

# TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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## this week's news

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## No paper for week of July 2

In keeping with the printing schedule, there will not be a *Baptist and Reflector* July 2. The next issue is July 9. ■

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## Remodeled SBC set for next century

By Wm. Fletcher Allen  
*Baptist and Reflector*

DALLAS — Amid a flurry of motions and resolutions, including a reprimand for The Disney Company, Southern Baptist Convention messengers here June 17-19 remodeled for the next century.

Two pending items of interest dominated the sparsely-attended 140th annual session.

SBC leaders moved messengers through the final step of reorganization in streamlining the convention in a "lean" structure.

And messengers followed up last year's warning to Disney by overwhelmingly passing a resolution that urges all Southern Baptists to "refrain from patronizing" Disney's vast array of entertainment and media entities.

To the business world, that language is tantamount to a boycott of all that Disney produces — including videos, movies, toys, media networks and publications, and anything connected with the mega-corporation. (The complete resolution appears on page 7).

Registration of messengers continued a downward tumble, with only 12,418 registering compared to 13,706 last year in New Orleans. When the convention last met in Dallas (1985), attendance was at an all-time high of 45,519.

That was amid a struggle between moderates and conservatives for SBC leadership — and Charles Stanley was elected as president.

At the 1973 convention in Portland, registration was 8,871.

Del City, Okla., pastor Tom Elliff was re-elected president of the nation's largest (15.7 million) non-Catholic denomination, without opposition.

Joining Elliff as officers are Miles Seaborn, first vice president, pastor of Birchman Church, Fort Worth, Texas; David Galvan, second vice president, pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista Nueva Vida, Garland, Texas;

John Yeats, recording secretary, editor of the *Indiana Baptist*, Indianapolis; and Lee Porter, entering his 21st term as registration secretary, Lawrenceville, Ga. Porter is a

former pastor and retiree from the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Convention messengers also commissioned their new North American Mission Board to direct attention to an intensified soul-winning thrust at the outset of the 21st century.

With a deterioration of families and family values in the United States, the convention authorized a study of whether its cornerstone statement of faith, the *Baptist Faith and Message*, should include a separate definitive statement on Bible-based family principles.

The Southern Baptist Convention's six theological seminaries, Southern, Southeastern, New Orleans, Golden Gate, Southeastern, and Midwestern, vowed to remain faithful in teaching "the authority, inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Bible."

In a unique ceremony, a representative from each seminary signed a prepared covenant to that effect.

Noting "how far we have come in our pilgrimage as Southern Baptists, the ground we have taken, and in some instances, taken back," Elliff said in his presidential address, "it is only by the grace of God that the largest evangelical group in the world has somehow managed to maintain our respect for the Scripture, our love for the Savior, and our passion for souls."



DAVID AND PAULA Green, Mt. Gilead Church, left, and Liz and Frank Kemper, First Church, Adamsville, talk over the day's events at the SBC session in Dallas. Churches of both pastors are in Shiloh Association.

Elliff added, "There are still battles which must be fought and ground to be taken before our Savior's return."

The resolution aimed at The Disney Company had been discussed for a year, since the SBC warned Disney of its possibility at this year's session.

The resolution, which has no binding effect on any Southern Baptist church or individual, also was directed toward "any company that promotes immoral ideologies and practices." It passed by close to 90 percent.

The resolution was drafted by the Resolutions Committee.

It did not use the word "boycott," though secular news media has emphasized it. The resolution is a followup to a 1996 resolution calling for a boycott if Disney continued its "anti-Christian and anti-family trend" in a number of its subsidiaries' feature films, and in preferential treatment of homosexuals, such as health benefits for homosexual employees' partners.

One notable opponent of the resolution is Jim Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, and immediate past president of the SBC. Disney World is located in Orlando.

— See Remodeled SBC, page 3

## Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord

Psalms 33:12 tells us, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

We've celebrated Flag Day already, and now on June 29, there is Christian Citizenship Sunday. Of course Independence Day follows swiftly on July 4.

In the midst of all the hustle and rushing around that threatens to engulf us, we should seek at least a few moments for reflection and reverent thanksgiving to God for his gifts of freedom of mind, body, and soul — and for his perseverance with a wayward people.

Long before July 4, 1776, there was a burning desire for liberty in the hearts of brave newcomers to what we call "America." Religious freedom was a precious commodity, and our forefathers faithfully sought it. But they also sought for themselves and others in the English colonies, an outpouring of blessed soul freedom and personal liberty.

They learned responsibility. They came with sacrifice, and with a willingness to die for the rights of all people. They wanted to be worthy of the blessing in Psalm 33. Because of their faith in God and themselves, we are blessed today to celebrate. **BGR**

'Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord'  
(Psalm 33:12)

Observe Christian Citizenship Sunday  
June 29, 1997  
Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission  
of the Southern Baptist Convention

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- ▶ **Office** — *Baptist and Reflector*, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
- Mailing address** — P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- Phone** — (615) 371-2003.
- FAX** — (615) 371-2080
- E-mail** — 70420.63@CompuServe.com
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# Wade Watts rejoins family at Memphis home

Baptist Press

MEMPHIS — Southern Baptist missionary Wade Watts has come home to his wife, Nancy, and their two sons, Marcus and Joshua, after 15 months in hospitals.

In February 1996 the family was injured in a car wreck on a mountainous road in Peru, where they had served as Foreign Mission Board missionaries since 1986. Wade and Marcus suffered severe brain injuries and lingered in comas. Doctors were at first uncertain the pair would even live, then offered little hope they would come out of their comas.

By November 1996, however, Marcus had made a miraculous recovery. Now 10, he suc-

cessfully completed his fourth-grade year in a Memphis school and has even been released from physical therapy.

And in May, Wade Watts was released from a rehabilitation center after dramatic improvements in his physical condition.

"A few weeks ago, we were hoping Wade would be able to move just one finger so he would be able to control an electric wheelchair," said Travis White, a Foreign Mission Board physician who has monitored the Watts case. "A computer had been ordered



WATTS

that would speak for him when he blinked his eye."

But now, Watts is feeding himself and speaking, White said. The computer order was canceled.

"God has answered our prayers," said Nancy Watts. "We've been praying Wade would be able to speak again so he could witness and preach, and the Lord has given him back his voice. Wade likes to eat, and now he's about to eat us out of house and home!"

Watts still requires around-the-clock care, and his homecoming has set off a new round of adjustments in their family life. But everyone is glad for the opportunity to make them.

Nancy Watts dates the turnaround in Wade's recent

dramatic improvement to an open house in April for a home provided for the family by the Highland Heights, Memphis. Bedfast, Wade was able to attend the event, where he was greeted by dozens of longtime friends and supporters. "It was that day he started picking up momentum. I think it made a difference," said Nancy.

Now Watts is using his right hand, enabling him to feed himself and even comb his hair and brush his teeth. He is able to sit up for short periods.

And he has a word for all those who have prayed for him for the past 15 months: "I plan to go back to Peru."

After everything else God has done, who's going to doubt that? ■

# NAMB trustees organize, elect Fuller, Reccord

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Trustees of the North American Mission Board held their first meeting June 19 in Dallas following the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting, handling necessary organizational items and electing board officers, including Charles Fuller as chairman, and a new leadership team led by Robert Reccord as president.

Creation of the new agency culminated the SBC restructuring which began in 1993 and put forth in the "Covenant for a New Century" approved by messengers to the SBC's 1995 and 1996 annual meetings.

The plan reduced the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12, including combining resources of the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission into one new home missions agency, the North American Mission Board.

C.B. Hogue, chairman of NAMB's incorporators, who served as a nominating committee and presidential search committee, opened the NAMB trustee meeting at the Hyatt Regency in Dallas with a devotion on unity. He encouraged trustees to seek a "unity of vision, service, and celebration, beginning with unity in Jesus Christ."

Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, told NAMB trustees and a standing room only gallery they were participating in an historic moment: "Southern Baptists for years and years will look back on this moment as the birth of the North American Mission Board. On behalf of Southern Baptists, I want to give you this new baby, confident that you will care for it and nurture it as God leads," Chapman said.

Trustees unanimously accepted proposed bylaws following two amendments which allow each of three trustee standing committees to elect its own vice chairman. The vice chairmen also would serve on the board's trustee executive committee, with committee chairmen who are appointed by the board chairman.

Although a slate of officers was recom-

mended by the incorporators, each person was placed in nomination by a trustee and voted on separately. In addition to Fuller, who is pastor of First Church, Roanoke, Va., other officers are Gary Underwood, Texarkana, Ark., first vice chairman, and Donley Brown, Jefferson City, Mo., second vice chairman.

The board's bylaws call for three additional offices to be filled by appropriate agency employees. Elected treasurer was Ernest Kelley, chief financial officer for NAMB; assistant treasurer, Carlos Ferrer, NAMB controller; and secretary, Marjorie Bowman, administrative assistant to the president's office. All were elected without opposition.

Following a 15-minute video biography of Reccord, Dallas pastor Danny Souder nominated Reccord to serve as the first president of NAMB. With two dissenting votes, Reccord was elected and received a standing ovation from trustees and guests.

The two dissenting votes were cast by Rose Bear, a campus minister from Terre Haute, Ind., and Roger Gorby, a pastor from Ladysmith, Va.

Bear told Baptist Press although she is impressed with Reccord personally, she is concerned "because of the way the transition was handled by the Implementation Task Force" which Reccord chaired for more than a year and his seeming "lack of missions involvement."

Hogue disagreed, telling Baptist Press the ITF conducted its affairs as directed by legal counsel and that Reccord has significant missions involvement. "Bob Reccord served as a summer missionary, worked for the Home Mission Board in evangelism, served as a bivocational pastor in a pioneer missions state and led his present church to strongly support missions, including starting several new churches," Hogue said.

Gorby declined to comment, except to pledge his support for Reccord.

Following Reccord's election, Fuller called the board into executive session,

which lasted an hour and 20 minutes. He told Baptist Press such a session would be rare during his tenure but was necessary in order to discuss sensitive personnel issues.

He said part of the executive session was spent discussing the proposed salary structure for NAMB, which had been criticized publicly by two Home Mission Board trustees a few weeks prior to the meeting. Trustees accepted the structure, after reducing the top end of the president's pay range, reported at \$140,000 to \$210,000, to below \$200,000. The pay range of \$100,000 to \$150,000 for the five vice presidents was not reduced.

Also during the executive session, trustees filled four of the five vice presidential positions: Ernest Kelley, formerly HMB interim president, was elected vice president of business services; Michael Day, previously executive vice president of the Brotherhood Commission, was elected vice president for strategy planning and mobilization; Richard Harris, formerly HMB director of mass evangelism, was elected vice president for church planting; and Nate Adams, vice president of *Christianity Today*, was elected vice president of media and missions education. A vice president of evangelization has not yet been selected.

Kelley, Day, and Harris begin their responsibilities immediately, while Reccord and Adams will assume full-time duties later in the summer.

Following his election, Reccord addressed the trustees and NAMB employees in Alpharetta, Ga., and Fort Worth, Texas, who were watching the meeting via a live satellite feed.

Looking directly into the camera, Reccord told the employees, "The good news is, you all have jobs. Congratulations and thank you. We could not have done this without you."

Reccord emphasized that NAMB is a new organization, not simply a combination of the three former agencies. "We have our own shoes and will make our own way," he told employees. ■ — This article also contains information from Associated Baptist Press.



RECCORD

# Remodeled SBC set for year 2000 ...

## Mission boards, others, have new look

— Continued from page 1

Henry, former pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, had argued against the resolution since the topic was discussed at last year's convention. He did not get to a microphone in time to speak to messengers.

Henry told reporters who sought his view after the vote that he thought the action would adversely affect evangelism.

After last year's resolution, or notice of intent, he said, members of First Church, Orlando, came to him in tears, saying that Disney workers to whom they had been witnessing, asked them not to contact them anymore — "if that's the way you feel about me or people, I don't have time for it."

Wiley Drake, pastor of First Church of Buena Park, about five miles from Disneyland, told reporters that the resolution would "help us win people to Jesus ... because the world is not looking for a mamby-pamby bunch of pansy-waist Christian that don't take a stand."

Disney released a brief written statement in response to the SBC resolution: "We are proud that the Disney brand creates more family entertainment of every kind than anyone else in the world."

"We plan to continue our leadership role, and in fact, we will increase production of family entertainment."

Observers noted that Southern Baptists will be hard-pressed to refrain from all entities connected with Disney. The empire includes the popular theme parks, merchandise stores, ABC network, motion

picture companies such as Touchstone, Hollywood, Caravan, and Miramax; cable TV channels ESPN, Lifetime, A&E and The Disney Channel; a number of radio and TV stations in major markets; Hyperion book publishing; and the Anaheim Angels major league baseball team and Mighty Ducks pro hockey team.

Restructuring of Southern Baptist Convention's boards and institutions was completed during the Dallas convention.

Finalizing under "Covenant for a New Century" was highlighted by a new North American Mission Board.

The task force overseeing the implementation concluded its two-year assignment and voiced confidence that the SBC will "enter the 21st century better equipped and positioned than ever to take the Gospel to the world."

In an eight-page report to messengers, the 10-member Implementation Task Force reiterated its estimate of a minimum five-year savings of \$34 million to be available for strategic frontline mission endeavors.

Ronnie Floyd, chairman of the SBC's Executive Committee, assured messengers during his report that the committee would monitor the money figures during the five-year period, to see whether the savings would meet estimates.

In the remodeling, the erstwhile Foreign Mission Board came in for some restructuring also, including a name change to match the next century's thrust, International Mission Board.

NAMB includes the former

Home Mission Board, the Brotherhood Commission, and the Radio and Television Commission, and will be housed in Atlanta.

Robert Reccord, Virginia pastor who chaired the ITF, became president of NAMB. The Christian Life Commission becomes the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

The Education Commission, Historical Commission, and Stewardship Commission, no longer exist. Some of their programs were given to other agencies.

The ITF was created by the Executive Committee and pared the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12. The personnel reduction in all affected agencies is approximately 200 — from about 565 to 365.

Messengers voted to empower the convention president to name a committee to consider adding a section on the family to the *Baptist Faith and Message*. A report will be brought to the 1998 convention in Salt Lake City.

To undergird the convention's final push under Bold Mission Thrust, the goal of sharing the Gospel with every person in the world by 2000, adopted by the SBC in 1976, Baptists are being urged to fast and pray every Wednesday in 1998 and 1999, ending the day's fast with an evening church fellowship meal.

Ray Edgemon, director of the BSSB discipleship and family development divisions asked messengers, "Could you imagine what God would do if 40,000 Southern Baptist churches fasted every single Wednesday? May God help us to undergird what we're doing with prayer and fasting to commit ourselves totally to the power of God to bring about what we have prayed for since 1976 — that every person have the opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel by the year 2000."

The Wednesday night missions report was a highlight of the three-day session. Six new believers gave



**TO THE CROSS** was the theme for the 140th annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting June 17-19 at the Dallas Convention Center. Tennessee Baptists numbered 850.

their testimonies, a great mass choir provided music, and Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church, suburban Memphis, preached.

Rogers issued a call to life in Christ and missions involvement, and challenged messengers.

"You may say that God didn't call you to have a missionary heart. There's nothing wrong with you that a good dose of salvation or an old-fashioned revival won't cure.

"I'm telling you, my friend, if you understand what Jesus did on that cross ... you cannot be silent."

In addition to resolutions dealing with moral directions of corporate entities, messenger resolutions also called for:

- prayer and foreign policy in behalf of people who face persecution for their faith;

- regular and systematic giving for the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund;

- support of displaying the Ten Commandments in government offices and courthouses;

- for Bible translators and publishers to use time-honored, historic principles and refrain from any deviation... and others, including support for home schooling.

Texas governor George W. Bush welcomed messengers.

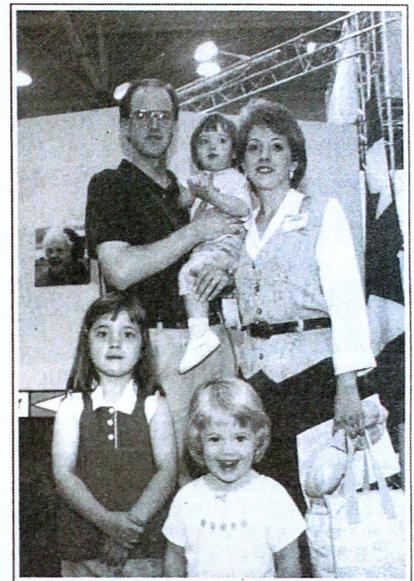
In other actions, messengers voted:

- to approve a 1997-98 comprehensive budget of \$635,971,716, the total of all the budgets of the SBC agencies — including a recommended \$6.1 million operating

budget;

- to hold the June 2003 annual meeting in Phoenix, Ariz.;

- to select James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., to preach the 1998 sermon. He is the new Execu-



**THE CONVENTION** was a family affair for the Powell family of Memphis. Gary Powell, minister of music and education at Cherokee Church, attended with daughters Bethany, in arms, Emily, left, Grace, and wife, Norma.

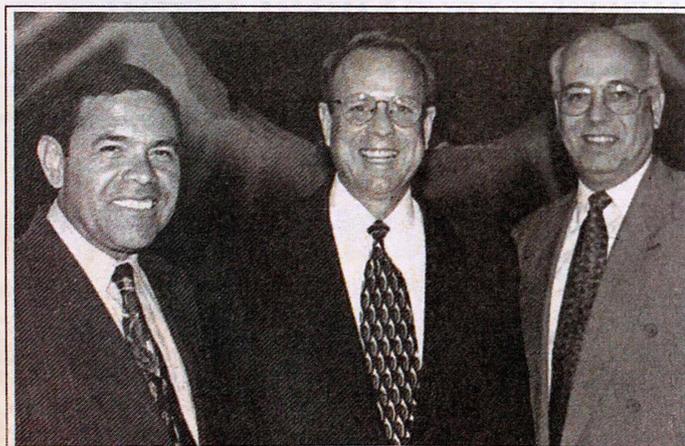
tive Committee chairman and a past president of the SBC Pastor's Conference.

Richard Land, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, preached the convention sermon.

He targeted abortion as one of America's greatest sins needing God's correction. He said perhaps "we aborted the one whom God sent to find the cure for cancer," or the next Billy Graham.

Each of the 31 million babies aborted since 1973 is a sacrifice to the pagan gods of social convention and material well-being, he said.

Texas had the most messengers with 2,200, followed by Georgia, 1,100; North Carolina, 935; Tennessee, 850, and Alabama 700. **B&R**



**TOM ELLIFF**, center, was reelected president of the SBC unopposed at the annual session. Elliff is pastor of First Church Del City, Okla. Other officers include David Galvan, second vice president, pastor of Primera Bautista Nueva Vida, Garland, Texas; and John Yeats, recording secretary, editor of the Indiana Baptist. First vice president Miles Seaborn and registration secretary Lee Porter (re-elected) were not present for photo.

## Pre-convention event

# Crossover Dallas is biggest such event

By Connie Davis  
Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Texas Baptists, with the help of volunteers from other states, can continue to claim that everything's bigger in Texas as they led Crossover Dallas to become the largest pre-convention evangelism effort.

The June 13-15 event included 142 block parties as well as door-to-door evangelism and street evangelism. Crossover, in its ninth year, is planned not only to reach people for Christ but to demonstrate different kinds of evangelism.

During the three days of activities, volunteers gave away three tons of chicken and thousands of New Testaments, conducted neighborhood surveys, and shared the Gospel in church and shopping center parking lots. Reports indicate more than 3,600 people made professions of faith in Christ.

Bill Cox of Nashville coordinated Crossover block parties for the sixth year and confirmed that this year's effort was by far the largest yet. He helped coordinate the block parties led by Dallas area churches with the help of volunteers attending the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Cox, staff evangelist of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, and retired Baptist Sunday School Board employee, said he was impressed with the wide variety of activities Dallas-area churches used to reach people. Churches had pool parties, concerts, and many other activities to draw people to the block parties, said Cox, who is a Mission Service Corps volunteer for the North American Mission Board (formerly Home Mission Board).

The other key ingredients besides the

churches were the Dallas associational staff and the volunteers, said Cox.

### Volunteers from Tennessee

Four volunteers from Tennessee who participated were David and Treva Thompson and their children, Landon, 12, and Leah, 10. David Thompson is pastor of Alta Loma Church, Madison.

The Thompsons, who have participated in Crossover events for five years, helped members of Inglewood Church, Grand Prairie, Texas, hold a block party Saturday morning. When they arrived, the whole family helped distribute flyers to remind people in the community near the church about the upcoming event. The block party was held on the grounds of an elementary school near the church, Treva Thompson explained.

Then the family pitched in to help lead the activities. The kids helped with the children's activities and helped serve food and their parents visited with people and shared their faith. David Thompson also spoke to the crowd, sharing his testimony.

Thompson explained that to share their faith he and his wife and the other workers gave New Testaments to people. As they gave a copy to them, they showed the person several verses marked in it which are commonly referred to as the "Roman Road." The verses explain how a person can become a Christian.

"It was so easy. Any Christian can witness this way," said Treva.

The couple led five people to make professions of faith and since they began participating in Crossover events about 50 make commitments to Christ.

"The receptiveness at these block parties is just tremendous," said David.

The family plans to participate in Crossover Salt Lake City in 1998, said Treva. "We would encourage all Tennessee Baptists to participate next year. It will be a real blessing," David added.

### Cox participates also

Bill Cox not only helped direct Crossover, but he participated. Cox worked at Bible Way Church, located in South Dallas. The African-American church only has about 35 active members, but the block party was a great success, said Cox.

He saw the church's members and volunteers feed 425 people and help 61 people make professions of faith. About 50 volunteers from Louisiana and Ennis and Dallas, Texas, helped them.

Before Cox returned home, Willie Smith, pastor of Bible Way Church, told him that people in the community who didn't attend the block party because of the heat still heard the amplified music and testimonies. They had thanked him "for doing something positive in their community," said Cox.

### Coordinator explains plans

To make it all happen, Cox recruited a team of volunteer leaders which he assigned to 10 or more churches wishing to lead a block party. To assist the churches, the volunteer leaders helped

the churches survey their neighborhoods and make plans.

To further assist the churches, the North American Mission Board and the Dallas area association provided training for church members. The NAMB also provided 42,500 New Testaments, of which 7,500 were in Spanish, and they provided much of the chicken which was distributed.

Cox said it was amazing how God worked throughout the events. The week before the weather included rain. The day when most Crossover events were held, Saturday, the weather was sunny. The next day included rain.

Cox, who is 70, said "this is one of the greatest experiences of my ministry, to see this many people come to the Lord." **B&R** — Baptist Press contributed to this story.



COX



TENNESSEANS pausing outside the convention hall are, from left, Treva and David Thompson, pastor, Alta Loma Church, Madison; and the Haun family, Dean Haun, pastor, Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage; Jonathan Haun; and Pam Haun.

## SBC messengers experience interactive exhibit area

Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Messengers and visitors to the Exhibit Hall of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting participated in many events offered.



WATCHING a video in the exhibit hall are Lauren, left, and Katye Oppizzi of Chamberlain Memorial Church, Chattanooga. Their father, Michael, is pastor at the church.

Adults practiced their golf swing and exercised on equipment at an exhibit sponsored by the Annuity Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board. Others were being counseled by staff on their computer-gen-

erated fitness evaluation.

In another area children huddled around TV screens to watch videos produced by the BSSB. Youngsters halted in what appeared to be a teen's cluttered bedroom. The area

presented youth programs and was manned by young adults.

A Gospel band performed at the new International Mission Board's booth. And pastors were lined up at the North American Mission Board's ex-



PAUSING in front of the International Mission Board exhibit which included live music are Dylan Seals, left, and Brent Seals, pastor, First Church, Elizabethton.

hibit to personalize a video introducing the board to church members. Pastors stood in front of a camera and read from a teleprompter. A few minutes later they walked away with tape in hand.

Tennesseans reacted to exhibits positively. Shirley Jackson of Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, said the area gave her ideas for preschool training she leads. Jim Stroud, pastor, Third Creek Church, Knoxville, appreciated the values at the Baptist Book Store exhibit.

Greg Long, pastor, Pleasant Grove Church, Maryville, liked the BSSB's area which grouped the staff by assignment, allowing him to better understand its changes. L. Gale Lyon, pastor, Park Lane Church, Knoxville, was glad to see the new agencies already promoting themselves. **B&R**



# Goodbye old friends, and hello



Everyone knows that Southern Baptists officially voted their feelings last week about the non-family directions taken by the Disney enterprises.

Most Southern Baptists by now have heard about the resolution passed June 18 at the annual SBC meeting urging Southern Baptists to "refrain from patronizing The Disney Company and any of its related entities ..." (See page 7, this issue.)

And most Southern Baptists surely have realized the extensive ramifications for each family in "keeping the faith" regarding Disney and similar corporate entities.

But that resolution was not the only event of the 140th annual meeting. Though important as it relates to moral concerns, it was only a small part of the Dallas convention.

The Wednesday night missions emphasis was a spectacular example of Southern Baptist missions at work.

Six new believers gave their testimonies of their new-found faith in Jesus Christ: Sekou Maiga, Niger Republic; Kathy Phillips, Portland, Ore.; Atsuko Shiroshima, Japan; Kakda Tuon, Cambodia; Lillian Velles, Colorado Springs, Col.; and Mike Woody, Fort Worth, Texas.

The entire program was dedicated to missions — and was bolstered by combined choirs of the Dallas/Fort Worth area. The missions message and challenge to commitment was given by Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church, near Memphis.

The testimonies marked a high point of the entire

three-day session. And showing of a missions video called "The Harvest," was a perfect introduction to Rogers' message, *The Cross over the World*.

In addition to relegating to the history books the names of the two mission boards, Home and Foreign, the convention welcomed the new names — North American Mission Board and International Mission Board. It will take a while for these to be firmly implanted, but they are good names and fit for the work we do in missions.

There also was a brief time during the closing session for messengers to say goodbye to commissions that were eliminated by the now-completed remodeling.

This is like saying goodbye to old and faithful friends, friends who have served the cause of Christ well, and who deserve accolades. We say to them, well done, stalwart servants.

We refer to the Historical Commission, the Education Commission, and the Stewardship Commission. Some of their duties will be picked up by other groups — but the commissions are gone.

These commissions, which in reality are people, have served well. Their places in Southern Baptist history are deserved. Their work through the years has been hard, accomplished with care, and often unrecognized. This is an attempt to say to them, you have served long and well.

They will be missed more in the future than they were appreciated in the past. To all the people involved, we say, "Thank you."

The Historical Commission has helped connect our

storied past with an exciting present and promising future. Southern Baptists have been better equipped to record their history with the help of the commission. If you need

advice, you can still get some help from a small cadre housed in the Executive Office building in Nashville.

The Executive Committee is now responsible for the work of the Stewardship Commission. And Baptist colleges and universities will try to fill in where the Education Commission operated.

As for the Disney resolution, Southern Baptists should have learned by now that the secular community does not understand resolutions' lack of authority. Indeed, some Baptists may not understand.

A resolution to avoid using Disney products or its theme parks, etc., is toothless, though well-intended. While it is a strong statement of the will of a group of Southern Baptists, it will be hard to gauge.

Disney's hands are into a multitude of entities that touch the lives of most Americans.

However, now that the resolution has passed, Southern Baptists have a rare opportunity to make a difference in a public way. The time for rhetoric is over. If the messengers mean business about refraining from involvement with Disney — now is the time. Whether or not we succeed will be our burden of proof. Now that we are into it, the world will be looking even more closely. Can we bear scrutiny? *B&R*



By Wm. Fletcher Allen, Editor

## Just for today

By Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis

### Start with a smile

Optometrist to new young assistant: "When the customer asks how much, say, 'Seventy-five dollars.'"

Assistant: "Then what?"

Optometrist: "If his eyes don't flutter, say 'For the frames.'"

Assistant: "Then what?"

Optometrist: "If his eyes still don't flutter, say, 'Each.'"

### Take this truth

How much will the traffic bear? That's the key word among merchandisers in pricing new products. No matter how much it costs us to make it, how much can we charge and make a good profit? The answer is simple — you can't get away ultimately with anything that is wrong. Sooner or later you will pay for every sin.

### Memorize this Scripture

"The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23

### Pray this prayer

Lord, keep before me the addictive and destructive power of sin. Lead me to see all I do in the light of its effect on my life. ■

## Everything's okay now, we've paid for the house

I don't know when it started, but some experts say it really caught on after World War II.

Every family wanted to own their own house.

Often that purchase price was stretched out for 10, 15, or sometime 30 years. And for some of us that's a lifetime.

Most families worked hard to get the house paid for. Some sacrificed to be able to make the statement, "We've paid for the house."

Sometimes the hard work and constant tension broke up the family. The mortgage debt appeared to be as apocalyptic as a sword suspended on a tiny thread, and hanging over the "breadwinners."

"We have to pay off the house mortgage," was the plaintive cry.

There is another way to look at the family situation. Why not pay attention to the most important item in the life of the family — making the house a home.

So then, when things get bad, we can

### one word more

— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

say that we are working hard to pay for the home.

Our father never owned a house — but we always had a roof over us, and four sturdy walls surrounding us.

Our father never owned a house, but he and our mother made us a home. Somehow we were never overly concerned that we didn't own a house.

I think that is because we had a home — all six of us. Our parents made it a home, and I'm sure they worked at it.

It was not a home where there was a long list of rules — you know, a list of what to do and what not to do. There was no printed code of ethics, no dire warnings of punishment. It amazes me even now when I realize that our home

was truly a refuge from the shocks of the outside world.

Oh there was excitement and wonder. Our parents helped us to grow in tune with God and his creation. The stars were our canopy, made by God with extraordinary care and energy and a burst of creative genius.

The pastures and fields, woodlands and plum groves where we wandered also were our home. The friendly carpets of green were matched by the wheat's golden grain — and the crickets and katydids lulled us to sleep as the pines whispered.

Each spring was an explosion of yellows, blues, shades of red and purples — the flower garden was a carpet of splendid color.

And inside that house, we took all of that and the love of parents and children for each other — and for God. We took it, and cherished it. Our parents paid for our home with love. ■



ALLEN

## What the world needs now, most of all, is real love

In other articles and places, I have defended my definition of love. Love is doing what is best for the object of one's love, despite what it costs to the one who loves.

Jesus on Calvary is cited as the supreme example. I contend, here in this article, that the lack of this kind of love can be demonstrated to be the root of most conflict whether in the family, community, work place, or world-at-large.

We can start with children in the family and build this analogy. When two children argue over some toy or play space, both usually believe they are right and that their "rights" have been threatened or abridged. One child might say, "It's my toy and she will break it if she plays with it." The other might try to take it and

### families matter

— by Paul Barkley, counselor, professor

break it accidentally, then appeal to mother for intervention because she was hit by the child that owned the toy. Each child will rationalize personal behavior to try to convince mother she was right.

Mommy and Daddy go into divorce court, each believing that he/she is right in the situation. He or she will call upon a judge to decide as both try to rationalize their sides of the situation.

Daddy has a business partner who doesn't carry his part of the load. He decides it is time to dissolve the partnership and hires a lawyer to present his rationalization to a jury who will be asked

to decide the case.

Mommy works with someone who abuses the sick leave policy and does not make production. She goes to her supervisor to make her case. The co-worker gets angry. Both try to convince the boss that their rights have been abridged, and they are the wronged party. The boss must decide.

We could carry the analogy worldwide, and find either love or the lack of love. The Apostle Paul said we are to submit to each other. This means doing what is best for the other, despite the cost to us. Problems would then be stopped before it's too late. Paul carries this analogy from husband-wife, to parent-child, employer-employee, in Ephesians 5:21 to 6:6. ■

# Pastors learn conditions necessary for revival

For Baptist Press

DALLAS — Pursuing the theme, "The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit," Southern Baptist pastors convened their annual conference June 15-16 at the Dallas Convention Center.

Eighteen speakers confronted the pastors with the conditions necessary for God to move in power among the 40,000-plus churches of the Southern Baptist Convention.

If Southern Baptists are going to see God move in power, they must give up religious traditions and the pains of the past that stand in the way, Claude Thomas, senior pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas, said.

"If, in God's sovereignty, he does desire to do something beyond that which is normally done, we want to be in a position where we can cooperate with what he wants to do," Thomas said.

"While we can't give up the foundations of our faith or our allegiance to the Word of God, we must give up anything that would imprison us in past experiences and prevent us from progressing with God."

Bruce Perkins, senior pastor of Memorial Church, Grapevine, Texas, said too many pas-

tors have lost touch with God and cannot lead their congregations to revival.

Citing personal experience, Perkins explained Memorial Church experienced rapid growth, slow growth and then decline because, he said, "I lost the influence of God in my life. ... The programs were in place, but the passion was not there."

Perkins said the church began to grow again only after he realized the congregation needed a new pastor — him — surrendered to God.

"The best thing you could do is resign this weekend — not to your church, but to God," Perkins told the pastors.

Taking his text from Daniel 10, Stan Coffey, senior pastor of San Jacinto Church, Amarillo, Texas, urged the pastors to seek a "fresh touch from God" that will put the pastor on his knees in prayer, on his face in worship, and on his feet in service.

"Whenever you commit yourself to seek a fresh touch from God (a) battle royal is going to be waged above you," Coffey said. Pastors must be willing to pay the price of spiritual warfare in order to get the "fresh touch."

"It is on your knees that you will get your victory," Coffey

said. "God brings us down to lift us up."

Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church in Cordova, said the spirit of God is more a burden than a blessing to the Christian who does not understand the power of the Holy Spirit in his life.

"We are in a battle and we are not going to win apart from the Spirit-filled life," Rogers said. "We are to be redeeming the time, for the day is evil. The days are too short; the Gospel is too wonderful for living in carnality."

If revival is going to come to Southern Baptist churches, pastors must have church members who will commit themselves to praying for their pastor, said John Maxwell, president of INJOY ministry of San Diego, Calif.

"The most valuable player in the church is the man or woman who will stand in the gap for a pastor and ask God to give that pastor an anointing of the Holy Spirit until revival breaks out in that church," Maxwell said.

He cited a survey revealing 70 percent of pastors have no one they consider a close friend. Maxwell challenged the pastors to return home and seek out church members who would support them in prayer.

"The only hope we have for

revival in our churches is to raise up prayer partners who can make a difference," he declared. "If we are going to have revival, we are going to have to mobilize our people to come alongside and pray with us and for us, because only together can we do what God wants us to do in our churches and in our communities."

Keith Thomas, senior pastor of First Church, West Palm Beach, Fla., said a powerful movement of God's spirit will not come as long as churches cling to routines of traditional worship.

Preaching from John 4, Thomas asserted Southern Baptists need to recover true worship.

Thomas bemoaned that many Christians in Southern Baptist churches "believe the right things" but have nonetheless "lost a passion for God."

James Merritt, senior pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., said bold biblical preaching will be required if America is to be turned back from destruction.

He told listeners to be faithful in preaching the Word and not worry about healing the sick, raising the dead, speaking in tongues, or trading in miracles.

"Preach the Word," not book reviews, economics, magazine

To The Cross

SBC '97 - Dallas

articles or philosophy, he said. "If you preach this book, you will not only meet every felt need there is, you will uncover needs people don't even know they have."

More pastors need to admonish public leaders on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, the lottery, and gambling, he said.

Ed Young, senior pastor of Second Church, Houston, highlighted the importance of balancing correct doctrine with compassion and witness if a congregation is to make an impact on its community.

O.S. Hawkins, senior pastor of First Church, Dallas, said in their scramble to create an in-offensive setting where "seekers" can be comfortable, many churches have offended the "Seeker" who calls a lost world to repent of its sins.

Thomas was elected president of the conference by acclamation. Pat Pajak, pastor of Tabernacle Church, Decatur, Ill., was elected vice president. Mike Gray, pastor of Southeast Church, Salt Lake City, was elected secretary. ■



# NAMB recognizes Tennessean Pulley, other church planters

For Baptist Press

DALLAS — Southern Baptists have begun four churches per day for three of the last four years, according to Charles Chaney, extension vice president for the Home Mission Board.

That evaluation of recent work was delivered during the HMB's annual New Work Banquet on June 16, when leaders in church planting were recognized.

► Billy F. Billingsley, pastor of Sheridan Hills Church, Hollywood, Fla., received the Presidential Award for outstanding contribution in church starting. He is the founding pastor of Sheridan Hills, which has started 53 churches since 1963.

► Larry L. Lewis, retired HMB president and now national facilitator for Celebrate Jesus 2000 through Mission America, received the Extension Award.

"In the last 10 years, we have had more than 3,000 Southern Baptist churches. That's the first time since 1955," said Chaney.

► Dennis Pulley, director of missions for Robertson County Baptist Association, Springfield, received the 1997 Metropolitan Church Planting Award for outstanding leadership in spreading Christ's message.

► Leonard King, director of missions for the Roswell, Hightower, and Etowah Baptist associations in Georgia, received the 1997 Town and Country Church Planting Award. King has served in Georgia for 20 years and has had more than 30 successful church starts.

► Harry Watson, director of missions for the Southern Nevada Baptist Association in Las Vegas, received the Mega City Missions Award. In the past four years he has helped start 68 congregations.

► Doug Wiles, pastor of Friendship Community Church in Canton, Ohio, accepted the Church-Type Mission Award on behalf of his church. The mission started six months ago and averages 65 in attendance on Sunday mornings.

► Clark Llewellyn, pastor of Beth-El Church in Jacksonville, Ill., accepted the Part-

nership Church Award on behalf of his church. The church averages 40 in attendance on Sunday mornings and has sponsored six new church starts.

► Nhia Leng Vang, pastor of First Hmong Chapel in Detroit, received the Language Church Planter Award. Vang was a pastor in Laos before the communist takeover there. He then came to the United States and has started several Hmong and Laotian churches in Michigan.

► Marcos Castro, Hispanic catalytic missionary in Glendale, Ariz., received the Language Church Multiplier Award. Castro has planted four churches in Texas, 25 in California, and 10 in Arizona.

► Ronald McCrary, pastor of Christian Family Fellowship, Austell, Ga., received the Black Church Extension Church Planter Award. Christian Family Fellowship averages 48 in attendance on Sunday mornings. McCrary has baptized as many as seven people in one month, and the church is reaching people in



DIRECTORS of missions William Gray, left, Stewart County/Truett associations and Dennis Pulley, Robertson County Association, visit during the convention.

multi-housing units.

► Elroy Barber, pastor of Westside International Church, Hollywood, Fla., received the Black Church Extension Church Sponsor Award. Westside International has started in 1993 and since 1994 has sponsored 11 new congregations.

► Huber Heights Church, Huber Heights, Ohio, was awarded the 1995-1996 Bronze Key Church Award. It has sponsored five congregations, started five new congregations, started 11 new ministries, and

baptized 66 people.

► Florida Boulevard Church, Baton Rouge, La., was awarded the 1995-1996 Silver Key Church Award. It has sponsored nine congregations, started six new congregations, started four new ministries, and baptized 109 people.

► Riverside Baptist Church, Denver, was awarded the 1995-1996 Gold Key Church Award. It has sponsored 13 congregations, started six new congregations, started three new ministries, and baptizing 270 people. ■

# Disney resolution one of 12 adopted by messengers

By Dwayne Hastings  
For Baptist Press

DALLAS — Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Dallas June 17-19 approved 12 resolutions, all non-binding, but it was a resolution chastising The Disney Company for "increasingly promoting immoral ideologies" and targeting the entertainment giant for economic action that captured the nation's attention.

A year after warning Disney its "anti-Christian and anti-family" direction in product production and corporate policy might bring punitive measures against the company, messengers voted "to refrain from patronizing" the entertainment giant and any of its subsidiaries, as well as any other company that similarly "promotes immoral ideologies and practices."

The resolution, which gained overwhelming approval June 18, noted, "The Disney Company has not only ignored our concerns, but flagrantly furthered this moral digression in its products and policies."

Adopting a resolution on religious persecution, messengers asked Southern Baptists to prayerfully intercede on behalf of persons around the world who are being persecuted for their faith, and to "encourage our government officials to elevate religious liberty concerns to the highest priority in foreign policy."

The resolution noted American companies and government officials appeared to value "economic gain over religious liberties" in the offending countries.

The plight of the world's hungry was addressed in another resolution accepted by SBC messengers.

Noting Southern Baptists support more than 200 hunger ministries worldwide, the resolution underscored the need for "regular and systematic giving" to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

Messengers approved a resolution calling for Texas Gov. George W. Bush to call a special legislative session to enact legislation to stem a pending lawsuit that "is causing the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars to worthwhile religious and other charitable causes."

The suit, *Richie v. SBC, et al.*, seeks a claimed \$1 billion in damages because of alleged illegalities in issuing charitable gift annuities.

John Sullivan, chairman of the SBC Resolutions Committee, told the convention a resolution adopted by messengers to the 1996 SBC in New Orleans condemning the late-term abortion technique known as partial-birth abortion was reaffirmed by this year's committee. Sullivan is executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention.

Messengers agreed June 19 to resolutions on the display of the Ten Commandments on government property, as well as a resolution urging Bible publishers to resist efforts to modernize Bible translations. Weighing in on the current debate over the display of the Ten Commandments, messengers pledged support for the Scriptural text's public display "in government offices and courthouses." Alleging prohibition of their display is "clearly discrimination against religious expression," the resolution also endorsed pending congressional legislation calling for a religious freedom amendment.

On the heels of the decision of the publisher and translator of the New International Version Bible translation not to publish an inclusive-language version in the

## Resolution on moral stewardship, Disney Co.

For Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Following is the complete text of the Disney resolution approved by SBC messengers.

"Whereas, everything Christians possess of time, money, and resources is given to them by God as a stewardship for which they will give an account before a holy God; and

"Whereas, those who serve the public in any manner also have a stewardship before God regarding their service, and those who have greater influence have greater responsibility for their stewardship and must give a greater accounting; and

"Whereas, many entertainment providers including, but not limited to, The Disney Company, are increasingly promoting immoral ideologies such as homosexuality, infidelity, and adultery, which are biblical reprehensible and abhorrent to God and his plan for the world that he loves; and

"Whereas, the 1996 Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution regarding these issues with a specific appeal to The Disney Company, which had long been a respected leader of family entertainment in keeping with traditional moral values; and

"Whereas, the aforementioned resolution called for our Christian Life Commission to 'monitor Disney's progress in returning to its previous philosophy of producing enriching family entertainment' and the Christian Life Commission has now reported that The Disney Company has not only ignored our concerns, but flagrantly furthered this moral digression in its prod-

uct and policies; and

"Whereas, we realize that we cannot do everything to stop the moral decline in our nation, but we must do what lies before us when it is right through a proper use of our influence, energies, and prayers, particularly when it affects our nation's children;

"Be it therefore resolved, that the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Dallas, Texas, June 17-19, 1997, urge every Southern Baptist to take the stewardship of their time, money, and resources so seriously that they refrain from patronizing The Disney Company and any of its related entities, understanding that this is not an attempt to bring The Disney Company down, but to bring Southern Baptists up to the moral standard of God; and

"Be it further resolved, that we encourage Southern Baptists to refrain from patronizing any company that promotes immoral ideologies and practices, realizing that The Disney Company, is not the only such provider; and

"Be it further resolved, that we ask our pastors and church leaders to become informed regarding these issues and teach their people accordingly, and that we urge all Southern Baptists to graciously communicate the reasons for their individual actions to The Disney Company and other companies; and

"Be it finally resolved, that we pray that God would use these actions to help the employees of such companies to respect the enormous stewardship they have before God, and we affirm those employees who embrace and share our concerns." ■

United States, messengers approved a resolution urging Bible publishers "to use time-honored, historic principles and refrain from any deviation to seek to accommodate contemporary cultural pressures."

An amendment "to request agencies, boards, and publishing arms of the Southern Baptist Convention to refrain from using any such translation" in denominational publications was accepted by messengers.

Recent dramatic developments in genetic technology, most clearly reflected in the cloning of a sheep in an Edinburgh, Scotland, lab, prompted the Dallas messengers to approve a resolution opposing the cloning of humans.

The resolution cited Southern Baptists' "consistent and vigorous opposition to the devaluation of human life and the encroachment of the culture of death," warning of the potential misuse of genetic testing "to stigmatize and discriminate against individuals on the basis of their genetic information."

While applauding the potential of genetic technology advancements for the treatment of disease, the resolution suggested genetic technology may well throw open the door for "increasing the numbers of abortions through the use of prenatal genetic screening."

In a resolution stating drug abuse contributes to the erosion of "the physical, moral, and spiritual well-being of our nation," messengers urged Southern Baptists to be actively involved in efforts to reverse the growing problem of drug abuse. SBC churches and entities are encouraged "to minister to those who have been harmed by drug abuse," the resolution states.

In a resolution calling gambling a "tidal wave" that brings "pain and destruction" to the lives of children, the poor, and elderly, convention messengers urged political leaders to pass legislation to restrict and eliminate "all forms of gambling and its advertisement."

Returning to an issue which helped frame the 1996 convention's first resolution on The Disney Company, messengers approved a 1997 resolution opposing corporate policies that extend employee benefits to domestic partnerships.

The resolution affirmed businesses that decline to offer benefits to the partners of homosexual employees, suggesting domestic partner benefit policies threaten to "erase fundamental and morally critical distinctions between homosexual relationships and heterosexual marriage."

Approving a resolution affirming home schooling, messengers acknowledged the rights of parents to teach their children at home. The resolution said Scripture identifies parents "as the principal educators of their children."

In an amendment, messengers affirmed "godly teachers in public schools who stand on the front lines to train and teach children." The amendment was proposed by **Toby Everett, pastor of City View Church, Knoxville.**

The Resolutions Committee received 53 resolutions from messengers for consideration. The committee declined to report out many of the resolutions, agreeing to forward the measures to the appropriate convention entities and combined several other resolutions into those submitted to the convention. ■



## Henry disagrees with resolution

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Former Southern Baptist Convention president Jim Henry, pastor of the 10,000-member First Church, Orlando, Fla., is opposed to the resolution adopted June 18 by messengers to the SBC annual meeting.

Henry's church is near Walt Disney World, the Orlando area's most famous attraction. He feared the decision would harm efforts to lead people to faith in Jesus.

After last year's resolution, Henry said he had members in his church come to him with tears in their eyes and say, "Pastor, those people I've been witnessing to, bringing to church ... they're saying, 'Don't invite me anymore; don't come back; don't ask me to go to that church. If that's the way you feel about me or people, I don't have time for it.' And that hurts us."

"I do not feel like this is the best way to get our positive message out," he said. "That message is Jesus Christ loves you and wants to save you, and we've got that message ...." said Henry, a Tennessee native and former pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville.

Henry, only a year removed from completing his second year as SBC president, said he was uncertain the convention had "thought through (the boycott), worked through it well enough to deal with it yet ..."

Among the issues he had to face were whether he should encourage church members who are Disney employees, an estimated 200 or more, to leave their jobs and whether the church should continue its Sunday morning telecast of 25 years on the local ABC-TV affiliate. Disney owns ABC.

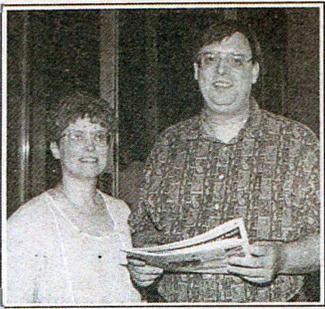
He said 95 percent of most Americans "will see the resolution as 'we don't like Mickey Mouse and the good healthy things,' not the things that are bad, which I deeply deplore and are reprehensible. I felt like the negatives outweighed the positives about our prime mission, and there are other ways to deal with Disney."

Henry attempted to speak against the resolution from the floor, but was unable to do so. ■

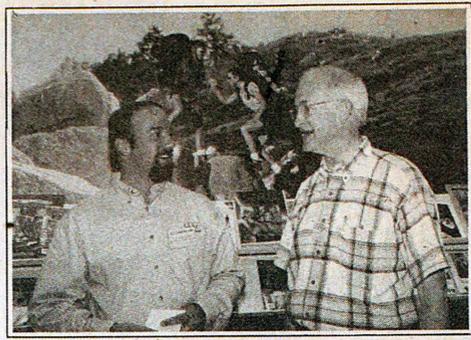


HENRY

**To The Cross**  
**SBC '97 - Dallas**



**RON BLANKENSHIP**, pastor, Haywood Hills Church, Nashville, and his wife, Evelyn, stand outside the convention hall.



**VISITING** in the youth section of the BSSB exhibit are Dwayne Ulmer, left, BSSB employee and youth minister, Immanuel Church, Nashville; and David George, pastor of the church.



**PREACHING** Wednesday evening, during the "Missions Emphasis" is Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Church, Cordova.



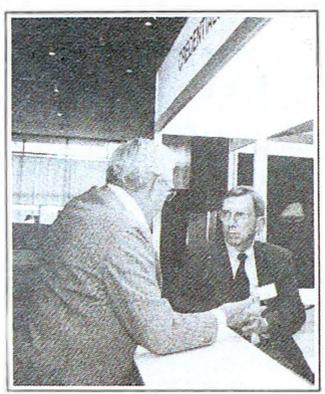
**JUST OUTSIDE** the convention center are, from left, Brent Lay, associate pastor, Englewood Church, Jackson; his son, Brandon; Phil Jett, pastor, Englewood Church; and Paul Mason, pastor, Central Church, Douglasville, Ga.



**ELECTED** president-elect of the Ministers' Wives Conference was Lanese Dockery, center, wife of David Dockery, president, Union University. She stands with other 1998-99 officers of the organization, Mary Cox, left, of Lawrenceville, Ga.; and Shirley Lewis, of Ridgecrest, Calif.



**REVIEWING** their retirement member of the Annuity Board Charlotte and Dana Fackler, Knoxville.



**CREDENTIALS** Committee member, Raymond Boston, right, pastor, First Church, Dyersburg, visits with Bill Bargiol, director of missions, Big Emory Association.



**J.V. REEVES**, pastor, Smyrna Church, Burlison, and his wife, Ernestine, attend the convention.



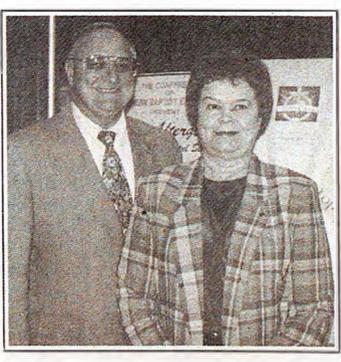
**PAUSING** in the exhibit hall are, from left, Sarah and David Tydings, director of missions, Grainger Association; and Wayne Stinnett, pastor, Beech Springs Church, Kodak.



**PHIL LOVELACE**, center, and his wife, Sandra, Baptist General Convention.



**DIRECTORS** of missions and their wives at the convention are, from left, Al and Margaret Patterson, Copper Basin Association; and Lucille and W.L. Shipman, Polk County Association.



**JAMES AND Carol** Growden attend the convention. James is pastor, Hillcrest Church, Nashville, and Carol is employed by Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union.



**THE CROSBY** family visits with former Tennessee pastor Gary Odom, second from left, of Ohio. The family includes, from left, Tim, pastor, First Church, Watertown; Suzanne; and Joshua.



**DISCUS** Wellness right, Fi John G School B sored by BSSB.

### 850 Tennesseans participate in the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 17-19 and related meetings in Dallas



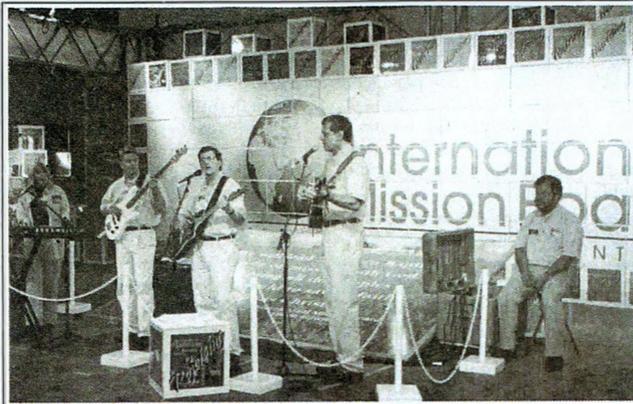
**DISCUSSING** changes made to form the new North American Mission Board are, from left, L. Gale Lyon, pastor, Park Lane Church, Knoxville; Darin Davis, NAMB; and Leland Lyon, pastor, Euclid Avenue Church, Knoxville.



**STEVE TAYLOR**, pastor, Cornerstone Church, Clinton, and his wife, Diane, pause near the convention hall.



Investments with a staff member exhibit area are, from left, [Name], pastor, Meridian Church,



**MUSICIANS** perform at the exhibit of the International Mission Board, which was transformed from the Foreign Mission Board by an act of the messengers in adopting the SBC restructuring. The backdrop bearing the name of the agency also changed after the action. Musicians include Carey Bates, right, formerly of Memphis.



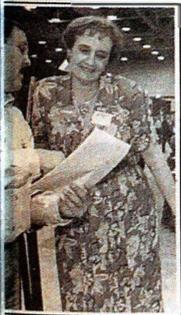
pastor, First Church, Somerville, with friend Dick Maples of the [Name] of Texas.



**CARSON-NEWMAN** College's Alan Medders, center, visits with Doug White, left, pastor, Alice Bell Church, Knoxville; and Jim Clayton, pastor, Ebenezer Church, Knoxville.



**AT THE** Carson-Newman College exhibit are, from left, Buck and Ila Mae Smith, missionaries to Venezuela; and Ann and Ronell Owensby, pastor, First Church, Rogersville.



her fitness at the booth is Ann Walker, church, Selmer, with [Name], Baptist Sunday School. The booth was sponsored by the Community Board and the [Name].



**GETTING** together are, from left, Bill Wilkinson, minister of education, First Church, Lenoir City, and Dartha Wilkinson; Judy and Ray Luck, director of missions, Loudon County Association; and Edith and John Churchman, director of missions, Chilhowee Association.



**SEATED** in the convention hall are pastors, from left, Kenny Carr, First Church, Gleason; Lynn King, Maplewood Church, Paris; and Mark McSwain, Maple Springs Church, Medon.

# Restructuring savings reiterated at \$34 million

By Art Toalston  
For Baptist Press

DALLAS — The task force overseeing the reshaping of the Southern Baptist Convention concluded its work voicing deepened confidence "that this process of restructuring has prepared the SBC to enter the 21st century better equipped and positioned than ever to take the Gospel to the world."

The 10-member Implementation Task Force, in an eight-page report to the 1997 SBC annual meeting in Dallas, reiterated its estimate of a minimum five-year savings of \$34 million to be available for "strategic frontline missions endeavors."

The ITF's \$34 million figure is derived from an estimated five-year savings of \$40 million by creating the new North American Mission Board from three former SBC agencies and dissolving several smaller SBC agencies, minus one-time restructuring costs of \$6 million.

Also, in its report, the ITF announced the Brotherhood Commission building in Memphis, has been sold for \$1.2 million.

The ITF was created by the SBC Executive Committee in September 1995 after messengers at the SBC annual meeting that June approved a proposed "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring.

The \$34 million savings estimate is based on research by the consulting firm of Coopers and Lybrand, the ITF said in its report.

Highlighting several facets of the restructuring's impact on the SBC, the ITF cited:

- ▶ "a streamlined, better de-

finied, more efficient structure."

▶ "an effective, strategic approach to assisting the churches in reaching North America for Christ."

▶ "a united and coordinated use of media, missions education, and volunteers in evangelization and church planting."

▶ "an opportunity for invigorated, improved partnerships with state conventions, associations, churches, and other Great Commission Christians."

In all, the number of SBC agencies is pared from 19 to 12 under the restructuring. The personnel reduction in all affected agencies is roughly 200 — from about 565 formerly to 365 now. In another part of the report, a specific figure of 217 was cited. At the time of the report's printing prior to the June 17-19 SBC annual meeting, 110 of the 200 were still seeking new employment.

The new North American Mission Board entails a merger of the former Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission, and Brotherhood Commission.

Smaller SBC agencies dissolved in the restructuring are the Historical, Stewardship, and Education Commissions, and the Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Seminary. The Southern Baptist Foundation becomes a subsidiary of the Executive Committee.

Of the \$6 million in restructuring costs, \$4.3 million was incurred in the NAMB merger; \$716,000 in dissolving the other, smaller agencies; and \$970,000 in such general expenses as consultants, legal

counsel, and ITF-related meetings.

In an agency-by-agency recap of the restructuring, the ITF noted:

✓ In severance payments to former HMB employees, \$766,000 will be paid by NAMB after its formal opening June 19, with \$162,000 already paid by the HMB. Other restructuring costs related to the HMB totaled \$90,000. HMB employees remaining with NAMB number 217, with 98 others being severed, 50 of whom are still seeking new jobs.

✓ In severance payments to former Brotherhood employees, \$329,000 will be paid by NAMB, with \$527,000 already paid by the commission. Other restructuring costs related to the agency totaled \$46,000. Brotherhood employees remaining with NAMB number 14, while 60 others were being severed (by being released, resigning, or retiring), 33 of whom were still seeking new jobs. A cash balance of \$1 million from Brotherhood will be forwarded to NAMB.

✓ In severance payments to former RTVC employees, \$181,000 will be paid by NAMB, with \$51,000 already paid by the commission. Other restructuring costs related to the agency totaled \$200,000. RTVC employees remaining with NAMB number 69, with 30 others being severed, 22 of whom were still seeking new jobs. RTVC has an indebtedness of approximately \$1.5 million against its Fort Worth, Texas, property. An estimated \$1 million in cash reserves will be forwarded to NAMB.

✓ In severance benefits and

other costs related to the restructuring, the Historical Commission has expended \$91,000, with no additional allocations needed from the SBC. Three employees were to be severed, one of whom was still seeking new employment. Medical benefits for commission retirees will be paid by the Council of Seminary Presidents, with the \$60,000 balance of commission assets to help defray the costs.

✓ In severance benefits to former Stewardship Commission employees, \$290,000 has been paid by the agency, along with \$9,000 in other costs related to the restructuring, with no additional allocations needed from the SBC. Three of the agency's 19 employees were still seeking new jobs. Medical benefits for retirees will be paid by the Executive Committee, with the \$250,000 balance in commission assets to help defray the costs.

✓ In severance benefits for former Education Commission employees, \$225,000 has been paid by the agency, along with \$6,000 in other restructuring costs, with no additional allocations needed from the SBC. One of the commission's seven staff members was still seeking new employment. Medical benefits for retirees will be paid by the Executive Committee, with the \$250,000 balance in commission assets to help defray the costs.

No employees of the Southern Baptist Foundation, nor any related to the Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Seminary, were released in the restructuring, nor were any costs incurred, the ITF report said. ■



## 3,000 attend wives meeting

Baptist Press

DALLAS — A first-time session designed specifically for wives of Southern Baptist pastors drew more than 3,000 women June 16, in a nearly four-hour meeting during the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference.

The session for "pastors' wives and other female Christian leaders," on the printed program, was well received, though it may not necessarily be the beginning of an annual event.

"This may be the only year we meet together," said Jeana Floyd, who organized the meeting with her husband, Ronnie Floyd, outgoing president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference. ■

## Geo. W. Bush issues welcome

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Welcoming messengers to the 1997 Southern Baptist Convention, Texas Gov. George W. Bush said people of faith must lead the way toward a "renewal of the spirit in America."

Babies born out of wedlock, families locked in a cycle of welfare dependency, and rising crime are "warning signs of a culture which has failed," Bush said in the SBC's opening session June 17.

"Government can be part of the solution," said Bush, who signed into law during the most recent Texas legislative session a series of initiatives designed to encourage "faith-based" groups to provide social services. "But all the laws in the world can't make people love one another."

Only faith can produce a change of heart, a rebirth of hope, and a commitment to "bedrock values" such as individual responsibility, Bush said.

"From the pulpits of our churches to the bully pulpit of government, we must issue a call to spiritual renewal and personal responsibility," said Bush, son of former President George Bush. ■

### On June 18

## Foreign Mission Board becomes IMB

Baptist Press

DALLAS — The Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board officially became the International Mission Board on June 18, during the 15.6-million-member denomination's annual meeting here.

The name will be different, but the goals of the agency will remain the same, says the agency's president, Jerry A. Rankin. The International Mission Board will still appoint overseas missionaries, help volunteers find places of short-term ministry and help bring the good news of Jesus Christ to people around the world.

The name is changing because times change and the meanings of words change. Once appropriate, the term "foreign" in many contexts today has become

negative, Rankin noted.

"What once seemed natural and comfortable now offends in some circles," Rankin said. "Or it produces an image we don't want. There's nothing foreign about God's love for his world or about Southern Baptists' desire to bring Christ's saving grace to the millions who don't know him."



RANKIN

The word "international" better describes the scope of the board's work today, he said.

"All around the world, people are coming to Jesus Christ. And they will continue to, because of Southern Baptists' ministry through their International Mission Board," Rankin not-

ed, adding, "The name change implies no change whatsoever in all we have done and continue to do in sending missionaries to witness and win the lost, disciple believers, plant churches, train and equip leaders, and minister to a world in need."

The name change will extend to other missions vocabulary as well.

• Foreign missionary will become international missionary.

• Foreign missions will become international missions.

• Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions will become Week of Prayer for International Missions.

• Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions will become the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions. ■

# WMU members called to go 'beyond the walls'

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Southern Baptists not only are going "beyond the walls," they are breaking them down, members of Woman's Missionary Union were told during their annual meeting.

Speakers addressed the theme "Beyond the Walls" during the 109th annual session of Woman's Missionary Union June 15-16 at the Dallas Convention Center. Approximately 1,000 women registered for the two-day meeting at the Dallas Convention Center. The 1997 attendance was about 800 less than last years.

Though WMU members and guests learned ways Southern Baptists are breaking down barriers, they also discovered many walls still exist that must be broken.

One of those walls is racism, WMU Executive Director Del-lanna O'Brien said during her annual report. "Racism still thrives in our land. People of color still experience discrimination and mistreatment," she said.

"I challenge you, our total membership, to use your influence to make a difference in your community as we focus our attention on cultural diversity," she said.

O'Brien also encouraged WMU members to use their influence "to bring down the walls of prejudice and injustice before it is too late."



TENNESSEE WMU leaders Carol Richardson, left, president, of First Church, Nashville; and Katharine Bryan, retiring executive director, pause during the meeting.

International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin and his wife, Bobbye, told participants Southern Baptist missionaries are reaching beyond the walls of communist oppression, economic stability, and misconceptions about Christianity to share the Gospel of Christ worldwide.

The Rankins credited the "mobilized" prayer support of WMU members and other Southern Baptists for "opening of doors" to new sports and medical ministries in countries such as North Korea and Cuba.

The Rankins' 40-minute presentation also featured testimonies from international missionaries Cindy Wilson of South Africa, Rick Smith, a CSI worker in Central Asia, and Lucy Pessoa of Colombia.

Wilson and Smith cited misconceptions about Christianity as barriers they face.

"The worst thing about apartheid is that its foundation is the government's suppression of people in the name of Christianity," Wilson said. "Therefore, many South Africans see Christianity and apartheid as going hand in hand."

Smith, agreed, noting he constantly has to overcome misunderstandings about Christianity. "Due to the deception of government officials who say they are Christians, many people tell their children that Christians are bad and Baptists are a cult," he said.

Baptist World Alliance General Secretary Denton Lotz observed walls must be broken in order for people to come to

know Christ. Among those walls, he said, are racism, poverty, injustice, hostility, tribalism, and more.

Among things Christians can do to break down barriers is to pray, bear the cross of Christ, and show love and joy, the BWA leader suggested.

"May God give each of us the courage, wisdom, and spirit to break down these walls," Lotz said.

The critically ill world cannot be ministered to by a critically ill church, WMU members and guests were told Monday night by Robert Smith, associate professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary.

After 2,000 years of knowing that the veil of the temple has been shattered, many Christians are at the same place relationally, religiously, and racially that the Jews were before the separation of the veil, Smith said.

"God is too big for the holy of holies that man constructs," he commented. "God is not in a box — in fact, he is too big to be contained in our denominational boxes."

WMU President Wanda Lee of Columbus, Ga., pledged WMU's continued commitment to missions.

"Woman's Missionary Union is committed to our missionaries and to telling their stories.

"May their example of loving service in turn challenge us at home to move beyond the walls of indifference to a more

To The Cross

SBC '97 - Dallas



LAURA HOWELL, Germantown Church, Germantown, speaks to the session in her role as one of six National Acteans Panelists. Because of that honor, Howell also served as an SBC Page.

committed lifestyle of love in action," she said.

Lee challenged WMU members to pray the prayer Bob Pierce, the president of Word Vision, prayed when he said: "May my heart be broken with the things that break God's heart."

"When we do," Lee said, "Woman's Missionary Union will be there to help us move beyond the walls that keep us from becoming all that God has called us to be." — Bob Murdaugh of the Alabama WMU staff contributed to this story.

## President answers queries, emphasizes spirituality

For Baptist Press

DALLAS — Tom Elliff began the traditional Southern Baptist Convention presidential news conference June 17 with a prayer, ending it with a challenge to those in attendance: "God's got a great plan for your life, and the only way you'll know it is if you know Christ as your Savior."

Elliff, pastor of First Southern Church, Del City, Okla., was re-elected to a second and final one-year term with no opposition the first day of the annual meeting of the nation's largest Protestant denomination June 17 in Dallas.

Elliff unhesitatingly answered questions about issues ranging from a proposed resolution to boycott The Disney Company to a question about his views on current controversies surrounding military dismissals for sexual behavior.

Elliff nevertheless held forth his primary agenda as SBC president.

"My prayer is God will bring (a great spiritual awakening)," Elliff told reporters, "I don't think much is going to change unless God brings an awakening in our nation."

Responding to questions about a pro-

posed resolution urging Southern Baptists to refrain from patronizing companies like Disney, Elliff said the reason the issue arose around Disney and not necessarily other companies involved in morally unacceptable practices is because Disney was a family oriented enterprise at its outset, Elliff said.



ELLIFF

"So many families trusted Disney — didn't have to think twice," Elliff said. "That was before Disney brought in under its umbrella all of these other film companies that produced graphic pornography and illicit pornography, and (they had) gay and lesbian days in their theme park campuses.

"We felt we had to speak out," he explained.

"Mr. and Mrs. Southern Baptist" will have to decide how they carry out the principles spelled out in the resolution, Elliff said. "The issue may or may not bring Disney down; the issue is (us) coming up to the level of scriptural morality."

On watching ABC programs on tele-

vision, Elliff asked, "Is it more harm to pay a prostitute or spend the night with it?"

"If you are a man or woman of principle and character, you're going to let that principle affect everything you do."

As for Southern Baptists who are employed by Disney, Elliff said he has prayed for them. "All of us have to give serious consideration as to where we put our energies, efforts (and the) years of our lives," he said, and suggested a first response should include asking Disney for a change.

"That's what we're doing," he said, in reference to an initial resolution by Southern Baptists last year asking Disney to respond to the concerns. "If we weren't working for a change, we wouldn't boycott," Elliff said.

A reporter from Arkansas asked Elliff if the fact that President Bill Clinton is a member of a Southern Baptist Church has affected the denomination.

"Southern Baptists are people of principle and character; that doesn't change based on whether we have a sitting president in office," said Elliff, who also said it's no secret that past presidents of the SBC drafted and sent Clinton two letters in the past year. Both

were urging him to act against partial-birth abortion.

On leaders in general, including those in the military, Elliff said, "I believe leaders have a heavier responsibility and ought to be expected to live with perhaps even closer attention to principle and character than people who do not lead.

"I can't speak for the Army ... but can tell you it always causes me to weep when I hear of someone who ... has fallen morally," Elliff said.

Fielding questions about the issue of women's ordination, Elliff said, "If you hold that Scripture is indeed the inerrant, infallible Word of God, and you believe Scripture ... speaks plainly, you cannot help but take passages relative to ministry and see that they plainly refer to a man of God — 'let man be the husband of one wife,'" he quoted from Scripture.

A tremendous diversity in the way church is conducted is apparent among Southern Baptists, Elliff observed. But "non-negotiable" issues involve beliefs about Scripture and salvation by faith in Christ — and Christ alone. Still, that doesn't prevent folks from getting along, Elliff said. ■

## Wartburg pastor

# Mooty uses TV knowledge to assist SBC press

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Tom Mooty has had a "bird's-eye" view of the Southern Baptist Convention since 1992.

No, he doesn't stand in line to get the front row; rather he has the advantage of modern technology at his disposal.

Mooty, pastor of First Church, Wartburg, works as an audio/video technician for Baptist Press, the official news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

He has a background in both radio and TV. His church has a TV ministry and Mooty has a live three-hour radio show on a local station.

Mooty's job, along with an assistant, is to tape, both audio and video, the SBC annual meeting "gavel-to-gavel." He also does the same thing for the SBC Pastors' Conference which precedes the annual meeting.

Mooty's efforts are not for sale. The tapes are strictly for the benefit and use of media covering the annual meeting, he said.

In addition, Mooty provides radio and video feeds to TV monitors and headphones in the SBC press room.

Mooty's efforts are appreciated by reporters who need to verify quotes or statistics. It helps the reporters accurately report what happens in the annual meeting, Mooty noted.

"I am here to serve the

press," Mooty noted, adding that he views his task as a ministry. "It's something I'm interested in and something I find exciting," he said.

He acknowledges, however, it is hard work. It takes three days to set things up and a day and a half to tear it down, he said. Plus, he is at the convention prior to the start of each session and remains 30 minutes after the last session of the day.

Mooty also shares what he learns with his congregation in Wartburg, who are very supportive of Mooty in this endeavor. "I use it to help our church be better informed." ■



**TOM MOOTY** checks to make sure sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention are being taped. Mooty is pastor of First Church, Wartburg.

# To The Cross

SBC '97 -  
Dallas

### CCM Position

The Bradley Baptist Association Personnel Committee is seeking someone to fill the Church/Community Missionary position. Resumes may be mailed to: Personnel Search Committee, Bradley Baptist Association, 2707 Ocoee Street, NE, Cleveland, TN 37312, by July 15. No phone calls, please.



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If qualified and interested, please send or fax resume to:

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Req. #354  
Human Resources Department  
MSN 121,  
Baptist Sunday School Board  
127 9th Avenue, North  
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# WALKING WITH GOD

GENESIS 5:24

# SBC motions reflect concern for family, moral issues

By Mark Kelly & Lonnie Wilkey  
For Baptist Press

DALLAS — Messengers to the 140th session of the Southern Baptist Convention June 17-19 voted to consider adding a section on the family to their 1963 statement of faith, the *Baptist Faith and Message*.

In all, they considered 35 motions dealing with topics ranging from moral concerns to ways SBC agencies conduct business.

"There has been a concerted attack upon the family," said Charles Lawson, a messenger from Linthicum Church in Baltimore, Md.

"The very meaning of family has been redefined by those whose agenda it is to include homosexual couples and generalized to include any two (or more) people living together."

Messengers attending the evening session June 17 adopted the proposal, which instructs SBC President Tom Elliff to appoint a committee to study the issue and bring an amendment to the 1998 annual meeting in Salt Lake City. If amended, it would be the first time the 1963 statement has been changed.

The convention also acted June 17 on a two-part motion introduced earlier in the day by Timothy Wilkins of Providence Church, Raleigh, N.C.

The motion's first part called on the newly formed North American Mission Board to "conduct a thorough study of homosexuality" and "develop and aggressively promote ministry resources" for churches to use in ministry to homosexuals.

The convention's Committee on Order of Business referred that item to the trustees of the new agency, but Elliff acted on

the second part, a call to prayer, adopted by common consent.

"I hope that all of us as messengers to our Southern Baptist Convention will continue to devote time to prayer and the matter of ministry to homosexuals," Elliff told messengers before leading them in prayer.

In another motion related to homosexuality, a motion by Dino Senesi of First Church, Marenno, La., was referred to the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, instructing it to "communicate this convention's concerns about corporate America's support of homosexual and immoral heterosexual relationships."

On Wednesday morning, June 18, messengers voted to "request its agencies and auxiliaries to refrain from the use of evolutionary ideology in the distribution of all materials."

The motion, made by Derek Staples, pastor of Lewisport (Ky.) Church, referred specifically to material printed recently by the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Staples said a Girls in Action worker in his church brought to his attention "the use of evolutionary ideology in her material for use in the missions education of our children."

The material in question was printed in the optional resource kit for *Awake* magazine. It noted that "people have lived in China for more than one million years."

"At first glance, this statement may seem harmless to some. It has even been suggested to me that our GA leaders should sift through the plethora of material and use their own discretion as to the right sources for use in missions education," Staples said.

"From my standpoint, theological fidelity is at stake."

WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien said in an interview that the auxiliary's staff is "committed to presenting the truth in Scripture. Because of that we have doctrinal readers who read everything we produce. There's always the possibility of something slipping through that might offend. This (motion) is a good reminder to us to keep a watchful eye," she said.

Messengers acted directly on only one other motion, by Debbie Everett of First Church, Calhoun, La. They approved the motion asking the Annuity Board to reconsider open enrollment in its group health insurance plan.

The majority of motions was referred to various SBC agencies in accordance with bylaws.

Referred to the Executive Committee:

- Request that future conventions not be scheduled on the week immediately following Father's Day — Jerry Stone, Oakland, Fla.

- Amend Art. III, Sec. 2, of the SBC Constitution to provide for messenger representation based on the percentage of a church's contributions to the Cooperative Program — Roger Perkins, Mount Vernon, Ala.

- Consider the New York City area for a future convention — Jody Wyatt, Polkton, N.C.

- Instruct the Committee on Nominations to apply no guidelines for eligibility for nominations other than the requirements mandated by SBC bylaws — Betty Rutledge, McKinney, Texas.

- Create a giving plan where churches can give money directly to the SBC Executive Committee, which, unless otherwise designated, would

be split equally between the SBC and the state convention the church designates — Ron Wilson, Thousand Oaks, Calif.

- Make messenger name tags readable from a distance of 10 feet — David Martin, Cary, N.C.

- Require the Resolutions Committee to give a rationale for why it does not recommend a resolution, allow each person who submits a resolution two minutes to defend his or her resolution and allow messengers to vote on whether to hear such resolutions. — Steven Lipscomb, First Church, Knoxville

- Provide maps of the area surrounding the convention to all messengers beginning in 1998 — Paul Lambach, Crenshaw, Miss.

- Re-evaluate the existing policy concerning the size of meeting halls and exhibit space — Billy Hickman, Quinton, Okla.

Referred to North American Mission Board:

- ✓ Set a goal of having 10,000 "trained soldiers of the cross" for Crossover Salt Lake City — Joe Hewitt, Rowlett, Texas.

- ✓ SBC entities acquire property in developing areas of North America and make it available for planting new churches — Milligan Elliott, Hollywood, Fla.

- ✓ Instruct SBC agencies and committees to pursue an advertising campaign to reach the nation with the Gospel — Don Allred, Zeigler, Ill.

- ✓ Develop alternative TV programs for children whose parents decline to use Disney programming — Alvin Rouse III, Winchester, Va.

- ✓ Reconsider the present NAMB salary structure and present a more reasonable



salary scale to the 1998 annual meeting — Mark Rawlins, El Paso, Texas.

Referred to SBC seminaries:

- \* Review accreditation affiliations — Kent Cochran, Raytown, Mo.

- \* Develop a strategy to educate ethnic students to be seminary faculty and curriculum writers — Rogers Jackson, University Park, Ill.

Sunday School Board:

- Include indentifying information on writers for the Family Bible Series — Terry Beals, Cheyenne, Okla.

- Provide bookstore discounts to laymen — Ted Tedder, San Antonio, Texas.

Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission:

- \* Study how the "not-in-my-backyard" syndrome restricts church expansion — Wiley Drake, Buena Park, Calif.

All SBC entities:

- Provide no funding for Cooperative Baptist Fellowship ministries and encourage churches which contribute directly to CBF ministries to more fully support the outstanding ministries of their convention — Abe Hudson, Houston, Texas.

- Oppose a bill to restrict religious liberties now being considered in Israel's Knesset — Victor Vaughn, Billerica, Mass.

Several other motions were declared to be resolutions and were not considered by the Committee on Order of Business. ■

# Missionaries, converts testify to impact around the world

By Karen L. Willoughby  
For Baptist Press

DALLAS — Lillian Veles is not alone anymore.

"When I came to Christ it was like there wasn't just my voice in my head anymore," the new Christian from Colorado said during the June 18 evening missions program at the 1997 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas.

"God was with me and there was no longer silence," she said. "There was God and he was big and he was strong and it was the most incredible feeling of my life."

In addition to God, Veles said she has the support of Southern Baptists and the missionary couple, Kelly and Tasha Williams, they sent to start Vanguard Church for young Generation X-

ers in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Veles, the Williams' first convert, was one of six people to testify to the value of Southern Baptist global missions programs. The testimonies, a video, a sermon by Adrian Rogers, pastor at Bellevue Church, Cordova, and a mass choir combined to bring home the simple missionary message: "God is calling all of us."

Atsuko Shiroyama of Japan, Kathy Phillips of Portland, Ore., Sekou Maiga of Niger Republic, Mike Woody of Fort Worth, Texas, and Kadda Tuon of Cambodia testified of similar changes in their lives because of Southern Baptist missionaries.

Enthusiastic applause at the close of each testimony swelled to a standing ovation as the group of six and the missionaries who reached out to them stood together on the platform.

Issuing a call to missions involvement, Rogers said, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ is simply glorious and gloriously simple. Not only should we be witnesses, we should be evidence."



ROGERS

He challenged some in attendance: "You, friend, you say, 'God didn't call me to have a missionary heart?' There's nothing wrong with you that a good dose of salvation or an old-fashioned revival won't cure. I'm telling you, friend, if you understand what Jesus did on that cross ... you cannot be silent."

"God is calling you tonight to lift up the Lord Jesus," Rogers said. "God is calling some of you tonight to release your children to the mission field. God

is calling some of you tonight to full-time missions service at home or abroad. God is calling others of you to remain in your present vocation but to go on interims across the sea or to some other city to share the Lord Jesus.

"God is calling all of us to go across the street," Rogers continued. "God is calling you tonight. God is calling an army of people to take the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ and you're part of that army."

Rogers invited those who made decisions to seal their commitment by coming to the front of the convention hall. About 100 streamed forward — young and old, individuals, couples, and families.

Among those coming up were Steve and Jeanna Anthony of Cincinnati who said they felt God was calling them to home missions in California. ■

# Land, Elliff deliver sermons at annual meeting

Compiled from Baptist Press

DALLAS — Messengers to the annual Southern Baptist Convention heard messages from two SBC leaders — President Tom Elliff and agency head Richard Land.

Preaching the convention sermon, Land, president of the SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (formerly-Christian Life Commission), noted Christians in America are being targeted by a persistent campaign to exclude them from the halls of government and the public square.

Land cautioned there is a “conscious, concerted, clever attempt by the various ruling elites in this country — the legal elites, the business elites, the social elites, the economic

elites, and even some religious elites — to marginalize Christians and to drive them from involvement in the public policy of this nation.

Land said Christians have allowed themselves to believe “this lie” and have consequently left the making of political decisions to their enemies.

“We must tell them we will no longer allow them to censor and suppress us and to keep us



LAND



ELLIFF

from our rightful place in the public square,” Land said.

Elliff, in the annual president’s address, observed the battle continues and there is ground yet to be taken.

“As soldiers we march under the banner of the cross,” Elliff told messengers. “As the great hymn says, we are, ‘marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before.’”

Elliff compared the SBC to a pilot flying overseas, saying it is beyond the point of no return.

“Crossing the point immediately focuses their attention on what is ahead,” he said. “Turning back is unthinkable and impossible.”

Elliff’s biblical text was I Corinthians 1:17-18, a passage emphasizing the preaching of

the Gospel with power, its foolishness to the lost, its power to those who are being saved. He stressed that his message could only be understood in the context of past gains and future challenges.

“First, there is the reality of how far we have come in our pilgrimage as Southern Baptists, the ground we have taken, and in some instances, taken back.

“It is only by the grace of God that the largest evangelical group in the world has somehow managed to maintain our respect for the Scripture, our love for the Savior, and our passion for souls,” he said.

But, he added, “There are still battles which must be fought and ground to be taken before our Savior’s return.” ■

## Seminary presidents sign covenant with denomination

Baptist Press

DALLAS — With a pledge to keep their institutions “anchored in the Book” and “lashed to the cross,” the presidents of Southern Baptists’ seminaries signed a covenant with the convention as part of their June 17 report during the SBC annual meeting in Dallas.

Titled “One Faith, One Task, One Sacred Trust,” the document was presented by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Ken Hemphill in the absence of its author and president of the Council of Seminary Presidents, R. Albert Mohler Jr., who had been hospitalized in Louisville, Ky., until June 17, suffering from blood poisoning. Mohler is president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The five presidents present for the report took turns signing the document while sitting in the chair of Southwestern Seminary founder B.H. Carroll whom

Hemphill said admonished his successor, L.R. Scarborough, “to keep the seminary lashed to the cross.” Mohler signed the document from his hospital bed before the seminaries’ report.

Hemphill affirmed the presidents’ commitment to keeping the seminaries “anchored in the Book, lashed to the cross, responsive to the churches, and committed to world evangelization.”

Southern Baptist Convention President Tom Elliff said the covenant represented the fulfillment of a personal dream. After visiting the seminaries in the fall of 1996, Elliff approached Mohler with the idea of a covenant between the seminaries and Southern Baptists.

“I had a passion about the idea and wrote the covenant in one sitting,” Mohler said in an interview from his hospital room.

He described the covenant as a “sacred pledge declared in public and signed be-

fore thousands that the six seminaries of the Southern Baptist Convention intend to stand against the tide of theological compromise and stand with the churches, rooted in the faith once for all delivered to the saints.”

The covenant pledges to uphold Baptist doctrines. “Let the churches in the Southern Baptist Convention know that our seminaries are committed to theological integrity and biblical fidelity,” the covenant states. Seminaries will teach “the authority, inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Bible.”

Elliff praised the covenant and the seminary presidents.

“Never in the world have six men so hot-hearted for souls, so firmly standing upon the Word of God, covenanted with a group the size of Southern Baptists, saying, ‘Send us your students. We will be faithful to God, faithful to you and faithful to our calling,’” Elliff said. ■

## Tennessee teenagers serve as SBC Pages

For Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Four Tennessee Baptist youth served as pages during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention last week.

Another Tennessee, Mark Conway, pastor of Zion Church, Brownsville, assisted the page program by serving as volunteer supervisor of the group, assisting staff from Woman’s Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission.

SBC pages are selected in national competitions to serve in the honorary positions.

Three of the pages were Challengers, a missions organization for boys, while one was an Acteen, a missions organization for girls.

Serving as pages were Rusty Edwards, Southeast Church, Murfreesboro; Josh Mullinax, First Church, Woodbury; Ashley Johnson, First Church, Sevierville; and Laura Howell, Germantown Church, Germantown. ■

## Draper apologizes for problems, outlines BSSB name change process

For Baptist and Reflector

DALLAS — Be patient with us and pray for us, the president of the Baptist Sunday School Board told messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at the Dallas Convention Center, June 17.

During the BSSB report to the convention, Draper offered a “deep apology” to churches and other customers who have had trouble with the board’s new ordering and distribution system.

“Our goal is to provide you with the best service possible, but that’s not what you’ve been receiving for the past several months,” Draper noted. “We haven’t been able to give you the quality we anticipate, but we believe we’ll be able to do that again.”

During the transition period, Draper said the BSSB is taking several steps to help alleviate the problem: employment of 40 new customer service representatives; installation of additional phone and fax

lines; enabling customers later this summer to place orders on the Internet or with a touch-tone telephone; making adjustments to shipping and handling charges; simplifying the customer discounts policy; and clarifying billing statements.

BSSB customers can facilitate the transition process by: (1) faxing or mailing orders for church literature instead of using the BSSB’s 800-number and (2) reading carefully the instructions on how to use the board’s customized order forms, he said.

Draper also told messengers of BSSB plans to undergo a name change — a three-step process which will need convention approval next year in Salt Lake City.

Draper explained the need for a more descriptive name, noting that when the board was founded in 1891, producing Sunday School literature was its only assignment. Now, Draper said, the board produces many different products and offers a variety of services. ■

# To The Cross

## SBC '97 Dallas

## YouthLink 2000 launched at SBC

Baptist Press

DALLAS — They stormed the stage dressed in white T-shirts and baseball caps. They filled the front of the convention hall and sang “I believe in Jesus.”

They were several hundred Southern Baptist youth and they came to the 1997 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 17 to present YouthLink 2000, an SBC-wide initiative to evangelize the age group before the end of the millennium.

Amidst pyrotechnics and energetic music, co-chairs of YouthLink 2000, Dean Finley and Richard Ross, said the event is a “once-in-a-thousand-years” party for teenagers and students to gather and welcome the new millennium with hope.

According to Finley and Ross, YouthLink is a coordinated effort of the International Mission Board, Baptist Sunday School Board, Woman’s Missionary Union and the newly organized North American Mission Board. Its goal is to enrich the youth of America as they congregate in Anaheim, Calif.; Atlanta; Denver; Houston; Philadelphia; St. Louis and Tampa, Fla., Dec. 29-31, 1999.

“We expect over 150,000

youth to attend. We expect over 1,500 to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior,” Ross proclaimed to the SBC audience. “We expect another 1,500 to respond to pastoral and ministry calls and we expect yet another 1,000 to answer the call to become missionaries.”

“The seven cities will be connected by satellite and ground link,” Finley explained.

Ross added, “This event will not only serve as a catalyst to help Christians once again turn the world upside down, but it will also provide these youth with an accurate vision of what the entire scope of Baptist life is all about.”

Registration for YouthLink 2000 officially began with the presentation. ■



ROSS

## Life and Work Lesson

### Witnessing — June 29

By Gary Rickman

#### Focal Passage — Psalm 22:22-31

We live in a society where people are searching for meaning in life. As Christians, we have found the meaning for which they are searching. An important aspect of the Christian life is to share what we have found with those who are searching. This week's Bible study will help remind all of us of the importance of our witness.

We are familiar with the opening words of Psalm 22 for they are some of the words Jesus spoke from the cross. The content of the first 21 verses of the Psalm is one of the most eloquent statements of human anguish in literature. In verse 22 the mood suddenly changes from one of physical agony to exalted praise.

In this passage we discover four reasons why witnessing is important. The first is witnessing brings honor to God.

A second reason to witness is witnessing conveys God's concern.

The third reason a Christian should witness is witnessing produces results.

The fourth reason is witnessing impacts future generations.

God's will is that people witness concerning his activity in their lives. One of the best ways to win people to Christ is to tell them about your condition before you were saved and how your life has been different since you came to know Christ. ■

— Rickman is Church Staff Leadership Group Leader, TBC Executive Board.

### Need of comfort — July 6

By Aubrey Hay

#### Focal Passage — Psalm 23

The 23rd Psalm is a jewel in the crown of Scripture. It is an affirmation of faith, obviously written by one who had walked in the valley. David knew what it was like to live life in the shadows, and how it felt to emerge into the sunlight. This brief passage resonates immediately with us, because it has the elements of personal experience.

We are not told when in the life of David he wrote it, or what circumstance prompted it. We do know it has the ring of personal experience and the inspiration of God.

Since it is the reflection of his experience with life and with the Lord of life, it is essentially a testimony. David had found God to be true.

It is an expression of fact. "The Lord is my Shepherd ..." (vv. 1-3). We are removed from the culture in which shepherding was a common sight. Still, we know enough about the relationship of the shepherd to his sheep to immediately understand that God is a personal, caring God who is with us in our struggles. This is a fact upon which we can depend.

It is an expression of faith. "Yea, though I walk through the valley ..." (v. 4). David has described who God is in verses 1-3. He now moved to addressing God personally. "Thou art with me ..." is an expression of faith. Facts of Scripture must always be translated into acts of faith for them to have meaning. This is the most powerful aspect of these verses. It is not just a statement of fact now. It is a statement of faith.

It is an expression of trust (v. 5). "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies ..." Although faith and trust are virtually synonymous in meaning, the fifth verse carries faith to a new level. Trust is the complete reliance of God to the point that David believes God provides for him bountifully, even in the presence of his enemies. — Hay is Church Ministers Relations Director, TBC Executive Board.

## Explore the Bible Lesson

### Taking care of our leaders — June 29

By Jerry Chapman

#### Focal passage — 1 Corinthians 9:1-18

This lesson begins a new unit of study centered around service. "Taking care of our leaders" focuses on meeting the material needs of spiritual leaders. After serving churches for over 20 years I can attest that some churches are very conscience of providing for their leaders. Others are not so caring. Paul wanted the Corinthians to be very responsible in this area.

**Recognizing the service rendered by spiritual leaders.** Paul began his plea with questions which dealt with his freedom and his apostleship. They demanded a positive answer. Grounds for such affirmative answers were based on two areas: (1) he had seen Jesus, (2) Corinthians were turning to Christ.

The question we need to ask in the church today is: Why should we support our spiritual leaders? The answers are the same as Paul had given: (1) Spiritual leaders have been called by God to minister. Christian leaders should and do serve sacrificially. (2) Seeing the positive results of their labor confirms that God is working in and through their lives and ministry. They deserve the support God's people can give them to be better servants as well as be better family leaders.

**Responding to the needs of our spiritual leaders.** In order to get the Corinthians to understand his argument Paul used four analogies to show that those who spend their lives sharing the Gospel should receive support. Four illustrations are given: (1) Illustrations from daily life (three occupations of being a soldier, farmer, and a shepherd); (2) an Old Testament passage (Deuteronomy 25:4); (3) temple operations; and (4) Christ's command. In every case the bottom line is: the church should support spiritual leaders with their material support. The greatest reason for this is not so much the parallels from daily life, quoting God's Word, or looking for other areas which support ministers but the fact that Christ instructs his people to do so. Who wants to argue with Christ? We need to provide for our spiritual leaders. ■ — Chapman is Discipleship Coordinator, TBC Executive Board.

### Winning as many as possible — July 6

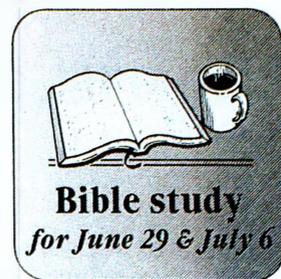
#### 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; 10:23-24, 31-11:1

Whether a person uses a tract or some plan which has been devised to help a believer share his faith, the goal is not to reach people in a certain way with a certain method; it is to reach people.

**Building relationships.** Paul said his position was "free from all." But almost in the same breath he declared himself to be "slave to all." His role as a servant meant that he would "win more." Paul had in mind anyone, no matter what race or religion they may be. But how do we win more people for Christ? To reach Jews he would become as a Jew as one "under the law." To reach Gentiles he would become as one who is without the law. In other words Paul would reach whoever he could but not beyond compromising the truth of the Gospel or violating the moral principles of the law. Paul lived under the "law of Christ." He wanted to win the unbelievers but also strengthen the "weak" or immature believers in the faith.

**See the good of others.** It was not just food offered to idols that Paul was asking the Corinthian Christians to consider. It is all our conduct which needs to be in line with God's way. That means anything which may be offensive to believers and non-believers. Paul cited himself as a model to follow. We would have difficulty putting ourselves up for someone else to imitate. But Paul did and said he would do it as a servant. He imitated Christ. So he wanted the Corinthians to do the same. And it comes to us to do that today.

Why would anyone do this? He wanted to reach as many for Christ as possible. His actions were also done to bring glory to Christ, to offend none, and to please all people. We have a constant challenge to reach others for Christ today. The fields are brilliantly white unto harvest. Workers are needed. Are you doing all you can to reach others for Christ? — Jerry Chapman



## Family Bible Lesson

### Be good to one another— June 29

By Lonnie Wilkey

#### Focal passage: Titus 3:1-11

It is easy to like people who like us. It is easy to like people with similar backgrounds and interests. The test of how we respond to God's Word is how do we like people who oppose us, or people who dislike us, or people who are just plain mean to us.

A sad fact of life is that we constantly come in contact with people who are hard to get along with or for one reason or another, take a dislike to us. The central truth of this lesson is we must deal graciously with everyone, both believers and nonbelievers. Paul explained to Titus how this could be done and he counseled him to emphasize the importance of taking every opportunity to do good toward others.

Being good to one another can be as easy as saying thank you or writing someone a letter of appreciation. I read a story about a Christian layman who hired a contractor to install a central heat and air conditioning unit in his new home. The contractor used a system the home owner questioned but finally approved. The new system worked well and the home owner wrote the contractor a letter of appreciation. A few months later the contractor, not known to be spiritual, was visited by the homeowner's pastor and was eventually led to the Lord. He later revealed the letter he had received changed his attitude toward Christians.

Who knows? By doing something good for a non-Christian, we may be planting a seed that will bring forth fruit for Christ? ■ — Wilkey is associate editor, *Baptist and Reflector*.

### The superior Son— July 6

#### Focal passage: Hebrews 1:1-5; 3:1-6

This lesson begins a two-unit study in Hebrews entitled "Call to Faithfulness." It is the first of four lessons in unit 1 which is "Focus on Christ."

The central Bible truth of this week's lesson is that the superior Son of God deserves our allegiance and worship.

We find there are three aspects to Jesus' superiority. First, he is superior to prophets (vv. 1-3). The Old Testament prophets had an important role in God's unveiling of himself. Yet, the highest revelation is Jesus himself.

Second, Jesus is superior to angels (vv. 4-5). Angels play important roles throughout the Bible. They were used to telling shepherds in the field about the birth of Christ; yet, their position, no matter how exalted it is, cannot come close to the position of Jesus Christ, the son of God.

Third, Jesus is superior to Moses. Few people in history can equal the impact of Moses, the leader of Israel, receiver of the law (Ten Commandments), and friend of God. Moses is honored by three world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Moses delivered the law to Israel, but the Israelites failed to keep the law. Jesus delivered salvation by grace through faith.

Moses was a man used by God; Jesus is the one and only Son of God, whom God sent to die on the cross for our sins. He truly is the superior Son. ■ — Lonnie Wilkey

# Baptist-related groups hold pre-convention meetings

Compiled from Baptist Press

DALLAS — Several Southern Baptist-related groups held meetings in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 17-19. Among them were:

## Directors of Missions

The Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions asked a study committee appointed last year to further refine a proposal that would change the organization's name and broaden its mission to meeting changing ministry needs into the 21st century.

During its annual meeting at the Adam's Mark Hotel June 15-16 the SBCADOM discussed the first draft of the committee proposal with the intention of presenting its re-

tended the meeting. The president for 1997-98 is David R. Dean of Metropolitan New York Association.

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## African American Fellowship

Outgoing president E.W. McCall Jr. told members and guests of the African American Fellowship to take a wait-and-see stance about changes in the Southern Baptist Convention.

McCall addressed structural change in the SBC and the growing rumble of African American frustration about the change process.

He noted "some brothers have been furious over NAMB structure. Some have been right to be furious," McCall continued. He was referring to the new North American Mission Board. He discovered that some African American leaders

After some conferees expressed concern about a final vote being taken in 1998, when attendance might be lower due to longer travel distances, a motion was adopted to refer the proposal back to the committee for further revisions.

A suggestion was made to present it for first reading next year and hold a final vote on approval the following year when the SBC meets in Atlanta.

Among the committee's proposals is a name change to National Conference of Southern Baptist Associational Staff, which would allow any full-time associational employees to join the organization.

More than 400 people at-

had been consulted during the restructuring process about how to help the African American community. "We must become proactive. We must be willing to wait and see what's going on. We must work with whatever paradigm is in place," he said.

About 200 people attended the morning business session of the fellowship.

## Chaplains

Looking back and ahead about 100 Southern Baptist chaplains and pastoral counselors met June 16 at Baylor Medical Center in Dallas for their last convocation held under the auspices of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Participants spent the morning reminiscing with retired HMB chaplaincy division staff.

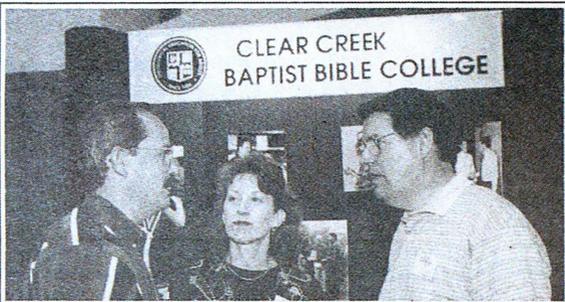
To The Cross

SBC '97  
Dallas

They devoted the afternoon to looking ahead to a new day with the North American Mission Board, a new agency which comprises the former HMB as well as the Brotherhood and Radio and Television commissions.

Chaplaincy in the NAMB organization will fall under the board's evangelization group, according to Huey D. Perry, current director of the HMB chaplaincy division. Perry confirmed he had been offered the position of chaplaincy manager within the new system. ■

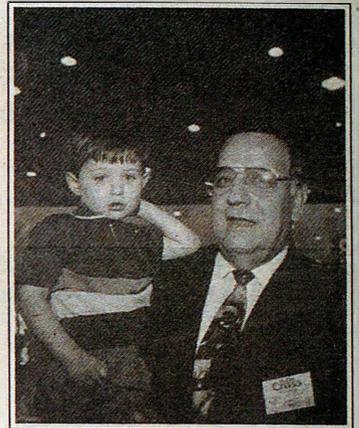
## Tennessee Baptists participate in SBC annual meeting in Dallas



AT THE Clear Creek Baptist Bible College exhibit are, from left, Randy Pressnell, staff member and pastor of First Church, Harrogate; Debbie Pressnell; and Bill Whittaker, president of the Pineville, Ky. school.



GARY POWELL, minister of music and education at Cherokee Church, Memphis, leads congregational singing during the opening day of the SBC annual meeting.



MURRAY MATHIS, pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro, enjoys time with his grandson, Britain Mathis.

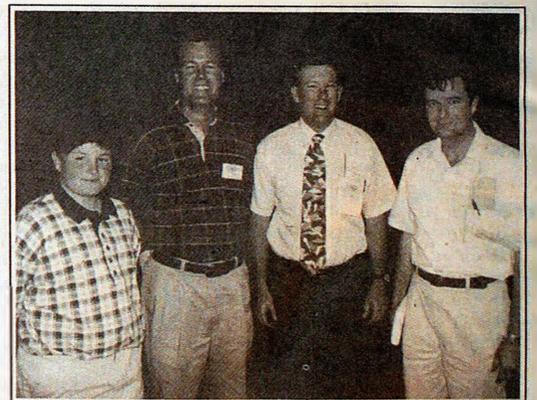


ARCHER THORPE of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries staff and his wife, Linda, attend a session of the SBC annual meeting.



TRYING OUT AN exercise machine at the wellness booth in the exhibit area is Ann Boston of First Church, Dyersburg.

PASTORS LYNN WALKER, left, Eastwood Church, McKenzie, visits with Wayne Rowan, Calvary Hill Church, Ripley.



THREE PASTOR BROTHERS visit at the SBC. From left are Matt Shankle, member of Garland Church, Corryton; David Price, pastor of Garland Church; Gene Price, pastor of Tumbling Creek Church, Gleason; and Jack Price, pastor of Fair Haven Church, Olive Branch, Miss.