

REFLECTOR

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Statewide Edition

February 18, 1998

this week's news

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Gambling proponents push for state lottery



By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Led by Sen. Steve Cohen of Memphis, gambling proponents are making a strong push once again to legalize a state lottery.

On Feb. 10 the Senate Judiciary Committee approved by a 5-4 margin to send a lottery resolution (SJR 52) to the Calendar Committee.

If the resolution is approved by a two-thirds vote in both the House of Representatives and Senate, a state-wide referendum would be held in November to decide whether to amend the state constitution to permit lotteries. It would require 22 votes in the Senate and 67 in the House.

The resolution would replace the period at the end of Article XI, Section 5, of the state constitution with a period and the following language would be added:

"except that the legislature may authorize a state lottery if the net proceeds of the lottery's revenues are allocated to a scholarship fund to be established and im-

plemented by the legislature to pay tuition costs for the post-secondary education and training of Tennessee residents in public or private schools or institutions in this state. The excess from such net proceeds shall be allocated to K-12 education.

"All other forms of lottery not authorized herein are expressly prohibited.

"Be it further resolved, that the foregoing amendment shall be submitted to the people at the next general election in which a governor is to be chosen, the same being the 1998 regular November election and the secretary of state is directed to place such amendment on the ballot for that election."

Voting for the resolution were Cohen, Rusty Crowe, Johnson City; Joe Haynes, Nashville; Rosalind Kurita, Clarksville; and Jim Kyle, Memphis.

Voting against the lottery proposal were David Fowler, Signal Mountain; Roy Herron, Dresden; Keith Jordan, Franklin; and Curtis Person, Memphis, chairman of

the committee.

Cohen told *The Tennessean*, Nashville's morning newspaper, he believed there were enough votes in the House to pass the bill and acknowledged the strongest opposition to the resolution is in the Senate.

"I believe I have always had the votes in the House," he told *The Tennessean*.

Bill Bates, Tennessee Baptist Convention public affairs consultant, said it is going to be "an interesting year."

In addition to Cohen's efforts, Sen. Ward Crutchfield of Chattanooga is leading an effort to call a constitutional convention on the lottery question. His proposal (SB 3103) would require only a simple majority in both houses. The Senate Judiciary Committee was to have considered his proposal on Feb. 17.

Bates encouraged Tennessee Baptists to contact their state senators and let them know they are opposed to the lottery and gambling in any form.

"I believe the resolution by Sen. Cohen will be defeated. Pray that God will lead our elected officials to do the right thing," Bates encouraged. ■



BATES



SHOEBOX GIFTS

New system adds to service

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Baptist Center now has a voice mail system for staff of Executive Board ministries, the *Baptist and Reflector*, the Foundation, and Adult Homes.

The new system will enable Tennessee Baptists to leave a personal message with the staff person they need to talk with if the person is not available to assist, said Art Darden of the Administrative Services Group. He stressed the system is not an automated answering service. "We will continue to have every call answered by a 'live voice,'" he said.

If the staff member is not in, the operator will connect the person calling to the staff member's voice mailbox. Staff members can check their voice mail messages no matter where they are.

James Porch, executive director-treasurer, stressed it is the desire of the Executive Board staff to continue to maintain a high level of communication with Tennessee Baptists. "This will provide us an additional means to respond to each call as quickly as possible." ■

Tennessee Baptist to lead BSSB trustees

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A Tennessee Baptist layman has been elected chairman of the trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Ken Speakman, a member of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, was elected during the board's semiannual meeting Feb. 9-11. Speakman is director of the international division of The Gideons International in Nashville.

In other actions, board trustees heard positive reports and opportunities that the board has in the years ahead.

"We are in the blessed position of not having to seek out opportunities," said President James T. Draper Jr. "Our challenge is to make the best choices among the opportunities we have."

In reports trustees learned:

(1) The SBC Executive Committee was expected to vote in its Feb. 16-17 meeting on a charter change and supporting bylaws amendments related to a proposed new name for the agency, LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

(2) Following a record fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 1997, with revenues of \$284.1 mil-

lion, first quarter revenues for 1997-98 totaled \$74.7 million, a 12.7 percent increase over the same quarter last year. Funds provided from operations, monies available after expenses, reached \$5 million or 13.8 percent above the same period in 1996-97.

In other matters trustees approved a recommendation that, for budgeting purposes, the average price increase of 2.5 percent be used for church

literature and magazines for 1998-99, effective with the spring (March-April-May) issues. Rather than implementing across-the-board increases, each product is evaluated annually for price and manufacturing cost. Information by title will be provided at the September 1998 trustee meeting.

Trustees also voted to increase conference center rates by 4 percent for Oct. 1, 2000 through Sept. 30, 2001. ■



NEWLY ELECTED trustee officers of the Sunday School Board enjoy a lighthearted moment with President James T. Draper Jr., left, during the trustees semiannual meeting, Feb. 9-11 in Nashville. With Draper, from left, are chairman, Ken Speakman, member of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, and secretary, Roy Mason, senior pastor of Derita Church, Charlotte, N.C. Re-elected vice-chairman is Kent Workman, far right, pastor of New Work Fellowship in Crofton, Ky.

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

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Youth Evangelism Conference to stress personal witness



For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — A major focus of the 1998 Youth Evangelism Conference will be the Personal Witnessing

Conferences on Friday, March 6, to be held at area churches, says Ken Weathersby, Tennessee Baptist evangelism specialist.

Materials will be given out in the conferences related to "Time To Tell," a simultaneous witnessing effort for youth

across Tennessee and America, Weathersby said.

The week of April 6-12 has been set aside across the denomination for youth to openly share their faith with their friends and classmates, he said.

A leader's guide will be given to youth leaders at the conference. Each youth will receive related materials. Youth leaders are encouraged to teach their teens the material and lead them to where they can participate during the Time To Tell week, Weathersby related.

"Time To Tell will be an incredible time of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ to a lost world," Weathersby said. "It can only happen if you and your youth are willing to take part."

The Youth Evangelism Conference will

be held March 6-7 in Nashville.

On Friday, March 6, West and Middle Tennessee youth will attend a session at Vanderbilt University's Memorial Gym from 4:30-6 p.m. and their personal witnessing conferences from 8:30-10 p.m. at local churches.

East Tennessee and Nashville area youth will attend the Personal Witnessing Conferences from 4:30-6 p.m. and the session at Vanderbilt from 8:30-10 p.m.

On Saturday, all youth will participate in a prayer walk to the state capitol.

It is not too late to sign up for the Youth Evangelism Conference, Weathersby stressed.

For registration information or additional information on the conference, call at (615) 371-2014 or 1 (800) 558-2090. ■

FAITH: Former Green Beret launches soul-saving offensive

By Chip Alford
For Baptist Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — On Sept. 23, 1966, Bobby Welch led 28 Army Green Berets into a Vietnamese jungle to rescue 120 soldiers pinned down by enemy fire.

Welch accomplished his mission, but not before the 22-year-old platoon leader was seriously wounded by a bullet to the chest. As he lay bleeding, he mouthed

a simple three-word prayer: "God help me."

"I knew I was going to die and I wanted to get right with God," Welch remembered. "I hadn't been living for God and I didn't want to meet my Maker that way."

But God wasn't through with Welch. He was rescued.

A little more than three decades have passed since that miraculous rescue, but Welch is still fighting battles. In January

he helped launch a nationwide offensive to save souls.

"I believe if we don't let God help us, we are destined to die of mediocrity in our churches," Welch told 650 pastors, church staff, and lay leaders from 28 churches in 15 states who gathered in January at First Church here for the "FAITH Originator Clinic." Welch has served as senior pastor of the church since 1974.

Also attending the conference were dozens of workers from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and North American Mission Board, several faculty from six Southern Baptist seminaries, and representatives from two other denominations — the Nazarene Church of America and the Wesleyan Church of America.

They were all there to learn more about FAITH, a joint strategy of the BSSB and NAMB designed to stimulate a dramatic upturn in baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention during the next five years. The new initiative is modeled after a program carried out at Welch's church the last 12 years.

According to Bill Taylor, director of the Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division, the strategy ties ongoing personal evangelism training to the church's Sunday School organization. Church members agree to attend 16 training sessions and practice what they learn in home visits. The initia-

tive also includes weekly meetings for Sunday School teachers and group leaders, intentional discipleship and plans for assimilating new Christians into the life of the church.

"FAITH has changed our church dramatically through the years," Welch told clinicians. "It's brought about a soul-consciousness."

FAITH will work in small churches as well as large, Jerry Webb, pastor of Flomich Avenue Church, Daytona Beach, told clinicians.

Though the church averages less than 100 in Sunday School, 41 members recently completed FAITH training. Following the strategy, Webb said, is enlarging his church's vision, developing new leaders, reviving him and his staff, and increasing the number of members and prospects.

"You start winning them wherever God leads you," Webb said. "This is going to change my church inside and out."

BSSB President Jimmy Draper is confident FAITH can have the same kind of impact nationwide.

"It has to hurt the hearts of every Southern Baptist what we're not doing in evangelism," Draper lamented, referring to denominational statistics which show that more than 10,000 Southern Baptist churches reported no baptisms in 1996, and more than 13,000 reported only one to five. ■



Bivocational pastors retreat

A marriage enrichment retreat at Fall Creek Falls attracted bivocational pastors and wives from across Tennessee Jan. 30-31. Program leaders, pictured above, included Paul Barkley, Memphis, licensed marriage and family therapist, his wife, Rhonda; and Bob and Jean Norman who led the music. Norman, retired pastor of Clearview Church, Franklin, also gave a devotional on Saturday. Pictured below are, from left, Michael and Helen Puckett, Open Bible Church, Lascassas, and Vickie and Robert Puckett, Snow Hill Church, Dowelltown. Ray Gilder of the Church Staff Leadership Group of TBC Executive Board ministries led the retreat. — Photos by Wm. Fletcher Allen



Giving to churches declines: study

Associated Baptist Press

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — American church members' hearts may be turning away from God, if their pocketbooks are a fair indicator, a new study shows.

Giving as a portion of income fell to 2.46 percent in 1995, according to empty tomb inc., an organization that monitors giving to U.S. churches and charities.

The 1995 figure is the latest data available from eight mainline Protestant and eight evangelical denominations, said Sylvia Ronsvalle, who with her husband, John, operates empty tomb inc.

The 2.46 percent giving figure represents a 21 percent decline from the 3.11 percent income American Protestants gave to their churches in 1968, the Ronsvalles said. ■

Double-barreled effort promotes lottery

There is always something going on that may seem harmless on the surface — but further consideration reveals terrible flaws.

Gambling is such an issue right now. The *Baptist and Reflector* for many years has been a staunch opponent of gambling — and in recent years, especially a state-sponsored lottery and pari-mutuel betting.

We cannot say categorically that all Christians oppose gambling, but we can express a strong and studied opinion that they should.

We have fought gambling for ten years, and we have tried to keep our readers informed so they can make decisions based on information rather than emotion.

Now is the time, folks, for you to get in touch with your representatives in the General Assembly — your senator and house representative.

We have all been warned. Now we have a reality check. Certain members of both legislative houses are pushing strongly for a Tennessee lottery — now!

Read the story on page one of this issue. It is quite possible that a constitutional convention will be convened in No-

vember as a step to legalize a lottery. But there are several pitfalls along the way. Speak up, let your voice be heard. If you believe that life is better if we falsely invest in a "get rich quick" scheme, and that everybody is going to win in a lottery, tell your legislator to go for it.

If you are supportive of morality in our culture and abhor evil — say "no."

The other move toward a lottery would allow legislators to begin a process to change the constitution and allow a lottery vote. This shady deal allows income from the lottery to go for scholarships! Imagine that — educating our youth with gambling money! How wholesome!

Don't wait. Call now with your vote. Our family values are in danger. — WFA

Board begins process to elect editor

You've read of the editor's retirement within a few weeks.

Many readers have inquired about the process of electing a new editor for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

The paper does not have a board of trustees such as those of the institutions. They have boards nominated by the Committee on Boards.

The *B&R* is supervised by the Executive Committee of the TBC Executive Board. When the committee relates to the paper, it operates as the *B&R* board of directors, a group of 18.

When the editorship is vacant, the chairman of the board of directors names a committee from that board to begin the

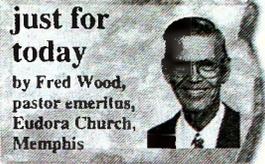
search process for an editor.

The current board is chaired by Bill Northcott, pastor of First Church, Covington. The committee process begins soon, and readers will be informed during the process as much as is possible.

Early in March the board will begin studying a long range plan for the paper, with recommendations from Craig Communications and the paper's staff.

Craig has completed a lengthy, indepth survey, with statewide focus groups, on the effectiveness of all ministry groups of the Executive Board.

Editor Wm. Fletcher Allen announced last month his retirement after more than 10 years with the paper. — WFA



Start with a smile

Joe: "I've got a problem. I gave my girl a beautiful diamond for her birthday."

Jim: "What's the problem?"

Joe: "She wants to keep it."

Take this truth

Every action has a reaction. It also has two kinds of results — immediate and long range. We see this truth especially in our foolish choices. God doesn't "settle all his accounts in October," but he does settle them in his own time. Let's leave the timing to him.

Memorize this Scripture

Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin; when it is finished, it brings forth death.

Pray this prayer

Lord, help us remember that you are a God of order. Lead us to see the wisdom of working within your rules, and not against them. ■

Who said that?

We must consider the lives of those whom we teach; we must consider the God who saved us; we must consider the God-given task that has been entrusted to our keeping. [A systematic plan] will bless those whom we teach, and God will smile with favor upon us. — *Teaching for Results*, Findley B. Edge, revised edition, Broadman and Holman Pub., Nashville, 1995

Think about it — in reality what can a kid do?



We adults often are guilty of posing the question — what can a child do?

Let's not get into the psychology of it. Maybe we are overly protective, not wanting the child to experience failure. Perhaps we just don't want them to grow up too quickly.

Or it may be jealousy. After all, kids aren't supposed to be able to do things that adults are able to do.

But I have a theory — and it's much more than that. It is reality, that in many cases, we

just keep telling them not to try something, and "You'll be able to do that when you're a big girl (or boy)."

David, the shepherd boy didn't seem to have a problem in attempting something that all the brave soldiers of Israel were afraid of trying.

Not a one of them would go out to meet Goliath, the Philistine brute, some eight or nine feet tall.

He challenged King Saul's army day after day, ridiculing, scoffing, taunting, bragging.

But Goliath's strength was in his physical prowess, and perhaps his military experience. David knew about another source of strength.

After accepting the boy David's offer to fight for Israel's honor by going up against the giant, the king

dressed David in his (Saul's) battle gear.

David walked around with all that oversized, heavy metal armor weighing him down. He put the sword in its sheath around his waist.

David realized that the sword was dragging on the ground, and the armor was pulling him down.

He did a very wise thing. He threw off all that adult stuff, picked up some pebbles from the brook Elah, and grasped his trusty sling.

He knew where his strength was — the Lord was his source. Guess what, Goliath was no match for David's pebbles. He was no match for the lad without armor or sword.

When Goliath went down, buttressed by the Lord's strength, David prevailed. Is-

rael got from under the threats of the Philistines — who fled, by the way.

Later Jesus told his listeners, including his closest disciples, that unless they changed their hearts, they would not accomplish anything of value.

He said that unless they became as little children, they had no place in the kingdom.

I also think about the boy who brought some bread and fish one day, for his lunch as he listened to Jesus the Nazarene speak from a Galilee hillside.

He didn't hesitate when he was asked to donate his lunch to provide some crumbs for the great crowd of tired and hungry listeners.

That's a lesson for us — be childlike, not childish. Have childlike faith. ☺☺☺

Prayer, offering: traditions that are worth keeping

For *Baptist and Reflector*

In a tradition that dates back to 1895, Southern Baptists have supported a national offering for home missions. Initiated by Woman's Missionary Union as the "Week of Self-Denial for Home Missions," the week acquainted Southern Baptists with the needs of missionaries in the United States.

It was led by Annie Armstrong, WMU's first corresponding secretary. In 1903, the offering was named the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, in honor of the Baltimore leader.

This year, the Week of Prayer for North American Missions is March 1-8. It is an emphasis for churches to focus on Southern Baptist missions in the homeland. All home missionaries are supported, but eight are featured for prayer support. Southern Baptists are encouraged to pray for specific missionaries and for their own involvement in missions.

The offering financially supports missions personnel. The Week of Prayer is concerned with more than paying the bills. It offers opportunities for support

and involvement with home missions locally and across the nation.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering traditionally has supported the Home Mission Board — now called the North American Mission Board. NAMB was created in 1997 when resources of three former SBC agencies, the Home Mission Board, the Radio and Television Commission, and the Brotherhood Commission were combined.

The primary responsibility of NAMB is to assist Southern Baptist churches in reaching people with the Gospel in the United States, its territories, and Canada.

Southern Baptists are able to magnify the impact of their missions contributions through cooperative networks that have been developed with churches, associations, and state conventions.

More than 5,000 North American missions person-

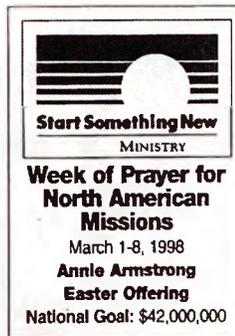
nel, most of whom are jointly appointed with state Baptist conventions, receive support from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The WMU still plays an active role in home missions offerings and the week of prayer.

The 1998 offering goal is \$42 million, about 38 percent of the agency's budget. All these dollars are committed to supporting missionaries serving on the field and cooperative work with state conventions.

The two main thrusts supported by the offering are evangelism and church planting. An estimated 200 millions people in the United States and Canada do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Every Tennessee Baptist church has this opportunity to support home missions — through the Annie Arm-

strong Easter Offering and Week of Prayer, March 1-8. *B&R*



In growing suburb of Memphis

Korean Church flourishes in Collierville

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

COLLIERVILLE — The Korean Church of Memphis here is one of about five ethnic congregations in the state which have built their own facilities.

And when it built those facilities five years ago, the congregation did it in a big way. Its campus includes 72 acres of land in this popular suburb of Memphis.

No, the members aren't particularly well off financially, explained S.B. Park, pastor. The congregation was wise enough to buy in a growing area. And when part of that land was needed for a highway, the county requisitioned 27 of its 99 acres. The payment received paid half of the land debt.

"Without God's help we couldn't survive," Park said as he described the event.

Another reason the congregation is so well situated is because of the sacrifice of individual members, added Park. Many of the members hold blue collar jobs because of their limited abilities to speak English, but they give unselfishly to the church. Thus, the congregation has added a gymnasium to its facility and has plans to build more educational space.

A factor in the church's growth is its stability. The congregation, which was a mission of Union Avenue Church, Memphis, is 22 years old and Park has served as pastor for 16 years.

Schedule to reach area residents

The church has a schedule which allows members to make only one trip to the church every other Sunday. This provides for those who travel some distance to the suburb.

Every other Sunday activities for the about 250 people who gather begin at 9 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. Activities include a Korean language and English language service and time for groups like Brotherhood, Woman's Missionary Union, and youth. Computer training and an *Experiencing God* study also is offered. On alternating Sundays evening programs are added to the schedule

Regular activities also are held on

Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. Other offerings include an annual youth missions effort. Last year they worked in Mexico. Such activities are led by three staff members, including James Kellum, an Anglo who is a former missionary to Vietnam. He leads the English-speaking service.

A community

An ethnic group naturally forms a close knit community when transplanted, and the Korean Church has taken advantage of that cultural adaptation.

In fact, it has drawn people to the area like Ted (Euntae) Lee, who commutes during the week 75 miles to Arkansas State University, where he is an assistant professor.



Lee and his family made the decision to live here more than a year ago and they are glad they did. They weren't Baptists and they had other Korean congregations to choose from in the area. But the Korean Church of Memphis has met their needs, he said.

Lee helps the congregation by directing a computer lab to train members. And his wife teaches traditional Korean dance to children and youth at the church.

"This church has really helped me and my family spiritually," said Lee. *B&R*



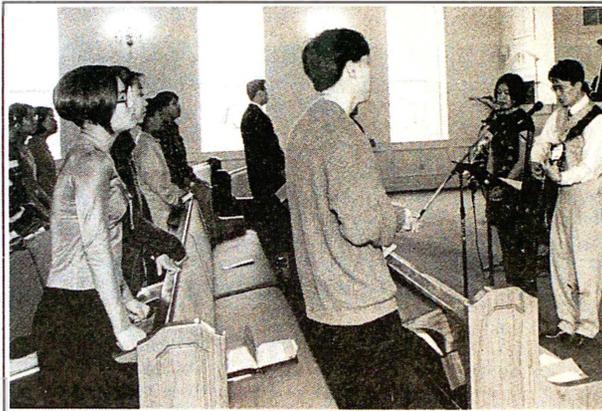
GREETING member Chong Pak Kim, right, is from left, Kang Rhee and S.B. Park, pastor, as Wan Ho Song looks on.



CHONG YOM'S use of a computer draws three other boys who watch the action on the screen in the church's computer lab, which is open several hours on Sundays during other activities. — Photos by Connie Davis



SUN HYE KIM gives a woman an order of worship while Min Woo Suk, center, and her helper, Yoon Choi, watch.



THE ENGLISH language service is more contemporary and draws many young people, like music leaders, from left, Marie Lee and Brandon Kang.



LEADING a Bible study on Sunday morning is Howard Choi, second from left.



THIS KOREAN language worship service is offered by the church each Sunday in addition to an English language service.



DISCUSSING a part of a Bible lesson with a student is Myung Kim.



The Macedonian Call

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Newsletter

Featuring news from Tennessee Baptists' four partnerships — Canada, Michigan, Rio de Janeiro, and Costa Rica

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

From your missionary

Find Out About Short-Term Missions

In the recent issue of *Stand Firm*, a men's devotional magazine produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board, was a devotional about men who were using their vacation to be involved in short-term missions projects.

The devotional urged the men to find out about short-term missions, and be available to be used by God.

The Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team is here to help you discover volunteer missions opportunities from here in Tennessee to projects around the world.

Please look at the many opportunities that are available in this issue of the "Macedonian Call." In addition to this listing in the "Macedonian Call," we have current project listings in an attractive promotional piece which can be distributed to folks in your church. You may request these by calling our office at 1 (800) 558-2090 or (615) 371-2021.

Please let us help you discover the adventure of Partnership/Volunteer Missions!



SHARP

Responses to needs sometimes hurt

Help that hurts: IMB President Rankin

By Jerry Rankin, president, International Mission Board
For *The Macedonian Call*

We are in an era of increased involvement in international missions. Partnerships and volunteer projects continue to multiply, and that is good.

It is our desire to mobilize the resources and potential of churches, associations, state conventions and every Baptist entity to reach a lost world for Jesus Christ.

Americans often are unprepared for the poverty and economic disparity they find overseas. It is commendable that many respond with a compassionate desire to help out of the abundance of their Western affluence.

Many are blind to the dangers of a valid spiritual ministry degenerating into material assistance, and how creating dependency can be detrimental to the health and growth of a church.

We are firmly committed to indigenous methods in our work of evangelism and church planting overseas. This means that mission efforts must produce churches that can exist, grow, and multiply within their own culture and economy without any dependence on foreign resources.

Over many years of missionary work around the world, missionaries have recognized it is a mistake to try to accelerate growth by an infusion of financial aid to build churches and support pastors.

The result is usually a welfare mentality. Well-intended financial assistance too often creates dependence and handicaps the initiative and faith essential for spontaneous growth.

One thing inevitably occurs when Americans subsidize the work of churches and pastors on the mission field. Potential growth is stalled because of a mind-set that it can't be done unless an overseas benefactor provides the funds.

The congregation loses a sense of ownership and therefore ceases to be responsible since others provide for the financial needs of the pastor or the church.

Jealousy often develops among the pastors and churches who don't receive assistance towards those who develop a pipeline of support from the US through their contacts with volunteers and others.

Cooperation between churches diminishes since they no longer need to work together in mutual support, encouragement, and interdependency.

In the long-term, support breeds resentment especially if the support is not sustained indefinitely because it creates a patronizing dependency. The donor is under illusion of assisting the church just until it can grow to self-support, but that seldom happens.

People are deprived of growing in faith, learning to depend on God, and discovering that He is sufficient for all their needs.

Subsidy propagates a Western model of a church that sees a building and a paid pastor as essential rather than encouraging a reproducible biblical model of the church as gathered believers responsible to and for their own leadership and facilities.

The work of the missionary is undercut in his effort to minister in a spiritual partnership since he is seen as uncaring in not providing the same material and financial aid.

Explosive growth in China, a 50 percent annual church growth rate in Malawi, 73 churches established in Cambodia in the last four years, and similar advances around the world would never have occurred if a pattern of subsidy and dependence had been created.

Unfortunately, well-intentioned help on many fields has handicapped long-term potential growth. — Reprinted with permission from *The Commission*/August 1997.



RANKIN

First partnership team to Rio de Janeiro reports results

By Dean Haun, pastor, Hermitage Hills Church, Nashville
For *The Macedonian Call*

God, in His graciousness, allowed my wife, Pam, and I to go on the first partnership trip to the great city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Jan. 4-13. We worked with some of the dearest Christian people that we have met.

The main purpose for our trip was to lead a seminar for the pastors and their wives of the Carioca Convention in Rio. I was asked to teach on biblical

preaching, while my wife led a seminar for the wives to encourage them in their role in the church.

Rio is a city of over seven million people and over 400 Baptist churches. However, many of the churches are struggling and needing encouragement. A number of the pastors have never had the opportunity to go to seminary.

The Wednesday evening after our arrival, I preached at the First Church in Villa de la Pinnah, a suburb of Rio. Pastor Sebastione and his people

were so gracious to us. I preached on a rainy evening to a packed house. The subject of the message was on strengthening the church. When the invitation was given, a number of people made first time professions.

One elderly woman came forward, led by her 40-year-old daughter, and she accepted Christ. After the service, the daughter said with tears in her eyes, "I have been praying for my mother to be saved for years. Now I know she will in heaven with me some day."

PAUSING during a seminar for pastors and their wives are seminar leaders, from left, Dean and Pam Haun of Nashville with participants, Theodomiro Jose de Freitas and his wife, Helize, of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Both men are pastors.

This kind of spiritual hunger was only the beginning of what we would see.

On Thursday morning, Jan. 8, I had the privilege of speaking at the Home Mis-

sion Board of the Brazilian Convention. We have some wonderfully dedicated men and women serving our Lord as missionaries in Rio.

For instance, Elizabeth Oates has served as an IBM missionary in Brazil for over 30 years. She drove us to all our appointments and destinations. She is without doubt the bravest lady that I have ever met overcoming unbelievable traffic, floods from torrential rains, and entering some neighborhoods that NFL linebackers probably would not visit.

In the afternoon, my wife spoke to the women of the Carioca Convention at the First Church of Bangu. They showed her with hugs and kisses and wanted to know all about our family and our children. We brought our photo album along with us and soon the bond between my wife and those ladies had been forever sealed.

Later that evening, we began the seminar for the pastors and their wives at the — See First, page 6



Video shares missions story

The new Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team video is now available. "Answering the Macedonian Call" shows Tennesseans doing just that.

The seven minute production can introduce people to possible missions opportunities as it highlights current and past efforts.

It is available from a director of missions or from the Partnership/Volunteer Missions office. ■

Larry

Volunteers in Missions Day

By Marcia Knox
For *The Macedonian Call*

Volunteers in Missions Day (VIM) will be emphasized Feb. 22 across the SBC and in TBC churches. Tennessee Baptist churches have a special interest in VIM Day. Of the 16,000 volunteers who served internationally through the International Mission Board in 1997, 1,410 came from Tennessee.

The figure for Tennessee volunteers in international partnership missions over the years is a startling 8,400. Part of this wealth of volunteers can be directly related to the institution of the Partnership Mission program in 1980s with the first international partnership with Upper Volta in 1981. Prior to Upper Volta, Tennessee established the oldest running continuous partnership throughout the SBC with Michigan in 1980, which has had over 16,000 volunteers.

This volunteerism is deeply ingrained within TBC churches and can in some ways be attributed deeply to the history of the state of Tennessee with that always ever present "Volunteers" tradition.

Currently, the TBC has four partnerships: Canada, Michigan, Brazil, and Costa Rica, which we are promoting throughout the state convention, associations, local churches, and "The Macedonian Call."

Several TBC churches are recognizing their members who have participated in the Partnership/Volunteer program with the VIM emphasis. Certificates for volunteerism will be distributed for those who returned their Recognition Forms by the Dec. 31, 1997, deadline.

The TBC Partnership/Missions Team takes pride in saluting all the Tennessee volunteers over the years with recognition through VIM day. For those of you who are considering volunteer missions, remember those in your church who have volunteered and see if you are ready to answer the Macedonian Call. ■

Shoebox gifts support ministry: missionaries

For *The Macedonian Call*

Thanks to Tennessee Baptists, many Costa Rican children had a nicer Christmas this past December. Many Costa Ricans were able to receive a message of Christian love through Baptists, both from Tennessee and Costa Rica.

The shoebox project was a big success in Costa Rica during December. The idea for the project originating with Luis Chavarria, past president of the National Union of Baptist Churches, UNIB, and sponsored by the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group, involved the collection of over 4,000 shoeboxes filled with candy, toys, pencils and markers, coloring books, toothbrushes, and other small items.

The shoeboxes were provided by Baptists from across the state of Tennessee and shipped in an ocean freight container to Costa Rica where local IMB Baptist missionaries and nationals worked together to distribute the gifts in various parts of the country.

The distribution locations were chosen by Chavarria. This information was provided to the Office of the First Lady of Costa Rica, who was able to assist with the paperwork in order to receive these items without paying customs on them as well as provide transportation to the various sites in and around San Jose.

The Costa Rica government was assured that the gifts would be distributed not only to Baptist children in each community, but also distributed to needy children. The shoeboxes were given to children regardless of their religious background as a method of outreach and testimony to the love of Jesus through the Christian community.

The first week of December, Chavarria, IMB missionaries Sis Tufts and Greg and Sue Smith, and Walter Rodriguez, assistant coordinator of the partnership, loaded vans and took the boxes to surrounding communities.

"For me, one of the special things about this project was seeing so many different people from different ministries and backgrounds come together to make this project work," said Sue Smith, volunteer coordinator. "It was a cooperative effort among IMB missionaries, national missionaries, missionary kids (MKs), and local pastors and leaders in Baptist work in Costa Rica."

"It became a family project as well," stated Rodriguez. "Sue took her kids and I took mine. It was a way to show my sons what I do and how I am able to help people through my work."

Rodriguez and his sons, Steven and Walter, made the six-hour trip to the South Zone of Costa Rica near the Panama border to assist the national missionary in the area with distributing gifts through the local churches and even to a group of street children.

Rodriguez and his family also held a party in their home for a group of children living in shacks near their home where they gave out remaining gifts.

"One little girl really touched me," he said. "I offered her a glass of Coke, and she couldn't take it from me because it would mean she had to put down her teddy bear. I could see how much that gift meant to her, and I knew it was probably the only one she would get."

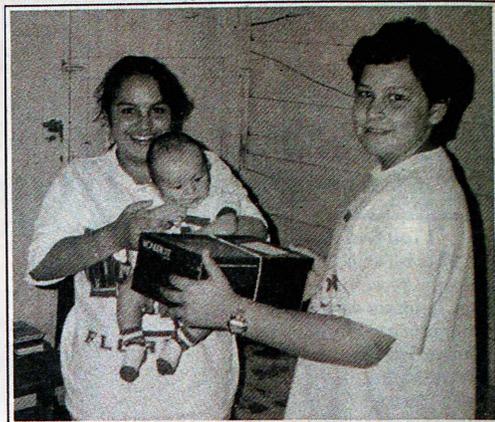
Sis Tufts also involved her family. She and her husband, Gary, and their four sons, Zach, Josh, Adam, and Micah, worked by loading vans and distributing gifts in the areas of Concepcion de Tres Rios, Cornerstone Church in San Juan de Dios, and Entebbe in Tres Rios.

In Concepcion de Tres Rios, the Tufts family cooperated with a Costa Rican family in organizing the distribution to needy kids.

"One of the neat things about this whole project was how two new Christians, Walter and Jorge, were involved in leadership positions as they got excited about sharing with others," said Sis Tufts.

Jorge is a new Christian who earns his living by guarding cars near the Baptist Center. He and his wife, Shirley, live in a very poor area, and they had organized a list of the most needy children in their neighborhood.

"His children did not even appear on the list," Sis Tufts added.



A YOUNG volunteer for Costa Rican Baptists delivers a shoebox gift to a young woman who holds a baby.

The Tufts family is currently leading a Bible Study in this neighborhood.

Jorge Arias, pastor of the Cornerstone Church and UNIB's Volunteer coordinator, had about 15 members of his church involved in distribution mainly focusing on a squatters' settlement near his church. The church had canvassed the neighborhood, and used the opportunity of gift distribution for inviting people to their church.

This church was very well organized in their distribution, and the members had plans for continuing with follow-up in the neighborhood. The local mission congregation in Entebbe, near Tres Rios, also involved many of their members in distribution.

Over and over, the children of the neighborhood said, "This is from pastor Luis Chavarria's church! This is from his friends in the United States!"

"I liked working in Entebbe best," said MK Jason Smith. "I liked it when everyone got a box and to see their faces when they saw what was inside."

Sons of Greg and Sue Smith, Jason, age 12, and his brother Kyle, age 8, were very involved in all aspects of the project from loading the truck at the warehouse to checking and packing boxes to the actual distribution. These MKs are "veterans" of helping with volunteer projects throughout Costa Rica.

What a blessing this project was! Thanks, Tennessee Baptists! ■

First partnership team to Rio de Janeiro reports ...

— Continued from page 5

First Church of Santa Cruz in the western portion of the city. Again, it was raining so hard that we decided there probably would not be a very good attendance. When we arrived, the church was brimming with hunger, excitement, and anticipation. An overflow crowd of nearly 450 people showed up for the service. Not only did the pastors attend, but the entire community showed up for a seminar dedicated to pastors and their wives. We were astounded.

I suggested to the pastor, Elison Amaral Leite, that we have a teaching session dividing the men and women, and then come together for a crusade. The pastor liked the idea, and God

moved in a mighty way. The altar was packed at the invitation time with people making decisions for Christ. The second night saw a crowd of over 700 people show up on a Friday night with 250 people standing and sitting on the outside of the church and looking into the window. Again, we saw God's mighty hand of revival move among us with a good number of decisions made.

On Saturday morning, I preached on encouragement for the pastor. One pastor after the seminar said, "God had to send you all this way just for me. I was very discouraged with my church and ministry. I was going to resign tomorrow on Sunday, Jan. 11, but God has given me a new vision and a new dream for our church. Thank you for coming!"

On Sunday morning, I preached at the great First Church of Pavunna in Rio, which is pastored by Theodomiro Jose de Freitas. This church leads the association in baptisms and has an auditorium that seats about 4000 people. It is the largest of any church in the city of Rio.

The service was electric! A full Brazilian band accompanied an anointed praise team and we worshiped the Lord. I could not understand the words being said and sung, but I sure could interpret the spirit of the service. A total of 12 people made professions of faith.

In the afternoon, we toured a new mission sight in the city where a church needs to be built.

In the evening, I had the honor of preaching at the historic First Church in Rio. Pastor Fausto Aquiar de Vasconcelos serves as the pastor there and was also my interpreter. The service was on live radio reaching into five different area states with a potential audience of 30 million people. We saw 11 people make professions of faith that night as I preached on the Cross.

I would encourage as many of our TBC pastors and laypeople as possible to make a mission trip to the great city of Rio de Janeiro. Your life will never be the same as you see and sense a hunger for God's Word that is often missing in the States. Rio is waiting for Tennessee Baptists with open arms. ■

The Macedonian Call

Volunteer is refreshed by experience in Costa Rica

By Don Schlosser, music design editor,
BSSB
For *The Macedonian Call*

"Oooo-pay," the pastor called out the distinctive Costa Rican interrogative and tapped his pen on the hot corrugated steel sheet that served as a make-shift door. "Oooo-pay," roughly translated means: "Anybody home?"

From the cooler shadows inside the bleakly humble cinder-block structure came the shuffling sound of bare feet on a bare floor, followed by a warm greeting.

I had come to Costa Rica as the music half of a music/preaching team for the Simultaneous Revivals Sept. 9-15 sponsored by the TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team. Serving as the preacher part of the team was Eliab Saenz, pastor of the Spanish Mission of First Church, Nashville. I had envisioned mostly leading hymns and singing solos as part of the revivals, but God envisioned something greater.

The lady of the house offered us a "refresco," a cool typical Costa Rican drink which was made from whatever exotic

tropical fruit was on hand, mashed and strained, and liberally mixed with sugar.

As I began to talk to our "Tico" hostess in my fractured Spanish about her need for a personal relationship with Jesus, I thought how very much like that "refresco" I was. Even though I felt inadequate, I was the fruit that was "on hand," and God was able to use me to tell someone about His sweet, refreshing love.

After sunrise on the next day, a rattling bicycle bounced over the rocky dirt road and a young boy called at the home of Pastor Wilberth Alvarez in Barranca where we were staying. "Oooo-pay," the boy said.

There was a message for the pastor from a church member who had the luxury of a telephone. A call had come from the neighboring city of Puntarenas where Charles Anderson, pastor of Broadmoor Church in Madison, was asking for someone to come and interpret the revival services.

They asked, "Me?" I was afraid my blunders with the Spanish language would do more harm than good. However, I was willing to try.

No one was more amazed than I

when during the revival service invitation a handful of people indicated they had prayed to receive Jesus. Oh, what God can do with whatever fruit is on hand!

A week later awake in the stifling tropical heat, my mind retraced my steps over the past eight days with the faces, the needs, the decisions, the concerns.

What could I do? It was the wrong question. I had come to sing and lead music.

The question was what could God do? Actually, I had sung a little bit, but the greater blessings came from the completely unanticipated opportunities that God had arranged. He chose to use whatever fruit was on hand to accomplish whatever He wanted to do. The results were refreshing.

We witnessed refreshment of His grace for the 26 of us from Tennessee and for the hundreds of friends that we made in Costa Rica during the simultaneous revivals. I am reminded that the invitation of Jesus was not to those who were the most capable. He still calls, "Come to Me, all you that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." ■

Partnership Prayer Requests

February

18 — Pray for the upcoming Mississippi River Ministries Convocation April 3-4 at First Church, West Memphis, Ark.

19 — Pray for the people of Quebec and Ontario, Canada, who have endured the recent ice storm.

20 — Pray for Larry and Mary Hendricks, missionaries helping ministry in Turcurique, Costa Rica.

21 — Pray for Tennesseans Gloria Patterson, Robbie Williams, and Allyson Wimberly, who will be ministering in Rio during Carnival.

22 — Pray for the church staff members on retreat in Michigan Feb. 23-25.

23 — Praise God for the 50 people who attended a student retreat in Canada.

24 — Pray for a Sunday School meeting in Michigan Feb. 27-28.

Missions Skills School scheduled for April

For *The Macedonian Call*

A Missions Skills School, sponsored by the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group, will be held Friday and Saturday, April 17-18, at Camp Linden, Linden.

Registration will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. The school will open with lunch at 12 noon on Friday and conclude at 2 p.m. on Saturday. The purpose of the school is to provide training opportunities for people to learn new skills for use in missions opportunities.

Several of the quality seminar leaders are: Roger and Penny Stacy, former IMB missionaries to Brazil and the Ukraine; Curt Fowler, MAI Volunteer Construction coordinator; Bob McEachern, IMB associate director of Volunteers in Missions Department; Don Whatley, associate pastor of Woodbine Church, Nashville; and Allyson Wimberly, "Hootie" the clown.

Some of the seminar topics to be taught are: General Construction; Prayer Walks; Teaching Conversational English in an Overseas Project; Conducting Block Parties; and Clowning.

The Prayer Walk seminar will be taught by McEachern who is a former missionary to South Korea. The Stacys will teach Conversational English in an Overseas Project and are practitioners of what they preach. Roger Stacy currently serves as director of missions for Central Association. Whatley will teach Conducting Block Parties which is an outreach of Woodbine Church's ongoing missions program and strategy. Wimberly, who has been involved in clown ministry for three years, is very active in WMU street ministry and will soon leave for Carnival in Brazil.

Registration will be handled through the MAI Group Office. Cost is \$45 per person. For pre-registration information, call MAI Group Office at 1 (800) 558-2090. ■

Missions Skills School

Registration Form

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax Number _____
Church _____ Association _____

Please register me for the following conference (check only one):
Conducting Block Parties _____ Clowning _____
General Construction _____ Prayer Walking _____
How To Teach Conversational English in Overseas Projects _____

Send to Tennessee Baptist Convention, Missions Awareness and Involvement Group, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728.

Kosciol Chrzciscijan Baptystow
Wroclaw, Poland
January 7, 1998



Dear Rev. Terry Sharp:

I am writing you on the behalf of the Flood Aid Committee representing First Church of Wroclaw. A month ago we received over 500 winter jackets from your convention for distribution to flood victims from the area of Wroclaw.

We are sincerely grateful for your very thoughtful and timely initiative. The children who got these jackets greatly benefited. The recipients were really grateful, and we tried to share the Gospel with them.

We found out that the project with jackets was very useful and practical help for flood victims. It was a good opportunity to share the Gospel with the

lost.

We enjoyed cooperating with the Southern Baptist missionaries who are stationed in Poland and came to Wroclaw to help us with the distribution of jackets. For them to drive all the way across Poland just before Christmas must have been very intense and exhaustive. However, the idea was excel-



HELPING a girl try on a coat are three members of the Flood Aid Committee which includes members of First Church, Wroclaw. — Photo by Steven Reece, IMB missionary, courtesy of IMB

lent and practical.

They witnessed the needs and conditions of life of many flood victims. Through this enterprise, we particularly appreciated the cooperation of Rev. Douglas Shaw with his administrative abilities as well as his command of Polish language.

We are also grateful for the additional gift of \$1,600 for flood victims' needs which we received from Rev. Shaw towards taxes, transportation, and other expenses and medicine to flood victims from our area.

Thank you very much for your support of this project. We hope for fruitful cooperation in the future.

On the behalf of the Flood Aid Committee,
Pastor Daniel Trusiewicz

The Macedonian Call

Costa Rica Projects

Children's and Youth Ministry

Project #: PM71998813
Dates: July 18-26
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 musical, mime, and drama. Bring bilingual preacher who can reach youth.

Seminar Leadership

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

Summer Missionaries

Project #: PM71998823
Dates: May 15-Aug. 15
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

Community Service

Project #: UP-1
Dates: June 11-25
Location: Gwin
Description: Community Service
 A team of 25-50 is needed to do clean up, painting, and present youth concert/drama in several locations

Lifeguard

Project #: N-1
Dates: June 1-Aug. 15
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
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
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
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

Construction

Project #: GD-2a
Dates: June 1-21
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to rough in multifunctional building

Project #: GD-2b
Dates: June 1-21
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to do roofing in a multifunctional building.

Project #: GD-2c
Dates: June 22-July 5
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to do electrical work in a multifunctional building.

Project #: GD-2d
Dates: June 22-July 5
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to plumbing for a multifunctional building.

Project #: GD-2e
Dates: July 6-26
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to do masonry work for a multifunctional building.

Project #: GD-2f
Dates: July 6-26
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to do electrical work in a multifunctional building.

Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to dry wall for a multifunctional building.

Project #: GD-2g
Dates: July 6-26
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Construction
 A total of 3 teams are needed to paint a multifunctional building.

Project #: G-3
Dates: Durand
Location: Durand
Description: Construction
 A total of 12-15 are needed to do construction on a new building.

Music Ministry

Project #: N-5
Dates: Open
Location: Prudenville
Description: Music Ministry
 Congregation song leader and pianist are needed.

VBS/BYBC

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

Project #: SC-2
Dates: Summer
Location: Portage
Description: VBS, Construction
 A team is needed to do VBS and do repairs on the church.

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

Project #: M-2
Dates: July 17-24
Location: Eastpointe
Description: Evangelism/VBS/Block Party
 A team of 8-12 is needed to do Block Party for evangelism and VBS.

Evangelism

Project #: M-3
Dates: Open
Location: Hazel Park
Description: Evangelism/Church Growth
 Revival teams, evangelism, and church planting activities are needed to help mission church.

Project #: M-4
Dates: Open
Location: Roseville
Description: Sports Evangelism
 A total of 2 volunteers are needed to do sports clinics for children and youth with emphasis on evangelism.

Telephone Survey

Project #: H-1
Dates: Open
Location: Ann Arbor
Description: Telephone Survey
 A total of 6-12 volunteers are needed to do telephone survey for new work prospects.

Project #: H-2
Dates: Open
Location: Chelsea
Description: Telephone Survey
 A total of 6-12 volunteers are needed to do telephone survey for new work prospects.

Project #: H-3
Dates: Open
Location: Dexter
Description: Telephone Survey
 A total of 6-12 volunteers are needed to do telephone survey for new work prospects.

Project #: H-4
Dates: Open
Location: Pinckney
Description: Telephone Survey
 A total of 6-12 volunteers are needed to do telephone survey for new work prospects.

Canada Projects

Camp

Project #: 97MIDQ27
Dates: July 19-24
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
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 emphases every night. Also involves 2-3 days in Saskatoon.

Project #: 97NOR017
Dates: July 18-26
Location: Prince Albert
Description: Evangelism/Construction
 A team is needed to provide entertainment at Prince Albert Exhibition and do light construction at a church.

Project #: 97NOR018
Dates: July 18-Aug. 1
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
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 #: 97MIDQ26
Dates: July 1-14
Location: Evansburg, Alberta
Description: VBS
 A team of 3 is needed to VBS with music, classes, and games.

Project #: CA-18
Dates: July 13-24
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 #: 97NOR019B
Dates: July 18-25
Location: Halifax
Description: BYBC/Prayer Walk
 A team is needed to do BYBC, prayer walks, and opinion polls.

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

Rio de Janeiro Projects

Evangelism

Project #: PM41998909
Dates: Open
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Construction/Evangelism
 A team of 12 is needed to do construction and refurbishing at the Centers for Social Work. In addition, they will do evangelistic work in neighboring churches

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

Project #: PM41998907
Dates: June 6-14
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 #: PM41998913
Dates: June 14-23
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Evangelism
 A team is needed to do evangelism in small churches.

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

Project #: PM41998914
Dates: June 14-23
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Evangelism/Creative Ministries
 A team is needed to do evangelism and creative ministries in small churches and new congregations.

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

Project #: PM41998911
Dates: July 26-Aug. 4
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Evangelism/Youth

Choir/Construction
 A youth choir is needed to do evangelism and construction in six small churches and new congregations.

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

Project #: PM41998919
Dates: Sept. 27-Oct. 6
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Evangelism
 A total of 20 teams of 2 (preacher and layperson with music skills) 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
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Evangelism/Social Work
 A total of 4 summer missionaries are needed to work in homes through the Carleca Convention Social Work Board to teach skills and do evangelistic outreach.

Construction

Project #: PM41998921
Dates: Open
Location: Rio de Janeiro
Description: Construction
 A total of 15 volunteers are needed to repair and paint Baptist Community Center and to do visiting.

Tennessee Projects

Construction

Project #: T-19
Dates: May 26-Aug. 6
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 Washum, (423) 475-5511

Project #: T-19
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A team is needed to do interior work/finishing of a pre-engineered metal building.
Contact: Lawrence O. Hudson, (901) 744-1643

Project #: T-29
Dates: May-Sept.
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A team is needed to complete a metal frame building.

Project #: T-21
Dates: June-July
Location: Jackson
Description: Construction
 A team is needed to do light construction and paint homes of elderly, disabled, or low income people.

Project #: T-25
Dates: June-August
Location: Martin
Description: Construction
 A total of 4-12 volunteers are needed to construct a new addition to the Baptist Student Center.

Project #: T-28
Dates: June-August
Location: Ripley
Description: Construction
 A team is needed to brick original sanctuary and a 40-foot addition.

Project #: T-49
Dates: June 13-20
Location: Chattanooga
Description: Construction/Special Event
 A total of 10-100 volunteers are needed to do construction in the morning and special events ministry in the evening

Project #: T-54
Dates: June 20-26
Location: Chattanooga
Description: Construction/BYBC
 A total of 10-100 volunteers are needed to do minor construction, BYBC in morning, and resort and park ministry in evenings.

Project #: T-33
Dates: June 22-July 31
Location: Memphis
Description: Painting
 A total of 10-30 volunteers are needed to do repair and home improvements.

Project #: T-53
Dates: July 4-10
Location: Chattanooga

Description: Construction
 A total of 10-100 volunteers are needed to do BYBC or construction in the mornings and resort ministry in afternoons.

Project #: T-50
Dates: July 25-31
Location: Chattanooga
Description: Construction, Resort, Inner City
 A total of 10-100 volunteers are needed to do construction or BYBC in the morning and work with resort or senior adult ministry in state parks in the afternoon.

Camps

Project #: T-52
Dates: July 11-17
Location: Chattanooga
Description: Camp Leader
 A total of 10-15 volunteers are needed to lead summer camp.

Project #: T-51
Dates: July 18-24
Location: Chattanooga
Description: Camps
 A total of 10-15 volunteers are needed to be co-counselors, recreation leaders, worship leaders, and do teaching.

Project #: T-48
Dates: July 26-31
Location: Brighton
Description: Camp
 A total of 5-10 volunteers are needed to conduct a week of summer camp.

Project #: T-43
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 4-10 volunteers are needed to frame and roof a new ministry center.

Project #: T-42
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 4-10 volunteers are needed to do electrical and plumbing work for a new ministry center.

Project #: T-41
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 2-10 volunteers are needed to do electrical and plumbing work for a new ministry center.

Project #: T-37
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 5-15 volunteers are needed to do finish work on a church.

Project #: T-46
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 4-10 volunteers are needed to do paving for a parking lot and driveway of a new ministry center.

Project #: T-34
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 5-10 volunteers are needed to replace the roof of building.

Project #: T-32
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 5-20 volunteers are needed to pave a parking lot.

Project #: T-31
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 5-15 volunteers are needed to do plumbing and electrical work on a church.

Project #: T-45
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 4-10 volunteers are needed to drywall a new ministry building.

Project #: T-44
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 4-10 volunteers are needed to do masonry work on a new ministry center.

Project #: T-47
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Construction
 A total of 25-30 volunteers are needed to construct a new sanctuary for an African-American church

Project #: T-36
Dates: May 15-Sept. 15
Location: Benton
Description: Camp
 Camp Agape in Benton needs volunteers

to serve as kitchen help, general maintenance, and craft workers. Teams of 3 adults per week are needed.
Contact: Andy Jordan, (423) 338-4153

Project #: T-7
Dates: May 15-Sept. 15 (weekends only)
Location: Benton
Description: Camp
 Camp Agape in Benton needs teams of 4-8 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 supervisors.
Contact: Andy Jordan, (423) 338-4153

Project #: T-15
Dates: June 7-Aug. 2
Location: Gallitburg
Description: Camp
 A team of 16-50 is needed for Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries day camp in mornings and family programs in evenings. A total of 18 large groups are required with 2 groups per week for 9 weeks.
Contact: Lori Fortner, (423) 436-0160

Project #: T-35
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Sports Camps
 A total of 10-20 volunteers are needed to do youth outreach with sports evangelism.

Project #: T-14
Dates: June 14-Aug. 1
Location: Townsend
Description: Camp
 A team of 5-15 is needed for Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries day camp in mornings, youth activities in afternoons, and family program in evenings. One group is required per week for seven weeks.
Contact: Lori Fortner, (423) 436-0160

Project #: T-11
Dates: Aug. 2-9
Location: Elizabethton
Description: Camp
 A team of 15-20 is needed to staff a local children's Bible ministry camp. Team will lead games, sports, hikes, devotions, teach Bible stories, and work with Big A Club workers.
Contact: Rebecca Brumit, (423) 547-0088

BYBC/VBS

Project #: T-8
Dates: June 22-27
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 Brumit, (423) 547-0088

Project #: T-22
Dates: June-July
Location: Jackson
Description: BYBC/VBS
 A team is needed to do VBS/BYBC in apartment complexes, mobile home parks, subdivisions, or churches.

Project #: T-26
Dates: June-August
Location: Covington
Description: BYBC
 A youth team is needed to lead a BYBC.

Project #: T-27
Dates: July
Location: Memphis
Description: BYBC Revival
 A total of 14 volunteers are needed to do evangelism and a BYBC.

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

Project #: T-24
Dates: July 27-31
Location: Memphis
Description: VBS
 A total of 12-15 volunteers are needed to lead VBS.

Miscellaneous

Project #: T-23
Dates: June-July
Location: Jackson
Description: ESL
 A team of volunteers is needed to work with Spanish speaking people in the association.

Project #: T-20
Dates: Open
Location: Memphis
Description: Clown Ministry
 A team is needed to give guidance and instruction on starting a puppet ministry
Contact: Lawrence O. Hudson, (901) 744-1643

churches

■ **Bordeaux Church**, Nashville, will hold a music event March 15 at 1:30 p.m. The Phillips Family from Hendersonville will perform. For more information, contact Kelly LeBlanc, pastor, at (615) 255-3395 or 384-6243.

■ **Smyrna Church**, Chapel Hill, recently bought 20 acres of land for possible future relocation of its facilities.

■ **Forest Hills Church**, Nashville, will host its monthly meeting of MOMS (Making Our Motherhood Special) Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. Anita Powers will speak. This group is not limited to mothers, but includes those interested in Christian parenting. For more information, call the church at (615)

373-8074 or at fhbc@nashville.net.

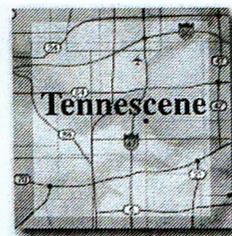
state events

■ **Two Special Friends Weekend Retreats** for people with mental retardation will be held April 24-26 at Camp Carson, Newport, and Camp Linden, Linden, May 29-31. Activities will include Bible teaching, singing, recreation, fellowship, and group worship. Programs also will be offered for parents, teachers, and chaperones. Pre-registration is required and openings are limited. The events are sponsored by Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries. For more information, contact Leanne Robbins at (615) 371-2083 or Gene Nabi at 662-0327.



■ A literacy missions workshop, "Tutoring Children and Youth," in Elizabethton drew 19 Feb. 6-7. Participants came from seven churches within **Watauga Association** and two churches outside the association. The leader was Mrs. N. Lee Hudson of Memphis. It was coordinated by Joe and Linda Ledford, Mission Service Corps volunteers there. **Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board** ministries sponsored the training.

BEING HONORED recently for 50 years of service as a Sunday School teacher is **Juanita Wallace** by her pastor, **Larry Jones**. They serve **Concord Church, Mohawk**.



Milton, for 14 years of service.

leaders

■ **Southeast Church**, Murfreesboro, has called **Kris Moore** as minister of outreach and **Peter Pollard** as minister of single adults. They both serve bivocationally.

■ **A. Carl Funderburk Jr.**, has resigned as pastor, **Scenic Hills Church**, Memphis, and is available for supply or interim positions. He may be reached at 2940 Bede St., Memphis, 38128 or at (901) 386-6440.

■ **Don Long** has been called as pastor of **North Knoxville Church**, Knoxville. He has served churches in Tennessee for 24 years and in Florida for eight years. Long is a former president of the Tennessee Pastors' Conference.

■ **First Church**, Savannah, has called **R. G. "Bob" Elliott** as interim pastor.

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NEEDED: Part-time Minister of Youth and Children. Send resume to Hillview Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, 1268 Springfield, Hwy., Goodlettsville, TN 37072.

PASTOR FULL-TIME: South Knoxville Church is accepting resumes for a full-time pastor. Send to: Search Committee, South Knoxville Baptist Church, 522 Sevier Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37920.

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Tutoring Children and Youth Workshop
March 20-21, 1998
Tennessee Baptist Convention Baptist Center Building
Brentwood, Tennessee

This conference is designed for anyone who is involved in literacy missions. Mrs. Lee Hudson of Memphis will be leading the workshop. She and her husband, Rev. Lawrence Hudson, serve as our Mississippi River Ministry Prayer Coordinators. Meals and breaks are provided through the Golden State Missions Offering. The cost of the training manual is \$10. Workshop begins at 1 p.m. on Friday and concludes at 4 p.m. on Saturday.

For registration information, contact Beverly Smothers, Tennessee Baptist Convention, Evangelism/Missions Strategies Group, at (615) 371-2031. **Registration Deadline: March 13, 1998.**

people

■ **Southeast Church**, Murfreesboro, recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of its daycare. And it honored **Charlene Demonbreum** and **Joyce Gray** for serving in it for 25 years. They are members of Southeast. Also recognized were **Gladys Lawson**, a member of Southeast, for 16 years of service, and **Tracy Johnson**, a member of Bradley Creek Missionary Church,

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Two million-plus anticipated to fast, pray March 1-April 9

By Art Toalston
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Maybe you should be one in not just a million, but at least 2 million.

Organizers of a 40-day period of fasting and prayer beginning Sunday, March 1, envision at least 2 million Christians asking God to bring revival to a morally decaying America. "PrayUSA! '98" will continue through April 9, the day before Good Friday.

"Our nation is in a moral free fall and desperately needs God's intervention," said Bill Bright, honorary co-chair of PrayUSA! '98 with his wife, Vonette.

"In this critical hour, nothing is more important than fasting, praying, repenting, and seeking God's face," said Bright, founder of the international Campus Crusade for Christ movement.

The 40-day fasting initiative — undergirded by a day-by-day prayer calendar — is an outgrowth of interdenominational "Fasting & Prayer" meetings Bright has led each November in recent years.

"God blesses or judges countries and cultures according to the obedience or disobedience of his children," Bright said at last year's meeting in Dallas when PrayUSA! '98 was launched. "If we are concerned about the tragic spiritual and moral decadence of our nation,

we as followers of Christ first need to see the faults in ourselves and seek God's face for forgiveness. I know of no better way to meet God's condition of II Chronicles 7:14 than to fast and pray."

The movement's cornerstone Bible verse reads, "... if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land," (NIV).

"These are desperate spiritual moments in the life of our nation," concurred Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., in a Feb. 8 *New York Times* article on the upcoming fasting and prayer effort.

The faithful must set an example by repenting and "humbling ourselves before God," Floyd told the newspaper, noting the most dramatic sign of repentance is going without food.

"We deny the most natural thing that our body desires, which is food, in order to persuade God to do something supernatural in our lives," said Floyd, a former president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference and former chairman of the SBC Executive Committee who called the convention to a day of fasting and prayer in October 1996.

Floyd, in a booklet he authored, *God's Gateway to Supernatural Power,*

recounts his experiences in two 40-day fasts along with practical guidelines for prayer and fasting.

"God's gateway to supernatural power is prayer and fasting," Floyd writes. "Unless and until we completely surrender to God's plan, we are destined to drift in a sea of disappointment, disillusionment, and depression."

Bright, in his book, *The Coming Revival in America*, urges Christians to "ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the kind of fast God wants you to undertake." Biblical evidence of fasting reveals various durations of as little as one meal to as long as 40 days. The extent to which a Christian fasts may range from an absolute water-only discipline to supplementing the period of abstinence with fruit and/or vegetable juices. For individuals with health questions, Bright advises consulting a physician to discuss any health risks.

"Prayer has great power, but fasting with prayer has infinitely more power," Bright told *The Times*, which quoted Bright as telling the Dallas gathering last year: "As a nation, we are faced with the gravest crisis in our more than 200-year history, because we have rejected God and his commandments.

"Judgment has already begun with rapid social disintegration during the last three decades, but far worse awaits us," Bright warned. "Unless we believers truly repent, further judgment and

ultimate destruction loom drastically ahead."

In a recent letter to PrayUSA! '98 supporters, Bright wrote, "Our society has an appetite for immorality and corruption that seems insatiable. As we approach the new millennium, the battle rages for the fate of our nation and God is raising up an army to fight on its knees. I am sure that all of you recognize how real this battle is and that it is fought more in our own hearts than anywhere else."

Resource materials for PrayUSA! '98 can be ordered by calling 1-(888)-FAST-ING (888-327-8464) or, from a fax machine with a headset, (703) 834-8990 and entering document number 105.

PrayUSA! '98 is an outreach of Mission America, a network of 100 denominational and para-church groups focused on evangelizing the United States and the world. Mission America's national facilitator is Larry Lewis, former president of the SBC's former Home Mission Board.

Supporters of the effort include televangelist Pat Robertson; Promise Keepers founder Bill McCartney; missions leaders Avery Willis of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and C. Peter Wagner; Bible teacher/broadcasters Tony Evans and Kay Arthur; and evangelical prayer leaders David Bryant, Evelyn Christensen, and Cindy Jacobs. ■

Internet becoming key tool for anti-gambling movement



By Don Hinkle
For Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — In the same way anti-tobacco forces used subpoena power to

prove that tobacco companies knew their products were addictive, the same strategy also may prove effective with the gambling industry, according to testimony posted on the Internet site of the nation's leading anti-gambling organization.

"We believe that documents exist which prove that the leaders of the gambling industry are also fully aware of the nature of their product," Bernard Horn, communications director for the Washington-based Coalition Against Legalized Gambling (NCALG), said while testifying before the National Gambling Impact Study Commission last August.

Horn's complete testimony is one of many resources NCALG offers via its site on the Internet's World Wide Web. The site — ncalg.org — is among a growing number of websites in which anti-gambling groups can garner much-needed resources as they combat the expansion of legalized gambling in America.

"They know that many of their customers suffer from gambling addiction, a medically recognized mental disorder," Horn testified. "They know that a huge percentage of their profits are earned from gambling addicts. And they respond by designing gambling games and establishments in ways to encourage and exploit this addiction."

NCALG offers free fact sheets, arti-

cle excerpts from national publications, statistics, poll results, and quotes from noted experts. Perhaps just as importantly, the organization's website provides e-mail addresses and telephone numbers for President Clinton, Vice President Gore, every member of Congress, and major news media outlets ranging from *Newsweek* to Rush Limbaugh, additionally giving tips on how to write effective letters to legislators and the news media.

NCALG also states it will provide research and technical and fundraising support to state groups battling the expansion of gambling.

The site is interactive as well (e-mail at ncalg@ncalg.org). Over the past two years, NCALG and its affiliates have beaten the gambling industry in statewide gambling referenda in Florida, Oklahoma, Colorado, Wyoming, Rhode Island, and Minnesota. The organization also has scored legislative victories in 27 states during the same period.

The gambling industry, meanwhile, maintains more than a dozen websites, yet "despite massive efforts by the gambling promoters, only one state legalized casinos or slot machines in 1995-96," NCALG stated in one of its website press releases.

Among other NCALG goals noted on its website:

(1) Fighting for a new federal law to curtail gambling mania. (In 1974 \$17 billion was legally wagered in the United States. By 1995 it was over \$500 billion.)

(2) Reaching out to other national, state, and local groups for support, especially in the fields of retail business,

entertainment, mental health, and law enforcement.

(3) Acting as a clearinghouse through its National Information Center and anti-gambling Internet site.

NCALG is not the only Internet site where anti-gambling groups can secure resources.

The Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission offers an anti-gambling resource catalogue, tapes, pamphlets, and other resources for a minimal cost. For example, church bulletin inserts are six cents each, while posters are 95 cents. The commission also offers free fact sheets and a sermon, "Gambling is Covetousness," based on Exodus 20:17.

Anti-gambling groups in individual states are discovering the power of the internet as well. One such group, Oklahomans Against Casinos (OAC), launched its own website — www.no-casinos.org — prior to the Feb. 10 statewide referendum on legalized gambling. The site included quotes from the state's political leaders who oppose casinos, anti-gambling editorials from newspapers from around the state and a list of more than 100 state lawmakers who oppose legalized gambling.

"Today's technology offers a powerful means of communicating with voters," State Rep. Forrest Claunch, OAC chairman, told the *Oklahoma Baptist Messenger* prior to the Feb. 10 referendum.

He cited a recent study by Georgia Tech researchers which shows 92 percent of Internet users are registered voters, and exit polling data indicates 25 percent of voters are on-line. ■

Former Secretary of State joins TBCH staff

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Bryant Millsaps, former Secretary of State for Tennessee and Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, has been named assistant to the president of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, Inc.

Millsaps, 50, assumed his new role Jan. 1.

"We are delighted to have someone of Dr. Millsaps' background and ability join our ministry," said Gerald L. Stow, TBCH president.

"He is a successful leader who is very familiar with Tennessee. Additionally, he clearly has a heart for hurting children and families. He will add significantly to the work that is already underway at the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes across Tennessee," Stow said.

Millsaps, who also served as chief clerk of the Tennessee House of Representatives from 1982-1990, said, "I have tried to approach every job I have ever had as a ministry. But of all the opportunities that I have had in my professional life, none compares to the potential of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home to positively impact the lives of so many people."

Millsaps and his wife, Robbie, are parents of three adult children. They have one granddaughter. They live in Hendersonville and are active members of Two Rivers Church, Nashville. ■

God's love

By Ron Blankenship

Focal Passage — I John 3:1; 4:7-18

Next to I Corinthians 13, our text in I John 4:7-5:12, is the greatest dissertation on Christian love in the New Testament. The love of God is the pinnacle of the Christian experience. Love is God's supreme characteristic. John boldly declares, "God is love" (ch. 4:8, 16). John expresses the love of God in five ways:

In the gift of his son (vv. 9-10). The most famous verse in the Bible is John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Jesus Christ was God the father's unique, one-of-a-kind son. Yet God sacrificed his special son for the sins of the world. This kind of love knows no bounds, it transcends all knowing; it is immeasurable. God doesn't want us to hate one another, so he sent his only son to die for us so we could see a picture of selfless love and how much we are worth in his eyes.

Includes all people (v. 16). Only those who accept Christ as savior and Lord are saved, but part of God's nature is to love everyone the same, even the ungodly. The Bible says, "He causes the rain to fall on the just as well as the unjust." Or as Paul wrote in Romans, "But God proves his love for us in that while we were sinners Christ died for us" (ch. 5:8). St. Augustine said hundreds of years ago, "God loves us every one as though there was but one of us to love." God is no respecter of persons concerning his love. God does not say, "If you are good I will love you." Only God can love with such perfection.

Not of a temporary nature (vv. 13, 15, 16b). John uses the word "abide" several times. Remember in I Corinthians 13:13 when Paul wrote, "And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love." Dale Moody in his commentary on I John related these words: "God is more a definition of love than love is a definition of God." Love is part of God's eternal nature and being. Love is more than what God does; it is part of who God is. Not only did God create us out of his love, but also he continues to sustain his children in his love. The child of God can be assured that God's love will stand with him through life, into death, and throughout eternity.

Expressed as we love one another (vv. 7-8, 11-12, 19-20). One of the evidences of our saved relationship with God is how we love one another. John writes some striking words: "Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers and sisters are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen" (4:19). Because of God's great love for us, we are commanded to love one another.

Ours for the asking. When I was a little boy in southern West Virginia, I would try to feed the birds on our porch when the winter weather was grey and cold and the ground was covered with snow. The shivering birds looked so cold, hungry, and helpless. I stepped onto the porch and scattered handfuls of bread crumbs and called to them. But they would not come near the bread crumbs. I wanted to help them so badly, but they didn't trust me. I really tried to love them, but they would not accept my love.

As I look back on my vain attempts to feed the birds, I get a glimpse of how God must feel. He offers, plans, watches, waits, hopes, and longs all things for our good. But he can only continue watching and offering his love for his timid, hungry, helpless little friends who have no idea how much God loves them. — Blankenship is pastor, Haywood Hills Church, Nashville.

Keeping the faith

By Hal Poe

Focal Passage — Jude

A popular attitude in America today has grown up which thinks it is important to have faith. It does not matter what you believe, just so long as you believe something. When Jude speaks of "contending" for the faith, he does not mean a generic faith that has no specific content (v. 3). He does not mean a rosy disposition or a positive attitude. In this brief letter, Jude makes the startling point that what a person believes affects how they live.

Family Bible Lesson

While faith may involve an attitude, that attitude depends upon the substance of what one believes, and more specifically, who one believes. This faith has real aspects to it which one can understand, so Jude can speak of it being "entrusted" or "delivered" to the saints (v. 1). Paul expressed a similar view when he spoke of how we are "stewards" of this faith (I Corinthians 4:1). When the New Testament writers speak of "the" faith, they usually refer to the Gospel which is the essential message about Jesus and salvation.

Jude does not give a detailed explanation of how these "godless" men challenge the faith, but their theology focuses on their denial of Jesus Christ as "sovereign and Lord" (v. 4). This denial results in immorality because they recognize no authority of Christ over their lives.

Jude's letter has a strong element of judgment. An essential aspect of the Gospel is the fact that Jesus Christ is the sovereign and Lord who rules over the universe and will one day judge the world in righteousness.

Just as some opponents of the Gospel in the early church denied the incarnation (I John), the resurrection (I Corinthians), and the second coming (II Peter), Jude is

dealing with people who deny that they have any accountability to the exalted Lord for their behavior.

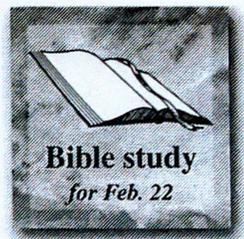
Years later, the Puritans would take this idea as one of their principle themes when they taught that those who will not have Christ as their king cannot have Christ as their savior. Christ is not divided. One cannot have faith in his atoning death and deny his exaltation as King of kings. We may fail to live as he would like, but at least we recognize that he has set a standard.

Jude reminds his readers of several times over the centuries when God has brought judgment against those who refuse to acknowledge his authority (vv. 5-7). In each case the ones who suffered God's judgment were those who refused to acknowledge God's authority over them. One might make the case that immorality is the behavior of one who has rejected the authority of God. Once a person has rejected God's authority, they are thrown into a realm of living without any restrictions.

Jude also gives examples of different spheres in which this attitude of total autonomy occurs (vv. 11). Cain had no restrictions; therefore, he felt free to murder his brother. Balaam did not believe God had any authority over him; therefore, he felt free to dabble in sorcery to gain power. Korah did not believe God had chosen Moses to lead Israel; therefore, he felt free to foment rebellion to take leadership himself. Jude says that the prophets (vv. 14-15) and Jesus Christ himself (vv. 17-18) warned that "scoffers" of this sort would appear.

A survey of church history reveals that people and cult groups that hold to these views have continually popped up over the last 2,000 years. Rather than be discouraged or fear, Jude reminds us of the reason for encouragement.

We can expect Jesus Christ to bestow mercy at the time of judgment and bring us to eternal life. Though we may fail in our own strength, he is able to keep us from falling because he does have the power and authority that scoffers deny. — Poe is dean, Academic Resources and Information Services, Union University, Jackson.



Trusting God's goodness

By Rocky Churchwell

Focal Passage — Genesis 50:14-25

God's grace is a marvelous thing, and quite beyond our comprehension. We deserve judgment for the sin in our lives (Romans 6:23), but God, through Jesus Christ, chooses to forgive us (John 3:16). If that were not enough, we are promised that God has a purpose for each of us, and that only God can come out of that purpose (Romans 8:28).

Why would God choose to have a purposeful relationship with sinful people? Only Jesus knows, but as we come to the end of Genesis in our study of Joseph and his family, we need to stop and ponder the wonderful example of grace that Joseph showed his brothers, because it might give us a good insight into the grace of God.

After a celebration with his brothers, Joseph sent them back to Canaan to bring the rest of the family to Egypt. Jacob and Joseph were soon reunited, while the family settled in Goshen, and were delivered from the famine that had set in. Joseph continued to distribute food, until the Egyptians spent all their money, livestock, and land.

Explore the Bible Lesson

Finally, in desperation, the Egyptians sold themselves to Pharaoh as slaves.

Joseph had done well for Pharaoh, and in his lifetime, the children of Israel were treated well. Jacob lived the last 17 years of his life in Goshen. When he realized that he was dying, he called his sons together and blessed each one, and made Joseph promise that he would bury his father at home.

When their father died, the other brothers became afraid of Joseph. Why not? By worldly standards, it was now time for Joseph to exact a revenge that had been a long time coming. What had they done in all of this time to deserve the grace that Joseph was showing them?

There was now, no one between them and the wrath of their brother, so seeking assurance that they would not get what they deserved became very important. But what they got, and what they deserved were two different things.

Joseph told his brothers that it was up to God to judge. What a wonderful answer to a pointed question. This is an answer that every Christian would do well not only to learn, but to put in practice. Since God is the only one who can do the forgiving, then we need to let God do the judging as well. We who are the recipients of God's grace, need to learn forgiveness in our dealings with those who have wronged us.

Joseph had been delivered from slavery only to rise to the second greatest position in Egypt. He had wealth and respect. God had given him everything he now had and he knew it. Joseph's brothers had sinned against him, but God used their sin to deliver everyone. In the end, Joseph reminded his brothers of God's grace, and showed his own love toward them by taking care of them for the rest of his life.

God has done a lot for each of us. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven and given life when we deserve death. We must forgive, and allow God to exact whatever revenge he desires. Then, we must find ways to tell others about what God has done for us. — Churchwell is pastor, First Church, Jamestown.



Oklahomans vote against casinos

Baptist Press

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. — "Don't roll the dice," Oklahomans said Feb. 10 as they voted 2-1 against legalizing casinos.

Despite fears from state educators, votes on school funding millages were not affected by the heavy "no" vote against casinos. Most millages, which provide most of the funding for public schools in Oklahoma, also passed by a 2-1 margin.

The final tally on casinos was 304,349 against and 139,024 for. The 443,373 votes represented about 22 percent of the state's registered voters. ■

Alcohol, drug abuse prevalent in prisons

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Alcoholism and drug addiction are key elements in the explosion in America's prison population, according to a recently released study.

A 281-page study issued by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University in New

Carver School given to Kentucky college

Compiled from BP, ABP reports

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Pointing to a change in the direction of social work as a profession and a 1995 mandate by its trustees, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has given its Carver School of Social Work to a Kentucky Baptist college.

Southern Seminary and Campbellsville University announced the transfer in mid-January. Seminary trustees had voted in 1995 to close the school upon the recommendation of President R. Albert Mohler Jr.

Mohler said the seminary "is fully committed to continue training and education in specialized missions and social ministries in keeping with both the spirit and the substance of the transfer agreement.

"Though we are no longer

York found that the number of inmates in state, federal, and local prisons tripled, from 500,000 to 1.7 million between 1980 and 1996.

Of that number drug and alcohol abuse and addiction are involved in 80 percent of the incarcerations, the study said.

Other key findings included the more prior convictions a person has the more likely the person is to be a drug abuser and that alcohol is more closely associated with crimes of violence than any other drug. Alcohol is a bigger culprit in connection with murder, rape, assault, and child and spouse abuse than any illegal drug. ■

Maine voters repeal homosexual rights law in close vote

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The voters of Maine dealt a setback to the homosexual rights movement Feb. 10, repealing a state law granting civil rights status to homosexuals.

Though official results were not available, the *Bangor* (Maine) *Daily News* reported the referendum succeeded by a margin of about 52 to 48 percent, according to *The Washington Post*.

The vote marked the second time in four months supporters of homosexual rights have lost in a statewide initiative. In November, voters in Washington defeated a homosexual rights initiative by 60 to 40 percent.

Some opponents of homosexual rights said the two statewide results show the tide

conducting a specialized program of social work leading to the master of social work degree, we will, in keeping with our Great Commission mandate, continue to train missionaries and ministers in Christian social ministries."

What was actually transferred to Campbellsville was not fully identified, but it appears neither real estate nor endowment were included. Mohler told news media that what was transferred was basically the legal entity known as the Carver School of Social Work opened by Southern Seminary in 1984, including records and other documentation as well as some library materials.

Carver traces its history back to 1907 when a Woman's Missionary Union Training School was founded to train female missionaries. The school was transferred to Southern

may be turning against what has appeared in recent years to be an unabated advance by the homosexual movement.

"It's a huge, huge victory," said Peter LaBarbera, an analyst for the Washington-based Family Research Council. "I think people are waking up, and they are seeing that it can be beaten. It just goes to show you that homosexual triumphs are not inevitable. I think this is something that can give hope to the rest of the nation," he said. ■

Missionary dies

Baptist Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Joe Lavern Prickett, a Southern Baptist missionary assigned to the island of St. Lucia in the West Indies, died Feb. 3 here after a long illness. He was 67.

In St. Lucia, Prickett and his wife, Helen, helped start a church from a base of Chinese factory workers. Many of the 25 baptized believers in that church have since gone back to China. Their work was featured in Baptist Press stories in July 1996 and December 1997.

Prickett is survived by his wife, two brothers, and three sisters. ■

NAC registration officially opened

Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Registration has opened for the National Acteens Convention which is expected to draw more than 12,000 teens and their leaders July 1-4 to the

by WMU in 1963.

Meanwhile, the question of what should become of the assets given by WMU in now being considered.

Although WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien and Mohler reportedly met to discuss it two years ago, no action has yet resulted.

O'Brien said the matter is "not a dead issue."

She said WMU leaders had determined "not to take any action until it was clear the trust funds were not being used as they were given."

Now that the final disposition of the Carver school has been announced, WMU may take a fresh look at the question, O'Brien acknowledged.

What's likely at stake is several hundred thousand dollars of endowment funds, including funding for scholarships and an endowed chair that bears WMU's name. ■

Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center here. The theme of NAC 98 is "Inside Out."

Acteens is the missions organization for girls in grades seven through 12 sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union. NAC is held once every four or five years for Acteens members and other girls who have completed the seventh grade.

Registration for NAC 98 will continue until June 15. Only those who register in advance will be allowed to participate in NAC activities.

Registration forms can be obtained from the Tennessee Baptist WMU office by calling (615) 371-2038. ■

SBTS trustees establish Henry Institute, hire faculty

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustee executive committee authorized the school Feb. 3 to establish the Carl F.H. Henry Institute for Evangelical Engagement.

Named for the man regarded by many as the most important evangelical theologian of the 20th century, the institute will hold annual summit conferences each spring where eight to 12 leading experts will gather to engage issues of importance to the church and society. Their research will be published and presented each fall at public seminars as information helpful to the local church.

President R. Albert Mohler Jr. described Henry as one of the primary shapers of the evangelical movement.

In other actions, trustees elected Bruce Ware, professor of Christian theology; Hal Ostrander, associate professor of Christian theology for the seminary's new James P. Boyce College of the Bible; and E. David Cook, professor of Christian ethics. ■

10,000 decisions made for Christ in Nicaragua crusade

Baptist Press

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Three hundred volunteers from 11 countries teamed with Nicaraguan Baptists and Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries in a January crusade that registered more than 10,000 decisions for Jesus Christ.

"This has been an historic time. Never before in our history has such a widespread evangelistic effort been carried out," said Walt Morgan, director of missions for the Nicaragua Baptist Convention.

Volunteers from the U.S. and other countries fanned out across the country in teams of two to four people to work alongside Nicaraguan Baptists in 105 churches and mission points. ■

Construction volunteers to aid work in Cuba

Baptist Press

CORAL SPRINGS, Fla. — At least 80 Southern Baptist construction volunteers, including some from Tennessee, are expected to undergird the evangelistic and mission work of the Baptist Convention of Western Cuba during 1998.

Their tasks — which begin with a team headed to Cuba March 1 — may not sound all that spiritual. Some will finish remodeling bathrooms and help rebuild a kitchen at a Baptist camp near Matanzas. Others will remodel Baptist church buildings in desperate need of repair. But their work will help western Cuba Baptists better accomplish their main goals, reaching "Cuba for Christ Now," their convention's theme. ■

Child care registration open for Utah meeting

Baptist Press

City, UT 84124, Attn: Jan/Sherrie.

SALT LAKE CITY — Registration for on-site child care for preschool children of out-of-town messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, June 9-11, is now being accepted.

A registration form is available by writing to SBC Preschool Child Care, c/o Holladay Baptist Church, 2780 E. 3900 S., Salt Lake

Child care fees will be \$10 per session. A nonrefundable deposit of 50 percent of the anticipated cost must accompany each registration form.

Parents are advised to register early. Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis due to limited space.

Preschool child care will be in the Salt Lake City Palace (convention center). ■