School, sung in the choir, and remains active in a senior adult group.

Bob Adams spoke.

■ **Mooring Church, Ridgely**, had a revival in May led by John Rushing of Columbia which resulted in nine people being baptized. Since then three more have requested baptism. They include family members from three different generations — father and mother, son and daughter-in-law, and grandson, reported David Bailey, pastor.

■ **First Church, Deer Lodge**, is holding Vacation Bible School July 10-14. Michael Jones is serving as director.

socialism hosted a Sunday School leadership conference June 13 at First Church, Jasper. Ninety-three people attended age group conferences directed by the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

■ the schools

■ **Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour**, has received a \$50,000 gift from Luther Ogle, a Sevier County businessman for its "Arise and Rebuild" capital campaign. Ogle, who is a former trustee of the academy, is a supporter of the school. The institution has received more than \$200,000 during the campaign, nearly reaching its goal.

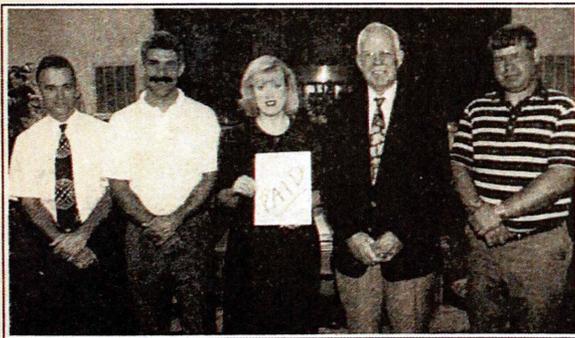
■ the associations

■ **Sequatchie Valley As-**



SMITH

Tennessee Baptist Convention and Wesley Pitts, director of



POSING DURING A CEREMONY celebrating the retirement of a debt of Bartlebaugh Church, Chattanooga, are, from left, Gary Bush, Ron Durham, Shawn Durham, Bill Delaney, pastor, and Chuck Overby. The church paid the \$40,000 debt in three years rather than six.



BREAKING GROUND FOR AN ADDITION to Virginia Avenue Church, Bristol, are leaders, from left, Valerie Morrell, Carl Jackson, Jack Slagle, Dennis Stitt, Mona Salyer, Johnny Singleton, and Darin Kress, pastor. The 6,400 square foot addition will be for choir rehearsal areas and is phase one of a two phase project.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

God's 'jewels'

By Jim Growden, pastor Hillcrest Baptist Church, Nashville

In Malachi 3:17, God calls his children "jewels." I am told jewels need to be skillfully cut by a master craftsman if all their beauty is to be revealed. One can hold two jewels in his hand that are alike in color and equally pure,

yet one will have a dazzling brilliance while the other is quite dull. What makes the difference?

One has received 80 cuts from the jeweler's chisel and the other only eight. The stone that has suffered much is radiant, but the one that has had little effort spent on it is lusterless.

This same truth can be applied to God's "jewels." Those who have been through personal trials, family crises,

or difficult church experiences and remain true to him have a special brilliance about them. It is true that God will make "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that ye may

participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that ye may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the spirit of glory and of God rests on you" (I Peter 4:12-14, NIV).

Just remember, God isn't through with us yet! He is doing what is necessary to conform us to the image of his son. The finished product will be worth the cost. □

HMB dedicates new building in Atlanta

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Home Mission Board leaders dedicated a new office building during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, saying the offices will help them accomplish their goal of reaching people for Christ.

Two Tennessee Baptists were on the building committee — Ron Phillips, pastor of Central Church, Hixson, and Tom Madden, interim pastor, Powell's Chapel Church, Murfreesboro. Madden was vice chairman of the committee and acted as chairman during the last few months due to the illness of the chairman.

In addition to offices for 340 staff members, the building will be used by a new church, said HMB President Larry Lewis. The Church at North Point will meet in the board's 500-seat multi-purpose room.

About 2,000 people attended the open house June 21.

The 34-acre site was purchased in 1990, and the building was funded primarily through the sale of the board's former location in midtown At-

lanta. The new building has approximately 184,000 square feet.

HMB staffer Bob Banks recognized those who donated money to furnish specific rooms or projects. "All of the gifts are for one purpose — that people will know Jesus as Lord and Savior," he said. □

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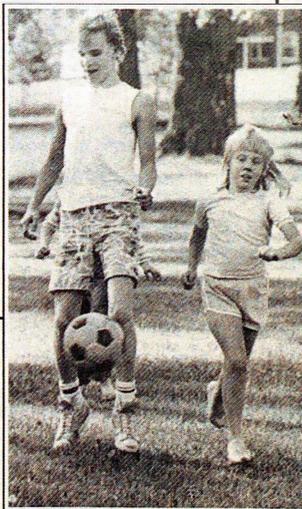
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**Life and Work Series
for July 16
Focal Passages:
Colossians 1:24 - 2:5**

Commitment to faithful service

By C. William Palmiter

In his prayer for the Colossians (1:11), Paul prayed that they might be able to endure with joy. Besides being a prisoner, he is frustrated by the dearth of opportunities (4:3). Yet Paul rejoices in suffering that has a purpose (1:24); the purpose is the price Christians pay to help others in Jesus' name. The word translated "minister" in verse 25 originally referred to a person who waited on tables, i.e., a humble servant, not someone with professional position. Only the power of Christ could change a committed persecutor of the church like Paul into a committed servant of the church, the body of Christ.

How do you measure commitment to Christ? If a person breaks his commitment to Christ, it is easy to discern the point at which his discipleship ends. But the loyalty of the disciple who is totally committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ can be examined even though the limits cannot be totally determined. Paul was such a disciple.

During Paul's time a whole group of pagan religions known as "mystery religions" considered the term "mystery" very important; these religions thrived in the area of Colossae. Instead of using the term "mystery" to describe that which is hidden, Paul uses the term to describe that which God has revealed openly. The thrilling mystery reveals God's love and mercy in Christ for all people, both Jews and Gentiles. It is only a secret in the sense that God's plan for restoring man to himself was kept secret until the right time. The life of Christ assures us that we have a vital relationship with God now and the hope of a fuller relationship in the future that physical death can't touch!

Now that we have a worthy motivation, what is the ultimate goal of Christian service? Verse 28 provides the answer: "that we may present every man mature in Christ." Sharing Christ with others so they may come to know Christ is the primary goal; yet built into this goal is the concept of maturity. True Christian service also involves the responsibility of assisting one another to mature in Christian discipleship. The theme of "every man" is mentioned three times in the verse emphasizing in a remarkable way that Christ is for every person. This means warning and teaching "in all wisdom" to bring a believer to Christian maturity. Wisdom here is the practical, daily application of knowledge.

The foundation of any church life must be love that unites and joins believers inseparably. With our hearts encouraged by generous love, Christ must be known and understood before he is to be shared. Good intentions for Christian service are never enough. Best results come by using the personal experience and historical evidence on which such faith is based to apply to real life situations. Everything a person needs to know about God is found in Jesus Christ for through him one has access to "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (v. 3). God's identity, nature, and purposes are open secrets in Jesus. To follow Christ is to become his disciple or learner. It is in sharing Christ, it is in suffering for Christ, it is in learning from Christ that we fulfill the ministry God has given us. Are you consistently fulfilling your God-given ministry? We can pray for one another and encourage one another to mature in our relationship to God through Christ. □ — C. William Palmiter is pastor of Bethel Church, Greenbrier.

A prophet who lived his message

By Jerry Barker

Lessons learned by experience can be life shattering but they can also be life changing. God taught Hosea a lesson that turned out to be a divine revelation. The prophet experienced the gut wrenching hurt of the unfaithfulness of his wife. From this experience Hosea learned some very important truths:

(1) The relationship between God and Israel is like the relationship between a husband and wife.

(2) The primary sin of Israel was unfaithfulness like the unfaithfulness in a marriage.

(3) God still loved Israel even though she was unfaithful.

Hosea- the prophet and his family — ch. 1:1-9

The prophet (v. 1). Hosea like Amos preached to the Northern Kingdom. His ministry was during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (786-746 B.C.) and actually continued beyond his reign. It was a time of superficial prosperity.

Gomer (vv. 2-3). At first reading, it sounds as if God told Hosea to marry an immoral woman with illegitimate children. However some interpreters believe that Gomer was one of many temple prostitutes connected with Baal worship. Also "wife of whoredoms" may mean a woman bent toward sexual immorality but not immoral when Hosea married her.

Jezebel (vv. 4-5). The name of the first child of Hosea and Gomer was prophetic. Their son's name Jezreel was the name of a valley and a village. Jezreel was the site of Jehu's extermination of Jezebel and the sons of Ahab (II Kings 9:4-19:17). Hosea pronounced judgment not only on the house of Jehu but also on Israel.

Loruhamah (vv. 6-7). Their daughter's name means "not loved." The name meant that God was not going to

continue to show love to a people who continued in their sins.

Loamni (vv. 8-9). The third child, a son, was given a name which meant "not my people." The truth is God was tired of a people who claimed special privileges but continued to live in sin.

Another chance —
ch. 3:1-5

Despite God's righteous anger and his judgment, God still loved. He does discipline us and correct us but he also loves us and gives us hope. In chapter 3:1-5 we see that love and hope. Let's take a look at the kind of love God had toward Gomer and Israel.

God's love is a greater love (v. 1). "Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other Gods, and love flagons of wine."

God's love is a love that redeems (v. 2). Gomer had become the property of someone and required a ransom. It is possible that she belonged to the master of the female prostitutes in the Baal temple. Nevertheless, Hosea was willing to pay the price for the love of Israel.

God's love and forgiveness is not a cheap love (v. 3). Gomer would return to Hosea's roof but there would be a time of testing. Remember love and forgiveness requires healing time after the hurt.

God's love will triumph (vv. 4-5). God intended that all of the experiences of Israel would eventually lead them to return to God's love. They "shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

Recently, I was preaching on the theme of God's love for sinners. I shared that everyone of us should be ever thankful that God loves sinners because we are one of them. □ — Jerry Barker is pastor of First Church, Alamo.

**Convention Uniform Series
for July 16
Focal Passage:
Hosea 1:2-9; 3:1-5**

False prophets condemned

By Clay Austin

Using drama to proclaim a message to God's people is not contemporary, it is ancient. Once again, God instructs Ezekiel to act out his prophecy. The message to be delivered is clear, "they shalt go into exile" (12:11). Even the royalty will not escape this fate!

For those who read Ezekiel from the twentieth century perspective it is very easy to focus on Israel and see them as a faithless nation that has grown too stubborn to listen to God's message. However, are we any more prepared to listen to a word from God than Israel? Like a nation about to enter exile, we must also decide which messenger and which message we will heed.

Judgment is near — 12:22-28

Israel had listened to so many messengers for so long that they no longer had faith in anyone proclaiming a word from God. Verse 22 is evidently a popular expression, "The days are prolonged and every vision faileth." Israel had embraced the dangerous notion that because some prophets and their messages were false, then all prophetic messages were to be ignored. This is a lesson for those who claim to offer a word from God and for those who listen.

The one offering the communication and the one receiving it should make sure the message is "from God." In Ezekiel chapter 12, God is about to make his message indelible on the minds of Israel. Those

**Bible Book Series for July 16
Focal Passages: Ezekiel 12:22-28;
13:3-6, 9-10a**

who refuse to listen will soon have their ears opened. There will be no more "flattering divination." Perhaps like us, Israel listened to what they wanted to hear. The coming judgment was not something they desired to hear. The prophet proceeds to demonstrate the message.

Beward false prophets — 13:3-6

The text now begins to focus on the prophets of Israel. These prophets are compared to foxes who have fed on the easy prey of undiscerning listeners. In a single stroke both the nation and its spiritual leaders are examined and found wanting. The spiritual leaders have strengthened their words with "Thus says the Lord," yet they did not speak for God. The nation has failed to defend itself from this spiritual corruption. The prophets are so corrupt and so self-deceived that they expect God to fulfill their words (v. 6).

We live in a day when the context of the message is so often more important than the message itself. Religious messages can be attractively packaged, delivered in a dynamic fashion and many will believe. We can be swayed by the "package" rather than the contents. Ezekiel offers a vivid reminder that

the messages we hear must be tested in the mind and the heart. The mind to analyze and compare the message to our understanding of God's word, and the heart to allow the Spirit to speak. Without these two restraints, we also may fall victim to our own egos saying only what is popular and listening only to what we want to hear.

The prophets punishment — vv. 9-10a

The most harsh judgment and punishment of all is reserved for the "prophets." The vision of these prophets is their own. "Vision" is a very popular word. Dynamic leaders must have a "vision." The task of Godly leadership, however, is to discover God's vision, not to create one. Nations have been destroyed by the misguided visions of their leaders. Churches have been destroyed by the faulty visions of their guides. God holds those in leadership accountable!

Those who claim leadership in God's name have a holy responsibility. These leaders should learn a valuable lesson from Ezekiel. Be careful about the vision you champion and the direction in which you lead, someone may be following! □ — Clay Austin is pastor of First Church, Blountville.

Romanian Baptists projected for key role in Eastern Europe

Baptist Press

ORADEA, Romania — Southern Baptists are



FMB PRESIDENT Jerry Rankin exhorts Romanian Baptists to an expanded role in world missions during his keynote address at the 31st Congress of Romanian Baptists in Oradea, Romania.

strengthening ties to Romanian Baptists who may play a key role in evangelizing Eastern Europe.

Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin stressed this solidarity as he keynoted the 31st Congress of Romanian Baptists in Oradea. The congress is held every four years.

Rankin challenged the Romanian delegates to share their evangelistic fervor, not only with Romania, but with Eastern Europe and the world.

"God is bringing about growth in your churches as never before. Could it be so that God can use you to touch the whole world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?" Rankin asked.

"Why did God begin to plant the Gospel in Romania through Baptists 75 years ago. Isn't it so you can become that apostle who shares the Gospel with all of Eastern Europe?" he continued. "God has called you to a mission greater than Romania alone. He's called you to be like Paul and have a vision

to evangelize the nations."

Romanian Baptist leaders also view Rankin's visit as a significant step toward greater cooperation between the board and Romanian Baptists, explained Paul Negrut, rector of Emmanuel Bible Institute, a local seminary supported by Second Baptist Church in Oradea, which is the largest church in Eastern Europe with a membership of more than 3,000 people.

"Dr. Rankin's presence here comes at a strategic time for Romania and all other Eastern European countries," Negrut said.

"The great potential of the Southern Baptist Convention and the dynamism of the Romanian Baptist churches have come together when there are so many God-given opportunities to share the Gospel. I see this as a Macedonian call."

Since the last congress four years ago, Romanian Baptists have constituted more than 400 new churches and launched several hundred mis-

FMB in 'second wave' in Romania

Baptist Press

ORADEA, Romania — The Foreign Mission Board is riding a new wave of involvement with Romania Baptists that many hope will spill into all of Eastern Europe.

The first wave of involvement came in the 1920s when Southern Baptist missionaries focused on starting

a seminary in Bucharest. The outbreak of World War II forced the missionaries to leave.

After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, Southern Baptists once again entered Romania. Twenty Southern Baptist missionaries are now assigned there and requests for more personnel are in the works. □

sion churches. The current congress set a goal of starting 3,000 new churches by the year 2000.

Negrut also noted the importance of Rankin's visit extended beyond Baptist circles in Romania.

"Romania is in a time of transition, as are all other Eastern European countries," he said. "Democracy is still fragile. The presence of the leader of a Baptist body known as one that stands for religious

freedom lends support and encouragement to those who pursue religious freedom in our country," Negrut added.

Religious liberty, however, was a minor issue compared to the number of times Rankin, Negrut, and other Romanian Baptist leaders spoke of Romania's emerging missionary role in Eastern Europe.

"We do believe that Romania is at a point where it can soon become a missionary sending entity," Negrut said. □

It's no mystery — Aug. 20 is Baptist and Reflector Day



This year marks the 160th anniversary of the *Baptist and Reflector*. The paper has been published under its current name since 1889 when *The American Baptist Reflector* and the *Tennessee Baptist* were combined.

Baptist and Reflector Day is a time set aside on the calendar of the Tennessee Baptist Convention to inform and remind Tennessee Baptists of their weekly newsjournal which enters more Tennessee Baptist homes than any other TBC entity.

Plan now to observe *Baptist and Reflector* Day in your church. We will provide a free copy to members of non-subscribing churches for use on Aug. 20 or any other day you choose. If your church used to provide the paper but no longer does so, this will be a good opportunity to remind your members of their state newspaper and to introduce it to new members. Return the form below to reserve copies of the Aug. 16 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* for your members.

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Israelis accept Christ as Savior in evangelistic effort in Haifa

Baptist Press

HAIFA, Israel — Forty-five Israelis accepted Jesus Christ as Savior during a three-day evangelistic campaign here.

Messianic Jewish believers who organized the effort said it was the biggest campaign with the most results since such efforts began by Jewish believers a decade ago.

Campaigns with this number of decisions would not be news in many places, but this is Israel, where resistance to the Gospel is high.

During the campaign 200 Israeli believers and Christian workers, including several Southern Baptists, organized themselves into 14 teams. They shared the Gospel with about 600 people in Haifa, a coastal city in northern Israel.

"This is the best campaign we've ever had in every way," said Avi Mizrachi, an Israeli who coordinates evangelism among Jewish believers. Haifa's population of a quarter of a million people includes Jews, Arabs, and Russian immigrants. "I believe we're seeing the first sparks of what God wants to do in this country," he said. □