

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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

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Tennesseans hear revival reports, strategies

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — About 1,000 Tennessee Baptists gathered Jan. 20-21 to hear reports on how revival has broken out in churches and how they can seek revival for their churches. The gathering was the annual State Evangelism Conference, held for the first time in many years at an East Tennessee location — Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville.



AVANT

John Avant, pastor, New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga., told how revival broke out two years ago at Coggin Avenue Church, Brownwood, Texas, while he was serving as pastor. He said that instance and other outbreaks of revival across the nation and the world are a sign that the last spiritual revival or awakening is imminent.

In two messages, Avant spoke on revival. He noted that so many people in South Korea are going to prayer meetings at 6 a.m. each day that traffic jams are occurring. On college

campuses in the United States, students are leading revivals like the one that broke out recently at Charleston (S.C.) Southern University.

Avant said Baptists have opposed spiritual awakenings. One example of such opposition was the lack of support by Baptists for the "Jesus Movement" of the 1970s. Now Baptists have another chance, he added.

The church "cannot afford to just sit there passionless, powerless, and prayerless while the world is going to hell and our culture collapses," he said. "We've got to enter a different level of spiritual intensity in our churches."

Churches must confront their pride, stubbornness, and selfishness, he said. They try using entertainment to draw people. They sin through prejudices like racism. Baptists need to do more than "just invite black preachers to our conferences," he said.

What Baptists need is the Holy Spirit, which is gained through prayer, he continued.

"I don't think the Bible teaches that charismatics are the only ones who will be filled with the Holy Spirit. If we don't get filled with the Holy Spirit,



SEEKING OUT John Avant, left, pastor, New Hope Church, Fayetteville, Ga., after he spoke are Bill Oakley, evangelist of Dyer; and Bonnie and Keith Stapleton, pastor, Washington Pike Church, Knoxville.

we're going no where fast," declared Avant.

He encouraged Baptists to join in the spiritual awakening by working with other denominations.

Jack Smith of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga., spoke on the need for a total church life strategy, which is an emphasis of the HMB.

The church should be serving in the role of a mother who is birthing and nurturing new

children of God. And God, as the father, should serve as the head of the church and the source of its plans, said Smith.

But that's not happening, he said. Currently it takes 40 Southern Baptists one year to lead one person to baptism. And Southern Baptists will probably fail at their commitment to Bold Mission Thrust, a plan adopted about 20 years ago to share the Gospel with each person and to provide a church in everyone's — See Tennesseans, page 7

Association's disaster relief crew feeds twister victims

For *Baptist and Reflector*

MURFREESBORO — After eight twisters hit the middle Tennessee area last Friday, Concord Association's disaster relief crew fed about 900 hot meals to people in the hardest hit area of Rutherford County south of Murfreesboro. The twisters damaged or destroyed 240 homes and businesses.

About 30 volunteers served hot meals Saturday and Sunday from the association's missions/ministries trailer, reported Archie King, director, of Southeast Church, Murfreesboro. King reported that the ministry was appreciated because other relief groups were serving cold food.

On Saturday the volunteers served mostly relief workers, including those from non-

profit, governmental, and law enforcement entities. On Sunday, it seemed the word had spread about the ministry and people visited the trailer. Also, volunteers delivered some 200 meals. Several volunteers also got to witness during ministry, he added.

No churches were damaged, but the home of Joe Vinson, minister of youth, Southeast Church, was almost destroyed. **B&R**



STANDING on the front porch of his damaged home is Joe Vinson, center, minister of youth, Southeast Church, Murfreesboro, with Bob Davison, right, of the TBC, and Kevin Hale of Immanuel Church, Murfreesboro.



DISASTER RELIEF team leader Jack Smith, center, of Southeast Church, talks with a Salvation Army worker at the missions/ministries trailer.

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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Ministers, churches get advice for complying with IRS rules

By Debbie Moore
For Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — Most ministers and churches don't realize how perilously close they may be to a painful audit by the Internal Revenue Service, a CPA told students at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

But both the IRS and lawyers are looking at churches and seeing a gold mine because of their careless lack of compliance to rules and regulations, said Rex Frieze, former chief business and financial officer for First Church, Orlando, Fla., and now a tax law specialist and church management consultant based in Orlando.

Frieze was on the NOBTS main campus Jan. 10-11 and at the NOBTS North Georgia Campus Jan. 9 presenting a second annual continuing education conference on a topic that should be of extreme interest to all ministers and churches for up-to-date information, if not for sheer defense: income tax issues relevant to ministers.

In a day when lawyers think they can make some easy money by suing churches, church leaders must take the time to evaluate their areas of risk, Frieze said. "It used to be unheard of for a church to be sued," Frieze said. "Now lawyers see churches as easy targets with deep pockets."

But a sadder situation, he said, is that embezzlement of church funds is at an all-time high. "It is a fact that 15 per-

cent of churches have been, are being, or will be victims of embezzlement," he said. The number in actuality is higher, he said, because church embezzlement is so easy to cover up with the sloppy way some churches keep their records.

Sloppy bookkeeping is just one of the many reasons the IRS continually makes new rules impacting churches and ministers — rules they must be aware of.

One of those new rules came into effect August 1996 and must be addressed immediately by ministers and church staff members if they want to qualify for the clergy income non-taxable benefits which are available to them, such as housing allowance, insurance, annuity, and ministry-related expenses.

According to the IRS, a minister or any other church staff member — whether ordained, licensed or commissioned — should not prepare his or her own compensation and benefit package, Frieze said.

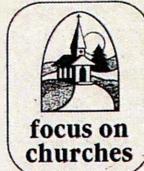
If the following three important steps do not take place, a minister or church staff member's entire compensation package could become taxable:

(1) The compensation and benefit package must be put together by a board or committee "composed entirely of individuals who are unrelated to and not subject to the control of the minister or church staff member."

(2) The board or committee

"shall obtain, review and rely upon objective 'comparability' information to substantiate their independent decisions regarding reasonable levels of compensation paid and benefits granted."

(3) The board or committee "shall adequately document the basis for all of its decisions and actions." That means no more little notes torn off the corner of a church bulletin or verbal OKs over the phone, Frieze said.



focus on churches

Besides legal and tax problems that may result from an improperly structured minister's compensation package, there are significant ethical problems, Frieze said, from "a misrepresentation to the congregation as to what the minister is truly receiving in the form of compensation" to church leaders and staff members being "viewed as unwise stewards of the tithes and offerings which have been entrusted to them."

Two "historical mind-sets" prevalent in church settings that must be changed, according to Frieze, are:

(1) the payment of a minister's compensation through a "package arrangement" and
(2) the payment of "expense allowances" to the minister for "ministry-related expenses" and "protection coverage reimbursements."

Frieze gave six guidelines for "the ideal minister tax reporting arrangement":

(1) Report as an employee for federal income tax purposes.

(2) Develop a church personnel budget which addresses separately each of the following three categories:

A. ministry-related expense reimbursements.

B. protection coverages.

C. personal (take-home) pay

(3) Operate under a church-approved "Accountable Expense Reimbursement Arrangement."

(4) Consistently review adequacy of insurance coverages and retirement contributions.

(5) Properly designate a housing or parsonage allowance through the church board before each new year begins.

(6) Consider voluntary withholding of federal income and self-employment taxes through the church.

To continue to handle church money "the same old way" simply because "that's just the way we've always done it" is setting up the church and minister for a disastrous situation, Frieze said.

"The church must be the pacesetter in demonstrating to its members and to a lost world the highest levels of integrity in organizing and operating its ministry affairs," Frieze said.

"As the Lord's people in the Lord's house, we should not be saying, 'All these rules are such a pain,'" he said.

Instead, "We should be taking pains to do what is right to protect the Lord's house and to be an excellent example, not because of possible punishments, but because of our testimony." ■

Partnership Prayer Requests

January-February

- 29 — Pray for Pastor Lewis Markwood and Cambrian Heights Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.
- 30 — Pray for Polish Baptist evangelism efforts in house-to-house video distribution of the "Jesus Film."
- 31 — Praise God for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan's recent men's retreat.
 - 1 — Pray for the Baltic Mission, which includes Poland missionaries, who will have a prayer retreat this month.
 - 2 — Praise God for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan's called meeting that was held Jan. 30 in Lansing.
 - 3 — Pray for Towers Church which invited Filipino Church, both of Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, to jointly use its church facilities. This move brings all three missions of Towers Church together in an effort to reach the city of Richmond.
 - 4 — Pray that God will provide financial resources to help underwrite the cost of the evangelistic campaign "Here's Hope — Christ" — to be held in Poland in May.

Staff reduction for NAMB to cost \$2.5 million

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Implementation Task Force has approved a staffing level for the new North American Mission Board of 350, according to a NAMB Transition News release. Severance costs for the staff reduction will be about \$2.5 million, ITF officials said.

NAMB, officially an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention following the June annual meeting in Dallas, is a merger of the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission. The merger is part of the SBC restructuring plan, "Covenant for a New Century," which reduces the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12.

The total of 350, ITF officials said, is "about 165 fewer employees" than the 500-plus positions at the HMB, Brotherhood, and RTVC.

David Hankins, vice president for convention policy for the SBC Executive Committee and chairman of the NAMB Communications Team, said the ITF will work with the nine-member NAMB Logistic Transition Team in affecting the reduction

in staff.

Earlier it was announced people eligible for severance benefits include employees at the three agencies who are: (1) notified that due to restructuring they will have no job available at their current location or (2) offered a job with NAMB at a lower pay level. Employees who will not have placement will be given four weeks' notice before their termination date.

Due to the continuing transition process, severance policies will be continued through Dec. 31, 1997, Hankins said.

Also, in a joint ITF-LTT meeting in December, it was emphasized that resources of NAMB which become available as the result of the merger of the three agencies will be directed to "front-line" mission work: missionaries and mission projects, rather than administration, according to the NAMB news bulletin.

ITF officials also announced a group will study the cooperative agreements used by the HMB and various Baptist state conventions. Cooperative agreements are documents which have guided HMB and the state in supporting missions work in the states. ■

Trademarks, national training top WMU board meeting

By Teresa Dickens
For Baptist Press

TALLADEGA, Ala. — The trademark of Southern Baptists' two national missions offerings, and recommendations related to the organization's vision statement, national training events, and a national project with Habitat for Humanity topped the January meeting of Woman's Missionary Union's executive board.

The board, meeting Jan. 11-15 at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly here, addressed a variety of business matters, along with hearing reports from the WMU staff and the presidents and selected staff from the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, and Brotherhood Commission. Each session of the meeting also featured the testimony of a foreign missionary.

WMU's plans to trademark the names, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, will be done in conjunction with the FMB and HMB. WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien said during the board's opening general session Jan. 11.

O'Brien noted the WMU executive board's original decision to apply for the trademarks of the offerings' names came in June 1995, when the board instructed her to approach the presidents of the

two mission boards about applying for joint trademarks of the names.

The board's 1995 action came in response to a flurry of activity earlier that year related to the FMB's application to trademark the name, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The trademark application caused extensive negative reaction in some Southern Baptist circles.

O'Brien said that since June 1995, she and other national WMU staff have worked to fulfill the board's directive. Although FMB President Jerry Rankin and HMB President Larry Lewis agreed to seek joint trademarks, WMU learned upon investigation that such trademarks were not legally possible.

The process that has evolved since then, she said, calls for WMU to hold the trademarks on the two offerings, while providing exclusive license agreements with the respective boards.

O'Brien said WMU and the FMB have finalized their agreement, but negotiations with the HMB are still under way. While not giving specific details, O'Brien said the agreements insure "WMU will do what we have always done" in

promoting the offerings.

In an interview with *The Alabama Baptist* newsjournal, Rankin described the agreement with WMU as "super." Noting he has "no question about the solid commitment of WMU in every level to the Foreign Mission Board," Rankin said, "WMU is registering it (the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering), but the agreement assures that it will be used exclusively by the Foreign Mission Board ... so it is a win-win situation. I think all of it reflects what our relationship is — probably stronger than ever."

The recommendations related to WMU's vision statement, national training events, and a Habitat for Humanity project came from the executive board's consultation committee. The committee, appointed in January 1996, serves in an advisory role to the WMU executive director and WMU national president on matters affecting WMU as a whole.

The first consultation committee, which will serve until June 1997, includes three state executive directors — Alberta Gilpin, Missouri; Beverly Miller, Alabama; and Betty Lynn Cadle, Minnesota-Wisconsin — and four executive board members — Ann Coffman, Florida; Donice Harrod,

North Carolina; Peggy Hicks, Kentucky; and Donna Brewer, Illinois.

The committee's recommendations, as approved, call for:

(1) revising WMU's vision statement to read: "Woman's Missionary Union challenges Christian believers to understand and be radically involved in the mission of God." The WMU vision statement previously read: "Woman's Missionary Union exists to enable churches and believers to participate in introducing all persons in the world to Jesus Christ."

The committee said its intention in revising the organization's vision statement was for clarification. "We believe that this vision statement makes our purpose clear and easily stated," said Wanda Lee, WMU national president, in presenting the committee's report.

(2) forming a task force of state and national staff to develop a three-year collaborative plan to include training, enrichment and missions involvement, and that beginning in 1998, WMU discontinue the present process of national training in alternating years at Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) (Conference Centers) and National Training Events.

Lee said this recommendation recognizes the reality that

week-long training events do not work anymore. With work and family demands, the majority of women will not take a week out of their lives to attend a training event. A more popular format for today's woman entails three to four-day events, she said.

The task force will be appointed by Lee and begin work immediately with the task of announcing training plans for 1998 within a few months.

(3) investigating the feasibility of a nationally coordinated project in partnership with Habitat for Humanity that includes ministry and witnessing projects and, if feasible, setting a launch date of 1999.

Like national training, this recommendation is in keeping with societal trends, Lee said. "Adults today like hands-on projects," she said. "A construction project with Habitat for Humanity would allow WMU to offer a hands-on approach to missions involvement and to fulfill our desire to help women in poverty."

In other business, the WMU executive board, approved the elements of "Project HELP: Violence," WMU's 1998-99 social issue, expanding the Project HELP emphasis to a two-year project beginning with Project HELP: Violence, changing its dates to 1998-2000, and approved the redesign of the Acteens Individual Achievement Plan. ■



O'BRIEN



WMU

Take responsibility for others, Clinton says at second inaugural

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton, the first Southern Baptist sworn in for a second full term in the White House, called on Americans to accept personal responsibility not only for themselves and their families but "for our neighbors and our nation" as the country nears a new century. The president also called for an end to racial and political strife in a "land of new promise."

Speaking at his inauguration Jan. 20, Clinton said the country needs "a new sense of responsibility for a new century."

"Our greatest responsibility is to embrace a new spirit of community for a new century," he said in his 25-minute address. "For any one of us to succeed, we must succeed as one America."

"The challenge of our past remains the challenge of our future. Will we be one nation, one people, with one common

destiny or not? Will we come together or come apart?"

Sixteen years after President Ronald Reagan declared in his first inaugural speech government is the problem, not the solution, Clinton said, "Government is not the problem, and government is not the solution. We — the American people — we are the solution."

"We need a new government for a new century — humble enough not to try to solve all our problems for us, but strong enough to give us the tools to solve our problems for ourselves; a government that is smaller, lives within its means, and does more with less."

Noting racial division "has been America's constant curse," Clinton pledged to seek to fulfill the dream of equality expressed by slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. The inauguration was held on the holiday commemorating King's birth. ■

Of three merged agencies

NAMB publication to replace magazines

By Herb Hollinger
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — *MissionsUSA*, the "flagship" magazine of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, as well as signature magazines of the Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission, will be replaced in September by a new North American Mission Board publication.

According to a mid-January NAMB Transition News bulletin, the three publications — *MissionsUSA* (HMB), *Missions Today* (Brotherhood), and *Beam* (RTVC) — will cease publication mid-1997.

MissionsUSA, named in 1984, has a circulation of 90,000. It became a monthly in 1938 under the name, *Southern Baptist Home Missions*. Its current editor is Wayne Grinstead.

Missions Today, edited by Bob Carey, is a monthly magazine that is distributed quarterly to churches. It has a circulation of 35,000.

Beam, edited by C.C. Risenhoover, is a quarterly publication with a circulation of 65,000.

NAMB will be the new Southern Baptist Convention agency created by the merger of the HMB, Brotherhood Commission, and RTVC under the SBC-wide restructuring approved by messengers to the SBC annual meetings in 1995 and 1996. NAMB will become a reality following the June SBC annual meeting in Dallas at the same time the three agencies cease to exist.

According to the Jan. 16 NAMB bulletin, published by the NAMB Transitions Communications Team, a team of employees from the HMB, Brotherhood, and RTVC will be named to design the new publication, as yet unnamed. A feasibility study also will be conducted about producing a NAMB video magazine, the bulletin said.

Also, approval was given the NAMB Logistics Transition Team to pursue production of a

single NAMB products/resources catalog by June 1997, "and to utilize all resources, including Sunday School Board to enhance cost effectiveness of production and distribution."

Work is continuing on a logo design for the new missions agency, under the leadership of HMB administrator Richard Harris. The NAMB bulletin said 22 designs are being reviewed.

In other NAMB-related news, the Implementation Task Force, a group created by the SBC Executive Committee to assist in the transition of the denomination's restructuring, has approved a cafeteria plan of benefits options within the "current per employee benefits costs." Selected employees from the three agencies will give input regarding preferences for benefits options, an ITF spokesman said.

The merger of the three agencies will reduce the number of employees from more than 500 to about 350, according to the ITF. ■

In Challenge to Build program

Highland Park meets, exceeds goal

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

COLUMBIA — When members of Highland Park went to church Jan. 19 they took with them a special offering to pay off a commitment they had made three years ago when they began a Challenge to Build program to renovate their fellowship hall and kitchen.

It turned out the church didn't need the special offering after all, but members gave it anyway.

During the week before money flowed into the office that enabled the church to reach the \$250,000 Hallelujah Goal they had made in 1993, said Pastor Trevis Otey Jr. The church, in turn, paid off the note on its fellowship hall improvements before the scheduled "celebration" Sunday.

The special offering Jan. 19 brought in more than \$3,000 which will be used as "a seedbed" for the next phase of the church's building program, Otey said.

The three-year Challenge to



STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS watch as Pastor Trevis Otey and Ann Starr, chairperson of the Steering Committee, front center, burn a note on renovations to the church's fellowship hall. From left are Nora Gibson, Jimmy Fogg, Gilbert Westberry, Harold Dillon, Jean Hughes, Jane Hughes, and Herman Lewis.

Build program, had a very positive impact on the Highland Park congregation, Otey observed.

"It allowed them to see we could do something and do it well."

Highland Park normally has an average attendance of

about 200 on Sunday mornings, Otey said.

Challenge to Build, which was led by Archer Thorpe, a church ministry specialist with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, also impacted the church spiritually, the pastor said. "Our people prayed about what the

Lord would have them do and really made some sacrifices."

Ann Starr, who served as chairperson of the Challenge to Build program at Highland Park, said the "past three years have been the most rewarding experience of my life and has enriched by life and faith."



Tennessee features

Starr admitted her faith was weak when they took on the challenge three years ago, but her enthusiasm and faith increased as the days passed.

Starr thanked the steering committee and all those who gave sacrificially, but she gave God all the credit.

Noting the church had the theme "not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice," Starr observed, "Little is much when God is in it, and he blessed our efforts."

The building project allowed the church to have a fellowship hall that would seat 200 people, provided three additional classrooms for Sunday School, and updated the kitchen facilities.

What's more, Otey said, Challenge to Build did not negatively impact the church's regular budget. "We ended up better financially this past year than we have in a number of years," he observed. ■

Tennessee Baptist layman's book relays favorite Bible verses

By Karen L. Willoughby
For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — What's your favorite Bible verse?

When people from all walks of life were asked that question, they often cited passages tied to God's intervention at pivotal moments in their lives.

Art Toalston, editor of Baptist Press, relays their experiences in a new book, *Lamp Unto My Feet, 365 Christian Leaders Share the Scriptures That Have Guided Their Lives*. Baptist Press is the news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Toalston has been its editor the past five years. He is a member of First Church, Nashville.

Toalston developed the book, a 1997 HarperCollins release, by asking Christians he learned about through magazines, newspapers, TV, and radio to share a few words about their favorite Bible passages.

He was amazed at the testimonies he received of personal encounters with God through the Bible from people in government, sports, entertainment and the arts, science, and education.

"The book is somewhat of a talk show — in printed form — about what Scripture means to people," Toalston said. "People don't have to be ordained ministers to have something truly significant to say about Christianity — in this case, about the Scriptures that carry them through the day, remind them of the grandeur of God, lift them out of depression, steer them away from futile anger and motivate them to care for

others who are hurting."

Lamp Unto My Feet includes three key human interest elements — the Bible, notable people, and human experience, Toalston said. Beyond being a book for quiet contemplation, he said he hopes it can serve as a tool for Christians in their witness to loved ones and friends searching for meaning in life, and for ministers in their sermons and church lay leaders in Sunday School lessons, Bible studies, or devotionals.

The Scripture reflections in the book — encompassing 263 different passages, from Gen. 1:1-3 to Rev. 3:20 — give witness to Christianity's supernatural and down-to-earth dimensions, Toalston noted.

"The Christian faith at its core is supernatural," he said. "A supernatural God supernaturally sends his Son who lives out his days on earth in often supernatural fashion, is put to death, then supernaturally returns to life and, now, he supernaturally works in his followers' lives through his Holy Spirit.

"Yet in this supernatural faith, there's a down-to-earth reality," Toalston continued. "Millions of people have experienced it to be the best foundation for life. They have found in it joy and a transforming power to live better emotionally and to live ethically in their families, in the marketplace and in their communities. They have found an

inner peace with God and a trust in his eternal care for their souls."

Among the 365 people who speak in *Lamp Unto My Feet* are music's Johnny Cash, Barbara Mandrell and Marilyn McCoo; former President Jimmy Carter and Surgeon General C. Everett Koop; Focus on the Family founder James Dobson; Nobel Prize winner in physics Arthur Schawlow; Holocaust survivor Rose Price; Joni Eareckson Tada; former Miss Americas Heather Whitestone and Cheryl Salem; TV's Willard Scott and "Mister Rogers," Fred Rogers; baseball's Dave Dravecky and Bobby Richardson; astronaut Shannon Lucid, whose 188 days in space are women's and American records; governors George Voinovich of Ohio and David Beasley of South Carolina; cosmetics exec Mary Kay Ash; and aerobics pioneer Kenneth Cooper.

The Bible verse selected most frequently in *Lamp Unto My Feet* was Proverbs 3:5-6, which in the King James Version reads, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Among the 17 people who chose it were actor Clifton Davis, tennis hall of fame Stan Smith, former HUD Secretary Jack Kemp, and Oklahoma City's police chief, Sam Gonzales.

Philippians 4:13 — "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" — was selected by 12 people, including former Dallas Cowboys coach Tom Landry; Florida State coach Bobby Bowden and his son, Auburn coach Ter-

ry Bowden; TV's Deborah Norville; and tennis great Margaret Court.

Evangelist Billy Graham, Cowboy legend Roy Rogers, and eight others chose John 3:16 — "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Southern Baptists in the book include Carter; Whitestone; Beasley; Ash; Cooper; Bowden; Graham; missionary Rebekah Naylor of India; emeritus missionaries Nancie Wingo and the late Robert L. Lindsey; former missionaries George Senter and Frankee Hellingner; Wingo's brother, Hal, of *People* magazine; Richard Ross of the True Love Waits teen campaign for sexual abstinence initiated by the Baptist Sunday School Board; evangelist Rick Stanley; Alaska Iditarod competitor Dee Dee Jonrowe; comedian Jerry Clower; Feed the Children's Larry Jones; Larry Burkett of Christian Financial Concepts; Chic-fil-A founder Truett Cathy; and Mars Hill College President Max Lennon.

Ross, a Tennessee Baptist at Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, cited III John 4 as his favorite: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth" (NIV). "Certainly this verse is important to me as I observe my only son, Clayton. Even at age 5, he brings me joy as he chooses actions that honor God. This verse also sums up my relationship with teenagers, which now stretches over 25 years. ..." ■



TOALSTON

Dare to be different — be positive

Demonstrating loyalty to Christ does not mean that Christians have to be wrapped in a tight-fitting package of negativism.

The truth is, many Christians may think that following Christ in obedience means they have to be governed by the negatives of life.

Sometimes we had rather be *against* something than to be *for* something else.

The world, and certainly the Southern Baptist denomination, would be more healthy spiritually and mentally if we "accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on the affirmative, and don't mess with Mr. In Between." Remember that popular song from long ago?

The world desperately needs people with positive attitudes. The world needs people who accept blame for their wrong actions, and who try to do better. Though Christ taught some "you shall nots," his Gospel is positive.

We do not need television or radio talk show hosts who get a lift from bashing national leaders and families, and other celebrities. Ordinary citizens who try to emulate the masters of negativism are not examples of who Christ taught us to be and how to act. Tune them out, turn them off!

The world does not need people whose single goal in life seems to be the destruction of someone else's character or reputation. What happened to Jesus' directives to go the second mile, and to give up your coat to do good to our brothers and sisters?

One of our nation's greatest problems is that too

many of us are swimming in a sea of negativism, and are caught up in the hopeless avocation of demeaning someone else.

It has become quite ordinary to laugh at the mistakes of other people, to tell jokes about the misfortune of others.

Perhaps the most severe wrong we do to our country, our denomination, or our church, is to belittle every action and plan that is different from our own.

So what happened to all the good qualities of the United States of America? Have we forgotten the good in Southern Baptist life, past and present? Is the local church a total flop?

The bosses of negativism would have us believe that our national government never does anything right, never has a pure thought, that Christians are sissies and witless dogooders, that the local church is satisfied with playing games and listening to warmed-over sermons.

But — the government *is* us, the SBC *is* us, the TBC *is* us, and the local church *is* us. Seems that "they" and "we" are the same people. Let's turn away from the dark game of negativism.

Search for the good things, the things that enable people to have a quality life. Remember the good advice to "don't curse the darkness, light a candle."

We can all light candles to reveal to others what's good and right in Tennessee Baptist life, in our churches, in our families, in our nation.

Remember also that we live in a great land, free, beautiful, and full of opportunity. We are not limited by our social and cultural status, only by our spiritual

poverty and lack of spunk.

Tennessee is truly a land of opportunity, despite the resistance of the naysayers. Pay no attention to those who squander their God-given time by constantly griping.

Baptists have opened many doors for people with little opportunity. There are more doors to be opened, and we can, with God's leading do it yet. For example:

1. Be thankful for your church — and for your pastor. Be a positive force with plenty of affirmation for others and constant prayer for God's leadership among you.

2. Volunteer to serve as a hospital visitor, reach out to strangers, help with neighborhood needs such as Meals on Wheels.

3. Be kind to street people, bring them in from the wind and weather, offer them a Christian witness.

4. Pray for your pastor, your family, your neighbors, your legislators, your national leaders — including President Clinton and his associates.

5. Promise God you'll be his helper in a spiritually-starved world.

6. Drown out the scornful, the negative naysayers, with your own positive words of praise for a Christ that is Lord of all, the love he has planted in our hearts, for life in the greatest nation on earth. The world is waiting for the Son. Our responsibility is to be our best. **B&R**



By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor

Just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

First doctor, looking at a flat tire on the car while on a trip with three colleagues: "I think it's flat."

Second doctor: "It sure looks flat."

Third doctor: "It feels like a flat."

Fourth doctor: "Don't you agree we'd better run some tests to be certain?"

Take this truth

To be sure, tests are wonderful. We have come a long way in diagnosis.

Group decisions are excellent and often needed. On the other hand, sometimes the problem is evident without expensive research.

Sometimes we go overboard and suffer the paralysis of analysis.

Solve the pressing problem first. This applies in all areas of life.

Memorize this Scripture

Test everything. Hold on to the good. — I Thessalonians 5:21.

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to take advantage of every opportunity I have to gain more knowledge. Keep me, however, from getting bogged down with needless detail. ■

Rounding up top recruits for the 'gridiron in the sky'

Wintertime is tough on those most avid college football fans. There are no games from "bowl days" until autumn, and no action at all except for spring days of practice.

If you can't switch your interest from football to basketball, baseball, soccer — or another sport, then you are reduced to speculating on recruiting progress.

Recruiting, to me as a teenager and even later, was a military term.

The armed forces had those recruiters beating the bushes for robust young Americans. They still do that, trying to get the best candidates to "sign up" for a military stint.

Later I learned that colleges also do their share of bush beating. You want the best for your team, and you certainly don't want anyone else to have the best.

So in these short, cold, sometimes nasty days of winter, avid sports fan can't wait for those high school recruits to sign on.

And they suffer in agony when one can't pass the qualifying tests or signs

one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

with another college.

If you listen to the sports talk shows on radio, you quickly learn about the eagerness, the insatiable curiosity of the fans who desperately long for September.

They have their lists of prospects, and they call the talk show to determine whether the best ones have signed up.

They even want to know if the prospect is leaning toward the college, or if he has visited other campuses. It's almost as if they were making the team lineup for the season's opener.

Football seems to attract the greatest interest in the recruiting process, but other sports aren't completely ignored.

I wonder if Christians and particularly Baptists, could whip up that kind of frenzy toward winning the lost, "signing up"

the unchurched.

We could keep our little notebooks on prospects, and could periodically check with the pastor to see if a candidate is "leaning" toward the Lord.

"Alumni" and/or friends could work together, talking with prospects, you know, that the pastor would assign. Or we could buy lists from the experts to determine the best prospects.

We could develop that sense of intense loyalty, wanting our team to be the best, to be undefeated, to play in a bowl game. And if the pastor didn't take us all the way to the Promised Land, why, we could just fire him.

This is not a put-down on those folks who keep up with college sports recruiting. That's okay; it's exciting.

But sometimes I would like to see Christians, churches, have the same intense loyalty to the Way, and be as fervent in recruiting. There is a very long list. ■



ALLEN

Good decisions help to resolve problems

Question from parents: Our teenage daughter is pregnant and unmarried. From a legal perspective, what are her options and what have been your experiences with each?

It is encouraging that you choose to help your daughter. Continue to demonstrate Christian love and support even though you have made it clear you do not approve of the choices she has made so far.

Her options: abortion, place the child for adoption, raise the child herself, marry the baby's father.

I do not advise abortion. Abortion is a grave offense against God's law, with inescapable consequences. The person may

families matter

— by Ivy Scarborough, attorney, mediator

be emotionally scarred and hardened.

These options were faced by a 17-year-old who once came with her mother to see me. She was energetic, a high-school junior who discovered she was pregnant by her boyfriend. She realized she could not hide her condition, and eventually would have to forego many of her dreams.

But she remembered what she had learned from the Bible. She did not consider abortion. She sought help. She delivered a healthy baby who was adopted by a childless couple nearby. She finished high school and married someone else.

A lawyer often sees the harsh realities of people's lives. It was encouraging to see this young woman act unselfishly and courageously. Once, marriage was the expected remedy for this predicament. Such weddings have a high failure rate. More problems can result.

Two wrongs do not make one right. It would be preferable if the couple unselfishly committed themselves in marriage. It's best for the child for the home to be founded on commitment and true love.

To be considered: Christian commitment, stable relationship, God's guidance, pressure of circumstance, prayer for God's direction. Don't assume there is only one answer to every such dilemma. ■



ENJOYING fellowship with friends are, from left, Mary Ellen Burr, West Hills Church, Knoxville; Doug Burr, minister of music/youth, Ebenezer Church, Greenbrier, who performed with the Tennessee Baptist Chorale; and Karen Rushing, Northside Church, Columbia.



VISITING during a break are David Green, left, pastor, Lincoln Avenue Church, Newport, with staff from First Church, Clarksville, including, from left, Jeff Burris, minister of single adults/evangelism; Roger Freeman, pastor; and Larry Riley, minister of education.



ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE from First Church, McMinnville, are, from left, first row, Nathan Smith, Swanson Bennett, Hansford Fairchild, Allen Jaco; second row, Joe E. Wright Jr., pastor; Joe E. Wright Sr.; George Burke; Richard Turner; Marty McDill, minister of youth; Tim Tatum; Bill Harris; and Jim Carden.

Revival in one church

For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — John Avant told how revival came to Coggin Avenue Church, Brownwood, Texas, in 1995 when he was pastor there.

Avant said he had served there about one and half years and was discouraged. Then two things happened. Members began taking the *Experiencing God* course and he met Fernando Hernandez.

Three hundred members took the *Experiencing God* course. As a result, men became reconciled to their families and people began to renew their commitments to God.

Hernandez, Avant learned, was a former drug addict, convict, and gang member who was working with young people in Brownwood. Hernandez was trying to support his family on a small gift from one church. Avant invited Hernandez to speak at Coggin Avenue. Soon the church was supporting him financially. Hernandez and new Christians he had influenced spoke to the congregation periodically.

"Our people realized God was up to something and we didn't know what," Avant said.

Then one Sunday morning, a student at Howard Payne University, Brownwood, came to the altar after the early morning service weeping. Then others came forward. Many spoke, confessing and sharing.

That morning, said Avant, "I lost control of my church and it was the greatest thing that had ever happened to me."

That service was the first of many similar services, he explained. **B&R**

Musician finds voice for God from musical background

For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Carolyn Reed, who sang at the annual State Evangelism Conference in Knoxville, feels like she is caught up in a whirlwind as her career as a Christian vocalist takes off.

During the conference her songs brought such responses as "Amens" and applause. Her cassette tapes were purchased and she talked with many who wanted to schedule her for events in their churches or associations.

Reed is surprised, but believes it is a confirmation of God's continuing work in her life, she said.

Reed, who is the wife of Danny Reed, pastor, Harsh Chapel Church, Nashville, was raised in the New England area. Her parents, grand opera singers who quit to raise a family in a Christian atmosphere, taught music and often performed in churches. But she chose a different kind of music — big band and country. After high school she joined the U.S. Navy to be a vocalist for a Navy music group. She also rebelled against her upbringing in the Christian faith.

Reed said she was unhappy until

friends persuaded her to attend a Baptist church where she became a Christian. Then she joined Bellevue Church, Memphis, and several other significant things occurred to her. She became involved in the church's music program as a soloist under the direction of Tommy Lane, minister of music, and she met her husband.

"God really started working on my heart and pointing me in the direction he wanted me to go," said Reed.

Many years passed, though, as Reed



CAROLYN REED

and her husband served churches and she sang when given the opportunity. Church leaders and evangelists who heard her talked to her about developing a music ministry, but they never offered assistance.

Then several years ago Henry Linginfelter, evangelist of Alcoa, began requesting that Reed serve in revivals he led. This past summer Reed resigned from her job as a teacher at Mount Juliet Christian Academy to become a full-time music evangelist.

As she looks back, she can see God's direction in her life. Her parents not only set the basis for her faith but taught her their music. Her father, Lloyd Thomas Leach of Westbrook, Conn., was the tenor who performed with Beverly Sills in the New York City production of "Carmen" in which Sills performed the role of Carmen. When he was offered a role at the New York Metropolitan Opera, he turned it down to join a touring company. During that tour he met his wife, Dolores Dillon Leach. Their professional names were Norman and Lenore Curtis.

Although Reed never studied formally, she "learned through the walls" at

home, she said. She still receives instruction from her father, often over the telephone. Her mother is deceased but got to hear a recording which was being prepared for Reed's first cassette release, "Who Am I?"

Reed can see God's direction when she turned down a recording contract in country music in the 1980s while she was in the Navy. It was a difficult decision and disappointed many people, but she decided against it for ambiguous reasons which are now clear, she said.

Reed's ministry is conducted mainly in revivals led by Linginfelter. She enjoys them because she gets to know people, she explained. "I have found many friends," she said.

Her ministry is made possible by her husband and daughter, Victoria, 10, who, as Victoria has said, is sharing Reed with others.

Reed believes she is called to encourage and be a witness through music. "I know people are hurting and I want them to know that Jesus is there and he's the Savior. I know Jesus can change lives," said Reed.

She seems to be an example of one changed life. **B&R** — Connie Davis

Tennesseans hear revival reports ...

— Continued from page 1
community by 2000 A.D.

Most of the focus in the church today is on the activities of members, Smith said. But its focus should be on the welfare of the unborn or unsaved, firstly, and then the newborn or new Christians, he said, referring to Matthew 16.

When newborns cause their parents grief, do the parents give them up? asked Smith. Do newborns or children have to do something for people to think they're wonderful? No, he responded. And when children need something, people, even strangers, will join in to help them.

The same philosophies should be held in the church, said Smith. God "is looking for churches to bless and when they're asked who did it, they will say, 'He (God) did it.'"

Frank Houston, pastor, Bethel Church, Morristown, addressed the crowd three times. He discussed the spiritual needs of the Christian and church.

Referring to Psalm 51, he presented the recipe for restoration David shared. David used the right ingredients, which were mercy, for-

giveness, and an understanding of sin; he accepted responsibility; and he asked God to cleanse him, said Houston.

From Acts 4:32-35 he said the marks of the spirit-filled church are unity, sharing, and testifying of the resurrection. Finally he detailed the apostle's job description defined in Matthew 10. The apostle has an on-going, active ministry, encounters the enemy on the enemy's turf, and anticipates opposition.



PHILLIPS

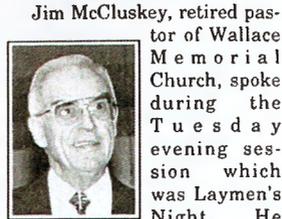
Preaching during the Monday evening session was Ron Phillips, pastor, Central Church, Hixson.

Speaking from I John 2 and Revelation 3-4, he said churches shouldn't expect revival until they receive the Holy Spirit.

Revival is messy, he said. It often involves fighting demons and other spiritual warfare, unusual worship practices, and dealing with sinners.

Just like the church referred to in the Revelation passage, our churches can be "blind" although they seem successful, he said. Phillips admitted he had been spiritually blind when he did not see sin in the life of a staff person.

Churches need the vision, mission, and passion of the anointed church. They should ignore criticism if they are "taking the Gospel to others," he said. And church staff members shouldn't worry about their next paycheck, but operate from their calling.



MC CLUSKEY

Jim McCluskey, retired pastor of Wallace Memorial Church, spoke during the Tuesday evening session which was Laymen's Night. He talked about the purpose of the church. It's not just to make people better or happier, but to provide them "heaven's glory," he said.

He told the story of Dennis Martin, 8, a member of the church who disappeared about 25 years ago while on an outing in the Smoky Mountain National Park. Just as Dennis was lost and never found, people without faith in God are lost spiritually unless they meet God, said McCluskey.

People who don't know God often won't attend church, he added. Thus, the need for witnessing.

"How can we be so silent when he has done so much for us?" McCluskey asked.

Another speaker was Doug Sager, pastor of First Church,

Concord, Knoxville. Sager identified the keys to the growing and ministering church, referring to Acts 2. The keys are focus, fellowship, favor, fervor, and fruitfulness.



SAGER

Pastors have trouble staying focused on God's work, he said. A Southern Baptist minister is fired every six hours, and most of the time the problem separating him from the congregation is not doctrinal, he reported.

"Listen, preacher, you have to set your schedule; you can't let the church do it. ... Friends, I'm concerned that we're becoming experts in everything except the Word of God. What's important is not the size of your church, but the size of your God."

The problems within the Southern Baptist Convention are not caused by "our differences," said Sager. "When I'm right with God, I'm right with others regardless of what they choose to do."

Roger Freeman, pastor, First Church, Clarksville, defined the New Testament pastor as described in II Timothy 3.

The Scripture notes that the pastor should emulate seven roles or items — son, soldier, athlete, farmer, craftsman,



Tennessee features



FREEMAN

Christians should keep a "cleansed life," he noted, because that one day they are going to see Jesus. And he said that the church is unique. There's nothing more important than what happens in the local church, he concluded.

Other Tennesseans

Floyd "Lammie" Lammersfeld of Gleason spoke of the need to be spiritually alive. "Too many pseudo scholars are more interested in how to wear their collars and what new scholars to follow than they are with men that sin," he said.

Bill Wilson and Jerry King of the TBC also spoke.

King presented "Celebrate Jesus, 2000," an SBC evangelistic emphasis. This year will be a year of prayer to prepare for it. He also announced that baptisms in the state were up 5.6 percent over last year. B&R



HOUSTON

Evangelists meet, elect officers

For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — In an annual meeting held prior to the State Evangelism Conference, the Fellowship of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists heard several speakers and musicians, heard reports on a revival program, and elected officers.

During its Jan. 20 meeting, participants heard a report on the one-day revivals held prior to the meeting in area churches. The program has been conducted for about 20 years.

Twelve churches invited members to lead a one-day revival. As a result, five people made professions of faith, 120 people made other spiritual decisions, and three joined churches. Fourteen evangelists participated, reported Floyd "Lammie" Lammersfeld, president, of Gleason.

Officers were elected and include Phil Glisson, Memphis, president; Benny Jackson, Memphis, vice president; and Tim and Amy Wuester, Galatin, music coordinators. B&R



NEWLY ELECTED officers of the Fellowship of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists pose with Lammie Lammersfeld, center, outgoing president. Officers include, from left, Benny Jackson, vice president; Phil Glisson, president; and Amy and Tim Wuester, music coordinators.

Laymen share witnessing experiences

For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Two laymen from Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville, the site of the State Evangelism Conference, shared their experiences as witnesses of their faith on Laymen's Night, a special emphasis of the meeting.

Daryl Boyer a mechanical engineer with Lockheed Martin of Oak Ridge, and Elder Mellon, a retired worker with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory who is employed by the University of Tennessee, told how the church's Evangelism Explosion (EE) studies helped them become more active witnesses.

Boyer said he had developed a reluctance to witness after he became a Christian which could be linked to a fear of rejection and to a search for any excuse. His EE studies helped him overcome that reluctance, he said. In one instance, he was given a second chance by God to witness to a friend after ignoring his lack of faith. When he learned of his friend's upcoming visit, he called other EE participants to support him in prayer. That friend made a commitment to God, said Boyer.

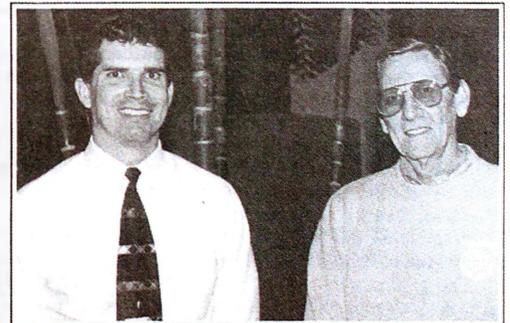
The effectiveness of any witness does not depend on the content, but depends on the Lord, said Boyer.

Mellon said he had felt inept at

speaking since he was a child. About 20 years ago he took the EE course and began witnessing. He still gets nervous, he explained, but he witnesses because of the results.

"Everytime a person makes an attempt to do something for God you will grow and grow and grow," he said.

Witnessing brings other results, he added. A person receives joy which cannot compare to any feeling — even the joy of watching a super bowl, said Mellon. Additionally, others will learn about God as new Christians witness and the effects are multiplied incrementally, he concluded. B&R — Connie Davis



LAYMEN Daryl Boyer, left, and Elder Mellon of Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville, pause after speaking to participants of the State Evangelism Conference.

Helping less fortunate people appeals to American teenagers

By Marv Knox
For Associated Baptist Press

PRINCETON, N.J. — The key to attracting the largest majority of American young people to church is to ask them to help less-fortunate people, the Gallup Youth Survey discovered.

Serving the needs of others appeals to 80 percent of teens polled by the Gallup organization's Princeton Religion Research Center and reported in the latest issue of its "Emerging Trends" newsletter.

Twenty percent of teens said they currently are involved in "church-sponsored activities to help less-fortunate people." Sixty percent claimed they would like to be involved in that kind of religious activity. And 68 percent of teens who "have not been attracted to attend church recently" said they would like to participate.

The 80 percent favorable rating for service to others far outpaced other church activities aimed at teens.

A church youth group other than Sunday School is the next-biggest draw, teens said. Sixty-two percent indicated they either are now involved (36 percent) or would like to be involved (26 percent) in

such a ministry.

Youth groups are "a prominent part of the teen social scene in the South, where a majority of young people belong to them," the Gallup pollsters reported.

And youth groups are more attractive to girls than boys, they added. Forty-two percent of girls attend youth groups, compared to 31 percent of boys.

Sunday School or a Bible study group is attractive to slightly more than half of American teens, they told the pollsters. Fifty-four percent said they either are now involved (33 percent) or would like to be involved (21 percent) in weekly study of Scripture.

Sunday School attendance declines as teens age, the survey found. Thirty-seven percent of youth age 13 to 15 said they attend Sunday School, compared to 27 percent of teens 16 and older.

Choirs and music groups are attractive to less than four in 10 teens surveyed. Thirty-eight percent said they either currently participate (13 percent) or would like to participate (25 percent) in a church music group.

Youth participation in church activities appears to be



Teens sound four cries for help, expert says

Associated Baptist Press

ST. LOUIS — Facing a turbulent, uncertain future, today's teens are sounding four cries for help, a youth ministry expert told a recent gathering of youth leaders.

Wait Mueller, founder of the Center for Parent and Youth Understanding, spoke at a nationwide meeting of youth leaders and his remarks were reported in "NetFax," a facsimile newsletter published by Leadership Network, based in Tyler, Texas.

Youths' cries, Mueller said, relate to:

(1) The changing family. The family traditionally has been the strongest cultural force and greatest influence on teens, but the family of today is

changing, he said. Divorce impacts an additional 3,000 children per day and 40 percent of U.S. children will at some time live in a home without a father present. The home front also is compounded by workaholic parents, sexual abuse, alcoholism and drugs, and the "latchkey" syndrome of children who are at home while both parents work. The response to the cry of the changing family is to build relationships with youth that are accepting and loving, and that model for them healthy families.

(2) Media influence. The media's influence on today's children is greater than the influence of families, schools, friends, and church, Mueller reported. The "average" teen listens to four hours of music

per day and will see 23,000 hours of TV by high school graduation. Christians can respond to this cry by providing youth with understanding and a sense of direction.

(3) Moral relativism. Youth live in a world where increasingly more people believe absolute truth cannot be known, Mueller said. They need a response that clearly explains truth in images they can understand.

(4) Hopelessness. Many youth today have no hope for the future, as evidenced by projections that up to 20 percent of them will attempt suicide, he said. However, teen hopelessness provides the church with a door of opportunity to offer them hope through a relationship with Jesus Christ, he said. ■

a key to maintaining their involvement in church later in life, the pollsters theorized. Noting Roman Catholics "have been losing followers as they grow older," the newsletter states: "In the formative teenage years, Protestants are far more likely to participate in church-centered activities. They are three times as likely as Catholics to be attending Sunday School, and twice as likely to participate in youth

groups, choirs, or church-sponsored charitable activities." The survey also found a connection between church involvement and academic success. "Students who are doing above-average work at high

school (are) twice as likely as those who are just average or below average to join the various church-sponsored youth groups and activities," the pollsters reported. ■

Campus Crusade, Southern Baptist leaders discuss cooperative efforts

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Twenty-five leaders of Campus Crusade for Christ and the Southern Baptist Convention met Jan. 17 in Atlanta to discuss working together in potential evangelistic projects focusing on America's young people.

The historic all-day meeting, called at the invitation of William R. Bright, Campus Crusade president, concluded with plans for creating a task force to study and recommend a process to reach the MTV-generation of America, defined as those in the first semester of middle school through college.

Members of the task force will be named from various Southern Baptist and Campus Crusade leaders suggested during the meeting.

The group will report its progress to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee; James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board; and Bright.

Bright had sought a meeting with SBC leaders in a Jan. 6 letter, in which he told of experiencing for several years a "growing awareness of the moral and spiritual decline of our country, and a growing burden to fast and pray for a mighty revival from heaven for the believers of our country."

Campus Crusade for Christ, based in Orlando, Fla., is a para-church organization best known for its evangelistic ministries on high school and college campuses.

Southern Baptist evangelist Jay Strack, one of the participants in the meeting, said the gathering was in response to a "real urgency" among the leaders about what's happening in the country today.

There was a sense of "are we doing all we know to do," Strack said. It was a time of prayer, a time to explore, to bring common concerns and burdens, as well as strengths, to the table, he explained, noting that "by no means did we speak for all Southern Baptists." ■

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FIRST BAPTIST ALCOA'S THIRD ANNUAL MID-WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCE February 2-5, 1997

SUNDAY



Dr. Ernie Perkins
Executive Dir, Capital Bapt.
Assoc., Oklahoma City

MONDAY



Dr. Herb Reavis
Pastor, N. Jacksonville
Baptist Church

TUESDAY



Bro. Junior Hill
Evangelist

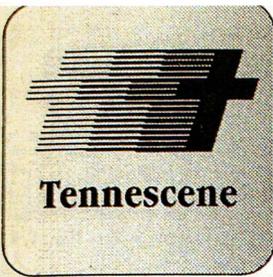
WEDNESDAY



Dr. Johnny Hunt
Pastor, First Baptist,
Woodstock

Plus Music from Bayside, Chattanooga; Sevier Heights, Knoxville; Calvary, Lenoir City

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Richard V. Holden, Pastor



Tennescene

churches

■ Internationally known author and speaker Evelyn Christenson will lead a "What Happens When We Pray" seminar Feb. 22, from 9 a.m.-3:45 p.m. at First Church, Donelson. Registration fee of \$15 per person or \$25 per couple (before Feb. 14) includes box lunch. For more information, call Lynn Taft at (615) 885-5834 or the church office at (615) 883-2339.



CHRISTENSON

■ First Church, Alcoa, will hold its third annual Mid-Winter Bible Conference Feb. 2-5. Speakers each day are Ernie Perkins, Herb Reavis, Junior Hill, and Johnny Hunt.

For more information, call the church office at (423) 982-2661.

the schools

■ Beginning its 11th year as a host to Centrifuge, Union University exceeds 15 summer camp sites with the largest number of preregistered campers. Registration numbers for the summer 1997 Centrifuge camps show Union with 3,418 preregistered campers. Union holds eight week-long camps each summer with a total capacity of about 6,000. Centrifuge is a week-long camp experience for youth grades 7-12.

state events

■ The Tennessee Baptist Convention will offer Interfaith Witness Associate Training in the area of Mormonism Feb. 7-8 at Union University in Jackson. James Newman of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board will be the instructor. For information about the meeting, including costs, call Tim Hill or Gail Parrish at the TBC at (615) 371-7916.

associations

■ Stone Association will hold an associational crusade rally Feb. 3 at 7 p.m. at First Church, Cookeville.

■ Cumberland Plateau Association will host a Marriage Enrichment Weekend Feb. 7-8 at the Associational Mission Center. Leaders will be Howard Stevens, a marriage counselor from Nashville, and Don and Carolyn Mauldin, family ministry specialists for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

leaders

■ Brad Rogers, son of Rev. and Mrs. Randall Rogers of First Church, Gordonville, has been called as minister of youth at Walnut Grove Church, Fredonia, Ky.

■ Joann Stevens, pianist at Dalewood Church, Nashville, for the past 18 years, resigned in December to become the organist at another church.

■ Westgate Church, Murfreesboro, has called Bobby Waynick as pastor.



NEW LEBANON Church, Greeneville, recently held its first Ateen Coronation in more than a decade with the coronation of, from left, Alice Cload, Rebecca Compton, Emily Hanks, and Erin Cload. The coronation featured special messages of encouragement from WMU President Emma Ruth Woosley, StudiAct Counselor Jane Murray, WMU Treasurer Jennifer McLain, and a prayer of dedication by Jean Peek, wife of Pastor Don Peek. Each girl also presented a testimony and a short speech on their favorite StudiAct project.

■ Midway Church, Whiteville, has called David Reeves as pastor. For the past year, Reeves and his wife, Terri, served as missionaries in Korea where he was principal of the International Christian School in Tongduchon and pastor of Liberty Bible Church. The school was affiliated with the Network of International Christian Schools in Memphis, and they were commissioned by Bellevue Church, Cordova. While there 60 people, mostly students, accepted Christ as Savior.

■ Ed Walter is the new interim pastor and Don Norris is the new interim music director at First Church, Lawrenceburg.

■ Larry Higgins and Tom Zahn were ordained as deacons Jan. 26 during a special ordination service at First Church, Waverly.

■ Frank Kemper, pastor of First Church, Adamsville, and his wife, Liz, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary Jan. 19. A reception was held for them that afternoon.



Tennessee samplers

Devotional exercise

By Paul Durham, pastor
Radnor Church, Nashville

Starting on a devotional life ... can sometimes be compared to getting started on a life of fitness training. Some think 10 minutes a day is enough to exercise while others exercise for hours and still don't feel like they've done enough. The same is true of a devotional time with God — some feel like 10 minutes is enough and others feel like an hour is too brief.

The way a person begins an exercise routine is the way a person should begin on a devotional life. Start out slowly. Personal transformation comes through a gradual but consistent commitment to daily exercising our faith and spiritually working through concerns with our Lord. Fatigue sometimes hinders our motivation to a devotional time. We feel tired and don't think we have the energy, but by the time we're finished, we're refreshed and amazed at the way the Lord has spoken to us.

What are the basic reasons for spending time with the Lord and building a spiritual exercise program and where do we begin? First, we begin with love; love your neighbor as yourself. Christ calls us to love and we need to realize he alone can give us the loving compassion for the unlovable persons in our lives.

The goal of all spiritual training is to become a fit servant of Christ and to become more and more like Him. God urges us to train here on earth so we can earn faith-winning medals before we cross that heavenly finish line.

How's your spiritual training? Do you take it serious? Does it show in your daily walk with the Lord? ■

Promises of God

By James A. Hutson, pastor
First Church, Rockwood

My good friend Roger McDonald used the following story about an old circus hand. "One morning when a seedy-looking rural character meandered up to the crew manager and drawled, 'Mister, got a job for a fellow?' 'Yes!' and jerking his thumb toward a cage containing three lions, snapped, 'Clean out that cage!' That ought to settle him, he thought, and hurried on to other chores.

Ten minutes later he was summoned back by the now excited crew. The lions were out of their cage! He rushed to the menagerie. There all the employees stood at a safe distance. Three ferocious-looking beasts with ropes around their necks were tied to the wheel of a float. The newcomer was serenely inside their cage, mopping up the floor

and spreading straw. The crew and the crew boss stood riveted to the spot. Presently, when all was finished to his liking, the man came out, untied the brutes and yanked them back into the cage, giving each an impatient kick, with a parting, 'Git in thar, you big no-account cats!'"

I don't know if the "seedy-looking rural character" got a permanent job. I suspect he did. But what fascinates me about the story is what is fearful to one person creates no problem for another. I do not know what the man did when he found out that the "no-account cats" were actually lions. Sometimes you and I are paralyzed by our fears. Sickness, loss of a loved one, job insecurity, family break-down. These are real, and the heartache is genuine. But let us not forget the promises of God. "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine" Isaiah 43:1. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" Proverbs 3:5. ■

Uncommon gifts

By Thomas Vinson, pastor
Leawood Church, Memphis

"When Southern Baptist foreign missionaries talk about the need for money on the mission field, they always tell the exciting stories," writes Don Minshew, missionary to Namibia.

"However, many Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon dollars are spent on some rather mundane items." Don shared one such story:

A pile of scrap lumber

"The purpose of a shipping crate is simply to carry a missionary's goods to the field. Once unpacked, the scrap wood is used for various tasks. Many a missionary home has the odd bookshelf or table made from it. Sometimes the uses are more unusual.

"Recently Pastor Moses Tololi and several other church leaders came to us with a problem.

"We have received sad news," Tololi began. 'Yeta Kalinga, our church leader at the Mahahe preaching point died unexpectedly two days ago. He has no family here and the people have no money to take care of his burial. All we can do is to wrap his body in a blanket and bury him.'

"No, we cannot do that," said one of the older men. 'If we bury him like an animal, it will bring great disrepute to our Baptist churches.'

"I led the men outside to my pile of scrap lumber. From it we built a coffin, which we delivered to the preaching point. Yeta Kalinga was given a proper burial.

"Afterward, the chief of the area, who attended the funeral, praised Baptists for caring for their leader. Instead of disrepute, God used a scrap shipping crate to bring distinction to the work of Baptists in the area." ■

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.



world news

Rwandans begin again with help

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Baptists who have returned to Rwanda have been given beans to plant from Baptist World Aid to make a new start in their country. Already 3,667 people have received beans, while 7,000 more are waiting to be served.

On a promised grant of \$100,000, BWAid has sent \$50,000 to the Union of Baptist Churches in Rwanda, and the rest of the money is needed for the other returnees.

"Those who have been served are very busy preparing the ground for the new seeds," said Buzizi Claver, development manager for the union. "You can hardly imagine how the refugees are so pleased to receive a good quality of seeds to plant their lands." ■

HMB staffer to lead church where M.L. King served

Baptist Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Michael Fox Thurman isn't intimidated by Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy at Dexter Avenue King Memorial Church here, but the congregation's new pastor is well aware of the awesome responsibility ahead of him.

Thurman, who has served since 1992 as associate director

of the Home Mission Board's black church extension division, is the 26th pastor of the 119-year-old church whose claim to fame is King, its pastor from 1954-60 and leader of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s.

In spite of Dexter Avenue's fame, Thurman is determined to move the church into the 21st century, building on its past to launch into the future.

"It is a tremendous challenge to bear such a tradition, but it's an exciting opportunity to contribute not only to an historical institution, but to also lead that institution into the next century," Thurman said. "It carries such an awesome responsibility." ■

SBREA to meet

Feb. 13-15

Baptist Press

SAN ANTONIO — The 1997 meeting of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association will be Feb. 13-15 at the St. Anthony hotel here.

The program will focus on "turning our ministry challenges into victories in Christ," said Jeter Basden, president of the 1,100-member SBREA and associate professor of ministry guidance at Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Plenary speakers are Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Howard Hendricks, professor, Dallas Theological Seminary.

For registration information, call (817) 292-7371. ■

Registration still open for senior adult convention

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The "graying" of Nashville is set for April 28-30 when senior adults from at least 21 states converge on Music City to participate in the 1997 National Senior Adult Convention.

Registration deadline is the day of the event, which will be held in the city's new downtown arena; however, hotel rooms are released on a first come-first served basis.

Sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board, the program will include Joni Eareckson Tada, artist and author; Anne Graham Lotz, international speaker for AnGel Ministries; George "Goober" Lindsey, actor; and Paul Box, evangelist.

For more information or a registration packet, call 1 (800) 254-2022. ■

Former Illinois editor dies

Baptist Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Robert J. Hastings, editor of the *Illinois Baptist* newsjournal from 1967-84, died Jan. 17. He was 72.

Hastings also was the author of more than 15 books and for many years had been the

Home Life celebrates 50 years

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — As magazines go, *Home Life*, at age 50, is considered on up there. But most 50-year-olds could tell you that holding AARP credentials hardly signifies senility.

In fact, *Home Life's* new editor, Jon Walker, argues the family periodical produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board is just getting its second wind.

"*Home Life* has lasted for 50 years because it continues to make changes," Walker said of the resilient publication that turns 50 this month. "The magazine continually adapts as it deals with family issues."

Watch for more biblically-based, issue-oriented articles as *Home Life* begins its journey into the next 50 years, said Walker, who acknowledges the publication cannot ignore worldly topics that confront today's family.

Christians live in the same world as non-Christians, facing many of the same issues, according to Walker, who said he wants *Home Life* to illustrate "not how people are overcoming adversity, but how God is overcoming it in them."

In dealing with topics such as divorce, abortion, teen pregnancy, and others, Walker said he wanted to "deal with them in a way that would talk about what the Bible has to say about the issues. I want there to be a real spiritual edge to the magazine. I want our articles to literally ooze the spirit of God," the editor said. ■

principal speaker at the Baptist Sunday School Board's workshop for prospective writers. Hastings is survived by his wife, Bessie, and three children. ■

WMU awards missions grants

Baptist Press

TALLADEGA, Ala. — Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union's executive board awarded \$85,000 in Sec-

ond Century Fund grants during its annual meeting Jan. 11-15 here.

The grants, assigned to both home and international fields, will fund a variety of projects designed to educate and involve women in missions.

The Second Century Fund is a permanent endowment created by WMU during its 1988 centennial year as a gift to future generations of women in missions. Since 1988 WMU has awarded \$566,523 in grants. ■

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Youth/Music Minister
Central Baptist Church of Eureka, Mo., is prayerfully accepting resumes until March 15 for a dynamic, full-time Youth/Music Minister to serve in a rapidly growing community. Send resumes to Central Baptist Church, P.O. Box 66, Eureka, Mo., 63025, Attn. Search Comm.

Ministers Needed
Trinity Baptist Church, Southaven, Miss., a suburb of Memphis, is seeking a full-time Minister of Assimilation and Evangelism and a full-time Preschool Minister. Send resumes to Dr. Jim Butler, Trinity Baptist Church, 7200 Swinnea, Southaven, MS 38671.

Classified

POSITION VACANCY: Southside Baptist Church, Martin, seeks a full-time Minister of Music and Youth. Send resume and names and addresses of three references to: Frank Vincent, Search Committee Chair, Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 121, Martin, TN 38237.



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Listen

By Donna Wright

Focal Passage — Matthew 13:1-9; 18:3-23

Jesus taught in a way that even the children in the crowd could grasp what he was saying. He used, though did not invent, the parable. A parable is a comparison drawn from daily life. This audience was familiar with the scene Jesus painted in this story of the soils and the sower.

First, he tells of the seeds that "fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up ..." (ch. 13:4). Like the time that you thought your testimony had really touched someone, but that person, before making a commitment to Christ, took it to people who said, "Why would you want to become a Christian? Look at all you would have to give up." Jesus actually said, in verse 19, "the evil one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart."

He goes on to describe other seeds that were sown. Those that fell on rocky places (v. 5) and among thorns (v. 7), neither of which were fruitful. The first is told one time that it is not politically correct to be a Christian, and is "offended" (v. 21). We are told the seed had no root. In the latter, the "cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches," again, the seed does not produce.

Matthew 13:9 quotes Jesus as saying, "He who has ears, let him hear."

In the Old Testament, the word "hear" takes on more meaning than just listening. It means listening, understanding, and obeying.

I believe that this story, commonly referred to as the "Parable of the Sower," is more for the Christian than the unsaved person.

So many times we, as Christians, who are spreading the Word, start to feel as if we are witnessing in vain. Someone tells us an emphatic "no," or even just "I don't think that's for me." Or, they seem receptive, but the next time we see them, they try to avoid us and ask us not to bring up the subject again.

This parable reminds us that we sow the seed, but have no authority over what happens to it afterward. In the same way we cannot take credit for someone receiving Jesus as Savior, we cannot take the blame, if we have witnessed, for someone not receiving it.

Jesus tells us in this parable what happens to it.

The first is the out-and-out NO. Satan was there to consume it, like birds eat seed. The second, receives the Word, is told once that it's stupid to be a Christian, and is "offended." The third is so busy accumulating wealth, and his own set of worries, that he can't find room in his life for Christ.

Then, there is the last soil in which the seed is sown. The good soil. It is the person who looks at you and says, "I understand what you are trying to say to me about the salvation offered by Jesus. I want that." He commits himself and goes on to be fruitful.

Those are the people that remind us why we witness at all. Sometimes, we go through many rocky areas, by the wayside, and through the thorns to find the good soil.

Those with ears, let them hear. ■ — Wright is a member of First Church, Newport.

Barnabas

By Mike Shelton

Focal Passage — Acts 4:32, 36-37; 9:26-27; 11:22-30

I can still remember the day I was playing Little League baseball and I swung at a bad pitch. The ball rolled back to the pitcher and he threw me out at first base. I felt terrible. The head coach and his assistant must have sensed how badly I felt because they both stood in front of the dugout and told me they thought I was a good ballplayer. Their words of encouragement meant a lot to a little boy.

Encouragement is one of the greatest gifts God gives to his children. The circumstances of life can be rough so much of the time. That's why we need words and deeds of encouragement so often. God provides them for us by sending special people into our lives who will help us and lift us up. Barnabas was just such a man. His example reveals how we can encourage others.

Family Bible Lesson

Barnabas encouraged the hurting — ch. 4:32-37

The first mention of Barnabas occurs in this passage. When the neediest members of the church in Jerusalem were looking for help, Barnabas, at that time called Joseph, sold some of his own property and gave the money to the apostles for distribution. His attitude and actions earned him the nickname "Barnabas." It means son of encouragement. The nickname described Barnabas so well. When the hurting people of the church needed help, Barnabas encouraged them by giving in a generous way to meet their needs. We can do the same. Jesus commanded us to love one another.

Barnabas encouraged a new Christian — ch. 9:23-31

We sometimes forget what a difficult time Saul, who

later became the apostle Paul, had in being accepted by the church in Jerusalem after his conversion. The church feared he was simply trying to find a way to infiltrate their membership to discover more believers to persecute. Barnabas sided with Paul and encouraged him in his efforts to become an accepted member of the church. New Christians always need encouragement. They don't know everything they need to know. They need to be shown how to live for Christ. If our interest in them drops after their initial conversion experience, we are doing them a grave injustice.

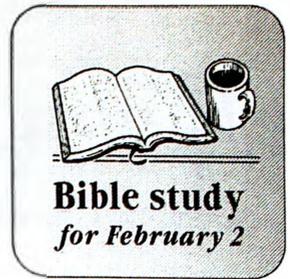
Every church needs a Barnabas who will encourage new believers and equip them for the Christian way of life. Make it a part of your ministry to reach out to new believers and help them in their desire to grow in Christ.

Barnabas encouraged an evangelistic church — ch. 11:19-30

When the church in Antioch began to welcome Gentile converts, it created a stir within the mother church in Jerusalem.

Questions were being asked. The Jerusalem church dispatched Barnabas to Antioch to find out what was happening. He investigated the situation and discovered that God was truly calling Gentiles to faith in Christ. Once again he showed his uplifting spirit by encouraging the Antioch church in its efforts to reach out to new people with the Gospel.

We need to follow suit by assisting our churches today in the effort to win new people to faith in Christ. Prove to be a Barnabas by encouraging and assisting in the evangelistic work of your church. ■ — Shelton is pastor of Bellevue Church, Nashville



Acknowledging the King

By Howard Kitter

Focal Passage — Matthew 21:4-14

Just two short weeks ago our nation was in the midst of a three or four day celebration dedicated to the inauguration of the President. This festive occasion served as a reminder to all that we recognize the president as our nation's leader. This is a splendid part of a democracy. Webster defines democracy as "a government by the people, a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system."

What a wonderful system. All the power is in the hands of the people. We are the boss.

Recognizing the king — vv. 1-14

In Matthew we read about a somewhat similar event, except it is far more abbreviated than a presidential inauguration. None the less, we see democracy at work. The democracy of people celebrating the king that they chose to lead them in this world. The greatest evidence of this democratic decision is found a little further when we hear them cry, "Crucify him," instead of "Hosanna."

In reality, Jesus was not intended nor did he desire to be king of a democracy. Instead, he was king of a theocracy. The question was, "were they going to acknowledge him as king over such?"

Explore the Bible Lesson

Webster defines theocracy as "a form of government in which God or a deity is recognized as the supreme ruler."

What differing governments. In democracy, man is the ruler. In a theocracy, God is the ruler. Simply stated man was trying to super-impose a democracy on Jesus. They desired to recognize Jesus as king on their terms and government. This just does not work. We need to ask ourselves, "Is Jesus supreme ruler in my life (theocracy)? Or do I desire to be the ruler and have Jesus as the elected leader for my bidding (democracy)?"

Realizing the kingship — vv. 12-17

The first place the new king goes is the Temple. The first act he performs, is to throw out all the impurity entrenched there. His Father's house was to be a place of prayer, not commerce. A very interesting factor to note here is, when the place of worship was cleansed, it became what it was supposed to be. It seems that directly after this cleansing of the temple people came to Jesus for help. What a powerful display of authority from the King.

The King and the fig tree — vv. 18-22

The withering fig tree is more of a warning to people. There is a stiff rebuke from the king to any who bare no

fruit. The sad state of barren religion stems from a philosophy of people ruling the king instead of the king ruling the kingdom.

The promise of asking and receiving is given in a fairly strict confine. This does not imply someone's ungodly whims shall be granted. It is based on faith and prayer life. If a person's faith and prayer life are growing, their request would most assuredly come from God's heart as they spend time with him.

The King and judgment — vv. 28-46

The first of these two parables talks about a son and his repentance of a disobedient decision. Even when we make a disobedient decision up front there is always room and time for repentance. This repentance and obedience is a mark of true commitment to the king. False commitment on the other hand is obedience in word but not action. Sure judgment comes to the disobedient. The second parable deals with a total, wicked rejection of the King all together. Judgment will be sure to come to this one also.

Ask yourself: Is Jesus really King of your life? Does your life prove out what you just answered in your heart? It is never too late, repent and return to a life of obedience to the King. ■ — Kitter is pastor of First Church, Bethel Springs.

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PASTORGRAPH

The power of suggestion is a subtle thing. I found that out when I was a member of a church. I was a member of a church for many years. I was a member of a church for many years. I was a member of a church for many years.

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