

Baptist and Reflector

December 13, 1995

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STATEWIDE EDITION

■ *this week's news*

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

TBC Executive Board begins work for new year

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Orientation is merely prelude to real action, Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board members learned last Thursday and Friday.

Meeting Dec. 7 - 8 at the Baptist Center new members combined with holdovers to begin the 1995-96 TBC year.

The 20 new members were put to work immediately with committee assignments and actions which can be called more "on the job" training.

Guided by President Herbert Higdon, Jackson, who was elected earlier, board members dealt with a variety of actions.

The board met briefly Thursday morning to approve the organization of board committees, the executive committee, and officers of both.

Standing committees met Thursday, and the entire board along with board staff leadership had a working ban-

quet that night.

Following the meal, James Porch, Executive Board Executive Director, previewed to board members a future restructure plan for the Executive Board staff of the Brentwood Baptist Center.

A dialogue session followed.

Emphasizing the One Servant Family in Focused Ministry ideal for Executive Board staff, Porch explained briefly four objectives for 1995-96: *Tennessee*, our priority in evangelism/missions field; *Baptist*, an identity worth preserving; *Relationships*, ever-developing and never assumed; and *Reorganization*, our pilgrimage toward focused ministry.

Executive Board ministries under the new organization, Porch stressed, should be more "user friendly" to Tennessee Baptist churches and staff members, he added.

The Executive Committee met after the dinner session to hear from standing commit-

tees. Several recommendations were passed on to the board for action on Friday morning.

As for the implementation of Vision 2000, the Long-Range Plan approved at the November TBC annual meeting, the committee determined implementation will begin early in 1996.

The advisory committee, already specified by convention action, will begin meeting to implement the five-year plan on a gradual basis.

Buoyed by Executive Director James Porch's news that the first month (November) of the 1995-96 CP budget year is ahead of budget needs, board members moved through an abbreviated agenda in quick but thorough manner.

TBC President Ken Hubbard, pastor of First Church, Smyrna, led off the Friday morning Executive Board meeting with a devotional from I Chronicles 11.

He talked about the faithful "mighty men" of Israel who

loved their King David enough to bring him refreshing water from Bethlehem. David honored all those who made the difficult journey, but especially the men who were seldom noticed.

Hubbard challenged Executive Board members and staff to remember, "We are called by Christ to go beyond the call of duty to serve our King. Like these men who loved David, let us stand near to the King we serve."

He closed by adding, "I wish Tennessee Baptists would love each other, really love each other. If we have the truth, it ought to make us be like Christ."

Executive Director Porch noted that the CP budget year ended in October with a record \$26.8 million. He said November CP income was 13.5 percent over the same month last year, and, "This is a testimony to the churches and leadership of Executive Board members." — See TBC, page 2

Union trustees unanimously elect new president

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Union University trustees have chosen theologian, educator, and author David S. Dockery as the university's 15th president.

Dockery, 43, was elected unanimously Dec. 8 in executive session during a special called trustee meeting on the Union campus.

Dockery will assume the presidency June 1, 1996, following the May 31 retirement of Hyran Barefoot who has served as Union's president since 1987. Barefoot will serve in the newly created position of chancellor.

Since 1988 Dockery has served on the faculty and administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He currently is vice president of academic administration and dean of the School of Theology. In addition to the presidency, Dockery also will serve on the faculty as professor of Christian studies.

Dockery was one of 41 candidates considered by the presidential search committee, according to John Drinnon, chairman of both the trustees and the search committee. "We had some outstanding people (to consider)," Drinnon said.

He noted that early in the process the committee felt Dockery would be one of the stronger candidates. "As we worked the process it became obvious he was the



WELCOMING NEW PRESIDENT David S. Dockery and his wife, Lanese, right center, to Union are John Drinnon, right, chairman of Union's trustees and presidential search committee, and Joyce and Hyran Barefoot. Dockery will succeed Barefoot as president June 1, 1996.

one to lead the university at this time," said Drinnon, a layman from Germantown Church, Germantown. "He's a committed Christian, a scholar, a man of vision, and someone who understands the needs and concerns of the liberal arts college in the world today," Drinnon added.

The Alabama native holds a Ph.D. from the University of Texas, Arlington, a master of arts from Texas Christian University, masters of divinity from Southwestern

Baptist Theological Seminary and Grace Theological Seminary, and a bachelor of science degree from the University of Alabama, Birmingham.

He has additional experience as general editor for the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman Press and on the faculties of several colleges, universities, and seminaries. An accomplished editor, he presently serves as a consulting editor for — See Union, page 2

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TBC Executive Board begins work for ...

— Continued from page 1

Since this was the first working meeting for standing committees of the board, some of them did not have a report for the full board.

Christian Services Committee chairman Eugene Cotey explained to the board that the move of Tennessee Baptist Children's Home offices to the Franklin campus is on schedule. An office building is being prepared for the staff there.

This will release office space for Executive Board staff in the Baptist Center now being used by TBCH. Executive Director Gerald Stow said TBC funds are not being used in the building project.

Baptist Health System of East Tennessee (Knoxville) representative Dick Denson, explained a concept, unique in the area, that places nurses on staffs with churches for special health care situations.

Vern Powers of Nashville Baptist Hospital said the health care system's administrative team is "on the fast track" building clinics, health care centers, and putting doctors and nurses in strategic places in Middle Tennessee.

In the report from Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes, Executive Director J.L. Ford commented on the growth of TBAH in numbers and quality during the last decade. Kenny Cooper, who replaces the retiring Ford in January, gave some brief remarks in support of Ford's tenure. He

expressed his excitement at working with "a ministry of care that meets special needs."

Katharine Bryan, TBC Woman's Missionary Union executive director, expressed excitement that the Golden State Mission Offering is nearing its goal.

More than \$920,000 has been received from the churches toward the goal of \$1.2 million. "This is exciting in light of Dr. Porch's emphasis on evangelism in Tennessee," she said.

The presidents of Carson-Newman College, Belmont University, and Harrison-Chilhowee Academy made brief remarks which underscored high enrollments and missions and evangelism actions among students. Carson-Newman will establish a master of science in nursing degree program to begin in 1997.

Hyran Barefoot, Union University president, was in Jackson where the school's trustees were electing David Dockery to succeed him upon retirement next summer. (See separate story, page 1)

Baptist and Reflector editor Wm. Fletcher Allen spoke to board members about the paper's 1996 emphasis planned toward affirming Tennessee Baptist families, and offering assistance through special articles and other helps. He said the paper is completing its 160th year of "distinguished and honest" reporting to Tennessee Baptists. He encouraged board members to remind their constituency

that the paper is their only official source of Tennessee Baptist news.

The Executive Board approved three recommendations from its Executive Committee.

Committee Chairman Frank Hawkins, pastor of First Church, Kingsport, presented the three items:

(1) That Dyer Baptist Association be given title to the Baptist Student Center at Dyersburg State Community College. The association assumes responsibility for the building and all related expenses. The Executive Board will, for five years, pay the total salary and benefits of the director of student ministries, and assume the \$3,000 currently provided to the director by the association. The five years is an assessing period.

(2) That Belmont University extend its total bonded indebtedness from \$14,170,000 to \$18,270,000. The \$4.1 million will be used to renovate and expand Colonial Village Apartments to accommodate on-campus housing for 232 students.

(3) That the Executive Board continue using Williams, Crosslin, Sparks and Vaden, P. C. for auditing services through 1998 at an annual cost of \$81,500. All TBC entities are audited by the firm except the three hospital systems.

The recommendations were approved with little discussion.

The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled May 7. □

Union trustees unanimously elect new ...

— Continued from page 1

Christianity Today and as general editor for Broadman Press' 40-volume *New American Commentary* series.

Dockery has authored five books and edited an additional 13 volumes including the *Holman Bible Handbook*, while contributing works to 16 other books.

After his election Dockery addressed Union trustees, faculty, staff, and students during a chapel service.

"It is with a deep sense of gratitude I accept the invitation of Union's board of trustees to become the next president of this great institution," Dockery said.

"With a dependence on God's enabling grace (my wife) Lanese and I shall look forward to investing our lives at this university in the years to come.

"Particularly in the last decade Union University has begun to move to the forefront among Christian colleges. Recent

recognitions underscore the quality education provided at this university. It is with expectation and anticipation that we look forward to working with the excellent administrators, faculty, staff, and students at this school."

Dockery acknowledged that "certain changes are to be expected" with a new administration but he stressed "there will be much continuity as we build on the great tradition of this university."

Union's new president pledged to lead the institution in a way "that is consistent" with its heritage and commitments and to build "upon the positive and constructive relationships with the Tennessee Baptist Convention in particular and the Southern Baptist Convention in general so as to provide leadership for today, while educating leaders for tomorrow."

Dockery and his wife, Lanese, and sons Jonathan, Benjamin, and Timothy are not

strangers to Tennessee. They lived in the Nashville area for two years (1990-92) while Dockery was on a leave of absence from Southern Seminary to work with the Baptist Sunday School Board as a general editor for Broadman Press. They were members of First Church, Hendersonville.

In addition to Drinnon, other trustees on the search committee members were:

John Williams, Ward's Grove Church, Jackson; Elzie Danley, Malesus Church, Jackson; Jane Alderson, West Jackson Church; John McRee, First Church, Memphis; Thomas Moore, First Church, Dresden; Max Walker, pastor, First Church, Selmer; and Gary Coltharp, pastor, First Church, Jackson.

Union faculty member Carla Sanderson and staffer Robert Simpson also served on the search committee. □ — Keith Currey, assistant director of public relations at Union, contributed to this article.

BSSB to continue publishing Hobbs commentary

By Linda Lawson
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The quarterly Sunday School lesson commentary written by the late Herschel Hobbs for 28 years will continue for the "foreseeable future," drawing from his 100-plus commentary volumes and other Bible study materials he wrote for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Hobbs, a Southern Baptist statesman, former SBC president, and pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City, died Nov. 28 of a heart attack. He was 88.

"Before his death Dr. Hobbs gave us permission to use the

materials he has written to continue this book," said Rick Edwards, manager of the adult life and work biblical studies section in the board's Bible teaching-reaching division. "This was a plan he supported and helped develop."

The lesson commentary, originally titled, *Studying Adult Life and Work Lessons*, was renamed *The Herschel Hobbs Commentary* with the October-December 1995 issue. Approximately 90,000 Sunday School teachers utilize the commentary as part of their lesson preparation each week.

"Teachers loved Dr. Hobbs and they have loved this book," Edwards said. "Many already

are calling us to ask about its future. "Our desire is to continue publishing the commentary in the genuine tradition of Herschel Hobbs," he said. "We will strive to maintain his actual wording as much as possible. Supplemental comments will be added only as they are consistent with Hobbs' style and his own theological and biblical perspective. Our goal is that there would be no recognizable difference in upcoming volumes."

Edwards said Ross McLaren, who has edited the Hobbs commentary since 1991, will continue in an expanded role as editor/compiler beginning with 1997 lessons. Hobbs

completed lessons through 1996.

"An earlier hospitalization in 1992 left Dr. Hobbs unable to complete most of the October 1993 issue," Edwards said. "Dr. McLaren compiled and edited that quarter using other material by Dr. Hobbs. In turn, Dr. Hobbs dedicated that issue to Ross, calling him a "fellow pilgrim and co-laborer — without whose integrity, scholarship, and skill this volume could not have been produced."

Edwards said no decision has been made to how long the lesson commentary would be continued using Hobbs' materials. □

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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Union's new president has varied background

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Coach, pastor, professor, educator, dean, academic vice president — these are the backgrounds David S. Dockery brings to the presidency of Union University.

"I have a varied background which I think the Lord has used to prepare me for this particular challenge," Dockery said in an interview with the *Baptist and Reflector*.

"I understand the issues facing higher education in the 21st century and can help Union prepare to meet those challenges," he said.

Dockery also has served at different ends of the spectrum of Southern Baptist life, having worked with a small church in New York, a megachurch in Texas, and on the staff of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

"I want to use those shaping influences to help Union relate constructively to the Tennessee Baptist Convention in particular and the Southern Baptist Convention in general," he said.

Dockery admitted he had no inspirations to become a university president. "This is a very recent development," he said.

He noted that the move represents a "shift" in his career which to this point has been focused on theological education to Christian liberal arts education. "I have had to think carefully about that," he said.

Yet, he is confident about

the move because "God has been in the process in a special way." Doors opened unexpectedly, Dockery said, and "we're prepared to walk through them."

Dockery, vice president of academic administration and dean of the School of Theology, has been at Southern Seminary since 1988. In recent months controversy has plagued the Louisville seminary. Southern is under scrutiny by its accrediting agencies in response to developments with the seminary's Carver School of Social Work.

Dockery stressed, however, the events at Southern did not influence his decision to accept the Union post.

"I have had other options to leave Southern during the last three years but have not responded.

"I wanted to come to Union because of the opportunities and challenges here. I am coming to Union rather than leaving from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary."

Dockery expressed gratitude for Southern Seminary's faculty colleagues and the opportunities to "serve in positions of academic leadership granted by Dr. Roy Honeycutt (retired SBTS president) and Dr. Albert Mohler (current president). I'm indebted to both of them and trust God's blessings on the school for the

future."

Mohler wished Dockery well in his new post.

"Dr. Dockery is an acclaimed scholar and an experienced administrator, and I am certain that he will lead Union University into a new era of excellence and progress," Mohler said.

"He has been a cherished colleague at Southern Seminary. We will miss him greatly and give thanks to God for the contributions he has made to this institution. In this case, Union University's gain is Southern Seminary's loss."

Union faculty members and administrators expressed pleasure with the trustees' selection.

Outgoing President Hyran Barefoot, who will become Union's chancellor after his retirement next May, did not know Dockery personally before his election, but expressed his support. "I have great confidence in the committee and their careful scrutiny. I am very supportive of this gentleman as the next president of Union," he said.

Dockery has the "desired presidential qualities as described by the search committee, faculty, and staff of our university," said Carla Sanderson, dean of Union's School of Nursing and Union's faculty representative on the search committee.

"Dr. Dockery has a vision of distinction for Union University, a vision that combines our heritage of Christian, liberal arts education with a vision for a new definition of scholarship

and outreach. I am excited to be a part of a team that will be led by this man as we work toward providing quality education for the young men and women who come our way," Sanderson added.

George Guthrie, chair of Union's department of religion, cited three reasons why Dockery's appointment is significant.

"First, he is widely known and respected in academic circles as a leading evangelical thinker and author. His contacts both inside and outside Southern Baptist life are wide-ranging and diverse. Therefore, he will enhance Union's growing national visibility as an academic institution.

"Second, Dr. Dockery is committed to the classroom, which fits well with the community of fine teachers we have at Union.

"Third, he is a committed Christian who cares deeply about the church and will continue the university's focus on spiritual life and ministry."

Dockery, in a chapel address following his election Dec. 8, pledged to "seek to prioritize the worship and service of God in all that we do.

"We will pray that the Union University community can be used of God as an agent of reconciliation to a hurting world. We will trust that we can continue to build a leading liberal arts university that is faithful to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life and service," he said. □ — Keith Currey contributed to this article.



DOCKERY

Church multiplies 'talents' for LMCO

Baptist Press

NEW BERN, N.C. — The \$10 bills a North Carolina pastor gave his congregation in October are now coming back multiplied — all for the cause of Southern Baptists' foreign missions offering.

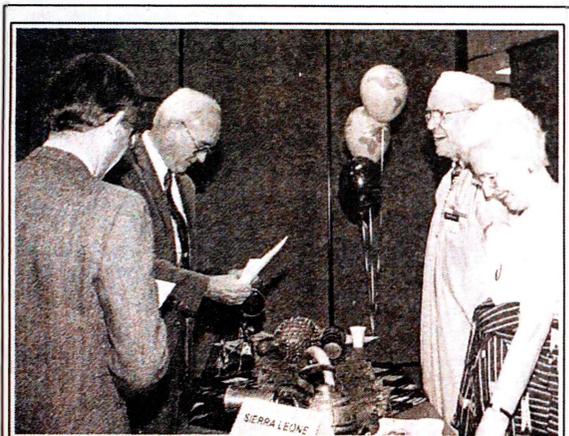
Pastor Jack Hinton of Tabernacle Church, New Bern, preached a sermon on the parable of the talents and then told church members he had a \$10 bill for every member there at least old enough to attend junior high school.

"What good is a sermon if you don't apply it to your life," Hinton asked.

"This is seed money to be planted on behalf of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," he said, challenging the congregation to invest in their own fund-raising projects.

Hinton's plan was to entrust up to \$4,000 from a personal loan to the ingenuity of his members. He asked them to return the seed money, along with profits, on Dec. 17.

Hinton expects the 450 active church members will exceed this year's Lottie Moon offering goal of \$24,000 — a 2,900 percent increase from the \$800 they gave in 1982. That was the year Hinton came to Tabernacle — and members began catching his vision for foreign missions. □ — Norman Miller



Foreign missions emphasis

Tennessee Baptist Woman's Missionary Union and the Tennessee Baptist Brotherhood Department jointly sponsored a Table Top Missions Fair for the employees of the Baptist Center in Brentwood last week. The event was held in conjunction with the Week of Prayer emphasis for foreign missions. Several retired missionaries set up booths to tell about missions in their country of service. Above, Ruth and Burt Dyson, right, of Woodmont Church, Nashville, talk to Pete Ford, left center, and Kenny Cooper of Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes about Sierra Leone. — Photo by Connie Davis

HMB launches 'Celebrate Jesus 2000' campaign

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Wyo. — A five-year plan to share the Gospel in every household in America is being developed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Known as "Celebrate Jesus 2000," the process includes training, prayer, personal witnessing, evangelistic crusades, and publicity.

Larry Lewis, HMB president, called the strategy "Spirit-led and God-directed." Using Mark 16 as a reference, Lewis said the success of Celebrate Jesus 2000 depends in part on whether Christians really believe in hell.

"Too many Christians, deep in their hearts, don't believe that people without God are really that bad off," he said. Believing that Jesus is the only way to escape eternal punishment will motivate Christians to share Christ, Lewis said during an HMB-

sponsored annual meeting of evangelism leaders from across the Southern Baptist Convention.

To develop a mind-set for outreach and growth, the HMB evangelism staff recommends churches use *Total Church Life*, a book written by Darrell Robinson, HMB vice president for evangelism.

Every part of the process must be bathed in prayer, Lewis said. He said he envisions churches praying for their communities, perhaps by making prayer lists from names in the phone book. Prayer efforts also could include walking through neighborhoods and praying for situations participants observe, enlisting prayer partners, and observing periods

of prayer and fasting.

After being trained to witness and praying for lost people, Southern Baptists will be encouraged to share the Gospel "house to house, door to door, and face to face," Lewis said. The witnessing thrust will help churches discover prospects and also create a community awareness of the church's ministry.

"People Sharing Jesus" is the training process emphasized by the HMB evangelism staff. It is designed to help Christians witness in their everyday settings.

The final phase of Celebrate Jesus 2000 is mass evangelistic programs such as crusades. One component will be "Youth-Link," simultaneous youth rallies to be held in seven cities Dec. 29, 1999, through 1 a.m. Jan. 1, 2000.

The rallies will be transmitted by satellite to churches across the country. □



LEWIS

■ about letters to the editor

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

Rethinking needed

In the Nov. 29 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* I read an article which reported that on Nov. 15, Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., had introduced in the House of Representatives an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, "Intended to protect religious expression."

On another page of the same paper, I read another article which reported that in Modesto, Calif., a resolution was approved which stated that "any church which has a woman as senior pastor is in violation of the (CSBC) articles of membership and cannot be considered a cooperating Southern Baptist Church."

It seems to me some rethinking is in order.

Art Davis
Gray 37615

Amazed

I write to express my amazement at what I see in Baptist life today. In a recent issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* I read letters expressing "distress" over the election of someone to the Executive Board "who has a position with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an organization that competes for Cooperative Program dollars with their own mission board, schools, and administrative budget."

In the same issue I read a report about Campus Crusade

for Christ's Prayer and Fasting 95 gathering in Los Angeles. I read that at least three Baptist leaders took part in this and praised the meetings. Does Campus Crusade not "compete" with us Baptists? Do they not have officers and budget and boards? Are there not Tennessee Baptist churches who have their own schools and missionaries? Are there not Baptist churches, pastors, and laymen who participate in all sorts of religious activities not "owned and operated" by the TBC or SBC? They exist in abundance.

Yet these are allowed to participate in TBC and SBC life and work without any "distress" being expressed. Why can some do this and others cannot?

I have been a Baptist for 41 years. I thought (until now) that in Christ the believer is free and the local church is autonomous; that we "cooperate" with the association/TBC/SBC, but that these do not own us; that Baptists are free to participate in various movements in God's kingdom and still be Baptists; and that we have "diversity with unity."

Now it appears we must all be exactly alike. Or at least our diversity has to be approved by a certain select few.

What is going on with us? Who are we?

Gary Baker
Sweetwater 37874

Has questions

I came home from the convention with questions.

Are we going to keep the preferred item of \$1.25 million in the budget even when we could easily have paid the mission percentage this year?

Why is our convention leadership so protective of 37.5 percent even in prosperous years?

When all large corporations are streamlining by reducing personnel, why should the TBC add new staff?

When did it change, that the final voice (the state convention in session) cannot instruct and direct any of its entities?

Is it right for even one messenger to feel oppressed or pressured in a business session or in making a motion when the clowns can dance on without time restraint?

When was it changed that you cannot give pertinent information to the convention about any matter. If someone knew a person, offered for election, was an employee of the mafia, would not the person who knew be duty bound to reveal that detail? If you cannot give negative information, can you give positive information?

Some are wondering about low attendance at the conven-

tion. When personal autonomy is violated, we cannot expect cooperation. People get tired of struggle that ends in defeat. Then, they quit.

If there are real answers, I would appreciate hearing them.

Clay Frazier
Morristown 37814

Shocked at survey

I was shocked at the survey reported by Rev. Doug Sager in the article "Ministers need new vision," (*Baptist and Reflector* Nov. 22).

As a Southern Baptist, I was taught and still believe that the church is an organism — not an organization.

The minister is first called of God to be a minister and then is on call for God. He can leave a church at any time and many do.

Men that do not believe Jesus' teachings to be relevant, preaching or the church to be relevant are not qualified to be ordained. They do not believe the Bible.

The average stay for most pastors at any church is from three to six years. In spite of this, their marriages and children do not go astray, and they financially manage to send their children to college.

A church should not ask a pastor to leave unless he practices or condones immorality or dishonesty of any sort, and/or has left the Word of God to preach heresy. However, he is free to leave as God leads. He is not under contract to a church.

Thelma Sudberry
Shelbyville 37160

Hobbs blessed

We were privileged to have Dr. Herschel Hobbs with us at our church in a Monday night preaching series this summer. I had come to know him during my time on Union University's faculty. He was also the commencement speaker when I re-

ceived my Ph.D. at Southern. Southern Baptists have lost a true giant, a great Bible teacher, a beloved pastor, and an elder statesman. His love for our Lord and his church, his doctrinal depth, fidelity to Scripture and commitment to kingdom living are ideals we all should emulate.

Dr. Hobbs was upbeat about the future of our convention. He thought the 150th anniversary celebration in Atlanta was the best convention in years. He continued to believe in and support the Cooperative Program. He was concerned about the tone and tenor of our political machinations. He was fearful of some trends in SBC life. But his confidence in God's grace and purpose never wavered.

I am honored to have known him for a time. We are a better people of God because he lived, labored, and loved among us. He will be missed perhaps more than we now realize.

L. Joseph Rosas III, pastor
Union Avenue Church
Memphis 38104

Heal the wounded

As I read about Jimmy Allen's precious grandson Matthew, I am deeply saddened. We are now in the 21st century and no longer can we run from the deep hurting brothers and sisters in the Lord or in the world.

The problem of AIDS is everywhere and we must love and face these precious people with God's love. We can't continue to hurt our wounded and dump them out on the streets for others to pick up.

It's hard to believe Matthew died knowing God's people didn't love him. God is holding him now in his loving arms. Why didn't we? The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, he has sent us to heal the brokenhearted. To proclaim liberty to the captives (AIDS victims). Luke 18.

Janice Scruggs
Knoxville 37920

Interfaith witness training planned

An Interfaith Witness Training Conference in the area of the occult will be held Jan. 25-26 at Union University in Jackson.

The conference is sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Jimmy Furr, interfaith witness associate for the Home Mission Board, will lead the conference on the occult.

The word "occult" means dark, hidden, secret, mysterious, and refers to all practices and systems that seek to obtain special knowledge or magical power that is not normally

available to the average person. Occult practices and groups include astrology, all forms of fortune telling, spiritualism, witchcraft, voodoo, and Satanism.

The conference begins at 2 p.m. on Jan. 25 and concludes the next day at 2:30 p.m. The cost is \$15 per person and includes meals and materials. Checks should be made payable to Interfaith Witness Department, HMB.

Deadline for registration is Jan. 5. For more information or to get a registration form, call the TBC Missions Department at (615) 371-2031. □

■ an occasional word

By Lonnie Wilkey,
associate editor

Even pastors hurt

The Tennessee Baptist Convention family received some distressing news early last week.

Stephen Gilder, the 21-year-old son of Ray Gilder was killed in an automobile accident Dec. 5 while going to school at Middle Tennessee State University.

Ray Gilder is well known to Tennessee Baptists, having served as a pastor in Memphis for many years and in the TBC Missions Department for the last few years in various roles. He currently is bivocational ministries consultant for the TBC and bivocational pastor of Gath Church, McMinnville.

Stephen's death was another reminder to me of how fragile life is and how we should never take it for granted.

I didn't have the privilege of knowing Stephen, but I have had the privilege of counting his dad as a friend. From what people have told me, Stephen was like his dad — a young man who loved people and had a positive impact on those who knew him.

His death also made me think about Ray and his wife, Diane — a couple who have given their life to serving the Lord.

Just because Ray is a pastor doesn't mean he is immune to the hurts and tribulations we all face.

Laypeople sometimes take for granted ministers and their families. Pastors aren't supposed to have problems because if they did that wouldn't leave time for them to deal with ours, would it? I'm afraid that's an attitude too many of us have, consciously or subconsciously.

We should never forget that pastors (and their families) hurt too.

Ray Gilder no doubt has stood beside countless families when they experienced the death of a loved one or some other tragic event.

I would encourage every Tennessee Baptist, even if you don't know him, to lift Ray, Diane, and their two daughters up in prayer. For those who know Ray, drop him a note or card. Let him and his family know they are loved and that God loves them too. □



WILKEY

Shepherds, sheep, and fields ripe for harvest

The biography of Jesus Christ, the man, began in earnest when the angel announced to a young and bewildered Mary news of history's grandest event.

Later the shepherds who were gathered on hillsides near Bethlehem heard firsthand from a heavenly chorus.

Shepherds, sheep, fields — are three words used unsparingly in the biography. Jesus himself talked about planting, growing, watering, and harvesting.

He talked about men becoming fishers of other men. He knew his subject matter. When he was born, it is quite likely that his young mother placed him carefully in that manger — trough.

Appropriately, Jesus was born to a couple whose income must have been "scraping the bottom of the barrel." It is probable they barely avoided legal problems with the tax officers and spiritual leaders, and, except for their strong faith in the God of Abraham, lived on the edge of existence.

But all the wealth of the world could not have bought a program to match that performance by the angels in chorus and the spectacular announcement from the skies. The world may not have been ready for such a proclamation and supernatural musical symphony, but the simple shepherds, and their willing sheep, heard the Great Good News.

No doubt it would have been too much to swallow for the political and religious hierarchy. The message was too simple, too plain, not theologically deep enough, void of pharisaical approval. It lacked the exclusivity that leaders often pre-

ferred, and used that dreaded definition, "all men."

Shepherds, sheep, and fields of stone. Some scrubby thickets of unimposing shrubs, the bleating of wayward sheep, a group of men who no doubt were tired, weary — this was the audience.

Can you hear the thundering voice of the angelic choir director? Can you imagine the sweet words of promise churning across the stony valley? Would you have believed the Good News long enough to hasten to the stable in lowly Bethlehem?

Would you have wondered at the authenticity of the herald? Was it merely a strong wind singing through the pines?

Well, these are thought-provoking questions. We answer them in daily life by our being and our doing. The shepherds' faith allowed them only to be joyful and awestricken. Had God delayed until now the great news of salvation by Bethlehem's babe, we perhaps would be less receptive and even hostile. Perfect timing!

The Lord God does it again. Though the world lay deep in despair and sin, this was the right time for the Good News to come to mankind. Perfect timing! It is doubtful that the shepherds, or their friends or families consider any other reason for his coming. They knew only that they needed the Savior, Bethlehem did, Jerusalem did, Israel did, and every lost person anywhere and everywhere, we all needed him.

So we greet Christmas again. This side of the shepherds, the sheep, and the

fields ripe for harvest, we have Christmas in 1995.

Can we imagine a time without Christmas? That is what makes the occasion so much more immense in time. The shepherds easily could have thought of a world without what we call "Christmas." They had never had one before, but we can be sure they remembered it and eagerly anticipated its second coming.

The shepherds, the sheep, the stony fields — and then a time for harvest. Fishers of men, he said, fishers of men if you truly love me.

O, look what miracle God wrought in those fields that night long ago. The Master of the harvest. Shepherd of all the lost sheep. Giver of Life, the Bread and Water, the Way, the Truth — all wrapped up in the Babe of Bethlehem.

The scene set before us in the New Testament is magnificent in its simplicity, no parades or shopping malls. There is no Holiday Barbie, nor is a great feast prepared. There are no chimneys and certainly no Santa Claus to climb down and up. No Christmas tree or halls decked with holly, no mad getting, spending, and forgetting the reason.

Through the centuries we have let the wrappings obscure the Gift. Let's begin now to truly honor *Christ* at Christmas.

There is good reason for generosity, praises, adoration. But the simplicity of the mission and message of Christ is for the heart, not mortal gratification.

Then let all things be in perspective, and let us adore him, Christ the Lord. The Shepherd still comes to the heart.

Let it be as that first coming. □

■ one word more
By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

Choosing the tree

There were at least two things necessary to prepare us farm children for Christmas.

It would be good to replace at least part of the bustle in today's world with such traditions.

First, we realized it was almost Christmas — or did Mama and Daddy remind us?

We put on our Christmas attire, that is, we wrapped ourselves with the joy and delight that was Christmas.

That didn't take much doing. It was easy to get excited. The anticipation of the event

ALLEN made it as real as the pristine air we breathed. Second, someone announced that this was the day to select the Christmas tree.

No, we didn't jump in the car and dash off to the tree farm or to a certain place where someone sold trees.

Wonder of wonders! Some of us, usually young ones skipping along with an older brother, marching in disarray to the pasture or to the woods.

One of the brothers carried the axe. We marveled at the strength — and the knack of remembering where the tree for this Christmas was standing, just waiting for us.

It was cedar — oh, the fragrance, or perhaps a thick-branched pine. After the brother felled it with smooth and even strokes, we would insist that we could help him take (drag) it homeward for Christmas.

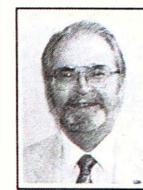
Along the way, we paused to snip some sprigs of holly. There was still much to do in preparation.

But Christmas was not only in the air, it enveloped us in solid merriment and excitement, parents as well.

The adventure of the Christmas tree was mine for a few years, when the older brothers went off to college and then to World War II.

There were no little ones to rejoice, to tag along. But then I grew up suddenly, and Betty and I were selecting Christmas trees with one, two, three, and four wonderful girls.

And I think we shared the joy equally just remembering how grand it is to prepare for Christmas. ☺



ALLEN

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

■ just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Judge (to man accused of stealing a pig): "The jury has found you not guilty. You are free to go." Man: "Thanks, your honor. Now, does that mean I can keep the pig?"

Take this truth

Is a thing yours because you have it? You must possess it also. Many people have books in their library they own but do not possess. Why? They've never read them!

You don't possess something unless you use it. The person who borrows your book you've never read and reads it, is the one who possesses it. You merely own it.

Memorize this Scripture

"All things are yours ... Ye are Christ's" (I Corinthians 3:21, 23).

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to possess what I own." □

It's good to make Christmas memories

In this special season of the year we have opportunity to make memories that will last a lifetime for the family.

Many families have traditions loaded with special significance at Christmas time. Children need the security that comes from the structure and sense of belonging which these family traditions afford. Therapists today are beginning to have a new appreciation for the value of multi-generational celebrations that are a part of many of these traditions.

Family traditions which center around religious rituals and celebrations are not new. The Jewish family of today looks back to the Old Testament and the feast days and festivals that have been markers of faith for millennia. It is important for each new generation to be taught the significance of these special days and use them as part of the underlying framework that gives strength in belonging to that special group called family.

As we celebrate Christmas, it is good to know that "our

■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

family" always puts up the tree on a certain day or has a traditional time to open gifts together. It is good to have a tradition of giving to others (possibly as a family to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering). These traditions become part of the glue that holds the family together.

Children need to feel safe and secure. This safety and security is built in familiarity of traditions. Children learn that these activities are special and help them know there is the special group to which we belong and call family.

This sense of identity is crucial to the child's own awareness of who he or she is. There is a special pride that helps one stand a little bit taller and walk a little straighter. When a child has this pride of belonging, he sometimes is more careful not to do anything that would shame or bring disgrace to this unique family.

There is also a multi-generational aspect of this tradition that creates these special

memories. Through family systems theory, many different disciplines from family practice in medicine to the workers in the correctional systems of this country are coming to realize the importance of pride in the group one calls family. By building these positive memories, the family designs the fabric of each individual in the group.

The building of multi-generational memories also helps establish support systems which can be life saving in time of crisis. When all the world around me seems to be shaking and undependable, it is good to have a family where I know that I will be secure.

Through the family traditions that we keep in this special season, we have the ability to make the memories which become part of the glue that holds the family together when the whole world seems to be falling apart. □

Black and white missions in Nashville share same facilities

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — It seemed to be a perfect solution to the problems of both congregations. One mission (a beginning congregation not yet independent) had a building, but too much debt. The other mission had been sharing facilities with its sponsor, and was looking for more worshipful facilities. The two congregations should share facilities, one would propose.

The only glitch was that one mission was made up of African Americans and the other of Anglos. And Wesley Shotwell, pastor of Hickory Hollow Chapel, and Jay Wells, pastor of Simeon Mission, began talking when race was an issue in the United States like it hadn't been in recent years. O.J. Simpson was in the final stages of his trial and the Million Man March was being planned. But the two pastors continued talking, getting their congregations involved.

The result has been a relationship which both congregations have enjoyed.

Shotwell noted he and Wells pre-

pared carefully. A committee formed of members of both congregations developed an agreement to alternate use of the facilities until one or the other became financially autonomous. To forestall any problems, the church councils meet together every three months.

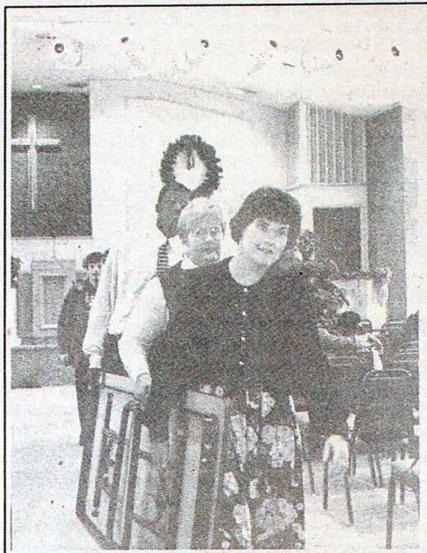
"Race and divisiveness are on the front burner, so we wanted to show people how Christ brings us together," said Shotwell.

Wells explained that race continues to divide people in the U.S., even Christians, which reveals that "we've let culture dictate our faith to the point that it has become more important than the Bible." Wrong interpretation of the Bible at one point in our country's history resulted in slavery, noted Wells, who is director of black church development for the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

Both congregations had to move out of their comfort zones, said Wells, to forge a cross-cultural relationship, one of the goals to which the congregations agreed.

Shotwell agreed, explaining that the arrangement "is not a separate but equal issue, but a cultural issue because we both feel cultural identity is important." Additionally, the agreement allows good stewardship of facilities, said Shotwell.

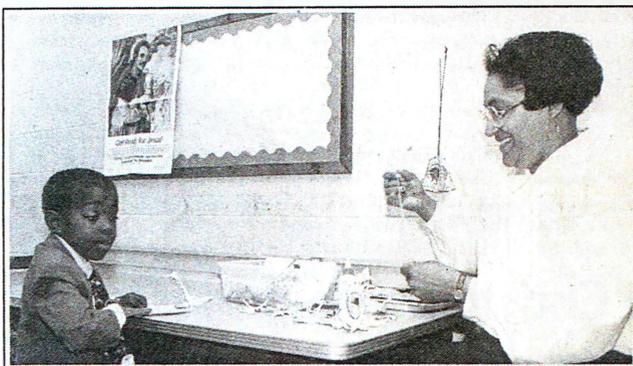
To bridge cultures, Wells and Shotwell have preached for each other's congregations. The two churches joined with a neighboring Catholic church to



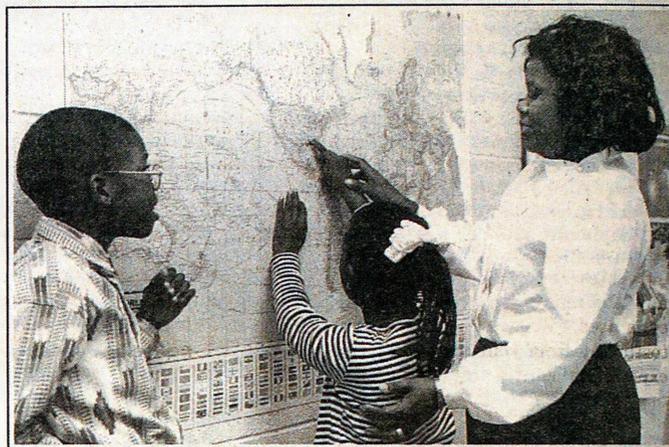
MOVING A TABLE used for a handbell choir between the two worship services are, from left, Craig Wells, Sharon Rice, and Margeie Shotwell.



AS THE TWO CONGREGATIONS pass each other in the building as they switch uses of areas, Wesley Shotwell, pastor of Hickory Hollow Mission, visits with Otelia Blackburn of Simeon Church.



TREY OLIVER and Karen Rollins make Christmas decorations together in Sunday School.



STUDYING A MAP as a part of their Sunday School class are Timothy Burton and Kaysha Powell with the help of Dorris Powell, all of the Simeon Mission.

hold a Thanksgiving service. Each church contributed to the service, but did not have to forsake their culture to participate, said Shotwell. The congregations may hold a forum in a few months to openly discuss each other's cultures, said Shotwell, in conjunction with Southern Baptist's Race Relations Day.

Karen Rollins, a member of the Simeon Church, downplayed the relationship by explaining that God "doesn't look at us as black or white and that's the way we should look at it. I love my family here — both families here," she said.

Larry Lindsey, Sunday School director of Hickory Hollow, said the two congregations share most classrooms and that both groups take down and store teaching materials, which has worked



DURING THE MEN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS of Simeon Mission, taught by Jay West, pastor, second from right, James Pugh, right, makes a point.

out well.

"Being together will do nothing but good to influence our children's minds away from racism, and what better place than a church," said Lindsey.

Christina Crawley, minister of education for Simeon Church, noted Hic-

ory Hollow had helped Simeon Church in many ways, including keeping its babies in Extended Session. The church "not only opened up their doors for us, but they opened up their hearts. When they did that, it made us feel comfortable." □



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

Let me thank you for helping make this year a wonderful year in Partnership Missions. Thousands have served here in the U.S. and abroad in missions endeavors. We truly are the "Volunteer State."

Please pray about what you will give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. We have a great challenge before us as Southern Baptists, a goal of \$100 million. However, I believe we will make the goal because we take seriously the Great Commission of our Lord.



SHARP

As a missions volunteer, you have experienced how the money is used. Why not use your testimony from your personal experience to encourage others to give this year?

My Christmas present came early this year with the addition of Carol Spurlin as part of our Partnership Team. Carol has already been a blessing to our ministry. She stands ready to assist you with your questions or plans for a mission trip.

We will launch in January another facet of our Partnership with Michigan. We will be asking churches in Tennessee and Michigan to link up as "Sister Churches." While there will continue to be a need for churches in Tennessee to make short-term mission trips to help establish new churches and strengthen existing churches, we now will have an opportunity to help these pioneer churches in a deeper way.

This project will seek to bring churches from each state into a one-on-one ministry from 1996-2000; church-to-church, pastor-to-pastor and people-to-people. You will be seeing more about this facet in the days ahead. Please pray about being a "Sister Church."

I hope you will have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In Christ,

Leary

Clown troupe ministers in Canada

Clowns on mission might sound strange to you, but to Gerald and Maxine Reeves they are an answer to prayer.

The Love Clowns, a group of 35 youth and adults from Central Church of Bearden, Knoxville, traveled more than 900 miles this summer to Quebec, Canada to be involved in a very special mission project July 6-16.

This clown troupe spent 11 days of non-stop action performing in malls, neighborhood parks, hospitals, and churches. Performances included clown skits, songs, and pantomime.

The Love Clowns were a welcome sight to Gerald and Maxine Reeves, missionaries in Montreal. "In a Province where the Gospel is so difficult to share, we have discovered that clowns move right through the barriers created by the population," states Reeves. "The clowns helped us to

gain credibility in our community and opened future doors of ministry through clowning."

The Reeveses explained to the clown troupe that traditional methods of evangelism would only close doors in the community. Through music, sketches and mimes, and the general attitude of the group, these clowns spoke to the community and touched lives. "This is where we have to begin in a region that does not believe that God has anything to offer."

In addition to performance, the group distributed more than 1,000 flyers advertising free English classes at the church, 500 clown Gospel tracts translated in French, 500 hug cards, and more than 1,500 balloon animals.

"It was a wonderful trip," remarks Susan Fendley, director of the Love Clowns and member of Central Church of Bearden, Knoxville. "Through our work in

the neighborhood, we helped begin several English as a Second Language classes and break down some barriers between the Reeves' neighbors who were unsure about living near a 'Christian pastor.'"

When it comes to missions these clowns aren't just clowning around.

Those who participated included Ryan Aldridge, Catherine Cox, Larry Crichton, Lauren Eskew, Andy Fendley, Susan Fendley, Katie Fendley, Archie Fendley, Amanda Garrison, Josh Hickey, Lora Hicks, Jim Hicks, Betty Hicks, Pat Irick, Alyson Justus, Ashley Krieg, Erin Marshall, Jim Montgomery, Celia Montgomery, Jenny Montgomery, David Neel, J.C. Neely, Cary Norton, Meg Pattison, Ty Pattison, Tim Powers, Eddie Shipe, Anne Louise Staples, Katie Swanson, Kelly Tatum, Brent Waugh, Elaine Waugh, Samuel Yates, Meredith Fischer, and Nikki Parks. □



CLOWN Alyson Justus decorates the face of a child in Montreal.



PREPARING COTTON CANDY to give away in a shopping mall are, from left, Lauren Eskew, Catherine Cox, and Katie Fendley.

Invitation: Reunion for all partnership volunteers

The Tennessee Baptist Convention will host a Partnership Missions reunion April 20, 1996, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Baptist Center in Brentwood to celebrate 15 years of partnership ministries.

Volunteers who have been involved in Tennessee Partnership Missions are invited to celebrate what God has done through the work of Tennessee volunteers since the first partnership began with Michigan in 1980.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to hear and meet missionaries, pastors, and laypersons they have worked with on

the mission field. Rooms will be set up with memorabilia from Michigan, Burkina Faso, the Philippines, Chile, Venezuela, Canada, and Poland.

A representative from the Foreign Mission Board will report on the activities of the past 15 years in the life of Tennessee Partnerships. There will also be an update of the work that is taking place with our past partners. Lunch will be served at noon. The cost is \$7. Registration fee is non-refundable after April 10. □

For reservations, please fill out and return to our office: Tennessee Baptist Convention, Partnership Missions Department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024, or call at (615) 371-2021.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Church _____
Partnership in which you served _____
Year(s) you served _____

Costa Rica

(Relationship with Costa Rica is short-term project status until 1997, when it may be adopted as an official partnership.)

Date: April or May for two weeks
Project: Construction
Team Needed: 2 teams of 7 each
Place: San Jose

The San Juan de Dios Baptist Church needs help to build its sanctuary. It has the downstairs walls, columns, and overhead steel beams in place.

Date: Feb. 18-25
Project: Sport Clinics on Mountain Biking
Team Needed: 3

Place: Guapiles, Cartago, and San Jose
Need team to conduct three mountain biking clinics in three cities. Need experienced bikers who know how to teach biking and racing techniques. For serious bikers only.

Canada

Date: February or March
Project: Winter Bible Study
Place: Cochrane, Alberta (Filipino Fellowship)
Team Needed: 3-6

Date: July/August
Project: Summer Outreach
Place: Enderby, British Columbia (Mountain View Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: PM11996613

Date: Between February and April
Project: Children's Festival
Place: Calgary, AB (Cambrian Heights Church)
Team Needed: 3-5

Date: August
Project: Concerts/Choir workshops
Place: Calgary, AB (Filipino Fellowship)
Team Needed: Open

Date: April 28-May 4
Project: Revival
Place: North Vancouver (Westlynn Church)
Team Needed: 3

Date: Fall
Project: Revival
Place: Charlottetown, PEI
Team Needed: 3
Project #: FP1VS96603

Date: June 8-15
Project: Construction/BYBC/Evangelism
Place: Muskoday Reserve, Saskatchewan
Team Needed: 8-10

Date: Oct. 18-20
Project: Revival
Place: Cochrane, AB (Calgary Church Deaf Fellowship)
Team Needed: 1-2
Project #: PM11996607

Date: Late June
Project: Youth Choir/Evangelism
Place: Winnipeg, Manitoba
Team Needed: Open



Date: Open
Project: Search for Significance Workshop
Place: Cochrane, AB (Calgary Church Deaf Fellowship)
Team Needed: Open

Date: July 15-19
Project: VBS
Place: Cochrane, AB (Calgary Church Deaf Fellowship)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: PM11996605

Date: Open
Project: *Experiencing God*
Place: Cochrane, AB (Calgary Church Deaf Fellowship)
Team Needed: Open

Date: July 20-27
Project: VBS/BYBC
Place: Edmonton, AB (Crossroads Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: PM11996614

Date: Open
Project: Prayer Partner Church
Place: Edmonton, AB
Project #: PM11996611

Date: July/August
Project: Children's Ministry
Place: Ontario
Team Needed: 5-25

Date: Open
Project: Partner for ethnic church plant
Place: North Vancouver

Michigan

Date: Early Spring
Project: Construction (roofing)
Place: Flint (Lincoln Park Church)
Team Needed: 4
Project #: G-2

Date: July 27-Aug. 3
Project: Auto and Home Maintenance
Place: Detroit (First Spanish Church)
Team Needed: 5
Project #: GD-2B

Date: Open
Project: Start New Work
Place: Northland Association
Team Needed: Open
Project #: N-2

Date: Spring (1-5 days)
Project: Golf Pro (lead golf clinics)
Place: Mt. Clemens
Team Needed: 1-2

Date: July
Project: VBS
Place: Tecumseh (Missionary Church)
Team Needed: 1-2
Project #: L-1B

Date: June 3-Aug. 9
Project: Summer Missionary (VBS/Puppets/Music)
Place: Flint (Genessee Association)
Team Needed: 2
Project #: G-3

Date: July-August
Project: Beach Ministry
Place: St. Joseph (Niles Avenue Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: SW-2

Date: June 3-Aug. 9
Project: Summer Missionary (BYBC/Survey/Church planting activities)
Place: Big Rapids
Team Needed: 2 (prefer male)
Project #: W-1

Date: July 15-Sept. 15 (one week)
Project: BYBC/Puppetry/Witnessing
Place: Detroit (Greater Detroit Association)
Team Needed: 4-5
Project #: GD-1

Date: June 3-Aug. 9
Project: Summer Missionary (VBS/Puppets/Clowning/Drama/Evangelism/Music)
Place: Roscommon (Northland Association)
Team Needed: 4
Project #: N-6

Date: August
Project: Leadership Training
Place: Marquette (FBC)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: UP-2

Date: June 3-Aug. 9
Project: Summer Missionary (lifeguard, nurse)
Place: Bambi Lake (Bambi Lake Baptist Retreat and Conference Center)
Team Needed: 4 (married couples)
Project #: N-7

Date: Summer
Project: Construction (new roof)
Place: Clio (FBC)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: G-1

Date: June 3-Aug. 9
Project: Summer Missionary (VBS/BYBC/Puppets/Clowning/Church planting activities)
Place: Detroit
Team Needed: 4
Project #: GD-3

Date: Summer
Project: VBS/Construction (framing crew, roofing crew, electrical and plumbing, dry wall)
Place: Cadillac (Evergreen Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: N-3a, b, d, and e

Date: June 22-29
Project: VBS
Place: Detroit (First Spanish Church)
Team Needed: 10-15
Project #: GD-2A

Date: Sept. or Oct.
Project: Revival Preacher
Place: Tecumseh (Missionary Church)
Team Needed: 1
Project #: L-1A

Date: June or July
Project: Construction/VBS/Revival
Place: Sanford (FBC)
Team Needed: 10-12
Project #: B-1B

Date: Open
Project: Survey Work
Place: Berrien Springs (FBC)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: SW-1

Date: July 15-21
Project: Revival Team
Place: Manton (Greenwood Bible Church)
Team Needed: 7
Project #: N-5

Date: Open
Project: Music/Drama Team (semester)
Place: Marquette (FBC)
Team Needed: 1-2
Project #: UP-1



Date: Open
Project: Evangelistic/Outreach
Place: Charlevoix (Safe Harbor Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: N-1

Date: Open
Project: Church Sponsor for new Church
Place: Mt. Clemens
Team Needed: Open

Date: Open
Project: New Work Sponsor
Place: Drayton Plains (Southern Oaks Mission Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: O-3

Date: Open
Project: Children's Work, Music
Place: Sanford (FBC)
Team Needed: 2
Project #: B-1A

Date: Open
Project: Sister Church
Place: Roscommon (Roscommon Baptist Church)
Team Needed: Open
Project #: N-4

Special Request

The Michigan Baptist Convention needs vans for transporting students from Southern Seminary who come up on the weekends to pastor churches. If anyone has a van they would like to donate, please contact the Partnership Missions office at (615) 371-2021. The Michigan Baptist Convention will provide letters for tax purposes.

Poland

Date: January or February
Project: Interior Painting
Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw

Team Needed: 4
The project consists of painting the halls in the basement and second floor and installing vinyl wall covering on the first floor where classrooms and administrative offices are located. Seminary needs \$5,000 for paint and related material.

Date: Spring
Project: Evangelism
Place: Warsaw
Team Needed: 6-10

Date: March
Project: Concerts (American Negro Spiritual)
Place: Bialystok
Team Needed: Open

Date: Winter/Spring
Project: Laying floor and wall tile
Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
Team Needed: 3
Team will install 600 square meters of ceramic floor tile. The seminary needs \$9,000 for material.

Date: May 11-20
Project: Basketball Team
Place: Bialystok
Team Needed: Open

Date: May 11-25
Project: Eye and Dental Clinics/Construction/Evangelism
Place: Narewka and Bialystok
Team Needed: 16-20

Place: Zelow
Team Needed: 2-4
Project #: PM11996477

Date: September/October
Project: Assist local church in all ministries
Place: Gizycko
Team Needed: 1-2

Date: Sept. 7-21
Project: Eye and Dental Clinics/Construction/Evangelism
Place: Narewka and Bialystok
Team Needed: 16-20

Date: Open
Project: Landscaping
Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
Team Needed: Open
Project #: PM11995402

Date: Open
Project: Business Seminars/Evangelism
Place: Warsaw
Team Needed: 1-2
Project #: PM11995464

Date: Open
Project: Construct Sidewalk System
Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
Team Needed: 6-8
Project #: PM11995403

Date: Open
Project: Install Electrical Fixtures
Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
Team Needed: 2

Date: Late Spring/Early Summer
Project: Paint exterior trim

(seminary housing)
Place: Baptist Seminary, Warsaw
Team Needed: Open

Special Request

A used computer is needed for Charles and Barbara Layton, Partner-

ship Missions coordinators in Poland. If you have a used computer you would like to donate please contact the Partnership Missions office at (615) 371-2021.

Date: June 30-July 13
Project: Construction/Evangelism
Place: Warsaw
Team Needed: 10-12
Project #: PM11996478

Date: July
Project: English Course

Chattanooga couple installs computer, leads *Experiencing God* in Poland

The following is a testimony by Mike and Juanita Bridges of Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga about their trip to Poland, September 1-9:

Our missions experience began when my wife and I read the list of missions opportunities in the May 10, 1995 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* and saw two items in Poland that caught our interest. One request was for volunteers to lead an *Experiencing God* workshop for church leaders and the other was for someone to donate and install a computer in the Baptist Union office in Warsaw.

Since Juanita had just finished leading an *Experiencing God* group at our church and my profession involves teaching people to use computers, we came to believe that God might be inviting us to join Him in His activity in Poland.

When our volunteer forms were approved, we began serious preparation for our trip and I joined an *Experiencing God* group in our church. We also began saving money in order to purchase the much needed computer. All along the way, God showed us His plans and we came to see that this was a God-sized task!

We did not know any Polish (and still don't!). We encountered all kinds of red tape related to taking a computer into a foreign country. Ultimately, God showed us his plan for us to buy the computer in Poland and to allow a Christian businessman in that country see how God works.

After an all-night flight to Warsaw, we were driven to Gdansk, four and a half hours north of the Baltic Sea. Here in the birthplace of Polish democracy, God was at work in the life of pastor Robert Miksa who, over the past year, has translated *Experiencing God* into Polish. He served as our interpreter during the all-day workshop, where 14 leaders from the area learned how to use this material to help their congregations know and do the will of God.

We were allowed to join the church in worship on Sunday and then returned to Warsaw on Monday. The computer for the Baptist Union office was acquired through a Baptist layman

who owns a small computer company in Poland. With a short training session, the office secretary was able to use the computer for word processing and correspondence. Our focus then shifted quickly back to our next task.

God is also at work in Poland calling young adults into full-time Christian service. We were allowed to observe as the Lord made himself known to the 30 students at the Polish Baptist Seminary in Radosc. They eagerly participated in the study of *Experiencing God*, thrilled to have materials in their own language.

Our hearts were touched as we heard them share how God was at work in their lives. Many of them already are pastoring small churches and could see an immediate need for the *Experi-*



PAUSING IN FRONT OF A BUILDING of the seminary in Radosc are Juanita and Mike Bridges of Brainerd Church, Chattanooga, during their work there in September.

encing God study in their congregations.

Our ten days were over quickly and we "returned with joy" like the disciples in Luke 10, realizing that we had experienced God working through our own lives. We also experienced the unity that is ours in the body of Christ, through the fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Poland. □

Builders needed in Michigan

Newaygo Community Church, Newaygo, Mich., urgently requests volunteers to come and help finish the building Tennessee Baptists began this summer.

The church is the first Southern Baptist church in a three county area. This summer a 2,300 square-foot building was erected with the help from Tennessee churches. However, there is still a lot of work left to be done before services can be moved to the new building.

Volunteers are needed to finish the electrical system, install door closers, build a riser on the

platform, install glass in the doors, install insulation, build a drop ceiling, and install plumbing fixtures. The church's goal is to finish the work and begin having worship services in the new building before Christmas.

Teams or individuals are welcome at any time. Woodland Baptist Association will help make housing and meal arrangements to meet the needs of volunteers. For more information, contact Way Parker at (616) 796-1405 or contact the Partnership Missions Office at (615) 371-2021. □

Eyeglasses 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 missions trips.



WMU group of Nashville Association leads retreat for women in Michigan

Four ladies from the Nashville Association WMU led a prayer retreat, entitled "A Praying Lifestyle," for the Macomb Baptist Association in Warren, Michigan, Oct. 27-28.

The retreat was held at Warren Woods Baptist Church, Warren, Mich. Thirty-seven women attended the retreat representing six churches in the association. Sessions began Friday evening and continued through Saturday morning.

Members of the team led sessions on the purpose of prayer, the process of prayer, and the practice of prayer. Sharri Donegan of Bon Aqua Mission Church, Bon Aqua, Tenn. led the worship time.

"We praised in music, studied the Bible, shared ideas and prayed together," reports Creely Wilson, director of WMU for the Nashville Association and member of Triune Church. "Gifts were presented to our Mission Partners in Michigan and many new friends and prayer partners formed."

Team members included Janice Cox, Harpeth Heights Church, Nashville; Candy Phillips, First Church, Nashville; Sharri Donegan, Bon Aqua Mission Church, Bon Aqua; and Creely Wilson, Triune Church, Triune. □



DURING THE RETREAT in Michigan leaders, from left, Sharri Donegan, Candy Phillips, Janice Cox, Ann Russell of Michigan, Leola Utter of Michigan, and Creely Wilson, pause.

Office worker begins work

My father always says that the best introductions are brief introductions. So allow me to briefly introduce myself. I am a graduate of the University of Memphis and until October I have been living in Memphis and working with volunteer missions at the Baptist Brotherhood Commission. However, my roots are right here in Middle Tennessee and it's good to be back.

Excited does not begin to describe the emotions I feel to be working with Tennessee Baptists through Partnership Missions. I have seen firsthand the commitment that Tennessee Baptists have to missions and I am honored to be working with you. Working with volunteer missions at the Brotherhood Commission, I have been trained by the best — you the volunteers.

Missions has been a very important part of my life. I am a product of missions education and missions action in the church. I was blessed with great GAs and Acteens leaders and a church that didn't just talk about missions, but participated in "hands-on" missions. I had the opportunity to be involved with several Partnership Missions projects to Michigan with my church. I still consider those trips as some of the best experiences I've ever had.



SPURLIN

Recently, I spent a summer working with World Changers, a program sponsored by the Brotherhood Commission. That summer allowed me to see hundreds of volunteers involved in missions. It also opened my eyes to the mission field around us.

God has truly blessed me with unique missions experiences. I look forward to many more and I look forward to working with each of you.

Joy in His service,

Carol Spurlin

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. 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

December

- 13 — Pray for church members to give sacrificially to the Harvest Mission Offering (state offering with gifts still coming in) and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.
- 14 — Pray for the Tenkinks, Canadian Baptist missionaries, on furlough in Alberta taking seminary courses.
- 15 — Pray for the officers in all of the associations in the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists who were recently elected at the fall annual meetings.
- 16 — Pray for Lithuanian student at the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary, Arturas Rulinskas, who must pass a TOEFL exam to be allowed to stay in Canada to study.
- 17 — Pray for the Buntains, Canadian Baptist missionaries on furlough in Tennessee.
- 18 — Pray for the new vice president for development at the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary, Roger Harrod. He needs to sell his home in Arkansas so his wife, Libby, can join him.
- 19 — Pray for the new pastor, Robert Ross, and family who are moving to Cumberland, British Columbia, in December.



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:

Tennessee Baptist Convention, 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 felt hope, sorrow, compassion 50 years ago

Editor's Note: Christmastime 1945 — 50 years ago — was the first holiday season of the post-war era, a time of hope, and of continued mourning. The following series of articles on this page and page 12 offers a glimpse of Southern Baptist life in the context of World War II and the emerging peacetime.

By Karen L. Willoughby
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Christmastime 1945: World War II was over and there was a semblance of peace around the world, but at great cost; tears of joy pooled with those in sadness.

In Southern Baptist life, the nation's anguish was reflected in Christmas-time editorial in state Baptist papers.

"With the end of armed conflict our nation will enjoy its first peaceful Christmas since 1940," preached Herschel H. Hobbs, then-pastor of Dauphin Way Church, Mobile, Ala., on Dec. 21, 1945, according to records kept in the church archives. "For the first time in five years many of our friends will be with us at this season. Our joy over this is tempered with the thoughts of those who are still far away. We are sobered in our spirits when we remember those who have gone to be with the Lord," said Hobbs, who later became a key figure in Baptist life. He died Nov. 28 of this year.

History: More than 100 million men and women served in armed forces during the war that spanned six years and one day; the death toll in Europe and the Pacific included 16 million dead male and female soldiers — and 20 million dead civilians.

World War II began Sept. 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. Germany and Italy declared war on the United States Dec. 11, 1941, four days after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor.

The European war ended May 8, 1945, after receiving the last of the signatures for Germany's unconditional

surrender. The Pacific war lingered on. Hiroshima was bombed Aug. 6; Nagasaki, Aug. 9. But not until Aug. 14 did Japan accept a call for unconditional surrender — and its signatures were not received until Sept. 2, 1945.

Christmas came three months later, and the editorials of the state Baptist papers reflected the nation's mixed emotions.

"In all honesty, all is not well on earth on this Christmas Day," wrote J.M. Burnett, editor of *The Baptist Courier* in South Carolina. "The war has been won but peace has not come. ... But let not that cast the shadow of gloom over this Christmas Season."

L.L. Carpenter, editor of the *Biblical Recorder* of North Carolina, quoted G. Bromley Oxnam of the *Christian Herald*: "Peace has come. Good will has not. But peace without good will is transient truce."

Carpenter also printed the Christmas message of W.R. Cullom, professor emeritus of Bible at Wake Forest College:

"In writing my word for the Christmas season this year four classes of people are in my mind: (1) Those who are under the necessity of facing an empty chair and long for 'the sound of a voice that is still'; (2) those who are deeply burdened on account of the vast amount of suffering, sorrow, hunger, sickness, and distress that is literally spread abroad over the whole earth; (3) those who are facing the future with misgivings, with anxiety, with apprehension, with dread, with fear; (4) those who are deeply concerned as to what God's will and purpose are for them personally and individually as they face the unparalleled challenge of the task of rebuilding a shattered world."

A.L. Goodrich of *The Baptist Record* of Mississippi pointed his readers to the needs of others:

"The best and only way to show our love for him whose birthday we celebrate is by the following words of the Scripture: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.'"

"The more love we have in our hearts for Christ, the more will we find the desire to express our love to those around us," Goodrich continued. "And he who can fill our hearts with love will show us a way of expressing that love."

In Tennessee, *Baptist and Reflector* editor O.W. Taylor wrote about "A Star Out of Jacob" without reference to the war, but included a by-request op-ed piece from his soldier son, Wilburn, on the subject of "How It Feels To Be Home for Christmas." The editor's younger son, Charles, was killed during the 1944 Normandy invasion.

The *Baptist and Reflector* also included "Christmas Prayer in 1945" in poetic form by Margaret Lewis, which begins with "O God, we thank thee on this day for peace and plead thy mercy to atone war's wrong."

Albert McClellan, editor of Oklahoma's *Baptist Messenger*, put two mentions of the atomic bomb on paper's Dec. 20 editorial page.

In an article headlined, "Here Is That Bomb Again!" McClellan opined, "Given intelligence, initiative, resources and the atomic bomb any nation, however small, can have the world almost at its feet in a few hours."

"This renders obsolete a large marshalled army ..."

"If we must war the real military defense of America will be, more men in college, not more men in khaki."

On a lighter note, under the head-

line "Claim," McClellan wrote, "We do not say that the *Baptist Messenger* is Atomic but we do say it is A tonic to any church daring to put it in its budget."

In Georgia, editor O.P. Gilbert of *The Christian Index* wrote in "The Spirit of Christmas" of wars dating back to biblical times.

"The purpose of this little editorial," Gilbert wrote, "is to suggest that we suspend our indifference and selfishness and fears and hates, and recognize that we are spiritually kin to all men; that we feed the hungry, house the homeless, comfort the heart-broken and defend the weak. For in doing we shall keep the spirit of Christmas the year around."

Virginia's *Religious Herald* editor, Reuben E. Alley, wove several emotions into his "Christmas in Peacetime" editorial. Love: "For four years the young men of our nation celebrated Christmas in barracks, in trenches, and on ships at sea," Alley wrote. "We who remained at home found a measure of satisfaction in searching for candy, cookies, and a few articles that would fit into small regulation Christmas boxes for shipment to our boys far away."

Anger: "This year we celebrate the first Christmas of peace; yet it is not peace. Certainly it is not the peace which we envisaged and for which our sons fought ..."

Guilt: "American citizens need to come to their senses before it is too late. We cannot celebrate Christmas in its true meaning by having a well-supplied Santa Claus while the rest of the world is hungry. A rededication might properly begin in our churches which have become quite wealthy during the war. ... It would be a Christian act and an expression of genuine good will if at this Christmas season every Baptist church in the Southern Convention would set apart and give one-third of its reserve fund for the rehabilitation of churches in Europe and Asia." □



CHRISTMAS

Editor's son reflects on 'how it feels to be home for Christmas'

Editor's Note: O.W. Taylor, editor of the *Baptist and Reflector* at the end of World War II, asked his surviving son, Wilburn, to write a brief article for the paper's Christmas issue in 1945. Taylor's younger son, Charles, lost his life in combat during the war.

By Wilburn Taylor

NASHVILLE — It was not quite one year ago that I sat in a tent in Italy on Christmas Eve and penned these lines home: "May it be his will that I spend next Christmas with the two I love best on earth, Mother and Dad."

In 1943 I sat on the side of my bunk in a barracks at Chanute Field, Ill., on Christmas Eve and wrote that

"maybe on Christmas, 1944, we can be together — Mother, Dad, Charles and I."

In June, 1944, that latter wish was put away for evermore: Charles was killed in Normandy while serving an infantry division ...

But it has been God's will that I spend Christmas, 1945, "with the two I love best on earth," and with other loved ones and friends. The Lord has been good to me. He has sent me safely through this "awful conflict; he has brought me home, to stay, without a scratch.

Our family knows what war can mean. But, as my Father has said over and over again, "All things work together for good to them that love God." If the loss of my brother is expe-

cient in the pattern of this world, then that is God's will.

We'll see that little fellow's happy face someday — Mother, Dad, and I — and we'll be able to talk to him again. Worldly cares will be forgotten; we'll be with the Lord, where cares are no more.

Little did we realize on Christmas, 1942, that we would have no more Christmas Days together. The United States was at war and I had enlisted in the army to fight our enemies — but, still, our family was intact on that day. We were thankful for that.

Then Charles came into the army and, after a few weeks' training, was sent overseas. Word of his death came just before I went to Italy.

Fourteen months later, after service in Italy and the West Indies, it was God's will that I was sent home and given my honorable discharge.

Christmas won't be the same again.

Nothing will be the same — not in this world as we know it. Because Charles is gone: "He can't come home, he has gone on home."

No, Christmas won't be the same. But it will be Christmas, birth date of our Lord, our Re-

deemer. And we will have so many things for which we are thankful, greatest of which is our Savior, who came to save those who will put their trust in him.

If this sinning world could only realize the comfort, the protection, the divine inspiration, the indestructible love that is bestowed on a believer in God, then war would be no more; the Lord would reign supreme, and peace, glorious peace, would be ours for evermore.

As our Lord's birthday nears once again, I want to reaffirm what I wrote from cold, muddy Italy almost one year ago. "...I have more faith in him than ever before. He is our Redeemer, our Keeper. In him my every hope lies." □



CHRISTMAS

Sunday School writer nudged Baptists to be peacemakers

By Chip Alford
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — "Peace on earth" was an especially welcomed message to Southern Baptists gathered in their churches for Bible study just before Christmas 1945.

World War II only recently had come to a close — Japan having surrendered to Allied forces on Sept. 2 and Germany four months earlier — but a question in the Dec. 23 Sunday School lesson couldn't have been more appropriate:

"If there is any hope for a permanent peace in the world, can it be found elsewhere than in the message of Christmas?" writer Lucius M. Polhill asked in *Adult Quarterly*, the class member book in the Southern

Baptist Convention Series, the Baptist Sunday School Board's only curriculum option at the time. Polhill was not identified in the quarterly as either a minister or layman.

Using the account of Christ's birth in Luke 2 as his biblical passage, Polhill titled the lesson, "The Message of Christmas to the World." Since the Bible studies were written months or sometimes more than a year in advance, Polhill likely had not known about the war's end. His Dec. 23 lesson, in fact, was filled with references to and testimonies about the conflict. Polhill told of a chaplain who had returned home from three months of rescuing wounded men from the front lines in Belgium during the fall of 1944. The chap-

lain said his men would often ask: "How can you be so happy and have such faith in the midst of all this hate, blood, and destruction?"

His answer, according to Polhill: "He knew the only source of true joy, and he kept the angels' message at work in his heart and in his living even as he stood in the blood of the slain."

Almost half a million Southern Baptist men were enlisted in active duty in World War II. Sunday School enrollment in SBC churches dropped by more than 200,000 and, like all American businesses, the Sun-



day School Board was forced to cut back on its offerings.

In Robert A. Baker's *The Story of the Sunday School Board*, the late Clifton J. Allen, associate editorial secretary at the time, recalled:

"Staff workers were given leave for military duty. Responsibilities were reassigned when necessary. Paper rationing required reducing the number of pages in various periodicals. One quarter the lesson quarterlies had to be published without covers."

However, Allen said the board did manage to publish special materials to enable

churches to minister to persons in the armed services, including the Sunday School lesson quarterly, "On Duty for God and Country."

In his lesson 50 years ago, Polhill noted the message of Christmas joy "has brought and can bring real and eternal joy to poor and rich, bond and free, black and white, Gentile and Jew, German and American alike." He closed the study with a question for thought and discussion: "What do you intend to do as a peacemaker this Christmas and in the days ahead?"

In a time of ethnic cleansing, political assassinations, and blatant human rights violations around the world, it remains a relevant question to ask today. □

Radio program gave beacon of hope during WW II

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — "The Baptist Hour" radio program gained wide acceptance throughout the nation during the turbulent, dark years of World War II. The program's Christ-centered sermons and music provided a beacon of hope for many war-weary Americans.

Conceived by the Southern Baptist Convention's Radio Committee, which was founded in 1938, the first broadcast of "The Baptist Hour" was Jan. 5, 1941, 11 months before the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. By 1945, "The Baptist Hour" was being broadcast live weekly January through June on the ABC Radio Network.

Speakers for the program in 1945 included M.E. Dodd, W.A. Criswell, Louis Newton, Roy Angell, K. Owen White, Duke McCall, Robert G. Lee, and Ellis A. Fuller.

As the war began to wind down in June 1945, layman Pat M. Neff, former Texas governor and SBC president, was "The Baptist Hour" speaker and delivered a series of messages on "The Call of a New Era." His sermons dealt with Christian patriots facing an uncertain future.

"The Baptist Hour" continues today in both radio and TV versions to reach out to people with the message of Jesus Christ. □

FMB waged spiritual warfare amid, after World War II

By Norman Miller
For Baptist Press

RICHMOND — "No plan for permanent peace can be devised which is not based on righteousness and good will in all relationships, human and divine."

As fitting as these words might be to describe recent peace accords forged for Bosnia or the Middle East, they are actually an excerpt from the pages of a 50-year-old issue of *The Commission*, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board magazine.

In 1945, Americans enjoyed a peaceful Christmas. Russia had repulsed Germany, Hitler had committed suicide, the Japanese had signed surrender papers, "Johnnie" came marching home, and U.S. citizens breathed sighs of relief and prayers of thankfulness.

Though the war had ended, a holier mission — taking the Gospel to war-ravaged lands — lay before Southern Baptists. The "war to end all wars" left carnage in its wake. Hungry in heart and body, multitudes

around the world appealed for help with gaunt, outstretched hands.

"Now that we have won the war, we must set ourselves to win the peace," said M. Theron Rankin, the Foreign Mission Board's executive secretary then. The war had proved it could not bring true victory or real peace.

In a *Commission* article, Rankin lamented the physical, emotional, and spiritual devastation.

The board was ready with a detailed plan for worldwide "enrichment." It would continue its strong support for evangelism in mission stations the war left untouched, and send missionaries back to rebuild mission ministries the war overran. The primary goal: create and strengthen indigenous Christianity among foreign Baptist churches and help them train to take part in God's plan for world redemption.

"We must go into all the world," said Pat M. Neff, president of the Southern Baptist Convention then. "We must

hasten to give the message of life to all who lived in the midst of death."

Southern Baptist support for the new thrust would prove to be unprecedented. In 1947 they would give \$3.9 million in a special offering for relief and rehabilitation and send 76 new missionaries, increasing the personnel force on the field by 14 percent in that one year alone. By 1955 they would have doubled the number of missionaries on foreign fields and quadrupled their giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions from \$949,000 in 1945 to \$3.9 million.

Even during the war, Southern Baptist missionaries forced from southern Europe and East Asia had found ways to continue their ministry. For example, while Germany was bombing Europe the FMB deployed 23 missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands (then a U.S. territory, not a state). Their efforts produced six churches and a Bible institute.

"The work of missions goes on, war or no war, and nothing shall stop our witness," wrote L. Howard Jenkins, president of the trustee board then.

From 1943-45, missionaries were appointed to Colombia, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil. Even during the torturous days of Japanese occupation in China, some missionaries opted to stay and sow seeds of spiritual peace.

"The present world situation offers to Christianity its greatest opportunity and its most terrific responsibility since the beginning of the Christian era," Jenkins wrote in an article in the October 1945 issue of *The Commission* magazine.

"To put it on the lowest possible level, our own self preservation demands that we accept this challenge and meet it in a worthy way. ... The Christian enterprise should remember the words of Woodrow Wilson: 'You are here to enrich the world; forget that errand, and you impoverish yourself.' □



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■ the people

■ Laneview Church, Trenton, licensed **James Ferguson** to preach Nov. 19.

■ **Oscar Jones** and **Randall Sanders** have been ordained as deacons by Pleasant Site Church, Selmer.

■ Stones River Church, Smyrna, honored **Ruben Utley** and **Jessie Cox Sr.**, by naming them deacons emeritus Nov. 12.

■ First Church, Dyer, honored its church secretary for 25 years of service by holding **Edith Taylor Day** Dec. 3. She received a plaque and several other gifts during morning worship services.

■ **Gene Chamberlain**, **Marvin Schoenecke**, **Tim Stewart**, and **Albert Wardin** were ordained as deacons Nov. 26 by First Church, Nashville.

■ **Scotts Hill Church**, Scotts Hill, has been given a piano by **James M. Brasher III** of Atlanta, Ga., in memory of his mother, the late **Marjorie Barnette Brasher**. She was killed in a car accident in 1990.

■ the leaders

■ **Glenn E. Smith** has



RECEIVING A CERTIFICATE AND PIN FOR 25 YEARS of perfect Sunday School attendance on Oct. 29 is **Hugh Brogdon**, second from right, from leaders of **Chapman Grove Church, Kingston**, including, from left, **Bug Gamble** and **Paul Crawford**, Sunday School directors, and **Adrian Jones**, right, pastor.

been called as pastor of Fellowship Church, Mount Juliet, located at 7391 North Lamar Road, effective Nov. 19.

■ **Cash Point Church**, Ardmore, has called **Larry Bottom** of a church in Athens, Ala., which was effective Nov. 8. He is a graduate of Heritage Bible College, Huntsville, Ala.

■ **Wanda Thorson**, director of preschool ministries, First Church, Jefferson City, will resign Dec. 31. She has served in that role for nine years.

■ **Prospect Church**, Walland, has called **Kenneth Stansberry** of Mount Carmel Church, Knoxville, as pastor, which was effective Nov. 5.

■ **Marble Hill Church**, Friendsville, has called **Bill Reed** as pastor, which was effective Nov. 5.

■ **First Church**, Strawberry Plains, has called **Craig Ward**, minister of students/activities, First Church, Pigeon Forge, as pastor, which was effective Oct. 29.

■ **Chris Holmes** has resigned as minister of music, Pleasant Hill Church, Orlinda.

■ **Tim Miles**, pastor, Flewellyn Church, Springfield, has been called as pastor of a church in Bowling Green, Ky.

■ the churches

■ The children's choir of **Baker's Grove Church, Mount Juliet**, will present *The Christmas Story Through the Eyes of Friendly Beasts* Dec. 17 at 6 p.m.

■ **Stones River Church, Smyrna**, has bought a new organ.

■ **Highland Church, Pulaski**, will present a live nativity scene Dec. 18-24 at 6:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., which drew 3,800 last year.

■ the associations

■ **Woodcock Baptist**



HOLDING A PLAQUE expressing the thanks of **Laurel Bluff Church, Kingston**, are **Dusty Stout**, left, pastor, with **Dillard Moore**, during the recent presentation. **Stout**, who served the church for seven years, has been called as pastor of **Dyllis Church, Oliver Springs**, effective Dec. 2. **Stout** also is interim director of the Baptist Student Union at **Roane State Community College, Harriman**.

Center, Nashville Association, needs a 15 passenger van to transport children in the **Cayce Homes** community to daycare and after-school programs at the center. Contact (615) 371-0704 or 254-1516.

■ During its annual meeting **Shelby Association** adopted mission and vision statements and a strategic plan, and added **Trinity Church, Cordova**, of which **Earl Davis** is pastor, and **New Beginnings Church, Memphis**, which is led by **Craig Wilson**. Accepted under its watchcare program were **Trinity Church, Memphis**; **Crossroads Church, Atoka**; **New Beginning Church,**

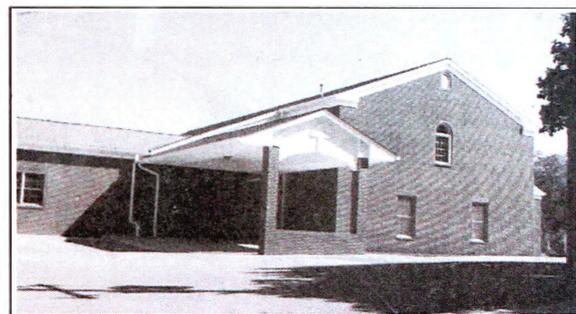
Memphis; and **Emmanuel Church, Collierville**.

■ the schools

■ **Ray Lloyd**, retired pastor of **First Church, Starkville, Miss.**, has been named minister-in-residence of **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**. **Lloyd**, who holds a doctorate degree from **Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.**, teaches at the school and is interim pastor. **First Church, Jefferson City**. He also has taught at the **Baptist seminary in Nigeria, West Africa**.



ELECTED TO LEAD **Shelby Association** during its annual meeting are, from left, **Irwin Hayes**, pastor emeritus, **Bartlett Church, Bartlett**, clerk; **Tommy Vinson**, pastor, **Leawood Church, Memphis**, vice moderator; **L. Joseph Rosas**, pastor, **Union Avenue Church, Memphis**, moderator; **Jim Meredith**, pastor, **Whitehaven Church, Memphis**, treasurer; and **John McBride**, director of missions.



THIS NEW MULTI-PURPOSE building of **East Athens Church, Athens**, was dedicated recently. It includes classrooms, a kitchen, and a gymnasium/fellowship hall.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

The Advent Season

By Charles Wm. Brown, pastor First Church, Maryville

For the four Sundays preceding Christmas Day, we focus upon the coming of God into the world through the birth of Jesus. It is called Advent. It is the most festive time in the life of the church; and for good reason.

Walter Brueggemann echoes the sentiment of many when he observes the keen disappointment that pervades our world as we approach the close of

the 20th century. Confidence in the face of great challenge is missing. A sense of the church's cultural strength is lacking. The belief that the new century (i.e., twentieth) would usher in a great Christian century has not been realized.

What is the implication of this for the church? Reflecting upon the possibilities of Advent, **Brueggemann** writes, "at the end of this bloodiest of centuries, the church — at least in the West — finds itself surrounded by an increasingly hostile culture and the growing strength of a resurgent pagan-

ism. Yet, this vulnerable place in the shadows of a closing century may be a good place for the church to hear with new joy the Advent message and to be grasped by the peculiar character of Advent hope."

Advent is about hope; for you, me, and the world. It offers a time to discover hope for the very first time or to confirm the hope that we have known for years. Regardless of our need, Advent offers a hand of hope to those who will receive. For this reason I feel Christmas is special. I appeal to you and your family to be present in all our

services throughout December. God has done something special. Let's celebrate it. □

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

Tennessee recording artist learns servanthood with family

Baptist Press

FRANKLIN — Three years ago, shortly after moving to the United States from Australia, Rebecca St. James found herself cleaning houses and raking lawns to help her

family make ends meet.

"We were left with no income, no car, furniture, or family to fall back on and my mum was pregnant with my sister," St. James said.

But God provided, she said, and through the problems her

family grew stronger. "One thing it really taught us was about servanthood, because we would rake and mow lawns and work together as a family," she said.

"You just stop worrying about your own little needs and focus on the other person's needs," said the 18-year-old ForeFront recording artist and member of First Church, Franklin.

Singing is St. James' new job, and she has become very

adept at it — recording albums (her second release is due in February), writing music, climbing charts, and being nominated for Dove Awards of the Gospel Music Association. Her dad is her manager and other family members help in a variety of ways.

She also finds time for her youth group at church, squeezes classes in with her

mother as her home-school teacher, and swims on a home-school swimming team. Not a typical way of life for most 18-year-olds.

St. James, however, said she keeps Jesus Christ as her top priority. □

FMB terminates missionary couple

Baptist Press

SINGAPORE — Missionaries Charles C. and Sharon Carroll were fired, effective Dec. 31, for teaching and advocating the practice of "falling" or being "slain in the spirit," according to a letter of termination they received from Clyde Meador, director of Foreign Mission Board work in southern Asia.

Carroll has served 13 years as a FMB church planter in Singapore.

Meador's letter of termination to the Carrolls also cites dissension caused by the controversial practice and the Carrolls' insubordination in refusing to stop the practice. Carroll also refused to resign, Meador said. A FMB trustee committee will review the Carrolls' appeal of that decision during their scheduled Dec.

11-13 meeting in Memphis.

The issue is not hindering God's spirit but promoting a particular spiritual experience with a questionable biblical basis at the expense of Christian fellowship, said FMB President Jerry Rankin.

The board provides "great latitude" for missionaries to express their personal spirituality in their own way, Rankin said. The board's stated policy, however, draws the line at a missionary teaching and advocating any one particular experience for others and thus causing confusion and dissension among missionary colleagues and national Baptists.

Rankin called Carroll "a great missionary," adding that God has used him effectively.

"I just regret that he's moved into an arena that prevents him from continuing to serve with Southern Baptists." □

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What Have We Done?

The story, old and forgotten, is of how the disciples tried to keep children from Jesus.

In so many ways, today's society is guilty of the same — exposing them to too much too soon; not exposing them to what is right.

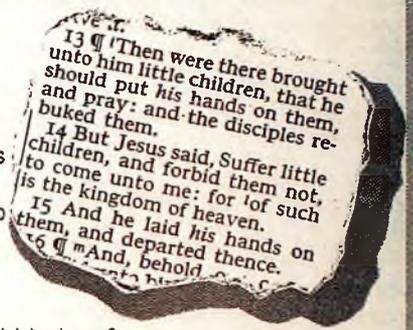
What have we done to our children? Why are they killing each other? Why are they using drugs and indulging in sex?

It's time to make a commitment to pray, to teach and to give so that children will not be denied their right to a healthy and productive life anchored in Christ.

As the year grows to a close and the new one enters, stand with us as we renew our commitment to minister to the hurts of children caused by others who have forgotten the innocence of youth.

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes believes that each child comes into this world with intrinsic value, enormous potential and the prospect for a happy life. Unfortunately for many Tennessee children, life is filled with abuse, neglect and abandonment.

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Life and Work Series for December 17

Focal Passages:
John 1:29-34; 10:10-18

Sin-bearer with us

By Charles Parker

Matthew recorded an angelic message before Jesus' birth: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21b). John the Baptist called to his listeners at the beginning of Emmanuel's ministry: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29b). All the Biblical writers agree that God became one of us in Christ in order to bear away our sins.

Dr. L.R. Scarborough, Southwestern Seminary's second president, was once preaching about Jonah and the great fish. On the way home his little son asked, "Daddy, did you really mean what you preached? Do you really believe that a whale could swallow a man and keep him alive for three days?" The fiery evangelist proceeded to set his son straight about God's power in creation. The little fellow replied, "Well, if you are going to bring God into it, that's different!"

The miracle of Christmas is that God Himself broke into the middle of our sinful dilemma and solved it. Jesus was born to bear sin, to give life, and to die. Both John the Baptist and Jesus use analogies of sheep and shepherds to describe these realities.

Jesus bears our sin — ch. 1:29

While John the Baptist preached repentance to the Jewish people and offered baptism as part of their preparation for the coming of the Messiah (the Christ), he also explicitly identified Jesus as the Lamb of God. Scholars guess that this event occurred about six weeks after John baptized Jesus.

Evidence is unclear that "Lamb of God" was understood by Jewish teachers of that day in a messianic sense, but it certainly points to their sacrificial practices. Lambs were even then being sacrificed in the Jerusalem Temple to take away sin.

To take away sins means that Jesus, the sinless Lamb without blemish, removes our sin nature, its guilt, and its power over us. Although we are still capable of sinful actions, he implants within us a new nature that will in eternity render us totally free of sin.

Jesus gives fullness of life — ch. 10:10b

John 10 is the "Good Shepherd" chapter. The Hebrew people were familiar with both God as their Shepherd (Psalm 23) and their national leaders who had often been bad shepherds (Ezekiel 34). Now Jesus, divine in nature and in his humanity of the family of David, unites all in one faithful life to bring life in all its abundance to those who are God's people. Jesus referred here to a spiritual life, an eternal life, the life of God himself lived within his people. He did not guarantee long life or materially wealthy life. But when Jesus is within us, life takes on new quality.

Jesus died and rose for us — vv. 11-14, 18

The proof that Jesus is the Good Shepherd is that he "giveth his life for his sheep." While an ordinary shepherd would do this and remain dead, Jesus rose from the dead (v. 17). This is a universal sacrifice. Here verse 16 likely refers to different folds of Jews and Gentiles, but one flock which is of the church.

Years ago a magazine carried an imaginary but forceful story. It described a man who had been found dead under a bargain counter in a department store one Christmas season. Apparently trampled in the rush, he was a rather shabbily dressed man, about 30 years of age. The odd thing, the article said, was the fact that he had nail prints in his hands! Could we overlook the Christ who died for us this Christmas? □ — Charles Parker is pastor of First Church, Jacksboro.

A time of joy

By Kim Allen

Convention Uniform Series
for December 17
Focal Passages:
Isaiah 9:1-7

Chapter nine is a continuation of the prophecy begun in chapter seven, and continues in chapter eight. It is composed of mingled threats and promises. It's make-up is composed of rays of light thrown into the shades of darkness. It promises comfort and deliverance, while denouncing the sins of the nation, and assures the nation that the anger of the Lord is not turned away.

The birth of a child prophecy is seen as the ultimate fulfillment in Christian history. Isaiah names the child and is quoted in Matthew as calling him, "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (v. 6). Let us look at a practical outline of chapter 9:1-7.

Light in the darkness — vv. 1-2

Galilee (v. 1) - The area being referred to is the northernmost part of the land of Israel. After the conquest, the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali were settled in the northern part of Canaan (Joshua 19:10-16, 32-39). Several times in history the area is called Galilee.

Due to its location, Galilee was greatly influenced by the Gentiles. At the time of Jesus, the Jews of Jerusalem and Judea looked with disdain on the Jews of Galilee. Verse 1 of chapter nine predicted a reversal of fortunes for the region of Galilee.

A great light (v. 2) - Darkness and light symbols for good and evil, sin and salvation are evidenced here. The verse shows that the rays of this light will extend to the ends of the earth.

The joy of victory and peace — vv. 3-5

Joy (v. 3) - The coming light in the darkness of sin would result in joy. Isaiah used two examples of joy; the farmer with a bountiful harvest and the joy of victors dividing the spoils.

Victory (v. 4) - Continuing the theme of victory in warfare, Isaiah describes God's deliverance of Israel from powerful enemies. The words "yoke," "staff," and "rod," all refer to subjection to an enemy. Isaiah refers

to the past victory over Midian to spell out the future deliverance.

Peace (v. 5) - Verse 5 continues the picture of victory from verses 3-4. The emphasis in verse 5 is on peace that follows victory.

The bloody garments of battle being burned return us to Isaiah 2:4, predicting the coming age of peace where implements of war are made into implements of peace.

The birth of a child — vv. 6-7

The child and his names (v. 6) - God promised David his dynasty would continue forever in II Samuel 7:4-17. The word Messiah means anointed one. Since Kings were anointed with oil, Messiah became synonymous with King. It was natural for the people of Israel to view this in earthly terms. Even in Jesus' day, this was the kind of Messiah expected by most Jews.

Isaiah in verse 6 refers to something far more than another merely human king of David's line. The ultimate fulfillment surely fits only the kind of Messiah whom God sent into the world in the birth of Jesus.

His reign (v. 7) - The lineage of the coming King is made clear in verse 7. The area of rule will be great. His rule will be everlasting peace. The fruit of his reign, other than peace, will be justice and righteousness. The people of Isaiah's day may have asked, "How will this ever be possible?" The final sentence of verse 7 gives the answer: "The zeal of the Lord of Host will perform this."

God can and often does the impossible from a human point of view. Isaiah did not understand how God would bring this great promise to fulfillment, but the prophet was sure that the Lord would be able to do it in his own way and time. Isaiah trusted God to do what only God can do.

I wonder what Isaiah would say today in light of the fulfillment of the prophecy and the rejection of this "King of Kings," as we celebrate this most wonderful season?

I believe his heart would passionately cry out "He is Lord!" □ — Kim Allen is pastor of Little West Fork Church, Clarksville.

For such a time as this

By Phil Lovelace

Bible Book Series for December 17
Focal Passages: Esther 3:2, 5-6;
4:13-16; 7:3-6a

Haman the enemy — ch. 3:2, 5-6

A faithful Jew, Mordecai would not bow to Haman; this made the proud ruler angry. The palace knew Mordecai was a Jew (v. 5); but they did not know Esther was a Jew as well. Haman decided to destroy all the Jews because of his malice toward Mordecai. Haman offered to get for the king over \$25,000,000 in silver if the king would authorize the slaying of the Jews. Haman lied about the Jews, of course, for Satan is a liar and a murderer.

Mordecai the protector — ch. 4:13-16

Mordecai went into mourning publicly, even at the king's gate, not ashamed of his people or of his God, although he had counseled Esther to hide her nationality. Esther sent Mordecai new clothes and suggested that he stop mourning, but he explained his actions. Mordecai sent Esther a copy of the king's decree that she might realize his desperate situation.

Mordecai reminded Esther that she would not escape death even in the palace. She asked for prayer! She realized that entering into the king's presence could mean death. "If I perish, I perish!" was not the despairing cry of a martyr; it was the testimony of a believer willing to give all to her God. Esther was forced to reveal her people. Esther

in the Old Testament and Joseph of Arimathea in the New Testament (John 19:38-42) were "hidden believers" whom God placed in special circumstances to perform special ministry.

Application: There is a modern spiritual application of these verses: Satan is the destroyer, and millions of people are going to go to hell unless somebody rescues them. (1) Some Christians are like the king, unconcerned about danger. (2) Others, like Mordecai, are deeply concerned to save the condemned people. (3) And there are the Esthers, too, who sacrifice themselves on behalf of the lost.

The question is: Which are you?

Esther's intervention — ch. 7:3-6a

The king asked Esther for her request. She opened her heart and pled for the salvation of her people. She uses the very words of the king's decree in verse 4. The king was not annoyed at discovering that Esther was a Jewess! He was amazed that such a wicked man should be in his employ, the enemy was Haman!

This monarch was blind to the true character of the men around

him. He kept godly and wise Mordecai outside the gate, but he had allowed Haman the run of the palace.

So disturbed was the king that he left the banquet hall and went to the garden. Haman then went to the queen, begging her for mercy.

Application: How like the flesh! When it is in control of our lives, it seeks to kill; but when the spirit of God brings judgment the flesh can be so humble and innocent!

So zealous was Haman in his begging that he fell on the queen's couch; and this was too much for the king. He commanded the man to be executed.

Final word: "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, but the wicked cometh out in his stead" (Proverbs 11:8).

For such a time as this: (1) God delivered the righteous — Mordecai; (2) God delivered his people from death; (3) God raised up Esther "for such a time as this" — to trust him, to pray, to announce her identity, and to see God be faithful to his people — as protector; (4) God portioned justice upon the wicked. □ — Phil Lovelace is pastor of First Church, Somerville.

Hobbs remembered by friends, loved ones

Baptist Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Friends and loved ones gathered Dec. 2 for a final farewell to Herschel H. Hobbs, memorializing the Southern Baptist statesman as one of the "great men of the Christian faith."

The memorial service for Hobbs, 88, who died Nov. 28 of a heart attack, was held in the Louise Prichard Chapel of First Church, Oklahoma City, where he was pastor for 23 years. More than 400 people attended the hour-long service and then, with the casket open, paid their last respects to the denominational leader. Burial was Dec. 4 in Birmingham, Ala., Hobbs' native state.

Longtime friend W.A. Criswell of First Church, Dallas, officiated the memorial service.

Some had called Hobbs "Mr. Southern Baptist," Criswell said, and there is "nothing more appropriate" for what he did for Southern Baptists. □

Golden Gate receives \$5.25 million gift

Baptist Press

MILL VALLEY, Calif. — Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary will begin a school of intercultural studies as the result of a \$5.25 million gift from David and Faith Kim of southern California.

The gift includes \$2 million in "current multi-year gifts" and a \$3.25 million endow-

ment through a charitable remainder unitrust. It is the largest gift ever received by the seminary.

"This allows Golden Gate Seminary to craft a thorough program of intercultural studies and training to help church leaders minister to people of all cultures, both in North America and abroad," said seminary President William O. Crews. "Contemporary ministry demands cross-cultural ministry skills." □

Kentucky paper gets interim editor

Associated Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Directors of *Western Recorder* named Mark Wingfield interim editor of the Kentucky Baptist newspaper, effective Nov. 27.

Wingfield, 33, news director at the paper since 1991, will take over editorial duties while a search committee seeks a successor to Marv Knox who resigned to become associate editor of the *Baptist Standard*, weekly newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Wingfield is a former news writer for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. □

Yeats named as editor of the Indiana Baptist

Baptist Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The editor of a Baptist conservative newsletter in Texas has been elected editor of the *Indiana Baptist*, the official biweekly

Clinton, Gingrich help launch new church

Baptist Press

ERIE, Pa. — Nearly two months after its beginning, 200 mostly young "seekers" attend Millcreek Community Church here. Millcreek's first worship service, Oct. 1, was attended by 234 people, in what is being called the largest first worship service of a Southern Baptist church in the northeast.

Ed Stetzer and his wife, Donna, moved to Erie, the third-largest metropolitan area in Pennsylvania, 18 months ago to plant the congregation. Stetzer, 29, had started and was pastor of Calvary Christian Church, Buffalo, N.Y., and, earlier, was pastor of youth and students at Calvary Church, Rome, Ga.

After moving to Erie, the couple began several small groups. Home-based cell groups are important to Millcreek's growth because many people feel more comfortable

in such settings.

To draw people to Millcreek's first worship, Stetzer developed an innovative media strategy. He wrote to and received replies from President Bill Clinton and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, both Southern Baptists. He published their greetings in a newspaper with a banner reading, "Clinton and Gingrich Finally Agree: Millcreek Community Church is an Exciting Place to Be." Three television stations and two local newspapers extensively covered the church's opening.

Millcreek operates out of a 230-seat facility once home to a former Southern Baptist congregation and now owned by the Northwest Pennsylvania Association of Baptists.

Because the building was filled on the church's first day and remains at capacity, Stetzer said he plans to begin a second worship service there on Easter Sunday 1996. □

publication of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana.

John Yeats, 45, pastor of South Park Church, Grand Prairie, Texas, received unanimous support from the SCBI executive board when presented during their regular meeting Nov. 28.

Yeats will serve as communications director for the state convention with responsibilities for editing the 5,000-circulation paper, directing public relations, and serving as Christian life consultant. He assumes his responsibilities Jan. 8.

When the conservative group, Southern Baptists of Texas, was formed to uphold biblical conservatism and support the traditional Cooperative Program funding in the state, Yeats was selected to

serve as editor of their monthly publication, *The Plumbline*.

Yeats is a trustee of the SBC Christian Life Commission. □

Church pension measure dropped from budget bill

Baptist Press

DALLAS — The proposed Church Retirement Benefits Simplification Act of 1995 passed the U.S. Senate, but was dropped from a budget reconciliation bill in conference committee.

Now the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and other members of Church Alliance, encompassing the benefits boards of 29 religious groups, are scrambling to get the measure attached to another bill.

One of the reasons for urgency is a new Internal Revenue Service audit guideline that declares a minister's housing allowance in retirement "net income," subject to self-employment (SECA) tax.

"It is imperative that this bill be enacted in this calendar year," said Thomas E. Miller Jr., senior vice president for public relations at the Annuity Board.

Annuity Board President Paul W. Powell sent a letter Nov. 22 to affected pastors and denominational executives asking them to write to President Bill Clinton, Senate majority leader Bob Dole, House speaker Newt Gingrich, and other congressional leaders urging them to attach the bill to some piece of appropriate legislation. The Senate bill is S.881, and a companion House bill is H.R. 528. "I don't think there can be too many contacts," Miller said. □

Michigan Baptists 'launch out'

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Mich. — With "Launching Out" as the theme for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan's 38th annual meeting and a 1996 emphasis on "Start Something New," 261 messengers gathered recently at Gorham Church here.

Messengers passed a resolution supporting the Southern Baptist Convention racial reconciliation resolution addressing racism and slavery, adopted last June in Atlanta, and adopted a 1996 budget of \$3,009,491.

Bob Galey, pastor of Oakland Woods Church, Clarkston, was elected president by acclamation. □

Evangelism is priority in SBC restructuring

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Wyo. — Telling others about Jesus Christ is the priority of the Southern Baptist Convention restructuring, Morris Chapman told evangelism leaders from across the nation Nov. 30.

"Evangelization is its priority, not one of its priorities," said the SBC Executive Committee president. "The heartbeat of Southern Baptists, and that is evangelism, must drive it all."

Messengers to the 1995 SBC annual meeting approved a reorganization plan that among other things combines the Home Mission Board and Radio and Television and Brotherhood commissions into the North American Mission Board. The board includes evangelism as one of three major divisions, Chapman said. □

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