

## this week's news

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**NOLACHUCKY LEADERS**

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

### Timelines, personnel decisions made

## SBC reorganization proceeds: transition team

For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE —Two executives of the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission, including President Ron E. Chandler, will take positions with the Baptist Sunday School Board as the commission prepares for its dissolution under the restructuring of the denomination.

Also, a North American Mission Board transition team chairman advised leaders of the three SBC agencies which will merge to form the NAMB to inform employees "there will be a considerable amount of staff reductions" in the merger.

"One thing is obvious," Jack Johnson, president of the Radio and Television Commission and chairman of the NAMB logistics transition team, said at an Oct. 17-18 meeting, "there will be a considerable amount of staff reduction. We must begin to tell our staffs that fact. We are as anxious as anyone to get to the point where we can tell our employees their future status." The RTVC, Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board will merge in June 1997 to form the North American Mission Board. The SBC "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring includes reducing the number of agencies and institutions from 19 to 12.

The three agencies which

will form NAMB currently have about 500 employees. No employment total for the new NAMB was released by Johnson or the transition team. A model of NAMB structure is nearing completion and officials hope to unveil the model in November, according to David Hankins, chairman of the NAMB transition communications team and vice president for convention policy for the SBC Executive Committee.



**JOHNSON**

"The restructuring process is proceeding according to the guidelines and time lines reported by the Implementation Task Force at the SBC meeting in June," Hankins said.

The Stewardship Commission's programs will be divided between the BSSB and the SBC Executive Committee. Decided during a number of meetings with the BSSB, the commission and Implementation Task Force officials, Chandler and Carl A. Hoffman, an endowment and capital giving promotion executive, will become consultants

for the BSSB. Hoffman begins Jan. 1 in a commission/BSSB relationship while Chandler begins June 19, the official date of the commission's dissolution following the June annual meeting of the SBC. Also moving to the BSSB is Kay Campbell, Hoffman's secretary.

Previously announced was the employment with the SBC Executive Committee of James L. Powell and James L. Austin, Stewardship Commission executives in Cooperative Program promotion. Under the restructuring, Cooperative Program promotion is added to the Executive Committee while capital giving is moved to the BSSB.

Other Stewardship Commission employees have been notified of the employment ending date of June 19, 1997.

"Since the June 1995 vote by the SBC, my number one priority has been the personnel of the commission," Chandler told Baptist Press. "My goal was to place all of our employees into the new organization. I am pleased that we have almost succeeded and will continue to work to find places for those employees who cannot retire at the present time."

In other SBC restructuring news, Bill Sumners, director of library and archives for the Historical Commission, will manage the library and archives in Nashville for the Council of Seminary Presidents. The commission will dissolve June 19, 1997, with the library and archives program given to the six SBC seminary presidents and other historical services assigned to the BSSB. Commission administrative assistant

Carolyn M. Patton and staff members Jean Forbis and Peggy Hester also will remain full-time under the new

... there will be a considerable amount of staff reductions.

— Jack Johnson, NAMB logistics transition team

Some have elected to take early retirement and some are seeking other employment opportunities, officials said. The commission has 12 Nashville-based employees.

structure. Other employees are taking early retirement or seeking other employment, officials said. The commission has 10 Nashville-based employees. ■

## SBC prayer, fasting thrust reaches other denominations

For Baptist Press

SPRINGDALE, Ark. — Another step toward spiritual revival in the Southern Baptist Convention began Sunday, Oct. 27.

Four thrusts are involved in a week-long emphasis initiated by Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd in his convention sermon at the past Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting:

▶ on Sunday morning, Oct. 27, Floyd urged pastors to call Baptists to fast and pray on Oct. 30.

▶ on Sunday evening, Oct. 27, Floyd urged churches to hold a "solemn assembly" of prayer to call people to repent of personal sin and the sins of the nation.

▶ on Wednesday, Oct. 30, he urged churches to hold a day of humiliation, prayer, and fasting for personal, church, and national revival.

▶ on Sunday, Nov. 3, Floyd urged pastors to preach on the subject of personal, church and national revival.

The emphasis has been accepted across denominational lines, Floyd said Oct. 21, through his invitations to speak on "Focus on the Family," the "700 Club," National Day of Prayer meeting, and a Campus Crusade for Christ meeting. ■



### Carroll-Benton Association holds meeting

Carroll-Benton Association opened its fall sessions with an Oct. 21 afternoon meeting at Eastview Church, Huntingdon. Danny French, Chalk Level Church, Camden, left, talks about the meeting with moderator Billy Murphy, center, Howse Church, Atwood; and George Hill, director of missions.

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## Falwell joins SBC, lauds conservatives

For Baptist Press

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — Jerry Falwell has confirmed that a monthly financial contribution to the new Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia state convention by Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Va., has, in essence, made him a Southern Baptist.

Falwell, in an Oct. 24 statement, noted: "For many years, I have watched with admiration the theological renaissance within the Southern Baptist Convention. I have been preaching in Southern Baptist churches for nearly 40 years and Southern Baptist pastors and evangelists have been preaching in my pulpit over the same period."

"When inerrantists in Virginia formed the SBCV recently, the Thomas Road Baptist Church was quick to show its approval and to offer encouragement by beginning modest monthly financial support. While we have no intention of discontinuing our support to our missionaries who are affiliated with many different fellow-

ships and faith mission boards, we fully intend to take our permanent stand with the national and Virginia Bible-believing conservatives who have rescued the Southern Baptist Convention from theological liberalism.

"Thomas Road Baptist Church will continue to be what Southern Baptist churches have always been, independent and autonomous. We are now happy to work in voluntary cooperation with Southern Baptist churches."

The church, thus, becomes dually aligned with the SBC and the Baptist Bible Fellowship, based in Springfield, Mo., encompassing about 3,500 churches, many proud to be known as fundamentalist. To be known as part of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, a church must provide support for the group's 800-plus missionaries on 98 mission fields and/or six affiliated colleges and ask to be listed in the fellowship's directory, published every two years. Another 900 to 1,000 provide financial support for missionaries or the colleges but have not asked to

be in the directory, a fellowship official said.

The amount of the contribution to the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia was not specified in Falwell's statement.

The contribution will qualify the independent Baptist church to send messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, scheduled next year from June 17-19 in Dallas.

Additionally, the contribution will qualify members of the church for service on the trustee boards of the SBC.

To qualify for messenger representation at an SBC annual meeting, the convention's constitution states that a church in "friendly cooperation" with the SBC can name one messenger by being a "bona fide contributor to the Convention's work during the fiscal year preceding." The amount of the contribution is not specified in the SBC constitution. A church can qualify for one additional messengers for every 250 members or for each \$250 given to SBC work, up to a maximum of 10. ■

## Change in Texas hunger gifts stirs official concern

For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A Texas decision to change its policy of sharing hunger gifts received from churches with the Southern Baptist Convention's mission boards to include other mission groups has irked executives at three SBC agencies.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas executive board in March approved a new funding method for hunger gifts and set four Sundays prior to Thanksgiving as the time to emphasize the hunger offering. Thus, instead of observing World Hunger Day one Sunday in October, many Texas Baptist churches

are devoting every Sunday in November to the emphasis.

Instead of promoting a general hunger offering divided 80 percent to the SBC Foreign Mission Board and 20 percent to the Home Mission Board, the Texas convention now solicits specific ministry proposals from the mission boards as well as from the Baptist World Alliance and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a moderate Baptist organization formed in 1991 and critical of SBC leadership.

The Texas decision has irked Jerry Rankin, president of the Foreign Mission Board; Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board; and

Richard D. Land, president of the Christian Life Commission.

"We regret that Texas Baptists have chosen to manage gifts to world hunger independently rather than cooperatively with the (SBC) mission boards," Rankin told Baptist Press. "It is sad that funds would be diverted to the BWA and other organizations for work in places such as Africa and Bosnia rather than supporting our Foreign Mission Board missionaries who are sharing the Gospel and ministering so effectively in those needy and responsive areas of the world.

"We are confident many

(Texas) churches, once they become aware of this policy to hold and divert funds, will want to send their gifts directly to the Foreign Mission Board where 100 percent will be used to support world hunger projects being administered by our missionaries."

Under the new policy, proposals are considered by a world hunger task force that includes representatives of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, the State Mission Commission, Woman's Missionary Union of Texas, and Texas Baptist Men. The team then recommends projects for funding to the full Texas CLC at its spring meeting. ■

## Churches weighing voter guide use

For Baptist and Reflector

WASHINGTON — With just days before the general election, church leaders are facing the choice to use the Christian Coalition's presidential voter guides.

The Christian Coalition voter guides are controversial. Critics charge the guides endorse specific candidates and should not be used in churches. Defenders of the Christian Coalition maintain the guides are educational and non-partisan.

In July, the Federal Election Commission sued the Christian Coalition, charging the organization improperly spent money to "influence the election of candidates for federal office."

Corporations may not spend money on federal elections, but may form political action committees (PACs), which may use money for elections. The Christian Coalition, a nonprofit group subject to restrictions on political involvement, is not a PAC and refuses to form one.

Several religious leaders warn that use of the voter guides may land churches in

similar trouble. Because they are in a different non-profit classification, churches are even more restricted than the Christian Coalition's political activity.

If the FEC finds the guides to be partisan political activity, the Internal Revenue Service may raise the tax-exempt issue not only for the Christian Coalition but for churches that use its voter guides, some church-state experts warn.

Brent Walker, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee, urged churches to beware of using the voter guides. "If churches embrace the voter guides or participate or acquiesce in their distribution, they will jeopardize their tax-exempt status," he warned.

Others, however, see less of a threat. Will Dodson, director of governmental relations at the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said churches "shouldn't be wary at all." He said the Christian Coalition voter guides simply record the voting records and positions of candidates without taking sides. ■ Associated Baptist Press contributed to this story

## Seminary trustees set campus plan

For Baptist Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees have agreed the time has come for planning new facilities at the nearly 40-year-old Kansas City, Mo., campus.

Trustees also cheered reports of an estimated 28 percent gain in student enrollment, approved a faculty development/study tour of the Holy Land, approved a faculty position in "church and the law" and addressed other business in their semiannual meeting Oct. 21-22.

Trustees voted to spend up to \$400,000 for completion of a campus master plan and schematic designs. The plans will entail replacement of the current administrative, classroom/faculty office, auditorium, and library buildings. Cost of the plans will be paid out of capital needs funding the seminary has received as a result of the strong Cooperative Program receipts this year.

# Show and tell for Tennessee Baptists

**I**n the finite scheme of things, Tennessee Baptists may not play a leading role. But in the infinite strategy of the Lord God, we are role players on the stage of life.

Like other Christians — past and present, Baptists have moments of greatness and moments of ineptitude and unconcern.

What happens?

Robert Frost wrote about the adventure of choosing "the road less traveled by." His excitement grew as he thought about sticking to that road, and realizing that "that has made all the difference."

The result should not be just "the difference," but a qualitative difference.

Southern Baptists have a character, shaped by forerunners who knew sacrifice, even death, in the effort to right things gone wrong in the world.

Often we have been persecuted and wounded by religious bigots. We have wounded our own brethren. At times we have tarried when the Lord beckoned. And like the wandering Israelites of the Old Testament, we have grumbled about the desert and longed for the comforts of Egypt.

But denominations are not only a sum of the total membership. While Baptists may alienate other groups when we adhere to the precious doctrines of our faith and heritage, the perception of others should not dissuade us from doing what is right.

We can no longer use the ballyhooed excuse of persecution, however. As a denomination, Southern Baptists may not always carry the banner of the Lord uprightly. And when we fail, we know it — then we should do something about the failure.

To walk somewhere near the Lord's will for Tennessee Baptists, there should be some evidence of willingness, desire, and cooperation.

Bill Moyers talks about religion "breaking out everywhere." Not to debunk Moyers, who certainly has approached the subject thoroughly, the point must be made that religion is a slippery word.

Looking at all the groups (religions) that are part of the American quilt, Moyers wants to find out whether "powerful beliefs and democratic tolerance" can coexist. That is a big one.

Baptists in general, Southern Baptists in particular, have held on to Baptist distinctives tenaciously. But we have to be the role players God needs for today's world population. It calls for tolerance, short of surrender.

Look at some positives:

**Promise Keepers.** Not a Southern Baptist idea in its genesis, nonetheless this program has brought together men of all means, races, and cultures.

**Experiencing God.** The Blackaby-King book is true to its title, helping thousands to recommit to a deeper walk with Christ. The same can be said about *Fresh Encounter*,

and T. W. Hunt's *The Mind of Christ*.

**Spiritual Awakening.** Many witnesses report that this is happening around the world. It is true that Baptist leaders and others are calling for awakening through prayer and fasting. The need is urgent, but the road is rough.

These are but a few of the positive happenings of today. Moyers' question about tolerance is all the more important. Compromise is not the complete answer. How does one tolerate a faith that is obviously anti-Christian?

Each of us must answer to God for ourselves. And to have a positive Christian impact on the world around us, we must first love one another.

People of the world are waiting for the spiritual rescue team that sees through the eyes of Christ. **B&R**



## And here comes Jerry

A news story on page 2 of this issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* reveals that Jerry Falwell has "brought" his church to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Observers of Falwell's ties with SBC leaders are not surprised. His church will keep its alignment with the Baptist Bible Fellowship.

Falwell has not changed — nor has his church. Apparently SBC leadership in recent years has moved toward Falwell, so that he feels comfortable with an affiliation. He may feel more at home in the SBC than do some Southern Baptists.

He and his school, Liberty University, have close friends in the SBC. Several prominent SBC pastors and/or leaders serve as trustees for the school.

In his statement, Falwell refers to the "theological renaissance" within the SBC. He also said he would stand with a recently formed conservative wing of the Virginia Baptist Convention. How long before Brother Falwell is picked as SBC president? It may be sooner than most think, and certainly much sooner than many longtime Southern Baptist leaders who have "paid their dues." **B&R**

**By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor**

## Cherished heritage — is truth's voice from the past

Heritage is an explanation of events, people, places that shaped our past.

The beautifully handwritten note on the inside cover of a book speaks to me of heritage.

My sister's gift to me strengthened personal desires to live that heritage.

It was a book that belonged to my grandfather whom I never knew.

*The Baptist Spirit*, published by the Sunday School Board, was a book he wanted to share with his family.

The carefully crafted note reads, "For the benefit of my family. Read and pass it on to others. If not read it is worthless. — David E. Allen, September 1, 1928."

As I glance through the book, I am impressed by W. D. Nowlin's grasp on Southern Baptist heritage. As I read it, I will increase my knowledge of our Baptist beliefs. The foundation is secure.

### one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

And I will take even greater measures to share with others the great truths that influenced our Baptist forefathers.

Heritage provides shaping for our spiritual and mental growth. Looking at the signature of our grandfather, I remember the value of a good name.

One of my brothers was named for David Allen, another was named Fred, as was our father.

I was given the name of my mother's father, the only grandfather that I knew.

Though Betty and I have four daughters and sons-in-law, we don't think we will ever stop parenting. And the grandchildren need a rich Christian heritage

just as their parents did.

I think that's why my grandfather apparently sensed the urgency of his family to read about Baptist heritage. The past, some say, is prologue to the future. It also has meaning for the present — though it would be a mistake to try to stay in either.

Names may offer links to the past. Shakespeare wrote that "A rose by any other name smells just as sweet." That's true, but when we talk about people, that adage is not always on target. People are different from roses.

We need the heritage of the Baptist name, the Christian name, the national name, the family name. We need those things of heritage that make us sturdy, strong, and resolute in our Christian heritage

Be faithful to the past and future. ■



ALLEN

### Just for today

By Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis

#### Start with a smile

Mother, to little boy after his first day in school: "What did you learn in school today?"

Son: "I learned my name is Henry, not 'precious.'"

#### Take this truth

Indeed, if we are wise, we will try to learn new things every day.



WOOD

Learning has been called the eye of the mind, and learned people have been called the cisterns of knowledge.

Lord Ches-terfield warns us to wear our learning like our watch in a private pocket, never pulling it out merely to show we have it.

#### Memorize this Scripture

Go on growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior. II Peter 3:18 Moffatt.

#### Pray this prayer

Lord, help us to realize those who do not continue to move forward will find they are slipping backward. Help me grow some each day. ■

## Foundation for nurturing your family

### families matter

— by Paul Barkley, counselor, professor

A strength of the Christian family is fellowship. We enjoy being together. Many families simply tolerate each other. Too often there is resentment, resistance, and revenge — which lead to open war or indifference.

In Philippians 1, Paul makes three suggestions which can help set the foundation for family fellowship. These building blocks for fellowship are our conduct, cooperation, and confidence.

Paul instructs the Philippian believers to conduct themselves consistent with the Gospel of Christ. A Christian family that behaves what it believes and practices what it preaches, will have a better chance of developing intimate relationships necessary for strong family ties.

In a society with few moral moorings, it

is imperative that the Christian family lives so that it will be the salt and light Jesus called us to be. This conduct also will form the foundation that will furnish stability in life's storms.

Conduct consistent with personal belief gives a sense of credibility and internal equilibrium.

Paul also encouraged them to cooperate with each other. His words are "with one mind striving together." Many families are divided and pitted member against member. The family is the smallest unit of society. No society will endure when the family is not a solid cooperating unit.

We don't always have to like each other, but we do need to love each other. When my brother and I fought and were not cooperating, our father would break a stick, double the broken pieces and ask us to try to break them.

When we couldn't, he would remind us how strong we were when we worked together.

Paul also sought to instill confidence in the Philippian believers. They were told to be "in no way alarmed by opponents." We may not feel strong enough to stand against the crowd. But we can have confidence when we stand for Christian values.

Our confidence comes because we have the confidence of our Lord, his prophets, and Paul — some good company. ■



**about  
letters to  
the editor**

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



**Partnership  
Prayer Requests**

**October - November**

- 30 — Pray for Don Miller as he seeks employment in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.
- 31 — Pray for the four churches in Oakland Association, Mich., which are without pastors.
- 1 — Pray for Joe Cook, a church planter and pastor of Faith Chapel, Jackson, Mich. Members are trying to work on a building started by a group from Bartlett.
- 2 — Pray for Lorna White, a member of First Church, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, who has heart and back problems.
- 3 — Pray for Gustaw Cieslar, rector of the Polish Baptist Seminary in Warsaw, who broke his ankle while in the U.S. He will have surgery this week in Poland.
- 4 — Pray for the annual meeting of the Michigan convention Nov. 5-7 in Midland.
- 5 — Praise God for the rebuilding taking place in congregation of First Church, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada.

**Veteran speaks**

I'm writing in response to the article in the *Baptist and Reflector* recently where we are sending food and money to the North Koreans. They are a hard core Communist nation. I think it is a slap in the face for Korean veterans. If they would "beat their swords into plow shares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Isaiah 2:4), they could take care of themselves.

I am a veteran and Baptist.  
*Raymond Mathis*  
Greenfield 38230

The people of North Korea are under a dictatorship. They need our prayers also. — Editor

**Long tenure**

On Aug. 12, our 89 year-old mother, Mary Moore Cummings, passed away. At the time of her death, she was teaching the Dorcas Sunday School Class at First Baptist Church, Medina. She had taught this class for over 25 years. She began teaching Sunday School at age 17 at West Jackson Baptist, and over the years, she taught at Poplar Heights, Ararat, and Westover Baptist churches, all in the Jackson area.

We do not know if teaching Sunday School for over 72 consecutive years is a "record," but if not, it surely is an honorable mention, so we thought we would share this information.

Her Christian life and example has influenced many lives over the years, most especially her five children who are

all living and are members of Baptist churches. She was preceded in death by her husband, Arthur Cummings, in 1967 after 40 years of marriage. Besides her children, she leaves 11 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Her dedication to her Lord was her first priority in her life and her influence will live on for many years to come.

*Linda Graves*  
Dyersburg 38024

**View given**

There seems to be a concerted effort by some media to spread the big lie that: "Homosexuality is but a normal sexual variation for a percentage of the world's population from the beginning of time."

The homosexual, above all else, seeks to be accepted as normal. But he cannot be normal because his practice bears no fruit. Homosexuality is its own end. Its legacy is self only. It makes no contribution to the ongoing of the human species. Its practice makes a mockery of God's command both to Adam and to Noah: "Be fruitful and multiply." The whole concept flies in the face of Nature's design to preserve the species. Given a choice between a heterosexual and a homosexual, nature will always choose the heterosexual; because homosexuality leads to racial suicide.

It is false that homosexuality is normal because it has been around from "... the be-

ginning of time." So has murder since Cain, incest since Ammon, stealing since Jacob, and lying since the Serpent; yet not one of these is deemed to be normal behavior. The age of a practice in no way determines whether it is right or wrong. That's decided by the ensuing consequences.

Tell me to accept the homosexual as a person — and love him. This I can do because I know that Jesus loves him. But don't tell me his behavior is normal.

So, maybe the Creator did the normal thing when he created Adam and then Eve — not Adam and then Adam.

*Leonard W. Riley*  
Memphis 38115

**Home missions**

The Baptists of Tennessee have demonstrated their commitment to missions by their generous Annie Armstrong Easter Offerings. On behalf of all who are involved in Home Missions, I want to say thank you and assure you of our profound gratitude.



The office of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention has just distributed the October 1995 through September 1996 report. It indicates the Baptists of your state increased their Annie Armstrong Easter Offering gifts \$160,517.38 over the previous year. This is a six percent increase.

The commitment to missions is one of the strong cords that binds Southern Baptists.

You and your state are a leader in mission commitment.

*Ernest J. Kelley*  
Executive Vice President  
HMB, Atlanta

**New world order**

What does the term, "family value system" mean? The traditional titles: husband, wife, father, mother, child are all biblical terms and have served us well.

However, the New World Order which originates from the nether world naturally rejects biblical terms and is trying to force our society to use their terms for family members: spouse, parent, care taker, all of which negate sex gender. These new terms accommodate the homosexuals, lesbians, government care takers, etc.

So, don't be deceived when a candidate uses the term, our family value system, for you can't always be sure which value system he or she is talking about.

I believe that the large rate of crime in our land today is the natural consequences of abortion rights — which has devaluated human life; and the promotion of homosexuality which preys on young children. Also, polls show that the majority of our society say that character is not important.

According to God's Word, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" Psalm 9:17. Will America be next?

*Norma Cox*  
Holladay 38341



**Associations hold fall meetings**

**Business**

Frank Proffitt, director of missions, Sevier County Association, announced he will retire in December.

**Churches added**

New Center Church, Sevierville, was added to the

membership of Sevier County Association. Tony Sutton is pastor.

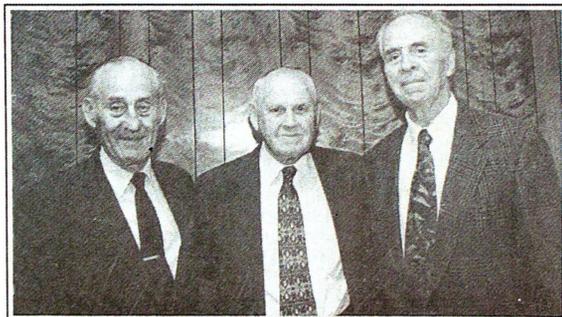
**Recognitions**

Ronnie White, moderator of Sevier County Association, was recognized for two years of service. Also Ashley Johnson,

winner of the National Challengers Speak-Out, a Brotherhood program, was recognized.

**Special Reports**

Hamilton County Association heard that giving from churches set a record for best in the history of association. ■



AMONG THOSE HONORED at the Wilson County Association meeting Oct. 17-18 were retired pastors, from left, Allen Buhler, retired from Southside Church; Albert Jewell, retired from Saulsbury Church; and Robert G. Capra, retired from Cedar Grove Church. Not pictured is W. L. Baker, retired from First Church, Donelson.

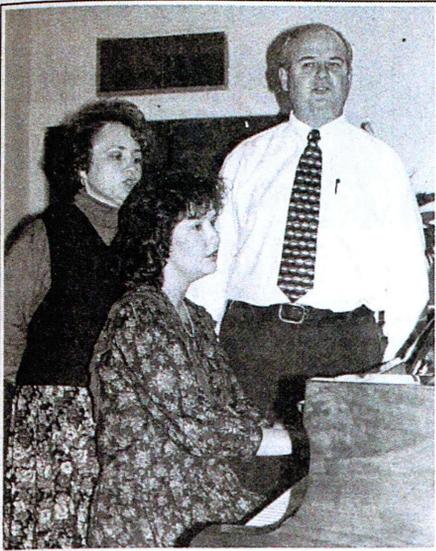


ELECTED TO LEAD Wilson County Association during its meeting were, from left, Don Pharris, pastor, Fairview Church, Lebanon, moderator; Arlie Pass, member, Shop Springs Church, Lebanon, treasurer; Mike Shelby, pastor, Cedar Creek Church, Lebanon, clerk; and Peggy Tramel, associational secretary.

# October's time for blue skies, meetings



## Tennessee's associations report, plan, cooperate for missions and ministry



**TRINITY SINGERS**, a trio from the area, performed for messengers to the Indian Creek Association, meeting with First Church, Waynesboro, Oct. 21. See photo below.

### Special Reports

**Haywood Association** messengers heard a report that its churches had an 11 percent increase in baptisms. Also, it learned that more church members participated in volunteer missions work this year. Nearly 200 people did such work.

**Maury Association** heard Amber Otey, a member of a team from Highland Park Church, Columbia, who worked in West Memphis, Ark., with World Changers, a program of the Brotherhood Commission, Memphis. Messengers also heard Greg McCoy, chairman of the missions committee, report on the associational team which helped rebuild Salem Missionary Church, Fruitland, an African-American church destroyed by arsonists.

**Central Association** is hold-

ing a spring evangelist crusade. Jay Strack will speak.

### Recognitions

John Kimberly Jr., former minister of music, Holly Grove Church, Bells, was honored for 10 years of service in **Haywood Association** churches. The annual minute book will be dedicated to him. He is a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Ralph Hoover, director of missions, **Central Association**, for 17 years, was honored along with his wife, Jean, on his upcoming retirement Dec. 31.

Salem Association honored the late **Charles B. Martin**, who served as associational song leader for 17 years, by dedicating the annual minutes to his memory.

### Business

**Union Association** appointed a long-range planning committee.

**Maury Association** established a 21st Century Committee to consider the future needs of the association and added a chaplaincy ministry to be directed by Jack Taylor.

### Churches added

Laurel Hill Mission, Sparta, which has constituted as a church, was added by **Union Association**. Ralph Benningfield is the pastor.

Hillsboro Church, Franklin, was accepted into the watchcare program of **Maury Association** for one year. The pastor is James Roland. ■



**INDIAN CREEK** officers, from left, Frank Samuels, First Church, Waynesboro, moderator; Norman Baker, Bethlehem Church, vice moderator; Linda Griggs, clerk; Phil Foster, Green River Church, treasurer; and David Miller, director of missions.



**LOUDON COUNTY ASSOCIATION** leaders are, from left, Tony Collins, Highland Park Church, moderator; Ray Luck, director of missions; Thom Tapp, Oral Church, Sunday School director; Pat Amos, clerk; and Ronny Jones, Kingston Pike, incoming moderator. Messengers met for the Oct. 22 morning session at Dixie Lee Church, Lenoir City. — Photos by Wm. Fletcher Allen.



**HAYWOOD ASSOCIATION** re-elected officers during its fall meeting Oct. 15 at Calvary Church, Brownsville. From left are Grover Westover, pastor, Harmony Church, moderator; Kenneth Culver, pastor, Calvary Church, vice moderator; Dewey Jones, Holly Grove Church, assistant treasurer; Linda Pratt, clerk; and Charles Pratt, director of missions.



**NOLACHUCKY ASSOCIATION** began its fall meeting at Alpha Church, Morristown, Oct. 15. Leading the session were, from left, James C. Williams, director of missions; Tom James, host pastor; Clay Frazier, retired pastor who gave the foreign missions report; and Donnie Bible, Bible's Chapel Church, moderator.



## What a difference a day makes

By Ron Galyon

**Focal Passage — Exodus 20:8-11;  
Mark 2:23-28; Acts 20:6-7; Romans  
14:5-8**

One day a little boy walked up to his daddy and said, "Dad, did you go to Sunday School when you were young?" The daddy looked at his son, smiled, and said, "Son, I never missed a Sunday!" The little boy started to shake his head, then he said, "Bet it won't do me any good, either."

I wonder, what difference does a day make? For many people the day that has been set aside as a day to join with others to worship God has become just like any other day. In fact, for the majority of those who claim to be believers the Lord's Day is a day of lounging, amusement, sports, recreation, and grass cutting. I am afraid many of us miss many of the great gifts that God has given to us. The day of worship is certainly one of those great gifts. The day of worship can make a tremendous difference in our life.

I want us to approach this commandment by first looking at the Old Testament practice, then draw God's forever principle, then take that principle and make an application in our lives today.

**The Old Testament practice prohibited work and promoted rest and worship on the Sabbath day.** Jesus gave us great insight into the Sabbath day when he said in Mark 2:27, "The Sabbath was made for man." In other words God gave to man a gift. Gifts can be used for the purpose for which they are given or gifts can be abused. What was the practice on the Sabbath? The term "Sabbath" comes from a Hebrew term meaning to rest or to cease from activity. The Sabbath was the seventh or last day of the Hebrew week. The Sabbath began at sundown on Friday and lasted until sundown on Saturday. The Hebrews were to remember the Sabbath day. There were two reasons to cease from work. One was the Hebrew people needed rest so their bodies, minds, and emotions could be renewed and restored. The second was so they could worship and this was to become the lens through which they were to focus all of life.

**The eternal principle is that the day of worship becomes a time of focus for all of life.** Like many other people I wear glasses. The first thing I do in the mornings when I stumble out of bed is put on my glasses which are on the bedside table. Without my glasses my vision is a blur.

God gave the gift of a worship day to bring life into focus and proper perspective. Without a weekly time to focus life with our church family, our lives will get totally out of focus. We will not be able to see the things that God desires us to see or experience what God has chosen for us to experience.

**The application is we should not allow anything or anyone to rob us of our gift from God of a day of worship.** Our day of worship has moved from the seventh day of the week to the first day. Our worship is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ by the power of God. We need to remember to guard, to protect our worship day from all infringements that would hinder our worship and rest. As you rest and worship you will be renewed, your life will be focused, and your relationship with God and others will be strengthened. ■ — Ron Galyon is pastor of First Church, Pulaski.

## Portrayal of doom

By Michael Smith

**Focal Passage — Ezekiel 4:1-13**

We remember and ponder what we see. More than any other prophet, Ezekiel used "visual aids" to communicate God's message. In the focal passage, Ezekiel portrayed God's impending judgment. The prophet's startling actions commanded the people's attention, challenging them to confront the hard realities they soon would face.

**Jerusalem under seige (vv. 1-3).** Under the influence of a long standing tradition, many Judeans believed God would never allow Jerusalem to be conquered utterly. Through Ezekiel's prophetic drama, God repudiated such false comfort.

God told Ezekiel to use a standard tile or brick. Such bricks were usually cut in one foot squares and were about three inches thick. Before being dried in the sun the tiles were soft enough to take impressions. Ezekiel probably sketched the outlines of Jerusalem's walls and major landmarks on a tile. He then built a scale model of a military seige of the city. While interesting, the display to this point would not have challenged belief in Jerusalem's divinely ensured security. After all, God had intervened before to break a seige of his city.

### Family Bible Lesson

Ezekiel's next action, though, threw down the gauntlet. He placed an iron pan or plate between himself and the model city. Whereas God had previously stood as a shield between Jerusalem and invaders, this time God would erect a barrier between himself and his people. He would leave them to the fate they had fashioned for themselves.

**How long, O, Lord (vv. 4-8).** Continuing to act out

God's message, Ezekiel depicted the duration of the Northern Kingdom's (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom's (Judah) punishment.

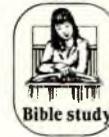
Bound in some way as a symbol of helplessness, Ezekiel lay first on his left then his right side to portray the long years of suffering each nation would face. We cannot pinpoint precise moments in history that correspond either to 390 or 40 years of punishment. Ezekiel, though, clearly meant to shatter any illusions his people might harbor. Their punishment would be long and in keeping with the extent of each nation's sin.

**Stripped of all dignity (vv. 9-13).** During the long days of laying on his side, Ezekiel was commanded to prepare food and eat it as if he were living under seige conditions. God allotted him only a half pound of bread and about a quart of water per day. The bread was to be made from mixed, cheap grains and cooked over a dung fire. Both actions were forbidden by law. The bread and the one who ate it would be rendered ritually unclean. The seige of Jerusalem would strip its inhabitants of all dignity and comfort. Not only would they slowly waste away, even their most cherished religious rituals would be taken from them.

We might think Ezekiel's people would have been moved to repentance by what they saw. The Bible, however, contains no hint of such a response. Though they stopped and looked, and no doubt talked among themselves about the prophet's strange actions, the people continued to live as they had lived. Such a response guaranteed Ezekiel's prophecy would come to pass. ■ — Michael Smith is pastor of Second Church, Memphis.



Bible study  
for November 3



Bible study

## Design for discipleship

By Thom Tapp

**Focal Passage —  
Matthew 6:1, 9-15, 19-  
21; 7:12, 24-27**

Why do some people excel? Have you ever watched a world class performer prepare for action? They give their whole heart to it. We should be "world class" Christians, giving our whole heart to Jesus Christ because we love him.

**Motivations for religious activities — ch. 6: 1-18**

In verse one we find that being seen of men becomes our only reward if that is our motive. God knows when we give from a pure heart.

Beginning in verse nine, Jesus gives us the model prayer. He emphasized prayer that is from the heart, then he gave us the ideal God honoring prayer.

"Our Father" speaks of a relationship with God that is close and personal. It paints a picture of God as the absolute provider for our absolute need.

In verse 10, Jesus again reminds us to make God our king. The only response to such a sovereign is "yes Lord." We should pray for this condition to be true for all people.

In verse 11 Jesus encourages us to acknowledge God as the source of our provision by asking for our

needs. It is a testimony to our dependence on him.

Forgiveness is a theme Jesus uses often. In verse 12, Jesus ties our forgiveness of others to our forgiven sin. A sign I saw recently put it this way, "I owed a debt I couldn't pay. He paid a debt he didn't owe." The fact we are pardoned from eternal death should motivate us to forgive those who wrong us.

Verse 13 deals with temptation. Billy Graham once said: "You can't help it if birds fly over your head, but you don't have to let them build a nest in your hair." We shouldn't let temptation nest in our minds.

Verses 14-15 reinforce what Jesus said in verse 12. Our motivation in prayer should be from a pure and forgiving heart. Forgiveness should be our "default" condition.

**Teachings about wealth and security — vv. 19-34**

Verses 19-21 address the heart of the issue: where is your heart? Treasure is a relative term, but we understand it implicitly. The things that are the most important to us are our gods. To a disciple of Jesus Christ, God and his will is treasure. That fact shows in the life of a true disciple.

### Explore the Bible Lesson

**Teachings about judging —  
ch. 7:1-6**

Jesus warns against judging. He is referring to "condemning" judging that is destructive, not a simple assessment of obvious facts. God alone has the right to judge.

**Teachings about God's generosity — vv. 7-11**

Here Jesus taught us not to assume we have no resources. God answers prayer, but is honored when we ask, seek, and knock through our petitions to him.

**The golden rule — v. 12**

It isn't easy to return good for evil. We are called to mercy. How many of us could safely say "Lord give me justice." Our actions speak volumes about our relationship with the living Lord.

**Kingdom contrasts — vv. 13-27**

Walking the strait and narrow will never be popular. More people will end life without Christ than with. The broad way represents the road most traveled, but it is the road to sorrow and destruction.

**How people respond to the Sermon on the Mount — vv. 28-29**

Jesus' authority astounded them. Jesus said "All power is given unto me..." If you are a Christian, you are a representative of Jesus. You have his authority vested in you. ■ — Thom Tapp is pastor of Oral Church, Lenoir City.



## world news

### Louisiana College trustees change hiring process

Associated Baptist Press

PINEVILLE, La. — A bitterly divided board of trustees at Louisiana College has voted 15-14 to eliminate trustee interviews of prospective faculty members, a move aimed at reducing tensions between conservative trustees and moderate professors at the Baptist school in Pineville, La.

In other business at the September meeting, trustees deadlocked 14-14 on a vote needing a two-thirds majority that would have automatically deferred discussion on items of new business unless two thirds of trustees voted otherwise.

Trustees seeking the change said it would allow board members time to consider and pray about volatile issues. Others argued it would stifle debate and was comparable to limiting academic freedom of professors.

To ease tensions between trustees and faculty, the

board's academic affairs committee offered a revised faculty-selection process that no longer allows trustees to meet with prospective faculty members. ■

### Religion growing while morality declines: study

Associated Baptist Press

PRINCETON, N.J. — American faith is much wider than it is deep, according to a Gallup study of religious values and practice.

"One of the seeming paradoxes of American society is that religion is gaining ground, but morality is losing ground," the Princeton Religion Research Center reports in its Emerging Trends newsletter. The research center analyzed a nationwide study of American adults who shared their perspectives on faith and life.

The poll found that "organized religion in America was at a 10-year high," according to such standards as church attendance and Americans' own expressions of their faith, Princeton research analysts note.

But other surveys contradict Americans' self-professed piety, they add.

For example: Two-thirds of high school students admitted they would like to achieve a business objective. Teen pregnancy, drug abuse, and juvenile crime rates in the United

### Student ministry '96 stats up in outreach, missions

For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Almost a quarter of a million college students were reached through Southern Baptist student ministry programs in fiscal year 1996, according to a recently released report from the Baptist Sunday School Board's national student ministry.

NSM's annual compilation of statistics showed 237,731 students participated in Southern Baptist student ministry programs during the year, up from 236,344 in 1995. The total number of

students involved in missions also increased from 23,491 in 1995 to 27,056 this year.

Increases also were reported in the number of:

► blacks involved in student ministry (9,261, up from 8,979 in '95);

► ethnics involved in student ministry (5,105, up from 4,872 in '95);

► churches, Sunday Schools, or missions students helped start (362, up from 346 in '95);

► students involved in Bible study groups (34,905,

up from 34,172 in '95);

► total contributions to student missions (\$3,286,281, up from 3,158,512 in '95).

"It's another encouraging report," NSM director Bill Henry said, adding, "It shows that student ministry is still an important investment for Southern Baptists."

Henry said he was especially encouraged that minority involvement in SBC student ministry programs showed an increase during the year.

"That's something we've been working on. We want to be effective in reaching people of all races and culture groups," he said. ■



States are among the highest in the industrialized world. Sixty percent of new marriages are expected to end in divorce.

Consequently, Gallup polls show Americans' concern for the national moral climate is at an all-time high. ■

### BSSB, SBCNet, launch web sites

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Baptist Sunday School Board and SBCNet, the Southern Baptist Convention's computer network coordinated by the board, have launched web sites on the Internet.

The address for the BSSB site on the World Wide Web is <http://www.bssb.com>. The SBCNet site may be accessed at <http://www.sbcnet.org>.

"Baptist Sunday School Board Online" is the board's web site identification, according to Chip Alford, BSSB communications department design editor who coordinates corporate content for the site. Subject areas offered online visitors include links to SBCNet and other Baptist sites, providing links to the SBCNet web site and web pages by a variety of Baptist agencies and institutions. ■

### Court accepts case on freedom of religion

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court has accepted a case which apparently will determine the extent of religious liberty protection from government intrusion.

On Oct. 15, the high court announced it would review a

case involving the proposed expansion of a Roman Catholic church building in Boerne, Texas, and the Catholic diocese's use of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to battle the city's refusal to grant a permit for such work.

Signed into law by President Clinton in November 1995, RFRA requires a government body to demonstrate a policy serves a "compelling interest" and is the "least restrictive means" in fulfilling the government's interest before restricting the free exercise of religion. The bill gained overwhelming bipartisan support in both houses of Congress.

The question of RFRA's constitutionality arrives at the high court in the form of a zoning dispute in a small Texas hill country town. Three years ago, St. Peter Catholic Church in Boerne applied for a building permit to enlarge its overcrowded sanctuary. City officials denied the request, citing a historic preservation ordinance and the church building's distinctive architecture. Church officials said the city's action violated RFRA. ■

### Virginia board reorganizes for churches

Baptist Press

RICHMOND, Va. — "Virginia Baptist Resource Center."

For most callers phoning the Virginia Baptist Building Oct. 3, that greeting from the receptionist was the first indication of organizational changes approved the day before by the Virginia Baptist General Board — whose own name may be changed in November.

At their fall meeting, board

members approved "Church First," a repositioning — effective Dec. 1 — of board staff members designed to make their work more responsive to churches affiliated with the Baptist General Association of Virginia. In addition to rechristening the Baptist building, "Church First" also arranges staff members into six "groups" instead of divisions and departments.

While each group is assigned specific tasks, many assignments overlap and the new structure relies on regular communication among group leaders. Board employees now will be called "Virginia Baptist Resource Center staff." ■

### SEBTS trustees approve plans for more housing

Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's board of trustees voted to proceed with negotiations to acquire 144 additional housing units by fall

1997 in an effort to keep pace with the school's record-setting growth.

Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern, said the additional

housing, for married couples with and without children, is expected to be provided through a combination of properties purchased and leased.

"It does appear that we have been able to secure 144 new units," Patterson said Oct. 15. "We should be in them by fall (1997)." ■



PATTERSON



### Two of 88 retiring missionaries honored

Ron and Betty Hartell, who have served in Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Ethiopia, play with their grandsons during an Oct. 6 service in Richmond, Va., in which they were honored along with 86 other retiring foreign missionaries. The Hartells are from Virginia.