

Baptist and Reflector

March 6, 1996

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STATEWIDE EDITION

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Pollard, Miller, Parsons also featured

SBC officers headline State Evangelism Conference

For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Two officers of the Southern Baptist Convention will be among the speakers at the 1996 State Evangelism Conference April 1-2.

A primary change to note: this year's conference will be held in West Tennessee — at First Church, Jackson.

This is the first year the conference has been held outside Nashville since 1957, said TBC Evangelism Director Jerry King. It is part of a plan to move the conference across the state to involve more participants. The 1997 and 1998 conferences will be held in Knoxville and Nashville, respectively, before moving once again to the west. Also, next year the conference will return to its traditional winter date — Jan. 20-21 at Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville.

Another change this year, King added, is the addition of special interest conferences on Tuesday afternoon. Topics include discipling the believer, growing churches through strengthening families, lifestyle witnessing for women, total church life, undergirding evangelism with an effective prayer ministry, volunteer



FROST



HAMBLIN



HENRY



HUBBARD



MILLER



PARSONS

missions and evangelism, using the Sunday School as the foundation for personal witnessing, and more.

The theme of the 1996 conference is "People Sharing Jesus." Among those addressing that theme will be two SBC officers — President Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., and former pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, and Second Vice President Gary Frost, pastor of Rising Star Church, Youngstown, Ohio.

Four theme interpretations will be preached by well-known pastor Frank Pollard of First Church, Jackson, Miss.

Other messages will be delivered by: Phil Roberts, Home Mission Board interfaith witness director, Alpharetta, Ga.; Calvin Miller, professor of communication and ministry studies and writer-in-residence at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth,

Texas; TBC Executive Director James Porch; Charles "Toonie" Cash, president, Fellowship of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists, Johnson City;

Ken Hubbard, TBC president and pastor of First Church, Smyrna; and Bob Hamblin, professor of evangelism, New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

Noted singer Squire Parsons, known for his signature song, "Beulah Land," will lead the music for the conference. The Tennessee Baptist Chorale, led by Julian Suggs, will perform on Monday evening.

Invocations and benedictions at each session will be given by state vocational evangelists.

Sessions begin on Monday at 2 p.m. with the last sermon by Jim Henry beginning at 4 p.m. The conference resumes at 6:45 p.m. Henry will preach the concluding message that night, beginning at 8:30 p.m.



POLLARD

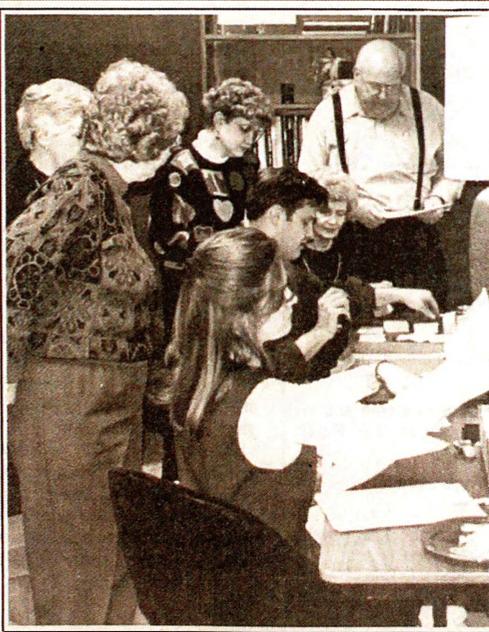


ROBERTS

On Tuesday morning the first session begins at 9:30. The last message that morning, presented by Ken Hubbard, will begin at 11:35.

The meeting resumes at 1:55 p.m. with a message by Frank Pollard, followed by 12 special interest conferences which conclude at 4:30 p.m. Attendees will be able to attend two conferences.

The evening session, "Laymen's Night," begins at 6:45 p.m. with the last message by Gary Frost slated to begin at 8:25 p.m. Hola Onishko, Belmont University student from the Ukraine, will give his testimony during this session. □



Getting ready

TBC Evangelism Director Jerry King (standing) and program associate Jay Austin (seated) pitched in last week to prepare for the onslaught of Tennessee Baptist youth who will merge on Nashville Friday and Saturday for the State Youth Evangelism Conference. With them are, counterclockwise, Polly Lucht, Penny Verble, Patsy Newman, Linda Estey, and Melissa Austin. For the first time, tickets for events had to be mailed to churches before the conference, creating the need for volunteer help in the Evangelism Department. More than 20,000 youth already have purchased tickets for the Saturday portion of the conference which will be held at Opryland Theme Park. Churches that sent in completed registration forms before March 1 and have not received tickets should stop by the hospitality center at Opryland on Saturday.

TBC gifts up for year after four months

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — After four months of the Tennessee Baptist Convention budget year, Tennessee Baptists' gifts are \$1,248,020 (14.4 percent) above giving at the same time last year.

Through February, Tennessee Baptists have given \$9,893,045, compared to \$8,645,026 after four months last year.

February gifts amounted to \$2,233,703, down slightly from the \$2,319,416 given in February 1995, but it is still the second highest amount in February since 1988. □

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NAMB could have up to 86 trustees

By Herb Hollinger
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The new North American Mission Board could have as many as 86 trustees, under the charter recently approved by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and to be recommended to the SBC meeting in New Orleans in June.

According to Bob Reccord, chairman of the Implementation Task Force of the SBC Executive Committee, the "Covenant for a New Century" specifies the first North American Mission Board, which will consist of trustees of the Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission, and Brotherhood Commission whose second term expires in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 plus the president of the SBC.

The Covenant calls for a board of 75, Reccord said, but the charter allows the first

board to be larger.

"Two factors caused this decision," said Reccord, pastor of First Church, Norfolk, Va.

"First, there are currently a few more than 74 second-term trustees serving on the existing entities. We believe it is the intent of the Covenant that all of these persons be given an opportunity to be on the initial board.

"Secondly, the pool of second-term trustees does not provide representation from some state conventions that are qualified. It was necessary to make provision for these gaps in the initial board."

Executive Committee staff research revealed, at the present time, the formula in the NAMB charter will produce a board of 86 people.

The Home Mission Board currently has a board of 88 trustees (including six local members), while the Brotherhood and RTVC boards both have 30 members.

"It will be no larger than that (86)," said David Hankins, Executive Committee vice president and staff liaison with the ITF, "but it will likely be smaller because of current second-term trustees who move from their current state convention, decline to serve on the NAMB, or otherwise become unavailable for election between now and June of 1997."

Reccord said while some details of the formulation of the board vary from the stipulations in the Covenant for a New Century, the charter of NAMB keeps faith with the intention of the Covenant.

By June 2001 all initial board members will have completed their service, Hankins said.

The size of the board, at that time, will have been reduced to 56 unless there are significant fluctuations in the current memberships of the SBC churches in the cooperating state conventions. □

Team explores partnership in Costa Rica

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — A six-member fact-finding team from the Tennessee Baptist Convention is in Costa Rica this week.

The team is investigating the possibility of a full three-year partnership with Baptists of Costa Rica.

Currently, Tennessee Baptists are working in Costa Rica in a project relationship. Tennessee Baptists fill requests as needed on specific projects.

On the team are TBC Executive Director James Porch; Terry Sharp, director, Partnership Missions Department; Bill Wilson, Convention Ministries Division director;

Wm. Fletcher Allen, Baptist and Reflector editor; Ken Hubbard, TBC president; and Herbert Higdon, president, TBC Executive Board.

The team, which left March 1, is scheduled to return March 7. □

Southern Baptist defends religious liberty on 'Oprah'

Baptist Press

CHICAGO — The Oprah Winfrey show served as a battleground for a recent clash over an upcoming trial on school prayer.

Religious liberty attorney Michael K. Whitehead faced off against People for the American Way attorney Elliott Minberg in a Feb. 28 taping of the program. The program is scheduled to air March 19.

Whitehead, who also is vice president for business affairs at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Minberg are representing opposing sides in the case which involves student-initiated, student-led prayers or Bible readings over the school intercom in a Mississippi public school district. The trial before U.S. District Judge Neal Biggers began March 4 in Oxford, Miss.

"This is a classic case in which strict separationists are pushing 'the separation of church and state' too far," Whitehead said on the program.

Whitehead is trial counsel for the public school district in Pontotoc, Miss., which has been sued by People for the American Way and

the American Civil Liberties Union. Another guest was Lisa Herdahl, the resident parent who contacted the ACLU about bringing the lawsuit. PAW and the ACLU claim the school district's accommodation of student religious activity constitutes governmental endorsement of religion, which violates the First Amendment's establishment clause.

"Oprah Winfrey opened the program with the theme, 'People who have been made outcasts in their community,'" Whitehead recounted.

"Video clips showed the Pontotoc school children and other citizens rallying in support of religious liberty and praying around the flag pole. But the voice-over commentary referred to the harassment and death threats which Mrs. Herdahl has alleged, and implied that she was frightened for her life, thinking every trip to the grocery store might be her last."

On the program Whitehead said "it is outrageous to imply that my clients were promoting a climate of threatening to kill Mrs. Herdahl or hurt her children. ... My client condemns and deplores name-calling and meanness, by children or adults, wherever it occurs," Whitehead said. □

YEC attendance can be an excused absence from school

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — At least two school systems across the state are using Saturday, March 9, to make up a "snow" day.

This has caused some concern for parents whose children are scheduled to attend the Youth Evangelism Conference March 8-9 in Nashville.

Because the Youth Evangelism Conference has been an established "religious event" for a number of years now, students can receive an "excused" absence in accordance to the *Attendance Accounting Manual* published by the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Accountability, said TBC attorney Randle Davis.

Students, however, are responsible for contacting the teachers of classes missed and making up any work missed, Davis said.

Furthermore, parents or guardians of students attending the Youth Evangelism Conference should provide written notice to the principal of the school prior to the day in question.

In a related matter to the Youth Evangelism Conference, an emergency phone number has been set up at Opryland on Saturday, March 9. The phone number is (615) 871-5029. □

Daily Partnership Prayer Requests March



- 6 — Pray for a great movement of the spirit of God in Poland and Eastern Europe.
- 7 — Pray for Scott Hanson as he begins a new congregation in Novi, Mich.
- 8 — Pray that local Michigan churches will become more involved in sponsoring new churches.
- 9 — Pray for John Nyhof, indigenous bivocational church planter in White Lake, Mich.
- 10 — Pray for health care professionals to give of their time and resources to come to Poland and fill the requests of Polish churches for free medical and dental clinics.
- 11 — Pray for the unity of Canada as a nation and wisdom for its political leaders.
- 12 — Pray for the preparation of the summer missionaries who were chosen in February to go from Canada and to Canada.

SBC CP gifts dip, designated gifts up

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for February totaled \$12,103,599, down 2.68 percent from the previous year's month, according to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee. For the five months of the SBC fiscal year, the CP total is \$60,319,676, a .92 percent decrease over the same period a year ago.

Designated gifts, however, are up. In February designated gifts were \$43,986,895, up \$7.2 million over a year ago. Year-to-date designated gifts of \$69,580,000 are up \$5.7 million from a year ago. □

Southern Seminary informed ATS not imposing probation

By Pat Cole
For Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will not be placed on probation by its primary accrediting agency, according to information received by the school Feb. 26.

The Louisville, Ky., seminary has been under review by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. The accrediting agency was responding to faculty concerns related to new procedures for hiring faculty, new policies for granting tenure, and the March 1995 dismissal of the dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work, Diana R. Garland. Representatives from the accrediting agencies visited the seminary in November.

Michael Gilligan, assistant director of accrediting at ATS, did not include mention of probation in a letter to seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. dated Feb. 21. The letter, however, notified the seminary of several actions the school must

take to keep its accreditation in good standing, and it informed the seminary of a "notation" on its accreditation. The requested actions and the notation, all of which were imposed by the ATS Commission on Accrediting, include the submission of four reports regarding:

1. the status of all contract and tenure-track faculty employed before the seminary changed its hiring procedures in April 1995.

2. the status of the Carver School of Church Social Work and the future of its students and faculty. (Trustees have voted to close the school at the conclusion of the 1996-97 academic year.) Mohler said the accreditation of the Carver school will be intact through May 1997 if the school can maintain its accreditation standards.

3. the "process and content" of the faculty's response to the current hiring policy.

4. actions taken to address concerns expressed by the visiting committee's report about communications among the ad-

ministration, faculty, and trustees.

Reports on the first three matters must be submitted by April 16. The seminary must report to ATS on the final action by Nov. 15.

The notation, which used standard ATS language for accreditation reporting, said: "General tone of the school impairs the capacity to provide significant theological education and ministerial training."

The Commission on Accrediting also authorized another focused visit in the spring of 1997 to monitor progress the institution has achieved in addressing concerns about "academic freedom, status of contract and tenure-track faculty, the faculty's role in shared governance, and communication among the board, administration, and faculty."

"I am very pleased to receive the action report from the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools," Mohler said Feb. 26. "From the onset, we have indicated our commitment to work with all appropriate ac-

crediting agencies through this period of institutional transition."

He said the ATS commission has been helpful in addressing several issues of concern. "My intention is to work through these issues in a manner which respects the concerns of the ATS, the concerns of the faculty, and is consistent with the commitments which undergird Southern Seminary and frame her future," he said.

Mohler said he "takes seriously" the imposition of the notation, and he expressed confidence "this notation will be removed as quickly as possible."

In the letter from ATS, Gilligan listed several matters the visiting committee believed in the need of "remediation." These include a lack of faculty counsel in the changing of qualifications for new faculty, insufficient faculty input in developing hiring procedures, not enough consultation with faculty in setting forth disciplinary procedures, and inadequate faculty consultation in the decision to disband the Carver school. The committee

also cited the overall need for improved communication among faculty, administration, and trustees.

However, the visiting committee also noted four strengths of the seminary that were determined by interviews with faculty and administration.

The strengths were "an unusual degree of unanimity and support" for the seminary's mission, a commitment to the seminary's work and place in the Southern Baptist Convention, a desire for the institution to prosper, and a "constructive spirit among the faculty interviewed as well as strong and appreciative collegiality across the ranks."

"We will continue to cooperate with the ATS Commission on Accrediting and other appropriate agencies," Mohler said. "We will also stand proudly before the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches. Southern Baptists should know that Southern Seminary is moving forward..." □ — Art Toalston of Baptist Press contributed to this story.

Foreign Mission Board reports record gains during 1995

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Proclaiming the Gospel and ministering in the name of Christ, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries and their partners overseas experienced record gains in 1995.

A record 2,612 newly constituted churches represented a 21 percent jump from 1994 and contributed to a record 39,073 partner churches. A significant number of new churches (367) and baptisms (6,548) were reported among people groups considered inaccessible to traditional mission work.

For the first time in history, total membership among affiliates overseas topped the 4 million mark — to 4.11 million. And the year's 287,806 baptisms, the second-highest number in

history behind last year's 302,132, amounted to the equivalent of a Pentecost harvest every four days. Mission strategists say it likely represents more than one million professions of faith.

The most telling story about baptisms, however, was the 14-to-1 member-to-baptism ratio among overseas partners, contrasting sharply with the 40-to-1 ratio among Southern Baptists in the United States.

The increase in the number of new churches in 1995, from 2,162 in 1994, and the continuing high number of baptisms "reflect the work of the Holy Spirit through the witness of missionaries, volunteers, and national co-workers," said board President Jerry Rankin.

Foreign Mission Board leaders say they see results overseas as affirmation of the very Gospel missionaries preach,

that signs follow those who believe and proclaim Jesus Christ. They consider the record showing a result of discovering where God is moving in the world, and rolling up their sleeves to go to work beside him.

"We are filled with praise that God has allowed us to participate in what he is doing around the world in such an amazing way," Rankin said. "It's especially thrilling to see the level of response among previously unreached people groups who never before had access to the Gospel."

Missionaries and their partners started working among 41 new people groups in 1995, many of them in "The Last Frontier," or "World A." Mission strategists define World A as the 2,466 cultures that have never been exposed to the name of Jesus Christ or seen the

Bible translated into their languages. They have been locked behind political, religious, and cultural boundaries.

"It's amazing," said Avery Willis, the board's senior vice president for overseas operations. "We're seeing that once we take the Gospel into these darkened places where it's never gone, people are responding. We never expected it to happen this quickly."

One country, with only 65 known believers a few years ago, now has an estimated 200,000 Christians.

Church growth surveys in recent years have helped missionaries zero in on lost people in all parts of the world. The clearer focus played a role in increasing the number of new churches, said evangelism and church growth analyst Jim Slack, who compiled the annual report. □ — Marty Croll

With TBC executive director

Statewide dialogue sessions set

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The first of several 1996 statewide dialogue sessions with James M. Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, is set for mid-March.

During the meetings Porch will answer questions pertaining to the convention. He will dialogue with directors of missions, pastors, church staff, and laypersons on matters relating to the convention.

Phase I of the 1996 dialogue sessions is scheduled as follows: Other sessions will be held later in the year.

Maury Association — March 14, 10

a.m., Highland Park Church, Columbia;

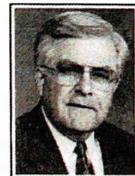
Gibson County Association — March 18, 8:30 a.m., Association Office, Trenton;

Holston Valley Association — May 21, 10 a.m., First Church, Church Hill;

Beech River Association — Aug. 13, 7 p.m., Association Of-

ice, Lexington.

Associational and church leaders are invited to attend the dialogue meeting in their area. □



PORCH

Missionary killed in Peru plane crash

Baptist Press

AREQUIPA, Peru — A Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary was among those killed after a Peruvian jet apparently caught fire in the air and crashed five miles from its planned landing Feb. 29.

The missionary, Lynn Davidson, 42, was last identified in Lima, Peru, boarding a Faucett Airlines flight home from a church growth strategy meeting there. Several hours after the crash, a newscast listed her among the 117 passengers and six crew who all died in the crash.

Davidson and her husband, Dennis, both from New Mexico, were appointed missionaries to Peru in 1987. They have three children: Charis, 11; Cassia,

8, and Rannon, 4. They have lived in Arequipa since 1992, where he is a church starter.

The air crash was the second disaster in February suffered by the organization of 63 FMB missionaries in Peru. The first was Feb. 1, when missionary Wade Watts and his family were seriously injured in a mountainous car wreck. Watts and his son, Marcus, have been in a coma since.

News reports indicated the plane was spotted by another commercial flight and was described as flying "completely in flames." It later crashed into a remote Andean mountain canyon.

Davidson had just begun to represent southern Peru on a team of missionaries studying church growth strategy. □

Pastor's doctoral project brings congregation together

By Lesley Key
For Baptist and Reflector

LAFAYETTE — Members of First Church, Lafayette, recently participated in a unique experiment designed not only as a project for Pastor Steve Nelson's doctorate, but to bring the church body together as one in unity.

January was declared "Unity Month" at First Church. Planned near the end of 1995, the members celebrated the concept of church unity throughout January with a series of sermons prepared by Nelson and with meetings in which participants aired their concerns in a "focus group" forum.

Nelson said the idea for Unity Month came as he was preparing his doctoral project for his graduation from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

"Our instructions were that the project should speak to a real need and be original. Our church is so diverse in terms of age, economics, religious and cultural backgrounds, combined with a large amount of growth and organizational changes over the last four years," Nelson said.

"I felt led after much prayer to do something that would enhance communication and strengthen relationships within the church body."

After meeting with faculty members and advisors at Southern, Nelson developed a format for the project, which

included a series of sermons and focus group meetings.

Nelson then presented the idea to the church's deacons who approved the project and told the pastor to present it to the entire church. The church unanimously adopted the proposal.

"God's Word teaches that churches must work together in unity," Nelson said.

Although approved there was some apprehension.

"This was something that had never been done before, but I felt the benefits would outweigh the risks," said deacon George Tucker.

To kick off Unity Month, church members took part in a survey in mid-December to rate how unified the church is, how personal issues can affect that unity, and what steps can be taken to help move the church closer to God's ideal of unity in Christ.

When the first focus group meeting was held in mid-January, about 40 members, nearly one-third of the congregation, attended and went over the results of the survey.

The participation was good and "we had candid dialogue on a very positive note," said Nelson.

"Much of the meeting dealt with improving communication. It allowed persons of differing viewpoints to discuss the many facets of our church program in a non-threatening environment and free of the pressure which can be experienced in church business meet-



PASTOR STEVE NELSON center, visits with members of First Church, Lafayette's focus group panel, from left, Jack Butrum, Johnnie Brewer, Wayne Adams, John Douglas Wootten, Vickie Cherry, and Doyle Gaines.

ings," he said.

Because two meetings were cancelled because of snow the focus groups were extended into February.

"Personally, I think it was great," said panel member Vickie Cherry. "I think it's like counseling for a married couple. I think if you can talk things out before they get serious, you can get them straightened out before it gets bad."

"I feel like everyone who attended has grown closer together than we were," observed deacon Garland Crowder. "After all, we're all working for the same person, and that's the Lord. We're all pulling together for him."

A post-survey of church

members was held Feb. 4 and its results show the general feelings toward the church and its pastor and members has improved since the December survey — a direct result of the focus group meetings.

"I hope the long-term results will be that the church continues to grow and more people are brought into the church, and that we look upon these occasions as opportunities," said Doyle Gaines, panel moderator.

Nelson said the results of the project will be written in book form to be submitted for committee review and his oral exam at Southern Seminary for his doctor of ministry degree. That will take place this

month, with anticipated graduation in May.

Although the genesis of Unity Month was for Nelson's doctoral project, the end result is something that benefits the church body. And, it all goes back to the basic teachings of the Bible — that fellowship in God's name will lead to unity.

"God honors unity among his people," Nelson concluded.

"This will draw us nearer to the will of God. Out of this, I would hope we will experience a fresh vision in which we may pursue as a unified body in the power of the Holy Spirit." □ — Key is a member of First Church, Lafayette, and a reporter for the *Macon County Times*.

Reaching teens a 'priority' for Franklin minister

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — After 26 years as a bivocational youth minister and teacher/coach in public and private schools, Benny Proffitt was convinced of the need for a Christian outreach on secondary school campuses.

"About 20-25 percent of teenagers attend church, but 95 to 100 percent are in school five days a week. We must have a consistent outreach on our junior high and high school campuses if we are going to reach American teenagers for Christ," said Proffitt, who recently moved to Franklin from Birmingham, Ala. His family has been attending Brentwood Church, Brentwood.

Proffitt said too many churches have turned away from that challenge. He said some only want to deal with people who come to them while

others hesitate because of a misunderstanding of the separation of church and state.

The truth, Proffitt said, is the 1984 Federal Equal Access Act supports the existence and activities of Christian clubs and organizations in secondary schools (grades seven through 12). They simply must be student-initiated and student-led, he said.

"We have an open door; we need to be supporting these student groups with everything we've got."

That "open door" is what led Proffitt to launch "First Priority of America" 15 years ago. The multi-denominational ministry carries out the "First Priority" strategy of organizing adults and churches in cities across the country to support student ministry efforts on secondary school campuses.

The First Priority Campus Club Support Strategy is now

supported by youth-related components at the Baptist Sunday School Board and the evangelism department at the Home Mission Board.

Proffitt said First Priority "encourages and trains youth pastors to network with all the churches in their community who have the desire for young people to come to Christ. We encourage them to equip, encourage, and empower students in their ministry to their peers." This is done through several methods, he shared.

Proffitt noted there is plenty of work to do as there are more than 56,000 secondary schools in the U.S. and only 10,000 or so have some type of Christian club or organization.

"We have an opportunity; I'm excited about the possibilities," he said.

For more information about First Priority, contact Proffitt at (615) 221-4963. □



Weakley County DOM honored

Richard Skidmore, right, director of missions for Weakley County Association, has been named Outstanding West Tennessee Director of Missions for 1995. The award was established by Union University's board of trustees to recognize West Tennessee directors of missions for their outstanding service to God, the local church, the Tennessee and Southern Baptist conventions, and Union University. Skidmore received the award recently from John Adams, left, vice president for religious affairs at Union.

Looking for answers? Read the directions

We introduced several weeks ago an idea that can boost "togetherness" and enhance cooperation among Tennessee Baptists and their churches.

The idea is **96 in '96**. This is an effort to gain 96 new subscribing churches in 1996, to strengthen family values in churches across the convention. When looking for answers, it helps if we understand the question.

By Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Several churches already have expressed interest in becoming part of the 96. At least two are firm candidates. As we focus on Christian values for the family, we need right answers.

To be an informed, participating, ministering Tennessee Baptist, it helps to read the *Baptist and Reflector*.

This faithful old friend provides good directions for involvement and participating. It may even provide almost instant answers to questions, or put the reader on the right road for that answer.

Questions about programs, plans, leadership, meetings, involvement, the Cooperative Program budget and allocations, etc., are important.

The nuts and bolts of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, the local association, and neighborhood churches — all work together. People are the vital working ingredient in the ministry.

And how do Tennessee Baptists find out about all the ministries happening right now?

Of course, by reading the *Baptist and Reflector*. Though Baptist work may seem that way at times, it really is not a

puzzle waiting to be solved.

But let's pretend that it is a puzzle. How can Tennessee Baptists solve the puzzle, put the pieces together?

As the saying goes, you are ahead of the game if you read the directions first. Get familiar with the pieces of the puzzle. You can get a feel for the overall plan, for the goals and plans for getting there. Perhaps one of the most important ministries of the *Baptist and Reflector* is to inform Tennessee Baptists of those things they need to know and want to know, prior to the question.

The *Baptist and Reflector* staff does not want to be a part of any problems

that may pop up. We do not wish to contribute to problems, nor do we intend to belabor reports of any controversy within the Baptist family.

There are almost a million Baptists in the state convention. We hope to major on news, plans, programs, that can bring spiritual health and guidance to families. Working together, we can discover more ideas that major on family values.

The 96 (or more) churches that come to our mailing list can be the nucleus, the additional "fresh faces" that brighten and stimulate any group. We would like to hear from eager '96ers who want to help us strengthen the family. □

Remodeling plan looks to future

In next week's issue we present the remodeling plan for the Executive Board staff. The plan, which comes to the board for a vote May 7, is termed ServanTeam 21. It calls for the staff to move from departments to seven newly-formed groups.

The plan has been developed by the administrative staff, with input from others. The board had opportunity for dialogue last December at its regular meeting.

It was discussed with directors of missions at Staff Sharing Feb. 5-6.

Executive Director James Porch has pledged to keep both groups informed in the weeks prior to the May meeting.

There have been serious questions. In some instances, it is fair to say that at first there was not complete agreement. Porch, however, said every effort will be made to involve all those affected, including churches and leaders.

A comprehensive directory is being de-

veloped for each church and entity. The directory will give an overview of all staff ministries, with photos and biographical sketches of staff members.

Responsibilities will be explained. In cross-over cases, churches will know with whom to relate for specific needs. "This is servant leadership at its best," Porch said.

We believe the plan merits approval, perhaps with fine tuning that is still to come. Some may say the organization is not "broke" so why fix it? A more appropriate query is, why wait until it is beyond repair? The current organization is out of step with needs.

The idea is not new by any means. Referring to queries about lack of information thus far, Porch said, "We could not make the plan known until we had something to look at." Current department work will continue, but the new group concept will "do it better." He's right. □

■ one word more
By Wm. Fletcher Allen
editor

In memory of...

Often we set up memorials for departed loved ones or other famous people. We don't want to forget them, and we do not want others to forget.

When I think of all the wasted time and money spent on senseless memorials, I will from henceforth pause to thank my God for our dear friend, Roberta Green.

And when I think of Roberta Green, I will think of rosebuds and spring water, blue skies and living for Christ, bright smiles and a loving heart. These are her memorial.

About sundown on February 26 she rose from her hospital room, lifted her glad face upward, and stretched forth her arms to meet Jesus.

On Sunday a small group had visited her wasted body and sang "Victory in Jesus" at her bedside. She was 96, and had lived out the Gospel of Christ in words and deeds.

As we sang, we could sense her keen desire to shake off the bonds of earth, forsaking the land of the dying, and moving on to the land of the living. Barely 24 hours later, He opened the Door.

Roberta was ever a treasure to kin and kindred spirits to all who met her on the path. She was an extraordinary treasure to Clearview Church because she was, by far, our oldest member, and certainly one of the best loved.

Folk of all ages felt comfortable in Roberta's presence. Perhaps she was a woman for all seasons of life. I think so.

John Magee Jr., in recognition of God's grandeur, wrote, "I have slipped the surly bonds of earth and danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings; I've chased the shouting wind along...put out my hand and touched the face of God."

Shakespeare wrote about "shuffling off these mortal coils." Paul talked about a tenuous earthly tent holding our fragile bodies, and about wanting to make the plunge to the Everlasting.

Roberta understood all that and more. She didn't make long trips from her modest home, was not written up in best-selling books, or featured on television.

But we who knew her know she was a lady for the ages. ☺



ALLEN

■ just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

University of California at Los Angeles professor, who was teaching Arabic customs: "Anyone in this class from the Mid-East?"

Sally: "Yes sir. I am."
Professor: "Where are you from?"

Sally: "Ohio."

Take this truth

Most of us see things from our own perspective.

Seeing the other person's viewpoint requires maturity, and this includes humility.

Memorize this Scripture

"Restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me, when I see someone who is having great difficulty, to say to myself, 'There but for the grace of God go I.'" □

Some culprits of stress

■ families matter

By Paul Barkley, counselor and professor

In recent issues we have described stress, and looked at types of people

who are suspects for stress. Now, let's consider situations in life that are culprits causing stress.

I don't believe we can avoid all of them, but we can be better prepared to deal with the stress they produce in us. The old adage is "forewarned is forearmed."

Let's look at five of these situations: contact with large numbers of people, continuous exposure to the same routine, compulsive expectation to complete tasks by deadlines, callous lack of appreciation, and continuous confounding interruptions.

Contact with large numbers of people is not a normal problem in the family. One may have a job that requires this, however, and then he will bring to the family the stress thus created. We are sometimes unaware of stress generated by simply being around crowds, whether they ask or require anything of us. This is the reason most hospi-

tals attempt to limit visitation to patients.

The continuous exposure to the same old routine is another silent, sure producer of stress. We may assume that we are more comfortable around things that we are more accustomed to seeing.

There is an adage that says, "Familiarity breeds contempt." Many times the sameness of daily routine builds stress when we are not aware of it.

The compulsive expectation to complete tasks by deadlines is another source of stress in the home. The expectation can come from self or spouse or children. Supper has to be ready by 5:30, while at the same time homework must be completed in order for the family to go to church tonight.

Then I forgot I had agreed to take a cake for fellowship after church. All these deadlines, whether imposed by self or

someone else, will tend to produce stress.

The callous lack of appreciation cause stress levels to climb in many homes. No one ever notices or cares what I do for this family! The child is likely to say, "I always get fussed at when I mess up, but I don't get bragged on very often."

Every mother knows those continuous-confounding interruptions. Just when you are in the midst of meal preparation, the phone rings. Or you are trying to finish an important sewing project when a child must show you his newest creation. It does not matter how important we realize the interruption to be, it will create stress if we have other things that must be done.

This is not an exhaustive list of stress culprits in the home, merely a demonstrative one. Next time we will look at some places and conditions which produce stress in the home. □



BARKLEY

AB assets top \$5 billion; benefit payments near \$200 million

Baptist Press

DALLAS — The Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention closed its 78th year of operations with assets of \$5.173 billion after paying a record \$192.56 million in retirement and relief benefits.

Trustees met in Dallas in regular session Feb. 26-27 and were told total earnings in 1995 were almost \$794 million, which made possible a permanent 5 percent increase in benefits on Jan. 1, 1996, for all annuitants with benefits established for five years or longer.

Trustees also heard a report from President Paul W. Powell that the SBC Executive Committee had responded

with positive action on the request by Annuity Board trustees to approve creation of two new business trusts. The two trusts could be used to implement a mechanism for using registered mutual funds for the investment activities of the Annuity Board. Trustees are not expected to take final action to convert investment funds to registered mutual funds before the first quarter in 1997.

At the initiation of Powell and W. Gordon Hobgood, chief operating officer, trustees began discussion of a succession plan for the two top officers of the Annuity Board. Hobgood plans retirement in 1998 and Powell in 1999. The executives told trustees the size and complexity of Annuity Board oper-

ations invites a study of the organizational structure and a review of the responsibilities of the two top executive positions. Trustees took the subject under advisement and will discuss it at their next meeting.

Treasurer Harold D. Richardson reported contributions to participant accounts continued to rise, with \$254 million representing a 6.5 percent increase over 1994.

There were 11,097 new retirement plan enrollments in 1995, and 4,413 new benefits were established. Of the new benefits, 3,568 were age retirements at an average of 63 years, 102 retired on disability at an average of 55 and 723 were survivor annuitants.

There were 20 education benefits established for dependent children.

Richardson said increases in Cooperative Program receipts and increases in available funds from the board's endowment funds made it possible to make relief payments of \$1.29 million in 1995, and 531 people or couples were on the relief roll at Dec. 31, compared to 503 persons on relief the same date in 1994. The board received \$1.1 million from SBC Cooperative Program, all of which was used in the relief program. Annuity Board operation expense is paid by earnings on assets.

Annuity Board trustees elected Richard C. Scott to a third year as chairman. □

Northwest Baptists told of potential 'harm' to Cooperative Program

Associated Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Northwest Baptist Convention, one of the smaller regional conventions that supports the Southern Baptist Convention, has been notified by the president of the SBC Executive Committee that a recent action poses potential "harm" to the Cooperative Program.

The Cooperative Program is the SBC's unified budget that supports missions, theological education, and other causes. Funds originate in local churches, which pass a per-

centage on to state conventions, which in turn pass a percentage on to the SBC.

During the fall 1995 annual meeting of the NBC, which encompasses Washington, Oregon, and part of Idaho, messengers approved a budget that changed the amount of money passed from the regional convention to the SBC. Messengers voted unanimously to take \$50,000 off the top of their national CP contribution as a gift to Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Golden Gate Seminary, based in Mill Valley, Calif., operates a regional campus in Portland, Ore., in cooperation with the Northwest Baptist Convention.

In a letter to Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, NBC Executive Director Jeff Iorg said the action was in response to a reduction GGBTS received in its 1995 CP allocation budget.

"We understand the current seminary funding formula penalizes any seminary with a commitment to regional campuses," Iorg continued. "Since the Northwest Baptist Convention cooperates with Golden Gate to operate a regional campus as a significant part of

our strategy to reach the Northwest for Christ, we can no longer ignore the reality that being our partner is costing the seminary financially."

The seminary funding formula, an agreement between the presidents of the six SBC seminaries and the SBC Executive Committee, distributes CP funding to seminaries based on a rolling average of full-time student enrollments. However, students who attend classes at off-campus centers do not count as much in the funding formula as students who attend classes on a main campus.

In his letter to Chapman, Iorg said the Northwest Convention's finance committee, Executive Board, and convention "believe in the Cooperative Program and have supported it exclusively and enthusiastically as our only channel of missions support.

"We want to return to this pattern, without designations, and will do so when the fund-

ing formula is changed to recognize the validity of regional campuses as a strategically effective method of delivering theological education."

Chapman responded to Iorg in a letter dated Jan. 8.

The Northwest Convention's action "is in violation of a principle that has been affirmed and reaffirmed by the SBC since the inception of the Cooperative Program in 1925," Chapman said. That principle is that state and regional conventions will not attempt to fund national entities directly, but only through the national Cooperative Program budget as determined by the Executive Committee, he said.

"It is not the prerogative of the Northwest Baptist Convention to spend \$50,000 of the money allocated to the Southern Baptist Convention, not even if the state convention

messengers vote unanimously," Chapman wrote Iorg.

"I encourage you to discuss with me in the future any such actions under consideration that may significantly harm the Cooperative Program, a God-given plan that has served Southern Baptists and the kingdom of God so well since 1925," Chapman concluded.

The issue of direct funding for Golden Gate was discussed in the Feb. 20 meeting of the SBC Executive Committee's seminaries workgroup, which develops the funding formula.

Iorg told the workgroup the action was based on philosophical differences with the SBC Executive Committee, not on political differences. "This is not an act of protest," Iorg told the seminaries workgroup. "This was not a slap at the Cooperative Program." □

Correction

In the story "Agencies receive memo from ITF" in the Feb. 28 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*, the fifth paragraph should have read: "David Hankins, the Executive Committee official directing the implementation, told Associated Baptist Press the memo was prompted by concern over severance agreements. The Implementation Task Force 'will take a comprehensive look' at severance issues, he said, and make sure all affected employees are cared for." □

Seeking

Highview Baptist Church is now receiving applications for principal of Highview Baptist School (K-12). Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest and current resume to John Boone, Highview Baptist Church, 7711 Fegenbush Lane, Louisville, KY 40228. Application Deadline — May 3, 1996

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Sunday School lesson commentary

**Life and Work Series
for March 10
Focal Passage: Matthew
6:25-34**

Defeating worry

By Charles Parker

The famous prayer of Reinhold Niebuhr reminds us: God, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference.

Such words are solidly in line with what the Master tells us in the Sermon on the Mount. Back in verse 11, Jesus spoke in the model prayer an introductory word to this section: "Give us this day our daily bread." He surely meant not only food, but also clothing, shelter, and the other necessities of physical life. Verses 19-24 show how devastating to Christian life the drive for prosperity can be.

Then today's text shows how devastating worry about even necessities can be. Instead of worrying about getting our daily, let us trust God and put his kingdom first for joyful fulfillment today and tomorrow. It is good to know that Christians who trust God can defeat the problem of worry in their lives.

Why do we worry? The King James Version translation "take no thought" does not mean that it is a sin to have a thought about daily necessities, an impossibility for thinking beings. This term for worry really means "be anxious" or "go all to pieces." Beyond our genuine concerns, however, many of us are surely major league worriers. The analysis of the futility of worry by the late G. Campbell Morgan may be helpful.

Worry is unnecessary for the children of such a caring Father. Jesus gives two examples from nature, the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. If God takes care of tiny creatures of nature, how much more will he take care of the crown of his creation? We are so constructed by God that we can usually take care of ourselves and provide for needy people, too. Jesus' words are not a counsel for idleness. Birds are fed by God as they look for seeds or worms. How much more should people who can work toil for what God provides?

If birds or lilies are cared for, how much more people who can take thought in a Christian way, to plan and provide for their families. These verses then, are no excuse for a lack of insurance or retirement savings. Seventeen times in the Sermon on the Mount God is called "Father." How he cares for us, wisely and providentially, in a fatherly way.

Worry is unworthy of the subjects of such a kingdom. As Christians, we had better be sure that we are making a life, not just making a living. Jesus describes two drives or passions or directions in life. The pagan or Gentile way of ungodliness is in contrast to the kingdom way.

Too many church members are like the lukewarm Laodicean Christians of Revelation 3:16, neither hot nor cold, not ruled or motivated by anyone, including the Lord. The one whose "Kingdom is not of this world" expects his soldiers-subjects to put him and his kingdom first. If not, we are unworthy to follow him, and we will not grow.

Worry is unfruitful. H. Leo Eldleman wrote: "Worry does not empty a day of its problems, only of its strength." In other words, worry does not work. Most of our worries are about the past, which we cannot change, or about the future, over which we have no control. Many of the future woes never occur anyway.

Instead of worrying, let us be good stewards of God's kingdom. Perhaps the greatest verse in this passage is verse 33. If we will seek above all other possible goals God's will and rule, both in our own lives and the world, happiness will come as a by-product. Neither individual or church should worry if we are putting his kingdom first. □ — Charles Parker is pastor of First Church, Jacksboro.

The unforgiving servant

By Kim Allen

**Convention Uniform Series
for March 10
Focal Passage:
Matthew 18:21-35**

The Bible places a lot of emphasis on the relationship man has with God and through that relationship how we respond to each other. The parable of the unforgiving servant teaches that God offers to forgive any and all of our sins. With God's forgiveness of our sin it should be reflected in forgiveness of those who sin against us.

A question about forgiveness — vv. 21-22

Peter's question (v. 21). Jesus had taught the disciples how to deal with a brother in verses 15-20. This led Peter to ask how many times he should forgive someone who sinned against him. In this example he wanted to limit forgiveness.

Jesus's answer (v. 22). The point Jesus was making was not just 70 times seven, but that no limits should be placed on forgiveness; was not to keep count but to forgive without counting.

A forgiving king and unforgiving servant — vv. 23-25

An enormous debt (vv. 23-25). Jesus deliberately painted an absurd picture of a man who owed his King an enormous debt.

This had to be a pagan king, for Jewish law prevented the selling of another into slavery to settle a debt. In Judaism, an Israelite could be sold only for theft and if he brought less than the amount stolen, his family could not be bothered.

Generous forgiveness (vv. 26-27). The desperate debtor fell to his knees before the king pleading for patience, promising to repay all that he owed. Although the king knew he could never repay the debt, he had compassion on him and forgave the debt.

All verses do not have application for relationship

with God, but verses 23-27 are taught elsewhere in the Bible (1) Sin is an enormous debt that none of us can pay; (2) God is compassionate with sinners; (3) when we repent, God cancels our sin; (4) God not only saves us from punishment for our sins, he forgives our sin making reconciliation with him possible.

A smaller debt (v. 28). The forgiven servant was creditor to another servant of about 100 days wages. This was no small amount, but it paled tremendously to his forgiven debt. Yet the first servant grabbed the second servant around the throat and demanded that he pay what he owed.

Unforgiving servant (vv. 29-30). Verse 29 repeats almost word for word the first servant's plea to the king, now spoken by the second servant. However, the servant was not compassionate and had the unfortunate man put in prison.

Judgment on the unforgiving servant (vv. 31, 34). Other servants had rejoiced with the king's forgiveness to the servant's debt but were disturbed by the lack of forgiveness by their fellow servant.

Word reached the king and he summoned the servant debtor again and inquired as to his lack of forgiveness of the other servants debt. Then the king ordered the unforgiving servant to be tortured until he paid his debt which amounted to a life sentence, since he could never hope to repay that amount.

The lessons of the parable (v. 35). The main point of the parable is the expectation by God that those whom he forgives should forgive those who sin against them.

On the negative side, the parable warns of judgment against those who display an unforgiving spirit towards others. □ — Kim Allen is pastor of Little West Fork Church, Clarksville.

Effective servant of Christ

By Phil Lovelace

**Bible Book Series for March 10
Focal Passage:
II Timothy 1:1-7; 2:14-16, 20-26**

As you read Paul's two letters to Timothy, you begin to understand the problems of this young minister. He hesitated to face matters squarely and settle them according to the Word of God. There was "fear" (cowardice) in his life. He faced the usual temptations of a young man, and certainly did not feel adequate for the task.

A praying friend — ch. 1:3-5

Paul was facing martyrdom, yet he takes time to pray for Timothy! He assures Timothy of his love and prayers, and of his good remembrance of him night and day.

He reminds Timothy that there is much to be thankful for, in spite of the problems he is facing. He reminds him of his godly heritage and the faith that God has given him, not only for salvation, but also for daily living and Christian service. We do not know if Timothy's loved ones were still living at this time, but if they were they were certainly bearing him up in prayer. What a blessing it is to have praying friends. What an encouragement it is to pray for others and to help them along in their spiritual lives.

A wonderful gift — vv. 6-7

One of Timothy's problems was cowardice, a timidity about facing problems and doing God's work. His youthfulness probably contributed to this. Paul reminds him that he was neglecting the gift God had

given him, and he needed to stir it up, as a man would fan into flame the embers of a dying fire. It was not a question of losing his salvation, for this is impossible; but of losing his zeal for the Lord, and his enthusiasm in the Lord's work.

Paul is talking about the Holy Spirit in verse 7. The Spirit does not generate fear in us but rather power, love, and discipline. Every Christian needs all three! The Holy Spirit is the power of our lives. The Spirit also gives us love, for the fruit of the Spirit is love. The Spirit also gives us discipline, self control.

In the first chapter, Paul reminded Timothy of his pastoral calling. In this next chapter he deals practically with the local church and the pastor's special responsibilities.

God's school — ch. 2:14-16

Timothy was attacked by false teachers, just as the church is today. What are we to do? First, remind the people to stick to essentials and not to argue about empty words and philosophies. Second, be sure to rightly divide the Word, being diligent to handle it carefully. Paul warns that false doctrine "eats like a cancer or ulcer" and that the only remedy is the healthy doctrine of the Word of God. Every church

should be a Bible school, where the Word of God is taught accurately.

God's house — ch. 20-26

Paul describes the local church as a house with a solid foundation and containing vessels of different kinds. The Old Testament Jews often wrote Bible verses on their houses and it was not uncommon for Gentiles to write mottos on their house. God's house, the church, has two affirmations on it, one is God-ward and one is man-ward. God knows his own, and his own ought to be known to men by their godly lives. Each Christian is a vessel in the great house, but some vessels are defiled and cannot be used. Timothy is warned to purge himself from the dishonorable vessels, lest they defile him. This is the Biblical doctrine of separation. Believers should be set-apart vessels unto honor, suitable for Christ's use. Fleeing youthful lusts and following that which is spiritual, would help Timothy be a prepared vessel that Christ could use for his glory.

Verses 23-26 explain how we should deal with problems in God's house, so that there might not be strife and contention. □ — Phil Lovelace is pastor of First Church, Somerville.

■ the leaders

■ **David Q. Byrd**, a past president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, has been named dean emeritus of Boyce Bible School, a division of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Byrd was dean of Boyce from 1978 until his retirement in 1989.



HOLDING THE 1996 King-Hampton Award of Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, she received is Faye Hubbard, secretary in the women's center there. She is the wife of Ken Hubbard, TBC president, and pastor of First Church, Symrna. The award is given to an individual who contributes to the status of women.

He was pastor of West Jackson Church. The school provides ministerial training for non-college graduates.

■ **First Church, Flintville**, has called **Clive G. Bell** as pastor.

■ **Nelson Turner**, former minister of music and youth, Haywood Hills Church, Nashville, has been called as minister of music, youth, and children, Gamaliel Church, Gamaliel, Ky., effective Jan. 14. Turner has served with the Home Mission Board and on church staffs for 18 years. He also has been a public school teacher.

■ **Ronnie Coleman**, pastor, Bethel Church, Henderson, has been called to the staff of New Bethlehem Church, Dyer.

■ **Carl Strickler**, pastor, Lynn Garden Church, Kingsport, was honored Feb. 11 for 25 years of service there.

■ **Horace Jones** of Rutledge has been called as pastor of Head of Richland Church, Bean Station. He is a former pastor of the church.

■ **Berclair Church, Memphis**, has called **John Hamilton**, a foreign missionary, as pastor, effective March 3. Hamilton served the Foreign

Mission Board in the Leeward Islands.

■ **Lew Reynolds**, state coordinator for prayer, has recently led a Prayer for Renewal and Spiritual Awareness Conference at Highland Park Church, Lawrenceburg, and Inskip Church, Knoxville. He also led a conference on how to start a church prayer ministry at the State Deacon Leadership Conference in Knoxville March 1-2.

■ **Riverview Church, Bean Station**, has called **Terry Winstead** of Meldrum Church, Middlesboro, Ky., as pastor. He is a former pastor of the church. **Dwight Bull**, former pastor, resigned after three years of service.

■ the churches

■ **Blue Springs Church, Rutledge**, will hold revival April 14-17. **Ronnie Coleman**, pastor, New Bethlehem Church, Dyer, will speak. **Jane Greene Johnson**, recording artist of Morristown, will present music.

■ **John Bramlett** of Memphis, former professional baseball and football player and

author of *Taming the Bull*, will speak March 12 at Cannon County high school, March 13 at a rally sponsored by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Brotherhood of **First Church, Woodbury**, held at the church, and March 14 at **Burt Church, Woodbury**, and **First Church, Gordonsville**.

■ **The Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir of First Church, Kingsport**, will perform March 21 at First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge, at noon. It is participating in a Lenten recital concert series at the church.

■ **Indian Ridge Church, Blaine**, will hold revival beginning March 25. **Jerry Vittatoe**, pastor, Clear Springs Church, Corryton, will speak.

■ the associations

■ The annual Single Celebration sponsored by **Knox County Association** will be March 9 at 7 p.m. at the Tennessee Theater in Knoxville. It will feature **Cindy Morgan**, recording artist of Knoxville, **Dave Edwards** of Oklahoma, **Matt Hinkin**, meteorologist

with WATE-TV, and Christian Music Connection Praise Band. A fellowship dessert will follow the celebration. **Tony Connors**, adult singles pastor, Calvary Church, Knoxville, is chairman of the event.

■ the schools

■ **Suzanne Matheny**, dean of student affairs at **Belmont University, Nashville**, was recently promoted to vice president for administration and planning.

Training for work with children, bus ministry set

For Baptist and Reflector

The Tennessee Baptist Convention will host the Smoky Mountain Bus Ministry Training Center and Specialized Conferences for Children's Workers March 22-24 at Mount Olive Church, Knoxville.

The training, which will begin Friday evening, will feature **Larry Lewis**, president, Home Mission Board, Atlanta. Other leaders include **Ken Carter** of the HMB; **James Eaves**, professor emeritus, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and **Tom Lee**, interim administration and education director, Central Church, Oak Ridge.

Other leaders are **Billy Vinson**, minister of bus evangelism, Whitesburg Church, Huntsville, Ala.; **Joan Clark**, minister of childhood education, Central Church, Bearden, Knoxville; **Doyle Landers**, minister of outreach, Mount Olive Church, Knoxville; and **Susan Nally**, children's division director, Crieveview Church, Nashville.

For more information, contact the **Liz Lee** of the TBC at (615) 371-2054. □



PAUSING DURING THE CONSTITUTION SERVICE of Bread of Life Church, Lyles, are, from left, **William Gray**, director of missions, Stewart County and Truett associations; **David Watts**, pastor, Bread of Life Church; and **Shelby Smith**, TBC church starter strategist. The service was held Jan. 14. Sponsoring the congregation was Fellowship Church, Dickson. The congregation has been meeting for three years.



PRESENTING A GIFT OF \$100,000 to **Walter Grubb**, left, president, **Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy** and its **King's Academy, Seymour**, is **Earle Stair** of **Seymour**, executor of the estate of **George Edison** and **Frances Getty Smith** of **Bristol, Va.** With **Stair** is her husband, **John**, who is a retired pastor. The gift is a challenge donation and is allocated to student financial aid and physical plant improvements.

Tennessee Sampler ■ views, insights

Christians in opposition

By **Tal Thompson**, director of missions Holston Association

The most interesting thing happens when I point a finger of accusation at someone else. Three point back at me.

I was reminded of that fact, again, during our recent opposition to the rock concert held in Viking Hall.

In reading the newspapers, I realized this was one of those volatile times when the Christian community publicly confronts philosophies and mindsets that are, what we feel, bad for our society. The good thing is that we get to carry on some sort of dialogue with

those who may not be Christians.

How those outside our Christian family feel about us was graphically reflected in the letters to the editor in most of our local newspapers. It was very obvious that we talk about each other more than with each other.

When we as Christians express deep concern on a moral issue, we must do so in such a way as to not build walls, but bridges. In some cases, this may be the only time a person will hear a positive witness: when locked in controversy with the Christian community.

Harsh words, a spirit of anger, or words spoken in haste can surely do no more than divide.

A Scripture passage that has had a

calming effect on me over the years is found in **Ephesians 4:29**: Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth (or pen), but only such a word as is good for the edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.

When a person writes a letter castigating the Christian community, it is usually a reflection of a bad experience that person had with a Christian sometime in their past. Rather than react out of anger to what that person has written, we must remember we may have the opportunity to make a positive influence on the lives of those disenchanted by the way we respond. We are here as reconcilers!

I personally do not like controversy. But I am convinced the Lord allowed us to be involved in this most recent episode for our benefit — so we could grow in his grace. Yes, I'm afraid I pointed my finger at several people. But there they were, those three fingers, pointing right back at me!

Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person, **Colossians 4:6**. □ — A Jan. 30 Rally of Concern drew 3,500 to Bristol to express opposition to a performance by the rock music group, **White Zombie**, at **Bristol's Viking Hall**. The city council of **Johnston City** denied the group use of its civic center.