

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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this week's news

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Romanian Baptists — not your usual convention

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — A Baptist convention met in Nashville recently — but it wasn't the TBC or the SBC. Surprised?

The Romanian Baptist Mission here hosted the (eastern) annual meeting of the Romanian Baptist Association of USA and Canada, a group that is Southern Baptist oriented. Preaching, praises and singing, and Christ-centered praying marked the two-day event.

The group met Nov. 8-9 in facilities of Grandview Church on Nolensville Road, which is now in process of combining with Concord Church.

The meeting had a definite missions thrust — since the national group is supporting Romanian Baptists here and in several international locations.

Messages were missions-oriented, specific needs were expressed, and offerings involved missions support.

In addition to the spiritual aspects of the session, participants delighted in fellowship and eating home-cooked Ro-

manian food at the Sunday mid-day meal.

So Mark Hobafcovici, Romanian Mission pastor, helped coordinate the meeting. He and his wife Christine were recently appointed to be home missionaries to Tennessee. The North American Mission Board named Hobafcovici as language director for Nashville Association.

The Romanian native has been a church planter/pastor in Tennessee since 1993.

Hobafcovici said the Romanian Association [Convention] meets three times annually, with one of the meetings being a business session as well.

The meetings are alternated — one each in the east and west of the United States and one in Canada. The fall congress (business meeting) was held in Newnan, Ga., in August with 1,500 participants.

The Romanian Association has 44 churches and missions, coming from 15 states and Canada (which has 4). All are members of the state Baptist conventions and the local Baptist associations.

Overall there are 3,500



ROMANIAN BAPTIST leaders led the national convention session recently, meeting at the old Grandview Church facilities, Nolensville Road, Nashville. From left: Mark Hobafcovici, host church pastor; Florin Cimpean, Goodlettsville pastor, who prayed; Ted Cocian, Atlanta pastor and convention president; Pitt Popovich, retired pastor, and Viorel Clintoc, Akron, Ohio, pastor, and convention treasurer

members in the churches and missions which include only those who confess Christ and are baptized.

Florida and California have the most congregations. The Nashville Mission is the only congregation in Tennessee, and soon will be constituted as a church with Nashville Asso-

ciation alignment.

According to Hobafcovici, the largest congregations are in large cities such as Chicago and New York.

Currently most of the church growth is in the South and Southwest. Most of the congregations are descendants — See Romanian, page 2

Regional coordinators to increase focus on evangelism

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Churches looking for help in reaching their evangelism goals may not have to look far.

Evangelism regional coordinators are being trained and will be available to help

churches and associations with their evangelism emphases such as "People Sharing Jesus" and other personal witnessing training, said Ken Weathersby, evangelism specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"We want to equip people across the state in different areas to help churches,

especially those that have reported zero baptisms," he said.

An effort to enlist evangelism regional coordinators was begun earlier this summer by Jay Austin, youth evangelism specialist who has since resigned to become minister of youth at Brentwood Church. Weathersby said.

Weathersby hopes to enlist and train others who will join those who are now trained and available to assist churches.

"We can't do it, but God can do it through us," he said.

Weathersby's goal is to double baptisms in the state from the 26,000 reported last year to 52,000 in 1998. "Jesus said, 'Go baptize.' We have to do something about winning our state for Christ," he said.

Regional coordinators include Mike Owens, Fellowship Church, Millington; Phil Mitchell, Mt. Gilead Church, Cedar Grove; Bob Cook, Tri-Cities Church, White House; Verlon Moore, Hilldale Church, Clarksville; Kevin Shrum, Inglewood Church, Nashville; Mike Partin, Indiana Avenue Church, LaFollette; Frank Blevins, First Church, Bluff City; Fred Davis, Victory Church, Dunlap; and Don Russell, Parks City Church, Fayetteville.

Anyone interested in using an evangelism regional coordinator should call Weathersby at (615) 371-2085. ■



SEVERAL EVANGELISM regional coordinators were at the recent meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention where they met with Ken Weathersby, the state's new evangelism specialist. These men, along with others, are trained to assist churches to reach evangelism goals. From left are, Fred Davis, Dunlap; Mike Owen, Millington; Phil Mitchell, Cedar Grove; Weathersby; Verlon Moore, Clarksville; and Frank Blevins, Bluff City.

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Romanian Baptists — not your usual ...

— Continued from page 1 of Baptist churches in Romania, where there are about 1,450 members in the Romanian Baptist Union.

Also, there are about 200 Hungarian Baptist churches in the Romanian Union.

Romania, Hobafcovici said, has the second largest number of Baptists in Europe. Russia has the largest number. And, he said, if the churches in Russia's European area are excluded, Romania has the most.

Several Romanian Baptist thrusts are evident at their national meetings, including the recent Nashville gathering.

First, the main thrust is missionary work. "We want to try to establish new work in other states," Hobafcovici said, "and hopefully we will be able to work through the North American Mission Board."

Second, Romanian Baptists are helping already-existing churches here and in Romania as well. In particular, the Romanian Baptist Theological Seminary in Bucharest is a main focus. The Romanian Association is giving ongoing financial help because of the need for seminary training.

There is a real shortage of pastors, Hobafcovici says. There are only 450 pastors for 1,500 churches — because of government restrictions on enrollment until 1992.

Third, the Romanian Association is always looking at large pockets of Romanian population — even in places such as Serbia. There are now 14 Baptist churches in frontier situations, and they get support from the Romanian Baptists in the U.S. and Canada.

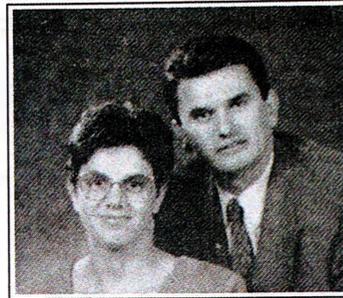
Fourth, the Association plans to help Romanian Baptist churches in Moldova, a for-

NAMB appoints missionaries

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Mark and Christine Hobafcovici recently were appointed home missionaries to Tennessee by the North American Mission Board.

He will serve as language mission director for the Nashville Association. A native of Romania, Hobafcovici considers Melbourne, Australia, as his home.

He has been serving as a church planted/pastor in Ten-



THE HOBACOVICIS

nessee since 1993. He was educated in Australia as was his wife who is a native of Melbourne. ■

mer part of the old USSR. The language is the same. Another metropolitan area getting assistance is the Romanian Baptist church in Paris, France.

Plans are underway for mission work among Romanian cen-

ters in Vienna and Sao Paulo.

According to Hobafcovici, young people hold high priority. They go on mission during the summer, helping in orphanages in Romania and Moldova — with much enthu-

siasm. A local church member will attend Belmont for more training.

Many of these topics were discussed at the recent meeting in Nashville.

Speakers included Hobafcovici, Ted Cocian, Association president, physician and pastor from Atlanta; Pitt Popovich, veteran pastor of many years in Romania and the United States, Atlanta; and Viorel Clintoc, treasurer, and pastor in Akron, Ohio.

Hobafcovici emphasized that fellowship is one of the prime ingredients for the conventions. Music also plays an important role.

For example, at the Nashville meeting, choirs and solos were incorporated into the agenda. Testimonies also are given by participants.

The Romanian Mission, as host for the event, provided two meals each day of the convention. First Church, Donelson, sponsors the mission which meets in a next door building. **B&R**



THE ASSOCIATION of Romanian Baptists from the United States and Canada met at Grandview Church building, Nashville.



2,000 and counting

TBC Registration Secretary Dan Ferrell, seated, congratulates Mary and Joseph Nickell of Cedar Grove Church, Maryville, who were the 1,999th and 2,000th messengers at the recent TBC annual meeting in Jackson. Nickell, pastor emeritus at Cedar Grove, was attending his 35th annual meeting. — Photo by Denise Scott

Troutt leads national study

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — William E. Troutt, president of Belmont University, a 3,000-student college affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, is the chairman of an 11-member National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education.

Troutt was appointed to the commission by Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., and elected chairman during the commission's first meeting Aug. 11 in Washington.

The commission, which met at Belmont Nov. 17-18, will issue its report in mid-December for use during the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

"Congress has given us a very challenging assignment. This is important to higher education, to students and their families, and to our nation's future economic and social welfare," Troutt said.

The commission is charged with reporting findings to Congress in a number of areas including increase in tuition compared to other commodities and services, innovative methods of reducing or stabilizing tuition, and trends in administrative and faculty costs. ■



TROUTT

When will they stop all that talking about us?

Listen — Tennessee Baptists usually are opinionated. They often have amazing and amusing things to say, and their opinions are very varied. An annual convention puts some in a frenzy and causes messengers and others to question each other on attitudes and points of faith and belief.

Young Baptists are not being given the opportunity to learn by simple observation. We're fussing too much.

If it were not for some of the levity and lighter moments, we'd all probably leave the convention site angry and irritated.

A review of church news letters this week reveals that opinions written by pastors are amazingly different.

There is sufficient disparity to cause confusion about who attended which convention, and whether they attended the same one.

Tidwell, White named

In last week's paper, the names of members of the Relationships Focus Group were listed.

At that time Herbert Higdon, then president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said he would appoint two more.

He has added Jerry Tidwell, pastor of West Jackson Church, Jackson; and Richard White, pastor of First Church, Franklin, making 17 in all. — *Editor*

Too often messengers return home unchanged — except to be more determined stick by their pre-convention ideas. Some may not be willing to change even when efforts are being made to do things right.

It's okay to differ but at least let's stay on the same page. The Relationships Focus Group needs an armistice to create an atmosphere of goodwill.

Mature Christians (Baptists) should be willing to discard some baggage and be a part of a great accomplishment.

In naming the Relationships Focus Group, then-President Herbert Higdon expected a focus that centers on unity (not a bad word) with Christian principles along with Tennessee Baptists' volunteer spirit.

As he explained the work and expectations of the group, former Executive Board President Gene Cotey admonished the appointees "not to be a feel-good group."

There are strong Baptist leaders in the group. Some are or have been board members. Some have been involved in this kind of service before. Surely none would accept the responsibility if they didn't intend to be open-minded and willing to listen.

Cotey and Higdon voiced a deep need for prayer support for each RFG member, for each meeting, for each decision, for every deliberation. As we interpret the assignment, each of the 15 is expected to have an open heart and unbiased mind.

For those interested in funding the

work of the RFG, the Executive Board authorized \$10,000 from the unallocated portion of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's general fund.

Pray for the reconciliation group — it has been the subject of many discussions since the idea was approved by the Executive Board Nov. 10. Nothing needs prayer more.

The success of the RFG would enable Tennessee Baptists to focus on the real work of ministering. Despite expressions of doubt already surfacing, the combination of earnest prayer with determined hearts and minds will save us from frail and shallow mindsets.

When that happens, there will be many by-products. For example, division among Baptists draws negative media coverage — people trying to sell their products.

If the Lord blesses us with "peace that passes all understanding," the negativism will have no basis.

Negative reports are evidence of the price Tennessee Baptists pay by our refusal to love each other and serve the Risen Lord together as a servant family. See how we are viewed by others! Let's eliminate any reasons for suspicion.

Tomorrow is (Nov. 27) Thanksgiving Day. Let's live a genuine attitude of thanks and appreciation during the entire year to come — and God will not only see us through, he will make unheard-of blessings available. Work — but pray. — *WFA*



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

English teacher: "Johnny, what do we call words like 'myself?'"

Jimmy: "They are aggressive pronouns."

Take this truth

Most of us have difficulty separating reflexive from aggressive in daily living. We usually show more energy and drive in matters that magnify our own interests and fulfill our selfish desires than in anything else.

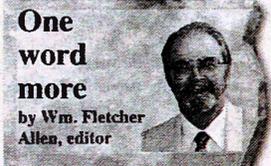
Memorize this Scripture

For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. — *Philippians 2:21*

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to remember that those wrapped up in themselves are clad in thin garments. ■

We felt a little bit of glory in desperate times



One word more
by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

The old home place where I did a lot of growing up was not a mansion, nor was it totally immune to the whims of weather.

But the family experienced joy there. It was weather-beaten, had a tin roof, and paint had never touched its outside walls.

The inside, however, reverberated to the usual noises of good living by a large and loving family. It was our home.

I remember often playing with sister Elsie in an abandoned car in the edge of the

wooded area behind our home. I never found out the story of that car. Though its engine had been taken someplace else long before, we sat on the rotted seat and twirled the useless steering wheel.

When the United States entered World War II, citizens almost immediately began devising ways to help the war effort, to provide the materials necessary for equipping the armed forces.

In addition to experiencing rationing of many food and clothing products, we helped also by rounding up scrap iron.

You guessed it. My sister and I attacked that old auto. Our school was a collection point for scrap iron and we wanted to do our part.

As the school's pile of scrap

iron grew higher and higher, we continued to chop on the car. We didn't have the tools to take it apart — but we tried with axe, wrenches, and determination.

And so one morning when the school bus stopped to pick us up, there we were, loaded down with a burlap sack of scrap iron. Big lunch, some smart kid said.

Never mind. At school we added our bits to the huge pile and experienced a great measure of satisfaction. The teachers and principal thanked us, just as they had thanked others.

Someone said our contribution would help shorten the war — which was certain to be won by America and her allies — and we were proud of our little part. Two brothers were in the U.S. Army, and we knew our work would help considerably. Our

scraps would help them.

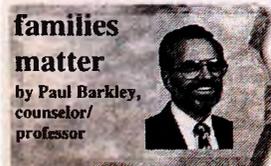
In a way, this reminds us of our spiritual gifts — and our daily participation in Christian life. We really had done something to help our side, the righteous side.

We also saved for the military tin foil wrappers from food and other goods. But we did keep enough to make the star atop the Christmas tree!

It's almost humorous now, the mere thought of two tow-headed country kids "toting" a burlap sack filled with iron scraps.

But it was our duty, not only to support our brothers, but to be a part of a national effort. It was a glorious feeling — and we didn't even understand glory. I've thought about it, and I believe that cooperative effort is what we all need now. ■

Suggestions for developing intimacy in family circle



families matter
by Paul Barkley, counselor/professor

be a haven of respite in the hustle of daily living. Too often it becomes another source of the feelings of isolation, "cutoffness", and loneliness. I suggest three facets of the process to bring intimacy back to the family — *admission, attention, and assimilation*.

We must first **admit** and own our need for each other and abandon our attitude of supreme self-sufficiency. Charles Swindoll in *Dropping Your Guard*,

Intimacy is one of the deep needs of our day. People live in a mass of humanity surrounded by throngs of people, yet cringing with pangs of loneliness. The family should

talks about a hot shot, independent athlete who shows up at practice and yells, "Hey, Coach! Don't bug me with a thick playbook and all this talk about team work and pulling together, okay? All I need is a stadium, a big crowd, and the ball. Working with ten other guys is a hassle and learning plays is a drag. Just gimme the ball and have everybody get outta my way. I do better all alone."

Too many family members sound like that.

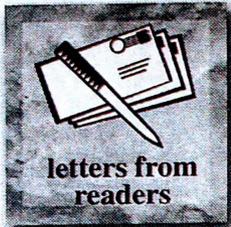
Second, we must **attend** to the task of cultivating our family relationships. This will require time, effort, and willingness. I find myself talking with families in my office about the need to intentionally set aside time each week to be together as a family. There is not only the need intentionally to set aside time, but intentionally to plan to enjoy each other.

If you go into the time together believing that it is

going to wind up in a fight, it probably will. However, if you go into the time with the attitude that you will enjoy it even if it kills you, you might be surprised that it won't kill you.

The third principle is that of **assimilation**. There must be in the family an intentional attitude to make time, make room, and accept each other as we are. English poet John Donne wrote, "No man is an island, entire of itself, every man is piece of the continent, a part of the main ..." We must put forth the effort to accept each other and make everyone feel part of the family.

It is sad when family members can't get along and don't go places together because they don't all enjoy the same things. If you don't enjoy one thing, others will do something you enjoy later so that everyone will have something sometime. ■



letters from readers

about letters

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

Glad partnership

Thank the Lord for the Baptist Association, the Cooperative Program, and the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the churches that compose our convention. Recently our church became the recipient of a \$25,000 grant from the State Missions office. This helped alleviate a great financial burden on our fellowship and has allowed us to get on to the greater task of reaching the lost and fulfilling the Great Commission.

I am a newcomer to Tennessee Baptist work, but people like Bill George, Larry Kirk, and my Director of Missions, Buddy Strickland, have made me feel like I have been part of the family for a long time. During my years as a Southern Baptist I have had feelings of ambivalence toward the direction of our convention. But when I see the fruit of the work in action I know why I stay connected with the work. Praise the Lord for reaching out to a sister church.

David Grisham, pastor
Cornerstone Church
Jasper 37347

Incredible surprises

Our extra special thanks to God this year for incredible surprises.

Our daughter and family, who had ministered for nine

years in Massachusetts, have moved to North Carolina where our son-in-law is now campus minister at Wingate University. Soon after their move, our son and family, who had ministered 11 years in Washington D.C. were called to First Church, Rockingham, NC, only 45 minutes from Wingate. We're all so thankful to be close together again. Amazingly, Diane's brother and wife plan to retire in three years just 30 miles away.

On top of all that, Diane's sister, a missionary to Japan for 41 years who has never married, is now engaged to an old beau whose wife died seven years ago. They plan to wed in Japan March 7, and after a six-month break, return to Japan as volunteers. God is so good.

We're overflowing with gratitude and praise for his amazing blessings. Thank you, Lord.

Monty and Diane Jordan
Talbot 37877

Thankful helper

I'm very thankful to have met Sharon. I heard a year ago that Sharon had cancer of the mouth and tongue. She has had surgery and treatments. Even though I didn't know her, a few months ago I started sending cards to cheer her. She is still strong-willed and on her feet.

She cannot talk any longer, so she communicates by writing notes. She is taking morphine every hour, which is unusual for her to be so alert. She pours out her heart in her notes. She thanks you for your care, love, friendship, and prayers.

I've come to know her as a special gift from God. I thank her for allowing me to visit and let her know God loves her. She has made me more aware of being thankful every day for my own family.

Roberta Eshew
Friendship 38034

Turkey and home

"Turkey for Thanksgiving and home for Christmas," promised General MacArthur to U.S. troops in war-torn Korea in November 1950. He could not have uttered sweeter words. My Air Force Unit had been alongside ground troops since September, and we were weary. But winners; we had defeated the North Korean Army.

I had my turkey leg as promised, and ate it with a hope not imaginable before the promise. Alas, the Chinese Communist Army had different plans for us, and swooped down right after Thanksgiving like a landslide. We that were

able to escape the initial onslaught were fortunate.

In my case, an MP — from nowhere — kept me from driving smack into the invaders. He then vanished. I call him "my guardian angel." He saved me there, so that eight years later another could save me here — Jesus. Is there any doubt why every Thanksgiving means so much to me?

Charles C. Herring
Murfreesboro 37129

My father's glow

While passing through the hall of our home my husband asked why I had left the bedroom light on.

This is a room that once was our son's room. Now, I call it our "grandroom," set aside for our precious grandchildren.

I replied that's the glow of the sunlight filtering through the golden leaves of the maple tree outside the window. The room seems to just illumine God's heavenly light.

Each time I see that glow I can't think of anyone else but my Heavenly Father. Seeing him in his warm light is such a comfort. He plants a smile on my face every time I pass that room.

I am so thankful for generations of parents before my family who taught us how important it is to let our Heavenly Father's light into the window of our life. And then to see these little grandchildren loved, and taught his love, in the light of his Word.

Thanks to our Father for the glow of light he put in my family's life.

Diane Wright
Brownsville 38012

Happy Thanksgiving

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Psalm 100:4

In the United States we celebrate Thanksgiving Day the fourth Thursday in November as a legal holiday. On this day, people give thanks with feasting, prayer, and praises for God's blessings they have received during the year. The American Thanksgiving Day probably grew out of the harvest and home celebrations of England.

The first American Thanksgiving was celebrated less than a year after colonists had settled in North America at what now is Plymouth, Mass., on Dec. 21, 1620.

In our country Thanksgiving Day is usually a family day, celebrated with dinners and joyous reunions, prayer, and praises to God for his blessings and providential care during the year.

The images that first come

to our mind when we think of the Thanksgiving holiday are family reunions, a holiday from work, turkey with all of the trimmings, and perhaps a football game.

Most of all we should focus on all of the blessings that God has given us and be in daily prayer and sing praises to God for his continual blessings, love, and care for his people, throughout the ages of time. God's mercy, love, and power endures forever. God is worthy of all our worship, praise, and thanksgiving.

Frank Stoffle
Seymour 37865

Little things

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise!"

How can I offer praise if I'm not thankful?

"You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things."

The little things come first. Would I be thankful if some great thing happened to me, if I'm not thankful for all the little, daily things? Right now I'm thankful that I can write. I can think; the Lord has preserved my mind. Many have Parkinsons or Alzheimers diseases. I have a warm home; many are homeless. I have plenty of food and clothing. I can see, hear, walk, talk, take care of myself, and do my work. Humdrum? Perhaps; but I am thankful, for they are blessings many do not have. One thinks of these things as she gets older.

Then there is family. And friends. Music. Good books. The beauty of nature, all around us if we but look and listen. The church that ministers to my spiritual needs. The Word that feeds my soul; that comforts and strengthens me.

Little things? No, these are the big things. Thank you, Lord.

Beulah Garlitz
Greeneville 37745

Letter from son

Louise Wiggs of Goodlettsville received this letter from her son in December 1994. He died in June of this year. She noted he died as he lived — with a thankful heart.

Just a note to say how many things I have to be thankful for. I am thankful to God for the many blessings he has given me over the years, such as being born in a good Christian home with good Christian parents. A mom that kept me in church, fed me, watched over me when I was sick, encouraged me, and, most of all, prayed for me. A dad that worked hard in an unpleasant job to provide food, clothes, and a good place to live. It was not easy, but we never wanted for anything, especially at

Christmas. Even when our house burned, we had a great Christmas.

I am thankful to God for giving me a good brain to learn, good health, and the ability to buy a home with enough space to repay my special mom in a very small way for all the many times she had to sacrifice for my family and me.

I am thankful to God for sending me a special wife to love me, understand me, to put up with me, and love my mom by sharing her home with her.

I thank God for my Christian boys, two Christian daughters-in-law, a Christian sweetheart (Pam), and three Christian grandchildren that God has special plans for.

Most of all, I thank God for sending Jesus, whose birthday we are celebrating at this time. I hope none of my family ever puts anything before Jesus at anytime of the year, especially at Christmas.

You are a very special lady and I thank God every day for you.

Bill Wiggs

Thankful for pastor

How do you begin to express "thank you" to a godly man that goes beyond all human realms for his congregation? We can only imagine what a minister must go through on a daily basis. He must feel similar to a game of tug of war, always putting other peoples' needs, hurts, and happiness above his own.

Our family is so grateful to Reverend Larry Williams of Ooltewah Church. He has been a part of our clan for four generations, from weddings, births, and, of course, funerals. We appreciate his unselfish service which is always consistent, not only for our family but countless others as well.

We thank him for his time and service. Larry is truly a man of God, whom we are forever grateful.

Mary Catherine, Carla,
and Mary Jane Tallant
Ooltewah 37363

Thanks for welcome

A heart-felt "thank you" to the folks at West Jackson Church and Barbara Owen from the TBC office for making us feel a special welcome at the annual convention.

We were impressed with the spirit and excitement of those attending.

PCA International Photography considered it an honor to have been a small part of what was achieved. Our services are available to any Tennessee Baptist church.

Thank you again.

Jon Rice
Rockvale 37153



The Macedonian Call

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Newsletter

Featuring news from Tennessee Baptists' five partnerships –
Canada, Poland, Michigan, Costa Rica, and Brazil

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team, TBC; P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
Phone (615) 371-2021; FAX (615) 371-2014

From your missionary

We are entering the time of the year when we reflect upon the blessings of God. Last week I was once again reminded by my guests from Rio de Janeiro of just how really blessed we are as Tennessee Baptists.



SHARP

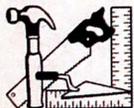
At the end of one of our busy days Pastor Belardin de Pimentel, the secretary general for the Carioca Baptist Convention, said, "God has richly blessed Tennessee Baptists! You must not keep the blessings to yourself, but you must be good stewards and touch the world."

Let this be a challenge to us as we count our blessings this Thanksgiving. We must never be so shortsighted that we see only what is near us and fail to keep the world in focus. Let us keep the Great Commission before us.

Let me also thank God and Tennessee Baptists for the opportunity to serve as your missionary in Partnership Missions. I am honored to serve a state that has a heart for missions and volunteerism.

I also thank God for the staff he has given me. Kimberly Huff came to the Partnership/Volunteer Team and has quickly endeared herself to our office as well as Tennessee Baptists. Marcia Knox continues to be an integral part of our work.

Levy



Mission Skills School

April 16-18

Camp Linden, Linden

To help victims of flooding

Coats, hats, gloves sent to Polish children

By Marcia Knox
For *The Macedonian Call*

The TBC Mission Awareness and Involvement Group has received over 500 new winter jackets and many toboggans and gloves for children in the flood ravaged areas of Poland, according to TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions State Missionary Terry Sharp.

Thank you Tennessee Baptists!

By way of Poland's Wroclaw Flood Committee and IMB missionary Doug Shaw four projects were designated for Tennessee. They were clothing requests and three other Disaster Relief projects.

"The MAI Group decided to assist children who lost everything in the floods with warm clothing," said Sharp. "We were overwhelmed with the amount of donations of new winter coats, toboggans, and gloves which will be shipped to Poland."

Through the various organizations of the MAI group, 554 new winter children's items were collected for distribution to summer flood victims with 300 items designated to Wroclaw and 200 designated to Klodzko.

Jackets, toboggans, and gloves ranged in size for children within the 9-15 year-old age groups. The items were new and made of washable fabrics.

Three collection sites were available to individuals and groups who donated to the project. The first collection site was TBC Baptist Center. The other two collection sites were: during the TBC annual meeting held Nov. 11-12 in Jackson; and the WMU Missions Extravaganza held

Nov. 10 at First Church, Jackson.

The last day for the winter clothing to be received at the Baptist Center in Brentwood was Nov. 14. From the Baptist Center the items will be shipped to Poland either before Dec. 1 when the cold weather begins in Poland or by Dec. 6, the traditional Christmas gift-giving day in Poland. It is hoped that the items will arrive in Poland in time for the church to distribute the clothing for this special day.

In the area of Disaster Relief, the following projects were requested by Wroclaw Flood Committee and Shaw.

There is an immediate need for volunteers to serve on **Concrete and Plaster Teams to do concrete floors and resurface walls** at the Tarnow Baptist Church as a result of water damage to the basement during the recent floods.

Four crisis recovery counselors are needed Jan. 31 to Feb. 15 to work with a children's camp for victims of the summer flooding. These children will come from the worst flood affected areas of Wroclaw and Klodzko and have experienced losses of housing and all belongings.

Some of the children are currently living in overcrowded apartments that belong to friends or relatives, living in houses that were gutted by the flooding while others are homeless. The ages of the children who will be attending the camp on IMB schol-



PACKING winter clothing for Polish children are, from left, Carol Growden, Terry Sharp, Kim Huff, and Rodney Wilson of TBC Executive Board ministries.

arships are range from ages 11-15.

The objectives of the camp and the counseling will be to help children develop coping skills to deal with crises and to work through the grief associated with their losses.

There also was a request for **Disaster Mitigation consultants**. This project is currently being reviewed for approval to send TBC MAI Group leader and State Disaster Relief director Tim Bearden and NAMB Disaster Relief National director Mickey Caison to help the Wroclaw Flood Committee develop legislation, policies and procedures to mitigate future disasters. ■

Simultaneous revivals for Rio de Janeiro set for 1998

For *The Macedonian Call*

Representatives from the Carioca Baptist Convention in Brazil attended the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Nov. 11-12, at

West Jackson Church, Jackson. The representatives discussed tentative projects of the Carioca Convention with interested volunteers. The Tennessee messengers voted Nov. 11 to approve the partnership

with Brazil.

Beginning on New Year's Day 1998, the Tennessee Baptist Convention will enter a three-year partnership with Brazil. The projects with the

VISITING the TBC annual meeting from Rio de Janeiro are, from left, Belardin de Amorim Pimentel; his wife, Heloiza; and Elizabeth Oates, missionary. They were hosted by Terry Sharp, TBC Executive Board ministries.



Carioca Convention, which encompasses Rio de Janeiro, are already being scheduled. Of special interest are the 1998 Simultaneous Revivals in Brazil that are scheduled to be

held Sept. 27-Oct. 6.

Project #: B-2
Dates: Sept. 27-Oct. 6, 1998

Location: Jacarepagua
Description: Evangelism
A team of 20 teams of 2 people each (preacher and layperson) is needed for simultaneous revivals in churches in Jacarepagua. Nightly services will be held along with visitation, personal witnessing, speaking in schools, and special musical presentations.

Cost: \$1,900 per person
Contact TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team for information on simultaneous revivals at 1-(800)-558-2090 or (615)-371-2021. ■

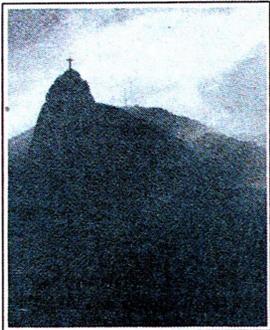
Images of country

Brazil: 'Christ the Redeemer' welcomes partnership

By Marcia Knox
For *The Macedonian Call*

When I was in the fourth through the sixth grade at Henry L. Barger Elementary School in Chattanooga, I suffered through year after year of social studies of South America.

I never understood why I had to learn about Brazil and the city of Rio de Janeiro. I never planned to travel outside the United States or meet anybody from South America.



'CHRIST the Redeemer' statue as seen from Sugar Loaf Mountain.

Why was it necessary for me to learn about the products of Brazil? Why did I have to know it was the largest country in South America? Even today Brazil has 105 million people and 6 million live in Rio de Janeiro.

One of the images of Brazil that I could never get out of my mind was the aerial photo of the Christ statue near Sugar Loaf Mountain also known as "Christ the Redeemer" overlooking the sprawling city of Rio. The Christ was thought to oversee and protect the city of Rio in local folklore. Now the Christ statue will welcome partnership mission teams from Tennessee. It's only 30 years later that God is revealing why those elementary lessons were important for me.

We came back from the annual TBC convention with a signed partnership from Brazil. Along for the partnership signing came three very talented people from the Carioca Baptist Convention which encompasses Rio de Janeiro.

The secretary general of the convention, Belardin de Amorim Pimentel, and his helpmate, the director of the De-

partment of Religious Education, Heloiza Helena R.A. Pimentel, are very remarkable people. Acting as their translator was Alma Elizabeth Oates, a native of Memphis and an IMB missionary, who is serving as the partnership volunteer coordinator and is very dedicated to her work. She has committed herself to the partnership by not retiring from the IMB at this time.

According to Belardin Pimentel, the Carioca Convention is counting on the partnership with the Tennessee Convention to help in several areas of different needs. They are evangelism, social ministry, religious education, and exchange of personnel.

"In the area of evangelism, our goal is to help 25 smaller churches develop, plant 50 new churches, and actually construct 10 new churches with help from the partnership," Pimentel said. "In the area of social ministry, we need help in the remodeling work of our children and senior citizens' homes."

"We also need medical and dental projects to help people in the slums," Pimentel noted.

"All cities in Brazil have problems with street children who are the consequences of an imbalance within the family."

The social problem occurs when a single mother abandons the children to the street, large poor families cannot cope and housing becomes a one room shack, or it's the unemployment factor. "Children live in the street, spend the day in the street, or children are left in the street to ask for alms."

The Carioca Convention has several programs to assist these street children. There are convention children's homes with 180 children as residents.

Halfway house programs are available to children who want to leave the street and live in a house. "We try to locate their families, and get the children to go back home," he said. "We have routine medical tests for the children to determine if they have diseases."

"Some of the churches within the convention have their individual programs which include preventive sports to keep young men away from drugs."

"In the area of religious education, the Carioca Convention is seeking help in the training of church leadership, church growth and stewardship clinics, and theological education," Heloiza Pimentel said. "We want to exchange teachers and students from both countries, Brazilian pastors for Tennessee pastors, build prayer programs, and fellowship together one with another." Besides serving as the convention religious education director, Mrs. Pimentel is also president of the WMU.

"The Carioca convention has 380 churches, 90 missions, two Baptist schools ranging from preschool to college, two Baptist colleges, and some of the churches have their own seminaries," she added. "The biggest part of the week day ministry programs are designed to reach the community."

The Pimentels are inviting Tennessee Baptists to come visit and partner with the Carioca convention. It is evident that by helping meet the Carioca convention needs, we may learn something and receive a blessing from God in the process. ■

Association team works with church in Costa Rica

By Ray Luck
For *The Macedonian Call*

An 18-member Tennessee volunteer team from Loudon County Association worked Aug. 1-11 in Guapiles, Costa Rica, beginning a sports evangelism/worship facility, teaching VBS, and leading seminars for the Casa De Oracion (House of Prayer) at San Rafael.

The Casa De Oracion is a mission of Primera Iglesia Bautista (First Church) of San Jose and was planted by missionaries Ben and Susie Argil. The church has been meeting on the Argils' front porch since its organization.

Ben Argil is a sports-minded person and has been using sports as a means of reaching the community for evangelism. The need for a multi-use facility that can be used to serve the community in a variety of ministries was the focus of the Loudon County mission trip.

Team members representing seven churches in Loudon County Association were: Ray and Judy Luck, Derick and Susan Williams, Arnold Estes, and Jerry Chadwick, all of Calvary Church; Bruce and Kirk Yates, both of Dixie Lee Church; Vicki and Carrie Lanham, both of Bell Avenue Church; Bonnie Houston and Arlene Lewis, both of Friendship Church, all of Lenoir City; Pat Wright, Shelby Lord, and Buddy White, all of First Church, Lenoir City; GayNelle Rayder, Second Church, Lenoir City; and Jamie Lennex, Corinth Church, Loudon.

When we arrived in Costa Rica, we were met by missionaries Ben Argil, Keith Travis, Sue Smith, and Luis Chavarri, pastor of the Baptist Union of Costa Rica.

After orientation at the Argils' home, we went to the construction site where we were disappointed that the work on the building was not any further along than it was.

However, during our effort, the Lord showed us why the work progressed slowly because of the monsoon-like rains that fell every day while we were there.

After assessing what needed to be done on the building, some team members went with Ben Argil to buy supplies and the others went to see the school where VBS would be held and to do a "prayer walk."

The women spent the afternoon planning VBS and the men began work at the site, starting from scratch. The footers were dug by hand on Saturday and Sunday. We worked Sunday morning so the people of the church could help us in construction.

By Monday morning a backhoe had been contracted and the footer trench was completed. The men and women worked side-by-side making the reinforcement forms, moving rocks, hauling supplies, and other needed tasks.

On Tuesday the mud was so bad we had to go to town to purchase rubber boots which were truly a blessing. Our last day to work was to be Friday, Aug. 8, but the rains that

morning put a stop to any thoughts of work. The team was able to complete nearly half of the footer and build a portion of the back wall of the building.

The ladies on the team taught VBS in the afternoons, women's seminars in the mornings, and assisted with seminars in the evenings. We averaged 100 children in VBS over the five days, 10-12 women at the day seminars, and around 25 at the night seminars.

Seminars ranged from work attitude to the Lord, family budgeting, marriage relationships, True Love Waits to crafts and flower arranging. When we worshiped with the church on Sunday, Aug. 3, Bruce Yates preached and on Sunday, Aug. 10, I preached.

With all the less than perfect conditions, we were still able to bond together as a team and also with the people at Casa de Oracion. ■



THE TEAM pauses during a fellowship with the congregation of Casa de Oracion at the home of the Argil family, who are missionaries.

Partnership Prayer Requests

November - December

- 26 — Pray for Christians across Canada to work together to present the Gospel to their nation and world.
- 27 — Pray for the Michigan convention's associational rallies for Celebrate Jesus 2000 to be held in January and February, 1998.
- 28 — Pray for the newly commissioned missionaries sent by Costa Rican Baptists. They are Anna Marie Pinnock to Guyana, and Herbert and Marjorie Soto Martinez to Costa Rica.
- 29 — Pray for the staff and ministries of the Michigan convention.
- 30 — Pray for Christians to mobilize in prayer for spiritual awakening in Canada.
- 1 — Pray for Tim Cox, pastor, Brinkley Heights Church, Memphis, who serves as the Mississippi River Ministry coordinator for Tennessee.
- 2 — Pray for the Michigan convention's churches that are without a pastor.
- 3 — Pray for the Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary in Cochrane, Alberta, Canada. Ask God to bless Richard Blackaby, president, its professors, and staff.

Manchester church serves on Prince Edward Island, Canada

For The Macedonian Call

During the first week of October, mountains of golden potatoes were dug from the rich soil of Prince Edward Island, but at the same time a different kind of harvest was being gathered at Community Church in Charlottetown, according to the pastor from Tennessee's First Church, Manchester.

A partnership missions team from First Church, Manchester, held a revival Oct. 5-8 at Community Church and also taught evangelism leadership training.

"Huge trucks carried the potato harvest to factories where it would be made into potato chips and to ports where it would be shipped around the world," said Brenton Cox, pastor of First Church, Manchester. "Besides the harvest, Prince Edward Island combines the beauty of the picturesque farms bordering maple wood lots with that of a rugged seacoast featuring lighthouses and lobster boats."

Like the harvest, the seeds had been

planted months before the revival. Community Church pastor, Wallace Jordan, had sown the seeds when he requested a revival team to come from Tennessee. The seeds were reaped in the only Southern Baptist church in the Maritime Provinces of Canada.

Cox, along with three church laymen, responded to the Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team request. The group included: Rolland Heim, music director and soloist; Joe Brandon, pianist; and Dennis Greer, counselor. Cox preached the revival services and the laymen gave testimonies.

Community Church began three years ago with 32 charter members. Since then the church has grown to 72 members with an average attendance of 80 to 100. The church worships in a new facility, built with the help of Tennessee volunteers, and is strategically located in an area of Charlottetown that is experiencing growth and development.

The theme for the revival services was "Experiencing God in Your Life."

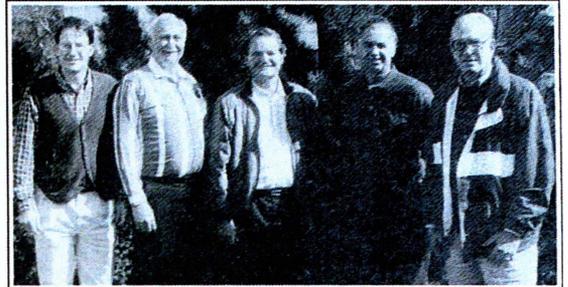
Nightly services averaged around 60 people and several made meaningful decisions concerning reading the Bible at home to their families and sharing their faith.

"The Community Church pastor wanted the revival to prepare the church to work in a fast growing area of the island," Cox said. "We went to give the church revival and prepare its members for evangelism by teaching needed skills such as visitation."

Evangelism training was offered to the Community congregation on Tuesday night, and 30 people out of the 60 who attended the revival ser-

vice stayed for the training and learned how to share their faith.

"Canadian Baptists have a vision to start other churches in the Maritime Provinces and Community Church will play a strategic role in that vision," said Cox. "We told them to look out to the fields." ■



BECOMING friends during their visit to Prince Edward Island are, from left, Brenton Cox, pastor, First Church, Manchester; Rolland Heim; Wallace Jordan, pastor, Community Church, Charlottetown; Dennis Greer, and Joe Brandon.

State Line Church returns to Michigan

By Derl H. McCloud, pastor
For The Macedonian Call

In our experiences, it is unusual for short-term mission volunteers to be so blessed as to do the planting, watering, and harvesting of God's increase.

However, 1997 was a year of harvest for State Line Church in Laurel Bloomery, Tenn., when we saw the fruits of our harvest in Michigan that began back in 1985.

It all began with planting the seeds of the Gospel in Newberry, Mich., in 1985 when 17 members of Roan Creek Church of Mountain City made their first partnership missions trip to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

We were participating in the Tennessee/Michigan partnership in which the Watauga Association was cooperating with the Upper Peninsula. We were commissioned to conduct Vacation Bible Schools, lead in revival services, and put a new roof on the Tahquamenon Church parsonage.

During that visit to Michigan, we met a beautiful two-year-old girl named Ashley who was a blue-eyed blonde that loved bananas and VBS. We also met Wendy, a vibrant young girl who had been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor that would lead to blindness.

In 1989, we accepted the call to pastor State Line Church in Laurel Bloomery. Our new church and Roan Creek Church continued mission trips to other places and to Michigan, but we kept going back to Newberry for seven of the 12 years. Early in 1997 State Line Church and Roan Creek Church began praying about a joint mission trip that would lead to Michigan. Our church went to Newberry and Roan Creek Church went to Escanaba, Mich.

On June 27 a group of 10 volunteers from State Line Church left on a 1,000 mile journey only to turn around after 150 miles due to a problem with the van. We returned home to pick up another van and were on the road again the same day. We drove all day and night and arrived in Newberry, Mich., in time to make the morning worship services at Tahquamenon Church where they had a new pastor.

We went to work on Monday, with a daily Vacation Bible School and a youth rally in the afternoon, and nightly revival services. We also visited with the pastor and church prospects.

The real beauty of the journey came during the week in VBS and revival services. When the invitation was given during VBS, 12 older children gave their hearts to the Lord. During revival services, three teenagers and one young adult surrendered their lives to the Lord. They included Wendy, who is blind.

We credit God with the glory. We sowed the Gospel seeds and we watered. God gave the increase and we saw the harvest of souls. Someone observed, "You can count the seeds in an apple, but you can't count the apples in a seed." ■

Blountville congregation helps build Michigan church

For The Macedonian Call

Tennessee's First Church, Blountville, recently completed a summer mission trip to help build a new building for Central Church in Clinton Township, Michigan.

Through the TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team, First Church learned that Central Church was in need of a new building. Central Church is a new congregation that meets in a building that had been used for many years by another congregation.

A Detroit pastor, Mickey Nardin, had a vision three years ago to start a new congregation in the Clinton Township area. Since then Central Church has grown in number, in ministry, and in spiritual vision to reach the now rapidly growing community. Likewise, the vision grew to provide a new and larger facility.

Several other churches worked with Central Church throughout the summer to build the new building. While the Blountville group worked on the building,

several local residents of the community stopped to see what was being built. When one of the Blountville workers asked a local resident to come back and worship with Central Church, the resident said, "I'm a Catholic, but I am glad to see this happening here."

Besides adding vinyl siding, the Blountville crew worked with dry wall and did some carpentry work. The team consisted of entire families, grandparents and grandchildren, youth, singles, and senior adults.

During Sunday worship services, several of the workers shared their testimonies. Both churches spent time in prayer for the work of Central Church.

"As always, those who went on the mission trip came back having received a great blessing," said Clay Austin, pastor of First Church, Blountville. "Also one member of the Michigan church has visited us to deliver a special thank you to the volunteers who made the trip."

This was the 14th summer mission trip for the church. ■



MEMBERS of the Blountville team review the day's activities with Mickey Nardin of Central Church, Clinton Township, Mich.



STANDING in front of the Tahquamenon Church are team members, from left, front row, Thelma Greer, Jessica Fritts, David Butler; middle row, Gladys McCloud, Samantha Wright, Glen Richardson; and, back row, Linda Morefield, Michael Morefield, Becky Neely, and Derl McCloud, pastor.

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Newsletter

Costa Rica Projects

Children's/Youth Ministry

Project #: PM71998808
 Dates: Feb. 7-16, 1998
 Location: Heredia
 Description: Youth Revival
 A team of 4 is needed to do youth revival with special sermons/worship times and activities.

Project #: PM71998812
 Dates: Feb. 28-March 9, 1998
 Location: San Jose
 Description: Neighborhood Youth Evangelism
 A team of 15 is needed to work with youth from inner-city neighborhoods in an evangelistic campaign including music, mime, drama. Bring bilingual preacher who can reach youth.

Project #: PM71998813
 Dates: July 18-26, 1998
 Location: San Jose
 Description: Neighborhood Youth Evangelism
 A team of 15 is needed to work with youth from inner-city neighborhoods in an evangelistic campaign including music, mime, drama. Bring bilingual preacher who can reach youth.

Construction

Project #: PM71998819
 Dates: Jan. 1-Dec. 1, 1998
 Location: TBA
 Description: Construction
 A total of 10 volunteers are needed on 4 teams to do various construction projects in Costa Rica.

Creative Ministry/Evangelism

Project #: PM71998811
 Dates: Jan. 15-24, 1998
 Location: Cartago
 Description: Creative Ministry/Evangelism
 A team of 20 is needed to do creative ministry as well as street evangelism during the annual National Sports Games.

Medical

Project #: PM71998825
 Dates: May 8-18, 1998
 Location: South Zone
 Description: Medical Team
 A total of 8 volunteers are needed on a medical team to work in local public hospital and share with healthcare professionals through lifestyle witnessing.

Project #: PM71998824
 Dates: Sept. 18-28, 1998
 Location: South Zone
 Description: Medical Team
 A total of 8 volunteers are needed on a medical team to work in rural area to hold medical and dental clinics.

Seminar Leadership

Project #: PM71998821
 Dates: June 13-21, 1998
 Location: San Jose
 Description: Conference Leaders
 A total of 4 conference leaders are needed to do Leadership Enabling Center seminar.

Spiritual Renewal

Project #: PM71998810
 Dates: Feb. 28-March 9, 1998
 Location: Heredia
 Description: Spiritual Renewal Revival
 A team of 4 is needed to do a spiritual renewal revival with emphasis on personal witnessing and missions.

Sports Evangelism

Project #: PM71998814
 Dates: January or April, 1998
 Location: Guapiles
 Description: Tennis Pro/Team Evangelism
 A team of 8 is needed, either pros or members of a team, to teach tennis and do lifestyle witnessing.

Summer Missionaries

Project #: PM71998823
 Dates: May 15-Aug. 18, 1998
 Location: Central Valley
 Description: Summer Missionaries
 A total of 6 summer missionaries are needed to work in local Costa Rica churches in evangelism, youth and children's ministries, and church development.

Michigan Projects

Evangelism

Project #: M-1
 Dates: Open
 Location: Roseville
 Description: Children's Evangelism
 Belhel Church, Roseville, needs a team to do BYBC and evangelistic outreach to children.

Community Service

Project #: UP-1
 Dates: June 1998
 Location: Gwinn
 Description: Community Service
 A team of 25-50 is needed to do clean up, painting, and present youth concert/drama in several locations.

Project #: N-1
 Dates: June 1-Aug. 15, 1998
 Location: Roscommon
 Description: LifeGuard
 A team of 1-2 is needed to do waterfront supervision for summer camps and general maintenance activities.

Summer Missionary

Project #: W-1
 Dates: June 1-Aug. 7, 1998
 Location: Holland
 Description: Summer Missionary
 A team of 2 is needed to work with churches in association doing various assignments to reach communities for Christ.

Project #: N-2
 Dates: June 1-Aug. 7, 1998
 Location: Roscommon
 Description: Summer Missionary
 A team of 2 is needed to work with churches in association doing various assignments to reach communities for Christ.

Project #: GD-1
 Dates: June 1-Aug. 7, 1998
 Location: Detroit
 Description: Summer Missionary
 A team of 8 is needed to work in Baptist Center in inner city Detroit doing children, senior citizen, and homeless programs.

VBS/BYBC

Project #: G-1
 Dates: June 1998
 Location: Linden
 Description: BYBC
 A team is needed to do BYBC and Block Party with outdoor concert for new church start.

Project #: SC-1
 Dates: Summer 1998
 Location: Kalamazoo
 Description: BYBC/VBS, Construction
 A team is needed to do BYBC/VBS and work on church sanctuary.

Project #: N-4
 Dates: July 1998
 Location: Cadillac
 Description: VBS/Drama
 A youth team is needed for a resort area to do VBS/Drama/Music with teenagers.

Project #: SW-1
 Dates: Open
 Location: St. Joseph
 Description: VBS/BYBC/Construction
 A team is needed to do VBS/BYBC, repair church building and parsonage roof.

Canada Projects

Camp

Project #: 97MIDO27
 Dates: July 19-24, 1998
 Location: Alberta
 Description: Camp Counselor
 One volunteer is needed to serve as a lifeguard for a children's camp. Other abilities such as drama, music, etc., a plus

Evangelism

Project #: 97NOR021
 Dates: June 29-July 4, 1998
 Location: Saskatchewan
 Description: Evangelism/Camps/Music/Drama
 A team of 10-15 is needed to help with an associational based family camp. Camp begins July 1 and runs through weekend with special emphasis every night. Also involves 2-3 days in Saskatoon.
 Project #: 97NOR017

Dates: July 18-26, 1998
 Location: Prince Albert
 Description: Evangelism/Construction
 A team is needed to provide entertainment at Prince Albert Exhibition and light construction to be done at a church.

Project #: 97NOR018
 Dates: July 18-Aug. 1, 1998
 Location: North Battleford,



Saskatchewan
 Description: Evangelism/VBS
 A team of 3 is needed to do VBS, visitation, crafts, drama, and puppets.

Project #: 97NOR016

Dates: Sept. 19-27, 1998
 Location: Prince Albert
 Description: Evangelism/Music
 A team of 10-12 is needed to hold nightly revival services with music and drama.

VBS/BYBC

Project #: 97MIDO25
 Dates: July/August, 1998
 Location: Grande Prairie, Alberta
 Description: VBS/Camps/Music
 A total of 6-8 is needed to do family, youth, and children's camps, and VBS. Teams may do 1 or all 4 programs. Camps have unchurched people and evangelism emphasized. Each camp will be for 5 days.

Project #: 97MIDO26
 Dates: July 1-14, 1998
 Location: Evansburg, Alberta
 Description: VBS
 A team of 3 is needed to do VBS with music, classes, and games.

Project #: CA-18
 Dates: July 13-24, 1998
 Location: Northwest Edmonton
 Description: VBS/Community Survey
 A team of 4 is needed to do VBS and survey with focus on low cost housing projects in area.

Project #: 97NOR019A
 Dates: July 4-11, 1998
 Location: Halifax
 Description: BYBC/Prayer Walk
 A team is needed to lead BYBC, prayer walks, and opinion polls.

Project #: 97NOR019B
 Dates: July 18-25, 1998
 Location: Halifax
 Description: BYBC/Prayer Walk
 A team is needed to lead BYBC, prayer walks, and opinion polls.

Project #: 97NOR022
 Dates: Aug. 1998
 Location: Saskatchewan
 Description: VBS/BYBC
 A team of 10-12 is needed to lead VBS/BYBC.

Poland Projects

Flood Recovery Ministry

Project #: P-2
 Dates: Nov. 30, 1997-Jan. 1, 1998
 Location: Tamow
 Description: Construction/Plaster
 A volunteer is needed for 2 weeks to do concrete and plaster work for remodeling children's room at Tamow Church. This church was damaged by recent flooding.

Project #: PM1997400
 Dates: Jan. 30-Feb. 16, 1998
 Location: Wrocław
 Description: Crisis Recovery Counselor
 A team of 4 crisis counselors is needed to work in a 2 week camp for children who were victims of recent flooding. Children are ages 11-15 and have experienced various levels of loss of belongings, homelessness, and other problems of displacement.

Brazil Projects

Evangelism

Project #: PM41998909
 Dates: Jan. 30-Feb. 8, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Construction/Evangelism
 A team of 12 is needed to do construction and refurbishing work at the Centers for Social Work. They will

do evangelistic work in neighboring churches.

Project #: PM41998901
 Dates: Feb. 18-March 2, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Carnival Evangelism
 At least 2 teams of 10-20 people are needed to do evangelism outreach during Carnival. Clowning, miming, and/or puppetry skills needed. After Carnival, teams will direct mime and clowning workshop.

Project #: PM41998904
 Dates: March 13-21, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Drama/Music/Evangelism
 A team of 20 is needed to perform in schools, churches, plazas to prepare people for the Crusade.

Project #: PM41998905
 Dates: March 13-21, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Drama/Music/Evangelism
 A student team of 20 is needed to perform in schools, churches, plazas to prepare people for the Crusade.

Project #: PM41998912
 Dates: March 15-23, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Construction
 A team of 10 is needed to do evangelism and light construction in small churches.

Project #: PM41998913
 Dates: June 15-23, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 A team of 50 is needed to do evangelism in small churches.

Project #: B-3
 Dates: March 14-23, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 A team of 11 is needed to do evangelism in small churches.

Project #: PM41998914
 Dates: June 14-22, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Creative Ministries
 A team of 40 is needed to do evangelism and creative ministries in small churches and new congregations.

Project #: PM41998917
 Dates: June 14-23, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Construction
 A team of 20 is needed to do evangelism and construction in small churches and new congregations. Also help complete construction on a small church.

Project #: PM41998907
 Dates: June 5-14, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Construction/Evangelism
 A team of 12 is needed to do construction and refurbishing work at the Centers for Social Work. They will also do evangelistic work in neighboring churches and other activities of the Social Work Board.

Project #: PM41998911
 Dates: July 26-Aug. 4, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Youth Choir/Construction
 A youth choir of 70 is needed to do evangelism and construction in 6 small churches and new congregations.

Project #: PM41998915
 Dates: July 26-Aug. 4, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Creative Ministries
 A team of 50 is needed to do evangelism, creative ministries, puppets, drama, music in small churches and new congregations.

Project #: PM41998906
 Dates: July 31-Aug. 9, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Sports/Evangelism
 A college or university basketball team of 20 is needed to play teams from Rio clubs and to hold basketball clinics.

Project #: B-2
 Dates: Sept. 27-Oct. 6, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 A total of 20 teams of 2 (preacher and layperson-music) are needed for simultaneous revivals in churches in Jacarepagua. Nightly services will be held along with visitation, personal witnessing, speaking in schools, and special musical presentations.

Summer Missionary

Project #: PM41998902
 Dates: June 1-Aug. 8, 1998
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Social Work
 A total of 10 summer missionaries are needed to work in homes provided by the Carioca Convention Social Work Board to teach skills and do evangelistic outreach.

Tennessee Projects

Construction

Project #: 93
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rossville
 Description: Construction
 Gospel Light Church needs team of 15-20 youth/adults to help repair low income homes.
 Contact: Les Sanders, (901) 853-8366

Project #: 94
 Dates: Open
 Location: Jackson
 Description: Construction
 Greater Hope Day Care needs team of 5-10 with carpentry skills to do light construction for one week.
 Contact: Richard C. Lee, (901) 423-6290

Project #: 96
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Construction
 New Song Church needs team of 10 youth/adults to repair neighborhood homes.
 Contact: Peggy Barkley, (901) 521-6868

Project #: 102
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rossville
 Description: Construction
 Rossville Church needs team of 5-10 adults to put in driveway. Bring equipment.
 Contact: Ted Powers, (901) 877-3734

Project #: T-18
 Dates: May 26-Aug. 6, 1998
 Location: Jefferson City
 Description: Construction/Appalachian Outreach
 A team of 10 summer missionaries is needed to do home repair ministry for low income families.
 Contact: Shannon Woshum, (423) 475-5611

Camp

Project #: T-6
 Dates: May/September 1998
 Location: Benton
 Description: Camp
 Camp Agape in Benton needs volunteers to serve as kitchen help, camp nurse, general maintenance, and craft workers. Teams of 3 adults per week are needed.
 Contact: Andy Jordan, (423) 338-4153

Project #: T-7
 Dates: May/September 1998 (week-ends only)
 Location: Benton
 Description: Camp
 Camp Agape in Benton needs teams of 4-6 each week to do river hospitality and campground ministry. Creative arts/sports and BYBC workers can work two weeks or entire summer. Around 30 people are needed each weekend along with summer missions supervisors.
 Contact: Andy Jordan, (423) 338-4153

Project #: T-15
 Dates: June 7-Aug. 2, 1998
 Location: Gatlinburg
 Description: Camp
 A team of 16-50 is needed for Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries day camp in mornings and family programs in evening. A total of 18 large groups are required with 2 groups per week for 9 weeks.
 Contact: Bill Black, (423) 436-4076

Project #: T-14
 Dates: June 14-Aug. 1, 1998
 Location: Townsend
 Description: Camp
 A team of 5-15 is needed for Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries day camp in mornings, youth activities in afternoon, and family program in evenings. A total of 1 group is required per week for 7 weeks.
 Contact: Bill Black, (423) 436-4076

Project #: T-11
 Dates: Aug. 2-8, 1998
 Location: Elizabethton
 Description: Camp
 A team of 15-20 is needed to staff local children's Bible ministry camp.

Team will lead games, sports, hikes, devotionals, teach Bible stories, and work with Big A Club workers.
 Contact: Rebecca Brumitt, (423) 547-0088

Health Care

Project #: 103
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Health Care
 Brinkley Heights Alliance needs a team of 5-10 health care professionals or medical/dental students to conduct screenings for one week.
 Contact: Judy Jackson, (901) 372-2373

BYBC/VBS

Project #: T-17
 Dates: Jan.-Dec. 1998
 Location: Johnson City
 Description: BYBC/VBS/Youth worker/Survey/Visitation
 A team of 1-2 is needed to work 3 months with Johnson City Baptist Center.
 Contact: Tai Thompson, (423) 929-1196

Project #: T-8
 Dates: June 22-27, 1998
 Location: Elizabethton
 Description: BYBC/Community Improvement
 A team of 10-20 is needed to provide BYBC, VBS, or Big A Club at Hale Community Ministries building for children ages 5-12 from public housing.
 Contact: Rebecca Brumitt, (423) 547-0088

Project #: T-10
 Dates: July 19-25, 1998
 Location: Elizabethton
 Description: BYBC/Community Improvement
 A team of 10-20 is needed to provide BYBC, VBS, or Big A Club at Hale Community Ministries building for children ages 5-12 from public housing.
 Contact: Rebecca Brumitt, (423) 547-0088

Project #: 108
 Dates: Open
 Location: Jackson
 Description: VBS
 Up to 40 teams of 6-10 youth/adults are needed to hold one week VBS or BYBCs in apartment areas or housing projects for Madison-Chester and Crockett Associations.
 Contact: Carol Vaughan, (901) 668-5690

Project #: 109
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: VBS
 Monument of Love Church needs teams of 5-10 youth to do VBS classes, activities, arts, crafts, and other related duties for 2 weeks.
 Contact: Lawrence O. Hudson, (901) 744-1643

Project #: 111
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: BYBC
 New Song Church needs teams of 10 or more youth to do BYBCs in public housing community building in church neighborhood. In the afternoons, groups may also help in other types of projects or second BYBC at another location.
 Contact: Peggy Barkley, (901) 521-6868

Miscellaneous

Project #: 113
 Dates: Year Round
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Clothing Ministry
 Brinkley Heights Church needs individuals or teams of youth to work in clothing room. Volunteers are needed for 1-2 days per month for 2 hours per day.
 Contact: Janie Hemminger, (901) 458-0617

Project #: 115
 Dates: September-April
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Tutorial Ministry
 Brinkley Heights Alliance needs individuals (youth-high school/adults) to tutor grade school children on Thursdays for two hours. This is one-on-one tutoring.
 Contact: Sam Wilson, (901) 458-0617



leaders

■ **Carl Martin**, pastor, Shelby Avenue Church, Nashville, will retire Dec. 31. Martin has served the church as pastor for 16 years and his ministry has spanned 47 years. In Tennessee he has served in Portland, Hartsville, Shelbyville, Crossville, Old Hickory, and Nashville. Martin also has ministered in Kentucky and Indiana. He and his wife, Doris, will live in Portland.

■ **Damon Mays** has been called as minister of music and

youth at First Church, Parsons. He was ordained Nov. 16.

■ **Jim Madden** has been called as interim pastor at Hebron Church Middleton.

■ **Bethel Church**, Morristown, has called two new staff members recently. **Wayne Cumbow** has been called as minister of music. Cumbow has served on the staff of churches in Bristol, Tenn., Bristol, Va., and in Alabama. **Andrew Ward** has been called as minister of youth. Ward is a recent graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

■ **Gene Hughes** has been called as interim pastor, Fort Robinson Church, Kingsport, recently. Hughes is returning to the church in which he made an initial commitment to

MARTIN



RECEIVING a plaque to honor Clear Springs Church, Knoxville, on its centennial anniversary, is Jerry Vittatoe, right, pastor, from Herbert Jones, director of missions, Midland Baptist Association.



TO HONOR James Beard, center, for serving 43 years as a pastor of churches in Big Hatchie Association and as treasurer of the association for 20 years, S. Ray Jones, director of missions, Big Hatchie, presents him with a plaque, as Mrs. Beard watches. Beard has taken disability retirement from his service, which includes serving as pastor of Durhamville Church, Durhamville.



THIS NEW CHURCH facility of New Providence Church, Loudon, was dedicated Oct. 26. This building replaces one which burned in 1995. Participating in the celebration were members of 36 churches. Speakers included Obie Campbell, pastor, who spoke on his 23 years as pastor. Since then he has retired. Also recognized was Ruth Dutton, a member for 72 years.

God. He has served churches in Tennessee and Virginia. Hughes also served in Ohio for 25 years.

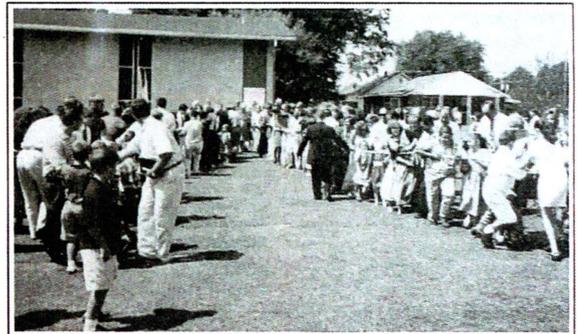
■ **Jon Reed**, pastor, First Church, Baileyton, has been called as pastor of a church in Cumberland, Ky.

■ **Eric Heaton**, pastor, Hunter Memorial Church, Elizabethton, has been called as pastor of Dungan Chapel Church, Elizabethton.

churches

■ The puppet ministry of **Cherokee Church**, Memphis, will hold its annual Living Christmas Tree Dec. 12 at 7 p.m., Dec. 13 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. The puppets will be presenting "The Free Gift." For more information, call the church at (901) 683-7344.

■ **Dellanna O'Brien**, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, based in Birmingham, Ala., will speak during the Foreign Mission Banquet of **Woodmont Church**, Nashville, Dec. 10 at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call the church at (615) 297-5303.



PULLING ON ROPES attached to an old plow to break ground recently for new construction are members of First Church, Henderson. The construction project includes renovation of the church's sanctuary and building of an administrative wing to include a new church library, staff offices, handicapped accessibility, and a visitor greeting area. Also the parking lot will be expanded. Stan Smith, pastor, spoke during the dedication service. The plow was restored for the activity by Leon Robison, member.



ELECTED during its fall meeting to lead ALPHA Association were, from left, Andy Turbeville, member, First Church, Centerville, treasurer; Ronnie Brewer, pastor, First Church, Lobelville, vice moderator; Faye King, member, First Church, Lobelville, clerk; Glenn Hester, director of missions; and Jerry Milam, pastor, Wrigley Church, moderator.

Mt. Juliet church to honor their pastor of 25 years

For Baptist and Reflector

MT. JULIET — Members of First Church here will honor and pay tribute Dec. 7 to Billie Friel, their pastor for 25 years.

Friel and his wife, Marilyn, joined the Mt. Juliet congregation in December of 1972. They have three children.

The Ohio native is a graduate of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. He has served as a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board

and Union University in Jackson.

Mt. Juliet Mayor David Waynick has proclaimed Dec. 7 as "Billie Friel Day" in honor of Friel's service and achievement to the community.

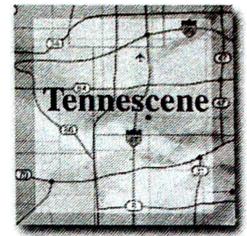
During Friel's tenure the church has been in the top 10 percent in the state in baptisms and membership has



FRIEL

grown from 548 in 1972 to 2,310, making it the largest Baptist church in Wilson County.

The Dec. 7 "Celebration of Service" schedule features a combined morning worship service at 11 with guest speaker W. L. Baker, followed at noon by a churchwide luncheon and reception and a celebration of service and praise at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in contributing to the program can call John Link, minister of music, at (615) 754-2525. ■



Nashville, will hold its "Hanging of the Green" service Nov. 30 at 6 p.m. Activities include carol singing, candlelighting, worship banners, and traditional decorations. A reception will follow. For more information, call (615) 227-2961.

■ **Trinity Church**, Cordova, will hold an "Alpine Christmas Village" Dec. 19-21 from 6-9 p.m. Visitors will experience scenes including 11 shops featuring such things as music boxes, clocks, books, and ornaments. Shops will have activities such as craft makings, and gifts for children. For more information, call the church at (901) 759-5955.

■ The Royal Ambassadors of **First Church**, Sevierville, held their 18th annual Basketball Marathon Nov. 14-15 to raise funds for food baskets and toys for the church's Christmas Store.

BSSB resource addresses holiday hurts, stresses



Baptist Press

N A S H - VILLE — While many Christians celebrate

Christ's birth with the joy of the ideal happy holidays, crisis needs for others make the season seem more desperate than usual, according to writers for the Winter 1997-98 issue of *Caregiving*, a resource for Christian ministry published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The crisis for some may be a disaster such as losing a home to fire. Others struggle with Christmas divided between divorced parents. Emotions related to loss and grief are intensified. Financial stress which could come from a loss of a job or unexpected expenses, and emotional depression are byproducts of the holidays for significant numbers of people.

Yet in all these circumstances are opportunities for ministry, writers emphasize. Assessing and understanding the loss are key needs in determining how to respond, and those who hurt may need care at times other than Christmas.

"Often we reach out during the traditional holiday season because we are more aware of the suffering and loss experienced at that time," writes Terry Lynn Ray, a nurse from Little Rock, Ark. "How-

ever, care needs to be extended on any of the holidays that may have special significance for the individuals who have experienced loss or trauma of some kind."

Dan Aycock, pastor of McLearn Church, Memphis, observes while memories can be good and also painful, "the future can be scary and uncertain" for those who have had a loss. He provides guidance for understanding one's changing situation, uniting with others in similar circumstances, reaching out to those in need, and evolving with the times.

While every year there are people who face a first Christmas without a family member, **Cos Davis, an educational specialist and pastoral counselor from Franklin**, urges readers to remember children in such circumstances.

He observes parents can be "so absorbed with their own grief that their child is not encouraged to deal with the pain the loss has caused."

Davis offers suggestions for dealing with children, as well as questions to consider in deciding how to help a particular child.

Caregiving is a quarterly resource designed to help pastors, church staff, and others who perform pastoral care ministry. For information on individual copies or subscriptions, call 1 (800) 458-2772. ■

Contemporary TV spots to aid churches

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — "Fear. Anger. Violence. Hate." The words flash on the screen over correspondingly harsh music and images: a street mugging, an alcoholic hitting his wife, a young boy mesmerized in front of a video game and marching white supremacists.

A young man dashes panicked through inner-city streets, suddenly facing a solid brick wall. Instantly, he then finds himself in the sanctuary of a church. "In a dangerous world, there is a refuge. The First Baptist Church of Bowling Green."

It's a powerful MTV-style television commercial, bristling with the fears that haunt so many today and offering a source of hope in the local church. The "Take Cover!" spot is one of four television commercials for local churches recently made available through the North American Mission Board's media technology center.

The spots are offered in four media kits, each of which includes a personalized radio commercial, newspaper advertisement, and television commercial based on a common theme.

The campaigns are available individually for a one-year licensing fee, which gives a church exclusive rights to the

ads in their particular market.

The campaigns are the result of a partnership between the NAMB media technology center in Fort Worth, Texas — formerly the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission — and Phil Cooke, a nationally acclaimed Christian producer.

David Clark, director of NAMB's media center, said the campaigns were designed to help churches present an effective evangelistic message in their advertising.

"In a recent survey, 60 percent of Southern Baptist churches said they wanted to use media to reach their communities for Christ," he said. "This fits in well with one of our newest mandates in the Southern Baptist Convention restructuring. That is to assist churches in communication

technology. Each of the campaigns is centered on a different theme, targeting a different audience. The other campaigns are "Just Imagine," "Destination Eternity," and "Ray of Hope."

The ads can be used in a variety of ways by churches: some may use them for regular paid advertising for the church; others might convince stations to run them as public service announcements. In at least one case, a 30-second spot was used in place of one of the regular advertisements a church receives from a station for buying the weekly time slot for its worship service.

For information on advertising licensing, contact Stan Grubbs, affiliate relations associate for the NAMB media technology group at 1 (800) 292-2287. ■

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CHURCH PEWS: Lengths: 14 feet to 22 and one-half feet. Contact Second Baptist Church, 4680 Walnut Grove Road, Memphis, TN 38117; Phone: (901) 682-3395; FAX: (901) 683-8771.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE: Part-time minister of youth, full-time family lifestyle minister/director, organist. Send resume to Valley Grove Baptist Church, Knoxville, 37920, Attn: Personnel Committee.

WORSHIP & PRAISE LEADER: Part-time. Growing congregation seeks motivated, self-starter to plan, coordinate, and lead worship and praise program. Send resumes to Pastor Daniel Hyde, Craigfont Baptist Church, 101 Harsh Lane, Castalian Springs, TN 37031.

COACH FOR SALE
GMC 4905, 42 passenger, air conditioned, restroom, refreshment center, video system, less than 30,000 miles on 8V-71 Detroit Diesel engine. Extremely well maintained. Coach is in beautiful condition inside and out. Completely updated and refurbished less than 4 years ago. Must see to appreciate. Asking \$49,000. Call (606) 277-7391. Ask for David.

Minister of Youth and Activities
We are seeking a minister with responsibilities for youth (grades 7-12) and activities in the church's Family Life Center. Person will work with other ministers on the staff as well as a Youth Council and Family Life Center Committee. Seminary education required. Send resumes with references to: Mr. George Gilbert, First Baptist Church, 810 Bridges St., Morehead City, N.C. 28557.

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Praise God for our first two years in evangelism! With an average of 42 revivals/conferences per year in 1996 and 1997 God has blessed me with the privilege of being in many of the finest churches with some of the greatest pastors in the SBC. Almost one half of my invitations and repeat invitations have been from Tennessee Baptist pastors/churches.

Testimonies of Tennessee Pastors

"I enthusiastically endorse the ministry of Bro. Jackie Kay. He did an outstanding job when he was with us at Hermitage Hills. We had one of our best attended revivals with a great number of decisions for Christ and our people loved his warm-hearted humorous style and responded with an outpouring of love to him. You and your people will be greatly blessed to have Jackie Kay in your church." — H. Dean Haun, Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Hermitage

"The week with Jackie Kay was what we needed in our church. God used the warm spirit of Jackie and his faithful preaching to bring folks to face God's precious truths. Souls were saved, relationships restored, and commitments to faithful, personal evangelism were made. Jackie Kay will be good for you and your church." — Dr. Gary Watkins, FBC, Collierville

"Bro. Jackie Kay was a tremendous blessing to the entire community of Tullahoma, Tenn., and especially FBC. I would encourage every pastor to prayerfully consider this man for a revival. You will not be disappointed." — Dr. Herb Heaster, FBC, Tullahoma

"Jackie Kay is a powerful preacher who treated my people with integrity and warmth. Our attendance grew nightly. I thoroughly enjoyed the week with Jackie. God has given Jackie a powerful ministry of encouragement to the pastor and the people. I hope you will give him consideration as you plan upcoming revival meetings." — Dr. Joel Wood, FBC, Hixson

"Jackie Kay was the guest speaker at our Deacons' Retreat and One Day Revival. The Lord led us to invite him back to lead our Fall Revival. God used his uplifting spirit and inspiring messages to renew our spirits. We were very much in need of his ministry of encouragement." — F. Murray Mathis, Third Baptist Church, Murfreesboro

Good 1998 Dates Still Available
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Leading others in prayer

By James Hutson

Focal Passage — 1 Kings 8:22-24; Acts 4:23-30; 1 Timothy 2:1-2

This is the last of five lessons under the theme of "Teach Us To Pray." Sometimes public prayer is repetitious and superficial. It is like the man who thanked the Lord for the beautiful sunshine while it stormed outside. (I was there when this prayer was prayed.) When I was a seminary pastor, I called upon one of our deacons to have the closing prayer. He said something I didn't understand. After a few seconds of silence (it seemed like an eternity), I led the closing prayer myself. That afternoon I visited in the house of that deacon to find out what happened. He explained to me that he said "pray to be excused." He did not pray in public. There are some folks who are uncomfortable at leading public prayer. Yet, leading others in prayer is a vital part of public worship.

King Solomon of Israel expresses a prayer of dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem. The dedication of the Temple was a grand and historic occasion. I Kings 6:38 tells us that the construction of the Temple took seven years. This is a long prayer covering 32 verses. Solomon begins by praising God for keeping the covenant made with his father, David. In verse 23 is the marvelous word translated "mercy" or "loving kindness." It is a word describing God's loving concern for all those bound to him in a covenant relationship. Solomon prays that the promise may be confirmed forever in the lineage of David. Solomon prays that the Temple may be a place to which Israel may turn for forgiveness. The remainder of the prayer is a series of intercessions.

The early church praised God for deliverance. Acts 4 begins with Peter and John being arrested and put in prison. The authorities were confronted with the undeniable fact of a lame man who had been healed. Not sure what to do, and facing two men who would not be intimidated, the authorities released Peter and John. Immediately, the two apostles went to their friends and told them of their experience. The result is a prayer meeting which produced a boldness to continue to witness for Jesus. This is the kind of prayer meeting we need in the church today. Testimonies of those who have witnessed in the past days or week, a prayer of thanksgiving for courage, and the assurance of divine boldness to go into the world and witness.

Paul's instruction to Timothy regarding worship. Here are four words used to describe prayer. The first three — requests, prayers, and intercession — have much in common. Thanksgiving is the fourth word. It is an integral part of prayer, yet it is too often neglected in our prayer life. Paul urges prayer for rulers. The reason we are to pray for rulers is that believers may live peaceful (calmness) and quiet (serene) lives in godliness (religious devotion) and holiness (seriousness of purpose). Paul says the same thing in Romans 13:1-7. If the early Christians could pray for the Roman Emperor, then we modern Christians should pray for our elected officials on all levels of government.

If you have never prayed in public, or feel threatened at the prospect, take a 3x5 card and write down what you would say when called on. When you are called on to lead in prayer, pull out that card and read what you have written. In time, you will be able to lead in public prayer without the card. Leading in public prayer is a skill that can be learned. — Hutson is pastor, First Church, Rockwood.

Reward of the faithful

By Dennis Trull

Focal Passage — Malachi 3:6-18

The book of Malachi was written after the Jews returned to Jerusalem and after the temple services were resumed. There was an air of disillusionment and indifference. One man has said, "Indifference is the epitome of all evil. The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. Because of indifference, one dies before one actually dies." Indifference will be manifested by disobedience to God, and an insensitivity to sin.

Family Bible Lesson

God's call (vv. 6-7). One thing of which we can be certain concerning the Lord is that he is consistent and unchanging. That's quite a rebuke to our inconsistency and propensity to change. At the same time, God's unchangeableness gives us assurance that what he has promised he will fulfill. One may question God's love, as did these Jews, but his love is constant. According to verse 6, if it had not been for his unchanging love, these disobedient people would have been destroyed by their sins. Because of God's love and unchangeableness, he called them to repent, to return to him. He promised that if they would do that, he would return to them. Their insensitive, cynical response is recorded in the last part of verse 7.

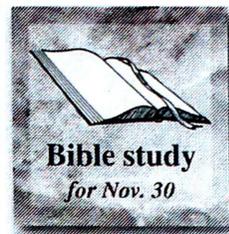
God's charge (vv. 8-9). "Will a man rob God?" was God's charge, but the people seemed shocked and surprised at such an accusation. They wanted to know how they had robbed God, and he lovingly, yet firmly told them. They had robbed him by withholding their tithes and offerings. This kind of robbery is still prevalent today among God's

people. To tithe or not is not a financial question, it is a spiritual question. This robbery in Malachi 3 was widespread as God accused the whole nation of being under the curse of this sin.

God's challenge (vv. 10-12). The people were not living in the blessings of God so Malachi issued God's challenge to the people to "bring the whole tithe into the storehouse." One man said this: "Storehouse tithing is the bringing of your tithes and offerings to the place where your membership is established, your spiritual life is nourished, and your church privileges are enjoyed." Tithing is 400 years older than the law and is taught in the New Testament. If they would meet God's challenge he would shower blessings on them, restrain the forces of destruction that had fallen on their crops so they would be fruitful, and make sure that the surrounding nations noticed. Thus, God would be glorified.

Their charges (vv. 13-15). The people had made some harsh charges against God. First, ungodly, arrogant people are blessed. Second, they prosper. Third, those who sin against God escape punishment. In addition to these charges, they complained that serving God was futile, keeping God's ordinances brought no profit, and expressing mourning before God was to no avail. However, they had missed their own poor spiritual condition. These people usually complain the most.

God's conclusions. The people of verse 16 are the people who walked with God. They feared God and testified to one another of the Lord. Verse 17 declares that these belonged to God. His future dealings with them would validate that they were his possession and he would spare them punishment. Verse 18 indicates that while the present may not clearly distinguish between the righteous and wicked, the future, which God controls, will make this distinction clear. — Trull is pastor, First Church, Savannah.



Responding to God's faithfulness

By Michael Ruffin

Focal Passage — Genesis 26:1-5, 23-25

Potential is at the same time exciting and frightening. I have been an Atlanta Braves fan since the team moved south from Milwaukee in 1966. My parents took me to see a game at the new Atlanta Stadium during that first season. I was eight years old. I have watched many baseball players come and go. Many have come up from the minor leagues with the label of a "can't miss" prospect. "He's going to be a star," the experts say, or "He will be the next Dale Murphy." Sometimes the player would become a star. Sometimes he would never live up to his potential, which is difficult to bear. It is hard to be the one on whom everyone pins their hopes.

How much potential Isaac must have been thought to have. What must Abraham and Sarah have dreamed for their son as they pondered the miraculous manner in which he had been born. Perhaps Isaac was inspired by the role he was called to play in God's purpose. On the other hand, might Isaac have been intimidated by the stories of his amazing beginning and of his near sacrifice? Might he have been pressured by the knowledge that he was the one human link between the promises of God and the actual fulfillment of those promises? After all, he must keep the family line going. It

Explore the Bible Lesson

was important for Isaac to experience the faithfulness of God and respond to that faithfulness.

Isaac experienced the protection of God in a crisis. It is instructive to compare the narrative in Genesis 26:1-11 with those in 12:10-20 and 20:1-18. The things that happen to Isaac and the things he does are very similar to what Abraham had experienced and done in those earlier passages. First, Isaac went to Gerar to escape a famine that occurred in his own land. In Gerar Isaac prospered. Like Abraham before him, Isaac experienced the protection of God during a time of natural calamity. Second, the Lord prevented Isaac from journeying to Egypt. Considering the place of imprisonment and oppression that Egypt will become for Isaac's descendants, this should be seen as an act of deliverance. Third, Isaac claimed that his wife Rebekah was his sister in order to protect his own life. Like his father before him, the patriarch put his wife at risk. And he experienced protection despite his lack of faith.

What may we conclude from these events? While Isaac had heard about and witnessed the actions of God on Abraham's behalf, and had surely heard about his own beginnings, it

was necessary that Isaac learn for himself of the delivering power of God. No one can believe for us. Isaac had to learn to trust for himself, and so do we.

Isaac experienced the assurances of God. Isaac heard the promises in much the same terms as Abraham had: "I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and will give to your offspring all these lands; and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring."

The words are the same because the promise is the same. Furthermore, we who worship the God of Abraham stand in the line of that promise. In faith we continue to experience the blessings of God. Note also this promise is given to Isaac "because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, commandments, my statutes, and my laws." The promise is better passed on to succeeding generations when the present generation is faithful.

Isaac responded to the promises of God by worshiping him. When Isaac settled in Beer-sheba, he built an altar and called on the name of the Lord.

The appropriate response of faith is to give our lives over to God in obedience, trust, and worship. True worship is the total submission of our lives to God in adoration and service. — Ruffin is associate professor, School of Religion, Belmont University, Nashville.



Georgia Baptists affirm compromise

Baptist Press

MARIETTA, Ga. — The Georgia Baptist Convention affirmed a nine-point report that seeks to bring healing and reconciliation between the convention and its flagship school, Mercer University.

The recommendation on Mercer calls for more direct convention involvement in the selection of some Mercer trustees and stipulates that the next president of Mercer should be a Baptist who can affirm the theology of the Baptist Faith and Message statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

While controversy has surrounded the GBC-Mercer relationship for many years, it escalated last year with the publication of President Kirby Godsey's book, *When We Talk About God ... Let's Be Honest*. Some of Godsey's theological views have been labeled as heresy by a special committee formed by the GBC executive committee to interview Godsey concerning his beliefs.

While some critics have demanded his resignation, the nine points adopted by the

GBC executive committee and convention, stopped short of that demand.

A further resolution, adopted at the GBC annual meeting, however, stated if the full board of Mercer trustees, meeting Dec. 4, fails to adopt the resolution and show good faith in accepting the conciliatory compromise, then the convention would begin the process of cutting funds to the university. Such cuts would be made over several years so as to fulfill all existing scholarship commitments. All convention monies currently going to Mercer (except capital improvements money) are designated for scholarships for Baptist students.

In other action, GBC messengers re-elected Atlanta area pastor Frank Cox as president and adopted its largest Cooperative Program budget ever — \$40.2 million. ■

Virginia Baptists strengthen BWA ties

Baptist Press

ROANOKE, Va. — Closer ties to the Baptist World Alliance and a resolution rejecting an "indiscriminate attitude toward abortion" were approved during the Baptist General Association of Virginia's Nov. 11-12 annual meeting.

The 1,900 convention messengers adopted a 1998 budget of \$15.2 million, \$300,000 less than the current budget.

The increased ties to BWA, which included increased funding and adoption of a BWA Sunday, comes at a time when

the Southern Baptist Convention is studying its ties to BWA, a fellowship of about 180 Baptist organizations worldwide.

Messengers also "reaffirmed" a statement on abortion first passed by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1976.

Bill Wilson, a pastor from Waynesboro, was elected convention president. He is the son of Bill and Creely Wilson of Brentwood. ■

Arkansas Baptists defeat guidelines

Baptist Press

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Following a year-long debate over Ouachita Baptist University's trustee selection process, Arkansas Baptist messengers narrowly defeated proposed charter and bylaw changes which would have implemented a reconciliation agreement between the state convention and Ouachita.

Debate over the issue began in October 1996 when Ouachita's trustees voted to resume responsibility for naming their own successors after the state convention nominating committee declined to recommend any of the nominee suggestions presented to them by Ouachita officials.

A reconciliation plan which provided for consensus between the groups for future nominees was approved last year by a vote of 801-456.

Although adopted last year, necessary charter and bylaw changes to implement the plan require a two-thirds majority vote for passages. The proposals were affirmed this year by a vote of 999 to 528 but fell 1.3 percent short of gaining the needed 66.7 percent majority.

Interest in the Ouachita issue produced a record 1,831 messengers to the annual meeting.

Messengers elected a new president, Greg Kirksey of Benton by 19 votes over Ben Rowell, of Rogers who was president of the state's 1997 Pastors' Conference.

The convention also adopted a budget in excess of \$17.6 million for next year. ■

President affirms homosexual rights

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton affirmed homosexual rights in an unprecedented manner Nov. 8 before 1,500 attendees at a dinner sponsored by the homosexual movement's largest political organization.

Religious and political conservatives, meanwhile, bemoaned the president's action.

In becoming the first U.S. president to address a homosexual rights event, Clinton said discrimination based on "sexual orientation" is "wrong, and it should be illegal."

Will Dodson, director of public policy for the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, noted the president's speech "marks one of the low points in the history of the presidency and, for that matter, the history of our nation."

A conservative Democrat who participated in a demonstration outside the hotel spoke against the president's action as well as "other permissive liberals" in the Democratic Party.

"I call upon conservative Democrats everywhere to rise up and let the present leadership of the Democratic Party know that enough is enough," said Michael Calsetta, president of the Conservative Democratic Alliance, in a written statement. ■

Carter's remarks on Mormons refuted

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Former President Jimmy Carter, who significantly raised the profile of evangelical Christianity in general and Southern Baptists in particular during the 1970s, has said Southern Baptists are off the mark in their belief that Mormon doctrine is essentially non-Christian and Mormons are therefore in need of evangelization.

A Southern Baptist interfaith witness leader says Carter is wrong on his views on Mormon teachings.

"His comments show he is totally uninformed and naive about the nature and beliefs of the Mormon church, which claims to be the one true church. Mormonism is not essential biblical Christianity. It is a new religious movement created by Joseph Smith," said Phil Roberts, director of the North American Mission Board's interfaith witness team responsible for assisting Southern Baptists in understanding and witnessing to persons of other faiths.

Carter's comments were printed in the Nov. 15 issue of the *Deseret News*, a Salt Lake City newspaper owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

According to a spokesman in Carter's Atlanta office, she had not seen the article previously and did not know whether Carter considered it an accurate portrayal of his comments. ■

Mackey nominated for Kentucky post

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A former Whitesburg, Ky., pastor who currently serves as leadership development and evangelism growth director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, has been nominated to be executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. He has served on the S.C. convention staff since 1979.

Bill Mackey, 56, will be presented to the KBC executive board Dec. 8 by a 14-member search committee.

If elected, he would succeed Bill Marshall Feb. 1, who retired nearly one year ago after 14 years as executive director.

Mackey was described by search committee chairwoman Peggy Hicks of Louisville as "conservative but non-political." ■

Florida convention long on inspiration

Baptist Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — The 136th annual meeting of the Florida Baptist Convention was long on inspiration and short on business.

None of the 1,573 messengers presented any miscellaneous business; three of the four resolutions presented were referred to the state board of missions; and the new officers of the convention, including president Jerry Garrard, a Tallahassee pastor, were elected by acclamation.

Messengers adopted a 1998 basic budget of \$27,069,494, up \$1,053,602 from the current budget. ■

Missouri Baptists elect Page president

Baptist Press

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — Wendell Page, last year's convention second vice president was elected president of the Missouri Baptist Convention over Benny King, a director of missions from St. Louis.

Page won the presidency by a 955-792 margin.

In other business messengers adopted a \$16.4 million Cooperative Program budget, an increase of \$900,000.

A motion to instruct the MBC executive board staff not to discontinue the current practice of accepting and forwarding monies to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was ruled out of order because it conflicted with the convention's business and financial plan. ■



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