

REFLECTOR

Volume 164 / Number 11

Statewide Edition

March 18, 1998

this
week's
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In North Korea

Tennessee Baptists asked to respond to hunger needs

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists once again have been asked to help alleviate hunger needs in North Korea.

The International Mission Board has requested the Missions Awareness and Involvement Group of Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries to take the lead in this effort, said Tim Bearden, group lead.

The MAI Group includes Baptist Men's Ministries and Woman's Missionary Union.

Two years ago Tennessee Baptists sent more than 200 boxes of food to North Korea.

Recent reports from North Korea indicate the severe food shortage there has worsened.

News services share that many parts of the nation will be without food in a matter of weeks, according to information supplied by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Southern Baptists have been invited to enter into a partnership with Feed the Hungry, a Christian relief or-



LOADING THE FIRST box collected to help alleviate hunger needs in North Korea are, from left, Tim Bearden, leader of the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group; Carrol Kelly, executive director, Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union; and James Porch, TBC executive director-treasurer.

ganization. They are being challenged to donate 3.25 million pounds of food.

Bearden and Carrol Kelly, executive director of Tennessee Baptist WMU encourage men's and women's mission groups to work together to supply a food box.

Individuals or church groups are asked to pack the following items in a 1.5 cubic

feet box (a small box which can be obtained from moving/storage companies):

- 3 bags of 4 lb. dried beans
- 3 bags of 5 lb. corn meal
- 3 bags of 5 lb. flour
- 2 packs of 5 lb. spaghetti
- 3 bags of 5 lb. rice
- 1 20 qt. box of powdered milk.

According to Bearden the approximate cost of these

items to fill one box is \$38.

The box will feed a family in North Korea for one month, he said.

TBC Executive Director James Porch hopes Tennessee Baptists will join in this humanitarian effort.

"I encourage Tennessee Baptists to respond to the urgency of this critical hunger need that is prevalent in North Korea," he said.

Bearden said locations are being secured as food collection outlets. Two sites have been confirmed: Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory (Nashville area) and The Attic Outlet in Tullahoma. At press time Monday sites were being secured in Knoxville, the Tri-Cities area, Jackson, Memphis, Crossville, and northwest Tennessee.

Locations and additional information will be announced in a future issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*. Churches can also call Bearden's office at (615) 371-2026 for more information about packing the boxes. Bearden said food needs to be at Tennessee collection sites by April 20 in order to be included on ship bound for North Korea. ■

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

Wilkey named interim editor; search committee announced

BRENTWOOD — The Board of Directors of the *Baptist and Reflector* has named Lonnie Wilkey as interim editor of the newsjournal.

Wilkey, a graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Journalism, has been associate editor of the *B&R* for 10 years.

Wm. Fletcher Allen, who retires on March 31, has been editor since 1987.

The board also announced a search committee to find a successor to Allen.

The committee comes from the Board of Directors, and includes Herbert Higdon, interim pastor of First Church,

Breton, as chairman.

Other members are Kenneth Hubbard, pastor of First Church, Smyrna; John Holland, pastor of Salem Church, Knoxville; Mattie Mullins, Johnson City, layperson; and Don Edwards, pastor, Southeast Church, Murfreesboro.

Two other board members will serve ex-officio with the committee: Bill Northcott, board chairman and pastor of First Church, Covington; and Michael Smith, Executive Board president and pastor of Second Church, Memphis.

"This is a good working committee. We are organizing now," Higdon said.

He added that recommendations, resumes, and suggestions should be sent to his attention to Executive Office, Baptist Center, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024. **B&R**



WILKEY

Missions Get-Together commissions Kelly, stresses far-flung 'missioning'

By Wm. Fletcher Allen
Baptist and Reflector

GATLINBURG — More than 1,500 Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union members met here on March

13-15 to commission Carrol Kelly, their new executive director, and to launch a new era for the missions organization.

The theme, "Oh, the Places You Could Go," gave strong — See Missions, page 2



KIM HUFF, left, ministry assistant with volunteer missions, explains missions emphasis to, from left, Dot Cooke, Anna Baker, and Kathleen Grubb, of First Church, Friendsville, at the WMU Get-Together.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION
* 901 COMMERCE ST SUITE 400
* NASHVILLE TN 37203

about your newsjournal

- Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
- **Subscribe to the *Baptist and Reflector*** for one year and receive 48 copies. Family or individual subscription — \$8.00; clubs of 10 or more subscriptions — \$7.25; church (more than 50 percent of families) — \$6.50. Contact office and we will bill you.
- **To contribute a news item**, call, write, or e-mail Editor Wm. Fletcher Allen; Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor; or Connie Davis, assistant editor
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- **For information about trial subscription plan** for church or association edition — Editor Allen, Lonnie Wilkey, Connie Davis, or Susie Edwards, administrative secretary
- **For information about local church edition** — the Editor, or Mary Nimmo, church pages coordinator
- **For production answers** — Lonnie Wilkey or Connie Davis
- **Publisher** — Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board
- **Board of directors:** Bill Northcott, chairman; Paul Medley, vice chairman; Charles Anderson, Hinton Climer, Elmer Crosby, Reed Dixon, Don Edwards, Frank Hawkins, Herbert Higdon, John Holland, Kenneth Hubbard, Jewell Jennings, Pat Landrum, Mattie Mullins, Ray Newcomb, Doug Sager, Michael Smith, Betty Summers, and Ambers Wilson
- **Office** — *Baptist and Reflector*, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
- **Mailing address** — P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- **Phone** — (615) 371-2003
- **FAX** — (615) 371-2080
- **E-mail** — 70420.63@CompuServe.com
- **Membership** — Southern Baptist Press Association
- **Postmaster** — Periodical postage paid at Brentwood and at additional mailing office. (USPS 041-780) POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn. 37024.
- **Frequency of issue** — The paper is published weekly except for the weeks of Christmas, New Year's, Fourth of July, and fourth week of August.

Printed on recycled paper

Largest-ever increase projected for LMCO

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptists have given the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions its largest dollar increase in history, according to a forecast released March 11.

Lottie Moon receipts are expected to total \$102.6 million when the books close in May, surpassing \$100 million for the first time in history. That would be the offering's fifth straight record year — and an increase from 1996 of \$9.5 mil-

lion, about 10 percent. That's the highest percentage increase since 1988.

"This phenomenal level of giving reflects the priority of Southern Baptists to be on mission with God around the world," said IMB President Jerry Rankin. The entire offering will support the board's overseas budget.

It would be the first time in

the past 16 offerings that Southern Baptists surpassed their goal. The goal has remained at \$100 million for the last three years.

"These resources will allow us to be effectively involved in the accelerating harvest," Rankin said.

The yearly forecast — historically very accurate — is based in part on data from selected Baptist state conventions. All show an increase in Lottie Moon giving this year.

If the forecast proves accurate, Lottie Moon receipts will

have increased by \$19.7 million — nearly a fourth — since 1993.

The 1997 offering would bring the cumulative total of Lottie Moon receipts to nearly \$1.8 billion, on target to exceed \$2 billion by Christmas 2000.

The offering, generally collected in December, should fund nearly half (47 percent) of the IMB's budget of \$210.8 million. The rest comes from the Cooperative Program and other income such as investments and hunger and relief receipts. ■



RANKIN

NOBTS to remain at current site on Gentilly Boulevard

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — Trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary voted unanimously March 11 for the 80-year-old seminary "to remain in its present location" rather than build a new campus somewhere else in the greater New Orleans area.

"Today we decided our future as a campus," said NOBTS President Chuck Kelley.

"We will be true to the heritage of our mission. We will be neighbors and not naysayers. We will do reality-based and

not reality-shielded theological education," he said.

The vote came after a presentation of results from a two-year study by an ad hoc committee called "Vision New Orleans," established in March 1996 by the seminary's then newly-elected eighth president, Kelley, at his first trustee meeting as seminary president.

"It is the unanimous opinion of this committee that the purpose assigned to this seminary by the Southern Baptist Convention and the seminary's role in fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments can best be accom-

plished by remaining in our present location," said Davis Cooper, chairman of the Vision New Orleans committee and pastor of University Hills Church, Denver.

In addition to voting not to move, trustees also voted for the seminary to prepare a master plan for the future, expand the campus on the eastern side to Press Drive as funds and property become available, renovate the campus, and develop strategies to address major concerns which surfaced in the Vision New Orleans survey. Major concerns were voiced primarily by extension center students rather than those living on campus. ■

Missions Get-Together commissions Kelly, stresses far-flung ...

— Continued from page 1

thrust to the three-day program.

Jeff Fray, Christian counselor from Knoxville, was keynote speaker, and addressed the group on the Presence of God, the Purpose of God, and the Provision of God.

A son of missionaries, Fray grew up in a mission family in Zimbabwe.

Fray said that the missions journey begins in the heart. "We are bound to God's purpose, and born for his mission. To sense his presence, you have to see him through the eyes of the spirit," he said.

He told his audience that Christians are the people of the presence of the Master. He said Christians should not fill their hearts with things of the world, but that God wants "to

capture our imagination."

Cathy Butler, Fayette, Ala., Alabama WMU recording secretary, said that often well-meaning people say to another Christian, "You can't do that."

She had heard that said many times as she sought God's will for her life, and finally realized that there is a place for each of us.

"But we find it when we listen only to God, as he tells us where our place is," she said, adding that though we may struggle, God is always preparing his place for us.

Katrina Knox, native of Columbia, now serving in France, said she was called to missions early in life, but had to keep looking for the open door.

Several times missions opportunities "fell through," but God kept guiding her to "her

place" of service. She was in Rwanda several years before civil war halted missionary work. She has since been working with Muslim women near Paris.

She said it is always exciting to see some former Muslims begin to grow as Christians.

Knox learned that an effective witness is possible through telling Bible stories chronologically.

That way, she said, "The people can learn who God is, his attributes, and began to understand why everyone needs a savior."

She stressed that getting to know the women personally enabled her to be a friend, interested in their lives.

"And as you begin to be trusted, they learn that you

really care about them.

"I may never see the results from the seeds planted," she said, "but prayer will continue as the Holy Spirit leads them."

Carol Richardson, state WMU president, Cordova, and former WMU executive director Katharine Bryan, led in a commissioning for Carrol Kelly, newly elected executive director.

In her address, Kelly said that though the world is in a mess, the opportunities for missions and service are the greatest ever.

"Are you and I wired for a new century?" she asked, "or are we content to stay as we are? We will be radically changed, and most effective as a missions organization, when we follow a Savior who is changeless," she said.

She said the WMU purpose will never change, but changes in style may be necessary "to stimulate giving and knowing, encouraging, empowering — women and girls and preschoolers for missions — not only in Tennessee but wherever we are called. Oh, the places where we will be called to serve!"

Jerry Rankin, International Missions Board president, spoke to a conference "for men only." **B&R**



CAROL RICHARDSON, left, introduces Carrol Kelly, Tennessee WMU executive director.



KATRINA KNOX was one of several missionaries who led conferences at the statewide meeting.

In five countries on 13 projects

Knoxville pediatrician ministers overseas



By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE —

Larry Rogers, a pediatrician here, says his overseas missions efforts, which require time away from patients, extra demands on his office staff, and expense, actually have strengthened his practice.

His office staff has spent hours calling patients to reschedule appointments when he has decided to accept an overseas assignment with little notice. However, his patients have been understanding when they discover the reason for the schedule change.

And his staff has been very supportive of his efforts. They have prepared equipment for him to take which includes sterilizing and packaging it. They have packed medications and other supplies. Members of his staff even have bought stickers for him to give as gifts to children overseas.

And others get in on the act. Pharmaceutical salesmen have donated drugs for the projects. And patients have given him money to offset his expenses.

Such responses affirm his calling, said Rogers, a member of First Church, Concord, and energize him for further work, although that doesn't seem necessary.

He just returned from Recife, Brazil, where he served with an evangelical church group. He plans to serve two times this year in Chile, a country with which Tennessee once held a partnership. And Rogers recently helped host a group from the Ukraine and discussed the health care needs there.

In the past seven years, Rogers has served on 13 projects in five countries, according to his best recollection. He doesn't keep track, Rogers explained.

How he became involved
Rogers knew for several years he should be an overseas missions volunteer. He said he carried a completed application around for two years in his brief case. At that time he was living and practicing in Greeneville following his graduation from the University of Tennessee - Knoxville, and residency here.

Then in 1991 some friends encouraged him to join a missions effort in Venezuela, which at that time was participating in the Tennessee/Venezuela Baptist Partnership. The leader of the project was Dewey Dunn, an active overseas missions volunteer who is a Nashville gastroenterologist. That experience became life-changing for Rogers.

He's glad God was patient with him until he responded to his call, he said.

"There was no question after that first trip if I was going to go back, just where God was going to send me ... or where Dewey was going to send me," he said facetiously, referring to the many overseas projects Dunn leads.

"That was the beginning of a true relationship with Christ for me in that it was truly a faith mission," said Rogers.

This is true despite the fact that he always has been active in church. He was raised in an evangelical church and became a Baptist during his young adult years. He and his wife, Linda, have raised their three children to be active Christians. But this missions experience was different for him, he explained.

"On these trips you often have no control over your circumstances. I learned what faith was all about at that point in my life," he added.

"And it's a beautiful opportunity to use the talents God has given a person," he explained.

Treating patients overseas
Despite the ideas many people have, health care work in most other countries differs little from that in the United States, said Rogers. The health care workers are well trained and "they practice according to the same standards that we have here."

The most common difference is a lack of supplies or technology, which, he said, "shouldn't change the practice of good medicine. That's a good witness in itself," he explained. The competence of health care workers in other countries has been confirmed during academic exchanges in which he has participated, said Rogers.

Loving others overseas
"Our purpose is to treat the patients and at the same time to use our knowledge and medications to present the Word," said Rogers.

The spiritual aspect is important because any medical treatment or medication has a temporary effect, but a changed life has a lifelong impact, he explained.

For that reason, the non-medical personnel on a project are just as important as the health care workers, he said. Volunteers serve as greeters, record keepers, and assistants to the health care workers. And they have more time to witness to the patients, he noted.

For that matter, Christians who remain at home are equally important to the effectiveness of a project as the project volunteers, added Rogers. "I can feel their prayers 2-4,000 miles away. God's called them into a service that's probably greater (than actual missions service) because they're our

cheerleaders," said Rogers.

His anecdotes

Rogers never will forget one unusual cultural tradition he discovered in a country in which he served. The babies were clothed in many layers — nine in one case.

And he never will forget the nine-year-old boy whose grandmother brought him to the clinic provided by the Americans. She wanted vitamins for the boy because she lacked enough food for him, she told the missionary who was serving as a translator.

They were provided, and Rogers felt led to spend more time with him, even though many other patients waited. For a few minutes the boy visited with several volunteers and was hugged by them before he left.

After the boy and his grandmother left, Rogers learned



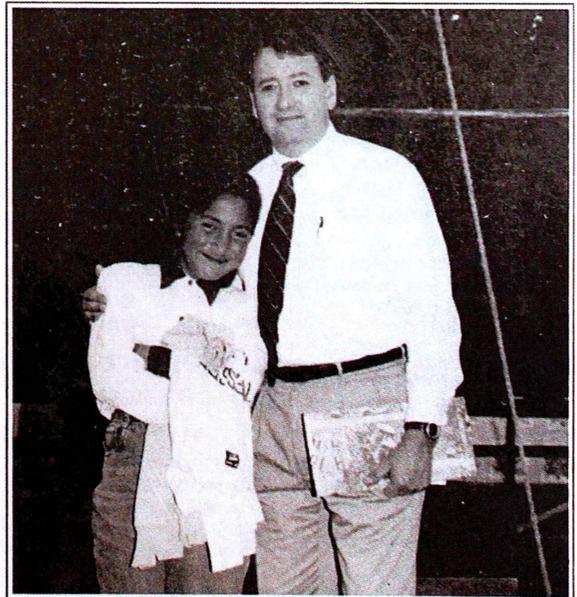
ROGERS



CHECKING A YOUNG girl's ears in Chile is Larry Rogers.



LARRY ROGERS HOLDS a baby he has treated in Chile.

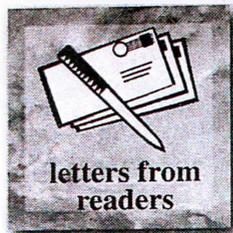


POSING WITH a new friend is Larry Rogers in Recife, Brazil, near Rio de Janeiro, where he served last year.



His efforts support Tennessee Baptist partnerships, past and present —

- Poland - 2 times
- Chile - 7 times
- The Philippines - 1 time
- Venezuela - 1 time



letters from readers

about letters

> Make it concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be edited for length.

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

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

> Send original copy. Form letters and 'open' letters will not be published.

> Only one letter in a three-months period per writer will be published.

> If letter does not conform, it will be returned.

> Opinions and ideas expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the *Baptist and Reflector* and its staff.

Opposes lottery

I want to share what our church is doing to fight a lottery in Tennessee. One of our deacons, John Vile, who is head of the political science department at Middle Tennessee State University, wrote a resolution against a state lottery which our church approved in a regularly scheduled business meeting on Feb. 25.

We have sent copies of the resolution to our legislators and Gov. Don Sundquist.

The resolution notes "we are thankful for and cherish our freedom to express our concerns about current public issues."

It also states "we believe gambling is detrimental to the public good" and "results in ruined lives, impoverishment, and split families."

The resolution says "we believe the state has no business conducting and advertising an activity that can lead to such dire consequences" and that gambling "glorifies the role of chance, over that of Divine Providence and the kind of hard work necessary to a system of free enterprise."

The resolution further states "we believe gambling encourages corruption and diverts resources from more socially productive and wholesome businesses" and that "we believe state-sponsored gambling sends a wrong signal to the youth of our state."

Through the resolution our members affirmed that "we believe that needed state projects should be funded through fair

and equitable taxation, rather than through games of chance" and we expressed "our collective opposition to any state-sponsored gambling, including a state lottery."

By this resolution, we also conveyed "our disapproval of spending the money to call a convention and conduct a vote on such a proposal."

I encourage Tennessee Baptists and other churches to contact their legislators and let them know they are against gambling in our state.

Don Edwards, pastor
Southeast Church
Murfreesboro 37130

Congratulations

Congratulations on your retirement.

There are many positive features in this season of life.

I appreciate your ministry as editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*. It has been fair and balanced in a period of great stress and tension among Southern Baptists.

Thanks and God bless you.

Franklin Paschall
Nashville 37215

It's our choice

A recent article talked about Christianity losing its influence in the world because of the way some Christians "act." We must realize that the only person we are accountable for is ourself. I cannot be accountable for or responsible for what anyone else does.

I don't know of any Scripture which says that I will be

accountable for anyone else. Romans 14:12 notes: "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." If we criticize the lives and actions of others, we assume God's position as our judge. It is not our right to deal with another's mistake, behavior, or attitude. Christians do fall short of someone else's expectations. The Bible is full of godly people who were not perfect — Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jacob to name a few. God dealt with them.

People of the world demand unattainable expectations of Christians as do other Christians. Who are we to think that another's attitude or actions will hinder the work and will of a sovereign God? He will use whomever and whatever is necessary to accomplish his will.

If we become a stumbling block, God will deal with us or remove us. It is the Lord's place to condemn and chastise, not man's.

God does the choosing, drawing, and saving of individuals. We sin because we "choose" to sin. We must not wrap God in a neat little package and place him wherever "we" want him in our lives or in the world. Christianity may be losing its influence, but God is not losing his.

Danny Grace, pastor
Gravelly Church
Kingsport 37660

Time flies

The years have flown by and to my astonishment you

say it's time to retire. When an individual is doing excellent work, time never stands still. You have not allowed your allotted time to stagnate. We all know this is the basic criteria of a busy and successful man.

Please allow me the privilege of congratulating you upon the completion of a successful and meaningful ministry to Tennessee Baptists through your leadership as editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*. You have been faithful to Tennessee Baptists. Your reporting has been unbiased and yet faithful.

Pat L. Landrum
Brighton 38011

Special thanks

I wish you a happy retirement. You will be missed and I'm sure you will keep up the Lord's work in other ways.

It was my pleasure to meet you last October at First Baptist in Rockwood. Thank you for the time you took to talk to me. I couldn't believe it when I saw you took a half page to honor me and I appreciate it more than you'll ever know.

I just give the Good Lord praise for everything. I know I'm not worthy of his blessings.

I just celebrated my 95th birthday with a big celebration. So many people were nice to me in so many ways. I received 67 cards.

Pray for me that I will be strong in the Lord the time I have here. I will certainly pray for you.

Roxie McClendon
Rockwood 37854



Partnership Prayer Requests

March

18 — Pray for the upcoming Mississippi River Ministries Convocation to be held April 3-4 in West Memphis, Ark.

19 — Pray for the members of the search committee who are seeking the next leader of the Canadian Baptist Convention.

20 — Pray for Jose Maria Venegas, pastor, Shalom Church, Los Guido, Costa Rica.

21 — Pray for the April crusade in North and Northeast associations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

22 — Pray for the Mission Staff Retreat of the Michigan Baptist convention to be held March 30-31.

23 — Pray for Don Leach, father-in-law of Dan Eddington, former pastor, Jasper Place Church, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. He is having heart problems.

24 — Pray for Mt. Vernon Church, Redford, Mich., which is without a pastor.

MRM regional convocation set for April

For *Baptist and Reflector*

WEST MEMPHIS, Ark. — A Mississippi River Ministry regional convocation will be held April 3-4 at First Church here.

The theme of the meeting, sponsored by the MRM Region State Conventions of Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee, is "Building Partnerships — Changing Lives."

The conference begins on Friday, April 3, at noon and concludes on Saturday at 1:30



WEATHERSBY

p.m. Ken Weathersby, evangelism specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, is the keynote speaker on Friday night. Chuck Kelly, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, will keynote the Saturday morning session.

Several conference tracks will be offered along with exhibits, testimonies, inspiration, special music, and more.

Registration fee is \$15 and includes a resource notebook, conference handouts, and Saturday lunch. Child care provided on request only.

For more information, call the MRM regional office at (501) 376-4791, ext. 5150, in Little Rock, or call Beverly Smothers at the TBC at 1 (800) 558-2090. ■

Conference planned to enrich Tennessee families

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Three marriage enrichment retreats are planned across the state beginning in March.

Lane Morris, a professor from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, will lead B.E.S.T. (Building and Enriching Stronger Tennessee Families) conferences March 27-28 at Best Western Traveler's Inn in Paris and April 17-18 at East Ridge Church, Chattanooga.

The cost for each of those conferences is \$40.

John Lepper, director of the family ministry department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, will lead a marriage enrichment retreat May 1-2 at First Church, Savannah. The cost of this retreat is \$20.

To register, send \$10 to Donald E. Mauldin, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024, and indicate which retreat. For more information, call Mauldin at (615) 371-2047. ■

Mathis to retire

For *Baptist and Reflector*

MURFREESBORO — Murray Mathis, pastor of Third Church here since 1979, will retire effective April 30.

The church has doubled in membership from 900 to more than 1,800 during Mathis' tenure. The church also has added a new worship center and educational space.

A native of Fayetteville, Mathis surrendered to preach at age 18. He holds degrees from Belmont University, Nashville, and Luther Rice Seminary, Lithonia, Ga.

Mathis, 59, served as president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1990 and second vice president in 1982. He served two terms for the TBC Executive Board and is in his third term as a Belmont University trustee. Mathis has served on committees for Southern Baptists on the associational, state, and national levels.

Members of Third Church will recognize Mathis and his wife, Loretta, for their years of service on April 5.

Mathis will be available for revivals, pupil supply, and interim pastorates. ■



MATHIS

'I have called you by name, you are mine'

There is never a moment when I am beyond the reach of Christ. That truth that is an endless experience for me. And if I let him lead me, there will never be a moment when I am out of touch with him.

The spiritual life, as well as the mental and physical, I can grow — or be stagnant.

In the closing days of this *Baptist and Reflector* experience, I am becoming more and more aware of the spiritual life.

No, it didn't happen yesterday or last week or last month — this renewed awareness. I don't know exactly when it began, but it is refreshing because I know it will never end.

Sitting across the desk from a pastor friend many years ago, I poured out the turmoil of my soul. I had a good job, but I was not in God's will. The salary was more than sufficient, but there was no joy of fulfillment in my soul.

He quickly grasped my dilemma, and he waited for the proper moment to remind me of some eternal truths.

My friend asked me to probe my memory as he quoted Matthew 10:37-39. For me, I think it was a radical emphasis of putting Christ first. He called me by name and asked me about whom I was putting

first in my life. I heard him, with my soul's ears, saying that Christ must come before father and mother, sister and brother — and that finding a certain comfortable rut in life would lead to a dead end. And it was the part about taking my cross daily and following Christ that really brought me to my spiritual senses.

Otherwise I realized, I would not be worthy of Christ's investment in me.

Those verses turned me around. He did not even have to mention Deuteronomy 2:1-3, or Isaiah 43. They came to my rescue later — at other crossroads.

I made the right decision then, and other choices that came along were made easier. As I continued trekking the Christian journalism road, Christ blessed me — not with things I had sought, but with the assurance that this road, though much less traveled and more difficult — was the way planned for me long, long ago.

So who cares about comfort zones? What do the material amenities of life mean to anyone who is a child and follower of the Master of everything?

It is therefore a magnificent status to have, knowing that the road ahead is the road intended for you — and is lovingly and carefully planned and marked.

When I started on this kind of life, this

journalistic experience, I did not know all the hills and curves, the roadblocks and potholes. But the Enabler always leads.

Simple math (the old kind) says that in almost 32 years of editing Baptist journals, I have helped or tortured readers with about 1,160 personal columns and 725 editorials.

Sprinkled in with those efforts has been a generous supply of accounts of Baptists at work in South Carolina, Maryland/Delaware, and Tennessee — and in places such as Burundi, Rwanda, Venezuela, the Philippines, Chile, Canada, Poland, Costa Rica, Rio de Janeiro, and Australia.

As if God had not blessed me sufficiently with those places and peoples, he also gave me the joy of a good family of Baptists in every place I've worked. Besides, I have been anchored by my wife Betty and daughters Amy, Jennifer, Monica, and Melody — their husbands, and the eight finest, most beautiful and gifted grandchildren in the world.

A career can never bless or be blessed if it is not secured in the Savior's love and for his people. I have tried to be there on the road with him. I thank him for all the fellow travelers, and to them I say, "Thank you!" — *Wm. Fletcher Allen*



just for today

by Fred Wood,
pastor emeritus,
Eudora Church,
Memphis



Start with a smile

John: "Charlie has lots of irons in the fire."

Bill: "Oh, you mean he's in a lot of new ventures?"

John: "No, I mean his golf game is getting worse. He's disgusted and given it up."

Take this truth

Sometimes the highest wisdom is to know when to quit, to accept limitations.

Memorize this Scripture

Then the Lord said to Moses, "This is the land I swore to Abraham ... I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there." — Deuteronomy 34:4

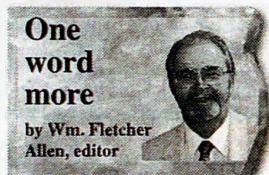
Pray this prayer

Help me, Lord, to realize that desire gained can mean the end of ardor and dreams. Show me that effort is important, even if we "lose." ■

Who said that?

Since the Bible is a record of conversation between men and God, we must expect that the actual condition of these men ... would shine through. ... There is no effort to white-wash or cover over. The Bible is brutally honest — and this quality helps convict us of its truth. It is "for real." — *The Bible — How to Understand and Teach It*, D. P. Brooks, Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1969

God gives us 20/20 moments when we don't expect them



Since I'm nearsighted (20/400 in each eye), I also know that properly fitted glasses can give me almost 20/20 eyesight.

I have that — with my "specs." But in some of those rare moments, to which I refer, a change of scenery and situation is like moving from 20/400 up to 20/20.

I have written previously about following the trail of Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, to Basel, Switzerland, a century ago to stake a claim for a Jewish homeland in what we now call Israel.

We went to St. Moritz for a brief sidetrip on our way to Basel, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem. With places like this on the agenda, I should have expected something special, almost ethereal.

After a long train ride from Zurich, we settled in our hotel rooms and a couple of hours later we had a superior dinner at the Post Hotel.

Afterward, Hans Peter, the Swiss Tourism director for the area, excused himself and a few minutes later appeared with two friends — a local fireman and a police officer.

Not unusual. But the charming Hans, with his friends serenaded the diners with mountain music extracted from their alpenhorns. Yes, those twelve-foot horns that you prop on the ground — just as in "Sound of Music."

But even that wonderful music from the alpenhorns

could not soothe my travel weary mind and soul.

At 2 a.m., I was still wide awake. A full moon enhanced the white alps just a half-mile from my window. Sleep was out of the question.

In that little hotel room, with the moonlight flooding through the window, God spoke to me clearly.

It was one of those times for decision-making. He was saying, listen, listen. I did. He spoke to me, through his Holy Word, telling me of his love and guidance in all of life.

He translated for me his will for me to take a new road, to leave behind fear and doubt, to have courage. And that is why I take that road in just a few precious days. ■■■

Looking at our heritage — who were first Baptists?

By Merrill Hawkins

Methodists have Wesley and Presbyterians have Calvin, but who do Baptists have? The answer is found in a group of English exiles living in Holland in the 17th century. How and why these English citizens came to live in Holland is the story of Baptist origins.

In 1606, John Smyth, a devout Christian living in Gainsborough, England, decided that his own Church of England was not really a church at all. Joining forces with his friend, Thomas Helwys, Smyth formed an independent congregation that was part of the Separatist Movement.

Separatists, as the name implies, believed in separating or withdrawing from all existing churches to form congregations that were based on the New Testament alone. The pilgrims who came to America were Separatists, and also associated with John Smyth.

Although this new Separatist congregation violated the law, they practiced their religion without too much interference from the government for about a year. Eventually government sponsored persecution forced Smyth and Helwys and the entire Gainsborough con-

gregation to escape to Holland. Soon after arriving in Holland, the group started thinking in ways that brought them closer to becoming Baptists. Ever interested in creating a church that was faithful to the New Testament, Smyth continued his study of the Bible, concluding that not only the Church of England, but all Separatists had erred in one major doctrine: baptism.

Based on his understanding of the New Testament, Smyth became committed to believer's baptism, the idea that the only proper candidates for this ordinance were adults who became Christians.

Since a church consisted of baptized believers, the little Gainsborough congregation, and all other congregations were not really churches. So in 1609 Smyth baptized himself, then his friend Helwys and 40 other church members. That event marks the founding of the first Baptist church, formed by a group of English exiles who were forced from their homeland because of their religion.

Like good Baptists, Smyth and Helwys had their disagreements. Their biggest disagreement caused them to part ways. Smyth soon questioned the validity of his self-baptism, which meant that he questioned the

validity of the baptism of Helwys and the 40 church members. Moreover, he wanted the congregation in exile to become more closely connected with the Mennonites. Not only did Helwys disagree, he believed that the congregation had a duty to return to England and spread their understanding of Christianity. In 1611, Thomas Helwys returned to England, forming the first Baptist church on English soil, just outside London.

Helwys was a man of conviction of courage, and he spread the Baptist view of Christianity without any concern for his personal safety. For his courage, he paid a price. His book, *The Mystery of Iniquity*, argued for religious freedom and denied the government the right to interfere in a person's religious beliefs.

That publication put this Baptist forefather in trouble. When he attempted to give King James a copy, he was arrested and placed in prison where he died four years later. Remember Wesley and Luther and Calvin and Knox, but add Smyth and Helwys to your list. ■

— *This is the first of a series about Baptist heritage, written by Merrill Hawkins, assistant professor of religion, Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.*
— Editor

Shed reluctance to talk about money: pastor



By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Pastors should shed their reluctance to talk about money from the pulpit, Alabama pastor Gary Fenton told a group of church leaders March 9.

After sharing that reluctance for years, Fenton said he "went through a conversion" about church finances.

Fenton, pastor of Dawson Memorial Church in Birmingham, said he once thought talking about money "violated my role" as a pastor. He would avoid the topic, he said, by using such euphemisms as "resources" and "stewardship of life." Eventu-

ally, he said, he realized he couldn't preach about Christian stewardship without talking openly about money issues.

Rather than downplaying his role as a financial leader in the church, Fenton said he now accepts that function. Getting involved in church finances is important for a pastor because the pastor is a church member and a church leader, and because the pastor "is one of the few people in the church who has the big picture."

Fenton identified five reasons for pastors to talk about stewardship:

- (1) Stewardship is a biblical theme.
- (2) A pastor can be an "accidental fundraiser." By talking about ministry opportunities, a pastor can spark "a little opening of generosity" from a church member,

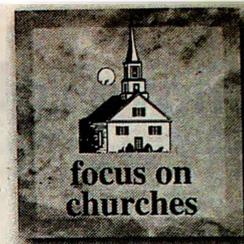
which often develops into a lifelong pattern of giving.

(3) "We are trusted trustees." Church members often look to pastors to help them sort out the worthy causes from among the avalanche of pleas for financial support.

(4) Pastors are "the conscience of the church."

(5) "We are heralds of the vision." A pastor can help a congregation define and proclaim its vision, "and vision attracts contributions," he said. "Instead of us going to them with hands out, they come to us with hearts open," he said.

Fenton spoke three times during the conference on "Money Matters," sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics. ■



Planning ahead increases giving, research shows

By David Winfrey
For Associated Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — People who think long-term about the needs of their churches are bigger donors than those who don't, according to a study of financial giving.

"How people think about giving and plan giving has a major influence on what they give," said Dean Hoge, co-author of *Money Matters: Personal Giving in American Churches*. Regularity of church attendance remains the No. 1 predictor of an individual's contributions to church, Hoge told a conference on church-finance issues sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics March 9-10.

A study of giving trends found Assemblies of God and Baptist congregations have both the highest rate of giving per household and the highest percentage of members who attend church activities more than once a week, Hoge said.

But the way members plan for giving has a direct impact on the amount they contribute, he added.

For example, Baptists in the study who determined to give a tithe (10 percent) or more of their income to the church gave an average of \$4,042 a year. Baptists who based their giving on a percentage of their income gave an average of \$3,120.

For Baptists who decided to give an annual dollar amount, the annual average fell to \$2,778. Those who set a weekly dollar amount gave an average of \$1,882.

And those who gave "what I can afford each week" averaged \$869 annually.

The findings held true among all five denominations studied: Baptist, Assemblies of God, Catholic, Lutheran, and Presbyterian.

Likewise, people who sign a pledge card give a "good bit more" than those who don't, Hoge added.

Hoge added that his study confirmed the adage that most churches get their money from a fraction of their members. "Seventy-five percent of the money comes from 25 percent of the people." ■

Spiritual growth produces stewardship, speaker says

By David Winfrey
For Associated Baptist Press

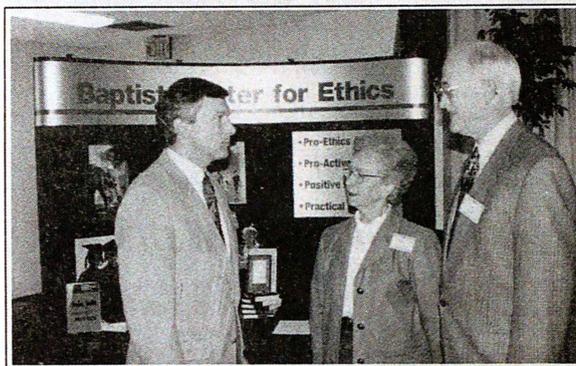
NASHVILLE — If a church is committed to bringing members into a deeper commitment with God, proper financial stewardship will naturally follow, advises a former financial director for Willow Creek Community Church.

Bringing members to deeper commitments to Christ "ought to have behavioral manifestations," Dick Towner said March 10 during a church-finance conference sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics.

Willow Creek, a mega-church in suburban Chicago known for its "seeker-sensitive" approach, does not ask its members to sign an annual pledge card. Yet the church had a 13 percent increase in giving last year even though attendance was relatively flat, Towner said, and the 23-year-old church has a debt-free campus.

As with many training messages by Willow Creek personnel, Towner encouraged those attending the BCE conference to consider Willow Creek's principles more than its actual methods.

"Our people are growing significantly in their understanding of and living out of biblical principles," he said.



FORMER TBC EXECUTIVE BOARD President David Crocker, left, visits with Tennessee Baptists David George of Immanuel Church, Nashville, and Sue Elder of First Church, Nashville, during a Baptist Center for Ethics conference held at Immanuel. Crocker, former pastor at Central Church, Johnson City, now serves at Snyder Memorial Church, Fayetteville, N.C.

Towner, who now directs Willow Creek's Good Sense Ministry for financial stewardship, said the church is committed to addressing stewardship among its members in four ways:

(1) Cautiously. People's relationship to their money is a "powerful and dangerous thing," Towner said. "We're dealing with habits of a lifetime."

Christians in America are living in a culture that has gone "materialistically berserk" and must recognize their sinful inclination toward greed

and envy. "It's an incredibly difficult topic."

(2) Fortrightly. Despite the tension related to financial issues, the Willow Creek leaders don't shy from discussing stewardship as an aspect of Christian living, Towner said. "We very rarely ask for money," he said. "We teach about money a lot."

Churches shouldn't be afraid of scaring off unchurched people by teaching what the Bible says about money, he added.

Through Good Sense Ministry, Willow Creek regularly

offers budgeting seminars for people wanting to get their finances under control.

Willow Creek leaders also recognize that the way the church handles money will speak volumes to non-Christians, Towner said. "It's a key area for Satan to get his foot in the door." The church has an open-books financial policy and annual audits. Anyone can learn about Senior Pastor Bill Hybels' \$83,000 salary, which he capped a few years ago, Towner said.

But rather than just giving the facts and figures of the budget, Towner said it is important that the church link its line items with how they translate into life-changing ministries.

(3) Unconventionally. Towner said Hybels found from the start that many people claimed they didn't attend church because leaders always were asking for money. In seeker services, Willow Creek leaders always note that the offering is for members only, Towner added.

(4) Biblically. Towner said churches must constantly fight Americans' unbiblical attitude that things bring happiness. "Our people are being duped by this, and we need to raise their consciousness and say there is another way." ■

Church secretaries conference planned at Baptist Center in April

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Tennessee Baptist Convention Secretaries Conference will be held April 13-15 at the Baptist Center here.

The program is for church, associational, and agency secretaries. The theme of the conference is "... in the Spirit Magnify Jesus, through worship, through work, through witness."

Five sessions, beginning on Monday, April 13, are scheduled for professional

development. Registration will begin at 12 p.m.

Those attending the conference can choose from 12 seminars.

Among two of the topics offered in the larger group setting are "Discovering Who I Am," led by Tim Holcomb of the TBC Executive Board's Christian Growth Development Group, and "Do I Really Want To Care?" led by Nashville counselor Tony Rankin.

Other special features will be a conference led by Elizabeth Godfrey, presi-

dent of the National Association of Southern Baptist Secretaries; a concert by Nancy Allen of Nashville; and a trip to Opryland Hotel.

Registration fee for the conference is \$13. Meals and the trip to Opryland are additional. Secretaries also are responsible for their own hotel reservations.

For more information about the conference, including a list of hotels, call Lana Rose of the TBC Executive Board Church Staff Leadership Group at (615) 371-2008. ■



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

Don't just read it. Live it! Each year during this season, we gather to study what God is doing through Southern Baptists across North America.

Part of the study for 1998 focuses on Tennessee and the Mississippi River Ministry. Why only read about it when you can live it? Why not lead your family, your Sunday School class, or mission group to participate in one of the many Tennessee Volunteer Projects? Listed in this issue of "The Macedonian Call" are many of which are Mississippi River Ministry Projects.

Just think, you and your family can live the missions experience, and not just read about it! Sometimes it takes more than our prayers and financial gifts. Sometimes it takes our willingness to go and see for ourselves the result of God's mission enterprise in action. Why not allow God to use you as an instrument of blessing to those who hurt in our state? Everyone needs to know Jesus.

God Bless,

Terry



SHARP

Two Tennessee women help families in Brazil

For The Macedonian Call

When their flight landed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Jan. 29, two Tennessee women involved with the TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team, hit the ground running and didn't stop for the next 10 days.

Kim Huff, TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group ministry assistant, and Kathy Chapman Sharp, Discipleship Family Magazine customization specialist, Baptist Sunday School Board, and wife of Terry Sharp, TBC MAI Partnership/Volunteer Missions specialist, led a family conference and a Vacation Bible School in Rio de Janeiro.

They also found the time to do a field inspection with IMB missionary and Tennessee/Rio partnership field coordinator Elizabeth Oates.

Working with Pastor Fernando da Silva Pereira at Ebenezer Church in the Jacarepagua area of Rio, Sharp led a Family Life Conference that dealt with God's purpose for the family. Kathy and Terry Sharp have a unique perspective on family life in Brazil since they served as IMB missionaries to Brazil and Spain.

"Family issues are a wonderful way to reach, communities in Rio," Sharp said. "Whether you're in North America or Brazil, the family — See Two, page 8



TEACHING CHILDREN how to make crafts in a Vacation Bible School are Kathy Sharp of the BSSB and wife of Terry Sharp, and Maria Jose of Ebenezer Church, in the Jacarepagua area of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

At Camp Linden in Linden

Missions Skills School planned for April 17-18

For The Macedonian Call

The TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group will present a first for the state of Tennessee, a Missions Skills School on Friday and Saturday, April 17-18 at Camp Linden, Linden.

Continuing the goal of being on the cutting edge of missions, the MAI Group is presenting the Missions Skills School. Other state conventions are attending the school in hopes of using this format. The purpose of the school is to provide training opportunities for people to learn new skills for use in missions efforts.

Registration will be held from 10 a.m. to noon.

Several of the quality seminars and leaders follow.

Conducting Block Parties — Come learn about an imaginative approach to introduce people to Jesus. Evangelistic Block Parties are conducted in neighborhoods, and provide meals and programs in a festive setting. In some neighborhoods, clothing is also distributed. Evangelistic Block Parties have been used all over the United States as the perfect marriage between ministry and intentional evangelism.

Instructor for this course is Don Watley, associate pastor and minister of missions at Woodbine Church in Nashville.

Conversational English in Overseas Projects — This class will provide ideas for lesson planning short-term Conversational English Classes taught overseas, usually without a textbook. A variety of suggestions and materials will be discussed since classes will differ based on country, student age, and

hours of class per day.

Instructors for this class are Penny and Roger Stacy, former missionaries to the Ukraine and Brazil.

Clowning — Learn the basics of clowning and discover skits that can be adapted for overseas mission settings. Everyone, regardless of age, can use this creative missions tool. This type of ministry continues to be one of the top projects received each year.

Instructor for this class is Allyson Wimberly, "Hootie the Clown." Wimberly has been involved in clown ministry for three years and has worked with WMU Street Ministries. She has just returned from Carnival in Rio de Janeiro where she did street evangelism with thousands through Partnership Missions.

General Construction — Participants will learn the basic skills of construction. This will be a hands-on experience so come dressed to work.

Instructor Curt Fowler is the Tennessee Coordinator for World Changer Projects. Fowler has served as a Disaster Relief volunteer for over 20 years.

Prayer Walking — Participants will learn a method of walking and talking with God and each other impacting their com-

munity in the process. Classroom study mixes practical experience to create a special learning experience.

Instructor Bob McEachern is the associate director of Volunteers in Missions Department of the International Mission Board. McEachern is also a former missionary to South Korea.

Cost: \$ 45.00 (includes room and meals)
Deadline to Register: April 1, 1998 ■

Missions Skills School

Registration Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

Church _____

Association _____

Please register me for the following conference (please check only one):

Conducting Block Parties _____ Clowning _____

General Construction _____ Prayer Walking _____

How To Teach Conversational English in Overseas Projects _____

Cost: \$45 (includes room and meals)

Deadline to register: April 1

Note: School begins at noon on Friday with lunch and concludes at 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Please send this registration form and fee to:

Missions Awareness and Involvement Group

Tennessee Baptist Convention

P.O. Box 728

Brentwood, TN 37024-0728

or register by phone: 1 (800) 558-2090



Ophthalmologist needed for effort

An ophthalmologist is needed May 1-10 for a medical project in Costa Rica, led by Dr. Dewey Dunn. Call Terry Sharp or Kim Huff of the Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team at (615) 371-2021 or 1 (800) 558-2090 for information. ■

Sweetwater Association team ministers in Rio de Janeiro

By Kenny Witt, pastor, Eastview Church, Etowah
For *The Macedonian Call*

A group of volunteers from the Sweetwater area traveled Jan. 27 to Campinas, Brazil, for revival services, and then to Rio de Janeiro for partnership evangelism. This campaign was part of the partnership between the TBC and the Carioca Convention which encompasses Rio de Janeiro.

Together with the Brazilian Bap-

tists, we held our campaign in a part of Rio de Janeiro called Campo Grande. Campo Grande is a suburb with over a million people.

The cobblestone streets of Campo Grande are lined with small block homes with clay tiled roofs, which are located on steep hillsides. In each of these homes, there were families who needed to know Jesus.

Working in teams we witnessed to many each day. With the help of the Holy Spirit and the good news of Jesus

Christ, 155 people confessed Jesus as their Savior during this campaign in addition to the 20 people in Campinas.

Besides myself the teams consisted of: Konny Wiggins and Dorothy Wiggins, Jimmy and Linda Jackson, all of Reed Springs Church, Philadelphia; Audrey Stephens, Notchey Creek

Church, Madisonville; J.D. Martin, Island Creek Church, Madisonville, all of Sweetwater Association; Kathy Mason, Gum Springs Church, Georgetown, Bradley County Association; Stanley Cooper and Carolyn Armstrong, both of Union (McMinn) Church, Niota, McMinn-Meigs Association. Assisting was Bennie Creel, director of missions for the Sweetwater Association, who organized and led the trip.

Jimmy Jackson, pastor of Reed Springs Church, led many to the Lord. During one encounter he witnessed to a Buddhist, and this person accepted Christ. At the close of the campaign, he did some "open air preaching" in a city park. Working at Jackson's side were his wife Linda, Stephens, and Martin.

Stephens, who has a deep love and compassion for missions, held a Vacation Bible School with some assistance from the other team members and IMB missionaries in Rio. Christ saved eight children in Bible school. Stephens has traveled since 1986 to Brazil where she has invested much of her heart.

Konny Wiggins with his wife Dorothy, and Mason worked each day in the streets telling people about Christ. Konny Wiggins has been involved with partnership missions in Brazil since 1984. Walking from home-to-home,

they shared the story of Jesus. Many made professions of faith in homes. Others came to revival services, held in the evening at the local mission, and accepted Christ.

Revival services were held at three congregations, Bairro Araujo, Adriana I, and Caroba mission. Each night services were filled to capacity with people wanting to know about Jesus.

Cooper, Armstrong, and I witnessed in the streets. Before church services in the evening, we would conduct Bible studies in selected Christian homes in the community. In each of these homes, the Brazilians had invited their neighbors to hear the message of hope. Many came to know Christ through these Bible studies.

Creel who served along side each team during the trip, provided refreshing support for everyone. The heat, which sometimes was in excess of 110 degrees, demanded that there be plenty of water and plenty of morale.

Creel worked in close conjunction with missionaries Sharon Fairchild and Aimee Hammonds, and a couple of special "MK's," Kim Hearon and Hannah Grey. Their combined ministry of praying, planning, preparation, and performance paid off for all.

When we left Rio, it was mutually agreed, that this campaign was the best that we had ever experienced. ■



PAUSING during the trip are team members standing, from left, J.D. Martin; Linda Jackson; Sharon Fairchild, missionary; Audrey Stephens; Konny Wiggins; Kathy Mason; Alesandria De Soto, interpreter; Dorothy Wiggins; Jimmy Jackson; Christina De Soto, interpreter; Bennie Creel; and Carolyn Armstrong; and seated are a driver and Stanley Cooper.

Two Tennessee women ...

— Continued from page 7

has needs which can be met through Christ and the church."

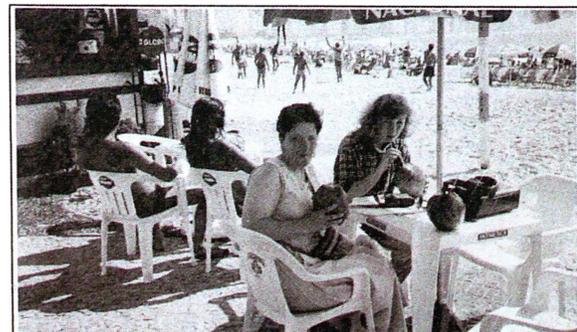
According to Sharp, the church was filled to capacity each evening, and eight families committed themselves to live by God's purposes and principles for the family. Huff, MAI Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team ministry assistant, participated in the family conference by sharing her testimony and perspective of being single.

The most challenging job of the trip was codirecting a VBS with Ebenezer Church Children's Sunday School coordinator Maria Jose. With the assistance of 13 church helpers, the StarQuest VBS program was adapted for use with children from the "City of God" slum.

It was the first time for many of the children to come into a church and hear Bible stories. Some children had never held crayons or children's scissors. They enjoyed making the crafts each day. Over 220 children were enrolled with an attendance reaching 178 on the last day. The children were sad to see the VBS come to an end.

"The most exciting thing for us was to see 68 children accept Jesus and know that all the decisions will be followed up by the church," Huff said.

Both of the women were able to see many of the project sites where Tennessee volunteers have been requested. This especially will assist Huff in her work at the TBC of relating opportunities in Brazil to Tennessee Baptists. ■



ENJOYING THE BEACH in Rio de Janeiro are Kathy Sharp, left, and Kim Huff.

Jackson team does MRM work

by Joann Breedlove, Parkview Church, Jackson
For *The Macedonian Call*

When the Mississippi River Ministry (MRM) began a few years ago, it was hard for us to think of Madison County in Tennessee as a REAL mission field. After all we are in the Bible Belt area!

In the past several years, Parkview Church in Jackson, has sent out volunteers all over the world. The only real missions that we did for our Jackson community was through our WMU.

Our first work in the MRM was helping with Backyard Bible Clubs at a government project in the summers at Parkview Courts in East Jackson. Three years ago, Parkview Church sent two girls and me, a leader of a Madison-Chester Activator Team, to Clarksdale, Miss. When we shared with Parkview about our work in Clarksdale with the children, we realized that there was as much need in Jackson.

With the burden of need now focused on our city, we invited Carol Vaughan, the director of Church and Community Ministries for Madison-Chester and Crockett Associations, to come and share areas of need in the Jackson area.

After much prayerful consideration and encouragement

from the manager and owner of the Sadler Mobile Home Park in Jackson, we decided to accept the project of the trailer park. Vaughn then gave us ideas and guidelines for starting a ministry and how to keep it alive.

With prayer and planning on May 17, 1997, we began our ministry on a vacant lot in the corner of the mobile home park. We had a carnival style block party with Bible study, games, singing, clowns, and food. A total of 35 came from our church and nine children and 15 adults came from the park.

After the block party, we held two BYBCs each month from June through October and averaged one to seven

children in attendance. We had no inside place to meet at the trailer park so we were not able to meet regularly during the fall and winter seasons.

Pray for the Lord to open up a home in the park for adult and children's Bible study for the winter months. If this is not the Lord's will, then we intend to resume our BYBCs on the vacant lot again when the weather will permit.

I believe that the key to a successful ministry is not how many we teach or help. It is the consistency with which this teaching and helping is done. As we are told in the Bible, God's word will not return void. The harvest will be reaped just as the seeds are sown. ■



MINISTERING in a Backyard Bible Club held at a mobile home park in Jackson are clowns, from left, Angela Villegas, April Rouse, Jimmie Lynn Phillips, and Janie Smith.

Missionaries give away coats, minister in Poland

By Steven D. Reece, missionary
For *The Macedonian Call*

The flood hit quickly last summer in Poland. The water rose so rapidly from unusually heavy rains in southwestern Poland that no one knew what to do. Rivers rose and spilled out of their banks sending a wall of water across the country side.

Within weeks, the flood waters subsided leaving nearly 60 people dead

and more than two billion dollars worth of property destroyed. According to officials, it was the "worst flood in Polish history."

The flood threw the government into an uproar. People were angry because the government could not help them, or the government's help was limited to a few thousand "zloty" or 100 bricks.

"Poland did not have much financial reserves to help people or to cover rebuilding," said IMB missionary to

Poland, Doug Shaw. "Flood insurance is virtually non-existent. The one private insurer went bankrupt. The national insurance company suffered huge losses due to the flood."

Shaw and his wife Marcy are first term IMB missionaries serving in Poland. In response to the

disaster, Doug Shaw helped coordinate Southern Baptist response to the flooding.

John Floyd, IMB regional leader for Central and Eastern Europe, released \$10,000 in IMB funds to assist in Polish flood relief. "After this initial response, we wanted to reach people that everyone else had missed," Doug Shaw said. A total of 20 percent of the flood victims received no help at all because they did not qualify."

Shaw contacted Terry Sharp, TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions specialist and Mickey Caison, NAMB International Disaster Relief director. At that time, the TBC was involved in a partnership with Polish Baptists until December 1997.

Shaw, Sharp, and Caison met in September with the Flood Aid Committee of the First and Second Churches of Wroclaw, Poland, to see what Southern Baptists could do to help minister.

The Flood Committee said there would be a great need in the winter for coats for children. Through the TBC Missions and Awareness Involvement Group, in November Tennessee Baptists gave 500 coats and hats to Polish children, and an additional \$3,200 towards church repairs and

medicine for the children.

Thus, the local Baptist churches of Wroclaw, five IMB missionaries, and one journeyman helped bring an early Christmas to 500 children and their families. Two days before Christmas, the missionaries, working with local Polish Baptists, distributed the children's coats and hats with food baskets, Gospel tracts, and Bibles to 100 families.

"The cooperative effort between the Polish Baptists and the IMB missionaries has let the Polish people know who Baptists are," Shaw said. "It also let people know that Baptists represent a God who loves them and who really cares about their needs."

The distribution of the coats and hats also impacted the lives of the missionaries. "Giving out the coats, changed my life," said Marcy Shaw. "Disasters are very intellectual until you are there and see what happened. I was overwhelmed by the pain and unhappiness of the people that I saw."

The flood also gave local Polish Baptists a chance to minister. "In what many people thought was a curse, we found a blessing," said a member of the joint Flood Aid Committee. ■



RECEIVING A COAT is Mateusz Wysocki, left, 12, of Lubrza, Poland, from Bogumil Jarmulak, center, and Zuzanna Bama of First Church, Wroclaw.

Revivals set for Brazil during fall

For *The Macedonian Call*

We are now underway with the Tennessee/Rio Partnership and the first groups are now returning. This is a three-year partnership with Brazil.

The projects with the Carioca Convention, which encompasses Rio de Janeiro, continue to be scheduled. Of special interest are the 1998 Simultaneous Revivals in Brazil that are scheduled to be held Aug. 9-17 and Sept. 27-Oct. 6.

Project #: PM41998925

Dates: Aug. 9-17

Location: Governor's Island

Description: Evangelism

A team of 15 people is needed for simultaneous revivals in churches in Governor's Island.

Cost: \$1,900 per person

Contact: Murray Mathis, pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro, (615) 893-8192 (office) and (615) 890-7308 (home)

Project #: PM41998919

Dates: Sept. 27-Oct. 6

Location: Jacarepagua

Description: Evangelism

Twenty teams of 2 people each (preacher and layperson) 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.

Cost: \$1,900 per person

Contact TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team for information on simultaneous revivals at 1 (800) 558-2090 or (615) 371-2021. ■

Smyrna dramatists serve in Costa Rica

By Jan McCall, First Church, Smyrna
For *The Macedonian Call*

Picture mountains in Costa Rica surrounding a pretty city and most of all friendly, loving people who opened their hearts and homes to 10 drama team members from First Church, Smyrna.

This is what we found when we arrived in Heredia, Costa Rica, on Jan. 9. Our original plan was to take a dramatic arts team to Primera Igreja Batista of Heredia to teach drama as a ministry and evangelistic tool.

As God was assembling our team, it became obvious that He had additional plans for this trip. At least four people who were called had no drama experience, and three others had only limited drama experience.

We told those who were unsure that, "If God is calling you to go, you'd better go. There is a reason God wants you there."

The team included: Marlen Aguilar, Ron Alley, Maggie Cole, Terry Drake, Sherrie Ferrell, Susan Harrell, Jan McCall, Jim and Darla Pace, and Nancy Williams.

The size of the team and the activities, already scheduled at the Baptist Camp in San Jose, made it necessary for the team to stay at the Hotel Valladolid in Heredia where we ate some meals. Other meals were supplied by the families of the church which meant that dinner was served after the revival services lasting from 9 to 11 p.m.

These family meals were an immeasurable gift to us because the average income for the families in the church was about \$7,000 per year. The members' homes were not always large enough to seat us at ta-

bles, but the love we felt was so great that we enjoyed the close fellowship.

The most exciting part of the trip was seeing and hearing what God is doing in the Central Valley of Costa Rica. Sis Tufts and Sue Smith, IMB missionaries, shared with us how more people wanted to have Bible study groups. The response is so great that they are scrambling to have people lead the groups. An evangelistic puppet program is now being requested to come into some Catholic schools.

One of our team members, Terry Drake, is very strong in teaching and Evangelism Explosion. Drake's people skills opened doors at the hotel where we stayed. By Sunday, Drake knew each person on every hotel shift, and he would introduce us to them.

Unknown to us, the love we had for one another, the love God gave us to share, and the joy we had in serving God spilled over to everyone we came in contact. One young man from an alcohol rehabilitation center for teenage boys accepted Christ. Two men in the hotel also were saved, and two people in the church accepted Christ.

One of the families that fed us was Catholic, but their son was a new Christian who attended Primera Iglesia Batista. The son had been looking for someone to train him in Evangelism. When he met Drake, he said, "I am the reason you are here."

God needed and used all 10 people on our team for the project; each person was vital to the mission. The last night of the revival, Drake told the crowd that God had prepared someone to take on each ministry we had brought down to Costa Rica from music, children's lessons, to prayer. All five ministries were accepted by someone in the church, and nine people out of 60 accepted the call of evangelism.

We are currently exploring ways of bringing some of the people from the Costa Rica church to our Smyrna area for training. Thank you, First Church, Smyrna, for supporting missions and for making it possible for us to go to Heredia. ■



POSING WITH a pig, which was the mascot of a local restaurant, are team members, clockwise, Ron Alley, minister of music; Sherrie Ferrell; Jan McCall; Susan Harrell; Terry Drake; Darla Pace; Jim Pace; Marlen Aguilar; Maggie Cole; and Nancy Williams.

The Macedonian Call

Costa Rica Projects

Summer Missionaries

Project #: PM47199823
 Dates: May 15-Aug. 15
 Location: Central Valley
 Description: Summer Missionaries
 Two summer missionaries are needed to work in local Costa Rica churches in evangelism, youth and children's ministries, and church development.

Evangelism

Project #: PM71998810
 Dates: September
 Location: Heredia
 Description: Spiritual Renewal Revival
 A team of 4 volunteers is needed to do a Spiritual Renewal Campaign for the church in areas of personal witnessing and missions involvement.

Project #: PM71998808
 Dates: September
 Location: Heredia
 Description: Evangelistic Campaign
 A team of 4 volunteers is needed to do a youth revival for ages 12 and up and children's activities for ages 9 to 12.

Michigan Projects

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
 Three teams are needed to rough in multi-functional building.

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

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

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

Project #: GD-2e
 Dates: July 17-26
 Location: Ann Arbor
 Description: Construction
 Three teams are needed to do masonry work for a multifunctional building.

Project #: GD-2f
 Dates: July 6-26
 Location: Ann Arbor
 Description: Construction
 Three teams are needed to dry wall for a multifunctional building.

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

Project #: G-3A
 Dates: July 17-20
 Location: Durand
 Description: Construction
 Volunteers are needed to do first rough-in on a new building.

Project #: G-3C
 Dates: July 6-13
 Location: Durand
 Description: Construction
 Volunteers are needed to do electrical work on a new building.

Project #: N-6B
 Dates: Open

Location: Oscoda
 Description: Construction
 Volunteers are needed to replace roof of 60,000 sq. ft. single story building including materials and labor.

Project #: GD-3
 Dates: Open
 Location: Detroit
 Description: Construction
 Two summer missionaries are needed to repair work on existing building

Project #: GD-4
 Dates: Open
 Location: Detroit
 Description: Construction
 Volunteers are needed to build new rest-rooms.

Project #: SC-3
 Dates: Open
 Location: Battle Creek
 Description: Construction
 Volunteers are needed to repair block siding of church and chimney.

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 #: N-4
 Dates: Open
 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 #: N-6A
 Dates: July
 Location: Oscoda
 Description: VBS
 A team is needed to do VBS.

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
 Revivats teams, evangelism, and church planting activities are needed to help mission church.

Project #: M-4
 Dates: Open
 Location: Roseville
 Description: Sports Evangelism
 A team of 2 volunteers is 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 team of 6-12 volunteers is needed to do telephone survey for new work prospects.

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

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

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

Canada Projects

Camp

Project #: 97MIDO27
 Dates: July 17-24
 Location: Alberta
 Description: Camp Counselor
 One volunteer is needed to serve as a life-guard for a children's camp. Other abilities such as drama, music, etc. a plus.

Construction

Project #: 98CAPO14
 Dates: Open
 Location: Richmond, British Columbia
 Description: Construction/ESL/Music
 A team of 4-6 volunteers is needed to do construction on a church and house. Cf

that group need 2 people for 3-6 months for ESL, and 2 people for 3-6 months for music.

Education

Project #: 98NOR025
 Dates: September to May 1999
 Location: Charlottetown
 Description: Education
 A team is needed to evaluate, plan, and improve new ministries in Christian Education, to support growth of younger families, and equip leaders.

Evangelism

Project #: 98NOR030
 Dates: May 30-June 7
 Location: Calgary
 Description: Evangelism
 A team of 20-30 is needed to hand out seeker targeted information as part of Operation Lifeboat.

Project #: 97NOR021
 Dates: June 29-July 4
 Location: Saskatoon
 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 #: 97NOR018
 Dates: July 18-Aug. 1
 Location: North Battleford, Saskatchewan
 Description: Evangelism/VBS
 A team of 3 is needed to do VBS, visitation, crabs, 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 #: 97MIDO26
 Dates: July 1-14
 Location: Evansburg, Alberta
 Description: VBS
 A team of 3 is needed to VBS with music, classes, and games.

Project #: 98NOR024
 Dates: July 4-10
 Location: Charlottetown
 Description: VBS/Evangelism
 A team of 12 volunteers is needed to do VBS and visitation in the homes.

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: Open
 Location: Halifax
 Description: BYBC/Prayer Walk
 A team is needed to lead BYBC, prayer walks, and opinion polls.

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

Rio de Janeiro Projects

Evangelism

Project #: PM41999912
 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 #: PM41999907
 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 #: PM41999913
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 A team is needed to do evangelism in small churches.

Project #: PM41999926
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 A team of 11 is needed to do evangelism in small churches.

Project #: PM41999914
 Dates: Open
 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 #: PM41999917
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Construction
 A team is needed to do evangelism and construction in small churches and new congregations. Also help complete construction on a small church.

Project #: PM41999920
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 A team of 20 volunteers is needed to revitalize a church with less than 10 members.

Project #: PM41999915
 Dates: July 26-Aug. 4
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Creative Ministries
 A team is needed to do evangelism, creative ministries, puppets, drama, music in small churches, and new congregations.

Project #: PM41999919
 Dates: Sept. 27-Oct. 6
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism
 Twenty teams of 2 (preacher and layperson-music) are needed for simultaneous revivals in churches in Jacarepagua. Nightly services will be held along with visitation, personal witnessing, speaking in schools, and special musical presentations.

Project #: PM41999904
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Drama/Music
 A team of students will perform in schools, churches, plazas to prepare people for a crusade.

Summer Missionary

Project #: PM41999902
 Dates: June 1-Aug. 8
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Evangelism/Social Work
 Four summer missionaries are needed to work in homes provided by the Canco Convention Social Work Board to teach skills and do evangelistic outreach.

Church Planting

Project #: PM41999924
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Church Planting
 A team of 20 volunteers is needed to start a new work in Jacarepagua Association area, called Pantanal.

Construction

Project #: PM41999909
 Dates: Open
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Construction/Evangelism
 A team of 12 volunteers is needed to do refurbishing work at the Centers for Social Work and evangelistic work in area churches.

Revival

Project #: PM41999925
 Dates: Aug. 9-17
 Location: Rio de Janeiro
 Description: Revival
 A team of 15 volunteers is needed to do revival at Governor's Island.

Tennessee Projects

Construction

Project #: T-59
 Dates: May 24-Aug. 7
 Location: Jefferson City
 Description: Construction
 A team is needed to do home repair ministry for rural East Tennessee families.

Project #: T-18
 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) 475-5611

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-September
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Construction
 A team is needed to complete a metal frame building.

Project #: T-25
 Dates: June-August
 Location: Martin
 Description: Construction
 A team of 4-12 volunteers is needed to do construction of a new addition to the Baptist Student Center.
 Contact: James Kinsey, (901) 885-8525

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

Project #: T-49
 Dates: June 13-20
 Location: Chattanooga
 Description: Construction/Special Event
 A team of 10-100 volunteers is needed to do construction in the morning and special events ministry in the evening.
 Contact: Stan Braley, (423) 267-3794

Project #: T-54
 Dates: June 20-26
 Location: Chattanooga
 Description: Construction/BYBC
 A team of 10-100 volunteers is needed to do minor construction, BYBC in morning, and resort and park ministry in evenings.
 Contact: Stan Braley, (423) 267-3794

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

Project #: T-53
 Dates: July 4-10
 Location: Chattanooga
 Description: Construction
 A team of 10-100 volunteers is needed to do BYBC or construction in the morning and resort ministry in afternoons.
 Contact: Stan Braley, (423) 267-3794

Project #: T-50
 Dates: July 25-31
 Location: Chattanooga
 Description: Construction, Resort, Inner City
 A team of 10-100 volunteers is needed to do construction or BYBC in morning and work with resort or senior adult ministry in state parks in afternoon.
 Contact: Stan Braley, (423) 267-3794

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

Project #: T-42
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Construction
 A team of 4-10 volunteers is needed to do metal building construction for a new ministry center.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Project #: T-45
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Construction
 A team of 4-10 volunteers is needed to do drywall for new ministry building.

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

Project #: T-47
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Construction
 A team of 25-30 volunteers is needed to do construction of a new sanctuary for an African-American church.

Camps

Project #: T-52
 Dates: July 11-17
 Location: Chattanooga
 Description: Camp Leader
 A team of 10-15 volunteers is needed to lead summer camp.
 Contact: Stan Braley, (423) 267-3794

Project #: T-51
 Dates: July 18-24
 Location: Chattanooga
 Description: Camps
 A team of 10-15 volunteers is needed to be co-counselors, recreation leaders, worship leaders, and do teaching.
 Contact: Stan Braley, (423) 267-3794

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

Project #: T-35
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Sports Camps
 A team of 10-20 volunteers is 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 afternoon, and family program in evenings. A total of 1 group is required per week for 7 weeks.
 Contact: Lori Fortner, (423) 436-0160

Revival

Project #: T-36
 Dates: Open
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Youth Revival
 A team of 10-30 volunteers is needed to do a youth revival.

BYBC/VBS

Project #: T-8
 Dates: June 23-July 3
 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 Brunitt, (423) 547-0088

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

Project #: T-27
 Dates: July
 Location: Memphis
 Description: BYBC Revival
 A team of 14 volunteers is needed to do Evangelism and BYBC.

Project #: T-24
 Dates: July 27-31
 Location: Memphis
 Description: VBS
 A team of 12-15 volunteers is needed to do VBS.

Miscellaneous

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

Project: Woodcock Center
 Dates: April 4
 Location: Nashville
 Description: Construction
 A team of skilled roofers and other volunteers is needed to re-roof Woodcock Center.
 Contact: Tony Langton, pastor and director, (615) 254-9380

Mission Service Corps

Project: Brinkley Heights Ministry Center
 Dates: Open for Long Term Missions > 4 Months
 Location: Memphis
 Description: Leadership Development
 A team is needed to work with children, teens, single parents, young married, senior adults, etc. for one year at Brinkley Heights Ministry Center. Persons would become "temporary/honorary members" of Brinkley Heights Church to assist in leadership development, in building relationships, and in reclamation of community for Christ. Also needed are: minister of recreation, minister of youth, and worship and choir leader.
 Contact: Sam Wilson, director, or Tim Cox, pastor, (901) 458-0617

Project: Woodcock Center
 Dates: Open for Long Term Missions > 4 Months
 Location: Nashville
 Description: Relationships Development
 A team is needed to assist Woodcock Center workers to build relationships of trust and to serve as "agents of change" in inner-city community. They will address long-term needs in food and clothing distribution, meals, tutoring, youth recreation and vocational training.
 Contact: Tony Langton, pastor and director, (615) 254-9380

Project: Copper Basin Crisis Center
 Dates: Open for Long Term Missions > 4 Months
 Location: Ducktown
 Description: Distribution and Counseling
 A team is needed to assist Copper Basin Crisis Center in food, clothing and used-lumiture distribution. They will also counsel and coordinate youth teams.
 Contact: Al Patterson, director of missions for Copper Basin Association, (423) 496-7977 (office) or (423) 496-2826 (home)

Project: Appalachian Outreach
 Dates: Open for Long Term Missions > 4 Months
 Location: Jefferson City
 Description: Volunteer Coordinator
 A team is needed to coordinate volunteer activity for home remodeling in rural area. Persons must be skilled in construction with ability to do home repair work.
 Contact: Shannon Washum, director, (423) 475-5611

Tragedy-stricken Sutton: 'You can trust the Lord'

By James A. Smith Sr.
For Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Five days after experiencing what he called the "darkest moment of my life," Jerry Sutton told a March 3 chapel audience at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary God can be trusted to help believers through life's difficulties.

"I've been to the bottom, and I want to say to you out of the experience of life that the Word of God is sufficient for every need," Sutton preached.

"It is sufficient for every crisis. It is sufficient for every unknown and every question."

Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, struck a pedestrian on his way to pick up evangelist Jay Strack early in the morning of Feb. 26. The two ministers were planning to ride together for Strack's preaching engagement later the same morning at the Louisville seminary's semi-weekly chapel service. A 47-year-old woman was killed in

the traffic accident and Strack never made the trip to Louisville, resulting in an impromptu time of prayer and reflection on the tragedy during the chapel service.

Sutton, who had been scheduled to speak in chapel before the beginning of the spring semester, thanked the seminary community for its prayers on his behalf and announced that he decided to put aside the sermon he intended to deliver and instead told the community, "I want to share with you this morning what God dealt with me about in the past week."

The deceased woman, Pamela Douglas, "was a dear, precious lady ... She loved the Lord Jesus," Sutton said, explaining the never-married woman lived with her invalid mother whom she cared for. It was while crossing the street

to catch the bus that Douglas stepped in front of his car, Sutton said, adding, "I didn't see her until I was about five feet from her."

According to Sutton, Douglas worked at the Nashville public library office and coordinated the annual Christmas-time Angel Tree project for Prison Fellowship, an evangelical para-church ministry to the incarcerated and their families.

Sutton said the moment of tragedy happened after a "mountaintop experience" the church enjoyed during the Strack-led revival services at Two Rivers Church earlier that week. The night before the accident, 22 people had been baptized.

"I asked the Lord, 'Why did you let this happen?'" Sutton said. "There is no answer on this side. I'll understand when I get to the other side. But for now there is no answer," he said.

The trustworthiness of the Bible was demonstrated in the time of crisis, Sutton said, not-

ing his daughter, fellow ministers, and friends reminded him of biblical passages from which to seek comfort and assurance: Job 1:6, Psalm 84, Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 8:26-28, Galatians 6:2, and I Peter 5:7.

"What looks to be a horrible, horrible situation God will make a place of nourishing in time," Sutton said, citing Psalm 84. "God will take the horrible experiences of life and he will make it a source to minister life to people who need him."

In spite of crisis, Sutton maintained, "You can trust the Lord. When things are going wrong, you can trust the Lord."

"When you do not know where to go, you can trust the Lord. When there are multiple options of what you can do when you graduate, you can trust the Lord."

"When there is only one door, you can trust the Lord. When there are no doors, you can trust the Lord. When times are good, you can trust him. When times are bad, you can trust him. He is a trust-



worthy God."

An outpouring of love and support from church members, fellow ministers, and friends came quickly after the news of the tragedy became known, Sutton recounted.

"We felt the ministry of the body of Christ to us," Sutton said. "Last Thursday (Feb. 26) was the darkest moment of my life," Sutton said.

"I went to the bottom. I want to tell you, dear friend, when you get to the bottom there is a solid rock upon which you can stand. God was present because he cares. I can tell you not as a salesman but as a satisfied customer, whatever God says is true."

"There is a reality in the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the Word of God in times of crisis, and God Almighty will never leave you hanging," he concluded. ■



SUTTON

Belmont position joins athletics, missions

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Jeff McGinnis, a former Belmont University basketball player and current strength and conditioning coach in the athletic department, has been named director of athletics in ministry at the school.

The new position reflects a joint effort between Belmont's athletic department, the School of Religion, the physical education, health, and wellness department, university ministries, and university relations.

"We are truly excited about the possibilities of Jeff's serving alongside us in orchestrating opportunities for our athletes to share not only their missions experience, but their personal faith as well," said Dane Anthony, university minister.

The concept of athletes in ministry has taken off the last few years and Belmont is a leading participant, committed to the Tennessee Baptist Convention's partnership missions efforts through sports evangelism.

"Sports evangelism has become a strategic way of sharing Christ with people around the world, particularly youth," said Belmont staffer Betty Wiseman, who has led Belmont athletes on mission trips to Poland.

McGinnis traveled on the first two teams which went to Poland in 1995 and 1996 and along with his wife, Amy, will be part of a faculty/staff team going to Costa Rica this month on spring break.

In his new role McGinnis will help organize local and global missions projects for the varsity athletes and coaches, while also coordinating requests of local churches for athletes to share their experiences in these ministries. ■

Tennessee missionary uses illness to glorify God

By Betty Poor
For Baptist and Reflector

ORANJESTAD, Aruba — There are days when Tennessean Debra Owens-Hughes doesn't feel like doing missions work. She and her husband, Stan, are church planters here with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Some days Debra, who was born in Paris, to Africa missionaries Carlos and Myrtice Owens (now retired and living in Buchanan), feels muscular pain all over her body and suffers extreme fatigue after very little physical activity. She suffers from two chronic physical problems: fibromyalgia and autonomic dysfunction. But the Lord is using these illnesses for his glory.

"I'm the support system for Stan," she said. "My ministry is now with my kids and my husband. It's humbling. I want to do more. But being humbled is the best thing that can happen to me."

The Owens-Hughes have four children: Mikaela, 10; Carlos, 7; and Sierra and Zachary, 4. Carlos and Zachary are adopted Brazilians.

As a missionary kid herself, Owens-Hughes is certainly not used to the more passive lifestyle her illness has forced upon her. Although she was born in Tennessee, she spent her childhood in Kigoma, Tanzania, Limuru, Kenya, and Moshi Tanzania.

"The biggest problem I had about going as a missionary myself was knowing whether it was the Lord wanting me to go or me wanting to go home," she said.

She attended Belmont University in Nashville and earned a degree from the University of South Florida in Tampa. She then headed on to Golden Gate



SOUTHERN BAPTIST missionaries Stan and Debra Owens-Hughes, left, chat with vacationers in Aruba at the La Cabana Resort where Hughes conducts services each Sunday morning. With Stan is their son, Carlos. — IMB photo by Sandy King

Baptist Theological Seminary where she met Stan. Her certainty of God's call to the mission field was confirmation that God wanted him to be a missionary as well. The couple married in 1988 and were appointed to serve in Novo Hamburgo, Brazil, where she worked in an orphanage and taught English as a Second Language. They transferred to Aruba in 1996.

By then Owens-Hughes was dealing with her illness. "You prepare for mission service, you go to seminary, and you live with what you plan to do, and then this happens," she said. "I participate in the Bible studies Stan leads, but sometimes I can't even get to church."

She noted God is at work in her family, however. "I've seen him at work in the lives of our children. The two older ones have accepted Christ. I have a lot of contacts with other par-

ents through the children.

"God amazes me how he not only uses us, but takes care of us," she said. She said she didn't understand at first why the Lord led her and Stan to a beautiful resort island in the Caribbean. "I would have lived anywhere. But God knew he could take care of me here. I am able to put my kids in the school system here."

Because Debra has been through difficulties with her illness, she can relate to people who have a crisis in their life.

The couple ministers to people in crisis through home Bible studies, a prison ministry, counseling, and a Sunday service in a shared time resort.

Though Owens-Hughes knows several languages her best communication of the Gospel comes through the way she deals with her chronic fatigue and pain. ■

ERCL seminar reaffirms God's design for the family, sexuality

By Tom Strode & Dwayne Hastings For Baptist Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. — An American church infiltrated by the culture's declining sexual standards can still make a difference by proclaiming and applying God's Word, speakers declared at the annual seminar of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

In several addresses March 2-4 at a seminar focusing on the theme, "The Family & Human Sexuality: Reaffirming God's Design," speakers counted the cost of a sexual revolution that has engulfed American society. They called on the church to restore crippled individuals and families.

"We have let the world sell us a cheap bill of goods," said Ed Young, pastor of Second Church, Houston, of many in the church who have adopted society's view of sexuality.



YOUNG

Such a godless approach to sex will affect all areas of culture, Young said. "We will all be splattered by it," he said. "Don't think you will be safe in your gated communities or the suburbs or behind the stained glass of our churches."

Speakers provided plenty of evidence of the detrimental impact distorted views of sex and marriage are having on the culture.

The risks of acquiring a sexually transmitted disease "are enormously more than they ever have been," said sexual health specialist Joe McIlhaney. As evidence, he said:

- (1) 12 million Americans get a new STD infection each year;
- (2) Five of the 10 most frequently reported infectious diseases in the United States are STDs;
- (3) There are more than 25

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significant STDs today, while there were only two before 1960.

Linda Keener, executive director of a Chattanooga, crisis pregnancy center, cited a recent report showing 43 percent of American women will have an abortion in their lifetime.

National Fatherhood Initiative President Wade Horn said: nearly four of 10 children do not have a father at home and it is estimated six of 10 children born in the United States in the 1990s will spend a "significant portion of their childhood" in a home without their father.

Only 55 percent of American adults are married — the lowest percentage ever, said columnist and author Michael McManus.

South Carolina pastor Hal Lane said in one of the five sessions, "The biblical church must make the task of affirming the biblical family one of its most important and sacred duties. Never before has it been more important for the church to teach the biblical view of marriage and family."

While the church should help the family, the government should make sure to not harm the family, said South Carolina Gov. David Beasley.

A seminary professor challenged the leadership of the ERLC and the Southern Baptist Convention to attack the problem of sexual abuse.

The convention's leadership needs to speak out and act on behalf of women and children "who are sexually abused, neglected, and forgotten," said Paul House, Old Testament professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The SBC needs to exert purposeful leadership that goes "beyond perennially important matters such as marriage and family, homosexuality and heterosexuality, divorce, chastity, and promiscuity," he said.

"Let me be blunt," House said. "The SBC must do more to expose pedophiles, urge their prosecution, and expose how utterly evil individuals are who rape our children, damage our marriages, and foul our culture. I pray that Southern Baptists

will act before a generation of our children rises up and condemns us for remaining silent, soothing ourselves with the notion that everybody is against child abuse and there is not much we can do." ■



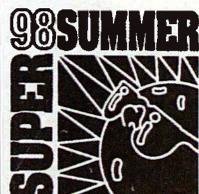
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leaders

■ **Mike Vidal** of the Hispanic Church of Spring Creek Church, Clarksville, will be ordained March 15. Vidal is retired from the U.S. Navy and is studying by correspondence at Covington Theological Seminary, Covington, Ga.

■ Pleasant Ridge Church, Huntland, has called **Dennis Tunstill** as pastor.

■ **Scott Walker** has been called as pastor, Meridian Church, Jackson, effective March 22. He formerly was pastor, Second Church, Millington.

■ Spring Creek Church, Paris, has called **Ray Barrow** as interim pastor.

■ Mansfield Church, Mansfield, has called **Bobby Campbell** as pastor.

■ **James Best**, pastor, First Church, Greeneville, will retire this fall when the first phase of the building program is complete. He has served there 23 years.

death

■ The mother of Gerald Stow, **Bertha Lee Stafford Stow**, 88, died March 12 in Nashville. Gerald Stow is president, Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, based in Brentwood. Mrs. Stow was a member of Tusculum Hills Church, Nashville.

churches

■ **Meridian Church, Jackson**, dedicated its new sanctuary and activity center Feb. 22. James Porch, executive director, Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries, spoke.

■ **Oak City Church, Seymour**, will break ground

March 22 for a new sanctuary at about 1 p.m. following a 10:30 a.m. worship service and luncheon.

■ **First Church, Fayetteville**, will hold a prayer revival April 19-23.

■ **First Church, Fairfield Glade**, will hold revival March 19-22. Jerry Atkins of Chattanooga, will speak. Also an open house and dedication of its new building and remodeled sanctuary will be held March 22 along with a luncheon.

■ **M.O.M.S. of Forest Hills Church, Nashville**, will meet March 26 at 7 p.m. Jan Yuill will speak on "Moms Leaving the Workplace." For more information, call the church at (615) 373-8074 or e-mail it at fbhc@nashville.net.

■ **Unity Church, Murfreesboro**, held a revival which resulted in three people making professions of faith, including one person who was 75 years of age. Floyd "Lammie" Lammersfeld, evangelist, spoke.

■ **Lincoya Hills Church, Donelson**, will hold a Community Block Party March 28 from 1-5 p.m. A free meal will be served and activities and entertainment will be provided. Also the church will hold a revival March 29 - April 1. Tom Madden, retired executive director, Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries, will speak. Lynn Briley will lead the music.

■ A spin-off of the 1996 Promise Keepers Rally in Memphis, the sixth **Tri-County Family Affair** for residents of Fayette, Hardeman, and Haywood counties will be held March 21 at Eddie Martin's Barn in KoKo. The event will begin at 4 p.m. and include a message, dinner, and music. For more information, contact First Church, Somerville, at (901) 465-3528.

■ **First Church, Somerville**, will hold revival March 29 - April 2. Floyd "Lammie"



FOUR GENERATIONS of Woman's Missionary Union members pose during WMU Focus Week at Smyrna Church, Burlington. They are, from left, front row, Audrey Engstrand; back row, Tracy Engstrand, Ruby McCommon, and Nellene Kidd. McCommon, 89, has been a WMU member for 50 years.

Lammersfeld, evangelist, will speak. The Bradfords, a music group of Leewood Church, Memphis, will perform. For more information, contact the church at (901) 465-3528.

■ **Southside Church, Johnson City**, held services Feb. 15 in its new sanctuary. The morning service drew about 400 people.

■ **Jean Stockdale**, a popular speaker and member of Bellevue Church, Cordova, will lead a women's study at The Glory of His Grace conference hosted by the women's ministry of **Alpha Church, Morristown**, on April 25. For more information, call (423) 581-3237.

■ **Rocky Point Church, Russellville**, will hold revival March 22-25. Larry Parrott, pastor, Pleasant View Church, Talbott, will speak and Michael Turner will lead worship.

associations

■ **Hiwassee Association** will hold an Evangelism Conference March 27 at Pisgah Church, Decatur. It will begin at 7 p.m. Ron Sorah, pastor, First Church, Calhoun, will speak and the choir of First Church, Calhoun, will sing.

■ **Nashville Association** will hold a Senior Adult Spring Rally April 2 at Tusculum Hills Church, Nashville. For more information, call the association at (615) 259-3034.

■ **Riverside Association** will hold an Associational Evangelism Conference March 24 at 7 p.m. at First Church, Livingston. Fred Lodge, pastor, Una Church, Nashville, and Doug Sager, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and pastor, First Church, Corcord, will speak. Julian Suggs of Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries will lead the music.

■ **Western District Association** collected items for the

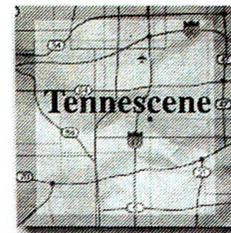
crisis center of Copper Basin Association. Members of the association's 32 churches delivered to the center on March 5 a truck full of diapers, cleaning supplies, laundry detergents, paper products, and personal care items. The project was coordinated by Jane Crossnoe, Woman's Missionary Union mission project leader for the association, and Bill Smith, director of missions.

schools

■ **Union University, Jackson**, has named Nedra J. Kanavel as director of news and information, effective March 9. An alumnus, Kanavel was editorial page assistant for *The Jackson Sun*.

state events

■ Tennesseans interested in serving as crew chiefs of World Changers projects may attend a **World Changers Crew Chief School** April 16-18 at Camp Linden, Linden, or April 23-25 at Camp Carso, Newport. Training will be offered on roofing, flooring, and sheetrock repair. Registration begins at 4 p.m. on Thursday. For more information, contact Tim Bearden at Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries, (615) 371-2026.



Watertown church sees 41 saved in recent revival

For Baptist and Reflector

WATERTOWN — Round Lick Church here saw 41 people make professions of faith during a recent revival. The results were so amazing, the meeting was extended one day to five days, reported Terry Wilkerson, pastor.

This revival follows one a year ago in which 98 people made professions of faith. In fact, in the last 13 months, the congregation has seen 228 people make initial spiritual decisions, Wilkerson said. This is true despite the fact the town only has a population of 1,300.

Ronnie Owens, evangelist of Tazewell, spoke during the services and in a Watertown public school to about 400 students. There he spoke mostly about being a winner, but he also invited the youth to the revival meeting, explained Wilkerson.

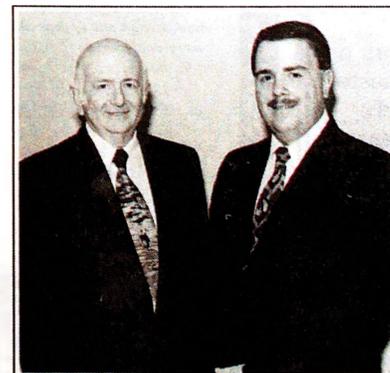
And teenagers who are members of the church were inviting teens to the services and distributing tickets to a free meal of pizza. The students responded and 13 made professions of faith.

Wilkerson traces the success of the revival to the 30-day preparation period, which has been held prior to each revival. During these periods, the members commit to specific prayer times, usually for 30 minutes.

The church also had a record attendance, drawing 375 in one service although the building only seats 300. Wilkerson has been pastor of the church for about a year. *B&R*



BETH PROWSE, third from left, stands with friends who honored her on Beth Prowse Day March 1 in Stone Association. Prowse, wife of director of missions Michael Prowse, was given a reception at First Church, Cookeville, to thank her for serving for about five years as secretary at the association office, and for serving five years as associational Woman's Missionary Union director, and in other leadership positions during their 20-year service here.



SERVING Antioch Church, Humboldt, are Bill Rice, left, as pastor, and his son, Andy Rice, as associate pastor. Bill Rice has served several churches in Gibson County. Andy Rice was licensed by First Church, Humboldt, recently and is taking seminary classes at Union University, Jackson.

Best place for Christian not always the safest: Tennessee missionary

By Herb Hollinger
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The best place in life for a Christian is not necessarily the safest or most comfortable, according to a Southern Baptist missionary to Uganda.

Mark Pierce, missionary doctor with the International Mission Board in the east African nation, told employees in chapel at the SBC Building March 6, Christians often pray to be in the center of God's will. However, he said, one must realize that the center of God's will is not necessarily the safest or physically the most comfortable.

Pierce and his wife, Elaine,

were participating in a missions conference in Franklin where he and his wife were members of First Church before going to the mission field. The former director of research in infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University Hospital was invited to speak to the monthly chapel of SBC employees.

Using Ephesians 4:1, Pierce challenged the employees with two keys in being "worthy ... of your call."

Obedience and "Christlikeness" are most important, Pierce said. Growing up in Illinois as the son of a Baptist preacher, Pierce said he knew

the call to the Christian life was not a "trivial thing." But after getting married, then with a family while working in AIDS research at Vanderbilt, Pierce said there was a comfort zone. But obedience to his call to medical missions was prioritized when he went on a short-term missionary project to Uganda in 1992.

Later at a marriage retreat at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, Pierce said the conference leader, Henry Blackaby, helped him realize the importance of his call to medical missions. One year later, the Pierces were in Kam-

pala, Uganda.

In Uganda, Pierce has worked in difficult, poverty-stricken areas and once faced a devastating cholera epidemic while at the hospital in Kampala where he teaches and practices medicine.

Citing Romans 8:29, Pierce called Christians to be "conformed to his likeness." As a physician, Pierce said he is aware he can be a help in healing physical problems but always in "Christ's name."

"Our purpose is not so much

to find where God wants us, or to find to what he has called us, but to be like Jesus Christ wherever we are and at whatever we are doing," Pierce told the employees. ■

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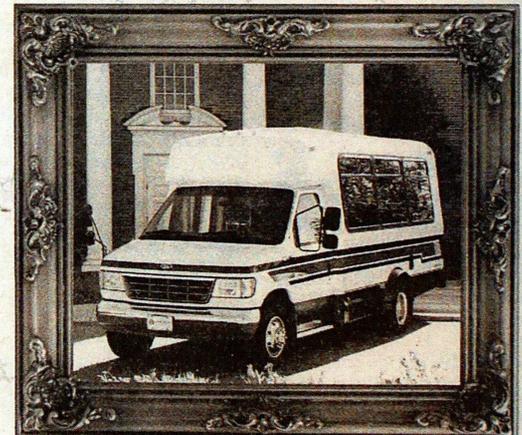
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By Mike Rogers

Focal Passage — Luke 17:11-19

Few live each day with the realization that Almighty God is at work in their midst. We become so consumed with our own agenda and the demands of making a living that recognizing God's activity in our lives becomes secondary. We may pray before a meal and even study the Scriptures regularly, but to walk through each day with a consistent awareness of his presence is unusual.

Jesus confronted this lack of awareness of God's activity constantly. When he spoke to the Pharisees, who had constructed their own narrow view of the Kingdom of God, he said to them, "The Kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21). Jesus was pointing out to them that the Kingdom of God was already in their midst. It was not a matter of waiting for some future event, but rather a conscious understanding that God (the King) was already at work in their midst.

This Sunday, God has invited us to stop momentarily and listen to one of those remarkable "divine moments" in the life of a few desperate people. They had been cast out of their homes. Their lives had been disrupted, and relationships had been broken because they suffered from leprosy. They were in search of a miracle. They cried out to Jesus, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us." He responded, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." This was required if they were to be accepted back into their community. Not knowing if their disease would be healed, they obeyed Jesus' instruction and as they were walking toward the temple, they discovered that they were cleansed. Their response to their healing was shocking, but revealing. The Bible says, "One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him — and he was a Samaritan." Only one is identified as praising God and returning to thank Jesus. Can you believe it? Only 10 percent of those who had been so miraculously touched by God even recognized the source of this incredible change in their lives. To make matters worse, he was a Samaritan. In other words, he was considered lower than a pagan in the mindset of the religious leaders of that day, because he was a product of interbreeding of Jews and Gentiles. Yet, he was the only one who recognized and acknowledged the source of his healing. Jesus said, "Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" What happened? Could it be that the other nine were so focused on returning home and getting on with their own plans, that they could see nothing else?

This series of Sunday School lessons is all about the change that God brings about in our lives. But perhaps the greatest lesson that we can learn from the miraculous event in the lives of those 10 lepers, is this: Though we may be healed physically of our maladies, the greatest healing awaiting us is the return of sight (spiritual sight) — to be able to see God at work in our daily lives. To see the reality of the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again."

Where are you? Are you in the 10 percent? — 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 Association.

Jesus' power demonstrated

By Billy Murphy

Focal Passage — Mark 5:21-24, 35-43

In this week's focal passage, Mark turns from parables to miracles.

A great crowd of people came to Jesus near Capernaum. Jairus, a man of considerable importance, was in desperate need of Jesus' help. Jairus laid aside all fears of public humiliation, pride, and dignity as he pleaded with Jesus to come and lay his hands on his child to heal her as others had been healed. No doubt he had heard of or witnessed how Jesus had healed so many. He must have regarded Jesus as an outsider, a heretic, and one to whom the synagogue doors were closed. But Jairus remembered Jesus when his child became very ill.

On the way to Jairus' house, someone in the crowd slowed Jesus' progress. A woman had been plagued with hemorrhaging for 12 years. All that time, according to Jewish law, she was considered "unclean" — a woman to be

Family Bible Lesson

shunned. She had tried all sorts of cures — none of which worked. No physician was able to help her. She was condemned to live in shamed isolation. Then in desperation, she came to Jesus. She came up behind him and touched a tassel that hung from his outer robe — in the hope that he would heal her. Here was a woman who came to Jesus as a last resort and Jesus healed her.

Like this woman, we can come to Jesus as a last resort and still find him ready to heal our hearts, minds, and bodies. Jesus thwarted the processes of nature several times, but always to help someone else, never himself. It was always human need that called forth his sympathy and his power.

The resurrection and the life

By James Growden

Focal Passage — John 11:21-27, 33-35, 39, 43-44

What a lesson we are studying this week. I like to think of John 11:1-44 as "The Great Sign at Bethany." Our focus passage begins at verse 21, where we see Martha's faith in Jesus. It is a limited faith, as is so many Christians' faith today. She believed Jesus could have healed Lazarus and kept him from dying if he had been with Lazarus, but Jesus could have healed Lazarus and kept him from dying from miles away. That's how powerful Jesus was and is today. I ask the question — Was Martha complaining? She did not believe with an unlimited and resting faith. Jesus made a striking declaration, "Thy brother shall rise again." He was very clear. Martha misunderstood. She thought Jesus meant that Lazarus would arise in the resurrection at the last day. She had no thought of an immediate resuscitation, but she did believe in the final resurrection at the last day.

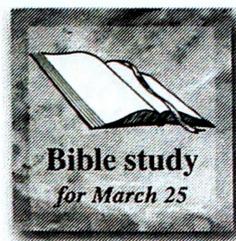
"I am the resurrection and the life." This is the fifth of Jesus' great "I am" statements. The teaching goes beyond the case of Lazarus and includes all who believe. I see two truths stated here. (1) The Christian may die but Jesus' power will live again, and (2) the possession of eternal life is gained through faith in Jesus. Those who have eternal life can never be separat-

Explore the Bible Lesson

ed from the source of life. Martha's reply (v. 27), "Yes, Master." She told him, "I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God which should come into the world."

We see Mary and the Jewish leaders crying. Jesus was deeply moved. He asked, "Where is he buried," as he wept openly. Here we see many of Jesus' emotions — compassion, indignation, sorrow, even frustration. He often expressed deep emotion, and we must never be afraid to reveal our true feelings to him. He understands them, because he experienced them. Be honest and don't try to hide anything from your Savior.

Jesus came to the tomb. Tombs were often cut into limestone, making a cave in the side of a rock wall. A stone was placed over the entrance. Jesus commanded that the stone door be taken away. To do so was to risk defilement. However, obedience was necessary if Jesus' purpose was to be realized. The scene was highly dramatic. The crowd watched and listened. Mary was weeping and Martha objected because after four days putrefaction has set in. Have you ever been around a four-day old corpse? I have and it is not a pleasant smell.



Imagine how Jairus felt about the delays Jesus encountered to heal the daughter. When messengers arrived with the news, "Your daughter is dead" Jairus no doubt was filled with fear and was possibly tempted to give up the faith he had in Jesus. The locals could accept his healing powers for the sick, but power to raise the dead? That was difficult for them to imagine. Jesus overheard the messengers and told the synagogue ruler not to fear and keep on believing.

Jesus allowed only Peter, James, and John to enter the house with him along with the child's parents. He found the house filled with people. Jesus asked the crowd in the house, "Why such loud mourning? The child did not die, but has fallen asleep." The crowd in the room laughed at him and he responded by putting them out of the house. Jesus was not denying grief in an appropriate setting, but his actions deemed it unnecessary in this case. Death seems final, but Jesus has power to call the dead back to life.

What a story of contrasts. There is the contrast between the despair of the mourners and the hope of Jesus. "Do not bother the Teacher," they said. "There is nothing anyone can do now." See the contrast between the distress of the mourners and the calm serenity of Jesus. The difference came because of Jesus' perfect trust and confidence in God. They laughed at him because they thought his hope was baseless. Their laughter must have turned to amazement when they realized what God could do. The worst human disaster can be met with courage when we meet it with God. There is nothing beyond conquest when it is faced with the love of God that is found in Jesus our Lord.

The secret to life is to let go — and let God. We do not have to beg for God's help. We need to realize his presence and his power and let ourselves go; let God carry the heavy load. He's interested, too; he loves us and cares for us. — Murphy is Computer Consultant for West Carroll Special School District and a bivocational pastor, Howse Church, Atwood.

After his brief prayer, he called in a loud voice for Lazarus to come forth. Jesus shouted loudly only three words, "Lazarus, come out." Note three significant points of this great shout of power: (1) the power over death comes from Jesus alone, (I see the enormous power of God here), (2) the shout of Jesus is personal. Lazarus' name was called so all those other dead followers of Jesus did not respond, and (3) the results of the shout of Jesus were twofold: (a) no power could hold Lazarus and (b) Lazarus received Jesus' personal attention.

What a wonderful happening is described in verse 44. I see two interesting things here: Like Lazarus, Jesus had a napkin wrapped around his face when he was buried. It was folded either by him or by an angel and laid to the side after his resurrection. The folded napkin was the immediate thing that convinced John of the Lord's resurrection. Also, the napkin gave us some insight into the grave clothes of Lazarus and Jesus. There were at least two pieces of clothing. There was a separate cloth around the face.

Praise the Lord, there will be a glorious resurrection for all God's children someday. Let's be ready and have no unconfessed sin in our lives. — Growden is a teacher and a bivocational pastor, Hillcrest Church, Nashville.



English teachers needed in China

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Fifty English teachers are needed urgently this summer to teach middle school instructors throughout China. The eight-week program is sponsored by the Volunteers in Missions department of the SBC International Mission Board.

The project will begin June 25 with a one-week orientation in Los Angeles. Teachers will depart from there July 2 for locations in China and return to Los Angeles Aug. 18 for a debriefing session.

Individuals interested should call the IMB at 1 (800) 999-3113, then press 8. At the end of the recorded message, leave the requested information. ■

Controversy arises after Disney invitation

Baptist Press

STOCKTON, Mo. — A routine request has turned into a media circus here.

A high school band director

submitted a request to the school board for the band to march in a parade at Disney World in 1999. The band director withdrew the request recently after the school board refused to vote on it that night.

The board meeting, which drew anti-homosexual picketers from nearby and a deluge of media from around the state, capped off four months of controversy in this small southwest Missouri community. The town has drawn nationwide attention for the school board's decision not to allow the band to take the trip to Disney World.

"The reason why we opposed the trip had to do with the gay-friendly policies of Disney and the questionable films put out by their subsidiaries," said Ken Spurgeon, school superintendent. "That's not reflective of what we want our kids to be around."

Spurgeon, a member of First Southern Church in Stockton, said being Baptist did not play a role in his, or the board's, position on the issue. One school board member is Baptist.

He said they did not look on the decision as a religious issue, but rather a moral and values issue. ■

Baptist volunteers aid tornado victims in central Florida

Baptist Press

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — The week after El Nino-driven twisters hit central Florida, Southern Baptist volunteers helped local churches reach out in ministry to their communities.

The tornadoes, packing 260 mph winds, left 41 dead, 265 injured, and an estimated \$67.5 million in damages to central Florida homes and businesses.

Baptists contributed supplies and assisted in clean up efforts. ■

Majority of Disney films in 1997 received R-rating

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — R-rated movies accounted for nearly two-thirds of the releases by Disney-related companies in 1997, according to Austin Pryor, publishing of *Sound Mind*

Investing newsletter.

Disney revenue from R-rated films surpassed \$750 million in 1997, up nearly four times over the \$199 million five years earlier, Pryor reported in the newsletter's February issue, citing figures from the Internet Movie Database.

R-rated films accounted for 65 percent of Disney's fare in 1997, up from 40 percent in 1993, he reported.

"The overwhelming proportion of Disney's films are not friendly to families, kids, or our Judeo-Christian values," he wrote in the newsletter. ■

House committee approves religious liberty amendment

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The House of Representatives Judiciary Committee approved by a 16-11 vote March 4 a constitutional amendment intended to restore religious liberties supporters say have been impeded by courts in recent decades.

The committee's action sends the Religious Freedom Amendment to the House floor for a vote.

The date for the floor vote has not been scheduled, a committee spokesperson said.

The Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, along with other evangelical and pro-family organizations, support the amendment. ■

Florida school board agrees to curriculum change

Baptist Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. — A Florida school board has voted unanimously to replace its Bible-history curriculum with material suggested by seven parents and others who filed suit against the board in December.

The vote was part of a settlement Feb. 25 of a lawsuit involving the Lee County School Board based here.

Plaintiffs claimed the original curriculum from the National Council for Bible Curriculum in Public Schools, was a constitutional violation of the separation of church and state intended to be religious instruction.

A U.S. district judge ruled the Old Testament curriculum was constitutional but the New Testament material was not.

Future classes in both Old Testament and New Testament will use the new curriculum and will be audiotaped. ■



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