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TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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October 1, 1997

this week's news

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Pastors to co-pastor

Two congregations merge despite obstacles

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — When John Burke, pastor, Concord Church, Brentwood, heard that a Nashville congregation was considering buying land near Concord's property, he decided to contact the pastor of that church, Grandview.

During a meeting, Burke asked Jess Love, pastor at Grandview, not to relocate near his church. But the meeting wasn't cut short by defensiveness or short tempers. It continued. Out of that conversation has come a merger of the congregations which benefits both, claim the pastors.

Grandview Church is an inner city church in a location which has become saturated with businesses. And Concord Church is located south of Nashville, in an area booming with housing development, but it has been struggling financially. The church's second building was built in a flood plain so the church must build another building at a different site.

Additionally, both congregations are small. Concord has about 70 each week in Sunday School and Grandview has about 60.

In just four months, the two congregations have worked out the details and merged into Concord/Grandview Church, which will meet for the first time Oct. 5.

The two groups decided to totally merge, in that all assets and members will join together without conditions benefiting either group, explained Burke.

There have been many benefits resulting from the decision, despite the cloud of failure which hangs over such church decisions, both pastors agreed.

Concord/Grandview Church will be strong enough financially to allow both pastors to

serve as co-pastors. Although this is unusual, Burke and Love identified an equal number of pastoral responsibilities each would assume and claim that those responsibilities uniquely allow them to use their spiritual gifts.

Love will lead discipleship, family ministry and fellowship, while Burke will direct worship, evangelism, and administration.

The merged congregation also will have the funds to continue to hire both church secretaries; an organist who serves one of the congregations, and increase the responsibilities of the minister of youth and family life at Concord Church, Darin Worthington, to a full-time job.

For guidance, the pastors consulted with Jim Freedman, director of missions, Nashville Association, and a former Memphis minister involved in the merger of Park Avenue Church, Memphis, with Audubon Park Church there.

The two congregations held open forum meetings at both sites where every aspect of the merger was discussed, said Burke. Joint worship services were held at each church.

Also members have conducted a needs assessment of the Brentwood community and planned special events to introduce the new church to the community, he added.

Flexibility has been required, noted



CO-PASTORS Jess Love, left, and John Burke pause in front of Concord Church building, where the merged church will meet.

Burke. The churches' organizations have not been merged because the new congregation hasn't stabilized yet. So the Sunday School, for example, will meet in age group meetings for several weeks until it is organized into smaller classes.

The congregations have been encouraged in their decision during the whole process, explained Burke. For example, the congregations learned that Concord Church (begun 1804) is the first congregation sponsored by the original Mill Creek Church, Nashville, and that Grandview Church (begun 1908) was the last congregation sponsored by it.

Members of both churches still face challenges in making the merger work, said Burke. "When you have to move over and make a place for somebody else, you have to deal with both big and small issues," said Burke.

Love agreed, but added, "There's been a spirit of harmony, of just working together." BER

Committee expands distribution system of messenger cards

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The TBC's Credentials Committee has developed an expanded system of distributing messenger cards to churches for the 1997 annual meeting. This additional distribution is made in response to repeated concerns related to the registration process.

The new process will speed up the registration process, clarify for churches the number of messengers each is entitled to register, and encourage attendance at the annual meeting.

Churches now will receive messenger cards directly from the convention office. Directors of missions will still receive extra cards to assist churches if cards are lost or misplaced.

During early October, every TBC church that has contributed financially through the convention since Nov. 1, 1996, will be sent a letter and a packet

of messenger cards. The number of cards will be based on total membership of the church as reported by the church on the 1996 Annual Church Profile. The convention Constitution states in part, "Each church shall be entitled to two messengers. Each church shall also be entitled to one messenger for each one hundred members or fraction thereof beyond the first one hundred subject to a maximum of ten messengers from any one church." Refer to the following scale for exact calculations.

Many churches will have increased their membership to a higher messenger level since the 1996 ACP was completed. Such churches are entitled to additional messengers. Churches may obtain additional cards in any of several ways:

✓ Inform Dan Ferrell, Registration Secretary, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, 37024, in writing of the updated membership total.

If the letter is received by Oct. 31, the additional card or cards will be sent by return mail. If not, the cards will be available at the credentials table, registration area, at the convention.

✓ Call the local director of missions for additional cards. In the event the cards sent are misplaced, others may be obtained from the director of missions.

✓ Each church is encouraged to elect the full contin-

gent of messengers.

Ferrell states, "We feel this expanded system will make it easier for churches to get cards and feel confident about the number to which they are entitled. This will provide a personalized invitation to every church to attend the Convention."

Any church that does not receive the packet by Oct. 25 should call Ferrell at 1 (800) 558-2090. ■

membership of at least	but not more than	entitled to
0	100	2 messengers
101	200	3 messengers
201	300	4 messengers
301	400	5 messengers
401	500	6 messengers
501	600	7 messengers
601	700	8 messengers
701	800	9 messengers
801	801 and above	10 messengers

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Given by bankrupt member

Texas church ordered to return tithes

By Marv Knox
For Associated Baptist Press

BAYTOWN, Texas — A state judge in Texas has ruled a Baptist congregation must relinquish tithes contributed by a church member who filed for bankruptcy.

Judge Tom Sullivan of Harris County Civil Court ruled that Cedar Bayou Baptist Church here must turn over four years of tithes donated by church member Leland Collins to a creditor.

Cedar Bayou Church has voted to appeal the ruling, which awarded creditor Bill Gregory \$27,687.23 — the amount Collins gave the church from Oct. 15, 1988, to Oct. 13, 1992 — plus interest.

Gregory's company, Gregory-Edwards Inc., sued Collins and two other former employees in 1990, claiming they had been overpaid by \$90,000.

Gregory-Edwards won that case, and Collins declared bankruptcy to protect personal assets including his home, vehicle, and retirement accounts. The bankruptcy case was settled in 1994.

In June of 1994, Gregory-Edwards sued Cedar Bayou Church for the tithes Collins contributed during the period he owed money to the firm.

The judge's ruling hinged on the contention that Collins made his contributions to the church "without receiving a reasonably equivalent value

Bankruptcy laws threaten tithes

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Witnesses at a Sept. 22 hearing urged a Senate subcommittee to change laws under which churches may be forced to pay back tithes and offerings given by people who later declare bankruptcy.

Witnesses at a Senate judiciary subcommittee, including a pastor who is fighting a court order to surrender tithes to bankruptcy officials, urged lawmakers to exempt religious donations from bankruptcy claims.

Crystal Evangelical Free Church in Minneapolis has spent \$280,000 over the past five years defending itself against a court order to pay creditors \$13,500 in tithes given by a couple who later declared bankruptcy, said Pastor Steven Goold.

Goold said at least 100 similar cases are pending across the country in which churches were being asked to return tithes.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, who called the hearing to draw attention to the issue, plans to introduce legislation to protect tithes from bankruptcy procedures.

"Tithing is an important act of worship ... and it's terribly offensive to me to think of a federal judge ordering that this act of worship be undone," Grassley said. ■

in exchange."

The church turned down several offers to settle the case, because a settlement would have violated the congregation's convictions regarding church-state separation, Pastor Richard Steel said.

"This case is not about bankruptcy," Steel contended. "The case is about religious liberty, about the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

"If a court can declare that a church member does not receive any 'reasonably equivalent value' for his tithes to his

church, then the court is defining how one can practice his religious faith and oversteps its dominion in the realm of that relationship between church and state.

"No court has the right to define one's practice of religion and his attendant gifts in support of his religious faith."

Collins' gifts to the church were not fraudulent and not intended to shelter money from Gregory, Steel contended. Collins "has been a tither since he's been a member of this church — 40 years or more," he said. ■

Hotels available for TBC meeting

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Twelve Jackson-area hotels/motels have block rooms for the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, to be held Nov. 11-12 at West Jackson Church.

Messengers and guests are responsible for their own room reservations. Reservations should be made as soon as possible. Some hotels will release block rooms after Oct. 25.

Rates and phone numbers for the hotels follow. All phone numbers are in the (901) area code.

Best Western, \$48, 664-8536

Budget Inn, \$41.95 flat, 664-1800

Casey Jones Station Inn, (\$39.95-\$79.95), 668-3636

Comfort Inn (The Inn), \$50 flat, 668-4100

Days Inn, East, \$36.95 flat, 668-3444

Days Inn, West, \$32 flat, 668-4840

Fairfield Inn, Marriot, \$49.95 flat, 668-1400

Garden Plaza, \$69-\$89, 664-6900

Hampton Inn, \$50 flat, 664-4312

Holiday Inn, \$59 flat, 668-6000

Sheraton/Old English Inn, \$59-\$79, 668-1571

Super 8 Motel, \$35.95 flat, 668-1145. ■

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Decision rate up among RA campers

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Boys making decisions for Christ at Tennessee Royal Ambassador Camps (TRAC) '97 increased 8 percent over those made the year before.

The decision rate increased from 21.7 percent in 1996 to 29.7 percent for 1997, according to Bob Davison, Mission Awareness and Involvement Group Brotherhood Children/Youth specialist.

Davison attributed the successful year to the Lord being involved with the TRAC staff leadership.

In 1996 TRAC ran with two staff teams, one for the regular TRAC camps at Carson and

Linden and the other for associational TRAC camps. This year's TRAC team did both camp settings.

"It's hard to compare the TRAC attendance figures since our locations have changed over the years," Davison noted, observing that new camp locations were added this year.

Camp Linden attracted the most RAs in 1997 with 124 campers. Overall, camp attendance was 526, up by 94 over the same locations as the '96 season, he said.

TRAC '98 locations and tentative dates have been set, Davison said. For more information, contact Davison at 1 (800) 558-2090 or (615) 371-2074. ■

As executive director

N.C. Baptists to consider Kingsport pastor

Baptist Press

CARY, N.C. — The general board of the North Carolina Baptist state convention was to have considered Johnson City native James Royston as their new executive director on Sept. 30.

Royston, pastor of Colonial Heights Church, Kingsport, since 1991, was the unanimous choice of the convention's executive director search committee, according to its chairman, Marion D. Lark.

Royston formerly served two churches in North Carolina as pastor — First Church, Huntersville, from 1985-91, and Carolina Pines Church, Raleigh, from 1978-81.

In addition to his pastorates, Royston served on the staff of the Mecklenburg (now

Metrolina) Baptist Association through a five-year appointment by the former SBC Home Mission Board to direct work in evangelism, lay ministries, stewardship, church growth, and new church starts.

Royston is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., where he earned both the master and doctor of divinity degrees.

He has been active in both the North Carolina and Tennessee state conventions. He currently serves on the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"I am humbled and honored to be nominated to the office of executive director-treasurer of the Baptist state convention," Royston told the *Biblical Recorder*, newjournal of the North Carolina convention.

Royston and his wife, Jeannie, have two grown children. ■



ROYSTON

SBC Executive Committee approves studies of annual meeting, BWA

By Art Toalston
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Two study committees — one on the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, the other on the SBC's relationship to Baptist World Alliance — were named during the Sept. 23 meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The SBC annual meeting committee was appointed as a follow-up step to Executive Committee action last February in response to a request from the SBC Committee on Order of Business for the Executive Committee chairman to name such a study committee.

In addition, the 1997 Committee on Order of Business was to develop a list of suggestions for improving convention sessions, according to the Executive Committee action in February.

Concerning the Baptist World Alliance ad hoc study committee, SBC President Tom Elliff issued a statement Sept. 23 noting reasons he called for the committee's creation.

"Over the years the SBC has enjoyed a positive and encouraging relationship with the Baptist World Alliance. The

BWA sometimes lends credibility to the Baptist witness in countries which might otherwise deny the opportunity for a significant presence. This is especially helpful for smaller Baptist conventions in developing countries or countries where Christian organizations are looked on with suspicion.

"Recently, however, questions have arisen regarding perceived changes in the mission, focus, and doctrinal positions of the BWA," Elliff continued.

"Since Southern Baptists give a significant amount to the BWA through our Cooperative Program (\$417,838 for the 1997-98 fiscal year), good stewardship requires that we be fully aware and in accord with their objectives, doctrinal positions, and operational procedures.

"It is in response to these concerns that I asked Dr. James Merritt, chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, to appoint a study group to meet with representatives of the BWA so that we might assess the manner in which we should support their work in the coming years."

Named to chair the eight-member Baptist World Alliance ad hoc study

committee was Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Executive Committee. The committee's other members are Elliff; Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board; James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board; Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in North Carolina; and three members of the Executive Committee: Joe Reynolds, a Houston attorney; Gary Smith, pastor from Arlington, Texas; and Bob Sorrell, associate pastor of Bellevue Church, Cordova.

Named to the five-member SBC annual meeting committee were three Executive Committee members: Forrest E. Lowry III, Spring, Texas, who will chair the study; Reuel May Jr., Jackson, Miss.; and Frank Cox, Atlanta. The other two members are former chairmen of the SBC Committee on Order of Business, Jim Richards of Arkansas and Danny Watters of Georgia.

Two new media initiatives were approved by the Executive Committee: a new monthly flagship publication of the

North American Mission Board, to be titled, *On Mission Magazine*, and a listener-supported weekday radio program by the Ethics and Religious Liberty Committee, "For Faith & Family."

Responding to motions referred from the 1997 annual meeting in Dallas, the Executive Committee agreed:

- ✓ to consider New York City as a possible site for an SBC annual meeting.

- ✓ to provide messengers more printed information at the SBC registration and information areas on facilities (restaurants, etc.) near the convention center.

- ✓ to recommend to the 1998 annual meeting in Salt Lake City improved appearance/readability of messenger name tags for SBC annual meetings, along with improved comfort and ease of their use.

The Executive Committee declined to act on some referrals including one which would require debate on every submitted resolution. The rationale given was that it would "unduly encumber the convention."

The Executive Committee affirmed the current resolutions process. ■

Chapman points to SBC signs of good health along with some concerns

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Record giving by Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program is "a sign of good health," said Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

"It's not the only sign, but it is a sign," Chapman said during the opening session of the Executive Committee's Sept. 22-24 meeting here.

Cooperative Program receipts have risen from \$140 million in 1990 to a projected \$153 million for the current year, Chapman also noted.

"I believe Southern Baptists are saying, 'We believe in the mission commitment which we claim to have among ourselves. We want to reach to the ends of the earth.'" Chapman said.

Chapman cited three other statistical trends in Cooperative Program giving, however, which are cause for concern. The CP is the channel of support by churches for missions



CHAPMAN

and ministries of state and regional Baptist conventions and, nationally and internationally, of the Southern Baptist Convention.

(1) The percentage of undesignated gifts received by churches and then channeled through the Cooperative Program has dropped from an average of 9.84 percent in 1990 to 8.14 percent in 1996.

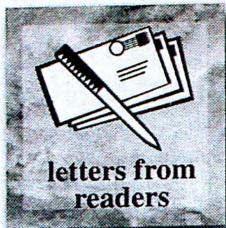
(2) The percentage of Cooperative Program receipts forwarded by state and regional conventions to SBC missions and ministries has declined from an average of 38.64 per-

cent in 1990 to 36.22 percent in 1996. Thus, the percentage of CP receipts retained by state and regional conventions has increased from an average of 61.36 percent in 1990 to 63.78 in 1996. He noted the percentage drop could be affected by CP shifts in one or two states. Chapman acknowledged many state conventions are increasing their CP percentage.

"... At the same while, I would urge that we not forget the task at hand in our home and foreign missions. We must reach America for Christ not

only through the state conventions but through the responsibility God has given us as Southern Baptists throughout the land. ..."

(3) Baptisms compared to Cooperative Program receipts have dropped from 429,063 baptisms when 1958-59 CP receipts from Southern Baptist churches totaled \$64 million, of which \$17 million was forwarded by the states to SBC missions and ministries, to 379,344 baptisms when 1995-96 CP receipts totaled \$412 million, of which \$148 million was forwarded to SBC causes. ■



letters from readers

about letters

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► Name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Include address and phone number.

► Avoid personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone.

► Send original copy.

Form letters and 'open' letters will not be published.

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► 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.



Partnership Prayer Requests

October

1 — Pray for the Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief teams that will be working in flood recovery in Wroclaw, Poland.

2 — Pray for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan's Sunday School Preparation Week being held this week.

3 — Pray for the revival being held this week at Community Church in Charlotetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. Tennessee volunteers, led by Brenton Cox, pastor of First Church, Manchester, is leading the revival.

4 — Pray for Ruben Harrison, an International Service Corps worker assigned the administration and promotion of the Costa Rica Baptist Camp.

5 — Pray for Soul Winning Commitment Day which is being observed today across the Michigan state convention.

6 — Praise God for the Michigan state convention's recent single adult retreat.

7 — Pray for the family of 18-year-old Tom Dubet of Canada whose body was recovered last month. He had been missing from home since April.

Priorities needed

Having been a Southern Baptist for 32 years and reading the paper every week, I find it very informative and sometimes amusing. The problems we have as Southern Baptists and as Christians is that we have forgotten to whom the church really belongs.

Jesus said "Upon this rock I build my church." We as Christians are caretakers of Jesus' church. It is his alone. I have seen many churches split because a few people want to decide what is best for the entire congregation.

Our first duty as Christians is first to obey God's law. The Ten Commandments are one law, God's law. Our second duty is to do his will. Our third duty is to love our neighbors.

If we do the first two that proves we love God. Missionary work should start in our own communities where we can do the most good. If we cannot bring those people to the kingdom of heaven why spend time trying to bring those farthest away.

Jesus came as the lamb the first time. This time he comes as the lion to bring God's judgment.

Ministers need to be more aggressive in their sermons. Who knows, the kingdom of heaven might just be at the end of a pen.

Michael Vales
Silerton 38377

Another look

Confronting reality can be disheartening. Such was expressed by Jim Carr (*B&R*, Sept. 17) with the reality that a member of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was elected president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board.

Rev. Carr fears the apparent direction the TBC is going. But it's going in that direction because conservatives, languishing in the grip of apathy, allow it to be led in that direction.

Most individuals elected to important TBC positions (and perhaps rightfully so) are pastors of our numerically larger churches. Many, but certainly not all, tend to be inclined toward the liberal viewpoint. Often they unintentionally lose contact with the "average person" in the pews. However, they are most active in TBC affairs.

Yet, the majority of our churches have less than 300 members. Most are stalwarts of conservative theology, and our Baptist heritage. These pastors have a "hands on" relationship with their members which is impossible for pastors

of larger congregations. However, many, if not most, are inactive in TBC affairs and not heard. Being inactive also invalidates them for important TBC positions.

Today we tend to interpret biggest to mean greatness. As a result the majority allow themselves to be led by the "big boys" like a bull with a ring in his nose.

Will conservative Tennessee Baptists have to make the hard choices now facing conservative Texas Baptists, or eventually do as the conservative Baptists of Virginia?

Regrettably, that's the direction the TBC appears to be headed.

J.L. Miller
Dickson 37055

Has a question

I read with interest the lead story in the Sept. 17 issue about the appointment of O.S. Hawkins as president of the Annuity Board. According to the article, the search for a new president "ended in early September when Hawkins agreed to allow his name to be presented."

Is this the same O.S. Hawkins who and the same Annuity Board that reportedly (*B&R*, Sept. 10) denied that he was the nominee for that position? While such technicality may have been the case in that he formally was not voted into the position by the board of trustees until Sept. 12, is that not a subtlety that might escape most people?

Am I correct in my understanding that the earlier story implied that Hawkins told his congregation that he might be leaving for another position and then both he and the board denied that he was the nominee?

Regardless of the answer to the latter question, is this the way Christians should conduct their business and handle their relations with others? I believe that here is a question worth considering, especially when so many Southern Baptists have known, heard, and/or read of both prominent and not so prominent ministers who have engaged in much the same verbal shenanigans while changing pastorates. Perhaps others can be more successful than I at convincing themselves that such conduct is acceptable to God.

James L. Baumgardner
Oliver Springs 37840

Thanks to DOM

I have been a pastor in Big Emory Association for 22 months. As I arrived on the field I was greeted by the di-

rector of missions, Bill Bargiol. I didn't know then what a teacher and friend I had found.

He made it clear that if I needed help in any way he would be there. Recently I had a time of illness, and sure enough, Bro. Bill was there in my time of need.

Pastors often don't really have a pastor, but I have found a pastor in Bill Bargiol. I hope other pastors find similar support from their DOMs.

Thank you Bro. Bill for 24 years of service to Big Emory Association.

Mitch Walker, pastor
Pine Orchard Church
Oakdale 37829

'Liberal scare?'

In regard to Jim Carr's letter in the Sept. 17 *Baptist and Reflector* concerning the election of Mike Smith as president of the TBC Executive Board: Does Rev. Carr know Dr. Smith personally, or is he sharing his opinions from the perspective of rumor and uninformed speculation?

Anyone who knows Mike Smith knows his integrity and his devotion to the Lord and Southern Baptists. He is aligned with the SBC, TBC, and the Shelby Baptist Association, as well as the CBF. He never severed any ties with the TBC. He is honest, sincere, Bible-believing, and sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in his life and his ministry. Had Jim Carr come to know Mike Smith as I have come to know him, he would not have written such words about him.

The TBC is solidly Biblical. The "liberal scare" is only a cover for some who want to dictate control over our excellent cooperative convention. Praise God for sincere, Godly leaders in our state convention. We need sound wisdom in a day when strife among Southern Baptists has become the norm instead of the exception.

I am glad the TBC has a broad representation of Tennessee Baptists at its heart. We must all hear the words of James 3:16: "For where jealousy and selfish ambition ex-

ist, there is disorder and every evil thing," and James 3:10: "from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way." Amen to the words of Scripture.

Donald A. Davidson, pastor
National Avenue Church
Memphis 38122

Missed point

I believe you may have missed the point in your discussion on Tennessee Baptists in the Sept. 17 issue.

You seemed to be troubled by quotes you heard from various brethren in our state convention. You attributed those remarks to egotism and arrogance. May I ask a question? When sincere Bible-believing Christians question the motives of the TBC because we feel led of the Lord to do so, why are we labeled as egotists?

There are many of us who have strong, Bible-based convictions why we must stand against certain issues in the TBC. Should we label the apostle Paul as arrogant and egotistic because he felt he must speak out to warn against trends that led to impurity of doctrine in the church?

Those who seem troubled by all this should study John T. Christian's two-volume book *A History of Baptists*. Upon diligent study of these scholarly works, one would be amazed to find Baptists have always struggled both internally and externally. If we Baptists believe in the sovereignty of God, then it may be wise to quit worrying and start leaving the direction of our TBC up to God.

Labels are good. It is this "generic" ecumenical direction that we see the TBC traveling that is of grave concern to us. Our love for the TBC also runs deep. One who truly loves you tells you when you are about to step on a "rattlesnake."

Terry R. Tuley, pastor
Smoky View Church
Maryville 37801

"Sincere Bible-believing Christians" were not labeled as egotists. No person or group was referred to as arrogant. — Editor

Do your Christmas shopping early — Order a gift subscription for a friend!



Do you dread fighting the shopping malls to look for gifts for that special friend in church or Sunday School? If so, why not consider a gift subscription to the *Baptist and Reflector*? You can give a gift now that they will receive for the next year. We'll even send a card announcing your thoughtful gift.

A one-year subscription to the *Baptist and Reflector* is only \$8. Send your check today to: *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024. Be sure to include the name and correct address of the person you want to receive the paper along with your name. Give a gift this Christmas that will last all year!

Grace of giving blesses around a big circle

Writing in his book, *The Grace of Giving*, published some 60 years ago by the Sunday School Board, P. E. Burroughs quotes M. E. Dodd in a good example of that grace.

Burroughs wrote about "Giving Works Around in a Circle." He attributed the following story to Dodd.

Several hunters in the Adirondack Mountains tried to cross a swollen stream. When their little boat sank, one of the hunters drowned.

The other men quickly put together a crude wooden box and began marching out of the woods to bury their friend without any burial service.

An old Indian guide, a Christian, asked if that were the way white people buried their dead. One of them replied, "No, but none of us is Christian and so we don't know how to conduct a Christian funeral."

The old guide asked if he might conduct the service for them. He was given permission. The hunters were so impressed with the beauty, simplicity, and meaning of the service that some of them gave their hearts to Christ beside that lonely grave.

One of them later told his mother about the death of his friend and the appeal of the Indian guide at the burial.

His mother smiled and said, "This is the way the Lord has repaid me!" She explained that 25 years ago she had been the first to give money to send a mission-

ary to that Indian tribe. Her gift had traveled its circle. Because of that witness, some of the tribe had given their hearts to Christ, including the guide. And now her son, for whom she had prayed many years, had come to believe in Christ.

October is **Cooperative Program Emphasis Month** in Southern Baptist churches. Think positively about keeping the family circle unbroken.

The grace of giving extends the Christian witness around the world. Beginning at home, here in Tennessee, in hundreds of Tennessee Baptist churches, the gifts of grace bless the community, the state, the nation, and even the entire world.

That's one way to obey the Great Commission. Gifts through the Cooperative Program will enable missionaries not only to go to the ends of the earth, they will also be supported in their efforts.

When we read about or see that a new

church has been planted in Costa Rica, Poland, or Canada — or even Wyoming, it is likely that Cooperative Program money helped. And when a Bible study is begun by a Southern Baptist missionary in Kenya, CP funds have been involved.

Teachers and preachers, doctors and builders, Bibles and tools, schools and clean water — are products of the grace of giving.

Bible teaching programs on tape, video, radio, or television are gifts of grace through the CP.

This wonderful rope of sand with strength of steel is a mighty force for the Lord Jesus.

During October, Tennessee Baptists have the opportunity to pray for the Cooperative Program, give generously through the church, and lead in a strong emphasis of what the CP does for lost and weary people around the world. — WFA



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Tom: "Could I borrow your lawn mower this afternoon to cut my grass?"

Bill: "I can't let you have it. I'm going to play golf."

Tom: "What does your playing golf have to do with my borrowing your lawn mower?"

Bill: "Nothing, but if you don't want to do something, any excuse is good enough."

Take this truth

When we don't want to do something, we can always find a reason — but it's often an excuse. Benjamin Franklin said he never knew a man who was good at making excuses who was good at anything else.

Memorize this Scripture

God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. — Romans 2:15

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to be honest in all things in my life. ■

Who said that?

"There is a needs-be for us to give ourselves for the life of the world. An easy, non-self-denying life will never be one of power. Fruit-bearing involves cross-bearing. There are not two Christs — an easy-going one for easy-going Christians, and a suffering, toiling one for exceptional believers. There is only one Christ. Are you willing to abide in him, and thus to bear much fruit?" (words of Hudson Taylor) — *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret, China Inland Mission, London, 1935.*

It's October and associations are meeting

October's blue skies and crisp mornings are calling the *Baptist and Reflector* editorial staff to hit the roads.

A few of the 68 associations of the Tennessee Baptist Convention met in September, but fall is really here now, and most of the meetings are yet to be held.

It's October, and we will be traveling across Tennessee, visiting at the associational meetings. It is inspiring to have fel-

lowship, hear reports and preaching, sing with fervor, and pray with Baptists from churches of all sizes and ages. And the food is good too!

The associational meeting is a place and time where we can grasp the work of a group of churches "in a nutshell." We can hear about missions and ministries, evangelism, and compassion.

When we're called, we will go. — WFA

Pretending to be someone else won't provide joy

one word more

by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor



Do you know who you are?

We may know our names, but it takes a lifetime to know who

we are. And sometimes we are tempted to be someone else.

Children have fun just pretending they are someone else. It happens almost as soon as they begin walking and talking.

Most of us at some time have envisioned the thought of being someone else, someone completely different, such as someone we see as a hero.

Early on I took seriously my experience of "playing like" Robin Hood, Jessie James, Tex Ritter, or Dan Dunn, secret agent. Sometimes those "roles" backfired, got me into trouble.

There was the time my bow slipped and the dull-pointed arrow thudded against

my sister's chest. Of course she was mortally wounded — at least the sounds she made indicated that she was a goner. Yes, thereafter I never forgot the stern admonition to "never point an arrow" at anyone. I didn't have a toy gun, so the arrow was my most daring weapon.

My preschool "experience" gained me a role in a play wherein the boys dressed sissy-like, in colonial costumes — lace on fancy coats, white stockings, and breeches-to-the-knees. We even had to wear powdered wigs and bow to the "ladies."

I didn't like that, but even a very sore foot wasn't reason enough for my mother to keep me at home. She was familiar with my excuse-making. So I limped around the stage and got a few laughs without trying. I later opted out of a role as a mother in another "high" drama.

I climbed the "professional" ladder, and years later in high school I volunteered for the role of an Army veteran who knew all the answers that high schoolers needed to know. It was a Thanksgiving play.

During one of the more serious parts, as the "family" gathered, I was inspired. Our high school Bible teacher was involved, and as she approached a chair turned to sit, I instinctively eased it from under her, and she sat on the floor.

Naturally that didn't fit into the serious aura we were trying to create. I don't remember all that happened, except that she quickly forgave me (as always), and that it was my career-ending role.

The heroes we emulate will let us down. The persons we pretend to be will never satisfy our inner longings.

Play-acting will not quench our desires to know who we are. The examples set by the Apostles are not perfection — like us, they are frail images of the Savior.

So then, our utmost goal in life should be to be like Jesus, to know him, and not just to know of him.

The maturing Christian always is putting away childish things. Weaned from the "milk," we press on toward the goal of the high calling and the prize. ☺

You don't have to join the army to be your best

families matter

by Paul Barkley counselor, professor



"Be all you can be" is a slogan used by the United States Army — but you don't have to join the Army to do that. Psychologist Abraham Maslow

coined the term "self-actualization." His premise is that after the basic physical and psychological needs are met, humans are motivated to fulfill their own greatest potential.

This impacts the family at points of physical, emotional, and spiritual support and space that we need from family, and owe to family.

He found that people who had achieved self-actualization shared four common characteristics: they are self-aware and self-accepting, they are open and spontaneous, they are loving and kind, and they are not paralyzed by others' opinions.

To reach our own potential and help family members reach theirs, we must realize who we are and accept who we are. We are fond of singing the hymn, "Just As I Am." We must come to the place where we stop defeating ourselves by having unrealistic expectations and recognize all that we are under the grace of God, even with human foibles.

God cannot do his work of grace in our lives until we become open and spontaneous. He can work best with us when we are unfettered by denial and delusion. He has not demanded perfect vessels but ones

who are open, honest, and transparent about their need for him. As we respond to each family member this way, we create the potential for strong bonds of nurture.

The family demands love and caring. God created us with the capacity and need to love and be loved. This is the fertile ground where family flourishes. As God unconditionally accepts and loves us, we are obligated to do the same for family.

No family is immune to conflict and differing opinions. The unflinching ability to stand for what is right without capitulating, even in family, is an essential element to family as God designed it. Despite what other family members might think or how they might respond to us, we must stand on truth as we understand it. ■

Senior adults 'redeem the time' at conference

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
Baptist and Reflector

PIGEON FORGE — This year's fall conference for Tennessee Baptist senior adults was a success — and 946 of them participated here Sept. 16-18.

"I'm pleased at the huge turnout for the conference," said Don Mauldin, Family Ministry specialist, Christian Growth Development Group.

Mauldin said registration was the highest in several years. He attributed the increase to "a good program using several workshops, as well as good weather."

He said the conference, which was begun in 1973, continues to be popular with Tennessee Baptist seniors.

Keynote speaker was Ken Hubbard, who also was the Bible Study leader. Hubbard is pastor of First Church, Smyrna, and immediate past president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Seven conferences were given on Wednesday morning and repeated the next day.

Conference leaders and topics were: Names of Jesus, Herbert Gabhart, Belmont University chancellor; Wills, Trusts, and Housing, W. L. Childs and Kenny Cooper, president/treasurer,

TBC Foundation, and TBC Adult Homes.;

How to Live the Rest of Your Life, Howard Stevens, marriage counselor, Nashville; Preserving Your Life Story, Faye Brown, author/humorist, Moundville, Ala.;

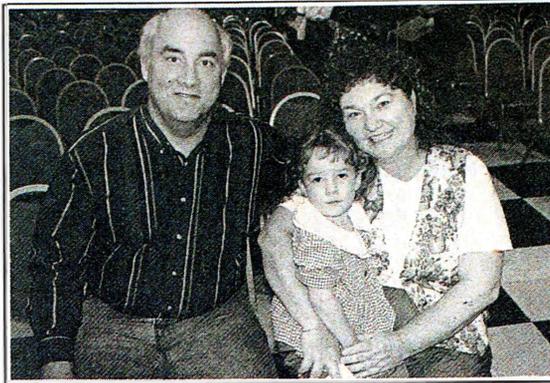
Professional Leaders, Robert Holley, Arkansas Baptist Convention staff member; Volunteer Leaders, Al Shackleford, editor, *Mature Living*;

And The Importance of Being You, John Tullock, religion professor emeritus, Belmont University.

Music was provided by Jim Graves, Ray Conner, Fes Robertson, Mark Caruth.

Mauldin recognized Johnnie and Phyllis Hall, retired from Discipleship Training, TBC, for their vital role in past conferences.

As usual, Wednesday's talent night was a highlight of the conference. About a dozen participants entertained.



PASTOR AND MRS. Rocky Churchwell, First Church, Jamestown, sang in the "talent show." Daughter Sara Elizabeth, attended the conference with them.

In his keynote message Tuesday night, Hubbard reminded the audience that, "It's necessary to have a purpose in life, a direction, especially for the golden years.

"There are those who watch things happen," he said, "and there are those who make things happen, and those who wake up and ask, 'What's happened?'"

He told the participants we all die like we live. Therefore it is necessary to have the right attitude. Years wrinkle the skin, Hubbard said, but loss of enthusiasm will wrinkle the soul.

"I'm looking for the upper-taker, not the undertaker," he said. "I don't want to be dragged into heaven — it's a great time to be living."

Hubbard said it is good to remember that happiness is stumbled upon along the road of servanthood.

On Wednesday morning, Hubbard talked about the need to close some doors in life.

He mentioned that senior adults should close the door to defeats, to criticism, to useless battles, to things that you can't change, and the door to sin.

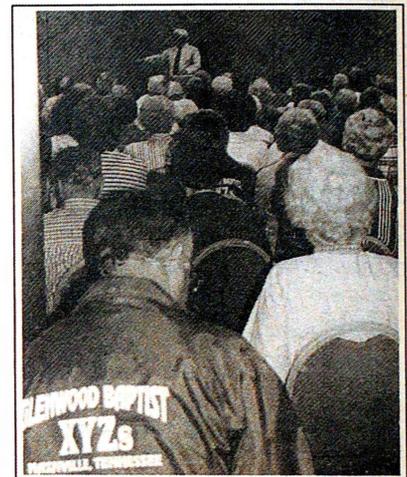


Hubbard admonished the senior adults not to let anyone take the joy out of their hearts, in his study on Wednesday night. Remember that Jesus told his disciples to be of good cheer.

"Jesus does not bring the joy to our hearts," Hubbard said, "but he brings eternal life. Then we receive the Holy Spirit as a spiritual cafeteria — and it's up to us whether to have the joy!"

Jesus told his disciples not to rejoice over accomplishments, but to rejoice that their names are written in heaven.

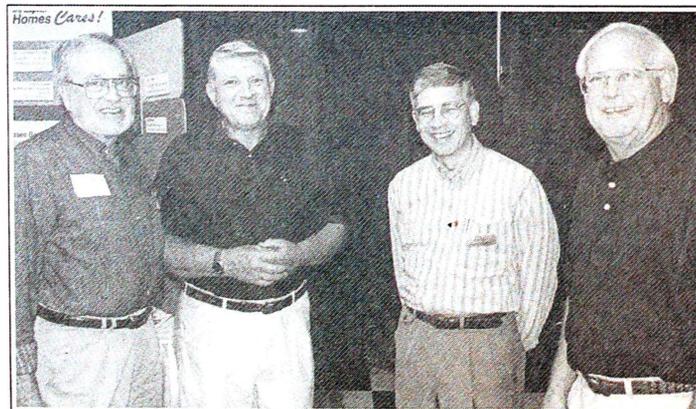
Finally, Hubbard told the audience not to be ashamed to share their burdens with others — and the Lord. **B&R**



CROWDED WORKSHOPS caused some participants to sit in the doorways.



PASTOR KEN HUBBARD of First Church, Smyrna, left, visits with Richard and Cora Mazavec of First Church, Portland, during the annual Senior Adult Conference held recently in Pigeon Forge. Hubbard, a current member of the TBC Executive Board, led Bible studies during the conference. — Photos by Wm. Fletcher Allen



INTERESTED participants from left: Al Shackleford, editor of *Mature Living* magazine; Deryl Watson, director of missions, Hardeman Association; Kenny Cooper, TBC Adult Homes president; and W. L. Childs, TBC Foundation president. Shackleford, Cooper, and Childs led workshops.



SOME 41 MEMBERS of Judson Church, Nashville, attended the conference, and spent the next two days on mission at Western Heights Mission Center, Knoxville. They carried 43 boxes of food, nine from the TBC Children's Homes. They dispensed tracts, clothing, and food. The "Judson Jewels" sang at First Church, Rogersville, Thursday night, in a special "Night to Remember." Richard Wade, volunteer missions director; David Bailey, minister of music; Pastor Walter Johnson; and TBC retiree Johnnie Hall, headed the mission effort, part of their "Touch and Tell Tennessee" program.

Memphis pastor does 'overtime' as UM chaplain

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

MEMPHIS — As the final seconds ticked off the clock at the Liberty Bowl Sept. 20 it appeared that the University of Memphis Tigers and the Golden Gophers of the University of Minnesota might be headed into overtime.

That would have been just fine with Memphis pastor Dick Sisk, provided the Tigers couldn't win the game in regulation. Sisk already was in "overtime." Unfortunately, neither option happened and UM lost by three points.

For about six years Sisk, pastor of Broadmoor Church here, has patrolled the sidelines of UM home games (and some away games) as team chaplain, an official yet unsalaried position.

No pay and the extra time commitment do not bother Sisk.

An avid sports fan, serving as chaplain enables him to combine his love for ministry with his love for young people.

Though he never played college football, Sisk did play the sport in high school. "If I wasn't preaching, I'd probably be in coaching. I love working with young people," the Levelland, Texas, native noted.

Sisk was first asked to speak during

chapel services for the Memphis football team when he came to Broadmoor nearly seven years ago. It evolved into the chaplaincy role, something he was familiar with.

While in Texas Sisk served as chaplain for local high school teams.

His primary role as chaplain is to lead or coordinate a weekly chapel service on Saturdays. The services are not mandatory and he is given complete freedom on how he conducts the meetings.

During his first year as chaplain the services averaged between six-10 players and two to three coaches, Sisk recalled. Now, services typically average around 30 players and five to six coaches weekly, he said.

He also is available to players before and after the game to pray with them when they need or want it. On the sideline during the game, Sisk is strictly a spectator and encourager.

During the week Sisk is on call to minister to the players and coaches should a crisis arise.

While some of the players and coaches occasionally join Broadmoor, Sisk realizes his ministry, while evangelistic, does not necessarily translate into church growth, he said.

Players are with the school for only four years and coaches frequently move from job to job. Yet, he has seen both players and coaches accept the Lord as Savior over the past six years.

"Our impact on the kids is not as visible as a lot of ministries (at Broadmoor) in the sense they don't join Broad-



DICK SISK, center, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Memphis, leads prayer with University of Memphis football players following a recent game with the University of Minnesota.

moor. It's the impact you see in their lives afterwards," he observed.

"This is a ministry to get people to the Lord and to show a Christian witness to players who otherwise might not be exposed to it," he added.

John Flowers, assistant to head coach Rip Scherer and director of football operations, is a member of Broadmoor and a participant in the chapel services.

"We realize there is not only a mental and physical aspect to the game, but a spiritual one as well," Flowers said.

"What we do on Saturdays in terms of wins and losses will not have eternal consequences. What we do spiritually does," he said. Flowers noted the chapel service on Saturday is "God's time." The players know and respect Dick for who he is," Flowers added.

He noted the services have had an impact on the team. "I'm thrilled we're allowed to do this and the success we've had," Flowers said.

Sophomore defensive player Joe Rocconi of Collierville attends the services each week though he is not a Baptist and he is convinced they are beneficial.

"He (Sisk) relates spiritual beliefs to what we're doing," Rocconi said.

The player also noted Sisk gets across to the team they should give all the glory to the Lord for any success they might have in football because God gave them the ability they have. ■



Pastor ministers in Costa Rica

By Heather Lawrence
For Baptist and Reflector

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — When Tennessee Baptist Ray Siler speaks of Costa Rica he often uses the word "warm" but he is not referring to the tropical climate.

Siler, who recently spent a week working in this small Central American country with a group of 29 volunteers from Tennessee, became acquainted with many Costa Rican nationals as he worked in their churches and stayed in their homes.

"I love the people here. They are very warm and hospitable," he said.

Siler, pastor of Demory Church, LaFollette, is no stranger to mission trips, having made trips to Jamaica over the past eight years where he preached and assisted in Vacation Bible Schools.



PASTOR RAY SILER, right, visits with Costa Ricans.

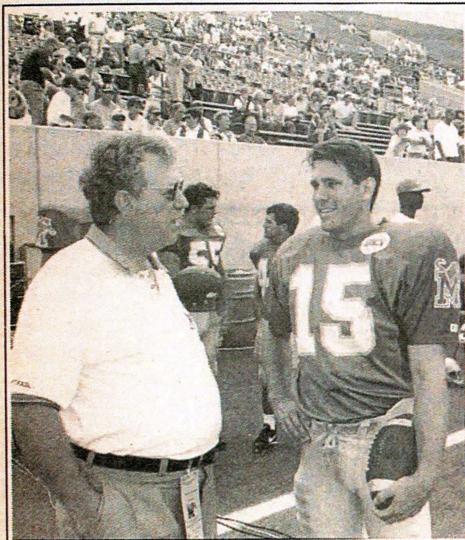
This year, God had something different planned. He was asked by Campbell County Association Director of Missions Glenn Petrie to consider working in Costa Rica. When some unsolicited financial support came his way, Siler felt God's hand leading him to Costa Rica.

Tennessee Baptists are currently working alongside International Mission Board missionaries and Costa Rican Baptists in a partnership designed to strengthen churches in this country where Southern Baptists have been for 50 years.

Siler and the other volunteers fanned out across San Jose. Though he could not speak Spanish, he found the language difference was not a barrier. With the assistance of translators Siler preached in two churches in the city where he witnessed four decisions to follow Christ.

Siler came to Costa Rica with the full support of members at Demory.

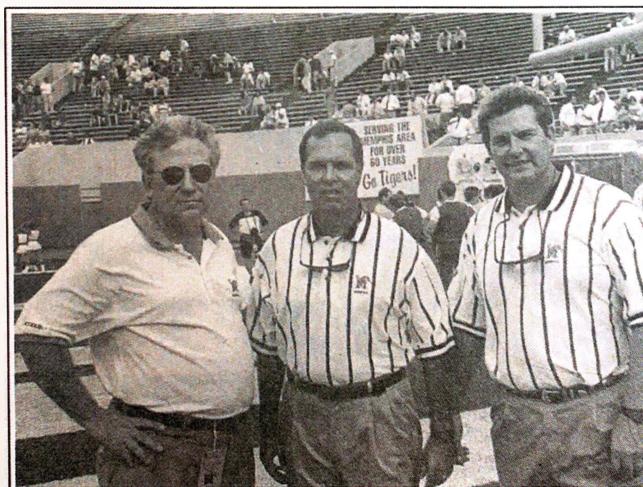
"I have always had a heart for missions and the people of my church are very mission-minded in their giving and in their ministries," he said. ■



UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS punter Drew Pairamore of Covington visits with chaplain Dick Sisk prior to a game. Pairamore regularly attends chapel services led by Sisk or special guests.



CHAPLAIN Dick Sisk, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Memphis, concentrates on the game. He has worked with the UM football team for about six years.



UM HEAD FOOTBALL Coach Rip Scherer, center, and John Flowers, right, administrative assistant to the head coach and director of football operations, are supportive of chaplain Dick Sisk.

Growing HEARTS & MINDS

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churches

■ **Hilldale Church**, Clarksville, will hold its 50th anniversary celebration Oct. 5. Activities include a morning worship service beginning at 10 a.m. featuring testimonies by former staff members, music, and preaching. A luncheon and concert featuring the Stone Brothers will follow. For more information, call (931) 648-8031.

■ **Jerry Rankin**, president, International Missions Board, based in Richmond, Va., is one of the speakers for the World Missions Conference of **Washington Avenue Church, Cookeville**. He will speak Oct. 26 at 6 p.m. Also speaking is Joseph Tson of the Romanian Missionary Society.

■ **Mt. Vernon Church, Halls**, dedicated its new facility Sept. 14.

■ **Gates Church, Gates**, will hold revival Oct. 26-29. Jerrell Dawson will speak.

■ **Fowlkes Church, Fowlkes**, will hold revival Oct. 5-9. Different speakers will lead the services.

■ **Bogota Church, Bogota**, will dedicate its new education/fellowship hall Oct. 12 at 2 p.m.

■ **Friendship Church, Friendship**, will hold a Judgment House Oct. 30-31 focused on the theme of abortion.

■ **Central Church, Alcoa**, will hold revival Oct. 5-8. Doug McPherson, pastor, Cedar Grove Church, Maryville, will speak.

■ **First Church, Trimble**, will begin a contemporary worship service Oct. 5. It will meet at 8:30 a.m. each Sunday morning.

■ **Pleasant Ridge Church, Huntland**, will hold revival Oct. 5-9. Richard Sowards of Olathe, Kan., will speak.

■ **Eastside Church, Burns**, has 26 padded, wooden pews the church would like to give to a congregation which needs them. For more information, call Bob Hammer, pastor, at (615) 446-5816.

■ **Gallaher Memorial Church, Knoxville**, will celebrate its 142nd anniversary with homecoming events Oct. 12. Blake Greer, a former pastor, and Howard Russell will speak. Activities will include morning and afternoon services and a luncheon. For more information, call (423) 577-1868.

■ **Valley Grove Church, Knoxville**, which is located on Old Sevierville Pike, will hold revival Oct. 5-8. Claude Thomas, pastor, First Church, Euless, Texas, will speak. Thomas was assistant pastor of the church from 1967-72. Jeff Story, minister of music at the church, will lead the music. For more information, call (423) 577-6620.

■ **College Heights Church, Gallatin**, will host the seminar, "A Marriage to Live For!" Nov. 14-15, for the Baptist Sunday School Board, sponsor of the event. Gary Chapman, popular speaker and author, and his wife, will speak. For more information, call 1 (800) 254-2022.



MEMBERS OF the group from New Union Church, Dayton, pause during their week-long effort at resort ministry recently at Kure Beach, N.C. The 23-member team led a Vacation Bible School on the beach, worked with tourists, and performed a variety program each evening. As a result, 13 people made professions of faith.

■ **Mount Gilead Church, Bethel Springs**, will hold revival Oct. 12-17. Pat Kough, retired pastor of Jackson, will speak.



■ **Calvary Hill Church, Dyersburg**, has called **Harvell Baker** as interim pastor after the resignation of **Gary Doughten**, pastor.

■ **Conroy J. Ryan Jr.**, minister of education and administration, Beaver Dam Church, Knoxville, has been named associate director of missions, Madison-Chester and Crockett Association, effective Sept. 10. His assignment will be educating members of churches in the association and promoting their events.

■ **Willo McCoy**, a staff member of Inglewood Church, Nashville, for 32 years, will be

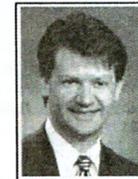
honored Oct. 26 on her retirement. McCoy has been minister of youth and minister of education at the church.

■ **Cross Roads Church, Greenbrier**, has called **Michael Blankenship**, bivocational pastor, as full-time pastor.

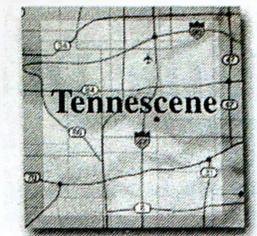
■ **Frank R. Lewis**, preaching and worship consultant, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, for 20 months, has been called as pastor, First Church, Nashville, effective

Oct. 19. Lewis regularly led "The Gathering," a contemporary service. Lewis was a church planter for the North American Mission

Board, Alpharetta, Ga., for 10 years, where he was pastor of Green Valley Church, Las Vegas, Nev. He is a graduate of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. He also has studied at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.



LEWIS



ham, Ala., New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. He also has studied at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

■ **Cornerstone Church, Clinton**, has called **Travis Walker** as minister of music and youth, effective Sept. 1. Previously he was a youth leader at the church. Also **Jim Hulse** has been called as minister to senior adults. Formerly he was pastor, Lakeview Church, Clinton.



■ **First Church, Trimble**, ordained **Alex Kennedy** to the ministry Sept. 14.



■ **The Christian Women's Job Corps of Nashville Association** will hold Training for Mentors and Other Volunteers Oct. 11 at Lockeland Church, Nashville. Instructors will be Sherri Carroll of Families First and the University of Tennessee College of Social Work and Char Gray, an educational research consultant of Nashville. For more information, call (615) 255-9681.

Tennessee samplers

by leaders of churches, associations

Message from Chaplain Available

By Michael L. Prowse, director of missions
Stone Association

We just received a fax from Chaplain Available on our new machine, furnished for the associational office by Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries.

He has served his usual week as a volunteer for the resort ministry at Land Between the Lakes State Park. The ministry is at the Piney Campground near Dover.

While making one of his daily rounds visiting campers, the chaplain

enjoyed chatting with some ladies at their RV near the lakeshore.

Since the ladies seemed interested in the chaplain's work as a director of missions, he shared a little about his current project, promoting the state missions offering for Tennessee. He added that it funds his work, since it, along with Cooperative Program funds, provided the camper trailer at Piney Campground from which he and other Baptists work.

Before reading the rest of the fax, I began considering the impact of the many changes occurring almost daily in the Lord's work, and how this work is trying to keep pace and be effective in meeting the needs of modern man. I remain confident, as in the past, that Tennessee Baptists will continue to cooperate in supporting generously our witness across the state through such projects as the annual Golden State Missions Offering (and with regular Cooperative Program giving).

As I begin this month my 31st year

serving the Lord in Tennessee associational missions work, I am thankful to God for my relationship with our TBC Executive Board ministries during these years. Also, I am counting on your prayers as I continue to work and serve here in Stone Association with you, where "we are laborers together with God" (I Corinthians 3:9).

(Despite the fact that it seems there are two people referred to, Chaplain Available is Prowse, who takes his alias from a sign on the trailer at this resort ministry site.)

Roots produce blooms

By Tom Suiter, pastor
Indian Springs Church, Kingsport

A few days ago I moved some flowers so that I could build a rock fence where they had been growing. I remember these flowers blooming in the spring. They are beautiful, purple irises. When in bloom they command full attention.

When I began to uncover the roots of these gorgeous flowers I discovered that they have the "ugliest" roots I have ever seen. This is true despite the fact they produce some of the prettiest flowers to grace a vase.

We must conclude that hidden somewhere in that ugly root of the iris is the nature of the beautiful flower that blooms above. I know that to be true in my life. If there is anything worthy of being called "beautiful" in my life, it has to come out of the ugly root. The ugly part is us, yet the nature of the Lord Jesus has been implanted into our ugly root.

There is nothing in ourselves that commands admiration, but when his nature that is hidden in our humanity comes forth, it is a surprise to us all. Iris means "rainbow" and is an expression of the radiant colors of the rainbow. I think it is grand that God can take an ugly root like me and produce out of that ugly root an expression of his many colors. ■

Little Doe Church celebrates 150th anniversary

For Baptist and Reflector

DOEVILLE — Little Doe Church, near Butler, recently celebrated its 150th anniversary with homecoming.

The church was established at its present site in 1843 by

settlers who migrated west from North Carolina and Virginia.

Records show that the Howard family was one of the first to settle and build a home in the Little Doe community.

Col. Samuel Howard donated a meeting house and a small plot of land as a place of public worship. Many of the current church membership are descendants of Howard.

More than 250 attended the anniversary service in late August. Former pastor Franklin Hall, now pastor of Bethel Church, Yorktown, Va., delivered the homecoming message, emphasizing the occasion was a time to look back, give thanks to God, look inward as individuals, and look to the future for God's purpose for the church.

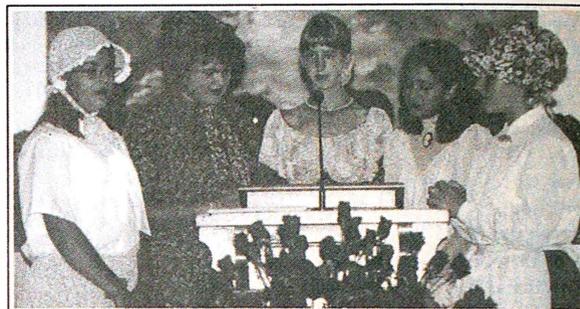
Watauga Association Director of Missions Bob Polk presented Pastor Kreg Smith a plaque on behalf of the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society. ■



DRESSED in attire their ancestors would have worn 150 years ago are Carol Stout and her son, Cody.



ABOVE, Pastor Kreg Smith of Little Doe Church accepts a plaque from the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society from Bob Polk, director of missions, Watauga Association. **BELOW**, youth from Little Doe Church read a drama. From left are Mary Jean May, Jean Brown, Inge Alridge, Tiffany Conde, and Melina Giarusso.



Classified

FOR SALE: FBC, Morristown, has 18 pews from chapel for sale. 10 feet, 8 inches, natural finish with white ends and solid wood construction. \$200 each. Arrangements for purchase and removal can be made with Jim Mathis at (423) 586-0522.

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Executive Board Openings for Ministry Specialists

The Human Resources Office of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention announces that resumes are being accepted for two ministry specialist positions. (1) Youth Specialist, Evangelism/Missions Strategies Group and (2) Youth/Adult Specialist, Missions Awareness and Involvement Group.

Information concerning either position may be obtained by contacting Human Resources Office, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37214, or calling (615) 371-2013. All candidates must submit an application to be considered for a position.



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July 20, 1997

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Encouragers

By James Hutson

Focal Passage — II Corinthians 1:3-11

This lesson begins a second unit entitled "Putting Your Faith To Work." There are four lessons from II Corinthians 1-9 which have a basic theme of how believers in Christ can express their faith in their daily living. We tend to glamorize the New Testament church. But the church at Corinth was a troubled church. They were divided over leadership; they openly questioned Paul's leadership; they were divided about whether to eat meat offered to idols; they were split over the use of spiritual gifts; and evidently some in the church questioned the bodily resurrection of the Lord. The church at Corinth was a heartache to Paul.

We begin this study under the subject "Be encouragers." Discouragement is no respecter of persons or positions. Charles Spurgeon, the great preacher in London of a former day, suffered intense depression. It is a mistake to assume that we should always be happy. Life has some hard knocks. There are times when all we can do is cry. It is the only emotion that fits the situation. What do we do when we are discouraged?

Remember that God is willing and able to encourage us. The NIV reads "Praise be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The KJV reads, "Blessed be God. ..." We probably understand the NIV better. When we praise God the name of Jesus is added. It reveals to us the Christian understanding of God. Our God is the Father of all mercies. Here Paul's understanding of God is deepened by his knowledge of God's saving action in Christ. God is also the God of all comfort. Our English word "comfort" comes from the Latin meaning "with strength." We are to praise God for who he is and for what he has done and is doing and will continue to do for us. When you are discouraged, remember God and praise him.

The purpose of God's encouragement. Why does God encourage us? It is his nature, and he knows that we need his help. Also, as a result of God's encouragement we are able to encourage others. Paul says that his afflictions enabled the Corinthian believers to share comfort with one another. There is a commonality in suffering. The things and events that hurt one of us will do the same to another.

And in some way the common sufferings of believers is a part of the Lord's sufferings. Jesus suffered to purchase our redemption. Believers don't suffer on a physical cross, but all of those who earnestly serve the Lord know what it is to suffer spiritually. That's why we need to encourage one another. Every church needs some "Barnabas" — sons and daughters of encouragement.

Paul's testimony about God's encouragement. Paul had an experience that devastated him. No one knows for certain what this was. While we are uncertain about what happened to Paul, there is no doubt about what Paul learned from it. He learned anew the total dependence upon his God who raises the dead. Paul also learned the benefit from those who prayed for him. He urges his readers to continue to pray for him.

God encourages us. We are to encourage one another. Everyone of us has burdens. We need all the help we can get from one another. A good word warmly spoken, an arm around the shoulder and the words "I'm praying for you" offer encouragement and enables us to be a blessing to others. — Hutson is pastor, First Church, Rockwood.

Resisting temptation

By Dennis Trull

Focal Passage — Daniel 1:3-5, 8-16

A boy attending Sunday School one day was asked to read Daniel 6:3. Instead of saying Daniel had an "excellent spirit," he said that Daniel had an "excellent spine." Daniel is also famous for having an excellent spine. In other words, he had backbone. Anyone who goes through a time of crisis needs to read and heed the book of Daniel. It is a book about faith, wisdom, and courage. Daniel's story is one of moral courage, knowing when to say "no" and when to stand up for what we believe.

Nebuchadnezzar's command. Babylon, led by Nebuchadnezzar, was the dominant power during the early part of the book of Daniel. After Babylon had invaded Judah, Nebuchadnezzar's command was that some of the young men would be carried off to be trained in Babylonian ways, ultimately to serve in the government. Daniel was one of those young men, as well as Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego. Verse 4 indicates at least six traits that Nebuchadnezzar was looking for in these young men:

Family Bible Lesson

no defect; good looking; intelligent in wisdom; endowed with understanding; discerning knowledge; and promise for service. You will notice that character did not matter to the king, but it mattered to Daniel.

Daniel's courage. It is interesting to note that Daniel received a new name without any hesitation or protest. However, he knew where to draw the line and it came at the point of diet. Verse 5 indicated that the young men would eat and drink from the king's choice food. When Daniel saw the menu he had to make a choice. On that table before him was pork, which was forbidden by Jewish law. He also understood that the food had been sacrificed

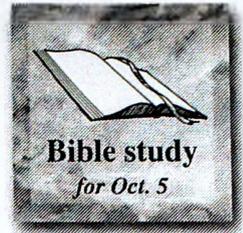
to idols. Then, there was the wine. While not forbidden by Jewish law, he remembered the warnings about its dangers. He was not tempted about accepting his Babylonian name, but he was when it came to a Babylonian diet. He knew when to say "no." Verse 8 says, "Daniel made up his mind..."

Daniel offered an alternative plan. He proposed a test whereby he and his three friends would eat only vegetables and drink water. At the end of the days, the overseer could easily determine whether the plan worked or not.

God's control. God was working behind the scenes helping Daniel and his friends stay true to him. God caused Ashpenaz to see Daniel in a favorable, compassionate light. God has promised to intervene for us when we are faced with temptation so we can stay true to him. I Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man, and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it."

Verse 14 reveals that the overseer did indeed listen to Daniel and allowed them to fulfill their plan. Daniel and his friends looked better and healthier than the other young men who had been eating the king's choice food. Daniel made a moral choice. God had honored his courage to say "no" to temptation. He will do the same for us.

An older teen got a summer job in a logging camp. One of his Christian friends asked him, "How can you live a Christian life in such a setting?" The young man said he didn't know but that he was sure it would work out somehow. Upon returning in the fall, his friend asked him how it went. He said, "Oh, it was no problem at all. I worked there all summer, and nobody guessed I was a Christian." That teenager lived by compromise. Daniel lived by moral courage. Our choice as born-again believers each day is compromise or courage. — Trull is pastor, First Church, Savannah.



Judgment and hope

By Michael Ruffin

Focal Passage — Genesis 6:5-9, 18-19; 8:16-17; 9:11-13

Judgment and hope go together in the Bible. God's justice leads to judgment, but even as judgment is taking place, hope is present. Perhaps we should even think of judgment itself as an act of hope. It is an imperfect metaphor, or course, but as a parent I know that when I discipline the children whom God allowed my wife and me to bring into this world, I do so as an act of hope, believing that out of that act of discipline can emerge children who have moved further up the ladder of maturity. God's judgment contains hope for a better human creation.

Hope is found in a righteous person. Genesis paints a vivid picture of the increasing sinfulness of humanity. The picture begins with the sin of Adam and Eve, progresses to the murder of Abel by Cain, continues in the utter disdain for human life shown by Lamech, and culminates in the marriages between human beings and the "sons of God" (6:1-4). Whatever else this last strange narrative means, it functions in the text as the "last straw." Humanity as a whole was found to be in a sorry state, and God determined to destroy the living beings that he had created.

Hope leaps at us from the text, however, in the person of Noah. He was a "righteous man, blameless in

Explore the Bible Lesson

his generation." Compared with those around him, Noah stood out as a person of integrity. To be "righteous" is to be in a sound, whole relationship with God. Noah's standing with God is depicted beautifully in the phrase "Noah walked with God" (ch. 6:9). This phrase has been used only once before in Genesis: "Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him." Enoch had a special relationship with God, so much so that it was a small step from his fellowship with God in this life to his fellowship with God in the next life. We may conclude that Noah had an equally rewarding relationship with God.

We often talk about the sinful condition of our world. A good question to ask ourselves is whether we as Christians have the kind of right relationship with God that might make us signs of hope in a world so worthy of judgment.

Hope is found in the actions of God. Even as he was judging the world in the flood, God was acting to bring about hope. Reflecting on three words will help us to see how God planned for and affirmed the renewal of his creation.

Replenishment. God made plans

to replenish the earth. Not only did he instruct Noah to take his wife, his sons and their wives onto the ark, he also told him to take male and female representatives of the various members of the animal kingdom. The human and animal population of the earth would be restored.

Covenant. Before the flood God told Noah he would establish his covenant with him and after the flood God affirmed that covenant. A covenant is an agreement, and any covenant between God and humans is a covenant of grace. That is so because God is in no way bound to reach down and establish an agreement with his human creation. That he does is a signifier of grace and hope.

Sign. The rainbow was a sign of God's covenant with Noah, the other living creatures which survived the flood by being on the ark, and with those generations to come after them. The rainbow is a powerful symbol of God's promise never again to destroy the world by a flood, because it is shaped like a warrior's bow. The presence of the rainbow in the sky says that God has set his warrior's bow down and will not again destroy the world in this way.

In a world like ours, it is worthwhile to continue to look for the signs of hope for renewal that are provided by God. — Ruffin is associate professor, School of Religion, Belmont University, Nashville.



world news

Kenny Rains joins NAMB staff

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Kenny Rains, former director of adults in missions for the SBC Brotherhood Commission, has accepted a position with the media and missions education group of the new North American Mission Board.

Rains presently is associate pastor of education at Faith Church, Bartlett. Prior to joining the Brotherhood Commission in 1985, where he served for 10 years, Rains was on the Brotherhood staff of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board.

In his new role as manager of missions opportunities/events, Rains will encourage awareness of missions education and opportunities in Southern Baptist churches among other duties.

The Tennessee native is a

graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

He and his wife, Connie, have two sons. ■

Northwest paper has new editor

Baptist Press

VANCOUVER, Wash. — Ed Ernsting, a pastor in Washington State since 1979, was elected unanimously as editor of the *Northwest Baptist Witness* Sept. 16 by the Northwest Baptist Convention's executive board. The convention encompasses churches in Oregon and Washington.

Ernsting, 46, will become editor Oct. 1, succeeding James Watters, who led the paper for 13 years before going on medical disability Aug. 1. ■

Gifts increase at Southwestern

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Contributions of more than \$5.1 million to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary doubled during its 1996-97 fiscal year and dwarfed totals for the previous five years. The total nearly doubled 1995-96 seminary gifts. It also was the

highest total since the 1986-87 fiscal year.

Gifts to the school dropped sharply three years ago after President Russell Dilday's departure but have increased steadily since.

"I think the reason (for the increase) is that our constituency continues to realize that Southwestern is still preparing men and women for ministry," said Jack Terry, Southwestern Seminary's vice president for institutional advancement. ■

SBC seminaries receive money from Arson Fund

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries have received \$83,768 in unspent monies from the Arson Fund as affirmed by the SBC annual meeting in Dallas in June, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

The Arson Fund was initiated during the 1996 SBC annual meeting by then-SBC President Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla., to help African American churches as an outreach to those congregations which ex-

B&H book featured on Winfrey show

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Oprah Winfrey described it as "a really simple concept that has profound results."

The nationally syndicated talk show host was referring to the suggestion in a new Broadman & Holman book that parents write a letter to their newborn child explaining what's really important in life.

Letters to Baby, described as "a keepsake of blessings and wisdom for new babies," was featured on the Sept. 19 edition of "The Oprah Winfrey Show." Compiled by Chaz Corzine of Franklin, the books is a collection of letters from celebrities and public figures who answer the question: "What would you tell a newborn baby that you have found to be important in life?"

Included among the 67 contributions to the book are letters from Art Linkletter, Amy Grant, Franklin Graham, James Dobson, and many others. Space is provided at the end of the book for parents to write their own letter to their newborn. The author suggests giving the letter to the child on a special occasion such as a 16th birthday, high school graduation, or wedding day.

The book is available at Baptist Book Stores. ■

perienced burning of their facilities.

More than \$700,000, received by the SBC, was channeled through 17 state conventions, including Tennessee.

At the June 1997 annual meeting, SBC President Tom Elliff of Del City, Okla., recommended, and convention messengers approved, that undistributed monies remaining in the Arson Fund be redirected to the six seminaries to be used

specifically for African American theological education.

Chapman recently notified the seminaries that the \$83,768 would be distributed according to the Seminary Funding Formula, used in the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget.

The undistributed funds were from six state conventions which returned unspent Arson Fund monies to the SBC. ■

For Adults and Teens

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Fun for the Family

Just for Kids

The Book of 1 Timothy

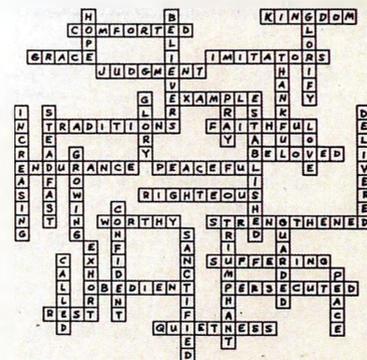
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S	I	C	N	N	T	E	S	R	S

-1 Timothy 1:15

Answers to the Sept. 24 Fun for the Family Puzzles

The Book of 2 Thessalonians for adults



The Book of 2 Thessalonians for children

MAY THE LORD DIRECT YOUR HEARTS TO THE LOVE OF GOD AND TO THE STEADFASTNESS OF CHRIST.

-2 Thessalonians 3:5

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