

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

Volume 163 / Number 6

Statewide Edition

February 5, 1997

this week's news

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

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Churches helped also

TBC seeks to assist terminated ministers

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Sixty-six Tennessee Baptist pastors were known victims of forced termination last year, according to a study conducted by Aubrey Hay, church-ministers relations specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The Tennessee study was part of a nation-wide study by church-ministers relations specialists from other Baptist state conventions, Hay said.

Tennessee results, which came from a survey completed by 65 of the state's 66 associations, will be tabulated along with other states and will be released some time in May, he noted.

The 66 forced terminations do not give a true indication of the problem because it involves only pastors, Hay said.

Add other church staff positions to the mix and the number could reach or perhaps exceed 150 forced terminations per year. "Every week in Tennessee, three to four ministers are being forced out. That should be a matter of concern to us," he said.

Hay stressed that forced terminations do not necessarily mean a vote of the church was taken. "We have very few cases where the pastor is actually voted out. Most of these cases involved pastors who were pressured out," Hay added.

Hay cited five top reasons directors of missions gave for forced terminations in their associations.

- (1) Control. Who's going to direct the church?
- (2) Poor people skills on the part of the pastor.
- (3) Authoritative leadership style.

(4) Church's resistance to change.

(5) The church already was in a conflictive state before the pastor arrived.

Instances of sexual and ethical misconduct accounted for only five of the 66 forced terminations of pastors last year, Hay said.

And only one church cited doctrine as the reason for termination.

The findings basically confirmed what Hay believed — that forced terminations are more directly linked to the pastor's leadership style and who's going to control the church rather than moral or ethical factors.

There are pastors who have an authoritarian style of leadership and that just doesn't work in some churches, Hay said.

Pastors do not set out to cause conflict, Hay said. "A lot of pastors go to a church with the thought of leading them and find there's a difference of opinion on where the church ought to go."

He is quick to point out that the pastor should not be held entirely to blame. "There are churches who call pastors and say they want to grow, but they are not willing to pay the price," Hay said.

Some churches want new members to come in, but they do not want them to come in and change anything, and this results in conflict, he added.

Church pulpit or search committees need to do their homework to make sure the person they are calling is compatible with the congregation, he suggested.



HAY

Forced terminations affect not only the pastor, but his family and the church as well, Hay said. Those 66 forced terminations in Tennessee last year do not reflect just one person, he noted. "They represent 66 families who were displaced."

Another sad thing about forced terminations is that when a minister is forced to leave, it usually leaves the church in a conflictive state and it takes time to recover, he said.

Hay discounts the notion that firing the pastor means the problem is solved. "That's not true. Churches ignore the fact they have ownership (in the forced termination). In some cases, it leaves the church poised to do it again."

In Hay's role at the TBC he works proactively and reactively with both churches and pastors.

Much of his ministry with pastors is reactive, helping them after they have been terminated by providing counseling, career assessment, and disbursing funds from the TBC's Ministerial Aid Fund, a ministry provided primarily through the Golden State Missions Offering.

In his relationship with churches, Hays tries to sensitize leadership to the problems of forced terminations through leadership conferences on how to manage conflict and one-on-one sessions.

"Churches need to see that one result of forced terminations is they lose their witness and become discredited if they do not handle conflict the way they should," Hay said. "We need to find ways to disagree without getting in a war over it." ■ — Hay will address termination further in a future issue.

New church staff orientation set for May 12-13

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — An orientation program for new church staff personnel is scheduled for May 12-13.

According to the Executive Office, TBC Executive Board, the orientation will be held at the Baptist Center in Brentwood. All church staff members, new to Tennessee, or who are serving with a Tennessee Baptist church for the first time, should call the Baptist Center for information on the orientation.

For details on the May 12-13 session, call 1 (800) 558-2090, or (615) 372-7912. ■

Deacon conference to address conflict management

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Conflict management will be the primary topic of discussion at the State Deacon Conference Feb. 28-March 1 at Belmont Heights Church in Nashville.

Several speakers will address the conference theme of "Building Healthier Churches."

The conference begins with registration on Friday, Feb. 28, at 6 p.m., and concludes around noon the following day. There is no registration fee for the conference, sponsored by the Church Staff Leadership Group of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Aubrey Hay, TBC church-ministers relations specialist, will present an overview of conflict management on Friday night. He will discuss a recent survey on forced terminations of pastors (see story above).

Also on Friday, perspectives of conflict will be given from both a deacon's and pastor's point of view. Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor of

the *Baptist and Reflector*, and a deacon at Clearview Church, Franklin, will share, followed by Joe Stacker, pastor of Belmont Heights Church.

The keynote address Friday night will be given by James Draper, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Saturday's sessions will include presentations by Norris Smith and Bob Sheffield, consultants with the BSSB.

Hay is convinced deacons can play an important role in resolving church conflicts.

"The issue is not that deacons are to control conflict, but rather for them to recognize what is going on and to minister to those who are having genuine problems in the church," he said. Deacons also need to support their pastor. "If the pastor and deacons can stay together, virtually any church conflict can be healed positively," Hay said.

For more information on the conference, or to register, call (615) 371-2010. ■

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- ▶ **Phone** — (615) 371-2003.
- ▶ **FAX** — (615) 371-2080
- ▶ **Membership** — Southern Baptist Press Association
- ▶ **Address changes** — *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- ▶ **Postmaster** — Periodical postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780)
- ▶ **Frequency of issue** — The paper is published weekly except for the weeks of Christmas and Fourth of July.



Printed on recycled paper

Typical SBC church growing on paper, but actually declining

By Mark Wingfield
For Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA — The typical Southern Baptist Convention church appears to be growing but in fact is in decline, according to a new comprehensive study by the SBC Home Mission Board.

The study, "A Large Convention of Small Churches," was conducted by HMB researcher Phil Jones, using data from annual statistical reports filed by most of the SBC's 40,000 churches. The typical SBC church has 233 total members, of which 168 are resident members. It is barely growing in total membership, having increased by one member from 1994 to 1995. It has 70 people in a Sunday morning worship service, reported five baptisms and five other additions during the 1994-95 church year and has an average Sunday School attendance of 55.

The typical church is 67 years old, predominantly white, and located in a rural area of the South. It receives slightly more than \$50,000 in undesignated gifts each year, of which it gives 7 percent to the Cooperative Program and 2.4 percent to the local association.

The study profiled the typical SBC church by determining the median number for key statistics. The median is the

middle point of all the numbers. For example, of 40,000 Southern Baptist churches, half have 233 or less members, and half have 233 or more.

While giving surface indications of slight growth, the typical SBC church actually is declining in statistical terms, Jones explained. "There have been considerable declines in some of the major programs and emphases of Southern Baptist churches. Even financial data, which are generally increasing, show signs of decrease when controlled for inflation over the past decade."

For example, the median income of a typical SBC church has increased greatly (about 315 percent) since 1972. But most of that increase can be attributed to inflation. "Since 1986, there has been an overall decrease in the adjusted median tithes and offerings," Jones reported. In purchasing power, the typical church received 5 percent less in tithes and offerings in 1995 as compared with 1986.

At the same time, the typical SBC church has decreased the percentage of gifts it forwards to state and national conventions through the Cooperative Program unified budget.

Since 1987, the median percentage given by churches has

declined from 7.8 percent to 7 percent. "This helps explain why the median Cooperative Program gifts, adjusted for inflation, has declined more since 1986 than median tithes and offerings or median undesignated receipts," he said.

The overall trend of declining resident membership in SBC churches is not as bad as it appears, however, because it is mainly due to an influx of new, smaller congregations into the convention. "However, the typical older church, those in existence in 1986, has grown only slightly over the past decade," Jones explained. "Given the propensity of Southern Baptist churches not to remove members from their rolls, it is likely that most churches are declining in active membership."

Jones pinpoints 1986 as a pivotal year for SBC churches. "This year began the decline in a number of median statistics, especially financial statistics," he noted. "There is no definitive explanation for this phenomenon. It is not clear whether this trend will eventually be lagged by decline at the convention level or whether growth in a small segment of churches will offset decline for a majority of churches."

Declines noted in the typical

church affect Sunday School, Discipleship Training, baptism rates, and Woman's Missionary Union enrollments.

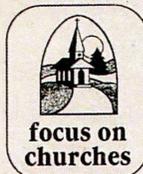
"These declines for the past decade are mostly attributable to the declines in the medians of older, established churches in the convention (those more than 10 years old) as opposed to being caused by the addition of new churches to the convention," Jones explained. "In particular, the baptism rate would have declined even further if not for the starting of new churches."

Among the study's other findings:

(1) 85 percent of SBC congregations are made up predominantly of white non-Hispanics; 11 percent are predominantly ethnic, and 4 percent are predominantly African American.

(2) Sunday morning remains the primary time Southern Baptists gather for worship.

(3) In 1995, the 10 percent of SBC churches that baptized the most people baptized from 23 to 1,313 new Christians each. They totaled 176,559 baptisms, for an average of about 44 baptisms per church. The median size of these congregations was 920 members. Meanwhile, 10 percent of SBC churches did not record any baptisms. The bottom 25 percent baptized no more than one person per church. ■



focus on churches

Recording star 'sells out,' encourages teens to do same

By Chip Alfor
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Rebecca St. James isn't hesitant to describe herself as a "radical." She's proud of it.

But her "in your face" musical style isn't steering teenagers toward drugs, sex, or rock 'n roll. It points them to God.

"I've always had a focus on being very biblical in my music," the 19-year-old Australian native and current resident of Franklin said in an interview. "It's very straight ahead, very 'in your face' about what the Bible says about how to live. And God has convicted me to stay that way, to always be challenging and encouraging others to live a radical Christian life."

St. James' direct nature even impacted the name of her current album, boldly titled: "God." Only her second major musical release, it was recently nominated for a Grammy Award for best rock Gospel album by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. She wrote eight of the 11 songs on the album, addressing themes such as obedience, servanthood, prayer, and the consequences of sin.

She also was a major player in the Baptist Sunday School Board's newly revamped Vacation Bible School materials for youth. She hosts the "Saddle Up! For the Adventure of Your Life" video, which

supports the daily VBS Bible studies. She also wrote an article for the *Saddle Up!* student newspaper which will be used by class members.

"I really appreciated the opportunity to be part of this ministry," St. James, a member of **First Church, Franklin**, said of the VBS project. "Bible study is so important. I couldn't do anything that I do without having that daily time with God."

Richard Barnes, manager of the youth biblical studies section of the BSSB's Bible teaching-reaching division, said he was "thrilled to have Rebecca as part of this project. She relates so well to her generation. I know teenagers will be impacted by her involvement."

Barnes said the BSSB expects approximately 160,000 teens to use the new VBS materials for small-group Bible study later this year. That's good news to St. James, who also has written a best-selling devotional book aimed at getting teens to "dig into the Bible." *40 Days With God: A Devotional Journey* topped Bookstore Journal's Christian best-seller's list last year and includes Scripture passages, sections from St. James' personal journal, lyrics from her albums, "scrapbook photos," and an "AudioVision CD" which features three music videos, five songs, and several short interviews.

"Someone asked me once, 'What does 40 days signify?' Well, they say it takes 30

days to make a habit, so if you make it for 40, you're doing pretty good. But more than that, Jesus was tested for 40 days out in the desert before he really even started his ministry. So, it's there to help teenagers get into the Bible during times when they are tested themselves."

St. James knows firsthand about tests. Born in Australia, she moved with her family to America in 1991 after her father, a Christian concert promoter Down Under, was offered a job here. But shortly after arriving in the States, the job fell through.

"We all had to pitch in, cleaning houses, mowing lawns, baby-sitting. It not only put food on the table, but it taught us the secret of life: It's all about giving of yourself," St. James recalled.

And that's exactly what she's been doing in recent years — giving of herself to help reach her peers for Christ.

In concert, she's fond of telling the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who were saved from death in the fiery furnace because they refused to bow to idols. She challenges audiences with a similar vision for her own generation.

St. James plans to just keep focusing on her No. 1 message to teens:

"The Christian life is the only way to go. To serve God and live for him is the most exciting, most fulfilling adventure anyone can imagine." ■

State Baptist Men's group adopts purpose statement

By Ken Camp
For Baptist Press

DALLAS — The Association of State Brotherhood Leadership determined in a recent meeting the new organization's purpose, defined its values, and discussed its relationship with developing entities in the restructured Southern Baptist Convention.

More than two dozen state convention Baptist Men's leaders met at Latham Springs Encampment in central Texas for the organizational meeting of the association at the invitation of Texas Baptist Men. The men had voted at their annual disaster relief roundtable meeting last April to create the association to help make sure existing men's ministries con-

tinue when the Brotherhood Commission is dissolved.

Under the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring plan approved by SBC messengers in Atlanta in 1995 and New Orleans last year, ministries previously coordinated on the national level by the Brotherhood Commission are being divided between the new North American Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The leaders of Baptist Men adopted as a purpose statement: "We exist to encourage mission action and education among Southern Baptist churches through an autonomous and cooperative environment for the sharing of ideas, concepts, projects, and concerns. We seek to accomplish this task through

networking with state and national bodies."

Identifying themselves as "Great Commission Christians," the group defined four core values:

(1) the discernment and pursuit of God's activity

(2) every Christian a missionary

(3) personal ministry involvement

(4) the primacy of the local congregation

The association elected as officers: chairman, Tommy Puckett, director of Alabama Baptist Men; vice chairman, Richard Brunson, director of North Carolina Baptist Men; and recording secretary, Gary Floyd, director of Baptist Men for the Northwest Baptist Convention.

Bob Dixon, co-convenor for the association's organizational meeting, reported constructive discussions with the BSSB and said a meeting with key personnel at what will soon be the International Mission Board is scheduled for March. No meetings have been set yet with the NAMB, a new entity that is assuming responsibilities previously held by the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission.

He quoted Tommy Dixon, director of the BSSB discipleship and family adult department, as saying his organization "wants to walk with the state leaders in men's ministry and build it together, to reach men as never before, to help them grow spiritually as husbands,

fathers, (and) employees."

TBM's Dixon also reported Jay Johnston, manager of the BSSB department's training and enrichment section, said his agency sees men's ministry not as a new program, but as a strengthening of existing foundations in local churches.

The Brotherhood leaders' group recommended coordination of disaster relief ministries and the World Changers program for high schoolers be moved to the Home Mission Board in Atlanta prior to the beginning of hurricane season and summer missions projects, Dixon said. Other program assignments will be absorbed by the North American Mission Board when that entity officially comes into existence at the end of June. ■

NAMB staff slots announced for new 350-employee agency

By Art Toalston
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The staffing of the five key components, or groups, of Southern Baptists' new North American Mission Board has been announced.

Each group will be headed by a vice president who will be a part of the senior management group of NAMB, projected to employ a total of 350 people.

The Implementation Task Force, a 10-member group appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee to assist SBC agencies affected by the restructuring begun in 1995, reported Jan. 30 the NAMB staffing will entail:

(1) Evangelization Group, 56 positions in four divisions: (1) Direct Evangelism, (2) Church Evangelism, (3) Campus Evangelism, and (4) Ministry Evangelism. Ministry evangelism replaces the current Home Mission Board's min-

istry division and will oversee such areas as chaplaincy, Abortion Alternatives, and Baptist centers.

(2) Church Planting Group, 26 positions in three divisions: (1) Leadership Enlistment and Training, (2) Strategy and Resource Development, and (3) New Congregation Implementation.

(3) Media and Missions Education Group, 122 positions in five divisions. The largest division will be the media technology division, most of whom will be housed in Fort Worth, Texas, at the current Radio and Television Commission facilities. The other four divisions will be (1) Public Relations, (2) Publishing, (3) Missions Education, and (4) Media Strategy, all to be located in the HMB's current facility in Alpharetta, Ga.

(4) Strategic Planning and Mobilization Group, 44 positions in four divisions: (1) Associational Planning, (2) Strategic Focus Cities, (3) Strategic Planning Coordination and Research,

and (4) Volunteer Mobilization

(5) Business Services Group, 86 positions in five divisions: (1) Finance and Accounting, (2) Human Resources, (3) Information Services, (4) Church Loans, and (5) Marketing Services.

Additionally, an Executive Group will have 16 positions, including the NAMB president, and all vice presidents and support staff. Currently, another 13-member group, the NAMB Incorporators, is working toward a recommendation for NAMB president to be made to the new agency's trustees this June, once NAMB is formally launched at the end of June's SBC annual meeting in Dallas.

The staffing levels were announced by the ITF in the Jan. 30 issue of NAMB Transition News, circulated to employees of the three agencies slated for merger under the SBC "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring: HMB, RTVC and the Brotherhood Commis-

sion, based in Memphis.

Overall, the restructuring will reduce the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12.

As announced earlier in January, the total number of employees will be 350, which is approximately 165 fewer positions than the current combined level of the HMB, RTVC, and Brotherhood.

According to the ITF, NAMB's structure will be a matrix organization led by the Evangelization Group and the Church Planting Group and supported by the other groups.

The ITF and a nine-member NAMB Logistics Transition Team are in the process of making recommendations of persons to fill the NAMB staff positions.

While the ITF has estimated severance costs for the NAMB merger staff reductions will be about \$2.5 million, ITF officials have said the net savings of the overall SBC restructuring, after all expenses, will be approximately \$34 to \$41 million over five years. ■

Costa Rica missionary shares prayer concerns with 'partners'

For Baptist and Reflector

Missionary Susie Argil of Costa Rica recently sent the *Baptist and Reflector* a list of prayer concerns she asked the paper to share with Tennessee Baptists, who on Jan. 1 officially entered into a partnership missions venture with Baptists in Costa Rica.

(1) Pray that the Lord will provide Christian leadership to assist missionaries Ben Argil and Keith Travis with the sports ministry program in Guapiles.

(2) A group of believers in San Rafael de Guapiles has committed to build a church building in their community. Pray that people would give generously and God would provide all their needs. Con-

struction is set to begin in March.

(3) Continue to pray for spiritual awakening in Costa Rica.

(4) Pray for the Hendricks family who serve as church planters in the Cartago Zone of Costa Rica. Thieves broke into their home Jan. 17 while they were attending revival services in Tukurique. Pray that they will soon be able to recover what was taken and they they will sense God's presence in a personal, loving way during this difficult time.

(5) Praise! Two people accepted Jesus as Savior during the recent Tukurique revival that was hosted by volunteers from Covington Church in Tennessee. Pray for the continued spiritual growth of these new believers. ■

Southern Baptists voice displeasure

Holiday Inn pulls transsexual ad

By Martin King
For Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Holiday Inn Worldwide has canceled plans for further use of a television commercial which features an actress portraying a transsexual. The commercial, which aired during the Super Bowl, was designed to introduce the hotel chain's renovation program, but generated hundreds of protest calls to local franchisees as well as the corporation's Atlanta headquarters.

Philip Roberts, interfaith witness director for the Home Mission Board, helped sound the alarm that generated many of the calls.

"I read about plans for the commercial on Friday and began calling pastors and friends

across the country urging them to register their outrage at this use of perversity in advertising," Roberts told Baptist Press. "Apparently the response was overwhelming in that Holiday Inn apologized and pulled the commercial less than 48 hours after it was aired."

Holiday Inn issued a release Jan. 28 announcing it planned to "discontinue any further broadcast of the Super Bowl ad."

In a letter to John Chandler, Holiday Inn vice president of marketing, Roberts applauded the decision to cancel the spot but requested a meeting with Holiday Inn officials to explain "why we oppose it so vehemently."

"Obviously Holiday Inn,

which purports to be a family-friendly company and is used by thousands, if not millions of Southern Baptists, miscalculated or, even worse, ignored the views of those who hold traditional Judeo-Christian values," Roberts said.

Hotel officials have said they received positive endorsement of the ad concept during testing with corporate officials, franchisees, and consumers. "The fact that so many of us were offended by this commercial is evidence that Holiday Inn's marketing staff is out-of-touch with a large segment of their customer base.

"I think we can help them understand why such perversity is offensive to us and the negative effects it has on our culture," Roberts concluded. ■



opinion

about letters to the editor

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

Partnership Prayer Requests

February

- 5 — Pray for the new Korean mission, Young Kwang Korean Church, SBC, which also is a member of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.
- 6 — Pray for "Little Friends Daycare," a ministry of Friendship Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, that has opportunities to minister to families.
- 7 — Pray for "Here's Hope — Christ" training to be held Feb. 22 in six regions of Poland.
- 8 — Pray for increased fellowship and cooperation among pastors in the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.
- 9 — Pray for prayer warriors to do spiritual warfare against the strongholds in the communities of the Battlefords in Saskatchewan, Canada. Ask God to protect First Church of North Battleford and its pastor, Gary Peters, against these strongholds.
- 10 — Pray for God to call out a special group of Tennessee volunteers to do street evangelism at the World Catholic Conference in Wroclaw, Poland, in May.
- 11 — Pray for Woodland Association in the Baptist State Convention of Michigan as they seek a new director of missions.

Where were we?

Well, Bro. Jerry King and company brought the State Evangelism Conference to East Tennessee, finally. So many of the East Tennessee folks had been harping about that for so many years — and he finally did it.

But, where was East Tennessee?

Where were all those who had been griping for all those years? I would have thought the number would have been triple what it was.

However, the van load from our church really enjoyed it and appreciated that it was in East Tennessee. Thank you Jerry King and staff for listening. But I really wouldn't blame them if they went back to the way it used to be. Frankly, I will attend all I can no matter where it is, but our people really appreciated it.

Tom Mooty
Wartburg 37887

Seeks information

Your help is greatly needed in the historical search of biographical information and photos of these pastors who served at Piedmont (Ala.) First

Church and other churches throughout Alabama and Tennessee — T.M. Byrom (1925-29) and Alfred J. Buford (1886-88).

If any reader or church has photos or information on these men, please call (205) 447-6072 or (205) 447-9496 or write to: Historical Committee, Piedmont First Baptist Church, 207 Rome Ave., Piedmont, AL 36272.

Your assistance is most appreciated as we endeavor to write the history of our church.

Benjamin Ingram
and Bruce Crescenzi
Piedmont, AL 36272

Invitation offered

"Baptists and the Civil War" will be the theme of a premiere conference hosted by the Southern Baptist Historical Society June 5-7 in the historic city of Richmond, Va. The meeting offers participants tours of significant Civil War collections and sites as well as a look at the theological and social impact of the Civil War on the Baptist denomination.

Fred Anderson, director of the Virginia Baptist Historical Collection and writer for the *Religious Herald*, will lead sev-

eral tours of historic sites in the Richmond area. Civil War buffs will be interested, for certain.

Persons interested in registration forms and for more information about the meeting should call the Southern Baptist Historical Society at 1 (800) 966-2278.

Kim Medley
Shawnee, OK 74801

Good service

A few weeks ago you had an article in the paper concerning delivery.

I certainly do not have that problem in Covington. We regularly receive the *Baptist and Reflector* on Thursday. I don't see how our service could be any better.

Addison Bringle
Covington 38019

Appreciates Hall

A resolution of appreciation for Johnnie Hall was approved by the executive board of Stone Association, acting on a recommendation from Roger Phillips, the association's Discipleship Training director.

Johnnie Hall retired from 37 years of faithful service in

the Discipleship Training department recently.

The resolution noted that Johnnie has tirelessly given of himself while crisscrossing the Volunteer State in pursuit of his God-driven goal of edifying the body of Christ.

He has consistently exemplified servanthood in all his relationships both as a leader and a friend with all the myriads of individuals and groups with whom he has worked.

The resolution resolved that we, his friends in Stone Association, gladly join the company of those commending Bro. Johnnie Hall upon his retirement; and sincerely in love extend for him and his wife, Phyllis, our prayers of thanksgiving to God for them and for a fulfilling future so richly deserved.

Mike Prowse, Stone Association director of missions, noted a response to the question, "Who will replace Johnnie Hall?" To this the new leader of the TBC Church Growth Development Group replied: "Someone like Johnnie Hall can never be replaced."

Gerald Padgett, moderator
Stone Association
Cookeville 38503

For generations to come

McCollum family keeps relationship with Belmont alive

For *Baptist and Reflector*

NASHVILLE — One of the goals of Belmont University's campaign for Baptist scholarships is to establish long-term relationships not only with Tennessee Baptist students, but with their families as well.

The McCollum family is an example of one such family.

All four of Jerry and Billie McCollum's children attended Belmont University. So did their son-in-law and daughter-in-law.

Greg McCollum ('84) and his wife, Valerie ('83) both earned bachelor of business administration degrees. Kelli McCollum Rodgers ('89) and her husband, Mason ('87) also are alumni. Sons Chris and Derrick attended Belmont.

In addition to his children being a part of the Belmont University family, Jerry McCollum became personally involved with Belmont's mission. Through his company, McCollum Construction (now Forum), he developed a vested interest in the school by working on the state-of-the-art Center for Music Business.

This relationship with the McCollum family is the type relationship Tennessee Baptist schools strive for.

When Jerry McCollum died last April in a scuba diving accident, Billie McCollum and her children decided that an appropriate way to memorialize their husband and father was to establish a scholarship in his name at Belmont.

This endowed scholarship, the first in Belmont's \$10 million Baptist Scholarship Endowment Campaign, is available with preference given first to members of McCollum's church, Clearview in Franklin, then to other eligible Baptist students.

The scholarship is set up through the support of Clearview Church. Two generations of McCollum's have ensured the continuation of quality Baptist education for future generations in a way that honors Jerry McCollum's work and preserves his legacy.

"Today's Baptist students represent the future of our churches and denomination," says Belmont President William E. Troutt.

"It's important that Belmont have adequate scholarships to keep Christian higher education within financial reach of any Tennessee Baptist family. We deeply appreciate the generosity and foresight of the McCollums and all our



Series to highlight efforts

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — The accompanying story is the first in a series which will run in the *Baptist and Reflector* in support of the Tennessee Baptist Scholarship Endowment Campaign.

This three-year campaign seeks a total of \$30 million. Each of the TBC's colleges — Belmont University (Middle), Carson-Newman College (East), and Union University (West) — are conducting simultaneous campaigns for \$10 million each in their assigned geographic regions.

The campaign was established through a proposal from the TBC's Budget and Program Committee after it became evident that future increases from Cooperative Program funds probably

would not keep pace with growing scholarship needs of the schools.

Churches are asked to work with the institution in their geographic region to establish a scholarship fund to assist youth from their own congregation, association, or region. Any church can place the institution in its annual budget and "build" a fund over a period of years.

Individuals may establish a fund bearing their own name or that of a loved one. Individuals may also add personal gifts to their church's fund.

Tennessee Baptists will soon be hearing from representatives of the campaign who will assist individuals and churches in building a Tennessee Baptist Scholarship Endowment Fund for students from local churches. ■

friends who share their vision."

"Financial obstacles should never be a reason that one of our young people cannot attend Belmont University," adds Tom Madden, chairman of the state-wide endowment

campaign. By working in association with the church, the McCollum family has helped to assure that does not happen to a Clearview Baptist student.

What about the children in your home church? ■

All people are created in God's image

When "push comes to shove," it is wise to know who does the pushing and who does the shoving — and it's good to know the object of the pushing and shoving.

"When push comes to shove," the farmer would say, "we'll get the grain in the barn."

Perhaps the grain is ready for harvest, and the weather prediction for tomorrow is for rain. Well, it has to be harvested today, and put in the barn.

If push comes to shove, we can get everybody to work two or three more hours — even though it's past sundown — and we'll have the grain harvested and in the barn.

Everything turns out right, because folks were willing to make the extra effort, work a little longer, look for the benefit to be gained for everyone and not just for self.

Race Relations Day is Sunday, February 9. Why do we need a special day to help us remember how we ought to relate to all people? Simple. The Bible teaches that mankind was created in God's image. But we don't always act as if we believe it.

Often when we relate to people who are different from us — different skin color, different culture or social strata, different religions or faith — we might be more willing to get the grain safely in the barn than to go the second mile in relationships.

And instead of seeing mankind, those people who are different, as being made in God's image, we see God as being made in our image.

Nine years ago the Christian Life Commission held a conference in Nashville tabbed, "Southern Baptists and Race."

Several resolutions came from that conference:

■ We call upon Southern Baptist Christians to resolve to stand publicly and privately for racial justice and equality and to speak out against racism wherever and whenever it occurs.

■ We call upon individual Southern Baptists, and Southern Baptist churches, to reach across racial boundaries, establishing friendships, fraternal rather than paternal relationships, through meal times, prayer times, and recreational times.

■ We call upon Southern Baptists to repent of past bigotry, and to pray for, and minister to, those still within its deadly clutches, either as persecuted or persecutor.

Robert Parham, who worked with the Christian Life Commission at that time and has since developed a Nashville-based Baptist Center for Ethics, wrote a theme editorial about Race Relations Day. "Racism remains an entrenched moral problem in our world, and we Christians need to be aware of it and to respond accordingly," he said.

Parham wrote that "the Bible teaches that all people are created in the image of God, that Christ died for all, that all are to love their neighbors, and that the church's mission is to every nation."

Of course he is right. He cited Scripture, Luke 13, about everyone being welcome at God's table.

We should deem it sufficient that God invites everyone to table. We don't do the inviting.

Sometimes racism, prejudice, bigotry, is subtle. But those who are treated as someone made in God's image discern the subtleties. Racism is all around the world, on every continent, in every nation, on most street corners and meeting places, and anywhere people meet together.

What is racism? How am I guilty or innocent? If you don't have a definition, you may be guilty of racism. It has been practiced as long as the world has existed. Racialism refers to supposed racial superiority, inferiority, or purity — and it is based on a good dose of racial prejudice.

Ben Mitchell, visiting professor of Christian ethics at Southern Seminary, reminds us that we are all one in Christ Jesus in salvation, fellowship, and mission. Therefore, on this earth, "We have no time to squander on petty things."

Racial hatred, no matter how subtle, infects the soul of the one who hates, and it is deadly and pervasive. Racism, racial prejudice, is based on false pride and feeds on ignorance and fear.

Church burnings are hideous manifestations of racism. Prejudice against others is also evil.

Tennessee Baptists of all races should be dedicated to healing racial wounds and restoring the dignity of all people — created in God's image. That's our blessing, and our beautiful assignment. *B&R*



By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor

Just for today

By Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Young lady browsing in an antique shop: "Do you have any television entertainment centers?"

Clerk: "No, lady. We should be getting a shipment of them in about 85 or 90 years."

Take this truth

Timing is of supreme importance in almost everything.

Thomas Carlyle said, "There is nothing so important as an idea whose time has come."



WOOD

Benjamin Franklin advised, "Do not squander time, for it is the stuff out of which life is made."

Memorize this Scripture

Knowing the time ... now it is high time to awake out of sleep. — Romans 13:11

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to be aware of how important the present moment is, and help me to use it for something good, and help me not to waste it. ■

Standing in the gap — assignment in a special place

one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

After World War II, Allied leaders got together and decided who would be charged with occupying certain portions of Germany to ensure there would be no more war.

The Soviet Union was assigned a hunk of eastern Germany. At the same time, the Communist government decided to stay put in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and East Germany.

The free world was astounded and wary of Soviet intentions.

The United States, Great Britain, and France soon realized the Communists did not intend to leave those areas. In fact, the Soviets installed puppet governments to lead in a communist insurgency.

To keep the Soviets from spreading across the entire European continent, the United States, Great Britain, and France soon guarded the border between West and East Germany with day and night armed forces.

A "no man's land" was established by the Soviets, with land mines and barbed

wire the entire length of Germany. Towns and homes were split where the barbed wire was strung.

One of the most dangerous and hard-to-defend spots along the border was called the Fulda Gap.

Just a few miles east of the major industrial city, the barbed wire border bulged westward near Tann, forming an almost complete circle.

The Fulda Gap — and the Tann Pocket — were weak links. That part of the border was in the middle of the area defended by armored cavalry regiments of the United States Army.

If we knew nothing about those two, we soon learned. Everyone in anyone's army knew about the necessity of defending those links in the border.



ALLEN

As one of several thousand in the 14th Armored Cavalry Regiment, I was awed and just a little bit afraid of that kind of duty.

On patrol in the Tann Pocket, you were surrounded on three sides by Communist forces. Many times from the top of the hill near Tann, I surveyed the beautiful land for miles and miles.

Then and now, Ezekiel 22:30 is impressive. In God's words about Jerusalem, it is written, "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none."

We stood in the gap, not of our own volition, but because someone who knew the situation put us there. We can all stand in "the gap."

I don't know what would have happened if the Communists had overrun the border. But I do know we tried to be ready. The Gap was ours to defend with honor. ■

It's important to care enough to correct

families matter

— by Paul Barkley, counselor, professor

A problem as old as Cain and Abel, and as current as tomorrow's newspaper is the problem of parental discipline. Everyone seems to know how to tell everyone else how to do it, but all parents seem to flounder in the practice.

After more than 25 years of practice as a marriage and family therapist, and as many years as a pastor and being the father of three children in college, I know I do not have the ability to say I know how to do it right.

We will all make mistakes and look back on situations that we should have handled differently. Some suggestions may help keep us on track.

Respect and responsibility are the two guide rails that will help keep parents go-

ing in the right direction. Parents must earn and require respect from our children. Respect is reciprocal. If parents want to be respected, they must be respectful. Being a parent does not give us the right to ignore the personhood of the child. Rights, desires, and differences must be honored.

But parents must demand respect. Parents who do not demand respect will have children who don't respect them or others.

Discipline should be designed to help the child learn responsibility. Punishment should be designed to use logical conse-

quences for misbehavior. Parents must learn early to distinguish between carelessness and challenge to authority. Children are naturally careless. When they miscue that way, parents will use a different discipline as when there is a challenge to authority.

And when a child defiantly tells the parent "no," that child must be immediately shown the logical consequence of choosing such behavior.

Success of teaching respect and responsibility will be determined by whether the child develops compassion or contempt for the parent. Children who grow up with respect toward and from parents and learn responsibility for their choices usually have good relationships with parents. ■

Texas Baptists oppose gambling measures

By Ken Camp
For Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS — Texas Baptists will weigh in against gambling when the state's 75th legislature convenes.

The Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission has joined Texans Against Gambling in calling for a moratorium on any expansion of gambling in this legislative session, including the introduction of new forms of gambling such as

"amusement machines" under existing lottery laws.

"Riverboat casinos, gambling ships, off-track betting, Keno, and most expansion of charitable gambling are all efforts by gambling investors to legalize full-scale gambling in Texas and must be vigorously opposed," said Weston Ware, citizenship associate for the Texas Baptist agency.

In a public-policy agenda adopted Jan. 24 in Dallas, the commission also went on record as opposing public funding for parochial schools

through vouchers, supporting sex-education programs which stress abstinence, and supporting restrictions on abortions. ■

Position Vacancy

Growing church seeks full-time youth/education minister. Send resumes to Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 1791 Lake Lowndes Road, Columbus, MS 39702.

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POSITION AVAILABLE: Full-time church secretary; proficient in Quicken for Windows and Word-Perfect. Send resume to Bellevue Baptist Church, 101 Cross Timbers Dr., Nashville, TN 37221.

YOUTH/EDUCATION POSITION: FBC, Savannah, is seeking a full-time youth/education minister. Seminary preferred, God-led essential. Send resume to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 1017 Main Street, Savannah, TN 38372.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Grandview Church is seeking permanent, part-time minister of music. Send resume to: Grandview Baptist Church, 2208 Tuckaleechee Pike, Maryville, TN 37803.

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.

Here's Why U.S. News Calls Union University A Top Five "Best Value" in the South



U. S. News & World Report ranks Union University as one of the five best values among Southern liberal arts colleges. Why is Union such a remarkable value?

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Forgive

By Donna Wright

Focal Passage — Matthew 18:21-35

Forgiveness: pardon, absolution, remission ... the list goes on and on.

Forgiveness is not something that we think about doing, only something that we want the Lord to do for us.

Our Bible verses for this week tell us the parable of two servants. One owed a huge amount of money. When he was brought before the king, he begged for mercy and time to repay the debt.

The king granted it.

Then, the same servant went out and found a man who owed him only a small amount of money. But, instead of rendering the same charity he had been given, he had the second servant thrown into prison.

In the parable, the king found out what the first servant had done. He called him back to see him, reprimanded him, and had him thrown into prison as well.

The Lord tells us, even in the Old Testament, that vengeance belongs to him.

Forgiveness is possibly the hardest doctrine of Christianity to accept and practice.

In our verses for this week, Simon Peter asked Jesus if we should forgive seven times? The Lord answers, no. We are to forgive an unlimited amount of times. In fact, 77 times.

However, he does not give us 77 years to do that forgiving.

Remember that guy in high school who told you your hook shot was no good in front of the gal you were about to ask to the prom? Forgive him.

Remember the girl who stole your boyfriend in junior high, only to break up with him the next week? Remember the boss you had, who almost put you in therapy? Remember the co-worker who stabbed you in the back, and ended up with the promotion that you had been promised?

Forgive them. Forgive them all.

The Lord will grant you a peace that will be so wonderful words cannot express it.

Maybe what happened to you cut you so deeply that you can't forgive it.

I understand, I've been there, too.

Pray. Pray without ceasing. Pray that he will teach you to forgive this person. Pray that he will forgive this person through you. Pray that he will love this person through you.

You may be wondering what the big deal is. It's just forgiveness, something the Lord does every day. Even if we can't do it, surely the Lord will understand. Without it, however, friendships crumble, churches split, marriages fail.

Whether someone has poured too much syrup on your pancakes or physically hurt you or a loved one, the Lord commands you to forgive.

Don't be like the first servant, forgiven but not forgiving.

Know the Lord's peace.

Forgive! ■ — Wright is a member of First Church, Newport.

Stephen

By Mike Shelton

Focal Passage — Acts 6:1-7:60

Stephen was the first follower of Christ to die for his faith in the book of Acts. His life was a marvelous example of faithfulness. We can learn from him how to be a more devoted follower of our Lord.

Faithful in service — ch. 6:1-8

The early church in Jerusalem had a great ministry in caring for widows who had come to Christ. Yet a problem arose in the church's efforts to care for them. The apostles called upon the church to select leaders to make sure the relief to the poor widows was carried out fairly. Stephen was chosen after being found to fit the requirements. He went beyond just his service in this ministry. He proved to be a committed servant to Christ by doing miraculous works as well. Nowhere in the Scriptures is there any hint that Stephen failed in any opportunity of ministry he was ever given.

We also need to be loyal to Christ in the area of service. When we are given the privilege to serve our Lord and fellow believers in a specific way, we should carry out that ministry to the fullest.

Family Bible Lesson

Faithful in witness — ch. 6:8-7:53

Stephen quickly became the focus of attack from the enemies of the church. Unbelievers could not overcome his presentations of the truth of Christ. Those who opposed Jesus and the church decided to falsely accuse Stephen of two of the most heinous crimes that could be committed in the ancient Jewish culture, speaking against the temple and blasphemy concerning the law of Moses. Stephen answered his accusers. Never did he squander the many opportunities he had to give a true witness, even when facing the threat of

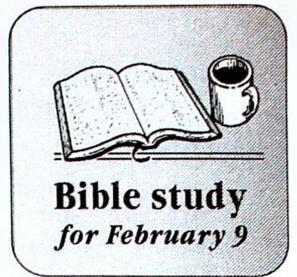
pain and punishment.

Each believer is called upon, at some time or another, to witness for Christ. Some will receive our testimony gladly and will surrender their lives to Christ. Others may express some opposition. Our responsibility is to share the good news as well as we can. Be a loyal witness by telling an unbeliever about our Savior this week.

Faithful to death — vv. 54-60

Although the accusations against Stephen were false, the religious leaders were determined to punish him. At a critical moment in the trial, Stephen looked up and got a glimpse of glory. He saw Jesus standing next to his heavenly throne. When Stephen told the crowd what he was seeing, they moved to carry out the sentence of death by stoning. Even in death he was faithful to the Lord he could now see. He stayed true to Christ all the way to the end of his life.

When the American West was being settled, circuit-riding preachers were common. Many times they would ride their horses across rivers and streams. They used to say that if they were attempting to cross an overflowing river, they would not look at the rushing water. Instead they would focus their attention on a large rock or tree on the far bank. It gave them a fixed point of reference that would help them. When adversity came for Stephen, he did not look at the difficulties that were swirling around him. He focused rather on the Rock of Ages on the far shore we call heaven. And the Lord stood from his throne to welcome his faithful child when he reached the other side. Devoted disciples today have the same assurance of what awaits us when this life is ended. We will finally see our Redeemer face to face. ■ — Shelton is pastor of Bellevue Church, Nashville.



Living for the King

By Howard Kitter

Focal Passage — Matthew 22:15-21,35-40

"It's time for your bath." Nearly every time that statement is made in our home two questions come in reply. "Can it wait until ...?" and "Do I have to wash my hair?" A seven year old always attempts to do as little as they can to get by, don't they? There's not much interest in conforming their life style into unquestioned obedience. Human nature has not changed much over history. As painful as it may be, we, like those spoken of in Matthew 22 are woefully human. This nature desires to do and to change as little as it can and still consider itself as living for the king.

Jesus ... Do I have to pay taxes? This was asked by the Herodians, a smaller religious group with political aspirations. Their reason for this question was to trap Jesus.

The trap was supposed to capture Jesus in one of two ways. One, if he would have opposed the tax then he could have been arrested as a traitor to the Roman government. Two, if he would have agreed to pay tribute to Caesar, he would have lost the hearts of the Jews that despised the Roman rulers. The wise response Jesus gave was perfect. Not simply because it arrested their foolish tinker-

Explore the Bible Lesson

ing with God's Word, but because it was truth.

Here we witness the King giving kingdom truth again. I believe when Jesus said, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's," he spoke of the dual responsibility that God's people have in being both kingdom citizens and community citizens, in that a Christian should obey the law, respect and pray for their leaders (I Peter 2:13 ff). A Christian also has the responsibility to live as a kingdom citizen would, honoring God and rendering to him what has his image embossed on it. The coin that was given to Jesus at his request, had an image of Caesar on it. According to Genesis 1:26-27 people are created in the image of God. Therefore we are to render to Caesar what is his and to God what is his.

It seems obvious that God is far more interested in us, than what we have. Have you personally come to the point in your life that God has received from you the title deed to your life? It is his, we ought to render to God what belongs to him.

Jesus ... What is the greatest command? In other words, "If I

only did a few things, or maybe just one thing, what should that be?"

The reply Jesus gave came from the very omniscience of God. It came packing a powerful punch to the heart. Jesus simply stated that one should, "... Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." What a challenge this is to the person who does as little as they can to get by, and still be considered a Christian.

Jesus spelled out clearly to these people that God is far more interested in them. He is interested in their heart. He desires their love, not just their activity.

Religious activity can be carried on by anyone, whether they are saved or lost. This type of activity is not motivated out of love for God. It is usually performed out of fear. And that, stemming from a works for salvation mentality.

Once that wonderful love relationship with God is ignited, the heart cry resembles, "I'm so grateful, what could I do to serve the King?"

Ask yourself: Do I look for the easiest way of service? What is my motivation for service? Am I trying to get something out of Jesus or am I giving myself to Jesus? ■ — Kitter is pastor of First Church, Bethel Springs.



Start Something New

1997 Season of Home Missions

Home Mission Study

Feb. 16-19



Tennescene

leaders

■ Five Points Church, Five Points, has called **Tommy Bunt** as pastor.

■ **Nelson Turner** of Gamaliel Church, Gamaliel, Ky., has been called as bivocational minister of music, Rayon City Church, Old Hickory.

■ **Ron Stansell**, pastor, Oakland Church, Rutledge, has resigned. He served the church for nearly four years.

■ **Jody Winstead**, pastor, Locust Grove Church, Washburn, has resigned.

churches

■ The Vietnamese congregation of **Immanuel Church, Nashville**, will hold a Vietnamese New Year's Celebration, "The Year of the Water Buffalo," Feb. 8 at 11 a.m. Call (615) 297-5356 for more information.

■ **First Church, Bean Station**, will buy a van and begin a

transportation ministry.

■ **Barnard's Grove Church, Bean Station**, received a gift of \$30,000 at Christmas for land.

■ The Royal Ambassadors of **Inglewood Church, Nashville**, will operate a Valentines Post Office to collect valentines for homebound members of the church.

■ **First Church, Morristown**, will host the music group, Truth, Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

■ **First Church, Lenoir City**, will hold an evangelism crusade March 9-13, beginning each night at 6:30 p.m. Harold F. Hunter, evangelist of Nashville, and Pat Roper, recording musician from Greenville, S.C., will lead it.

associations

■ **Cumberland Gap Association** will hold its annual Evangelism Conference Feb. 10 at 7 p.m. at First Church, Harrogate. The theme is "Living His Commission." Frank Houston, pastor, Bethel Church, Morristown, will speak and music will be provided by the Tri-State Crusade Youth Choir and Doris Hickman. Also Dillard Long, pastor, Dogwood Heights Church, Tazewell, will speak. His church led the association in the number of baptisms last year.

■ **Big Emory Association** recently hosted five pastors from the Treasure Valley Association, Idaho. The association has a partnership with the association. The pastors spoke in 15 churches during the visit.

■ **Nashville Association** is holding a prayer meeting for members of churches in metropolitan Nashville Feb. 7 from 8-9:30 a.m. at

Rivers of Joy Church, Nashville. Additionally, the association, First Church, Nashville, and *NashvilleScene*, a local newspaper, will hold a conference, "Understanding the Opposite Sex," Feb. 28 - March 1 at First Church, Nashville. Dick Purnell, author and speaker, will lead it. For more information, call (615) 664-6081.

■ **Lawrence County Association** will hold a Volunteers in Missions Banquet for all missions volunteers, potential volunteers, and those interested in missions work Feb. 24 at Leoma Church, Leoma, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The association also will meet Feb. 10 to consider selling a home which has been used as a residence for the association's director of missions.

■ **Big Emory Association** will hold its annual Youth Evangelism Conference March 7-8 in Pigeon Forge. Leaders include Jay Strack, evangelist, and musicians Bob Carlisle and the group Sierra. For more information, contact Mark Umbe-hagen, South Harriman

Church, (423) 882-1816.

■ **Big Hatchie Association** will hold its Evangelism Conference Feb. 20 at First Church, Covington beginning at 4:30 p.m. Leaders include Bob Hamblin, Jerry Tidwell, pastor, West Jackson Church, Jackson, Ray Gilder of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's bivocational ministry, and Chris McNairy, pastor, Westhaven Church, Memphis.

■ **Shelby Association** will hold a World Missions Conference Feb. 8-12 for 63 churches and involving 50 missionaries. A dinner and rally for adults will kick off the event on Feb. 8 at Eudora Church, Memphis. During this period children will participate in a Mission Fair and Autograph Party. On Feb. 12 a Youth Mission Rally will be held at Highland Heights Church, Memphis.

the schools

■ **Robert Webber** and **Harold Best** of Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., will lead the "Church Music in the Twenty-First Century" symposium Feb. 13-14 at **Carson-Newman College**, Jefferson City. It is sponsored by the school, Tennessee Baptist Convention, and Louis and Mary Charlotte Ball Institute for Church Music. For more information, call (423) 471-3328 or e-mail measels@cncacc.cn.edu.

■ **Registration**, including late registration for the spring semester of **Union University, Jackson**, will be Feb. 3-11. For more information call (800) 33-UNION.

■ The School of Divinity of **Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, N.C.**, will match each dollar a student's church will give for his or her tuition. The matching scholarship is available each year the student meets grade and course requirements. For more information, call (800) 619-3761.

missionaries

■ **David and Carol Crutchley**, missionaries to Southern Africa, are in the states and can be reached at 7318 Shalimar Pointe Way, Knoxville, 37938.

■ **Jeff and Kathy Deasy**, missionaries to Brazil, have completed language study and arrived at their place of service. They can be reached at Rua Luis Barbalho, Apt. 60, 50001-970 Recife, PE, Brazil. The former **Kathy Callahan** considers New Johnsonville her hometown.

■ **David and Pamela Emmert**, missionaries to Ethiopia, are in the states and can be reached at 5635 Paddington Rd., Dayton, Ohio 45459. He considers Waverly his hometown.



missions



Tennessee samplers

If you were to meet Jesus tomorrow

By John Parker, minister of music/outreach Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville

Expectation is an amazing thing. When a magician performs he successfully carries off his illusions by playing to assumptions you and I make about how things work.

Expectation also acts powerfully upon our mindset in worship. If we were to receive word that God wished to meet us tomorrow at 3:30 in the afternoon, how would that affect our moments leading up to that appointed time? Would we proceed with our usual routine of ball games, or perhaps a date, or a trip to the playground with the kids? How would we spend the hours before that meeting?

I expect many of us might find our Bible, consult with our pastor as to how we might prepare to meet the Almighty, or we might "cram" like a student seeking to pass a final exam. The truth is that it would be nearly impossible to study enough to pass an examination with God. However, we might pray. What is for so many of us the last resort might be the best first option.

Remember that Jesus spent the night before his trial and crucifixion in constant, unrelenting prayer. Of course, that was not so unusual for him. He often retreated in prayer, constantly cultivating the relationship with his Father. We get the feeling that Jesus was at any moment ready to meet the Father, yet ... he spent the night in prayer. It tells me that the most prepared one of us still needs to prayerfully deal with our own attitudes and expectations in worship. ■

Chinese language confirms Bible truth

By Don Bowery, pastor First Church, Mountain City

The Chinese written language dates back at least to 4,500 B.C. This places

the origin of the language in the era following the confusion of tongues at Babel (Genesis 11). The significance of this fact means that an accurate oral tradition of the early days of humankind, as recorded in Genesis, was probably available in the beginnings of the spoken and written Chinese language.

If so, then there should be embedded in the Chinese language some clues to the events recorded in the early chapters of Genesis. Researchers C.H. Kang and Ethel R. Nelson think they have discovered such clues. They explain this in great detail in their book, *The Discovery of Genesis*, 1979, Concordia Publishing House.

For example, take the Chinese word for happiness. It is a very complex symbol having several parts. One part represents God, another part stands for mouth, or by extension man. A third part of the character is a symbol that means garden.

Put the pieces of this word/character together and clearly the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8) is revealed. Other Chinese words such as wife, the devil, righteousness, flood, boat, and tower equally convey the truth revealed in the early chapters of Genesis.

Those who believe the Bible do not need independent evidence validating God's Word. For example, we do not

need a discovery of Noah's ark to believe in the universal flood. But such research can be a great asset in evangelizing the lost (especially of China) and in parrying the false claims of evolution as to man's origin. ■

Worship, work, play

By Jim Justice, associate pastor, music/worship Springfield Church, Springfield

A guest preacher once reported that our present culture is getting mixed up concerning three important aspects of life: worship, work, and discretionary time (play). His comment was, "too many of us **worship** our work, **work** at our play, and **play** at our worship."

I hope that this is not true of our church or of us as individuals. However, if it should be true, I pray that we get off of the "side tracks" of routine, selfishness, insensitivity, complaining, mere traditionalism, or personal agenda, and get back on the "main line."

Let us renew our commitment today to focus our mind's attention and heart's affection upon the Lord and realize that everything else is a distraction to our one, true calling ... worship. ■