

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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this week's news

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

TBC churches begin to grasp Vision 2000

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Churches across the state, from Ripley in the far west to Mountain City in the far east, are beginning to catch Vision 2000.

It's not a dreaded disease; rather it's the long-range plan adopted by messengers to the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1995.

"Vision 2000: Reaching Tennessee for Christ provides the local church with a practical guide to assist in developing goals for ministry and ideas to enhance expansion in mission development," said TBC Executive Director James Porch.

Vision 2000 incorporates six areas: (1) revival and spiritual awakening; (2) evangelism and missions; (3) education; (4) ministry; (5) fellowship; and (6) stewardship.

"The six areas of the plan were selected to include all aspects of a local church's ministry," Porch said.

"At the same time, Vision 2000 is intended to help local churches develop a sense of focused ministry," he added.

The plan is adaptable to the

local congregation, Porch said.

Greer Ruble, executive assistant to the TBC executive director, has developed an implementation guide for Vision 2000 which is available from the TBC executive office.

Ruble is counseling with churches and associations about their involvement in Vision 2000. Currently, there are approximately 10 churches across the state that are on track for being pilot churches for Vision 2000, Ruble said.

Ruble cited several keys to church implementation of the convention's long-range plan: prayer and leadership of the Holy Spirit, pastoral leadership, evangelistic outreach and visitation, responsiveness to "people needs" in the community, planning, goal setting, changing attitude in regard to church growth, revitalization of worship services/program organizations, training, and an atmosphere of love, unity, and fellowship.

"The value of this plan will be determined by the decision of churches to involve themselves in such a focused ministry," Porch said.

"In addition, churches need



TBC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR James Porch, left, and Greer Ruble look over aspects of Vision 2000, the convention-adopted long-range plan to reach Tennessee for Christ. — Photo by Connie Davis

to consider their willingness to commit themselves through the year 2000 to completing the goals they have established for their local ministry.

"Our heavenly Father expects us to do all things in an orderly manner. May we together see Vision 2000 as a guide to assist us in responding to God's great expectation for us individually and as churches," Porch said.

Pastors and directors of missions across the state are

beginning to see how the state convention's long-range plan can positively affect them and their congregations.

First Church, Fairfield Glade, voted unanimously to enter into the program after a presentation by Ruble, said Pastor Doug Turner.

"We all felt the need to adopt the theme 'Vision 2000' for our building program, building fund-raising plan, and education program," he said.

— See TBC, page 10

BSSB explores name change

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — As a continuing step in preparing for its 21st-century ministry, the Baptist Sunday School Board has named a 19-member employee committee and contracted with an outside consultant to study the name of the board, according to BSSB President James T. Draper Jr. "We are entering this process with no preconceived ideas about whether our name should be changed," Draper said.

In the last five years, he said, the board has introduced a new vision statement, core values, operating principles, and business and financial objectives. Also, the board has been restructured and processes are being re-tooled to continuously improve products and services.

"Evaluating our name and making a conscious decision to retain it or make a change is a

logical next step," Draper said.

"With the Southern Baptist Convention undergoing major restructuring, including name changes for several denominational entities, this seems to be the right time to look at our name."

Draper said Mike Arrington, executive director for corporate affairs, is coordinating the project. Anspach Grossman Enterprise, a nationally known firm specializing in identity and name change, has been selected to work with the committee.

The company is interviewing BSSB employees, customers, and others.

Based on the research, Arrington said the committee will formulate a recommendation to Draper and Ted Warren, executive vice president, in September on whether to retain the present name or move forward to identify options for adapting or changing the name. ■

Maryland Way open to traffic

Maryland Way, front street for the Baptist Center, Brentwood, has reopened to traffic. The street was closed for two and a half months for major renovation.

Traffic now can enter the parking lot on Maryland Way near Taco Bell, or off Franklin Road. Handicap parking is available in the front, and visitors can find reserved parking on the west end. ■

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Prayer movements growing; resources available

By Sarah Zimmerman
For Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Around every evangelical corner this fall is a call to prayer. Pray for revival. Pray for the lost. Pray for the president. Even *Good Housekeeping* magazine ran a column in its July 1996 issue about the reality of God and importance of prayer.

The trend toward seeking divine intervention is not new — four years ago the National & International Religion Report referred to an “unprecedented grass-roots prayer movement.” Henry Blackaby, Southern Baptist leader in prayer and spiritual awakening, said he’s noticed a growing emphasis on prayer during the last three years, but he added he “sees a crescendo building.”

“Every major denomination has prayer and revival as its number one goal,” Blackaby said. “I know of at least 130 global prayer networks” of peo-

ple seeking revival.

Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president who also is on the executive committee of a November fasting and prayer gathering, said Christians are emphasizing prayer now more than any time he can recall.

“The dire needs of our world and the decadent condition of our nation have driven Christians to our knees,” Lewis said.

While encouraged by the increased prayer activity, Blackaby warned against thinking of prayer as leverage to manipulate God. “Our first motive in fasting and prayer must be to return to God,” he said. “It must not be for what he will do in revival, regardless of how crucial the need for revival may be.”

Among upcoming prayer-focused activities are the convocations on seminary campuses led by SBC President Tom Elliff; a call to prayer and fasting Oct. 27-Nov. 3 by Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd, SBC Ex-

ecutive Committee chairman; the See You at the Pole prayer emphasis on high school campuses, and many others.

Several products are available from Southern Baptist agencies to help churches plan prayer emphases.

A special edition of *Evangelism Today* will be printed in September. Produced by the HMB evangelism staff, the piece will include articles on authentic prayer and fasting and the biblical basis for prayer and fasting. HMB staffer Toby Frost said the publication is designed to provide inspiration and motivation. It will be mailed to pastors and associational, state and denominational leaders.

In addition, individual guides to praying for the lost will be available in September. “We hope churches all over the United States will use this as an impetus to pray,” Frost said. “It’s a pocket-size tool to keep the names of lost people

before you all day.”

Among Southern Baptist resources for prayer ministries is the Watchmen Revival-Prayer Network which links churches in a 24-hour prayer ministry focused on revival and spiritual awakening. Participating churches pray for one hour then call the Watchmen coordinator at the next church on the prayer chain.

The Watchmen Network is coordinated by Conrad Keil in the Home Mission Board prayer and spiritual awakening office. For more information or to participate, call Keil at (770) 410-6521 or 410-6522.

Other prayer resources also are available from the Baptist Sunday School Board and the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

To order material from the HMB, call (800) 634-2462. To order from the BSSB, call customer services at (800) 458-2772. To order from the Brotherhood Commission, call 1-800-727-6466. ■

Says CLC general counsel

Voter guides listing candidates' positions are acceptable

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Warnings to churches to avoid voter education materials are nothing more than election year posturing, according to some religious liberty advocates.

The suit filed by the Federal Election Commission alleging the Christian Coalition’s violation of federal election statutes has begun to spill over to the local church as several organizations caution churches to stay clear of the Coalition’s voter guides.

“We are writing to alert you of the serious threat to churches’ tax-exempt charitable status that can be posed by ... distribution of such materials,” stated a

memo released by People for the American Way. The memo alleged distribution of the Christian Coalition voter guides is an engagement in “political campaign activity” forbidden for tax-exempt organizations that receive tax-deductible contributions.

“Unless the Christian Coalition dramatically changes its established pattern ... it would be both legally improper and morally wrong for churches and other religious institutions to distribute its voter guides this fall,” emphasized the Aug. 1 memo.

Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State echoed Walker’s warning: “Any church in America which distributes the Christian Coalition’s tainted voters’ guides risks losing its

tax exemption.”

“This is pure political intimidation by certain liberal organizations,” said Will Dodson, general counsel for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission in Washington, noting the threats against the distribution of the voter guides are coming as the guides are being prepared.

“There should be no problem at all with churches distributing voter guides which do not endorse candidates but simply state the position of candidates on issues of importance to followers of Christ,” Dodson said.

“Church leaders need to look at any kind of material they distribute to make sure it doesn’t cross the line into partisan political activity,” Dodson noted. ■

FMB receives China invitation

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — The Foreign Mission Board has been given a new opportunity to work with the China Christian Council, the Chinese government’s official body for churches and ministries in China.

To implement the work, Gwen Crofts, a 20-year veteran of FMB work in Hong Kong, was appointed China ministry coordinator, effective July 15. Crofts will live in Hong Kong and direct ministries and personnel in China who work with the Chinese Christian Council.

Crofts, of Phoenix, Ariz., served from 1987-95 as director of Hong Kong’s Baptist Press, which publishes Christian literature for Chinese

around the world.

“Gwen Crofts is a perfect fit for the task that lies ahead,” said Faye Pearson, director of Foreign Mission Board work in East Asia.

“The challenges facing the Chinese church are great,” Pearson said. “One-fifth of the world’s people (1.2 billion) live in China. God has been at work in China throughout the years, and it is a privilege to learn from these Chinese Christians. Gwen will do an excellent job working in this environment.”

Pearson said reports indicate record numbers of Chinese young people are accepting Christ and Chinese churches often are more than half composed of these young converts. ■

Arkansas anti-gambling forces at work

Baptist Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Following a successful petition drive for a proposed amendment to outlaw all gambling in Arkansas, gambling opponents are setting their sights on registering 250,000 new voters to prepare for the November election.

Anti-gambling advocates also plan to hold 15 town hall meetings throughout the state to debate the gambling issue. Larry Page, executive director of the Christian Civic Action Committee, said he was notified Aug. 2 by the Arkansas secretary of state’s office that the CCAC petition had qualified for the Nov. 5

ballot. The proposed amendment calls for all legalized gambling to be outlawed in the state, including existing gambling on thoroughbred racing in Hot Springs and West Memphis. The CCAC amendment also seeks to counter up to four proposed amendments at legalizing casinos and state lotteries.

“Unlike the pro-gambling amendments, we qualified our amendment with only one submission of petitions,” Page noted.

While the “battle for ballot approval” was a big hurdle, Page said “we haven’t won the war yet.” He said the anti-gambling forces will need to keep their momentum going. ■

Downsizing is 'fact of life' with economic, spiritual impact

By Clay Renick
For Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Jim Dunbar made six figures one year and minimum wage the next.

"We had no money and massive debts," he said about his two-year job search.

Dunbar worked with institutional finances. But he lost his job in a corporate downsizing. Now he's a church loan officer at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Still, "We're wondering where the Lord is going to take us."

"God does provide," he tells others. "Even in the moments where you don't think you'll make it."

Downsizing — when companies trim costs by reducing their work force, expecting more work from remaining staff — has had a society-wide impact. More than 43 million American jobs have been terminated since 1979, according to the *New York Times*.

Approximately 5.5 million people lost jobs in 1991-92. Only one third found work at the same pay, according to a Labor Department survey of displaced workers. About 24 percent were jobless, and 28 percent settled in a position at less pay than before. The others worked part time or were self-employed.

That's shown in the rise of temporary workers. According to *USA Today*, the number of temps has increased 89 percent since 1990.

Some industries are hit harder than others. The *New York Times*, recapping corporate layoffs in the last four years, reported AT&T had an announced cut of 123,000 workers; General Motors, 99,400; and Boeing, 61,000.

But the projections aren't always right. AT&T planned to lay off 40,000

workers last year and later revised that figure to 18,000 workers who will leave the company involuntarily, said spokesperson Ruthlyn Newell. "We restructured into three companies," she explained. "There are new jobs being created that require new skills."

"Downsizings will continue," said Bill Elliott, an outplacement consultant in Houston. "It's a fact of corporate life."

Elliott is a member of South Main Baptist Church who has spent 25 years in human resources. He expects more layoffs as companies adjust for competition.

But, he noted, workers can improve their career options.

"The best protection is to maintain your technical expertise in whatever you do," he said.

He also advises good relationships with peers, subordinates, and supervisors. And use professional associations to "network."

Companies started to downsize back in the late 1970s, he explained. But most of those released were in labor jobs. And many were subject to recall.

Now the trend includes professional workers. And there is no call back.

"I'm seeing a lot of people downsized out of a job two or three times," Elliott said.

The pattern is affecting churches, said Lynn Gillory, a human resources director for Cobo Resources, an oil company. He's a member of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas and helps teach a career seminar there.

"In every church across America," he said, "there are about 4 to 5 percent of the people out of work."

Ray Lindsey has been on both sides of the problem. He's a member of Second Baptist Church in Houston. He had to release 1,000 workers as a corporate vice president. Then, last year, his own job ended.

"There isn't such a thing as guaranteed employment," he said. "The only alternative is to prepare yourself for a changing market."

Isolation can be one of the most difficult aspects of unemployment, so some churches use support groups for people affected.

Fairview Church, Greer, S.C., has a team of human resource workers in the congregation. They help with resumes and contacts when members face

layoffs.

Some congregations, however, don't react until after the problem.

"When I first went to work, I thought this was one of the most secure jobs around," explained Ed Rainer, a Southern Baptist in Springfield, Ill., who works as a chemical engineer for a public utility.

They recently merged with another company. And that led to staff cuts.

"It's the not knowing that gets to people," he said about the workers affected.

One of his co-workers, a supervisor, was a Baptist Sunday School teacher. Many people under him were losing their jobs.

"He was not going to be able to protect those people," Rainer said. "He just got to the breaking point."

The man went out to his garage and closed the door. Then he turned on the



Denominational study reveals lack of stewardship vision

By Herb Hollinger
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A study of 13 denominations in America, including Southern Baptists, revealed "most church members do not want the pastor to know how much individual members contribute to the church."

Also, congregations do not have a clear vision to help them improve their stewardship, which most see simply as meeting the budget, a study by Illinois researchers found and documented in a book: *Behind the Stained Glass Windows: Money Dynamics in the Church*.

According to Jim Austin, SBC Stewardship Commission vice president, the study by John and Sylvia Ronsvalle, Champaign, Ill., also cited a similar survey which revealed the giving of 30 million members in 29 denominations has declined, compared to generations ago, from 3.01 percent to 2.5 percent.

"The study showed that Americans are over 200 percent richer after taxes and after inflation than in the 1930s and yet give a smaller portion of this

income to their churches," Austin said. "While we have access to more discretionary money, we are choosing to spend it on ourselves. Leisure activities have been one of the rising expenditures absorbing the increased incomes."

The Ronsvalles research was funded by a three-year \$311,887 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. Their work, through their "empty tomb, inc." organization, has focused on helping the church fulfill its potential for helping a hurting world in Jesus' name, Austin said.

The SBC, through the Stewardship Commission, participated in the National Money for Mission project with 12 other denominations: Catholic Church USA, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), Church of the Brethren, Church of the Nazarene, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church USA, United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church.

Austin said the objective of the study was to help church members decide, with God's help, to do what they could to help move their congregations toward meeting the goal of providing money for missions.

Current conventional wisdom insists fewer people trying to buy a house can afford to live like their parents, but the Ronsvalles' study found if people were willing to buy a starter home now equal to one many of their parents began in, they would have none of the amenities taken for granted today.

Despite 2,000 biblical references about a person's relationship to possessions, the Ronsvalles found many pastors are struggling with the challenge of a laity bent toward increasing consumerism, Austin said.

"They also encountered laity leadership who discourage teaching or preaching about increased giving rather than risk a power shift in the congregation," Austin said. "They learned that if pastors overcome their distaste for preaching about money, it is usually to talk about bills that need

to be paid, rather than how members can deepen their financial stewardship."

The Ronsvalles interacted with more than 500 congregations, talked with pastors and more than 100 denominational officials, including Southern Baptist leaders at the state and national levels.

One chapter, Austin said, looks at "Signs of Hope." The Southern Baptist stewardship materials, including the computer program that helps organize household finances and includes the tithe, are cited as one positive direction church leaders have taken to help church members develop a more Christian mind-set about how they approach their money.

Austin said the Ronsvalles are scheduled to meet with stewardship and Cooperative Program directors representing all state Baptist conventions at a Stewardship Development Process meeting sponsored by the SBC Stewardship Commission in Nashville, Sept. 16-17. Their book will be available in bookstores Sept. 1. ■

They encourage the mix of faith and practical skills on a job hunt.

McDorman is a career consultant who has lost three jobs. He said there are some things you can do to prepare for downsizing.

"All bills need to be brought to a present status," he stated.

He said it takes about one month to find work for every \$10,000 you expect to make.

Increase your resources if you don't have it in savings, he added. That might involve a side job.

Then look at your career focus, he explained. Start with God's will in the Scriptures but also examine your abilities.

Finally, look for fellowship and evaluate your faith.

"In business, people say network," he noted. "You do that by helping others. The support will be there when you need it."

"Do it now while you have a job," he suggested. ■

Presidential group joins building effort at Fruitland

By Keith Currey
For Baptist Press

FRUITLAND — Although President Bill Clinton spent part of his 50th birthday rebuilding Salem Church following an arson-related fire, he received no special treatment.

"It may be your birthday, Mr. President, but I'm gonna work you 'til you sweat," Salem pastor Daniel Donaldson told the commander-in-chief Aug. 19 as the first family, along with Vice President Al Gore and his family joined 15 volunteers from Flat Rock Church, Mt. Airy, N.C., in the rebuilding effort.

On Dec. 30, 1995, arsonists destroyed the 120-year-old building at Fruitland that had housed the 65-member African American congregation. No arrests have been made in the incident.

Tennessee Baptist construction teams have been among those involved in Salem's rebuilding efforts in recent weeks. The project has been under the auspices of Beulah Association's Mississippi River Ministry led by Pastor James Kinsey of Sunswep Church, Union City. The church also has been given funds for the rebuilding effort from Tennessee and Southern Baptists.

"In the months following the fire, everyone has been really uplifted," Donaldson said. "Nobody is down — we've rebounded from the tragedy and we're moving on."

"People have rallied around our tragedy, and it's encouraging to see people making a stand against crimes motivated by possible ignorance. People are standing up and saying, 'If you burn this house,



SALEM PASTOR Dan Donaldson speaks to the crowd Aug. 19 as President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and others listen in the background. — Photo by Mark Edwards

you may as well burn mine, too, because we're all in this together."

Since June, volunteers from Texas, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, and Tennessee have joined in reconstruction efforts, with the North Carolina group working at the site through Friday, Aug. 26. Mt. Airy pastor Jon Cawley noted the epidemic of black church burnings across the Southeastern United States and his congregation's desire to take a stand against such tragedies.

Vice President Gore cited Genesis 50:20, saying, "Man meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

"These cowards can burn down the building, but they can't burn the faith out," Gore continued. "From the ashes of terror, we will build up a house of faith."

President Clinton then took the platform and presented plaques to Donaldson and William Vaughn, pastor of New Shiloh United Methodist Church, a nearby congregation also destroyed by fire earlier

this year.

"I wanted you both to have these plaques when you reopen your church so that people all over this part of the country could see that what you have done is a symbol of the best in our faith and the best in our country," Clinton said.

The plaques, which parallel the president's earlier statements condemning those responsible for the church fires, read, "We must come together as one America to rebuild our churches, restore hope, and show the forces of hatred they cannot win."

"I see this everywhere," Clinton said, alluding to violence and unrest in the Holy Land, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, and Burundi. "And I thank God for the wisdom of our founding fathers who said, first, that all people are created equal and, second, that the right to freedom of religion is the First Amendment — the first and most important right we have"

"You're not just rebuilding your church here; you're show-

ing America what's special about America," Clinton said.

"You've given us a gift today. The Scripture says much is required from those to whom much is given. You have shown us that we have more than we think and that we can give more than we think," Clinton said.

Following his remarks, President Clinton, his wife, Hillary, and daughter Chelsea, and the Gore family worked alongside the North Carolina team and Salem church members. The first and second families spent more than an hour installing dry wall in what will become Salem's new sanctuary.

Besides the national attention, Salem's reconstruction efforts received a significant boost when the National Council of Churches, an interfaith organization representing congregations nationwide, presented the church with checks totaling \$125,000 to underwrite construction costs.

Said Byron Aldredge, a council representative, "This problem goes beyond denominational and theological boundaries, and our nation's churches wish to voice their mutual support."

With additional volunteer help, Donaldson said he hopes Salem will open the doors of its new building by mid-October. Regardless, he is convinced the arsonist's crime has not diminished his congregation's faith.

"We've been blessed beyond all degrees of measure," Donaldson said. "This church is being built with the help of many people across this nation, including the president and vice president. God has taken over the rebuilding of his house." ■

Should a Christian hire only a Christian lawyer?

The term Christian, when used this way, often means different things to different people. Our society uses the name Christian rather loosely. Though I believe piety and a Christian commitment are strongly to be preferred and should be sought, this alone should not be a definitive consideration. In the first place, sadly, it may be difficult to find a lawyer in the area of expertise needed who has a true Christian commitment. Equally sadly, many professing Christian lawyers put the customs, practices, and values of the legal system before the teachings of the Bible.

Another consideration might be illustrated by a question: Would you submit to brain surgery by a medical doctor who had little or no expertise in that

area, simply because he was a devout Christian? Most of us would immediately acknowledge the folly of answering yes. Similarly, it is best to focus on competence, experience, and integrity in a lawyer rather than simply insisting on Christian piety to the exclusion of all other considerations. The Bible shows us God can use even a heretic or atheist to accomplish his ends.

You must be assured though that a lawyer will honor your Christian principles in his rep-

families matter

— by Ivy Scarborough, attorney, mediator



SCARBOROUGH

resentation of you. A true story of a common experience demonstrates how critical this can be. Carol, a mother in her mid-30s, was devastated when her husband left her for another woman. Despite everything she loved her husband and wanted above all else to do what she believed God would have her do under the circumstances. Since her husband had already hired a lawyer and filed for divorce, Carol had little choice but to seek legal representation. She found a lawyer noted for his expertise in divorce.

Carol was shocked when the lawyer advised her to "go after" her husband aggressively. Despite her pleas to file an answer

denying that a divorce was called for and stating her desire for reconciliation, the lawyer was unsympathetic.

Carol finally left the lawyer's office confused and in greater anguish but she did not give in to what the lawyer advised. Her Christian convictions came first.

A lawyer should be avoided if he is unwilling to make a clear commitment to honor your Christian convictions in representing you.

More unwise decisions are made by Christians in selecting a lawyer in the area of divorce and family disputes than perhaps any other.

We Christians are responsible for our behavior and the decisions we make, even in the legal system. We can and should insist on God's standards. ■



Tennessee features

TENNESSEE BAPTIST PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS



Partnership Prayer Requests

August

- 28 — Pray for South Hills Church in Milford, Mich., part of the Oakland Association.
- 29 — Praise God for the First Church, Nashville, construction team which worked July 20-Aug. 3 at the Canadian Baptist Seminary in Cochrane, Alberta.
- 30 — Praise God for the successful annual meeting of the Canadian Baptist Convention in June in Toronto. Those who attended the meeting thank God for the sweet fellowship with him and each other.
- 31 — Pray for Harold Schmidt, one of several Texas Baptist Men who worked this summer at the Canadian Baptist Seminary. He had a heart attack while on the mission trip. Pray for his recovery and for his wife, Esther, as they seek medical treatment for him.
- September 1-3 — Pray daily for each of Tennessee Baptists' three partnership partners — Michigan, Canada, and Poland.

Memphis church needs volunteers

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Construction workers are needed to help rebuild Zoe Church in Memphis, one of the many churches that has burned recently.

The needs are:

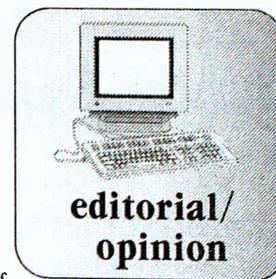
Aug. 31-Sept. 4 — volunteers who are experienced in electrical or heating/duct work

Sept. 14-30 — volunteers who can tape and mud sheet rock; and volunteers experienced in bricking

Oct. 1-8 — volunteers are needed as a "finish up crew" to put on the finishing touches on the church

For more information, call the Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnership Missions Office at (615) 371-2021 or (800) 558-2090. ■

Equal to the task? Hmmm, what is it?



September 8-15 is marked on Tennessee Baptists' calendar as Week of Prayer for State Missions. In fact, the entire month of September is designated as a special time of emphasis on missions in our state.

State missions emphasis in the churches also recognizes a special offering, the Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO), with a goal of \$1,300,000.

Any emphasis on prayer and stewardship such as this one certainly merits the total involvement of every Tennessee Baptist church.

Woman's Missionary Union of Tennessee has chosen a significant portion of Scripture as a key incentive for the Week of Prayer. II Corinthians 2:15-16 reminds us, "For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are saved and those who are perishing... and who is equal to such a task?"

While the \$1.3 million will help with mission projects for many areas, the concerted prayer efforts of Tennessee Baptists is the other half of the other spiritual loaf.

East Tennessee Baptist must answer from heart and head, the question asked by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, "Who is equal to such a task?"

Most readers will make an attempt to answer that question. But we must carry with us constantly the willingness to say through that week and many more to follow, Yes, I am equal (or ready to try to be ready) to the task. Because it comes from the strong and caring voice of many people, in unison, "I am equal to the task."

WMU leaders in every Tennessee Baptist church should have received information relative to the Week of Prayer. It is very user-friendly and supplies answers to questions that church members may have about state missions. WMU leaders and pastors will lead in the

week-long prayer emphasis and month-long mission awareness.

A summary of the emphasis is on page 6 of this issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*. Also included is a list of recommended speakers for the Week of Prayer.

Here are a few examples of GSMO-supported projects in 1995:

- Filled 80 requests for assistance from Minister's Aid Fund;
- Helped 141 language ministries reach 36 ethnic groups;
- 48 scholarships granted to students preparing for careers in missions and/or ministries.
- 200 mentally disabled persons were "equals" a week at Special Friends Camp;
- Disaster Relief equipment maintained in readiness for the next disaster call;
- Christmas checks were sent to 238;
- Foreign missionaries, 59 home missionaries, 55 retired foreign missionaries, and 23 MKs attending college.

The 1996 GSMO allocations serve five areas of work: ministry, outreach/growth, new work thrust, leadership development, and miscellaneous projects — which includes \$200,000 for upgrading lodging and facilities for Camp Carson and Camp Linden.

Among these allocations, United Tennessee League receives \$45,000 for alcohol and drug prevention in youth areas. Ministers Aid Fund receives \$50,000 to assist terminated pastors and staff with financial support and encouragement. Other examples include Mississippi River ministry, language ministries, student summer missions, new church development, bivocational ministries, prison ministries, African-American leadership development, and chaplaincy.

Back to the Scripture chosen for the Week of Prayer

theme. The question asked of us in II Corinthians 2:15-16 stymies us when we are suddenly faced with giving our heart answer.

Are we equal to being the aroma of Christ among saved and perishing people?

Of course, the answer is "no," we are not.

But the marvel of the equation is that God not only is able, but he will use unselfish instruments, people who make themselves available because of the love of Christ that is saving them. These people become the willing "yes" answers to that awesome question posed by Paul to the church at Corinth.

The human part of the equation is three-fold: willingness to pray, willingness to give, and a willingness to go.

That willingness alone touches off within God's heart an awesome and magnificent response to the problems we seek to solve. In short, we become the answer, the solution. Not of our own power, devotion, courage, wisdom, or love, but it is Christ who enables us to become his channels of blessing.

Tennessee Baptists, this is the challenge. Put forth the whole effort with which Christ has gifted you.

Oh, let this Week of Prayer for State Missions — and the offering, be the catalyst for Tennessee Baptists' greatest surrender to our Lord Christ.

Giving and praying are two of the common denominators; they cannot be overlooked. Another, just as important, is living the lifestyle of Christ, which emboldens us to be courageous. The surge for Christianity in our state will benefit because of people who sacrifice even themselves. **B&R**

Just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Lady to jeweler: "Could I buy three earrings instead of two?"

Jeweler to lady: "Yes, madam, but why would you want to do that?"

Lady to jeweler: "Well, it's because I have a daughter and a teenage son."

Take this truth

The ability to adjust to circumstances is a necessity in life. Robert Browning said God has placed us in the midst of "this dance of plastic circumstances."

Disraeli said, "man is not the creature of circumstances, circumstances are the creatures of men. We are free agents, and man is more powerful than matter."

Memorize this Scripture

In him who strengthens me, I am able for anything" (Philippians 4:13 Moffatt).

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to realize that, because Christ lives in me, I can be superior to and victorious over any adverse circumstances that life may bring to me. ■

She liked fresh vegetables, and shared her piano

Aunt Ruby was the matriarch in our family for several years. I don't think she relished that distinction, or even cared about it.

Though technically she "married into" the family, she outlasted all of the blood kin uncles and aunts, and most of those who held her status.

She and my Uncle Bub and the cousins lived in Charleston, the embodiment of aristocratic culture. My uncle was a railroad man.

My earliest memories of Aunt Ruby bring to mind some of her amusing ways that would defy the sometimes haughty attitudes of Charlestonians.

She would tell us, when she and the family made one of their brief but enjoyable visits, how much they enjoyed our farm life — especially the food.

They liked the fresh vegetables my mother prepared for summer meals. But Aunt Ruby enjoyed telling how she would persuade Uncle Bub to stop the car beside some lush field of peas or beans and "pick

one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

a mess" of fresh vegetables.

Daddy would be properly perturbed, protesting that was tantamount to stealing. "Ruby," he would say, "you can't just stop and get vegetables from somebody's garden. Those vegetables came from hard work — and besides, they aren't yours for the picking."

She would give a hearty laugh, and I guess all of the children joined her. And she would answer, "But Fred, you know they had more than enough. And nobody minds sharing with city folks."

That was Aunt Ruby.

But the remarkable thing about her attitude was that she really believed that everyone wanted to share.

She was generous. She shared, so she felt that others did also.

The years passed, and we all grew up.

The rest of the family stayed closer to them. But somehow, Aunt Ruby and Uncle Bub stayed in our lives even though we lived far away.

They had a summer home in the North Carolina foothills — and everyone was welcomed. We went on a hot day, but their hospitality at the end of that two-hour drive was as real as it had been two decades earlier.

She shared a fine piano with our girls. It wasn't being used, she said, and she shipped it from Charleston to Greenville. The girls used it for years, and then, when Aunt Ruby's family needed it, she finagled a mover to pick it up and take it back home.

Years later we visited — and though in ill health, she revealed how she and daughter Beth overcame a horrendous hurricane!

We missed the piano, but we still miss her hearty laugh and willingness to share "things" and her love.



ALLEN

On being shepherds or sheep-herders

Churches can be led by leaders who are shepherds or "sheep-herders."

There is a great difference in the leading style of these two.

Shepherd leaders see the force of their leadership as an expression of love. Sheep-herders are those who love the leadership of force.

Shepherds lead by example and obviously are interested in the best for the sheep.

They are kind and gentle in persuading the sheep to follow the right paths toward rest and refreshment.

Sheep-herders are impatient, wanting to corral the sheep as soon as possible. Their goals are selfish, manipulating the

think about it

by Calvin Metcalf, pastor of Central Church Fountain City, Knoxville

sheep toward activity and performance.

While the shepherd will search long and hard for the one sheep that went astray, the sheep-herder will always sacrifice the few for the many.

The sheep-herder leads in ways that give him glory and add to his ailing self-image.

The sheep-herder does not care to know the names of his sheep because all that is important to him is that they know his name and respond appropriately when he

speaks.

The shepherd leader leads his sheep beyond himself to the Good Shepherd.

The sheep-herder is concerned primarily that his fold should follow him.

May the Shepherd of all shepherds guide us into the paths of righteousness for his name's sake so that goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives.

There are many good shepherd leaders within the flock. Please make the most of your skills because there are sheep who have lost their way.

You may be the one to find them and bring them home. ■

Are You Equal to the Task?

By Leighann McCoy
For Baptist and Reflector

Why would God entrust his kingdom work to us?

We get so distracted by the lures of the world. We waste time and energy in selfish motives and objectives. Then finally we surrender and God performs his marvelous miracles of grace.

Why entrust us with his kingdom work? Paul gives the answer in II Corinthians 3:7 when he said, "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

God chooses to entrust us with his measure of hope to a lost world because he wants the world to know only God could accomplish such wonderful works with such inadequate resources.

As Tennessee Baptists we share a heritage of faith — the ripple effect God set in motion when W.C. and Mildred Golden chose to join God in his purpose for the Tennessee region of his kingdom work. Golden was state missions secretary of Tennessee from 1902-1910. During that time his wife was corresponding secretary for Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union.

Mrs. Golden's sensitivity to God's work in Tennessee led her to follow his initiative and establish a season of prayer for state missions. In 1902 Tennessee became one of the first states to collect an offering designated for state missions.



Equal to the Task?

**Week of Prayer
for State Missions**

Sept. 8-15

**Golden State Missions Offering Goal:
\$1,300,000**

This commitment to allow God to work through them was costly for the Golden's. For the first 10 years of state mission emphasis, the Golden's worked long hours without the benefit of computers, secretaries, and pre-printed labels for envelopes.

During this time they educated Tennessee Baptists about needs across the state — challenging them to respond with them to God's invitation to join him in his work in Tennessee through prayer, giving, and going.

God blessed the sacrificial work of the Golden's time, money, prayer, and effort. Through the years others have

joined him in his work because the Golden's were willing to allow God to spread the knowledge of himself across Tennessee.

What began with an offering of \$800 has expanded to more than \$1 million.

Because the Golden's answered God's call, today Tennessee Baptists respond annually through gifts to the Golden State Missions Offering. Tennessee Baptists join together year after year through prayer, and more than ever Tennessee Baptists are serving as volunteers, full-time ministers, and missionaries.

Look how God works through jars of clay. Certainly

this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

Ponder this question, "Who is equal to the task?" Paul poses this question in II Corinthians 2:14-16 when he says, "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?" (NIV)

Were the Golden's equal to such a task? Are the people highlighted in state missions material equal to such a task? Am I? Are you?

Actually, no. None of us are. Paul explains this in II Corinthians 3:5-6: "There is nothing in us that allows us to claim that we are capable of doing this work. The capacity we have comes from God; it is he who made us capable of serving the new covenant, which consists not of the written law but of the Spirit" (TEV).

Certainly these "jars of clay" are not capable of doing this work. Our capacity comes from God. Paul reminds us in Philippians 2:3: "It is God who works in you to will and to act accordingly to his good purpose" (NIV). ■ — Article adapted from promotional pamphlet prepared by Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union.



**Tennessee
features**

Speakers available for Week of Prayer

For Baptist and Reflector

The following are recommended as speakers for the Week of Prayer for State Missions.

Each of these persons may be contacted at the Baptist Center, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024, (615) 373-2255.

These persons are TBC staff members and will come at convention expense. Contact the individual directly with your request.

Speakers will share information about work funded through the Golden State Missions Offering, prayer requests, and volunteer opportunities for ministry.

TBC speakers are:

Wm. Fletcher Allen, B&R; Mark Anderson Adult Homes; Vickie Anderson, WMU; Jay Austin, Evangelism; Tim Bearden, Brotherhood;

Katharine Bryan, WMU; Connie Davis, B&R; Bob Davison, Brotherhood; Amanda Day, WMU; Bill George, Missions; Johnnie Hall, Discipleship Training;

Ircel Harrison, Student Ministries; Aubrey Hay, Church-Ministers Relations; Tim Hill, Language Missions; Carrol Kelley, WMU; Jerry King, Evangelism; Larry Kirk, Missions;

Elizabeth Lee, Sunday School; Don Mauldin, Discipleship Training; William Maxwell, Central Administrative Division; Roy Miller, Sunday School; Barbara Owen, Public Relations;

James Porch, Executive Office; Gary Rickman, Church Annuity Programs; Greer Ruble, Executive Office; Terry Sharp, Partnership Missions; Beverly Smothers, Church and Community Missions; Julian Suggs, Church Music;

Archer Thorpe, Stewardship Promotion; Ken Weathersby, Black Church Extension; Lonnie Wilkey, B&R; Bill Wilson, Convention Ministries Division; Rodney Wilson, Student Ministries/Collegiate Missions

Prayer requests listed for Week of Prayer in Tennessee

For Baptist and Reflector

Pray each day for these requests:

Sunday: Pray for churches to catch the vision of becoming a "key church."

Monday: Pray for the terminated minister and family

as they seek God's direction for their future.

Tuesday: Pray for volunteers to be trained as literacy consultants.

Wednesday: Pray for volunteers who teach Bible studies in men's and women's prisons weekly across Tennessee.

Thursday: Pray for a retired contractor who is willing to work as a construction supervisor with Appalachian Outreach next summer.

Friday: Pray for international students/leaders attending the 1997 International Student Ministry Conference.

Saturday: Pray for the medical clinic held each Saturday at St. Elmo Center in Chattanooga.

Sunday: Pray that other denominations will join in United Tennessee League's efforts against alcohol, drugs, and other moral concerns. ■

Where do Golden State Mission Offering dollars go?

For Baptist and Reflector

State missions offering monies fund special projects and programs that would not exist without this support. No salaries of full-time employees are included in Golden State Missions Offering Allocations.

Among items funded in 1995 through the Golden State Offering were these:

- 80 requests for assistance were granted from the Minister's Aid Fund.
- Five key churches began missions

or ministries.

- 82 children/youth attended All Nations Camp; 14 professions of faith and 18 rededications were recorded.
- 48 scholarships were granted to students preparing for careers in missions and/or ministry.
- 200 mentally disabled persons became "equals" for one week at Special Friends Camp.
- Disaster Relief equipment was maintained in readiness for the unexpected disaster call.

- Four Metro associations received assistance for ministries in inner city and for strategy planning.
- Eight students served as summer missionaries working in Vacation Bible Schools.
- United Tennessee League provided visual aids, youth institutes, and training seminars for advocate speakers.
- Christmas checks were sent to 238 foreign missionaries, 59 home missionaries, 55 retired foreign missionaries, and 23 MKs attending college. ■

Inner-city church holds block party

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Someone once said it was the best of times; it was the worst of times. That's how Rick Baggett, pastor, Eastland Church, Nashville, initially felt about the block party sponsored by the inner city church Aug. 10.

More than 500 people from the community attended, 150 New Testaments and 200 packets of school materials were distributed, and about 70 people requested more information about the church. Also,

15 people made professions of faith and more than 40 percent of the congregation participated.

The downside of the event was that because church members only expected about 250, they ran out of school supplies,

prizes, food, and New Testaments. However, the long-term benefits will outweigh any downside, Baggett said.

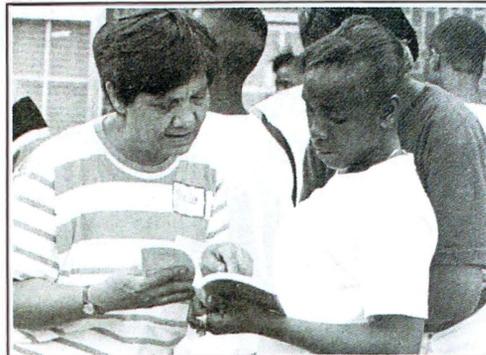
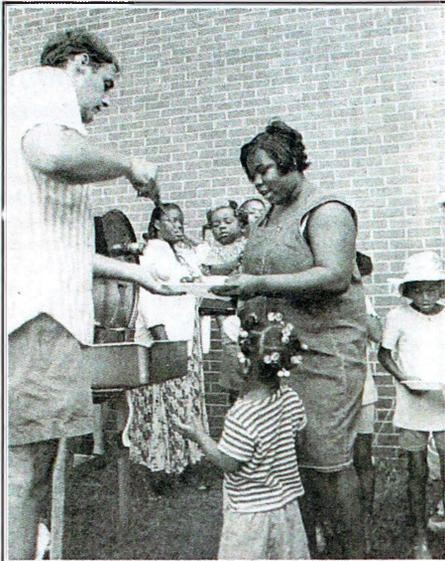
The church found out about the outreach project from Ken Weathersby of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Baggett prepared by attending training provided by the Home

Mission Board and the TBC. Church members followed guidelines offered for such an event, like distributing free tickets, which were estimated to draw 100 people per 1,000 tickets.

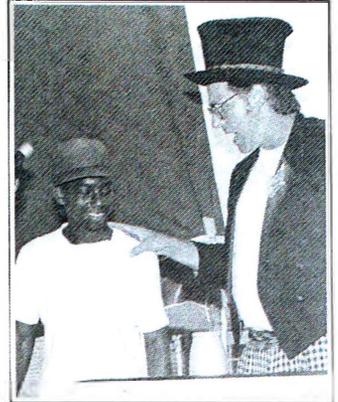
"It was a door-opening activity to the community," he said. *B&R*



Tennessee features



WITNESSING to a girl using a 'Marked New Testament' is Sheila Kiley.



RECRUITING an assistant is Christian magician Stephen Bargatze, who is a member of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory.

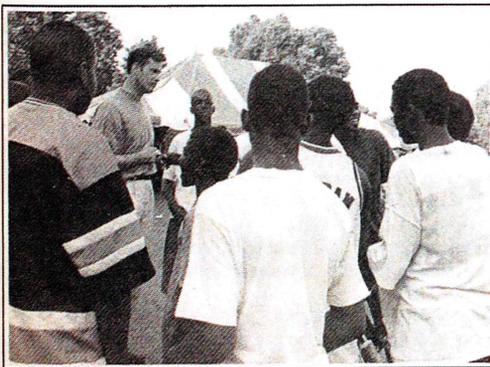
← SERVING barbeque chicken to a guest is member Eliot Hinson.



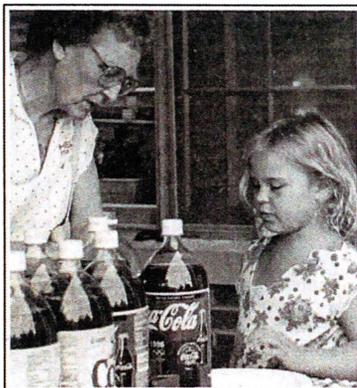
PARTICIPANTS CROSS the church parking lot between activities and the line of people in the background waiting for free food offered as part of the block party.



HELPING CHILDREN play a ring toss game is Myrtle Lowe.



DISCUSSING life, including spiritual matters, are Jay Austin, second from left, of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and some guys at the block party.



POURING a drink for a girl is Dot Delk, member who worked at the food and drink booth.



VISITING WITH a lady registering for the block party, which allows her to be qualified for door prizes, are church members Jane and Frank Crocker.

Maryville, Murfreesboro youth impacted by World Changers project in Nicaragua

For Baptist and Reflector

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Baptist youth from Maryville and Murfreesboro recently returned from a World Changers project here.

Eight young people from Third Church, Murfreesboro, and eight from First Church, Maryville, were among 91 World Changers involved in a variety of improvements to the grounds of Nicaragua Christian Academy, located in the outskirts of Managua.

The youth and their leaders also worked with Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries Jim and Viola Palmer in evangelism during their week-long stay.

The group showed the "Jesus" film two nights and did personal evangelism in a squatter neighborhood during the time in Nicaragua, which was prolonged by two days

Trip offers firsts for mother, daughter

For Baptist and Reflector

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "There's a first time for everything," according to a popular saying.

That was especially true for a mother-daughter team — Connie and Elizabeth Moody — from First Church, Maryville. They racked up several "firsts" during a recent World Changers missions project here.

Seventeen-year-old Elizabeth has been homebound for about five years with chronic health problems.

It was a first for her to fly overseas, lay brick, and dig ditches under the broiling tropical sun. "I've really gotten close to the youth participating in this project," she said. "Not going to school, I didn't have very many friends," Elizabeth added.

"My daughter has been sheltered and she's come out of her shell," said her mother, who is a staff member at First Church.

Considering their enthusiastic response, this "first trip" overseas may not be their last. ■

when Hurricane Caesar closed air traffic to the city for two days.

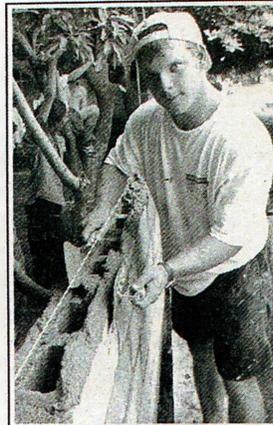
Each World Changers group is led by two persons — a crew

leader who serves as counselor for the group and a crew chief who has construction experience to guide the young people who may have little expertise but are willing and eager to work.

The team constructed a concrete block wall.

Clayton Dyer, 24, a physical therapist from Murfreesboro, led the group from Third Church. It was his first World Changers trip. As he debated about whether to go, he received a letter from a former patient who lives in Managua. He felt this was the Lord's indication to him that he should go. Serving as crew chief for the Murfreesboro group was Larry Beard.

The Maryville group was led



TODD WOOD, youth minister at First Church, Maryville, lays block at the Nicaragua Christian Academy in Managua. — Photos by Warren Johnson

by Mark Humphrey and Connie Moody with Todd Wood serving as crew chief.

Wood, youth minister at First Church, Maryville, noted that since World Changers is based in Tennessee (the SBC Brotherhood Commission in Memphis), "it's important that more people from our state be involved."

The trip impacted those involved.

"This is what the Lord laid on my heart to do," said Staci Carroll, a junior at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro. "It's filling my call to missions," she added. ■



STACI CARROLL and Joanna Boyd of Third Church, Murfreesboro, prepare cement forms for laying a concrete block wall.

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President/Chief Executive Officer

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, headquartered in Louisville, Ky., is seeking a president/chief executive officer for immediate placement.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has a broad spectrum of programs and services with numerous facilities throughout the state and is the oldest and largest private child/family care organization in the state.

Applicant must be active Baptist, have advanced degree (master and above) and experience in child/family care or related field, be knowledgeable in pertinent issues, be a capable spokesperson and advocate, possess demonstrated management/leadership skills, and a vision for the future in this field of service.

Competitive package, negotiable with demonstrated ability.

Send applications/resumes to H.R. Booth, 6296 Saddle Ridge, Burlington, KY 41005-9602.

FOR SALE: Church Organ, Allen Model 603-3, 2 manual, 2 computer; Excellent condition; presently in 800-seat sanctuary; perfect for same or smaller church; \$16,000; Contact Forest Hills Baptist Church, 2101 Old Hickory, Blvd., Nashville, 37215; (615) 373-8074.

Classified

CHRISTIAN ART: Lovely hand-framed Scripture pictures. Original watercolor designs. From \$15. Personalizing available. For FREE color catalog, call (800) 886-4611. The Crown Prints Gallery.

PART-TIME MINISTER: East LaFollette Church is searching for a part-time minister of music. The position is open to male or female and requires minimum of 20 hours a week. Send resumes to East LaFollette Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1156, LaFollette, TN 37766, or contact Phyllis Fannon, chair, Search Committee, at (423) 562-4213.



Tennessee features

Senior adult meeting set

For Baptist and Reflector

PIGEON FORGE — "In His Presence" is the theme for the 1996 Senior Adult Conference, sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The conference will be held Sept. 17-19 at the Grand Hotel and Conference Center in Pigeon Forge.

Former TBC President Frank Hawkins, pastor of First Church, Kingsport, will lead Bible study.

For more information about the senior adult meeting, including costs and hotel information, call Don Mauldin at (615) 371-2047. ■

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Retreat for Women on Mission



Joy for the Journey

Sept. 20-21

First Baptist Church, Jackson

Registration: \$10 (Early Bird, \$7 prior to Sept. 9)

Schedule:

Friday: 1:45 p.m., registration opens; 2:45 and 3:45 p.m., conferences; 7:30 p.m., general session
Saturday: 8:30 and 9:25 a.m., conferences; 10:40 a.m., general session; adjourn by 12:30 p.m.

Program Personnel:

Bible Teacher: *Nelda Seal, Louisiana*

Soloist: *Leanne Robbins, Brentwood*

Pianist: *Teresa Wood, Alamo*

Foreign Missionary: *Dottie Babcock, West Africa*

Home Missionary: *Dottie Williamson, Mississippi*

Registration forms are available from church WMU director, associational Women on Mission director, or contact Tennessee WMU at (615) 371-2038.

Hotels: Fairfield Inn — (901) 668-1400
Holiday Inn — (901) 668-6000
Days Inn — (901) 668-3444
Hampton Inn — (901) 664-4312

leaders

■ **John Kimberly Jr.** has resigned as minister of music and associate pastor at Holly Grove Church, Bells, to enter Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

■ **Scott Campbell**, pastor of South Madisonville Church, Madisonville, recently received his doctorate degree from Covington Seminary in Rome, Ga.

■ **John Smith**, pastor of Mt. Zion Church in Loudon County Association, will retire Aug. 31.

■ **Jeff Bosley** has been called as pastor of Pleasant Hill Church in Loudon County Association, effective Sept. 15. He comes from a pastorate in Holly Springs, Miss.

■ **Donnie Cantwell** has begun serving as pastor at Friendship Church in Loudon County Association after serving several months as interim.

■ **Jay McCluskey** will celebrate his 10th anniversary as pastor of North Cleveland Church, Cleveland, on Sept. 15. The day's activities will conclude with the Sunday evening service that will look on his ministry at the church and will include testimonies and special music. A reception will follow.

■ **Jerry Eggenberger** celebrated his 10th anniversary as pastor of Highland Park Church, Jackson, on Aug. 18. A reception was held in his honor and he was presented a plaque and money tree in appreciation of his 10 years of ministry.

■ **John Rhodes** became pastor of New Salem Church in Beulah Association, effective Aug. 4.

■ **Terry Council** is the new associate pastor in charge of children and youth at Pleasant Hill Church, Rives.

■ **Randy Montgomery**



FIRST CHURCH, DANDRIDGE, dedicated its new education building and held open house on Aug. 25. Construction of the \$1.6 million expansion included a 20,135 square foot education building and a 2,515 square foot administrative addition. The church is one of the oldest in Tennessee, having been organized in 1786. The church, which began with 12 members, now has a membership of 900. Robert D. McCray is pastor.

has been called as pastor of Valley View Church in McMinn-Meigs Association.

■ **Michael Justus** has been called as pastor of Alder Branch Church in Sevier County Association.

■ **Earl Bales Jr.** and **Everett Bleicroth** recently were ordained as deacons at Red Bank First Church in Sevier County Association.

■ **Al Smith** has been called as interim pastor of Mt. Zion Church in Sevier County Association.

■ **Dwight Hobbs** recently resigned as pastor of Bethel Church, Sevier County Association, to become pastor of East Side Church, Elizabethton.

churches

■ **Leawood Church, Memphis**, will hold a "Giving You a Future and Hope" crusade Sept. 22-25 with evangelist Steve Hale. Huel Moseley will bring special music.

■ **New Providence**



NEW BLACKWELL CHURCH, Rutledge, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Aug. 4 as the congregation entered its new building for their first worship service. The church will observe its 175th anniversary Sept. 29. Participating in the ribbon-cutting were, from left, building committee members Leon Kidwell, Shields George, V.K. Woods, Pastor Gary L. Satterfield, Grainger Association Director of Missions David Tydings, building committee member Terry Greenlee, builder Ray Myers, and building committee member Kenny Turley.

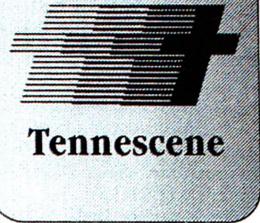
Church, Lenoir City, held groundbreaking for its new sanctuary on Aug. 18.

■ **First Church, Lavergne**, will hold revival services Sept. 8-13 with evangelist Harold Hunter and music leader Perry White.

■ Twenty-six youth and seven adults from **Brownsville Church, Brownsville**, presented Vacation Bible School at Junius Heights Church, Dallas, Texas, in July. The VBS was presented bilingually as the church is in a predominantly Hispanic area. Six children prayed to receive Christ. The group also presented a musical drama six times during their trip and sang the National Anthem at a Texas Rangers' baseball game.

■ **Swannsylvania Church, Dandridge**, recently sent a mission team to Jonesville, Mich. They conducted a Backyard Bible Club at Lighthouse Mission and Vacation Bible School at Frontier Church.

■ **Westover Church, Jackson**, Acteens held a spaghetti supper recently to benefit the arson fund for burned churches and to promote unity among Christians.



FIRST CHURCH, Lavergne, held a surprise 10-year anniversary reception in honor of Pastor Milton Hicks and his wife on Aug. 18. Hicks came to Lavergne from Calvary Church, Lenoir City, in 1986. While at First Church, he has baptized 287 individuals, performed 131 weddings, and held 131 funerals.



A TEAM OF 27 from West End Church, Fayetteville, recently traveled to Memphis to work in Mississippi River Ministry at Brinkley Heights Church. They conducted children's clubs in the morning and performed community work projects in the afternoon. The church's Clowns for Christ, puppet team, and mission team choir also performed. Mike Johnson is pastor of West End.

Sharon youth change worlds in Natchez

KNOXVILLE — Fifteen members of Sharon Church joined more than 400 youth and their leaders for a World Changers national work project recently in Natchez, Miss.

Sharon participants were Heather and Shanda Aiken, Genny Hawkins, Carrie Huskey, Christopher Mertz, Elissa Miller, Jason and Nathan Moorman, Benjamin Rayfield, Craig Satterfield, Jeremy Tucker, Lindsay Whitson, Kelly Bradley, Misty Caulineau, and Bryan Watson.

Participants were divided into several work crews. Projects included roofing, painting,

and repairing porches.

Meeting youth from other churches and learning to cooperate and work as a team were cited by many to be the best aspects of the week. "World Changers was the best week of my life," affirmed 15-year-old Nathan Moorman.

Bryan Watson, minister of youth, noted World Changers provided an opportunity for youth "to get their hands dirty" instead of just talking about or giving to missions.

Sharon pastor James Robertson noted their youth and leaders "were blessed and were a blessing to others." ■



ERIC AND DEE ANN MELTON, front center, members of First Church, Franklin, engaged the kids at Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes' recent 'Camp of Champions' in karate. As part of the camp program, the couple shared their testimonies and karate skills. This year marked the 11th camp for TBCH and saw 34 children saved, six rededications, and one commitment to full-time Christian service.

TBC churches begin to grasp Vision ...

— Continued from page 1

"As pastor, it is a refreshing theme because it carries both short and long-range goals," he continued.

First Church, Ripley, is another church that has already "signed on" as a pilot congregation.

"From our participation in Vision 2000 as a pilot church, we anticipate a number of results," said Pastor Randall Cummings.

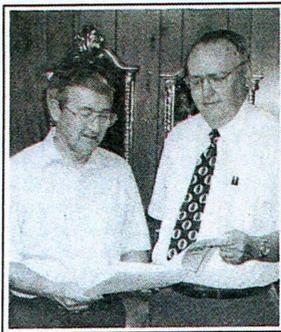
"We expect to see overall church programs become more balanced. We expect to learn to do a better job of setting goals and developing plans to reach those goals," he said.

As a pilot church, Cummings added, "we hope to deepen our own awareness of the importance of cooperative work in the convention.

"Most importantly, we expect to win more people to the Lord and do a better job of discipling believers," he said.

Pastor Albert Bentley of Nelson's Chapel Church, Mountain City, said he feels Vision 2000 "will help our church members in their giving" and "will greatly improve our church in all areas as we seek to better equip ourselves to serve God and reach more people for his Kingdom."

Vision 2000 can be incorporated for any size church, Ru-



WATAUGA ASSOCIATION Director of Missions Bob Polk, left, discusses Vision 2000 with Pastor Albert Bentley of Nelson's Chapel Church, Mountain City.

ble affirmed.

Pastor Eliot Roberts agreed. Calling Mountain View Church in Crossville where he serves a "micro" church, he thought there was no room for a pilot church that had just recently broken the "30 threshold" in attendance for the first time in many years and was suffering from a shortage of workers and resources.

Roberts discovered after a talk with Ruble that he was wrong. Ruble met with Mountain View's church council and on Aug. 7 the church "voted without dissent" to become a pilot church.

"We have great expectations of what God will accomplish

through us in the days to come," Roberts said.

Pastor Richard Cassidy of Henard's Chapel Church, Rogersville, and Sunday School director for Holston Valley Association, admitted he was skeptical when he first heard of the plan.

Yet, after hearing a presentation of the program in the association, he became more than interested. He signed his church up. "I'm excited. It (Vision 2000) can work. And I believe that our church will witness great growth through a visit from God through this vision," Cassidy said.

A church that is still considering becoming a pilot is Immanuel Church in Lawrenceburg. "With its emphasis on church growth, spiritually as well as numerically, I thought this might be an opportunity for Immanuel. In recent years we have struggled to maintain the status quo. The emphasis on growth encourages the setting of goals which are both challenging and attainable," said Pastor Patric Fife.

He noted that even if Im-

manuel chooses not to become a pilot church "it is my prayer that we will make every effort to accomplish the objectives which the Vision 2000 project emphasizes.

From a director of missions' perspective, Vision 2000 is a plan that leads Tennessee Baptists "back to the basics with a plan for church growth," said Roy Davis of Cumberland Plateau Association.

"The mission of the church is to evangelize, disciple, teach, and minister in Christ's name. The focus of Vision 2000 is to give the church direction in carrying out these functions," Davis said.

Davis added that he liked the plan because it is adaptable to any size church.

Ray Jones, DOM for Big Hatchie Association, observed long-range planning "requires a lot of time and energy."

As a result, "many churches do not attempt long-range planning and others burn out before they complete the task.

As a result we continue doing business as usual and miss many opportunities," Jones said.

He noted positive reactions from people in his association regarding the plan. "I believe the churches of Big Hatchie Association who utilize Vision 2000 will reach more people for Christ," he affirmed.

The pilot churches not only gain from participating in the emphasis, they are contributing to the overall success of the program, Ruble noted.

The churches will benefit from the six major thrusts of Vision 2000, he said.

In addition, "valuable information will be gathered from each of these churches," he said.

He noted that results gleaned from the pilot churches would not change the Vision 2000 plan but would be used to improve the way the six emphases of Vision 2000 could be used by local churches. ■

Seeking

FBC, Hopkinsville, is accepting resumes for full-time minister of music. Mail to FBC, 1400 S. Main Street, Hopkinsville, KY 42240, Attn: Min. of Music Search Committee

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TALL

Sept. 19-22
Camp Carson

TALL (Tennessee Adult Leadership Lab) combines a training opportunity for Brotherhood leaders and workers with fellowship and outdoor recreation training. It also is designed to help ministers of youth, recreation, education, and others who work in these areas in their churches.

A total of five different TRACKS will be offered at Camp Carson in Newport. They are: TRACK 1: Brotherhood Adult Campcraft; TRACK 2: Tennessee Adventure Recreation (TAR); TRACK 3: General Brotherhood Program; TRACK 4: Associational Brotherhood Program; and TRACK 5: Disaster Relief Program.

TRACK	Check-In Times, Dates	Cost
1A - Advanced Adult Campcraft	10 a.m., Sept. 19	\$82
1B - Basic Adult Campcraft	10 a.m., Sept. 20	\$65
2A - TAR Instructor Level	10 a.m., Sept. 19	\$82
2B - TAR Survivor Level	10 a.m., Sept. 19	\$82
2C - TAR Pathfinder Level	10 a.m., Sept. 20	\$65
2D - TAR Searcher Level	10 a.m., Sept. 21	\$62
3 - General Brotherhood	4 p.m., Sept. 20	\$62
4 - Associational Program	4 p.m., Sept. 20	\$62
5 - Disaster Relief Program	4 p.m., Sept. 20	\$62

Preregistration is requested. Early registration deadline is Sept. 1. After deadline, cost is additional \$5 per person. For more information, call TBC Brotherhood Department at (615) 371-2025.

Commitment

By L. Joseph Rosas III

Focal Passage — Hebrews 1:1-3; 2:1-4, 17-18

We all face discouragement at one time or another. Much of the New Testament is written as a word of reminder and encouragement for those who know but don't always do the truth. The book of Hebrews was written to Christians of Jewish background. They were familiar with the story of Israel's deliverance from bondage. They knew of the wilderness wanderings of the people of God. The writer of Hebrews drew upon this common background and shared practical implications for Christians living at the end of the first century. These words are alive and powerful for Christians living at the end of the twentieth century as well.

The God who reveals himself to us (ch. 1:1). God revealed himself in a progressive fashion in the Old Testament. The various names of God relate to his character and attributes as revealed in different circumstances to specific individuals. God spoke in a variety of ways through the prophets. Sometimes his word dealt with immediate events or needs. At other times the prophetic word was a bold declaration of God's overarching purpose and promises. We have a more certain word from God, his final word revealed in and through his son and our saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The son who reveals God to us (vv. 2-3). Jesus is superior to the prophets in several ways. As son of God he speaks with greater authority and completeness. Their revelation was in bits and pieces. Jesus said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." He speaks as both creator and sustainer of all things. He provides purification for sins.

A warning that challenges us (ch. 2:1-3a). This is the first of five progressive warnings recorded in Hebrews. Since neither angels nor prophets can compete with the Lord Jesus Christ as God's final word, we are exhorted to pay attention so that we don't "drift away." The word picture is dramatic. It refers to one who is careless and doesn't even realize they are losing ground or to a ship that is loose from its moorings.

A revelation that assures us (vv. 3b-4). We should pay attention because the word of God revealed in Christ has been affirmed and passed on to us by authoritative witnesses. The author indicates he had not personally received the Gospel from the Lord but it was confirmed "to us by those who heard him." The signs and wonders in the New Testament are part of that witness. The Holy Spirit also seals that witness in our hearts and gifts the church to demonstrate that witness in the world today.

A savior who encourages us (vv. 17-18). "I feel your pain" has become cliché. Yet Jesus is not only fully divine, he is fully human. Because of his real humanity he can truly identify with us in testing and adversity. We have an approachable high priest who knows experientially what we are going through. He is both "merciful," in that he reveals the grace of God, and "faithful," in that he remains true to the character of God. We enjoy a unique status in relationship to God, we are called through Christ to be both children and heirs. The hymn writer proclaims "What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry, everything to God in prayer." ■ — L. Joseph Rosas III is pastor of Union Avenue Church, Memphis.

Following the Lord

By Kevin Goza

Focal Passage — II Kings 18:1-8; 20:16-21

Great leaders understand the importance of being a good follower. Hezekiah's life was marked by an obedience to the Lord that was unsurpassed. In our focal passages, we witness the great beginning and humble end of Hezekiah's leadership.

Great beginning — ch. 18:1-8

Hezekiah's godly character is sketched for us at the outset of his reign over Judah. Being concerned about the things of God, he walked in the footsteps of his forefather, King David.

His reign began with reformation. He ordered the removal of all the forms that portrayed acts of idolatry (v. 4). The high places, where vulgar acts of idolatry were performed, were destroyed. The cultic stone pillars and Asherah poles were taken away with haste.

One interesting act of reformation Hezekiah performed was the destroying of the bronze serpent of Moses (v. 4b). Can you imagine the fire he drew with this act? The response to the destruction of such a "sacred" object would have been outrage. However, the

Convention Uniform Lesson

object had become a focus of idol worship, and therefore did not need to exist. The point for us is strikingly clear: God jealously guards our worship, and reserves it only for himself. Even good things become sin when they come between us and our worship of God.

God was pleased with Hezekiah's actions (vv. 5-8). He stood above the crowd spiritually, he followed the Lord faithfully, and he kept the commands of God. Be-

cause of this, God blessed everything Hezekiah did. Obedience opens the door for God's blessings to fall on his people.

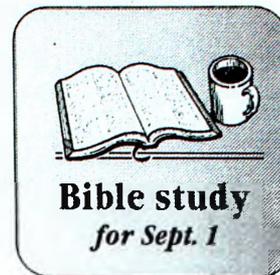
Humble end — ch. 20:16-21

Hezekiah had his ups and downs as king. He made good decisions, and he made bad decisions. Because of the Scripture's honest assessment of Hezekiah's reign, we can find points of identification with this man who had a heart for God.

One of his bad decisions was to open the doors of his kingdom to the Babylonian contingent (vv. 12-13). In revealing Judah's wealth, he opened the door for future attacks on his people. Isaiah confronted Hezekiah with his indiscretion, and delivered a word from God to the king (vv. 16-18). To Hezekiah's credit, he heard the word of God, and responded with great humility (v. 19). He realized that, while the rest of his reign would be characterized by peace, his decision brought unrest to bear on the future of Judah.

Hezekiah's decision to reveal Judah's wealth was out of character for this godly man. Again, we see that following God does not guarantee we will not ourselves fall into temptation. We make decisions about obedience to the Lord one at a time. All the more reason to make every decision under the leadership of God's spirit within us.

In spite of imperfections, Hezekiah's life ended as one marked by obedience to the Lord. Even when sin crept into his life, he rebounded by faith, sought God's forgiveness, and continued on in his walk with God. In his life, we see the power of obedience, and God's power to forgive. ■ — Kevin Goza is pastor of First Church, Lebanon.



Seven vials of God's judgment

By Tom Moncrief

Focal Passage — Revelation 15:5-7; 16:4-6, 10-17

The scenes presented in this passage call attention to the victory of the redeemed and are to fortify the saints and encourage those who live in the tribulation. The bowl judgments are intended for God's glory and man's redemption. Earlier judgments were partial but these are full and final.

Seven angels came from the temple with seven plagues (ch. 15:5-7). The temple, symbolizing God's very presence, was usually closed but now is opened giving a clearer vision into God's presence. From his presence come angels as God's agents to fulfill his covenant promise to bless his people and judge their enemies. The seven bowls are filled with what represents God's wrath. They are penalties of God's broken laws.

The third angel turned all fresh water into blood (ch. 16:4-6). This angel declares God to be just in his actions upon those who shed the blood of the saints. Their actions had not come to an end with the death of their victims.

People cannot attack the friends of God and expect God's world to be their friend. The rivers and fountains usually give fresh water fostering life but now they issue the blood

Bible Book Lesson

of death. This was recompense for persecuting the godly.

Pouring out the fifth bowl on the throne of the beast results in total darkness (vv. 10-11). The throne of world power is threatened. This darkness symbolizes gloom and hopelessness. Men refusing the light offered to them do not have the illumination needed for life and conduct. Worshipers of the beast have turned away from the light and are in darkness and are spiritually blind. Along with complete darkness "they gnawed their tongues in pain." In the darkness and terrible pain they do not repent but rather blame and curse God increasing their blasphemy of God's name. Rejecting God always has terrible consequences.

The sixth angel poured out his vial or bowl on the Euphrates River and the river was dried up (vv. 12-16). This represents removal of the barrier between the promised land and their enemies of the East. The hosts of evil are pictures in conflict with God's agents. Foul spirits issued from the mouths of the dragon (Satan), the beast (world power), and the false prophet (false religion). They evidently represent false teachings and are foes of Christ and

his church. They are the combination of all that is evil in the world against all that is good. Enticing speech of evil draws people

to unite with Satan against God. The foul spirits seek to gather all men in war against God by all the forces of evil in the world. The "great day of God Almighty" is when God executes judgment in decisive conflict between the worship of Satan and the worship of Christ.

Christ comes unexpectedly "as a thief" in judgment that evil shall be destroyed in the world and also in individuals. The church must maintain its watchfulness and personal holiness during the conflict and so recognize the coming of the Lord in victory over evil. Armageddon describes the struggle of the forces of good against the forces of evil. The struggle has moral and spiritual implications.

The seventh angel pours out his bowl into the air and a great voice declares, "It is done." The pouring out of God's wrath is completed. God's purpose is accomplished.

This lesson reminds one of the awfulness of rejecting God and the blessedness of following him and gives a challenge to evangelize the world while there is time. ■ — Tom Moncrief is a member of First Church, Cleveland.



world news

Elliff to lead prayer service at Southern

SBTS News Office

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Southern Baptist Convention President Tom Elliff will speak at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in a series of chapel services, Tuesday, Sept. 10.

The chapel services are being held in conjunction with a series of one-day convocations on the six Southern Baptist seminary campuses.

Elliff will speak in the regularly scheduled chapel service at 10 a.m. in Alumni Memorial Chapel. It will be followed by an 11 a.m. prayer service and another chapel service at noon.

Henry Blackaby, author of Experiencing God and Avery Willis, author of MasterLife, will accompany Elliff and will participate in the services.



ELLIFF

Elliff said.

A complimentary box lunch will be served at 1 p.m. on the seminary grounds.

Tennessee Baptists are invited to the seminary for the activities, said Southern President R. Albert Mohler Jr.

Those planning to attend the lunch should call the Student Services Office at (502) 897-4205 to make a reservation. ■

Kuwaiti Christian flees to U.S.

Baptist Press

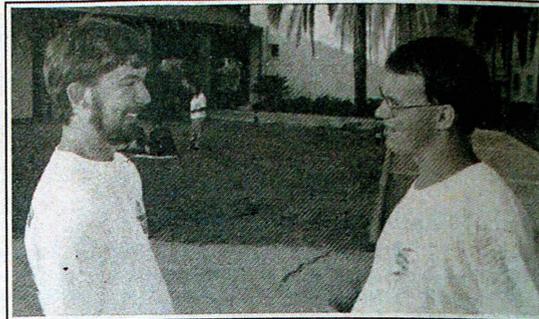
WASHINGTON — A Kuwaiti businessman sentenced to die in a Muslim Court arrived at Dulles Airport Aug. 17 and was whisked away in a private vehicle to an undisclosed location far away from the nation's capital.

Robert Hussein, the Kuwaiti, fled his homeland with a valid passport and a six-month visa to the United States.

"He is now a free man in a free country," said Jim Jacobson, president of Christian Solidarity International, who met Hussein at the airport and arranged for his asylum.

Hussein was stripped of Kuwait's Muslim family courts of the custody of his children and his inheritance because of his Christian beliefs.

Islamic law does not allow for conversion from Islam. ■



Tennesseans serve in Israel

Joe Calfee, left, and Robert J. Estes are two Tennessee residents serving at Baptist Village in Petah Tiqva, Israel, this summer. Calfee is a member of First Church, Oak Ridge. Estes was active in the Baptist Student Union at the University of Tennessee when he was a student there. Baptist Village plays a key role in Southern Baptist work in Israel by providing conference and retreat space. — Photo by Mike Creswell

HMB commissions US-2 missionaries

Baptist Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — The cooperative nature of Southern Baptist work was celebrated during the commissioning of 22 US-2 missionaries at Sandia Church here on Aug. 11.

Participating in the service were Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis; WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien; and Mike Day, Brotherhood Commission executive vice president.

The 22 new US-2 missionaries are college graduates age 30 or younger who will serve the next two years in a variety of HMB assignments. ■

RTVC broadcasts get responses

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — During the first 10 months of its fiscal year, the counseling department of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission reported 12,063 letters or phone calls resulting from RTVC-produced or sponsored radio and television programs and its pages on the Internet.

Of the numbers we're reporting, 238 received Christ as Savior, 113 inquired about salvation and 367 received referral to a local church," said Pat Wooley, RTVC director of counseling.

"Invitation to Life," featuring the preaching of Ronnie Floyd of Springdale, Ark., received the most response with 6,598 phone calls, followed by the "Baptist Hour" program with Frank Pollard of Jackson, Miss., with 1,790 calls.

Other RTVC-produced television programs generating re-

sponses were "COPE," 915 letters; "Country Crossroads," 112 letters; and "Home Life," three letters. ■

Alaska Baptists conclude 50th anniversary year

Baptist Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Alaska Baptists, concluding their 50th anniversary year, framed their annual meeting with the theme, "Sound the Trumpet in the Year of Jubilee."

Messenger registration totaled 199, representing the 65 churches and 23 missions in the state Baptist convention.

The convention's 50-year history, This Is The Work of God, was published in time for the Aug. 6-7 gathering at First Church, Anchorage.

Messengers elected Wally Smith, pastor of Faith Church, Fairbanks, as president and approved a 1997 budget of \$1,599,438, a 5.5 percent decrease from the 1996 budget. ■

SBU taps Taylor as new president

Baptist Press

BOLIVAR, Mo. — C. Pat Taylor of Shawnee, Okla., was elected 24th president of Southwest Baptist University Aug. 20 in a special meeting of trustees at the Missouri Baptist school.

Taylor, 50, is a Kentucky native and currently is provost at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. He will succeed Roy Blunt, SBU president since 1993 who is seeking Missouri's 7th District congressional seat in the November general election. Blount had announced he would leave the university Dec. 31. ■

IT'S BUDGET PLANNING TIME IN TENNESSEE!



Has your church begun planning its budget for the next church year?

If not, don't faint when you see how costs for paper, printing, and postage have gone up. And, according to Dan Ferrell of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Production Services Department,

postage for church mailings probably will increase again later this year.

But, there is a way to "beat the system." Let the Baptist and Reflector print your newsletter. By using the back page (or more) you can publish your newsletter for only \$65 per week (plus subscriptions). For one convenient price, your newsletter is typeset, printed, and mailed. This saves you money and releases your office staff for other responsibilities.

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