

# Baptist and Reflector

November 8, 1995

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STATEWIDE EDITION

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## First time since 1984

# Gifts from TBC churches exceed budget

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — For the first time in 11 years, Tennessee Baptists' giving exceeded their budget.

For the fiscal year 1994-95, which ended Oct. 31, Tennessee Baptists gave \$26,893,421 to the Cooperative Program, an increase of \$686,649 or 2.62 percent over the previous year. It marked the fourth year in a row gifts to the Cooperative Program

have exceeded the previous year's amount.

The gifts also were \$708,787 or 2.71 percent over the 1994-95 budget of \$26,184,634.

The last time Tennessee Baptists' gifts exceeded budget was during the 1983-84 fiscal year, according to William Maxwell, director of the TBC Central Administrative Division. "The overage will be allocated to the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board, institutions and agencies, and

the Southern Baptist Convention on the same percentage basis as the budget," he said.

Of the CP gifts received this year, 37.5 percent was forwarded to the SBC Executive Committee to support Southern Baptist work worldwide.

For the month of October Tennessee Baptists gave \$2,073,550, which was down from last October's giving of \$2,745,236.

In addition, Tennessee Baptists gave \$164,980 designated

for SBC causes and \$404,042 designated to TBC causes.

"During the 1994-95 fiscal year, Tennessee Baptists gave a record \$26,893,421 to support the Cooperative Program," said TBC Executive Director James Porch.

"Such consistent giving is an expression of the mission and ministry commitment from the churches of this state.

"Each gift from every participating church made this record giving possible. To God be the glory!" Porch added. □

## Promise Keepers end 1995 season with nearly 60,000 attending Dallas session

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Over 59,658 men jammed into Texas Stadium in the Dallas suburb of Irving in late October. Many Southern Baptist men joined with men of other denominations and heard Tony Evans, a Dallas pastor and prominent Promise Keepers speaker, proclaim, "Our churches have too many members! What our churches need are disciples!"

Evans was among a number of speakers including Promise Keepers founder Bill McCartney, former head football coach of the University of Colorado, who challenged their all-male audience to have faith in Jesus, love their wives and children, go to church on Sundays, support their pastors, and form friendships with other

men, especially men of color.

Promise Keepers held 13 conferences in 1995 and 11 were sold out. The organization anticipated about 725,000 men attended the events, a substantial increase over the 4,200 men who attended the first PK rally in 1991 and also more than the 278,000 who attended rallies in 1994.

Many SBC churches have a growing constituency of Promise Keepers alumni.

Bob Carey, editor of the SBC Brotherhood Commission's *Missions Today* magazine, said, "Men are 'hands-on' people — people who like to 'do.' We're trying to provide the next step for Promise Keepers. The 'do' concept is necessary for a man's personal growth and personal accountability, and we help men mobilize to personally 'do.'" □

## Mississippi Baptists approve change in SBC funding

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Messengers to the Mississippi Baptist Convention approved without debate a 1996 budget of \$23.3 million that includes a change in funding of home missions work in the state.

The Cooperative Program budget for 1996 totals \$23,280,983, a 2.99 percent increase over 1995. Of that amount, 37 percent, the same as in the 1995 budget, will go to SBC causes outside the state.

One difference in the CP budget from past years is that an amount equal to the money sent to Mississippi by the Home Mission Board for jointly funded projects, \$249,530, is being set aside for home mission work in the state. Thus, the quarter million dollars usually returned to the state for joint projects is freed to go to pioneer mission work and not be sent to Mississippi.

The HMB will receive the same amount it received in 1995, \$1,635,673. The convention is making the funds available from gifts during 1995 over the basic budget. Such funding provisions traditionally continue from year to year, convention officials said, although technically the provision of funds from basic budget surpluses applies only to the 1996 budget. □

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**Robertson County leaders**

Pausing during sessions of Robertson County Association's fall meeting Oct. 17 are its leaders, from left, Leslie Bruce, pastor, First Church, White House, outgoing moderator; Mike Duff, pastor, North Springfield Church, Springfield, new vice moderator; Thomas McPherson, seated, member of Barren Plains Church, Springfield, clerk; and Bill Vance, pastor, Orinda Church, Orinda, new moderator.

# Southern Baptist elder statesmen offer opinions as to why CBF exists

Associated Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Southern Baptist Convention leaders could have prevented formation of the rival Cooperative Baptist Fellowship had they heeded a 1987 recommendation to include moderates in leadership positions, according to elder statesman Herschel Hobbs at a recent meeting.

However, conservative leaders of the SBC regard the Fellowship, formed by moderates in 1991, as a nemesis, saying it competes for missions funding in Baptist churches.

W. A. Criswell, 85, long-time pastor of First Church, Dallas, blamed moderates for the schism.

Hobbs, 88, long-time pastor of First Church, Oklahoma City, said moderates formed a rival organization only after conservatives controlling the SBC ignored recommendations of the SBC Peace Committee calling for balancing leadership in the convention between the two factions.

"If those recommendations had been followed — balanced appointments, balanced faculties, boards — we would never have had a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship," Hobbs said.

They offered the observations Oct. 24 during a week-long dedication of a new Bee-

son Divinity Hall at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. A Tuesday evening banquet honored Hobbs and Criswell, another SBC patriarch. Both men departed briefly from a program of light-hearted story telling to lament division in the SBC.

"The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is such a strange development to me," Criswell said. "For churches and pastors to leave our convention because of what someone in the convention believes — I don't understand that. If I am of a certain turn in my devotion and worship and another man is of another turn, let him preach what he believes and expound that, and we stay together," he said.

The Peace Committee, appointed in 1985, brought moderate and conservative leaders together in a last-ditch effort aimed at healing a growing rift in the nation's largest Protestant body. Some observers said

the 1987 report favored conservatives and contributed to greater polarization, culminating in the formation of a separate moderate Fellowship in 1991. Others disagree. Among the committee's recommendations was that future presidents and committees of the convention select nominees for leadership roles "in a balanced fashion from the broad spectrum" of Southern Baptists.

Implementation of the report, however, focused on other recommendations calling for a narrowing of theological parameters at Baptist institutions.

Hobbs, a member of the committee, said he opposed last-minute changes in the document that he feared would cause it to be used as a creed.

The night before the report was to be presented, Hobbs said, someone wanted to move four examples of the "Bible as truth without mixture of error" from the "findings" section of the report to the "recommendations."

"That was the only time I stood up to talk," he said. "I said they were where they belonged ... If you put them into the recommendations, they would become creedal. Another member said we should have the guts to move them. I said ... matter of guts; it's a matter of brains." □



HOBBS



CRISWELL

## SBC CP gifts down, designated gifts up during October

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for October were down 6.55 percent from the same month a year ago while designated gifts were up 18.33 percent, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

For the first month of the 1995-96 fiscal year, CP gifts totaled \$10,937,383, compared to last October's \$11,704,398, a difference of \$767,015, or 6.55 percent.

The monthly requirement for the 1995-96 Program Allocation Budget is \$11,802,427.

Designated gifts for October totaled \$2,326,574 compared to last year of \$1,966,220, a difference of \$360,354, or 18.33 percent.

The SBC Cooperative Program total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions, and fellowships for distribution according to the 1995-96 Program Allocation Budget. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger, and other special gifts. □

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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- **Office** — Baptist and Reflector, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
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## Historical Commission asks to attend Task Force sessions

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Implementation Task Force named to coordinate the restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention has been asked by the Historical Commission to open its meetings to a representative of the agency, which is among several scheduled for dissolution.

The request, voted on by the Historical Commission's administrative committee Oct. 25, was forwarded in a letter by commission chairman Ronald Martin of Garden Grove, Calif., to Morris H. Chapman,

SBC Executive Committee president, and Robert Reccord, Implementation Task Force chairman and pastor of First Church, Norfolk, Va.

Reccord responded Nov. 3, noting "contact is being made with each agency to establish the needed communication for the future implementation process."

The restructuring plan which eliminates the Historical, Stewardship, and Education commissions was approved by SBC messengers last June.

In his letter Martin said the Historical Commission's "trustees have responsibility

for the operation and dissolution of the agency as provided by the Southern Baptist Convention and the laws of the state of Tennessee, and as defined by the charter of the agency."

Martin said he wrote the letter to remind the task force of the legal responsibility "our trustees have to the agency as it is dissolved."

The agency's administrative committee requested Slayden Yarbrough, interim executive director, or his representative from the staff, attend the Implementation Task Force meetings. □

## Baptists send condolences in wake of Rabin assassination

Baptist Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Workers in Israel related to the Southern Baptist Convention sent messages of condolence to government offices and to the family of slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin after Rabin was assassinated Nov. 4.

Meanwhile, Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry accompanied President Bill Clinton's delegation to Rabin's Nov. 6 funeral, at Clinton's request. Others included former U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter and George Bush. Henry was a part of Clinton's dele-

gation to an October 1994 signing ceremony for a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan on the countries' mutual border.

Rabin died shortly after he was gunned down by a 27-year-old extremist Jew who said he wanted to stop Rabin from giving away Israeli land in peace negotiations with Arab leaders, including Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Rabin and Arafat shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

Messages on behalf of the Baptist Convention of Israel went to the offices of the prime minister and religious affairs minister and to Ra-

bin's wife, Leah.

Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham asked Christians to pray that the hatred and violence that trouble Israel and the area around it will be replaced with compassion and tolerance. "When Mr. Rabin was Israel's ambassador to the United States, we spent many hours together," Graham said in a statement released to news media.

"I respected him greatly, but I also loved him as a friend and had looked forward to seeing him again. Modern Israel truly has lost one of its greatest leaders and the world has lost a valiant and courageous

champion of peace."

Although Rabin's movement toward offering self-rule to Palestinians on Israeli-occupied land had been detested by many Israelis, few people would have predicted Rabin's assassination by a fellow Jew.

"The Jewish people have prided themselves that they have not had this kind of thing happen before," said Thomas F. Hocutt of Birmingham, Ala., administrator of Southern Baptist Convention personnel in Israel. "The most significant thing is that a Jew did this," Hocutt added, noting youth especially were shaken by the assassination. □

# NOBTS candidate withdraws; special meeting cancelled

Compiled from news sources

NEW ORLEANS — The special Nov. 8-9 trustee meeting at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary to elect a new president has been canceled because the nominee withdrew his name, according to Morris Anderson, trustee search committee chairman.

Fred L. Lowery, pastor of First Church, Bossier City, La., and an SBC vice president in 1993, called Anderson, pastor of First Church, Pigeon Forge, Oct. 30, and informed him of his decision to withdraw as the nominee.

In a one-paragraph statement Lowery said, "Yesterday (Oct. 30) God confirmed in my heart that I was not to go to New Orleans. At that time I called the chairman and shared what I felt in my heart. Today I formally withdrew

my name from further consideration." Lowery's statement came less than an hour after he was shown an ABP story announcing his nomination and quoting both supporters and critics of the committee's choice.

The search committee did not release Lowery's name because of a promise to inform the trustees of the decision on campus.

Anderson told the *Baptist and Reflector* the information about their candidate's nomination did not come from the committee. "In my opinion, the word came from the seminary campus," he said. The news of Lowery's pending nomination apparently had gotten out before Lowery told his congregation Oct. 29 he had been offered the presidency of New Orleans Seminary.

Anderson said he was disappointed. "We went further in the process than

we had gone with any other person," Anderson acknowledged.

"I felt the man we were going to present to the trustees was the ideal candidate," Anderson said.

The Pigeon Forge pastor admitted the committee was back to square one. — "praying, seeking and waiting on the Lord to give us his man."

The committee did not have a back-up nominee. "We had no number two man because we were praying for God's man," Anderson said.

Critics of Lowery cited the fact he did not have a doctorate from an accredited seminary. Lowery received his doctor of ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary in 1978. At that time the seminary was not accredited. It since has received accreditation from the Transnational Association of Christian Schools, a conservative agency

founded in 1979 to accredit schools committed to biblical inerrancy.

Louisiana pastor Robert Magee of Ruston, a former trustee chairman at NOBTS, said Lowery's education is inadequate for the post of a president. Almost all of the seminary's faculty have earned doctorates and about 10 percent of the students are working on a doctorate degree. "How can he effectively supervise those who have the ultimate degree when he does not have comparable preparation?"

Another Louisiana pastor, David Hankins of Lake Charles, said he was not troubled by Lowery's Luther Rice degree, noting "some of our greatest Southern Baptist leaders and pastors have received degrees from there." □

Compiled from BP and ABP stories with additional reporting by Associate Editor Lonnie Wilkey

## Managing money is biblically-based idea, married couples told

By Terri Lackey  
For Baptist Press

HOT SPRINGS, Ark. — If you don't think overspending is a sin, check the Bible.

Carefully managing money is a biblically-based concept, said a pastor who led a workshop on the subject during a Fall Festival of Marriage Oct. 27-29.

"Jesus said a lot about money. There are 700 verses about it in the Bible," said Dan Griffin, pastor of Christ Fellowship Church, Arlington, Texas. Griffin, who keeps a detailed, but simple monthly budget, led the workshop, "Money and How It Matters," at the marriage festival.

Griffin said God wants Christians to maintain control of their finances for two reasons: because the church needs

10 percent and because families operate more healthily when money matters are not a concern.

"Money is the No. 1 cause of marriage breakups," Griffin said. "We need to be very scrupulous and disciplined and Christian about how we handle our money. Money is dangerous."

Ironically, Griffin said, when couples have little money, they pray more.

"But when we get more comfortable, we don't trust in the Lord as much," he said. "And, that's why money can be dangerous."

If Christian couples seriously want to get out of financial debt "and promise God they want to tithe, I think God will bless you," Griffin said. But, he added, before God is willing to help a couple break free from

their financial chains, he expects them to recognize their problem and want to correct it.

Griffin listed several ways a couple can recognize if they are in financial chains.

"You are in financial bondage if you cannot pay your bills at the end of the month; you and your spouse are arguing on a regular basis about money; you are doing something dishonest regarding money; you live, breathe, eat, and sleep making money; and you can't afford to give even a dollar to the Lord."

Getting control of finances requires a simple monthly budget listing monthly expenses and monthly salaries. Couples then add their monthly spending, including credit card bills, food, housing, gas, utilities, tithe, and miscellaneous, and subtract it

from their monthly salary.

"First you get control, and then you either cut your expenses or increase your salary."

Griffin recommended one spouse, "probably the husband," take a periodic second job to eliminate credit card bills.

"Generally, you pay off the smallest credit card bill first — the one with the highest interest. Then you use the money you paid monthly on that bill to pay off another bill. Once you finish paying a credit card account, you cut up those credit cards," he advised.

The three principles to money management, according to Griffin, are tithing, taking care of what you have, and earning interest by not paying it.

"That means getting rid of the credit card payments," he

said. "To do that, we have to start resisting what Madison Avenue tells us we need to be happy. Money is important, but it's not supposed to be our lord and master."

Griffin suggested couples begin actions to reduce or eliminate debt. "Work with what God has already given you and let him know you want to get out of debt. Take what he's given you and do the best you can with it."

Two resources for couples interested in taking charge of their finances include "Master Your Money" video training kit and workbook and the 1995 doctrine study, "Partners with God: Bible Truths about Giving" by Bobby L. Eklund and Terry Austin.

Fall Festivals of Marriage are sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board. □

## House prohibits abortion method

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act recently, marking the first time in nearly 23 years it has banned a type of abortion.

The 288-139 vote Nov. 1 is the only time either house of Congress has passed legislation prohibiting an abortion procedure since the U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions of 1973.

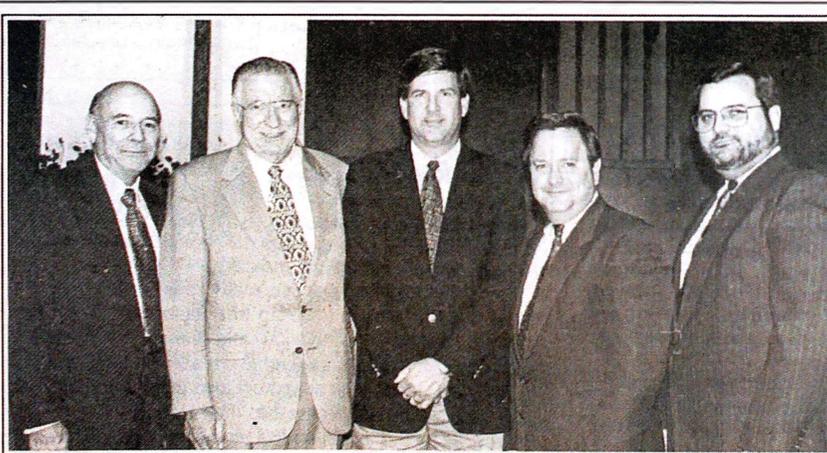
The bill outlaws a procedure used by apparently a limited number of doctors in the second half of pregnancy. The technique, named "partial-birth" by the bill's sponsors, but usually known as dilation and extraction (D and X), involves partial delivery of the unborn child before his or her skull is stabbed with scissors and the brain suc-

tioned out. The majority of babies are alive until near the end of the procedure, doctors say.

Supporters of the bill had expected to win comfortably in the House, but the legislation's future in the Senate is less certain. Sen. Robert Smith, R - N.H., has introduced a similar bill (S. 939) on that side. President Bill Clinton, meanwhile, has not committed himself on the measure.

"Only persons whose consciences are seared could participate in such a gruesome method of killing," said Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Opponents of the bill argue that the procedure is used only in cases of severely defective children or a threat to the mother's life. □



### Madison-Chester Association elects officers

New officers for Madison-Chester Association were elected during the association's fall meeting at Parkview Church, Jackson. Outgoing moderator Roger Abbington, far left, along with associational leaders Gary Williams, second from right, director of missions, and Larry Murphy, right, director of education and promotion, welcomed new officers Mel Williams, second from left, pastor of Enville Church as vice moderator and Stan Smith, center, pastor of First Church, Henderson, as moderator.

## Oscar Nash, 90, drives 200 miles to serve church

By Connie Davis  
Baptist and Reflector

COOKEVILLE — There's no comparison between Oscar Nash and the Nash Rambler he used to own. He's still going.

Oscar Nash is 90, and is pastor of First Church, Harpeth, which is 104 miles from his home in Cookeville. He's served the church for five years.

Nash doesn't see his efforts as unusual. "When you have a love for the Lord and for the people, it's hard to give up." The commute to the church is

relaxing, he added.

It's also not uncustomary for Nash, who has been serving Tennessee Baptists and their churches in some capacity for 60 years. Since 1935, he has been pastor of 42 churches or missions, at times leading seven services a day. He also has served as a missionary for the Tennessee Baptist Convention in Jackson County beginning in 1949, and later in Clay County and Williamson County. Throughout his career his work has been starting churches, one of his callings, said Nash.

He recalled how he got into the official work of a special missionary. During a service Nash was leading he referred to the fact that he had resigned from his leadership as pastor. Charles W. Pope, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, was in that service and later asked

him why he had resigned. He explained he didn't resign to assume another ministry, but because God had led him to make the decision. Then Pope asked him to work as a

convention missionary. The salary was \$100 a month. "Back then that was good money," said Nash.

He fit that role and the others he has held because his priority is evangelism. One year he baptized 76 people, he said. He would organize revival meetings, which often would be held in public school buildings. And he organized congregations. When Center Hill Dam was built and the locations of some of those churches were flooded, some didn't relocate, he explained. But many others remain and have started other churches.

One thing he has learned, said Nash, is that a person can't criticize people and expect to influence them to become Christians. "You've got to love people and people of other churches, too. You've got to love them to help them. You've got to spend a lot of time with people."

Ministry is hard work, explained Nash, which is his main advice for Christians — work hard for God. Of course, most of today's Christians can't relate to Nash's version of labor. He worked for a saw mill and made 20 cents for a 10-hour day while he was serving a church as a pastor. Nash also has been a mechanic, builder, and potter.

During the time he was selling pottery door to door in East Tennessee, he had an experience which led him to make his spiritual commitment. After being refused lodging at a large house, the resident referred Nash to another house down the road. Nash had decided to spend the night outside, but he and his partner approached the cottage and were welcomed by the family. Even though the family had

little space, they made a place for Nash and his friend. Before bedtime, the family knelt by their chairs and prayed. That experience made him think. It was after he visited the family on another selling trip that he decided to commit his life to God.

He's had problems, admitted Nash. He lost a finger in a building accident. His first wife, Flora, died. He struggled against God's call to preach for a year, a time when he even resisted work to sustain his family. God finally communicated with him through a dream.

He didn't mention other problems, revealing a view antithetical to pessimism.

"Everything the Lord has promised me he's given me. I don't know anybody else the Lord has blessed like me," said Nash. "I've had a good ministry."

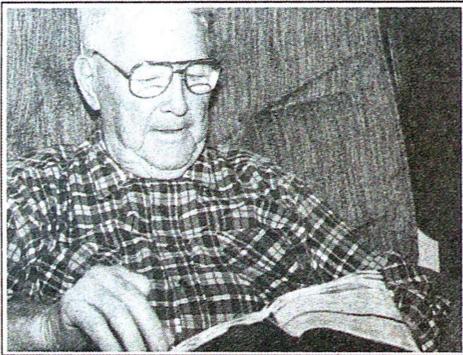
Nash admitted he has had an easier ministry in some ways because society has changed. In years past people who attended church or special services often did so because they didn't have cars so their options for relief from their lives were few, he noted.

Today he sees people confusing conviction with salvation, which doesn't lead people to give up their sin for salvation. The most pernicious problem is greed, Nash added. "I've seen so many people dedicate their lives to the Lord and then fall away because they begin to make money."

Nash said he does plan to retire some time. His wife, Lillie, became ill recently and he has had to miss some services to care for her. But he added, "They just love me. That means a lot to an old man like I am, you know." □



THE NASHES at the surprise birthday party held by his five children on his 90th birthday several months ago.



NASH READS HIS BIBLE, the pages of which are liberally tabbed with paper clips enabling him to find certain passages.

## Edwards joins TBC Sunday School staff as youth program associate

BRENTWOOD — Bruce Edwards has joined the Tennessee Baptist Convention Sunday School Department as the new youth program associate, effective Oct. 23.

Edwards comes to the TBC staff from the Baptist Sunday School Board where he served as the youth marketing team leader in the marketing planning department.

Edwards brings almost 20 years of hands-on experience in youth ministry to this position. He has served as minister to students at First Church, Hendersonville; First Church, Dallas, Texas; and Eastside Church, Marietta, Ga.

He is known throughout the SBC as a youth conference leader and specialist. The Georgia native will be working with associations, churches, and youth leaders in the state to build a strong youth ministry through training, events, and relationships.

In addition to his youth work, Edwards also will bring Sunday School and program leadership to the TBC's college and single adult ministries.

Edwards is engaged to be married Dec. 2 to Ann Liles, a preschool consultant at the Sunday School Board. □



EDWARDS

## Loudon County gets new director of missions

LENOIR CITY — Ray Luck, former pastor of Mt. Lebanon Church, Maryville, recently was named director of missions for Loudon County Association. He succeeds Raymond Atwood who retired.

The search committee of four pastors included Gene Russell, Mt. Pleasant, chairman; John Smith, Mt. Zion; Houston Inman, First Church, Loudon; and Obie Campbell, New Providence.

"Our theme for the new as-

sociational year is "Together in Service, advancing the Kingdom," Luck said. "Our purpose is to be of one heart and mind as under God's leadership we focus on advancing the kingdom to those who are lost and encouraging those who are saved to grow in his grace and knowledge," he added. "We are happy to join Loudon County Baptists in ministry, missions, and evangelizing."

Luck and his wife, the former Judy Campbell, are Tennessee natives, and both are graduates of Carson-Newman College. The new DOM also has a MRE degree from Southwestern Seminary. Judy Luck has a teaching certificate from

Texas Christian University.

Luck previously worked as executive director of the District Three Governmental Co-operative, 1974-79, and administered a \$500,000 government funded senior citizens nutrition and transportation program.

He was director of missions for Lebanon Association, Abingdon, Va., 1979-85. Prior to working as pastor at Mt. Lebanon, he was associate pastor of Euclid Avenue Church, Bristol, Va. Luck served on various boards and agencies in several communities. In 1993 he was president of the Chilhowee Association Ministers Conference. □



LUCK

## Daily Partnership Prayer Requests

### November

- 8 — Pray for 38th annual meeting of Michigan Baptists today in Jackson.
- 9 — Pray for a team traveling to Poland today and as they teach Christian social ministries to Polish leaders.
- 10 — Pray for God's leadership as several associations in Canada look at restructuring in order to better meet the needs of churches there.
- 11 — Pray for the Polish people as they elect a new president this month to lead their nation.
- 12 — Pray for Warren and Sharon Hessling who will soon move to Sterling Heights, Mich., to start a new church.
- 13 — Pray for someone to teach Sunday School classes at Madison Heights Fellowship Church in Michigan.
- 14 — Praise God for the growth taking place at Evergreen Church in Cadillac, Mich.



# Alaska was first, now it's Tennessee's turn

Winter comes early in Alaska, so the northern-most Baptist state convention meets early. There is a threat of snow or ice when the sun's hours are limited, so Alaskans stay ahead of the inclement weather. Who could blame them?

When the Baptist Convention of New Mexico met earlier this fall at Glorieta Conference Center, messengers quickly adapted to the informal atmosphere and dressed casual style as suggested by their president. However, the dress code for most Tennessee Baptists probably will be "Sunday go to meetin'."

Many other state conventions also have had their annual meetings already.

Now it is our turn. Mid-November in Chattanooga ought to be prime time for a state convention meeting in a beautiful, comfortable setting.

However, successful and Christ-honoring conventions need more than good weather, beautiful setting, and comfortable atmosphere. *We need to know why we are there, and in the best way possible, follow and obey the Lord God.* This is the first and inescapable guideline.

The 121st Annual Session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention officially gets underway when President Frank Hawkins strikes the gavel at 9 a. m. EST November 14 in the meeting hall. At least 2,000 should be registered for the two-day session.

The stage is set for a positive, harmonious, convention. Attendance is higher

when Tennessee Baptists meet in the east and suggestion of some controversy or possible challenge always boosts attendance. Questions to some reports or recommendations are always possible, and this session is no exception.

And messengers will do business of ministry, missions, evangelism, and other expressions of a convention at work.

There usually is a level of excitement about the annual session, in anticipation of reports, messages, leaders to be selected, praises, and old and new friendships.

This convention is no different. All necessary elements should be present. There is a high hope of Christ-centered cooperation. No, messengers will not agree on everything. But probably they will agree on most things — especially on those things of significance. Disruptive issues often major on the minors.

The October 11 edition of the *Baptist and Reflector* carried a report of schedules for the annual session and various other related meetings.

Although CP giving is not the primary cause for celebration, messengers should be elated that the 1994-95 budget year just ended is the first budget to be met since 1984. Let us continue this generous and sacrificial stewardship of giving.

Cooperative Program budget gifts totaled \$26,893,421 as of October 31, surpassing the budget goal of \$26,184,634 by \$708,787.

The 1995-96 CP budget presented to

messengers for approval amounts to \$26,969,000.

Successful giving is achieved by sound budgeting and faithful, sacrificial giving. It is the unselfish lifestyle.

The \$26.9 million is more than a "bare bones" budget; it is a healthy, positive budget. It is reachable, it is realistic, and it takes care of Tennessee Baptist needs and allows missions beyond state borders. It is in step with the Long Range Study Committee recommendations.

Tennessee Baptists made a giant leap to reality several years ago with a new look at the budgeting process. We began by looking at needs first, and then setting a realistic budget goal. This method now has led the convention to reach the goal. In past years dreams and plans often waited for budgeting to become realistic. We need to continue to practice a good stewardship lifestyle.

Here are some "self-helps" for surviving the convention:

- Save most of your energy for the "main" meeting.
- Expect the Holy Spirit's presence.
- Expect great blessings.
- Be prepared spiritually, physically, mentally.
- Take time to be friendly, well-behaved (Christlike conduct).
- Be considerate, respect others.
- Refuse to think negatively.
- Be serious about Christ's business.
- Finally, thank God for his bounty of great blessings. □

■ one word more

By Wm. Fletcher Allen editor

## Small treasures

Matthew was full of energy. It was a warm day for October, and he was excited to be alive, as most four-year-olds can be.

He left the adults and ran to the back yard; he wanted to be creative, though those words probably were not in his mind at the time.

In just a few minutes, he rushed breathlessly back in the house and grabbed me by the hand.

"Poppa," he exulted, "come outside, I need you."



ALLEN

Afraid I might limit his creative spirit, I was ready to beg off. But I did ask him why he needed me.

He replied with enthusiasm and joy, "We have to build a Batmobile." Let me pause to say I have never built a Batmobile.

"Look," he said after he got me outside, "I've gathered all the parts. Now all we have to do is build it." I could tell easily that he had no doubts.

We worked together steadily, placing this part by that part, and the Batmobile took shape. He changed only a few of my innovations. I did not object because his imagination (and engineering) skills far surpassed mine.

The Batmobile was almost ready to roll off the assembly line when he remembered.

"I have to make a place for my treasure," he said, and quickly did it. "And you can help me with my treasure," Matthew said. I went to work, searching for treasure, following his lead.

He had an old cloth from the play area. We selected a few "precious" stones, and he carefully wrapped them and placed them in the secret treasure compartment.

He rushed inside to share the good news with the rest of the family. I was left for some moments of reverie. Back he came, settling down to "drive" our invention for countless imaginary miles, in comfort.

The lesson? It is simple. As Matthew grows he will be more selective of treasures. He will want them to be of real value, even spiritual. And hopefully he will still want to share them.

For me, I am reminded that joy often comes in small treasures, not necessarily of my own making. ☺

■ just for today

By Fred Wood pastor emeritus Eudora Church, Memphis

### Start with a smile

Zeke: "What's your favorite pastime?" Zach: "I love to kiss cows." Zeke: "That's crazy." Zach: "Oh yeah. What's your favorite?" Zeke: "I love to kiss horses."

### Take this truth

All of us have our preferences. We need to be ourselves and not worry about that of the other person. This does not mean we should never honestly examine ourselves. It does mean we should never try to force our ideas, biases, or opinions on others.

### Memorize this Scripture

"I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am" (Philippians 4:11).

### Pray this prayer

"Lord keep me from trying to force my agenda on someone else. Help me to respect the personhood of everyone and major on improving my own self." □

# Christocracy, a way to govern church

The *Baptist and Reflector* is pleased to share with readers Dr. Caudill's view of New Testament church government. — Editor.

## ■ New Testament church

By Paul Caudill, pastor emeritus, First Church, Memphis

For years I have searched for a definitive word that would best characterize the ideal form of a government for a New Testament church. Baptist church polity, for instance, has been referred to as "the purest democracy on earth."

But somehow that terminology never quite satisfies. Nor does the corresponding term, Christian democracy, seem sufficient.

The word "democracy" comes from two ancient Greek words meaning "people" (demos) and "might, rule, power" (kratos). Democracy, says Webster's International Dictionary, is "government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is retained by the people."

The emphasis in a democracy, however pure, is obvious, it is on the strength, the authority,

and the rule of the people. The same is true of Christian democracy.

Would it not be better to think of the government of a New Testament church as a "Christocracy?" Such would place the emphasis upon the authority of Christ, his strength, his authority, his power, would be forever the ideal — the first and final appeal in every case.

In a democracy, it is possible for the minority to be far nearer the truth than the majority. I have always felt that when a considerable number of believers, in a given situation, dissent from the views of the majority, there is need for further inquiry and study, before the matter is finalized.

In our church, through the years, we have never been satisfied with a mere majority opinion in determining procedures. Again and again, matters have been held up for further prayerful consideration merely because

there was a reasonable minority who failed to believe, at the time, in the given procedure. We often refer to such action as putting the matter "on storage." As a result, our congregation has been able to move together, over many a rough terrain. And where we have fallen short of absolute unanimity, in the making of decisions, we have not lacked in Christian understanding.

In a Christocracy, the authority of Christ is forever the goal, the perfect ideal, however poorly attained. It remains the basis of both the immediate and the final appeal. Is the matter in question right, for instance, in the sight of Christ? What would Jesus say? To what extent would the proposed course of action advance his kingdom?

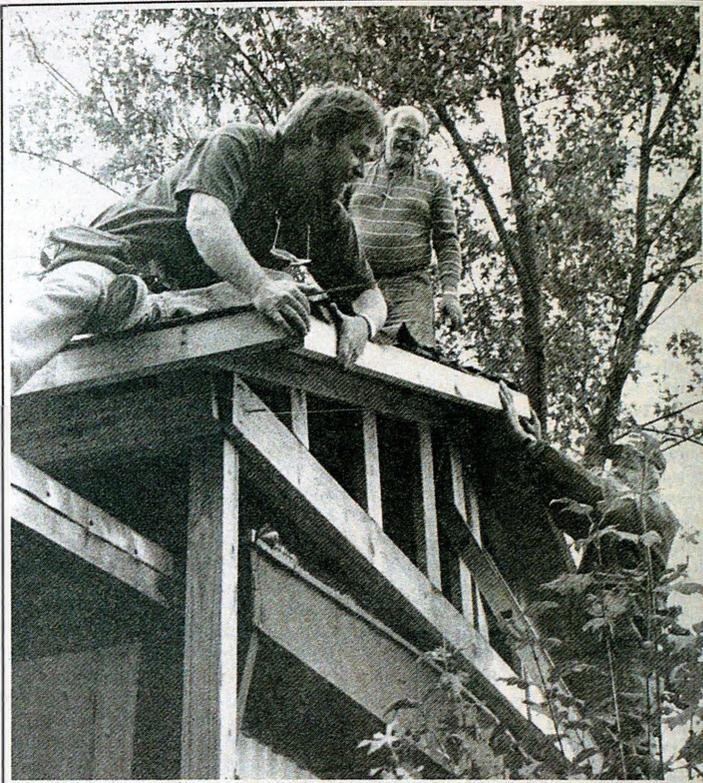
Not the authority of the people, but the authority of Christ! Not the will of man, but the will of God!

In a Christocracy, man forever decreases and Christ forever increases. □

# Association's Brotherhood builds shelter for trailerhouse



MEASURING A PIECE OF LUMBER before cutting it are Gene Wilson, left, and Howard Norris, both of whom are members of Calvary Church, Crossville.



POSITIONING A PIECE OF THE EAVE are Jerry Hearndon, left, Brotherhood director of Cumberland Plateau Association who is a member of Emmanuel Church, Crossville, with the help of Gene Wilson, a member of Calvary Church, Crossville, while Roy Davis, on roof, director of missions, looks on.

By Connie Davis  
Baptist and Reflector

MONTERREY — When Paula Stapleton, a home health nurse, visited Alice Wilson as a part of her job, she decided somebody ought to help Wilson. But she didn't stop there. She presented the needs to Roy Davis, director of missions of Cumberland Plateau Association.

Davis visited Wilson and discovered her predicament. She had lived in government-subsidized apartments but

had saved her money in case she ever had the opportunity to buy her own home. Then she learned about a trailerhouse which was for sale. That seemed to be a better housing option, she said.

After Wilson, 79, moved in, she discovered the trailer's roof leaked and the well which supplied water to the home was contaminated. Wilson relies on the support of a walker for mobility which basically confines her to the trailer. Davis learned she had friends who kept her supplied with water and food. She also had money for repairs, but she didn't know how to correct the leaking roof.

Wilson didn't have to wait long for help. Davis turned to Jerry Hearndon, who is the association's Brotherhood director and a member of Emmanuel Church, Crossville.

Brotherhood members decided to build a shelter over the trailer. About 15 men have worked on the project, explained Hearndon. And others have helped by providing food for the builders. In addition, Lola Norris and Pauline Wilson, wives of Howard Norris and Gene Wilson of Calvary Church, Crossville, spent an afternoon

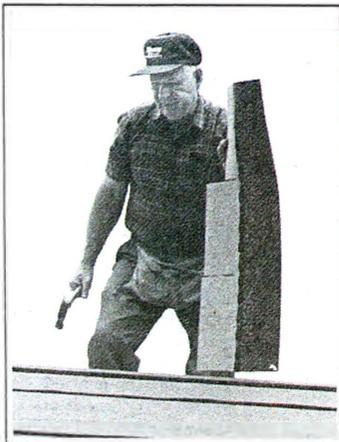
with Wilson while the other volunteers were building.

Wilson, who is a Protestant, said the effort was one of the greatest things that had ever happened to her. "They're such wonderful, wonderful people."

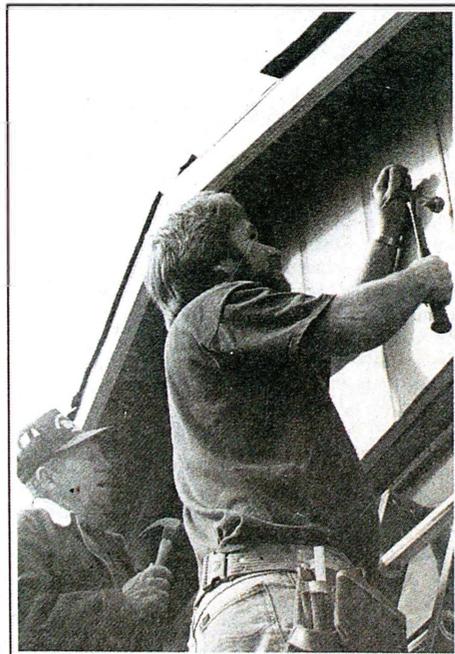
Such missions work should be more common among Baptists, Hearndon said. Missions and evangelism should be what churches are about, he added. □



RECIPIENT OF THE LABOR, Alice Wilson of Crossville, stays busy cutting out quilting pieces during the building efforts.



CARRYING A roofing shingle is Robert Hallatt, interim pastor, Lantana Road Church, Crossville.



GENE WILSON, left, and Jerry Hearndon attach a piece of lumber to the shelter.



HAMMERING ON A SHINGLE is Cecil Cordell, pastor, Plateau Church, Crossville.

## ■ Tennessee features

# Church family, volunteers face challenge of construction

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor  
Baptist and Reflector

KENTON — When messengers to the Gibson County Association met near Dyer recently for their annual association meeting, some of their fellow members were hard at work a few miles north. A sturdy group from Laneview Church, Kenton, and a band of able volunteers were laying brick and doing other construction work on a new sanctuary.

Work on the new building began in May, and according to the schedule, the Laneview congregation will move in next May.

About a mile away from the new five-acre site stands the present meeting place for Laneview, Kenton. "We are tight for space at the old place," says Harold Kemp, deacon and builder. "We don't have but about one acre there, and this spot gives us plenty of room to grow."

As in most construction projects similar to

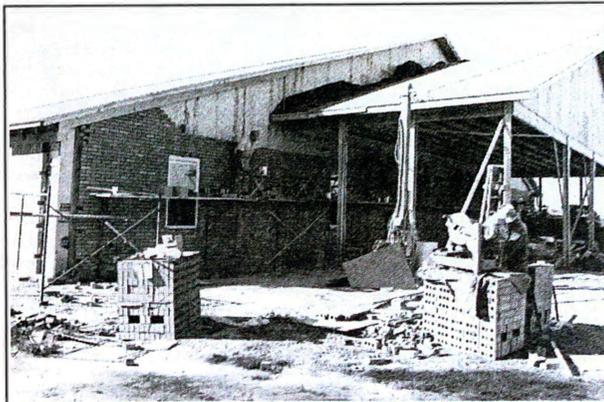
this one, there is an excitement about the work. The local men blend well with the volunteer groups, many of whom have special construction skills.

"They are coming from all across Tennessee," says a Laneview member, "and we are glad to have their help." Plans for the spacious new building originated with another Laneview member, Randy Holloway.

Not only is the church anticipating a May 1996 completion date for the new building, they plan to host the Gibson County annual meeting in October 1998. "We will be ready," the workers say.

Like any Tennessee Baptist volunteer construction group, there is no idle time. The "specialty" crews, such as brick-layers, come in to do an assigned job in a defined amount of time. They have to do their work so others can come in for their task.

Volunteers can contact Pastor Don Cooper at (901) 749-0391. □

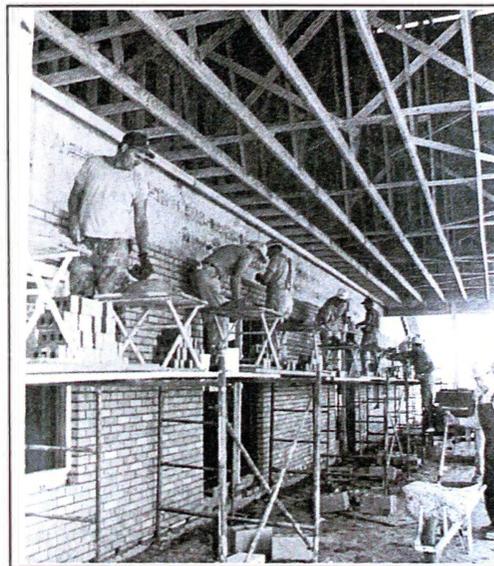


**VOLUNTEER BRICK-LAYERS** join with Laneview members to get the bricks in place so that other construction can follow.



**JAMES VINSON**, left, from Calvary Church, Union City, joins Laneview workers Harold Kemp, Keith Vinson, and Pat and J.R. Roden. They stand inside the unfinished building with the already-installed baptism pool behind them. Volunteers for the project include a talented support group of Laneview women. James Vinson directs Tennessee Baptist volunteer brick layers.

**THE BUILDING'S** front begins to take on a finished look as brick-layers do their work on the new church.



## First Church, Dyersburg, makes sure there's no shortage of organists

For Baptist and Reflector

DYERSBURG — Thanks to Al Travis, organ professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, First Church, Dyersburg, will have qualified

organists in the congregation for years to come.

The timing couldn't be better as there seems to be a shortage of church organists nationwide, according to a Baptist Press news story which appeared in

the Oct. 18 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Travis was at First Church in late October to teach private and group lessons to church musicians interested in learning the basics of organ playing and improvisation.

At the invitation of the church's music leadership, Travis has taught one week each year since 1993.

Betty Jones, church organist, met Travis at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center in 1989 and was impressed with his teaching abilities.

For the next three years Jones spent one week each summer at Southwestern (with her lessons paid by the church) taking private lessons from Travis. In 1993 Travis accepted an invitation to come to Dyersburg and teach organ to those interested through private lessons.

Five organists took advantage of the teaching that first year. The number grew to 15

the next year as it was opened up to other organists, some who came from neighboring states.

This year, Jones said, the week-long effort was limited to FBC members and 10 people participated. "These people are excited about the organ and we've never had that before," Jones observed.

Jones praised Travis who is a much sought after recitalist, lecturer, teacher, and writer.

She noted Travis had the talent for taking people from where they are at any level and instilling confidence.

"With his unique and gracious methods of instruction, no student feels intimidated. Instead, each student gains confidence and a fresh vision of how beautiful and inspiring church music can be."

Learning does not stop after Travis leaves, Jones said. Students, who range in age from 14 to 58, rotate playing the church's new Casavant pipe or-

gan during evening services at FBC. Occasionally church members are called upon to play at other churches in the area, she added.

"Because of far-sighted leadership the church, community, and students are blessed," Jones added.

The program has the staunch support of First Church Pastor Raymond Boston and Minister of Music David Willard.

Willard is especially enthusiastic. "This is unique in that so many churches struggle to have one organist. It's refreshing to have several who have had training available to you," he observed.

Plans are being considered to expand instructions in other areas of music through this unique approach, Jones said.

"We would like to see this expand and grow into a mini-music school," she added. □



**SOUTHWESTERN SEMINARY** music professor Al Travis, left, and David Willard, minister of music at First Church, Dyersburg, observe as Valerie Fitch, seated to left, and Suzanne Harrington practice Travis techniques.

# Associations conduct business at meetings

## Churches added

Concord Association voted to accept under watchcare the First Korean Church of Murfreesboro, which constituted into a church on Sept. 17.

Sevier County Association added First Church, Seymour, into its fellowship.

Knox County Association accepted two churches with the same name — Providence Church, Knoxville, where Richard Hall is pastor, and Providence Church, Knoxville, where Lance Robinson is pastor.

Madison-Chester Association, added Northbrook Church, Jackson, and accepted Cornerstone Community Church, Jackson, under its watchcare program for a year. Mark Howard is the pastor.

Cumberland Association voted to accept Willow Bend Church, Clarksville, where Ervin "Buster" Gilliam is pastor, as a member church. It also recognized two missions which have become churches during the year — Greater Missionary Church, Clarksville, sponsored by Little West Fork Church, Clarksville; and Greater Saint James Church, Clarksville, sponsored by Gracey Avenue Church, Clarksville.

Sequatchie Valley Association voted to place two churches under watchcare for a year, which is a preliminary step to membership in the association. The churches are Victory Church, Dunlap, and Cornerstone Church, Jasper.

## Business

Sevier County Association of Baptists burned a note representing the debt-free status of its office building.

Stone Association voted to begin recognizing a Volunteer of the Year at each annual meeting.

Dyer Association voted to sell property of Hale's Point Church, Halls, which was deeded to the association after it closed. The receipts were designated to a missions project(s).

Riverside Association broke ground for an office building.

Madison-Chester Association approved a record budget including funds for a third staff person who will coordinate church and community ministries.

Cumberland Association approved a budget with an increase of 5.5 percent.

Holston Valley Association heard a proposal to renovate the association office and house into an office complex at a cost of \$110,000. The proposal was accepted and is estimated to begin in the spring of next year.

Weakley County Association adopted a record budget which includes funds to begin a counseling ministry.

## Missions

Sevier County Association reported an increase in every statistical report of the churches.

Lew Reynolds of Franklin, retired minister of education, Judson Church, Nashville, led Sevier County Association in an emphasis on spiritual awakening.

Dyer Association voted to adopt Syracuse Baptist Fellowship, Syracuse, Ind., as a project during the next year.

Riverside Association recognized eight missions volunteers who served during the past year to support the Canada/Poland/Michigan Baptist Partnerships.

Haywood Association set a record for the number of missions volunteers who worked during the year — 177. It also adopted plans to hold a tent crusade in August, 1996.

Crockett County voted to do Town and Country Long-range Strategy Planning in 1996.

Cumberland Association voted to fund a trip to Canada to support the Canada/Tennessee Baptist Partnership for Wesley Pitts, director of missions, and his wife.

Gregory Frizzell, pastor, Georgian Hills Church, Memphis, spoke to Holston Valley Association about how associations can lead convention and nation into spiritual awakening and revival with prayer.

Sequatchie Valley Association heard Wayne Parker, director of missions from Big Rapids, Mich., who reported on missions opportunities to support the Michigan/Tennessee Baptist Partnership.

## Recognitions

Bill Bates of Jackson, public affairs consultant, Tennessee Baptist Convention, was honored by Madison-Chester Association for his work.

Linda Hodges was recognized for serving five years as Woman's Missionary Union director of Grainger Association. The association also received a gift from First Church, Bean Station, and its pastor, Raymond Long, who was moderator for the past two years. The gift was a gavel.

Holston Valley Association honored Johnny Carr, moderator during the past year and pastor, Shepards Chapel Church, Rogersville, for being named a

bivocational pastor of the year for East Tennessee.

Haywood Association recognized Charles Pratt, director of missions, by dedicating the minute book in his honor.

Stone Association honored Bessie Buckner, a member of First Church, Cookeville, by dedicating the association's annual to her. Buckner, a native of Cookeville, served as a volunteer for 34 years in Michigan. Since 1970 Tennessee and Michigan Baptists have participated in the Michigan/Tennessee Baptist Partnership.

Knox County Association honored Johnnie Hall for his years of service to the Tennessee Baptist Convention in Discipleship Training work; Tom Everett, director of Western Heights Baptist Center, for 20 years of service; Lloyd Powell, director of Camp Ba Yo Ca, for 15 years; and Joe Chandler, associate director of missions, for five years.

Mrs. R.V. Via, clerk of Crockett County Association for 17 years, was honored and the annual minutes were dedicated to her.

## Resolutions

Stone Association resolved "to encourage our churches' members to demonstrate opposition to the presence and sale of alcoholic beverages in our area due to their known detrimental effects on the health and conduct of those who use the same, especially youth, and because of its factually supported role as a contributor to vehicular accidents, and crime, and to the stability of society at all levels, particularly families." □

# Fall gatherings of associations result in business actions



**WHITE HALL CHURCH, Gibson Association, received a certificate for achievement as the 25th best church in ratio giving to Cooperative Program in the state. Receiving the award from left were members Marion McCurdy, Brotherhood director for the church and the association; Martha Alexander; and Bill Brown, pastor.**



**SPECIAL GAVEL and plaque for Gibson County Association is presented by DOM Ken Sparkman to outgoing moderator Randy Crews at recent annual meeting. The gavel was crafted by retired pastor James Powers with wood from the organ chamber (1924) of First Church, Trenton, and the plaque was made by Peggy Bell, association WMU director. The Trenton church is being renovated. The gavel/plaque will be kept at the association office.**



**ELECTED TO SERVE AS OFFICERS of Holston Valley Association during its Oct. 19 meeting in Church Hill are, from left, Eddie Click, pastor, McPheeters Bend Church, Church Hill, associate moderator; John Parrott Jr., director of missions; Linda Williams, clerk; Bobby Tucker, pastor, Persia Church, Rogersville, moderator; and Johnny Carr, pastor, Shepards Chapel, Rogersville, outgoing moderator.**



**DURING THE MEETING OF Robertson County Association Oct. 17, William Maxwell, left, of the Tennessee Baptist Convention presents Bill Palmiter, pastor, Bethel Church, Greenbrier, with the TBC's top recognition for per capita giving to the Cooperative Program among churches.**

## ■ the people

■ **Leela Clarke** was honored Oct. 15 by Clear Creek Church, Dayton, for 60 years of service. As part of the recognition, two new pulpit chairs were dedicated in her honor.

■ Westside Church, Halls, ordained **Nathe Ozment**, pastor, Harvest Church, Dyersburg, to the ministry Oct. 1 and **Gary Wilson** as a deacon Oct. 15.

■ First Church, Mountain City, ordained **David Arnold** and **Tom Kerley** as deacons Oct. 29.

■ On Oct. 29 **Naomi Thomas**, church organist/pianist, Shelby Avenue Church, Nashville, was recognized for more than 66 years of service. Her father, the late P.F. Langston, was a former pastor of the church.

■ Hilldale Church, Clarksville, has ordained **Jay Alberta**, **Willie Lyle**, and **Dwight Staggs** as deacons. **Richard Watrous** has been licensed to the ministry.

## ■ the leaders

■ North Jackson Church, Jackson, has called **Randy Latch** of New Bethlehem Church, Dyer, as pastor, effective Oct. 1.

■ **Russell K. Noss** has been called as minister of music, Baker's Grove Church, Mount Juliet. He is former minister of music at First Church, Big Sandy, and a student at Cumberland University, Lebanon.

■ **David Ramsey**, associate pastor, Piney Church, Oakdale, for eight months, was ordained to the ministry Oct. 15.

■ **Philip Dougan**, former pastor, New Providence Church, Clarksville, has been called as interim pastor of Cornerstone Church, McMinnville.

■ Calvary Church, Oak Ridge, has called **Bruce Coyle** as interim pastor, **Tom Lee** as interim administrator/education director, **Mark Williams** as interim youth director, and **George Wadlington** as interim minister of music.

■ **T.D. Hooker** has been called as interim pastor of First Church, Lake City.

■ Wildersville Church, Wildersville, has called **Tommy R. Smith**, pastor, Natchez Trace Church, Camden, as pastor, effective Oct. 22.

## ■ the churches

■ North Jackson Church, Jackson, held homecoming Oct. 29 in its new facility. A luncheon and music program was held in the afternoon.

■ First Church, Tracy

City, will dedicate its new sanctuary Nov. 12. The \$200,000, 300-seat addition was built mostly by volunteers. The homecoming morning service will be followed by a luncheon. An open house will begin at 3 p.m.

■ **Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory**, will hold a one-day harvest revival Nov. 12. **Jimmy Draper**, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, will speak at both the morning and evening services.

■ **Alta Loma Church, Madison**, will host **Brent Murray** in concert Nov. 12 at 6 p.m.

■ **Poplar Avenue Church, Memphis**, will dedicate its repaired sanctuary Nov. 19. The building was struck by lightning in April. **Gerald Martin** will speak at the service, which will be in the morning.

■ **Narrow Valley Church, Rutledge**, will hold revival Nov. 10-12. **Paul Hall** will speak.

■ **Calvary Church, Lebanon**, is holding revival services Nov. 6-12. **Terry Wilkerson**, evangelist, is speaking.

## ■ the associations

■ **Nashville Association's** Woman's Missionary Union is hosting a "Woman's Touch in Lifestyle Witnessing" seminar



**THE DO AS YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY GROUP** at Liberty Church, McEwen, raised \$100 to help a family in Panama City, Fla., who lost their home as the result of a hurricane. The group includes, from left, top row, **Josh Oliphant, Leslie Oliphant, Shelly Davis, Josh Davis**; middle row, **Justin Jackson, Alec Tidwell, Nathan Davis, Donald Bishop**; and first row, **Josh Bishop, Eric Tidwell, Jeremy Jackson, Jesse Davis, Enoch Davis, Nacole Turner, and Derrick Turner**.

Nov. 18 at Tri-County Church, White House, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The fee is \$15. For more information, call (615) 646-4500.

■ **James Pethel**, composer-in-residence at **Carson-Newman College**, Jefferson City, has been awarded the American Society of Composers and Publishers' Standard Award for 1995. He has had 180 pieces and arrangements published in the last 27 years.

## ■ the schools

■ **Carson-Newman College**, Jefferson City, has been named to the Templeton Foundation Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges. It is one of only 124 schools nationwide to make the list. The Templeton Foundation was founded by **John Templeton**, a native of East Tennessee.

■ **David Olive** has been named director of charitable gift planning at **Carson-Newman College**, Jefferson City. **Olive** is a graduate of Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, the University of Tennessee College of Law, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

# Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

## Inviting others to church

By **Jim Growden**, pastor Hillcrest Church, Nashville

The phone company has an ad that says "Reach out and touch ... ." I encourage you to "Reach out and touch someone" for our church and Jesus. Ask a relative, friend, or neighbor to come to church with you.

We never know where a simple invitation may lead. It doesn't take but a moment to invite someone to church. Yet that simple invitation may result in that person attending, obeying the Gospel, and becoming a great servant of God.

The thought of speaking to a group may frighten you. You may feel inadequate to conduct an indepth Bible study. But, we can all extend a "warm invitation" to a person. Instead of focusing on the things we cannot do, let's focus on the things we can do. You can invite others to church. Then pick them up and bring them.

It is true that some of those we invite will probably never come. Some will even say "I'll try," not really meaning it. But if nothing else is accomplished, they will know that you are

friendly and concerned.

Did you know there are a lot of folks who would appreciate and accept your invitation. According to recent surveys, a lot of folks are looking for a church home. Your invitation may be just what they've been waiting for!

Want to see the church grow? I do! Want to enhance our image and influence in the community? I do! Invite others to church! Offer to pick them up! Sit with them! Introduce them to others! Help them find their way! Tell them we love them.

Yes, reach out and touch someone! □

## Negative 'baggage' of visitation

By **John Parker**, Minister of music/outreach Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville

**Problem:** Most people, for various reasons, feel uncomfortable visiting someone in behalf of the church.

**Enigma:** There are individuals who faithfully and effectively do visit people in behalf of our church family, seem to gain great satisfaction from their visits,

and yet they share no common skill that explains why they are so comfortable with visitation.

I sense a great personal challenge as one of your staff members in the area of removing the fear and negative "baggage" from the ministry of outreach for our Bible Study ministry. We seem to need more opportunities to represent our church, and we need training that will help us remove the stigma, or false impressions, of what outreach is.

Training and other opportunities to do outreach in a way you feel competent will be offered in upcoming weeks. □

## Letting go like the leaves

By **John Yarbrough**, pastor Unaka Church, Johnson City

November is a time for letting go of the things that are past like withered leaves in the autumn breeze. What do you need to have swept away with the changing of the seasons?

How about letting go of the resentment that grew when things didn't work out the way you wanted them. Maybe you could finally rake away bitterness that has withered your kind-

ness. Perhaps you should let go of success and risk a new venture that may lead you to new successes.

We all stumble in sin. You can let that sin grumble like dead leaves dried by the sun and watch them be swept away in the refreshing gust of the forgiveness of God. He can carry them away as far as the East is from the West.

Jesus died for sin. He hung upon a tree until he withered with the sin of the world. God raked those sins in the chasm of his grave and left them there to burn away in the glory of his resurrection.

Sweep away your leaves of autumn and look with an unobstructed view to the heights of heaven beyond the barren limbs of winter.

"Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away" Psalm 65:3. □

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

## Academy hosts open house

**SEYMOUR** — The King's Academy of Greater Knoxville (a program of Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy) will hold an open house for prospective students and their families on Nov. 30.

Registration begins at 7:15 p.m., followed by an ice cream social and an information session and campus tour.

For more information, call Janice Mink at (423) 573-8321. □

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## C-N cited as one of South's most efficient schools

For Baptist and Reflector

**JEFFERSON CITY** — For the second consecutive year, *U.S. News & World Report* has named Carson-Newman College one of the South's most efficient schools. C-N is the only Tennessee institution to make the "Most Efficient Schools" list.

In its second annual "America's Best Values" survey, Carson-Newman ranks fourth among the South's liberal arts

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"This ranking is most affirming of Carson-Newman's commitment to provide a quality educational program at a price that is still affordable to worthy students," said C-N

President Cordell Maddox.

Those considered for the "Most Efficient Schools" listing were regional liberal arts schools that finished in the top 20 percent of the "America's Best Schools" rankings the magazine announced earlier. C-N was cited in that listing. □

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**Life and Work Series  
for November 12  
Focal Passages:  
Ruth 1:1-2; 4:9-15**

## Loving commitment

By Charles Parker

Ruth is the greatest Old Testament example of loving commitment within a family structure. In the midst of a life confused and distorted by economic chaos, grief, migration to a foreign land, and adjustment to a new culture, she displayed the virtue of being dedicated to Naomi, the Lord she had newly chosen to worship, and Boaz. And no less than she, her mother-in-law, and her new husband demonstrated loving commitment to family members. Certainly no commitment in life can mean more than that to our families, aside from that we make to the Lord himself.

"Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled," according to Ruth 1:1, roughly 1200-1000 B.C., that hardship was the rule rather than the exception. Elimelech's family moved to Moab to escape a famine in Israel. Eventually he and his two sons died, leaving his wife, Naomi, and his two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, as widows. In those days before Social Security and retirement accounts, such a state was indeed perilous. Naomi decided to return home to Bethlehem. Parallels may be drawn to the single adults in America's families today, and to the stream of refugees in Rwanda and Bosnia.

Although Orpah agreed to return to her parents and their pagan religion (v. 14), Ruth had apparently seen something in the lives of Naomi and perhaps her husband that caused her to make a fresh commitment to herself and to her mother-in-law's welfare and to the God of Israel. Do the unsaved and unchurched in our families, if any, see anything different in our lives as Christians that would make them seek the Savior? Ruth's declaration of loving commitment (vv. 16-17) was open-ended. She intended to go where Naomi went, to live where Naomi lived, to accept Naomi's people as her own, and to embrace Naomi's God as her God. In a sense these words were her profession of faith in the God of Israel. Ruth 1:16-17 is often read or recited during wedding ceremonies. Such a strong commitment surely needs to be present when a couple begins a Christian marriage together. But it also needs to be present in other family relationships as well. And, by the way, these verses are a pattern for the closeness that can exist among in-laws in the Christian family. Verse 22 sets the stage for the next scene in the drama by its reference to "barley harvest," which occurred near the end of April.

In Ruth 2:1, 11-12 we are introduced to a key figure in the story of Ruth. Boaz was a relative of Naomi's late husband, Elimelech. He was a wealthy landowner. In those days the poor were allowed to "glean" or gather for their own use grain left in the fields by the reapers. As God so often does, he used the "leftovers" as the basis for his gracious work in his beloveds' lives. Verses 7-9 tells how Boaz, impressed by Ruth's diligence in labor and her commitment to Naomi, promised her provision and protection. A man of faith, he pronounced a beautiful benediction over her in verse 12. Since she had taken refuge "under (God's) wings," he prayed the Lord would bless and reward her. God used him to answer this prayer as he exercised a role as "kinsman-redeemer," a Hebrew term for the nearest male relative who was obligated to "save," in some sense, the widows, even to the extent of marrying her and fathering children. This Boaz did, as described in Ruth 4:13-15. By their actions of loving commitment, not only were they helped, but they also became the ancestors of Israel's great king, David, and even of Jesus, the Messiah. □ — Charles Parker is pastor of First Church, Jacksboro.

## The Jerusalem conference

By Kim Allen

**Convention Uniform Series  
for November 12  
Focal Passages:  
Acts 15:1-2, 6-18**

Historically this passage is crucial. We all face critical decisions. These decisions affected the early church and the church in every age. The church was at a pivotal time when it moved from being an off-shoot of Judaism and becoming a universal faith and life. The amazing success of the church at Antioch caused the called council in Jerusalem to come to terms with how converted Gentiles should be admitted to share in fellowship. A group of strongly Jewish background within the church wanted adherence to the Mosaic Law. Another group said the ritual was not necessary, so the council convened to settle the dispute.

Let us look at the issue, the discussion, and the decision.

### A divisive issue — vv. 1-5

Some Jewish leaders told converts at Antioch "Except ye be circumcised ... ye cannot be saved." This created a crucial issue. The converts were told that to be saved they must first become a Jew. Paul and Barnabas had assured the Gentiles that faith was the only requirement for salvation. Realizing that this issue had to be settled, the church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas back to Jerusalem to confer with the Apostles and Elders.

As they traveled, they stopped in churches along the way telling them of the conversion of Gentiles. In Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas and promptly challenged by Pharisaic believers insisting upon circumcision.

### Discussion and speech — vv. 6-21

After much was said, Peter spoke. Why did Peter wait so long to speak? Even though he had the encounter with Cornelius and the Roman Soldier, there was doubt in his mind. He pleaded, "Do not put a yoke around the neck of our Gentile brothers." He then

reminded his Jewish brothers that the Law they wanted to enforce had been impossible for the Jews themselves to keep. He said, "We have attempted to keep every law, but you know in your

heart we have failed. Why shift our problem to the Gentiles?"

Peter then gave the truth that has stood the test of time: "We believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will" (v. 11).

Peter sat down, giving Paul and Barnabas time to recount all they had seen, heard, and experienced. There was no doubt where they stood — people are free in Christ Jesus.

### The decision and implementation — vv. 22-35

There is a consistent picture of shared church government with leaders making important decisions in cooperation and consultation with the local church portrayed here.

James spoke against the prevailing spirit of the Jerusalem church in suggesting the Gentiles not be constrained by Jewish customs. For their own good they should abstain from consorting with idols, avoid all sexual unchastity, and eat nothing strangled. This was a plea to the Gentiles to live on a higher plane. The dietary regulations were attempts at compromise. Jesus was saying they could "save face" by observing basic, painless food restrictions.

This decision pleased them all, and by common consent the council and Jerusalem church selected emissaries who would travel to the Gentile churches to give them the word of liberation.

Paul and Silas went first to Antioch and read the letter to the congregation. They explained the decision and exhorted the people to continue spreading the good news. □ — Kim Allen is pastor of Little West Fork Church, Clarksville.

## Correcting injustice through reform

By Phil Lovelace

**Bible Book Series for November 12  
Focal Passages: Nehemiah 5:1-8,  
11-12a, 14**

### Selfishness

**Synopsis:** This chapter has sad news as Jews selfishly began preying upon one another. There is no building in this chapter because of great economic concerns/burdens upon the Jews, because of the famine (Haggai 1:7-11) and the taxes and tributes. Nehemiah was angry (v. 6) because his people were so spiritually backslidden as to rob one another. Nehemiah saw it as a spiritual problem. He consulted with his own heart (v. 7) and prayed to God for wisdom. Then he rebuked the people (v. 7-11) reminding them of God's goodness to their nation. "We have been set free by the Lord," he argued; "will you now put one another in bondage again?" He appealed to the OT law as he commanded them to restore their ill-gotten property (Exodus 22:25). How the enemy enjoyed seeing the Jews rob one another (v. 9)! Note that Nehemiah also appeals to his own example as a leader (v. 10). The people vowed to obey the Word and they did!

**Application:** This lesson shows how some people are greedy even when a crisis comes that can destroy everyone, including themselves. No nation can be strong unless all of its citizens have the necessities of life and enough good things to give them a degree of self respect.

**Background:** During a halt in

harassment from their enemies, the Jews faced internal problems. Nehemiah had shown great skill as a leader. His strategy had made possible the people's joining the walls together. Some people had sacrificed for the common good, some were able to give and have much left, and others gave out of their poverty. They borrowed to repair their part in repair and were in dire need. Nehemiah faced a grave problem.

### The rich exploit the poor — vv. 1-8

Though the wealthier Exiles probably stayed in Babylon, those who came to Judah were not lacking. They contributed generously toward the Temple, and some people built ceiled houses (Haggai 1:4). Adversity came; and many could not cope. Famine cut short their income, and the recent building of the walls combined with the clash against the enemies left many families nearly destitute. Selfish governors reduced many flourishing people to poverty. Oppressed people complained to their leader against their countrymen who had prospered but had taken advantage of their poor brethren.

### Nehemiah corrects injustice — vv. 11-12d

Nehemiah was righteously indig-

nant because the rich heaped abuse on the poor and caused them to suffer (v. 6). Also, the rich had forgotten the brotherhood which God had demanded that the Jews practice.

Nehemiah suggested that those who had taken lands and houses from the people by foreclosure should give them back. The "hundredth part" probably referred to the money charged as interest.

### Nehemiah's administration — v. 14

Nehemiah refused to demand aid and bore the expense from his own funds. His compassion for others gave him the right to ask the rich people to refrain from exploiting the poor. Such an attitude actually helped all people, for he could have raised his "expense money" by taxing them. As he recited the good features of his rule, he contrasted it with those who had served before him. His motive was religious, as he pointed out that he feared God and looked to him for his reward.

**Conclusion:** Nehemiah trusted the Lord and lived this trust out with his life. He lived what he preached. Correcting injustices by reforms was really for Nehemiah, "correcting injustices by example." □ — Phil Lovelace is pastor of First Church, Somerville.

## More than 6,000 accept Christ during meetings led by Fanini

Baptist Press

MEGHALAYA, India — More than 6,000 Garos from Meghalaya, northeast India, responded to the invitation to accept Jesus Christ in evangelistic meetings held by the Baptist World Alliance with President Nilson do Amaral Fanini, Oct. 18-22. Each night, approximately 25,000 people attended the meetings.

"There was a mighty outpouring of God's spirit on the Garo people" the six times Fanini preached, said Tony Cupit, BWA's director of evangelism who organized the meeting with the Garo Baptist Convention.

One hundred and twenty-five people were trained to counsel with those who came forward each night.

Every person was given a decision card and his or her name, address, and home church was recorded for follow-up by the Garo Baptist Convention, Cupit said. □

## Bible restorer offers tips on preserving God's Holy Word

Baptist Press

ESCONDIDO, Calif. — Use your Bible if you want to take care of it, advises Jerry Kiley of Golden Rule Bindery.

That is, don't keep it open at the same passage for weeks or years at a time, says Kiley, who specializes in Bible restoration.

Among other pointers Kiley offers:

- Don't use a yellow highlighter or red pen, because the ink eventually will seep through to the other side of the page.

- Use a bookmark instead of bending pages to keep your place.
- Don't stuff your Bible with paper or mementos.
- Apply a leather dressing such as mink oil to the cover. □

## Texas Baptist agency begins international ministry for children

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Buckner Baptist Benevolences, one of the nation's oldest and largest Christian social service agencies, has announced plans to begin cooperation with officials in three Eastern European nations, opening the door for Buckner's first-ever international ministries.

Buckner President Kenneth L. Hall said the international ministries will involve a wide-range of Christian social services, from international adoptions of special-needs children to joint exchanges of social workers between Buckner's staff in Texas and social workers in Russia, Poland, and Romania.

Buckner's first international adoption was finalized recently when a Houston couple returned to the United States with a 5-year-old girl from St. Petersburg, Russia.

Along with the adoptions and staff exchanges, Hall said Buckner will cooperate with officials in the three countries to provide a variety of other services including medical care for children in orphanages. □

## Keith Parks' son resigns as missionary

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Three years after his father retired as president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to head

missions work at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Kent Parks is also resigning as a Southern Baptist missionary to seek appointment with the moderate organization's alternative missions program.

Kent Parks and his wife, Erika, have resigned from the Foreign Mission Board effective Nov. 30, citing philosophical differences with the agency's leaders.

They expect to be hired as Fellowship missionaries at an appointment service Dec. 1, after which they will return to Asia to work with an unreached people group.

A FMB spokesman declined to comment, noting the board does not "routinely comment on personnel matters." □

## New Mexican cited as top HMB volunteer

Baptist Press

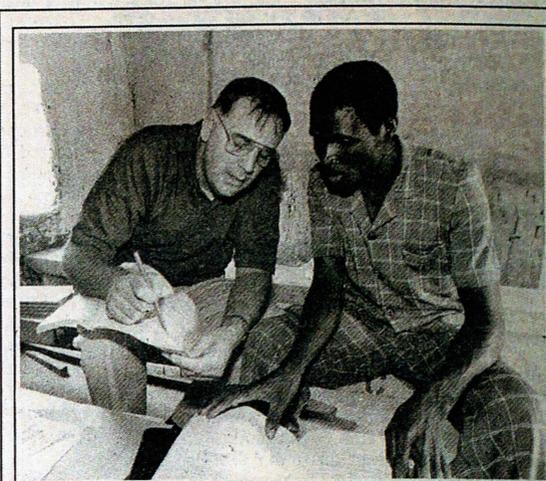
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — A 62-year-old New Mexico woman has been named this year's volunteer of the year by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Mission Service Corps department.

"He told me he'd take care of me and he has," said Orella Stanford who has lived in New Mexico the last 27 years.

As director of the ladies daytime ministries for the Neighborhood Center in Albuquerque, Stanford teaches sewing classes to immigrants, providing a service and teaching as well as Christian fellowship.

Stanford was already doing some work for the center when director Ken Goode asked her to consider joining the staff as an Mission Service Corps volunteer in 1992.

MSC volunteers serve at least four months in home missions work. Those who work at least two years are considered home missionaries. □



## Training leaders in Nigeria

*Theological Education by Extension (TEE) plays an important role in training new pastors for the large number of new churches Baptists in Nigeria are starting. In 1994, the Nigerian Baptist Convention started 437 new congregations, about one-fifth of all churches started on Southern Baptist mission fields worldwide. Above, Southern Baptist missionary Ron Copple, left, of High Point, N.C., reviews a lesson with Pastor Inywa during a TEE class at Hosanna Baptist Church in Boshikiri. — Photo by Ken Touchton*

## 40-year-old railroad retiree is first Ridgecrest volunteer

Baptist Press

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Garry Giddens believes his opportunity to retire at age 40 after "20 years, two months, and three days" of working on the railroad was a gift from God.

In return, he set out to find the best way to give time back to the Lord. He found the answer at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

"I felt the Lord was wanting me to serve him in some kind of capacity even though I wasn't a preacher or anything," said Giddens, a slow-talking native of Ringgold, La. Giddens and his wife, Patricia,

moved in June from Lafayette, La., to become the conference center's first volunteers. They will serve through the end of this month.

Patricia, who had been a secretary at First Church, Lafayette, became a paid employee after three months, now serving as a marketing clerk.

Giddens puts in 60-hour weeks greeting guests as they arrive, punching tickets in the dining hall, talking to every child and most adults, solving problems of guests, cooking, serving food, and any other needed task that arises. Of his 60-hour weeks, Giddens emphasized, he is only asked to work 30 hours in return for a place to live on campus. "I didn't come here as a worker. I came on a mission. You can't put time limits on that." □

# Graham's international crusade director ordained at age 68

By Clay Renick  
For Baptist Press

MARIETTA, Ga. — Although it was a typical ordination service, it attracted international attention when Henry Holley was officially welcomed to the ministry at 68 years of age.

"I wanted to be obedient to his call and his claim on my life," said Holley, a member of Johnson Ferry Church here.

Holley's recent ordination came after 30 years with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. As one of the organization's international crusade directors he never found time to get ordained, Holley said.

"This was a confirmation more than

anything," he explained. "I have no plans to retire."

Letters of support came from church leaders across the country and from several Asian countries. Among those writing letters were SBC President Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla., and former SBC President H. Edwin Young of Houston.

Graham also wrote a letter. "He has set up some of the largest crusades in which I have ever had the privilege of participating," Graham noted. Graham was not at the ordination, but the team was represented by Cliff Barrows.

Hank Holley, executive minister of Calvary Church, Charlotte, N.C., affirmed his father in the ordination service with the acronym PATH: Proven

in ministry, Authentic in personal walk and life, Trustworthy and a man of integrity, and a Heart for God.

Holley became a Christian as a boy and spent 23 years in the Marines. "I drifted away from God," he recounted.

That changed at Okinawa. Holley spent 18 months on the island as a career Marine master sergeant, finding a new interest in prayer and the Scriptures.

Holley started helping at Billy Graham crusades in 1959 and joined the effort full time after retirement from the Marines.

Now, as international crusade director, he averages 150,000 miles a year in travel.

Holley organized Graham's 1973 Ko-

rean crusade, which drew more than one million people at the closing service. In 1990, he directed the Hong Kong crusade with satellite television exposure to 100 million people in 45 languages.

In each major effort, Holley works a year or more in the target area. "Our work is being obedient to what God wants," Holley explained. The Billy Graham team uses four principles of outreach: prayer, simple presentation of God's Word, united witness, and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

"We don't know how many years we'll have left on earth," said Holley, who is awaiting his next crusade assignment. "I just want to be faithful to the end." □