

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

Volume 163 / Number 36

Statewide Edition

September 10, 1997

this week's news

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Board won't move, camps campaign seeks \$5 million

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Relationships, finances, leadership, a \$5 million fund raising campaign for Camp Carson and Camp Linden, and affirmation of TBC colleges were among main topics at the Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention, Sept. 5 meeting here.

The fund raising campaign for the camps will be aimed at individuals, said the report.

Results of a Site Feasibility Committee report given by former Executive Committee member Russ Dunham, recommended that the Executive Board Baptist Center not be moved from its Brentwood site on Maryland Way.

The report, which was accepted by the board, came from a study of several months, initiated after Maryland Way was widened by City of Brentwood, and taking more frontage from TBC property (for which the board is being compensated).

James Porch, Executive Director of the Executive Board, reported that Cooperative Program giving was down in August, but is higher than last year's receipts at this time. (See full report on this page.)

Board members overwhelmingly approved recommendations on renovation of Camp Carson and Camp Linden, and turned back by a large margin a motion from the Executive

Committee that would have established a Unity Bridge Committee to study relationships within the TBC.

The proposed unity committee would include Herbert Higdon, current TBC president, and eight former presidents named by him. The committee would "examine thoroughly the question of relationships and unity and the matter of board and committee appointments and report back to the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1998."

After the motion was defeated, board members relieved the Executive Committee from further action on the subject.

The idea, presented by Paul Durham, pastor of Radnor Church, Nashville, at an earlier meeting, had been referred to Executive Committee.

The Executive Board unanimously approved a resolution/motion of affirmation of the convention's three colleges.

The motion was presented by the board's educational committee, chaired by Ray Newcomb, pastor of First Church, Millington.

Newcomb said the schools were a source of pride for Tennessee Baptists and deserve "our strong support."

The resolution affirmed "the administration, faculty, and staff of Belmont University, Carson-Newman College, and Union University as being committed to a wholesome ex-



NEW OFFICERS for the Executive Board are, from left: Reed Dixon, Sweetwater, recording secretary; John Holland, Knoxville, vice president; and Michael Smith, Memphis, president. — Photo by Connie Davis

pression of the Christian faith, character, and commitment."

The action also urged Tennessee Baptists to support the colleges and "directly contact them with any concerns or questions" at any time.

The Executive Board unanimously approved the resolution/motion which will be presented to the annual TBC session for November ratification.

Michael Smith defeated Ken Hubbard in a close vote for the presidency.

Smith, pastor of Second Church, Memphis, and member of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's coordinating council, was nominated by Frank Hawkins, Kingsport.

Hubbard, former TBC president and pastor of First Church, Smyrna, was viewed

as more conservative by some board members. He was nominated by Larry Gilmore, Galatin pastor.

John Holland, pastor of Salem Church, Knoxville, was the only nominee for vice president; Reed Dixon, Sweetwater attorney, was re-elected recording secretary.

Eugene Cotey, retired pastor of Murfreesboro, is current president and ineligible for another term. Smith is vice president. The new leaders take office after the Nov. 11-12 annual meeting in Jackson.

Two years ago, David George, pastor of Immanuel Church, Nashville, was defeated for the presidency after discussion in which the board was reminded by a member that Im—See Board won't, page 3

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

TBC gifts ahead of last year

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists' gifts to the Cooperative Program dipped in August, but remain ahead for the year.

August receipts totaled \$2,028,368, compared to \$2,635,369 given last year at the same time.

Year-to-date CP receipts total \$24,558,097, up \$464,677 or 1.93 percent over the same time last year.

The month, however, ended on a Sunday which means gifts normally received in August will be counted among September receipts, according to Tennessee Baptist

Convention Executive Director James Porch.

During the Sept. 5 Executive Board meeting Porch told board members Tennessee churches are continuing to give good support to the Cooperative Program.

He noted there are 15 more churches giving to the CP this year than last and that about 1,400 churches have increased their giving over last year.

Porch said CP receipts for the year could be between \$29.5 million and \$30 million.

"We're thankful we have this good report to share with you this year," Porch told board members. ■

Survey team returns from Poland

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — A Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief Assessment team to determine Southern Baptists' response to severe flooding in many areas of Poland and Eastern Europe were scheduled to return Sept. 10 to Tennessee, according to Tim Bearden, state Disaster Relief director.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief clean-up and recovery teams will be enlisted and sent over the next several weeks to Poland through the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group and Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team, Bearden said.

The assessment team in-

cluded the TBC's Terry Sharp. They toured the Wroclaw area of Poland Sept. 2-9 where recovery is continuing from July floods. The TBC will conclude a three-year partnership with Poland in December.

Doug and Marcie Shaw, SBC missionaries to Poland, already are filing projects with Sharp.

Food staples are being requested for the area. Food production for this year is not only a loss, but also for the next three-four years until the soil recovers.

Interested individuals, churches, or teams, willing to help in Disaster Relief in Poland may contact the Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team at 1 (800) 558-2090. ■

HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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NASHVILLE TN 37203



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► **Membership** — Southern Baptist Press Association

► **Postmaster** — Periodical postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780) POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to Baptist and Reflector, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024.

► **Frequency of issue** —

The paper is published weekly except for the weeks of Christmas and Fourth of July.

Printed on recycled paper

August SBC CP giving down; fiscal year still up

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts declined more than 11 percent over last August while year-to-date receipts totaled more than 4 percent over the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

August 1997 receipts totaled \$11,598,190, compared to \$13,101,189 last August, a decrease of \$1,502,998 or 11.47 percent.

For the SBC's fiscal year, after 11 months, CP gifts totaled \$141,493,038, compared to the same period last year of \$135,935,202, an increase of \$5,557,836, or 4 percent.

Designated gifts for the

month of August totaled \$3,502,780, compared to last year's month of \$3,071,865, an increase of \$430,914 or 14.03 percent. For the 11 months of this year, the designated totals are \$139,099,299, compared to last year's total of \$136,201,883, an increase of \$2,897,416, or 2.13 percent.

For the SBC's Program Allocation Budget, the August total was \$489,600 short of the required monthly figure of \$12,087,791 or 4.05 percent. However, for the year to date, the budget has been surpassed by \$8,527,330 from the required budget figure of \$132,965,707, or an increase of 6.41 percent.

The SBC CP total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions.



Writers meet new SBC agency head

Bob Reccord, center, seated, president of the North American Mission Board, spoke with several Tennessee Baptists attending an Aug. 14-16 conference at NAMB offices in Alpharetta, Ga., for writers of missions education materials for children and youth. Participants, from left, were Susan Word, Bellevue Church, Cordova; George Siler, Faith Church, Memphis; Melissa Hill, Colonial Hill Church, Southaven, Miss. (near Memphis), and Fred and Jo Ann Heifner of First Church, Nashville.

Groups seek to help wives of Promise Keepers adjust

By Sarah Zimmerman
For Associated Baptist Press

BOULDER, Colo. — As Promise Keepers head for Washington, D.C., next month to "Stand in the Gap" for the nation, a growing women's movement is trying to keep wives from standing in the way of their husband's new-found enthusiasm.

The Oct. 4 "Stand in the Gap" rally will focus on repentance and confession, drawing its theme from Ezekiel 22:30 which says God looked for someone to "stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it."

Promise Keepers is better known, however, for challenging men to be the spiritual leaders in their families. Conflict can

arise when a woman has assumed that role, and her husband returns from a Promise Keepers rally ready to take charge.

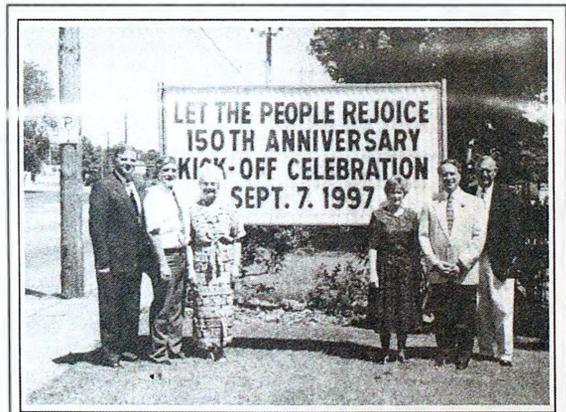
"The men are so pumped up after a rally," said Cheri Bright of Boulder, Colo. "But many women will say, 'I've seen this before.' They don't think it will last. They want men to be the spiritual leader, but it's hard for them to let go because they've done it for so long."

Lori Beckler of Wichita, Kan., agreed that a newly zealous husband can create conflict at home. "Every husband-wife relationship is unique, but in a lot of cases, the man might not have been the spiritual leader. He comes home (from a Promise keeper's rally), and she doesn't know if it's for real."

Bright and Beckler each lead women's organizations created in response to Promise Keepers. Bright's organization is Suitable Helpers, based here, while Beckler and her husband, Bob, lead Heritage Keepers in Wichita.

Labeled Promise Keepettes by the *New York Times* magazine, the groups plan conferences and workshops to help women relate to their Promise Keeper. Both groups have conferences scheduled this month. Heritage Keepers also has one slated for Nov. 1 in Portland.

Bright's message to women whose husbands are eager to become spiritual leaders is, "Trust in the Lord. With the Lord, it will last. Nothing you can do will change your husband. Take your hands off and pray." ■



150th anniversary celebration

White Haven Church, Memphis, began a year-long celebration of its 150th anniversary Sept. 7. The theme of the celebration is "Let The People Rejoice." The morning message was delivered by Ronnie Wilburn, director of missions, Shelby County Association. Joining in the excitement for the kick-off day and celebration events were, from left, Ralph Thomason, minister of music; Mike Flowers, Jenine Riddle, Norma Gordon, anniversary committee members; Pastor Jim Meredith; and Jack Day, anniversary committee member.

Baptist youth sings at Diana's funeral

Baptist Press

LONDON — Jonathan Kirk, 12-year-old son of Southern Baptist missionaries Tom and Carolyn Kirk, was selected as one of 24 members of the Westminster Abbey boys choir that performed at the Sept. 6 funeral service of Princess Diana.

Kirk's parents, now serving in Porto Alegre, Brazil, formerly served in northern England.

Kirk was invited to study at the Westminster Abbey Choir School and he remained in England after his parents moved to Brazil. He was visiting in Brazil when he was called and asked to consider returning to sing. ■

Wagon train, camp meeting planned

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Tennessee Equestrian Ministry will hold a Wagon Train and Camp Meeting in West Tennessee Sept. 21-23, according to Jerry Reynolds, Equestrian Ministry coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The event will begin Sept. 21 at 6 p.m. at Good Hope Church, Adamsville, with a covered dish supper, followed by a camp meeting. The wagon train will proceed the next day to First

Church, Bethel Springs, for a covered dish supper and camp meeting, beginning at 6 p.m.

The wagon train will move Sept. 23 to Mount Gilead Church, Bethel Springs, for a 6 p.m. covered dish supper and camp meeting.

All horseback riders, wagon and buggy riders with mules and horses, and others interested in equestrian fellowship are welcome to join the wagon train.

For more information, call Lloyd Watkins at (901) 645-6752. ■

Electrical fire destroys African American church facility



By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

ROSSVILLE — Gospel Light Church here was destroyed by fire during the early morning hours of Sept. 5. Officials ruled Sept. 6 the fire was caused by some faulty wiring.

The facility, used by First Church, Rossville, until 1995, included an original structure built about 100 years ago and several additions on a one-acre site.

The church building is not one of eight African American church buildings in Tennessee which have been damaged by arson or suspected of such since Jan. 1, 1995. According to a recent report in *USA Today*, 64 African American churches across the country fall into this category.

Because of a possible link to arson activity against African American congregations, government officials arrived to investigate within hours of the fire, including representatives of the FBI and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Agency.

Pastor Les Sanders, who lives near the church, was awakened by responding fire trucks, but was unable to rescue anything. Firemen had difficulty protecting neighboring homes, which also were damaged, reported Bob Campbell, director of missions, Fayette Association, and Howard Bickers, minister of missions, Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, the congregation's sponsor-

ing church.

The facility was fully insured by the Memphis church, noted Bickers.

"Everybody is relieved it's not arson-related," Bickers said.

"Our members are upset and shaken," Sanders said. "They will be as strong as I am," he added, noting he is "depending on the Lord for strength."

The congregation has ties with several Baptist groups. Just two years ago First Church, Rossville, decided to relocate and chose to try to start the first Southern Baptist African American congregation in Fayette County.

The Rossville congregation chose to discount the cost of its facility so it could be used by such a congregation. Campbell, who was assisting the Rossville church in the effort, contacted Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries, which referred him to Kirby Woods Church, Memphis.

The Memphis church is a part of the Key Church program of the North American Mission Board which encourages congregations to start other congregations. It agreed to sponsor the African American congregation.

Shelby Association and TBC Executive Board ministries supported the effort by providing monies for the building and a pastor's salary.

The effort also was assisted by members of First Church, Rossville, who visited people in the community with Sanders, who was called as pastor. Members of Germantown Church do-

nated computers and other items.

The 40-member congregation will need help from its Baptist friends now, agreed both Bickers and Campbell. Campbell noted Sanders lost office and library items such as sermon notes, Bibles, and books. Members have lost tools for ministry and less practical but important things such as the beautiful stained glass windows in the sanctuary, he added.

The Kirby Woods Church congregation responded to the disaster by inviting and transporting members of the Gospel Light congregation to a previously scheduled revival at the Memphis church beginning Sept. 6.

Kirby Woods members showed concern with gifts of money, used to replace immediate needs such as eyeglasses and van keys, said Bickers, who also is an instructor at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis.

Kirby Woods Church members are committed to the Gospel Light congre-

gation, said Bickers.

Both Bickers and Campbell agreed the Rossville congregation is needed because it is training people in its community in computer skills and providing tutoring for children in addition to other ministries. It can start other African American Southern Baptist congregations, desperately needed in surrounding counties, said Bickers.

"We're going to stand behind them," he stated. And as people work together, the disaster might be used by God for good by bringing revival, he added.

As for Sanders, "I'm sure things will be brighter when the church is rebuilt." **B&R** — Lonnie Wilkey contributed to this story.



PASTOR LES SANDERS, right, of Gospel Light Church, points to the remains of its charred building as Howard and Arleen Bickers of Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, views it.

Board won't move, camps campaign seeks \$5 million ...

— Continued from page 1
manuel had hosted a CBF meeting.

In Friday's meeting, there was no discussion of CBF connections before the election. However, when the board discussed the Unity Bridge proposal, Bill Sherman, pastor of Woodmont Church, Nashville, said that such a committee study would "magnify our differences, not our pluses."

Sherman said he was "troubled" by a letter sent to TBC pastors from some pastors in eastern Tennessee, stating "all we need to do is to have a majority at the state convention for two years, and we can take over the convention, and change the liberal teaching in our colleges."

"We don't need this," he said, "it's no one's business church to church, we have soul freedom.

"They threaten to remove people from this building, and from our colleges. ... it's time to set aside the takeover stuff."

Sherman apparently referred to letters mailed by a group headed by Guy Milam and Charles Bailey, two Chilhowee Association pastors. Their aim, stated in mailouts and meetings, is to move TBC bylaws toward giving the president more authority in naming committees.

Jane Hardaway echoed Sherman's remarks in speaking against the motion. She said ... "We've become divisive, and are going to split" if care isn't taken.

There were suggestions about funding the committee, but there was no

statement of support before the vote was taken and the motion lost.

Concerning the camps, the board approved: a lock and key conference center/camp project not to exceed \$10 million, to develop a basic design limited to the costs, to begin an Involvement Campaign to raise \$5 million in cash, \$1.5 million in volunteer labor and donated materials, and to report progress to the 1998 convention and ask permission to begin construction.

The relocation feasibility report by Dunham was thorough and offered several reasons for the Baptist Center location to remain at its current Brentwood site.

Dunham said the committee addressed traffic flow in the immediate area, relationship with the City of Brentwood, present and future efficient use of the Brentwood property, employee needs, and access to the Baptist Center by Tennessee Baptists.

He said that a majority of employees live within a comfortable driving range of the Baptist Center and that was a major concern for not moving.

He added that the Brentwood property had probably peaked in its value. He said that the property itself is extremely valuable, but that the building is not conducive to use by potential buyers. Thus, there would not be sufficient funds from a sale to relocate — without financing part of the construction.

Dunham admitted that while traffic at peak hours is "tough to handle," employees and guests to the building have

adjusted as well as possible.

He noted that, "We need to redefine entrances and make adjustments for handicap spaces."

His committee recommended that the Executive Board maintain the present Baptist Center in Brentwood, and that "monies received from the sale of the easement property be used for the refurbishing and remodeling of the present Baptist Center."

Both recommendations were approved by the board.

In other actions the board voted:

— to allow Belmont University to raise its debt ceiling to \$35.6 million.

— to recommend to the annual convention a Cooperative Program budget for 1997-98 of \$30,105,515.

— to approve an updated and revised version of association supplement program guidelines.

— to approve the position of Youth/Adult Missions Awareness Specialist and for the administration to begin the selection process.

— to change its December meeting to January. **B&R**



RECOGNIZED FOR TENURE during the meeting were, from left, Bob Hall, collegiate ministries specialist, University of Tennessee - Knoxville, 20 years; Doris Clark, Communication Services, 20 years; Sandra Garner, Church Staff Leadership, five years; Gayle Ingram, Missions Awareness and Involvement, ten years; and Wm. Fletcher Allen, Baptist and Reflector, 10 years.

Missions Awareness and Involvement Group

TBC group 'practices what it preaches'

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Members of the Missions Awareness and Involvement Group of Tennessee Baptist Convention's Executive Board ministries talk about missions but they also participate in missions work.

On one work day they painted walls at Woodcock Baptist Center, Nashville, to "practice what they preach." Staff members also have spent hours organizing the about 4,000 shoe box gifts which have been provided by Tennesseans for Costa Rican children at Christmas. A similar project last year involved food boxes for North Korea.

"If we're talking about missions, we need to be involved in missions. These were ways for us as a group to live out what we're talking about," said Tim Bearden, group leader.

Their service also is a way to model the work of volunteers, which their work is heavily dependent upon, said Bearden.

Relies on volunteers

The Missions Awareness and Involvement Group relies on volunteers who conduct disaster relief efforts, serve as missions leaders in their churches through Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood organizations, and participate in missions work around the world.

The group members see their roles as helping these volunteers, explained Bearden.

"Our ultimate goal is for all Tennessee Baptists to be involved in some way in missions," he stated.

"Many folks are willing to go. Our task is to train them so they can go," he said.

With a task that targets the one million Tennessee Baptists, the group members manage their assignment by dividing it into four areas — WMU, Baptist Men's Ministries, Partnership/Volunteer Missions, and Collegiate Missions.

These areas of work allocate some of the group's work into age or gender groupings. The team approach fosters organizations such as WMU and Brotherhood, added Bearden, and supports the auxiliary status WMU holds with the convention. But the teams work closely together on projects and in their ministry areas, added Bearden.

Functions of work

To remain focused on their overall work, the Missions Awareness and Involvement

Group has identified five group functions. They strive to provide ministry opportunities, develop missions education, foster networks of missions volunteers, lead training of volunteers, and develop prayer support systems.

Group members have had to adjust some of their work in the area of providing missions education and training because of the reorganization of the Southern Baptist Convention. These readjustments have required extra flexibility on their parts as Brotherhood Commission staff in Memphis, where Bearden worked for eight years, closed that operation and transferred their work to the North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga.

Another function which has been a focus of the group's work is the fostering of networks. The staff works to network such groups as nurses, construction volunteers, and Acteen Activators, members of the WMU missions organization for teens who accept missions projects around the world. They also network college students through Baptist Student Unions.

A major part of their work is training. Such training is offered in regular ministry areas, but also, for disaster relief volunteers, criminal justice ministry workers, and Partnership/Volunteer Missions workers. This final group of volunteers are participating in partnerships with Baptists in Canada, Michigan, Costa Rica, and Poland. The three-year relationship with Poland will end this December, and may be replaced with a Tennessee/Caribbean Convention (Brazil) Baptist Partnership. (The TBC annual



SORTING SHOE BOXES filled with Christmas gifts for Costa Rica children prior to shipment are group ministry specialists, from left, Rodney Wilson, Tim Bearden, Amanda Day, Vickie Anderson, and Carrol Kelly. Some 4,000 shoe box gifts have been supplied by Tennesseans. Not pictured are Terry Sharp, Bob Davison, and Glenda Palmer.

meeting will act on this in November 1997.)

Personal word

Bearden returned to state work when he joined TBC Executive Board ministries in 1995. He served the Georgia Baptist Convention for six years.

"It's exciting to help people realize their call to missions, whether it's as a volunteer or vocationally. And it's exciting to help people realize that there are ministry opportunities that come our way daily," said Bearden.

The group "has a strong commitment to missions —

missions awareness and missions involvement. They are both strongly committed as individuals, as well as through their positions," said Bearden.

One measure of that was their reaction to their work at Woodcock Center, noted Bearden. After their day of painting, some of the group members seemed to have more paint on them than they put on the walls, Bearden joked, but they decided to participate in a similar project soon. And they agreed although they still must complete their regular job assignments, he added.

"All of us feel the call to missions," Bearden concluded. **BER** — This story is the fourth in a series on Executive Board ministry groups formed by the reorganization of the Tennessee Baptist Convention ministries staff in November 1996.



Group members

- **Tim Bearden** — ministry specialist/group leader
- **Dianna Hughes, Marcia Knox** — ministry assistants

Woman's Missionary Union Team

- **Carrol Kelly** — ministry specialist/interim director, WMU
- **Vickie Anderson, Amanda Day, Glenda Palmer** — ministry specialists

- **Carol Growden, Gayle Ingram, Dene Mashburn, Andrea Walkup** — ministry assistants

Men's Ministries Team

- **Bob Davison** — ministry specialist
- **Carol Davidson** — ministry assistant

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team

- **Terry Sharp** — ministry specialist
- **Kim Huff** — ministry assistant

Collegiate Missions Team

- **Rodney Wilson** — ministry specialist
- **Bernie Baker** — ministry assistant



MINISTRY ASSISTANTS who are part of the group are, from left, first row, Carol Davidson, Andrea Walkup, Kim Huff, and Dianna Hughes; second row, Gayle Ingram, Dene Mashburn, Marcia Knox, Bernie Baker, and Carol Growden.

Did they really find Eve's footprints?

Evolution. The theory that can't be proved entirely is still on the witness stand.

But let's leave the meaty discussions to the "experts," and briefly explain why we believe in the creation story as it's told in the Bible.

About three weeks ago, the world was told that the footprints of Eve "may have been" discovered near the shore of a coastal lagoon in South Africa. News media told us about the new revelation. *National Geographic* magazine which has reported similar finds before, supported the research. The discovery is given coverage in the current edition.

A television special further ballyhooed the find. The National Geographic Society, and the magazine, have consistently researched the early beginnings of mankind.

Be that as it may, the magazine did not present its case for Eve very well. The article was littered with words such as "may have," "could have," "probably," "possibly," and so on — when explaining how the footprints of "Eve" were made and the evolutionary linkage with modern mankind.

That is strange for an event so positive, at least in theory. We looked in biblical concordances for references to words such as probably, possibly, perhaps, could have. They appear in the entire Bible only a few times, and don't relate to anything about God's creation.

On the other hand, when the writer of

Genesis explains the creation, simple verbs of action are used. There is no equivocating, no speculation, no "perhaps," just words such as "Let there be light," "God made," and God said it was good. He gave the first couple (who became the first parents) names. He breathed life into them, he cherished them and gifted them with knowledge to reason and choose.

It's difficult to believe that the first humans made by God did not have mental, physical, and spiritual capacities as de-

scribed in the Bible. Refer to Genesis 1, John 1, and chapters from Job — to draw an accurate portrait of God at work, as well as the majesty of his creating and his creation.

The story about the discovery described Eve as "a hypothetical female" but never mentioned the Eve created by God.

Biblical references cause problems with the evolution theory. The truth and power aren't enough for some. The "missing link" must be in the heads of some theorists — and not lost somewhere. **WFA**



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Life's lessons sometimes are hard

It's been a full week since the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales. It seems impossible that so many words and pictures could be disseminated in so short a time.

Such deaths of the rich and famous attract the best and worst of feelings. There is no way to assess the damage done, the deep-felt personal sense of loss by family and so many others. Her own short life was tragic, and she cared about people.

Let's look at another life, lived long and full, also ending in death the same week.

She was not beautiful, Mother Teresa. She assuredly was not rich. But without a doubt, millions of people in India, who never knew the Princess, will mourn deep and long for the Mother.

Mother Teresa spent almost 70 years walking and living and nurturing among the outcasts, the abject poor, the hopeless hordes of Calcutta and India.

We will never know the thousands upon thousands of lives she touched in the name of Jesus Christ. She was not plagued by heartless photographers. Though she had her own following and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her humanitarian lifestyle, the world at large knew little about her.

Tiny, but abounding in grace and energy, she was adopted by the people of India, gained Indian citizenship, and became a role model for those who care about others. Somehow, her death touches us, but it is not tragic. **WFA**

Start with a smile

Ronald: "When my doctor operated on me, he said he would have me walking in three months."

George: "Did he succeed?"
Ronald: "You bet he did. With what he charged me, I had to sell my car to pay it."

Take this truth

The financial aspect of a situation always has a sobering effect on us.

The price tags of life are "real" and determine to a large extent our decision to purchase or not to purchase.

Consider also the "price tags of sin." Paul speaks of its wages as death. Goethe said, "Choose wisely. Your choice is brief, yet endless."

Memorize this Scripture

Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. — James 1:15

Pray this prayer

Lord help me to evaluate every decision in life on the basis of "How will the implementation of this decision affect the future of my life?" ■

Who said that?

"The person filling the most menial job in a Christian institution is just as important as the one filling the highest post. Jobs may be rated, but not the people who fill them. They are all of infinite worth in the sight of God and should be equally respected in the attitudes of Christian leaders." — James L. Sullivan, *Baptist Polity as I See It*, Broadman Press, Nashville, 1983.

Keeping your feet on the ground, head in clouds

one word more

by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor



I am so indifferent to the blessings of God that sometimes he almost

has to chase me down to remind me that, yes, that was a blessing — not a coincidence.

Ah, Lord, I readily admit that you often have shaken me to remind me who I was, who I might have turned out to be, and who I am now— because of Jesus.

In my life, and perhaps in others, blessings sometimes accompany other blessings. For example, the job may be a blessing, all you ever dreamed of doing. And then God just tosses in additional blessings because you have the job.

Last week I observed a milestone of sorts, the tenth anniversary of the day God put me to work for Tennessee Baptists. When I looked back then, before

leaping southward from Maryland, there was time to pause and reflect. I do so now.

The hardworking Allen clan blessed me with a love for the land, for God, and for each other. My parents gave us a strong work ethic — which incorporated joy into daily living.

Farm work was never easy, but in those days it was hardly mechanized at all. I think working and playing on the farm, two years of Army duty, plus two years on a daily newspaper staff, prepared me well for 37 years of working with Baptists.

I have worked as an editor for my alma mater, Furman University. I have put in 31 years with three state Baptist papers covering four states.

That's where I am now. After 17 years in South Carolina, my native state, four in Maryland/Delaware, I've just completed 10 with Tennessee Baptists.

The blessings which some call serendipities, have been heaped upon the blessings of working with God's people called Baptists. In newspaper language, you have the

main story, and you can have one or more sidebars to amplify the main story.

That's the way my life has been. The sidebars of my daily life and work have been as good a gift as the main thing. God is responsible.

Every experience of a Christian life helps us to grow — and I am no exception.

Because of my assignment as editor or similar title, I have been blessed many times over. I have met people in their homelands of Canada, Costa Rica, Venezuela, the Philippines, Brazil, Poland, Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Italy, and Switzerland.

And I have experienced the warm love of Jesus Christ in the hearts and lives of those people. Until we met we had been strangers. But the relationships last.

The days ahead will be just as bright. The road has not changed.

I am thankful for all the partnerships I have been privileged to participate in, all the churches and people who reached out.

This is a wonderful life; I'm grateful.

families matter

by Paul Barkley counselor, professor



Six descriptions that tell us about the family

An assignment to my marriage and family class recently started wheels turning in my mind. I asked the

students to write a paragraph to describe the family.

While I was thinking about the assignment the acrostic of FAMILY came to mind.

Faithfulness, fidelity, and trustworthiness are the foundations of all family relationships.

With the egocentricism in our world today, it is difficult to help people understand that everyone in the family has to depend on the other members.

Achieved status is one of the marks of the family in our society.

I am husband and father because I chose to be part of a family. There is great status in family membership despite current media disparagement of family value.

Monolith of society. The family is still the foundation of our culture and society. As the family goes, so goes the nation.

When the family is not strong, the nation is weak or weakening.

Indelible bonds that last a lifetime are chief characteristics of the family. I am a Barkley and a part of Roy Barkley's family, whether or not the others like

it. These are imperishable ties that transcend the troubles of life.

Loving and being loved unconditionally are two of those foundational distinctives of the family. God created all mankind with the need to love and to be loved. This is most basically fulfilled in the family.

Yielding to the needs of each other is the final quality of that I assign to the family.

The family is the shelter in the storm, the harbor in the hubbub of life.

The family is the place where I am certain that they will care about what is going on in my life. The family provides the place where we share our lives in honesty and love. ■

Partnership takes C-N professors to Costa Rica

By Joy Hayes
For Baptist and Reflector

JEFFERSON CITY — After a year of intense effort planting churches, training Christian leaders in seminary, and ministering to university students, even missionaries can use a spiritual boost.

So Southern Baptist missionaries to Costa Rica were ready when Carson-Newman College religion professors William and Carolyn Blevins led their spiritual retreat this summer.

The Blevins traveled to San Jose, the nation's capital, as part of Tennessee Baptists' three-year partnership with Costa Rica. The partnership encourages volunteers from Tennessee to fill missions

needs and serve in short-term roles in Costa Rica.

"The Blevins challenged us to think and feel and live in new and different ways," said missionary Rick Lane, a C-N alumnus and former missionary-in-residence at the college.

"We are now much better equipped to see all that God is doing around us and to respond positively to that divine activity."

Among the group of about 30 missionaries, four are Carson-Newman alumni — Lane and his wife, Laura, and Keith and Pamela Travis. Lane and Travis were religion majors and studied under the C-N couple.

Catalogs and brochures from Carson-Newman that the Blevins took to Costa Rica

sparked an interest among missionary kids and nationals, which could lead to more Costa Rican connections in the future.

Tennessee Baptists have served Costa Rica in various capacities since the partnership began in January.

"It's difficult work getting leaders trained to create self-supporting churches," said Carolyn Blevins.

"The missionaries' long-range goal is to essentially work themselves out of a job, but it's a long journey."

Tennesseans who, like the Blevins, volunteer through the partnership are helping the missionaries of Costa Rica on the road to that goal.

"We all believe that God is sending spiritual awakening to Costa Rica," said Lane, youth

and music ministries consultant for Costa Rica.

Because of that spiritual awakening was a natural theme for the retreat led by the Blevins.

Blevins focused on biblical models while his wife gave examples of renewal from history. "In both cases these were stories or examples they had heard of before, but this reminded them again and created new associations for them," said Carolyn Blevins.

Blevins noted the missionaries were hospitable, responsive, and appreciative of their efforts. "Everyone was very curious about the historical and biblical models," his wife noted. "We both had people who wanted to stay and ask questions and have discussions." ■



Senior adults to gather in Pigeon Forge

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — "Redeeming the Time" is the theme of the annual Senior Adult Conference to be held Sept. 16-18 at Pigeon Forge's Grand Hotel and Conference Center.

Bible study will be provided by Ken Hubbard, pastor of First Church, Smyrna, and former president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.



Jim Graves of Pleasant View Church, Clarksville, will lead the music. A highlight will be a musical concert featuring Fes Robertson and Ray Conner, with accompaniment by Joyce Byrd.

Conference topics and leaders include: Professional Leaders, Robert Holley; Volunteer Leaders, Al Shackleford; Preserving Your Life Story, Faye Brown; How to Live the Rest of Your Life, Howard Stevens; The Names of Jesus, Herbert Gabhart; Wills, Trusts, and Housing, Bo Childs and Kenny Cooper; and The Importance of Being You, John Tullock.

Registration fee is \$12 and checks should be made payable to: Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024. Walk up registrations will be accepted.

Room reservations should be made directly with the Grand Hotel by calling 1 (800) 362-1188 for individuals. For six or more in a group, call 1 (800) 472-1188.

For more information about the conference, call Don Mauldin, TBC Executive Board Ministries, at (615) 371-2047. ■

Kingsport layman unites area churches via Internet

For Baptist and Reflector

KINGSPORT — The Tri-Cities Religion Page is now online.

This new site on the Internet's World Wide Web provides in a central location links to all area church web sites as well as a variety of related information and services.

Tennessee Baptist churches utilizing the service are First Church, Kingsport; Tri-Cities Church, Gray; University Parkway Church, Johnson City; and First Church, Elizabethton.

The web site, located on the Internet at <http://www.brightbridge.com/trireligion/>, is the brainchild of Roger Hoover, president of Brightbridge Church Web Services and a member of First Church, Kingsport, where his wife, Susan, is organist/music associate.

"This area has always had a rich diversity of religious experience, but there hasn't been any central forum for information, communication, or sharing of resources," Hoover observed.

"Thanks to the new technology of the Internet, the Tri-Cities Religion Page can

bring all these congregations together, as well as providing a guide to those seeking a home in which to worship," he added.

The Internet can not only reach church members and the community-at-large, but the world as well, Hoover said. The Internet "provides opportunities to share the Good News" of Christ, he added.

The web site provides hyperlinks arranged by both city and denomination to about 30 churches in the Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol area that have their own home pages. In addition the web site provides links to major denominations and other religious organizations, religious news services, and search engines, Hoover said.

The Tri-Cities Religion Page is set up to make it easy for users to update it, Hoover said.

"We've provided forms so that visitors can add links to their own church's web sites or another religious-related link simply by filling in the blanks online.

"We know there are other sites out there that we don't know about yet, and expect new ones to be set up with increasing frequency. We're ready for them,"

Hoover emphasized.

Computers and new technology are tools churches need to consider for ministry now and in the future, Hoover said.

Information on the Internet is a two-way street, Hoover stressed.

Not only can churches share information to their members and a lost world, members can communicate prayer concerns and other needs to the church via the Internet, he said.

"The Internet is another way of getting the message of Christ out.

"The Great Commission tells us to go throughout the world and preach the Gospel and that includes cyberspace," Hoover said.

He observed that the Internet will be utilized by people with all kinds of messages to share, and some of those will not be positive.

"We shouldn't surrender the Internet to people with other agendas.

"We should take hold of this and use it. The Internet can be a very powerful tool," Hoover said.

And, what's more, he added, the church "can always be open" via the Internet. ■

Retreat planned for bivocational ministers, wives

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — A Bivocational Ministers and Wives Retreat will be held Sept. 26-27 at the Ramada Inn in Pigeon Forge. The cost is \$75 per couple and includes lodging and three meals.

Send name, address, phone number, church name, and the name of the association with either \$25 deposit (balance due upon arrival) or \$75 full payment to: Ray Gilder, Bivocational Ministries, TBC, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024. Make check payable to Tennessee Baptist Convention. ■

Information available for Bible drills

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — In Tennessee this year 1,396 boys and girls participated in the State Children's Bible Drills, according to Liz Lee of the Christian Growth Development Group of TBC Executive Board Ministries.

The new Bible Drill leaflets are available now from the CGD Group, local associations, or state Bible Drill coordinators, Lee noted. State coordinators are:

Eastern — Steve Peek, Knoxville, (423) 671-5556; Martha Hoffmeister, Powell, (423) 938-8185

Southeastern — Linda Pittman, Hixson, (423) 877-6462

Northeastern — Cindy Georges, Morristown, (423) 581-6352

Central — Jeff and Kim Lake, Hender-

sonville, (615) 824-6154

North Central — Linda Maynard, Sparta, (615) 738-3249

South Central — Cyndi Cox, Manchester, (615) 723-2325

West/Shelby — Mary Buckner, Memphis, (901) 683-6231

Southwestern — Margaret Brown, Bells, (901) 663-3798

Northwestern — Marsha Higgs, Martin, (901) 587-9555

State coordinators are here to answer questions, provide resources, and assist associational leaders in Children's Bible Drills, Lee said. She encouraged churches to seek assistance.

"Together we will have another great year as boys and girls learn and hide God's Word in their hearts," she said. ■

Join in the
Season of Prayer
for State Missions
during September!

Church with once bleak future now thriving

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

McLEMORESVILLE — Just four years ago the future looked bleak for McLemoresville Church.

Attendance had dwindled into the 20s.

George Hill, director of missions for Carroll-Benton Association, recalled he preached there one Sunday with only 18 people present.

"I was scared we were going to lose the church," he said.

Yet, the members who remained stepped out in faith as did a young minister and his family from St. Peters, Mo.

Ron Cox, his wife, Janette, and their two daughters at the time, Brittany and Chelsea, (they now have two sons as well, Ronnie and Anthony) left a full-time position with General Motors and a bivocational position as associate pastor of a church that ran 300-400 people in attendance to accept the pastorate at McLemoresville.

"Before Ron came, he asked me if he had the faith to come and worked hard, and God blessed the church, would they

take care of him and his family," Hill recalled.

"I knew they would and they have," he affirmed.

"He (Cox) came on faith and God has blessed that," Hill added. "He wasn't afraid to come and trust the Lord."

Hill noted Cox "hit the ground running. He's not lazy." While ministering to the church and reaching people for Christ, Cox furthered his education through seminary courses at Union University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he will graduate next spring.

"We prayed through the process and the Lord opened doors for us," Cox recalled. Cox also learned that "if you don't want God's opinion, don't ask him. We prayed about it and felt with peace about the decision to come."

He agreed with Hill that it was a two-way step of faith.

"The church stepped out in faith because they couldn't afford it (a full-time pastor) and so did we. God has blessed us."

Cox credits the support of the leadership at the church.

"We have worked together well," he said, noting the "church has responded when I have suggested something."

He also is grateful to his wife, Janette, who was willing to leave her family in Missouri to follow God's call to Tennessee. Her response during that time of decision was, "If the Lord wants you there, let's go."

Four years ago the church had around 20 in Sunday School, only two youth, and no children.

The church now has a children's group of about 50, 25 youth, and Sunday School attendance averaged around



PASTOR RON COX stands in the pulpit of McLemoresville Church. Behind him is the theme of the church, which he credits for helping the church to more than quadruple its attendance in four years — C.A.R.E. (Care About Reaching Everyone) for Christ

125 in the spring and despite the summer season remained around 100. Cox anticipates having about 150 in Sunday School and around 200 in worship during the fall. The church has had about 50 baptisms over that period including around 20 this year.

In 1993 the church's present building, located on about an acre-and-a-half as one enters McLemoresville, was more than big enough.

The church is now bursting at its seams. Recognizing the need members of the congregation voted unanimously Aug. 31 to purchase a house and 13 acres of land about a mile from the present site.

Immediate plans call for Cox and his family to move into the house as soon as possible and convert the parsonage adjacent to the church into Sunday School space, he said.

The church's vision is to pay off the land and house (\$85,000) and build a multi-use facility on the new property. The church also would like to begin a Christian preschool at its present site, Cox added.

"It was a big step for our church to go out and buy the 13 acres," Cox said. He is grateful the church vote was unanimous. "Unity is the key. If we can be unified in this, God will bless that," he is convinced.

How did the growth happen?

Cox noted the leadership of the church caught a vision to grow and reach people for Christ.

The potential for growth was there, Cox said. A primary school near the church has 400 children, he said. While McLemoresville is a community of about 300 people, the church is centrally located between McKenzie and Huntingdon. "We're reaching

out to the county and tapping out on a broader scale," Cox said.

One thing the church decided to do was to focus on building its children's and youth programs, Cox said. "If you meet the needs of the kids, the parents will follow."

The church intentionally has tried to reach out to families of broken homes, the pastor added, noting these are people with problems in their lives, but are wanting to find something for their children.

"If we supply something for the children that changes their life — Jesus Christ — the parents pick up on that and want to be a part of it," Cox said.

Visitation also has been a key to growth, Cox noted.

Once a month the church has a C.A.R.E. (Caring About Reaching Everyone) Night, Cox said, noting participation has ranged from 15 to 30 people.

Just as important, Cox said, is lifestyle evangelism. "Our people do a lot of outreach where they live. We encourage them to evangelize where they are," he said.

Cox also has found promoting high attendance days to be effective in increasing attendance. One high attendance day theme that has been particularly successful has been "Roundup Sunday," Cox said.

Members are encouraged to invite friends and they can wear jeans or western gear, he noted. "We have to get people in the door to let them know what we have as a church."

Cox also has worked hard to build relationships with people. "If people know you're a preacher, they know you want them to come to church," Cox acknowledged. "I try to be real with people and let them know I really care about them."

The foundation for everything done in the last four years at McLemoresville, however, is God's Word.

"That's what we preach and teach. That's our measuring stick," Cox affirmed. ■



Jackson to lead Belmont conference

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Richard Jackson, interim pastor of Germantown Church, Germantown, and pastor emeritus of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Church, will lead a "Leading from the Pulpit" seminar Sept. 18 at Belmont University.



JACKSON

The seminar, to be held from 10:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. is offered at no cost by Belmont's Moench Center for Church Leadership. A complimentary luncheon is provided.

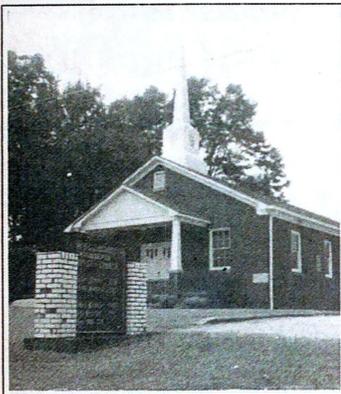
The conference will offer proven, practical ways of "leading from the pulpit," ideas of how other pastors lead, and more.

For more information about the seminar, call (615) 460-5580. ■

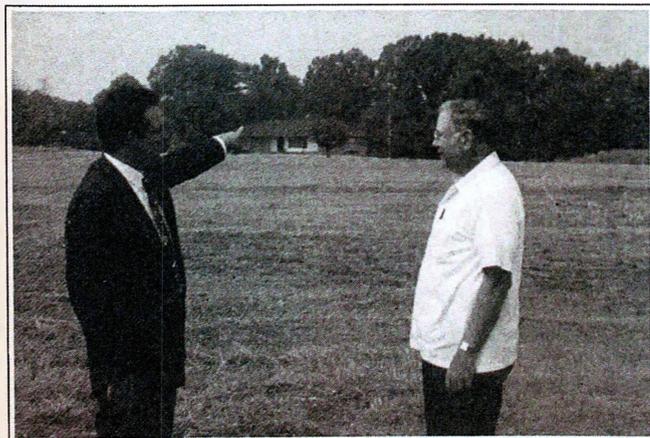
Partnership Prayer Requests

September

- 10 — Praise God for the 17 Tennessee volunteers from Loudon County Association who did construction work at Casa de Oracion Church in Costa Rica in August.
- 11 — Pray for volunteers Tom and Liz Lee and Steve and Millie Peek, who are teaching Leadership Training this week in Canada.
- 12 — Pray for missionaries in San Rafael de Guapiles, Costa Rica, who were recently challenged by parents for holding VBS in a local school. Missionaries Keith and Pam Travis and Ben and Susie Argil are now being harassed by the same parents who object to them living in the area. Ask God to have the victory.
- 13 — Pray for the Week of Prayer for State Missions this week in Michigan.
- 14 — Pray for Sunday School conferences in Michigan Sept. 15-20.
- 15 — Pray for Faith Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, that is without a pastor.
- 16 — Praise God for the Memphis team that has returned after teaching English as a Second Language in Zyradow, Poland.



McLEMORESVILLE CHURCH has outgrown its space at its present site here. Church members voted recently to buy 13 acres of land for future growth.



DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS George Hill, right, of Carroll-Benton Association surveys the house and land purchased by McLemoresville Church with Pastor Ron Cox. Plans are for Cox and his family to move into the house, freeing the church's parsonage to be used for Sunday School space.

Kentucky association bans churches with ordained women

By Mark Wingfield
For Associated Baptist Press

MUHLENBERG COUNTY, Ky. — A Kentucky Baptist association has voted to remove a woman's name from its official listing of ministers and given the church where she is a member one year to come in line with "the position of the association" against women's ordination or be removed from membership.

The Aug. 28 vote marked the second time this year for Muhlenberg County Baptist Association to deal with concerns about Angie Flack, an ordained pastoral counselor. She is a member of First Church, Drakesboro, Ky., where her husband, David, is pastor.

In January, a motion to oust the church fell short of a required two-thirds vote by the

association's executive board.

Flack was ordained by a North Carolina church several years before she and her husband moved to Kentucky. The Drakesboro congregation knew of her ordination and has supported her ministry as a pastoral counselor, although she holds no official position with the church.

When the association gathered information for its 1996 *Book of Reports*, the Drakesboro church listed Angie Flack under the category of "ordained ministers other than pastors." David Flack said not to list his wife's name there would have been untruthful.

After the book was distributed at last year's annual meeting, however, several

pastors objected to a woman's name being included in the ministers' listing and sought to have the Drakesboro church kicked out of the association.

Although the church has never ordained a woman, critics say the congregation should have denied membership to Flack because she is ordained.

The matter continued to simmer during the next seven months, with churches on both sides of the issue withholding contributions to the association and one church leaving the association in protest of the way women are treated. Muhlenberg Association does

not allow women to serve as messengers.

Prior to this year's annual meeting, several pastors mailed out letters pledging to raise the issue again.

The original motion was amended to read that any church that "goes against the position of the association in the future on the ordination of women" automatically lose membership in the association and that FBC, Drakesboro, be placed under watchcare status for one year, and then be removed from the association if

the church has not "met the position of the association."

About 20 members of the Drakesboro church were present. Many lined up to speak to and hug Angie Flack, who could not speak in her own defense at the meeting because of the association's rule banning women messengers. ■

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CHILDHOOD MINISTRIES:

Broadmoor Church, Memphis, seeks full-time Director of Childhood Ministries. Send inquiries or resumes to Johnny Layton, Associate Pastor/Education, Broadmoor Baptist Church, 3824 Austin Peay Hwy., Memphis, TN 38128.

MUSIC POSITION: Salem Springs Church, a small, growing church in Murfreesboro, seeks bivocational minister of music. If interested, contact Larry Hayes at (615) 898-1239 or Sharon Lamb at (615) 896-5701.

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The Baptist Sunday School Board is seeking an Event Planner for Ridgecrest Conference Center in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. This newly created position will design, develop, and produce 25-30 enrichment events annually to meet the needs of our guests.

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Human Resources Department
MSN 121
Baptist Sunday School Board,
127 9th Avenue North,
Nashville, TN 37234, or fax to
(615) 251-5017.

churches

■ **First Church, Sparta**, will hold revival Sept. 28 - Oct. 1. Jackie Kay, evangelist of Millington, will speak and Rush Harrison, minister of music and youth, First Church, Livingston, will lead the music.

■ **Russwood Church, Springville**, broke ground recently for a new facility including a sanctuary. Otis Hinton, pastor, Temple Church, Paris, spoke during the activities. Temple Church sponsored the congregation.

■ The Vacation Bible School of **Mt. Harmony Church, No. 2, Riceville**, drew 280 children, of which 16 made professions of faith.

■ **Bethel Church, Greenfield**, held revival in which nine

people made professions of faith. Benny Jackson, evangelist, spoke.

■ **First Church, Greenfield**, is building a new worship center.

■ **Union Avenue Church, Memphis**, will hold a financial seminar Oct. 4 led by Klink Cook, a member of the church. The focus will be on how to become debt-free and secure. For more information, call the church at (901) 726-0055.

■ **Mouth of Richland Church, Blaine**, has given a gift of money to help a local African American congregation build a facility.

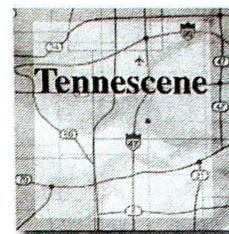
■ **Sunnyside Church, Kingsport**, is celebrating its 50th anniversary during September. On Sept. 14 activities include a Homecoming Day and High Attendance Day. Gary Jennings will speak. A luncheon and afternoon service will be held.



NEW FRIENDS of members of Mt. Olive Church, South, Knoxville, are members and friends of Evergreen Church, Cadillac, Mich., from left, Terry Shepardson, Becky Farley, Lindsey Adams, Tyler Adams, and Leah Shepardson. The Michigan residents became acquainted with the Tennesseans during a missions effort there recently to support the Tennessee/Michigan Baptist Partnership. A team of 36 Tennesseans worked on the church facility, led a Bible school and recreation, and presented several musical programs.

Carolina. Polk and his wife plan to retire in Elizabethton.

■ **Steve Carpenter**, associate pastor, Cherry Road Church, Memphis, has been called as pastor of White Station Church, Memphis, effective Sept. 7. Carpenter has served the Memphis church for two years. He also has been pastor of Russwood Church, Springville; associate pastor of a church in Texas; youth pastor at a Mississippi church; and youth ministry intern, Bellevue Church,



Cordova. He is a graduate of the University of Memphis and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

■ **John F. Burleson**, retired pastor of Lenoir City, and his wife, **Thelma Noe**, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary Sept. 14 from 2-4 p.m. in the Family Life Center of Dixie Lee Church, Lenoir City. Burleson has retired as pastor of the church.

■ **Helton Springs Church, Rutledge**, has called **Dale Harris** as pastor, effective Aug. 3. He was ordained by Holt's Church, Morristown, Sept. 7. Harris is a bivocational pastor. He is branch manager, Citizen's Bank, Bean Station.



■ **Antioch Church, McDonald**, has licensed **Charles Carroll** to the ministry.

association

■ **Grainger County Association** held a Vacation Bible School at a school facility. Seventy children participated and four made professions of faith. It was led by members of three churches in Bean Station — First Church, Barnard's Grove, and Rock Haven.

leaders

■ **Bob M. Polk**, director of missions, Watauga Association, will retire Dec. 31. Polk, who has served since 1990, also led Lawrence County Association in this role and was a Southern Baptist missionary in Colombia for five years. Additionally, he has served as pastor of seven churches in Tennessee and North

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Love,
Ruth

Thank you note written by one of our 1997 TBCH campers.

Early hotel reservations advised for 1998 SBC

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — An advisory to make reservations early for the 1998 Salt Lake City annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention has little to do with Mormonism.

The city's hotels are not as large as those in other cities where the SBC has met, said convention manager Jack R. Wilkerson, vice president for business and finance at the SBC Executive Committee. Thus, each official convention-related hotel will have fewer rooms available for messengers attending the June 9-11 SBC annual meeting, Wilkerson said.

SBC hotel registration will begin Oct. 1.

The SBC housing guide and request form is now available at state Baptist convention offices and the Executive Committee here. It also is in the

September edition of *SBC LIFE*, the Executive Committee monthly journal.

Beginning Oct. 1, reservations may be made by calling the Salt Lake City Convention and Visitors Bureau/Southern Baptist Convention Housing Bureau at 1-800-217-0002 or (801) 521-9025. Completed forms also may be faxed to (801) 355-0250.

By mail, the forms must be postmarked Oct. 1 or after and addressed to SLCVB/SBC Housing Bureau, 90 S. West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1406.

Wilkerson also noted that official hotels in the airport area are less expensive and are located from two to six miles from the Salt Palace Convention Center.

A shuttle service will operate from both the airport and downtown areas, Wilkerson added. ■

In 10-day event

Kenya effort registers 34,226 decisions



Baptist Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — More than 34,000 people registered decisions for Christ after Southern Baptist and Kenya Baptist volunteers teamed up for two 10-day evangelism campaigns in western Kenya this summer.

The large response to the Gospel is expected to jump start Baptist work in a part of Kenya where Baptists are not well known.

The West Kenya Baptist Evangelistic Effort produced 125 congregations and 34,226 new believers, said Sam Turner, an associate director in the International Mission Board's volunteers department. The effort teamed up 258 Southern Baptist volunteers, including some from Tennessee, with 844 Kenya Baptist workers.

"Baptist work in Kenya is stronger in some areas than others," said Turner, a missionary in Kenya for 25 years before joining the staff at the board's Richmond, Va., headquarters. "Our goal was to start new churches, rather than get large numbers of decisions."

But volunteers found people ready to open their hearts to Christ, he said.

"Kenya Baptists are a people of prayer," he said. "Some of the volunteers who worked in the Bungoma area reported everyone they talked to wanted to accept Christ."

"When they asked why, they learned the Kenyans had fasted and prayed on a weekly basis for several weeks and then for three straight days before the volunteers arrived. They were just really spiritually prepared."

Kenya Baptists were stimulated by pre-graduate training and relationships developed with the Southern Baptist volunteers, said Bob Allen, one of about 15 IMB missionaries who worked with Kenya Baptist leaders to coordinate the effort in 17 associations.

"Pastors and church members were trained in witnessing, and leaders of new preaching points and many new Christians were trained in basic principles of Christian growth," Allen said. "Pastors and church members were encouraged by being with volunteers, seeing that time spent in evangelism is valuable, productive time."

To minimize the strain of discipling new believers, each new preaching point was tied to an established "mother church" that will help with follow-up and provide ongoing support for the new work, Allen said. ■

Women's roles in state structure draw concern from Illinois ministers

Baptist Press

BENTON, Ill.— Several Illinois Baptist pastors and two associational directors of missions have raised concerns about the role of women in the proposed staff reorganization of Illinois Baptist State Association.

Nine ministers in the southern-Illinois Franklin Baptist Association signed one letter to the editor of the *Illinois Baptist* newsjournal, and a central Illinois DOM sent another one.

The concerns center on IBSA Executive Director Bob Wiley's plan to place women in two positions in a proposed new state convention staff structure.

Wiley has announced plans for Janet

Craynon to be associate executive director and for Evelyn Tully to be facilitator for the service/ministry team. Craynon currently is director of the convention's resource management department and Tully is director of Woman's Missionary Union services, a position she would continue to hold in the new structure.

Citing verses in 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and 1 Timothy, the ministers' letter from Franklin Baptist Association states women are not to be in authority over men. In an interview with the *Illinois Baptist*, two of the men, Jim Endsley and Jim Kerley, said that injunction applies to ministry situations, not other areas. And

they said they believe the proposed new IBSA structure puts Craynon and Tully in positions of authority over male ministers.

"We are people of the Book," said Endsley, pastor of North Benton Church, citing the relationship of Baptists to the Bible. "We need to remain people of the Book, and the Book says in many places that women are not to be in authority. I don't know that I like that, but I can't do anything about it. I can't change the Scripture."

"I agree with Brother Endsley," said Kerley, director of missions for the Franklin association. "This is a scriptural issue. This is not a preacher issue."

Both men stated laypeople in the as-

sociation also have expressed concern over the plans for women to serve in the new IBSA positions.

Wiley said Craynon and Tully would not have authority over men. "The whole purpose of the restructure is to take away positional authority," the executive director said. "The purpose of the restructuring is to flatten the lines of authority, to put in new ones."

In the proposed new structure, "actions can be taken by one's own decision without upline approval, as within policy of the board," Wiley said. "My commitment is to teams, where each member of a team has as much influence over the direction of the team as anyone else." ■

Hawkins denies he's candidate for Annuity Board presidency

Baptist Press

DALLAS — O.S. Hawkins, senior pastor of First Church, Dallas, and the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board both deny he is the nominee for president of the Annuity Board, although a Dallas newspaper says he is considering the position.

The *Dallas Morning News*, in its Sept. 4 edition, said Hawkins told his congregation Sept. 3 that "he might leave for another job — but he insisted that he had made no decision."

Although the newspaper did not identify what "another job" is, the newspaper did mention rumors concerning the presidency of the Annuity Board, located in Dallas. The board is searching for a successor to retiring President Paul W. Powell.

Annuity Board officials told Baptist Press Sept. 4, "We have no information about any person who may be under consideration as a possible presidential nominee. The presidential search committee has made no recommendation to the board of trustees, and the committee has no deadline for completion of its search and recommendation."

The Annuity Board, with more than \$6 billion in assets, is the world's second-largest church pension fund. ■

Abstinence movement credited for teen sex decline

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Even before the federal government's new sexual abstinence education program goes into effect this fall, 1997 has been a good year for advocates of virginity.

In October the federal government will award grants totaling \$50 million to states to teach sexual abstinence, an initiative supporters believe will help reverse the tide of teen sexuality.

Congress adopted the sexual abstinence education program as part of the 1996 welfare reform law. For the next five years, \$50 million will be awarded to the states annually to provide sexual abstinence education, with the intention of focusing on groups most likely to have children outside marriage. Survey results announced in

May by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services showed the first recorded decline in teenage sexual activity in 25 years. In a survey conducted in 1995, 50 percent of unmarried women 15 to 19 years of age said they had had sexual intercourse at least once. In 1990, the same survey found that 55 percent of women in that age group reported having had sex. Previous surveys found a steady increase in sexual activity from 29 percent in 1970 to 36 percent in 1974, 47 percent in 1982, and 53 percent in 1988.

Meanwhile, another survey conducted in 1995 and announced by HHS in May reported the percentage of unmarried men from 15 to 19 who said they had had sexual intercourse had declined to 55 percent from 60 percent in 1988. The finding reversed a trend measured

since 1979.

For abstinence advocates, it is at least an encouragement, if not a bold affirmation, their message is having an impact, even before the government provides noteworthy help with its own program.

"I think it is interesting to note that the decline in teenage sexual activity began about the same time as 'True Love Waits' and the broader abstinence movement began to pick up steam," said Richard Ross, the Baptist Sunday School Board youth ministry coordinator who started the now-international True Love Waits emphasis as a ministry for the young people in his own church. ■



ROSS

Only Savior

By James Hutson

Focal Passage — John 14:5-9a; I Timothy 2:5-6; I John 5:7-12

What does it mean to be saved? If you can't swim and you are in water over your head, being saved means someone throws you a rope or jumps in the water and carries you to dry ground. If you are in financial trouble, you can be saved by your banker who approves your loan or a good friend who will loan you the money. If you are playing golf, you can be saved by a partner who makes the putt to win the hole.

All of these simple illustrations have in them the idea of rescue. Who is the one who can rescue you and me from spiritual bondage to sin? Now there are some people who refuse to acknowledge they are in bondage to sin. They will admit they have made a few mistakes — but not bondage to sin. They are living well — health is good, money in the bank — why do I need a Savior? Luke 19:10 says of Jesus, "The son of man is come to seek and to save those who are lost." The bottom line for every human being is that we need to be rescued from our sinfulness. And who can do that? Only Jesus because he is the one and only Savior. The Christian faith affirms that Jesus exclusively is the Savior.

Jesus said of himself that he is the way. Jesus shocks his disciples by telling them he is going away. To comfort his disciples at this news, Jesus speaks the marvelous words of John 14:1ff. To the announcement of Jesus' departure the disciple Thomas expresses his desire to be with Jesus. Thomas asks Jesus where are you going and how can I get there. Jesus responds by saying "I am the way, the truth and the life..." Jesus does not say "I am a way" or "I will point you to the way." Jesus says "I am the way ... and no man cometh to the Father but by me." There is only one way of spiritual rescue, and that way is Jesus.

Paul says that Jesus is the one mediator. A mediator is one who brings others together. We have seen the work of a Federal Mediator in the recent UPS strike. Jesus is the one between God and man. Jesus as a mediator did much more than just talk. Jesus is the ransom. He is the price paid for mankind's redemption. Simon Peter says "For you know it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that you were redeemed ... but with the precious blood of Jesus ..." (I Peter 1:18 NIV).

Jesus is the mediator for everyone. The salvation which Jesus provides is for all the human race. We who know the Savior must be eager and willing to tell others that Jesus died for the sins of every person.

Many witnesses to the Savior. In this passage of Scripture, John lists a series of witnesses as to the person of Jesus. There is the witness of the Holy Spirit, the water (Jesus' baptism), and the blood (shed on Calvary's cross). To these three is added the witness of God himself. In addition there is the witness of the written Word, and the testimony of those who have received Jesus as their own Savior.

These many witnesses agree. Jesus is the one and only Savior. To accept these witnesses is to experience eternal life. To reject these witnesses is to refuse life abundant and eternal. To deny that Jesus is the son of God is to cut off from the life of God. Jesus is the one and only Savior. — Hutson is pastor, First Church, Rockwood.

Return to the Lord

By Dennis Trull

Focal Passage — Isaiah 55:1, 3, 6-11

Cyrus of Persia had conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. Under his rule, the Jews have been treated very fairly, even to the point of being allowed to acquire property and engage in business. When the call came from Isaiah to return to Jerusalem according to Cyrus' edict, some of the exiles balked. However, they needed to know that it actually was God who was calling them to return not just to Jerusalem but to God himself. Also, the blessings of God would come only when they returned to him. The same principle still applies to us today.

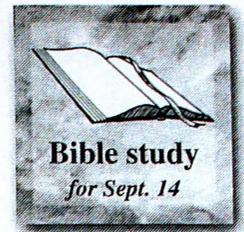
Call to return (vv. 1, 3, 6-7). God's call to return is expressed in the form of an invitation. Water was scarce where the exiles lived, so they understood its importance. But, this invitation had a spiritual perspective to it. God was inviting them to come to him to quench their spiritual thirst. In fact, the gracious Lord, is the one who placed

perfectly fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 6 expresses the urgency of seeking the Lord now. When God allows us to understand his drawing of us to himself, it demands our immediate response. There is no promise of tomorrow. Verse 7 reminds us that God's call is to sinners and it always includes repentance. The sins of which they were to repent included both actions and thoughts. The primary focus of repentance is not just turning from sin, but turning to God.

Consideration of reason (vv. 8-9). Verse 7 spoke of human ways and thoughts which are sinful while the contrast of verse 8 is on God's ways and thoughts. No one can fully understand God and his ways. If we could, he would no longer be the true and living God. We would have reduced him to our level, put him in our box. That's idolatry. Paul marveled at God and wrote: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

Certainty of release (vv. 10-11). When God releases his Word for a specific purpose, the outcome is certain. Verse 10 speaks of the mystery of natural sowing and reaping. Then, verse 11 builds on that truth to speak of the mystery of spiritual sowing and reaping. God's powerful Word is a statement of his character and ability to fulfill his Word. The old adage is appropriate: God says what he means and means what he says. He promised the exiles that he would restore them to the promised land, and he saw to it that his Word was fulfilled. Today, the Lord is still fulfilling his Word to those who heed his invitation to come to him. Someone has said, "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." That's wrong. When God said it that settled it whether we believe it or not. Jesus keeps his Word. — Trull is pastor, First Church, Savannah.



Family Bible Lesson

that spiritual thirst in them.

Although the word buy appears in verse 1, it is evident that those invited had no money. If they would return to God they would receive, as a gift from God, wine and milk. These were symbols for joy and nourishment. Returning to God not only meant rest, it also meant rejoicing.

"Incline your ear" in verse 3 meant to hear and heed God's invitation to return to him. Those who heeded God's call would find real life. This truth is still the same. Also, in verse 3 is God's promise to remember his covenant to David and his descendants. This promise is

God and his highest creation

By Michael Ruffin

Focal Passage — Genesis 2:7, 15-24

The focal passages remind us of the privileges and responsibilities which extend to all humans. Christians should consider the fact that these privileges and responsibilities are even greater for us because of our discipleship. How much more fully should we exercise our humanity under God since we are people who have a personal relationship with the God who created us? Several aspects of our human privileges and responsibilities arise from the text.

Our basis. Verse 7 says that "the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." In a sense, we have our basis or foundation in the ground from which we came. There is a play on words here. The Hebrew text says that the Lord God formed adam ("man") from the adamah ("ground"). So, there is a kinship between humans and the physical world of which we are a part. This truth reminds us of our frailty and mortality. We are dust, and to the dust we shall return. Here is cause for humility.

On the other hand, the verse also tells us we have our ultimate basis in God. God himself took the initiative to form the man from the dust. The

Explore the Bible Lesson

image is of God lovingly forming his highest creation and then breathing life into him. Only of humanity is it said that God breathed life into his creation. Here is cause for awe as we consider the special way in which humanity was made.

Our vocation. Humankind's responsibility toward the earth from which God formed us is made explicit when God places the man in the garden of Eden "to till it and keep it." As God's highest creation, we are to be stewards of his creation. To "keep" the garden implies a protective role which humankind is to play. To "till" the garden implies a creative role; humankind is to work in productive ways with the earth. One of our challenges is to be productive in our relationship with the earth while at the same time being protective in that relationship. Productivity and environmental stewardship go hand-in-hand.

Also worth noting is the fact that man's assignment to work in the garden is a part of his function from the beginning. The frustrations that accompany work will not arise until the aftermath of sin (ch. 3:17-19), but work itself is one of God's gifts to us.

Our limits. The man was told by

God that he could eat of any tree in the garden except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So, there were limits placed on humanity from the very beginning. God has drawn lines which are not to be crossed. As human beings, we are free. We are free to relate to God, to be productive, to be stewards of God's creation, and to enjoy the blessings of God's world. There are limits placed on us, however. From the beginning God has established boundaries. Of course, we are also free to violate God's prohibitions. But when we do, we must prepare to face the consequences and to accept responsibility for our sin.

Our partnership. Verses 18-24 tell the beautiful story of the creation of man's counterpart, woman. Since the woman is made from the man's rib, they are in essence of the same "stuff." When in marriage "a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh," (v. 24), a natural and intended state is achieved. The text stresses the complementary nature of the man/woman relationship. God's ideal for this highest creation is mutual and respect between male and female as they enjoy the privileges and meet the responsibilities given to them by God. — Ruffin is associate professor, School of Religion, Belmont University, Nashville.



the Chama church's then-pastor became romantically involved. ■

Arizona Baptists to begin new publication

Baptist Press

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The Arizona Southern Baptist Convention has voted to launch a new state publication and discontinue publication of the *Baptist Beacon*.

The new publication, *Portraits*, carrying a tagline of "images of faith and action," will be sent free to the home of every Arizona Southern Baptist.

"This is an exciting opportunity to tell the story of how God is working in Arizona through the lives of individuals, churches, associations, and state convention agencies," said Elizabeth Young, communications director for the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention Executive Board. She also is editor of the *Baptist Beacon*, and will serve as editor of *Portraits*.

The new publication will be a 16-page magazine-format, printed in two colors on high quality paper. The first issue is slated for November. ■

N.M. leader's son killed in car wreck

Baptist Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Craig Cone, 37, son of Baptist Convention of New Mexico Executive Director Claude Cone, was killed in an automobile accident near Hamilton, Texas, at about 10:30 p.m. on Aug. 31.

Cone, a pilot, had flown his boss to Hamilton, located northwest of Waco, and was driving a pickup truck back to the airport when a head-on collision occurred. His vehicle burst into flames upon contact, and he was burned beyond recognition. Three people in the other vehicle were injured and were in stable condition Sept. 1.

Cone is survived by his wife and three children. ■

86-year-old earns biblical studies diploma through SE

Baptist Press

EMPORIA, Kansas — Want to live longer? Then take some Seminary Extension courses.

That's the advice of Blanche Finney, who at age 86, earned her diploma in biblical studies.

"Taking these courses keeps me alive," she often tells Vance Veazey, director of the Blue Stem Association Seminary Extension Center where her classes are offered.

In the process of "staying alive," Finney has also learned a great deal about the Bible.

When asked why the classes kept her alive, she responded quickly, "When your mind quits working, you're the same as dead, aren't you?"

Finney took her first class in 1988. It took her eight years to complete the 16 courses required to earn a diploma in biblical studies. ■

BWA launches Internet web site

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Baptist World Alliance now has its own Internet site on the World Wide Web accessed at www.baptistnet.org, according to Wendy Ryan, director of communications.

The web site contains general information on the BWA with separate pages that describe fellowship, evangelism, aid, justice, human rights, and the work of the men, youth, and women's departments, Ryan said.

A special news and informa-

tion section includes the latest news releases from the BWA as well as files on *BWA News*, the monthly newsletter, and *Baptist World*, the quarterly magazine. ■

Boyce Bible School dean set to retire

Associated Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Boyce Bible School Dean Bob Johnson has announced plans to retire at the end of the current academic year.

Johnson, who will be 65 this year, said the decision was his alone and is not related to a new emphasis by the administration of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary to check more vigorously the theological beliefs of Boyce faculty.

Boyce Bible School is a division of Southern Seminary that provides theological education for individuals without college degrees. In addition to work on the seminary's Louisville campus, Boyce operates 26 extension centers across the country.

Johnson denied rumors that he had been ousted. He has worked at Southern Seminary since 1990. He previously taught for 11 years at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo. ■

Jury finds church not negligent

Baptist Press

SANTA FE, N.M. — A church accused of not adequately supervising its pastor was found innocent Aug. 29 in a civil court case here.

First Church, Chama, N.M., was notified in December 1995 it was being sued for negligence — not adequately researching a man's background before calling him as pastor, not adequately training him to fulfill his pastoral duties, not adequately supervising him, and not firing him for cause.

The suit originally also cited the New Mexico Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. The two Baptist entities were dropped from the suit when the autonomy of the local church was explained.

The man who filed the suit said his 13-year marriage disintegrated after his wife and

For Adults and Teens

The Book of Colossians

The following people are found in the book of Colossians. Find them in the puzzle below and circle them.

- | | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| ARCHIPPUS | FREE MAN | MASTERS |
| ARISTARCHUS | GENTILES | NYMPHA |
| BARNABAS | GREEK | ONESIMUS |
| BARBARIAN | HUSBANDS | PAUL |
| CHILDREN | JEW | SAINTS |
| CHRIST JESUS | JUSTUS | SLAVES |
| CIRCUMCISED | LUKE | TIMOTHY |
| DEMAS | MARK | TYCHICUS |
| EPAPHRAS | MINISTER | WIVES |

I B D I J U S T U S U M I S E N O N
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Y M G S L K A M H U W Y E F F R A O
A R C H I P P U S Y G D D L Y F A S

Fun for the Family

Answers to the Aug. 27 Fun for the Family Puzzles

The Book of Philip-
pians for adults

Rejoice in the Lord. —
Philippians 4:4a

The Book of Philip-
pians for children

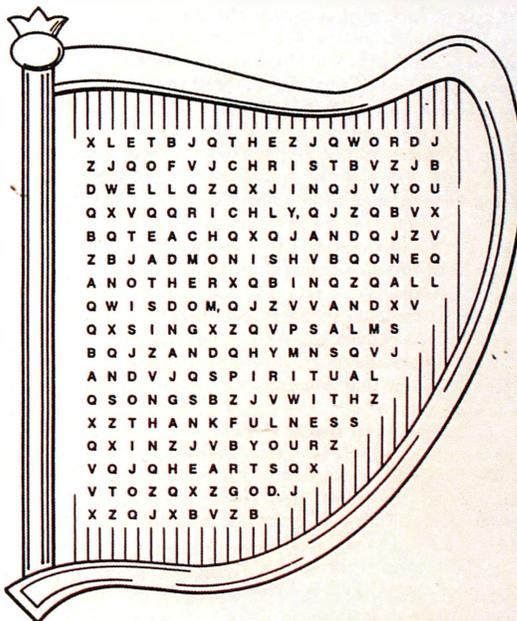
I can do all things
through Christ who
strengthens me. —
Philippians 4:13

"Fun for the Family" is
a feature of the *Bap-
tist and Reflector* that
will appear regularly.

Just for Kids

The Book of Colossians

Cross out the letters B, Z, J, Q, X, V to find the hidden verse.



-Colossians 3:16