

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

Volume 162 / Number 49

Statewide Edition

December 11, 1996

this week's news

- ▶ State Evangelism Conference will be held in January in Knoxville. — Page 2
- ▶ Warren withdraws from NAMB consideration. — Page 3
- ▶ Urgent need cited for volunteers in Costa Rica. — Page 3
- ▶ Death, illnesses pose test for faith. — Page 4
- ▶ Cookeville layman works to prevent church arson fires. — Page 6
- ▶ Nashville physician, hospital aids Ukrainian woman with kidney disease. — Page 7



PROVIDING HELP

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

New committees chosen during December meeting

TBC Executive Board approves ministry proposal

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention approved a proposal which gives the board responsibility for administration of Baptist collegiate ministries in the Memphis area.

Action took place during the board's Dec. 5-6 meeting here.

Board members also heard a positive financial report from Executive Director James Porch (see story below), approved new committees for the coming year, and referred to the Executive Committee of the Executive Board a motion for the TBC President to appoint a "Unity Bridge Committee."

Acting on a recommendation from the Church Programs Committee, the board established the Baptist Collegiate Ministries of Memphis Corporation (BCMM). This separate entity will be a wholly owned subsidiary of the Executive Board and will be directed by an eight-member board of directors elected by the Executive Board.

Porch said the action was initiated by Shelby Association Baptists who in effect will no

longer work in student ministries as an association.

The eight-member board — to be comprised of two Executive Board employees, two Executive Board members from Memphis area churches, and four nominated by a local advisory committee — will be responsible for the program of collegiate ministries on the campuses of University of Tennessee, Memphis; University of Memphis; Shelby State Community College; Rhodes College; and the State Technical Institute of Memphis. Other campuses may be added later.

Porch acknowledged "this is a different working relationship in student ministry" but "we need to address the fact that student ministry work across the state is not going to be the same."

Executive Board President Eugene Cotey noted it "is a unique ministry and is not a pilot program. It is something for those in the Memphis area who want to do student work there."

Dan Haskins of Crossville expressed concern about a corporation being established to replace the work of local churches.

Board member Michael



HONORED FOR years of service on the TBC Executive Board staff were from left, Gary Rickman, Church Staff Leadership Group, five years; Eleanor Yarborough, Communication Services Group, 15 years; Shirley Strong, Camp Linden, five years; and Joe Wiles, Tennessee Tech, five years.

Smith of Memphis replied that "all the work that brought us to this point (the proposal) was done by local churches. It's still local church work from my perspective," he said.

The motion passed with a few dissenting votes.

New committees were formed incorporating those members who were elected at the November annual meeting.

Committee chairpersons are: Paul Medley, Jasper, Budget and Program; Jewell Jennings, Lebanon, Central Ad-

ministrative; Charles Anderson, Gatlinburg, Christian Services; John Holland, Knoxville, Church Programs; Elmer Crosby, Columbia, Convention Ministries; Ray Newcomb, Millington, Education; and Bill Northcott, Covington, Executive.

At the close of the two-day meeting Nashville pastor Paul Durham recommended that the TBC president (Herbert Higdon of Jackson) appoint a "Unity Bridge Committee" to address differences that exist — See TBC, page 2

TBC giving off to good start

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists' gifts to the Cooperative Program have gotten off to a good start for the 1996-97 fiscal year.

Tennessee churches sent \$2,509,264 in CP gifts in November. While the amount was down slightly from that given a year ago (1.67 percent), it is still \$159,919 over the first month's budget requirement of \$2,349,345.

"It's a very good beginning," said TBC Executive Director James Porch.

"We trust that throughout the year we will continue to see a response (in CP giving) even greater than last year's record level," he said. ■

B&R from us to you, via USPS posthaste

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — From the *Baptist and Reflector* staff and its Board of Directors, here is some information for our subscribers (and other readers).

First, the staff and board are studying whether an increase in subscription costs is necessary. It's been determined that a small increase is needed — for budgeting.

The cost of an individual subscription already has been increased from \$7.50 to \$8.

Other rates are being studied. Rates for the Church Budget Plan, and Church Club Plan are being reviewed.

Since 1992, the CBP (50 percent or more of the families) has cost \$6.50 per subscriber, and the CCP (club of at least 10), \$7.25 each.

Of course the CBP is the most economical plan for churches to use — unless they use the Church Page Plan for their church newsletter. A special rate is in force for this plan.

If new rates are adopted, they would not go into effect until Feb. 1, and would not exceed

50 cents per subscription.

We will keep subscribers informed with a comfortable time line.

Second, we want to know if the paper is delivered promptly to subscribers. We will always do all we can to ensure timely delivery.

However, remember that the paper is mailed from the United States Postal Service (USPS) Donelson mailing center, Nashville every Tuesday, usually in early afternoon.

After it is properly labeled, sorted, and delivered to the mail center — we have NO control as to when it is delivered. As with any other mail, the mailer loses control at that point. Most people have late delivery on regular mail often.

We pledge to do our best for you, but each subscriber should insist on timely delivery by the postal service. Sometimes it is delayed in route. Usually, the local authorities will help track the problem.

Persistence often is the key.

Please keep us informed, and we will work with you. — Editor

900-00410-0127 REGUL 370
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 400
NASHVILLE TN 37203

TBC Executive Board approves ministry ...

- ▶ Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
- ▶ **Subscribe to the Baptist and Reflector** for one year and receive 50 copies. Family or individual subscription - \$8.00, clubs of 10 or more subscriptions - \$7.25, church (more than 50 percent of families) - \$6.50. Send check/money order to address below.
- ▶ **To contribute a news item, call or write Editor** Wm. Fletcher Allen; Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor; or Connie Davis, assistant editor.
- ▶ **To advertise** - Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor or editor.
- ▶ **For billing and subscription list questions** - Betty Williams, bookkeeper
- ▶ **For information about trial subscription plan** for church or association edition - Editor Allen, Lonnie Wilkey, Connie Davis, or Susie Edwards, administrative secretary
- ▶ **For information about local church edition** - The Editor, or Mary Nimmo, church pages coordinator
- ▶ **For production answers** - Lonnie Wilkey or Connie Davis
- ▶ **Publisher** - Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board
- ▶ **Board of directors:** Bill Northcott, chairman; Ambers Wilson, vice chairman; Charles Anderson, Hinton Climer, Eugene Cotey, Elmer Crosby, Frank Hawkins, Herbert Higdon, John Holland, Jewell Jennings, Pat Landrum, Paul Medley, Ray Newcomb, Charles Parker, Richard Patton, Michael Smith, Betye Summers, and Gary Watkins
- ▶ **Office** - Baptist and Reflector, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
- ▶ **Mailing address** - P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- ▶ **Phone** - (615) 371-2003. **FAX** - (615) 371-2080
- ▶ **Membership** - Southern Baptist Press Association
- ▶ **Address changes** - Baptist and Reflector, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- ▶ **Postmaster** - Periodical postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780)
- ▶ **Frequency of issue** - The paper is published weekly except for the weeks of Christmas and Fourth of July.



Printed on recycled paper

— Continued from page 1
between Baptists in the state. Durham's proposal called for the president to appoint "five members from the left, five from the right, and five from the center, whatever that means."

Bill Sherman, also a Nashville pastor, spoke against the motion. He said he was in "favor of the principle" behind the motion but did not agree with "the package." Sherman encouraged Executive Board members to stay focused on ministries and missions. "If we come up with a committee we will focus on differences." Joseph Rosas, pastor from Memphis, offered a substitute motion that the matter be de-

ferred to the Executive Committee of the Executive Board and that they report back to the full board.

After some debate, the substitute motion was approved on a show of hands vote with opposition.

On other actions, the Executive Board:

- ▶ learned of three new employees: Sue Raley, preschool ministry specialist, Christian Growth Development Group; Rebecca Works, BSU director, Roane State Community College; and Lana Rose, church annuity accounts specialist, Church Staff Leadership Group.

- ▶ recognized TBC employees for tenure (Eleanor Yarbor-

ough, Communication Services Group - 15 years; Gary Rickman, Church Staff Leadership Group; Shirley Strong, Camp Linden; Joe Wiles, BSU director, Tennessee Tech, Cookeville; and Stan Braley, BSU director, Chattanooga State Technical Community College - five years; and those retiring (Johnnie Hall, Greer Ruble, Roy Miller, and Felton Clark).

- ▶ approved 1997 dates for the Executive Board and its committees.

- ▶ adopted a recommendation that the board adopt the described amendment to the Southern Baptist Protection Program Church Annuity Plan. The plan does not change the cost to the convention and

increases benefits for the participants.

- ▶ adopted "Church Planting System 1996," a plan to assist local churches and associations in developing effective church planters who establish effective churches.

- ▶ received as information reports from the Church Building and Loan Program and the New Work Revolving Loan Fund.

- ▶ raised the debt ceiling for Union University from \$4.5 million to \$8.5 million.

- ▶ heard reports from institution representatives along with WMU Executive Director Katharine Bryan and Baptist and Reflector Editor Wm. Fletcher Allen. ■

SBAMA searches for full-time executive director

Baptist Press

BRENTWOOD — The board of directors of the Southern Baptist Association of Ministries with the Aging has appointed an eight-member search committee to recommend the first full-time paid executive director for the organization.

A vote on the nominee could come during the 1997 SBAMA annual meeting, Feb. 16-17 at the Menger Hotel in San Antonio.

The association was founded in 1976 and celebrated its 20th year at its annual meeting last February in Clearwater, Fla. SBAMA's 80 members are involved in such ministries to the aging as church and denominational programs, homes for the aging and government, community or educational institutions' initiatives.

Nominees for executive director are being received by the search committee through Dec. 15. Resumes should be sent

to Donald E. Mauldin, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024 or faxed to (615) 371-2014. **Mauldin, search committee chairman, is Discipleship Training, seniors, and singles specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.**

Funding for the executive director position has been secured for three years.

Also slated for the upcoming SBAMA meeting is a vote on a revised set of by-laws resulting from the work of a 15-member strategic planning committee named at the association's 1995 annual meeting. The committee's work encompassed study by six ad hoc committees, focusing on education, membership, financial feasibility, governing/bylaws, administration, and development.

In its nine-part purpose statement, the organization aims:

- (1) to promote awareness of the value of older adults.
- (2) to train and equip individuals who

provide Christian services to older adults.

- (3) to develop specific ministry strategies to meet needs of older adults.

- (4) to facilitate cooperation and communication among individuals and groups who minister to older adults.

- (5) to encourage and recruit individuals to become involved in older adult ministry through volunteerism or vocation.

- (6) to create a forum for advocacy on issues affecting older adults.

- (7) to serve as a facilitator for the emerging ministries affecting older adults.

- (8) to initiate and develop ongoing dialogue with Southern Baptist agencies for the benefit of older adult ministries.

- (9) to position Southern Baptist older adult leaders on the cutting edge of ministry opportunities through encouraging continuing research in the field of aging.

For annual meeting and membership information, call (615) 661-6138. ■

Evangelism Conference set for Jan. 20-21

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The 1997 State Evangelism Conference will be held Jan. 20-21 at Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville. The opening session begins at 2 p.m. on Monday.

The program will feature special interest conferences on

Tuesday afternoon and layman's night that evening.

Speakers include John Avant, Brownwood, Texas; Frank Houston, Morristown; Floyd Lammersfeld, Gleason; and Ron Phillips, Hixson. Other speakers along with additional information will be released later. ■

Long-time TBC pastor dies at age 85

For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Homer A. Cate, a Baptist minister for 65 years died Nov. 19. He was 85.

During his ministry Cate served as pastor of Thorn Grove, Stock Creek, and Immanuel churches in Knox County; First Church, Crossville; First Church, Shelbyville; and Lakewood Church, Nashville.

Cate also was very active in the Tennessee Baptist Conven-

tion. He served two terms on the Executive Board, was active on several committees, and was a trustee of Belmont College (now University) and Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy.

Cate was a graduate of Carson-Newman College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is survived by his wife, Edna Palmer Cate; a son, H. David Cate; and two granddaughters. ■



Knoxville church receives arson funds

Inner City Church was destroyed by arson in January 1996. Recently the church was given \$10,000 through the Tennessee Baptist Convention Arson Fund created to assist black churches in Tennessee that have been destroyed by arson. The church plans to rebuild on its previous site. Presenting the check to Pastor David Upton, second from right, are Walter Taylor, right, director of missions, Knox County Association; Joe Chandler, left, associate director of missions, Knox County Association; and Ken Weathersby, black church consultant, TBC.

Rick Warren declines NAMB presidency bid

By Mark Wyatt
For Baptist Press

LAKE FOREST, Calif. — Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., has withdrawn from consideration to become the first president of the Southern Baptist Convention's new North American Mission Board.

Warren gave his decision to NAMB incorporators, the 13-member group responsible for nominating a president for the new agency, in a letter dated Dec. 1.

"Although I consider this position to be the most strategic one in the SBC, God has not released me from my call to Saddleback Church, so I cannot accept your nomination," Warren wrote.

C.B. Hogue, chairman of the incorporators group, told *The California Southern Baptist*, California convention newspaper, he received Warren's let-

ter by fax Dec. 2 but he declined to discuss the contents. Hogue acknowledged the committee has held "initial, exploratory conversations" with several people, and Warren "was talked to a second time in the process."

Regarding Warren's decision to remove himself from consideration, Hogue said the Lake Forest pastor apparently "felt he did not want to go further in the process."

Hogue said the incorporators group now will resume "examining other candidates who are within the process." However, he declined to specify how many other prospective nominees are under consideration. No date has been set for the incorporators to resume their selection process, he said.

Meanwhile, trustees scheduled for election to the new NAMB board, who actually will elect the agency's first president, will meet for the first time Feb. 7 in Dallas to

get acquainted, although they can take no action until after the June convention.

The NAMB, created from the merger of three current SBC agencies, will coordinate all evangelism and church-starting efforts of the 16 million-member Southern Baptist Convention. The merger will bring together the resources of the Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission, and Brotherhood Commission, while reducing the combined staff.

Warren founded Saddleback Valley Community Church in Mission Viejo, Calif., with one family in 1980. The church has grown to be one of the largest in the country with 13,000 attending weekly worship services.

In his Dec. 1 letter to the 13-member committee, Warren cited three reasons for his decision. In addition to his continued "calling" as pastor of Saddleback Church, he said, "I believe I can best help NAMB's

task of planting churches by continuing to experiment with new approaches at Saddleback." Innovative churches can serve as the SBC's "research and development department," field-testing new evangelism and ministry concepts, he said.

Thirdly, he said, "the demands of the new NAMB president would severely limit the amount of time that I could invest in actually training pastors." In the past decade, more than 30,000 pastors and church leaders from 63 denominations and 42 countries have been trained in the principles employed at Saddleback.

"Just as I am convinced that I am not the man for this job, I am certain that God has just the right man in waiting," he added.

The name most frequently mentioned for the NAMB position is Norfolk, Va., pastor Bob Reccord, who heads the Implementation Task Force steering the SBC's restructuring plan. ■

SBC gifts up in November

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for November were almost \$3.2 million more than the same month in 1995, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

Gifts for November 1996 were \$13,934,056, compared to last year's \$10,743,955, an increase of \$3,190,100, or 29.69 percent.

For the first two months of the SBC's 1996-97 fiscal year, CP gifts have totaled \$26,249,173 compared to the same period last year of \$21,681,338, an increase of \$4,567,834, or 21.07 percent.

For the first two months the budget goal of \$24,175,583 was surpassed by more than \$2 million, an increase of 8.58 percent.

Designated gifts in November were down \$71,996 compared to a year ago: \$2,434,287 this year to \$2,506,283 in 1995. ■

Baptist Foundation board approves new charter

By Herb Hollinger
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The 35-member board of trustees of the Southern Baptist Foundation met for the last time as a separate agency of the SBC and approved the new charter of the Foundation which makes it a corporation of the SBC Executive Committee.

Another part of the restructuring process of the SBC approved in 1995 reducing the number of agencies from 19 to 12, the Foundation will have a seven-member board at the conclusion of the SBC annual meeting June 19, 1997 in Dallas. The new Foundation corporation will have one member, the Executive Committee of the SBC, which will elect the seven-member board.

Meeting at the Opryland Hotel here Dec. 3-4, the 35-member Foundation board approved the new charter without dissent in a voice vote. Interestingly the board's action came at the 50th anniversary of the Foundation as an SBC agency.

Concerns raised earlier about the independence of the Foundation and control by the Executive Committee were apparently resolved in the negotiations this year be-

tween officials of the Foundation, Executive Committee, and the Implementation Task Force. The ITF is a committee set up by the Executive Committee to help implement the restructuring with the affected SBC agencies.

"The Foundation is appreciative of the Implementation Task Force who listened to the concerns raised by the Foundation and various clients, and produced a governance structure that will work," Hollis E. Johnson III, told the Foundation board in his report. Johnson, honored at the meeting for 20 years of service, is the president of the Foundation.

"The Foundation is extremely grateful to those institutions which continued to use the investment management and trust services provided," Johnson said. The Foundation will continue to operate as a separate institution under the amended charter, Johnson told the trustees at the annual meeting.

Johnson said the change should not affect the quality and range of services provided by the Foundation to clients, many of which are state convention foundations. The same staff, including Johnson, will manage the Foundation's work.

Total assets increased during the year

to a record \$183,877,757 but the increase was less than one percent. It was an increase accomplished during a year of "great uncertainty to clients," Johnson said. The Foundation has 1,250 accounts.

Income produced by assets increased 1.7 percent to a record \$11,764,597 during a year of "generally declining interest rates, a basically constant asset base, and a continuing shift of some assets to lower yielding equities," according to Johnson.

Johnson cited three priorities for the coming year: (1) implement the transition smoothly for both staff and clients; (2) implement the (Foundation's) strategic plan; and (3) address the trends in the industry.

In other action, trustees re-elected three Tennesseans as officers: Leonard M. Brannan, Chattanooga, chairman; M. Terry Turner, Brentwood, vice chairman; and Roy L. DePue, Nashville, recording secretary. Trustees also re-elected a 10-member executive committee to direct the agency in its closing months.

Trustees also honored Johnson with a resolution of appreciation for his 20 years of service, a plaque, and a special golf club; and honored Betty J. Libby, corporate secretary, for 23 years of service. She will retire Dec. 31. ■

BSSB withdraws commentaries

Associated Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The *Broadman Bible Commentary*, a mainstay of Southern Baptist pastors' libraries for more than two decades, has been quietly removed from the shelves of Baptist Book Stores.

It was weak sales and not theology which led to the product's demise, said BSSB spokesman Charles Willis.

The commentary series was one of about 100 book titles taken out of print during the past year, Willis said. He noted only two of the commentary's 12 volumes sold more than 500 copies the last fiscal year, while one volume sold only 38. The top selling volume sold 663.

Frank Staggs, author of two of the commentaries blamed lagging sales on a lack of marketing and the fact the commentary is no longer used and promoted in seminary classes.

While some attributed the decision to theology, Willis said he doubted the commentaries' content had much to do with the action. Had BSSB officials been concerned about the series' theology, they probably would have pulled it long ago, he said. ■

Volunteers needed Costa Rica in January

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Seven more teams are needed to complete the 15 teams requested for the Jan. 11-20 simultaneous revivals in Costa Rica, announced Terry Sharp, Partnership Missions specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Sharp extended the Dec. 1

deadline to Dec. 26 in hopes of securing more volunteers to fill the Costa Rica request. The simultaneous revivals will emphasize the theme "Spiritual Renewal" and 20 churches will be participating.

January officially begins Tennessee Baptists' partnership with Costa Rica Baptists.

Each revival team will be

comprised of three leaders: preacher, musician, and layperson. During the services, the preachers will focus on a renewal message; music leaders will provide special music; and laypersons will share their testimonies as well as work with children.

Churches are encouraged to send three-person teams.

However, individuals can volunteer and they will be assigned to a team by the Partnership Missions office.

The cost for the trip is \$1,200 per person with departure from Nashville. Those interested should respond immediately to the TBC Partnership Missions office at (615) 371-2021 or (800) 558-2090. ■

Catastrophic illnesses, death pose tests for faith

By Laurie Lattimore & Jennifer Davis for Associated Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — While many people facing a catastrophic illness draw strength from their faith, facing one's death can cause doubts, say chaplains and counselors familiar with issues of death and dying. But that "testing" of faith is natural and can even be healthy, they add.

The initial trauma of learning of a catastrophic illness that will lead to an early death often results in questioning, blaming, or bargaining with God. Such sincere confrontation with God can help Christians come to terms with their faith, their future, and their purpose, experts say.

"When people ask, 'Why, God?' they are asking an emotional question, not a cognitive one," said Doug Dickens, professor of clinical pastoral education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "I try not to give them an answer. If they want to rage, I let them rage. I say, 'Let me sit here and you tell me how ticked off you are.'"

Dickens, who has experienced the loss of a child, said it is not uncommon for people in crisis to feel initial anger toward God. That anger should not be hidden, he said. Although Christians are taught to have faith and rely on God for strength, Dickens said that sometimes one cannot get to that point before dealing with the anger toward God.

"It's not true that we don't have a right to be mad," Dick-

ens said. "I still have some questions I want to ask God when I get to heaven."

But by working through their anger, Dickens added, Christians can come to realize God did not cause the pain but is available to provide strength. The key, chaplains and counselors contend, is being able to reach that point where patients and their families can use their faith for strength and not blame God for the difficulty of coping with a terminal illness.

Randall Walton, director of pastoral care for Princeton Baptist Medical Center in Birmingham, Ala., said the role of chaplains or pastors is to bring comfort to patients and their families and offer a listening ear when they want to express anger, sadness, joy, and fear.

"Our gift is to represent the presence of God, so they can wonder what this illness means," he said. "Illness has a way of making us struggle with meaning and faith and our relationship with God."

Dealing with the terminal illness or death of a child can be particularly devastating, said Linda Serino, a chaplain at St. Jude's Children's Medical Center in Memphis.

"To know a child is not going to grow up makes it more difficult to accept that a child is diagnosed with a catastrophic illness," she said.

However, she noted, children are typically much more

resilient in dealing with a catastrophic illness than are adults.

"Children are truly the experts," Serino said. "They can find something to claim the joys of that day and not worry about the future.

Adults have a much more difficult time.

"Children are more in touch with their spirituality than their parents so much of the time," Serino said.

Another issue related to death and dying is grief. During an illness or following a death, members of a family can be at different stages of grief, counselors say.

Some Christians wrongly believe that grieving shows a lack of faith, said Granger Westberg in his book *Good Grief*.

"(People) often seem to have the idea that a person with strong faith does not grieve and is above this sort of thing. Moreover, these people imply that religious faith advocates stoicism," he wrote.

Westberg stated the Jewish-Christian faith has never said that a truly religious person does not grieve but that there are "good ways and bad ways to grieve."

Churches offer too few resources to persons dealing with grief, said Jim Hightower, minister of pastoral care at First Church, Huntsville, Ala.

"In my opinion, I think we have confused the right to the pursuit of happiness to everyone has the right to be happy

all the time," he said. "When grief does come, we are absolutely shocked and think it must be a mistake. It's a cultural thing. But suffering is an equal employment opportunity.

"Grief is our physical and psychological reaction to any significant loss," said Hightower. "The purpose of grief is to help us recognize that this significant loss has occurred in our lives; to help us adapt to this new reality, and to help us live healthy in this world without this significant person, object, or dream."

Theologians offer belief in eternal life as the Christian's strongest resource for facing death.

"The great theological truth is that Christ overcame death. Therefore we can have hope in the face of death," said Eric Hayward, director of pastoral care at Baptist Medical Center in Montclair, Ala.

Carroll Freeman, a retired professor of psychology and counseling at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said that in order to reach the fullest extent of eternal life, one must experience death.

"When a person accepts Christ, his eternal life begins at that point. Death is merely a stage in the process," he said. "Death is an exit and an entrance."

John Claypool, a former Baptist minister who is now an Episcopal priest, agreed. "I think God's love for us is everlasting," he said. "Whatever God creates, God loves and loves everlastingly."

Still, the idea of death is



hard to grasp, said Claypool, who lost his 10-year-old daughter to leukemia in 1970.

One analogy, Claypool said, is to compare death — the end of life — to birth. After developing in the womb, a baby is born into a more appropriate place for growth, he said. At the same time, the baby experiences death from the only world he or she has known.

"We die to the smaller and are born to the larger," Claypool said. "God gives us our lives in stages, not all at one time.

"When my little girl died there seemed to be nothing worth living for," he said. "But it gradually dawned on me that there are others to love and more truth to learn."

Claypool said he chose to be grateful that he had the opportunity to have his daughter for the time he did rather than be angry that she died. In so doing, he said he learned that he does not own anything. "I take each day that comes as a gift and don't presume that I can control what happens," he said.

"Life is a gift, not an entitlement," Claypool said.

"The Bible is clear that God gives us our life out of nothing. There is nothing in me that guarantees that we live on and on." ■

Theologians grope for answers to 'why' questions of faith

By Jennifer Davis for Associated Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Catastrophic illnesses raise the tough "why" questions of faith, say religion professors and experts in pastoral care who attempt to explain grief from a biblical and theological point of view.

Eric Hayward, director of pastoral care at Baptist Montclair Hospital in Birmingham, Ala., said initially terminally ill patients go through a grieving process that involves questioning, anger, doubt, and sometimes blame.

The "why" question almost always surfaces, Hayward said. "It is an expression of some kind of frustration. People usually ask it because they feel there has been an injustice," he said.

While this questioning stems from anger, there is no answer. The patient often feels depressed and discouraged, Hayward said. Even Jesus did not get an answer when he asked "Why?" on the cross, he said.

But asking why is not necessarily

the right question, Hayward said. "It doesn't make any difference why. The real question is 'how am I going to cope?'"

Fisher Humphreys, theology professor at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School, said it is OK to question God, and sometimes even healthy. "When people are really suffering they may need to ask God why," Humphreys said. "Otherwise it would be somewhat insincere."

A person who avoids asking why when that is his or her deepest cry is not being honest with God, he said.

"We do not know why all the suffering and evil happen, and we don't expect to understand it," Humphreys said, adding that everyone, even good Christians, go through hard times. "It is no help to say that the pain is a blessing in disguise. It does help to believe that God really knows what we are going through. After all, his son died also."

William Blair, a religion professor at Samford University and an ordained

minister, knows firsthand how God stays through the pain. Blair has multiple sclerosis and is confined to a wheelchair.

"My disability brought me from being a religious person to a more spiritual person," he said, adding that he did not handle his disability well at first. "Even though I was not aware of it at the time, God was with me during the whole crisis," he said.

Blair said that he could not see God in the situation at first because he was going through denial, anger, guilt, bargaining, and acceptance. "It is just a process we have to go through and everybody has a different time schedule."

The problem is that people want to talk about illness as God punishing them for something, he said. "God is not doing this. It is not his intent." Disease and illness are just part of this world, he said. "No one is to blame."

The scholars said they reject any theology that claims tragedy occurs as a result of sin.

"Some people tend to get caught up

in the health, wealth, and prosperity theology that once you become a Christian all of life is great and everything works out perfectly," said Langston Haygood, a Christian counselor and professor at Beeson Divinity School. "That is cruel theology because it leads people to think wrongly."

Christians also face suffering and hard times, Haygood said.

"To immediately look for an area of sin in a person's life who is suffering is wrong. It is not biblical," he said.

Blair said when he first became disabled a fellow church member asked him what sin he had committed.

"That caused me to start thinking back and trying to figure it out. I couldn't locate what sin it would have been," Blair said. "When people are put in this position they feel unloved, unclean, alone in the world, and that no one understands." Blair's experience helps him minister to others going through similar situations. "I just try to be with people rather than passing judgment on them," he said. ■

What a friend we have in gambling?

Promise of gambling is not the Christmas gift Tennesseans need.

The Big Push is on, headed as usual by Memphis Senator Steve Cohen. He has taken this gambling idiocy as his pet legislative project, and he intends to push it through. Anything about gambling you want to know, ask him.

He will tell you — but he won't tell you about the pathos and degradation gambling brings to people and governments.

Cohen and other gambling proponents are pushing hard to pass legislation in the Tennessee General Assembly to allow a vote on a state-sponsored lottery.

They are even so kind as to pledge that the benefits will go toward education in Tennessee. But, wait a minute. That sounds too good to be true. And it is; it is rubbish.

There are very few genuine philanthropists, and the gambling industry certainly is not one of them. Ask yourself this question, why would gambling enthusiasts want to have a state lottery or casinos, or gambling on horse races, or simulcast wagering? Is it out of the goodness of their hearts? Is it because they love the people of Tennessee? What do you think?

They want any or all of these gambling methods in Tennessee because the money would flood the coffers of the gambling industry. The pittance that would go to the state would be woefully short of repairing all the damage done to families, businesses, individuals,

and morals. The damage is long-lasting, and often it is irreparable.

And do you think the savaging of a state is worth allowing a few people to get rich quick? What do we gain by spending money gained from gambling on any state project, most of all, education? That "income" gained by deception and destruction is tainted; it stinks. It comes from corruption of all the values that are necessary for family life and moral character.

Already the gambling forces are moving. In fact, they never rested since gaining a narrow victory in the state Senate earlier this year.

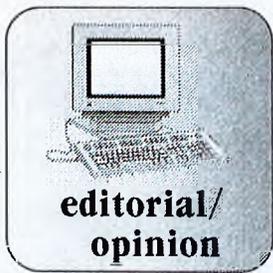
Citizens be ready, and be wary of all the promises of good things resulting from a lottery. The promises sound good. There may be a few good years, but the road leads downhill, and the crime and filth involved hasten that slide to the bottom.

Let's challenge the legislators who so vehemently demand a state referendum on the lottery to at least

be brave enough, honest enough, to thoroughly explain to all of us the dangers and bleak side of gambling. Let them continue proposing, but let them be honest to tell citizens the truth about a lottery — and the end results.

We should demand that kind of responsibility. Let there be no subterfuge, no whistling in the dark. Tell about the other states who have repented on the gambling issue — too late.

If the legislature really works for the good of the state and its citizens, they will think less about easy money and more about total welfare involved. This paper will keep readers aware of gambling news. *B&R*



By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor

Missions offering promises extra help where it's needed

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions is scheduled early in December, but it is never too late to pray for foreign missions and to give to its support.

Tennessee Baptist churches will promote prayer and giving for foreign missions through December.

The offering is named in honor of one of Southern Baptists' best known missionaries, Lottie Moon. But it could just as easily be named for one of thousands who have lived most of their lives in foreign lands, trying to bring lost people to Jesus Christ.

Reaching people in foreign places requires much prayer, much financial support, and much hands-on

assistance. Missions involvement should never be compulsory, but if we believe the Lord's commands of service, we will be involved.

Tennessee Baptists have a goal of \$7.5 million. We can and should give it gladly, joyfully, with an air of expectancy for what it will accomplish in the name of Jesus. *The national goal of \$100 million is admirable, but if all Southern Baptists are truly sincere about Bold Mission Thrust and a spiritual awakening, that goal could be doubled.*

Ask missionaries to overseas nations. They will tell you about needs. *B&R*

Just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Carl: "What do you call a congressman who was not re-elected?"

Carla: "A consultant."

Take this truth

One thing we all need, is a good backup plan! What would happen if you suddenly found yourself forced to "change horses in the middle of a stream?"

Many people today are facing a mid-life career change.

How would you react if you suddenly confronted that problem?

Do you think you could do it?

Memorize this Scripture

I know how to be abased and I know how to abound.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4: 11, 13).

Pray this prayer

Lord, please help me to have the spiritual resources necessary to face disappointment and to change without "going to pieces." ■

Mail brings variety of letters — mixed with hard news

Mail coming to the editor's desk is almost always interesting.

Some of it is even exciting.

Some, well, the editor wants to dodge because it may be dangerous.

Mail, like people, is habitual. If a "controversial" item appears in the paper, we know we are going to hear from the constituency.

And the envelope may be smoking!

Tuesdays are usually calm — on the news front, and in the letters category. It is probably calm because everybody (did I say everybody?) went to church on Sunday and is living right on Monday.

But we can always expect a certain amount of junk mail, a nominal amount of "please help us" mail, and some that carry news, suggestions, or advice on how to do the work around here.

Christmas seems to be the season for folks to solicit help. It begins before Thanksgiving Day really, when most of us are feeling very comfortable about the blessings God has given.

one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

That attitude of gratitude lingers, and even grows as we approach Christmas.

This week a letter came, signed by a well-known television personality (who has millions to spare), asking for donations to a certain favorite charity of his. Another came, offering the best prices for a computer product "if you buy this week, just give us your credit card number."

Yet a third letter asked for help for college students at a non-Southern Baptist college — signed by a person whose motives seem questionable.

Requests for prayer and financial assistance come almost every day. Most of these are for groups and peoples from faraway places — usually former communist nations or Third World places. Often the needs are nebulous, occasionally

they are specific.

Baptist churches from around the world write to state papers, asking for space to announce the need for a pastor. Most of these are in the United States, or at least places where Americans have a presence.

All of these are interesting, of course, but not all merit a response. It's not stretching the point too far, but we could almost fill the paper each week with these requests and stories of need.

Most of all, however, we like to get mail from Tennessee Baptists. You would have guessed that, but it is a privilege and honor for us.

Letters about people and churches that are doing things for the Lord, letters that share ideas and feelings, letters that are for publication — all are welcome.

And once in a while, someone catches us off guard with a letter of thanks or a warm reason to laugh or smile.



ALLEN

God's love important Christmas reality

think about it

By David Allen, pastor, First Church, Crossville

The Christmas season is upon us. It is busy, joyous, as we celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world. We are reminded of how much God loves and cares for us.

It is a time when Southern Baptists are reminded of the millions in our world who yet have to hear the Good News. God has given us the salvation message to share with those people.

We support more than 4,000 foreign missionaries through our Foreign Mission Board. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal is \$100 million. Our church goal is \$13,000. As we give our money to support the missionaries, I hope we will also give ourselves to reach the thousands of people here in Cumberland County.

Some live in darkness and sin, and need to trust in Jesus. We need to pray for lost friends and family, and to use every opportunity to present Jesus to them. There are many opportunities at hand; let's make the most of them. Bring some friends to witness the Living Christmas Tree message.

This is a season when it is difficult not to hear the Christmas message. But Satan will use anything to distract our attention from Jesus.

Our family watched a promo show about the new movie, "101 Dalmatians." A

chorus in the show took familiar Christmas carols and changed the words, from "Joy to the world, the Lord has come," to "joy to the world, the dogs have come."

Disney may have gone to the dogs, but the Joy given to the world is not from some Disney movie filled with hype. It is from the simple scene in a manger many years ago when God became a man.

I pray that this Christmas, we will not let the glitter and sparkle from such highly commercialized season divert attention from the King of Glory.

After all he left heaven and came to earth — just so he could die for our sins. That too is the meaning of Christmas. ■

Cookeville fireman works to prevent church fires

By Lonnie Wilkey
For Baptist and Reflector

COOKEVILLE — A Baptist layman from West View Church has been selected as the Tennessee Public Fire Educator of the Year.

Bruce Womack will receive an award in January from the Tennessee State Fire Marshall's office.

Womack is especially concerned about the recent rash of church-related fires across the southeast.

During a recent meeting with Stone Association pastors, Womack shared tips on what churches can do to prevent arson-related fires.

Womack drew his materials from "Safeguarding Your Place Of Worship," a pamphlet produced by the Tennessee State Fire Marshall's Office.

"According to that office there have been nearly 100 church-related property fires in the state since 1986.

"The idea of someone destroying a house of worship is something I can't tolerate," Womack said, adding, "It's hard to fathom someone would want to go into a church and destroy it."

He noted the problem of church arson crosses racial and denominational lines. "The bottom line is there are a bunch of mean people, but there are things that can be done," he said.

Womack observed rural churches seem to be the main target although all churches are vulnerable. "We need to work together to stop this while we can."

The pamphlet, which Womack gave to those in attendance, noted: "While places of worship have never been immune to violent acts of destruction, they have recently been targeted with an unprecedented degree of vandalism and arson."

The pamphlet offered tips in

five areas to reduce the risk of fire: exterior security, interior security, internal awareness, community involvement, and a neighborhood watch program.

Exterior security involves things such as lighting up the building's exterior and surrounding area, not blocking the view of the building with trees or shrubbery, installing burglar and fire alarm systems, and keeping a list of building key holders.

Interior security factors include good general housekeeping practices, Womack noted.

"Fire prevention starts with good housekeeping. Don't leave areas cluttered."

Womack suggested church leaders make sure flammable liquids are never stored inside or in storage areas near the building and that combustibles

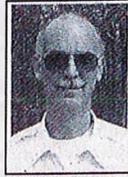
are not stored in the furnace room or near a water heater.

Other suggestions listed in the pamphlet include having a licensed plumber, electrician, or heating contractor do needed repairs, have an annual inspection performed on all heating and air conditioning units, and using flame retardant materials on pews and other combustible areas.

The pamphlet also emphasizes internal awareness and community involvement processes as well as the establishment of a neighborhood watch program.

Church leaders interested in obtaining a copy of the pamphlet, "Safeguarding Your Place of Worship," can call the Tennessee State Fire Marshall's office at (615) 741-2981.

Anyone wanting to report suspicious activity or arson tips call the Tennessee Church Arson Hotline toll free at (888) 333-0552. ■



WOMACK



Tennessee features

Tax seminars set for January

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The 1997 tax seminars, sponsored by the Church Staff Leadership Group of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, will target church treasurers and financial secretaries to provide information on federal reporting requirements.

The meetings will assist leaders in learning how to complete necessary forms that are due by Feb. 1.

Dates, locations, and times are:

Jan. 9 — Concord Association, Murfreesboro, 7-8:30 p.m.

Jan. 13 — Nolachucky Association, Morristown, 1:30-3 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m.

Jan. 14 — Hamilton County Association, Chattanooga, 1:30-3 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m.

Jan. 23 — Madison-Chester Association, Jackson, 1:30-3 p.m. and 7-8:30 p.m.

Seminar leaders are Gary Rickman, Ministers Financial Support Specialist, TBC, and Deborah Taylor, Accounting Manager, Administrative Services Group, TBC.

The tax seminars are provided at no cost. Reservations are not required. For more information about the seminars, call (615) 371-2008. ■

Churches join to help benefit ill children

For Baptist and Reflector

MURFREESBORO — Funds raised for five seriously ill, very young Rutherford County children through a benefit concert by the Rutherford Mass Praise Choir have exceeded \$9,200.

An estimated 1,100 people overflowed Southeast Church here Nov. 23. Some had to view the concert in a second smaller auditorium via closed circuit television, organizers said. A love offering taken that night alone totaled more than \$8,000.

Benefiting are Elizabeth Scott, Piercetion Harris, twins Logan and Tanner Coursey, and Halee Burreis, all age 3 or less. Their illnesses range from forms of cancer to a rare blood disease.

The Scotts are members of Third Church, Murfreesboro; the HARRISES, Spring Hill Church, Murfreesboro; the Courseys, Smyrna Church of Christ; and the Burreises, First Cumberland Presby-

terian, Murfreesboro.

Rutherford Mass Praise Choir is comprised of more than 90 members from 26 African American and white area churches of several denominations. It is directed by Jimmy Tyson of Galilee Primitive Baptist Church, Shelbyville. The choir chairman is Tom Hunt of Southeast Church.

The choir practiced at Southeast for about six weeks prior to the concert. The goal was to "bless people and let them know there's no such thing as white or black Christians — just Christians," Tyson observed.

Hunt noted a common bond developing over the course of the choir practices, one of not only helping members of the community but also of showing the power of outreach when Christians unite.

Tyson said the choir will continue to practice monthly with an eye toward future performances. ■ — Steve Buller

Everetts awarded national honor for work in Knoxville

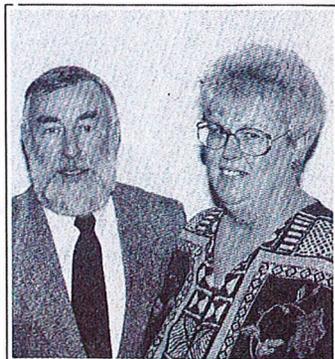
For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Tom and Shirley Everett, home missionaries based at Western Heights Baptist Center in Knoxville, have been awarded the Clovis Brantley Award of the Home Mission Board.

The award, which is the highest recognition for missionaries involved in Christian Social Ministry, honors two missionaries or two missionary couples involved in Christian Social Ministry each year. It was presented to the Everetts at the Knox County Association's recent meeting.

The award acknowledged the couple for demonstrating "creativity, innovation, integrity, courage, and excellence in ministry."

The Everetts have served the Western Heights center for 22 years. Tom is director and Shirley is administrative assistant. B&R



TOM AND SHIRLEY EVERETT

Tennessee Baptist Partnership Prayer Requests December

- 11 — Pray for Salmo Church, Alpine Association, Canada, whose members are seeking a bivocational pastor.
- 12 — Pray for Cornerstone Church in San Jose, Costa Rica, whose members are seeking God's direction in starting a day care and a children's music program. Ask God that the church members' eyes be opened to local and foreign missions.
- 18 — Ask God to provide the Upper Peninsula Association in Michigan with pastors for their three churches without a pastor and the two new works that are planned.
- 14 — Pray for Canada's Midwest Association which is seeking a director of missions. Also pray for the following Midwest churches currently seeking pastors: Arabic Church and Hispanic Church, both in Calgary; Fort McMurray Church, Grace Chinese Church, Edmonton Dovern Court Church, Evansburg Church, and Wabumun Mission.
- 15 — Pray for all places to be filled on the 15 evangelistic teams that will travel in January to Costa Rica for simultaneous revivals.
- 16 — Pray for Bill Browning, new moderator for Upper Peninsula Association in Michigan, and that he will lead the association in God's will.
- 17 — Pray for Harvest Church in Brandon, Keystone Association in Canada, where members have been seeking a bivocational pastor for four years.

Endowment fund established at C-N

For Baptist and Reflector

JEFFERSON CITY — A Carson-Newman College alumna has left one-fifth of her estate to her alma mater.

The college will receive \$125,000 from the estate of Lucile R. Anderson, a 1926 graduate and a physician who practiced 40 years.

The endowment fund is designated for students with Christian commitment, to be divided equally between music and graduate studies in education.

Anderson included C-N as a result of her desire to do something for her alma mater and her lifelong friendship with her college roommate, Daisy Heard, who has a special love for music. ■

Nashville physician, hospital help Ukrainian

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The first American Iryna Kolesnyk met saved her from kidney failure which would have occurred in one year.

Nashville physician Mark Johnson, a urologist, met Kolesnyk while on a trip directed by First Church, Franklin, to the Ukraine in August. While visiting the city of Vinnitsa, a local physician brought Kolesnyk, who is a Baptist, to Johnson for help.

Kolesnyk, 23, has endured recurring kidney stones since she was five years old. She had undergone two major surgeries and has suffered much pain. Kolesnyk understood many of her health problems. She is a pediatric resident at the hospital in Vinnitsa. However, she had not found relief from any sources in her country or the Soviet Union.

Johnson explained Kolesnyk "had the worst kidney stone disease I've ever seen."

When he arrived back in the states, Johnson began making

arrangements for Kolesnyk to travel here for treatment. He called on Sam Satterfield of First Church, who is coordinator of the church's Ukraine ministry, and John Mohr, a member of the church who moved to Vinnitsa to minister.

After a whirlwind of events for Kolesnyk, she found herself in Nashville for about a month in October. She underwent a 14-hour surgery and five lithotripsy treatments, several of which were accompanied by endoscopic techniques.

The Nashville physician cleared her kidneys of stones, but he also diagnosed the problem and provided her with medicine which will prevent further stone formation. Kolesnyk has a "complex stone-forming problem," said Johnson, which was traced to three metabolic problems.

In addition to assuming the difficult case, Johnson recruited and coordinated the efforts of physicians, anesthesiologists, radiologists, nurses, and Baptist Health Care System, Nashville, to provide free care. He estimated the care would have cost about \$100,000.

Johnson feels confident Kolesnyk has a healthy and pain-free future.

Kolesnyk agreed and said both God and Johnson had helped her.

Kolesnyk's experience in the United States was enabled by the fact that she had studied English and became much more proficient during her visit. Johnson provided opportunities for the young physician in training to view surgery at Baptist Hospital and other aspects of American health care.

"America is very interesting country. For me, interest in medicine because I am doctor," said Kolesnyk. Although she didn't get to see a lot of the country because of her medical treatment, Kolesnyk said she had learned about the people.

"American people are very nice people," she observed. She also learned American food is prepared differently, containing more spices than that at home.

Johnson escorted his new friend back to her home, his second trip to the Ukraine.

Johnson said he plans to return to the Ukraine because of the needs he has observed there. The country has good health care workers, but they don't have the equipment or medications they need. He also hopes to assist the government in developing a health care

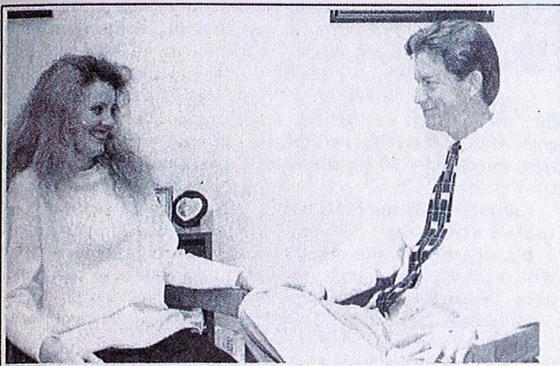


component which is based on a free market economic model. During his recent visit he met with the minister of health to initiate the process.

During his visits to the Ukraine he has participated in work coordinated by the Franklin church in which American health care workers provide treatment to local people through clinics. The efforts are expensive, though, because of the expense of shipping medicine and equipment.

The church has accessed U.S. foreign aid to defray shipping costs, but is raising money and researching other ways to continue its ministries in the Ukraine, noted Satterfield.

Kolesnyk reported part of the problem for her country is that it is a new country. "The American people help the Ukrainian people," said Kolesnyk. "I say thank you, American people, very much," said Kolesnyk. *B&R*



VISITING in Johnson's office after her surgery and recovery are Iryna Kolesnyk, left, and Mark Johnson, a Nashville urologist. — Photo by Connie Davis

College students gather for music, ministry conference

For Baptist and Reflector

MURFREESBORO — Over 100 college students from across Tennessee gathered recently at Third Church, Murfreesboro, for Gospel Praise '96. The event was the fifth annual workshop on Gospel music and ministry. Most of the students were members of Gospel choirs. Seven campuses were represented.

Gospel choirs performed during the meeting and participants heard Jim Freedman, director of missions, Nashville Baptist Association, and Michael Graves, pastor, Temple Church, Nashville. Both challenged students to follow God's leadership and seek spiritual awakening on their campuses.

The meeting is made possible by gifts to the Golden State Missions Offering. ■



SPEAKING is Jim Freedman.



PAUSING during the workshop are Charles Nored, left, director of student ministries, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, who was host of the meeting, and Lawrence Ragland, director at Lane College, Jackson.



PRESENTING the Irene Turner High Attendance Award to Kiva Taylor, center, and Kenny Yarborough, right, of the University of Tennessee at Martin is Chris Jackson, left, director of student ministries for Fisk University, Tennessee State University, and American Baptist College, all located in Nashville.



LEADING a seminar is Melvin Hughes, pastor, Allen Chapel AME Church, Murfreesboro. The subject was the heritage of the African American church.

Belmont trains congregations for marketing

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Belmont University's School of Business is offering a new course in marketing for church congregations.

"Congregational Marketing: Effectively Communicating the Mission and Ministries of the Church" will meet Tuesday evenings during the spring semester which begins in January.

The course will explore the many applications of marketing practice which can help religious leaders, both lay and ordained, learn to build more viable organizations through which to minister in an increasingly secularized culture.

"Some people become uneasy when the words 'marketing' and 'church' are used together, but it need not be a concern as long as the church's message remains unchanged," said Greg Pope, the instructor. "The term 'congregational marketing' simply refers to tools and plans for communicating a congregation's mission and ministry more effectively," he added.

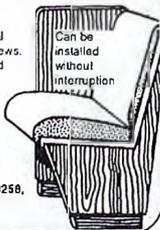
A limited number of people can take the course without receiving credit for \$300. For more information or to register, call (615) 460-6784. ■

Wanted

Westown 1st Southern Baptist Church is seeking an experienced full-time pastor. Seminary degree preferred but not required. Resumes will be accepted through 12-31. Send resumes to Westown Baptist Church, 11415 North 35th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85029.

ADD-A-PAD CUSHION

- Seat Only
 - Seat & Back
- A very economical solution to hard pews. Separate seat and back are permanently attached. Comfortable poly foam cushion in beautiful Scotch Guard Nylon.



P.O. Box 399
Treaswell, TN 38258,
1-800-651-8161
901-669-3364

Central Church Furnishings



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

Church Buses

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

Study says unchurched 'too busy' to attend

By Marv Knox
For Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Most people who don't attend church stay away not because of hostility toward organized religion but because they are simply too busy to attend, according to a report by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Almost four in 10 participants surveyed said unchurched Americans "are 'too busy' to attend church," the agency's research division reported in its newsletter, "Research Review."

The survey, called Project Discovery, was conducted by four Baptist groups in the Washington, D.C., area.

Four out of 10 people say they are not actively involved in a congregation, synagogue, or other house of worship, the survey found. The study also showed that unchurched Americans "tend to be younger and disproportionately male," the newsletter reported.

People polled in the survey were asked to explain why they believe people don't go to church. "Too busy" was the No. 1 answer, cited by 37.5 percent of respondents.

"People have a fixed amount of time and thus choose to spend their time in activities or interests other than

church," HMB research analysts said.

The next most common response was "don't know." Almost one in three respondents (32.5 percent) either weren't sure why people don't go to church or they were not willing to say.

The third reason, cited by about one in six of the people polled (15.8 percent), indicated a specific problem with the church. Responses included such reasons as "they are just after the money" and "they are full of hypocrites."

"Either these unchurched people have had a negative experience with church that hinders them from current participation, or they developed a negative impression of church that is a stumbling block to them," the researchers theorized.

Apathy ranked next, with 8.8 percent of respondents saying unchurched people just don't care about church. Then came a lack of belief in God, cited by 4.8 percent of the people polled, and 2.4 percent claimed not being raised in a church as reason enough not to attend now.

While about half of those surveyed expressed neutral

feelings toward religious groups, the researchers noted that Southern Baptists have a public relations problem when compared to other denominations.

Presbyterians topped the list of groups that generated favorable attitudes among unchurched people, generating those feelings in 45.2 percent of respondents. Next came United Methodists (44.5 percent), Roman Catholics (44.3) and all types of Baptists (43.2).

Southern Baptists came in eighth out of 15 groups, with a 37.0 percent favorable rating among the unchurched. Black Muslims came in last in that category, with a favorable perception among only 16.8 percent of respondents.

Conversely, Black Muslims ranked at the top of groups who are perceived unfavorably, with a 22.7 percent unfavorable rating among the unchurched. Next were Mormons (17.3 percent), Muslims

(15.0), and Southern Baptists (12.2). Lutherans generate the fewest unfavorable feelings (2.4 percent), followed by United Methodists (2.8) and Presbyterians (3.8).

"Compared to other Christian groups, Southern Baptists had the highest percentage of negative opinions expressed and were among those with the lowest favorable ratings," the researchers noted. "While not critical, Southern Baptists do have a public relations problem that is not shared by Baptists in general."

This PR problem may be accentuated by secular media coverage that "highlights negative reactions to some issue or event," they speculated, urging, "Southern Baptists should intentionally communicate the positive values of love, concern, caring, forgiveness, and grace that make up their Christian faith."

The survey also discovered issues that are important for many church people — abortion, the lottery, prayer in school, racism, and politics — are "not mentioned as concerns" by unchurched people. ■



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

A & O CHURCH FURNITURE
4871 HARVEY RD. • P.O. BOX 1053
JAMESTOWN, NORTH CAROLINA 27282
— FEW —
UPHOLSTERING
1 (800) 523-9058
NC 1 (800) 222-7695

Steeple & Baptistries
From the world's largest manufacturer of fiberglass church products
• Steeple
• Baptistries
• Lighted Wall Crosses
• Baptistries Heaters
Call or write for our free catalog
1-800-527-1459
Fiberglass Specialties, Inc.
P.O. Box 1482
Needham, TX 75561
FIBERGLASS SPECIALTIES INCORPORATED

FOUR SEASONS
COUNTRY INN
Great for winter retreats, groups
(502)-678-1000
4107 Scottsville Rd
Glasgow, Ky 42141
The Diamond
is loved



Remember when...? That's a tough question for a child with a history of abuse and neglect. At the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, especially during this time of year, all of our "remember whens" are good.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus who is the cornerstone of what we are about. Because of His life our kids have hope for a bright future.

May the Savior bring blessings and pleasant memories to you this holiday season and may He bless your new year.

TENNESSEE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES, INC.
A Benevolent Ministry of Tennessee Baptist Convention
Dr. Gerald L. Stow, Pres./Treas.
P.O. Box 728 • Brentwood, TN 37024
1-800-624-8591



Tennescene

Leaders

■ **Billy Patterson** has been called as pastor of Pleasant View Church, Martin.

■ **Tony Terrell**, pastor, West Union Church, Dresden, has resigned.

■ **Highland Church, Hohenwald**, has called **Kevin Clayton** as pastor.

■ **Robert J. Burns**, pastor, Bethel Church, Clinton, recently retired as pastor after serving the church for 13 years and service in ministry for 40 years. He and his wife, Mae, will live in Etowah.

■ **Alice Bell Church, Knoxville**, has called **Doug White** as pastor, effective Dec. 8.

■ **Tunnell Hill Church, Rogersville**, has called **O'Dell Davidson** as pastor. Formerly he was pastor of Catherine Nenny Church, Whitesburg.

■ **Calvin S. Metcalf**, pastor, Central Church, Fountain City, Knoxville, has written the book, *Jump-Starts for Thoughtful Meditation*.

■ **Glenwood Church, Oak Ridge**, has called **James R. Tarrant** as minister of music and education. He is a graduate of Cumberland College, Williamsburg, Ky., and Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, where he earned a master of music degree. Tarrant is working on his doctorate of sacred music from the University of Memphis. He was a member of the church during his youth.

■ **New Union Church, Medon**, has called **Orville McMahan** as interim pastor.

■ **First Church, Rutherford**, has called **William Lee Barnett** as its first full-time minister of youth and activities, effective Nov. 19. Barnett is a graduate of Belmont University, Nashville. He formerly served on the staff of a church in North Carolina while attending Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

■ **Lewis Screws** of Crump has been called as pastor of Calvary Church, Parsons, effective Nov. 3.

■ **Mount Pleasant Church, Bradford**, has called **Brigham Scallion** as minister of music/youth.

■ **Lowell Wilson** has been called as pastor of Oak Grove Church, Milan, effective Dec. 1.

■ **Jerry McDivitt** has been called as pastor of Latham Chapel Church, Medina. He has served as pastor of Northside Church, Milan. **Bob Elliott** is serving as interim pastor of Northside Church.

■ **Clingan Ridge Church, Cleveland**, has called **Don Jenkins** as youth pastor. He formerly was youth pastor at Bethel Church, Cleveland.

■ **Dale Sheridan** has been called as pastor of Immanuel Church, Trenton. He formerly served as pastor of Oak Grove Church, Milan.

■ **Stones River Church, Smyrna**, will send its pastor, **G. Ross Maroney Sr.**, to Tel Aviv, Israel Jan. 12-24 to do missions work.

■ **DeWayne and Natalie Howard** of Athens have entered full-time evangelism. DeWayne Howard is a former pastor and youth minister and is a member of Valley View Church, Athens. Natalie is a musician and artist. The Howards may be contacted at (423) 744-7109.

■ **Central Church, Alcoa**, licensed **Allan and Kim Atchley** to the ministry Dec. 1.

churches

■ **Southside Church, Parsons**, celebrated its 40th anniversary Dec. 8.

■ **First Church, Wildersville**, entered a float in its community's Christmas parade.

■ **Pine Grove Church, Wildersville**, recently bought an organ.

■ **Woodland Park Church, Chattanooga**, will work at the Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf in Montego Bay, Jamaica Jan. 11-24. Members will do construction and other ministry. The church also will work in Honduras, Albania, and Nicaragua during the next year.

■ **Calvary Church, Knoxville**, is providing an Angel Tree, a project of Prison Fellowship Ministries. Children represented on the tree are chosen by members who pro-



CHURCH SECRETARIES pause at the Hamilton County Association office recently during Baptist Sunday School Board-endorsed training. They are, from left, seated, Carolyn Sutton, Cyndi Rymer, Pat Johnson, Becky Witt; standing, Pam Chastain, Perky Long, JoAnn Mummert, Linda Mauritzen, Pat Malone, Joy Brackett, Sharon Ramsey, Gwen Freeman, Betsy Salmon, Pauline McClure, Wanda Tubbs, Karen Robinson, Susie Fisher, and Pat Schmitt. Twenty-nine have completed the basic training and 16 the advanced training during the almost two years it has been offered.

vide Christmas gifts for them. These are the children of prisoners.

■ **Calvary Church, Kingsport**, will hold a Lottie Moon Basketball Tournament Dec. 14 to raise money for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

■ **Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville**, held its third annual Lottie Trot, a walk and run on a 4.9 kilometer cross country trail to raise money for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

■ **Clingan Ridge Church, Cleveland**, will present "Celebrate the Life," an original drama written by two church members, Dennis Cagle, pastor, and Sharon Ramsey, on Sunday, Dec. 15 at 10:45; Saturday, Dec. 21, at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 22 at 10:45 a.m.

■ **First Church, Morristown**, will work in Santiago, Chile, in April 1997. Members will do construction work.

■ **East Rogersville Church, Rogersville**, will present the play, "The Christmas Guest," Dec. 20-21. For more information, call the church at (423) 272-2496.

■ **Edgefield Church, Nashville**, will hear Ken Collier, missionary to Brazil, Dec. 11. Collier is former minister of youth and education, Dalewood Church, Nashville.

■ **Stock Creek Church, Knoxville**, has begun renovation of its facilities. The congregation is trying to conduct the project, which will cost about \$45,000, debt-free.

■ **Brentwood Church, Brentwood**, will present "Two From Galilee," Dec. 13-17. For more information, call (615) 373-2992.

■ **Red Bank Church, Red Bank**, will work in Honduras Feb. 15 - March 1. Volunteers will build a house at an orphanage.

■ **Stones River Church, Smyrna**, held a one-day revival Nov. 17. Glen Savell of Tuscaloosa, Ala., spoke.

■ The adult sanctuary choir of **Charlotte Road Church, Nashville**, will present "Heavens Declare the Glory" Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m. The presentation is a drama which includes music. For more information call (615) 356-5810.

■ **Tri-Cities Church, Gray**, is building a multi-purpose building which will include a 1,000-seat sanctuary and educational space. The congregation is trying to complete the project debt-free.

■ **Forest Hills Church, Nashville**, will hold a Christmas Celebration featuring its 100-voice sanctuary choir Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m. and a Christmas Carol Sing Dec. 22 at 6:30 p.m.

■ **Lyle Lane Church, Nashville**, will present a Christmas drama and musical, "I'm a Father Too," Dec. 14 at 7 p.m.

■ **West Colonial Hills Church, Kingsport**, is building a building for family life and educational activities. It is a 19,000 square foot building.

■ **Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage**, will offer "Christmas Images," a dramatic musical presented by the Sanctuary Choir, drama team, and orchestra, Dec. 14-15. Also, the singles of the church provided free gift wrapping for

senior adults on one Sunday.

■ **First Church, Jackson**, is holding a "Giving Tree," offering names of children in foster care provided by the Department of Human Services. The church reported the foster families are not provided extra funding for Christmas.

■ **First Church, Jefferson City**, will begin holding Church Ministries Night in January. It will be held once a month during the evening worship service and include time for conducting business and for focus on committees or ministries of the church.

■ **New Hope Church, Hermitage**, has begun using portable buildings for Sunday School classrooms.

■ "The Miracle on Main Street," a Christmas pageant of **First Church, Franklin**, will be held Dec. 13-15. During the event last year 99 people made professions of faith.

■ **Youth of First Church, Parsons**, will participate in a Christmas parade by preparing and directing a float.

■ **Trinity Church, Manchester**, will hold an annual lock-in for youth from the area Dec. 30-31. For more information, call the church at (615) 728-4588.



associations

■ **Duck River Association** is selling its Baptist Building and will auction office equipment Dec. 14. For more information, call the association office at (615) 455-5072.

■ **ALPHA Association** voted Nov. 4 to buy 10 acres of land on Highway 100 west of Centerville and build an office building.

Christian message, commercial success compatible: Stephens

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Can a book, video, or other product with a Christian message be commercially successful?

Yes, insists Ken Stephens, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers. He joined the board earlier this year after 14 years with Thomas Nelson Publishers/Word. A member of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, Stephens is a former Southern Baptist missionary to the Dominican Republic.

Stephens said trade publishers such as B&H that are associated with denominational institutions face a challenge of low expectations from general trade publishers, authors, and retail outlets.

"There is an assumption these publishers will do worthwhile products with little commercial value," he said.

At B&H, "we have to pay for ourselves," Stephens said, not-

ing the BSSB is supported by the sale of its products and services and does not receive Co-operative Program funds.

"We must do a line of good commercial products with a strong redemptive message. These, in turn, provide funds to make possible the ministry-type products."

Recent Broadman & Holman products living up to the dual standard of a positive, evangelical Christian message and commercial success include "Christy" videos, the 1996 book *Breaking Through* by Wellington Boone, *Experiencing God Study Bible* editions in the New King James, International, and Spanish

versions, and its *Insight for Ministry Series* for ministers on topics such as effective evangelistic churches, worship styles, and Sunday School.

Among the strengths of B&H, Stephens listed at the

top its "core of competent people"

Numerous plans are underway for new products in the future. Stephens said he hopes Southern Baptists will view B&H products as the best on

the market.

He added that he believes the future includes B&H products having a strong Christian message and commercial success as the norm rather than the exception. ■

Classified

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY:

Growing congregation in search of bivocational Minister of Music. First Baptist Church, Watertown, P.O. Box 187, Watertown, TN 37184; (615) 237-3312.

Interested In European Travel?

I am a conservative Baptist minister in Birmingham, Ala., who is coordinating a tour to England and Scotland during the month of June. If interested, please contact Timothy Hamblin at (205) 979-0381 between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

Exciting Career in Christian Retailing

Excellent salary and benefit package available. Qualifications must include: four-year college degree or comparable business experience, outstanding leadership, computer skills, strong vision for the future, and an active role in a Southern Baptist church.

Send resume to:
Retail Store Operations Dept.
Manager Training Search
127 Ninth Avenue North
MSN 165
Nashville, TN 37234-0165
or fax to (615) 251-3622

BAPTIST BOOK STORES
LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN STORES

owned and operated by the
Sunday School Board of the

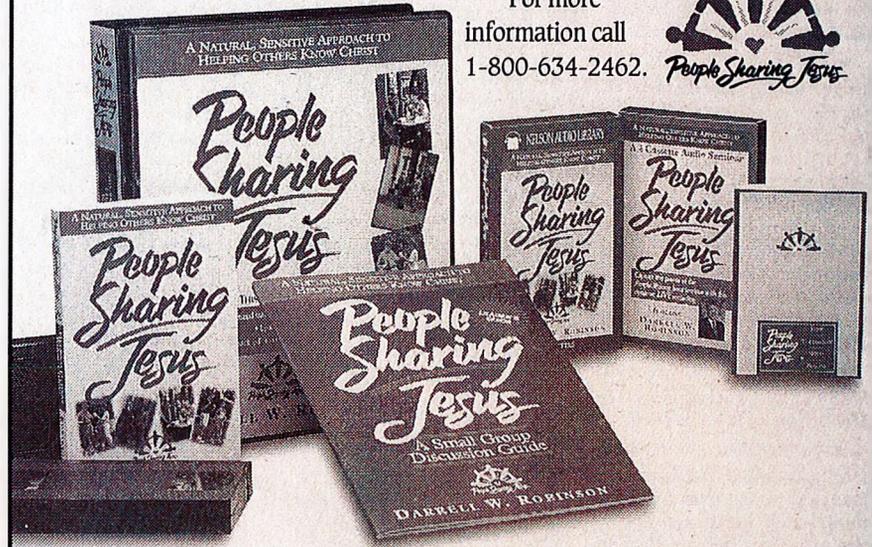
2,000 Years Ago A Carpenter Started A Job He'd Like Your People To Help Finish.

People Sharing Jesus can help your people to share Jesus as part of everyday life — naturally, simply and effectively. *People Sharing Jesus* is a breakthrough system by Darrell W. Robinson, head of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board since 1989. It's not about gimmicks or manipulation. It's about sharing the joy and faith your people have found in Christ.

Without guilt, anxiety or awkwardness.

The *People Sharing Jesus* process includes a book, abridged audio tapes, complete audio seminar, dramatized video, leader's guide and a special New Testament edition. It's everything your church needs to build confidence for sharing Christ. And it's available now at your local Baptist or Christian bookstore.

For more information call
1-800-634-2462.



"Darrell Robinson, whose pastor's heart is clear and resounding, has expressed most helpfully in this book the basic features of a spontaneous witness for our living Lord."

— Henry T. Blackaby, Author, *Experiencing God*

Call for free
BAPTISTRIES
HEATERS, PUMPS
FACTORY DIRECT
TOLL FREE NATIONWIDE
1-800-251-0679
FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.
3511 HUSCH PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

Thinking Florida Vacation
Disney-Sea World-Universal
Summerfield Vacation Villas
2BD-2/one-half BA, Pool-Playground. Ask about 40 % off.
(800) 207-9582

For Sale

Church Organ, Allen Model 603-3, 2 manual, 2 computer; presently in 800-seat sanctuary; perfect for same or smaller church; \$14,900; Contact Forest Hills Baptist Church, 2101 Old Hickory, Blvd., Nashville, 37215; (615) 373-8074.

CHURCH STEEPLES
● BAPTISTRIES
● WALLCROSSES
● BAPTISTRY WATER HEATERS
COLONIAL CONTEMPORARY AND MODERN DESIGNS
ERECTION AVAILABLE
WRITE OR CALL FOR LITERATURE OR PROPOSALS
TOLL FREE 1-800-241-3152
IN N.C. 1-800-523-9058
A&O STEEPLES & BAPTISTRIES
4871 HARVEY RD. • BOX 1053
JAMESTOWN, NC 27282
Providing Church Products for 25 Years

Magnum Transportation



"Bus Sales, Service, & Refurbishments"

1228 Lakeview Dr.
Franklin, TN 37067
(615) 790-8990 FAX (615) 790-8989
"Your Transportation Solution"

Gotta have it

By Ron Galyon

Focal Passage — Exodus 20:17; Joshua 7:1, 19-21; Romans 7:7-11; II Corinthians 8:1-4

I am often on the highway driving back and forth to Nashville to visit in the hospitals. One day I discovered a talk radio station which had a financial counseling program. The hosts are Dave Ramsey and Roy Matlock. People would call in with financial questions and Dave and Roy would give them advice based on their financial system. I was intrigued by this program because one element of their financial program included tithing.

One day a lady called who said she and her husband were working to pay off their credit card debt. She had paid off \$18,000 in the past 12 months. Dave and Roy asked how much she still owed. She told them around \$25,000. She further admitted that she was still charging around \$500 a month.

Dave Ramsey then asked her if she and her husband were involved in a church and she told him they were. Dave then asked about their giving to the church. She told him she would hold what they would give to the church to the end of the month to be sure they could pay all of their bills.

The point is that our relationship to material things either reflects our spiritual health or our spiritual problems. Possessing and the desire to possess can create serious spiritual and relational problems.

God's top 10 list has a great insight for us about our attitude and desires toward stuff. This text certainly is relevant for our stuff crazy society of today. Let me share with you an Old Testament practice and God's eternal principle.

The Old Testament prohibited a life motivated by the obsession of possessions. The Hebrew people were prohibited by God's law from coveting. This word "covet" means to desire or take pleasure in. The meaning is not negative except by context. Covet can be used as a desire that is selfish or lustful, pleasure in reference to idols, or the desire for God. In Exodus 20:17 it refers to a desire that is evil because God prohibited it.

The form of this commandment is somewhat different from the others. Rather than simply stating, "Thou shalt not covet," God gave several specific applications. The two applications deal with people and things. The understanding of this would be that we are not to desire to possess or control things or people.

This Old Testament practice is striking at the purpose of why we are living. This practice prevented materialism and prevented the desire to control. What does this commandment promote?

God's eternal principle promotes our relationship with God and others as the source of satisfaction in life. The purpose of our being alive is to love God and others, not to love stuff.

It is not a sin to make money or to have money. It is wrong for the desire for money to replace our love for God or others. In fact, when we properly love God and others we become free to use our money and stuff to help others.

Tony Campolo said, "I do not think it is a sin to make a million dollars, but it can become a sin not to spend that million dollars as Jesus would if he were in your place." I would add that it is a sin if your desire for a million dollars replaces your desire to love God and help others. ■ — Ron Galyon is pastor of First Church, Pulaski.

The shepherds

By Michael Smith

Focal Passage — Luke 2:8-20

When most people think of the one passage of Scripture they would label "the Christmas story," Luke 2:1-20 is what they have in mind. Verses 1-7 tell the circumstances of Jesus' birth: Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem to participate in the Roman census, their lodging in a stable when there is no room in the inn, the birth of Jesus, and Mary's placing of the infant in a manger or feeding trough.

Through verse 7, the story involves only the family of Jesus. Starting with verse 8, though, the good news begins to spread to all people.

The announcement to the shepherds — vv. 8-14

Shepherds were tending their sheep in the fields outside Bethlehem. The nature of their work made it impossible for shepherds to observe all the purity rituals of first century Judaism. Because of this, shepherds were virtually second-class citizens, at least in the eyes of religious leaders such as the Pharisees.

In all probability, most shepherds accepted their assigned standing as their lot in life. They certainly would not have expected to be first to hear the announcement of the Messiah's birth.

Family Bible Lesson

Frightened by the angel's appearance, the shepherds were intrigued and reassured by his message. First, the angel brought "good news of great joy that will be for all people," even for outsiders such as shepherds. Second, the good news was the birth of the long awaited Messiah.

Third, the shepherds might see the Messiah for themselves if only they would go and seek him. They

would know they had found the Messiah when they located a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

The shepherd's response (vv. 15-20).

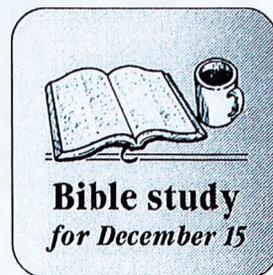
Rather than debate the meaning or reality of their shared experience, the shepherds hastened to Bethlehem to find the Messiah. Their enthusiastic response to God's revelation was soon rewarded when they found Jesus and his family. The shepherds surely told Mary and Joseph about the angel's message.

Going farther, they shared the good news with all who would listen. Shepherds, who normally lived their lives on the fringe of respectable society, had become the first to hear of Jesus, see Jesus, and hear witness to Jesus.

Verse 19 records that "Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." The implication is Mary served as Luke's primary source for what scholars call "the birth narratives."

In any case, Mary probably did not comprehend the full implications of that first Christmas night until many years later. Her obedience to God throughout a very trying time in her life became an inspiration to later Christians.

The story of the shepherds roots the Christmas story in everyday life. God brought his long term work of salvation to fulfillment in the midst of what we would call the real world, where life was often dominated by government decisions, social barriers, taxes, and the daily grind. He chose shepherds to be the first to hear the good news. Through their response to God's action, the shepherds in turn became models of how all should respond to the Gospel. ■ — Michael Smith is pastor of Second Church, Memphis.



A supernatural disclosure

By Thom Tapp

Explore the Bible Lesson

Focal Passage — Matthew 16:13-20

My father has taught me many wonderful truths. He provided me with a good environment each day. He worked in a dangerous job climbing riggings in the rain, crawling into hammer mills to repair huge crushers, and working even while he was sick from exhaustion. Later I learned the hardships he endured to provide for his family. He disclosed these circumstances as he taught me responsibility.

As a new Christian, I had certain pre-conceived ideas about Jesus. As I have matured in Christ, his Word revealed more and more about Jesus. These disclosures sometimes astounded me, but they always have a purpose.

Jesus teaching about what defiles a person. Again Jesus was taken to task over a legalistic issue. The Scribes and Pharisees pounced on him because his disciples broke the traditions of the elders by not washing their hands before they ate. He said it isn't what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out of his mouth. The objective is not the strict adherence to tradition, the objective is a cleansing relationship with God.

The handling of a Canaanite

woman's daughter. Why would Jesus reject a Gentile woman in her time of need? He was faced with a dilemma. If he helped her outright, he would be further alienated from those who were prepared to receive his message. If he did not, he risked the breach of his own teaching on compassion. The woman's faith gave him the opportunity to help while maintaining credibility with the Jews. She asked, in humility, for the crumbs from his table. This act of faith served to appease the piety of the Scribes and Pharisees.

A second miraculous feeding of a multitude. This journey with the people had lasted three days, and the food supplies were dwindling. Jesus noticed this, but why didn't his disciples notice it? As Christians we are called to see our world through the eyes of Jesus.

The demand for a sign. The Sadducees and Pharisees came demanding a sign. How blind they were not to recognize the miracles Jesus had already performed. Today we see the same thing, people demand a sign. They don't recognize the miracle of changed lives, mercy, and faith. Jesus chided them for being able to recognize the weather in-

dicators, but not the obvious signs he had displayed in the natural course of his ministry.

Warning against the teachings of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus warned his disciples to avoid the hollow veneer of the Pharisees and Sadducees. True believers want to live by the spirit of the Word as well as obeying it outright.

Great Confession. Is Jesus just a great teacher? Is he just a prophet? Jesus asked the disciples what people thought of him, and they gave various answers. The only correct answer is the one Peter gave: "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." If he is any less, he is nothing at all.

Then Jesus calls Simon Peter — or stone. I believe Jesus referred to Peter as a small stone, while Jesus himself was the rock the church was built upon. Jesus is the one who "loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Verse 19 speaks of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. I believe the keys are the preaching of the Gospel. It's power frees from sin, and it's rejection binds to destruction.

Jesus has made a divine revelation of himself. Our lives should communicate that revelation to our world. ■ — Thom Tapp is pastor of Oral Church, Lenoir City.



world news

Garlands named to Baylor posts

Associated Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, KY. — Diana Garland, fired last year as dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Carver School of Social Work, and her husband, David, a long-time New Testament professor at the seminary, have been named to faculty positions at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

The Garlands, who begin teaching at Baylor next fall, are among 46 professors to leave Southern Seminary since 1993.

Diana Garland was fired by President Albert Mohler after criticizing his decision to turn down a prospective professor because of his support for women pastors. After Garland told students Mohler's hiring policy jeopardized the Carver School's accreditation, he accused her of insubordination and fired her from the administrative position. In the chain of events that followed the

Carver School will be closed by August 1997.

Garland remained on faculty and continued to teach at the seminary before leaving last year to direct a family ministry research project at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary.

At Baylor Garland will teach and help the university develop a master's degree in social work. David Garland will join the faculty of Baylor's George W. Truett Theological Seminary. ■

U.S. to evacuate at-risk Kurds

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The United States plans to evacuate up to 5,000 endangered Kurdish relief workers and family members — including hundreds known to Southern Baptists — from northern Iraq in the near future.

The Kurdish workers, under threat of death from Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, reportedly will be moved across Iraq's northern border into Turkey.

From there they will be flown to Guam for processing, then on to the United States for resettlement. The evacuees, employed by more than 20 aid groups, will include 363 workers and family members connected to an international aid agency through which Southern Baptists have aided the

New BSSB magazine

Graham featured in *The Minister's Family*

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A profile of Franklin Graham, heir apparent to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, is the lead article for the first issue of *The Minister's Family*, a magazine published by the Baptist Sunday School Board's pastor-staff leadership department.

Designed in the format of a "model home," as editor Matt Tullos describes it, *The Minister's Family* has sections headed "The Guest Room," "The Master Suite," "The Family Room," "The Kitchen," and "The Kid's Room," includ-

ing pages for preteens and teenagers. A section called "The Back Porch" wraps up the issue and gives a glimpse of the next issue.

Dena Dyer, a minister's wife and writer, tells the story of Franklin Graham, "The Ultimate Preacher's Kid," from youthful prankster to rebellious young adult, to evangelistic preacher.

Of his colorful earlier years

and his subsequent total commitment to God, Graham tells readers, "What is important about my story is important about everyone's story: God has a plan for each of his children and he will bring that plan to successful completion."

Tullos said the new quarterly magazine, which begins publication with the January-March 1997 issue, is designed to encourage, inspire, inform, and enrich the lives of ministers and their families.

"We'd like to be a source of inspiration, release, humor, and kindredship," Tullos noted. ■



GRAHAM

Kurds in northern Iraq since the end of the Persian Gulf War. ■

EBC bids farewell, welcome to execs

Baptist Press

HEIDELBERG, Germany — Saying goodbye to John and Elizabeth Merritt and welcoming James and Wilma Heflin were the focus of the 33rd annual meeting of the European Baptist Convention in Heidelberg, Germany.

Merritt is the retiring general secretary of the EBC, encompassing 66 English-language churches in 21 countries in Europe. Heflin is his successor.

The EBC is associated with the Southern Baptist Convention and supports the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

Merritt is a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary who served the

EBC for 24 years. Heflin formerly was professor of preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. ■

Mexican Baptists to send emissary to 'Last Frontier'

FMB News Office

MONTERREY, Mexico — A woman doctor from here will be the first Mexican Baptist to take the Gospel to "The Last Frontier," that part of the world with little or no access to the Gospel. To cover her salary and travel expenses, the National Baptist Convention of Mexico is promoting a special offering, "One Peso for Every Member." The doctor hopes to work with Southern Baptist doctors at Jibla, Yemen. ■



Get a head start on Christmas gift giving!

You won't need a camel to deliver your Christmas gifts this year. Give a gift subscription to the *Baptist and Reflector* and let the post office do the delivering. A one year's subscription to the *Baptist and Reflector* is only \$8. Send the form below, along with a check, and your friend will know you care each time they receive their copy of the paper. We will send a card notifying the person of your gift. Mail form to: *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024

Send gift subscription to:

Name _____

Address _____

Given By: _____

Take every opportunity, missionary learns

FMB News Office

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil — Southern Baptist missionary Ann Sprouse knows it's important to be sensitive to opportunities God gives her to share the Gospel, even on the most "trivial" occasions.

Sprouse, who serves in Rio de Janeiro, was standing in line recently at a local grocery store when two women asked about a bag of peanuts she was buying.

Sprouse took the opportunity to invite the women to Sunday worship. One of them came to the service — and make a decision for Jesus Christ. ■



Lottie Moon dollars at work

Foreign Mission Board missionary Ken Cummins greets a neighbor of Harvest Baptist Church near La Ceiba, Honduras. In the background is the church building, erected with help of Southern Baptist volunteers. Cummins is supported through Southern Baptists' gifts to the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The national goal for the Lottie Moon offering this year is \$100 million. Tennessee Baptists have a goal of \$7.5 million. — Photo by Warren Johnson