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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

Baptists work in Bosnia despite war, destruction

Unlikely evangelical witness first heard Gospel from SBC messengers in Las Vegas

By Frances Meeker
Special to *Baptist and Reflector*

BIHAC, Bosnia — Rotco Renenar, a native of Croatia, was living in Las Vegas, Nev., when the Southern Baptist Convention met there in 1989.

Although he did not attend the convention, Southern Baptists helped to change his life.

Renenar was alone when some Southern Baptists came by his home one day during door-to-door evangelistic witnessing as a part of the three-day Baptist meeting.

"I listened to them and I liked what they told me," Renenar said in a recent interview in Bosnia. He is working as a Protestant Christian counselor in a country where Protestants are a distinct minority.

He said part of his Christian ministry is helping women from neighboring countries who have come into Bosnia during the war as prostitutes. He said those who are pregnant can't make a living and they can't go home.

Renenar also works with groups that set up adoptions for the babies.

Renenar and Ladislau Rusicka, minister of a 100-member Baptist congregation from Croatia, are apprehensive about the future of small Protestant groups in a nation where religion is synonymous with nationalism.

"To be Catholic is to be Croatian and to be Croatian is to be Catholic," Renenar related. "The same is true of the Orthodox Christian Serbs. Here, religion has nothing to do with the heart, it has everything to do with nationalism. Religion is their identity."

Renenar said the new Croatian constitution that will make Croatia a European nation, guarantees freedom of religion. However, according to the constitution only religious groups at least 30,000 members will be officially recognized as a church or denomination.

"Under those conditions, only the Catholic Church can be recognized as an official church," said Renenar, a former Catholic. "The small Protestant churches, which are called sects here, will have to call themselves a community or fellowship, but not a church."

The Catholic Church, as the only official church in Croatia, will continue to be

subsidized by the government. Many countries have a government-subsidized state church.

Rusicka's small Baptist congregation in a town near Zagreb is the only Protestant church in an area of several thousand people, he said.

Rusicka and Renenar accompanied a group from the United States recently, led by Franklin Graham, son of evangelist Billy Graham, in their travels in Croatia and Bosnia.

Graham is head of Samaritan's Purse,

out of Boone, N.C., a no-frills, no red-tape relief organization that provides emergency relief to countries plagued by war, famine, and other

I listened to them, and I liked what they told me.

— Rotco Renenar, Protestant Christian Counselor in Bosnia

disasters.

The group of about 75 people going into Bosnia with Graham just prior to Christmas, included several from England and Canada. They were helping distribute about 800,000 shoe boxes filled with toys and personal items from children and families in the United States and several European countries. It was a Christmas effort called Operation Christmas Child.

In the cargo of Christmas boxes airlifted from Charlotte, N.C., to Croatia and trucked into Bosnia, were 550 boxes from Nashville. Employees of the Nashville-based Thomas Nelson Publishers filled 500 boxes. Students at Franklin's Grassland Middle School prepared 50 boot boxes filled with goodies. The boxes were for children of Croatia and Bosnia, including Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims. Many cannot remember when their homeland was not at war.

The adults bearing gifts for children arrived in Bihac in an 11-van convoy after a three-hour drive through snow-locked mountains from Zagreb, Croatia's capital city.

Much of the area between the two cities is a no-man's land.

Visitors saw the ghost towns in Croatia where Serb grenades and bullets ripped off the roofs of houses formerly occupied by Croats and left sagging holes where windows and doors used to be.

"Serbs dropped 3,500 grenades on this town in four hours," Rusicka said. "Ninety percent of the houses were Croatian and every one of them was destroyed. At least 250 people were killed."

Farther down the highway, abandoned

towns of empty and deteriorating houses testify to the exodus of Serbs, who fled the wrath of Croatian neighbors. The Serbs can't return for fear of being treated as war criminals. The local Croats cannot buy the former Serb property because of the confusion and unrest in local governments.

Renenar said Croats had been there for centuries, but the Serb army came during the war and took it over. When the Croats got it back, the local Serbs who had been here for about 150 years, left and now are refugees in Serbia.

It is different in Bosnia now, said Renenar. Catholic Croats, Orthodox Serbs, and Muslims, who are of Croatian and Serbian ancestry, will continue to try to live together. They will be in their own enclaves within the country, following the signing of the peace accords in Paris in December.

In all this chaos, Rotco Renenar, a Baptist who heard the Gospel in Las Vegas, a world away from here, is trying to help others make a difference for good. □ — Frances Meeker is a writer with the *Nashville Banner*. She traveled with several other news reporters to the Balkan area a few days before Christmas. She wrote this story for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Churches, paper making history; share the news

History is being made each year by Tennessee Baptist churches and the *Baptist and Reflector*, which also is growing older.

Staff efforts are underway to report church anniversaries and record the paper's history.

Each year the staff tries to report on events concerning special church anniversaries. We need assistance from churches that will observe during 1996 birthdays of 100, 125, 150, 175, and 200 years.

Inform us of the date and schedule as soon as possible. The staff will try to attend and then report the anniversary celebration. But we rely on news from the churches about the date.

The *Baptist and Reflector* has just completed its 165th birthday. A proposal to prepare a history of the paper has been approved.

The staff encourages readers to help in this endeavor. If you have oral or printed information that would be helpful in such a history, please contact us at address on page 2. □ — Editor

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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Fasting may be overlooked, misunderstood, but still ...

By Joni B. Hannigan
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Is it a spiritual discipline or a spontaneous response to a deepening relationship with God? And why are Baptists more known for their feasting than fasting?

Fasting is both an Old and New Testament teaching, mentioned more times in Scripture than baptism, says Don Whitney in his book, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*.

Whitney, assistant professor of spiritual formation at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., defines fasting as a "Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes."

In order for God to bless a fast, it must be God-centered in its purpose and not "coerced," he adds, calling fasting the "most feared and misunderstood of all the spiritual disciplines." As evidence, Whitney points to the lack of sermons addressing the subject. Yet, Whitney writes, Jesus "expects us to fast."

"...In the strictest sense, Jesus did not command fasting," says Quaker author Richard Foster in his book, *The Celebration of Discipline*. "But it is obvious that he proceeded on the principle that the children of the kingdom of God would fast."

These and other writers discuss Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6 to not give, fast, or pray so that others will see and self will be glorified.

"There are always those who are afraid to talk about (fasting), because it takes the glory away ..., but you know, we pray silently and in secret and we talk about prayer," says Alvin Reid, associate professor of evangelism and church growth at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

The dangers of legalism don't justify silence, adds Reid, who says he never heard about fasting until he went to college and met a man who fasted. Since then, it has been something he does when he is about

to make a big decision, or when he desires to take a personal spiritual inventory or retreat alone with God. Although not opposed to lengthy fasts, Reid typically fasts for only one day at a time for "deep and concerted" prayer.

However, fasting for 40 days, as did Moses, Elijah, and Jesus, is the current challenge in Bill Bright's book, *The Coming Revival*. Bright, founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ, recounts his 40-day fast and says God led him to pray that at least two million North Americans will fast and pray 40 days for an awakening in America and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Not wanting to be accused of "beating a fasting drum," Bright says he's committed to the Great Commission but is convinced fasting and prayer by a large number of Christians will facilitate and accelerate evangelism and discipleship as well. Prominent Christian leaders joined Bright in December 1994 for "A Special Call to Prayer and Fasting for America" in Orlando, Fla. Expecting about 300 participants, Bright wrote "God moved far beyond my expectations as more than six hundred came to fast and pray."

Adrian Rogers, a Cordova pastor and former Southern Baptist Convention president, and Jim Henry, an Orlando pastor and current SBC president, were among those at the prayer meeting. Rogers, in an introduction to Bright's book, says, "For many, revival is a shopworn phrase, but Dr. Bright points out that by massive fasting, repentance, praying, and obedience it can be a vital reality."

Henry says he's familiar with churches that have prayed and fasted: "And I have seen God do some absolutely phenomenal things. I know that when we pray and fast, it gets the attention of heaven, and God moves in and with his people."

There are those who argue that fasting is misunderstood if it is employed in an

attempt to get something from God. Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God* and director of prayer and spiritual awakening at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, warns that God is not obligated to respond to certain spiritual exercises.

"...I think that is heretical. God is God and we don't put God on the spot," Blackaby says.

Fasting is "not a spiritual discipline but rather the spontaneous response of a life that is fully concentrated on the Lord and will not break for a meal," Blackaby says. Jesus went without food when he was focused on his relationship with God to a degree that he could not break for a meal. This is different, according to Blackaby, than a person who exercises discipline in his life in hopes of producing a response from heaven.

"Fasting is a by-product of a relationship with God, rather than a means to a relationship with God," Blackaby says.

At the same time, he says he doesn't fault those who do fast for that reason. Admitting he would "hesitate" about enlisting others to fast for revival, nonetheless, Blackaby does not discount that revival could happen in that situation.

"If fasting produces a holiness and a deep commitment, and if a lot of the people fasting were led to repentance and the holiness of life," reflects Blackaby, "that creates a highway for which God can go for revival."

Scripturally, historically, and personally, Blackaby defends his position, and equates it to prayer. "I don't have a quiet time in order to have a relationship with God; I have a quiet time because I have a relationship with God. I pray, not because I believe in prayer, as much as I believe in the God who answers prayer," Blackaby asserts.

He says people often are taught actively, but "you can teach people to pray (who will) have no heart relationship with God. A person who has a relationship to God — there's no way you can keep them from giving, prayer, and fasting" □



BLACKABY

Atlanta First to vote on Reighard

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — First Church, Atlanta, was scheduled to vote Jan. 14 on whether to call Dwight "Ike" Reighard, former Georgia Baptist Convention president and SBC Pastor's Conference president, as senior associate pastor.

Reighard, 17-year senior pastor of New Hope Church, Fayetteville, south of Atlanta, would have primary responsibility for the Atlanta church's northern location in Dunwoody

and sometimes preach at the church's main location in Midtown.

Reighard will assist senior pastor Charles Stanley, 62, who has led the state's largest church for 26 years and is one of the country's most popular television preachers.

If elected and Reighard accepts he will join First Church in February. Reighard, 45, has been at New Hope for 20 years. During that time it has become one of the state's fastest growing churches. □

Wilson resigns BSSB vice presidency

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Charles A. Wilson, vice president of the Baptist Sunday School Board's trade publishing group, has resigned, effective Jan. 31, according to President James T. Draper Jr.

Wilson, who plans to pursue other business-ministry activities, has led the board's Broadman & Holman Publishers

since 1992.

He joined the board in 1991 as assistant vice president for business. He was elected vice president for trade and retail markets in 1992 and became vice president for trade publishing in 1994.

With Wilson's resignation, B&H managers will report to Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer. □

1995 Annie Armstrong offering sets new record

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Southern Baptists gave an unprecedented \$38.9 million for home missions through the 1995 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, according to the Home Mission Board's chief financial officer.

The year-end total came to \$38,908,339, said Ernest Kelley. That represents a 4.66 percent increase compared to the 1994 offering of \$37,177,516.

Home missions supporters welcomed the news.

"I'm delighted that we have again this year set an all-time record in Annie Armstrong income," said HMB President Larry Lewis. "And I would express on behalf of all our staff and nearly 5,000 home missions personnel our deep appreciation to Southern Baptists for their strong

support for home missions."

Lewis added he is grateful Southern Baptists continue to see missions as a priority and have given generously despite convention controversies and economic recessions in some areas of the country.

Woman's Missionary Union President Dellanna O'Brien also praised Southern Baptists for the increase.

"Because we Southern Baptists have been faithful in our missions giving in 1995 through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, men, women, boys, and girls in our homeland will have the opportunity to hear the Gospel in fresh new ways," she said.

Brotherhood Commission President James D. Williams said exceeding the offering record is an indication the missions spirit is alive and well among Southern Baptists. □

Study to assist churches in developing compensation packages

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — What should we pay the new pastor or the new minister of education? What benefits should we offer our ministers? Should we provide insurance for the secretaries?

These are just some of the questions typically asked by personnel or minister search committees across Tennessee.

In order to help those committees and churches, the Church Annuity Programs and Church-Ministers Relations departments of the Tennessee Baptist Convention are working on a study which will answer those questions.

Many churches have called asking those questions, said Gary Rickman, director of the Church Annuity Programs Department.

"The Tennessee Baptist Church Compensation Report" will be a tool churches can use when considering compensation packages for church staff members, added Aubrey Hay, director of the Church-Ministers Relations Department.

A one-page, front and back, compensation study survey was mailed to church treasurers in late December. Additional copies of the form were included so treasurers could complete a form for each staff member. Forms also can be photocopied as needed, the two men said.

Rickman and Hay emphasized the information sought on the survey is confidential. In fact, no names, not even the name of the church, is needed to complete the form, they said.

The form seeks information

in regard to salary, vacation, and other benefits including various types of insurance, travel or car expenses, convention expenses, books, tapes, and subscriptions, and other ministry-related expenses.

Three vital questions on the form relate to the church's average Sunday morning attendance, resident membership, and annual church budget.

Those three pieces of information will enable Rickman and Hay to compile information on churches of varying sizes all across the state.

"We can set the parameters and pull information pertinent to any church that calls requesting information," Rickman said.

The report being compiled by the two departments will replace a "Compensation Study Book," that has been used in

the past.

While it did have some helpful information, it was not always easy to use for churches seeking salary and benefit information, the two men said.

The new report is designed to be more "user friendly," they agreed.

Instead of a book, churches requesting information will be given a two-page customized report geared to their specific needs.

In addition, Rickman said, other state annuity representatives are compiling similar data bases which they will have access to. "We can pull information not only for Tennessee churches, but also for SBC churches in Kentucky and other states," he noted.

The key to having sufficient data on all size churches and church staffs in order to have a

usable survey is for church treasurers to complete the survey forms and return them to the TBC no later than Feb. 14, Rickman and Hay said.

In June churches can request a general compensation study report or ask for a customized report.

"We encourage Tennessee Baptist churches to participate in this survey. We believe the information will be useful to churches when budget planning time approaches next year," Rickman and Hay said.

The study will be done every two years in order that churches may have the most complete information available that is possible, Hay said.

For more information or for treasurers who did not receive a survey, call Rickman at (615) 371-2008 or Hay at (615) 371-2010. □ — Lonnie Wilkey

1996 Olympics is 'More Than Gold' to Baptists, other Christians

By James Dotson
For Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Evangelistic ministries during the 1996 Olympics will have more in common than a desire to share the good news of a risen Christ: They will share a theme and witnessing tools influenced largely by Southern Baptists' Atlanta International Ministries (AIM '96) and Home Mission Board.

The theme of "More Than Gold" has been adopted by a consortium of denominations and para-church organizations as the basis for evangelistic ministries related to the Olympics.

And the HMB's "Interactive Pocket Guide '96" — an evangelistic booklet that also contains Olympic records and previous gold medal winners — is destined to be the principle

witnessing tool for many evangelical organizations.

"It's just really neat to see how this has snowballed," said Toby Frost, HMB associate director of mass evangelism and chairman of the AIM '96 evangelism committee.

"We believe that this 'More Than Gold' slogan and array of products that has developed using this slogan gives Christians a kind of united front in Atlanta and other venues without sacrificing our denominational distinctives," he said.

Frost said the consortium of organizations — the Olympic Outreach Partnership — was formed out of a larger group called Sports Outreach America to seek ways to coordinate evangelistic ministry efforts. In their first meeting in 1994, Frost said, they discussed possible themes before settling on "More Than Gold."



After the meeting the evangelism committee began work on designing the Olympic lapel pin and tract with that theme.

The pin and pocket guide will be the principle evangelistic tools used by AIM '96 volunteers and others working in association with the Olympics.

The pin is important because of the enormous popularity of pin trading during the

Olympics. Almost every organization, sponsor, or sport associated with the Olympics now creates its own pin, and many people collect as many of the pins as possible through trading, Frost said.

The pin — and the logo it bears — is designed as a simple witnessing tool in the same way "power bands" with five different colors of beads have been used to share the Gospel for years.

The logo also has five colors. The blue represents God's royalty and hope, symbolizing his love for mankind. The dark purple represents darkness, symbolizing separation from God because of sin. Red represents Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Gold represents eternal life, and green is used to sym-

bolize growth as a new Christian.

The same means of presenting the Gospel is used in the 32-page pocket guide. While it doesn't look like a tract because it contains Olympic records for selected events, it does contain a full Gospel presentation.

Frost said the idea was to provide an item people would use and refer to while still including an uncompromising Gospel presentation.

"Most Christian materials start where God is," he said. "What I wanted to do with this piece of material is start with where the people were and move them to where the Lord wants them to be. We start on their turf with the Olympic records ... and when they get into it, it's 'more than gold.'"

For more information, call AIM '96 at (404) 872-0096. □

Air crash reminder of need for outreach

Baptist Press

CALI, Colombia — No one on earth will ever know how many of those who died aboard Flight 965 from Miami to Cali were spiritually prepared to stand before God.

But for many in Colombia, including Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries John and Joyce Magyar, the impact of the fateful air disaster reached far beyond the mountainside where wreckage and bodies were strewn minutes before scheduled touchdown.

Probably none of the 164 people on board had any warning disaster loomed. The flight

crew knew for only nine seconds. For the rest, death came suddenly and unexpectedly. Only four people and a dog — named "Lucky" by his rescuers — survived.

Although no Baptists were known to be on the flight, the Magyars have been involved in "a network of sorrow," he said. A family friend was among those killed. And many of their friends and acquaintances lost loved ones. One friend of the Magyars, a teacher, had taught 15 of the victims over the years.

"It's touched us on several different levels," said Magyar, a missionary in Colombia for more than 25 years. "It's pret-

ty much devastated the circle of people we run with here in Cali. Plus, we make that flight frequently ourselves. I've been on it a hundred times, I guess, over the years. So I've had to deal with it some at that point, too."

In fact, Magyar returned to Cali aboard Flight 965 just three days after the Dec. 20 crash. He had been at FMB offices in Richmond.

Then and in later travel via American Airlines, Magyar spoke to airline personnel he knows, "telling them we're praying for them," he said.

Other ministry opportunities have arisen for the Magyars out of the tragedy. □

Deadline extended for Youth Evangelism Conference in March

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Youth Evangelism Conference, Youth Reach '96, is less than two months away.

The TBC Evangelism Department has received many calls from churches across the state seeking information about the Jan. 19 registration due date.

Several inquiries have noted that recent weather conditions have hampered their ability to finalize the number of youth who will be attending from their church.

In an attempt to address the problem, Jay Austin, program associate, has extended the \$18 registration due date until Jan. 26. This will allow another week for those who have not been able to send in their registrations. After Jan. 26, any available tickets will be \$21.

The Evangelism Department hopes that this will give your group enough flexibility to get your registration material in before the fee increase.

For more information about Youth Reach '96, call Austin at (615) 371-2077. □

■ 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. □

TWB program

I have recently become aware there may be some misconceptions about the status of the Stewardship Commission's "Together We Build" program. In one instance, a state stewardship director was quoted in an article saying TWB would be transferred to the SBC Executive Committee and described the program as "in limbo."

When bylaw changes are adopted at the 1996 Southern Baptist Convention to implement the Program and Structure Study Committee report, capital fund raising will be transferred to the Sunday School Board, not to the Executive Committee. Therefore, I am naturally concerned about any perceptions that might affect confidence in this important ministry. I wanted to let you know our intentions.

When the changes are adopted by the SBC, "Together We Build" will become part of our Church Growth Group. We will work closely with the Stewardship Commission and with state convention stewardship leaders to assure a smooth transition. We see this as a vital service and ministry. We intend to maintain TWB at the same high level. We will always seek to enhance its effectiveness.

We do not want any momentum to be lost in the transition. After action at the 1996 SBC, when the bylaw changes are approved, we anticipate build-

ing stronger relationships with state stewardship directors. We will welcome your input and suggestions as we undertake this process. Please call Mike Miller at 251-2991 or Mike Arrington at 251-5001 if there are any questions.

James T. Draper Jr.,
president
Sunday School Board
Nashville 37234

Drifting away?

I believe our state convention has drifted from its conservative roots. I believe the vast majority of Tennessee Baptists are conservative but the majority of our boards and agencies are more sympathetic to moderate causes. I further believe it is a conflict of interest for an employee of the CBF to be serving on our executive board. While I am fully aware that many readers disagree with these opinions I am hopeful we can all follow our convictions without attacking personalities or judging motives.

A challenge was made to one nominee by the committee on boards at our recent convention. The reasons given above are only part of the motivation for raising the challenge. The one presented is the only pastor selected from Chilhowee Association for over 10 years even though our director of missions has submitted several names. He served six years and was reappointed, the fifth person from his church serving on some board or agency while 76 of our churches are not represented.

Another letter writer expressed concern about the challenge. I looked in my book of reports and found that in Sweetwater Association that his church has three representatives on various boards and agencies while only one other church out of 72 in his association is represented. I understand why some people want the status quo but others of us want a change and are committed to bring it to pass. I encourage all Tennessee Baptists to become better informed and more involved.

Charles D. Bailey
Louisville 37777

Love and support

The death of a pastor friend who took his life reminded me that even a called man of God is human and not immune to despair, depression, and hopelessness. Examples of burnout, forced resignations, divorce, career changes, health problems, and suicide are reaching epidemic proportions among clergy, including Baptists. Let us not forget that Moses, Jonah, Elijah, and Paul were honest enough to admit they sometimes despaired to the point of taking their own lives.

I have a unique perspective. My father was a Baptist minister, and I have been a pastor for 31 years. All my 52 years have been spent in the pastor's home. I know the extra demands and stress. I have served churches that were primarily supportive and encouraging to pastor and staff. For nine years I've had the privilege to shepherd one of the most loving and loyal church families in the TBC. I get far more affirmation, encouragement, and prayer support than I deserve. Salary and benefits for all staff are among the best in the TBC.

But my situation is the exception. I appeal to church members to be sensitive to their pastor and staff ministers and their families. They need daily prayer support and tangible means of love and encouragement. Any criticism should be done in a tactful, constructive way and in the love and spirit of Jesus Christ.

May lay members resolve in 1996 to give more support and demonstrate more love to their pastor and his family. May pastors resolve to grow more spiritually, spend more time with their families, and give their best year of service to God and the people. The result will be greater churches, stronger Christians, and more people coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

Larry W. Fields, pastor
Central Church Bearden
Knoxville 37919

About degrees

Thank you for Joe Trull's article, "Seminary Professor Asks, 'Who is your Doctor?'" (1-3-96). In my opinion, the problem of ministers with bogus or substandard "degrees" is rampant. For those desiring a bona fide non-traditional educational experience check out the many Seminary Extension (901 Commerce St., Nashville, 37203) courses offered both by associations and correspondence. For more information on this topic see my article, "Beware of Phony Credentials" in the October 1994 issue of *The Deacon*. For more in-depth information contact Dr. Steve Levicoff, Institute on Religion and Law, Box 552, Ambler, Penn. 19002 (1-215-272-4072). His book, *Name It & Frame It*, (subtitled "New Opportunities in Adult Education and How to Avoid Being Ripped Off by 'Christian' Degree Mills") is excellent.

John Owston
Kingsport 37663

Thanks to helper

I had opportunity recently to visit Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, to watch Royal Ambassadors and their leaders

involved in an on-going mission project. They repair bikes and make them available to children who would not otherwise have a bike. While done by RAs and their leaders, these bikes look professional rebuilt.

While I was talking with some of the leaders, I was made aware of a person who works behind the scene to help get the resources needed for this ministry. He also gives leadership to the total RA program of the church. The leaders asked me to find a way to thank him for his hard work and commitment. He is a quiet unassuming person who has a heart for missions and ministry to young men through Royal Ambassadors. I have known him for about 10 years. This man is also on the staff of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

On behalf of the RAs and their adult leadership of Tulip Grove Church, the RAs, and Baptist Men of Tennessee, thanks to Lonnie Wilkey, *Baptist and Reflector* associate editor, for his heart for missions. We need more men like him.

Tim Bearden
Brotherhood Director
Executive Board staff
Brentwood 37024

Budget and CP

Missions in the SBC includes giving through the Cooperative Program and the various SBC offerings. But we know that the CP is the mainspring of our missions work. This year it seems in some states that the mainspring needs to be re-wound. But not so in Tennessee!

In November we voted to increase the TBC share through the CP by 2 1/2 percent over the next 5 years. This is not without significance and must not be overlooked by Tennessee Baptists. For in order for our TBC to increase its share to the SBC, the churches

must increase giving through the CP.

Think with me. TBC work is ever expanding. This is good for, as Dr. Porch so powerfully reminded us in Chattanooga, Tennessee is indeed a missions field! Certainly we must do more to reach the lost in Tennessee, but we can't reach the billions of people in World A or the rest of the "Last Frontier" apart from increased CP contributions.

It won't be easy for our Executive Board to "lose" that half percent for TBC work in 1997 and again every year into 2001. But if we will do more (increase our percentage of giving), then the job of the board will be far easier, and we will all "win!"

Mike Womack, pastor
Calvary Church
Erwin 37650

At the state convention in Chattanooga last November, the chair ruled that messengers could not direct the board on its budgeting, but could vote "the will of the body" for the CP gradual increase. They did. — *Editor*

Note of thanks

Just a note to express appreciation for the staff for making the effort to get the *Baptist and Reflector* out on time.

On Jan. 8th we had a very bad day with around three inches of snow in Nashville, and even though the Baptist Building was closed, the staff braved the weather and got the paper out on time.

Thank you for all you do so that Baptists can stay informed on what is happening across our state as well as around the world! I always eagerly await every edition.

James A. Growden, pastor
Hillcrest Church
Nashville 37203

Daily Partnership Prayer Requests

January

- 17 — Pray for Canadian Evangelism Conferences starting Jan. 19 through Feb. 4 from Vancouver to Toronto.
- 18 — Pray for the Michigan Men's Retreat, Jan. 19-21.
- 19 — Pray for the British Columbia Baptist Student Ministries Conference Jan. 19-21.
- 20 — Pray for Second Baptist Church in Warsaw as they look for land for a new building.
- 21 — Pray for Mark Edworthy and his family, missionaries to Poland, as they continue their furlough in Texas.
- 22 — Praise God for the youth work being done in Szczytno, Poland. They have a meeting every Friday evening for Christian fellowship and worship.
- 23 — Pray for the processing of Canada Summer Missions done mostly in January.



Family, foundation stone of caring society

As stated in last week's issue, one of the *Baptist and Reflector's* goals for assisting families and churches during 1996 involves the issue of gambling.

Gambling has been on the legislative agenda in Tennessee for many years and some legislators have made it an issue of prime importance.

For at least eight years, Tennesseans have been besieged with efforts for gambling on horse races, bingo and poker games, and lately, casinos and a lottery.

In a free society, people who want to gamble personally usually may do so. Certain kinds of gambling are illegal. Gambling which is harmful for the general public should be illegal. Perhaps the qualifying lines are gray, but there is a difference. Is it good for the family?

For some reason, those of us who oppose gambling have drawn the ire of pro-gambling interests. Wild accusations will increase.

For example, a good, reliable, reporter for Nashville's *The Tennessean*, on January 7 discussed some of the issues ahead for the current Tennessee legislature.

Gambling is one of the issues. In his opinion, there will be no quick referendum on a lottery because "a handful of Bible-thumpers has paralyzed the Senate on the issue."

My, what an epithet! Bible-thumpers indeed. What next?

We have not seen anyone thumping a Bible. Is it Bible-thumping to search the Scripture and to study it? Is it Bible-

thumping for a person to believe the Bible is God's Holy Word, and that for Christians it is the guide and road map for living?

And is it Bible-thumping for anyone to express opinions based on Scripture?

Using Bible-thumping as a somewhat derisive label for Christians who try to live as Christ is an indication of misunderstanding.

Every Christian (and every Tennessee Baptist) has the same rights as any other citizen. It is not wrong to express opposition to gambling. It is not wrong to do so even from a minority view. We have laws guaranteeing those rights - for everyone.

Bible-thumper? Not a bad title, really, if the source is considered.

So let that bogus issue be put to rest. Bible-thumpers, if they do exist, are worthy opponents of gambling and other evils that beset a society centered on nurturing families. And the number probably greatly exceeds "a handful."

However, any group, even the public, can be paralyzed by general apathy. Neither can afford to be apathetic about the moral welfare of our families.

Some of the public probably had rather venture blindly into a state lottery than to back the legislature in efforts to deal with legislative ethics, welfare reform, and health care.

A lottery would temporarily satisfy thousands who are determined to risk a chunk of personal income for an astro-

nomical chance (get that word) to win the big one.

Apparently the Tennessee Senate and some members of the House realize the fallacy in that idea. To say that "a handful" of Bible-thumpers can control the Senate is an insult.

There is an argument in letting Tennessee citizens vote whether to process the idea of a state lottery. But we assume that legislators who oppose the lottery idea have done research in the catastrophes happening in neighboring states.

Such homework tends to open one's eyes to see the real story of the lottery. While many think it is their right to vote on the issue, no one has the moral right to destroy what Tennessee families need.

The old argument of Tennessee money being spent by those who play the lottery in other states also is ridiculous. Does anyone have to buy lottery tickets? Now some legislators are dragging out another idea - use state lottery income to help youth go to college.

Already the wheels are in high gear, they began turning months ago. Once the lottery issue was defeated in the 1995 legislature, the lottery proponents began work on strategy for 1996.

We encourage Tennessee Baptists to study the issue thoroughly now. Use only Christlike words and methods to state your personal beliefs. *Would a lottery improve family life for Tennesseans?* Then, thump your Bible and share with those who represent you *whatever* you feel about all these issues. □

■ one word more
By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

A special road

The road that led to the house where I grew up was not an afterthought.

Though it may have begun as a path of convenience, it became, for the Allen family, a route of necessity.

I don't remember its exact length, but to a boy it seemed to be ten miles long. More than likely it was roughly a mile.

It was a friendly road. It was the imaginary shortcut from the hand to the shoulder when the arm is bent at the elbow. In Greek, it was the hypotenuse of a right angle.

Our house was the only one on the road, and it connected two more well-used roads. I guess our road was less than a real road because it was one lane wide and seldom used.

One of the regular users was Mr. Mac the mailman, one of the few friendly faces from the "outside" world.

I guess he laughed at me sometimes. I often ripped an intriguing coupon, already stamped, from a second-hand magazine, and "sent off" for some exotic free pamphlet or gift. It had to have prepaid postage and it had to be free.

My three best returns were a Charles Atlas pamphlet, a pin shaped like wings from the Cessna company, and a free sample of Ovaltine.

Charles Atlas thwarted me. Even though I liked the idea of muscles big enough to scare bullies, I didn't have \$2.98 and wasn't sure I wanted to get involved with dynamic tension.

The little pair of wings was great. I pinned it to my sweater as a sign of patriotism in those World War II days.

But Ovaltine, that was another thing entirely. With the sample came a card asking me to indicate how my children liked the Ovaltine sample.

Well, put yourself in my place. Wouldn't you be afraid you would get indigestion or maybe the sheriff would come for you if you actually drank the Ovaltine yourself?

I loved that road though. It was a connection with other people, other places. More than that, I think it slowly impressed on me the reality that every road takes you someplace, and every road can take travelers in two directions. You can't hide from that. ☺



ALLEN

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

■ just for today

By Fred Wood pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Cliff to Carl (as they watch the evening news): "Do you think Billy will jump from that plane like he's boasting to do?" Carl: "I don't think so." Cliff (later): "Well, he did jump." Carl: "I knew he would. I saw him on the earlier news program." Cliff: "I did too, but I didn't think he'd do it again."

Take this truth

Some people insist on learning the hard way. Some never learn! You don't have to make the same mistakes others make. You can study the lives of people. Those who refuse to learn from the mistakes of others will repeat the mistakes of others!

Memorize this Scripture

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

Pray this prayer

Help me remember each experience of life, especially setbacks, can be occasions for us to learn new truth. □

Facing up to difficulties

■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

We all know that Christians are not guaranteed immunity from the common irritants which

are a part of everyday life. No family is immune to those things which cause fear, distress, worry, and deep concerns.

Many families face catastrophes and circumstances which may be overwhelming and insurmountable.

These dilemmas come in many areas including financial, physical, spiritual, and emotional.

When faced with these devastating events and issues, families tend to give up in despair and may protest that life is impossible.

To those facing a teenager using drugs, a spouse's infidelity, loss of a job, or diagnosis of a terminal illness, the world's wisdom proclaims the situation to be hopeless. What's the use of trying? What have I got to live for?

Research has shown that, faced with these kinds of dilemmas, one's mind-set or frame of reference can determine a large part of the resulting outcome.

As Christians we have an

advantage on the world. The apostle Paul proclaims in Philippians 4:13 that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

I encourage families to reframe their thinking about life circumstances from resignation to resolution.

We must focus on getting with it instead of giving up, going on rather than giving in.

When life events threaten to envelop or overpower us, we must stand back and take a new and critical look at the whole picture and not simply concentrate on our problem.

I remember the story of a man who came upon his son in the back yard straining to lift a large rock. The little boy was red-faced with the veins in his throat bulging in evidence of his effort.

His father asked, "Are you using all your strength?" The little boy, dropping the stone in exasperation, exclaimed, "Of course I am. Can't you tell?"

The father replied, "No, you aren't; you haven't asked me to help."

Too often in facing the catastrophic and cataclysmic events of life, the Christian family does not take an accurate inventory of its assets. Peter in his impulsive bravado jumped from the boat to join our Lord in walking on the water.

Looking at the surging surf and hearing the sound of the screaming wind, he took his eyes off Jesus and lost control of the circumstances of his life.

I remember Earl Wilson, former leader of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation, handing out certificates that said, "Ain't nothing going to come up today that the Lord and I can't handle."

I think Reinhold Niebuhr gave us a good formula in his Serenity Prayer.

"O God, give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things which should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other." □



BARKLEY

Tennesseans earn Church Study Course awards

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists earned 38,439 Church Study Course awards during the 1994-95 year. Although the report was down 12 percent from the previous year, the state retained its fifth place ranking behind Texas, Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. During 1993-94, Tennessee had fewer Baptists than all of these states except Florida.

One reason for declining involvement, said Johnnie Hall, Discipleship Training director, Tennessee Baptist Convention, is the state of change of the program. A revamped program will be introduced in 1996 by the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, which directs the program.

Hall said a layperson can get an overview of seminary training through the Church Study Course program. It is "one of the best training vehicles we have for leadership training and it's encouraging when we see associations and churches involved."

Church Study Course is a program of study in 24 areas of church work. Most of the study is done in groups, such as in leadership training provided by state conventions and churches. Many Tennesseans receive credit for participating in the annual Winter Bible Study and Baptist Doctrine Study many churches conduct. Course work also can be done on an individual basis. On completion of a study, the individual receives a certificate known as an award.

The revised Church Study Course program, said Morlee Maynard of Baptist Sunday School Board, will provide new course requirements which are broader than current guidelines. But she encouraged Baptists to continue their study since credits can be transferred.

Three associations in the state ranked among the top 25 associations in the convention. Nashville Association was number seven with 3,297 awards, Knox County Association was 12th with 3,100 awards, and Shelby Association was 24th with 2,349.

The top 25 associations in Tennessee after Nashville, Knox County, and Shelby were Clinton — 2,153, Hamilton — 1,663, Holston — 1,616, Sullivan — 1,512, Chilhowee — 1,161, Concord — 1,100, Beulah — 780, Watauga — 766, Duck River — 691, Bradley — 664, Cumberland — 661, Grainger — 627, Big Emory — 615, Lawrence — 579,

Jefferson — 578, Madison-Chester — 534, Big Hatchie and Nolachucky — 519, Hardeman — 514, Truett — 503, Stone — 474, and Sevier — 456.

Hall oversees five areas of the program in which Tennesseans earned the following number of awards — Christian Growth/Service — 21,704, Age Division/Special Group Characteristics — 1,113, Baptist Doctrine — 1,027, Discipleship Training Leadership — 197, and Christian Ethics — 25.

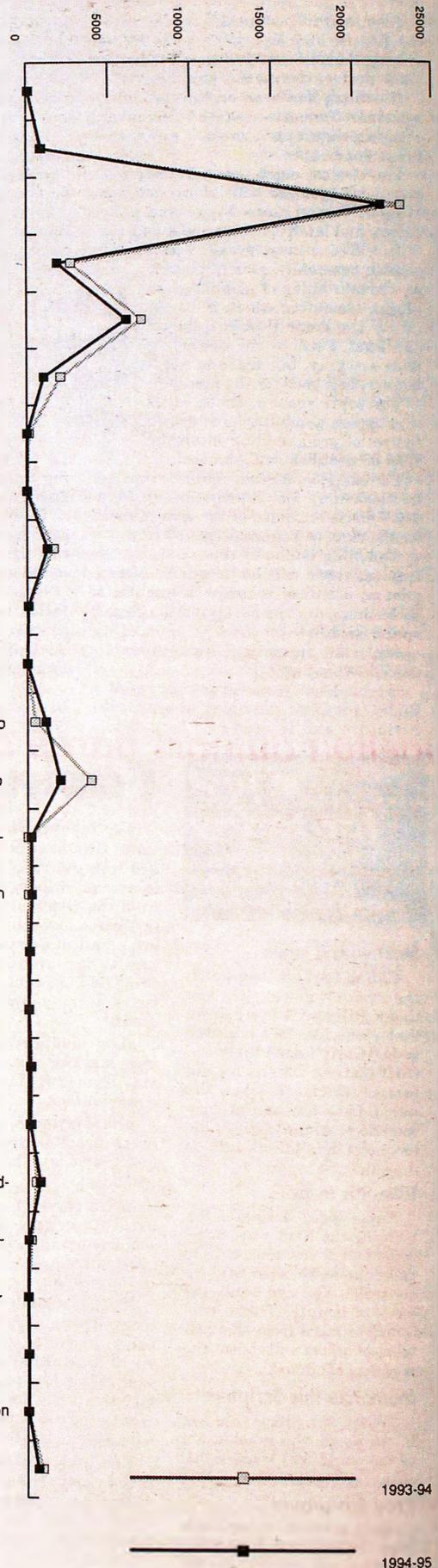
Eleanor Yarborough, Church Media Library/Church Recreation Director for the TBC, reported Tennesseans earned 730 awards in Church Media Library Leadership which was only three behind the highest in that area — Texas at 733. Thirty Tennesseans earned awards in the Church Recreation Leadership area, which was third among states, she added.

Julian Suggs, Church Music Director, reported 59 Tennesseans earned Church Music awards. He explained this area of study is unique in that music skill development requires personal instruction which few churches provide. He has developed skill shops which he conducts across the state to meet this need. Participants are encouraged to study the book required by the Church Study Course program which relates and then follow through by requesting credit. But few do this, explained Suggs. He plans to devise a method to encourage this in conjunction with the music skill shops, he added.

Directing Sunday School work last year was Greer Ruble, who began working for the TBC Executive Office Jan. 2. Ruble reported 1,989 awards were earned in Sunday School Leadership and 6,078 in Bible Studies. These results can be tied to leadership training done by TBC Sunday School workers and Winter Bible Studies led by churches, he said. "These studies strengthened those participating in the areas of Bible knowledge and better Bible teaching," said Ruble.

Other reports follow — The Church — 88, Evangelism/Witnessing — 907, The Christian Family — 1,870, Basic Church Leadership — 3, Woman's Missionary Union Leadership — 228, Brotherhood Leadership — 102, Deacon Ministry — 115, Church Administrative Services — 5, Stewardship — 54, and Church Weekday Education — 41. There were 656 who completed repeat courses. □ — Connie Davis

- The Church
- Evangelism/Witnessing
- Christian Growth Service
- The Christian Family
- Bible Studies
- Baptist Doctrine
- Christian Ethics
- Support Groups/Ministries
- Missions
- Church Music
- Basic Church Leadership
- Age Division/Special Group Characteristics
- Sunday School Leadership
- Discipleship Training Leadership
- Woman's Missionary Union Leadership
- Brotherhood Leadership
- Church Music Leadership
- Pastoral Ministries
- Deacon Ministry
- Church Media Library Leadership
- Church Recreation Leadership
- Church Administrative Services
- Stewardship
- Church Weekday Education
- Repeat Courses



Kristi Pennington named BSU director

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Kristi Pennington has been named Baptist Student Union director at Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, effective Jan. 8.

Pennington and her husband, Mike, served for 12 years as missionaries to Venezuela. He was called last year as director of missions, Bledsoe Association.

Mrs. Pennington holds degrees in education and music from West Texas State University, Canyon, Texas. She has worked as a public school teacher and she taught music at the Venezuelan Baptist Seminary.

The couple also served at First Church, Waverly; Ardmore Church, Memphis; and Parkway Village Church, Memphis; and in Missouri, where he was a staff member. □

Tennessean's book addresses issues faced by missionary kids

By Keith Hinson
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Charlene J. Gray remembers coming to America and feeling a bit irritated by some people's questions about her life as a "missionary kid," or MK.

"As an east African MK, the standard question people asked me ... was, 'Did you ever see Tarzan?' At first it was amusing, but it began to wear thin on me," writes Gray in her new book, *Children of the Call: Issues Missionaries' Kids Face* (Birmingham: New Hope, 1995).

Gray, a member of First Church, Nashville, and former staff member of Tennessee Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, was born in Tanzania to missionaries Earl and Jane Martin, who are now retired, living in Jefferson City.

Gray says she wrote the book to help churches better understand and minister to missionary families — and especially MKs.

American Christians sometimes overlook the cultural challenges faced by MKs who

come to the United States to attend college, notes Gray, whose husband, Brad, also was an MK.

Gray came to the States in 1974 and worked at a fast food restaurant for a few months before she enrolled at the University of Tennessee.

"It was the first time I had worked at a real job. I requested when I was employed that I not be put up front: taking orders and handling money. I did not want to have to make decisions about currency that was very foreign to me. That was my coping mechanism," recalls Gray, who graduated from the University of Tennessee and later Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

During the past two decades, Gray has spoken at numerous events and retreats for MKs, and she tells some of their stories in her book.

Gray quotes Jeff Fray, an MK from Africa who visited relatives in Texas. "One of (my cousin's) friends came by and picked us up in his Z28 Camaro. ... This one hot rod would burn up a month's gas

rations in Zimbabwe in half a day. He drove this speed machine to McDonalds, which we proceeded to circle for the next hour. Other teenagers were engaged in this strange ritual. I was clueless as to what they got out of it."

For most MKs, the American pre-occupation with possessions is a major adjustment, Gray suggests. "The focus in America is so much more on materialism. You're gauged on who you are and what you have."

MKs often see American churches as affected by materialism. "It's still the number one issue for MKs," Gray states. "How do you fit into a church when you've seen church without all the trappings?"

It often seems to MKs that American churches feel they must have certain programs, books, and resources to have an effective ministry, Gray says. She suggests some MKs

see American churches as having lost sight of what is truly essential.

"It's really a struggle to go to church here in the States. I see church practices that don't really make sense. Money seems to be a big focus," according to Chad, an MK from Africa that Gray created in her book based on MKs she has known.

Recalling his last time at a church on the mission field, Chad says, "As I sat among the Africans, sang their songs, read the Bible, prayed to God, I realized that this was worship in its purest form. ... Women carried their babies for three miles, so that they could be with fellow Christians. After the service, we were served chai and bread, both were rich and sweet, as were the smiles and handshakes. How could I leave this?"

An MK's departure from the mission field and arrival in the States is a time when churches can help MKs as they adjust to the change, Gray says. Her book has numerous suggestions on how churches can minister effectively to MKs

who come to America, such as:

(1) Encourage MKs to talk about their experiences. "Allow opportunities for them to tell their stories. ... Missions-minded churches can offer a haven of acceptance to MKs," Gray writes.

(2) Sponsor MKs to attend youth camps such as Youth Jericho, Centrifuge, Crosspoint, state GA/Acteens camps, or associational youth camps.

(3) Offer to transport an MK to and from church.

(4) Invite MKs to your home for Sunday lunch.

(5) Assist MKs in gathering information about the places where they are planning to attend college. Churches can provide information about community services, shopping, and housing.

(6) Provide college MKs with a long-distance telephone gift certificate so they can call home on special occasions.

(7) Offer MKs a home away from home during holidays. Invite several MKs so they have someone with whom they feel comfortable. Share your traditions openly with them. Ask them to share theirs. □



GRAY

Joelton authors agree adoption requires prayer above other factors

By Edith Chenault
For Baptist Press

PLEASANT VIEW — More than Christian concern, adoption requires prayerful consideration.

Because adoption can be complicated and the child's needs have to come first, "You need to pray about whether to adopt or not, and take your time," said Janice Duffy.

Duffy and Connie Crain, members of First Church, Joelton, are co-authors of *How to Adopt a Child*.

"God tends to ask us to do the things we are suited to do," Duffy, of Pleasant View, said in an interview.

For Duffy and her husband, adopting two children has brought them closer together. "It really broadens your horizons when you know the needs are out there," she said. "And it gives you a deeper sense of how important it is for a child to have a home."

There is a small minority of children whose adoptions do not work out, and, unfortunately, those cases have received the most media coverage lately.

However, "I have never run into a family, once they've decided, that adoption does not become a strong urge for them," Duffy said. "They're willing to put up with the strange things they've run into because they are willing to go to the ends of the earth to bring that child home."

More than a million couples consider adoption each year, according to Duffy and Crain in their book. According to

statistics released by the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse in Washington, 127,441 children of all races and nationalities were adopted in the United States in 1992, the last year for which statistics are available. Nearly half these adoptions involved stepparents or relatives.

International adoptions peaked in 1991 at little more than 9,000. It dropped to about 6,500 the next year, about 7,340 in 1993, and is projected at 8,200 in 1995, according to statistics from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

One out of 30 people who want to adopt will actually succeed, according to Duffy and Crain. So, why is there the wide disparity between the number of couples who want to adopt and the number who do?

Many people drop out because of what seems to be the staggering cost. Depending on the type of adoption, it may range anywhere from \$3,000 to \$25,000. "It used to be considered more affordable," Duffy said. "It seems a strange way to put it, but if you needed a car really badly, would you come up with \$8,000? It often is a matter of priorities in your life."

Many companies are now offering incentives and benefits to employees who adopt, and one bank has even opened an open-ended line of credit for prospective adoptive parents, she said.

Additionally, many hopeful couples or even singles drop out prematurely because of frustration — they don't

even know where to turn.

Duffy and Crain's book evolved from their own frustrations and victories with the adoption process. Duffy and Crain, both registered nurses, worked together and began talking about all the questions they had and the questions they were getting about the adoption process.

"They (prospective adoptive parents) don't know who to ask for more information. They don't know where to look. We ended up being scavengers of information about adoption," Duffy said.

She and her husband, Roger, gave birth to two sons and a daughter and have two adopted daughters from Romania. Crain and her husband, David, of Springfield, adopted a child privately and another through an agency. "We had run the gamut," Duffy said.

Some prospective parents are leery of the whole adoption process because of the negative publicity about failed adoptions. Many of the adoptions garnering headlines today floundered because the prospective parents failed to check all of the information or get all the legal knots securely tied, Duffy said.

"Today, the majority of adoptions turn out well. But you need to go into it with your eyes open," she said. "Things will get better as adoption laws change," she predicted, noting many states are examining and changing their adoption laws to better meet the needs of the child.

The book explains the pros and cons

of agency adoptions (the couple pays an established agency to find a child for them) versus private adoptions (the adoptive parents find the child on their own, hiring an attorney to complete the legal legwork for them). It guides the reader through pitfalls to avoid in domestic and international adoptions, and helps the reader decipher the volumes of information they will gather.

Duffy and Crain leave the reader with a chapter on further resources, listed state by state with names and telephone numbers included. An additional source of information is the Internet. A 10-minute perusal of Internet resources included such items as a warning about adoption fraud from an attorney; information about U.S. immigration and Naturalization Service guidelines for international adoption; and photo listings of children from other countries from Christian and non-Christian agencies.

Some prospective parents don't even tackle the process because they feel as though they'll be turned down because of their age or because they are single. That's not always true, Duffy said. Again, she suggested, it pays to check into the laws and regulations in each state and country, if adopting internationally, before becoming discouraged.

Even with the pitfalls and snares, adoption is still considered more reachable than it was 30 years ago. "A lot more people are considering it now," Duffy said. □ — Chenault is a freelance writer from College Station, Texas.

**State Handbell
Festivals scheduled**
For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The TBC Church Music Department will sponsor State Handbell Festivals in four locations during February.

Feb. 16-17 — Central Church, Fountain City, with Norman Johnson of Birmingham, Ala., as clinician and Broadmoor Church, Memphis, with Dan Arterburn of Nashville as clinician.

Feb. 23-24 — Ridgedale Church, Chattanooga, with Johnson as clinician and First Church, Mt. Juliet with Bob Williamson of Nashville as clinician.

Call the TBC Church Music Department at (615) 371-2040 for the required music list, registration form, and time and cost information. □

Classified

DAY CARE CENTER DIRECTOR: New facility opening in Spring of '96. Send resume to Bethel Baptist Church, 7022 Bethel Road, Greenbrier, TN 37073, Attn: Personnel Committee.

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Tennessee students among December graduates at SWBTS

For Baptist and Reflector

F O R T W O R T H, Texas — Seven students with Tennessee ties were among December graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Todd Brady of West Jackson Church, Jackson, received the master of divinity degree with biblical languages.

Receiving the master of arts in religious education were



BRADY



GAITHER



McFARLAND

Christopher Gaither, South Seminole Church, East Ridge; Daniel McFarland, Central Church, Hixson; Jacqueline Tyl, First Church, Kingston; and Kristopher Myers, First Church, Hendersonville.

Jon Wofford of First Church, Newbern received the



MYERS



PENNINGTON

master of divinity degree. Earning the doctor of ministry degree was Michael Pennington, director of missions, Bledsoe Association, based in Gallatin. □



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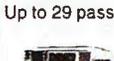


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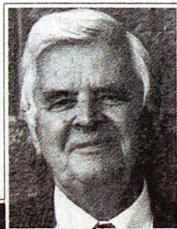


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TenneScene ■ the people, their work

■ the people

■ **Michael James** has been licensed to the ministry by Russwood Church, Springville, Dec. 31.

■ **Immanuel Church, Nashville**, will ordain **Laura Ingram Lemley**, chaplain, Masonic Homes of Kentucky in Louisville, a retirement and health care facility, to the ministry Jan. 21.

■ the leaders

■ **Charles Grigsby**, pastor, First Church - Moss Bluff, Lake Charles, La., was called as senior pastor of Bartlett Church, Bartlett, effective Feb. 4. Grigsby also has served on the staff of other churches in Tennessee and Mississippi. He is a graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis.

■ **Roger Jennings**, minister of music, South Dalton Church, Dalton, Ga., has been called as music associate, Central Church, Hixson, effective Jan. 2. Jennings has taught music in public schools and served on the staff of churches for 26 years. He is a former Marine and graduate of the University of North Alabama.

■ **Gary Murphy** has celebrated his 15th anniversary of service as minister of recre-

ation/administrator, Raleigh Church, Memphis.

■ **Duane Swanson**, minister of education, First Church, Old Hickory, for five years has been called as minister of education at Vale Church, Heyworth, Il.

■ **Immanuel Church, Nashville**, will celebrate the 20th anniversary of **David George** as pastor on Jan. 17.

■ On Dec. 3 Short Creek Church, Christiansa, called **Willard L. Runnels** as pastor.

■ **Emmanuel Church, Collierville**, has called **Lane Dyke**, pastor, Spring Church, Spring, Texas, as pastor, effective Dec. 27. Dyke is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and a student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis. His wife, Katie, is a member of the Gospel singing group, "The Griffin Family" of Texas.

■ **Bradley's Creek Church, Lascassas**, has called **Jeff Cox** as pastor.

■ **Fellowship Church, Mount Juliet**, has called **Glen Smith** as pastor.

■ **Walker Roberson** has been called as pastor of Unaka Church, Elizabethton.

■ the churches

■ **First Church, Clarksville**, is holding World Mis-

sions Month in January. Speakers include Stan and Debra Owen-Hughes, missionaries to Brazil; Joe and Betty Jo Garrett who have worked in Russia; David Dean of New York City; Adney and Vel Cross, missionaries to Namibia, Africa; and Morris Chapman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

■ **Hornsby Church, Hornsby**, is remodeling its sanctuary.

■ The Belarus Choir from the former Soviet Union will perform at **First Church, Cleveland**, Jan. 18.

■ **First Church, Alcoa**, will hold its second annual Mid-Winter Bible Conference Jan. 28-31. Speakers and their topics from Sunday-Wednesday evenings, respectively, are Jerry Sutton, pastor Two Rivers Church, Nashville, Revival in the Family; Johnny Hunt, pastor, First Church, Woodstock, Ga., Revival in Our Churches; Ken Hemphill, president, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, Revival in the Pulpit; and Randy Davis, pastor, First Church, Morristown, Revival in America. Services begin at 7 p.m. each night except for Sunday which begins at 6 p.m.

■ **Third Church, Murfreesboro**, began a schedule including dual Sunday School programs Jan. 1.

■ **Belle Aire Church**,

Murfreesboro, burned a note on its educational building representing its debt-free status.

■ **First Church, Tullahoma**, hosted a Christmas Day Dinner which drew about 250. About 30 meals were delivered to shut-ins and those working in businesses. Eighteen churches participated in the ministry.

■ **John Sevier Church, Knoxville**, will host a 50-day Spiritual Adventure Feb. 18 - April 7 based on the theme, "What to Do When You Don't Know What to Do." It will include theme-based sermons and personal journals for each family.

■ **First Church, Hunter**, will hold a Singles Weekend Jan. 26-27. Steve Cretin of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, will speak.

■ the associations

■ **Cumberland Association** will hold its annual evangelism rally Feb. 26. Bob Hamblin, professor of evangelism, New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, will speak.

■ **Hardeman County Association** will hold its Evangelism Conference March 18.

■ the schools

■ **John Adams**, vice presi-

dent for religious affairs, **Union University, Jackson**, completed all requirements for the position of field supervisor, Supervised Ministry Experience programs, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

■ **Larry Stewart**, vice president for development, **Union University, Jackson**, for 18 years, has retired to begin a consulting business in fund raising, effective June 30. Under his leadership, the university has acquired more than \$54,000,000 in gifts and its endowment has grown from \$812,000 to \$15,000,000. Stewart also has helped churches, schools, and other non-profit organizations do fund raising. He also is a humorist and banquet speaker.

■ the hospitals

■ **Baptist Hospital, Nashville**, and its affiliate facility in **Smithville, Baptist DeKalb Hospital**, have been named to the 1995 list of "100 Top Hospitals: Benchmarks for Success." The study of nearly 3,500 acute-care hospitals ranked the Nashville hospital among the top 25 teaching hospitals in the nation with 250 or more beds in service. Baptist DeKalb Hospital was included in the study's list of the top 20 rural hospitals in the nation with fewer than 250 beds in service.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

Is hope for year a cliché?

By Paul Clark, minister of music
First Church, Jackson

What a year this will be!!(?!?!?!?! This year is loaded with promise and hope and possibilities, opportunities, etc., etc., ad infinitum, blah, blah, yada, yada.

Cliche? Of course! True? Of course. This year our church will open new facilities, find new leadership with our newest staff member, experience a new music instrument in worship, and make a major decision related to a project that has been a tradition for 19 years (The Living Christmas Tree). And these are just a few of the things we actually know about ahead of time.

There is a sad tendency in our day and age to gather mounds of data, think about it, and make a conservative, or progressive decision based on the level of optimism, and/or perhaps what was eaten for dinner the night before the time for decision-making. I am afraid spiritual decisions that can and will effect our life and ministry as a church are sometimes made by the least spiritual means. Recognize the impact that our actions (or lack thereof)

will have in 1996, and pray in "the fear of the Lord." We need his leadership! □

Qualifications for choir members

By Ed Crawley, minister of music
Beverly Hills Church, Memphis

Positions open — soprano, alto, tenor, bass

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conscience and ability to return the glares and pointed remarks of the director.

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Rehearsal — Wednesday nights — 7:45 p.m.

Apply — By attending the next rehearsal or by contacting Bro. Crawley. □

Ready for a change in 1996?

By Greg Spears, associate pastor
Speedway Terrace Church, Memphis

"Make your ear attentive to wisdom. Incline your heart to understanding: For if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will discern the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God" Proverbs 2:2-5.

Do you want to live in 1996 the way you lived in 1995? If you are like me, you are ready for a change. Praise the

Lord, he has made a way for us to experience change in this new year. Read the verses above again. Notice that there is a connection between wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord.

We all need wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to make decisions in this new year. We must decide about attitudes, activities, plans for jobs, family, health, finances, etc. According to his Word, we cannot have the discernment necessary for such "discern-making" unless we have a "fear of the Lord." Do you understand — discern the fear of the Lord?

I am convinced that most of us fail in this area — we do not fear God. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This does not mean we are horrified by a God of wrath waiting to pour out his judgment upon us for our sin, which we deserve — but rather we reverence, respect, place God in a right place in our thinking (Lord of our life).

This opens up the possibility for discernment, knowledge, wisdom, and understanding for life. Don't live 1996 like you lived 1995 — there is no going back. You must go forth! □

Training events for church leadership scheduled in February

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Various training events for church leadership are scheduled by Tennessee Baptist Convention departments in February. Among them are:

"Common Ground" Worship Conference: This two-day conference sponsored by the Discipleship Training and Church Music departments is designed for every member of the worship team including pastors, music leaders, and worship committees. The meeting will be held Feb. 26-27 at

Concord Church, Chattanooga. For registration information and costs, call (615) 371-2053 or 371-2040.

AIDS Conference: The Discipleship Training Department will sponsor two AIDS: Crisis for Church and Families conferences on Feb. 12 at the Cumberland Association office in Clarksville, and Feb. 13 at the Lawrence County Association

office in Leoma. For more information, call (615) 371-2053.

VBS Training: The Sunday School Department is offering training for associational VBS leaders in four locations.

Feb. 19 — First Church, Morristown

Feb. 20 — First Church, Athens

Feb. 21 — First Church, Donelson

Feb. 22 — Englewood Church, Jackson

For more information, call the Sunday School Department at (615) 371-2054. □

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Life and Work Series for January 21

Focal Passages: Matthew 19:4-6; I Corinthians 6:13b, 18-20; Romans 12:1-2

Sexual purity

By Charles Parker

Is it better to send an ambulance to the bottom of a precipice to pick up the survivors of a crash, or to build a guardrail at the top to prevent such mistakes in the first place? Many times in dealing with problem pregnancies and trying to prevent abortions, we feel as though we are at the bottom of the cliff. Today's lesson is an attempt to build safeguards to prevent such situations that threaten the sanctity of human life. Because God created us as sexual beings, we should live in sexual purity according to biblical teachings.

Created as sexual beings — Matthew 19:4-6
The Pharisees wanted to trick Jesus into opposing Moses' teachings about divorce, a practice they sanctioned under varying circumstances. Instead of entering into a debate with them, Jesus broadened their horizons to include the whole subject of marriage. It would be well for supporters of life today to remember that life is sacred throughout, not just before birth; sometimes horizons are not broad enough.

Jesus affirmed the creation by God of both "male and female" persons, beings with significant gender differences, though equal before God. If people were to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28), the sexual nature of the creatures was important.

An expected outcome ("for this cause") of the conditions of being male and female was that the persons would leave their parents and "cleave" to each other in marriage. This word derives from a word meaning to "glue" or to "cement" something together. Such a "one-flesh" union is threatened by sexual infidelity. Experience has shown that both premarital and extramarital affairs violate God's plans for a healthy, happy home.

Someone has said: "The promises of sexual revolution of the 60s and 70s have given way to the horrors of the 90s. AIDS, abortions, sexual abuse within families, divorce, and the growing pornographic bent in the media are expressions of an abandonment of God's intentions for sexual purity among persons." Fidelity and purity in marriage are God's intentions.

Responsible to God — I Corinthians 6:13b, 18-20

Paul built upon the teachings of Jesus when he interpreted the Mosaic law as freeing Christians to live relationships marked by sexual purity and fidelity. He was neither libertine nor legalist, but Christ's free man.

Paul warned the Corinthian Christians to flee from fornication. This Greek term was used for voluntary sex between an unmarried person and someone else. It could be applied to include premarital sex, adultery, prostitution, and all other illicit sexual acts.

As if Paul was overhearing, he declared that our bodies are not our own, but are temples of the Holy Spirit bought or redeemed at the price of Christ's shed blood.

Serving God with everything — Romans 12:1-2

While Paul knew that Jesus' sacrifice alone forgives sin, he also called upon all Christians to offer their bodies in self-sacrifice as a worthy act of worship. To be acceptable, our sacrifices must be pure, which surely excludes sexual impurity.

Our bodies are to be consecrated or sanctified unto the Lord for his glory. Our minds are to be transformed by the Spirit. We can be conformed to Christ or conformed to the world. Christ's way is life. The world's way does not hold life sacred. □ — Charles Parker is pastor of First Church, Jacksboro.

The servant's steadfast endurance

By Kim Allen

Although no definite description of the servant is made in Isaiah 50, there is the reference in verse 10 about the servant. This gives assurance that this is another servant passage. The servant himself speaks in verses 4-9. As we continue in Isaiah a sharper picture of the servant appears.

Our aim for this lesson is to apply the characteristics of the servant in Isaiah to our Christian lives.

The cause of Israel's plight — vv. 1-3

(1) Israel's charge that God had forsaken her (v. 1). In chapter 49:1, Zion charged the Lord with forsaking her and forgetting her. Thus, Israel said the covenant relationship, much like a marriage relationship, had been broken. God answered the charge with the question, where are the divorce papers? None existed because Israel had forsaken God, not God Israel. Her own sin brought about the situation Israel was in.

(2) Israel's charge that God had not helped her (vv. 2-3). These two verses assert the claim that God had not come to the rescue of Israel in her trouble. God reminded Israel that he had the power to redeem his people as he had done during the time of the Exodus.

The servant's faithfulness — vv. 4-9

(1) Disciples and teacher (v. 4). Verse 4 deals with two of man's most used appendages, the tongue and ear. The servant's tongue was ready to receive and to speak God's Word. His ear was programmed to God's messages. The word "learned" is similar to the word "disciple," which means a learner. Disciples are teachable followers of Christ who become lifetime learners.

(2) Obedient sufferer (vv. 5-6). Verses 5-6 give us two truths about the servant. One, he would be abused by enemies. Two, he would endure it in obedience to God. When the servant offered his back, his hair, his beard, and the spitting in his face, he offered himself to the

**Convention Uniform Series
for January 21
Focal Passage:
Isaiah 50:4-11**

worst insults in the Old Testament. We cannot read this passage without thinking of the things endured by Christ prior to the crucifixion.

(3) Divine help and vindication (vv. 7-9). Verses 7 and 9 begin with the same words

"The Lord will help me." The servants, as did Christ, as even we did and do, trust God will provide strength and help to endure abuse and insults.

In verses 8-9, the servant expressed the false charges against him and the knowledge that God would vindicate him. The final part of verse 9 gives clear warning to people who set themselves against God's servant and God. They will wear out and be destroyed; a powerful statement on the corrupting power of sin.

Responses to the servant — vv. 10-11

(1) Trust and obey (v. 10). The question to understand in verse 10 is where to put the question mark? In the original text there are no question marks. Some place it after servant, others after lights, and others at the end. If it is at the end, all statements refer to the servant and he should be obeyed. If it is placed after "servant" or "light," the meaning is the people should obey the servant by living a life of trust and obedience. We cannot be sure of the placement but God's Word teaches two truths: (1) The divine servant, Jesus, showed perfect trust and obedience to his Father; and (2) Followers of Jesus should follow his example and obey the commandments of the divine servant.

(2) Burned by their own fires (v. 11). Verse 11 deals with all those who refuse to trust and obey the Lord. This is a picture of judgment that comes on them because they refuse to walk in his light.

We must always realize that our sin will find us out and exact its price upon us when we fail to stay in the light. □ — Kim Allen is pastor of Little West Fork Church, Clarksville.

Sexual purity

By Phil Lovelace

The original Edenic Law — Matthew 19:4-6

God instituted marriage back in Eden, long before the Mosaic law. The Bible gives at least four reasons or purposes of marriage:

(1) To continue the race (Genesis 1:28); (2) for companionship and enjoyment (Genesis 2:18); (3) to avoid fornication (I Corinthians 7:1-6); and (4) to illustrate the relationship shown between Christ and his church (Ephesians 5:22-23).

God's original purpose was that one man should wed one woman, and only death should break the union (Romans 7:1-3). Marriage is basically a physical union ("they two shall become one flesh"), although it ought to be union of minds and hearts, too. The marriage union is even stronger than family ties, for a man is to leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife. It is a sacred union, for Jesus said that God joins a man and a woman together.

Defilement in the world — I Corinthians 6:13b, 18-20

(1) "Don't Christians have liberty? Aren't we free from the law?" (v. 13b).

Certainly we are free from rules and regulations, but we are not free to sin. Christian liberty is never license. It does not mean I am free to do what I please, but that I have been freed to do what pleases Christ. Furthermore, "liberty to sin" is really the worst kind of slavery!

**Bible Book Series for January 21
Focal Passages: Matthew 19:4-6; I Corinthians 6:13b, 18-20; Romans 12:1-2**

"But," you say, "if God gave us these appetites in our bodies, certainly he wants us to use them." That's right — use them, not abuse them. Your body is the Lord's, and if you live in sin, that sin will destroy you and God will someday judge you.

(2) "Can I not use my body as I please?" (vv. 18-20).

Of course not! To begin with, it is no longer your body; it belongs to Christ. He purchased you with his own blood. Back in Paul's day, a slave could set himself free by saving his money and depositing it with the priest at the local heathen temple. When he had enough money to purchase his freedom, he would take his master to the temple and the priest would give the master the money and declare that the slave now belonged to that particular god.

Christ paid the price to set us free from sin, and we must use our bodies to please him.

A sacrifice on the altar — Romans 12:1-2

True Christian service and living must begin with personal dedication to the Lord. True dedication to God is the presenting of the body, mind, and will to God day by day. It is daily yielding the body to Christ, having the mind renewed by the Word, and surrendering the will

through prayer and obedience.

Thus, as Christians we are to present our bodies to Christ as a living and holy sacrifice. This act of presentation of our bodies to Christ, to live and serve him in purity, is our spiritual service of worship to him.

Conclusion:

Christians are to glorify God with their bodies. This means the way we care for the body, the way we dress the body, the places we take the body, the deeds we do in the body. It is dangerous for Christians to use their bodies for sin. Remember what happened to Samson and David.

In these latter days, we will continue to see a growing problem with sexual sins. We dare not close our eyes to it.

Sexual sins are against Christ, against the Spirit, and against ourselves.

Sexual purity is God's command. Flee fornication. What God commands, he will empower.

He has given the marriage for completeness, satisfaction, fulfillment, companionship.

As Paul, the apostle stated: It is better to marry than burn with desire. God has provided for our sexuality. □ — Phil Lovelace is pastor of First Church, Somerville.

RNA ranks SBC race apology as fourth most important in '95

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Southern Baptist Convention's apology to African Americans for its part in racism and slavery has been voted by the Religion Newswriters Association as the fourth most significant religion story of 1995.

The top story, according to the annual year-end vote by RNA members, was the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, followed by the Million Man March in Washington, D.C. and a statement by Pope John Paul prohibiting women from ordination as priests, but stopping short of a claim of papal infallibility.

The SBC's "Resolution on Racial Reconciliation" was adopted during the convention's annual meeting last June in Atlanta. □

Samford president selected to lead accrediting agency

Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Samford University President Thomas Cortis has been elected president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a regional accrediting

organization representing more than 12,000 public and private schools.

Cortis was chosen to lead SACS during the organization's annual meeting in Atlanta in mid-December.

The organization is one of six regional accrediting agencies in the United States. It covers 11 southern states from Virginia to Texas and schools in Latin America. □

Church's \$15 million debt prompts bankruptcy filing

Baptist Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Facing foreclosure on a \$15 million overdue debt, Great Hills Church, Austin, has filed for bankruptcy protection.

Much of the debt was incurred in construction of a 3,600-seat sanctuary and 75,000-square-foot education building during the economic boom in the early 1980s.

With 3,895 members, Great Hills is the third-largest congregation in Austin Association.

Harold O'Chester, the church's pastor for 27 years, said the bankruptcy filing in federal court will not interrupt the congregation's services and ministries. Trustee chairman Herschel Kelley said the church had considered filing for bankruptcy earlier, but the idea was "abhorrent." □

Study says giving decline precedes membership decline

Associated Baptist Press

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Declining giving patterns may forecast membership decline in the church, according to new research on church giving trends.

For example, one group of mainline Protestant denominations in the study has been losing membership since 1964 but began experiencing a decline in giving in 1961.

"This data suggests that giving patterns may be a leading indicator for membership trends," reported the study's authors, John and Sylvia Ronsvalle of Champaign, Ill.

In contrast, increased giving patterns in the Assemblies of God church and the Southern Baptist Convention closely parallel periods of increased membership, the Ronsvalles said.

The couple reported their latest findings in the fourth installment of a series called "The State of Church Giving," funded by the Lilly Endowment. □

N.C. Baptist college elects new president

Baptist Press

MARS HILL, N.C. — A. Max Lennon, former president



PEOPLE COUNT

1996 Season of Home Missions

Home Mission Study February 18-21, 1996
 Week of Prayer for Home Missions March 3-10, 1996
 Home Missions Day in Sunday School March 10, 1996
 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering National Goal: \$42 million

of Clemson (S.C.) University, has been elected president of Mars Hill College by the school's trustees, effective March 1.

Lennon, currently president and chief executive officer of Eastern Foods, Inc., in Atlanta, will succeed Fred B. Bentley, who has held the post the past 30 years. The 1,050-student college is affiliated

with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Bentley is a 1960 graduate of Mars Hill Junior College. His mother and all seven brothers and sisters also attended the school.

Lennon was president of Clemson from 1986-94 and has been on the administration and faculty of other universities as well. □

Missionary's culinary skills stirs up interest in Gospel

By Keith Hinson
For Baptist Press

BORNEM, Belgium — Classes in breadmaking can serve as an opportunity to share about Jesus, the bread of life as the Bible calls him, according to Laurie Ingram, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary to Belgium.

"There was a store in downtown Antwerp called Home Baking, which had a demonstration kitchen. I rented the kitchen," Ingram recounted, "and offered two different eight-week classes in American cooking."

In the first course, Ingram taught her students how to make cornbread, biscuits, and banana bread. In the other course, she offered instruction on cooking American desserts, such as chocolate cake and apple pie.

"During each class, I would have a five-minute devotional and talk about my faith in Christ and the personal relationship I have with him," Ingram said.

Though she hasn't seen any converts yet, the Illinois native plans to offer the class again in her family's new city of residence. "I have just been asked to offer it here at the local cultural center in

Bornem where we just moved this past summer," she noted.

Ingram's love for cooking led her to collect recipes from other foreign missionaries and to publish them in a book, *There's a Missionary Loose in the Kitchen* (Birmingham, New Hope, 1995).

"When I was still in the United States, I was very involved in Woman's Missionary Union," Ingram said. "For years, I wished there was a resource which included recipes and information from various countries which I knew was reliable."

Ingram gathered the recipes by putting a notice in *Intercom*, a publication for FMB missionaries, and by writing to missionaries around the world. The book's chapters are divided according to nine geographical regions with recipes from several continents and nations.

"Our family tried all of the recipes before they went into the book — a full year of international flavors. The kids would come home from school and ask, 'What country are we eating tonight, Mom,'" Ingram said with a chuckle.

Ingram described her husband, Cliff, and her three children, Caleb, 9, Bethany, 7, and Joel, 5, as people who

will eat quite a wide range of foods.

Asked if she had prepared any recipe they would not eat, Ingram said, "There were a couple. The ones they absolutely refused to eat didn't make it into the book. I figured if our group of adventurous eaters wouldn't eat it, not many others would either."

Even now, Ingram said her family still tries "two to three new recipes a week. . . . If we don't try something new, they want to know what's wrong."

Ingram said she believes cooking classes could be an effective means of outreach for American churches. "I think it would especially be beneficial in a culture where people have at least some religious background and where Baptists are not seen as a cult as they are in Belgium," she said.

When people in Belgium first learn she and her family are Baptist, "the first question we get is, 'Are you a Jehovah's Witness?' . . . Most people wonder how such nice people like us got trapped in a cult. They never heard of Baptists."

Evangelical Christians are only one-half of 1 percent of the population in Belgium, Ingram noted. "Belgium is about 90 percent Roman Catholic. However, statistics show that less than

10 percent ever attend mass. The predominant religion is humanism and materialism."

The attitude of many people in Belgium is that "religion is something which was good in history, but that they are way beyond that now and they have progressed beyond the need for religion," Ingram said.

Ingram nevertheless remains undaunted in sharing her faith in Christ. "Through my church I gained an understanding of what it means to have a relationship with Jesus Christ and how important it is to share that message with others," she writes in the introduction to the cookbook.

Ingram credits her grandmother with helping to nurture a love for cooking.

The recipes in Ingram's book includes such dishes as "Pumpkin Soup" from the Cayman Islands, "Cabbage with Ground Nuts" from Zambia, "Corn Pie" from Chile, "Soy Lemon Chicken Wings" from Hong Kong, "Spiced Coconut Custard" from Sri Lanka, and many more.

Ingram's book can be purchased by calling Woman's Missionary Union's Customer Service at 1 (800) 968-7301 or at local Baptist Book Stores. □