

## REFLECTOR

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Statewide Edition

March 11, 1998

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week's  
news

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

HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 400  
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## 20,000 gather for Youth Reach '98



**MARCHING TOWARD** the state capitol in Nashville last Saturday are youth participating in one of the Youth Reach '98 activities. The conference resulted in about 1,400 youth making professions of faith. — Photo by Connie Davis

By Connie Davis  
*Baptist and Reflector*

NASHVILLE — An estimated 20,000

youth from across Tennessee marched to the state capitol last Saturday and rallied there for the first time as part of Youth Reach '98, the annual youth

evangelism conference.

Despite rain, the youth seemed undaunted. In fact, a youth speaker, Jonathan — See 20,000 youth, page 3

## Could lead to gambling in Tennessee

## Call for constitutional convention clears first hurdle

By Lonnie Wilkey  
*Baptist and Reflector*

NASHVILLE — Committees in both the Tennessee Senate and House of Representatives cleared the first hurdle for a constitutional convention which could eventually open the state up to not only a lottery, but all forms of gambling.

A subcommittee of the House State and Local Government Committee approved the lottery resolution by voice vote on March 3.

The Senate's Judiciary Committee approved by a 7-2 vote a call for a constitutional convention.

The Senate committee vote followed an opinion by State Attorney General John Knox Walkup. He said a constitutional convention authorized solely to consider changing the constitutional ban on lotteries could not legally deal

with other issues.

The committee, by a 5-4 vote, amended SB 3103, sponsored by Sen. Ward Crutchfield of Chattanooga, to increase the constitutional convention from 33 delegates to 99 delegates.

Sen. David Fowler, who opposes the lottery, proposed the amendment to make it harder for the gambling industry to dominate the convention.

Fowler said by adding more delegates it would ensure "the voice of the people is heard" and would limit the influence of the gambling industry.

Several senators argued against the amendment, noting it would add to the cost of the convention.

Sen. Roy Herron of Dresden also voted against the call for a constitutional convention.

Herron referred to an oath taken by all senators that they "will not assent to any bill which appears injurious

to the people."

Herron argued that removing the prohibition against lotteries would open the state to "every form of gambling known to man.

"That is not clear to the people," Herron said.

If a constitutional convention is called and delegates vote to remove the lottery prohibition, the legislature ultimately would decide whether or not to have a state lottery or any other form of gambling.

Two major differences in the House and Senate versions must be worked out.

In addition to the difference in number of delegates called for by the Senate and House bills, the two legislative bodies also differ on the timetable of events.

The House version calls for Tennessee residents to vote in November on whether to have a convention and to elect delegates in August 2000. The Sen-

ate version calls for a yes or no vote on the convention in August and the election of delegates two months later.

The bill now goes to the full House State and Local Government Committee and the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee.

Bill Bates, public affairs consultant for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, called recent developments "serious."

"We must be proactive in making our fears about gambling and the consequences that could arise if the lottery prohibition is removed from our state constitution known to our legislators," he said.

He urged Tennessee Baptists to continue to pray about the matter and to contact their legislators.

**A list of Tennessee senators and House members was printed in the March 4 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*. ■**

## about your newsjournal

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# Legislation to protect tithing makes headway

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Legislation to protect tithing and charitable giving under the federal bankruptcy code are making headway in both houses of Congress.

The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved a bill by Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, to provide greater religious freedom and fair treatment for individuals who commit themselves to giving part of their income to churches or other charities while recovering from bankruptcy.

A hearing, meanwhile, has been held in the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law on a similar bill sponsored by Rep. Ron Packard, R-Calif.

The Senate committee vote was Feb. 26; the House subcommittee hearing was Feb. 12.

Grassley, in a news release, said his proposal "responds directly to decisions made by fed-

eral judges which leave churches open to bankruptcy lawsuits and force charities to return money given through tithing. It would prevent federal judges from undoing a voluntary act of worship in the way of tithing as described in the Bible."

Packard, in a separate release, stated, "Churches and charities should not be regarded as 'cash-cows' for greedy lawyers."

Following a 1992 court decision in which a federal bankruptcy trustee recaptured \$13,500 in past tithes from a Minnesota congregation, creditors across the country have filed suit demanding repayment of past contributions, Packard said.

Bankruptcy-related collections are "having an absolutely devastating effect on churches and charities across the nation," Packard contended. "Lawyers are well aware that most churches and charities don't have the resources to fight a creditor in court. With-

out protection, every collection plate in America is at risk."

In addition to protecting money previously donated to a church or tax-exempt charity organization, the proposed legislation also would protect tithing after Chapter 13 bankruptcy has been declared. Chapter 13 allows debtors to re-pay a discounted portion of their debts.

Under current law, debtors are permitted to budget a moderate amount of money for entertainment expenses, but they are not allowed to budget money for tithing, Grassley said.

"It doesn't make sense that a person repaying debt under Chapter 13 can budget for a burger and a movie, but not for a charitable contribution to his or her church, even when that individual has demonstrated in practice that he or she believes that tithing is biblically mandated," Grassley said. "In fact, current law violates individual religious freedom."

As Packard put it, debtors under Chapter 13 "can spend

their paychecks at bars, buy a television, even gamble or call psychic advice lines without repercussion. But they cannot throw a dollar into the Sunday collection plate. America is truly the last place I could have imagined this happening."

Specifically, Grassley's Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act of 1997 would amend two aspects of the federal bankruptcy code:

(1) It would prevent federal bankruptcy judges from ordering churches and other charitable organizations with tax-exempt status to return donations of up to 15 percent of debtors' gross annual income. In addition, where debtors have demonstrated past patterns of giving greater percentages of income, those donations would be protected by Grassley's legislation.

(2) It would allow Chapter 13 debtors to include a charitable contribution of up to 15 percent of their gross annual income in budgets for repayment of debt. ■

## Prayer lists will exclude 'Last Frontier' missionaries

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptist missionaries living and working with people in areas of the world that restrict the Gospel will no longer be named in public prayer lists distributed through the denomination's information channels.

"It's a very dangerous world we live in," said Avery Willis, senior vice president for the International Mission Board's overseas operations. "We need to pray for these people, but just to give their names might endanger them or, at least, cause them to lose access to the people they work with."

IMB officials fear not only for missionaries and their families, but even more for believers whom missionaries reach and disciple. "From the standpoint of people who might not be Christian or might be anti-Christian, if someone knows you are a missionary, they might persecute the

national believer," Willis said.

Missionaries appointed to help lead ethnic people groups in "The Last Frontier" to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ were informed in February of the decision to withhold their names from birthday prayer lists sent for publication through the Baptist Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union, and North American Mission Board.

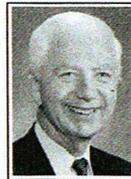
The Last Frontier is the collection of people groups that have been kept from hearing about Jesus Christ, often by governments or traditional religions. To prevent loss of life or access, the board has labeled each missionary according to the level of security under which each one must operate.

Through the years, countless mission-

aries have documented miraculous moves of God that occurred on their birthdays, when people throughout the world were praying for them.

"Recognizing that this is a great loss to missionaries in these categories, we will suggest that these publications ask their readers to pray, at least, for 'Last Frontier' missionaries," a notice to missionaries said. Those who pray need to spend more time on this group because the term "Last Frontier missionaries" could represent five to 10 people a day, Willis added.

People who want to pray specifically for Last Frontier activity can access the CompassionNet prayer network through a link on the IMB's Internet page ([www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org)). They also may e-mail [webservant@imb.org](mailto:webservant@imb.org) and ask for an automatic e-mail of the daily "Today's Prayer" listing of concerns from throughout the world. Last Frontier needs are detailed on CompassionNet and Today's Prayer as they come up. ■



WILLIS

## Volunteers needed

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — The SBC International Mission Board needs volunteers for evangelism and also those who can drill wells.

Well drillers are needed in Indonesia. For specific information, call Betty Slate at (804) 219-1471 or Bob McEachern at (804) 219-1524.

Volunteers also are needed to lead crusades May 13-26 in South Korea. For more information, call Wray Ivey or Judy Hensley of the Georgia Baptist Convention at (770) 936-5281. ■

## Moderates form national council to expand model

Associated Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Moderate Baptists still looking to influence the direction of Baptist state conventions have formed a national council to help form Baptists Committed organizations in as many as 15 more states.

The state groups likely would be patterned after Texas Baptists Committed. Similar organizations also exist in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

The motivation behind the expansion effort is "to preserve the integrity of the state con-

ventions" and "leave a lasting legacy of freedom for our children," said Herbert Reynolds, chancellor of Baylor University and moderator of a March 2-3 meeting here.

Reynolds and others said many moderates are not ready to withdraw from the state conventions, although many others already have redirected their energies toward the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a national moderate group that focuses on offering alternatives rather than contending for control of the state and national bureaucracies.

About 100 people from 15 states, including Tennessee, participated in the Nashville meeting, which was organized by Reynolds, Houston layman John Baugh, and Jack Glasgow, a pastor from Zebulon, N.C.

The group, billed as a "Mainstream Baptist Gathering," agreed to form a council called Baptists Committed Connection to coordinate the work of the various organizations.

Reynolds said the council would not direct the state groups but merely share resources and encouragement. ■

# 20,000 gather for Youth Reach ...

— Continued from page 1  
Vieira of Brentwood Church, Brentwood, said the rain could represent the challenge the youth would face when they returned home if they were going to try to live the Christian life.

Many youth took the first step toward that kind of life when about 1,400 made professions of faith during Friday activities, according to Ken Weathersby of Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries.

A number of youth were led to make those decisions by Kelly Green, evangelist of Brandon, Fla. He spoke at a Friday night session at Vanderbilt Gymnasium and the Saturday rally. Personal Witnessing Conferences also were held at area churches.

At the rally Green referred to two heroes of youth — Princess Diana and Mother Teresa. He said these women were willing to get their hands dirty for others, just like Jesus, "who spent his whole life getting his hands dirty in the lives of broken humanity."

Green told the youth to follow Jesus' example by trying to

help others, but to do it without condemning them.

He said God hasn't called him to abortion clinics to try to discourage young women seeking abortions, but to the back doors of those clinics to tell those women that "Jesus can set you free," he declared.

"Get out of your comfort zones," he encouraged them.

They should seek out the people "nobody wants to be with," said Green, because before Jesus saved them they were a nobody. He added that they should stop judging peo-

ple by the way they look.

They will be more effective witnesses, noted Green, if they earn the right to be heard. "You must back it up with your lives. Let them see your tears. Don't just talk, but let them see your passion," he said.

They will discover their lives and the lives of others "will be worth living when Je-

sus is Lord," he proclaimed.

On Friday night Green told of his adolescence during which he suffered verbal and physical abuse, used alcohol, and joined several churches. Then he met Jesus, he said.

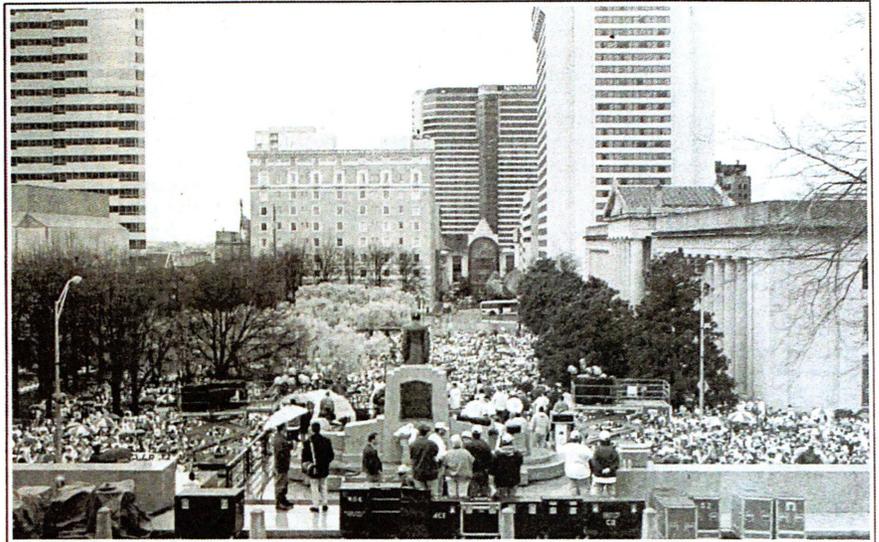
Other speakers were Davie Moore of Stanton, Tennessee Youth Speakers Tournament winner, and Ryan Moore of



First Church, McMinnville, the runner up. On Saturday Bennie Proffitt of First Priority Clubs, Brentwood, a program for schools, also spoke. *B&R*



**DAVIE MOORE** of Charleston Church, Stanton, speaks during a Friday night session at Vanderbilt Gymnasium.



**YOUTH FILL** Legislative Plaza, a pedestrian mall, and parts of Charlotte Avenue as they gather at the side of the state capitol for the rally following the march. — Photos by Connie Davis



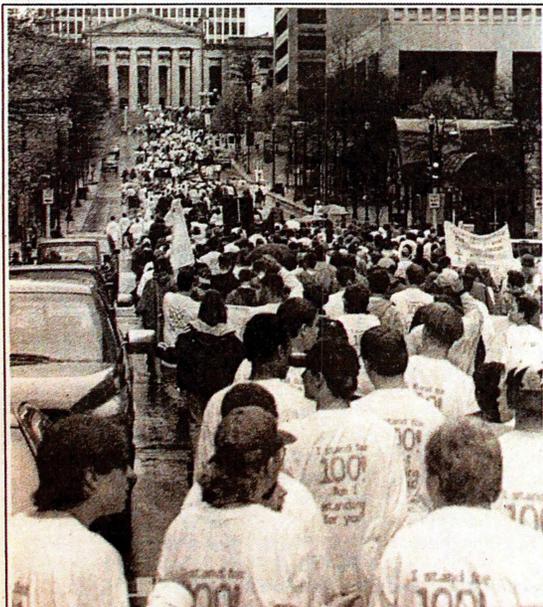
**POSING IN** makeshift rain gear made out of black plastic are, from left, Jake Avery, Michael Brashier, Zack Kirk, and Danny Brashier of Leawood Church, Memphis.



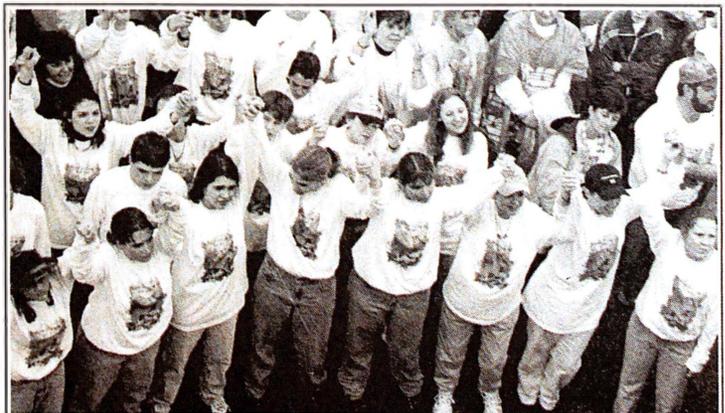
**THE CROWD** in front of the stage by the state capitol building observes the leaders of the rally and a statue at the back of the stage.



**KEVIN SHRUM**, pastor, Inglewood Church, Nashville, makes announcements while Brian Sims, pastor, Brentwood Deaf Church of Brentwood Church, interprets into sign language.

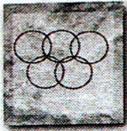


**ONE OF FOUR GROUPS** marches down Deaderick Street toward the War Memorial Building on Legislative Plaza. The groups started at four locations in downtown Nashville and marched about a mile to the rally. They wore T-shirts which said 'I stand for 100' referring to the several million unchurched people in Tennessee.



**SWAYING TO MUSIC** by recording artist Clay Crosse are members of Bethel Church, Greenfield, from left, April Hailey, Becky Galey, Erin Campbell, Christi Brock, Shea Cutrelle, Crystal Thornesberry, Christy Frazier, and Sheena Rowlett.

# Tennesseans serve at Winter Olympics



For Baptist and Reflector

NAGANO, Japan — Three Tennesseans

joined a 15-member team coordinated by the Woman's Missionary Union to minister during the 1998 Winter Olympics here. The Tennesseans were Ann German of First Church, Winchester; and Becky Brumitt and Donna Proffitt of First Church, Hampton. They served as part of a Women on Mission Enterpriser team.

German described the experience as a dream come true.

"For many years I've participated in the winter olympics (from a TV screen) and dreamed how nice it would be to be there in all the excitement, to see some of the athletes compete, and enjoy the beautiful snow and scenery. The Lord amazes me," she reported.

Based in Karuizawa near Nagano for 12 days, the women used several different approaches to witness to the many people gathered for the olympics.

### Witnessing approach

The team members distributed flyers inviting people to church services at a church in the Nagano area, they gave away gifts bearing spiritual messages, they led activities which drew people so other team members could witness, and they related to Japanese Christians to encourage them, reported German.

The team worked with Barbara Akins, missionary; Delane Tew, former missionary to Japan of the Woman's Missionary Union, SBC; and other evangelicals ministering here.

Soon after they arrived they distributed 5,000 flyers inviting people to special

services at the Baptist church here. German said the Southern Baptists were glad to learn the church had been built with funds from the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

To witness they used bilingual booklets, New Testaments, Gospels of John, bracelets, and lapel pins prepared especially for the olympics. For example, German explained, the lapel pins were a cross and sun over mountains with the word Nagano written in Japanese.

### Witnessing venues

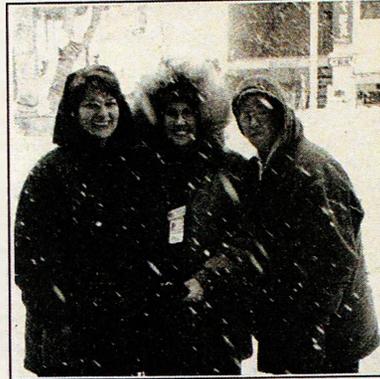
Team members worked at a railway station in Nagano. Several members would begin painting the olympic logo or snowlets (an olympic character) on the faces of people who were receptive. This was very popular, said German, and many people would gather who wanted their faces painted or to watch. Then several other team members would share witnessing items and witness as much as language barriers

would allow.

Another site of ministry was a coffeehouse or kissaten converted from an international language school. Team members were joined by evangelicals from Germany who performed music at the coffeehouse. The volunteers served refreshments and visited with clientele.

An unusual ministry activity presented itself during an afternoon when another activity had been cancelled, said German. She and several team members saw some Japanese merchants shoveling a large pile of snow from a sidewalk in Karuizawa. The Americans helped them and distributed materials to them and passers-by.

They also worked near ath-



TENNESSEANS, from left, Becky Brumitt, Ann German, and Donna Proffitt stand in a snowfall.

letic venues. No distribution of literature or other items was allowed in the venues or their parking lots.

### Personal experience

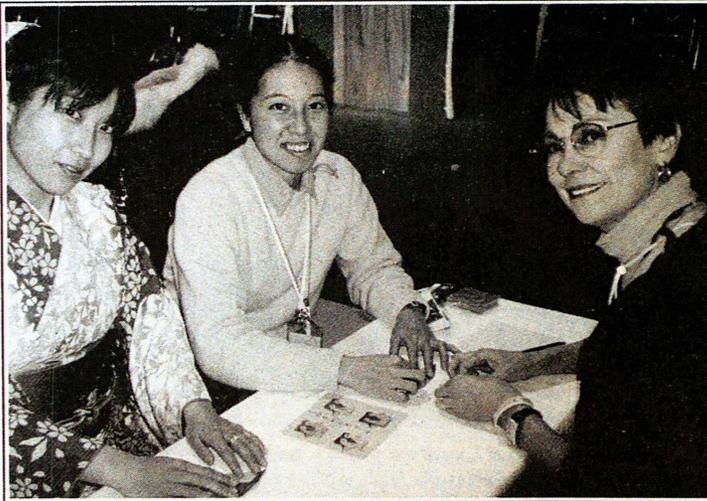
German said she will remember one experience for a long time. She was traveling on a train, referred to as a bullet train because of its speed, when she saw a young woman carry-

ing a toddler. She offered the young woman the seat beside her and the Japanese woman sat down.

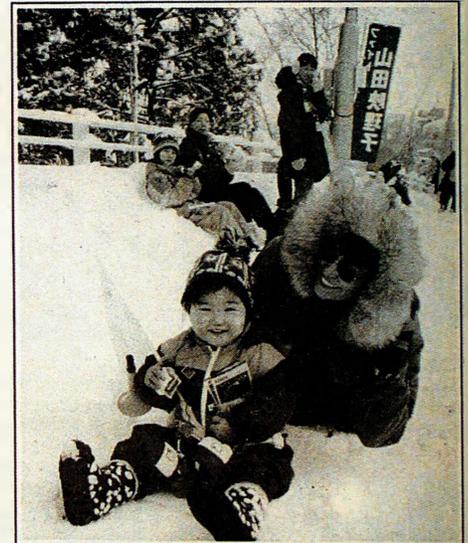
German learned from the woman that it was her child's third birthday. German gave the woman a New Testament in Japanese as a birthday gift for the child. The woman appeared to be very proud of it, said German, and asked her to write a note in it identifying herself.

German wrote a note with a reference to God. When they parted, German and her fellow team members sang "Happy Birthday" to the child although she had gone to sleep. The Americans and Japanese woman parted friends.

This experience and many others were directed by the prayers of many Tennesseans and other Baptists for the team, she concluded. *B&R*

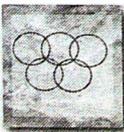


LEARNING THE ART of origami from some new friends at a cultural presentation area is Ann German, right, of Manchester. Origami is the art of folding paper into different shapes and forms. The area was near the curling competition venue.



ANN GERMAN plays in the snow with a child she got to know during her visit in the Nagano area.

## East Tennessee missionaries minister during Winter Olympics



For Baptist and Reflector

NAGANO, Japan — Two East Tennessee resort missionaries — Bill Black and Pete Owen —

overcame unexpected expenses and transportation problems to share Christ and minister to those attending, participating, and working at the Winter Olympics here.

Black, director of Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries, and Pete Owen, chaplain at Dollywood, served at several Olympic sites.

The assignment required the team

purchase transportation and tickets to events in order to be in the crowd and have access to the people, Black said.

"We accepted this unexpected cost. Transportation proved to be very difficult and we almost changed our team name to that of the 'train team.' We spent many hours waiting on buses and trains and riding them," Black said.

He noted their assignment required the team, which also included Kyle Woodfin of Georgia, to "remain focused and intentional in our efforts."

The team varied its approach in

reaching people, Black said, noting they would give out small gifts which earned them the right to be heard.

"We followed these with relational time in which we sought to get to know the other person and to tell them who we are as Christians.

"Finally, we would attempt to share something of how they could experience God's love either through conversation, gifts of *More Than Gold* books, or gifts of the Gospel of John. We often sought to make sure they knew where to find a Christian church in Japan or how to contact us," he said.

In addition to working the ski events

and crowd, the team surveyed the area for resort ministries and found that "it is ripe for church-based resort missions," Black added.

Black observed "the Holy Spirit worked" within the Olympic climate and "within us to lead us to many people who were open to the Gospel for the first time in their lives.

"We were able to capitalize on the Olympic spirit to share God's spirit and reveal to them there is much more than gold in life. Our intentional efforts were to go beyond the excitement of the Olympic spirit and into the blessing of the Holy Spirit," Black concluded. ■

# The state of the paper, serving Baptists

**A** most significant ingredient in the character of Christian journalists is a keen interest in the position they hold. There must be a singular dedication and love for the work.

Caring about the job ranks at the top, along with a definite call from God, and qualifications as a journalist. Money is not the driving force. A spiritual gift is.

All this comes to mind as I reflect on more than three decades of serving Christ through Baptist newspapers.

Early in my career I chose to seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit in decision-making. I chose not to argue endlessly about politics, and to try to represent fairly Tennessee Baptists. This must be a habit — and the paper becomes a habit.

The *Baptist and Reflector* does not belong to the editor or the staff — and it is not under Executive Board ownership. All of us are merely caretakers.

If there are owners, they are the people of our churches — and the paper is their advocate. It's also true that the paper works with the ministries supported and led by the Executive Board — through Cooperative Program support.

The challenge of a good paper is to guide its readers through all circumstances, and to present the news unfettered and without bias. Tell the truth and

trust the people is a high standard.

The paper and staff must never play favorites. This is a vital sign of health, a carefully crafted plan to represent equally the different groups in Tennessee.

The paper must always be free from politics or political pressure. A free press is at the heart of freedom itself. A controlled press dances to the tune of those in control. A true journalist will never seek control and cannot abide it.

Loss of a free newspaper is death to the free flow of information that all readers have a right to expect. They pay the bills and they want a free press.

Those who would try to make decisions from a non-journalistic approach play to the galleries of ignorance and self.

The *Baptist and Reflector* has existed as a strong influence for 162 years — born when our nation was just a fledgling.

We are at a critical time in history — for the paper and the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

On April 1 the paper faces a change in leadership. The past decade has been boisterous at times — with occasional unsettling developments in the Southern Baptist Convention and in our own state.

There have been changes in leadership and growth in almost every area. Even so, the convention faces the year 2000 with

reason to attain even higher goals.

The *Baptist and Reflector* remains a steady force for supporting, reporting, and promoting Baptist work in Tennessee.

Though we have fewer readers than we had at the decade's beginning, the *B&R* is still a strong and dependable voice.

We have reported earlier that plans are underway to elevate the readership and strengthen the paper's viability. These plans are developing from a study by Craig Communications and the *B&R* staff.

The recommendations are scheduled for action over a period of months, taking us into the next century stronger and better able to help our readers.

Be a part of this. The state of the paper? Well, and getting stronger with a bright future. — *Wm. Fletcher Allen*

## Speaking on issues

A special emphasis of the *Baptist and Reflector*, published on March 25, will spotlight the 1987-98 decade.

This period covers the tenure of the editor, who retires on March 31.

The paper also will have its usual features plus current news of events of Tennessee Baptists and their churches.

Churches also are reminded that this is a good time to subscribe for church families, or to add to your readership. — *WFA*



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



### Start with a smile

Baseball umpire: "I call them a ball or a strike just as I see them."

Second umpire: "I call them as they are, ball or strike."

Third umpire: "They become a ball or strike only after I call them."

### Take this truth

Sometimes the boss is right. Sometimes the boss is wrong. But the boss is always the boss. Early in life we need to learn to respect authority. Parents need to teach children to accept and respect those in leadership.

### Memorize this Scripture

Jesus went ... with them, and came to them and was subject to them. — Luke 2: 51

### Pray this prayer

Lord, teach me to realize the best leaders are those who have first learned the discipline of being led. ■

### Who said that?

Be assured that as you make your best and most enduring attempt to build a strong family, God will be with you. He will bring honor to himself through your example. He will take your legacy of values and faith, and build it into an unshakable foundation that does not fail. — *Building Strong Families, William Mitchell and Michael Mitchell, Broadman and Holman Publishers, Nashville, Tenn., 1997*

## You don't have to wait to get an assignment



One word more

by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

An item of praise was noted in the February issue of Prayer-O-Grams, a mission publication that emphasizes current prayer needs and praises involving Southern Baptist missionaries.

A missionary reported that a 95-year-old Japanese woman living on Okinawa, had a special praise to share.

The lady said, "I have a bright future — because I know that Jesus is waiting for me — and I have a bright fu-

ture." Her statement makes me want to shout!

Betty and her friend Evelyn deliver meals on wheels. They don't just give the folk food, they check on them and try to show interest along with their friendly greeting.

One undefeatable woman, we'll call Miss Beulah. Also 95, she is still an evangelist. How do I know? She goes beyond her limits, and wants to help care for people and make sure they know all about Jesus!

She too has a bright future.

These two ladies could lead an outreach or witnessing brigade. What pastor wouldn't like to have them lined up to talk to lost or "strayed" people about the church and the love of Christ?

Most Baptist churches have

members just like these two 95-year-olds. There are people in every church who have a zest for living, and who want to carry good words and kind deeds to others.

Many of them are older members. They may not want to be called Keen Agers, the Golden Group, or Gray Power — but put an opportunity in front of them and they will take it seriously.

I have a bright future, she said, because Jesus is waiting for me. I think that she's excited about the prospect of seeing the Savior face-to-face.

We may have lost that eagerness, many of us. We know about it but we tend to push aside the inevitable. It's not necessary to want to "move on up" but I have a healthy desire

to be like these 95'ers.

A cartoon recently depicted two "old" ladies rocking on the porch. One wheezed to the other, "I'm so old that my friends who have gone to heaven will think I've died and they've missed me."

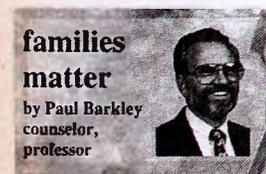
You know something? Even that bit of sarcasm showed a spirited attitude, and a humorous look at life.

Fat chance. If they were true friends, they'll know.

Whether it's discussions about using choruses or hymns for worship — or whether it's fussing about someone taking a seat on your favorite pew — times are changing.

But the outlook is great no matter our age, when we all realize we "have a bright future." ■

## What is the most significant influence on parents?



families matter

by Paul Barkley, counselor, professor

ma with no idea how to make the appropriate decisions.

They often have no direction in education, vocation, family planning, or purpose in life. Somehow the expectation is that "everything will work out."

When this lack is combined with another startling statistic, the effects are frightening. According to the Barna Research Group, less than one quarter of America's parents would identify church or religious faith as a significant factor influencing their parenting.

William Bennett has been credited with the statement that America has lost its moral compass. I see children today adrift in a confusing sea of confounding dilem-

ma with no idea how to make the appropriate decisions. At the same time, four of five Protestant churches offer some type of family-specific ministry or program. We might ask, Is the ministry offered ineffective or do the parents simply not avail themselves of the programs offered?

Even born-again Christian parents ranked only slightly higher (33 percent) in claiming the church as an important influence on their parenting.

What ranks as the most significant influence? The highest was the impact of their own parents' style, or their upbringing, mentioned by 45 percent of parents surveyed.

A close second was the influence of other people such as friends, relatives, and spouses mentioned by 35 percent. That is almost the same percentage acknowledged print materials such as books, magazines, and articles, 34 percent. Only a small percentage recognized the experts, Dr. James Dobson, 3 percent, or Dr. Spock, the child-rearing specialist, 1 percent.

A surprisingly large number, 81 percent, said they thought their churches should be more involved in helping them to be better parents. I am proud of the material available through the Baptist Sunday School Board, especially Lifeway Press in our Baptist Book Stores.

I am also proud of our Tennessee Baptist Convention for assigning a section of its Executive Board staff under Don Mauldin with responsibility of planning and providing resources to Tennessee Baptist churches in the area of family and parenting.

When you combine the few parents who feel that religion or faith is an important influence in their parenting skills, with the many Protestant churches that offer family-oriented programs and ministry, we wonder whether parents are making use of the resources at their disposal.

The old adage is, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." ■

## SBC CP gifts rise in February

Baptist Press

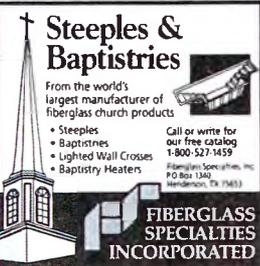
NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for February increased more than 5 percent compared to last February, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

A total of \$14,072,308 was received in February, an increase of \$682,088 over the same month last year.

For the first five months of the SBC fiscal year, receipts total \$66,606,966, compared to \$64,920,033 over the same period last year, an increase of \$1,686,933, or 2.6 percent.

Designated gifts also rose in February and total \$77,299,241 for the year, an increase of \$6,665,036 or 9.44 percent over the same time last year. ■

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# Texas board targets church with ordained homosexual

Baptist Press

DALLAS — The executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas voted Feb. 24 to no longer receive funds from an Austin church which ordained a homosexual as a deacon.

The board also asked that University Church, Austin, not state any affiliation with the BGCT on printed materials or on its Internet site.

The vote was described as overwhelming among the board's 200-plus members by

Associated Press and area daily newspapers.

University Church, which gave \$11,000 through the BGCT last year, can still attempt to send messengers to a BGCT annual meeting, although such an attempt may prove futile after a stance adopted by the convention in 1966 against seating churches that "knowingly endorse sexual practices outside of the biblical vision of marriage." Austin Association disfellowshipped the church in 1995 over its 1994 ordination of the

homosexual deacon.

"We are not criticizing their ministry to homosexuals," said Charles Davenport, pastor of First Church, Tullia, and chairman of the administrative committee that unanimously recommended the action to the BGCT executive board.

However, "ministry to is different from affirmation of," Davenport said, noting the con-

vention's position. "We are simply saying we believe homosexuality and homosexual practice is contrary to Scripture."

University Church Pastor Larry Bethune said the decision is an attempt by the convention to dictate policy to a local church and sends a "damning message to homosexuals that can only be interpreted as hatred in the name of Christ." ■

## Classified

**FULL-TIME POSITION:** First Baptist Church, Jamestown, is accepting resumes for minister of youth/music. Send resume to Search Committee, c/o Dickson, 315 Colditz Road, Jamestown, TN 38556.

**FOR SALE:** Pews, all wood with red cushions. (27) 14 ft, (4) 11 ft., (2) 10 ft., pulpit, 2 pulpit chairs. \$25 per linear foot, price negotiable. Call Kerry Walker at Trinity Church (931) 728-4588 or Tom Giel (931) 393-7443.

**RECEPTIONIST:** Colonial Baptist Church is seeking a part-time receptionist. Computer skills a plus. Send resume to: Business Administrator, 1503 Colonial Road, Memphis, TN 38117.

**POSITION OPEN:** Poplar Corner Church, about 4-5 miles from Jackson, is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Search Committee, Poplar Corner Baptist Church, Highway 4

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## Position Openings

### Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention

The following Ministry Assistant positions are now available at the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention:

- Missions Awareness & Involvement Group — Secretary
- Administrative Services — Support Services Assistant and Accounting Assistant
- Communication Services Group — Secretary and Temporary Part-time Design Services

Information concerning these positions may be obtained by contacting Human Resources Office, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024, 1 (800) 558-2090, Ext. 2013. All candidates must submit an application to be considered for a position.

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## Pastor of Discipleship/Administration

Bethlehem Church, a rapidly growing SBC congregation of 750+ active worshippers, is looking for a person to develop an overall discipleship process which will help "develop people into passionate, fully-devoted followers of Christ." This individual will be asked to develop a master plan to facilitate spiritual growth in our members and also help develop an overall strategic plan for our church. The candidate will provide day to day leadership to the coordination of all church ministries and provide direct supervision of all support staff. Prior experience in a Discipleship/Administrative role is required and a bachelor's degree and master's preferred. Send resume to: Personnel Team, Bethlehem Baptist Church, 539 N. New Hope Rd., Gastonia, N.C. 28054; FAX: (704) 864-3276.



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This is a Cooperative Program event sponsored by the MRM Region State Conventions.

## You kept them together through Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

Lisa was asked to leave the Job Corps when she became pregnant.

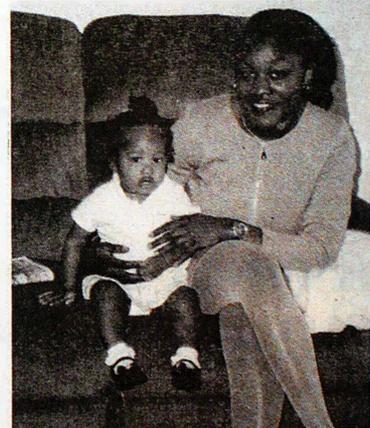
Homeless, jobless, and alone, Lisa found support through the TBCH alternative home in Greeneville where she lived until her daughter Asia was born.

Lisa then tried to support herself and her child. Overwhelmed and unprepared, she found a chance to better both their lives through the TBCH Living Waters program in Elizabethton.

The Living Waters program provides housing, teaches parenting skills, and helps young single mothers like Lisa find employment.

Thanks to the gifts of Tennessee Baptists, Lisa is finishing her G.E.D. and will start at East Tennessee State University this year.

Your gifts and the ministry of TBCH change lives. Just ask Lisa Reeves.

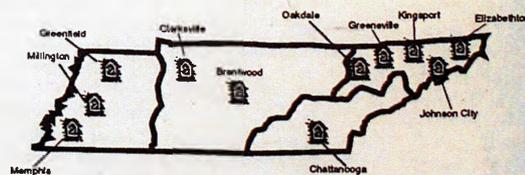


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## Kingdom vision

By Mike Rogers

**Focal Passage — Luke 7:36-50**

Can you imagine sitting in the presence of the Son of God and not having a clue who he is? What happens to people who have embraced a "system of religion" to such an extent that they do not know God? Today, many Baptists are quick to condemn Simon, the Pharisee, because he didn't recognize who Jesus really was. Also, we express confusion over his obvious rejection of the "sinful woman" who washed and anointed the feet of Jesus. Yet, has the church today not been guilty of the same? Are we not more consumed with building projects, maintaining cultural traditions and defining orthodoxy in lieu of recognizing the risen Lord in our midst? Are we sensitive to God's grace-filled agenda toward the people who surround us each day? Have we selectively chosen our target population? Has the Gospel become something other than "Good News" in the church today? Is our love for God reflected in our sacrificial love of others? Or are we just going through the motions of our religion with little passion born out of authentic love for God?

This remarkable experience in the life of Christ points to the striking clash between the "religion of men" and the "Kingdom of God." Simon was operating out of the orthodox thinking of his religion. He was shocked by Jesus who seemed to "color outside of the lines" drawn by the most righteous teachers of that day by allowing such a sinful woman to touch him — what blasphemy. Simon was shocked that Jesus would violate the written traditions of his faith in such a way. Even though this righteous man was in the presence of the King and the Kingdom, he could see neither. Jesus told the most religious of his day, "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. I do not accept praise from men, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts" (John 5:39-42). The ironic truth revealed on that day was that Simon was further from the Kingdom of God than the sinful woman he so readily condemned. His system of religion had eclipsed the love of God and he had no compassion for the sinful woman. His religion had blinded him from seeing the Son of God and experiencing the activity of God. Yet this nameless woman honored Jesus with a touching expression of gratitude and humility. She recognized her sin and her need for God's mercy. Amazingly, the Kingdom of God was opened up to her that day. She experienced a cleansing of her soul from the sin that had so entrapped her life. She was set free to love freely and live in the fullness of life.

This Kingdom moment in history constantly reminds me of the vast difference between the mindset of men and the Kingdom of God. Many times I feel sadness for the arrogance with which religious leaders proclaim their "system of religion." Are we caught up in our righteous condemnation of the "sinful people" in this world from our comfortable pulpits, far from the reality of everyday life ... pushing our programs and missing the King and his Kingdom ... holding on to the riches of this world as we build monuments to ourselves with brick and mortar? Standing in contrast to us all is one "sinful woman." Seeing herself honestly, she knelt before the King and through his grace and mercy found salvation, love, and life. This Sunday, as you gather for Sunday School, pray for Kingdom vision, perhaps the one "change" we need the most in these days. — Rogers and his wife Debi are the authors of "The Kingdom Agenda: Experiencing God in Your Workplace" (LifeWay Press, 1997). Mike also serves as director of missions, Bradley Baptist Association.

## Jesus' authority

By Billy Murphy

**Focal Passage — Mark 2:3-12; 3:1-5**

Jesus returned to Capernaum and people filled the house until it could hold no more; they had come to hear him teach.

Four men brought a paralyzed friend to the house in which Jesus was teaching. In their determination to bring their friend to Jesus, they climbed the outside stairs on to the flat roof, cut a hole in it, and lowered their friend down into the house. Jesus said to the sick man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." We discover so often in the Bible a connection between sickness and sin, which is quite evident here. First, came the forgiveness of sins; then, the healing. The man's sinful will and his guilty conscience were at the root of his trouble. When this man became aware that God did not hate him for his sins, but loved him in spite of them, he was healed.

### Family Bible Lesson

Religious leaders in the crowd were watching and listening for anything they could use to destroy the influence of Jesus. Being scribes, they were guardians of the orthodoxy of Judaism. When they heard Jesus speak to the paralyzed man, they were shocked because, to the Jewish faith, only God could forgive sins. For any human to claim to do so was an insult to God; that was blasphemy, and the penalty for blasphemy was death. Based on their belief that sin and sickness were linked together, he asked them a question. "Which is easier to say to this man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'" (Mark 2:9)? If his declaration of forgiveness of sins of the paralytic was truly blasphemy, then the man would not be healed. God would never work through blasphemy. He turned to the paralytic and said, "Arise ..." and the man arose, and walked. In that instance, Jesus' authority was verified; but the charge of blasphemy was not

## Service and devotion

By James Growden

**Focal Passage — Luke 10:30-42**

The question asked of Jesus in Luke 10:29 sets up the Parable of the Good Samaritan for him. This world today needs to know the answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" With all the things that go on, in large cities, in mid-sized cities, small towns, and rural areas, we need to take a look at this question. We have people who want to look at the color of a person's skin as a reason for helping or not helping them. Some folks want to support a "mission" for others but would not let those Christians of another color assimilate into "their church." If the "other person" wants to become a part of "our church," I feel they should have that opportunity.

Now let's look at the Scriptures of this well-known parable. We must set the stage for the reason for the action of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan. Verse 30 gives us the setting for this event. "From Jerusalem to Jericho" tells us a lot. This is a distance of 17 miles and a descent from about 2,500 feet above sea level to about 800 feet below sea level. The road ran through rocky, desert country, which provided places for robbers to waylay defenseless travelers. This traveler was foolish and irresponsible to travel this road called "the way of Blood." How many of us are foolish and reckless in

### Explore the Bible Lesson

life, exposing and destroying our bodies by walking where we should not and by doing what we should not? Read Proverbs 22:3 and Hosea 14:9

The needs of others bring out various attitudes that we often harbor. Jesus used this parable to make clear what attitude was acceptable to him. We must please Jesus, not human beings, or pay the price of disobedience. If we are truly honest, we often find ourselves in the place of the lawyer (v. 29) needing to learn again who our neighbor really is. The different attitudes toward the wounded man are interesting: to the thieves, he was someone to use and exploit; to the religious man, he was a problem to be avoided; to the innkeeper, he was the source of a fee; to the Samaritan, he was a human being worthy of being cared for; to Jesus, he was a man worth dying for.

From the parable, we learn three principles about loving our neighbor: lack of love is often easy to justify, our neighbor is anyone of any race, creed, or social background who is in need, and love means acting to meet the needs of another. There is no justifiable rationale for refusing to help others.

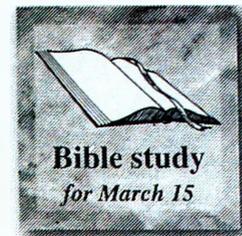
In this lesson is included Jesus'

dropped. Should the Son of God win the faith and allegiance of the people, the power of the scribes would be gone. John says, "The Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). If judgment is committed to Jesus, then must also be committed forgiveness.

After Jesus called Levi (Matthew), a tax collector, to follow him as a disciple, he sat down to eat and drink in Levi's house with a group of social and religious outcasts. To the proper scribes and Pharisees, this was extremely offensive. Breaking bread with another was a symbol of brotherhood, but this was a rabble of sinners, with whom no Pharisee could sit down and eat. Levi was a wealthy tax collector, who extracted from the people as much as he could and apparently lined his own pockets. The Pharisees recognized only two kinds of people: those who kept the law and those who failed to observe all the rules and regulations of conventional religion. They felt the non-observers were unclean and deserved to be shunned. Once again, Jesus had an answer that silenced them. He said that he came not to minister to the piously religious, but to call the humble sinners to repentance. A good physician went where he was needed.

The Pharisees questioned his every move. They criticized the actions of his disciples, who did not fast as expected. The actions of his critics stirred two emotions in Jesus — one of anger, because of their indifference to the needs of mankind; one of sadness, because their actions showed how hardened their hearts were becoming.

Jesus knew his message was new. He also knew that his conduct was different from that of orthodoxy; therefore, out with the old and in with the new. His analogy of the wine skins is an indication of the need to recognize the dramatic difference between the rituals of the past and the spontaneity of helping hurting humanity in the name of God. The final arbiter in the use of all things is love and not law. — Murphy is Computer Consultant for West Carroll Special School District and a bivocational pastor, Howse Church, Atwood.



visit to Martha and Mary's village of Bethany, located on the slope of the Mount of Olives. Martha is the first person we see. She possessed a highly commendable character. She was a giving, caring, and loving person, however, she lost sight of her priority and became aggravated and critical of Mary who was not helping her serve. Mary also had an excellent character. She was loving and humble, and she had a spiritual hunger for the word of the Lord: she "heard his word." She hung on his every word and truly heard them. Both loved Jesus and both were serving him in this passage. Martha inferred that Mary's style of serving was inferior to hers. She did not realize that in her desire to serve, she was actually neglecting him. Are you so busy doing things "for" Jesus that you are not spending any time "with" him? Do not let your service become self-serving. It is important to know "who" you are serving. Jesus asks us to set priorities in our lives and service.

This lesson pictures the love Jesus has for us. Like the traveler, we have been wounded and left to die and we can do nothing to save ourselves. Praise the Lord, Jesus came along and took us to a place of healing. Our salvation is his sacrificial gift to us. We can do nothing to earn such great love. — Growden is a teacher and a bivocational pastor, Hillcrest Church, Nashville.



■ First Church, Cumberland City, ordained **Charles Finch** as a deacon Feb. 1.



■ Ararat Church, Jackson, recently has called **Suzanne Piersiak** as minister of children and **Jamie Forester** as minister of music and youth.

■ First Church, Atwood, has called **Kenneth Roberts** as pastor.

■ **Wiley I. Rutledge** has retired as pastor, North Johnson City Church, Johnson City, after serving 12 years. He has been called as interim pastor. Rutledge also has served as pastor of churches in North Carolina and other churches in Tennessee.

■ Retired missionaries **Paul and Peggy Grossman** of Springfield have been named state International Outreach Representatives to international students by the International Mission Board based in Richmond, Va. The Grossmans served in Africa for 31 years.

■ **A. Sidney Waits**, pastor, Rugby Hills Church, Memphis, will retire April 1. He has served the church for five years and was interim pastor there. Waits has served 53 years in the ministry. He was pastor of Hickory Hills Church, Memphis, for 20 years and of churches in Bolivar, Joelton, Nashville, and in Alabama. He will serve as interim pastor of Rugby Hills until a new pastor is called.

■ Oak Dale Church, Afton, has called **Frank Lethcoe** as pastor.

■ **Fred Jackson**, pastor, Lovelace Church, Fall Branch, has been called as pastor of Grace Church, Bristol.

■ **Jerry Hall**, interim pastor, Antioch Church, Johnson City, has resigned and is available for ministry.

■ **Dan Rowland** has been called as youth and evangelism minister, Sunnyside Church, Kingsport. A native of Spartanburg, S.C., he is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

■ First Church, Greenfield, has called **Joe T. Lusby** as pastor. He previously served as pastor of First Church, Tunica, Miss. Lusby is a graduate of the University of Mississippi and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

■ Oak Dale Church, Afton, has called **Frank Lethcoe** as pastor.

■ **Fred Jackson**, pastor, Lovelace Church, Fall Branch, has been called as pastor of Grace Church, Bristol.

■ Lights Chapel Church, Greenbrier, has called **Travis Allen** as a youth worker.

■ Haywood Hills Church, Nashville, has called **Kathy L. Kinnison** as minister of youth and church recreational activities. The native of Louisiana is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond; and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

■ **David Jordan**, pastor, Walden's Ridge Church, Dayton, has resigned after about 16 years of service there.

■ **Brent Wells** has been called as youth director, First Church, Rossville. He is a student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis.

■ **Jim Whitley** has been called as pastor of Feathers



**BREAKING GROUND** for a new fellowship hall and activities building are leaders of First Church, Carthage, on Feb. 22. The leaders are, from left, Jim Broyles; Thomas Baines, pastor; Morris Mabry, businessman; Tim Smith; Dewayne Wilmore; Ollie Emery; and James Trainham. The project is scheduled to be completed in the fall.

Chapel Church, Somerville.

■ Bishopville Church, Heiskell, has called **Ed Bowne** as pastor.



■ **Buchanan Church, Paris**, will hold revival April 6-10. George Fournier of Texas will speak.

■ **Union Friendship Church, Como**, will hold revival March 26-29. Mickey Basham II will speak.

■ **Smithwood Church, Knoxville**, will hold a prayer revival March 29-31.

■ **Lucy Church, Millington**, will hold revival March 27 - April 1. Donny Guy will speak.

■ **Munford Church, Munford**, will hold revival March 29 - April 1. Jackie Kay, evangelist, will speak.

■ **Tri-Cities Church, Gray**, will host a Mountain Empire Women's Conference March 20. For more information, call (423) 349-5559.

■ **Eastview Church, Huntingdon**, will hold revival March 28 - April 2. John Adams of Union University, Jackson, will speak and Wendell Verdell will lead the music.

■ **Hillhurst Church, Nashville**, will hold revival March 29 - April 1. Phil Glisson, evangelist of Memphis, will speak.

■ **First Church, Old Hickory**, will hold revival March 29 - April 1. Henry H. Linginfelter, evangelist, will speak and Carolyn Reed will perform.

■ **Fairview Church, Watauga**, will celebrate its 75th anniversary March 22.

■ **Trinity Church, Hendersonville**, will host the Hendersonville High Select Chorus March 22 at 6 p.m. The 32-

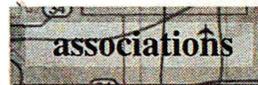
member auditioned group has performed in several states. For more information, call the church at (615) 826-0874.

■ A team of 21 from **Central Church, Mountain City**, served in Reynosa, Mexico with Harold Ward, missionary. They built a church building in just three and a half days. During the first service of Iglesia Bautista Central, 23 people made professions of faith.

■ **First Church, Rossville**, will dedicate its new facilities March 29.

■ **Sunnyside Church, Kingsport**, soon will move into a new \$1 million educational building.

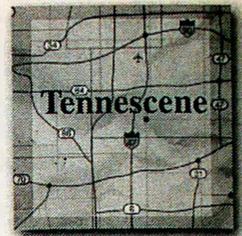
■ **Inglewood Church, Nashville**, will host the Campbellsville University (Campbellsville, Ky.) Choir and Handbell Choir March 18. For more information, call (615) 228-2546.



■ **Holston Association** will hold a Marriage Alive seminar March 14 at University Parkway Church, Johnson City. The association also will host an Education Rally March 16 at the church. On March 13-14 three events will be held for youth and youth leaders. On March 27-29 a College and Career Spring Conference will be held at Holiday Inn, Pigeon Forge. For more information, call the association at (423) 929-1196.

■ **Haywood Association** will hold a Brotherhood Breakfast March 14 at Zion Church, Brownsville. For more information, call the association at (901) 772-4826.

■ **Watauga Association** will hold a Youth Night March 21 at Immanuel Church, Elizabethton. The association also is recruiting volunteers for two teams who will do health care



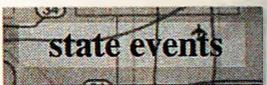
ministry and construction work in Venezuela. The teams will serve April 18-26 and Sept. 5-13. For more information, contact the association at (423) 543-1451.

■ **Fayette Association** will hold a Youth Rally March 14 at First Church, Somerville, from 7-10 p.m. For more information, call the association at (901) 465-8613.

■ **Robertson County Association** will hold a World Missions Conference March 22-29.

■ **Sweetwater Association** will hold a Youth Night March 14 at Madisonville Intermediate School, Madisonville. It will include a Prayer Walk to the county courthouse. For more information, call the association at (423) 442-6604.

■ **Western District Association** will hold an Evangelism Rally March 18 at First Church, Paris, beginning at 6:50 p.m. Ken Story, retired pastor, Germantown Church, Germantown, will speak. The association also will hold a Marriage Enrichment Retreat March 27-28. For more information, call (901) 642-4641.



■ A **Conversational English Workshop** will be held April 4 at Germantown Church, Germantown. It is for teachers, directors, and participants and will be led by Gayle Leininger, missionary with the North American Mission Board. She is author of the *Conversational English Manual*. The training is coordinated by Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries. Registration should be completed by March 30 and can be done by calling Jean Thompson at (901) 682-4298 or Nina Clark at (901) 751-3808.

■ **Camp staff** is being sought for a Youth/Children's Weekend Mini-Camp, July 17-19, Camp Linden; Children's Impact Camp, July 20-24, Camp Linden; and/or a Children's Impact Camp, July 27-31, Camp Carson. For more information, contact the Human Resources Office, Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024-0728 or call 1 (800) 558-2090, ext. 2013 for an application.

## Bon Aqua congregation gives record amount to Christmas offering

For Baptist and Reflector

**BON AQUA** — The congregation of Parker's Creek Church gave a record \$8,771 to this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions, according to Pastor Joe Estes.

The Christmas offering taken at the church has exceeded the amount given the year before for the past six years, Estes said.

He credited the record gifts to an all-day emphasis

on missions held in December.

The church invited retired missionaries Carlos and Myrtice Owens to be with the church. Owens brought the morning message, Estes said.

After the message the church held a time of prayer and members were given offering envelopes to place their money or pledge. There were about 200 people in the service that day, Estes said.

"Our people were excited," he observed. ■