

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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this week's news

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Tennesseans respond to hungry North Koreans

By Marcia Knox
For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists have sent approximately 263 boxes, filled with food, for the North Korean Relief Project.

TBC ministry groups, churches, associations, Woman's Missionary Union, and Baptist Men's ministries responded to hunger needs in an effort called "Merry Christmas North Korea," said Tim Bearden, TBC Mission Awareness/Involvement Group leader.

"In addition to the boxes collected by WMU at GA Jams and the Women on Missions Retreat, and those brought by messengers to the TBC annual

meeting in November, there were approximately 20 additional boxes added to the container, Bearden said.

The latest effort was in response to a renewed call from the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. In late April Tennessee Baptists shipped 205 boxes of food to North Korea in response to a request from Cooperative Services International, the South-



BEARDEN



BRYAN

ern Baptist aid agency.

Tennessee Baptists joined with Baptists from Arkansas and Mississippi to coordinate the latest North Korean relief effort. Shelby Association in Memphis served as the clearing house for the tri-state effort.

"Only one container was designated for the goal, but Tennessee Baptists, Mississippi Baptists (1,200 boxes) and Arkansas Baptists (200 boxes) filled three containers," Bearden said.

Besides the food items, each contributor was asked to donate \$20 to defray the cost of purchasing and shipping a container. Tennessee Baptists gave \$3,000 for this effort, according to Bearden. The For-

eign Mission Board will make up the deficit for shipping the goods, he added.

"It is encouraging to realize Tennessee Baptists hear of needs and enthusiastically respond without regard to political or social circumstances where the needs exist," said Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Katharine Bryan.

"What a tool of ministry we are putting in the hands of our representatives who are on site with these people," she added.

In addition to the food taken to Memphis, approximately 100 pounds of donated food that did not meet project specifications was given to Nashville Association's Woodcock Center. ■

Make the B&R a part of 1997

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — The staff of the *Baptist and Reflector* wishes all our readers a very happy and prosperous new year.

We also welcome a new member to our church page family. Beginning in the next issue, First Church, Nashville, will begin publishing its newsletter in the *Baptist and Reflector* each week.

Leaders at First Church, along with several others that have been using the paper for their newsletter for many years, have discovered the *B&R* to be an effective, cost-efficient means of delivery. *The Baptist and Reflector* also can tailor the newsletter to fit any church's needs. Some churches print two pages each week; others print one page once a month.

For a low set-up fee of \$65 per issue, plus the lowest cost available for subscriptions, the church page plan is affordable.

For more information, call (615) 371-2003. The staff will even do a sample newsletter. Send a copy of your church's latest newsletter to P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024 and request a sample page. ■

TBC remodeling, new missions partner among convention's top stories of 1996

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Servan Team 21 and a new foreign missions partnership highlight the top news stories in the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1996.

In May, the TBC Executive Board approved Servan Team 21, a reorganization of the Executive Board staff from departments to seven groups — Evangelism/Missions Strategies, Christian Growth Development, Church Staff Leadership, Missions Awareness and Involvement, Communication, Administrative Services, and Executive Leadership.

The driving force behind the remodeling plan, according to TBC Executive Director James Porch, was "to remodel our organization to continue to improve our responses to the needs of Tennessee Baptist churches."

In early March an advance team traveled to Costa Rica to explore a foreign missions partnership with that Central American country.

The team reported positively and in November messengers to the state convention approved a three-year partnership in Costa Rica, beginning Jan. 1.

Other top stories in 1996, in no particular order, were:

(1) Efforts to legalize gambling in Tennessee intensified. After years of trying Tennessee state legislators scraped together enough votes to give first approval for a vote on a state lottery. Both houses passed SJR-4 on a simple majority last year. In 1997 it will have to gain a two-thirds majority before reaching the governor's desk. *The Baptist and Reflector* ran several stories on the evils of gambling last year and will continue to lead against the effort to bring a state lottery to Tennessee.

(2) A missionary family from Tennessee is recovering from a tragic car accident Feb. 1 in Peru. Wade Watts of Memphis was severely injured along with son, Marcus. His wife, Nancy, and another son, Joshua, escaped serious injury. The prognosis on Wade Watts is still uncertain as to whether he will make a complete recovery. Meanwhile, Highland Heights Church in Memphis is trying to renovate a church-owned duplex into a home for the Watts family.

(3) For the first time since 1957 the State Evangelism Conference was held outside Nashville. Approximately 800 people attended the two-day sessions at First Church, Jackson. The 1997 State Evangelism Conference will be held

Jan. 20-21 at Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville.

(4) The Youth Evangelism Conference also experienced a change in 1996 as Opryland Theme Park was utilized for the first time along with the traditional Friday night sessions at Vanderbilt University's Memorial Gym. Approximately 29,000 teenagers attended and more than 1,000 made spiritual decisions.

(5) Tennessee Baptists helped some black churches which were victims of arson in 1996. One of the major recipients of aid was Salem Church in Fruitland. Several Tennessee Baptist volunteer teams helped build a new facility there. The church also received money from a special arson fund.

(6) The Olympics came to Polk County last summer. About 220 volunteers from seven states were based at Polk County Association's Camp Agape. They distributed about 30,000 hospitality bags provided mostly by Tennessee WMU.

(7) The largest single group (78 youth and leaders from Concord Church, Knoxville) to go to one location in a Tennessee Baptist partnership went to Poland last summer. The group witnessed 100 decisions for Christ.

— See TBC, page 4

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Memphis hospital signs contract with Mississippi casino

By William H. Perkins Jr.
For Baptist Press

MEMPHIS — Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc. (BMHCS) in Memphis has contracted through a DeSoto (Miss.) County branch hospital to provide health care services for employees of Grand Casino in Tunica County, and the agreement is raising eyebrows among Mississippi Baptists.

That's because BMHCS is one-third owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, which has condemned the legalization and rapid spread of casinos in the state.

John N. Robbins, BMHCS executive vice president, confirmed the contract Dec. 3 and issued the following statement:

"Baptist Memorial Health Care provides industrial health nurse services such as wellness and preventative medicine for many corporations in the Mid-South. It is the mission of Baptist Memorial Health Care to serve the health needs of all people with

in our geographic area and literally around the world. We provide compassionate care in the name of Christ to all people regardless of race, religion, vocation, or lifestyle. At the same time, we are most sensitive to the moral concerns of those of the Baptist faith and seek to uphold basic Christian principles in representing this institution to others."

Robbins stressed that BMHCS is opposed to gambling but at the same time feels a ministry commitment to care for individuals in situations where a Christian witness is needed.

Robbins said BMHCS will remain sensitive to the concerns of the three state Baptist conventions affiliated with the health care system — Mississippi, Arkansas, and Tennessee — by taking such measures as turning down invitations to provide exhibits at health fairs and convention meetings at casinos.

Mississippi is currently the only state of the three that al-

lows casino gambling.

Arkansas voters recently turned down a proposal to open that state to casino gambling, and Tennesseans also have been successful in keeping casino gambling out of their state.

Robbins also pointed out the Grand Casino contract applies only to casino employees at an on-site clinic, with emphases on prevention and wellness, and does not involve services to casino patrons.

Paul G. Jones II, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention's Christian Action Commission (CAC), commended BMHCS for its years of Baptist service to the residents of the three-state area, but he questioned the propriety of the casino contract.

"The churches of the MBC have long appreciated the ministry and health services provided by BMHCS.

"The recent decision by BMHCS to enter into a contract (with) Grand Casino is both regrettable and offensive

to those who have long fought to keep gambling out of our state.

"We strongly disagree with a policy that places employees of BMHCS inside a facility whose product or service is in direct contradiction to historic Baptist positions on moral and ethical issues.

"We find it hard to understand how a contract with Grand Casino is being sensitive to the moral concerns of Baptists, or (how the contract) upholds Christian principles.

"We are deeply disappointed by this action and trust the churches of Mississippi will communicate their displeasure and disappointment," Jones said.

Baptists in DeSoto County, where the BMHCS branch hospital with the casino contract is located just north of Tunica County, were instrumental in defeating a November gambling referendum in their county for the third time since gambling was legalized by the Mississippi legislature. ■

Of SBC churches

BSSB survey profiles support staff

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — More than 800 responses to a survey by *Secretary FYI*, a quarterly publication of the Baptist Sunday School Board's pastor-staff leadership department, provides a profile of church support staff people in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Survey results, published in the newsletter's January-March 1997 issue, indicate 66 percent of respondents have a written job description, 52 percent have served their organization for more than five years, and only 37 percent have an annual performance review.

While 15 percent are required by the church to be a member of that church, 70 percent are members where they work, the survey indicates. People responding that their church employer requires they not be members of the church where they work totaled 11 percent.

Sixty-five percent of respondents are full-time employees, 33 percent are part-time, and 2 percent are volunteers.

Hourly wages ranged from \$3.50 to \$15.83, with the greatest percentage of respondents — 39 percent — earning between \$6 and \$7.99 hourly.

Paid vacation days ranged from zero for

11 percent of respondents to more than 15 days for 13 percent. Paid sick leave is provided to 78 percent.

No insurance benefits are provided 36 percent. Life insurance is provided to 13 percent, health insurance to 21 percent, disability insurance to 7.5 percent, workman's compensation insurance to 19 percent, and family health coverage to only 4 percent.

Only 18 percent of respondents indicated a full annuity benefit provided by their employer. Another 9 percent are offered matching funds for retirement. No retirement benefits are provided for 73 percent.

The highest percentage of respondents — 44 percent — indicated they are between 41 and 55 years of age.

The highest level of education completed among respondents — a master's degree — is held by 7 percent of support staff. A bachelor's degree is held by 9 percent, business school degree by 11 percent, an associate degree by 9 percent, some college courses by 32 percent, and high school by 32 percent.

The survey also covered other work issues, such as office equipment, computer software, professional development, and professional affiliations. ■ — Charles Willis

Christian country music winners have Tennessee ties

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Several winners of 1996 awards in the Christian Country Music Association have Tennessee Baptist ties.

The female vocalist of the year, Paula McCulloch, is a member of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, while Randy Fox of the vocal group of the year, the Fox Brothers,

is a member of First Church, Franklin.

Don Pardoe of Wilcox & Pardoe, named new artist of the year, is a member of First Church, Nashville.

Also, Seneca, winner of the vocal duo of the year, has worked in behalf of True Love Waits, the youth campaign for sexual abstinence before marriage launched by the Baptist Sunday School Board. ■

750 missionaries requested for 1997

By Mark Kelly
For Baptist Press

RICHMOND — The world's need for the Gospel has never been greater, and Southern Baptists have been given unprecedented opportunities to help bring it to Christ.

But if you want to play a part, you'll have to hurry.

"God is moving as never before to bring a lost world to Christ," said Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

"There are only a few nations left in the world still closed to the Gospel. I can count them on my hands," he said. "We may, in fact, be sending out the last generation of missionaries."

The FMB recently released a list of 750 new missionary requests for 1997 — 50 of which were labeled strategic priorities. The requests reflect needs among ethnic people groups that have never heard the Gospel as well as "harvest fields" where potential response is great.

In some places, like Mozambique or Cambodia or Mexico, response to the Gospel is limited only by the number of workers available. Among some peoples, Christian professionals can carry the good news of God's love where no one has ever heard it.

The opportunities to serve are many and varied, said Lloyd Atkinson, who directs the board's missionary selection department.

For more information about responding to needs for new missionaries, call (800) 999-3113, ext. 1635. ■

Things to forget, to look for, to know

Knowing the future doesn't make us inclined to have a mature faith.

Turning the page into a new year is always exciting, but sometimes it can be devastating if we have not measured up to expectations for the old year. Anyway, it's a clean slate.

One thing is certain, the Ten Commandments are more important than ten New Year's Resolutions.

Combined, the package can make a distinct and positive difference in anyone's life.

For example, why not give priority to those things which the Bible gives top priority?

Look at it this way:

1. Incorporate Matthew 5-7 into personal lifestyle.

2. Study (thoroughly) and comply with the teaching in *Experiencing God*.

3. Take time to read some good books — and make it a practice. Let God be your reviewer for selections. Read the *B&R* to know about Baptists everywhere.

4. Be brave enough to say, "I was wrong," when you know you were wrong.

5. Read the Bible through during the year — without haste. Take time to be holy, speak often with God.

6. Make friends with God's children; help those who are weak. Those with families, smother them with love. Make those without families your own. "Listen" to your tears of compassion.

7. Remember always that the Lamb was slain to bring us to salvation through his blood (Revelation 5).

8. Be like little children, open to the wooing of the Holy Spirit, and having the simple faith that only children have.

9. Put the interest of others before personal interests, inasmuch as Jesus Christ blesses those who give themselves in his name.

10. Spread the joy and love of Christ everywhere you go; there is enough gloom and despair to blot out the sun's brightest and warmest light.

In all of these, be eager to bear testimony of Christ's miracle in your heart.

Don't waste time. It is fleeting. It can never be brought back, or purchased. It is unavailable after the moment passes. Don't waste time.

Be faithful to God's body of people who are the local church. And honor the reality that it is his church, not yours or mine.

Make your own list of commandments and/or resolutions. The options are inexhaustible. There are hundreds and hundreds of verses and words in the Bible that can

make a substantial difference in the innermost heart.

There is nothing wrong about making personal resolutions as 1997 begins, but it is folly to write down a list with shallow intentions.

We encourage Tennessee Baptists to make strong, unapologetic, strong stands on moral and other family-related issues — locally, in state government, and in national affairs. Remove blindfolds and chains.

While we should not expect everyone (or anyone) to be perfect, or to subscribe to our personal moral values, our lifestyle should be so evident that Christ may

be revealed in us.

What can we do then, about moral decay of our neighborhoods, communities, state, nation?

We must remember that there are many good people in government and leadership. We should be as quick to give praise and thanks as criticism and rebuke.

Then, we can make plain our Christian views on moral issues. If the Christian voice can make a difference (and it can), the voice should be heard without apology, and with courage. Christians can be good citizens, with opportunity to influence decisions that benefit many, many people.

What to look for in 1997? Stay tuned to efforts to force the gambling issue. The *B&R* will provide reliable information on this and other moral issues.

The Tennessee legislature will be confronted with an all-out assault to change the state constitution so as to allow a state lottery.

There will be other issues such as possible decisions on homosexual "marriages," etc., as well as an effort to over-ride the bill that allows betting on simul-cast racing.

We hope to help readers steer clear of the smoke screens that always accompany the evils of gambling, lotteries, and other damaging actions.

What about 1997? Make your list of priorities. Be a plus in an era rife with minuses. Accept the direction God has planned for your life, live it with zest. *B&R*



By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor

Just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Leroy: "How many lawyer jokes are there?"

Lester: "I don't know. What do you think?"

Leroy: "Only three. All the others are true stories."

Take this truth

Lawyers, please don't write or call and accuse me of discrimination! This could be said in poking fun at other professions as well.

A profound truth is present here. We often use a joke to "get in a dig" at some group.

That, however, is a pretty sneaky way to do it. I hope I'm not doing the very thing I am condemning.

Memorize this Scripture

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." (Colossians 4: 6).

Pray this prayer

Lord, please help me to "be open and above board" in speaking to people or about people. Keep me from saying anything I am not willing to say publicly, without apology. Keep me tender and wise. ■

Looking at tomorrow from the backside of the moon

Jesus told the multitude there by Lake Geneserath, or the Sea of Galilee as the KJV translation says it, tomorrow has enough trouble of its own — without our adding to it.

And, my parents condensed the Lord's admonition to a priceless Southern homily that advises, "Never trouble trouble, until trouble troubles you."

Think about today, Jesus said, because you are living in it. The Father is not going to seek your counsel about tomorrow's weather or the ocean tides.

And, he said, that if the Father knows and cares about the smallest fallen sparrow, surely he knows my personal situation.

That should make me stand on the chair and shout, "Take charge, Lord. I am through with worrying, and studying decisions over which I have no control."

Enter 1997, the new year.

As I jot down memos for dates and events in 1997 (I started back in October), I find myself remembering Paul speaking:

one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

"When anyone is joined to Christ, he is a new being; the old has gone, the new has come." — 2 Corinthians 5:17.

What was that Jesus said about patches and old wine?

Putting patches of new cloth on an old piece of cloth will only shrink it and make a larger hole in the garment.

Pouring new wine in a used wineskin will cause the skin to burst and the wine will be lost and the wineskin ruined. That is his lesson of Matthew 5:16.

When Americans first orbited the moon, there was some real concern about the unknown.

The long adventure into space perhaps was made less intimidating because of excellent and intricate communications system with NASA's Space Control Center.

Astronauts could talk back and forth with the communications center almost at will.

When something troublesome was imminent, there was NASA to give advice, to comfort, to boost the positive factor.

But the "dark side" of the moon had never been seen by mankind. No one really knew what was in the "outback." They felt certain there would be a period of total communications blackout. That was, and is, scary.

The unknown, except for the loss of communication, was the same as the moon's visible side.

Good lesson. As we step into 1997, let us take a bold step, an adventurous leap, a step for spiritual awakening. Hey, I don't want my favorite old shirt to be patched with new cloth!

Give us a new and glorious beginning, Lord, as we march into 1997 with strong faith and enough excitement to keep on walking with you. ■



ALLEN

Choice or change comes with a new year

As we face the new year, 1997, it's good to think about what will govern the events that we will look back on at this time in 12 months.

Effects of chance occurrences and choices of others cannot be discounted, but we come to terms with our own destiny by our choices.

God said to Israel as they stood poised to possess the promised land, "Today I have set before you, blessing and cursing." The outcome was largely determined by their personal choices.

As we face the new year, with its potential for good and bad, we must acknowledge that the outcome will come mostly from our personal outlook.

Whether it is self-fulfilling prophecy by

families matter

— by Paul Barkley, counselor, professor

the psychologist or faith by the theologian, the reality is that the way we conceptualize situations has a great bearing on the way we experience them.

The biblical writer reminds us that "as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

In our day, many would like to elude responsibility by claiming that it is "not their fault." Coming from a dysfunctional family or the wrong side of the tracks is seen as rationale and explanation for the failure to make good choices.

Each one of us changes emotionally,

cognitively, socially, and physically. Today's choices will affect our ability to choose tomorrow.

Remember David as he lamented about his son, "Absalom, my son, would God that I had died instead of you." His choices with Bathsheba and earlier business matters molded the mind of young Absalom. He felt it was all right to go after what you wanted, with no concern for the outcome.

Let's remember that choices we make today will have an effect on the outcome of this new year.

Let us commit to make wise choices prayerfully as we enter the promised land of this new year with all its potential and promise. ■

FMB appoints missionaries with Tennessee ties

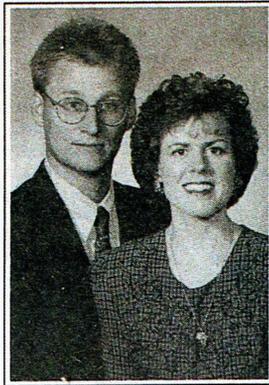
For Baptist and Reflector

RICHMOND — Two couples with Tennessee ties were among 51 people appointed by the Foreign Mission Board Dec. 8 during a service at First Church, Jackson. They join nearly 4,200 Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board workers sharing Christ in 127 countries among 336 ethnic people groups.

Tim and Julie Cline were appointed as missionaries in Senegal, where 92 percent of the population is Muslim. Baptist work in Senegal remains strong with new work among four unreached people groups as well as several ongoing human needs projects.

Cline will start and develop churches and together with his wife will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

The Clines, members of



THE CLINES

Rosemark Church, recently served in Senegal through the FMB's International Service Corps option — a four-to-24 month assignment to meet priority needs.

Cline, a native of Knoxville, cites Mount Pleasant Church,



THE GALLIONS

Andersonville, among those influential to his Christian growth. He is a graduate of Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis.

Mrs. Cline, is a native of

Nashville, but considers Portland her hometown. First Church, Portland, was influential to her Christian growth.

The Clines have one son, Timon Lloyd.

Carl and Cassie Gallion were appointed to serve in the Ukraine where he will work as pastor of the International Baptist Church in Kiev.

The Baptist Union in Ukraine, founded in 1992, has asked for missionaries to help in Sunday School training, church planting, and theological education.

Mrs. Gallion is a native of Spencer while her husband hails from Jenkins, Ky.

The Gallions have two grown children.

Both couples will go to Rockvale, Va., in January for an eight-week orientation before leaving for overseas. ■



TBC remodeling ...

— Continued from page 1

(8) For the second year in a row, Tennessee Baptists' Co-operative Program giving exceeded the budget. For the fiscal year 1995-96, which ended Oct. 31, Tennessee Baptists gave \$28,373,117, an increase of 5.5 percent over the previous year and 5.21 percent over budget needs.

(9) The Executive Board in May approved a feasibility study "respectively to acquisition of other property and replacing this property," referring to the Baptist Center in Brentwood.

(10) After 15 years Tennessee Baptists still have a strong partnership with Baptists in Michigan. More than 1,000 volunteers served in Michigan in 1995 and that many or more were expected in 1996, according to Terry Sharp, partnership missions specialist.

(11) The Conservative Baptist Alliance, a group from Chilhowee Association, was formed with intentions of garnering support to change TBC bylaws to give the convention president limited appointive powers. The bylaws amendment was defeated by TBC messengers.

(12) Henry Blackaby, a spiritual leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, motivated TBC messengers and others in attendance with a series of six devotional messages at the annual meeting. Concentrating on the convention theme "Tennessee Baptists Awake," Blackaby pointed messengers toward a fresh spiritual awakening in the churches.

(13) Retired West Tennessee director of missions Herbert Higdon was elected convention president by 47 votes over Jackson pastor Ronnie Wilburn.

(14) Retired TBC Executive Director Tom Madden was named to chair a \$30 million endowment drive for Tennessee Baptists' three schools of higher education — Belmont University, Carson-Newman College, and Union University. ■ — Compiled from 1996 news stories written by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor; Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor; and Connie Davis, assistant editor.

Relates his struggle with cancer

Former Nashville pastor shares with seminary grads

By Victor Lee
For Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Twenty-six years ago, Charles Page faced a life or death crisis as a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary when doctors gave him and his wife little hope for the survival of their newborn son, Robbie.

On Saturday, Dec. 14, Page returned to Southeastern, amid his own struggle against a rare form of bone cancer, to deliver the seminary's commencement address.

"For 57 years I had hair, but four months of chemotherapy and massive steroids pretty well took care of the hair," said Page, former pastor of First Church, Nashville, who is now at First Church, Charlotte, N.C.

But there was no somber mood about Page as he spoke to the near-capacity crowd in Southeastern's Binkley Chapel in Wake Forest. This, in fact, was a time of joy for Page and his wife, Sandra, as they celebrated their son's graduation; Robbie Page was one of 75 who received diplomas from Southeastern.

During his address, Page shared the lessons wrought from his fight against cancer which began in May.

"The main thing I've learned is that God is good and he never hurts us; he has a purpose in it all," Page said before the

ceremony. "I've seen a lot of that purpose fulfilled already. My desire is to share with the graduates what I've learned through this experience that I possibly should have been learning all along in a more in-depth way."

Page's decision to not wear a hairpiece since losing his hair in the aggressive cancer treatment has been consistent with his handling of the disease. He has hidden nothing and has taken very little time away from ministry. He held back nothing Dec. 14 in a frank, bold, touching 40-minute address that frequently left some members of the audience dabbing their eyes.

Page called his address a "confessional message." Titled "Why Wait for Crisis," it stressed four points: God's Word is truly precious; the Bible's promises are meant for me; the importance of friends; and God has a purpose in pain.

Page said since learning of his illness, the Word of God "is alive, as if on every page God has something special to say to me. ... Don't wait for crisis to drive you to the depths of the Word of God!"

He reminded the audience the Bible's promises are personal. "Those promises will not become powerful in your life until they become personal in your life," Page said. "Don't let crisis come before these promises get personal."

Page left Dec. 26 for Little Rock, Ark., home of one of two hospitals in the United

States specializing in his type of cancer. He will undergo high dosages of chemotherapy. Over the next few months, Page will have two bone marrow transplants.

"They feel that gives them a better chance of getting a long-term remission (of the cancer)," Page said before the ceremony. "At this point there is no cure, but of course we're trusting the Lord for that cure. They feel like if they can get a five- or six-year remission by that time they may have a cure."

Page said he gains his strength from God's faithfulness over the years. He returns often in his mind to his seminary days when he surrendered his sickly infant son, Robbie, to the Lord while pacing the floor in a hospital waiting room.

Robbie recounted, "If you really think about it, prayer is what my parents looked for to ask for my life, and that's what we've come to now, asking for God to be in control of my father's life."

Page assured everyone God is in control as he uses this pain to make a longtime pastor even wiser and better equipped to serve.

"I don't want to live to keep from dying — I'm long past that," Page said.

"I want to live because I think just now I probably can be what God wants me to be. Begin now learning the lessons he has for you; don't wait for a crisis to come." ■

Church members, other friends express appreciation to Bob Norman

FRANKLIN — Robert N. "Bob" Norman was honored by 400 church members and other friends Dec. 14 in a retirement banquet at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

Norman, who announced

his Dec. 31 retirement earlier last spring, has served Clearview Church as pastor for 11 years.

He and his wife Jean have been in Baptist ministry for 48 years. The Alabama native is a graduate of South-

western Seminary, and most recently served as pastor of Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, and Northway Church, Dallas.

They were honored by several speakers. The Normans will serve with Nairn Church

in Scotland for two months this spring.

They were given roundtrip airline tickets, a book of letters, a quilt made by church members, and an endowment fund. Speakers came from each church they served. ■



Partnership Missions Newsletter

Featuring news from Tennessee Baptists' three partnerships —
Canada, Poland, Michigan

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Phone (615) 371-2021; FAX (615) 371-2014

From the director

Carpe Diem! or "Seize the Day" is a popular phrase. The first time that I remember seeing it was when I walked into my daughter's room. This line was running on her computer screen.

The other place that I saw this phrase recently was in the book, entitled *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*. My daughter, as well as the author of the book, said that we must seize God-given opportunities.

Most of us are tired of feeling we are getting nowhere. We want the precious little time that we have to accomplish something. We want to believe that our efforts are really making a difference.

I believe that you feel the same way about volunteering your time. So why not volunteer for Partnership Missions where you know that you are making the most of your time?

We are now in three foreign partnerships and one stateside partnership.

We are asking each of our partners to seriously think strategically how they will use volunteers.

Baptists in each of these places are small in numbers. A group of volunteers from Tennessee is the difference between doing a Vacation Bible School, a survey, an evangelistic effort, or not doing anything at all.

The new year is here. Will you make plans to "Seize the Day" as a missions volunteer in 1997?

God Bless,

Revival workers sought

Poland

40 teams needed
May 18-28

Simultaneous revivals with a theme of "Here's Hope — Christ"

Simultaneous revivals offer hope for Poland

By Marcia Knox
TBC Partnership Missions Office

NASHVILLE — "An opportunity of a lifetime" will be given to those Tennessee volunteers who go to Poland May 18-28 to do simultaneous revivals, according to TBC Partnership Ministry specialist Terry Sharp.

The fields are ripe for harvest according to the statistics. "The number of evangelical Christians in Poland including Baptists are less than one percent of a population of 40 million," Sharp said. "Specifically, less than .015 percent of the total Polish population are evangelicals.

"The evangelical witness is limited in Poland because thousands of towns and villages have no evangelical presence in them at all."

According to Sharp, there is a desperate need for hope in Poland. By providing Tennessee volunteers to do simultaneous revivals in Poland, it's a perfect opportunity for Baptists to say "Jest Nadziesia — Chrystus" or "Here's Hope — Christ."

Hope is something the Polish people can use. Since the new Poland emerged out of a former communist regime, the country's future has been uncertain if measured by its economical situation, he added.

"Many in Poland are without hope, and Baptists will share their hope and that is Jesus," said Ryszard Gutkowski, general secretary to the Baptist Union of Poland. "My dream is for every Pole to have a chance to hear the

Gospel, and for those who know Christ, that their faith will grow."

"I have never seen revival," said Marek Glodek, committee chairman for the simultaneous revivals. "I've heard it mentioned in other countries, but I am waiting to see God's hand in Poland.

"I am expecting to see the power of God come across Poland and that God's going to do a great thing. The Baptist family is waiting and the world is waiting for such a family to walk together."

Sharp and TBC Ministries Coordinator Bill Wilson returned Nov. 23 from Poland to report that Polish Baptists have done outstanding planning for the revivals. Meeting with 52 Polish pastors and missionaries to pray and review plans, Sharp discovered that the revival is the first massive coordinated effort of Polish Baptist churches.

"Churches small and large now have the opportunity to be a part of something big and great," Marek said.

This month, Polish Baptists are holding regional area workshops based on *Experiencing God*. In February, counselor train-



PAUSING during planning meetings in Poland for the simultaneous revivals are Grzegorz Bednarczyk, left, president, Polish Baptist Union, and Terry Sharp of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

ing will be offered.

In March, those trained as counselors in the regional workshops will offer training in their local churches. Also in March, regional follow-up training in Bible study will be held.

In April, pre-evangelism meetings will be held across Poland. Evangelism rallies also will be held May 8-11 in Warsaw and Gdansk, led by Dr. Nilson Finini, president of the Baptist World Alliance. These rallies will be followed by the simultaneous revivals May 18-28.

In June following the revival, those who made decisions through the revivals will be contacted and invited to Bible studies.

The Polish Baptist Union has invited every Polish Baptist church to participate in the revivals which will involve 60 congregations. — See Simultaneous, page 7



Canada newsjournal reports on partnership

The following excerpts are from *The Baptist Horizon*, the *Canadian Southern Baptist newsjournal*.

Have Tennessee Southern Baptists lived up to their name, "The Volunteer State"?

Since a three-year-partnership between Tennessee Southern Baptists and Canadian Southern Baptists began in 1995, two groups of Tennessee volunteers have come to the Filipino Canadian Baptist Fellowship to help with Vacation Bible School, church camp, and other ministries.

Pastor Jesse Morales of the Filipino Fellowship said, "Yes, they have lived up to their name.

"Our church was revived by their coming," Morales said,

noting many church members were inspired and several non-Christians came to know the Lord.

Allen Schmidt, executive director-treasurer for Canadian Southern Baptists, says that the Tennessee/Canadian partnership has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on Canadian churches.

"We have become richer because of this partnership," he said. "Tennessee Southern Baptists have responded readily to requests from Canadian churches."

One of Canadian Southern Baptists' best friends in Tennessee is Terry Sharp, partnership missions specialist for

the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"The partnership with Canada has seen 534 volunteers participate since its beginning," said Sharp. "Our partnership with Canada has been a blessing to each who has participated."

Des Price, a deacon at Westlynn Church, North Vancouver, British Columbia, said of the members of two Tennessee teams which came to Westlynn, "They came to our homes and everyone thoroughly enjoyed them. They were a real inspiration to us."

A group of Tennesseans also came to Keystone Association

and helped with surveying, Vacation Bible Schools, and Kids' Bible Clubs in the Winnipeg area.

The variety of ways Tennessee Baptists have helped their partners is enormous, notes Bonnie Carlson, administrative secretary to the missions division of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists. They include revivals, Backyard Bible Clubs, painting, landscaping, music ministries, building churches, concerts, and prayer partners.

"Tennessee volunteers have helped churches from coast to coast," she said, "from Vancouver to Prince Edward Island." —Reprinted from *The Baptist Horizon*, October 1996, Volume 9, Number 9



Team works with only Baptist church on Prince Edward Island

By Joe Ledford
For "The Macedonian Call"

Going where few Southern Baptists have been, a TBC Partnership Missions team from the Watauga Association recently saw God work mightily through a new church on Canada's tiny Prince Edward Island.

The 15-person team was made up of volunteers from six churches in the northeast area of Tennessee who assisted Community Church on the Canadian island conduct Backyard Bible Clubs.

Community Church is the only Southern Baptist congregation on the one-million-acre Prince Edward Island. In three years, the church has quadrupled its attendance, constructed a building, and started something new on the island.

The island church was organized in 1993 with 20 members. In 1995, a new building was constructed in the center of a growing area of Charlottetown where many Tennessee Baptist Men teams worked. By the time the Watauga volunteers arrived, people in the neighborhoods were familiar with Tennessee accents.

On the island, churches typically conduct Sunday morning preaching services only. Community Church pastor Wallace Jordan and its members wanted to begin a Sunday School so they developed a strategy to locate prospects. This included a week of Backyard Bible

Clubs that would be followed by Vacation Bible School and then Sunday School would begin.

The Watauga team conducted five Backyard Bible Clubs in Charlottetown. The team was led by Rebecca Brumitt, director of Hale Community Ministries, a Watauga associational outreach ministry to families.

Other team members were: Millie Arnold and Melinda Heck, both of Roan Creek Church, Mountain City; Carolyn James, Union Church, Hampton; Jennifer Houghton, Unaka Church, Elizabethton; Shirley Greenwell, Jackie Davis, Brenda Snodgrass, Heather Hall, Zelma Campbell, and Elaine Bogart, all of Zion Church, Elizabethton; and Ted Lewis, Donna Lowry, Linda Ledford, and Joe Ledford, all of Lynn Valley Church, Elizabethton.

Accustomed to being in the majority denomination back home in Tennessee, the Watauga team learned how different things can be in another culture even in near-neighbor, English-speaking Canada. In fact, some residents of the island, which is predominately Anglican and Roman Catholic, viewed the Baptist volunteers suspiciously as a cult.

In neighborhoods around Community Church, team members met children



CHILDREN in Canada use their hand print to make a piece of art with the help of Jennifer Houghton, left, of the associational team.

and invited them to Backyard Bible Clubs. One volunteer carried a monkey puppet, named Fred, to attract children's attention.

After one negative response, Jordan explained to the volunteers that some islanders are leery of church groups because it is not common on the island. However, most parents welcomed the children's ministry.

In fact, one woman who was not a member of Community Church allowed a club to meet on her porch while she was on vacation. More than 60 children attended the Backyard Bible Clubs. The children learned that Jesus loved them and wanted them to have eternal life.

During the afternoons, the partner-

ship volunteers canvassed the neighborhoods, distributing Gospel tracts and brochures about Community Church. "More Than Gold" tracts, a guide to the Atlanta Olympic Games, were a key tool.

Many times the volunteers who knocked on doors were told by residents, "We have our own religion." Some suspicious residents were willing to receive the Olympic guide with its message about a gift that is more precious than gold.

The last day of the week, volunteers transported children to the church for a

dress rehearsal for the coming Vacation Bible School. Community Church members prepared lunch and greeted children, who became Vacation Bible School students the next week, and future Sunday School members. Also on that Friday, one of the older children prayed to receive Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

The Tennessee-Canada Partnership benefits the messengers well as those who hear the message. Watauga team members who began the trip as strangers, parted as close friends, assured that God had brought them together and sent them to Canada for His glory. ■ — Ledford is Elizabethton bureau chief for the Johnson City Press.

Tennesseans help Tennessee

By Terry Sharp
Partnership Missions Specialist

Tennessee's nickname is "The Volunteer State." For years we have lived up to our name as thousands of Tennessee Baptists have served in all parts of the world.

However, we have found that many of you have a desire not only to work in other countries and states, but also to work right here at home. In an effort, to meet those needs that exist here in Tennessee, we are trying to assist churches in locating volunteers as well as helping volunteers find a project.

Starting in February 1997, Partnership Missions will provide churches that need volunteers with a one-page form. With this form the churches can make known the needs that they have. This form will allow the church to indicate much needed information. Included will be: the date the project may be done, what type of work is needed, how many vol-

unteers it will take, as well as any other pertinent details.

Once the form is returned to our office, Partnership Missions will promote these projects in our newsletters, and make prospective volunteers aware of the needs.

Volunteers interested in participating in a Tennessee project can contact our office, or request a volunteer form. The form will allow them to indicate the type of project they are interested in doing, how many people they have on their team, when they can do a project, and other specific information.

Partnership Missions will then inform the interested volunteer of any available projects that would suit their particular interests.

Both the Church Needs Forms and the Volunteer Interest Forms will be available in February 1997. To obtain these forms, call the Partnership Missions Office at 1-800-558-2090. ■

Dear Terry Sharp,

During this Christmas season my heart is filled with gratitude for God's love, family, and friends.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Tennessee family and friends for your assistance in Michigan by filling many of our project requests during 1996.

Tennessee teams assisted us in the construction of buildings, with Vacation Bible School, survey revivals, starting new congregations, and many other ministry projects.

Our Start Something New goal was 496 for '96. Our total result was 501! Many from Tennessee assisted us in reaching this goal.

Michigan needs your help in 1997. Project requests for 1997 have been turned in and others will be forthcoming. I pray that you will consider the "Michigan Call" and make a trip north to assist us in 1997.

Wishing you a very, Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year!

Sincerely,
Billy Whitt, Missions Ministries Leader
Baptist State Convention of Michigan



Simultaneous revivals ...

— Continued from page 1
gations with about 4,000 members.

Sharp added that Polish Baptists have accepted the challenge of the revivals and have planned newspapers ads, banners, and television spots. They need assistance in the effort because most churches have an average of 40-50 members.

Sharp is recruiting 40 teams to hold the revivals. Teams will be made up of preachers, solists, and groups such as youth, musicians, and creative teams using drama, puppets, and clowns. Opportunities range from personal witnessing and street evangelism to school assembly programs.

A deadline of March 1 has been set by the Partnership Missions Office for volunteers to have their applications and deposits of \$300 to the convention office. The total cost of the trip per person including room and board is \$1,750. ■

1997 Volunteer Interest Form

If you are interested in participating in a partnership project for 1997, please complete this form and return it to our office: Tennessee Baptist Convention, Partnership Missions Department, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Church _____ Association _____

Please check ONE of the following areas where you could serve:

Canada Michigan Poland Costa Rica

Type of project you would like to be involved in _____

Date you would like to serve _____ Estimated number on team _____



History professor teaches, learns history in Poland

By Albert Wardin
For "The Macedonian Call"

While teaching Baptist history in September 1996 at the Polish Baptist Seminary at Radosc, Belmont University professor emeritus of History, Albert Wardin, learned about Polish Baptist churches and their theology from his students.

My Baptist history class at the Polish Baptist Seminary in Radosc had 21 students including three young women, a Pentecostal, and a Roman Catholic. They were a delight to teach.

A number of students were comparatively young converts. Some came from homes indifferent if not hostile to the Gospel or from a Roman Catholic background.

In the first lecture, I emphasized Baptist principles. One student asked, "How does one identify a regenerate believer?" A few days later I spoke in

chapel and gave a short exposition on the five characteristics of a genuine believer as found in I John.

Another student strongly pressed me on how one could justify Baptists fighting each other in our own Civil War. My teaching was not confined to controversial issues. I attempted to provide a sweeping survey of Baptists beginning with the Anabaptists to the present and show the missionary expansion of Baptists around the world.

Trying to make the class relevant, I provided the opportunity for an exchange on various issues in theology or church polity. One student wanted to know why we used individual communion cups in America and not the common cup. This led to why we used only grape juice and not wine.

We discussed or compared practices in respect to closed communion, the lack of discipline for church members, adult Sunday School classes, and the role of women in the church.

With the permission of the Polish seminary president, my wife Lucille spoke on women of the Bible in chapel.

The seminary at Radosc is developing a fine campus with financial assistance from Southern Baptists and is in its third year. Its energetic and personable president, Gustaw Cieslar, provides strong leadership and projects an inspiring vision for the school.

The Polish seminary is attracting a very active student body that includes members of a Catholic revival group that stresses regeneration. With instruction in the Polish language, there is not only the advantage of students being taught in their native language, but also less chance of students studying away from Poland.

The library of the seminary is growing, but it needs many more new books and periodicals, and help in cataloguing. My wife, Lucille and I brought 11 books with us. We cataloged about 150 German and Russian books, and about 150 English books. The seminary faces two great needs: qualified professors with adequate degrees, and scholarships for needy students.

Baptists in Poland are a small group with 3,500 members and a constituency of 7,000 in 60 churches and about 20 mission stations that spread across the nation. Baptists are very active and evangelistic in the country. They baptize one convert for every 13 members. Members are accepted with great care. Only teenagers and older persons

are baptized.

Partly for logistical reasons, a candidate must wait one to six months before baptism. The elders of the church and sometimes deacons lay hands on the newly baptized, or extend hands over them in recognition of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and also as a commission to serve.

Only immersed believers in fellowship with their church are allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper including immersed believers of other denominations. One receives the bread and cup by standing.

The churches expect members to follow a high moral code including abstinence from alcoholic beverages. A decade ago most Polish ministers were older men; today it is just the reverse with most pastors being young men.

Just before the second world war, the Baptist population in Poland had reached almost 16,000 members. With the transfer of populations, war losses, and shifting of the Polish borders, Baptists were left with only 1,500 members. They were submerged in an almost entirely Roman Catholic population, and ruled by a Communist regime.

Many of the church buildings that the German Baptists had built were lost to the Baptist cause. The buildings were either nationalized by the government or taken over by other religious groups for lack of a Baptist congregation. However, Polish Baptists did hold on to some of these properties.

In late 1994, the government finally returned the property of the First German Baptist Church of Lodz. In the church, the sanctuary had



POSING with the seminary students they became acquainted with are Lucille and Albert Wardin.

been transformed into a theater. An adjoining building of the church had been used as a community center. Its small congregation is facing the task of raising \$80,000 to attempt to renovate the complex which will include a magnificent auditorium when completed.

There are also many other needs in Poland for financial support for renovation or expansion. However, Polish Baptists do have some attractive buildings in several important centers such as Bialystok, Warsaw, and Katowice.

I also preached in the churches in Hajnovka and Lodz and spoke in First Church, Warsaw. Churches generally display in front of the sanctuary a Bible verse or phase such as "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." Due to Polish Catholic culture, the pulpit is generally off to the left or right with the Lord's Supper table in the center.

Singing in the churches is spirited. Their church music may include more contemporary songs if led by a member of the younger generation. At special services, sponsored by

the seminary at one church in Eastern Poland, songs were projected on the wall. The singing was accompanied by guitar, keyboard, and drums. However, these innovations are not always appreciated by the older generation.

Personal prayers, generally by women, are part of the services usually at its beginning or ending. Polish Baptists have Sunday Schools for children, but do not have classes for adults. Bible studies may meet in homes.

The offering is taken near the end of the service. Kostanty Wiazowski, my class interpreter and former president of the Baptist Student Union, said the offering is not considered an integral part of the service.

Youth camps and conferences are very important in the life of Polish churches. The seminary at Radosc also serves as a conference center.

In my last class with the students, I asked what message I should bring back to my church in America. My students said, "We send our greetings and thank you for the books. Pray for us. Pray for Poland. Pray for revival in Poland." ■



Partnership Prayer Requests

December - January

- 25 — Pray for Tennessee's Belmont University sports evangelism basketball team as it prepares to travel to Poland in February.
- 26 — Praise God that all churches in Canada's Quebec Association have pastors.
- 27 — Pray for George Bulson, director of missions, South Central and Southwestern associations in Michigan as he prepares to retire Dec. 31.
- 28 — Pray for wisdom and discernment as Polish Baptists prepare for work with Americans.
- 29 — Pray for Cityview Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Its members have begun buying a building.
- 30 — Pray for Gustaw Cieslar, rector of the Polish Baptist Seminary, Warsaw, who is recuperating from surgery on a broken ankle.
- 31 — Pray for missionaries Bill and Linda Egbert in Costa Rica. They need direction in choosing locations of Bible studies and a lay institute.
- 1 — Pray for four congregations in Michigan's Oakland Association which face many obstacles — White Lake Mission, North Farmington Hills Mission, Commerce Pines Mission, and Novi Mission.

Volunteer searches for Polish roots

By Albert Wardin
For "The Macedonian Call"

Belmont University professor emeritus of history Albert Wardin traveled to Poland to teach Baptist history, and rediscovered his German relative's Baptist legacy.

When I first met my class in Baptist history at the Polish Baptist Seminary in Radosc near Warsaw in September 1996, I told the class that in some respects I was returning home.

I pointed out to the class my Polish heritage since my great-great-uncle Gottfried Alf, founded Baptist work in Poland in 1858. He was the first German Baptist minister in the Russian empire. During his ministry which he conducted in both the Polish and German languages, the Russian authorities imprisoned him 30 times.

In one of my class lectures, I shared some of Alf's published letters which were translated into English for the Baptist public in Great Britain and America. Plans now are for his let-

ters to be translated into Polish and then published. His letters should help Polish Baptists recover their Baptist roots.

A group of us including Leszek Wakula, youth minister for Poland, and Kostanty Wiazowski, former president of the Polish Baptist Union and my class interpreter, went on a seven-hour trip to locate Alf's grave. Alf had died in 1898 near the small village of Mogilnica, east of Lublin.

Although we had a picture of the gravestone and found an old graveyard near the village, our search was in vain. The graveyard was neglected and completely covered with brush and trees with a few broken markers. We had prayer at the site remembering Alf's faithful ministry.

In my report to the class, I expressed my disappointment in not finding Alf's memorial stone, but I noted that Alf's work had produced "lively stones." His heritage is reflected today in Polish Baptist work and in the students of my class. ■



Partnership Missions Newsletter

Costa Rica Projects

Project #: CR711997801

Dates: Dec. 13-22
Location: San Jose
A team of 30 is needed to do evangelistic Christmas concerts in churches and public places. The target is young people.

Project #: CR71997802

Dates: Feb. 11-17
Location: Costa Rica
A team of eight is needed to provide a Centriurge-type camp for 20-30 youth.

Project #: CR71997804

Dates: March 21-30
Location: Costa Rica
A team of 14 is needed to provide a Centriurge-type experience for 75-100 adolescents and college-aged young people.

Project #: CR71997805

Dates: July 7-16
Location: San Jose
A team of 15 is needed to do repair work on a school and lead an evangelistic effort for children.

Project #: CR71997806

Dates: Feb. 15-22
Location: San Jose
Three teams of eight volunteers have been requested to repair three local schools and lead an evangelistic effort for children.

Project #: CR71997807

Dates: Aug. 1-10
Location: San Jose
A computer/network specialist is needed to examine all computer systems of the missionaries.

Project #: CR71997809

Dates: May 31 - June 8
Location: South Zone
Three doctors and two nurses are needed to work with a regional hospital for a week. The hospital serves 40,000 people.

Project #: CR71997811

Dates: May 17-24
Location: San Jose
A team of three is requested to join missionaries in a "prayer walk" through unevangelized areas.

Project #: CR71997812

Dates: Aug. 23-30
Location: San Jose
A team of three is requested to

join local missionaries in a "prayer walk" through unevangelized areas.

Project #: CR71997813

Dates: Sept. 20-27
Location: San Jose
A team of three is requested to join local missionaries in a "prayer walk" through unevangelized areas.

Project #: CR71997814

Dates: April 12 - 20
Location: San Jose
A team of six is needed to do door-to-door evangelism promoting church locations and the services available.

Project #: CR71997815

Dates: May 3 - 11
Location: South Zone
A team of 10 is needed to do construction for a public health clinic in a rural area.

Project #: CR71997817

Dates: April 12 - 20
Location: San Jose
A single female is requested to visit a WMU group for an Intercessory Prayer Ministry Conference.

Project #: CR71997818

Dates: Oct. 25 - Nov. 1
Location: San Jose
A team of 10 is requested to provide annual maintenance to a Baptist camp including painting, minor repairs, and landscaping.

Project #: CR71997819

Dates: June 18 - 24
Location: South Zone
A team of three is requested to do "prayer walks" to distribute tracts and witness.

Michigan Projects

Project #: B-1

Dates: Open
Location: Birch Run
The Bay Area Association needs five or more volunteers for Backyard Bible Clubs.

Project #: L-1

Dates: July
Location: Adrian
A team of eight is needed to do VBS and hold a revival.

Project #: M-1

Dates: June 15 - Aug. 15
Location: Roseville
Antioch Church needs two volun-

teers to lead a day camp.

Project #: M-2

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Clinton Township
Central Church needs construction help on a new sanctuary.

Project #: M-3

Dates: ASAP
Location: Port Huron
A volunteer is needed for church planting in evangelism, leadership development, and music. The term is one-two years.

Project #: O-1

Dates: July 21-25
Location: Madison Heights
A team of 14 is needed for VBS/BYBC and survey work.

Project #: O-2-7

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Michigan
The churches of Oakland Association need seven teams of 10-50 to start new churches with block parties, surveys, BYBC, and witnessing. This work includes drama, music, skits, games, and puppets.

Project #: O-8

Dates: Summer
Location: Pontiac
A team is requested to do VBS and some painting and minor repairs.

Project #: SC-1

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Kalamazoo
A team of 20 is needed for VBS or BYBC. Remodeling and light construction also can be done.

Project #: SC-2

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Portage
Volunteers needed for BYBC, VBS, and basic survey work.

Project #: UP-1

Dates: Summer
Location: St. Houghton
A team is needed to repair the roof of a church sanctuary by resurfacing it.

Canada Projects

Project #: CA-3

Dates: April 20-23
Location: Muskoday
An evangelistic preacher and music leader are needed for a revival.

Project #: FPIVS6601

Dates: Open

Location: Winnipeg
A team is needed to complete a survey in two areas to find opportunities to start a church.

Project #: FPIVS6600

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Winnipeg
The Keystone Association needs volunteers for the 1999 Pan American Games to be translators, evangelism teams, choirs, and booth workers.

Project #: PM11997603

Dates: Aug. 4-11
Location: Birch Hill
A team of 16 is needed for Backyard Bible Clubs and to pour a 250-foot-long concrete walk.

Project #: PM11997614

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Edmonton
A group is needed for VBS and BYBC.

Project #: PM11997619

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: North Kildonan
A team of volunteers is needed to start new church.

Project #: PM11997620

Dates: Open
Location: Calgary
A team of three - five is needed for a weekend children's festival. This work includes drama, skits, puppets, teaching, and preaching.

Project #: PM11997622

Dates: Open
Location: Vancouver
A congregation is needed to assist Gladstone Church in sponsoring a Mandarin-Taiwanese congregation.

Project #: PM11997632

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Prince Edward Island
Community Church requests a team to do surveys and evangelism in new residential areas.

Project #: PM11997633

Dates: Open
Location: Abbotsford/Chilliwack
The Capilano Association needs a church planting partner.

Project #: PM11997636

Dates: Open
Location: Surrey
A team is needed to plant a

church. They will lead BYBC for Vietnamese children and support the new congregation through prayer.

Project #: PM11997641

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Grand Prairie
A male volunteer is needed to act as camp pastor for a family camp. This is a wilderness camp serving 35-40 people.

Project #: PM11997642

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Grand Prairie
A team of three or more is needed to be camp pastor and counselors at a youth camp.

Project #: PM11997643

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Grand Prairie
A team of three is needed to lead VBS at New Life Chapel.

Project #: PM11997644

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Grand Prairie
A team of three males and three females is needed to be camp pastor and counselors for a children's rustic camp.

Project #: PM11997650

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Alberta
A team of 10-20 is needed to build a playing field with baseball backstop, soccer goal posts, and landscaping.

Project #: PM31997604

Dates: Aug. 4-11
Location: Birch Run
A team of 16 is needed to lead BYBC and to pour a concrete walk.

Project #: PM31997605

Dates: Open
Location: Prince Albert
Volunteers are needed to purchase and renovate a bus for a mobile chapel.

Poland Projects

Project #: 11997410

Date: June 28 - July 12
Location: Zyrardow
A team of three is needed to teach English as a second language to youth and children.

Project #: 11997412

Dates: Summer 1997
Location: Koszalin
A team of three - five males is needed to install replacement

windows in Koszalin Church.

Project #: 11997417

Dates: June 28 - July 13
Location: Bielsk
A team of five - six is needed to teach English as a second language. This work includes evangelism and outreach activities.



Project #: 11997421

Dates: June 2-9
Location: Bialystok
A team of six - eight is needed to play basketball, visit schools, play teams from Bialystok, and give testimonies.

Project #: 11997422

Dates: March 5
Location: Bialystok
A team is needed to present concerts of African American Spirituals and testimonies.

Project #: PC-8

Dates: Spring 1997
Location: Poznan
A team of four - six is needed for preaching, personal witnessing, and music evangelism in schools and public areas.

Project #: PS-3

Dates: June 7-20
Location: Warsaw
A team of 10 is needed to conduct a senior adult camp.

Project #: PS-4

Dates: March 8-16
Location: Warsaw
A team of 10 is needed to lead a business education seminar.

Project #: PS-9

Dates: July 20 - July 30
Location: Poland
A team of three is needed to teach English, music, Bible study, games, and crafts at an orphan's camp.

Project #: PS-10

Dates: Aug. 1-10
Location: Poland
A team of three is needed to teach English, music, Bible study, games and crafts at an orphan's camp.

Project #: PS-12

Dates: March 8-16
Location: Warsaw
A team of eight - 10 is needed for construction of a classroom.

Check online for info

The TBC Partnership Missions Office is now online with SBC Net through CompuServe. Access the SBC Net and then State Convention Forum. Go to Library Browse and then Tennessee. Under Partnership Missions, look for the updated "Macedonian Call."

Not only will the latest Volunteer Projects be filed, but also the most recent Prayer Requests from TBC Prayer Partners.

Send Prayer Requests online through CompuServe's e-mail to Marcia Knox, 104520,3323. ■

Michigan

Over 25 Sister Churches needed!

A great need exists for Tennessee Baptist churches to become involved in our Sister Church Program with Michigan. Over 25 churches in Michigan have requested a Tennessee church to join them in this pilot effort.

The Sister Church program is designed to bring together a church from each state. Through this association and the ongoing partnership, the churches are encouraged to support each other through prayer and frequent contact between the pastors. Both churches may choose to support each other through mission trip programs in their Sister Church such as revivals, VBS, BYBC, and survey work.

Won't you become involved in this program and become an encouragement to a Michigan church in 1997? Our Michigan partners are awaiting you!

If your church is interested in becoming a sister church, please send information to:

Partnership Missions
Attention: Christina Peters
P.O. Box 728
Brentwood, TN 37024

Or call at (615) 371-2021 or (800) 558-2090

Become a Prayer Partner

Will you commit to pray daily for our partnerships with Poland, Canada, and Michigan? As a Prayer Partner you will receive monthly prayer requests and a quarterly newsletter just for Prayer Partners. Please complete the form below and return it to the TBC Partnership Missions Office, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024, or FAX it to (615) 371-2014. ■



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Tennescene

deaths

■ **Boyd Loftis**, caretaker, Camp Cherokee, which is a part of McMinn-Meigs Association, died Dec. 2. He had served for about 23 years. Loftis was a member of First Church, Calhoun.

■ **Lorene Tilford**, 92, of Red Bank died Dec. 16 at a local nursing home. Tilford served as a missionary in China from 1936-51 and in Taiwan from 1951-73. In China she taught English at a girls' school, at the Baptist University of Shanghai in China, and at several public universities in Taiwan. When Japan bombed Shanghai in 1937, she was erroneously reported in the *Nashville Banner* as dead. Another unusual aspect of her missions work was during World War II when her voyage from the United States back to

China took one year. That trip involved travel around the horn of Africa and across the mountains of India. Tilford's last two years of missions service was under the communist government. She left just hours before China's borders were closed. She was a member of Red Bank Church, Red Bank. Tilford is survived by a sister, Katie Belle Powell of Rossville, Ga. Memorial contributions may be made to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions in care of the church at 4000 Dayton Boulevard, Chattanooga, Tenn. 37415.

leaders

■ **Rusty Wheelington** has been called as minister of youth, Raleigh Church, Memphis, effective Jan. 19.

■ **Broadway Church**, Knoxville, has called **Dudley Cockrum** as interim pastor.

■ **Dennis Robinson**, pastor, Tarklin Valley Church, Knoxville, has resigned.

■ **Short Creek Church**, Athens, has called **William Walker Jr.**, as interim pastor.

■ **Isoline Church**, Crossville, has called **Mike Moser** as minister of music.

associations

■ **Cumberland Plateau Association** will hold prayer rallies Jan. 13 and Feb. 10 at 7 p.m. in preparation for its simultaneous revival March 9-14. At this time 19 churches will participate.

■ **Indian Creek Association** will offer a Study on Mormons Jan. 6 at Grace Church, Collinwood. Bob Kinslow, interfaith witness specialist of Cheatham County, will speak. The meeting will include a meal beginning at 6 p.m. and the study at 7 p.m.

■ The seminary extension program of **McMinn-Meigs Association** will offer registration Jan. 21. Classes to be offered include Old Testament III and Biblical Backgrounds.

■ The Woman's Missionary Union of **Cumberland Plateau Association** prepared 100 gift bags for prisoners this year.

■ **Concord Association** will host a Legacy Builders Retreat Jan. 17-18 at Henry Horton State Park, Chapel Hill. Jim Burton, men's ministry director, Baptist Brotherhood Commission, will address the theme of "Men Building a



BURNING A NOTE representing the retirement of a debt by Cedar Grove Church, Lebanon, are leaders, from left, Derrell Reese, Eugene Graves, Johnny Crips, and Bill Enoch, pastor. The debt which was paid off was for paving the church's parking area.

Christian Legacy." Burton is author of Legacy Builders materials.

■ **Western Heights Baptist Center of Knox County Association** requests detergent, toilet tissue, paper towels, soap, shampoo, deodorant, and diapers for its ministries. Director Tom Everett reports that these items cannot be bought with food stamps.

churches

■ **Everett Hills Church**, Maryville, will offer a new

women's class entitled "The Disciplines of a Beautiful Woman." It will be held on Sunday evenings.

■ **Hampshire Church**, Hampshire, has installed a new sign, a steeple, and paid off the debt on its building in the past year. Additionally, the congregation recently began adding siding to the building.

■ **Black Oak Heights Church**, Knoxville, will host Anthony Burger in concert Jan. 5 at 7 p.m. For tickets, call the church at (423) 689-5397.



Tennessee samplers

Holidays in inner city

By Tom Everett, director
Western Heights Baptist Center, Knoxville

Mingled with the joy of the holiday season are some dismal memories. Earlier this week two young men were shot and killed in a party at a club. Both had been in and out of the Baptist Center when they were children, and one was a regular member of our Bible Club. His family had experienced the same terror two years ago when one of his older brothers was shot and killed.

On Thanksgiving Day an accused fifteen-year-old murderer out on bail was arrested in Western Heights when the police found a loaded shot gun and ski mask in the car in which he was riding. He managed bail for this charge but failed to show at his hearing — and he was discovered and arrested again in Western Heights this week.

He too had been in and out of the center as a child. These young lives have been wasted by drugs and the attendant violence.

These dismal conditions limit expect-

tations in the inner city. Still we experience surges of the Spirit. On Dec. 5 West Hills Church hosted children from Western Heights at an annual Christmas Party. As a result of the party, some of these and their parents learned the center is a caring place. And some children heard for the first time that Christmas celebrated the birth of Jesus.

This period of enchantment mingles with the dismal memories. We live daily with the tensions of this paradox. While we cannot forget the suffering and the wasted lives, we are grateful for these surges of the Spirit. ■

Direction for new year

By Ken Clayton, pastor
Tulip Grove Church, Hermitage

One of my favorite Scripture passages, especially thinking about the new year, is Philippians 3:13-14: "But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." I think this passage gives to us some practical suggestions about how to live in 1997.

► **Travel light.** Forget those hurts, failures, griefs, worries, and disappointments of the past.

► **Trust the Lord for the future.** We press on toward his goal for our lives.

► **Live in the present in his**

presence. In the present we are marching (pressing on) with the Lord Jesus Christ.

What kind of year will 1997 be for you? Only the Lord Jesus knows the answer to that question. But, there are questions only you can answer for yourself. Will I live this year by faith in the Lord Jesus? Will I accept the Lord's opportunities and challenges to serve him? Will I strive by faith to be all that Christ wants me to be?

1997 — a new opportunity to walk with the Lord. ■

A look at offerings

By Gary Coltharp, pastor
First Church, Jackson

What's wrong with this picture? According to a recent issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* (our Tennessee Baptist Convention's newspaper), Tennessee Baptists contributed a record \$28.4 million through the Cooperative Program during the 1995-96 fiscal year. Since 1925, the Cooperative Program has been the plan by which Southern Baptists have combined and distributed their money to support foreign, home, and state missions, six seminaries, and the work of both state and national conventions.

Our Tennessee Baptist Convention is made up of almost 3,000 local churches with a combined membership of more than 1.1 million. From those 3,000 churches came CP gifts totaling \$28.4 million.

Now look at the picture again.

Recently two men stepped into a boxing ring in Las Vegas to "slug it out" in pursuit of the WBA's heavyweight world championship. As you probably know, underdog Evander Holyfield won the fight in the 11th round. What you might not know is that Mike Tyson, the loser, collected \$30 million for the fight! That's right, \$30 million!

CP gifts for a whole year from all Tennessee Baptists — \$28.4 million.

"Winnings" for losing one prize fight — \$30 million.

This world's system is sold out to the pursuit of pleasure. That is nothing new. In such a world the values and priorities of Christ and his church seem out of place.

But the church knows something the world cannot comprehend. One day the books will be audited and accounts settled.

On that day, those individuals and churches which have not sold out to the world's system will hear the most wonderful greeting of all: "Well done, good and faithful servants; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your Lord." ■

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

Beginning the new year with Bible Study

Family Bible Lesson

John the Baptizer

Focal verses Mark 1:4-11, 14-15;
Luke 7: 18-23

The lesson begins a four-lesson study on persons in Jesus' ministry. John was to be the forerunner of Jesus. He preached repentance boldly, and offered baptism to those who repented.

The lesson's aim is to describe how John the Baptist prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus.

The lesson: Mark's Gospel begins with the "beginning." His account begins with the work of John, who fulfilled the promises of Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3.

Repentance was the focus of John's preaching. He called on people to turn from their sins and then, to begin to do what was right (Luke 3: 7-14). Though Judaism had a number of washings, John said they still needed to be baptized when they were converted.

Luke 1:80 tells us that John the Baptizer lived in the wilderness from an early age. He lived a simple, sacrificial life, reminding people of Elijah's lifestyle.

Malachi had promised that God would send Elijah the prophet (again) before the day of the Lord, and John was the fulfillment of that promise. John pointed people to Christ, taking allegiance from none of those who were persuaded by his preaching.

Jesus was baptized by John, and "a voice from heaven" acknowledged the Son's place with the Father. Then Mark says, Jesus was tempted by Satan and was ministered to by angels.

John was put into prison because of his strong moral messages, and Luke records how he sent two of his disciples to question Jesus as to whether he was "he that should come." Jesus was curing and healing people and gave that response to John's disciples. In other words, he was performing the kind of ministries predicted of the Servant by Isaiah, and to make salvation possible. Jesus commended John. Sadly, many of the religious leaders rejected what God was doing through John and Jesus.

How do we respond to God's messengers? ■

Life and Work Lesson

Christ, Lord of nature

Focal passage: Matthew 8:23-27; 4: 22-33

The central Bible truth for learning this week is that Jesus is the Lord of nature, and he calls his followers to faith instead of fear, even in the midst of natural disasters.

The key verse is Matthew 8:26.

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Explore the Bible Lesson

Kingdom attitudes

Focal passages: Matthew 18: 1-8; 21-22

The lesson: The verses for study in this lesson follows a pivotal time in the ministry of Christ. Matthew 16:21 marks a transition in his writing, for everything that follows leads us directly to Jerusalem, the cross, and the empty tomb.

Peter had affirmed that Jesus was the Messiah, but it is evident that he did not

grasp the entire impact of his words. When Jesus was telling the disciples about his impending death, they rejected that thought.

Peter was the spokesman. Jesus rebuked him, and ordered Satan to "get behind me." The disciples still did not want to hear about a Messiah who came to serve, suffer, and die. So Jesus had to continue teaching this truth to them.

Now, in Chapter 18, several of Jesus' teachings are recounted. He calls a child to himself, and reminds the disciples (and us) that "unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Each person must repent, and become humble like a child, embarking on a fresh journey. Being humble means we are not self-centered.

Receiving children means that we do not look down on the lowly, helpless, and powerless. Anyone that causes someone to stumble rejects them.

Jesus also says that we cannot blame others for our failures, and that we can blame only ourselves for our sins. He told them that the greatest in the kingdom of heaven has a humble dependence on God.

This chapter reminds us that a church should be consistent in responding to sinful behavior by a member. Testimony of other members should be heard.

Forgiveness also is stressed in this teaching. To Peter's question about forgiveness, Christ answered that seventy times seven times would be better than the seven times Peter suggested. In other words, there is no limit!

Jesus told the disciples that our forgiveness to others should be as limitless as the long-suffering of God toward us. God will not forgive us if we fail to forgive others.

Christ taught that greatness is signified by willingness to forgive, not by the power to punish. ■

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Worship Messiah

By Ron Galyon

Focal Passage — Matthew 2:1-11

One Sunday morning precisely at 11 a.m. the morning worship service began. The organ wailed and the people yawned. This Sunday morning tragedy struck. Old Brother So and So was sitting on the back row when he had a heart attack and died. The head usher wrote a note and went to the pastor who was sitting on the platform. The usher handed the note to the pastor. The note stated, "Brother So and So has died of a heart attack while sitting on the back row. What am I to do?"

The pastor leaned over to whisper to the usher, "Call the funeral home and have them come and get his body."

The usher called the funeral home and they came to get the body. In fact, they carried out the first five back rows before, they found anyone who was alive.

Is your church dead or alive when it comes to worship? Better yet, are you dead or alive when it comes to worship?

I believe there are five essential elements for a dynamic New Testament church: worship, discipleship, fellowship, missions or ministries, and evangelism. The element that must come first is worship.

Worship is to meet with God, experience God, and properly respond to God. If we have not met with God, not experienced God, and have not properly responded to God then we will be ineffective in the other four elements of a New Testament church. I believe God wants us to be dynamic in our worship. I believe God wants us to be energized through our worship. Let me share with you two principles concerning energizing your worship of Jesus.

Energize your worship by enjoying worship rather than enduring. We are created to worship God. The times in our lives we accomplish God's purpose will be the times of greatest fulfillment and joy. Therefore, the encounter of God in worship should be a time of great joy.

The joy of worship begins in developing a desire for worship. It is really a desire to be with Jesus. Psalm 42:1 states, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul after you, O God." The wise men had this desire because they traveled a great distance to worship Jesus.

Matthew 2:10 is a great verse for us concerning worship. Matthew states, "they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."

Does that phrase describe you at the beginning of worship? Are you rejoicing with great joy that the King of kings and Lord of lords wants to meet with you? When you realize that Jesus wants to be with you, it will energize your worship.

Energize your worship through experiencing rather than watching. Worship is about a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and not a show that is to be watched. The wise men came into the presence of Jesus and they personally experienced him.

Matthew 2:11 tells us, "they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshiped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Worship is about your encounter, your experience, and your response to Christ. When you experience Jesus, your worship will be energized. ■ — Ron Galyon is pastor of First Church, Pulaski.

Simeon and Anna

By Michael Smith

Focal Passage — Luke 2:22, 25-38

Luke's account of Simeon and Anna rounds out the story of Jesus' birth and infancy. The encounters suggest at least three teaching points.

First, Jesus is declared to be the expected Messiah by people who represent the best in traditional, first-century Jewish piety. Humble people who wait upon God, such as Anna and Simeon, can discern and affirm God's work in the world. Second, Jesus is the fulfillment of Israel's religion, the Messiah for all people, not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles. Third, Jesus will be a divisive Messiah. His work, words, and claims will require that one decide for or against him.

Presented in the Temple (vv. 22-24)

Mary and Joseph were pious people who observed the law of Moses. They obeyed the teaching of Leviticus 12, which required a woman be purified 33 days after childbirth. Normally, a lamb was offered, but if the couple were poor they might substitute two doves. Jesus' family chose the latter option, thus indicating their relative poverty.

Family Bible Lesson

The Encounter with Simeon (vv. 25-35)

Simeon was "just and devout," that is a person of genuine piety. Not only did he desire to live to see the coming of the Messiah, the Holy Spirit had assured him that such would be the case. Under the Holy Spirit's leadership, he came to the temple and found Jesus. Taking the baby in his arms, Simeon announced the fulfillment of his dream: to behold God's "salvation," the Messiah. Simeon declared Jesus to be light to the

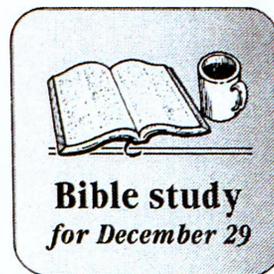
gentiles and the glory of Israel, thus underscoring that Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecy and Messiah to all people.

The old man then gave his blessing to Mary and Joseph. He warned Mary people would respond both positively and negatively to Jesus. As the Lord's mother, Mary would experience soul-deep pain as she watched her son die on the cross.

The Encounter with Anna (vv. 36-38)

Anna, like Simeon, was a model of piety. Luke identifies her as a "prophetess," that is as one who spoke words inspired by the Spirit of God. The aged widow frequented the temple. She practiced two traditional expressions of devotion to God: fasting and praying. Even as Simeon completed his blessing, Anna came to the holy family and confirmed his insight. She gave thanks to God for the coming of the Messiah. Afterwards, as she pursued his calling in the temple, Anna spoke to others of what she saw. Like the shepherds, this devout woman proclaimed the Good News.

Simeon and Anna's story suggests three questions for reflection. First, do we take seriously the role of traditional piety in preparing us to perceive and respond to God's work in our midst? Might we have undervalued prayer, fasting, meditation on the Scriptures, and the like? Second, are we prepared to respond to Jesus as wholeheartedly as Simeon and Anna? When he came into their lives, they accepted him and rejoiced. Do we do the same, or do we hesitate. If so, why? Third, are we prepared to suffer because we love Jesus? Mary chose to continue her course though warned it would break her heart? Would we make the same decision? ■ — Michael Smith is pastor of Second Church, Memphis.



A Glorious Revelation

By Thom Tapp

Focal Passage — Matthew 17:1-9

When I was ordained to the Gospel ministry, something very special occurred. I was instructed to kneel as members of the ordaining council laid their hands on me and shared words of encouragement. To those watching, it might have seemed like a mere tradition, but to me it had great impact. These men were praying for me. One of the last ordained men to lay his hands on me was my father-in-law. I was deeply moved and strengthened as he shared his words of support.

In that same sense, Jesus was strengthened in his mission by Moses and Elijah. Jesus was truly supported in the ministry he came to accomplish.

Jesus Predicts His Suffering, Death, and Resurrection (16:21)

Jesus announced to his disciples that he would suffer and die, but they didn't want to hear what he had to say. Peter was so moved that he rebuked Jesus for even mentioning it. What he didn't understand was that this was the mission Jesus had begun when he was born, and without its accomplishment, Peter, and the rest of us, would have no hope.

Jesus Calls His Disciples to Self-Denial (16:22-28)

Jesus then explained that his disciples must also be willing to suffer. Denying self is the negative side of

Explore the Bible Lesson

discipleship, while taking up one's cross is the positive. The idea isn't to find ways to suffer for the Lord, but to be willing to do whatever it takes to obey him.

Three Disciples Witness Jesus' Transfiguration (17:1-13)

About a week later, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up onto a high mountain where the "transfiguration" took place. Jesus' appearance changed. He was radiant! He was joined by Moses and Elijah. Moses was the one through whom God gave the law, and Elijah was Israel's first great prophet. As such the Father allowed them to minister to Jesus in a supportive way, preparing him for his great sacrifice. In verse five, again the Father affirms his Son. Then a command was given: "Listen to him."

The disciples were afraid at the sounding of God's voice and fell down in fear, but Jesus touched them, assuring them of his presence. In verse nine, the disciples were instructed not to tell anyone of this incident until after Jesus had risen from the dead.

Jesus Heals An Afflicted Boy (17:14-21)

This is an account of a heartbroken father seeking help for a son who has no hope. He had probably done everything for his son that was possi-

ble during his day, but to no avail. He asked Jesus' disciples to help but they could not. Then Jesus came. Mark 9:23-24 gives us more insight on

this incident. Jesus tells the father of the afflicted boy that he must have faith in him, to which he replies, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." None of us have perfect faith. There is an element of doubt in us no matter how faithful we are. Jesus doesn't demand perfection of us; he demands trust and obedience.

Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection (17:22-23)

Jesus was emphatic on the matter of his death and resurrection. He knew his disciples would endure hardship on his behalf and prepared them for what was to come.

Jesus Pays the Temple Tax (17:24-27)

Jesus provides for service. He teaches that we are to live in this world, but not be a part of the evil in the world. Jesus willingly paid the tribute, but asserted his authority to choose to do what was required of him by law. We are to follow his example.

Our family is the family of Christ. We will share his glorious revelation of himself with others as we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him. What a wonderful honor it is to follow the Master. ■ — Thom Tapp is pastor of Oral Church, Lenoir City.



world news

Billy Graham to use Internet for new believers

Baptist Press

MINNEAPOLIS — In addition to calling a telephone number shown on the TV screen, new believers also will be able to report their decisions for Christ after a Billy Graham telecast via a special Internet web site.

On Dec. 19, in most markets, Graham utilized a broadcast-specific Internet site for the first-ever, on-line follow-up for one of his syndicated specials, "A Joyful Christmas in a Fragile World."

Traditionally, Graham's crusade telecasts include a phone number which viewers can call for spiritual counseling, to report a commitment to Christ, or request follow-up materials. From now on, the



GRAHAM

Graham specials will incorporate a special Internet address — <http://www.billygraham.org>.

Using the Internet to expand Mr. Graham's ministry is a logical step in his progressive use of emerging technologies," said Stan Jackson, director of administration for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

The new web site opened Dec. 16 and will remain on-line for three weeks. In the future, specific follow-up materials will be provided at the same Internet address concurrent with each BGEA television outreach. ■

S.C. pastors join governor in flag plea

Baptist Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — As controversy swirled around the unfurled Confederate battle flag flying over the South Carolina statehouse, more than 100 ministers joined ranks Dec. 12 behind Gov. David Beasley's "desire to bring about racial reconciliation."

They met for a noon news conference at Trinity Cathedral, directly across the street from the capitol and in the shadow of a banner that has caused emotions to churn ever since Beasley proposed that it be removed from the dome to another site on the statehouse grounds.

"It is our desire," said a

statement released by the group of 127 ministers, "that divisions be lessened between the races of our state and between the sincerely held points of view regarding the place of this flag."

The statement, shaped in part by the governor's pastor, Dick Lincoln of Shandon Church, Columbia, said "while the flag holds a position of high honor in the minds of many South Carolinians, it is a source of anguish for many others."

Calling for the flag controversy to be approached by both sides as "first and foremost a spiritual matter," the statement asked for South Carolinians to put personal preferences aside and "ask God to guide us to a place of reconciliation and a future of togetherness." ■

U.S. evacuates Kurdish workers

Baptist Press

ANKARA, Turkey — The United States began evacuating Dec. 4 about 5,000 Kurdish relief workers and their families from northern Iraq — where their lives were at risk from Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

Among those rescued were 357 Kurds connected to an international relief agency through which Southern Baptists have aided the Kurds in northern Iraq since the end of the Persian Gulf War. ■

Five RTVC staffers opt for severance

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Five employees at the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission have taken

severance packages in anticipation of the merger of the RTVC, Brotherhood Commission, and Home Mission Board into the North American Mission Board.

Taking the action were three clerical workers and two printers, according to RTVC President Jack Johnson.

He emphasized the action was not the result of any outside pressure but a recognition by those employees that there would be a sizeable reduction in the number of employees in the merger. ■

Godsey book still an issue for Georgia Baptists

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — The Georgia Baptist Convention's executive committee will create two new committees after wrestling with their response to the controversy over Mercer President Kirby Godsey's new book.

Following an extended question-and-answer session with Godsey in which he was asked to clarify his theological views, the executive committee went into executive session and eventually passed a resolution that called for appointing a committee "to study the mission of the Georgia Baptist Convention in its relationship to Mercer University and to discern the university's role in the mission and values of the GBC." A second committee will specifically explore theological matters raised in Godsey's book, *When We Talk About God ... Let's Be Honest*.

Earlier in the month, Mercer trustees affirmed Godsey while also supporting the commitment to keeping Mercer a Baptist university. ■

Judge vows to keep praying in county courtroom

Baptist Press

GADSDEN, Ala. — Etowah County (Ala.) Circuit Judge Roy S. Moore has vowed to defy a Nov. 23 ruling prohibiting prayer in his courtroom, no matter what the circumstances.

In a nationally publicized case, Circuit Judge Charles Price upheld Moore's right to display the Ten Commandments in his Gadsden courtroom but banned prayers before jury summons in any Alabama courtroom. Price said courtroom prayers violated the First Amendment.

Moore, however, said he believes the ruling "warps" the U.S. Constitution. Although Moore was happy with the Ten Commandments decision, he believes the ban on prayer violates his right to acknowledge God.

"I will not take down the Ten Commandments, and I will not stop prayer," he declared in a press conference after the decision.

Although he is unsure what a contempt of court ruling will do to his future, Moore said he is more concerned about the Almighty Judge than Price. "It is my duty to acknowledge God."

Moore has consistently opened up jury selections with a prayer from visitors or clergy members. It may not be until Moore's next scheduled jury trial Feb. 24 that Price will have to act on Moore's vow not to stop prayer. ■



OOPS!

Did Christmas come too soon?

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Union offers seminary extension courses

For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Union University, in cooperation with local associations, will offer 10 seminary extension courses this winter in nine West Tennessee cities.

Regular university entrance requirements are waived for the courses, which are open to all individuals above 16 years of age. Course work leads toward a diploma in pastoral ministries or Christian leadership.

Up to eight credit hours from the seminary extension program may be transferred to Union for college credit. The classes should not be confused with Union's seminary studies program, a joint project with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Seminary studies credits may be applied directly toward a seminary degree rather than a diploma.

Courses, location, and dates of first meetings are as follows:

Ardmore Church, Memphis — "Formation for Ministry," Wrex Haut, Jan. 30, 7-9 p.m.

Beech River Center, Lexington — "Hebrews," Michael Moore, Jan. 7, 7-9 p.m.

Big Hatchie Center, Covington — "History of Christianity," Paul Moore, Feb. 17, 7-9 p.m.

BSU Center, Dyersburg State Community College — "Pastoral Care with the Terminally III" and "How to Understand the Bible," Charles Halliburton, Feb. 3, 5-7 p.m. (first one listed) and 7-9 p.m.

Gibson Center, Trenton — "Revelation," Wayne Perkins, Feb. 3, 7-9 p.m.

Hardeman Center, Bolivar — Contact the Hardeman Association office at (901) 658-9378 for details.

Shiloh Center, Adamsville — "Ephesians and Philippians," Jimmy Garrett, Feb. 13, 7-9 p.m.

Weakley Center, Dresden — "New Testament Theology," Richard Skidmore, Jan. 21, 7-9 p.m.

Western District Center, Paris — "Old Testament Survey, Part III," Bill Holbrook, Feb. 6, 7-9 p.m.

Tuition costs vary in each association. For more information, call John Adams, Union's vice president for campus ministry and church services at (901) 661-5160, or any local director of missions. ■