

REFLECTOR

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

As Baptist and Reflector editor

Allen era comes to close March 31

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Another chapter in the history of the *Baptist and Reflector* comes to a close March 31 when Wm. Fletcher Allen steps down as editor.

Allen is retiring after more than 10 years as editor of Tennessee Baptists' newsjournal. He will be 67 on July 1.

He is the first editor to retire since 1968 when Richard Owen retired after 18 years as the paper's editor.

Owen's successors — Jimmy Lester and Al Shackelford — left the paper to accept other positions. Two people — Eura Lanom and Charlie Warren — served as interim editors between Owen and Allen.

Allen is the ninth editor, excluding interims, of the *Baptist and Reflector* since it became a part of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1921. The paper's beginning dates back to 1835.

Allen came to the Tennessee editorship Sept. 1, 1987 after serving almost five years at the *Baptist True Union*, newsjournal of the Maryland-Delaware convention. Prior to that Allen was associate editor of the *Baptist Courier* in South Carolina for 17 years.

Fred W. Isaacs Jr., of Virginia Beach, Va., was chairman of the board of directors for the *Baptist and Reflector* in 1987.

He recalled that "while we possessed several capable names for this slot, the Heavenly Father led in those deliberations" and the committee presented Allen as its choice to the full Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

TBC Executive Director James Porch, who was on the Executive Board at that time, remembers when Allen appeared before the *Baptist and Reflector* board in



FLETCHER AND BETTY ALLEN

view of a call as the new editor.

He was reserved at first but he "demonstrated a clear perception and understanding of Baptist life and offered very straight answers to challenging questions," he said.

The TBC leader noted he believes Allen has "kept the faith in making a diligent effort to inform Tennessee Baptists, and at the same time, assisted in building strong relationships among our people."

Allen made several pledges in his first editorial on Sept. 9, 1987.

Among them were to serve with integrity, to be fair, to be the people's advocate, and to not allow the paper to be a political tool.

Allen's first editorial also reflected his love and respect for his profession — Christian journalism. He wrote:

"Christian journalism in Southern Baptist life has a long and illustrious history.

We must not allow that history to be blemished; the task is the same task that faced those first journalists — tell the news openly, honestly, completely, with integrity and compassion."

During his 10-plus years with the paper Allen sought to live up to those pledges.

He led the paper to increase its focus on Tennessee Baptist news and to emphasize stories concerning missions and evangelism. Allen participated in every mission partnership the convention has had since he became editor.

Allen also led the paper in making two major design changes planned to enhance the paper's appearance and appeal.

In a March 11 editorial regarding the "state of the paper," Allen reflected on the past decade which "has been boisterous at times — with occasional unsettling developments in the Southern Baptist Convention and in our own state.

"There have been changes in leadership and growth in almost every area. Even so, the convention faces the year 2000 with reason to attain even higher goals.

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

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

One of Allen's last major tasks as editor was to assist Floyd Craig of Craig Communications in a study of the paper and its viability. The study led to recommendations which will be enacted on in the coming months by the *B&R* board of directors and staff.

Additional stories, photos, and comments on "the Allen years" appear throughout this issue. ■

Wm. Fletcher Allen

- ▶ Editor, *Baptist and Reflector*, 1987-98
- ▶ Editor, *Baptist True Union*, Maryland/Delaware, 1983-87
- ▶ Associate Editor, *Baptist Courier*, South Carolina, 1966-83
- ▶ Assistant Public Relations and Advertising Manager, Sonoco Paper Products, Coker Industries, Hartsville, S.C., 1965-66
- ▶ News Director and Alumni Director, Furman University, Greenville, S.C., 1958-64
- ▶ Sports Editor, *Florence Morning News*, 1956-57
- ▶ Executive Officer, Platoon Leader, 14th Armored Calvary Regiment, U.S. Army, Fulda, West Germany, 1954-56
- ▶ Graduate, Bachelor of Arts, Furman University, Greenville, S.C., 1954
- ▶ Church work — Lay Renewal leader, deacon, Sunday School teacher, softball coach
- ▶ Missions service for Baptists — Burundi, Rwanda, Venezuela, the Philippines, Chile, Canada, Poland, Costa Rica, and Brazil
- ▶ Family — Betty Fink Allen, wife since 1954; daughters — Amy Burns, Jennifer Howard, Monica Langdale, and Melody Dowdy; grandchildren — Wesley, Daniel, and Graham Howard, Jessie and Ezra Burns, Matthew, Michaela, and Merritt Dowdy



WM. FLETCHER ALLEN, seated, is flanked by his staff, all of whom have served with him seven years or longer. From left, Connie Davis, Lonnie Wilkey, Betty Williams, Mary Nimmo, and Susie Edwards.

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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
- ▶ **To advertise** — Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor or editor
- ▶ **For billing and subscription data questions** — Betty Williams, bookkeeper
- ▶ **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
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North Korea food collection sites announced

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Collection sites have been announced for the North Korean food project which was described in detail on page 1 of the March 18 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

The following locations have been designated as food collection sites, according to Bob Davison of Baptist Men's Ministries of the TBC Executive Board.

Locations, contact person, and phone number to call for information are listed:

West Tennessee

Beulah Association office, Union City, Jerry Essary, (901) 885-2151

Madison/Chester/Crockett Association office, Jackson, Ramona Mercer, (901) 664-3851

A site is being secured in Memphis. Call the associational office for information.

Middle Tennessee

Cumberland Plateau Association office, Crossville, Louise Davis, (931) 484-1858

Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, Steve York, (615) 226-6683

The Attic Outlet, Tulla-

homa, Linda Crouch, (931) 393-3002

East Tennessee

Knox County Association office, Knoxville, Joe Chandler, (423) 693-9097

Holston Valley Association office, Rogersville, John Parrott, (423) 272-7318

A site is being secured in Chattanooga. Call the associational office for information.

Food items which were listed in the March 18 issue should be packed in a 1.5 cubic foot box (small moving company box).

Packing tips include lining

the box with a kitchen trash can liner and putting corn meal and flour packages in large ziplock storage bags for extra protection while shipping.

Pack the boxes securely and make sure they do not bulge.

Steve York, a Tennessee Baptist layman who owns a trucking business, has volunteered to pick up full boxes at the different collection centers during the week of April 13.

For additional information, call the TBC Missions Awareness & Involvement group at 1 (800) 558-2090. ■

High standards needed for leaders, Graham says

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Less than two weeks after Billy Graham said in a nationally televised interview President Bill Clinton "has such a tremendous personality that I think the ladies just go wild over him," the renowned evangelist reaffirmed in a *New York Times* opinion piece leaders should be held to a higher standard of personal behavior.

Graham's March 17 commentary in *The Times* contrasted somewhat with an earlier interview he did for NBC's "Today" show. That appearance, in which Graham lamented the president's temptations and pressures, brought a sharp rebuke of the world's leading evangelist for the last half-century from columnist

Cal Thomas, an evangelical Christian.

In his commentary for *The Times*, Graham, 79, wrote people "entrusted with leadership — whatever their field — bear a special responsibility to uphold the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct, both publicly and privately."

Should personal character be ignored as long as a leader is doing his job? No, Graham said, "because the stakes are too high and the impact on society too far-reaching. ...

"A leader's moral character also influences those who look up to him or her — particularly young people. The moral meltdown in our country in part results from a failure of leadership."

Graham also wrote "we need to pray fervently" for the president and country. ■

Tennessee Baptist history set for 1999 publication

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The History Committee of the Tennessee Baptist Convention met March 10 and heard a progress report on the publication of the new Tennessee Baptist history.

Albert Wardin, retired professor of history at Belmont University, is writing the history. Wardin told the committee the work is approximately two-thirds complete with the remaining chapters to be finished by year's end.

The new history will be published by Providence House Publishing Company and the planned publication date of November 1999 will coincide with the 125th annual session of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Each TBC church will receive a copy of the history. Additional copies will be available for purchase.

The history focuses on a new primary source material that has been discovered at a variety of locations. The work encompasses the total life of Tennessee Baptists as related on the local church, associational, and state convention levels.

Attention is being given to changes that have taken place in Tennessee Baptist life over the years as well as telling the Baptist story in the context of the times with special attention given to the social and economic influences.

The History Committee affirmed Wardin's work, said TBC Executive Director James Porch. "Certainly, this new publication will be a valuable source of preserving the rich heritage of Tennessee Baptists," he noted. ■

WMU to trademark AAEO; license NAMB to use it

Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering will become a trademark of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, and all funds raised through the offering will continue to be used exclusively for work of the North American Mission Board under an agreement between the two mission organizations.

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU's executive director, said registering the trademark is important "because it formalizes WMU's relationship with the offering. The support of mission giving has been at the core of WMU's existence since its founding in 1888."

NAMB President Bob Reccord said the agreement "binds together these two great Southern Baptist missions entities, and assures Southern Baptists that when they give to Annie Armstrong, they give directly to the support of God-called men and women on mission in North America."

The national offering to support South-

ern Baptist missions work in the United States was initiated in 1895 by Annie Armstrong, WMU's first corresponding secretary. The offering was named in her honor in 1934. Nearly \$700 million has been given to the offering since its inception.

The trademark agreement is similar to an existing agreement between WMU and the International Mission Board regarding the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Ownership of both offerings has become an issue in recent years because of a broadened array of options for missions giving among Southern Baptist churches. Leaders wanted to ensure that offerings raised under the Annie Armstrong and Lottie Moon names would



O'BRIEN



RECCORD

be used exclusively for the work of Southern Baptists' two official missions agencies.

Under terms of the agreement, WMU will apply for federal registration of the Annie Armstrong offering name and will license NAMB to use the trademark. Every dollar raised through the offering must be used solely for direct missions work in North America and not for NAMB's "operational or administrative costs and expenses," according to the agreement.

"Southern Baptists have always been assured that every penny of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering went to support missionaries and their field work," O'Brien said. "This agreement with NAMB underscores the continuation of this practice."

Reccord said, "WMU has been excellent to work with in finalizing this agreement. I appreciate Dr. O'Brien's leadership in bringing this issue to such a satisfactory conclusion." ■

Views of Allen from close acquaintances

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Through his association with Baptists across the state, Fletcher Allen has made an impact on his fellow "travelers," whether through his reporting work in churches or associations, involvement in Tennessee Baptist Convention activities, or service on missions efforts overseas.

Missions projects

Missions has been one of Allen's favorite activities, according to several Tennessee Baptists.

Ray Fowler of Athens said he felt he knew Allen before serving with him in the Philippines. He had been associated with Allen as a member of the *Baptist and Reflector's* board of directors and on the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board. However, he saw Allen "in a different light," he said, after their work in the Philippines.

Fowler, retired pastor, Highland Heights Church, Memphis, said Allen worked hard as a journalist, but took time to show his "apparent love for the Filipino people," he said. And this effort was beyond "the matters of the missions trip or his reporting work," he said.

Dennis Pulley, director of missions, Robertson County Association, agreed with Fowler. Like Fowler, Pulley also ministered in the Philippines with Allen while a member of the newsjournal's board and the TBC Executive Board.

The editor served "not just as a reporter, but participated too," said Pulley. And when they roomed together and visited, Pulley learned a great influence on Allen's life was the missionaries he had met. Allen is committed to missions, Pulley said.

Nell Greene, a veteran missions volunteer from First Church, Sneedville, confirmed that Allen joined the missions activities of the other volunteers despite his reporting responsibilities.

"No matter what country he's in or what group he's with, he's just Fletcher, just one of the group," said Green, who has served on 20 projects in seven countries.

She added that he also is a risk-taker. In a Venezuela airport, Allen agreed to try to hold the plane if Greene would go and buy them an ice cream cone. They both lived up to their commitments, she joked, although Allen didn't have to try to hold the plane.

Clarance Stewart, former partnership missions director of TBC Executive Board ministries from 1986-91, said he also observed Allen on several missions trips.

Stewart refers to Allen as his "main man" because of Allen's support of him as he directed the projects. Stewart recalled one evening in

Valencia, an area of Venezuela, when the two men captured an opportunity together.

A church service was being held but the building was too small for the crowd, explained Stewart. People milled about outside the church.

So Stewart and Allen started witnessing as a team to people with whom they could communicate. In the moonlight that evening, reported Stewart, several people made initial commitments to God. He would never forget it and would never forget Allen's enthusiasm and help, he said.

They had one problem as they traveled together, admitted Stewart. His snoring kept Allen awake. Stewart kids Allen that at least it wasn't his preaching that kept Allen awake.

Personal relationships

Allen has developed lasting relationships with many during his tenure and several reported on how those friendships developed.

Doug Baker, pastor, Parrans Chapel Church, Bolivar, said he got to know

Allen during his service as vice president of the convention in 1994 and on the TBC Executive Board from 1988-93. Baker said he was drawn to Allen because he "always was open" and had a positive attitude.

Baker said he discovered Allen has a rapport with younger people too. He learned this when he invited Allen to eat a meal at his home with his family. Baker's children, at that time older teenagers, really enjoyed Allen, he reported.

Baker also was helped by Allen, he said. During a period when he was at a "low ebb" in his life, he visited with Allen. Allen immediately perceived his circumstance and told Baker to remember that people would sling mud on others, but he shouldn't try to remove the mud. The more a person rubs mud, the more it stains, Allen said. Instead, Baker should let it remain until it dried and then simply brush it off. Allen went on to explain that his metaphor meant that a person should wait and let God deal with attacks made by people and even the resulting apparent stain on a reputation.

Baker said he really needed to hear that truth that day.

Baker added that he got to reciprocate and encourage Allen when Allen was at a low time in his life, having physical problems and other challenges. But Baker said he was sure Allen already had taken his problems to God.

"I've heard him say many times, 'God has a purpose in everything,'" said Baker.

James Robertson, pastor, Sharon Church, Knoxville, also said Allen had helped him. Knowing his commitment



FLETCHER ALLEN POSES in the ruins of a Second Century church in Capernaum during a visit to Israel with other Baptist journalists.

to Tennessee Baptists, Allen encouraged him to continue that commitment by addressing issues which were important to him, he explained.

Pulley said he was impressed soon after meeting Allen for the first time. Pulley served on the committee who called Allen as editor. He recalled when Allen and his family were introduced to the TBC Executive Board that Allen's teenaged daughter made an unusual entrance. But Allen not only wasn't fazed by that, he saw the humor in it, Pulley said.

Allen has continued to have a sense of humor, said Pulley. And Allen has been a genuine friend to him, he added.

Greene agreed, noting Allen always recognized her and spoke to her, "which means so much to everybody," she said.

And Fowler said he has counted Allen as a personal friend since he served on TBC committees and the board. He said he also has felt close to Allen because Allen has exposed himself in his personal columns. Allen has used home-spun stories to share "his journey of faith," explained Fowler.

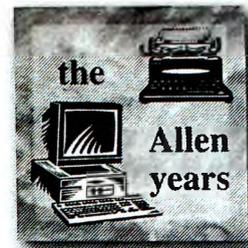
His leadership as editor

Allen has led the *Baptist and Reflector* during a denominational shift, noted several of his acquaintances, which has caused rifts between Southern Baptists.

Robertson noted one way Allen has dealt with the turmoil is by focusing on Tennessee Baptist churches rather than on the changes in the denomination. The choice has been effective in that it has strengthened the most important entity of the denomination — the local church, he said. And Allen has done that without buckling to pressures from groups in the denomination, Robertson added.

Deryl Watson, director of missions, Hardeman County Association, agreed that Allen has focused on Tennessee, but added he has taken a stand when the heritage of Southern Baptists has been at stake. And Allen has done it with compassion rather than by hurting anyone in any group, he added.

"The ink from Fletcher Allen's pen has flowed from the well of his love for Jesus," he added.



Others described him as fair and positive.

Fowler, a former member of the newsjournal's board, noted Allen has led the newsjournal to produce a quality product despite challenges. Fowler said he wished the board had been able to help to supply more funding and strengthen its organization.

Pulley, another board member, commented on Allen's approach to the board. Allen wanted to serve with board members "as partners to try to make the paper the best it could be for Tennessee Baptists," said Pulley. Allen was very open to the ideas of members, he explained.

Robertson also served on the board and he noted Allen saw the paper as belonging to the board and Tennessee Baptists and not to Allen or the staff. "He did not make himself the issue. The media did not become the message," he noted.

Allen also has been self-deprecating in his approach to the board and to others, Robertson added, focusing on the work or on others.

His faith and family

Robertson described Allen as an active person, most recently an active grandfather. They have discussed that role since they both share it, he said.

Stewart noted Allen has a deep commitment to Betty, his high school sweetheart, and to his four daughters and their families. Betty Allen has complemented his work and accompanied him many times, he added.

And Allen also is very involved in Clearview Church, Franklin, where he is a member, said Pulley. He has heard Allen express his frustration at not being able to participate in a church activity because of work obligations.

All agreed with Greene's sentiments. "Nobody will be Fletcher. The Lord has really blessed his ministry," said Greene. **B&R**



FOWLER



BAKER



PULLEY



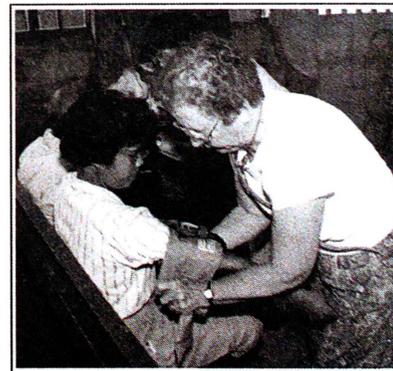
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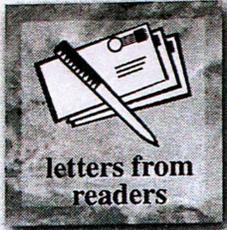
WATSON



ROBERTSON



CHECKING the blood pressure of a clinic patient in the Philippines during a 1991 missions effort there is Nell Greene.



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.

Agrees with action

In regard to the article about "Texas board targets church with ordained homosexual" (March 11 issue), let me first say, Praise God! The Baptist General Convention of Texas has not lowered the standards of Jesus' teaching.

Pastor Larry Bethune, I ask you to read I Timothy 3:8-13, John 3:16, and Proverbs 15:9.

So as you search the Bible, it shows that Christ does not hate the person, but he hates the sin. All that person has to do is repent of his sins and Christ will receive him unto himself as a new Christian.

This is the way all Christians will act to anyone that is a sinner. They will show love and compassion. Jesus Christ teaches every one to love one another as you would yourself.

Alvin Cogburn
Greeneville 37743

Benefits of service

One of the benefits of serving on Tennessee Baptist Convention committees is getting to know others from across the state that one might not meet otherwise. It was in that capacity that I met Doug McPherson, pastor of Cedar Grove Church in Maryville.

I was saddened to learn of his recent death. Doug was a joy to be around. He was always willing to do any task assigned and was a constant support and encouragement to the work of the Committee on Boards. Until we meet again, we will miss his wisdom, wit, and fellowship.

Clay Austin
Blountville 37617

A survivor

Congratulations to you, a survivor — one who endures

"to the end." In these turbulent times, not everyone has been so steady and strong under pressure, where every editor lives as he serves with honesty and fairness.

You have done a fantastic job of honesty and honor and are going out strong. Not every denominational servant is so fortunate when so many arrows are flying by constantly from "Indians on a rampage." All too many times those darts are fatal.

May the days ahead for you be kind and delightful, knowing that you have done a good job for Tennessee Baptists and for God.

James Sullivan
Nashville 37214

Appreciative

We have deep appreciation for your time and talents as

editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*. We have read each edition with anticipation and interest for the Baptist news. You have represented Tennessee Baptists and Southern Baptist problems and achievements in a fair and honorable way.

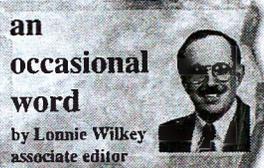
You have been a special friend in my relation to the legislative programs for TBC. Your personal interest and time devoted to the concerns of Baptists across the state is evidenced by the quality of your writing.

In your retirement days we hope you will have time for rest and inspiration and opportunities to continue writing and speaking.

We hope whoever follows you will appreciate your record and enlarge upon it.

Bill and Chris Bates
Jackson 38305

Retiring editor has been friend, mentor, Christian example



an occasional word

by Lonnie Wilkey
associate editor

As I work on this issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*, I do so with a mixture of joy and sadness.

While I always enjoy working on each issue of the paper, this one is particularly exciting because it highlights the 10-year plus tenure of our retiring editor, Wm. Fletcher Allen.

But that's where the sadness also enters in. Next Tuesday, March 31, marks the end of Fletcher's tenure with the *Baptist and Reflector*.

It was about 10 years ago this month, give or take a couple of weeks, when he called me and offered me the opportunity to be his associate editor.

As one who felt God's calling to Christian journalism, and to Baptist state papers, in particular, it was an offer I could not refuse.

The 10 years since have been among the most enjoyable of my life. Not only am I doing on a weekly basis what God has led me to do as a Christian journalist, I have had the privilege and opportunity of working alongside Fletcher Allen.

In our trek together he has not only been my boss, he has been my mentor, friend, and Christian example.

No matter what profession we are in, we need someone like Fletcher who can provide wisdom and counsel.

Fletcher has willingly passed along the knowledge he has gained over 32 years of work with Baptist state papers in South Carolina, Maryland/Delaware, and Tennessee.

He has passed on much more than just his knowledge of Baptists and denominational journalism. He has taught me a lot about life in general, and on what it means to be a true, genuine Christian.

I have sat in his office while he was being "chewed out" in a telephone conversation. I never heard him raise his voice in anger. In fact, most of the time he would listen quietly until

the person ran out of steam.

When he received an complimentary letter, he would often wait before responding just to make sure he didn't write something he would later regret.

I have seen him hurt by people he believed were his friends, but he continued to be their friend as long as they would allow him to.

His nature is to be a friend to all — moderate, conservative, large church, small church. It really doesn't matter to him. Fletcher takes to heart what the Bible says — love thy neighbor as thyself.

Fletcher Allen has been a friend to countless people over the years. I count it an honor to be one of them. *B&R*

'Oh Captain, my Captain,' the journey has been swift



another word

by Connie Davis
assistant editor

It seems appropriate to use a line written by poet Walt Whitman to speak of Fletcher Allen, who loves poetry. A love of poetry is just one of the things I've gained from him during the 10 years we've worked together.

I've watched "my Captain" lead our staff in an unconventional way. When a mistake was made, he was sorry for the staff person who confessed (although he didn't demand a confession) and for the readers.

His approach, at first, was disarming and, to be quite

truthful, exasperating. Why didn't he just chew me out? I wondered.

Instead, Fletcher maintained his approach, despite the demands of producing a weekly newsjournal, reporting on a million Tennessee Baptists, denominational struggles, a changing market and industry, and budget restrictions.

He adopted this unconventional approach for several reasons, I believe. First, he viewed our staff as a team. Fletcher did not elevate himself above the others on the staff when it came to work. In fact, few assignments were assigned to a particular person.

This was helpful because of the amount of work and our limited staff, and made it possible to produce a quality *Bap-*

tist and Reflector each week. This style also provided variety and constant challenges in our jobs.

Secondly, Fletcher wanted us to excel. This was true despite the fact he didn't know us when he first came and all of us were less skilled. This also has been true despite the changes our staff has undergone.

The staff has remained constant in that all of the present staff has worked with Fletcher nearly all of his tenure except one. And that person has served seven years. But we have worked with a changing industry. For example, when Fletcher came, the journalists wrote stories on typewriters. Now we write stories on computers. And we have worked in a changing denomination which has been harder to cover.

Finally, Fletcher operates from a "kindness first" philosophy. His favorite chapter in the Bible is Romans 12, which reminds Christians to treat others in this way.

This guideline has led Fletcher to react unconventionally to the staff, as I mentioned before. But it also has led him to react differently in other ways.

For example, the *Baptist and Reflector* shouldn't criticize an individual. A story or photo should help the majority of our 54,000 readers. And we must wait to get all the facts before a story is run. His "kindness" philosophy sometimes has caused him pain.

However, I think Fletcher sees a bigger picture. He is working to please the One he loves. Thanks, Fletcher, for the example. *B&R*



Partnership Prayer Requests March

- 25 — Praise God for Tennessee volunteers Bryan Chastain, Teresa Hill, and Laura Barnes who worked in medical missions Feb. 28-March 3 in Costa Rica.
- 26 — Pray for Sharon Fairchild, IMB missionary, who works with volunteers in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- 27 — Pray for Orchard Hills Church in Novi, Mich., which is without a pastor since the death of Lee Vandenburg.
- 28 — Pray for the April crusade in North and Northeast associations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- 29 — Pray for First Church of Turrialba in Costa Rica which recently joined the National Union of Baptist Churches.
- 30 — Pray for members of the Baptist Center director search committee in Michigan.
- 31 — Pray for a volunteer team to start a new work in Fatima, the center of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

And now, some advice for grandchildren

When I answered God's call to be editor of this newspaper, there were many things I didn't know. I didn't know how long God wanted me to be here, and I didn't know much about Tennessee.

I didn't realize that one day I would be writing to our grandchildren — on this page.

Now it's more than ten years later — and I'm ready to retire. Some of you were not even born ten years ago. But you are the future — and I salute you. B and I are tremendously proud of you.

I have never written an editorial to "youngsters," but this one is for you, our very own. I want to share with you some of the things I believe in, and that have helped me as a journalist, writer, and wordsmith. I think it's appropriate that this last editorial is for grandchildren. It's for older folks also — because Jesus told his first disciples that all his followers must be like little children.

*** **

Wesley, Jessie, Daniel, Ezra, Graham, Matthew, Michaela, and Merritt:

Getting along in life is not always fun. Having a good time is not always best for us. More than anything, B and I want you to be what God has planned for you to be.

It doesn't matter whether you are five, fifteen, or fifty, you'll do better in life if you have guides. A guideline is a rule, or a line you follow because you don't want to get lost. If you follow that line, it will lead you to the right place.

Talking about road maps

Guidelines are like road maps — they show you the way, but unlike maps, guidelines usually are in your heart and mind, and they are there as reminders about how we should live.

Guidelines are like steering wheels in cars, the instruments in an airplane, the electronic system in a space ship.

The best guideline is the Bible — our gift from God. It is perfect, true in every way — and it is personal. By applying the Bible to my life and work, I've learned some things in the many years I've worked at a job.

To all our grandchildren, I want to pass on some of my lessons:

I was a little boy once, I really was. And even then words were important to me, especially words on paper and in books. Reading became more than a hobby — it was a part of happiness. I liked to play with words — and I really enjoyed writing.

You know something? I still do. God made it possible for me to work with words — to be a writer, a journalist, a wordsmith.

I want to tell you about some things I've learned, things I believe in with all my heart. My dad often told us, "I don't have anything to give you but a good name," he said. I understood later.

What is a good name anyway?

Your name is not good just because you like the way it sounds, or that you were named for a famous person or relative. A person with a good name is honest, truthful, and dependable. To earn that good name, you are honest, truthful, don't take shortcuts when it's best to work harder to finish the job.

The best way to do anything is to do it the right way the first time.

Your good name is like a perfect photograph of you. A good name tells people that you are dependable, and have high goals for your own life.

I've learned that life is not always fair — because the way we do things isn't perfect, and people aren't either. So life is not fair, but we have a loving Father who is fair, and cares for us.

I have learned that it isn't really hard to say, "Forgive me," "I'm sorry," or "Thank you." Courtesy is always best. People remember that.

We know when we have treated someone wrong or when we've been unkind. It's good to be brave enough to apologize. I've learned that happiness is not always getting what you want — and that God gives us joy when we ask him for what he knows we need.

I've learned that it feels good when I smile and say a kind word to someone who is unkind or someone who is hurt or ignored by others.

I know that honesty is telling the truth, and it's when I treat others the way I want them to treat me.

I have learned that it feels good to know people can trust me because they know I care about them.

I've learned that integrity pushes me to do my best always, and to follow the map Christ has made for me. By the way, integrity is something in our hearts that helps us know what's right, and makes us always want to do it.

I know how to set high goals — and how to reach your goal without hurting anyone.

The Bible is the best teacher

I can tell you from experience that these lessons, as I call them, come from the Bible, and we can see them in the lives of Bible people.

Sometimes we don't understand hurts and bruises, but they help us to "grow up." Be brave. Use your mind. Don't be discouraged or sad. Let joy rule your heart, joy from the heart of Jesus.

Make good choices. Read good books, especially the Bible. Study. Don't settle for the cheap or easy way. Listen for God's whisper in your heart. Be strong in the Lord. Love each other. You are the bright promises for today, the hope for tomorrow.



When I was about nine or ten, I had a friend who was a champion at playing marbles. We'd play marbles while we waited for the school bus. He was the best — a real champ. Jimmy had a solid red shooter that he used — and he usually knocked almost all of my marbles out of the ring before I got a chance to shoot.

I was convinced that his shooter was the reason Jimmy was a winner. So I swapped him thirty marbles for his shooter. Guess what happened! The next time we played, he knocked all my marbles out with another shooter. Try as hard as I could, the red shooter wouldn't win for me.

I finally realized that Jimmy's skill won the games — it wasn't the marble. Kids, life is like that game in a way.

You have a special gift

God made us. He gave each of us special gifts in our hearts and minds — to do things the way no one else can.

So, listen to Jesus. Begin right now to walk with your hand in his hand. I have learned a lot because I have also listened to Jesus, and I have let him show me the guidelines for my life.

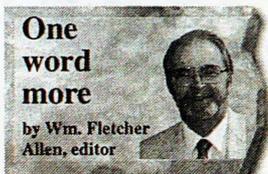
Most of all, I'll tell you that God's love for me, and my love for God and for people have helped me be what God intended me to be.

I hope you will always love God, your family, and your country. Be proud to be an American, and try to make our country great.

One more thing. God has fixed it so that B and I will be able to spend a lot more time with you guys!

— Love to you, Poppa

Tennessee Baptists — don't neglect the gift of ministry



One word more

by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

Tennessee is strategically located on God's blue print.

A bright star in the middle of the Southland, Tennessee holds the key to salvation for millions of people who do not know Christ as their Savior.

If I know Tennessee Baptists at all, I know they like a challenge. Baptist leaders from all across this Volunteer state must make the message clear and plain — we must not let this window of opportunity pass. To the work!

That's a plea from a retiring editor — let the people know, Jesus loves them, every one. Take light to the darkness!

To do that, we must be centered, focused, captured by our Lord. No man-made plans can improve on the one-on-one messenger — saved

sinner to lost sinner.

We must not be split into fragmented efforts. No one has a monopoly on "how to do it" when the subject is witnessing.

That strong and beautiful message comes from the Bible, God's own Word, the Risen Savior, and his Holy Spirit.

We must not deviate, substitute, or delay. Christ receives sinful people!

In the tumult of power-grabbing and money-loving, we have to remain stable — secure in the knowledge that our work for Christ will succeed only when we are willing to give him the honor and glory.

Memories are among the most precious gifts God gives us. When I remember a decade of serving with Tennessee Baptists, I am grateful and humble. Itemizing these memories is treacherous, because I know I will omit some.

But because we came to Tennessee, I met two of the bravest people I have ever known. James and Wende Jackson several years ago fled their Liberian home and carried their two

daughters on their backs many miles to freedom.

We worship together at Clearview Church, Franklin. That's where God brought them, and I am grateful for their Christian commitment.

Steve Orr of Parks City Church, Fayetteville, is a smile on God's face. Steve can't speak in normal language, but he communicates enough to serve as leader of his church Brotherhood group. He's a mountain of strength.

And so is Roger Rice. This young man, born without arms and still less than four feet tall — is going to make a dream come true for folks like him.

He's working on a state-of-the-art full-time care facility.

I think of a Sunday morning, standing on a street in a Rio de Janeiro slum, looking in all directions, guided by Pastor Esequias Santana. "We won't give up to the drug lords," he says, "because we serve the only Lord."

And Nell Greene, there's a lady with a missions-filled heart. Not only is she involved

in partnership trips, she ministers to prisoners and other needy people — right here in Tennessee.

The letter from Mrs. Roxie McClendon the other day reminded me of another loving heart. She's 95, but won't quit caring for others. Her love affair, like Nell's reaches out to everyone within her reach.

These are but a few of the people that have touched my life — because God called us to Tennessee. I am all the better for their influence.

I remember one rainy night in Hardeman Association. In a Holy Spirit occasion, that body of Christians at Bethlehem Church, about 30 of them, prayed for me.

They gathered and put their arms around me and prayed for my ministry. They were sensitive enough to know that I needed that affirmation.

Ten years ago I wrote a personal credo in my first Baptist and Reflector editorial.

I promised to serve Tennessee Baptists with integrity, to be fair, to be honest, to take

stands on issues, to be compassionate.

Further, I wrote, "We will be the people's advocate. One primary goal will be to tell the news to the people in fairness, with integrity, in an attractive package."

"The Baptist and Reflector will never be used as a political tool, nor as a tool for any particular theological slant, nor will it be manipulated by anyone in any way."

"We pledge to try to inform, inspire, educate our readers, and to strengthen the programs and priorities of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, its associations, and the local churches."

"While we will not avoid controversy, we will not promote nor delve into needless and/or Christian arguments."

Looking back, I know we have tried to do that. These people, even all of you, have helped me do that. There is work to do, but there are faithful workers.

The page is turning — but you still have an advocate. The staff will ensure it.

TBC, SBC leaders reflect on Allen's career

Debt of gratitude

Tennessee Baptists owe a debt of gratitude to Fletcher Allen, editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*. For one decade he has faithfully served in this strategic place of ministry. Over the past two years I have had the privilege of serving as chairman of the *Baptist and Reflector* board. During that time, I have gotten to know our editor. As my knowledge of the man has increased, so has my appreciation.



NORTHCOTT

Fletcher is a person of integrity. Because of the diversity of our convention it is impossible to please everyone. However, Fletcher has fairly presented the news as objectively as any human being could be expected, without capitulating to this side or the other. Fidelity to truth and fairness often requires courage, and I have witnessed that in the decisions made in the office of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Even more impressive than the above has been Fletcher's Christian spirit of cooperation and service. He has, in my opinion, always put the paper above his own personal goals or agenda. His relationship with the paper reminded me somewhat of a good marriage, in which the husband loves his wife so much that her needs become more important than his.

Thank you, Fletcher, for embodying those personal and professional characteristics that demand respect, if not always approval. We will miss your editorials, but we will miss you more.

*Bill Northcott, board chairman
Baptist and Reflector
Covington 38019*

Paths often crossed

Over the past five decades, my journey through life has often brought me into contact with Fletcher Allen. I first met Fletcher during our college days at Furman University in Greenville, S.C. As a student, he had already begun his lifelong career in journalism as editor of our school newspaper. We both returned to Furman to begin our professional career. Fletcher served in the news office there, and I worked in the alumni and development office.

As I began my duties of Anderson College, again our paths would meet. He became associate editor of the *Baptist Courier*, the state paper for South Carolina Baptists. Later, we both made the move to Tennessee — Fletcher to Nashville to edit the *Baptist and Reflector*, and I to Jefferson City to become president of Carson-Newman College.

Throughout the 48 years that we have known each other, I have noticed some constants about Fletcher Allen: his beliefs and faith in God have been paramount to his calling in journalism,

his dedication to his family has always been evident, his voice has been courageous in matters deeply important in Baptist life, and he has been a proponent of Christian higher education.

On behalf of Carson-Newman College, I write this with sincere best wishes for a chapter yet to begin in the Fletcher Allen story.

*Cordell Maddox, president
Carson-Newman College
Jefferson City 37760*

Forever friends

Fletcher Allen is a genuine pilgrim — a homey philosopher with a passion for souls — an American original. His work as editor of the *Baptist and Reflector* tells you that he is enthralled with life. To him it is all worthwhile, and he is determined to help everyone enjoy it. Such men are never bored nor do they bore their readers.

Fletcher is a spectator of life that, to him, is more than a pageant — it is a school and sometimes a battlefield. He sees into the soul of things. For him, there is always an element of romance in homespun things. There is often a smile upon his face, but there is nothing ill-natured or arrogant in his description.

You can readily see Betty's influence in his writing style. The simple dignity of friendliness is in his every relationship. He is never pompous or overbearing. He is never the superior person. Fletcher Allen has always shared not only his experiences but also his emotions with his readers, and they are thrilled that their own lives have been points of contact.

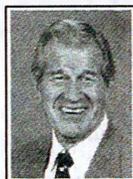
His churchmanship and denominational leadership are of the highest caliber, characterized by loyalty and courage. We will long remember a multitude of grand moments preserved in the afterglow of memory. We are forever friends.

*Bob Norman, pastor emeritus
Clearview Church
Franklin*

Missions partner

I have grown to appreciate Fletcher as a person of integrity and as one who loves the Lord. Sometimes when you don't know a person very well you tend to form opinions based on outside influences. However, when you spend time with someone you have the opportunity to get to know their heart.

In the summer of 1996, my wife Judy and I had the privilege of going on a mission trip with Fletcher to Australia. We had time to talk, hear each other share our testimony, and learn how faith in Jesus is the guiding principle of our life. Upon our return his reporting of the trip truly captured the heart of the mission.



NORMAN



LUCK

We also discovered that we share the same birthday (July 1). However, I am a few years behind Fletcher in age, thus will have to wait a little longer before I too can enter "the land of the laid back."

I am happy he is able to move into another arena of ministry for our Lord, but he will be missed at the throttle of the *B&R*. Thank you for a job well done. I hope we can share some other mission opportunities in the future, and it indeed pleases me that I can call you friend.

*E. Ray Luck, director of missions
Loudon County Association
Lenoir City 37771*

Fortunate day

Fletcher Allen and I have traveled parallel paths in Christian journalism for 32 years. We have been colleagues, partners, friends, establishing early a special bond by which two men, totally unrelated by birth, have become brothers.

March 19, 1966, was a fortunate day for me. That day I walked boldly into the office of Wm. Fletcher Allen, a junior executive with Sonoco Paper Products, part of Coker Industries in Hartsville, S.C.

I had rehearsed carefully what I would say, had prayed hard that I would get his attention. I asked him to leave his position at Sonoco to become associate editor of the *Baptist Courier*, newsjournal of South Carolina Baptists.

The *Baptist Courier* was in what athletic circles would call "a rebuilding program" with no way to go but up. I had been editor less than two months, my head filled with plans and dreams, and knowing I could not do it alone. I needed an associate editor with an extra measure of both journalistic skill and Christian commitment. He was the right man for the job.

His decision did not come easy. He had just moved into his dream home on land between his father and brother. In leaving Sonoco he would give up such things as bonuses and profit sharing, stock options, and an excellent retirement plan. But he accepted the offer.

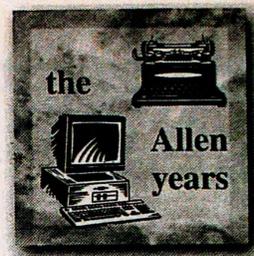
We worked together 17 years. During that time the paper's circulation doubled, we built an office building and an endowment, and won awards for journalistic excellence. And, Fletcher Allen began to spread his wings. In 1983 he was chosen to be editor of the *Maryland Baptist*, now the *Baptist True Union*. My words to the search committee were, "You will not find anyone better."

A few years ago I said those same words to the chairman of the committee seeking an editor for the *Baptist and Reflector*. Tennessee Baptists are fortunate to have had him as editor these 10-plus years.

*John Roberts
Greenville, S.C. 29609*



ROBERTS



Never feared interview

As a native Tennessean and having been a reader of the *Baptist and Reflector* since my childhood days, I found it through the years to be a source of information and inspiration.



HENRY

Fletcher Allen, during his tenure, gave additional credibility and integrity to this instrument of communication. I found his work to be fair, balanced, and written in such a way as to foster good will, fellowship, and cooperation without compromising on the basics.

He is a Christian gentleman in every respect. During my years as SBC president, I never feared an interview with Fletcher Allen. He was an editor and reporter whom you could trust. He will be sorely missed, but forever appreciated, as a kingdom builder for the King of all kingdoms, our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Jim Henry, pastor
First Church
Orlando, Fla. 32805*

Imprint stamped

You have stamped your imprint on the publications you have served and Baptist journalism as well. Your publications have always been interesting, readable, and warm. You have succeeded in providing Baptists with the stories about themselves and their brothers and sisters in the work of the kingdom.

And, another mark of your service has been fairness and integrity. Although those qualities are not required elements in journalistic work today, you have shown that people who love the Lord can also live like they do!

Also, these years you and I have worked together have been tough years, my friend. Not everybody likes us nor the way we report the news. But you have been a bellwether for me, an editor who has stayed the course. I deeply appreciate your ministry and friendship.

Mary and I pray that you will thoroughly enjoy your retirement. It is our hope that Betty and you will find retirement so enjoyable that you will wonder why you didn't consider it sooner! And, my friend, I'm not far behind you (in retirement consideration, that is).

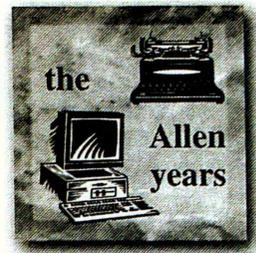
Blessings on you my brother, keep on keeping on!

*Herb Hollinger
Vice President for Convention News
SBC Executive Committee
Nashville 37203*



HOLLINGER

TBC, SBC leaders reflect on Allen's career



EXECUTIVE BOARD MINISTRIES
TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION

ONE SERVANT FAMILY



March 11, 1998

Fletcher Allen
Baptist & Reflector

Dear Fletcher:

I hope that your years of retirement are as enjoyable to you as I believe your ministry was to Tennessee Baptists through the *Baptist & Reflector*.

I remember our first meeting. You appeared before the Baptist & Reflector Board in view of a call as the new editor. At first you were reserved, but immediately upon being questioned you demonstrated a clear perception and understanding of Baptist life and offered very straight answers to challenging questions. That day you endeared yourself to the members of that board. A few weeks later, the Executive Board met in the chapel and enthusiastically acted to trust you with the responsibility of producing our state Baptist paper. As I think back over the years, I believe you have kept the faith in making a diligent effort to inform Tennessee Baptists, and at the same time, assisted in building strong relationships among our people.

During the past five years, I have enjoyed our working relationship at the Baptist Center. We have met often and on a wide variety of concerns. Always, I have expected and received from you candor and cooperation. On numerous occasions, the Executive Board Ministries have been affirmed through your ready response to assist us in the promotion of events when you could have just waited and reported the event. Thank you for going the extra mile.

In each ministry opportunity, whether in the local church or a denominational position, we who serve leave behind a legacy. Your chapter in the life of the Tennessee *Baptist & Reflector* has been written well and faithful. The role of Tennessee Baptists in the ongoing kingdom of God has been greatly enhanced through your words and your life.

I thank God you came our way to serve our Lord.

Grace to you,


James M. Porch
Executive Director-Treasurer

5001 MARYLAND WAY • P.O. BOX 728 • BRENTWOOD, TENNESSEE 37024-0728 • PHONE 615/373-2255 • FAX 615/371-2014

I've always been convinced that one of the beauties of our trade is that it's never necessary for us to "hang it up" as word-smiths, that from our PCs, typewriters, note pads, or whatever, we can, with mouse or pen, continue to mobilize the English language to tell the story so old, but so fresh, of the love of God through his son Jesus.

I take seriously your recent summons to Baptist journalists to "return to basics," an appeal which is all the more compelling because it comes from one who in his long years of service has consistently possessed and used the "right tools — desire, instinct, compassionate heart, a strong will to be your best at what God wants you to do, and God's constant blessing." For us still carrying the title of editor after you've moved from the familiar surroundings of the *Baptist and Reflector*, we would do well to keep that checklist nearby as our challenge and guide for staying on course in our work.



KIRKLAND

I also want to try, in an admittedly inadequate way, to tell you something of my deep appreciation for your help to me as a young Christian journalist breaking into a field of service that would make me happier than I ever could have imagined. I never would have made it without your wisdom and experience to learn from and your friendship to lean on.

My respect for you as a Christian journalist and my love for you as a brother in Christ have grown with the years.

Don Kirkland
editor, *Baptist Courier*
Greenville, S.C.

Early mentor

I owe much to Fletcher Allen. When I graduated from seminary, he hired me as assistant editor at the *Baptist True Union*. When he left Maryland/Delaware to move to Tennessee, I had the opportunity to follow him as editor where I remained until 1993 when I joined the staff of Associated Baptist Press.

What I remember most about those early years in my career were Fletcher's friendship and sage advice.

Fletcher possessed years of experience in denominational journalism — and in life — which he shared freely. Those coffee-break conversations were invaluable to me as I sought to become grounded both in my work and as a young adult, husband, and father.

Congratulations for your faithful service to God and Southern Baptists.

Bob Allen
associate executive editor, ABP
Jacksonville, Fla.



B. ALLEN

Wonderful journey

Journeying with you has been wonderful. You have blessed and encouraged me all along the way. Thank you for being a committed co-worker, a faithful friend, and trusted teacher. You are a good editor and a great Christian.

Your retirement stirs mixed emotions within me. I will miss our visits together at denominational gatherings and reading your columns in Baptist newsjournals.

On the other hand, I am glad you are retiring in good health with challenging possibilities of service to Christ during the coming years. I look forward to hearing about God's work in and through you.

Ken Lyle
executive director
Baptist Convention of New England
Northborough, Mass.



LYLE

Supporter of missions

When I attempt to describe Fletcher Allen I think of the man I have had the privilege to work with for the past 10 plus years. He is compassionate, caring, an encourager, and a man who loves people.

As editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*, he is balanced and fair in his presentation of news. At the same time he takes a

stand for what he believes. He is a man of great integrity and is extremely knowledgeable about our state, our denomination, and the opportunities for ministry around the world.

Fletcher is a strong supporter of missions and missions education. This support is evidenced not only through articles included in the *B&R*, but it is also seen in his lifestyle. He is a man whose conversations are peppered with missions stories and prayer requests and his passion for missions.

Though I join with others in celebrating Fletcher's life and career and wish him well in retirement, I will miss his presence in the *B&R* through his editorials and "One Word More," which is always more than a word.

Carrol Kelly
executive director
Tennessee WMU



KELLY

Telling the story

As you retire from the editorship of the *Baptist and Reflector*, I know, and find great satisfaction in, the knowledge that you are not turning from your calling as a Christian journalist, and that you will in the years to come continue to make your considerable writing talents available for the Lord's work.

Lord-led writer

My friendship with Fletcher Allen has extended over a 25-year period. My initial acquaintance was when he served as associate editor of the *Baptist Courier* in South Carolina.

Upon an illustrious tenure with this paper he left to accept the editorship of the Maryland/Delaware paper. While I served as chairman of the board for the *Baptist and Reflector*, coupled with the status of chairman of the search committee to find a new editor for the *Baptist and Reflector*, without reservation or mental equivocation, my recommendation to the committee was to bring in Fletcher Allen.

While we possessed several most capable names for this slot, the Heavenly Father led in those deliberations and the committee presented its choice — Fletcher Allen along with his wife, Betty, and daughter, Melody — to the full TBC Executive Board.

In a departure from protocol, Melody spoke and immediately brought the audience to a resounding unanimous decision to offer this position of editor to Fletcher. I yet am not certain who had the most impact on the listeners — Fletcher or his daughter.

To this day if I were to seek an office of any consequence, I know where I would look for a campaign manager — his daughter. What an impassioned speaker who succinctly indicated the type family background from which she was brought up.

Although Tennessee Baptists were yet to familiarize themselves with his inspired Christian writings, they were soon to be enlightened by Allen's ability to take profound spiritual truths and explain them in a simple way so that all can understand and utilize them in their daily lives. Indeed, innumerable lives have been filled with new beauty, interest, and joy through his inspired writings.

As an exceptional Lord-led writer, he succinctly expresses that there is no problem that cannot be solved, nor any aspiration that cannot be fulfilled when once the underlying meaning is absorbed and made a part of one's life.

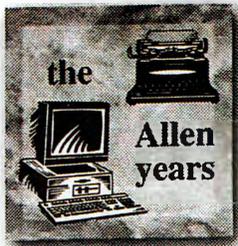
I have always experienced that Fletcher Allen writes that God is always ready when we are and Fletcher continues to elaborate how to obtain that divine contact which will bring a freshness and newness to every department of your life.

May the Heavenly Father continue to bless Fletcher and his family for the rest of the journey ahead.

Fred W. Isaacs
Virginia Beach, Va.

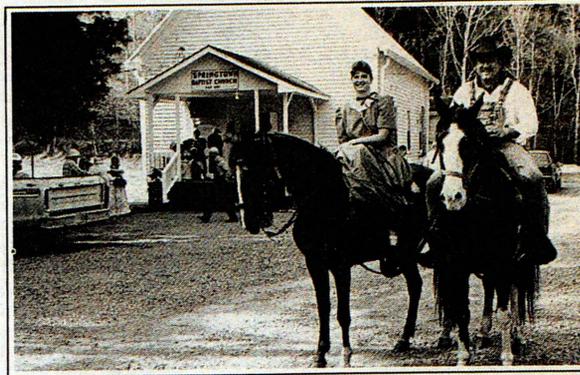


ISAACS



Allen photos show ministry, heritage of Tennesseans

During the past 10 years Wm. Fletcher Allen has taken countless photos reflecting the ministry, witness, and heritage of Tennessee Baptists. He has covered numerous events ranging from conferences to missions work to disaster relief efforts to church anniversaries.



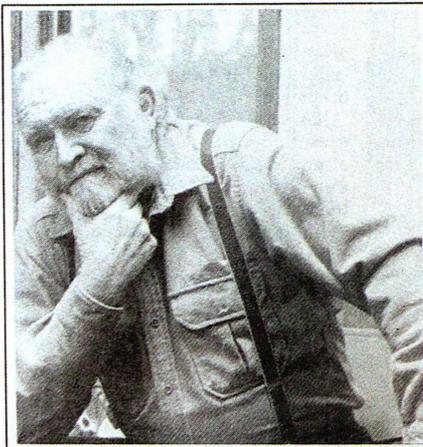
EDITOR FLETCHER ALLEN covered numerous church anniversary celebrations over the years. Here, Laverne Shedd and Mark Perrin dress in the attire of their predecessors and use old-fashioned transportation at Springtown Church in 1992.



THE ANNUAL PASTOR'S Retreat at Camp Carson was a favorite event for Fletcher Allen. Here, he caught up with pastors Bobby Kail, left, and Dennis McMahan during a break in 1992.



CENTRAL CHURCH, BEARDEN, Pastor Larry Fields, chaplain for the University of Tennessee football team, leads players in a post-game prayer.



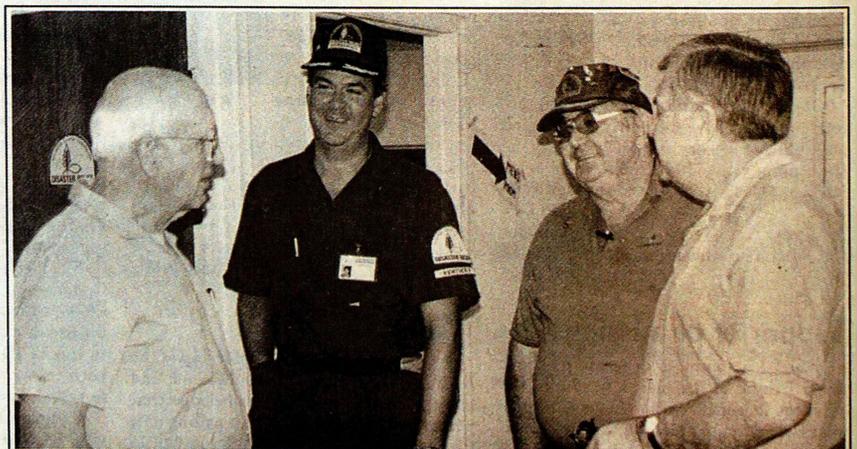
A FEATURE with TV star Gene Evans, now a Tennessee Baptist, catches the television cowboy in a pensive mood.



THE SENIOR ADULT Conference held at Pigeon Forge each September always was a favorite for Fletcher Allen. Here he shows a group from Richland Church, Nashville, which attended in 1993.



HUMAN INTEREST was captured when Wm. Fletcher Allen met Steve Orr, center, of Parks City Church, Fayetteville. Though hampered with numerous handicaps, Orr takes an active role in the church's Brotherhood program.



THE EDITOR traveled to Florida in 1992 with new Executive Director James Porch, right, and Camérón Byler, then Brotherhood Department and state Disaster Relief director, to cover relief efforts to victims of Hurricane Andrew.

Photos made by Allen overseas show needs, workers

Wm. Fletcher Allen has taken countless photographs during his 32 years of service in Southern Baptist journalism. He has covered various partnerships held between state conventions and Baptists in other countries. He has reported on missions work in those countries to prepare Baptists for volunteer service there.

Allen also has participated in missions efforts in various countries led by Baptists. And he has visited Israel several times with small groups of editors and journalists.



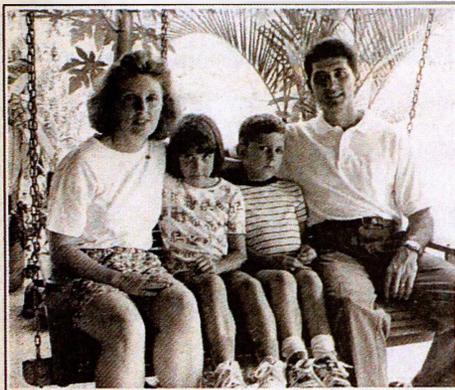
A CHILDREN'S CHOIR performs at the Baptist church in Constitution, southwest of Talca, Chile. A Tennessee team worked there. Allen reported in 1994 of the three-year partnership.



RABBI YITZAK RUBIN and his wife, Patsy, hosted Allen in their Jerusalem home for an interview in 1997.



IN APRIL, 1997, a survey team of Tennessee Baptist leaders visited Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to consider a partnership with Baptists there. They were assisted by Elizabeth Oates, left, missionary, and included, from left, Herbert Higdon, Bill Northcott, Terry Sharp, Gene Cotey, and Wm. Fletcher Allen. They stand on Sugar Loaf mountain which rises above the city in the valley below.



SUSIE AND BEN ARGIL, Leslie and Evan, relax at their home in Guapiles, Costa Rica. The Tennessee/Costa Rica Baptist Partnership began in 1997.



RESIDENTS of Elk, Poland, push a baby stroller along a sidewalk in front of Elk Baptist Church.



THE CONGREGATION of Rudca Baptist Church in Poland near the Ukraine gathers for a photo during Allen's work there in 1994.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH who were formerly homeless in Rio de Janeiro now have a safe residence at the Baptist Children's Home in the city. Tennessee Baptists began a partnership with the city in 1997.



IN BURUNDI more than 100 new Christian converts await baptism near a local Baptist church. Allen took this photo during a visit when Maryland/Delaware had a partnership with Baptists there between 1983-86.

Crossover Salt Lake City to focus on reaching all who need Christ

By James Dotson
For Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Southern Baptists will mobilize to share the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ in northern Utah June 5-12 through Crossover Salt Lake City, an annual evangelistic blitz held before and during the SBC annual meeting.

It is an effort that has taken on much broader focus and heightened urgency this year because of the convention's location on the home turf of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But national coordinators say the events have the same ultimate objectives as always — reaching all people in need of salvation.

"While Mormons own the culture in Salt Lake City, there are more than 500,000 people living in the Wasatch Front who have no religious affiliation of any kind," said Don Smith, evangelism associate at the North American Mission Board who is coordinating the Crossover effort on a national level. The Wasatch Front, stretching from beyond Ogden

in the north to Provo in the south, encompasses the vast majority of Utah's population.

"We're developing our witnessing approach in such a way that it addresses the Mormon issues, but it is not confrontational in the sense that it looks like we're picking on Mormons," he added. "It will be couched in general terms that anyone who is without Christ would need to understand in order to receive the Gospel. But a person who is a Mormon would be able to see, 'Well, that's different from what I believe.'"

LDS members make up about half of Salt Lake City's population, and the percentage rises to more than 75 percent in some suburbs and outlying cities, according to several recent estimates. Southern Baptists, meanwhile, had less than 1 percent of the population of Salt Lake County in one 1990 survey.

Crossover has been part of the SBC annual meeting since 1989, when Southern Baptists mobilized to share the Gospel in Las Vegas. As in the past, Crossover will include events

such as block parties, door-to-door visits and personal evangelism. In addition to the primary objective of leading people to faith in Christ, the events also teach and model effective evangelistic methods and provide the groundwork for starting new churches.

"We are trusting and believing that out of Crossover '98 we are going to launch at least five new churches ... and possibly more," said Herb Stone-man, evangelism director for the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention. About 40 Southern Baptist churches in the Salt Lake area are helping sponsor Crossover events.

All Salt Lake City outreach activities — which also encompass a seminar on Mormonism for seminary students and an area-wide media and direct-mail campaign — are being coordinated at the national level through a special NAMB task force designed to focus efforts of the entire agency. Also, many Southern Baptists have been learning about LDS teachings through materials such as NAMB's "The Mormon Puzzle" video. ■

Most Southern Baptists aren't boycotting Disney, poll shows

Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA — About 30 percent of Southern Baptists said they are likely to observe their denomination's boycott of the Walt Disney Co., according to a poll conducted by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and the University of North Carolina.

The poll showed widespread knowledge of the boycott. Nearly two-thirds of non-Southerners and three-fourths of Southerners said they had heard of some religious group's dissatisfaction with Disney. Of those, however, 66 percent said it is unlikely they will participate in a boycott of Disney products, including movies and recordings.

Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, said he was satisfied with those numbers. "The boycott is growing and continues to grow as more and more Baptists understand what's involved," he told the *Atlanta newspaper*.

"We're going to continue this," Land continued. "It's not one hydrogen bomb. It's a steady month-by-month artillery barrage."

Disney spokesperson John Dreyer told the *Journal-Constitution* the boycott has had little effect. "We just posted another record quarter," he said. "We had a record year last year. Our parks had record attendance for the holidays, and the Disney Channel has posted a gain of 5 million households."

The boycott, adopted at last summer's Southern Baptist Convention, asked 16 million Southern Baptists to "refrain from patronizing" Disney products, films, theme parks, and more than 200 subsidiaries.

The boycott protests several company policies, including providing domestic-partner benefits for gay employees, allowing homosexual groups to hold "Gay Day" at theme parks, the "outing" of "Ellen" character in a sitcom on Disney-owned ABC, and allegations of unwholesome content in Disney movies. ■

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MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Fire destroys church in Jefferson County Association

For Baptist and Reflector

NEW MARKET — A late night fire March 14 destroyed Rocky Valley Church here.

The 49-year-old church, constructed out of native stone, caught fire around 11 p.m., according to witnesses.

The cause of the fire has been attributed to the church's furnace. One member who lived nearby reported hearing an explosion.

The fire spread through the building quickly, and though fire fighters were on the scene within minutes of the blaze being reported, all that remains are a few charred walls, burned doors and windows, and one Bible which had only charred covers.

Church members told firemen they had been experienc-

ing problems with the furnace in recent days. It had been turned up at 5 p.m. that Saturday in preparation for the service on Sunday morning, the Jefferson County *Standard Banner* reported.

Pastor George W. Johnson told the *Standard Banner*, "The church building may be gone, but the church is still alive. We're still in business."

Jerry DeZearn, director of missions for Jefferson County Association, met with church members the following morning as they gathered for a brief service outside their burned building.

They were disturbed, but they had the attitude that their church was still alive and would rebuild, DeZearn said.

DeZearn reported the church did not have enough in-

surance to completely rebuild.

Churches in the association are planning to take a special offering to help Rocky Valley, DeZearn noted.

He also said the association

is accepting contributions to assist the church. They may be mailed to Jefferson County Baptist Association, P.O. Box 388, Jefferson City, Tenn., 37760. ■



WMU officers gather in Gatlinburg

Officers of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union met recently while in Gatlinburg for the recent *Missions Get-Together*. From left are, back row, Kathy Davis, Harriman, vice president; Bobby Turner, Knoxville, recording secretary; Ruth McNabb, Elizabethton; Sharon Lunsford, Nashville; Carol Martin, Chattanooga; Wilma Hundley, Humboldt; JoAnn Wortham, Bell Buckle, vice president; front row; Executive Director Carol Kelly; Norma Hancock, Smithville; Martha Haynes, Ripley; Mevis Swinford, Fayetteville; Ramona Mercer, Jackson, vice president; and Carol Richardson, Memphis, president. All others are promotion directors. Not pictured is Phyllis Hazelwood of Harrogate. — Photo by Wm. Fletcher Allen

State BSU conference planned

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The BSU State Collegiate Spring Conference will be held April 3-4 at First Church, Clarksville.

The theme is "Tear Down the Walls."

Speakers are David Ben-

jamin and John Nance. Music will be provided by Partners in Christ.

The fee is \$10.

Local BSU directors can provide more information, or call the TBC Executive Board Collegiate Ministries office at 1 (800) 558-2090, ext. 2056. ■

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- He has been the model of a good and faithful servant, so earnest in his Christian duty as to make it a work of art.
- Through his weekly editorials he has offered constant reminders of the relationship between God's word and our lives.
- And, Fletcher, you have, indeed, been a friend. You have shared in our triumphs, broadened our understanding of complex issues, and inspired us to meet the future with bold assurance.

On behalf of the entire Carson-Newman College family, may you greatly enjoy the years to come as you and Betty enter this new and exciting chapter in your lives.



CARSON-NEWMAN COLLEGE

States join to offer Preschool/Children Leadership Festival

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Many churches experience a need for well-trained workers in preschool and children's organizations.

In order to meet that need, the state conventions of Tennessee and Mississippi are joining efforts to provide training specifically designed for those age-group workers in Sunday School, Discipleship Training, graded choirs, missions organizations, and weekday ministries.

"Building for the 21st Cen-

tury" has been planned by a task force of workers from both states. Tennessee task force members are Liz Lee and Sue Raley of TBC Executive Board ministries; Jill Sampson, Humboldt; Jayne Simpson, Huntingdon; Catherine Prewitt, Memphis; and Jean Burton, Memphis.

The leadership conference is set for May 1-2 at Trinity Church in Southaven, Miss., a suburb of Memphis. The registration fee is only \$12.50 per person and includes all materials. A special Friday evening dinner of "Mississippi catfish

and all the trimmings" will cost an additional \$6 each.

Conferences have been designed to provide the information needed for building for the 21st century. More than 30 of the best conference leaders available have been enlisted on a wide variety of topics. A special conference, designed especially for men who lead children, will be led by James Hargrave of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Registration and Early Bird conferences begin at 3 p.m. on Friday, May 1.

Conference leaders from

Tennessee include Brenda Morris, Knoxville; Tim and Janice Holcomb, Brentwood; Sue Raley, Brentwood; and Gayle Haywood, Brentwood.

The keynote address will be given by Willa Ruth Garlow, noted preschool educator from Oklahoma.

For more information, call Sue Raley or Liz Lee at the TBC Executive Board at (615) 371-7905. To register, contact Linda Reeves, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205-0530. Registration confirmation will contain maps to the church and a list of area hotels. ■

Classified

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

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION MINISTRIES: East Tennessee church is accepting resumes for a full-time associate pastor in childhood education. Seminary degree and some ministry experience preferred. Fax to (423) 586-1637, Attn: Program Administrator, Manley Baptist Church, Morristown, or call (423) 586-8665. ***

VOLUNTEER MUSICIAN: Stonebrook Church, Smyrna, is looking for a volunteer musician to play keyboard on Sundays. If interested, call Chad Hunter at (615) 355-6639 or the church office at (615) 890-0374. ***

POSITION OPEN: Poplar Corner Church, about 4-5 miles from Jackson, is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Search Committee, Poplar Corner Baptist Church, Highway 412 West, Bells, TN 38006. ***

PART-TIME: FBC, Centerville, seeks part-time youth director, open initially for the summer only. Send resumes to FBC, Attn: Youth Committee, 123 Church St., Centerville, TN 37033. No phone calls.

Missions Skills School set at Camp Linden

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Missions Awareness and Involvement Group of TBC Executive Board ministries will offer a Missions Skills School April 17-18 at Camp Linden in Linden.

The school will open at noon on Friday, April 17, and will conclude at 2 p.m. the following day.

Seminar topics include general construction, prayer walks, teaching Conversational English in an overseas project,

conducting block parties, and clowning.

Conference leaders include Roger and Penny Stacy, former IMB missionaries to Brazil and the Ukraine; Curt Fowler, MAI volunteer construction coordinator; Bob McEachern, IMB staffer; Don Whatley, associate pastor, Woodbine Church, Nashville; and Allyson Wimberly, "Hootie" the clown.

The cost is \$45 per person. To register and receive more information, call the MAI group at 1 (800) 558-2090, ext. 2025. ■

Senior adult 'Spring Fling' planned

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Spring Fling Senior Adult Conference in Memphis is being billed as "a fun and fellowship conference for all senior adults."

The Spring Fling is set for April 27-29 at Leewood Church, Memphis.

Registration will be held from 2-5 p.m. on April 27 with

the opening session beginning at 7 p.m. The conference concludes at noon on April 29.

Bible study will be led by Bob Norman, retired pastor of Clearview Church, Franklin, and well-known speaker. A variety of topics will be offered during conference times.

Kellye Cash Sheppard, former Miss America from Tennessee, will present a concert.

Registration is \$15 per person. For more information, call Don Mauldin, TBC Executive Board ministries senior adult specialist, at (615) 371-2047. ■



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Campbell participates in first efforts to reach Tai Lue

For Baptist and Reflector

SOMERVILLE — Robert W. Campbell, director of missions for Fayette Association, recently returned from a two-week mission trip to Thailand.

Campbell went to observe and participate in Southern Baptists' first evangelism efforts among the Tai Lue, an unreached people group of southeast Asia.

Fayette Association has entered into a "Prayer Plus Partnership" with the Tai Lue.

The Prayer Plus Partnership is a Southern Baptist International Mission Board program which encourages

churches, classes, mission groups, and others to adopt a people group to pray for and then to be obedient to the leadership of the Holy Spirit in assisting in the evangelization of that group.

Campbell worked alongside the IMB's strategy coordinator for the group and participated in a mobile medical clinic effort in five Tai Lue villages of Thailand.

Southern Baptist missionaries joined with volunteer doc-

tors and a team of student evangelists in an effort to treat the physical and spiritual needs of those villages.

Through the use of medicine, evangelistic videos, tract distribution, small group and one-on-one witnessing, singing with youth and children, sharing the love of Jesus with people who had never heard, more than 1,500 Tai Lue heard the Gospel for the first time.

The Tai Lue are part of the larger Tai/Dai people grouping of southern China and southeast Asia.

Like their ethnic cousins, the Thai, Tai Lue are Buddhists and less than 1 percent

Christian.

Partnering with each other and other Great Commission Christians, Southern Baptists are exploring methods that will impact the Tai Lue with an incarnational witness, lifestyle evangelism, media distribution, leadership training, and community and educational development in an effort to catalyze a church planting movement.

Fayette Association has agreed to undergird these efforts foundationally with prayer plus a commitment to help personally and corporately as the Lord directs and provides. ■



CAMPBELL



Sorrells chosen as DOM in Watauga

For Baptist and Reflector

ELIZABETHTON — Ray Sorrells, pastor of First Church, Erwin, since 1991, has been named director of missions, Watauga Association, effective April 1.

Sorrells also has been pastor of Calvary Church, Elizabethton, and churches in West Virginia and Virginia.

He is a graduate of Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour; Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City; and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., where he earned the doctor of ministry degree. ■



SORRELLS

Sumrall joins state WMU staff

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Becky Sumrall will join the staff of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union as ministry specialist — adults, effective April 13.

Sumrall has been serving as interim minister of recreation at Crievevood Church, Nashville. Her husband, Rusty, is director of church



SUMRALL

development for Nashville Association.

Sumrall is a native of Douglas, Ga., and is a graduate of Georgia College, Millledgeville, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. ■

For weekday education

Tennessee Baptist council formed

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The first council for Tennessee Baptist Weekday Educators has been formed and met recently at the Baptist Center here.

Council members are Mollie Lynch, Jackson; Beth Chaney, Chattanooga; Brenda Morris, Knoxville; and Jayne Simpson, Huntingdon. Sue Raley, TBC Executive Board preschool

ministry specialist, also serves with the council.

The council will give support to day care, Mothers' Day Out, and other weekday programs in TBC churches by providing in-service training for teachers and directors.

For more information or to put your program on a mailing list, call Raley at (615) 371-2082. ■

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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Survey: Nearly one in five at missions blame gambling for homelessness

By Tom Strode
For Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly one in five people at the country's rescue missions say gambling has played a part in their homelessness, according to a recent survey.

A survey of more than 1,100 men and women at Gospel missions nationwide found 18 percent of respondents cited gambling as a cause of their homelessness. The polling also showed 70 percent of respondents believe the prevalence of gambling opportunities makes it difficult for them to rebuild their lives. Though they are homeless, 37 percent said they occasionally gamble. Eighty-six percent said they consider gambling addictive.

Lotteries far outdistanced other forms of gambling by respondents in the rescue missions. Those who used to play, or still play, lotteries totaled 86 percent, contrasted with 34 percent at casinos and 25 per-

cent at horse and dog racing tracks, the survey showed.

The results of the survey, conducted by the International Union of Gospel Missions, were released only four days before the National Gambling Impact Study Commission began its March 16-17 meeting at Boston. The panel was expected to consider the impact of state lotteries by focusing on the Massachusetts lottery.

"This survey confirms what any honest person would admit — lotteries are bad business and bad public policy," said Barrett Duke, gambling specialist for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "One hundred years ago, our country dealt with lotteries and banned them in every state. Today, history is repeating itself.

"Our own states are destroying the people they are supposed to be protecting through their insatiable appetite for more spending money. The time has come for the people of this country to say, 'Enough is enough,' and to begin to elect legislators who will end this tragedy. If we don't do it soon, it may be someone we know on the streets next," Duke said.

The survey was conducted because of increasing reports from missions of the devastating effects of gambling in lot-

teries and at casinos on people's lives, according to the International Union of Gospel Missions, an association of nearly 250 rescue missions in the United States.

"The people running America's rescue missions, who are giving their lives to care for society's less fortunate, ask very little from the government," said Lee Schmooker, executive director of a Newark, N.J., mission, in a IUGM news release. "At a minimum, we ask that it not make our lives more

difficult. And by promoting lotteries and cutting sweetheart deals with the corporate gamblers, that is exactly what is happening."

Ninety-two percent of respondents in the survey were male. The majority, 56 percent, of respondents were from the 31-45-year-old age bracket.

The rescue missions conducted the research by giving men and women at their facilities surveys to fill out and to return in a designated box or face down. ■

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Values change

By Mike Rogers

Focal Passage — Luke 19:1-10

Change is good. In fact, change is normal in the Kingdom of God. When we have an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ, we never walk away the same. This miraculous revolution of the soul brings change into every aspect of our lives. One of the greatest changes that begins to take place in our hearts is a shift in ownership of our assets. That which we considered as our own, is now understood to belong to God, the rightful owner.

However, today's brand of "Christianity" rarely embraces such a shift. We prefer the easy path to "gettin' saved." A walk down the aisle of a church, a prayer to receive Jesus, a pat on the back from the pastor, a vote of confidence from the congregation, a few tears, and a sigh of relief — we've got our ticket to heaven. Soon we are on our way to work Monday morning, often with little or no change in the way we do business. You might say the whole experience is rather self-centered. It is true that salvation is a free gift. We are saved by grace, not works. But salvation is so much more. It is about change. Change in the way we live — like the eternal transformation that occurred in the life of Zaccheus.

An eternal transformation

In the presence of Christ, Zaccheus was compelled to make right any wrongdoing in his life. He also redistributed his wealth by giving one-half of everything he owned to the poor. It was a most unlikely and dramatic move on his part. Jesus responded to the radical change in Zaccheus' life and said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham." This dramatic salvation experience did not result from the fact that Zaccheus confessed certain theological statements that were a reflection of the orthodox views of his religion. Salvation came because of a radical change in Zaccheus' heart. Facing his own sinfulness, he repented. God initiated change in his life and he acted upon it. He obviously had accepted the sovereign will of God in his life. He not only made restitution to those he had wronged but released one-half of his wealth to those who were poor. He was a new Zaccheus, born again to a new life in Christ.

Open to change

Take a few moments and compare the story of the rich young ruler (ch. 18:18f) and that of Zaccheus. What appeared impossible for the rich young ruler became possible for Zaccheus, the rich tax collector. The striking difference between the two was that the rich young man didn't see the influence of his own sinful nature in his life, but the tax collector did. Zaccheus was open to change, the rich young ruler was not. The young ruler trusted in his own wealth. Zaccheus came to complete trust in Jesus.

What is your agenda?

In verse 3 of chapter 19, Luke writes that "He (Zaccheus) wanted to see who Jesus was." Perhaps his hunger to see "who" Jesus really was opened the door to the Kingdom of God in his life. What a striking contrast this is to the example of the rich young ruler who said, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" This rich man had a very self-focused agenda, searching only for self-satisfaction. Are we seeking to know who Jesus is, or are we obsessed with finding what will most benefit ourselves? — Rogers and his wife Debi are the authors of "The Kingdom Agenda: Experiencing God in Your Workplace" (LifeWay Press, 1997). Mike also serves as director of missions, Bradley Baptist Association.

Jesus' identity, mission

By Billy Murphy

Focal Passage — Mark 8:27-9:1

The focal passage provides a bridge between the first and second parts of Mark's Gospel. Jesus left Galilee and went into Caesarea Philippi. Philippi was the site of a great marble temple built in honor of Caesar and was the center of Baal worship. Here Peter recognized him as the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, the Son of God. After Peter's acknowledgement, Jesus' only insistence was, "... that they should tell no man about him."

To understand why Jesus insisted that the disciples "tell no man ..." we must realize that by tradition, the Messiah was to take command. Then there would be an age of peace, prosperity, and goodness that would last forever. So Jesus had to be careful in announcing himself as the Messiah. He instructed his disciples in order that they not mislead the people into believing him to be that kind of Messiah. He did say to them that there would be suffering.

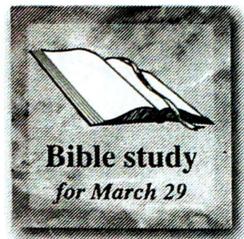
tempter sometimes speaks to us in the voice of a well-meaning friend, or in the voice of those who love us, and who think they seek only our good. The Messiah would establish his rule and Kingdom only through his own suffering and death. Not even the pleading voice of love must silence the imperious voice of God.

As the Messiah should suffer, so must his disciples accept that they, too, would suffer; as he would know a cross, they would know a cross. He offered them no way to escape this. He never indicated to anyone under any pretense that following him would be easy.

Of course, there was one way to escape this horror; people could ignore Jesus, deny him, or go silently about some other business. People could deny him in the pagan courts when they were arrested and save their lives. Individuals could disavow the Messiah, but they should know that, at the end, the Messiah would disavow them. It is a choice all have to make.

Jesus said that denying self or losing one's life for his sake is the way to find true fulfillment. The world insists on living as mere "getters" and never learning how to become "givers." The man who views life as Christ viewed it will not sell himself cheaply, nor will he waste his life on things that destroy the soul.

The final verse of this lesson refers not to a future coming of Christ as some might think, but to the magnificent spread of the spirit of the Christian movement by A.D. 100. The "people of the way" as the followers of Christ were chronicled, began to spread rapidly through the Mediterranean area, Eastern Europe, and Northern Africa. The presence of the Spirit at Pentecost is an indication of the phenomenal events that were occurring during the life times of the disciples who were listening to Jesus' disclosure. — Murphy is Computer Consultant for West Carroll Special School District and a bivocational pastor, Howse Church, Atwood.



Family Bible Lesson

"... The son of man must suffer many things ..." (v. 31). The elders, the chief priests, and the scribes would reject the Messiah; he would then be murdered. It was too much for Peter; he refused to accept this story. He refused to see his Christ in such a helpless role. How could the Son of God, with all the powers of heaven at his command, suffer such treatment and suffer such a shameful death?

Jesus then condemned the words of Peter as words of Satan. He said, in effect, that Peter was not being loyal to him, but to the tempter who had recently made exactly the same suggestions to him in the wilderness. In Caesarea Philippi, Jesus had to fight the battle of the wilderness all over again, with Satan speaking in the words of Peter. The

Were you there?

By James Growden

Focal Passage — Mark 14:44, 55-56, 71-72; 15:9-15

The title of this lesson is a question that all Christians should ask themselves. Were you there? No! not physically, but many times today we as Christians betray our Savior by disobedience of his clear, easy to understand instructions. Let's look at the focal passage.

Judas had given the armed band a signal (a kiss) that would identify the person they were to arrest. Judas was given a contingent of Jewish temple police as well as some Roman soldiers in order to seize Jesus and bring him before the religious court for trial. The religious leaders had issued the warrant for Jesus' arrest, and Judas was acting as Jesus' official accuser.

Next we see Jesus before the Sanhedrin. The Romans controlled Israel, but the Jews were given some power to handle religious and minor civil disputes. This Supreme Court was made up of 71 of Israel's leaders. It was assumed that these men would be fair and just. Instead, they showed great injustice in Jesus' trial, even to the point of making up lies to use against him. The trial was being held in the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest.

This was the second of Jesus' trials. There were five trials: (1) before Annas; (2) before Caiaphas as stated earlier; (3) the first before Pilate; (4)

Explore the Bible Lesson

before Herod; (5) a second before Pilate. Jesus' enemies were out to get him. How many people today have five trials?

We move from the trial to Peter's denial of Jesus. I feel that Peter felt fear. In verses 67-68 Peter feared an individual, the maid and in verses 69-70 he was fearing the crowd. The third failure is also that of fearing the crowd. This time the crowd approached him. The pressure was much greater. Peter's chest must have been pounding with emotion and fear. His thoughts were flying, trying to figure out how to escape. His emotions burst forth in a forceful cursing and swearing denial. Immediately upon his denial, the cock crowed, and he heard it and was reminded of his failure. A worldly crowd can and will put undue pressure upon a believer. A believer does not belong in the midst of a worldly crowd, hanging around worldly places. Read Ephesians 5:11.

In verse 72 we see that the answer to failure is repentance. This has not changed since the beginning of time and never will. When God's children sin, they must repent.

The last part of our focal passage

is chapter 15:9-15, which covers Jesus' trial before Pilate. Doing a good study on Pilate will help you understand this trial. This mob was a group of Jews loyal to the Jewish leaders. The Jews hated Pilate, but they went to him for the favor of condemning Jesus to crucifixion. Pilate saw a frame-up. That is the only reason they brought Jesus to this hated man and the Romans he represented. Crucifixion was the Roman penalty for rebellion, so they wanted his blood on Roman hands.

Although Jesus was innocent according to Roman law, Pilate caved in under political pressure. He tried to second-guess the Jewish leaders and give a decision that would please everyone while keeping himself safe. God promises to honor those who do right, not those who make everyone happy. How about you? Do you please God or man? Fear, of course, lay behind Pilate's action. The fear of losing the people's favor, his position and security, and fear of causing problems for himself. He scourged Jesus and released Barabbas. Then he delivered Jesus to be crucified. Pilate had the authority and duty to do what was right, however, he failed. He was too weak to stand for the truth and free himself from the evil influence of the world. How about you? Do you stand for Jesus and his truth? — Growden is a teacher and a bivocational pastor, Hillcrest Church, Nashville.

churches

■ **Beverly Hills Church, Memphis**, will host a women's conference, "Valued By God, A Woman of Strength and Honor," April 24-25. It will feature Jewel McFarland. For more information, contact Carol Griggs at the church, (901) 743-4120.

■ **First Church, Murfreesboro**, will host its first annual Composer Weekend March 28-29. It will feature Joseph M. Martin, a pianist/composer with Shawnee Press of Austin, Texas. Martin is the recording artist of "American Tapestry" and "Songs of the Journey." He has about 300 compositions in print. For more information, contact the church at (615) 893-2514.

■ **New Middleton Church, Gordonsville**, will hold a groundbreaking ceremony March 29.

■ **Spring Creek Road Church, East Ridge**, will hold revival March 29 - April 1. Bill Stafford, evangelist of Chattanooga, will speak.

■ **Calvary Church, Knoxville**, will hold a conference for couples, "I Win, You Win," March 27-28. For more information, contact the church at (423) 523-9419.

■ **First Church, Carthage**, broke ground recently for a fellowship hall and activities building.

■ **Mount Union Church, Clarkrange**, has paid off a loan for its Fellowship Hall more than two years early.

■ **First Church, Byrdstown**, will hold revival April 19-22. Richard Ratliff of Kingsport will speak.

■ **Dalewood Church, Nashville**, will present its "Living Pictures of Easter" April 1-5, at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call the church at (615) 227-7000.

■ **First Church, Franklin**, will hold its annual Marriage Retreat April 17-18 at Opryland Hotel. Speakers will be Bill and Terri Howard and Jeff and Brenda Schulte. For

more information, call Alan Pace at (615) 794-2812.

■ **Rocky Hill Church, Knoxville**, will hold a women's retreat, "Becoming a Vessel God Can Use," April 24-25. For more information, call the church at (423) 691-7685.

■ **Goodsprings Church, Etowah**, will hold revival April 5-9. Doug Surber, a pastor in Dayton, Ohio, will speak. Music will be led by Tim Trotter.

■ **North Cleveland Church, Cleveland**, held an organ recital and dedication March 15.

■ **First Church, Hunter**, will hold revival April 5-8. Bailey E. Smith will speak and music will be led by His Praise, Jessica Cole, Chris Allman, and others. For more information, contact the church at (423) 543-1381.

■ **Grace Covenant Church, Knoxville**, will hold an area-wide youth rally April 11 at 7 p.m. It will feature a concert by George Koon, evangelist, and daughters, Allison and Carla.

■ The Sanctuary Choir of **Smithwood Church, Knoxville**, will present the East Tennessee premiere of "The Art of the Hymn," by composer Mary McDonald of Knoxville. The premiere will be April 12 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (423) 689-5448.

■ **Central Church, Memphis**, will hold a Worldwide Evangelism Explosion Clinic June 26 - July 1. For more information, call the church at (901) 365-4673.

■ **Mt. Gilead Church, Bethel Springs**, will hold revival April 5-8. Maurice Hayes, collegiate ministry specialist, Jackson State Community College, Jackson, will speak.

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

■ **Dickerson Road Church, Nashville**, will hold a Bible Conference April 24-26. Speakers include Roger Shelton, Norris Hite, Sid Maddox,



LEADING A GROUND BREAKING ceremony March 8 for Parkers Creek Church, Bon Aqua, are Joe Estes, center, pastor, and Benny Spencer, a member of the building committee, as Mr. Donegan and his mules watch. The mules actually broke ground by pulling a plow. The church will build a 20,000-square-foot facility on a five-acre site near the present building.

Herbert Gabhart, James Sullivan, Bill Sherman, Franklin Paschall, Tom Madden, and Carl Duck. For more information, contact the church at (615) 865-0911.

associations

■ **Knox County Association** will hold a World Missions Conference April 25-29. Lew Reynolds of Nashville, state prayer coordinator, will serve as prayer minister.

■ **Beulah Association** will hold a Youth Workers Training Meeting at the Mission Center April 16. For more information, call Alan Pittman at (901) 536-4710 or 536-4223.

■ **Shiloh Association's** Evangelism Rally will be April 16 at Hopewell Church, Savannah. Bob Pittman, pastor, Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, will speak and Squire Parsons, recording artist, will sing.

people

■ **Central Church, Crossville**, will ordain Jack Brandon and Harold Smith as deacons on April 5.

deaths

■ **William P. Carter**, 72, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to Chile, died March 17 in Johnson City. Carter and his wife, the former Kate Callaway, served in Chile for 38 years. After retiring, he was interim pastor, Central Church, Johnson City, from 1994-95. Prior to his missionary service, he served as a pastor in South Carolina and in Kentucky. He is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

■ **Clayton C. Baker**, 75, retired pastor, died March 1 in Jackson. He started serving as

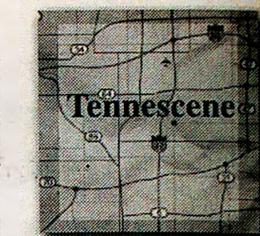
a pastor while a student at Union University, Jackson. He served in Texas while a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. Baker also served churches in Arkansas, Missouri, and Florida.

■ **Randall Hackett**, 60, of Carthage died Feb. 24. Hackett was treasurer of New Salem Association and Sunday School director at Peyton Creek Church, Carthage. He was a businessman and civic leader. Hackett is survived by his wife, Nancy; son; and daughter.

■ **Bessie D. Gentry**, 100, of Cookeville, died Feb. 23. She was a member of Cane Creek Church, Tellico Plains, for 86 years, where she taught Sunday School for 60 years, and was treasurer and church clerk for 50 years. Gentry established the Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Gentry Scholarship to honor her parents at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City. She taught public school for 52 years after being one of the first students of Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville.

leaders

■ **Roland Smith**, pastor, Central Church, Crossville, will celebrate his 13th anniversary of service there April 12.



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■ **Atkins Church, Knoxville**, has called **Ralph McGee** as pastor.

■ **Bill Gruenewald** has been called as minister of administration, First Church, Hendersonville, effective April 1.

■ **Todd Young** of First Church, Natchez, Miss., has been called as minister of activities, Forest Hills Church, Nashville.

■ **Roger L. Richards**, interim pastor, Highland Heights Church, Memphis, for a year and a half, has resigned, effective March 29.

■ **First Church, Tullahoma**, has called **J. Mark LeMay** as minister of education/administration.

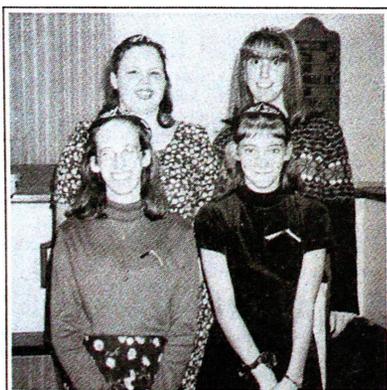
■ **First Church, Rickman**, has called **Mike Gay** as pastor.

■ **First Church, Celina**, has called **Lou Paradiso** as pastor. He formerly was associate pastor, First Church, White House. He also has served a church in New Jersey. Paradiso is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

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

■ **First Church, Selmer**, has called **Russell Rowland** as minister of music and education. He was associate minister of music, Sagamore Hill Church, Fort Worth, Texas. Rowland and his wife, Tammy, are graduates of Union University, Jackson, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

■ **First Church, Kingston**, has called **Bill Paczkowski** as minister of music.



RECOGNIZED as completing the Queen level of the Acteen advancement program recently are front row, from left, Linda Farmer and Monica Dawson; back row, Brandy Boyd and Amber Reagan. The young women are members of Adams Chapel Church, Dresden.



FOUR GENERATIONS of a family spoke during Baptist Women's Day Feb. 22 at Kingston Pike Church, Lenoir City. They included, from left, Juanita Gardner, 73; Sandra Duggan, 51; Amanda Brown, 10; and Lori Brown, 30.