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TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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Statewide Edition

August 13, 1997

this week's news

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MISSIONS AT WOODCOCK

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

Robertson County Baptists help dream come true

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

COOPERTOWN — Twelve-year-old Brandy Groves of Springfield dreamed of her own room in her own house.

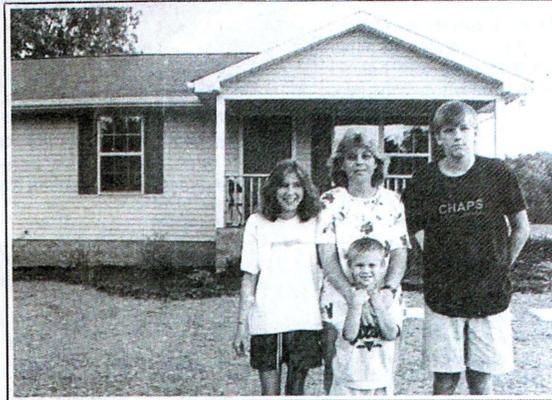
God, Robertson County Baptists, Habitat for Humanity, and a host of others have made her dream a reality.

In January Brandy was referred by Vanderbilt's Children's Hospital to DreamMakers, an organization in Middle Tennessee that works with children who have life-threatening illnesses. Brandy has cystic fibrosis, the most common fatal genetic disease in the United States which as of yet has no cure. The disease affects 30,000 children and young adults. Approximately 1,000 new cases are diagnosed each year, usually within the first three years of life.

Karen Berry of DreamMakers, who was assigned to Brandy, was not shocked when Brandy gave her wish for a home because she had heard similar wishes before.

She simply told Brandy that might not be possible and asked for her second wish, which happened to be a big screen TV.

But something about Brandy



BRANDY GROVES, left, and her family, from left, Patty, William, and Brandon, stand outside their new Habitat for Humanity home in Coopertown, a community near Springfield.

and her family, which includes two brothers (William, the youngest also has cystic fibrosis) and her mom and dad, caused Berry to go the extra mile.

She contacted Habitat for Humanity in Nashville and discovered that a chapter was forming in Robertson County and that they were taking applications for the first recipient.

Approximately 29 families applied for the program, but the Groves family was chosen.

"It's been a great process for

us to be involved in helping to make this dream come true," Berry said.

"There's not a more deserving family that this dream could happen to," she added.

Jerry McClain, Brotherhood director for Robertson County Association and vice president of the Robertson County Habitat for Humanity chapter, noted the Lord had worked throughout the entire process, from the Habitat chapter being formed to the selection of the Groves family.

He noted the Robertson County Association Brotherhood met about two years ago and voted to get involved with Habitat for Humanity. At the same time interest was developing in the county for a Habitat chapter. The chapter was approved last November and everyone involved began gearing up for their first house this summer. "The Lord has really been working," said McClain, a member of Hopewell Church, Springfield.

He stressed the effort to help the Groves family was "a community-wide, ecumenical project involving a cross section of people and churches.

"It has brought the community together for a common goal," he said.

Dennis Pulley, Robertson County Association director of missions, agreed. "I'm grateful for the way everyone has partnered together," he said.

Jack Evans, pastor of Ebenezer Church, Greenbrier, was one of many who braved temperatures in the high 90s to work on the house in late July. "I think it is fantastic to see people working together and what you can accomplish when you do that," he said.

On Saturday, July 26, when — See Robertson, page 2

Baptist and Reflector Day is Aug. 17; special issue also highlights state missions

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — This special issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* is focused on *Baptist and Reflector Day* on Aug. 17.

Of added interest to Tennessee Baptist readers this year is news about state missions and the Golden State Mission Offering on eight pages of this issue.

The GSMO report is prepared by Woman's Missionary Union for use by churches to promote the Week of Prayer for State Missions, Sept. 7-14. Most Tennessee Baptist churches will emphasize state missions during the week.

With this focus on state missions, churches will see how the Golden State Mission Offering is allocated for needs and new programs, including new church work.

Baptist and Reflector Day will be observed across the state Aug. 17. Editor Wm. Fletcher Allen explains that the day has been on the state denominational calendar

for several years, and gives churches opportunity to introduce the paper to church members. Churches may want to observe *Baptist and Reflector Day* on a day more suitable.

Although every effort is being made to deliver these special orders on schedule, the strike against UPS could complicate delivery.

Allen said that alternate delivery measures were under consideration at press time. "It's possible that association missions offices will be pick up points," he said.

The UPS strike should affect only those deliveries to churches not on the regular mailing list.

United States Postal Service has been cooperative and helpful in handling the extra papers, Allen reported.

"This year we are pleased to cooperate with Tennessee Baptists' Woman's Missionary Union in supplying a wealth of news and features about state missions, and to celebrate *B&R Day* at the same time," Allen said. *B&R*

Welcome new readers!

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — This week the *Baptist and Reflector* staff welcomes more than 10,000 new readers to the *B&R* family for *Baptist and Reflector Day*. We hope you will enjoy it and will want to receive the paper weekly.

You can subscribe individually to the paper for only \$8 per year. Clip the form below and return it to: *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024.

Enclosed is \$8 for a one year's subscription.

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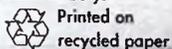
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Printed on recycled paper

Robertson County Baptists help dream ...

— Continued from page 1 much headway was made on the house, Brandy's mother, Patty, was both nervous and excited.

"I feel the Lord here today," she affirmed.

She noted the entire family is excited about the new house and that they could not have had it without help.

Although her husband, Marty, a Robertson County police officer in the D.A.R.E. program, has a good job and salary, "everything we make goes out" to help their two children who have cystic fibrosis.

The Groves family lived in a rented home before they were accepted into the Habitat program.

McClain stressed that a Habitat home is "not a handout, but a hand up to a family who otherwise could not afford a home." The Groves family helped earn their new home by putting in 500 hours of "sweat equity." They also will pay a 20-year no-interest mortgage. The home is built on an acre-and-a-third lot donated by Robertson County native Lorene Jones.

The finished home has about 1,000 square feet, McClain said.

Professional builders and specialists such as roofers and landscapers joined with volunteers to give freely of their time. Ted Emery, Robertson County Sheriff, gave of his time to dig the waterlines. In

addition to all the labor, many things were donated, the Robertson County Brotherhood director added. Among those were the kitchen and bathroom sinks, roofing, flooring, heating and air unit, and more.

McClain estimated materials for the house cost between \$38,000-\$40,000. Add the value of the donated labor and the house would probably be ap-

praised somewhere around \$80,000 or more, he said.

Robertson County Association's WMU, led by Phyllis Cobb of Flewelyn Church, joined the effort by providing meals throughout the nine-day project. Some of the women also helped work on various stages of construction. The majority of churches in the association helped in one way or an-

other, Pully said.

Randy Fletcher, president of Robertson County's Habitat for Humanity chapter, spoke during the opening ceremony and summed up what Robertson County Baptists and other Christians involved in the effort already knew:

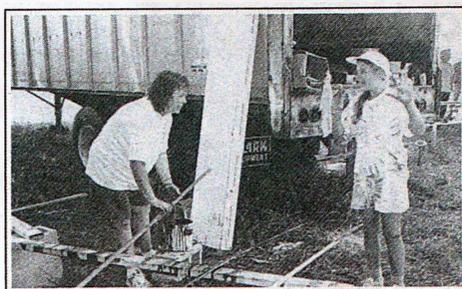
"If you don't think God's hand is in this, you're an atheist." ■



PASTOR JIM WOODARD, left, of Hopewell Church, Springfield, worked on the Habitat home along with one of his laymen, Jerry McClain, Brotherhood director for Robertson County Association.



PAUL GAMBLE, left, of Cedar Hill Church, explains the art of sawing boards to Robertson County Association Director of Missions Dennis Pulley, center, while Paul Smith of Grace Church, Pleasant View, observes.



HAVING FUN while helping to stain molding are **Dianne Evans**, left, and **Reanna Todd**, both members of Ebenezer Church.



MARTY GROVES watches as his daughter **Brandy** hammers the ceremonial first nail in their new Habitat home. — Photos by Lonnie Wilkey

Southern Baptist hunger gifts up 26 percent thus far in '97

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptists' concern for the world's hurting and hungry is evident as gifts designated for Southern Baptist hunger ministries continue on the upswing.

For the first six months of 1997, both Southern Baptist mission agencies, the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board, reported a 26 percent increase in gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund when compared to the same period last year.

Steve Nelson, director of hunger concerns for the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said it is "exciting to see God working through his people to open doors for sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with a lost world.

"With over 800 million people hungry both here and abroad, it thrills the heart to see such an outpouring of Christlike compassion." He voiced hope the increas-

ing awareness of hunger needs "will eventually allow both our domestic and international missionaries to expand their vision."

He said hundreds of church families are using a "rice bowl," available through the ERLC, to collect change in their homes, and a number of churches are sponsoring World Hunger Fund change canisters, newly available from the ERLC, in the church and local businesses.

"Both of these items encourage a lifestyle of consistent caring for the poor," Nelson said.

Rejoicing in hunger fund increase, Bill Cashion, human needs consultant for the International Mission Board, said, "As we continue to see the doors open for ministry evangelism to many of the unreached people groups around the world, we are grateful for the rise in gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund."

Cashion added, "... we must remind ourselves that we are still far below the

years of the mid-'80s when nearly \$12 million was given for world hunger needs."

David Wigger, director of church and community ministries for the North American Mission Board, said, "Where we live in a country where approximately four million children under age 12 go to bed at night hungry, and where between 1985 and 1995 the number of people experiencing hunger increased from 20 million to 30 million people, it is encouraging to see Southern Baptists increase their contributions to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund."

Nelson pointed out 100 percent of gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund received by the ERLC are used for hunger ministry, with nothing taken out for promotion or administration. Unless otherwise designated by the donor, all gifts received are dispersed with 80 percent going to the International Mission Board and 20 percent to the North American Mission Board. ■

BSSB takes 'extraordinary' measures to deliver literature

By Charles Willis
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Baptist Sunday School Board is taking "extraordinary" measures to see that churches get their literature in spite of the nationwide United Parcel Service strike, the board's president announced Aug. 7.

James T. Draper Jr., told Baptist Press that dated literature orders placed by Aug. 6 will be sent by other carriers at a cost to the board estimated in excess of \$500,000. While approximately 70 percent of the dated orders for use beginning in September had been shipped before the strike began on Aug. 4, Draper said, delivery of the remaining 30 percent has become the board's most immediate concern.

"We have looked at the situation, and we have made this choice because ministry is where our heart is," Draper said. "This is an extraordinary measure, but we choose to do this because

churches will get their literature when they need it and because we want to do it. We have surveyed some other organizations that are also among the largest UPS customers, and many of those are holding orders until the strike ends. We do not feel we can delay shipment to those we consider partners in ministry."

Affected orders are primarily from 10 states. On Aug. 8 the board was to begin shipping orders to Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Draper said if the strike continued into the week of Aug. 11, orders for Alabama, Florida, and Georgia also will have been prepared for shipment by other carriers. Some orders from churches in other states, placed on or just before Aug. 6, also will be included in the shipment schedule.

Approximately 12,000 churches' orders which were in the board's system by Aug. 6 will be shipped by direct

freight for packages of 10 pounds or more. Packages weighing less than 10 pounds will be sent by U.S. Postal Service. Freight deliveries should be completed by Aug. 22. Estimated delivery time by the Postal Service is 14 to 21 days.

However, Draper asked churches not jam the board's phone lines inquiring about deliveries. "Please allow time for the packages to work through this process," he said.

"We will also determine orders that may be in UPS warehouses, and we will send out duplicate orders beginning on Aug. 18. However, due to the freight expense the board will incur, we will not be able to provide free duplicate orders for those delayed in shipping. Churches will be able to return for credit duplicate orders for which they have paid."

Churches whose orders were placed beginning Aug. 7 will be offered the choice of delivery by U.S. mail at the

usual shipping and handling charge, with no tracking capability and no guarantee of delivery date, or delivery by direct freight with an additional freight charge based on weight with a minimum charge of \$40.

Churches that placed orders after Aug. 6 and that are within driving distance of Nashville are encouraged to have a member pick up materials in Nashville with no pick-up charge.

Draper said changing delivery systems requires many employees from across the board to assist in resorting packages already marked with UPS codes to meet other carriers' requirements.

"These are unusual circumstances out of our control," Draper observed, "but we are more than a business. We succeed only when we meet the needs of churches and individuals, and we believe this extraordinary challenge deserves an extraordinary response based on ministry needs." ■

NAMB-BSSB announce 'new day' in agencies' relationship

By Martin King
For Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Two of Southern Baptists' largest agencies have reached what their respective presidents termed historic agreement to work cooperatively, with the first effort being a joint task force to make Bible study more evangelistic.

The executive staff of the North American Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board met eight hours Aug. 5 at NAMB offices here to "talk about how we can capitalize on

the resources of our two agencies and serve churches cooperatively, rather than duplicate services, or even compete," said Bob Record, NAMB's new president.

Record told Baptist Press he invited James T. Draper Jr., BSSB president, and his executive staff to meet him and NAMB's new leadership team on Record's first full day at the new mission agency be-

cause "our agency alone cannot reach North America for Christ. We've invited the Sunday School Board to cooperate with us in helping our churches, associations, and state conventions evangelize and congregationalize the United States and Canada. I am thrilled they have responded so enthusiastically."

Draper said the meeting sig-

naled a "new day" in SBC agency relationships. "I am very excited about the commitments our agencies have made to cooperate and complement each other, rather than to compete. We're in this thing together," Draper said.

He said the new relationship is a direct result of the Southern Baptist Convention's "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring which promised increased effectiveness and efficiency. "That's exactly what Southern Baptists will see from this type of joint strategic planning. It's wonderful,"

Draper said.

The first joint task force will develop ways to equip Bible study leaders and participants in effective soul-winning.

NAMB's representatives on the task force will be Mike Day, vice president of strategic planning; Richard Harris, vice president of church planting; and a person to be named later.

BSSB representatives are Gene Mims, vice president of the church growth group, and Bill Taylor, director of the Bible teaching-reaching division. ■



DRAPER



RECORD

Jericho vols complete projects for missions around the world

Baptist Press

GLORIETA, N.M. — In a step of faith that volunteers would come, supplies for sewing infant receiving blankets and Bible covers, gluing bookmarks, constructing wooden toys for a day-care center in Brazil, and assembling gifts for Arkansas prison inmates to give their children were laid out July 26 in a conference room and a canvas tent at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

The volunteers did come and by the end of the Jericho Southern Baptist Missions Festival on Aug. 1, each project requested by a North American or international missionary had been completed. Missionaries who had requested the projects had worked alongside the volunteers and plans were made

for getting the items to the mission fields.

Many of the carpentry workers had no experience, but Frank Green, property manager for Faith Church, Bartlett, and a member of Baptist Builders was available to help. While he was at his first Jericho conference, Green is a veteran of at least 50 mission construction projects.

"It's satisfying to make something and see it put to good use," he said. "One of the side joys is to teach a young person or adult to do something they've never done before," Green added.

The Jericho missions conference was sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board, North American Mission Board, International Mission Board, and Woman's Missionary Union. ■

First-person account

Song makes mark in nation's cultural crisis

By William H. Perkins Jr.
For Baptist Press

JACKSON, Miss. — It's nothing short of phenomenal — and that's no exaggeration. "Butterfly Kisses," written and performed by Christian recording artist Bob Carlisle, is sweeping across the country like virtually no other tune in Christian or secular recording history.

That's right. An unashamedly Christian song by an unabashed Christian singer sits atop the industry-standard *Billboard* magazine pop music charts, and it seems to be picking up more listeners every day.

It's been a heady trip for Carlisle, who has worked in the Nashville Christian music scene for more than 20 years. Carlisle wrote the song late one night while waiting for his daughter to return home. He thought it would be a nice present for her 16th birthday. As he put pen to paper, the verses began to flow.

The unprecedented popularity of "Butterfly Kisses" has been achieved without the endorsement of most mainstream media. MTV doesn't think much of it, and secular critics have sniffed that it's just too "syrupy," "weepee," and "unsophisticated" to be a hit.

They just don't get it.

"Butterfly Kisses" is about one father's unconditional commitment to his child, phrased simply and described in down-to-earth terms.

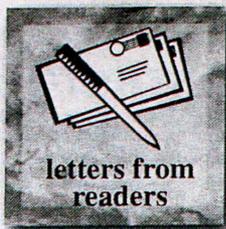
It's the only secular hit song in recent memory that actually uses the name of Jesus in a manner other than defamatory.

"Butterfly Kisses" must create great discomfort for the keepers of the unwritten rules of our culture. Here is a father — a man — who thinks of himself as more than a sex-charged, self-gratifying, self-centered seeker of pleasure at all costs.

Here is a father who regrets his mistakes and is humbly grateful for second chances. Here is a father who admits praying with his child at bedtime, a father who actually wants to be home at his child's bedtime.

It's tough being a father in a culture that has steadily downgraded the expectations of fatherhood for decades. It's even tougher being a Christian father in a society where manhood is measured in hours worked, money acquired, and worldly adulation.

Thanks Bob Carlisle, from the Christian fathers and mothers who fight the culture war every day to be the parents God intends for us to be for our children. There are a lot of us out here, and we appreciate the encouragement. ■



letters from readers

about letters

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

About VBS

In the July 23 issue, a letter was published about this year's Vacation Bible School theme. The writer was not pleased with the material and the "worldly" approach to reaching children with the Good News.

Here is my opinion: I am the mother of two boys, ages 6 and 8. We live in the same small community where I grew up. My boys attend the same church and school I attended as a child. Everything seems the same as when I grew up here. But it's not the same.

My boys are growing up in a world much different than it was 25 years ago. Because of all the technology children are exposed to today, they need to be entertained more than children of my generation.

If using a cowboy theme holds attentions long enough to plant the Word of God into their hearts and minds, I see nothing wrong with it. I feel that changing the way we present the Good News to keep up with the times is a positive

thing as long as the Good News stays the same.

I am familiar with this year's VBS material. I feel that by the end of VBS week children will know how to share the Good News of Jesus with others. And I have no doubt that some will come to know the Lord as their personal Savior. Isn't that what VBS is all about?

Sherry Williams
Savannah 38372

Disney boycott

As a Southern Baptist for 50 years, I have not agreed with the ultra-conservative ideas of the Southern Baptist Convention. Paul, so admired by many, said in I Corinthians 7:7-11, "Stay single like me if you can!" He also said, "Husbands, don't divorce your wives."

We Southern Baptists surely support and minister to the singles or divorced, but we ignore the gays and drug users. What would Jesus do? What did he do? So often Jesus had to preach to the church lead-

ers, or hypocrites as he called them. Look at Matthew 19:3-12.

Let me close with a reference from the little book of Jude, verses 7-10, 17-23. "Keep yourselves in the love of God — and of some, have compassion, making a difference!"

Let us love and witness — not boycott! Disney doesn't need the money of the SBC, but the salvation.

Gayle Gilpin
Clarksville 37040-4705

Wrong example

In the July 23 paper I read with astonishment a letter critical of the Disney boycott which then suggested we follow the lead of Mormons who "hand out Bibles."

Just because a sect passes out Bibles (or has cute ads on TV) doesn't make it a proper example to be copied.

We should examine what the Mormon church really teaches. I suggest an excellent book that will give enlightenment. It's called *Cults, World Religions, and the Occult* by

Kenneth Boa. I agree we should be more zealous in our evangelism, but let's not use the wrong examples.

Donna Edwards
Morristown 37814

Persecution

I have recently been learning about the cruel persecution our fellow Christians are suffering in the African country of Sudan. I understand this suffering is also going on in many other Muslim controlled areas where followers of Jesus Christ are being "faithful unto death." Children are often snatched away and sold for various purposes.

Surely we who call ourselves Christians have a responsibility to respond in some way to this great need. The least we can do is to pray daily for those who suffer.

For more information, call 1 (800) 747-0085 or write: The Voice of the Martyrs, P.O. Box 443, Bartlesville, OK 74005-0443.

Norma Cox
Holladay 38341

12-year-old's courage teaches journalist vital lesson

an occasional word

by Lonnie Wilkey
associate editor



On a Saturday assignment to cover Robertson County's first Habitat for Humanity house (see story on page 1).

There were some things I needed to do at home. It was going to be hot. The temperature was supposed to be in the high 90s, perhaps even reach 100 degrees. I had another assignment on Sunday that would require me to drive about 400 miles and cover two events in one day.

And if those "reasons" weren't enough, I had covered a Habitat for Humanity story a few months earlier. Habitat is a great program, but I didn't really think it merited giving up part of my Saturday to go do another story.

I was wrong. I'm just thankful all my excuses didn't keep me from covering what proved to be one of the most rewarding stories I've had as a journalist.

There was supposed to be a groundbreaking ceremony for the Habitat home at 10 a.m. When I arrived (about 20 minutes early) I was shocked. The framework of a building already was in place. People were everywhere, either working on the building or clearing land around the house.

Upon visiting with Jerry McClain, Brotherhood director for Robertson County Association, and Dennis Pulley, the association's director of missions, I sensed this was not an average, run-of-the-mill story.

People were so excited about the project they began a day early. What was their motivation?

I must confess I was not exactly thrilled a few weeks ago when I was given

It was 12-year-old Brandy Groves and her family.

In one sense the Groves could be the typical American family. Marty, the dad, is a police officer with the Robertson County D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program. He is known and respected in the Springfield area. Patty, the mom, stays at home with her three children which includes Brandy and her brothers, Brandon and William.

Typical families, however, don't live with what the Groves face every day of their life.

Brandy and 6-year-old William have cystic fibrosis, the most common fatal genetic disease in the United States which as of yet has no cure. The disease affects 30,000 children and young adults. About 1,000 new cases are diagnosed each year.

William's disease is in the very early stages and his life is more normal at this time. Brandy's disease is more advanced and her life revolves around taking medicine and trips to Vanderbilt's Children's Hospital. Her chances of becoming an adult are not great. In fact, her family was not sure she would be with them last Christmas after undergoing a serious bout with the disease.

But Brandy doesn't seem to dwell on her future. She lives in the presence. Her attitude is contagious.

Brandy's mom admits to having bad days when she sits and cries and wonders why this happened to her children. But, she says, "I just go on. The Lord gives me strength." She clings to the hope that a cure will be found for CF before it is too late for her children. "Our goal is to keep our children as healthy as we can until they develop a cure. We feel like we will make it," she says with conviction.

Brandy and her family were there on that hot Saturday putting in their hours of "sweat equity" which are required for a

Habitat home. Brandy had to stay under the tent most of the time because heat affects her condition. But she had a smile and was excited. Her dream for her own house and her own bedroom was becoming a reality before her very eyes.

Her story, her courage, and her dream has brought a community together. People from different backgrounds and churches bonded together for a common cause — to make Brandy's dream come true.

Tennessee Baptists can be proud of their brothers and sisters in Christ in Robertson County Association. While they weren't totally responsible for Brandy's new home, the association's Brotherhood and WMU members played a major role.

Seeing their enthusiasm and their willingness to show God's love to a little girl and her family was as inspiring as the courage and attitude of Brandy and her family.

I visited the family a week later to take a picture of their new house. I learned Brandy had to go to the hospital before the home was completed, but she was allowed to come to the dedication service held Aug. 3. I asked Brandy what she thought about her new home. "It's just beautiful," she replied. I asked if it was what she had dreamed of. A beaming face was the only answer I needed.

God taught me a lesson that hot July day. Here was a 12-year-old girl with every reason to be bitter and unhappy. Instead, her courage and cheery attitude rallied a community to pull together and build the first Habitat for Humanity home in Robertson County. Approximately 100 people sacrificed their time and gave of themselves to work on the house that day and about 300 were involved overall.

And just think — I didn't even want to take the effort to drive 60 miles round trip because I was too "busy" and it was going to be "too hot." May the Lord forgive me! ■



Partnership Prayer Requests

August

13 — Pray for the upcoming Week of Prayer for State Missions, Sept. 7-14, in the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.

14 — Pray for the Area Sunday School Conferences to be held Sept. 15-20 in Michigan.

15 — Pray for pastor Julio Ruiz and his family who arrived last month in Canada from Venezuela. Ruiz will serve at Royal Heights Church, North Delta/Surrey.

16 — Praise God for a team from Memphis who worked in Zyradow, Poland, where they taught English as a Second Language.

17 — Pray for Bettye Summers of Camden, Elizabeth Childs of Brentwood, and Polly Cole of Union City as they prepare to lead prayer walks in San Jose, Costa Rica.

18 — Pray for the Youth Super Summer program of Michigan Baptists Aug. 18-21.

19 — Pray for those attending Christian camps in Canada this summer.

Tell others about this world window

Tennessee Baptists have a denominational calendar to mark off special events of interest.

There are many "special" days on the calendar — anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, special occasions, workshops, retreats, and conferences.

Now it's our turn. Sunday, August 17, is marked with a big red circle on the Tennessee Baptist Convention's calendar — as *Baptist and Reflector* Day. We want you to observe this day, and give you some reasons why.

Our relationship is reciprocal. Even as we support each local church, association, institution, and other TBC entities, we want you to support your paper.

The *Baptist and Reflector* is the best and only way you can receive with balance and fairness all the news about Baptist work in Tennessee. This is your official news source, and the paper keeps readers informed also about news of the Southern Baptist Convention and Baptist work around the world.

We provide news that you want and need, always trying to be the advocate of the people.

The *B&R* is your window on the world, your chief messenger of Baptist life. Wherever the news is, we try to be there. Wherever there is an interesting story being acted out in real life, involving real Baptists, we want to be there.

The staff wants you to observe *Baptist*

and *Reflector* Day because it is the convention's way of saying, "Look at your paper. It has served Tennessee Baptists since 1835, and it is older than the convention itself.

"It has faithfully pictured for you the many faces of Tennessee Baptists at work for the Lord.

"The *B&R* is the best resource you will ever have for being more missions-minded, more evangelistic, more concerned about lost people, more eager to love and learn about fellow Baptists here, and there. The paper 'educates' its readers.

"Look at your newspaper — and you see images of people working, planting churches, teaching and reaching people, witnessing, serving God in a rainbow of colorful ways. Look at your paper and you will see stories of lives lived out for Christ, over and over and over."

Accountability is proven on the pages of the *B&R*. For example, regularly we publish the giving records through the Cooperative Program from all the churches. And we show how the funds are spent within Tennessee, how the money is dispersed to and used by our institutions, agency, colleges, state work, and what portions are forwarded to the Southern Baptist Convention to be joined by funds from other states.

Yes, look at your paper.

We try to provide a solid spiritual support for families, and share ways to assist.

Of course we want more Tennessee Baptists to be regular readers of the *B&R*. But our main goal is to provide the best possible paper for those who subscribe to and support the paper.

The appearance of any newsjournal is important, but not as vital as its content. We have introduced some new "looks" this week, and we will continue to match any facial surgery with due concern for content. We are developing some ideas and dreams into reality.

The paper, now in its 162nd year, has an auspicious heritage. However, the heritage of excellence has to be mirrored in the difficulties and successes of each era of existence.

For almost half of its life, the *Baptist and Reflector* and its ancestors were owned by individuals who sought to provide Tennessee Baptist news to Tennessee Baptists. Sometimes they were overzealous in their efforts and let personal views and desires rule.

A delicate and necessary balance was eventually developed. Every editor must have complete freedom, but at the same time, he must realize that the paper reflects the "soul" or embodiment of Tennessee Baptists. It always is the advocate of the people. Not only is it the only official source of news for Tennessee Baptists, it is their property.

Now, since you're a reader, tell others about their newsjournal weekly. — *WFA*



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Mother to Bobby: "I don't want to get another note from your teacher about you."

Bobby to teacher: "My mother said she doesn't want to get another note from you about me."

Take this thought

Never underestimate the shrewdness of your children. They know how to turn a phrase to their advantage and even how to manipulate one parent against another for their benefit. Also, always be consistent with your children. They pick up on our failures quickly. As it has been said, "If you think your child doesn't know right from wrong, try being wrong."

Memorize this Scripture

I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. — Matthew 11:25

Pray this prayer

Lord we thank you for the sharp minds and keen insights of our children. Help us to help them develop in a mature way. Help us, however, to remember they are still children and need both our guidance and our example. ■

Who said that?

In *Surprised by Joy*, I wrote that "before God closed in on me, I was offered what now appears a moment of wholly free choice." But I was the object rather than the subject in this affair. I was decided upon. — C. S. Lewis

When you gain an extra day, make good use of it

one word more

by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor



What do you do when you are given an extra day to do something

free ride to Shangri-La.

Well, it was a day in Jerusalem, a day in which I made out my own itinerary.

Imagine — you have your personal guide, Sofie Wertheimer; your private car with driver (superb), and perfect weather.

I spent quality time at the Israel Museum, which has recently undergone breathtaking renovations; several hours walking about Old Jerusalem outside the walls; some casual sauntering among the people, and a cool trip to Hezekiah's Tunnel.

But first, the day started with a visit and interview at the home of Rabbi Yitzak Rubin. Yes, there are great differences in the beliefs of Southern Baptists and Jews — but we spent most of two hours discussing the spiritual truths that draw us together.

A Vietnam War chaplain who has lived in several areas of the United States, he said he had felt a "magnetic pull" to live in Israel. Over and over he talked about the God who was involved in human history, and who is still involved.

He is a God who listens and acts on our

prayers, Rubin said.

God always wants something from us, he said, and it matters to God how we live between Sabbaths.

We could have gone longer, further, deeper. But the itinerary beckoned.

The trip to the Israel Museum turned out to be a distinct bonus. Yes, it is flattering to be recognized that far from home, and to be treated to a private guide.

Sofie and I were offered the rare opportunity to visit a special exhibit, which had opened the day before. We jumped at the chance. The Cairo Genizah proved to be as it was advertised — a mosaic of life. It marked the 100th anniversary of the discovery of a cache of remarkable documents found at the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo in 1897.

Some of those documents, including letters and vital manuscripts, were 800 to 900 years old.

An extra day? Yes, but like most extra days, they always invoke a longing for several more. ✽

special?

A good answer is, take it — and use it wisely. Gifts like that are blessings.

I was given an extra day in early summer, tacked on the end of two weeks of exploring parts of Switzerland and Israel.

The extra day offer came before I left Nashville on the first leg of the trip, Atlanta to Zurich to Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and some very interesting destinations in between.

So I had time to think about that extra day. It was not like getting an extra half hour in "time out," or staying an hour after school. No, it was on the far end of extraordinary, a carte blanche, a

Failures aren't always failures — they are 'teachers'

families matter

by Paul Barkley, counselor, professor



John quotes Jesus' words about tribulation in John 16:33: "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage I have overcome the world."

Some of my greatest lessons have come from what I perceived to be failures at the time. Some of my greatest disappointments occurred immediately following some of my successes.

The family is a small macrocosm of real life. We tend to see the mistakes made in marriage, raising children, and getting along with extended family as

the precursors of gloom and doom with no hope of rectifying the mistakes. Each of us has known families who seemed to "have it made" financially, emotionally, socially, and materially, yet they seem to fall apart before our eyes for no apparent reason.

A large part of the outcome is based on the outlook. It's been said that success is never permanent and failure is never final. While I do not believe always that "thinking makes it so," I believe the focus of our frame of reference will help determine finale of our future.

Paul said, "Whatever is good ..." think on these things. We tend to look at life from our perspective and label it good or bad as though we had the final word. Once we have labeled a situation "bad" we are already headed for defeat, discouragement, and de-

spondency. In essence, we give up any control we might have in the situation to change the outcome.

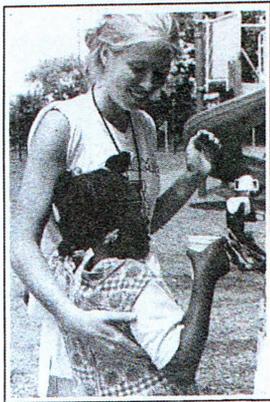
I think as Christian families we must remember "the battle is not ours," it is God's. No matter the subject, in the family we must never develop the defeatist attitude that nothing will change. This attitude denies that God is still in control.

I don't believe that God will force our child or spouse to do the right thing, but I do believe that we many times abandon ship before God has been able to use us to make any course correction.

We should acknowledge the possibility for problems. We need to walk with the Father in his way. We can face the future with finesse when we have completely conceded control to God with his flawless focus on the future. ■

Workers ignore danger to minister to residents

Woodcock Center serves inner city comm



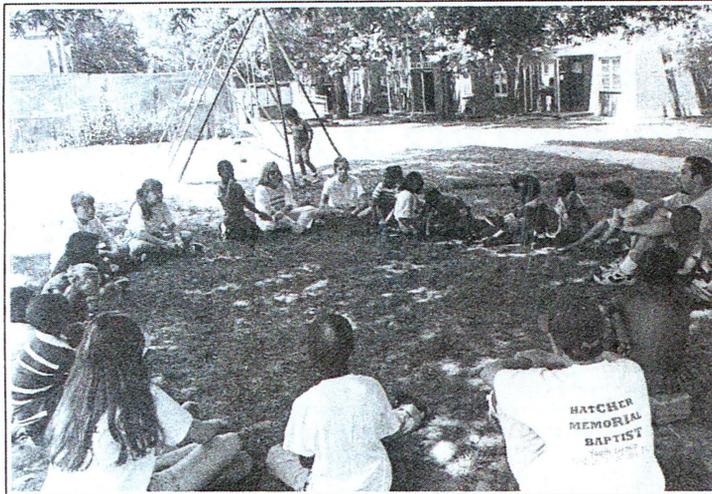
HUGGING a member of her Backyard Bible Club is summer missionary Jennifer Easley.



A NEW FRIEND catches a ride on the back of Corey Seaborn of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory.



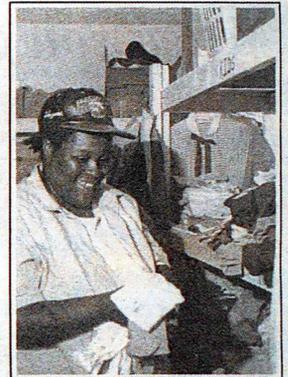
SUMMER MISSIONARIES with their supervisor are, from left, Jennifer Easley, Franklinton, N.C.; Mark Hanson, Mobile, Ala.; Linda Knott, director, Woodcock Baptist Center; Bart Dalton, Nashville; Steven Burchette, Kingsport; Melissa Evette, Easley, S.C.; and Heather Logan, Bolivar. — Photos by Connie Davis



A BACKYARD BIBLE CLUB meets in the courtyard of a government-subsidized apartment complex.



VOLUNTEERS working in the center's clothing distribution area are, from left, Adelle Johnson, Dottie Stewart, and Tessie Murrow from Walker Memorial Church, Franklin.



MICHELLE JOHNSON visits with workers in the clothing area of the center as she looks for clothes for her children.



PLAYING A TRUST GAME is a member of a Backyard Bible Club with help from Chuck Wiltshire, left, and Travis Hughes of Hatcher Memorial Church, Richmond, Va.



SLIDING in tandem with a new buddy is Kris Neely, in back, of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory.



MAKING A NEW friend is Mark Hanson, summer missionary from Mobile, Ala.

Community struggling with poverty

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — "Hey, Linda. We had a drug bust today," said Mark Hanson, a summer missionary serving at Woodcock Baptist Center, as he passed through a cramped office after completing a report on a Backyard Bible Club held that morning.

"Yes, I saw the police cars, four of them. Were you almost through with club?" asked Linda Knott, director.

"Yea," he replied. "We just cancelled a little early when we saw the cops moving into our area."

"You did good," Knott said as she patted him on the back. Hanson, of Mobile, Ala., grinned and moved toward the lunch room while Knott rejoined a conversation with two other summer missionaries. A second later the door opened and several other workers plunged in from the summer heat replete with other stories.

Hanson's Backyard Bible Club met that morning on a grassy plain between apartment buildings in one of several government-subsidized apartment building projects in the community. It seemed to be a peaceful setting. About 25 children and leaders formed a circle under a massive shade tree. But it wasn't the first drug bust of the summer and it wouldn't be the last, Knott reported.

Hanson explained later that the children were aware of the event before he was. One boy old him, "I heard that noise when they (police) go into apartments." Hanson noted the children in this neighborhood are very streetwise.

The community

Located just east of the skyscrapers of downtown, this east Nashville community is appropriately separated from the polished buildings by an interstate highway. It includes three government-subsidized apartment projects and Crack Boulevard, otherwise known as Sylvan Street, explained Knott, a member of First Church, Donelson. She has directed the center for three years.

In this 10 by six block area, 11,000 people live, of which 3,000 are children or teenagers, said Knott.

"There are a lot of un-reached folks here," said Knott.

The residents are diverse, including Caucasians, African Americans, and Hispanics, said Knott. She doesn't worry

about the danger that exists because she remembers that they "have families at home," she said.

However, Knott and the workers take precautions. Neither she nor the workers visit residents alone. And each week this summer they held a Prayer Walk throughout the streets claiming God's protection for the community. Knott also encourages each summer missionary to enlist at least 10 people who will pray for him or her during their term of service at Woodcock Center.

"I know there's some harmful things going on," she said. But fewer acts of violence have occurred in the area since the Prayer Walks were begun, Knott reported.

The missionaries

The summer ministries of Woodcock Center are added to the center's year-long offerings like its clothing ministry, beauty and barber shops, Wednesday luncheon and worship service, and afternoon activities for children and teens, including computer training and Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors, and Mission Friends. The year-long activities are led by about 100 volunteers from churches in Nashville Association.

This summer, with the assistance of six summer missionaries and a semester missionary who led youth helpers, additional activities have reached 235 children from 139 families, reported Knott.

Each morning except Wednesdays the summer missionaries and youth led Backyard Bible Clubs at six sites in the community. Youth workers came from youth groups who accepted assignments from the North American Mission Board to Woodcock Center. Additional helpers came from Mission Fuge, a youth program based at Belmont University this summer.

Each Wednesday the entire operation for children and youth of the community has been combined and moved to Crieveewood Church, Nashville.

Bart Dalton, summer missionary who directed the Wednesday day camp, said "When you take the children out of the projects, they really relax and begin to feel secure." Dalton has been a volunteer for two years at Woodcock. He is a student at Belmont University here and a member of Brook Hollow Church, Nashville.

"God has really blessed day camp," he said. "I've always had the people I've needed to

help. It's really miraculous."

Dalton learned from another summer missionary some of the impact of the day camp. During a home visit, the summer missionary learned that five children of a family attended the day camp. When each returned home with a prayer ball made from yarn as a reminder of their day, they pulled yarn from theirs to make prayer balls for their remaining two siblings.

Knott commended the staff and members of Crieveewood Church, who opened their air-conditioned gymnasium for the day camp and served a meal and a snack to the crowd. She explained that many of the children receive little food in the summer.

Dalton also reported on an outing for 20 children in the 5th - 7th grades organized with the help of Polk County Association to its Camp Agape, Benton. For most of the children, it was their first trip outside of Nashville, he said.

Another Tennessean, Heather Logan of Bolivar, said her assignment was different from what she expected. Her focus this summer was to minister to residents of a seven-block area which is not a part of the projects, but made up of lower middle class families. In her contacts with the residents, she discovered many single parents. Most of the people don't go to church, Logan noted.

Melissa Evette, of Easley, S.C., requested an assignment at Woodcock Center after serving as a volunteer last year with a college group during spring break. This is her second stint as a summer missionary here.

Evette said she exercised her creativity when she felt a burden for the preschoolers who weren't included in the

Wednesday day camp. So she directed a one-day carnival just for that age group. The theme was Noah's ark. "We had so much fun," she said.

Jennifer Leonard is a semester missionary at Woodcock Center. Leonard, a member of Walker Memorial Church, Franklin, and recent graduate of Belmont University, planned to serve at four different Baptist centers in the United States to pursue her calling to help lead a Baptist center. Her first assignment was Woodcock. She has remained four semesters.

The youth workers

The older youth of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, usually serve outside of Tennessee doing missions work in the summer. This year they decided to work closer to home, said Richard Ross, minister of youth for the past 13 years.

They were closer to home, but they cut off communication with friends and family just as if they were out of state. They decided they wanted to "focus on these relationships," said Ross.

The team of 56 led Backyard Bible Clubs, but also conducted a sports camp for youth and worked at Woodcock Memorial Church, which started the center and also ministers in the community. The center is funded by churches in Nashville Association, the association, and the Tennessee



Baptist Convention's Golden State Missions Offering.

One commitment

One volunteer reported Knott had once given shoes off of her feet to a needy lady.

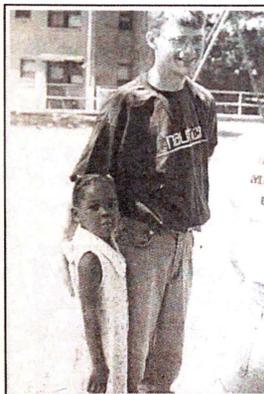
Knott, who will retire Aug. 31, said "I do a lot of praying. I see children who need to be reached, and families. Our responsibility is to see that they have the Gospel presented in a way they can understand it."

She said the challenge is that she works in a different culture. But soon after she started volunteering at Woodcock Center about 30 years ago, she stopped seeing the people here in terms of the projects, and started seeing them as individuals.

"They've become my friends," she said. *B&R*



VISITING with Yolanda Hanserd, right, who participates in activities at Woodcock Baptist Center, and her daughter, Celeste, is Linda Knott.



POSING for a photo is a friend of summer missionary Bart Dalton.



LEADING A TEAM from Hatcher Memorial Church, Richmond, Va., in prayer at the beginning of the day is summer missionary Mark Hanson, second from right.

Tennessean to retire as president of Oklahoma Baptist University

Baptist Press

SHAWNEE, Okla. — Tennessee native and former Union University administrator Bob R. Agee will retire as president of Oklahoma Baptist University Sept. 1, 1998.

Agee became president of OBU in 1982, coming to the post from Union where he served as vice president for religious affairs.

Following his retirement as president, Agee will assume the role of president emeritus.

Although the title will carry no administrative authority, he will assist the university with 10 specific tasks through the year 2000, primarily assisting with smooth transition to new leadership and with fund-raising efforts related to the current "Foundation for the Future" campaign.

"This decision did not come easily," Agee said.

Agee, who has recently gone through a second bout with

leukemia and recovery from chemotherapy treatments, received an encouraging report in June of a significant reduction of cancer cells in the bone marrow and blood counts re-

turning toward normal ranges. Doctors expect the leukemia will be back in remission by the end of the summer, and Agee and his wife, Nelle,

have two grown daughters and three granddaughters. ■

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Classified

MINISTER OF OUTREACH: Nashville area church seeks an interim, part-time minister of outreach/pastoral assistant. If interested, send resume by Aug. 29 to Tulip Grove Church, 565 Shute Lane, Old Hickory, TN 37138.

CHURCH ORGANIST: Needed for both Sunday services, experience required. Send resumes to Personnel Committee, Valley Grove Baptist Church, 9000 Old Sevierville Pike, Knoxville, TN 37920, phone (423) 577-6620.

SEEKING: FBC of Mt. Sterling, Ky., seeks a full-time minister of youth/music. Applicants should send resume to: Search Committee, FBC, P.O. Box 324, Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.

Attention Pastors and Church Staff

Got kids coming to Knoxville for college? Want a church to recommend?



The college ministry of Grace Baptist Church is looking to reach out minister to and involve students interested in spiritual things. Transportation is provided from the campus. Worship services are very upbeat and exciting. Bible study and fellowship are outstanding.



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Thank you for meeting the 1997 Mother's Day Offering goal! ♥♥♥♥♥



This year, Tennessee Baptist churches and individuals met our \$1,275,000 Mother's Day Offering goal!

Words cannot begin to express what your support means to children whose lives are torn by neglect, abandonment, and abuse! Your gifts make it possible for Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes to care for more than 400 children state-wide by providing them with the privileges our own children enjoy--food, clothes, medical care, love, educational assistance, a Christian home, and most importantly, spiritual guidance through church attendance, camp, and counseling.

From the staff and children of the 30 homes in eleven locations across our state, thank you for continuing to support this ministry!

Dr. Gerald L. Stow
President/Treasurer



Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes
P. O. Box 2206, 1310 Franklin Road
Brentwood, TN 37024

A Benevolent Ministry of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

The Christian Growth Development Group of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board Ministries will again provide training for Sunday School, Discipleship Training, Media Library, and Collegiate Ministry leaders. Conferences are scheduled as follows:

West Division

Monday-Tuesday, Aug. 25-26 — Leawood Church, Memphis, 6:45-9 p.m.
Monday, Aug. 25 — FBC, Lexington, 6:45-9 p.m.
Monday, Aug. 25 — FBC, Dyersburg, 6:45-9 p.m.
Tuesday, Aug. 26 — FBC, Paris, 6:45-9 p.m.
Tuesday, Aug. 26 — FBC, Jackson, 6:45-9 p.m.

Middle Division

Monday, Sept. 8 — FBC, Tullahoma, 7-9 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 8 — Hilldale Church, Clarksville, 7-9:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 9 — FBC, Goodlettsville, 7-9:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 9 — FBC, Franklin, 7-9:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 9 — FBC, Hohenwald, 7-9 p.m.
Monday-Tuesday, Sept. 22-23 — FBC, Cookeville, 6:45-9 p.m.

East Division

Monday-Tuesday, Sept. 22-23 — Central Church, Bearden, Knoxville, 6:30-9:15 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 29 — Central Church, Hixson, 6:30-9:15 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 29 — FBC, Kingsport, 6:45-9 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 30 — FBC, Cleveland, 6:30-9:15 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 30 — FBC, Morristown, 6:45-9 p.m.

Make Plans Now To Attend!

Your local director of missions or Sunday School ACTeam has information about the 1997 Regionals, or you can contact the Christian Growth Development Group at 1 (800) 558-2090, ext. 2083.

churches

■ The single adults and students of **New Friendship Church, Cleveland**, led several missions efforts this summer. A group worked in Parker, Colo., leading neighborhood park ministries and doing surveys for a church. A group helped Cumberland Fellowship Church, Crossville, a new congregation, to lead a Vacation Bible School. Finally, a group worked with First Church, Heyworth, Ill., for the fourth year leading a VBS and a revival. New Friendship Church has less than 150 members.

■ **First Church, Lexington**, will hold a Women's Conference Sept. 12-13. Barbara Joiner, author of *Count It All Joy*, of Alabama, will speak

and Carolyn Reed, Christian recording artist of Nashville, will perform. For more information, call (901) 968-3685.

■ **Two Rivers Church, Nashville**, will offer DivorceCare on Tuesdays or Wednesdays evenings beginning Sept. 2. DivorceCare is a 13 week program. For more information, call (615) 889-3950, ext. 129.

■ Twenty-six senior high youth and six adults from **Brownsville Church, Brownsville**, conducted an 11-day choir mission effort in Crystal Springs, Fla. They worked with Ozello Community Church, leading a Vacation Bible School and doing repair work. The group also performed in seven churches.

■ **First Church, Nashville**, will offer DivorceCare, a



PAUSING after receiving a plaque from the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society during the 125th anniversary celebration of New Hope Church, Bon Aqua, are leaders, from left, Hoyett Tidwell, Caroll Pendergrass, Leon Tidwell, Harding Daugherty, Cleatus Tidwell, Randy King, pastor, and Ray Woodall, director of missions, Judson Association. The congregation has helped start Mount Zion Church, Fairview, and Parkers Creek Church, Bon Aqua.

13-week study, on Wednesday evenings beginning Sept. 3. For more information, call Beth Ervin at (615) 333-6638 or Drew or Pam Nixon at 591-9756.

leaders

■ **Clymersville Church, Rockwood**, recognized **Charles Kelly** Aug. 10 on his 30th anniversary as pastor. Kelly, in his 48th year of ministry, was honored last year as a Tennessee Baptist Convention "Small Church Pastor of the Year."

■ **First Church, Lawrenceburg**, has called **David F. Lawrence** as pastor. Formerly he was pastor, Emmanuel Church, Athens, Ala., for six years. Lawrence is a graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis; and the University of Mobile, Ala.

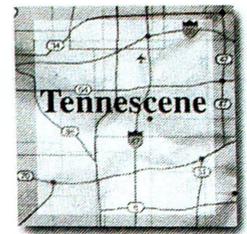
■ **Nickey McMinn**, pastor, Laneview Church, Trenton, has resigned and is available to lead revivals and do supply and interim work.

■ **Ralph Brown**, minister of music/youth, Brownsville Church, Brownsville, celebrated his 15th anniversary of ser-

vice there recently.

■ **Tracy Sims** has been called as pastor of University Heights Church, Cookeville, effective Aug. 10. Sims was pastor, Meadow Church, Comer, Ga. He is a graduate of Berry College, Mount Berry, Ga., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He has served as a youth pastor and speaker in churches in Georgia, Florida, and Texas.

■ **Jeff Story** has been



called as minister of music, Valley Grove Church, Knoxville, effective July 13. Story has been minister of music/youth, Pleasant Hill Church, Lenoir City.

■ **Joy Jordan Lake**, former staff member of the *Baptist and Reflector*, is author of the new book, *Grit & Grace, Portraits of a Woman's Life*. She is a daughter of Moncrief Jordan, retired pastor, First Church, Jefferson City, and Diane Jordan. Lake and her husband, Todd, are on the staff of Wingate College, Wingate, N.C.

■ **David Sharp**, former pastor, First Church, Spring City, has been called as interim pastor, Central Church, Spring City.

■ **Lake Drive Church, Sale Creek**, has called **Shane Johnston**, pastor, High Point Church, Evensville, as pastor.



RECEIVING a plaque to recognize the recent 125th anniversary celebration of Walnut Grove Church, Ripley, is Scott Price, left, pastor, from Ray Jones, director of missions, Big Hatchie Association. The plaque was from the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society.



PREPARING to write materials for Woman's Missionary Union are, from left, Lloyd and Jodi Blackwell, Belmont Heights Church, Nashville, and Dixie Ruth Crase, Second Church, Memphis. The Tennesseans recently participated in the 1997 WMU Writer's Conference held at its offices in Birmingham, Ala.



AFTER SPEAKING during Discipleship Training Week at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, Davie Moore, left, winner, Tennessee Youth Speaker's Tournament, pauses after receiving congratulations from Roy Edgemon, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, and his wife, Ann Marie. Moore, a member of Charleston Church, Stanton, presented his award winning speech, "No Excuses," July 9. Moore also received a \$3,600 scholarship, which he plans to use at Union University, Jackson, in 1998.

Tennessee samplers

by leaders of churches, associations

Commitment

By Charles N. Bryan, pastor Central Church, Alcoa

In the book, *Clicking*, by Faith Popcorn and Lys Marigold, the story of

Zhongmei Li is told. Li is a young Chinese dancer, who at the age of 11 made the journey from a remote village to the Beijing Dance Academy, and then on to a performance in New York.

In an interview by Jennifer Dunning in the *New York Times*, the young Chinese girl told how her parents were set against her auditioning as a dancer because of her lack of training and the formidable competition she would face.

"I went on a hunger strike," she recalled. Her parents gave in, borrowed 1,200 yuan (about \$24) for the ticket, and sent her on her way. She arrived at the academy to find thousands of children waiting to audition.

But she danced. When she made a mistake, she told the auditioners she had to start again.

"I had come so far," she said. "I wanted them to know I was a good dancer."

Out of 3,000 children, she was one of a handful chosen. That shows her determination. And she had even more of what it takes.

"We worked from 6 in the morning to 9 at night," she stated. "I got up early to practice, before anyone else. But I had no alarm, so I put a string down the wall and tied it to my wrist. The night watchman agreed to tug the string at 4 every morning."

What a commitment this little girl made to dancing! How's your commitment to your relationship with God? ■

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

Bethel members celebrate 150th anniversary

For Baptist and Reflector

GREENFIELD — Members of Bethel Church celebrated "150 years of God's blessings" Aug. 10.

The church also made history on the day it observed its heritage with a Sunday School attendance of 239, a record high. More than 300 attended the worship service and fellowship dinner afterwards.

During the morning service Richard Skidmore, director of missions for Weakley County Association, presented the church a plaque from the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society.

Skidmore cited the church for its missions giving, noting the church gives 20 percent to the Cooperative Program, placing it consistently among the top churches in the state in percentage giving. Bethel also gives generously to the association and members also are involved in doing missions as well, he said.

Pastor Clark Brown preached the morning message entitled "Back to Bethel." The afternoon service highlight a video presentation written and produced by Brown and his wife, Millie.

The video updated some of its history as members had thought the church did not have a meeting house for the first 10 years of its existence.



MILLIE BROWN stands beside the only known photo of a charter member, James G. Allen. Brown found one of Allen's descendants, Ann Drewry of McKenzie, who loaned the church the photo for festivities on Aug. 10.

The Browns searched and found the original deeds showing that Cantrell Bethel deeded one-half acre of land to three trustees for Baptist worship in 1845. The meeting house also is mentioned in another deed, according to the Browns.

The video also featured interviews with members baptized before 1940, including Isoline Coleman, who at 93, is the oldest member of the church, having been baptized in 1920.

Prior to the Aug. 10 festivities the church held an old-fashion-



PARTICIPATING IN THE 150th anniversary service of Bethel Church were, from left, Larry Pentecost, deacon chairman; Pastor Clark Brown; Richard Skidmore, director of missions, Weakley County Association; and Sterling Peery, chairman of the homecoming committee. Skidmore presented the church a plaque on behalf of the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society.



PASTOR CLARK BROWN visits with Isoline Coleman, who at age 93, is the oldest member of Bethel Church, Greenfield. Her great grandfather donated the land in 1857 where the church sits today. — Photos by Lonnie Wilkey

ioned tent revival with evangelist Benny Jackson. There were nine professions of faith. — Millie Brown and Lonnie Wilkey



Mind of Christ Conference set for Sept. 21-24

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — T.W. Hunt, author of the *Mind of Christ* study materials, will lead a Mind of Christ Conference Sept. 21-24 at Judson Church, Nashville.

The conference begins at 7 p.m. each evening.

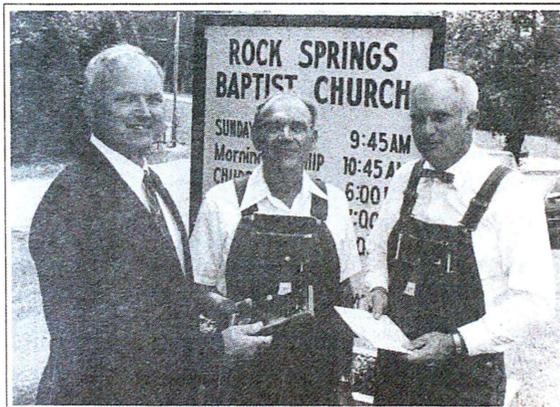
The *Mind of Christ* is a Life Course based on Philippians 2:5-11. The study is divided into six parts: Christ's freedom, lifestyle, servanthood, humanity, holiness and love, and name.

"If you have been looking for a conference to enhance your personal walk with God, you will certainly not want to miss this one," said Jerry Chapman, Discipleship coordinator for the Christian Growth Development Group of TBC Executive Board Ministries, sponsor of the conference.

The registration fee is \$15 and covers cost of the study guide. Member's books and leader's guides will be available for purchase at the conference.

To register, send check for \$15, made payable to Tennessee Baptist Convention, to Jerry Chapman, Christian Growth Development Group, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024. ■

Rock Springs Church reaches 150 mark



For Baptist and Reflector

COLUMBIA — Rock Springs Church honored its heritage July 20 with a celebration of its 150th anniversary.

The church was named for springs flowing from nearby rocks. The first building was a log house which was used until about 1868.

The church annex was in 1978, and serves also as a community center and recreational building. Dwain Brown, pastor since 1995, also served as pastor from 1980-86. ■

ABOVE, BOB GAMBLE, Maury Association director of missions, left, presents an historical plaque to Arthur Wentzel, chairman of deacons; and Pastor Dwain Brown, right. AT RIGHT, 150th anniversary congregation.



DRESSED for the 150th anniversary are, from left: Mary Barker, Willie Mae Wrather, Carol Andrews, Kathy Brown, Angela Wrather, and Sarah Bailey.



Tennessee Baptist golf tournament set for Oct. 2-3

For Baptist and Reflector

GREENFIELD — The annual Tennessee Baptist Golf Tournament will be held Oct. 2-3 at Henry Horton State Park.

Cost of the tournament is \$45, excluding lodging, and checks should be mailed by Sept. 15 to Dan Farmer, 104 Hillsboro St., Greenfield, Tenn., 38230. Participants are responsible for their own reservations at the inn at Henry Horton State Park by calling (615) 364-2222 by Sept. 1.

For more information, call Farmer at (901) 235-3017 or 235-3365. ■

Prejudice

By Aubrey Hay

Focal Passage — Acts 10:1 – 11:18

No one is completely free of prejudice. We are conditioned by our environment, which includes our home, the schools we attend, and the place of our birth, to be prejudice. Oftentimes circumstances contribute to our prejudice. A war veteran never spoke of his former enemy in any way but what bordered on a racial slur. When confronted about his attitude, he would display the wounds inflicted on him while he was a prisoner of war. He had scars to justify, in his mind, his prejudice.

Most of our prejudice is less dramatic, but it is a fact of human existence. Christians must struggle constantly to live above a prejudicial attitude that considers their fellow human as being inferior to them. Peter had such a struggle.

Prejudice examined (ch.10: 9-16). We have all sorts of ways to defend our prejudice. Unfortunately, Peter had connected his to his spirituality. Once prejudice is encased in our religious expressions it becomes difficult to see. The vision God showed Peter allowed him to see his own. In the vision Peter is shown images that confront the dietary restriction of the faithful Jew. Some of these animals were unclean and therefore forbidden by Jewish law. But the real lesson had to do with Peter's attitude about other people. God's statement stands as a warning to us all. He has made all people. There are no special classes of people in the eyes of God. "God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean" (v. 28b). The thrust of the Great Commission is "whosoever" and that must be the attitude of our lives.

Prejudice challenged (vv. 27-35). It is interesting how, while Peter was still reeling from the meaning of the message of the vision, the messengers from Cornelius came. God is about to demonstrate that all people are truly one in his grace. Two things must be present if we are to challenge our prejudice. We must first see it clearly. This was difficult for Peter for his bias was ingrained in his religious training. It is also difficult for us to see, since prejudice is often a part of our culture, and yes, sometimes given support by our religious expression. To break out of it means going against old habits and teachings. The second thing necessary is to be firmly convinced that it is a sin against God. He has made it obvious that all people are precious to him. We need conviction about the sin of our prejudice, and we need to exert every effort to defeat it.

Result of conquered prejudice (ch. 11:15-18). Had Peter kept his negative attitude toward the Gentiles, we probably would never have heard any more about him. He confessed, "of a truth I perceived that God is no respecter of persons." This is followed by Peter proclaiming the message of grace, and the result was the salvation of the house of Cornelius. This opened the floodgates through which redemption flowed to all people of all nations. You and I have been the benefactors of this victory of Peter's as he proclaimed the Gospel without prejudice.

We, of all people, should fight the temptation to act or to live in an attitude that is offensive to people with whom we do not agree. In our zeal to present our point of view we must not alienate those for whom Christ died. — Hay is Church-Ministers Relations Specialist, TBC Executive Board.

Living by faith

By Wm. Fletcher Allen

Focal Passage — Hebrews 11:1-2,6-10, 13-16, 39-40

Faith is an enigma to those who have not experienced the faith exercised in trusting Christ as savior. But it is only as complicated as we make it. Faith is real, dynamic, powerful. An older Bible student once was asked, "How much faith is enough in life?" He quickly responded, "As much as you need."

A pastor who had walked with Christ for many years was asked, "How do we get the faith to follow God?" He replied, "When you don't have the faith to do something God wants you to do, do what you would do if you had the faith." The pastor had learned by experience.

Family Bible Lesson

There are three dimensions to faith as it related to believers: saving faith in Christ, the spiritual gift of faith, and daily faith — the walk and the talk. Our faith grows as we submit to his leadership without reservations, without counting the cost.

Faith undergirds — vv. 1-2. It is evident in our culture today that we live on one or two levels. There is a sensual level, where we choose our values and goals based on what our senses perceive. This is prominent in the "now" generation. The future, including eternity, is sacrificed for the present.

But faith in the doctor is expressed when we take the prescribed medicine. Faith in technology is expressed when we fly on airliners.

So Christians exercise faith as the way to live, real-

izing that faith stands as a foundation for everything hoped for. Substance means a foundation, something that stands under us.

This kind of faith gives us a hope that is the confident-expectant kind of hope. Evidence has in its roots, the word "proof." Having faith doesn't prove that something is real. It means that we have full assurance that all God has told us about is real. It is the faith of the elders.

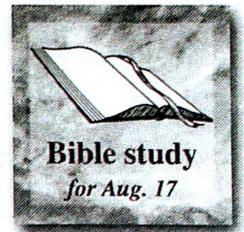
Faith trusts — vv. 6-10. The theme of Hebrews is that without faith, it is impossible to please God. Examples of the great "faith" heroes are listed. The Scriptures tell their stories.

As important as these spiritual heroes are to our testament of life, what we personally experience by faith in God is also great testimony. In looking at these leaders and studying God's world, we can be joyful in serving the body of Christ, rather than seeking a perfect comfort zone for ourselves in a "perfect church."

Faith grows — vv. 13-16, 39-40. History may record our generation and recent ones as people who demanded instant success and/or gratification. Much of what we read and hear tells us we deserve it and can have it.

We have even come to expect church services to supply entertainment and excitement. We must remember that faith is only a glimpse of the divine glory God has prepared for his children. Living by faith in him, we may even be restless for what he has in store for us.

As believers in Christ, we cannot have divided loyalty. As we grow in faith, we let go of attitudes of the world, and seek to serve him completely. A growing faith keeps believing, and does not demand the promises immediately. God has asked us to take a leap of faith. Can you do that? — Allen is editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*, TBC Executive Board.



Believing in Jesus' resurrection

By Jerry Chapman

Focal Passage — I Corinthians 15:12-20

At Ridgecrest Baptist Conference center I was teaching a class on the resurrection of Jesus. Two teams were formed to debate whether Jesus was raised from the dead or not. The first team argued, using the Bible, that Jesus did raise from the dead, is alive, and lives today! The leader of the second team stood and simply said, "We do not believe in the Bible, so what you have said about the resurrection is not true." He sat down. People were stunned. How would you answer this argument?

The heresy (v. 12). Some Corinthians, even some Christians, had been convinced "there is no resurrection of the dead." This could have indicated that the physical bodies of those who had died prior to Christ's return were lost. Others thought the soul, or the inner spirit of man, would survive death without the body. Yet others thought that a spiritual resurrection already had happened when salvation was experienced. Paul simply stated that Christ had been raised from the dead. However, after so many years others have proposed the res-

Explore the Bible Lesson

urrection is only a legend, made up by Christians to cover what some say never happened.

Implications of the heresy (vv. 13-19). What if Christ had not raised from the dead? What would be the implications? This section lists at least seven possibilities: (1) not even Christ has been raised, (2) preaching is worthless, (3) faith is worthless, (4) those who say Christ has been raised are liars, (5) Christians are still in their sins, (6) dead Christians have perished, (7) those who have hoped in Christ are to be pitied.

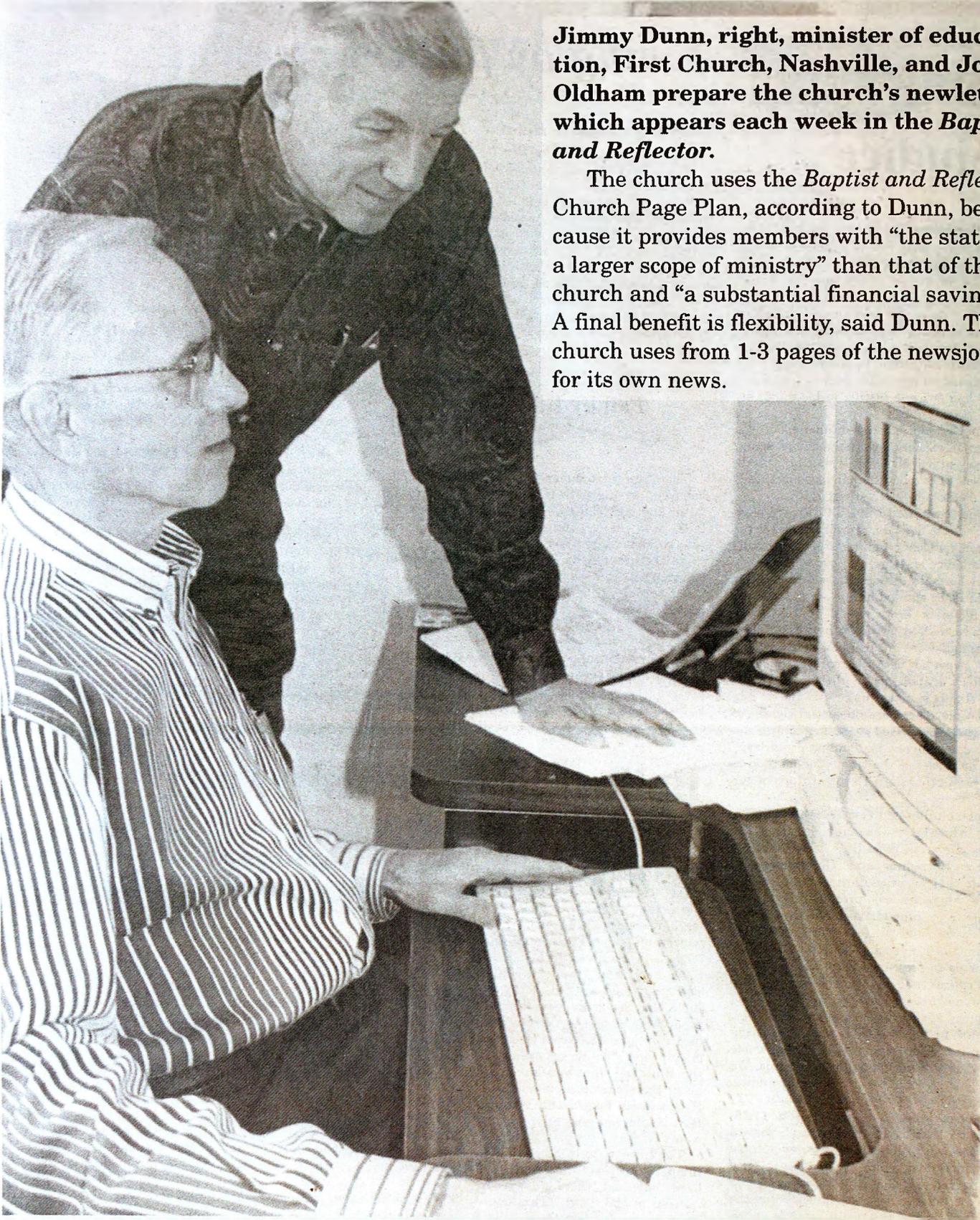
The resurrection is meaningful and real when a person is changed by the resurrection power of Christ Jesus. Believers have a promise of a future only because of what Christ has done for every person.

The reality (v. 20). After Paul had shown that denying the resurrection is a bad idea, he described Christ's resurrection as "the first fruits of those who are asleep." This was a reference to the first sheaves of grain harvested which were of-

fered to God. After this the entire crop was blessed. It was a pledge that what was to follow was as good and real as the first. Paul indicated that Christ's resurrection was the pledge and proof that all believers will be resurrected. Death will be overcome even though "in Adam all die." But Christ's resurrection demonstrates God's power over sin and death.

That brings us back to the class at Ridgecrest. How will we win the argument? Who can prove Christ raised from the dead? The answer is found in those of us who are believers. Christ has changed my life and yours as well. No one can argue about that. Christ is not only God's exhibit of resurrection but believers are God's exhibits that Christ raised from the dead and has the power to change lives. Praise God that Christ raised from the dead and we have an assured future in Christ. — Chapman is Discipleship Coordinator, TBC Executive Board.





Jimmy Dunn, right, minister of education, First Church, Nashville, and John Oldham prepare the church's newsletter which appears each week in the *Baptist and Reflector*.

The church uses the *Baptist and Reflector's* Church Page Plan, according to Dunn, because it provides members with "the status of a larger scope of ministry" than that of the church and "a substantial financial savings." A final benefit is flexibility, said Dunn. The church uses from 1-3 pages of the newsjournal for its own news.

For more information about the *Baptist and Reflector* Church Page Plan, send this form to *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Name _____



We've a Story to Tell



Tennessee's Missions \$\$\$ at Work

by Tambi Swiney, writer, Nashville

When Jesus returned to his boyhood hometown of Nazareth, his family and friends were anxious to see and hear Him. The word of His miracle-working and extraordinary teachings had spread rapidly throughout the countryside. The message He delivered

on the Sabbath in his local synagogue, however, was not what people expected. After reading from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah, Jesus boldly pronounced that through Him, the scripture had been fulfilled.

What were Jesus' shocking words that day? "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19 NKJ).

When Jesus spoke of the acceptable year of the Lord, He was referencing the "Year of Jubilee" described in Leviticus 25. The advent of this observance every fifty years meant that slaves were freed, debts were canceled, and property was redeemed by its original owners. It was, in effect, an economic rebalancing of society. By applying those words to His own ministry, however, Jesus pointed not towards economic issues but physical, emotional, and spiritual ones. The slaves He came to free were brokenhearted people held captive by sin. By preaching the good news of salvation, Jesus truly ushered in the acceptable year of the Lord.

Jesus' message of healing and redemption resonates in our state today. With a population of over five million in a state that covers 42,244 square miles, there are people in every direction who need to hear the

in our state through their prayers, gifts, and service. Mrs. Golden contributed greatly to missions as Corresponding Secretary of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union from 1898-1902. When Dr. Golden

became the State Missions Secretary in 1902, Mrs. Golden served as his office secretary.

At their annual meeting in 1901, Tennessee WMU adopted a plan at the suggestion of Mrs. Golden for a special season of prayer with an offering for state

missions. The program, entitled "Prayer and Privilege," marked the beginning of Tennessee Baptists' commitment to a Week of Prayer for State Missions. Tennessee, in fact, was the first state to establish such a season of prayer accompanied by an offering. In 1943, the offering was officially named the "Golden State Missions Offering" in tribute to the couple who shared a zeal for state missions.

Tennessee Baptists have been faithful through the years to support this offering. We've certainly come a long way since that first

offering of \$800 in 1902; in 1995, \$1,146,131 was given. This year's goal is \$1,325,000 — an increase of \$25,000 over 1996 — money that will be used in a variety of missions endeavors, including new churches, student work, resort ministries, language missions, multi-housing ministries, disaster relief, prison ministries, scholarships, and the Mississippi River Ministry.

Because of the overwhelming needs of Tennesseans, there are incredible opportunities for Tennessee Baptists to seek and love and share in Jesus' name. The 2,902 churches and 69 missions in the Tennessee Baptist Convention must band together to preach the gospel to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and set at liberty those who are oppressed. Imagine what the Lord could do if each of the 808,994 resident members of Tennessee Baptist churches committed to support missions efforts in our state through their prayers, gifts, and service. Then we could truly proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord!

Seeking...



Sharing

good news of Jesus Christ. The poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the blind, and the oppressed cry out for someone to love them. Who will seek out the needs of these people? Who will love them through words and deeds? Who will share the gospel with them?

Tennessee Baptists have a long history of meeting the needs of our fellow citizens. Dr. W.C. Golden and his wife Mildred recognized the urgency of the needs in Tennessee at the turn of the century and worked as a team to educate their fellow Baptists to support missions efforts

Inside this issue read about:

- Mississippi River Ministry - pages 2 & 3
- Inner City Ministry - page 2
- International Ministry - pages 4 & 5
- Language Ministry - pages 4 & 5
- Resort Ministry - page 6
- Student Ministries - pages 6 & 7
- Ministry to Missionaries - page 7
- New Church Start - page 8
- Bivocational Ministers - page 8

September, 1997

Season of Prayer for State Missions

Golden State Missions Offering Goal

\$1,325,000

A Mississippi River Ministry Primer

by Tambi Swiney, writer, Nashville

Have you heard about Mississippi River Ministry? If you are not already familiar with this partnership initiative, you will have the opportunity to learn more when it is featured in next year's North American Mission Study. Last year, \$20,000 was allocated from the Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO) for use by churches and associations in West Tennessee in connection with Mississippi River Ministry (MRM). The GSMO will continue to support MRM in the coming year through another \$20,000

allocation for outreach and a one-time allocation of \$16,000 for promotion.

So, exactly what is Mississippi River Ministry? MRM is a partnership of the state conventions of the seven states bordering the lower Mississippi River (Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee), the North American Mission Board, and Woman's Missionary Union. MRM was formed to guide Southern Baptist churches to commit their resources to provide ministries, evangeliza-

tion, strengthening of existing churches and starting of new churches in this region, which includes 153 counties and parishes. The state conventions work together, sharing volunteers, resources, and information. Each state has its own coordinator. Tim Cox, pastor of Brinkley Heights Baptist Church in Memphis, serves as Tennessee's MRM Coordinator.

A recent study indicates over 50% of the estimated 6,000,000 residents living in the MRM area are lost spiritually. Illiteracy, poverty, infant

mortality, substandard housing, broken homes, and drug dependency are particularly pervasive problems in this region. Many of the churches located in the MRM region are small and lack trained leadership and financial resources.

The twenty-one West Tennessee counties included in MRM represent fourteen Baptist associations. Because of the GSMO, associations and churches in this area can request funds for missions efforts and ministries designed to meet the specific needs of the people in

their communities. During the past two years, GSMO funds have been used for a wide range of MRM related projects including: building materials, paint, Bibles, summer programs for Hispanics, a medical ministry, a summer missionary, a piano, and cellular air time.

Even if you don't live in West Tennessee, you can be a part of Mississippi River Ministry: volunteer, pray, and give to the Golden State Missions Offering.

A Place Where Love Is Felt

by Richard Lewelling, Montgomery Village Baptist Center Director, Knoxville

When Montgomery Village Baptist Center opened its doors on October 12, 1987, this was its stated aim: To bring boys and girls, men and women face to face with their need for Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives. Ministries are to be spiritual and take into account the needs of the people and seek in every possible way to meet their needs. At Montgomery Village Baptist Center, we try to meet physical, emotional, and spiritual needs in Jesus' name.

Montgomery Village Baptist Center is located in a low income housing project with 452 apartments. We seek to meet the needs of these residents through our food pantry and clothing room and the provision of household items and toiletries. By meeting their physical needs we are often able to build relationships where emotional needs are met. After relationships are established, we try to meet spiritual needs by introducing them to Jesus

through personal witness, Bible study, and worship.

A year ago, two young ladies made professions of faith at our Thanksgiving worship service at the Center. Both of these ladies' families had been helped by our Center with food, clothing, and toiletries. Over time, relationships were built, and they became our friends. Soon they began attending Bible study and worship at the Center.

Janie was a single mother of five who had never attended church. We had known her for over seven years and had often shared with her about God. Feeling convicted, Janie would stay away until she had a physical need. We continued to pray for her and her children until she came to know Christ. She and her children

now attend one of our churches, and she attends Bible study and worship at the Center.

Anne had only lived in

of months later, Anne died suddenly at the age of 29.

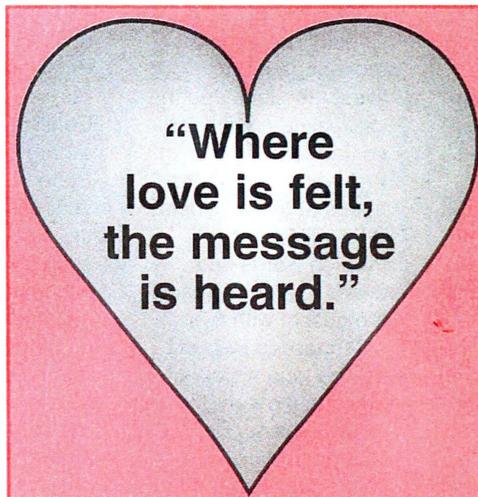
In both of these situations we learned something very important. In Janie's case, we learned to never stop praying for people we have on our hearts. Because of Anne, we decided to never let anyone come into the Center without them feeling the love of Jesus. We believe there is truth in the statement: "Where love is

felt, the message is heard."

The media portrays low income housing projects as havens for drugs, alcohol, and violence, but the real inner city world is one of people who are doing the best they can to provide for their families. Bad things do happen in housing projects, yet there are also a lot of good people living there

— people like Mary and John, who recently asked me to take part in a ceremony to renew their vows as they celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. Our ministry had been able to meet physical needs for Mary and her family by providing emergency food, clothing, and household items. We then built relationships with Mary and her family that eventually allowed us to meet their spiritual needs. Mary is now a member of one of our local congregations and continues to be involved in our ministry at the Center.

The Golden State Missions Offering has impacted our ministry by helping fund our efforts to supply the physical needs of people in our community. It also has helped support our US-2 missionary, Amy, who has proven to be an invaluable member of our staff. Thank you very much, Tennessee Baptists, for your support of our ministry.



Dirty Hands, Clean Hearts

by Ellen Richardson, writer, Memphis

Brinkley Heights Baptist Church, located in inner city Memphis, ministers to the poor on a daily basis. The members of the congregation, most of whom live and work in the community, are dedicated to serving the people of their neighborhood. However, Brinkley Heights' multiple ministries (see article "A Mustard Seed in Memphis") could not be effectively carried out without volunteers. During the past six years, thousands of people have volunteered to serve as missionaries in the North Memphis neighborhood to which Brinkley Heights belongs.

Last summer a church youth group made their way to Brinkley Heights to conduct a week long Vacation Bible School for children. They had been preparing for weeks to perfect their ministry.

Each person had an assigned job and was eager to serve.

Upon arrival in Memphis, however, they discovered that Tim Cox, the pastor of Brinkley Heights, had an additional assignment in mind. The church was interested in beginning an outreach in another neighborhood, he explained. In order to gain credibility with the people in the community, Cox wanted the residents to witness an act of selfless love. "Would this group be willing to pick up garbage during the afternoons following VBS?" he asked. Mindful of their calling to serve others, the group accepted the additional assignment.

The following afternoon as the van pulled up to the street, an audible sigh swept through the group. Trash was everywhere! Slowly, the

youth and adults got out of the van and began to pick up the garbage. This was going to be a long, hard job.

When Pastor Cox returned later in the afternoon to retrieve the volunteers, he immediately sensed anger from many in the group. After returning to the church, Cox decided to address the unspoken issues openly. When pressed to express their thoughts, many of the youth and a few of the adults fell into a cycle of blame.

"Why should I have to pick up their trash?" asked one.

"If they don't care about their home, why should I?" questioned another.

"If they weren't so lazy, we wouldn't have to be doing their work for them," another said indignantly.

After allowing the

group to voice their frustrations, Cox calmly reminded them that Christ did not come to blame or point fingers or scold the poor — He came to serve them. However, he did add that the group did not have to return to pick up garbage the next day if they chose not to. Then he asked the group to join him in prayer.

With their hearts turned towards God, the anger and blame in the hearts of the volunteers turned to tender love. One teenage boy, touched by the realization of Christ's message to serve, prayed earnestly, "God, help me to pick up the trash cheerfully tomorrow. And make me ever mindful of how much trash You have cleaned out of my own heart."

The next afternoon, the group decided unanimously to return to the

neighborhood to finish cleaning up. When they arrived at the street where they had left off, they were greeted by the sight of several neighborhood residents cleaning up garbage! Cox says it was a humbling moment for everyone, himself included. The youth group spent that day talking, laughing, cleaning, and getting to know the residents. As stereotypes gave way to relationships, blame gave way to love.

This experience taught the young people an invaluable lesson: Miracles happen when people are given a little hope and shown they are loved. That day, each group — the youth volunteers and the neighborhood residents — went away blessed and touched by God.

A Mustard Seed in Memphis

by Ellen Richardson, writer, Memphis

When Tim Cox became pastor of Brinkley Heights Baptist Church in Memphis seven years ago, his new job seemed overwhelming. The church building had holes in the roof. Pigeons made their homes in the rafters. There was no air conditioning or heat. On Sunday mornings, the gathering was small and the offering plates collected nickels, dimes, quarters, and food stamps. But Cox recognized what this fledgling congregation did have — a vision.

After six months of dealing with rain pouring in through the roof and having barely enough money to pay the bills, the church approached their pastor with this simple question, "When can we start helping people?" A skeptical Cox directly addressed the church's question during the next

Wednesday night's service. "Helping people requires money, and we don't have any money," Cox announced matter-of-factly.

Then a young man spoke out. "Pastor Cox, you don't have to tell us we don't have any money. We know that. But our Heavenly Parent has money and other churches have money. We want to be the front lines. Other churches can provide the necessary supplies so that we can retake this neighborhood and establish the Reign of God here on this earth, in this neighborhood, right now."

In the six years since this young man's magnificent declaration of faith, Cox says he has been living in the middle of a miracle. In 1995, approximately 2,000 families were fed through the

church's food bank, and many were clothed through their clothes closet. Tutoring for children is provided each week, and a support group for those with chemical dependencies has been established. Spiritual counseling sessions are provided by lay volunteers, and volunteer nurses work in the Wellness Center to give total assessment physicals two days a week. The church has started two missions, multiple Bible studies, English as a Second Language programs, job training opportunities, and children's clubs. The people of Brinkley Heights are now working to improve housing in their inner city neighborhood.

When Tennessee Baptists give generously to the Golden State Missions Offering

(GSMO), they join in the work of the Brinkley Heights congregation as they minister to an impoverished North Memphis neighborhood in Jesus' name. Brinkley Heights is a part of the Shelby Baptist Association's Urban Allies missions strategy, which receives financial assistance from the GSMO. This lay led program empowers residents of economically distressed neighborhoods to participate fully in the kingdom of God and in human society.

Brinkley Heights is also an integral part of the Mississippi River Ministry (see article "A Mississippi River Ministry Primer"). Last year \$20,000 from the GSMO was earmarked for churches and associations in West Tennessee through MRM. Brinkley Heights was among those receiving

financial assistance.

Because Tennessee Baptists are working together, the people of Brinkley Heights are able to minister on the front lines, feeding, clothing, counseling, educating, and witnessing to those in need in their community. This church is truly a living example of the parable of the mustard seed: "The Reign of God is like what happens when a farmer plants a mustard seed in a field. Although it is the smallest of all seeds, it grows larger than any garden plant and becomes a tree. Birds even come and nest on its branches" (Matthew 13:31-32).

As this congregation takes its vision to the streets, a north Memphis community is being transformed by Jesus' love — and the Reign of God is being ushered in.

International Missions at Home

by Marc Byrd, Associate Pastor, The Church in Midtown, Memphis

In a city with scores of Southern Baptist churches, the Lord has led an incredible mass of people to Midtown Memphis. They come from the four corners of the earth. Among them are immigrants and refugees seeking a better life in our country. Many are Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians who were desperate to escape the war, strife, and political and religious persecution in their home countries. Others are from the Middle East, and there are many Iraqis and Kurds from northern Iraq. Recently, there has been an influx of refugees from southern Sudan, primarily from the Nuer and Dinka tribes. Most of these are Christians who have seen family members raped, murdered, and sold into slavery by the brutal Islamic government now in power. There are also many Hispanics from Latin America seeking a better life for their families.

We have the opportunity to share the gospel around the world right here in the middle of our church field. The Lord has opened a door for us among the

Nuer and Dinka peoples living in Memphis. We have begun to meet in their homes for worship, Bible study, and prayer. Most of these people are experiencing a severe case of culture shock. Many were committed believers in their home country. They have been overwhelmed by our culture and are struggling to find their place here. They long for the sense of community and belonging they had among their own people. This is difficult to find in a country of "rugged individualists."

We are building bridges across the cultural barriers which isolate these people by cultivating relationships and meeting their basic needs. Our efforts include teaching English, offering driving instruction, helping them obtain proper medical treatment and human services support, assisting in job searches, and teaching budgetary principles. We are also pursuing ministry opportunities among their

children. The Sudanese are just one of approximately twenty people groups living in our church field.

The problem is there is no incarnational witness living among these people which reaches across cultural, racial, and language barriers with the gospel. The Church in Midtown is



Midtown, Memphis ministers to children through a variety of opportunities. Through fun activities, Bible stories are introduced and new friendships are developed.

prayerfully developing a strategy to do this. Our desire is to acquire an apartment in this area staffed by our volunteers around the clock. This will involve a commitment to invest ourselves in every aspect of their lives in order to see them come to Christ and become firmly

grounded in Him. We want to be salt and light permeating their lives with the good news of Jesus Christ.

We are also making headway into the inner-city African-American community. I recently visited in the home of a family in a very rough area of Memphis. I had led the

twelve year old son to Christ and was following up on his work in the Survival Kit. His sixteen year old sister, a gang member, seemed interested in our conversation. I asked her if anyone had ever shared the gospel with her. When she replied no, I took my Bible and shared with her. She tearfully prayed, asking

Jesus to save her and take control of her life. It was a great experience for both of us. We have established a home cell group in her neighborhood and have seen several come to Christ. One man recently commented after receiving Christ, "I knew you had to be real; no white man

could come down here and make it out again unless God was with him."

The Church in Midtown is a mission of Leewood Baptist Church. Because Leewood is one of Tennessee's key churches, it receives financial assistance from the Golden State Missions Offering to help it start and maintain new missions and community ministries. In 1996, \$25,000 was allocated for key church ministries like our mission.

The Church in Midtown believes God has called us to fulfill the Great Commission right here in Memphis. Only as we leave the comfort zone of our buildings and permeate the community where God has placed us, seeking out the lost, sharing our lives and the Gospel of Christ, and loving them into the Kingdom, will we see the great harvest of souls that our Lord desires. "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into the harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).

A Bible of Her Own

by Tim Hill, Language Church Extension/Interfaith Witness Specialist, Tennessee Baptist Convention

Do you remember the first Bible you ever received? I do. It was on December 25, 1960, when I was only five years old, so my remembrance of receiving it is fuzzy. My parents gave me a white Bible with a cross hanging from the zipper on the side. As I look back some thirty-five years now, I must say that was the best Christmas gift I ever remember receiving. I took it to church with me, kept it by my bed, and read it often.

It wasn't until twelve years later that God's Word penetrated my heart with my need to accept Jesus as Savior. The words found in Isaiah 55:11 are so true: "So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will

accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

I have acquired numerous Bibles since that Christmas, but none means more to me than the first. That Bible, though worn and frayed, serves as benchmark of the first time I ever remember being exposed to God's Word. I often think about that day long ago when I received my Bible. I give thanks to God that here in America His Word is readily available. But we have people in our nation, and even in our state, who have never received a Bible. This is often true in the case of language work — no one has ever given them the opportunity to read God's Word in their own language.

Several months ago, a pastor requested assistance in understanding how his church could minister to Hispanics who had moved into his community. I joined him as he visited several families in their homes, asking them about their work, their families, and their needs. For many it was the first time anyone had visited them and expressed a personal interest.

I will never forget an unplanned visit I had with a lady named Sarah on a dirt road. We introduced ourselves and explained we were from the Baptist church in town. We learned she had a Roman Catholic background but didn't attend church anywhere. The pastor invited Sarah to visit his church with her

family.

At one point in the conversation I asked Sarah if she had a Bible. When she said no, I asked if she would like to have one. "Yes sir," she responded in Spanish, "but I don't understand English."

"Sarah, the Bible I have for you is in Spanish," I replied. "I will go to the car and get it for you." I will never forget the look on her face or the words that came from her mouth when I handed her a Spanish Bible. First she asked how much she owed me. I replied, "Sarah, you don't owe me anything. We receive God's Word freely and we share it freely." With tears running down her cheeks, she said, "Sir, I am thirty years old and have never had my own Bible." She

accepted that paperback Bible as if it were made of gold.

Immediately, my mind raced back to the day when I received my first Bible. May we never take it for granted that everyone has had this opportunity. Through your gifts to Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO), you provide Bibles like the one Sarah received to all kinds of people who speak many different languages.

I haven't heard from Sarah since that day, but there is peace knowing that the seed has been planted and that God's Word will not return to Him void. By your gifts to the GSMO, we as Tennessee Baptists are able to seek, love, and share God's Word with those who have never heard.



Dr. and Mrs. W.C. Golden recognized the urgency of the needs in TN at the turn of the century and worked as a team to educate their fellow Baptists to support missions efforts through their prayers, gifts and service. In 1943 the state missions offering was named the "Golden State Missions Offering" in tribute to the couple who shared a zeal for state missions.

Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Golden . . . Who are they? Will they come and speak at our church? Were they the folks the WMU ladies mentioned sometime in September? A team of Acteen Activators from the Union Association came face to face with the lasting legacy of the Golden and the contributions of

Tennessee Baptists when they accepted an assignment to work at All Nations Camp.

The place was Camp Linden. The task was to serve as counselors, worship, and recreation leaders at All Nations Camp. Their experience was made possible by a cooperative effort involving Tennessee WMU, TBC Missions Department, First Baptist Church and Bear Cove

Baptist Church in Sparta, volunteers, paid workers, and the gifts of people across the state.

A phone call from Amanda Day came in early December seeking a group of Acteens to work at the camp. "Why us, Lord? After all, the girls meet every week, study missions, and do some

Acteens Meet the Golden

by Dave Shelly, Bear Cove Baptist Church, Sparta

"little" mission tasks. Besides, there is a lot of extra work required and meetings to attend. High school juniors and seniors are anticipating the end of their Acteen years, not seeking something else to put into crowded date books, especially a big job." But God is bigger than the biggest job. The One who touched these girls with a salvation experience was seeking them to serve Him at All Nations Camp. So began the journey. The team completed their homework and the Association commissioned the girls to action. The time had come to meet the Golden, the state, and the world.

It was off to Camp Linden where the girls got their first glimpse of the Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO) in action. This was the first time most of them had ever set foot on a Tennessee Baptist campground. The children

came to Linden for a week that left its mark on every participant. They came from churches involved in ethnic outreach. They came speaking English and other languages. They laughed and learned, played and prayed, and opened their hearts to a God who sought them.

The children came because others first opened their hearts in giving to the GSMO. Many attended the camp because someone paid their way. Tennessee is filled with someones who voluntarily give. The differences in roots found a common root in the gospel. Soon loving and sharing friendships developed throughout the campground, and some campers met a new friend named Jesus for the first

time.

There were the camp pranks and the camp highlights. There was unity in the midst of diversity (sounds like the New Testament church). There were children who had some unforgettable moments. There was a group of Acteens who in the end met the Golden and said, "Thank you for giving." They came to give and found others who had given much more.

The world came to Camp Linden. The impact of the GSMO was real and appreciated by all. As heaven rejoices, so must Tennessee Baptists. Because of their gifts of joy, one day some All Nations camper or some Acteen Activator will join the giver on the streets paved with gold.

Seeking . . . Loving . . . Sharing with Internationals

by Scott Payne, BSU Director, Johnson City

Seeking . . . One of the ways we like to meet new international students at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) is to attend the annual fall cookout for international students and their families. It was at just such an event where we met two students who became very special to us during the next two and a half years. What started out as a casual conversation about similar places visited and similar foods eaten soon turned into genuine friendship.

Loving . . . These friends, one from Japan and one from Thailand, came to our home for delicious meals of food from various cultures. We talked together about

many things — life, traveling overseas, adjusting to the return home, spiritual issues, dreams for the future, and more. While on a family vacation in Florida, we enjoyed their company for a day while they were in the area. Our lives were enriched by the time we spent together while they were students at ETSU.

Sharing . . . Following graduation, it was time to move on, the time for our friends to return to their homes. From experience, we knew that this would be a stressful and somewhat sad time. It would be a time of readjusting to what was once very familiar. In the midst of all of the sorting through belongings,

packing, moving, and saying good-byes, I detected that our friend from Japan was very stressed. He was carrying a heavy burden, and I wanted to share about God's care for him in the midst of it all. What started out as a simple comment turned into a conversation of almost two hours. I was able to share clearly and plainly about the caring God who demonstrated His concern and love for us in Jesus Christ. As we talked, I shared about the life we can all have in Christ, and answered questions about my faith. I also listened to him as he shared about his own beliefs. This conversation continued several days later when I took



The 87 children attending All Nations Camp spoke English and other languages. They laughed and learned, played and prayed, and opened their hearts to a God who loves them. This camp introduces children from other cultures to camping and offers unique witnessing opportunities.

him to Knoxville for his flight home. For two more hours we talked about these things. I encouraged him to read the Bible and pray, because it is through those avenues that God often speaks to us most clearly.

We invested a lot in these two friends over the time that we knew them, although we sometimes didn't feel as though we did enough. We received a lot from them through our relationship, too. It is a privilege to befriend these

special visitors to our nation and our community. It is also a privilege to share God's love with them.

By contributing to the Golden State Missions Offering, Tennessee Baptists are helping build effective ministries to the 4,500 international students on college campuses and churches across our state. We are paving the way for Christians to build witnessing relationships that may one day have a ripple effect around the world.

Mountain Top Ministries

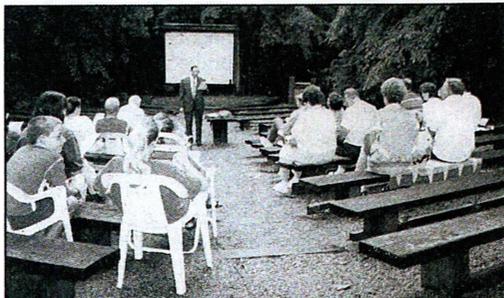
by Duffy Walls, semester missionary, Pigeon Forge

Hiking up a mountain may seem like an extreme way to seek out the call of God, but that's what Duffy Walls does every weekend. Duffy, an extended semester missionary, began her work with Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries three summers ago as a Tennessee summer missionary. She experienced resort missions on a daily basis as a member of a creative arts team. During her first summer, Duffy was one of twenty summer missionaries who shared the gospel with visitors through puppets, clowning, and drama.

After graduating from college, Duffy moved to Gatlinburg to take over the chaplain position on Mt. LeConte (elevation 6,593 feet), the fourth highest mountain east of the Mississippi. Atop this mountain sits a lodge that sleeps fifty guests each night. The only way to reach this lodge is by foot and the shortest trail up is over five miles long. Every weekend, Duffy hikes to the top to lead two worship services and work with the crew members who come from different parts of the country.

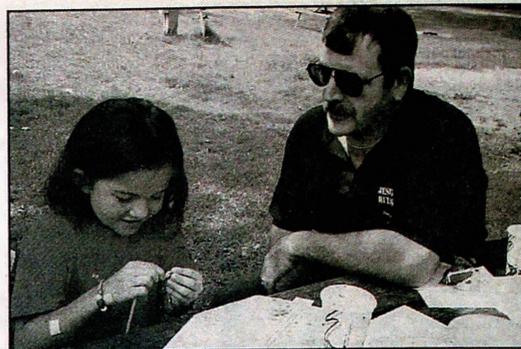
They live in an environment without televisions, washers and dryers, or electricity. Duffy sees building relationships as the key to relating Christ's love to the LeConte

The Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO) allows Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries to support these semester missionaries as well as over



employees and guests. Stephanie Quattlebaum uses the same concept as she ministers to the people who work on the parkway of Gatlinburg. Stephanie, another semester missionary, takes time each week to walk around the parkway to befriend people. During a recent visit, she learned of a death in a store clerk's family and was able to be a comforting, listening ear. Since resort settings often do not provide the locals with a sense of community, being Jesus "in skin" can be the best way to love someone and give them value.

twenty summer missionaries. During the summer, Gatlinburg's prime tourist season, these missionaries use their God-given talents to love people and share the gospel. Vista Townsend was one of those summer staff members who changed lives. One week Vista was assigned to run a day camp at a campground by herself. Toward the end of the week as she told the creation story, the children began to ask questions. Vista led three of the four children to Christ that day. She even had the opportunity to share the children's decision with their



Eight resort areas have volunteers providing ministries to visitors: Dale Hollow Lake, Hamilton County Resort Ministry, Reelfoot Lake, Tims Ford State Park, Smoky Mt. Resort Ministries, Land Between the Lakes, Polk County Resort Ministry, and Bristol Raceway Ministry. Ministries include day camp opportunities for children and worship.

parents.

In a resort, families and singles come looking for a place of peace to rejuvenate and refresh their spirits. Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries targets the heart of this search for the vacationer by offering simple and free solutions. Some of those are puppet shows at the Outlet Mall or free balloons in the Village. A message of love can be shared in a hug or a smile. Family evening programs led by youth mission teams provide a free entertainment alternative while also providing a venue to share the gospel. Chaplains lead worship services for employees at Mt. LeConte, Ober Gatlinburg, Dollywood,

and The Track in Pigeon Forge. Tennessee Baptists' gifts to the GSMO allow Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries to go where God is leading in order to touch lives as Jesus would.

Bill and Cindy Black, co-directors of Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries, work together to make sure all the various programs flow effectively. Bill takes the time to love people for who they are. The Blacks know that God called them to the mountains of Tennessee to share the truth of Christ. As they continue ministering, they thank Tennessee Baptists for their prayers and financial support through the GSMO.

Seeking...Loving...Sharing with African-American College Students

by Chris Jackson, BSU Director, Nashville

The college stage of life involves a multitude of question marks. Some of these include: Who am I? Who is my master? What is my mission? Finding the answers to these and other questions can be a perplexing endeavor. Launching into college life has been compared to a trapeze artist who grabs the crossbar and leaps from the relative security of the tower platform into thin air. From the opposite end of the arena, her partner swings and extends her hands to be grasped. In one precarious and volatile instant, the life of the artist hangs

in the balance as she prepares to let go of security and latch onto the intimidating yet exciting unknown. To be truthful, not every fledgling freshman trapeze artist makes a successful exchange in the mid-air transfer from home and high school to college and relative independence. In fact, even college seniors have been known to slip and fall in the midst of life's transitions.

Black college students have long been a group for which there is virtually no safety net. Little provisions are made to assist them in navigating the rigors of the university experience.

The "casualty rate" is further enhanced when black college students have no spiritual support system on campus. Many such students give up after experiencing their first "fall."

The Golden State Missions Offering provides a very necessary "safety net" by sponsoring an annual conference for African-American students called "Gospel Praise." This event brings together students from across the state for an inspirational weekend of seminars, speakers, music, and fellowship. This is just one small way Tennessee Baptists are

sending a message that in an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty, somebody cares.

Love and care was demonstrated for these students at last year's conference, held in Murfreesboro at Third Baptist Church. This love was communicated, for example, through the message of Michael Graves of Temple Baptist Church and by Dr. Jim Freedman, Director of Missions for the Nashville Baptist Association. Love was further administered through seminars addressing topics such as campus evangelism, God's will, sexuality,

music ministry, and other subjects. In the evaluations, many students reported their lives were greatly impacted by the opportunity to be encouraged through fellowship with Christian students from other campuses across the state.

All this was made possible by the financial sharing of many Tennessee Baptists who gave a little to produce a lot. On behalf of African-American college students in Tennessee, only one word will suffice:

Thanks.

The Gift That Keeps on Giving

by Tambi Swiney, writer, Nashville

The white folder in front of me is brimming with thank you notes with return addresses from places around the world: Burkino Faso, Florida, Dominican Republic, New Jersey, South Africa, Indiana, Ethiopia, Jefferson City, Grenada, Chile, North Carolina, Malawi, Memphis, Mexico, Illinois, Peru, Clemson, Colombia, Wake Forest, Brazil, and Bartlett, Tennessee. Who are these cards and letters from? Missionaries and missionary kids (MKs). Why did they take the time to pen notes thanking Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union? Because each Christmas Tennessee WMU mails out monetary gifts to missionaries and MKs

with Tennessee roots.

These Christmas gifts are made possible through your contributions to the Golden State Missions Offering, which includes a line item for the "Nurture of Tennessee Missionaries and Families." This fund is used not only for Christmas gifts, but also provides a fellowship opportunity for missionaries, both current and retired, who live in Tennessee. It offers assistance to Tennessee MKs attending the Re-entry Retreat in August prior to entering college.

In many of the thank you notes, the missionaries and MKs explain how they will use their checks. Some spend

ed to use her check to help fill Christmas gift bags for the sixty-four men in her county jail. An international mission-

ary said her check will go towards the purchase of a new tire for the motorcycle her husband uses to visit village churches and pas-

tors in West Africa. Someone in Brazil plans to purchase a keyboard to use in her ministry, since many of the churches there lack instruments. Still

another international missionary was excited about the prospect of buying herself some Diet Coke! Two MKs wrote they would use their checks to pay a portion of upcoming college-related trips. Another needed to use hers to buy books for the next semester, since she had been convicted to give her textbook money to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. An MK who is in seminary preparing to become a missionary said the gift would help to pay for her classes during the next semester.

The Golden State Missions Offering truly is the gift that keeps on giving!



the money during the Christmas season to buy gifts for family members, to prepare meals for gatherings, or to cover travel expenses. One home missionary decid-

ed to use her check to help fill Christmas gift bags for the sixty-four men in her county jail. An international mission-

Tennessee Baptists — A Channel of Blessings

by Walker Wright, BSU Director, Memphis

Because of my experiences in student ministries in Memphis, I can personally testify how Tennessee Baptists have been a channel of blessings to countless numbers of young college students. Because Tennessee Baptists have been faithful to give and to share, opportunities have been created to make known the gospel of Christ to people of all races.

Since August 1981, I have served with the Tennessee Baptist Convention (TBC) in the area of Student Ministries. My assignments have included working with black college students at the University of Memphis and developing a Baptist Student Union (BSU) at the State Technical Institute at Memphis. To date we average about twenty-five students per

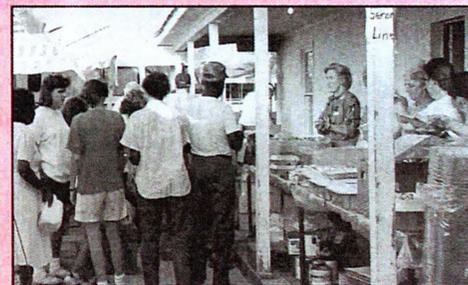
meeting at the BSU at the Technical Institute, with both black and white students participating. The fact that both black and white school administrators have worked to ensure we have a place to meet is a testimony to the remarkable impact Tennessee Baptists have had on that campus.

My chief responsibility is to help minister to the needs of black students who come to the BSU. Through our ministry we attempt to bridge the gap between races, improve our understanding of one another, and foster fellowship between those in the community, other campus ministries, and various other segments of the campus community. Our work is funded largely by the Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO).

The impact of the GSMO extends beyond

the ministries it supports. Being a part of student ministries has improved my spiritual life as my faith in God has increased. I appreciate the power of the Holy Spirit more than ever, and I now have a better understanding of people in every walk of life. On the campus there is greater respect for student ministries by the university administration. Race relations have improved because of increased opportunities for fellowship between students of various races. Other denominational centers have watched and taken note because of the results they have seen at the BSU.

Among Tennessee Baptists, I find "there's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place, and I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord."



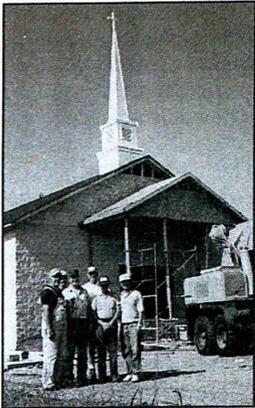
Over 1000 volunteers are trained to respond during times of disaster and 100 volunteers are trained for child care. These teams work through the TN Disaster Relief and Child Care Units.



Special friendships are formed during Special Friends Camps. In 1996, 170 developmentally disabled individuals enjoyed a camping experience which included Bible study, worship, crafts, and fellowship.

GSMO Grows New Churches

by Tambi Swiney, writer, Nashville



Korean Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, has a new church facility thanks to New Church Development allocation included in the Golden State Missions Offering.

In 1996, \$500,000 was designated for new church work through an allocation from the Golden State Missions Offering (GSMO). "New Church Work" is the single largest line item on the GSMO allocations distribution list. Money from this fund provides assistance for new churches as they seek to purchase property and erect buildings. It also can be used to supplement the salary of a pastor of a new church. Financial assistance from this allocation has helped new churches in communities in East, Middle, and West

Tennessee get off on the right foot.

One such church is Hermitage Springs Baptist Church in Red Boiling Springs, which first began to take shape in February 1992, when eighteen people met in a bank building to begin a mission of First Baptist Church Celina. Soon thereafter, the mission began meeting regularly in an old grocery store building in Hermitage Springs, where they would continue to meet during the process of acquiring property and erecting a building. Four years after the core group began meeting,

the Hermitage Springs Southern Baptist Mission was chartered as a church.

Hermitage Springs has twice received funds from the GSMO. First, an outright grant of \$7,000 was used along with monies from FBC Celina to purchase a 3.1 acre lot in November 1994. An additional \$8,000 of GSMO funds was contributed to their building fund for construction of a new 60-foot by 40-foot church building.

Has your church helped start another church? If your church has supported the



Larry McCrary serves as pastor of West Lake Church with assistance from New Church Development funds and First, Concord.

GSMO, you certainly have! When Baptist churches in Tennessee promote the GSMO, they are promoting the birth of new churches throughout the state.

Seeking...



Sharing

September, 1997

Season of Prayer for State Missions

Golden State Missions Offering Goal

\$1,325,000

Bivocational Ministers — A Growing Need

by Tambi Swiney, writer, Nashville

Last February, forty-five couples gathered at Fall Creek Falls State Park for a much needed retreat. During the twenty-four hours they were together, these folks fellowshiped, dined, laughed, relaxed, and learned amidst the picturesque scenery of the park. Who were these lucky people? Some of Tennessee's bivocational Baptist ministers and their wives, that's who.

This Bivocational Ministers and Wives Retreat certainly won't be the last one offered for bivocational pastors serving in Tennessee. Ray Gilder, TBC's Bivocational Ministry Specialist, plans to hold two such retreats a year — the next one is scheduled for September 26-27 in Pigeon Forge. The February retreat featured a marriage enrichment

workshop led by Dr. Terry Cain and his wife Ann, a seminar led by Dr. Archer Thorpe on personal finance, a conference geared towards pastors' wives led by Alice Lowrie, and a seminar offering ideas for sermon preparation led by Dr. D. L. Lowrie. Dr. Lowrie also spoke to the entire group each day.

Many of the couples present for the weekend had never been to a retreat before and desperately needed a fun time away together. Participants deeply appreciated the opportunity to take a much-needed break from the daily grind, and the responses from their evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. The cost of attending the retreat was subsidized by funds from the Golden State Missions

Offering (GSMO).

The number of bivocational pastors is on the rise nationwide. In Tennessee, 48% of all Southern Baptist churches have a bivocational pastor. Ray Gilder knows firsthand the struggles associated with such a dual role: Gilder's time is split between his responsibilities as pastor of Gath Baptist Church in McMinnville and his position at the TBC. He desires to raise the level of appreciation among Tennessee Baptists for the work done by bivocational pastors.

Though some view bivocational pastors as men who simply cannot get a job at a big church or young men working their way up, the truth is there are a number of valid reasons for a church to call a bivoca-

tional pastor. One reason is limited finances. A recent North American Mission Board report states that the average weekly Sunday School attendance for Southern Baptist Churches is 55, while the annual receipts for such churches average \$59,160. It would be difficult for such a church to pay an adequate salary to a full-time pastor. Also, if a church is located in a sparsely populated community, it may choose to call a bivocational pastor since a full-time pastor might be underchallenged in a situation where few prospects exist.

Gilder points to a third reason, which he believes will continue to fuel the growth of bivocational pastors in the future — many men believe God has called them to serve in a dual

role. These men may work in the community as teachers, guidance counselors, or professional counselors. A growing number of men are being called later in life and feel an equally strong call to work at a second vocation. Additionally, a minister may choose to be bivocational in order to allow more of a church's limited funds to be used for ministry and missions.

Tennessee Baptists owe a great deal to our bivocational pastors. By contributing to the GSMO, we can help to encourage these men and their wives as they strive to spread the gospel to pockets of unsaved men, women, and children living in communities across Tennessee.