

Baptist and Reflector

August 23, 1995

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STATEWIDE EDITION

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week's
news

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Baptisms in Tennessee churches show increase

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Baptisms in Tennessee Baptist Convention churches showed an increase in 1994, according to Jerry King, state evangelism director.

TBC churches reported 23,866 baptisms last year, compared to 23,538 in 1993, King said. Baptisms were taken off annual church letters submitted to local associations.

"While the increase is not large, I am grateful for it because it reverses the decrease of the previous year," King said.

Shelby County Association led in number of baptisms with 2,294 while Haywood Association had the best ratio of baptisms to church membership, 15.69.

Associations following Shelby in number of baptisms were: Nashville, 2,220; Knox County, 1,699; Hamilton County, 1,145; Cumberland, 711; Holston, 679; Clinton, 643; Chilhowee, 625; Concord, 609; Sullivan, 580; Bradley, 555; Madison-

Chester, 527; McMinn-Meigs, 519; Wilson, 454; and Sevier County, 452.

Coming in behind Haywood in ratio were: Lawrence County, 17.55; Alpha, 18.20; Cumberland, 19.19; Judson, 19.42; New Duck River, 19.72; Riverside, 21.56; Cumberland Plateau, 22.87; Sullivan, 23.25; Fayette, 24.08; Concord, 25.68; Duck River, 26.08; Weakley, 26.34; Dyer, 26.44; and Wilson, 26.54.

Bellevue Church, Cordova, led TBC churches in total baptisms with 601.

They were followed by:

Higher Ground, Kingsport, 263; Central, Oak Ridge, 197; First, Hendersonville, 192; Two Rivers, Nashville 171;

First Concord, Knoxville, 141; First, Clarksville, 134; First Millington, 133; Central, Hixson, 123; Grace, Knoxville, 114; Calvary, Oak Ridge, 112; Germantown, Germantown, 112; Hildale, Clarksville, 101;

First Cleveland, 96; Bayside, Chattanooga, 89; Third, Murfreesboro, 86;

Westwood, Cleveland, 82; Park Avenue, Nashville, 82; Sevier Heights, Knoxville, 78; First, Powell, 76; First, Mt. Juliet, 75;

Broadmoor, Memphis, 71; Leawood, Memphis, 70; Hanvit, Korean, Nashville, 70; Beaver Dam, Knoxville 69; Hillcrest, Lebanon, 67; Immanuel, Lebanon, 66; Little West Fork, Clarksville, 66

Tusculum Hills, Nashville, 65; Holly Grove, Bells, 64; First, Pigeon Forge, 61; Beech Springs, Gleason, 60; Brentwood, Brentwood, 59; Kirby Woods, Memphis, 57; First, Lenoir City, 57; First, Lawrenceburg, 56; West Jackson, Jackson, 56; First, Franklin, 56; First, Shelbyville, 56; Central Bearden, Knoxville, 56;

Southeast, Murfreesboro, 53; First, Halls, 53; Central, Chattanooga, 53; Cold Springs, Pikeville, 53; Elliston, Memphis, 53; Green Hill, Mt. Juliet, 53; Southside, Shelbyville, 53;

Ellendale, Memphis, 52; Beaver, Brighton, 52; and Colonial Heights, Kingsport, 51. □

FMB trustees call Baptists to new mission heights

By Mark Kelly
For Baptist Press

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Southern Baptists must redouble their efforts if people who have never heard the Gospel will be reached for Christ, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees were told Aug. 13-17.

In response, they voted to commit more resources to reach the unreached, to challenge Southern Baptists to

new heights of missions involvement, and to cooperate with other evangelical groups to try to fulfill in this generation the biblical Great Commission mandate to reach the world for Jesus Christ.

Almost one-third of the world's population — 2,466 people groups — have never had a chance to hear the Gospel, according to Avery Willis, FMB senior vice president for overseas services.

Yet for churches to be plant-

ed among all those groups, missionary numbers and budgets will have to double, he told trustees.

Trustees responded to that challenge by adopting a strategic plan for the 21st century: "On Mission with God to the Last Frontier." It calls for missionaries and FMB leaders to develop new strategies for taking the Gospel to unreached people groups without neglecting the tremendously responsive "harvest fields" of the

world. Existing missionaries and budgets can't just be reshuffled to accomplish both tasks, Willis said.

Trustees took two actions to challenge Southern Baptists to new heights of missions commitment and involvement.

First, they endorsed the enlistment of a respected Southern Baptist pastor as a foreign missions ambassador. John Bisagno, 61, pastor of First Church, Houston, since 1970. — See FMB, page 2

World Changers make repairs to 140 homes in Tennessee

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Fifty-three Tennessee Baptist youth groups helped repair homes of low income families this summer. They traveled to various locations across the United States, from Savannah, Ga., to Lame Deer, Mont., and many places in between.

Each group spent a week repairing, remodeling, painting, and roofing homes in the name of Christ.

A total of 7,500 people from across the nation participated in World Changers, a mission project opportunity for youth and adults, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood

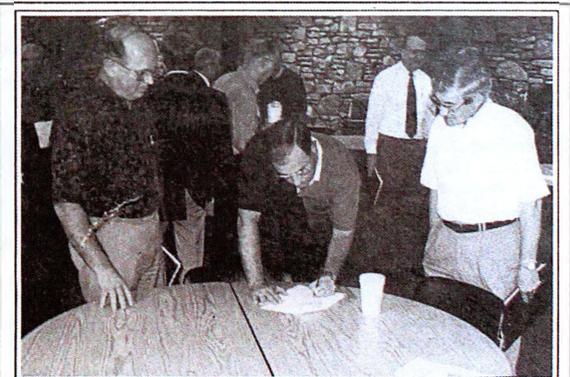
Commission, in cooperation with local associations and state Brotherhood departments.

More than 1,500 World Changers worked in three Tennessee locations — Memphis, Clinton, and Jackson — repairing 140 homes.

There are 11 weeks of World Changers scheduled for 1996.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention Brotherhood Department is responsible for enlisting adults to supervise the construction at each site.

For additional information, call the TBC Brotherhood Department at (615) 371-2025. □ — Tim Bearden



Planning committee finalizes report

Gary Coltharp, center, pastor of First Church, Jackson, and chairman of the TBC's Long-Range Planning Committee, looks over the report while committee members Paul Peak, left, of Murfreesboro, and Bob Polk of Elizabethton observe. The committee met recently at the Baptist Center to finalize its report which will be presented to TBC messengers in November. The report will be printed in the *Baptist and Reflector* prior to the annual meeting.

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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FMB trustees call Baptists to new ...

— Continued from page 1
will become a special assistant to FMB President Jerry Rankin to help the board promote foreign missions in churches, conferences, and other speaking engagements. He also will encourage fellow pastors to give higher priority to missions involvement and support. Bisagno will remain as pastor of the 22,000-member Houston church.

Rankin cited Bisagno's tenure at First Church, noting the congregation gives more than \$1 million a year to local and national Southern Baptist missions and gives more than \$200,000 a year to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. More than 900 of the church's members have gone overseas as missions volunteers and 87 as foreign missionaries.

Second, trustees ratified a "covenant of cooperation" with a new organization dedicated to helping Southern Baptist churches develop "personalized, prioritized" plans for missions support and involvement.

Global Focus, founded last March, will help Southern Baptist congregations broaden and deepen their missions programs by "strengthening traditional Southern Baptist missions channels with creative, contemporary methods that appeal to a new generation," said Larry Reesor, Global Focus executive director and member of First Church, Woodstock, Ga.

The organization's board of directors includes Bill Stafford of Chattanooga.

FMB trustees approved a total grant of \$200,000 for Global Focus' FMB-related expenses in 1995 and 1996.

Board members also voted to join the Evangelical Fellowship of Missions Agencies, a voluntary association of 110 mission organizations that send out almost 15,000 missionaries worldwide. Member groups include the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Con-

servative Baptists, Campus Crusade for Christ, World Vision, and International Bible Societies. The FMB's annual membership fee to the organization is \$15,000, based on more than 4,100 Southern Baptist missionaries serving in at least 131 countries.

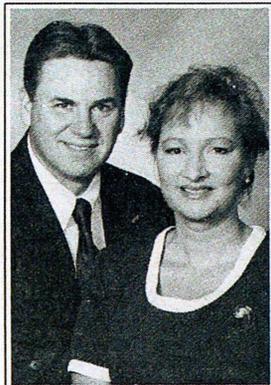
"By joining EFMA, we're recognizing we don't work in a

vacuum on the mission field and therefore need to cultivate relationships and communication with other evangelical missions," Rankin said. "Our participation in EFMA, at a time of unprecedented global opportunities, will demonstrate our willingness to cooperate at a deeper level than ever before and let us be a cat-

alyst for world evangelization that would honor Jesus Christ until he comes," Rankin added.

The four-day trustee meeting culminated in an emotional appointment service Aug. 17. Trustees appointed 69 new missionaries and reappointed eight others in the agency's largest appointment service since 1983. □

FMB appoints missionaries with state ties



THE HENSLEYS
For Baptist and Reflector

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Four missionaries with strong Tennessee ties were among 77 people appointed Aug. 17 by the Foreign Mission Board.

James and Penny Hensley were appointed to serve in Venezuela, where he will start and develop churches. Together they will be involved in outreach ministries.

Hensley was born in Rogersville, but considers Kingsport his hometown. He considers Oak Grove Church, Mount Carmel his home church.

He is a graduate of East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Mrs. Hensley is the former Penny Rhea of Church Hill.



THE HUSKS

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rhea of Church Hill. She, too, considers Oak Grove her home church. Both credit Greenvale Church in Church Hill as being influential to their Christian growth. She also is a ETSU graduate.

The Hensleys have three children.

George and Terri Husk were appointed to serve in Chile, where he will start and develop churches and together will be involved in outreach ministries.

Husk considers Morristown, where his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Husk live, his hometown and First Church, Oliver Springs, his home church. He is a former minister of youth there.

He and his wife are both graduates of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City. In ad-



THE LOFTICES

dition, he also earned a degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Husks have one child. Susan Loftice, the former Susan Holmes of Maryville, was appointed along with her husband, Michael, to serve in Niger Republic.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R.T. Holmes of Alcoa.

She considers Maryville her home town and Rosen Heights Church there her home church.

The Loftices have three children.

Others appointed with Tennessee ties include Randy Jackson, former pastor of Greene Hills Church, Greeneville; Belmont University graduate John Marshall; Carson-Newman graduate Keith Travis; and Murfreesboro native Lisa Richey Jones. □

SBC restructuring will not distract HMB, Lewis says

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention will not distract the Home Mission Board from its primary task of reaching the nation for Christ, HMB President Larry Lewis pledged during the board's Aug. 9 meeting.

Lewis told HMB directors "it would be presumptuous for me or my staff to attempt to unduly influence the structure of the new North American Mission Board Our task is to lead Southern Baptists in the most intensive evangelistic effort in our history.

"Neither do I believe the SBC Executive Committee should assume the role" of structuring the new missions agency, Lewis said. "Only the directors of the North American Mission Board can as-

sume that function, and half of that board is sitting here this morning."

A restructuring plan approved by the SBC in June would merge the HMB, Radio and Television Commission, and Brotherhood Commission. Forty-four current HMB directors will serve on the NAMB board along with 15 members each from the other two agencies. The plan must be approved a second time at next summer's SBC before it can be implemented. To represent the board's interests in the merger, board chairman Steve Swofford appointed a transition committee to be chaired by Charles Fuller of Roanoke, Va.

In other business, the board voiced opposition to Woman's Missionary Union leaders' decision to produce materials for a competing missions organization, affirmed revision of the belief statement for

chaplains, and appointed 14 new missionaries and three new staff members.

Board members approved a motion by a 3-1 margin affirming a request from their administrative committee that Lewis write a letter to Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, protesting WMU's production of missions education material for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an organization of moderate Southern Baptists critical of SBC leadership.

Some expressed concern that the action could be perceived as opposition to WMU as a whole. "Our concern has nothing to do with the mission support of local church WMUs," said Texas pastor John Avant. "Our concern is over this serious mistake by the leadership of the national organization and the resulting deterioration of our historic relationship with WMU." □ — Martin King

If you are willing: to pray, to give, to serve

September 10-17 marks the Week of Prayer for State Missions in Tennessee Baptist churches. Put it on your calendar, emphatically, right now, if you haven't checked it before.

Draw a circle in red around this week. It is important.

The slogan for the week is, "If you are willing," with II Corinthians 8:12 as the focusing Scripture. It says, "For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have."

The Golden State Missions Offering goal for Tennessee Baptists is \$1,200,000. Can we do it? We can do it, but congregations all across the Volunteer State, to accomplish the goal, have to cooperate in prayer and generosity.

Tennessee Baptists, because of the prompting of Mildred Golden, corresponding secretary of Woman's Missionary Union, became the first convention to collect a state missions offering (1902). The offering was named for her and her husband W. C., state missions secretary.

Perhaps a brief summary of some interesting facts of 1994 will stir up that feeling of generosity and cooperation:

- State population is 4.9 million.
- There are 808,646 Tennessee Baptists (resident church members).
- There are 2,905 TBC churches.

■ Through 140 kinds of ministries, Tennessee Baptists minister to 27 language groups.

■ There are an estimated 3 million unchurched people in Tennessee.

■ In 1994, Tennessee Baptists reported 28,866 baptisms.

For Tennessee Baptists, then, to be willing means a cheerful, sincere intent to pray, to give, to serve.

From Shelby County Association to Watauga, working together is the key.

Week of Prayer for State Missions emphases are packaged concisely and made available to every Tennessee Baptist church. Golden State Missions Offering allocations are listed and explained. Suggestions for theme and sermon topics are included. Art work for mailouts and handouts are included, and attractive posters as well.

Plainly, Tennessee Baptists' Woman's Missionary Union is putting tools into the hands of congregations — tools that can help develop the "If you are willing" theme. Add these tools to a willingness to pray, give, and serve — and good results will be multiplied greatly.

The goal of \$1.2 million will be used in ministry, outreach/growth, new work thrust, leadership development, and two miscellaneous items: capital for camps and Week of Prayer for State Missions promotion.

A look at some 1994 expenditures will illustrate where Golden State Missions

gifts are used.

For example, in 1994: disaster relief van response to six locations, deaf ministry training, new work loans for 14 churches/missions, migrant ministry workshop for 95, supplemental support for five ministers of missions, 76 requests for assistance from ministers aid fund, assistance to six Baptist Centers, pastor salary supplements to 25 churches/missions, and many others.

The annual goal and all allocations are considered carefully.

Committees make crucial decisions only after thorough discussion and prayer.

Yes, sometimes it is difficult to feel inspired to give to missions here at home — when foreign and national missions needs seem so demanding.

But there are needs here at home that only Tennessee Baptists can accomplish under the thrust of God's Holy Spirit.

It is vital to remember that the needs are immense and many, and that prayer and funding are two components that must be equal to the demands.

Willingness to give, willingness to pray, willingness to serve and go — combine to make an excellent formula that guarantees the success of the work.

The prayers have begun — long ago. Plans were instigated months in the past. Now Tennessee Baptists lend themselves to share God's magnanimous offer of salvation and grace. Join the team! □

■ one word more

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

The best policy?

Is honesty the best policy? Little children seem to think so. At times they can be almost brutally honest.

Ask them for an opinion; they won't spare the questioner. It is as if honesty and truthfulness make the only formula they know. They just don't know any better. Every parent has been embarrassed by the stark honesty of a kid.

The children soon learn better, don't they? And from whom do they learn? Surely they don't pick up dishonesty from adults!

Not long ago, *USA Today* addressed the honesty issue. A North Carolina company gave written honesty tests to about 3 million job applicants. The company determined that 18-31 percent were untrustworthy — compared to about 11 percent 30 years ago.

The tests showed that women are more honest than men, older people more honest than younger ones, minorities are more honest than whites — and that busboys, dishwashers, and waiters are among the most honest, trustworthy.

Years ago while in the Army, on border duty between free West Germany and communist East Germany, my platoon was chosen to relieve a British unit to our north.

Since I was the only married officer among three, I asked the company commander for his rationale. Why didn't you choose one of the other officers, I said.

He grinned. "That's easy to answer," he told me. "You are the only trustworthy one. I can't trust the others to do a job so important and demanding."

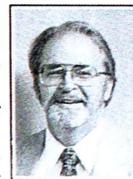
Although he was only five years older than I was, he sounded just like my father, always emphasizing honesty and trust!

I accepted his reasoning, but not without a feeling of remorse for asking the question.

Perhaps Jesus frequently gathered little children to himself because he wanted to be surrounded by honest people who put their trust in him.

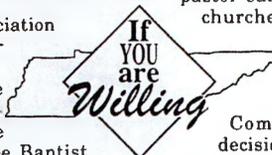
Perhaps for those moments he could feel sincerity in questions and answers, and feel their openness.

We learn from little ones. Honesty is the best way. □



ALLEN

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor



■ just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Teacher to second graders: "Pupils, I want you to paint the duck yellow and the umbrella he is holding — paint it green. Do you understand?" Class: "Yes, teacher." Teacher (observing the work of one boy): "Wilbur, you've painted the duck red and the umbrella purple. When did you see a red duck?" Wilbur: "The last time I saw one holding a green umbrella."

Take this truth

Can you strip aside non-essentials and see reality? What would you think if you read this: "Eleemosynary deeds have incipience intramurally?" Try: "Charity begins at home." The KISS approach says "keep it simple, stupid."

Memorize this Scripture

"How forcible are right words" (Job 5:26).

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me not to emphasize the non essentials and not to lose myself in exuberance of my verbosity." □

Teenagers and gambling

Ed Looney, Executive Director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, said, "Gambling is the addiction of the 90s. It is very popular in high schools and it is exploding at the college level. It's worse than drugs and alcohol in one way because it is an addiction that you don't smell or see. It's totally invisible."

Some may ask why I am writing this article since gambling is not yet legal in our state. My first answer is that we still have the problem with our neighboring states which have lotteries and legalized gambling. The second answer is to say how important it is for our youngsters that we keep gambling as far from them as possible.

Gambling is a compulsive problem. The National Council on Problem Gambling reports that 80 percent of adult compulsive gamblers started betting at age 14 or younger. While playing cards for money was once the favorite form of gambling for youth, betting on college and professional sports teams has taken over the number one spot. The major problem that compulsive gamblers have is their colossal debt. This within itself is ironic, since the proponents of gambling usually site the reduction of debt of government as one of the major reasons for any government legalizing gambling.

The American Psychiatric Association defines compulsive gambling in four phases: the winning phase, the losing phase, the desperation phase, and the disease phase. The young person may begin to gamble to try to get away from his or her problems, seeing gambling as a form of recreation. Winning is ego enhancing. Losing is chalked up to "bad luck." As the compulsion builds the young person begins to suffer from what is described as magical thinking — the mistaken belief that somebody "up there" likes them and is watching over their gambling. As the young person gets into the desperation and disease phases, he finds that he has to steal, even from his family, to provide for his gambling debts. Children

■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

in this stage suffer from severe mood swings with depression that can lead to suicide.

The following are some signs that one might see in a young person with a gambling problem:

- Possession of large amounts of money, possibly bragging about winning it;
- Change in personality for the worse toward belligerence, caustic language;
- Increase in unexplained truancy;
- Decrease in academic performance;
- Increase in rebellious behavior;
- Increased interest in newspapers, magazines, and periodicals that relate to sports and horse racing;



BARKLEY

— Flashy dress, unusual new and expensive possessions;

— Gambling language in his or her own conversations; for example "five-timer, bookie, loan shark, underdog or favorite";

— Exaggerated use of the word "bet" in his or her vocabulary. □ — Barkley is a licensed psychologist, based in Memphis.

'Christy' cliffhanger may never be resolved

By Jon Walker
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — "Christy" fans shouldn't count on a conclusion to the show's season-ending cliffhanger. CBS didn't renew the series for next year so viewers may never know how Christy chooses between the two men pursuing her romantically: Cutter Gap's pastor, David Grantland, or doctor, Neil MacNeil.

The family oriented "Christy" is one of the few network television programs that develops the spiritual side of its characters, and its on-again, off-again presence on CBS has given its fans a roller-coaster test of loyalty.

The series executive producer, Ken Wales, is asking for continued viewer loyalty, as reruns of the show shift to cable's The Family Channel, beginning Oct. 7 at 7 p.m., E.S.T.

"If we can transfer the audience of seven million homes, minimum, that have been watching 'Christy' consistently each week, then we can convince The Family Channel and other networks the audience is

still there, loyal, and faithful."

Wales is confident that with such a showing, The Family Channel or CBS will renew the series.

This is a "real test case," Wales said, showing whether people concerned about family-oriented television will follow "Christy" to cable.

Ironically, "Christy" has won critical acclaim during its short network run, as well as drawing 44 million viewers for its pilot episode and a respectable audience for its weekly shows. And, reportedly, CBS received more positive cards, letters, and phone calls for "Christy" than any other program in the network's history. But the show's audience is missing the coveted 18-49 male demographics perceived as necessary by many advertisers.

Wales said it's not too late to write CBS, requesting the return of "Christy." Viewers wishing to do so should write: Mr. Leslie Moonves, President, CBS Entertainment, 7800 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif, 90036. The phone number is (213) 852-2345. □

'Roe' professes faith in Christ, renounces abortion rights role

By Tom Strode
For Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The woman whose unwanted pregnancy led to the legalization of abortion in the United States has made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and renounced her role in the abortion rights movement.

Norma McCorvey, known as "Jane Doe" in the controversial *Roe v. Wade* case, was baptized Aug. 8 in the swimming pool of a Dallas area home. She says she placed her faith in Christ at a July worship service at Hillcrest Christian Church in Dallas.

Flip Benham, director of Dallas-based Operation Rescue National, baptized McCorvey at her request. Her baptism by Benham, an ordained Free Will Methodist minister, came only four months after Operation Rescue National moved its offices next door to the Dallas abortion clinic where McCorvey worked. She resigned as marketing director of the clinic Aug. 7, according to an ABC news report.

Claiming to be a victim of rape, McCorvey challenged the state of Texas' anti-abortion law, resulting in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. In its opinion, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down state laws against abortion and ruled there was a constitutional right for a woman to choose to have an abortion. McCorvey later said she had not been raped.

While she expressed regret about her role in the legalization of abortion, her specific position seemed unclear.

In an Aug. 10 report, ABC News reported she believes women in the first trimester of

pregnancy should have the right to choose an abortion in at least some instances. An Operation Rescue spokesman said when McCorvey is asked when first-trimester abortions should be allowed, she cites a threat to the life of the mother and fetal deformity.

"I think abortion is wrong. I think what I did with *Roe v. Wade* was wrong. And I just have to take a pro-life position on choice," McCorvey told ABC.

She said in an Operation Rescue release, "I'll be serving the Lord and helping women save their babies. I will hold a pro-life position for the rest of my life."

Also, McCorvey has had a lesbian relationship for 21 years, ABC reported. Her new-found Operation Rescue friends have not asked McCorvey to "say goodbye" to her lesbian friend, ABC said.

Benham told ABC News, "My plan, my purpose is simply to encourage Norma to keep her eyes fixed on Jesus, to follow hard after him."

"We rejoice at anyone's profession of faith," said Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues with the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and "the pro-life position is consistent with the Christian faith and the Christian tradition." He expressed hope that she would be disciplined.

Abortion rights leaders expressed concern about McCorvey's decision, but downplayed its significance.

Though she was the central figure in the *Roe* case, McCorvey never had an abortion. She gave the baby up for adoption. □

CLC supports Clinton's teen anti-smoking fight

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton's aggressive campaign to reduce the use of tobacco among young people deserves support, says a Southern Baptist medical ethics specialist.

The president announced recently he was authorizing the Food and Drug Administration to implement policies designed to block the sale and marketing of cigarettes and chewing tobacco to children under 18.

"This is the kind of health-care reform we can support," said Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the SBC Christian Life Commission.

"Tobacco is a public health hazard. Smoking kills 419,000 Americans each year. Reducing the number of smokers and, thus, tobacco-related illnesses, will save millions of dollars in medical costs," Mitchell observed. □

Stanley relinquishes church administrative roles, continues preaching; son resigns as associate

By Martin King
For Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Charles Stanley, senior pastor of First Church, Atlanta, has relinquished all administrative responsibilities for the 14,000-member congregation in order to deal with his marital problems.

Stanley told church members in a four-hour, standing-room-only, called business meeting Aug. 13 he will continue as pastor but his "only responsibility will be to teach and preach the Word of God."

Upon Stanley's recommendation, the church appointed a committee to oversee administration of the church. The committee will "recommend to the church the time at which (Stanley's) administrative oversight would resume."

Stanley and his wife, Anna, have been separated since she filed for divorce in 1993.

"I have worked and waited two years, hoping and praying my marriage would be healed," Stanley told the estimated

4,000 members gathered in the auditorium and around closed circuit television sets throughout the downtown facility. "I am not divorced. I do not want a divorce. My wife does not want a divorce. We are trusting God will put it back together."

He announced to his church for the first time Sunday night, "If my wife divorces me, I would resign as pastor immediately."

Anna Stanley, however, says their marriage of 40 years cannot be salvaged, according to a statement released to news media Aug. 14. A story in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Aug. 15 quotes Anna Stanley's statement that "the time for, and the possibility of, reconciliation between Charles and me has passed."

In her statement, she said she has "earnestly tried to negotiate a legal separation" to avoid negative impact on First Church and on her husband's "In Touch" television ministry.

"Unfortunately and regretfully, no changes have oc-

curred and the problems with our marriage go unresolved," her statement read.

The Atlanta paper quoted a spokesman for "In Touch" who said Stanley has not agreed to any legal separation because that's not his goal. The spokesman said Stanley loves his wife and has done everything he can to pursue healing. Anna Stanley's statement also said "I have been dismayed at my husband's refusal to accept the critical state of our marriage. Instead, he has made repeated announcements from the pulpit that progress was being made toward reconciliation, when in fact, the very opposite was true. I do not choose to contribute to this charade."

Charles Stanley, who has led First Church for 26 years, also announced he would take a previously planned vacation during September to "seek the Lord and his definite direction for my life."

Meanwhile, their son, Andy, resigned as the church's associate pastor Aug. 6, apparently

in disagreement with his father's decision to remain as pastor. In a statement read to the church, Andy, who was not in attendance at the meeting, strongly affirmed his love and admiration for his father, but said, "I believe my father should step down as pastor because of the issue of leadership, not preaching." However, he said he was committed to a model relationship with both his parents.

Baptist Sunday School Board President Jimmy Draper moderated the special business meeting at the request of Stanley.

Draper told FBC members he was there "as a friend of this church to help you do what you want to do as a body. I don't come with an agenda or to be a part of the process." Following adjournment, the church gave Draper a standing ovation for his fair service.

"All Southern Baptists need to be in prayer for First Baptist, for Dr. and Mrs. Stanley and for Andy during these very difficult days," Draper said. □



Partnership Missions NEWSLETTER

Featuring news from Tennessee Baptists' three partnerships — Canada, Poland, Michigan

Partnership Missions Department, TBC; P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
Phone (615) 371-2021; FAX (615) 371-2014

From the director

The summer is almost over and hundreds of Tennessee Baptists are reflecting on their mission trips. I receive weekly evaluations from volunteers who share how their mission experience has changed their life. Many of these testimonies have appeared or will appear in our newsletter.

Thank you volunteers for giving of yourselves to touch a hurting world with the love of Jesus.

It's not too early to think about next summer. If you are interested in going personally or taking a group to one of our partnership sites, please complete the form on this page. We will let our partners know of your interest and try to match your interest with a project.

There are opportunities for service during the fall and winter. Please pray and look over project opportunities that are still available this year.

Again, thanks for being the greatest group of volunteers. It's a joy to work with you.

In Christ,
Terry W. Sharp, Director
Partnership Missions



SHARP

Knoxvillians impact Winnipeg

By Gerald Mounce, DOM
Keystone Baptist Association
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

I wanted to write and share what a marvelous time we had with the Central Baptist Church, Fountain City, Knoxville. In just four days they handed out over 8,500 church brochures and flyers. Covering this amount of homes meant that over 12 percent of the entire population of Winnipeg were made aware of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptist churches. And with only three churches and one mission in a city of 650,000, this is significant contact. All this was done in eight hours over two days. Though they were very tired, the only complaint was that one church did not have enough flyers to hand out!

In the midst of all this, they also performed six concerts in these four days. In our three churches they did concerts in

the Sunday services and on Wednesday nights. In two malls, over two days, they did three concerts. It has been a long time since I have seen a group work so hard.

Their friendly, positive attitude was so evident in the way they mixed and mingled with our people after the concerts. They did not just sing and "take off" after they finished performing. Our people enjoyed fellowship with them. Their director, Steve Brown, handled all the adjustments, last minute changes, and a hectic schedule with grace and patience. The way he worked, led, and motivated the choir was a real inspiration.

I don't believe Tennessee Baptists will ever understand the impact something like this can have on an entire association. This has never been done association wide in Keystone before. It gave our churches a bigger vision than what they

had before the Chapel Choir came. Getting the word out as to who we are and where we are is always a real challenge. The choir did more of this for us in just four days than many of our churches could have done in a year.

We are already seeing immediate results of both the flyers and the mall performances. I am so glad that our first experience in the partnership with Tennessee has been so positive. I told people that if quality like this was what we had to look forward to over the next three years, it was going to be a great time of growth for our churches.

I know it sounds like I am praising men and women too much. In reality, I am praising God for these people letting him be Lord of their lives. Only when people of this caliber let Jesus be Lord of their lives can things like what happened in Winnipeg ever come about. □

Mission tidbits to consider ...

Volunteers still needed

Numerous projects are still available this summer in Michigan, Canada, and Poland. Please note the different projects, pray, and contact us to make this summer one to remember for years.

We want to recognize you!

We are sharing the testimonies of volunteers in our newsletter and want to share yours.

Also, we are recognizing our volunteers with a special partnership missions certificate and pin.

If you have gone or plan to go to Michigan and did not receive your project through our office, please send us the names of those on your missions team along with the location and dates of your project.

We don't want to overlook anyone as we recognize our fine volunteers who are serving in partnership projects. □

Urgent requests

The following three requests represent urgent needs from our partners in Poland, Canada, and Michigan. Prayerfully consider each of these needs.

(1) First Church, New Baltimore, Mich., is trying to complete their facility in order to begin worship there this fall. They need the following assistance to complete construction: dry wall hangers and finishers, finish and rough carpentry, plumbing, siding installed, and carpet or tile installed.

If you can assist this church, contact the Partnership Missions Department at (615) 371-2021 or Pastor Joe Berna at (810) 725-9951 at his office or (810) 725-0946 at his home.

(2) The Baptist Union Building of Poland is in need of repair. They need the outside of the building painted and repair of the balcony, which is in a dangerous state. Money needed for the project is \$7,500. Materials can be bought in Poland. Contact the Partnership Missions Department if you are interested.

(3) The Community Baptist Church, Prince Edward Island, Canada, is in need of volunteers to assist them in completing their construction project. Many volunteers have gone to Prince Edward Island this summer to assist this church with their new facility.

The project is almost complete but they need some finishing work in the areas of painting, drop ceiling, cabinets, windows, and doors.

If you can assist this church, please call Pastor Wallace Jorden at (902) 962-3196, or contact the Partnership Missions Department for more information. □

1996 Volunteer Interest Form

If you are interested in participating in a partnership project for 1996, please complete this form and return it to our office: Partnership Missions Department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____ Church _____

Association _____

Please check ONE of the following areas where you could serve: Canada Michigan Poland

Type of project you would like to be involved in _____

Date you would like to serve _____ Estimated number on team _____

Baptists in Poland win back church

By Krystian Ber, pastor
The Baptist Church in Lodz

The Baptists began their mission work in Lodz, Poland, in the middle of the 19th Century. The first baptism took place on Sept. 25, 1868, as Gotfried Alf baptized five people in a pond near the factory on Widzewska Street. The pioneer of mission work in Lodz was Johann Rohner. After a year the number of believers grew to 71, then increased to over 100 the following year.

The property on 27 Nawrot Street was bought in 1875. A fine, three-aisle church in neoclassical style was built and dedicated on June 25, 1882. The mission work continued to increase during this time. In December, 1938, there were 10 congregations in the Lodz area with 2,499 members. Including their families, it was a community of 5,195 people.

Unfortunately, World War II changed the history of the

church. In 1945, the church building was taken over by the army and given to the police to be later changed into a cinema. The congregation's house became a community center. The oldest brick church in Lodz had been turned into a building that became a sign of the epoch.

The attempts to reclaim the

es returned negative. Officially the property had been taken away in small parts. The expropriation of the part of the church and congregation's house took place in 1952, after the decision of the local authorities that it should "serve for public affairs." The last piece of land was taken away in 1977.

All pleas, claims, and offers to buy the property back had been refused. In the years of 1988-1994, a lot of effort was made to get the church back.

On March 30, 1994, the Minister of Construction declared "the expropriation was done with glaring infringement of the law." The City of Lodz returned the building of the cinema (church building) to the Baptist Church in Lodz on Sept. 1, 1994.

On that evening, a solemn service of thanksgiving took place. There were many church members and city official guests, as well as members of other denominations present. The congrega-

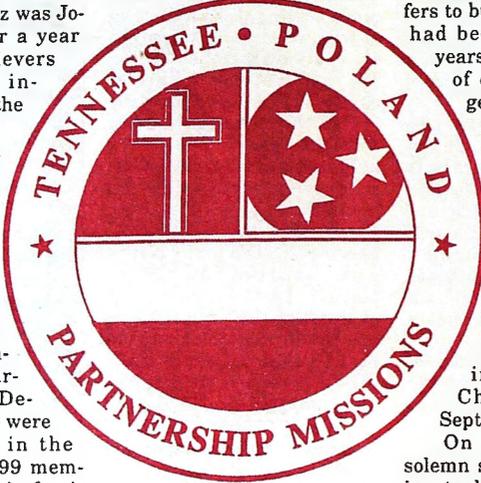
tion's building was returned on Dec. 19, 1994.

The preparations to restore the buildings are now in progress. A restoration plan has been made and accepted by the city officials. It will include reconstruction of the church and changing the community center into a congregation's building. It is our aim that the building be useful not only to our community but the whole city.

Just as in the past, Lodz has become the center of baptism in Lodz. We now hope that 27 Nawrot Street becomes the center of Christian culture in Lodz.

We plan to create a youth club, kindergarten, and later a school, Christian Movie Discussion Club, School of Foreign Language, and a bookstore. In the church building, we would like to celebrate our services as well as organize concerts, conferences, and other Christian programs. All of these projects will be offered to the people of our city.

What we need most are your prayers, that God will show us what his will is and what his plans are for us in the days ahead. □



property began right after the war. On Sept. 24, 1945, the first letter was sent to the government. All respons-

WMU in Portland adopts church

The Woman's Missionary Union of Chestnut Grove Baptist Church, Portland, recently has accepted the challenge to adopt Gladstone Baptist Church, Vancouver, Canada.

Their goal was to buy 35 Bibles, but because of their hard work and generous congregation, they were able to raise \$405, which bought 65 Bibles.

Their pastor, Forrest Creekmore, states that the WMU and the entire church are eager to continue this relationship with the Canadian Baptists. □

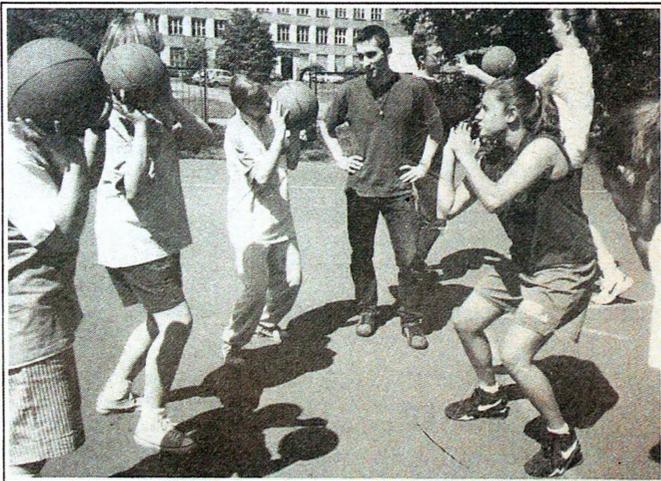


Belmont University sends sports team to Poland

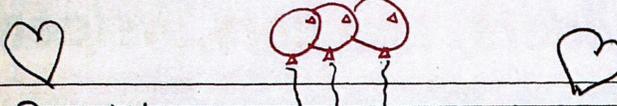
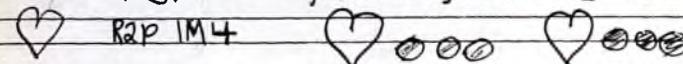
It was a life changing experience for our student/athletes as God allowed them to share their faith in Jesus Christ without fear and with boldness. God blessed our efforts as Polish young people made decisions for Christ. Seeds were sown and barriers broken down as the power of the Holy Spirit took control. I am convinced that Sports Evangelism is an awesome means of reaching youth for Christ around the world.

— Betty Wiseman, associate professor, Belmont University, Nashville

Team members were: Abbey Benton, Jeff Bryan, Rob Cook, Kevin Fields, Amber Gibbs, Jennifer Mathis, Jeff McGinnis, Keith Tenpenny, Wendy Truitt, Kerry West. Sponsors: Betty Wiseman and Clara Brincefield.



■ The Macedonian Call


 Dear: Ms. Davis
 My name is Abbie Shelton. I am the daughter of Pastor Bob and Debbie of Garden Park Baptist church. I would like to have a pen pal who is a pastors daughter. Like ME! I like sports and designing and I am 9 years old and going into grade 5. Would you be able to print my name, address, age and grade in the Baptist and Reflector? Maybe someone would like to write to me and be my pen pal so we could get to know more about each other?
 My address is...  Sincerely:
 374 Arthur Wright Cres. Abbie Shelton
 Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, Abbie Lynn Shelton
 R2P 1M4

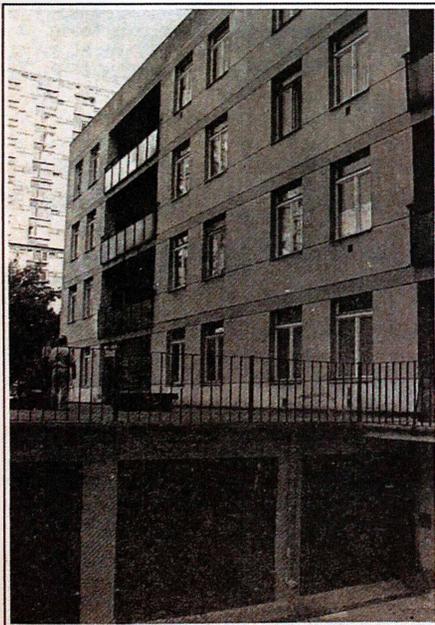
Abbie, who wrote Connie Davis, assistant editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*, may have started a pen pal program which can develop partnerships between Tennesseans and children, not only in Canada, but in Poland and Michigan as well. Watch the *Baptist and Reflector* and this regular insert, "The Macedonian Call," for further opportunities.



Welcoming new coordinators

Bill Wilson, director, Tennessee Baptist Convention Convention Ministries Division, pauses from a meeting with Barbara and Charles Layton of Dallas, Texas, who will serve as coordinators of the Poland/Tennessee Baptist Partnership from Poland for two years. They will move there in September.

Views of Poland from planning trip by Tennesseans



BAPTIST BUILDING in Warsaw that needs painting and balcony repairs.



PLANNING FOR THE PARTNERSHIP are Terry Sharp, left, director, TBC partnership missions, and Irek Dawidowicz, pastor of a Baptist church in Bialystok.



BAPTIST CHURCH in Warsaw.

■ The Macedonian Call

Opportunities abound as builders, teachers, helpers

Canada

Date: October 1995
 Project: Teaching/Seminary Extension
 Place: Muskades
 Team Needed: 1-3
 Project#: FPIVS95634

Date: Open 1996
 Project: Church Planting/Survey
 Place: Winnipeg
 Team Needed: Open
 Project#: FPIVS95616

Date: Open 1995/96
 Project: ESL Teacher
 Place: Vancouver, BC (Gladstone, BC)
 Team Needed: 1-2
 Project#: FPIVS95607

Date: July 15-19, 1996
 Project: VBS for deaf
 Place: Calgary Baptist Deaf Fellowship
 Team Needed: Open

Date: Open 1996
 Project: Construction (re-roof auditorium)

Place: Delta, BC (Royal Heights BC)
 Team Needed: 4-6

Date: Oct. 18-20, 1996
 Project: Revival
 Place: Calgary Baptist Deaf Fellowship
 Team Needed: 1-2

Poland

Date: Oct. 3-11
 Project: Youth Workers' Workshop
 Place: Warsaw
 Team Needed: 1-2
 Project #: PM11995439

Date: Nov. 12-19
 Project: Bible Training Weekend
 Place: Gorzow Wielkopolski
 Team Needed: 1-2
 Project#: PM11995467

Date: Open
 Project: Landscaping
 Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
 Team Needed: Open

Project#: PM11995402
Date: Open
 Project: Businessmen and Women Meetings
 Place: Warsaw
 Team Needed: 1-2
 Project#: PM11995464

Date: Open
 Project: Construction (side-walk system)
 Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
 Team Needed: 6-8
 Project #: PM11995475

Date: May 16-28, 1996
 Project: Sports/English Class
 Place: Warsaw
 Team Needed: 12-14

Date: June 30 – July 13, 1996
 Project: Construction/Evangelism (new chapel)
 Place: Warsaw
 Team Needed: 10-12

Date: July 1996
 Project: English Course

Place: Zelow
 Team Needed: 2-4

Date: Sept. – Oct. 1996
 Project: Assist local church in all ministries
 Place: Gizycko
 Team Needed: 1-2

Michigan

Date: Fall 1995
 Project: Construction (roof)
 Place: Warren (Dequindre Road BC)
 Team Needed: 6-8

Date: Fall 1996
 Project: Leadership Training
 Place: Marquette (FBC)
 Team Needed: Open

Date: Open
 Project: Construction/Renovation
 Place: Gaylor (Alpine Village BC)
 Team Needed: Open

Date: Open
 Project: Construction
 Place: Pontiac (Columbia

Avenue)
 Team Needed: 6

Date: Summer 1996
 Project: VBS/Construction (new auditorium)
 Place: Cadillac (Evergreen BC)
 Team Needed: Open

Date: Summer 1996
 Project: VBS
 Place: Kalamazoo (Victory BC)
 Team Needed: 30

Date: Open
 Project: VBS
 Place: Bay City (Bangor BC)
 Team Needed: 12-15

Date: Open 1996
 Project: Survey Work
 Place: Berrien Springs (FBC)
 Team Needed: Open

Date: Open 1996
 Project: BYBC/VBS/Survey
 Place: Centerline
 Team Needed: Open

Eye glasses needed

If you have old eyeglasses that you would like to donate to missions, please send them to our office. These glasses will be used on medical mission trips.



Medical team to Poland

We have a medical team scheduled to go to Tarnow, Poland, Oct. 14-23. An optometrist and adult physician are needed for this team. If you would be interested in going on this trip, please call our office.

Will You Be a Prayer Partner?

Will you commit to pray daily for our partnerships with Poland, Canada, and Michigan? As a prayer partner you will receive monthly prayer requests and a quarterly newsletter just for prayer partners.

If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please complete the form below and return it to the Partnership Missions Department, TBC, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024, or FAX it to (615) 371-2014.

Prayer Partner

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Church _____

Association _____

Daily Partnership Prayer Requests

August

- 23 — Pray for the clown ministry that began in Poland this June and its leaders.
- 24 — Pray for Mike and Juanita Bridges as they prepare to teach *Experiencing God* in Poland this fall.
- 25 — Pray for Ricky Belcher, volunteer from New Mexico, for a job and a place to live as he begins to work with children in Macomb Association, Mich.
- 26 — Pray that a church will be started in Radom, Poland, as a result of the evangelism work done there.
- 27 — Pray for the evangelistic block parties scheduled for August and September in Macomb Association, Mich.
- 28 — Pray for Terry Sharp, director, Partnership Missions Department, as he leads our partnerships.
- 29 — Pray that many volunteers will be available to work in our partnerships in 1996.



■ the leaders

■ **R. D. Kelsey** has resigned as pastor of Wetmore Church, Delano, after five years, to accept a call to First Church, Riceville. During his ministry at Wetmore the church upgraded the pastor's position from bivocational to full-time. Also, **Jack Tullock** has retired as music director of Wetmore Church and **Ramona Jordan** has been called as minister of music and education at the church.

■ **Tommy Clark** has been called as pastor of Southland Church, Memphis. Clark formerly served at Cruger Church, Cruger, Miss., and is a graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis.

■ **Tony Lollis** has been called as associate pastor/minister of music of Grassland Heights Church, Franklin, effective Aug. 21.

■ **Richard Clay Smother** has been ordained into the

ministry by Meridian Church, Jackson, and has been called as pastor of Spring Hill Church, Trenton.

■ the work

■ As of mid-June, three construction teams in **Hamilton County Association** have helped construct a new building for the Newaygo Community Church, Newaygo, Mich., to support the Michigan/Tennessee Baptist Partnership. Participating churches include Brainerd Hills, Central Hixson, Concord, East Lake, Middle Valley, and Oakwood. The volunteers worked on the foundation, roof, and did electrical work on the building. More teams are planning to work this summer. Anyone interested may call Wayne Parker, director of missions, Woodland Association, Mich., at (616) 796-1405.

■ A team of nine people from **Mt. Gilead Church, Cedar Grove**, joined Volunteer Christian Builders during

the week of July 2-8 to help build a new education building and remodel the sanctuary of Bellvue Church, Bellvue, Colo.

■ the churches

■ **First Church, Columbia**, will offer sign language classes for people of all ages starting Sept. 6. Classes include Beginning Sign, Intermediate Sign, Children's Sign K-5, Sign Choir, and Prayer/Planning.

■ **Holly Grove Church, Bells**, will hold revival Aug. 27-31. Max Walker will speak and John Kimberly Jr., minister of music and associate to the pastor, Holly Grove Church, will lead the music.

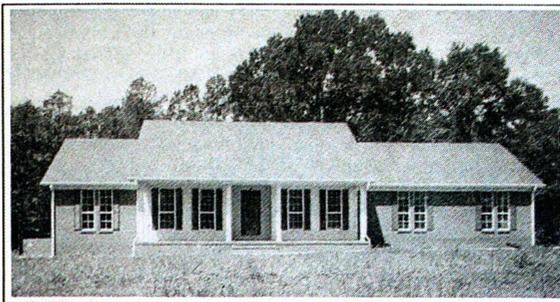
■ **Ewtonville Church, Dunlap**, will hold its Annual Ladies Bible Conference Sept. 8-9. The theme is "A Woman of Love." Ann Downing, Dove and Grammy Award winner, will sing. For more information, call (615) 949-3141, 949-7495, or 554-3309.

■ **Central Church, Hixson**, will host a John Starnes concert Aug. 27.

■ **Orlinda Church, Orlinda**, sponsored a community block party Aug. 6 to reach prospects for the church. Approximately 250 people were present and most were guests. The event preceded an Aug. 13-16 revival.

■ the associations

■ **Weakly County Association** will begin a counseling ministry. Counselor Bob Swift will be available at the mission center office on Thursdays starting in September. A meeting will be held at First Church, Sharon, Aug. 24, to in-



PICTURED IS THE NEW PASTORIUM of Toone Church, Toone. Construction was begun under the leadership of Charles "Chuck" Smith and was completed under the leadership of R. G. "Bob" Elliot.

roduce Swift and provide information about how the ministry will be conducted.

■ **Sequatchie Valley Association** will hold an Associational Youth Rally Sept. 23 at Ewtonville Church, Dunlap. The theme is "Youth Alive in '95." Tom Toombs will speak and Michael Passons will lead the music.

■ the schools

■ **Paul D. Brewer**, professor of religion and philosophy at **Carson-Newman College**, Jefferson City, has retired after 37 years of service. Merrill

Hawkins Jr. has been named a faculty member by the religion department. William L. Belvins has been reassigned to a new area within school counseling.

■ the missionaries

■ **Richard and Ida Bennett Lusk**, missionaries in Asia for the past 33 years, will be returning to the U.S. for their final furlough in October. The couple will live in the missionary house of Brownsville Church, Brownsville. They can be reached at 208 W. College St., Brownsville, 38012, (901) 772-6558.



LEADERS OF SHAWANEE CHURCH, SHAWANEE, break ground for educational space, a parking lot, and covered driveway Aug. 6. They include, from left, Danny Ellis, Kelly Chumley, Jason Peters, Bill Fultz, Donnie Fox, pastor, Wayne Sexton, Terry Fultz, George Surber, Dan Peters, M.S. Young, and Emily Campbell. The additions will cost about \$200,000. The congregation also recognized that day the debt-free status of a church van.



EDDIE TURNER, right, minister of music and recreation, Pleasant Heights Church, Columbia, for two years, receives a certificate from Bob Vassar, pastor, at his ordination July 9. Turner is a graduate of Mars Hill (N.C.) College and Southern Baptist Seminary.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

Surprises

By Mari E. Wiles, associate pastor West Hills Church, Knoxville

I love surprises! A surprise call from a friend, flowers delivered at work, or a kind word all make the day brighter.

I enjoyed seeing my new yard slowly break forth with daffodils and tulips - all surprises to me. I got to anticipate the beauty of new life that was slumbering when I bought the house in October of last year.

God is a God of surprises. Sarah was pretty surprised when God announced she needed Lamaze classes for those 90 and over. Jonah was surprised to have a tour of the belly of a large fish. Zachaeus was surprised by the acceptance and Grace of Jesus.

God has some surprises in store for you, may you anticipate them with awe and wonder. □

Our tasks

By Kevin L. Shrum, pastor Inglewood Church, Nashville

Nehemiah was God's man for God's time. God's purpose for him was to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after they had been destroyed; the year was 444 B. C.

A few naysayers did not want to see God's people renewed and God's city rebuilt. These enemies tried to slow down or stop Nehemiah's work.

Nehemiah stood firm and refused to allow himself to be removed from God's project. Nehemiah 6:2, 3 states, "But

they were scheming to harm me; so I sent messengers to them with this reply: 'I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?'" No matter the cost, Nehemiah refused to take his focus off the task set before him.

We too have been given a great task as a church. God has called us to:

■ Lift up the name and person of Jesus Christ, John. 12:30-33

■ Faithfully serve Jesus by serving others, Matthew 20:26

■ Evangelize the lost among and around us, Matthew 28:16-20

■ Love each other in Christlike love, I Corinthians 13:1-13

In addition to these major things, I believe that God wants us to: be faithful and loving to our families; be in-

involved in church activities and events; study God's Word; and pray and seek the mind of Christ. This is our challenge.

However, it is very easy to become distracted from what is best, what is godly. Let me offer several suggestions as to how we can be like Nehemiah.

First, go to church, read your Bible, and pray. Why? Because as you do these things you place yourself in a position to be blessed, touched, and taught by the Lord Jesus.

Second, find something to do. There are many things within the church that need to be done. Find one thing then do it well.

Third, be faithful in the small things; God will bless the big things. □

BSSB deletes eight jobs in Bible teaching-reaching division

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Further adjustments in the structure of the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division will result in a reduction of eight positions, effective Oct. 1.

Six of the cuts — including three vacant positions — will be made in the ministry-leadership development department where two field service teams (pastor/general leadership and associational) are being merged into one (general leadership-associational). Two vacant positions also are being deleted in the youth-adult department.

Employees whose jobs are being deleted, all in the ministry-leadership development department field service section, include: Willie Beaty, general leadership consultant, and James Harvey, associational consultant, who will take early retirement; and pastor/general leadership team leader Tim Holcomb.

BT-R Division Director Bill Taylor said the restructuring is in response to "the need for positioning the Bible teaching-reaching division for the challenges ahead and financial concerns, not employee performance. Cutting jobs is never easy, especially when it involves people who have given so much of their time and talents to the Sunday School

Board and its ministries."

Beaty came to the BSSB in 1982 from the Florida Baptist Convention's Sunday School department.

Harvey joined the board staff in 1987 after serving as pastor of churches in Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.

Holcomb joined the board in

1983 after serving as minister of education in Texas.

According to Billie Pate, associate director of the BT-R division, merging the two field service teams "will enable more efficient coordination of field services directed to Sunday School general officers, pastors, staff, and association-

al leaders. A focused, coordinated field service effort is a priority of the newly designed BT-R organization," Pate said.

The division will consist of three departments, effective Oct. 1: ministry-leadership development; youth-adult biblical studies; and preschool-children biblical studies. □

Classified

FOR SALE: Oak padded pews, pulpit furniture, & communion table. Call (615) 775-1154 or (615) 624-5846.

ACCEPTING RESUMES: FBC, Walnut Ridge, Ark., is seeking full-time pastor. Send resumes to Chairperson, Pastor Search Committee, FBC, P.O. Box 547, Walnut Ridge, AR 72476.

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Life and Work Series for August 27

Focal Passage:

Proverbs 20:1; 23:19-21,
29-35

Alcohol and drugs: danger — be wise!

By C. William Palmiter

It is obviously wise not to allow our lives to be captivated by the wrong spirits that can harm and destroy our relationships and even ourselves. Many people are trapped by the abuse of alcohol and drugs. The news media, which receives a large amount of advertising income from the liquor industry, informs us of the great amount of taxes generated from this industry. What they fail to tell us is the cost of the hospitals, the treatment centers, the accidents, the law enforcement, the people who have been maimed for life, and the loss of life as a result of drinking drivers. We all understand how bad illegal drug abuse is today; remember, alcohol is only a drug that has been declared legal by the state. Youth are not stupid and they begin to make comparisons. Youth have asked me why they are judged for the evils of marijuana by folk who sit around drinking alcohol. The hypocrisy on this issue in the church rivals the hypocrisy of those outside the church.

Excessive consumption of intoxicating beverages is usually a symptom of a deeper problem. Unfortunately, it has the potential of becoming a complex problem on its own. In ch. 20:1, the dangers of drinking alcohol are presented in vivid images.

The reason for the next admonishment is to avoid the related sins of drunkenness and gluttony (ch. 23:20-21). The constant "drowsiness" (v. 21) refers to the associated laziness and inactivity. The word translated "rags" is derived from a verb that means to "tear in pieces." Torn clothes or rags indicate poverty. The common denominator between addiction to alcohol or other drugs and eating disorders, which includes gluttony, is compulsive behavior. Recognizing compulsive behavior is a vital step to having peace in your life. Six questions (v. 29) portray some results of excessive drinking. These include despair, misery, quarrels, complaints, and unnecessary injuries. The "blood-shot eyes" are either red after too much drinking or dull from an alcoholic stupor. Those who have such characteristics waste time looking for new combinations of mixed drinks to escape reality (v. 30). In spite of the enticing color and taste (v. 31), the impact of the alcohol is like being bitten by a poisonous snake (v. 32).

In verses 33-35 the Scripture vividly pictures the sickening effects and hallucinations induced by intoxication. Although Proverbs makes no explicit prohibition against drinking alcohol, these definite warnings are very close to a prohibition. No one who is wise in the Lord will get drunk. The person who refuses the first drink is in no danger of drinking too much.

Regardless of the warnings, many use alcohol and drugs to dissolve their anxiety, to reduce their tensions, to remove their loneliness, and to solve all their problems temporarily. Alcoholism and drug abuse cannot appear in, progress in, nor maintain itself in isolation. One person drinks excessively, but others react to the drinking and its consequences. The drinker responds to the reaction and drinks again. This sets up a cycle of shame and denial that sucks the participants into a bottomless pit. Condemnation and judgmental attitudes only exacerbate the problem. Many hurting families are finding help and healing in Christian treatment centers that enable them to face the deadly cycle of guilt, shame, and denial. Then the power of Christ enables healing and rehabilitation to take place. Real help and hope are available in Christ! □ — William Palmiter is pastor of Bethel Church, Greenbrier.

The end of a nation

By Jerry Barker

A good example of prophetic history is found in II Kings. We are reading history from a moral and spiritual point of view in II Kings. It is sad to read the title of the lesson but as we have seen judgment and justice will eventually come to our lives. In the lesson, we will seek to describe the fall of the Northern Kingdom and we will seek to learn why it fell.

An overview of II Kings — II Kings 17:1-23

The Assyrians attacked Israel when tribute was sent to Egypt and not to Assyria by King Hoshea (vv. 1-5). Following was a three year siege by Assyria and Samaria fell and the Israelites were then taken into captivity (v. 6). The reason that Israel fell was because of her sin against the Lord who had delivered her from Egypt (v. 7). The sins of Israel were many. They adopted pagan worship and the ways of other nations (v. 8). Sadly throughout their history sin and idolatry were prevalent throughout the land (vv. 9-12). God made every effort to call the people back through his prophets (v. 13). However, the people continued to reject God's Word (vv. 14-17). Finally, enough was enough and God's wrath fell on Israel (v. 18). For a while longer, Judah continued to exist, but she too had not learned the lesson that had been taught to Israel. So later in her history, she also was defeated and a similar fate befell her (vv. 19-20). As one looks back, it is clear that the sin of Jeroboam I at the beginning of Israel's history continued as an evil influence (vv. 21-23).

Fall of the Northern Kingdom — vv. 6-14

"In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Haberby the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes" (v. 6).

The return of God's glory

By Clay Austin

Chapter 43 has a familiar yet awesome familiarity to the prophet. These visions remind Ezekiel of previous times when God had spoken to him in dramatic fashion. However, these wonderful experiences took place over a long period of time. Ezekiel waited almost 20 years to see this vision of hope. We live in a day when the effectiveness of many things are measured by speed. Computers can perform complex functions in a fraction of a second and a microwave can cook food in a few minutes.

We may sometimes feel that God should respond to our requests and questions instantly. Many times Ezekiel probably wished that God would speed up the process, yet because of his faithful patience, Ezekiel now witnesses the ultimate vision of hope. He was a man of faithfulness and that faith was rewarded. From this ancient prophet we learn that the faithful never give up hope that God will address our problems.

Ezekiel had the responsibility to deliver the message of exile and judgment, he also had the opportunity to deliver the joyous message of hope that the glory of the Lord was going to return. The sensations that accompany this wonderful vision recall the flapping wings of living creatures that transported the chariot throne in ch. 1:24. To a temple of

Convention Uniform Series for August 27 Focal Passage: II Kings 17:6-14

We read in history how brutal the Assyrians were with torture, execution, and terror. Their policy of conquest was to uproot defeated nations and scatter them.

Verses 1-6 are a summary of the historical and political facts which related to the fall of Israel. Verse 7 begins an explanation of the moral and spiritual factors in Israel's fall. God had called the people of Israel to a distinctive faith and had called them to a special way of life. They were to worship the one true God but after the Israelites settled in the promised land, they began to compromise their faith. They began to adopt pagan worship and immorality. Sin and idolatry began to pervade the land.

"And the children did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchman to the fenced city. And they set up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree" (vv. 9-10).

God tried to bring the people back to him through his prophets. During this quarter we have studied six of the prophets that God called to speak his word. Elijah, Elisha, Amos, and Hosea spoke to the Northern Kingdom and Micah and Isaiah spoke to the Southern Kingdom. According to God's Word the people rejected his messengers and his message.

Remember, Israel fell not just because she sinned, but because Israel continued to reject God's call to repentance. Eventually Judah would follow the same road of destruction (vv. 19-20).

Let us as a nation not follow the same pattern of Israel and Judah. God is calling us to repent and to return to our Lord. He will forgive and he will accept us, but if we continue to reject him judgment will come! □ — Jerry Barker is pastor of First Church, Alamo.

Bible Book Series for August 27 Focal Passages: Ezekiel 43:1-4, 7-12

ruins the glory of the Lord returned. The most beautiful cathedral or the most humble chapel are on equal ground when the presence of God takes over.

In verses 10 and 11 God makes it clear to the prophet that the nation must have some understanding of their sins if they are to enjoy a new relationship with God. If wrong practices had resulted in the exile, then the people had to repent and change if they were to enjoy a new relationship with God. The physical plan of the temple was to have meaning for the people of God. The massive entrances warned of the awesomeness of the one who resided there. The architectural plan was itself to serve as an inducement for inaugurating and maintaining a new holiness in the people. Not only is the temple proper to be a holy place, but the whole area belongs to God (v. 12).

The book that began with such a heavy message of judgment, ends with a wonderful message of hope. We learn that God indeed does discipline his creation. He does so because of his love for them. For those willing to learn from the punishment, God has a wonderful message of restoration and hope.

Often we become impatient and feel that God has forgotten us or we mistakenly feel that he has given up on us. God wanted to bring his nation back from exile, but he wanted to make sure they had learned something.

We have seen that God can restore life where previously only spiritual death has been evident. The desire of God was for the time of punishment to end so that he could bless his people. Not only did God bless his people he also protected them. When other nations enjoyed the downfall of Israel, God made his judgment known to the foreigners.

Recycling has become a concept widely talked about in our time. Long before we thought of preserving our resources, God was restoring and recycling his creation. Ezekiel's message demonstrates God's willingness to take lives that have missed the mark and restore them to usefulness.

Ezekiel's words are as applicable and needed today as they were centuries ago. The words to a contemporary Christian song sum it up. "God's love never changes." □ — Clay Austin is pastor of First Church, Blountville.

Pioneer missionary to Taiwan dies

Baptist Press

WAYCROSS, Ga. — Retired missionary Marie Conner, one of the first four Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to Taiwan, died Aug. 11 after suffering a stroke at her home. She was 80.

Appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1944, Conner worked 36 years among Chinese people in China and Taiwan.

After two years of language study, she taught in Baptist schools in Yangchow and Shanghai, China, living under the communist regime in Shanghai for more than a year.

In 1950 she transferred to Taiwan, joining legendary missionary Bertha Smith, who began working there in 1948.

"Marie lived for missions," said her sister, Jimmie Lee Chidester of Macon, Ga. □

Alaskan Baptists elect Sullins as new exec

Baptist Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Messengers to the 50th annual meeting of the Alaska Baptist Convention elected Cloyd R. Sullins as successor to retired Executive Director Bill G. Duncan.

Sullins, 59, will begin duties Sept. 15, coming from the post of director of evangelism for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. He was Alaska's director of church evangelism/church growth from 1991-94.

"Making Missions Happen in Alaska" was the theme of the Aug. 8-9 sessions attended by 221 messengers at First Church, Anchorage.

Tim Clark, pastor of First Church, Palmer, was re-elected to a second term as convention president. □

Texas foundation, SBC added to lawsuit

Baptist Press

WICHITA FALLS, Texas — Attorneys for a woman challenging the right of charities to issue gift annuities have petitioned a federal court to add 29 new defendants to the case, including the Baptist Foundation of Texas and the Southern Baptist Convention.

And a hearing on the case is scheduled in the U.S. District Court here on Aug. 28, that could have billion dollar ramifications for almost every charitable organization in the United States, from the Boy Scouts to churches.

On that date, attorneys will ask U.S. District Judge Joe Kendall to certify their suit as a class action, including every donor and/or their beneficiaries and heirs who have given charitable gift annuities and every charity that has issued an annuity or acts as a trustee for a charitable trust, includ-

College students weigh 'True Love Waits' message

Baptist Press

GATLINBURG — Teenagers by the hundreds of thousands have responded to a call to sexual abstinence made through "True Love Waits," but is it a message college students are ready to embrace and take to their campuses?

If the response at 1995 Student Week Conference is an indication, the answer is yes.

During an evening worship service Aug. 8 at the Gatlinburg Conference Center, 384 Baptist college students made a public commitment to remain chaste until marriage as part of the international abstinence campaign sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board. Of that total, 153 were first-time commitments and 231 were restatements of earlier pledges they had made as members of youth groups.

While True Love Waits always has been open to college students, the BSSB's National Student Ministry is emphasizing the cam-

paign at both its student conferences this year — in Gatlinburg and Glorieta, N.M. It ties in with the theme of this year's meetings — "Absolutes? Absolutely!" — which points students living in a world of moral relativism to the absolute truth of Scripture.



A new collegiate True Love Waits Bible study also is being introduced at the national conferences. "Finding a Love Worth Living" is a four-session study written by Randy Deering, a Nashville-based student minister.

Students attending the Gatlinburg conference were encouraged to place God at the heart of all their dating relationships.

"If someone uses the word 'love,' it would behoove you to find out what kind of love they're talking about," said Texas pastor Sam Douglass during a morning Bible study.

"There is a lot of love on your campus that is not agape; it's eros, a sensual, physical, erotic kind of love," Douglass said, describing it best as "lust." □

ing thousands of churches, hospitals, arts organizations, and universities throughout the country.

Certification of the suit as a class action could make targets of almost every charity in America simply because they have been issued or managed gift annuities.

"Every charity in the country is in jeopardy because of the implications of this lawsuit," said Tal Roberts, executive vice president of the Baptist Foundation of Texas.

"This could cripple charities precisely at the time when the federal government is looking to charities to take on more of our needs." □

Mantle dies at Baylor Medical Center, Dallas

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Baseball Hall of Famer Mickey Mantle, 63, died

Aug. 13 at Baylor University Medical Center, nine weeks after receiving a liver transplant at the Texas Baptist hospital.

Mantle received the liver transplant June 8 and enjoyed a few weeks of peace before doctors discovered cancer had spread from his liver to so many organs it could not be fought.

Critics maintained Mantle received preferential treatment since the average wait for a transplant organ is five months and Mantle waited one day. Others decried the fact Mantle died so soon after the transplant and the organ could have been given to someone with a better chance of surviving longer.

But hospital officials insist Mantle was simply the sickest one on the recipient list that matched the organ, and at that time, tests did not show any signs of cancer that could hinder the transplant. □

7,500 youth serve as World Changers

Baptist Press

MEMPHIS — This summer World Changers involved almost 7,500 youth and adults from 535 churches in 25 projects in the United States and Nicaragua.

World Changers, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, involves youth and adults in coeducational missions projects that stress "hands-on," personal involvement.

The theme for the summer work was "We Make House Calls." Approximately 600 low income families or elderly residents received new roofs, fresh coats of paint, siding, and other repairs on their homes.

In 1996, World Changers plans to host projects in 40 locations, including Kenya and Nicaragua. □

Alternative to abortion helps the hurting

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — "We have a lot of hurting people sitting in our churches," said Sylvia Boothe, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's nationwide crisis pregnancy center effort, Alternatives to Abortion Ministries.

"Most abortions, 98 percent, are for convenience," said Boothe, and legally can occur during all three trimesters of pregnancy. But the feeling of convenience soon gives way to depression and despair.

Those among the hurting are not only women, but also

men who fathered the babies, moms and dads who would have been grandparents, and friends who suggested the abortion route.

They fear rejection if they reveal their secret, and they feel stress from concealing their secret. "Part of our call as the church is to be approachable and to be instruments of God's healing and God's resources," Boothe said.

Through Alternatives to Abortion Ministries, Boothe wants to "educate and equip Southern Baptists to be involved in long-term, positive ministry to those involved in

crisis pregnancies." Boothe was director of a crisis pregnancy center in Oklahoma City eight years ago when the HMB asked her to coordinate the SBC's nationwide ministry.

Boothe has helped through her position to provide training for the establishment of 31 centers nationwide.

In addition to counseling on the alternatives to abortion — either parenting or adoption — most centers also provide post-abortion counseling.

For more information on the centers, call Boothe's HMB office at 1 (800) 962-0851. □

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