

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

Volume 162 / Number 31

Statewide Edition

August 7, 1996

this week's news

► Baptists dedicate new facility in McMinnville — Page 2



DEDICATING FACILITY

► Search process announced for head of new SBC agency. — Page 3

■ SBC Cooperative Program receipts up for year-to-date. — Page 3

► Tennessee team ministers at Olympic equestrian site. — Page 6

► Pastor's example leads to large gift for HCBA. — Page 7

■ Other groups join in challenging Disney Company. — Page 10

MOVING? Cut out and mail address label and new address to *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 726, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024

900-00410-0127
* HISTORICAL COMMISSION
* 901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 400
* NASHVILLE TN 37203

Southern Baptists extend North Korean project

By Mark Kelly
For Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptists have shipped almost two dozen containers of food and given hundreds of thousands of dollars to help stave off the starvation that threatens up to five million North Koreans.

The response has been strong enough to allow the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to release another \$350,000 to the North Korea relief project.

To date, 23 containers of food — each carrying 450 boxes of rice, beans, noodles, and other nonperishables — have been shipped to North Korea by Baptist state conventions,

including Tennessee, said Bill Cashion, director of the FMB's human needs office. One other container is being prepared for shipment.

"We've had a very good response from state conventions and individuals and even overseas Baptists," Cashion said.

The \$350,000 allocated July 23 will provide rations that, combined with the containers of food, will feed the city through the end of this summer and beyond, Cashion said. Extending the aid was necessary because the starvation threat in the country continues to worsen, he added.

North Korea's first harvest after last year's catastrophic floods will be meager at best. New flooding is expected to de-

stroy most of this year's harvest. Before this year's floods, up to five million people already faced starvation, the International Red Cross estimated. Young children reportedly were getting only about a third of the calories they need.

The meager diets leave children and the elderly vulnerable to disease. Outbreaks of diarrhea and measles have been reported.

In isolated northern mountain villages and rural areas, people have been subsisting on grass and roots, even soil, said a Korean-American Christian who has seen the suffering firsthand.

The FMB, Woman's Missionary Union, and Brotherhood Commission challenged

Southern Baptists to meet the dire needs in North Korea.

Leaders in Baptist state conventions organized campaigns to fill shipping containers with food. Congregations, including many Korean Baptist churches in the United States, gave offerings for hunger relief.

"People have responded to this need out of compassion for the suffering and obedience to our Lord," Cashion said.

"We think about the love Christ had for us, and it overflows into love for others.

"Our prayer is that North Koreans will recognize we are doing this for no other reason than to share the message that God loves them and cares for them," Cashion said. ■

Costa Rica missionaries ask for prayer following hurricane

By Susie Argil
For Baptist and Reflector

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — Last week Hurricane Cesar ripped through Central America, leaving behind massive destruction in the south zone of Costa Rica.

As a result of the natural disaster, approximately 30 people were killed. Due to major flooding and mudslides in the area, the roads leading to the south zone have been destroyed or are impassable.

Missionaries and national Baptists are working together with other evangelical groups to coordinate relief efforts. Food

and clothing will be flown into the town of San Isidro, where the local Baptist pastor will meet the plane and distribute the supplies.

Missionary Bill Egbert, church planter in the south zone, is working with local Baptist leaders in the relief effort. One area that suffered major damage is Cortez City. Egbert is coordinating relief efforts to help the people there.

They are already beginning to feel the effects of food shortages, Egbert noted, reporting there is no sugar or flour and the stores are limiting how much rice each family can buy.

Tennessee Baptists, if approval is given at the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention this fall, will begin a partnership with Costa Rican Baptists next year.

Costa Rica missionaries are asking Tennessee Baptists to pray for the hundreds of Costa Ricans who are suffering as a result of the hurricane.

Pray for the relief ministry that it will be effective in reaching needs and leading people to Christ and also for the Egbert family as they minister to the many hurting people in the area where they live. ■
— Argil is a missionary in Costa Rica.

B&R Day set for Aug. 18

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — *Baptist and Reflector* Day in Tennessee Baptist churches is Aug. 18 on the calendar.

Traditionally, churches devote some time to observe the occasion. Some churches, especially non-subscribers, order extra copies for that day, to distribute to visitors, members, and shut-ins.

It's not too late to order copies of the Aug. 14 issue. Requests for extra copies must be received here by Aug. 9. Call (615) 371-2003.

The *Baptist and Reflector* is the official newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. *B&R*

TBC giving increases in July

For Baptist and Reflector

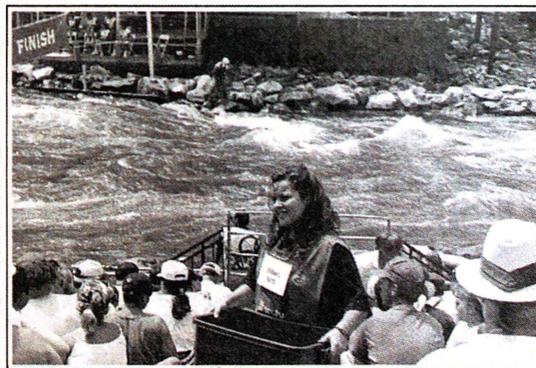
BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists gave \$2,578,769 to the Cooperative Program in July, an increase of \$759,880 over July a year ago.

The amount also is more than \$765,000 over the \$1,813,638 received from TBC churches in June.

For the year-to-date, Tennessee Baptists have given \$21,458,050 to the Cooperative Program.

TBC Executive Director James Porch said he is grateful for the good report.

"We trust that this pattern of disciplined and sacrificial giving will continue," Porch added. *B&R*



Ministry on the Ocoee

Summer missionary Stephanie Franklin sells drinks to spectators of the Olympic Canoe/Kayak Slalom events July 26 at Ocoee as part of Tennessee-based Baptist ministries during the sports events. Franklin, a recent graduate of Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, who is from Ocoee, and some 200 other youth led ministries the week of the Olympics which were directed by Andy Jordan of Polk County Association. See next week's issue for Olympic coverage.

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
- **Subscribe to the *Baptist and Reflector*** for one year and receive 50 copies. Family or individual subscription — \$7.50, clubs of 10 or more subscriptions — \$7.25, church (more than 50 percent of families) — \$6.50. Send check/money order to address below.
- **To contribute a news item**, call or write Editor Wm. Fletcher Allen; Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor; or Connie Davis, assistant editor.
- **To advertise** — Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor or editor.
- **For billing and subscription list questions** — Betty Williams, bookkeeper
- **For information about trial subscription plan** for church or association edition — Editor Allen, Lonnie Wilkey, Connie Davis, or Susie Edwards, administrative secretary
- **For information about local church edition** — The Editor, or Mary Nimmo, church pages coordinator
- **For production answers** — Lonnie Wilkey or Connie Davis
- **Publisher** — Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board
- **Board of directors:** Frank Hawkins, chairman; Russ Dunham vice chairman; Charles Anderson, Christine Bess, Hinton Climer, Eugene Cotey, Herbert Higdon, Ken Hubbard, Diane Jordan, Lynn King, Pat Landrum, Paul Medley, Bill Northcott, Charles Parker, Richard Patton, Mike Thrower, Conyer Walker, Gary Watkins, and Ambers Wilson
- **Office** — *Baptist and Reflector*, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
- Mailing address** — P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- Phone** — (615) 371-2003.
- FAX** — (615) 371-2080
- **Membership** — Southern Baptist Press Association
- **Address changes** — *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- **Postmaster** — Periodical postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780)
- **Frequency of issue** — The paper is published weekly except for the weeks of Christmas and Fourth of July.



Printed on recycled paper

Church turns new property into base for ministry

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
Baptist and Reflector

McMINNVILLE — They're not finished yet, but they have made a good start.

Pioneer Community Baptist Church dedicated its renovated sanctuary July 28 with an eye to the future.

The church, formed by a new congregation, bought 1 1/2 acres of land on Old Smithville Road when the city rezoned it in January.

All the buildings of the former Northside Elementary School were on the property. And the cafeteria became the worship center after several months of renovation.

The school relocated several years ago with consolidation.

Donny Stewart, former pastor of Ewtonville Church, led the dedication service.

Speaking with Isaiah 6 as his text, Stewart reminded the congregation of the many opportunities in the immediate for sharing the Gospel. "There are at least 2,500 meters right at our doors," he said.

He urged the church to join him in taking seriously Isaiah's response to God when he said, "Here am I, Lord, send me."



DEDICATION DAY personalities include from left, Bill George, TBC missions department; Pastor Donny Stewart; Lorell Mills, historian; Harold Seals, deacon; Buddy Strickland, Sequatchie Valley director of missions; and Virgil Powell, associational moderator.

The property had been purchased by a local businessman who was unsuccessful in attempting to rezone it for housing. He then turned to the Pioneer Community Church members who agreed to buy it if it could be rezoned for the church. That move was successful. The new work began last winter with about 50 people and has doubled in numbers. One major thrust of the

church ministry will be drama, coupled with emphasis on contemporary worship.

Church members already are hard at work renovating other buildings for manufacturing rooms for puppetry and banner ministry.

They also have structured rooms for rehearsals for both.

Deacon Harold Seals estimates that members have spent at least 5,000 man hours

in renovating work thus far.

The property has about 70,000 square feet that can be put to use after renovation. Class rooms are being used, and the gymnasium is next on the list for overhauling. A lighted softball field is being used also.

Though named for the community, pioneer is a key word in the attitude of the new church in its ministry. *B&R*

Church participation declining, says George Barna

By Marv Knox
For Associated Baptist Press

VENTURA, Calif. — Christian churches must get "back to basics" to reverse a downward spiral of participation, religion pollster George Barna reports.

A dismal array of statistics reveals the nation's churches aren't reaching America for Christ, Barna says in the latest issue of his newsletter, *The Barna Report*.

For example, according to information gathered by the Barna Research Group:

(1) Church attendance is suffering a five-year decline. Only 37 percent of U.S. adults attend church on a given weekend. That's the lowest level in two decades.

(2) Church attendance is dropping among baby boomers and among senior adults. Less than one-third (31 percent) of boomers attend church on a given weekend, compared to half who attended five years ago. Less than half of seniors attend church in a typical weekend, compared to 70 percent in 1991.

(3) Fewer non-Christians are attending church. Five years ago, 53 percent of adults who attended church services said

they were not Christians. Now, that proportion is 38 percent.

(4) Weekly Bible readers have declined precipitously. The percentage of adults who say they read the Bible in a typical week has dropped from 47 percent in 1992 to 34 percent today. The biggest declines have been among married adults and boomers.

(5) The proportion of people who volunteer their time to churches has fallen, even though other non-profit groups have not felt a similar loss.

(6) Financial contributors to churches have decreased by more than 20 percent during the 1990s.

Barna offers three "key shifts in attitude and behavior" to explain the declines.

First, "generational distinctives are significant," he notes. "Baby busters, those in their teens and 20s, ... have not adopted Christianity as their faith of choice. Rather than exhibiting the normal pattern of increasing attendance and involvement in Christian activities as they age, buster participation has remained flat."

Further along the generational spectrum, baby boomers aren't behaving as

their predecessors did.

"Traditionally, church attendance, Bible reading, and charitable giving increase as people move from their mid-40s to their mid-60s," he adds. "Instead, we are seeing a decline in church attendance, Bible reading, and giving among boomers." Reasons cited for the decline include failure of churches to be relevant, to provide good leadership, and to address the needs and satisfactions of adults.

Second, "the distancing of men from Christian practice" has added to the decline, Barna suggests. "The data show that only 28 percent of men attend church services on a typical Sunday — versus 46 percent among women — and they are much less likely than women to read the Bible or to consider themselves to be Christian.

And third, "the turbulence within families has also hindered the growth of Christianity and Christian activity," he says.

"What will it take to restore the church to health?" Barna asks.

"Among the priorities must be a return to the teaching of the basics of the faith," he answers. ■

TBC churches encouraged to observe Aug. 11 as Day of Prayer and Giving

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Aug. 11 has been set aside as a day of prayer and giving to assist African American churches

destroyed by fire. The recommendation to observe the special day of prayer and giving was announced in early July by the Tennessee Baptist Convention Christian Ser-

vices Committee.

Tennessee Baptist churches are encouraged to send their gifts for this cause to the TBC Executive Board. Gifts should be marked: Arson Fund.

Gifts will be forwarded to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, unless designated specifically for Tennessee churches. *B&R*

Search process announced for NAMB head

By Art Toalston
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The process for receiving nominees for president and chief executive officer of Southern Baptists' new North American Mission Board and an overview of qualities sought in the new executive have been released by C.B. Hogue, chairman of NAMB's 13 incorporators.

NAMB, which will become operational at the conclusion of the 1997 SBC annual meeting in Dallas, will replace the current SBC Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission.

Naming the 13-member incorporator group was among steps approved by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 11-13 in New Orleans to implement the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring that includes NAMB's creation and an overall reduction in SBC agencies from 19 to 12.

Key among the NAMB incorporators' duties is the search process for the agency's first president. The incorporator positions were part of NAMB's charter documents; the 13-member group is to act in the agency's behalf until NAMB's initial trustees, to number around 80, are in place in June 1997.

NAMB trustees then will vote on the nominee recommended from the incorporators' search process.

According to NAMB incorporators, the search process includes these guidelines for a person to submit a nominee for NAMB president and CEO:

(1) "The recommender must obtain permission from the person being recommended before a resume is given to the incorporators."

(2) "The resume must be full with applicable education, personal background, and other pertinent data, such as experience, etc."

(3) "The resume should have sufficient worthy and honest references."

Resumes should be sent to Hogue at 41771 Auberry Road, Auberry, CA 93602, or to Hogue in care of the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Suite 750, Nashville, TN 37203.

NAMB incorporators will follow two further guidelines:

(1) "Resumes will be examined by the incorporators and organized according to levels of applicability."

(2) "All resumes will be kept confidential to protect the person nominated and the church or position of employment now held by the nominee."

The incorporators' overview of qualities sought in NAMB's new president and CEO states:

"The primary focus of the president & CEO of the North American Mission Board will be to promote reaching the lost for Christ, planting new churches, doing ministry, and the edification of Christians and churches within North America.

"Therefore, the president & CEO should be a Spirit-filled man of God who meets the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

"The president & CEO must be firmly committed to the Bible as the inspired, authoritative, and inerrant Word of God. He must hold to the historic Baptist doctrines set forth in the *Baptist Faith and Message* and be in agreement with the purpose and mission of The North American Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Convention. The president & CEO should be a strong leader in cooperative relationships between the North American Mission Board and the state conventions.

"The president & CEO should understand and accept the Covenant for a New Century, and the vision for this office as set forth in the bylaws of the North American Mission Board. He must be committed to the mission statements and ministries statements of the North American Mission Board and be willing to lead in a strategy for their fulfillment. ..."

Housing forms available for TBC annual meeting

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Housing forms are now available for the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Nov. 12-13 at Two Rivers Church, Nashville.

Messengers needing hotels for the convention need to use a TBC Housing Application, according to TBC Executive Director James Porch. All requests are being handled by the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Six area hotels/motels have been secured for use by messengers. They are: AmeriSuites, \$79; Days Inn Nashville-Airport, \$55; Holiday Inn Express, \$51; Howard Johnson, \$59; Ramada Inn, \$64; and Shoney's Inn, \$65. Tax should be added to all quoted rates.

Forms must be postmarked no later than Oct. 7. All housing requests must be received by mail or fax using the TBC Housing Application. Reservations after Oct. 10 are to be made directly with the hotel/motel.

Forms are available from local Baptist associations or the TBC Executive Office. ■

Christian coalition suit may have broader impact on advocacy groups

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — In a suit that threatens to have a chilling effect on political activity by issue-advocacy groups, the Federal Election Commission has accused the Christian Coalition of violating federal election laws by illegally spending nearly \$1 million to bolster the failed re-election bid of President George Bush in 1992.

In a civil suit filed July 30, the FEC sued the group, considered to be the nation's largest political group of reli-

gious conservatives, for contributing in-kind more than \$1.4 million, citing in particular the coalition's disbursement of voter guides.

Federal election laws prohibit corporations from contributing money or services to any candidate or political group.

FEC documents allege the Christian Coalition illegally coordinated its endeavors with the campaigns of Sen. Jesse Helms, House Majority Leader Newt Gingrich, Reps. Bob Inglis, R-S.C., and John David Hayworth, R-Ariz., as well as

Oliver North in his bid for U.S. Senate in Virginia — spending money on behalf of the candidates without reporting the expenditures as contributions.

The complaint also claims the group aided the efforts of the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC), a committee which seeks the election of Republicans to the U.S. Senate.

The lawsuit has broader implications than just the operation of the Christian Coalition, suggested a *Washington Post* report, noting many organizations — unions, environmen-

talists, and pro-life and pro-choice groups — have become more involved in the political realm while claiming their activity is only issue-oriented.

"We're going to start seeing a lot more of these kinds of cases," speculated Lisa Rosenberg of the Center for Responsive Politics, according to *USA Today*.

The action was triggered by a complaint made in 1992 by Sue Wrenn, chairman of the Democratic Party of Virginia, calling the Christian Coalition "nothing more or less an arm of the Republican Party; an

arm that has been used to bend and break the law." The Democratic National Committee also complained to the FEC in 1992 the coalition was engaging in "express advocacy" of GOP candidates.

"Christian Coalition has abided by both the letter and the spirit of the law," said Ralph Reed, Christian Coalition executive director. "We are absolutely and totally confident that we will be fully vindicated and the courts will affirm that people of faith have every right to be involved as citizens and voters." ■

SBC Cooperative Program down in July, still ahead for year-to-date

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for the month of July dropped 2.54 percent under the previous year's month but the year's total is 1.5 percent above last year, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

The total for July, \$11,411,336, is \$297,518 below that of July 1995, or a 2.54 percent decrease.

But the SBC's year-to-date

total, from October through July, remains 1.5 percent above the same period for the previous year: \$122,834,012 compared to \$121,023,134, or an increase of \$1,810,878.

Designated gifts for the month of July dropped from the previous year's month: \$4,699,223 compared to \$5,624,435, down \$925,212 or 16.45 percent. However, for the year to date, the 1995-96 year totals are \$133,130,017 compared to the previous year of \$127,328,164, up \$5,801,853 or 4.56 percent. ■

Former BP editor joins Texas convention's news staff

Compiled from news reports

DALLAS — Ken Camp, news writer since 1984 in the office of communications of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has been promoted to news and information coordinator, effective Aug. 1, according to Thomas J. Brannon, director of communications.

Succeeding Camp as news writer is Dan Martin, a veteran editor and writer for Southern Baptist agencies, also effective Aug. 1.

Martin was news editor for Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist Convention's news service, for 10 years before being

fired in 1990 in a dispute with conservative directors over editorial freedom. He was press director for the BGCT office of communications from 1973-76.

"Texas Baptists are blessed to have a team of Camp's and Martin's journalistic skill and Christian commitment serving in their office of communications," Brannon said.

"Both are highly respected among both secular and Baptist media and will continue to advance the Texas 2000 goal by using all available media to create the most favorable atmosphere for sharing Christ with every Texan by the year 2000" Brannon added.

Camp succeeds Orville Scott, who retired July 31 after 35 years with Texas and North Carolina Baptists as writer, editor, and photographer.

A native of Greenville, Texas, Camp earned the bachelor of arts degree from East Texas State University, Commerce, and the master of arts degree in communication from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

In addition to Baptist Press, Martin also has worked for the SBC Home Mission Board and several secular newspapers. ■ — BP & ABP reports



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.
- Attackattacks on character or integrity of any person or group will not be allowed.
- Send original copy. Form letters and 'open' letters will not be published.
- No gossip or rumors; letters must be factual.
- Only one letter in a three-months period per writer are eligible for publication.
- If letter does not confirm, it will be returned.
- Opinions and ideas expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the *Baptist and Reflector* or its staff.



Partnership Prayer Requests

- August**
- 7 — Pray for Fellowship Church, Oxford, Mich., which is without a pastor.
 - 8 — Pray for the family of Mrs. Dave Milligan of a church in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Canada. She died recently.
 - 9 — Pray for the upcoming visit of Jerry Rankin, president of the Foreign Mission Board, to Poland beginning Aug. 31.
 - 10 — Pray for Northfield Hills Church in Troy, Mich., which is without a pastor.
 - 11 — Pray for Tommy Holtzclaw and the Sullivan Association team who will conduct backyard Bible Clubs and do construction Aug. 12-21 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
 - 12 — Pray for the English Language School team, led by Annie Byrd and Jackie Ferguson, who is leading classes in Zyradow, Poland, Aug. 1-15.
 - 13 — Pray for Commerce Pines Church in Michigan which needs a pastor.

From Michigan

Columbia Avenue Church, Pontiac, had a group from Tennessee stay in our education building, July 13-17.

Brother Ed Jent of First Church, Millington, led the group from there. Some worked in two missions of a sister church and some worked in our church. They helped with Vacation Bible School, Backyard Bible Clubs, and surveys. We would have been hard pressed to have these without help. They led worship services on July 14. Some good prospects were located. We have followed up with letters. More follow up is planned.

The group was helpful and courteous, but more importantly, they reflected the spirit of Christ while here.

Our church is an older church (for Michigan), in an inner city location which is declining. The church has been declining also for several years. We have many older people and our physical strength is also declining. We have very few under 50. The young folks certainly were appreciated. Their sweet spirit and enthusiasm has been contagious.

Of 119 children in VBS, six were saved.

Billy B. Cooper, pastor
Columbia Avenue Church
Pontiac, Mich. 48340

World Changers

With the roots of World Changers beginning in the town of Briceville, it is exciting to see Tennesseans still involved and committed to this unique ministry.

This was obvious for the two weeks that the Clinton Baptist Association hosted 800 World Changers and took the responsibility of the association's con-

gregations feeding the youth lunch each day. It was also obvious as the Tennessee Disaster Relief feeding unit prepared the meals for the two weeks each morning and evening. It was great that Calvary Church of Oak Ridge opened its facilities for the project to house the youth.

It is exciting to see so many Baptist youth willing to help change the world, and to see Tennessee Baptists help with the organization and structure so this can happen.

Mari Wiles
Project Coordinator
World Changers
Memphis 38104

Worth reading

I have just read Bill Junker's new book *Contending for the Right to Know: A History of the Southern Baptist Press Association*. It was fascinating reading. I recommend it to every Baptist. It gave me renewed appreciation of the task the editors of our state papers face. It is an impossible task, given the make-up of Southern Baptists. The quote by James F. Cole on page 137 gives some idea of this task: "It would be the better part of wisdom to publish a dozen or more different editions ... every week. One for the fundamentalists, one for the conservatives, and one for the liberals. One for the extremists, one for the reactionaries, and one for the moderates. One for the neurotics, one for the laity, and one for the ministers."

Appendix II is an editorial by Edgar E. Folk, editor, *Baptist and Reflector*, Jan. 5, 1899. The title is *Shall Southern Baptists Divide?* He lists the divisions that existed among Southern Baptists 97 years ago and made a strong plea for unity. This editorial is worth

reprinting today. His last paragraph concludes, "Let there be no unkind reflections cast by some upon others. Let none attempt to injure others. Let us remember that 'we be brethren.' Let us pursue a live-and-let-live policy. 'With malice toward none, with charity for all' let us live together and work together, as we have done for 50 years."

Appendix III is the Report on the Denominational Press to 1901 SBC. The report has meaning for today: "A free press is the greatest possible safeguard to the liberty where-with Christ has made us free ... A free discussion of all denominational matters not only makes for our safety in the long run, but has in it vital corrective elements tending constantly to the cure of its own ills. We are children of the light, and a free press more than any other force in civilization has in it the power to enlighten the world." The report is absolutely correct.

I am a Baptist layman who wants to know — the good and the bad. So I subscribe to several Baptist papers. The Royal Ambassador pledge says in part, "As a Royal Ambassador I will do my best to become a well-informed, responsible follower of Christ." Keep our state press free. Stay informed.

Tom Brown
Murfreesboro 37130

Questions CBF

Will Southern Baptists again be driven by doctrinal deviation and liberal extremism that existed prior to 1979 when godly Bible-believing leaders, led with spiritual insight, initiated measures to rescue SBC from positive further decline? Thank God for these men.

The trend with some SBC

churches is to detour from truth and traditional conservative Baptist values.

This movement stems largely from leadership of dissident CBF, who have tried by every political ploy, means, and measure to regain influence, position, and power in the convention and promoting their own liberal persuasion. They are known and recognized by their political activities, going back as far as the "Gatlinburg Gang."

Some of us are saddened by some local pastors now in churches that were strong SBC Cooperative Program supporters, now place maximum funding emphasizing on the CBF.

This leadership seems to emphasize entertainment more than evangelism. More promotion on the Hollywood/Broadway performance than Gospel persuasion.

CBF has its own convention.

If its initiative and organization is to serve a spiritual purpose, they should pursue that and refrain from devious means to make inroads into SBC. It has taken time, tears, and pursuit to cleanse the SBC of liberal presidents, professors, and trustees, and repave the path to true biblical tradition. We can ill afford to do otherwise. Some of us who are opposed to any portion of our offerings going to CBF have had to find other sources to support missions, evangelism, other churches, or the electronic church, as led.

CBFers we love you, God loves you and desire your work to prosper, but not at the expense of divisiveness and damage to the SBC Cooperative Program, the homogenizing ingredient that bonds 35,000 SBC churches together.

W. T. Barner
Memphis 38111

Should you use a Christian counselor?

families matter

— by Ivy Scarborough, attorney, mediator

With this issue the *Baptist and Reflector* introduces a column written by Ivy Scarborough, a Tennessee Baptist living near Jackson. Scarborough is an attorney and mediator. His articles will be used alternately in the family series along with Paul Barkley's articles.

A native of Jackson, he practices law there, and lives on a farm with his wife, two daughters, and mother. He has written extensively, including a handbook for victims of drunk driving and anti-drunk driving advocates, *Winning Against DUI*. Editor

Question: What can Christians do to avoid settling disputes in the courts? Is there an alternative?

You have asked a good question, one important to the Christian family. Paul said: "If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? ...

the conflict and causes more emotional wounds.

The legal system is bad for dealing with disputes among family members, former family members, and fellow Christians. Divorces and child custody, visitation, and support disputes in the courts damage a family. Christians and churches should and can encourage and develop alternative methods for resolving disputes that are consistent with Christian principles.



SCARBOROUGH

One method that keeps people out of court is mediation. Even if you are already in court, mediation can still be used. The Tennessee Supreme Court has added a new rule giving those involved in a lawsuit or the judge the option of having the dispute

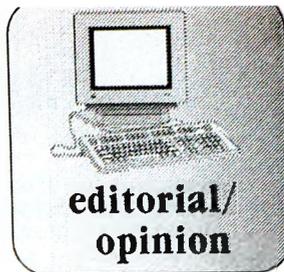
mediated.

A professionally trained mediator is impartial and helps people in dispute reach their own resolution. The mediator cannot force a solution. If a dispute is bitter, a good mediator can often foster a resolution though the people do not believe they can agree.

Mediation encourages cooperative, respectful behavior between individuals in dispute. And it is confidential. Mediation is more economical.

Finally, mediation is fast; courts are slow. Emotional wounds caused by conflict cannot heal until conflict is resolved. It is best to get the conflict behind them quickly. Marriages could be saved and much emotional suffering prevented by using mediation. ■

Everybody now, for the families



Baptists today have more on their minds, as the old adage says, than they can shake a stick at. We often have minds that are "boggled."

Issues and answers, questions and quibbling, they all come when we need them least.

The mental, physical, and emotional drain on Christian families is sometimes overwhelming. Many families and many individuals pay the price of constant stress and pounding opinions.

Turn on the radio. Give the television set a click or two. Read some of the daily newspaper. Visit with school, business, or church groups. Keep your eyes and ears alert in grocery stores and shopping malls.

We are talking more and faster, we are accusing and abusing, we are splintering more rapidly, it seems than at any other time in recent memory.

The knowledge is pumped out in all the areas without a warning label, without excuses, without so much as the simple questions, "Have you had enough of this?" and "Can't you do something about this?"

Most of us at some time recently probably have wanted to scream or shout, "Let me alone, I have heard enough. Please stop talking, I don't want to hear any more."

More and more hours are required to do all the things that seem to be top priority. Schools, the work place, civic affairs, community projects, child care, participating in government as a discerning citizen, entertainment, recreation and vacation, and, let's see, what else?

Oh yes, church and religion.

Families cannot barter time for satisfaction. Those things which we know are important are worthy of

our time and unselfish participation.

Families are of the very highest priority. Not only do parents have to determine whether certain movies are acceptable, or what's the proper age for Sally to begin dating — the urgency of spiritual matters begins at birth, or perhaps earlier.

Churches should be caring for families. And they need that care more when they are outside the walls. Sundays and Wednesdays are not sufficient.

Churches must set the pace, with high standards, for being on call and on duty every hour.

This is what is on the minds of parents. They can make choices about political candidates and what community they want to live in. They can give time to help the schools and their children. But to withstand storms of life, coming from an insensitive and careless world, they need solid support from their church.

And all members have those needs. The weak and the strong, they all need it. Buildings can be replaced. But the spiritual and moral fiber of communities, states, and nations, cannot be restored without great,

sacrificial labor.

It isn't easy to work for family values that are growing weaker each day — but the joy of success is a worthwhile reward. Families are bleeding, and the church of the living Lord can help in the healing.

In Tennessee Baptist churches, there are gifted people that can nourish families through prayer, mentoring engaged couples, help troubled relationships in the repair process, teaching family values, demonstrating family altars, baby-sitting, adopting grandchildren and grandparents, and so on.

So, what's on your mind? As every busy family knows, the questions are endless. Let's get to work, providing answers, and share them on our pages. Let's combine our prayers, know-how, and get on with it.
B&R

Bold invitation: help us celebrate B&R Day

To every church in the Tennessee Baptist Convention, here is an invitation.

We want you to help celebrate *Baptist and Reflector Day*. The editors can talk with the church.

Although this is not the paper's birthday, the occasion is placed on the TBC denominational calendar each year. Sunday, August 18 is the appointed time.

You won't have to provide cake and ice cream, or even balloons.

Many churches already subscribe to their official newsjournal, and many pay for those subscriptions to

church members. For those who have not yet joined the family of subscribers, we urge you to come in from the "cold."

On Sunday, August 18, we ask churches to call attention to the state paper. We ask the pastor or some appointed church member to lead the congregation in a short time of recognition and prayer for the paper and its staff.

The paper serves all Tennessee Baptists. That is our reason for being. That means we'd like for all Tennessee Baptists to be in the family. B&R

Just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Professor in a college philosophy class: "Who can give me a clear, succinct definition of 'life'?"

Student from Pakistan: "Life is not a problem to be solved. It is a mystery to be lived."

Professor: "Excellent. Is that from a teacher in one of the great Eastern religions?"

Student: "No sir. I saw it this morning on a coffee mug in the gift shop."

Take this truth

Often we find profound truth in unusual, even simple places. To learn truth does not require us to travel to far-off places. Neither must we leave our Scriptures to learn moral and spiritual truth. If it is valid truth, it is in God's Word. Find it!

Memorize this Scripture

The entrance to your words gives light (Psalm 119: 130).

Pray this prayer

O Lord, please help me to realize the truth in the saying, "All the sages said is in the books our mothers read."

Sharing guilt — killers and those standing by

I wasn't sure whether to be concerned, nonchalant, or panicky.

Dwight Jackson, missionary guide and host for our small group, assured us this delay was not unusual.

We had been stopped by a small band of uniformed Burundi soldiers. Dwight said they liked to harass foreigners, and we certainly met that classification.

The leader of the group was somewhat belligerent, but a few days earlier Dwight had said they liked to bluster, and intimidate people. Since they were armed with very real-looking weapons, I assumed they were not entirely harmless.

I was nervous.

Dwight stopped the dusty van, stepped out with the proper papers, and satisfactorily answered the questions.

Two soldiers talked with us briefly and then searched the vehicle. It was all over in a quarter of an hour, but it seemed to be much, much longer.

Isabelle Smith told of an experience with her grandchildren. She said, "My husband and I were enjoying an impromptu concert of Sunday School songs from our grandchildren, Jacey, seven, and Jessica, four.

"After they had run through their repertoire, Jacey began making up a song of his own, using Scripture he knew.

"I was impressed. 'Jacey,' I said, 'you've learned a lot of the Bible. Do you know Jesus as your personal Savior?'"

"Before he could answer, his little sister answered, 'How does it go?'"

Indeed, how does it go, for you, for me, for others?

This great question is what our re-

one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Dwight must have endured the same kind of harassment before, since outwardly he seemed unperturbed. He shrugged as he politely handed the soldier-in-charge the van's registration papers. On the other hand, we four visitors reluctantly surrendered our passports.

After a cursory inspection of the documents, the leader handed them back to us. There was an uncomfortable pause as he conferred with his associates.

He impatiently waved us on. Dwight quickly jumped into the driver's seat and moved us along on our journey.

It seemed almost absurd, but Dwight assured us it had been a testy time. He said he was happy that the soldiers didn't change their minds.

Years later I am reminded of that brief

interlude on a mission trip. I am thankful that it was only that, a brief but scary encounter.

And now in that same part of Africa, Burundi and Rwanda, there is constant bloodshed and brutality beyond description. An accurate accounting of deaths and displacement, broken families and unfulfilled dreams will never be made.

The work of the little Baptist churches is almost silenced. But in some places, tiny groups gather. There's an indomitable spirit about the people. Christ is alive.

Death may visit, lives may be lost. The mirth of freedom may be diminished. But somehow, I believe that God's remnant will survive. Some "civilized" people see Africa as a dark continent. No, only the hearts of mankind are dark — the hearts of those who kill and torment, and the hearts of those who stand by and let them.



ALLEN

Question of concern: how does it really go?

think about it

by Bruce Yates, pastor, Dixie Lee Church, Lenoir City

cent Vacation Bible School was all about.

The Lord gave us a wonderful opportunity to share with the children of our church family and our community, how they could come to know Jesus as their personal Savior.

Through songs, Bible stories, and crafts, our teachers and workers earnestly shared the love of Christ with tender, accepting hearts. For many of these children, the week of Vacation Bible School will make an eternal difference.

What is true of the children of Vacation Bible School, is also true of young people and adults in every community.

In their hearts, many of them are asking the question, "How does it go?"

They are seeking the Lord. They need someone to tell them "how it goes."

They need someone to tell them how they may come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord.

Who will tell them "how it goes?" Will you be the one?

Gathering for the outreach ministry will be one way to tell them how it goes.

Let us teach others a new song, the song of the redeemed. ■

Team ministers at Olympic equestrian site

For Baptist and Reflector

CONYERS, Ga. — A team of 26 from Cedar Hill and Adams ministered to athletes, tourists, and residents gathered for the equestrian events of the Olympics in Conyers, Ga., July 14-20.

The Glorifier Mission Team was made up of members of Cedar Hill Church, Cedar Hill, and Red River Church, Adams.

Members ministered in various ways, including using creative arts such as clowning, puppetry, drama, miming, and music.

They also served at hospital sites. The volunteers assisted other AIM '96 (Atlanta

International Ministries) workers through the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

One of the team's responsibilities was to prepare the area for ministry by other Baptists who would come later by interacting with the residents and recruiting them to help in ministry. On July 17 the Glorifiers performed for the crowds of residents and tourists gathered for the Torch Run Celebration.

They were assisted in ministry by witnessing tools including some provided by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. These tools includ-

ed "More Than Gold" pins, New Testaments which emphasized sports and included testimonies of athletes, frisbees which carried the prod-



MEMBERS of the Glorifier Mission Team which served at the equestrian venue of the Olympics in Conyers, Ga., pause during their week of work.



gal son parable and More Than Gold message, and pocket guides.

Bonnie Johnston, a leader of the group, reported that the Glorifiers and other AIM '96 volunteers ask Baptists to pray that the work that God began will continue.

"The race we ran is a race for Jesus Christ, because he is 'More than Gold,'" she said. "We as Christians are Olympians for Christ as we carry the torch ... to the darkness," she explained. **B&R**

Missions efforts of Gray church prevail despite robbery

For Baptist and Reflector

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — When Gene Mermilliod of Gray found out during a stop at a motel here on an annual missions trip June 28 that a truck, which was loaded with supplies, had been stolen, he was shocked, but he and other leaders decided to continue with a planned worship service for the group of volunteers.

Mermilliod, associate pastor, Tri-Cities Church, Gray, helps lead an annual effort of about 100 Baptists from five states to a Navajo reservation at Chinle, Ariz.

With just a few minutes to think about the crisis, the leaders decided to worship rather than talk about it. They didn't even announce it to the group until the time during the service when it seemed appropriate, said Mermilliod. The ensuing prayer time "was awesome," he said.

"We were very hopeful that the Lord was up to something — that this was not a bad thing, but a good thing," said Mermilliod.

Their attitude was remarkable when considering that 120 volunteers depended on the equipment in that truck to lead Vacation Bible Schools for hundreds of children who were expecting them. Baptists

supporting the efforts had invested some \$25,000 in the effort, and the expenses would mount if they continued with their commitments. The equipment included the makings for a tent city for the volunteers. Without the equipment, they would have to stay in motels incurring great expenses. And they would have to replace part of their VBS supplies.

They decided they would continue, reported Mermilliod.

When the local press arrived at the motel wishing to cover the story, Mermilliod was not receptive, he said. However, he answered their questions.

Then the group was notified by the local sheriff's office that the truck had been located. Although ransacked, the tent and cooking supplies and craft materials for the children were left. Also remaining were appliances which were to be donated to the church near the reservation. Personal items and about one-half of the sleeping bags were all that was missing.

The next day their story was reported on the front page of several newspapers in the four-state area, including the *Albuquerque Journal*. And help started pouring in, reported Mermilliod. The group received calls of encouragement and questions about their situation, and donations.

The group's journey was resumed with a sense of awe. When they arrived at the reservation, they incurred some \$10,000 in extra expenses because of the theft, mostly due to two nights in motels. But soon, about \$6-7,000 of that had been offset by gifts from Baptists who heard about it, said Mermilliod. Four churches in Albuquerque gave the group \$2,300 to help with extra expenses.

The Lord worked through the news media, Mermilliod noted, which gave the mission effort "top billing in a four state area." Because of the positive coverage, people provided help, prayed for them, and learned about God, he explained.

The increased prayer support from people in the area and from their homes of Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, and Texas, affected their work.

The team became very unified, he said, and the Lord continued to work. During their work with children in four VBS groups, some 100 of the children made professions of faith.

"It was a great experience, and the best thing about it was how the Lord revealed himself to our mission team and how that came out in the mainstream media. It confirmed to us that God was doing something," said Mermilliod. **B&R**

Union University names Brady as campus minister

For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Union University, Jackson, has named Todd Brady as campus minister. He will direct the Baptist Student Union and supervise student missions and ministry efforts.

Brady comes to Union from Northside Church, Columbia, S.C., where he served as community pastor. Brady also served as pastor of Midway Church, Pernell; minister of youth and activities, First Church, Bolivar; and youth and activities assistant, West Jackson Church, Jackson.

Brady has spoken at youth camps and retreats in several states, including the 1995 Texas Youth Congress.

He is a graduate of Union University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. **B&R**



BRADY

Korean partners of C-N complete studies

For Baptist and Reflector

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman's first visiting class of students from Joonkyoung Sanup University received certificates July 10 to note completion of studies at C-N's English Language Institute (ELI).

The university, which is located in Taejon, Korea, is Carson-Newman's fifth Asian partner in higher education. The college has worked with two schools in China and two other schools in Korea.

C-N Provost Michael V. Carter presented certificates to the 37 Korean students who had completed three weeks of study in American culture and English language. Teachers in the program are gradu-

ate students in C-N's Teaching English as a Second Language program. **B&R**



PARTICIPATING in the ceremony were, from left, Seung Tony Yu and Young-Han Lho of Korea and Michael V. Carter, C-N provost.

Pastor's example leads to \$75,000 gift to school

For Baptist and Reflector

SEYMOUR — When Claude Kelley graduated from Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy in 1948, the thought surely never entered his mind that his leadership would result in a \$75,000 gift to the school nearly half a century later. But in the academy mail in June was an envelope containing a check in exactly that amount, and it can be directly traced to the example of Kelley.

After graduation from Harrison-Chilhowee, whose program for kindergarten through grade 12 is now identified as The King's Academy, Kelley

attended Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City. He then went to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. While a student he served as pastor of Greenway Mission; Mount Harmony Church, Strawberry Plains; Walnut Hill Church, Harri-man; and churches in Kentucky.

In 1962 he was called as pastor of Northwest Missionary Church, Chicago, Ill., which was located in the inner city.

Once, while working at the church, Kelley was shot in the chest during a robbery. The assault occurred while children

attending the church's daycare slept nearby. Kelley recovered, but the church decided to move.

The church moved and became First Church, Glenview, Ill. During the 27 years Kelley led it, members started 21 missions.

During this period, Kelley often referred students to Harrison-Chilhowee. One academy graduate who came from the church was Barry Slaton. When Slaton died at a young age, the church established a memorial fund in his memory for the academy.

Kelley returned to Tennessee in 1990 and after serv-

ing as outreach minister at First Church, Lawrenceburg, retired.

Recently, the Glenview area has suffered an economic decline, due in part to the closing of a nearby military base. After struggling with a declining population, First Church decided to disband. The members voted to sell the church's assets and distribute them to worthy causes. Thus, they sent \$75,000 to the academy, designated as an endowment for student financial aid.

Upon receiving the gift, academy president Walter Grubb said that the academy's staff grieve with the member-



ship of the church in their loss and are humbled by their generosity. He also thanked Kelley for his support of education through his church leadership.

Kelley, reached at his home in Lawrenceburg, commented, "The church wanted to do this. Chilhowee still means a lot to us." B&R



First Church, Hunter, breaks ground

Participating in a groundbreaking ceremony at First Church, Hunter, recently, are representatives of several church ministries, from left, James Ferguson; Cecil Eggers; Dennis Deese, pastor; Loretta Miller; Steve Minton; Lawrence Hodge; and David Whaley. The ceremony launched the building of a 750-seat worship auditorium and observed the second anniversary of a fundraising program which has met a \$48,000 goal.



Presenting \$5,000 to burned African American church

Representatives of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, a rebuilding team from Nashville, local associations, and the government gather for the presentation of \$5,000 to leaders of Mount Pleasant Church, Tigrett, an African American church which was destroyed by fire May 15. The monies were from a collection taken at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention this year. Participating in the presentation are, from left, Mark Edwards, First Church, Nashville; Eugene Johnson, Mount Pleasant; Jerry Essary, Beulah Association; P.E. Lusby, Mount Pleasant; Joe Naylor and Neal Chatham, Dyer Association; Ken Weathersby, TBC; Mack Bellefont, Mount Pleasant; Bill Whitcomb, government official; and James Kinsey, Beulah Association. — Photo by Tom Menees

Pastor retires after 16 years of 'double duty' ministry

By Bill Bargiol
For Baptist and Reflector

WARTBURG — William Keebler, pastor of Liberty Church near Wartburg recently retired after serving 16 years there. It was a sad occasion for church members.

Soon after Keebler began his ministry there, his wife became so ill she was confined to bed. For some 10 years her condition has been such that she required constant personal attention and care.

Keebler and the church had some choices to make. Keebler chose to stand by his wife and provide the care she needed. This greatly limited his ability to conduct other ministries. The church chose to allow him to continue his essential duties as its pastor. Members also helped by providing meals daily and relieving him.

By making difficult choices and working together, the church received the ministries from Keebler it needed and the pastor was able to continue to serve the church and his wife until he reached retirement age.

During these years the church did not struggle or "dry up." Rather, the church has progressed and prospered. ■

—Bargiol is director of missions, Big Emory Association.



NOBTS graduates four Tennesseans

For Baptist and Reflector

NEW ORLEANS — Austin Bennett Amonette of Franklin, Joe Brooks of Cookeville, Wesley C. Thompson of Tullahoma, and Arthur S. Werner, formerly of Chattanooga, earned degrees from New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary July 26.

Amonette, associate youth pastor, Memorial Church, Bogalusa, La., earned the master of divinity degree with a specialization in biblical languages. His home church is Nolensville Church, Nolensville. Brooks, associate pastor, Celebration Church, Metairie, La., received the master of divinity degree. His home church is Big Spring Church, Cleveland. Thompson, a church planter

in Florida, received the master of divinity degree with specialization in pastoral ministries. His home church is First Church, Tullahoma.

Werner, former pastor, New Salem Church, Chattanooga, serves on a church staff in Louisiana. He earned the master of arts degree. ■



AMONETTE



BROOKS



THOMPSON

Memphian accepts unusual role on mission trip

For Baptist and Reflector

MATAMOROS, Mexico — When Gladys Griffin of Memphis agreed to serve as a translator for a mission effort in Mexico, she never dreamed what she would end up doing for a church there.

The retired teacher who is a member of Primera Iglesia Hispana Bautista, Memphis,

agreed to assist a team from Jackson, Miss., with work in Matamoros, Mexico, because she speaks Spanish.

The 50-member team from Pine Lake Church, Jackson, worked with five churches there July 13-20.

Griffin was assigned to a church which she discovered was without a pastor during weekdays. Therefore, although

she had planned to lead art and craft activities, she was asked to deliver the evening messages for the revival the team helped lead.

Each service had big crowds, Griffin reported. A total of 77 people made professions of faith during the services.

Her pastor, Jose A. Zepeda, said the Lord used her in a beautiful way to reach the people who accepted Christ. ■

'Can do' attitude needed in family ministry

By Charles Willis
For Baptist Press

GLORIETA, N.M. — Changes in meeting the needs of today's American family requires a "can do" attitude on the part of deacons, church staff, and laypeople attempting to provide family ministries, according to a state Baptist convention leader.

Gary Bearce, director of church development for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, told participants in a National Conference for Church Leadership he believes deacons and key leaders "can be effective partners with God in caring for families."

Changes among families, he said, include smaller family units with fewer children; more children living with only one parent; many children lacking consistent involvement of a father; and parents and children spending less time together. Others include many single adults living with parents; older Americans living longer; more mothers of children under age 6 working; a decline in the birth rate outside of marriage in part because of abortions; and an increase in poverty among children.

Today's diverse families include fewer traditional families, Bearce said. Other family types which deserve considera-

tion by churches include dual-career, single-parent, step- or blended families, childless families, never married or divorced singles, and widowed.

In offering ministry opportunities to deacons and others in the church, he said, consideration should be given to special ministry needs of hospitalized people and their families, the bereaved, the lonely, the needy, church members in conflict, couples in marital conflict, child-parent conflicts, the uprooted, the unemployed, alcoholics and those with other addictions, and people who suffer depression or despair. Other special needs include people suffering abuse, families having an unusual death, premarital pregnancy, divorce, terminal illness, handicaps, financial stress, and families of homosexuals.

"The Bible uses family images and relationships to convey some of its most profound spiritual revelations," Bearce said.

"Family ministry requires skills to encourage growth in the most intricate human relationship God created. If you have encountered God in times of trouble, that equips you to minister to others in times of

trouble."

Relating the seven realities of the *Experiencing God* study to family ministry needs and opportunities, Bearce said what people believe about God will affect what they believe about ministry to families and how effectively they discover needs and minister. *Experiencing God* is the popular discipleship course produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division. The seven realities include:

(1) Acknowledge God is always at work around you — in your family, your church, your community, and your world.

(2) God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal. If you do not accept the love he offers you, you cannot serve as an instrument of God's love in ministry to families.

(3) God invites you to become involved with him in his work.

(4) God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal himself, his purposes, and his ways.

(5) God's invitation for you to work with him always leads you to a crisis of belief that re-

quires faith and action. What you do in response to God's invitation determines what you really believe about God.

(6) You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what he is doing in ministering to families.

(7) You come to know God by experience as you obey him and he accomplishes his work through you.

Bearce said many churches have to overcome hurdles of skills, attitudes, differing views of ministry and application, lack of priority, and fear of needed adjustments to minister effectively to families.

"Family ministry never arrives," he said.

"You have to be continually looking for what God is up to and continually preparing yourself."

For those who want to be effective ministers to families, Bearce recommended being yourself, listening, withholding judgment, declining to make decisions for others, using referrals for situations beyond your abilities, and praying with the person or family.

National Conferences for Church Leadership, July 12-15 and July 15-19 at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, focused training on leadership, ministry, and worship and were sponsored by the BSSB's church leadership services division. ■



for your family

Says BSSB consultant

Leading small churches requires understanding

By Chip Alford
For Baptist Press

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Leading a small church to grow first requires understanding its unique characteristics, a church leadership consultant from the Baptist Sunday School Board told a group of church leaders attending National Sunday School Leadership Training July 29-Aug. 2 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Barry Campbell of the board's pastoral leadership department said there are currently about 22,000 Southern Baptist congregations classified as "small churches."

That means they have a church membership of less than 300, a Sunday School enrollment of less than 150 and a Sunday School attendance of less than 100. Including congregations from denominations other than Southern Baptist, Campbell said about 250,000 churches nationwide fall into the small church category.

And while each is unique, they do share some common characteristics, he said.

"Primarily, they are single-cell entities," Campbell, author of the book, *Unleashing the Power of the Small Sunday School*, explained. "When there's a meeting, everybody goes. When there's an

event, it's for everyone."

Decision-making in small churches has been compared to a "family chapel," where everyone gets involved but power is limited to one strong leader or a handful of influential members.

"Usually, there is one person who is very powerful and it can be a matriarch or a patriarch. A lot of church business is taken care of in advance of the business meeting (through these leaders)," Campbell said.

Members of this power base can come from the church deacons or officers, the nominating or finance committees, or families who have been members for many years, he said.

In his early days as a pastor, Campbell said he often viewed these powerful leaders as the "enemy."

"But 95 percent of the time, they are not the enemy," he said. "They are simply people who have had authority thrust upon them. Often it's because they have been willing to do things no one else was willing to do."

Pastors, too, can be very powerful in small churches, Campbell said, especially those who have a long tenure with one church. On the other hand, many small churches are used to pastors staying only a few years, so they avoid giving him too

much power, he added.

Those called to lead small churches must also understand that their history is very important to these congregations.

"You must understand their stories; know where they've been and what they're about," Campbell said.

Other common characteristics of small churches, he said, include:

(1) A strong emphasis on relationships.

(2) Limited resources. "They usually, though not always, have less money. ... But in some ways they have unlimited resources because they can offer an intimacy that a larger church usually can't match."

(3) They are much more comfortable with projects or events than ongoing processes or programs.

"Homecomings and special events like that are very important to these churches," Campbell said. "I don't think we need to fight against them or overcome them; we need to go with them."

National Sunday School Leadership Training is sponsored by the Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division.

Eleven training sessions were held this summer at Ridgecrest, Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center and Green Lake (Wis.) Conference Center, drawing more than 10,000 church leaders. ■



focus on
churches

End church debt, pastor urges in book

Baptist Press

DOTHAN, Ala. — The national debt. Credit card debt. Business loans. Car loans. Mortgages. Debt is common among people of all ages, races, economic backgrounds, and social classes across the United States — even churches and that concerns pastor and author Rodney Culpepper.

Culpepper, pastor of Cloverdale Church, Dothan, Ala., used his interest and experience in the area of debt reduction to write *Breaking the Cycle of Debt: A Cutting Edge Approach to Church Stewardship*.

"There are hundreds of books and articles and seminars about families going into debt, but there's very little about churches and why churches should operate with the same kind of standards," Culpepper said.

Culpepper cites data from the Baptist Sunday School Board showing Southern Baptist churches were more than \$2 billion in debt at the end of the 1993 fiscal year. Based on average interest rates, Southern Baptist churches are paying more than \$182 million a year in interest payments alone, he said.

One of the main reasons Culpepper is concerned about church debt is it seems "to put more trust in what people can do than in what God can do."

Culpepper said while the decision to go into debt varies from situation to situation and from church to church, there are some questions the church should ask, including: has the church gone into debt before and has money been budgeted into savings to prepare for future building.

By asking these questions and others, a church can determine whether it has adequately planned for a building project and is ready to proceed, said Culpepper. ■

people

■ **Stones River Church**, Smyrna, ordained **Stanley Barnes** and **Steve Hicks** as deacons July 28. A reception was held in their honor.

leaders

■ **James Cambron**, pastor, Mountain View Church, Johnson City, will retire Aug. 25 after serving in full-time ministry more than 40 years. He and his wife, Margaret, will be honored Aug. 25 by the church from 3-6 p.m. Cambron is the first and only pastor of the Mountain View church, where he has served 10 years. He also has served as pastor of Southwestern Church, Johnson City; church planter and pastor in Illinois; and pastor of Cherokee Church, Jonesborough; Clark Street Church, Johnson City; and Fall Street Chapel, Johnson City.

■ **Ken Altom** has been called as pastor of New Hope Church, Raleigh, N.C., effective Sept. 1. He was pastor of First Church, Cookeville, for more than 10 years, and is a member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board.

■ **Beverly Hills Church**, Memphis, has called **Toby Robinson** as minister of youth/education. He is a graduate of Union University, Jackson.

■ On Aug. 25 **Hugh Vancel** will celebrate his 90th birthday by preaching during the morning worship service at Dogwood Heights Church, Tazewell. Vancel has led 33 churches in five different states as pastor. His story is told in the book, *Cumberland Gap's Hillbilly Preacher Hugh Vancel*, which is published by Providence House Publishers of Franklin. A luncheon will follow the worship service.

■ **Beaver Dam Church**, Knoxville, has called **Luckey Steele** as minister of youth

and young adults, effective Aug. 19, rather than as minister of youth and education, as reported in last week's edition.

■ **Ed Gardner**, pastor of Philadelphia Church, Waynesboro, has resigned after three years of service. He is available to do supply, interim, or other evangelistic work and can be reached at P.O. Box 984, Waynesboro, 38485, (615) 722-3833.

churches

■ The exceptional department of **Beverly Hills Church, Memphis**, which ministers to mentally handicapped people celebrated its 35th anniversary July 21. Over 500 people participated in the recognition.

■ **Grace Church, Nashville**, will hold revival Aug. 18-21. Phil Glisson, evangelist of Memphis will speak.

■ **First Church, La-vergne**, had a record-setting Vacation Bible School July 22-26. The enrollment was 364 and average attendance was 235. An offering of \$268.19 was collected for missionaries.

■ **New Friendship Church, Cleveland**, will do mission work in Heyworth, Ill., working with First Church there and TriValley Church in Downs. They will lead Vacation Bible School, a park ministry, and a revival. This is the third year the church has worked there. The church also held outdoor services on Sunday evenings this summer. Each service featured an aspect of the church's ministry.

■ The Gathering, a contemporary worship service of **First Church, Nashville**, will begin meeting at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday beginning Aug. 25.

associations

■ **Holston Association** will hold a national Continuing Witness Training seminar Aug. 29-30 at Guaranda Drive Church, Johnson City, from 8:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. For more information, call the association at (423) 929-1196.

the schools

■ **Aubrey A. Carlton**, a retired pastor of Lenoir City, has been named the 1996 Male Alumnus of the Year by the alumni association board of **Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy (King's Academy)**, Seymour. Patricia Ann Sharp Jones of Texas was named as the distinguished female recipient. Carlton, 89, retired from Calvary Church, Lenoir City. He served as minister of senior adults, First Church, Lenoir City, and as an interim pastor following retirement.



Tennessee features

■ The enrollment of summer school at **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**, set a record at 917. The school has five summer sessions.

the hospitals

■ **Baptist Hospital, Nashville**, named its conference center the **Guy E. Bates Sr.**, Conference Center June 12 in honor of the hospital's chairman of the board, **Guy E. Bates Sr.** of Whites Creek who is a member of **First Church, Joelton**. Bates has served the hospital's board of trust for 16 years and as chairman the last seven.



ACTEENS from **First Church, Ashland City**, pause before they leave to work with **Appalachian Outreach of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**. Team members include, first row, from left, **Callie Jo Hamlin** and **Alison Stone**; second row, **Rochelle Fuller**, director; **Andrea Stone**; **Jennifer Laine**; **Whitney Craig**; and **Melissa Tomlinson**; third row, **Teresa Basham**, leader; **Tashina Thompson**; **Mandy Smith**, counselor; **Allison Creed**; and **Kari Foust**. They cleaned, repaired, and painted a home to help a needy family. The group does missions work away from home annually.



PLANTING a pear tree in memory of the late **Mike Powers**, missionary and pastor of **First Indian Church, Ripley**, on the last day of Vacation Bible School at the church are, from left, **Shawn Powers**, son of the missionary; and **Trumann Bell**, **Eric Bell**, and **George Bell** of the church. Members of **Gateway Church, Atoka**; **Walnut Grove Church, Ripley**; and **First Church, Ripley**; helped lead the VBS attended by 53 children and youth.



Tennessee samplers

News from the folk

By **Jerry Winfield**, pastor
Forest Hills Church, Nashville

I talk to people and people talk to me. I suppose it goes with the job. When people talk to me, I try to listen — especially when they are talking about our church. You would be sur-

prised at what people are saying. For instance, some people who have been visiting for a long time recently told me that they were ready to take the step of church membership. They said that they felt at home here and that, after looking in several other places, they believed that the Lord had directed their family to this place. Now, that's talk I like to hear. They used words like friendly, accepting, loving, and caring to describe the reception they had received.

However, not everyone is saying the same thing. I recently heard someone say that they had visited several adult Sunday School classes, one particular class several times, and no one from those classes had contacted them. Luckily, contact had been made through the office and the regular

church outreach channels, and thankfully they are still coming and probably will join. I also heard a family say that they were waiting for someone from the staff to contact them — which we immediately did — before they would consider making this their church home. When I hear these kinds of comments, all I can say is "Ouch!"

My point is this. We are blessed with large numbers of guests each week. They deserve our best efforts in making them feel welcome, and we need to make sure they know we are glad they chose to worship with us. Many of these people are looking for a church home, and some are even looking for the Savior. We must diligently strive to always be friendly and open to those who are seeking. People are our business, and outreach is our strategy for

sharing with them about our Lord and our church.

This coming Sunday, you will have the opportunity to participate in an "Outreach Blitz." I encourage every one of you to participate and help us contact those whom the Lord has sent our way. After all, would you have joined **Forest Hills** if someone hadn't welcomed you and made you feel at home? ■

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

Southern Baptists aren't alone in challenging Disney Company

By Art Toalston
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Southern Baptist Convention isn't a voice crying in the wilderness in its protests of the Walt Disney Company's drift from family values.

Add the National Association of Free Will Baptists. And the Oklahoma State Church of God Ministerial Fellowship.

And the executive board of the Assemblies of God. And *Texas Catholic*, the newsjournal of the Catholic Diocese of Dallas.

And *Charisma* magazine, the leading periodical of the charismatic movement.

The National Association of Free Will Baptists, encompassing 2,500 churches with 250,000 members, unanimously adopted a resolution July 25 during its annual meeting in Fort Worth, Texas, stating:

"Whereas, we are dissatisfied with the direction of the Walt Disney Corporation concerning their support and approval of homosexuality, which we consider a perverted lifestyle and a sin against God,

"Be it resolved that the National Association of Free Will Baptists go on record encouraging our churches to boycott their products and inform the Disney Corporation of our action."

The Disney resolution was the initial recommendation of

a resolutions committee to 6,771 delegates attending the annual Free Will Baptist meeting, said Jack Williams, editor of the denomination's national publication, *Contact*.

Two days earlier, the Oklahoma State Church of God Ministerial Fellowship voted unanimously to adopt the Southern Baptist Convention resolution as its own. The fellowship encompasses about 100 Oklahoma ministers affiliated with the Anderson, Ind.-based Church of God.

The fellowship additionally resolved to send a copy of its stance to all Church of God congregations in Oklahoma; to the Church of God's Leadership Council in Indiana; to all state assemblies of the Church of God in North America; to the editor in chief of Warner Press, the denomination's publishing house — and to Michael Eisner, Disney's chairman and CEO.

The fellowship action was initiated by P. Roger Brewer, pastor of First Church of God, Seminole, Okla., and formerly a pastor in Garden Grove,

Calif., who lived within two miles of Disneyland.

"We always thought you could trust and respect what they were producing," Brewer said, "but with the new things that are being produced, I was concerned about what my grandchildren are going to see." Eliminating Pocahontas' conversion to Christianity in its recent animated feature, for example, is one of many evidences of Disney's agenda "to make it say what you want it to say," he said. Brewer also was director of curriculum development for Warner Press from 1979-89 and a 1968 graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., with a master of religious education degree.

Brewer said his son intended to make a career of Disney after finishing college, but he left the company after three years, "disillusioned with the direction Disney was taking with the theme parks" once Eisner became chairman and CEO.

On other fronts:

■ A month before the SBC

action, the executive board of the Assemblies of God officially canceled the denomination's participation in the Disney theme park promotional, "Magic Kingdom Club."

George Wood, general secretary of the Assemblies of God, wrote to Eisner, stating: "For over 20 years, our denominational headquarters has ... promoted visits to the Disney theme parks by providing membership cards to hundreds of our employees, as well as thousands of our churches and 2 1/2 million members as places they can visit knowing their family moral values will not be impinged." That support is no longer possible in light of Disney's promotion of homosexuality, Wood wrote, citing the company's assistance to annual "gay and lesbian days" at its theme parks; a book for teens, *Growing Up Gay*, embracing the homosexual lifestyle, published by Disney-owned Hyperion Press; and Disney subsidiary Miramax's film, "Priest," about a homosexual clergyman.

A news release of Wood's

letter was forwarded to the 56 district bulletins mailed monthly to pastors in the Assemblies of God, a denomination numbering 2.5 million members in 11,800 churches.

■ *Texas Catholic*, the newsjournal of the Catholic Diocese of Dallas, with a circulation of 75,000, editorialized June 28 in support of the SBC Disney resolution, noting: "... we applaud the Baptists for getting the message sent loud and clear to Disney."

■ The publisher of *Charisma* magazine, Stephen Strang, also editorialized in support of the SBC Disney resolution in the August issue of the Orlando-based periodical, with a circulation of 225,000.

"By standing with our Southern Baptist brothers and sisters, we can show Disney that Christians expect them to be part of the solution to the moral decay in America — not part of the problem," Strang wrote, describing Disney as a company "with an increasing tendency to produce any kind of movie or product it thinks will make a buck." ■

Volunteer Wanted

400-member church has 1-year opportunity for retired minister of education to participate in church growth project, provide staff leadership to church educational program, 30 hrs. weekly, BA or MA in Religious Education. \$10,000 housing, plus small stipend. Send resume to FSEC, 761 Little Creek Rd., Dover, DE 19901 (302) 678-3130

Music & Youth Position

Full-time music and youth director; experience needed; must have love for lost souls. Send resumes to: Calvary Baptist Church, 1601 Chickasawba, Blytheville, AR 72315, Attn: Pastor.

CHURCH FURNITURE

Finest Construction

Lowest Prices

Free Estimates

Plain or Padded

BAPTISTRIES,

STEEPLES, WINDOWS

"Refinishing,

Upholstering,

Cushioning Your

Present Pews"

Toll Free

1-800-365-2568

1-615-359-3075

CISCO

P.O. Box 1068

Lewisburg, TN 37091

Associate Pastor and Ministries Director

Dynamic missions-minded church under expansion to meet community needs, seeks an Associate Pastor-Ministries Director. Candidate must be ordained, with preaching-teaching skills and able to provide overall leadership for planning and directing educational programs and community ministries. Minimal educational requirements: M.Div. and five years experience.

Send resumes with references to:

Personnel Committee
Guilford Baptist Church
4800 Mountline Drive
Greensboro, NC 27409

Church Buses

- We rent new buses!
 - We buy used buses!
 - Guaranteed buy back!
- Call Henry Headden
Carpenter Bus Sales
Brentwood, Tenn.
1 (800) 370-6180
1 (615) 371-6180

BOWLING UNITED INDUSTRIES
Manufacturers Baptistries Signs
TOLL FREE 1-800-446-7400
FAX: 804-822-2210 Steeples
P.O. Box 2250 • Danville, VA 24541

L.L. Sams
Our company proudly carries the name of our founder, L.L. Sams, a Southern Baptist pastor. It has been our privilege to serve Southern Baptists since 1958.
• pews • pulpits • furniture • stained glass • educational furniture • carpet • painting • more than 200 complete CHURCH RENOVATIONS
FREE BROCHURES CALL 1-800-537-4723
P.O. Box 1438 Wood, TN 37070

ADD-A-PAD CUSHION
• Seat Only
• Seat & Back
A very economical solution to hard pews. Separate seat and back are permanently attached. Comfortable poly foam cushion in beautiful Scotch Guard Nylon.
Can be installed without interruption.
P.O. Box 399
Trenton, TN 38258,
1-800-651-8161
901-669-3364
Central Church Furnishings



Available in 20' to 33' models
(12 to 38 Passenger, New and Used)

LITTLE GIANT MFG. CO.
BAPTISTRIES
WATER HEATERS
STEEPLES
CROSSES
Buy Directly from Manufacturer
Box 518 Orange, Texas
TOLL FREE 1-800-231-6035

Call for Free
BAPTISTRIES
HEATERS, PUMPS
FACTORY DIRECT
TOLL FREE NATIONWIDE
1-800-281-0679
FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.
3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

Bibles Rebound
Specialty Bookbinding
709 Magnolia Ave.
Gadsden, AL 35903
• Other valuable books restored.
Call Toll-Free 1 (800) 631-5015

A & O CHURCH FURNITURE
4871 HARVEY RD. • P.O. BOX 1053
JAMESTOWN, NORTH CAROLINA 27282
— PEW —
UPHOLSTERING
1 (800) 523-9058
NC 1 (800) 222-7895
REFINISHING

Call toll-free anytime ... 1-800-473-6688
We're built on a strong foundation of over 3800 churches.
Church Interiors of Nashville
New PEWS REFINISHING UPHOLSTERING
Stained Glass Steeples Baptistries Loose Reversible Cushions
Lighting and Complete Renovations
Free Estimates and Interior Design Consultation

Holy Land Tour
Tour the Holy Land with evangelist Henry Linginfeller. 8-day, all Israel tour, Nov. 22-29, only \$1,989 (from Newark), optional extension to Egypt, Nov. 19-23, only \$495.
For free color brochure, call or write:
Henry Linginfeller
1848 Nobel Street
Alcoa, TN 37701
(423) 982-2661 or 983-8968

Henry Linginfeller

Classified

ORGANIST: Tulip Grove Baptist Church is seeking a church organist. If interested, call Jerry Rankin at (615) 883-1856 (day) or 833-2839 (night).

CHURCH SECRETARY: Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, is seeking a full-time church secretary with desktop publishing experience. Call (615) 373-8074 for application.

EDUCATION/YOUTH: First Baptist Church, White Pine, is seeking a minister of education and youth. If interested, send resume to Search Committee, FBC, P.O. Box J, White Pine, TN 37890.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Charlotte Road Baptist Church has an opening for a part-time minister of music. Call Rev. Fred Phanco at (615) 356-5810 or send resume to 7511 Charlotte Road, Nashville, TN 37209.

NEEDED: YOUTH MINISTER: If interested, call or write Pastor Tony Rutherford, First Baptist Church, 206 Roane Street, P.O. Box 601, Oliver Springs, TN 37840 or call (423) 435-2946.

Friends

By L. Joseph Rosas III

Focal Passage — Proverbs 10:12; 17:17; 18:24; 16:28; 26:21; 3:28-30; 25:9; 27:10a; 14:9; 19:11; 29:11

During graduate studies at seminary I had a friend who occasionally asked me to ride with him to his "farm." He had over 100 acres of rough and rocky wooded countryside that was more up and down than flat. The farm produced no cash crop and, except for a hunting shelter, had no buildings. However something much more priceless grew there; my friend and I would talk to each other. In our sharing of dreams and fears the bond of a deep and abiding friendship was sealed. It is possible to know a great many people and yet not have any real friends.

Valuing friendships (ch. 10:12; 17:17; 18:24). No man is an island. We are created social creatures. It is healthy to need and desire community. Hatred and love stand in stark contrast. Hatred "stirs up" strife, it reveals secrets with the intent of causing conflict. Love covers wrongs not so much by overlooking them but by viewing them through the eyes of grace and forgiveness. Paul says, "love keeps no record of wrongs." A real friend will show love at all times and is closer than a brother. When there needs to be confrontation or correction, this type of friend is able to do so in love. A real friend is better than an army of fair weather acquaintances.

Damaging relationships (ch. 16:28; 26:21). We must avoid actions that will damage and destroy trusting relationships. One who stirs up dissension and gossip divides friends and is called perverse. We routinely condemn gossip and yet are guilty of sanctimoniously sharing concerns about others in such a way that injury is done to the cause of Christ. Some people are quarrelsome by nature. Always looking for a fight they take delight in fueling controversy. They are like charcoal that produces embers and wood that is the fuel for a fire.

Strengthening relationships (ch. 3:28-30; 25:9; 27:10a). We must invest time and effort in maintaining anything of value. We must be willing to serve our friends when we have the means to do so. It is not always convenient. Emergencies never come at an opportune time. When we send a neighbor in need away, we are the losers. We must avoid plotting and making unjust accusations against our neighbor. If there is something to be discussed with our neighbor, we should do so without divulging confidences. We must not forsake a friend. Instead, we should continue to cultivate and develop those long standing relationships of friends who have been tried and proven.

Resolving conflicts (ch. 14:9; 19:11; 29:11). When conflict comes, the wise will seek to resolve it immediately. Fools are not to be taken seriously. They make a mock of sin, their sacrifice is futile. The wise man knows to hold his tongue and not respond in anger in difficult situations. He is patient and therefore able to overlook an offense. In contrast, the fool does not care what damage is done, giving full vent to his anger. The key to resolving conflict is self-control. If confrontation is necessary, it will not be in haste or anger. This is the recipe for a long and lasting friendship. Jesus placed right relationship between those in the family of faith ahead of the sacrifice of worship saying, "First ... be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift." ■ — L. Joseph Rosas III is pastor of Union Avenue Church, Memphis.

Obey God's laws

By Kevin Goza

Focal Passage — Psalm 119:1-16, 45, 105, 129-130

The blessings of obeying God's laws are tremendous. Unfortunately, there are many who deny themselves those blessings by ignoring what God has to say. Psalm 119 is a wonderful passage that continuously points us to the Word of God for life and living. Obedience to God's laws is mandatory for a fulfilling walk with God.

Blessedness of obedience — vv. 1-8

Don't let the word "law" discourage you. It refers to more than a set of rules. It points to the revealed will of God concerning how his people are to live. Psalm 119 uses a whole series of descriptive terms for God's law: commandments, instructions, example, statutes, precepts, judgments, way, testimonies. Each of these has a slightly different emphasis, but all describe God's Word.

Convention Uniform Lesson

The passage also uses a variety of terms to describe how God's people respond to his Word. In this passage we find "undefiled in the way," "walk," "keep his testimonies," "seek," "do no iniquity," and "respect." If the Word of God is not having a direct impact on our way of life, it is having no real impact at all.

From addressing an audience in verses one through three, the psalmist moves to directly addressing God in verse four and following. His prayer is one of commitment, stating his desire to practice what he preached. He expresses obedience, followed by a desire for deeper obedience. Is this not the plea of every Christian's heart? It is reminiscent of the response to

Jesus, "Lord, I believe. Help thou my unbelief."

Obedience leads to praise, and further commitment to obedience.

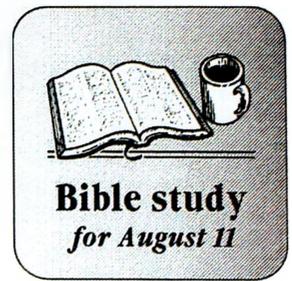
Benefits of obedience — vv. 9-16, 45, 105, 129-130

The benefit of overcoming life's assaults is tremendous. Youth is a critical time of life. How can the youthful, those just starting out in life, find direction for living? The answer is in taking heed to God's Word. This takes place in the whole heart, the entire being. When God's Word becomes an important part of ones life, he can be warned of impending sin through the Word, and thereby avoid a fall.

The benefit of joyous living is also wonderful. Far from considering God's law to be burdensome, he found reason to rejoice therein. He compared the joy found in God's Word to great riches, giving great satisfaction.

As he sought God's ways, he found the benefit of true freedom. The reason we can walk by faith is that God has granted freedom from bondage and sin. Seeking God's precepts assures liberty in life.

Verses 105, 129, and 130 reveals the benefit of guidance. God's Word is a lamp for our feet (it shows us where we are), and a light to our path (it shows where we are going). Without his light, we would stumble through life, not having a clue as to our place and purpose. The testimonies of God give understanding where there are no apparent answers. Real meaning comes from God alone. The intelligent of the world seek understanding, and never find it. God's "simple" find understanding in their relationship with God, and are satisfied therein. ■ — Kevin Goza is pastor of First Church, Lebanon.



Interlude and seventh trumpet

By Tom Moncrief

Bible Book Lesson

Focal Passage — Revelation 10:9-10; 11:1-4, 7-8, 11, 15, 18

An interlude is placed between the sixth and seventh trumpets of judgment. This is designed to comfort God's people.

A little book (ch. 10:9-10) was held by an angel appearing to John. The little scroll is seen as containing God's redemptive purpose made effective through martyr witness of the church. This book is sweet in John's mouth but bitter in his stomach as he fulfills the command to eat it. It contained the message of God's mercies and his judgments and shows the absolute sovereignty of our Lord. The necessity of John eating the scroll shows that the messenger must make the message a part of himself.

A reed was given to John to measure the temple (ch. 11:1-2). The temple, symbol of the church, is the dwelling place of God where he is worshiped by true believers. Nothing can violate God's dwelling place. Measuring distinguishes the true church from those who surround them. It implies God's protection. The outer court was not to be measured. This court of the Gentiles represented the world and suggests

a struggle between genuine Christianity and worldly professing religion. The true church may be trampled but it is not destroyed. It is secure and victorious even in persecution.

But the true church never sits idle. It has the task of publishing the Gospel even in the face of calamity. The two witnesses (vv. 3-4) may symbolize the true church performing her missionary activity. Picturing them as olive trees and lampstands shows them to be channels through whom divine strength flowed to the people. God's strength is available to the church when it relies on God's spirit. The power of God's Word is also seen here.

The witnesses were protected from their tormentors until their ministry was completed. Then the witnesses were killed and disgraced (vv. 7-8). The beast from the pit killed them and left the bodies in the street. The ungodly celebrated their seeming destruction for a short time but long enough to seem complete and final. This symbolically describes the scorn and contempt to which the world powers subject the church.

Following this time of wordly re-

joicing and the disgrace upon Christians, the witnesses were revived (v. 11).

When they stood upon their feet the enemies experienced great fear. Even these enemies recognized that divine power must have brought about this great happening. The church sometimes has seemed to "die" but it rises again when a breath of life from God enters it.

With the seventh trumpet: the kingdom is announced (v. 15, 18). This trumpet was accompanied by loud voices in heaven. John sees as already having happened the coming of the Lord's kingdom. It is so certain it is seen as having occurred. John reaffirms the great eternal reign of God in Christ. The elders sing their song of triumph of the Lord over the heathen.

Persecution is real in the world and it takes many forms. Ridicule, scorn, disgrace, and seeming defeat may face the church and Christians. Those who are truly committed to the Lord are assured of victory through Christ's spirit and power. Whenever things seem uncertain look to Christ and be patient while your life and witness remain true to him. He will overcome and reign forever. ■ — Tom Moncrief is a member of First Church, Cleveland.



world news

Stewardship leaders named to EC positions

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — James L. Powell and James L. Austin, executive vice president and vice president for Cooperative Program promotion, respectively, of the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission, have accepted positions with the SBC Executive Committee, effective no later than June 19, 1997, when the Stewardship Commission will be dissolved.

The commission's dissolution will result from the SBC restructuring, "Covenant for a New Century," adopted by messengers to the June 11-13 annual meeting in New Orleans.

Powell will serve as director of CP relations in the division of CP Advancement led by Executive Committee Executive Vice President Ernest E. Mosley. Austin will serve as director of CP promotions.

The two men bring more than 40 years of experience in CP promotion to their new roles, according to Morris H. Chapman, Executive Committee president. ■

Baptists continue aid to victims of Chechnyan war

Baptist Press

GROZNY, Chechnya — Southern Baptists continued to help victims of the Chechnyan war as sporadic fighting in the rebel republic intensified through mid-July.

So far, more than 2,000 refugees have received food and basic supplies through \$60,000 in hunger and relief funds allocated by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, according to Jack Shelby, the Moscow-based missionary overseeing the relief program.

Chechnya is located on the northern slopes of the Caucasus Mountains in southwestern Russia, on the border of the former Soviet republic of Georgia, between the Black and Caspian seas. ■

Transplant a first at mission-related hospital overseas

Baptist Press

ASUNCION, Paraguay — In July, doctors at the Baptist Medical Center here performed what is believed to be the first heart transplant in an overseas Southern Baptist mission-related hospital — and the first in Paraguay.

Receiving a new heart was Pedro Nunez, 36. He was released July 22, recovering satisfactorily.

"The practice of organ donation in Paraguay is relatively

unknown and not well accepted due to cultural and religious beliefs," said Marlin Harris, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary and medical center administrator.

The spiritual impact was significant. "Through this historic chain of events, the Lord spoke to Pedro about more than physical life," said Hebert Palomino, medical center chaplain who ministered to Nunez and his family, along with the family of the donor, Juan Bautista Chaparro, 41, who suffered a massive cerebral aneurysm.

"Just days after the transplant, Pedro believed and received Christ as a born again believer," Palomino said. ■

Home Life names editor

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Jon Walker, associate editor of *SBC LIFE*, newsjournal of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, will become editor of the Baptist Sunday School Board's *Home Life* magazine Sept. 1.

Walker will become the magazine's fifth editor, succeeding Charlie Warren who resigned in July.

Prior to joining the SBC Executive Committee in 1994, Walker was news and information director for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Walker holds degrees from the University of Florida, Gainesville, and Southeastern Seminary. He and his wife, Sherry, have one son. ■

Add Easter '97 to SBC calendar

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — There's a key omission in the Southern Baptist Convention's "1996-97 Calendar of Activities" — Easter which will be March 30.

The calendar is a 16-month, September-December long-range planning calendar used by church leaders and produced by the SBC Executive Committee.

The omission "reflects the humanity (clerical error) of persons who process vast quantities of printed material day after day," said Ernest Mosley, SBC Executive Committee executive vice president. ■

Stringer named interim director of N.Y. convention

Baptist Press

EAST SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Dan C. Stringer, who has led three other Baptist state conventions, has been elected interim executive director of the Baptist Convention of New York. His service began Aug. 1 and will conclude Nov. 9.

The retired Baptist leader has served the Northwest, Florida, and Arizona state conventions. ■

Warren book earns 'gold'

Baptist Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Southern Baptist pastor Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Church* was one of 22 books receiving "Gold Medallion" awards from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association July 13 here.

Warren's 400-page book details the story, philosophy, and strategy behind the growth of Saddleback Community Church, Lake Forest, Calif., from seven people to 12,000 attendees for its weekend services.

Saddleback now is the second-largest attended church in the Southern Baptist Convention and one of the five largest in America, according to a report by Chris Meyer, a writer with the *Orange County Register*.

The book, according to Meyer, has been in print only eight months and already has been the top seller in Baptist book stores the last six months. It is being translated into Russian, Chinese, and Korean and has been adopted as a textbook by 23 seminaries, including the six SBC seminaries. ■

Hawaii meeting targets MKs

Baptist Press

HONOLULU — Many children of internationally based missionaries suffer from feelings of abandonment and isolation when they leave their homeland to attend college in the United States.

Other MKs deal with the same issues when their parents' death, divorce, or resignation results in their being removed from the only home, lifestyle, and culture they've ever known.

Still other MKs — lost in the shadow of their parents' missionary zeal — struggle with personal identity issues. Some talk of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse.

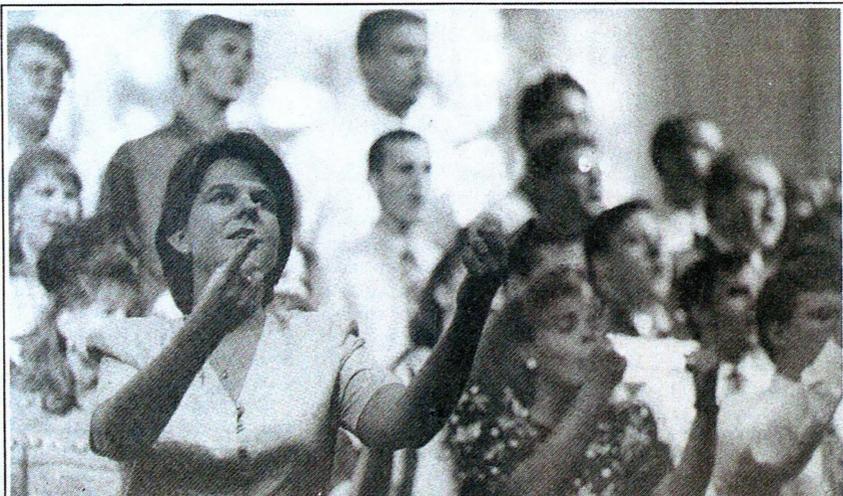
About 300 adult MKs, missionaries, and leaders from several denominations and mission-sending boards met the last week of July in Honolulu to discuss the unique needs of MKs at what might be the first-ever conference of its type.

The week-long conference, billed as "Mission Meeting 1996," was sponsored by the International MK Fellowship, an independent, trans-denominational organization founded in 1989 by Southern Baptist MK Steve Solesbee of Dallas.

"The price for doing missions is too high when it includes sacrificing our children," Solesbee said in an interview July 26 at the Aloha Tower, a Honolulu landmark. Exhibits for the conference were set up at the tower; daily sessions and workshops took place at Waikiki Baptist Church; evening services were held at the south end of the professional sports-size Aloha Stadium.

"We need to stop sweeping this problem under the rug," Solesbee continued. "We can't go forward if we're not honest. The important thing is that we want to make a statement to these kids and it has to be brutally honest and transparent; we want to say they don't have to live in bitterness the rest of their lives."

The purpose of the conference, which was open to MKs of all denominations, was to affirm MKs, to provide a forum for dialogue, and to search for solutions, Solesbee said. ■



Carson-Newman graduate appointed as journeyman

Melissa Koscheski, a 1995 graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, was one of several choir members who interpreted a song with American Sign Language during a July 21 commissioning service for 68 new missionary journeymen at Grove Avenue Church in Richmond, Va. Koscheski will serve two years in Israel. The journeymen were reminded by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin that 'young people who follow God's call to missions will find he goes before them and rolls back the obstacles.' — Photo by Bill Bangham