

REFLECTOR

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Ircel Harrison sets retirement

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — On June 15, 1998, Ircel Harrison, collegiate ministry specialist, completed 20 years of service with the Tennessee Baptist Convention and announced his retirement.

In a letter to student ministers in Tennessee, Harrison expressed his appreciation for their fellowship and support and continued by affirming the student ministers for their unique and essential contribution to the ministry of college students.

"Certainly Ircel Harrison has touched the lives of a great number of college students across Tennessee over two decades of ministry," said James Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

During the interim period, Tim Holcomb, leader for the Christian Growth Development Group, will serve also in the collegiate ministries position.

The process to fill the vacancy in collegiate ministries will begin immediately according to prescribed procedures of the Executive Board. ■

Tennesseans minister in Salt Lake City

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — The Saturday prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting the parking lot of Holladay Church here was transformed by members and Southern Baptist volunteers, including a 13-member team from First Church, Millington, into a carnival setting.

Children were getting their faces painted with the logo of the Utah Jazz, the local professional basketball team; youth were throwing softballs to test their speed; children were learning safety from city emergency personnel; and everyone was munching on free popcorn and candy.

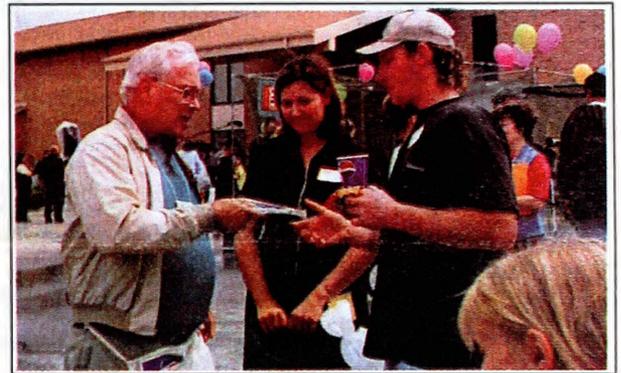
About 300 attended despite light showers, cool temperatures, and actions by Mormons. The local Mormon ward's leaders told people not to attend the special events at Holladay Church and scheduled a conflicting event, reported Marilyn Patrick of the church. But these deterrents didn't dampen spirits at the June 6 block party.

At the softball throwing booth, a teenaged boy tested his speed with help from Mark Thompson, minister of youth at First Church, Millington, and Laurie — See Tennesseans, page 6



ED JENT, minister of education, First Church, Millington, discusses the fish symbol he is painting on a boy's forehead with some observers at the block party. — Photos by Connie Davis

GIVING a Bible to a young man is Ray Newcomb, pastor, First Church, Millington, as he visits with the young couple at the block party held at Holladay Church, Salt Lake City.



Tennessee third in attendance; action taken on variety of issues

SBC messengers affirm views on family

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Southern Baptist messengers amended their *Baptist Faith and Message* statement for the first time since 1963, elected Paige Patterson as president of the 15.9 million member denomination, and acted on a variety of motions and resolutions.

In addition, Southern Baptists before and during the convention spread the Gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ in an area heavily populated by Mormons. As of June 11, 1,200-plus decisions for Christ had been made. See additional stories on Crossover and the efforts of Tennessee Baptist volunteers in this issue.

Messengers

The 1998 SBC annual meeting at the Salt Palace Conference Center here drew only 8,586 messengers, down nearly 4,000 from the 12,420 who attended last year's meeting in Dallas, Texas. It is the first time the SBC meeting has

dipped below 9,000 since the 1973 convention in Portland, Ore.

The messenger count included 725 from Tennessee. Only Georgia and North Carolina had more, each with 800 messengers.

Also numbered among the messengers were Jennette C. Briggs of Fort Worth, Texas, the SBC's one millionth messenger, and Jerry Falwell and seven other members of Thomas Road Church, Lynchburg, Va. Falwell is a nationally recognized independent pastor whose church officially became affiliated with Southern Baptists in 1996. Although he has attended SBC meetings before it was the first time he has registered as a messenger. His church reported giving \$10,000 to SBC causes last year through a new state convention formed by conservatives in Virginia.

Statement on Family

Southern Baptists adopted the four-paragraph statement (see page 3) on family after two

attempts to amend it failed.

SBC President Tom Elliff appointed a committee to produce a statement on the roles of family members after last year's annual meeting.

"The assignment to produce a concise and clear statement that expresses the generally held beliefs of Southern Baptists concerning family was a daunting one for us," said Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and chairman of the committee.

"The statement on family is thoroughly biblical," Jordan emphasized. "Every line is deeply rooted in the clear teaching of Scripture. ... Our intent was to craft a confessional statement that declared what is believed rather than to describe what is disbelieved. It is a positive declaration of biblical truth regarding family."

One amendment offered by Tim Owings of Augusta, Ga., wanted to change the wording to read "both husband and wife are to submit graciously to

each other as servant leaders in the home even as the church willingly submits to the lordship of Christ." The amendment failed.

Another amendment offered by Dennis Wiles of First Church, Huntsville, Ala., would have added two sentences to the first paragraph: "The Bible contains many examples of the diverse manifestations of the family. Single adults, childless couples, widows and widowers can comprise legitimate and biblical expressions of the family."

Jordan responded that the committee felt those groups were included in the first sentence of the statement. The amendment failed.

Once approved by SBC messengers the statement became Article 18 of the *Baptist Faith and Message* which was first drafted in 1925 to serve as "information to the churches" and "guidelines to the various agencies" of the SBC. Revised in 1963, the statement is not — See SBC, page 3

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- ▶ **Office** — Baptist and Reflector, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, TN, 37027
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- ▶ **FAX** — (615) 371-2080
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Cordova pastor speaks prior to SBC

For Baptist and Reflector

SALT LAKE CITY — Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Church, Cordova, shared his spiritual journey June 8 during the SBC Pastors' Conference.

Rogers was among nearly 20 preachers who took part in the two-day pre-convention meeting.

The journey for Rogers began when, as a child, he made a commitment to God at a revival. But he strayed from God during his adolescence, he said. His sins included street fighting and truancy.

While he was in high school, Rogers recommitted himself to God and accepted a call to preach while participating in a meeting at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Other touchstones of his life included his marriage to his high school sweetheart, Joyce, and the death of an infant son to Sudden Death Syndrome.

As a student at Stetson University, Rogers said he learned that he was a fundamentalist theologically which contrasted to the views of one of his professors there.

"That's when I said, 'I'm either going to see this convention get right with God or I'm going to get out of it,'" he said.

Rogers said his advice to pastors is to have integrity. "Integrity is to the spirit what health is to your body."

He suggested they practice moral, doctrinal, and devotional integrity.

Ministers should remain



MAKING A POINT during his message is Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Church, Cordova.

pure morally, said Rogers.

Doctrinal integrity should lead them to "stop trying to please people and please the Lord," he declared. This will enable them to avoid competition with other Christians and compromising the message to get a crowd.

And their doctrinal integrity should lead them to witness. Rogers said he recently led a bank president and a black man seeking work at his house to the Lord.

He said he doesn't have a devotional time each day, but he always starts the day with four thoughts — praise, acceptance, giving up control, and expectation.

Other speakers

Charles Lowery, pastor of Hoffmantown Church, Albuquerque, N.M., said society at the dawning of a new millennium is searching for something real. Unsatisfied by vain searches for truth in New Age methodologies such as numerology and psychic hotlines, he said people are looking for answers to life's

meaning.

"In this age, people look for strange things to solve their problems. In order for us to love people, we have to be real with people," Lowery said, citing the Apostle Paul's encouragement in I Thessalonians 2:7-8.

Comparing today's churches with the early church in Corinth, Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., warned of the confusion Satan has ushered through the culture into the church, paralyzing it and discouraging its leaders.

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church, Dallas, said pastors must be passionate about God's calling on their lives to help rescue a culture drowning in decadence. He cited the sinking of the Titanic as a parable of today's world.

"The world is sinking in judgment," he said. "People are dying, people are lost, people are sinking and our lifeboats, our churches, are half empty, and we are unwilling to take whatever risks are needed to go back to rescue the perishing. We need to be filling up our lifeboats," he said.

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Church, Woodstock, Ga., encouraged pastors to remember their God-given victories during times of trouble. "One of the problems in our ministries is that oftentimes our memories are far too short."

Jim Cymbala, pastor of The Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, N.Y., called for pastors to depend more on the leading of the Holy Spirit and less on

themselves.

He said some churches are bound by their bulletins. "There's never been a revival if you follow the bulletin. We have this pathetic situation where pastors tell me we can't go on past an hour. Doesn't someone think this is not what God intended when he started the church?"

Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee said the blame for society's ills belongs on the church steps not in state capitols or Washington, D.C.

"If those of us in our churches had practiced the biblical role of tithing, if we had been willing to give one dime out of every dollar to help those who are needy, to help widows, to help the orphans, to help the hungry, to help the sick," Huckabee said, funds would be available to help people in the name of Christ.

Huckabee said he entered the political arena knowing that government didn't have the answers but realizing that God does.

Also during the Pastors' Conference, the six SBC seminary presidents affirmed basic doctrines of the Christian faith.

Each president addressed what conference planners termed "an anchor point of faith." ■ — Contributing to this article were Assistant Editor Connie Davis and Baptist Press writers Keith Hinson, Lee Weeks, Steve Achord, Martin King, Joni Hannigan, and James Dotson.

Tennesseans address 40th annual evangelists' conference

By Keith Hinson
For Baptist Press

SALT LAKE CITY — The 40th annual Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists had a distinct Tennessee flavor with three speakers. In addition, two of the new officers are Tennessee Baptists.

Full-time evangelists are a gift from God, but many Southern Baptist churches either ignore or avoid these itinerant ministers, said Bob Pitman, pastor of Kirby Woods Church, Memphis.

Pitman cited figures from the North American Mission Board which indicate only 7,000 Southern Baptist congregations held revival in 1997.

"Some say the day of the revival is over. ... The Scriptures do not teach the day of revival is over. This is one of the greatest days for revival there ever has been," he said.

As a pastor, Pitman has used 25 full-time Southern Baptist evangelists in revival meetings and "never one time had a bad experience."

Phil Glisson, evangelist from Memphis, emphasized the importance of Christians acting like Jesus by being Spirit-filled, humble, patient, faithful, and determined.

"Be determined that you will do what God wants you to do," he urged. "Be determined that nothing will stop you. ... Pray and ask God to give you that spirit of determination in your heart — no matter what happens, no matter what comes, that you'll do what God wants you to do."

Glisson said living a genuine Christlike faith will fulfill a need for unsaved people. "When we act like Jesus, we're doing what this world desperately needs to see. The world needs us to go out of here and act like Jesus."

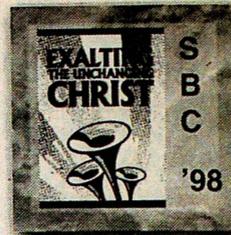
James T. Draper Jr., president of LifeWay Christian Resources (formerly Baptist Sunday School Board) encouraged the group not to lose hope. "You rob anyone of hope and you rob

them of life," he said.

New evangelist officers for 1998-99 include Jerry Drace Humboldt, president, and Ker Holland, Franklin, music director. ■



TENNESSEE EVANGELIST Henry Linginfelter, right, of Alcoa visits with Tennessee speakers Bob Pitman, left, and Phil Glisson, both from Memphis, at the evangelists' conference.





SBC messengers affirm views on family ...

— Continued from page 1
officially a creed since it is not binding on churches or individual believers. Southern Baptist agencies, however, require employees to accept its tenets.

The committee which drafted the statement on family was comprised of Jordan, O.D. "Damon" Shook, pastor, Houston, Texas; Richard Land, president SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission; Mary Mohler, homemaker and wife of R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Bill Elliff, pastor, Little Rock, Ark.; John Sullivan, executive director, Florida Baptist Convention; and Dorothy Patterson, author/speaker and wife of Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Election of Officers

Messengers elected Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1992, by acclamation. He was unopposed for office.

Patterson, 55, is generally regarded as one of the architects of the conservative resurgence in the SBC which began in 1979.

Patterson is the first seminary president to serve as SBC president since 1939-40.

In nominating Patterson, James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., described him as "a proven leader and a champion of the cause of Christ."

Two Southern Baptist pastors were elected as vice presidents. Rick Ferguson of Riverside Church, Denver, was chosen as first vice president over Bill Wagner, an emeritus missionary from California by a 2,195 to 1,396 margin.

Mike Gray, pastor of South-east Church, Salt Lake City, was elected second vice president over two other candidates — Manuel Galindo, a pastor from Olmito, Texas, and Paul Blanchard, a director of missions from Louisville, Miss.

John Yates of Oklahoma was re-elected recording secre-

Article 18 — The Family

The following statement on family was adopted by messengers to the SBC annual meeting in Salt Lake City. It becomes Article 18 of the *Baptist Faith and Message*.

"God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

"Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and his church, and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

"The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to his people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

"Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents."

Listed Scripture references are:

Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-25; 3:1-20; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Josh. 24:15; I Sam. 1:26-28; Ps. 51:5, 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Prov. 1:8, 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6, 15; 23: 13-14; 24:3; 29:15, 17; 31:10-31; Eccl. 4:9-12; 9:9; Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Rom. 1:18-32; I Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col 3:18-21; I Tim. 5:8, 14; II Tim. 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Heb. 13:4; I Peter 3:1-7

tary with no opposition. Lee Porter of Georgia was elected registration secretary for the 22nd time. He was challenged by Ken Barnett, a pastor from Denver, Colo. Porter received 1,676 votes to 1,310 for Barnett.

Resolutions

In seven resolutions adopted during the convention, messengers affirmed the sufficiency of the true Gospel, expressed opposition to President Bill Clinton's executive order prohibiting discrimination regarding sexual orientation in the civilian federal work force, and called for ethical behavior of persons holding public office.

Other approved resolutions addressed public funding of the National Endowment for the Arts, affirmed strengthening the marriage covenant, opposed women in combat, and expressed appreciation for Salt Lake City hospitality.

Meeting just a few blocks from Salt Lake City's Temple Square, messengers approved a resolution affirming the "finality, sufficiency, and exclusivity of the Christian Gospel," highlighting the doctrinal dis-

tinctions that separate orthodox Christianity from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) headquartered in the city.

A recent White House executive order on equal employment opportunity earned a rebuke from messengers. The resolution urges Congress to nullify the action by President Clinton which prohibits discrimination because of one's sexual orientation within the civilian federal work force.

An amendment to call on Immanuel Church, Little Rock (the president's home church) to discipline Clinton for the executive order was narrowly defeated by messengers, 52 percent to 48 percent.

The Committee on Resolutions received 27 resolutions for consideration but voted to take no action on most. Resolutions are non-binding.

Motions

Messengers voted to form a task force to involve the denomination in helping to solve the nation's drug problem.

The motion, presented by Ted Stone of North Carolina, calls for the task force to be chaired by Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, for Land to invite chief executives of SBC entities to participate in the task force, and for the task force to "formulate a plan of action for our denomination's more direct involvement in the solution of the serious drug problem" and to report on the plan at the 1999 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta.

Of more than 25 proposed motions, Stone's was the only one considered by messengers. All others were either referred to SBC entities or ruled out of order.

Three proposals dealt with moving the SBC annual meet-

ing in 2000 out of Orlando, Fla., because of opposition against the Disney Company's pro-homosexual policies. The motions were referred to the Executive Committee.

Two other motions, also referred to the Executive Committee, proposed changing the name of the Southern Baptist Convention. One specific name change was suggested — The Baptist Convention of North America.

Specific Actions

► Messengers voted to reduce their annual meeting from three days to two beginning in 1999. Convention sessions will end Wednesday night rather than Thursday at noon. Time was reserved on Wednesday afternoons for "seminary luncheons and other necessary meetings."

► Messengers approved a \$155,005,723 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget for 1998-99. The new budget represents a \$6.8 million increase over the current budget. The new budget is based on actual receipts for 1996-97.

► The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention became LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In a show-of-hands vote, only a scattering of messengers voted against the new name.

LCR President James T. Draper Jr. told messengers the name change reflects additional assignments given to the agency over the years.

"We feel that we need a name that enables you and all Southern Baptists to better understand the many resources available to you to support you in your ministries," he said.

Messages

► In the annual president's address Tom Elliff proclaimed

the only hope for the future of the Southern Baptist Convention lies in "charting our course by the unchanging Christ."

Giving extensive credit to those who spoke with prophetic force to shake off "barnacles which would debilitate and diminish the power of the convention," Elliff, pastor of First Southern Church, Del City, Okla., addressed the need for members to emphasize holiness, mobilize for harvest, and personalize the hope of Christ's return.

"Jesus must be to us as the pole star is to the ocean navigator, that fixed point of reference by which everything is judged. If we know where Jesus is on an issue, we can always know where we are supposed to be," he emphasized.

► In the convention sermon, James Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga., exhorted Southern Baptists to take seriously the Apostle Jude's admonition to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

The alternative, Merritt said, is an inevitable drift from truth and consequently from God's favor.

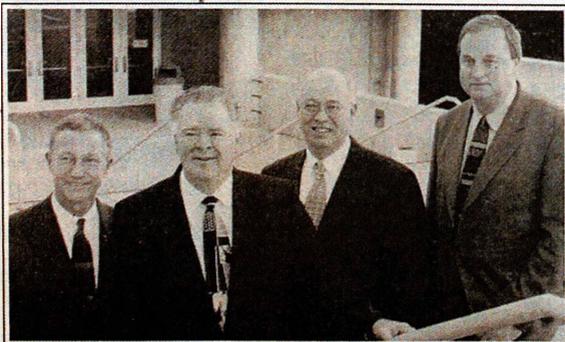
Merritt noted "the battle for the soul of our denomination, our colleges and seminaries, our churches, even for the Bible itself, will never be over. There may be a cease fire, but Jude says we can never let our guard down."

Merritt said "we have turned this denomination around theologically, but it is now time we turn this denomination around evangelistically." He cited statistics showing that while baptisms are up over the last few years after earlier decline, nearly 25 percent of churches report no baptisms at all. Also, he said, while it took 19 Southern Baptists in 1950 "to win a soul to Christ and baptize him," it takes 39 today.

The Georgia pastor praised God for convention successes in record missions giving, missionary counts, church membership, and new conservative leadership at its seminaries.

"But let us not get so caught up in backslapping that we forget that there is a nation of lost people drowning in a pool of sin, with no hope without Jesus Christ."

► American culture is divided into two warring camps: those who believe God is and those who believe God isn't, ac— See SBC, page 8



OFFICERS OF THE Southern Baptist Convention include, from left, Rick Ferguson, first vice president; Paige Patterson, president; John Yates, recording secretary; and Mike Gray, second vice president.

More Tennesseans support Crossover events

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

SALT LAKE CITY — Numerous Tennesseans participated in convention-related Crossover '98 events, which were planned to present the Gospel to Utahans in several cities.

Emerson Wiles, pastor, First Church, Fayetteville, and his wife, Mary, not only participated but were featured in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, and on the local NBC-TV channel, which shared it with the NBC-TV station in Middle Tennessee. Their sons also helped.

The Wiles didn't mind the media attention because it was another way to share the Christian message, they said. And the reporters were sensitive to the nature of their effort and didn't intrude, Emerson Wiles said.

The family got their assignment at First Church, Bountiful, near Salt Lake City. The couple's sons remained at the church to work in a block party while the couple left to visit door-to-door.

"It was neat to knock on Mormons' doors because they have knocked on ours a lot of times and I think they are among the most deceived people in the world," said Wiles.

The event was very orga-

nized, said Mary Wiles, in that volunteers were given maps, information which could be left on a door knob, tracts, and a questionnaire which could guide a conversation.

Of the 13 people they met, 10 were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS church or Mormons); two weren't associated with a church; and one was a Jehovah's Witness.

"They were very cordial and willing to talk to us," said Mary.

Those who were Mormon "were ready for us," added Emerson, in that many shared "their journey through the LDS church."

However, they prayed with a woman whose husband recently died as they grasped her hands through a slightly open door.

And they were able to witness to a newspaper reporter. "I told him I'm not knocking on this door to earn planet status or God-hood; I'm knocking on this door because I love the Lord and appreciate what he's done for me," said Emerson Wiles.

Another volunteer

Mark Dance, pastor, Ridgeview Church, Church Hill, received his assignment at a Chinese church here and joined a college student volunteer in door-to-door work.



VOLUNTEERS from Alta Loma Church, Madison, include, from left, Treva Thompson, John Sherrell, Jenny Rader, Pastor David Thompson, Logan Jarrard, and Landon Thompson.

Dance agreed with Emerson Wiles that residents were expecting the Baptist visitors. In fact, he reported the LDS church had an Internet Web site to help Mormons deal with Baptists.

He also met mostly Mormons. Ten out of 12 residents Dance met were Mormon.

With several people, Dance said the conversation became indepth. The active Mormons with whom he visited had a desire to be known as Christians.

He asked them to consider the fact that their faith is based on one man's beliefs and those beliefs are significantly different from other Protestant faiths.

One inactive Mormon said he wanted to accept God's grace, but decided not to pray at that time.

Dance said he was thankful for the preparatory materials which were produced by Southern Baptists. He also prepared by teaching a class on religions at his church.

Worker from Dickson

Another pastor who traveled by himself, Thomas Webb of

Sylvia Church, Dickson, also worked in door-to-door visitation.

This was Webb's fifth year to participate in Crossover activities. His first was in Las Vegas, Nev., which he felt prepared him for tough witnessing situations. Many residents of Las Vegas weren't interested in the Christian faith, he said.

Webb assisted West Jordan Church here, which also had a block party. Like at least one other block party, it drew few people possibly because of showers and cool temperatures.

About 80 percent of the people Webb met were Mormon. They were skeptical and most did not welcome him into their homes, he said. But he did visit with four people about the Christian faith. He passed their names on to the church as prospects, like all volunteers were instructed.

"I'm hoping and praying that I sowed a little seed," said Webb.

One idea he will take home is the block party, which he will recommend to Sylvia Church.

Madison group

Six members of Alta Loma

Final Report

Baptist Press

More than 1,200 people professed faith in Christ as of noon, June 11, as a result of Crossover '98, which was held June 5-14.

An estimated 1,500 out-of-state and 700 Utah and Idaho volunteers participated, including 250 high school students and 500 college students. *B&R*

Church, Madison, also participated in Crossover. It was the first time the church has brought laypersons to participate, said Pastor David Thompson, who along with his wife, Treva, have participated in Crossover events before.

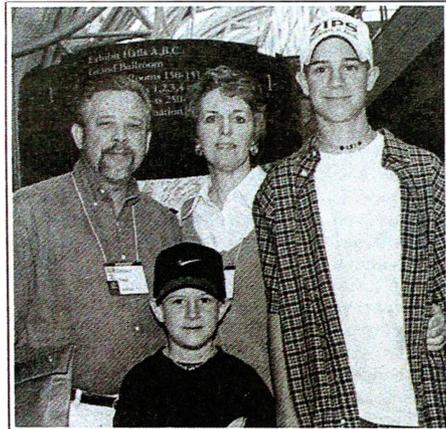
"They have gotten a real blessing and they have led people to the Lord," Thompson said.

The Alta Loma group worked at two different block parties and also did some door-to-door visitation for one of the churches.

Jenny Rader, a member of the church, said she was convicted by the need she saw in Salt Lake City. "They do not have a church on every corner."

Logan Jarrard, a summer missionary working with the church, led two people to Christ. He noted one woman thanked them for just being there. "Out here in the West, the laborers are so few," he observed.

Treva Thompson said one pastor told her their presence and the excitement created by the block parties would give Baptists a new image in the community. "This was important to them." *B&R* — Lonnie Wilkey contributed to this story.



THE WILES FAMILY, from left, Emerson, Auburn, 9, Mary, and Caleb, 14, served as Crossover volunteers. They pause at the convention meeting.

In Crossover — Salt Lake City

Ken Weathersby of TBC practices what he preaches

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

SALT LAKE CITY — Ken Weathersby showed Utah Baptists he practices what he preaches.

Weathersby, evangelism specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Evangelism/Missions Strategy group, participated in Crossover Salt Lake City, pre-convention evangelism initiatives coordinated by the North American Mission Board.

Weathersby led two people who were unchurched to Christ and planted seeds with three youth during a block party sponsored by First Southern Church here. Approximately 450 people attended the block party and there were about 75 professions of faith dur-

ing the day, according to Pastor Eric Frye.

"This is what it's all about — telling people about the Lord," Weathersby said of his Crossover experience.

Weathersby noted those he talked with were open to someone sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

He acknowledged that when witnessing to Mormons it is important to define the terminology.

"They use many of the same terms we use but they have different meanings from what we believe," he said.

Though this was his first Crossover event Weathersby does not expect it to be his last.

"Crossover is part of what I would want to do in the future," he noted. He encourages others to participate.

"We have a great opportunity as Christians to go to another area and help saturate it with the Gospel of Christ.

"We have an obligation as Christians to take care of convention business, but we have a greater obligation to take care of the business of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with those who have not heard," he noted.

On Sunday Weathersby delivered the message at First Southern Church.

He reminded an overflow crowd, which included SBC messengers from



KEN WEATHERSBY, evangelism specialist for TBC Executive Board ministries, visits with Pastor Eric Frye of First Southern Church, Salt Lake City, during a Crossover event June 6.

several states, that evangelism is not an option for Christians.

"Evangelism is not a gift, Weathersby declared. "It is an assignment to every child of God." *B&R*

Christian witness shines forth in Salt Lake City

By Lonnie Wilkey
Interim Editor

A good thing happened at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Salt Lake City — Southern Baptists acted with a Christ-like spirit both before and during the annual meeting.

As one who has attended SBC annual meetings since 1983 I have observed that could not always be said.

This year, however, Southern Baptists must be commended. A record number of secular journalists from notable papers such as the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *USA Today*, and others came expecting a showdown between Baptists and Mormons.

To the credit of both groups the showdown did not take place.

Baptists presented the saving message of Jesus Christ firmly, yet respectfully. Mormons were friendly and while many were not receptive, they treated Southern Baptists with respect as well.

During Crossover events Southern Baptists penetrated the city with the true message of Jesus Christ. Hard work paid off. More than 1,200 decisions, many of whom were unchurched, were made for Jesus Christ. Some Mormons saw the truth and made life-changing decisions.

Many Tennessee Baptists took part in the Crossover effort coordinated by the North American Mission Board. They came early to share Christ in a pioneer area where Southern Baptists are a minority.

When asked what it meant to have Southern Baptist volunteers come and help win their city for Christ, Pastor Eric Frye of First Southern Church, Salt Lake

City, replied: "It's like getting a blood infusion when you need it. There's no value you can put on it as to what it means."

As Southern Baptists switched gears from Crossover to convention business, they continued, with just a few exceptions, to let a positive Christian spirit shine forth.

President Tom Elliff presided fairly and effectively. He took a potentially embarrassing situation for a retiring SBC agency head and, as Barney Fife would say, "nipped it in the bud" by declaring a messenger out of order.

For the most part, messengers debated what little business that drew debate in a good spirit. One issue which drew considerable interest was the addition on family to the *Baptist Faith and Message*.

Secular press took exception to the phrase that "women should graciously submit to their husbands." Whether or not one agrees, various translations of the Bible do use the word "submit."

The resolution on family did not target women only. It also specified how men should treat their wives — to love them as Christ loves the church. In one sense men have the toughest task to fill. Just think about it — to love as Christ loves the church. What an awesome responsibility. How can man do anything as Christ? If more people, both men and women, followed the intent of Scripture, we would not have the abusive situations and high rate of divorce we have today.

Despite the approach of secular media and others, the amendment should not be construed as saying the husband should dominate his wife. Marriage is a partnership which requires the cooperation and

love of both the man and the woman. There must be give and take by both parties.

The statement says firmly and without apology that "marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime...."

That is God's ideal. Unfortunately, however, sometimes God's ideal is "messed" up by sin. The statement simply affirms God's ideal for the family. It is a biblically-sound document.

The *Baptist Faith and Message*, last revised in 1963, has served Southern Baptists well. Hopefully, this will be the last revision the document needs for many more years to come.

Other highlights of the convention were the reports of LifeWay Christian Resources (formerly the Baptist Sunday School Board), the North American Mission Board, and the International Mission Board. The IMB's commissioning service on Wednesday night is always a special time for men and women who have followed God's call in their lives. It was inspiring to see Wade and Nancy Watts of Memphis during the IMB report. Watts is still recovering from a near fatal accident two years ago in Peru where he was serving as a Southern Baptist missionary. We will have a special story on Watts and the IMB service in next week's issue.

Hopefully, the 1998 SBC annual meeting in years ahead will not be remembered for what messengers did at the convention. It needs to be remembered for what we left behind — 1,200-plus new Christians and hopefully more who will spring forth from seeds planted by Southern Baptists who shared Christ's love. *B&R*



just for today

by Fred Wood,
pastor emeritus,
Endora Church,
Memphis



Start with a smile

Visitor to boss' office: "Why do you keep that goldfish in the bowl on your desk?" Boss: "It relaxes me." Visitor: "In what way?" Boss: "I like to see something around here with its mouth open not asking for a raise."

Take this thought

What is your favorite subject to talk about? The weather? Politics? The latest gossip? Conversation between and among people falls onto three levels. First, the lowest level is to talk about people. Second, the next level is to talk about things. Third, the highest level is to talk about ideas. On what level do you live and talk?

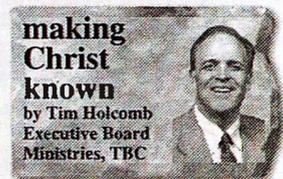
Memorize this Scripture

"Hear, for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." — Proverbs 8:6

Pray this prayer

"Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff. Then nudge me when I've said enough." ■

Looking to make Christ known? Try Sunday School



We Southern Baptists have a wonderful heritage in Sunday School. The Sunday School over the years has provided a tool for reaching lost people, ministering to needs, building communities of love and concern, and developing believers.

Recently, I attended a Leadership Network Church Champions Forum. The forum focused on small group consultation. Many different traditions were represented: The Christian

Church, Christian Reform, Willow Creek, Methodist, various non-denominational groups, Presbyterian, and me, the only Southern Baptist.

The discussion flowed around how to consult with churches that are either doing small groups as a part of their work; or using small groups as the only means of their work (a small group is 7-12 people meeting together for any number of reasons).

As the discussion continued, I felt more and more out of place, thinking that in our Southern Baptist systems, we are not really into the small group movement.

One of the participants, a former associate of Lyman Coleman's Serendipity Co., described five different types of small

groups. As these were defined, I was amazed at the number of small groups we Southern Baptists actually use. The question is: Are our Sunday School classes small groups? The answer is yes.

A Sunday School class is a small group. Actually, if it is developed properly a Sunday School class is several smaller groups making up a larger group. An effective Sunday School class may have 25-30 members. Those 25-30 are organized into smaller groups of 5-7.

In the larger group persons are encouraged to study the Bible and understand ways to apply it in their lives. The smaller group provides a process for ministry to needs, develop relationships, and af-

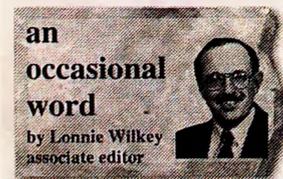
fect accountability.

Our Sunday Schools must be willing to be more intentional about their work. A strategy which will help Southern Baptist Sunday Schools accomplish all the things mentioned in the article is called "FAITH."

FAITH is an evangelistic/ministry process that trains Sunday School members to share their faith and minister to class members.

If your church is looking for a more effective way to make Christ known, try the Southern Baptist version of small group ministry — the Sunday School! ■ — Holcomb is leader of the Christian Growth and Development group of Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries.

Father's Day should involve honoring and commitment



Sunday, June 21, is Father's Day. Contrary to what some believe, the day was not estab-

lished to sell more cards.

I looked it up on the Internet and found that the idea for a father's day was first proposed in 1909 by a woman in Washington state who wanted a special day to honor her father who sacrificed greatly for her and her siblings after her mother's death.

The third Sunday in June has been recognized as Father's Day for about 30 years. I found two

different dates listed — 1966 and 1972.

How it became established is not that important. What is important is that Father's Day is more than just honoring your dad though that is a good idea. My wife and kids already have said they are taking me out to the restaurant of my choice.

It is more important, however, for dads to make a special

commitment on this day to be the kind of fathers we need to be — to spend time with our children, to show them love and affection, and to teach them Christian principles that will last a lifetime. The Bible has several references about the responsibilities a father has. Among them are Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21. Look them up. It's a good refresher course. *B&R*

Partnership Prayer Requests

June

- 17 — Pray for Laura Lane, an IMB missionary in Costa Rica, who leads cooking classes that include children.
- 18 — Pray for RA camps in Michigan to be held July 13-17 and July 20-24.
- 19 — Pray for a member of Cityview Church in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, who has learned her son is a gang member. Ask God to deliver her son from the gang.
- 20 — Pray for churches in Michigan that are without pastors.
- 21 — Pray for MK Gabriel Hallock of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, who is in an ankle cast due to a basketball injury, and for an 18-member team of graduating seniors from FBC, Nashville, who will work June 22-July 4 to begin a new work in the Santa Teresa area of Rio.
- 22 — Pray for the search for a Baptist Center director in Michigan.
- 23 — Pray for Krista O'Keefe, a 16-year-old member of Gateway Church, Surrey, British Columbia, who is in critical condition due to cancer.

Tennesseans minister in Salt Lake City

— Continued from page 1
Thompson. Mark asked the young man several questions about himself between throws. When the teen finished, Mark asked if he could tell him something. The two young men stepped away and Mark pulled a New Testament out of his jacket. They started visiting.

The Tennessee volunteers were helping Holladay Church June 6 by participating in Crossover '98, a convention-related evangelistic effort held at several sites in Utah.

Not far away from the softball throwing booth, youngsters watched a puppet show led by other Millington team members. After the show the children encircled a nearby table as Lonnie Hall, Becky York, and Laurie Thompson of Millington made them bracelets. The women explained the meaning of the beads to the children as they leaned in to listen. The beads could help a person remember some things about God, they said.

Ray Newcomb, pastor of the Millington church, spoke to a young couple. After a few minutes, Newcomb gave a New Testament to the man, whom he found had never attended a church. Newcomb also discovered the young woman was a Christian. She said thank you as they moved away.

"We didn't come out here to proselyte anybody" into the Baptist church, said Newcomb. "We're just sharing Jesus."

"It's encouraging to witness to different people," said Lonnie Hall, referring to the fact that this city is the headquarters for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS church or Mormon).

She said the parents of children with whom she visited didn't encourage their children to participate in the activities as much as in other places she had ministered, but she "had seen a lot of seeds sown," referring to sharing information about God.

Some spiritual results were seen by the group. Three people made professions of faith during the block party.

Ernie Owens of the Millington church had the privilege of leading a single mom and a teenage boy to Christ, he reported. And he heard later from members who knew the young man that he went home and excitedly announced to his family that he was now a Christian, Owens said, with a broad smile. Newcomb added that the young man who accepted a New

Testament from him came to him later and told Newcomb he enjoyed the church activities.

The Tennesseans joined about 70 other Baptist volunteers helping Holladay Church that day. The Baptists visited with many people who weren't Christians, they reported. According to reports, 60 percent of the city's population are Mormon and only two percent are Baptist.

Larry Silvey of the team learned about Mormon beliefs during the block party. He discussed the religion with three young adults who were members of the LDS church.

They believed they would be rewarded with heaven based on their works and that the Bible is best understood with guidance from the Book of Mormon. They considered the Book of Mormon another translation of Scripture, said Silvey.

And they didn't know whether they would go to heaven if they died, he discovered.

"You don't have to argue with them, just witness to them," he observed.

After discussing respective beliefs, Silvey got to tell one of the men how he could be assured of a future in heaven.

Tennesseans blessed

Another result of the effort was encouragement of the church's members, said Newcomb. And the Utahans were an encouragement to the Tennessee group, the team agreed. Preparation for the block party was "well organized and enthusiastic," Newcomb said.

Team members added that church members were great hosts to the team. Such bonds were created that members of Holladay Church plan to visit the Millington church, said Ed Jent, minister of education.

Thanks from Holladay Church

The effort also discovered many prospects for the church. Most of the volunteers were visiting door-to-door during the block party.

Calvin Partain, interim pastor, Holladay Church, said the results were yet to be compiled, but one of the greatest benefits of Crossover was to focus the congregation on evangelism. Evangelism is not only "the right focus," he said, but it has united the congregation.

Another benefit was to introduce church members to non-traditional methods of evangelism.

Partain said he believes the church, which has about 250 people attend Sunday morning activities, will hold other block parties.

Annual home missions effort by church

The Millington team served in Crossover '98 instead of an annual home missions effort, explained Newcomb. The effort was combined with the SBC annual meeting. And Ernie Owens participated as a member of the SBC Committee on Committees.

To support the volunteers, church members donated 200 lbs. of candy for the block party. The team also transported puppet ministry equipment for it.

"God had his hand in all of this to get us here and we saw his hand on everything today," said Lonnie Hall.

Other team members were Jerry Dye, minister of children/bus ministry; Bobby Maxwell, Carter and Glenda Hooker, and Betti Owens.

Another couple helps

Also helping Holladay Church June 6 were Colleen and Neal Chatham, pastor, Fowlkes Church, Dyersburg. The couple visited door-to-door while distributing flyers to about 100 homes.

The people they met were more "open" and friendly than Tennesseans they had visited in the same way, they said.

They found few people at home but met about six people who visited with them about the Christian faith.

The couple gave these people tracts produced by evangelist Billy Graham. Chatham said he learned while serving a church in New

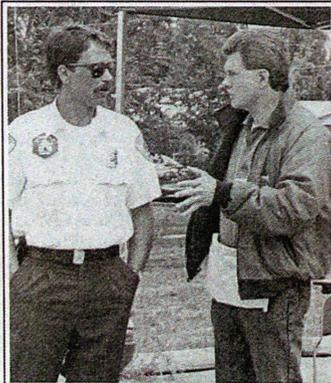
Jersey that references to Bill Graham helped people understand the Christian faith as Baptists.

Chatham admitted, "We got the feeling we were in some body else's world." However the couple said they were glad to learn more about Mormon because an LDS temple is being built close to their church.

Baptists would be measure by "how we react" to Mormon and other residents during the convention, he stated. *BGR*



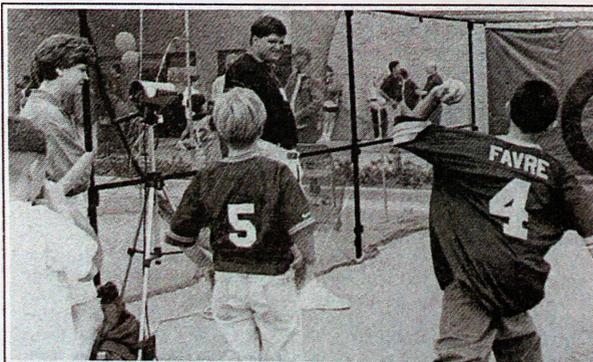
SHARING THE BIBLE'S plan of salvation with young man attending the block party is Mark Thompson of Millington.



VISITING with a city emergency worker is Jerry Dye of the Millington church.



TENNESSEANS Neal Chatham, center, pastor, Fowlkes Church Dyersburg, and Colleen Chatham, visit with Cloyd Sullins, editor, Alaska Baptist Messenger, at Holladay Church.



RUNNING THE BOOTH where the speed of a softball throw could be tested is Laura Thompson, left, and Mark Thompson of Millington.



BETTI OWENS of Millington visits with two girls from a church in Oregon who portrayed clowns at the block party.

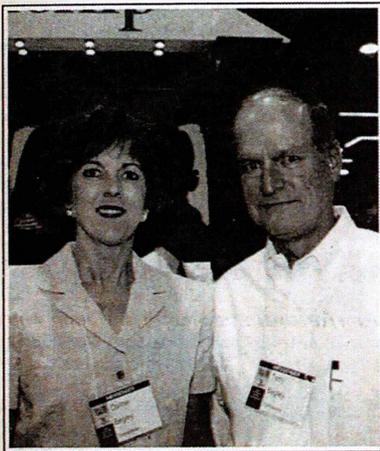
Tennessee Baptists enjoy SBC meeting in Utah



FRIENDS FROM SHILOH ASSOCIATION discovered each other among the more than 8,500 messengers in Salt Lake City. From left are Pastor Abe Silliman, Turkey Creek Church; Pastor and Mrs. David Green, Mount Gilead Church; and Pastor and Mrs. Frank Kemper, First Church, Adamsville.



TAKING A BREAK in the exhibit area of the Salt Palace Conference Center are Pastor Kevin Minchey of Central Church, Hendersonville, his wife, Laura, and their daughter, Anna.



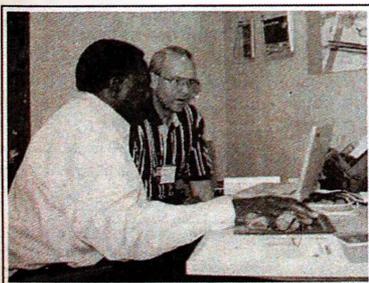
PAUSING IN THE exhibit area at the convention are Connie and Terry Begley, members of West View Church, Kingsport.



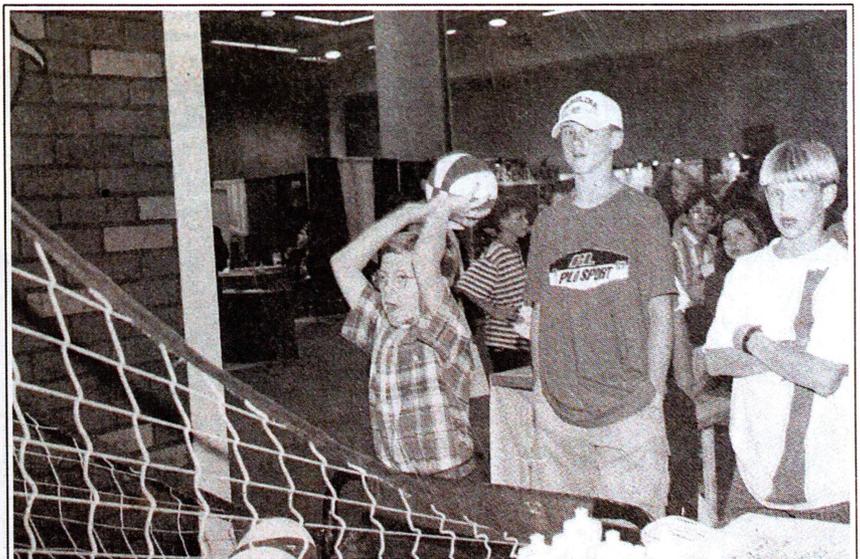
ENJOYING A REST are Pastor Arnold J. King of Goodsprings Church, Etowah, and his wife, Patsy.



THE MULLINS FAMILY of Cherokee Church, Memphis, enjoyed the convention together. Joining Mallory, front center, are, from left, Wanda, Brandon, Bobby, and Melody. Bobby Mullins is pastor of Cherokee Church.



LEROY FOWLER, left, of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, helps Larry Fields, pastor of Central Church, Bearden, Knoxville, look up his annuity information.



SHOOTING HOOPS as others wait in line is Brandon Lay, son of Brent Lay, staff member at Englewood Church, Jackson. The booth was part of the North American Mission Board's 'Get into the Game' theme in the exhibit area.

BARBARA AND DICK SISK prepare to leave Salt Lake City and return to Memphis where he is pastor of Broadmoor Church.



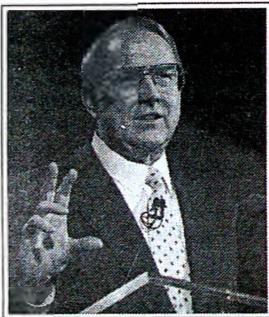
SBC messengers affirm views on family ...

— Continued from page 3
cording to James Dobson.

Dobson, founder and president of Focus on the Family, received a warm welcome from a full house during the SBC's final session June 11. Messengers and guests greeted Dobson with several ovations throughout his hour-long speech.

"Society is split into two broad camps in a civil war of values," Dobson asserted.

The first is "those who say God is," he said. "And because he is there's a whole litany of transcendent truths you don't have to re-examine with every generation that comes along. You accept them because they come from the Creator. That's why we believe in the sanctity of life, the dangers of premarital sex, the Ten Commandments, in honesty, integrity."



JAMES DOBSON addresses SBC messengers during their final session on June 11.

On the other side are "those who have concluded that God isn't," he said. "If God does not exist, everything changes. You set your national policy on the basis of public-opinion polls. When life is inconvenient, you get rid of it. ... If God isn't, then homosexuality is the moral equivalent of heterosexuality and the family is defined any way you want to define it."

The speech was not the attack on the Republican Party some thought Dobson would deliver, the kind of speech he has been making in Washington and other points across the nation in recent months.

However, Dobson called Southern Baptists to action in the moral war he says is engulfing America, and which he has attempted in recent months to hold GOP leadership accountable for addressing.

Dobson challenged Christians to not let them be intimidated into thinking they cannot make a difference on political issues. Critics should not stop the Christian voice, Dobson urged. "This is not a dictatorship. This is a representative form of government. We have every right to be heard,

every right to influence, every right to participate. This is guaranteed to us by the Constitution."

Dobson also applauded Southern Baptists for several actions taken both this year and at last year's annual meeting. Among those were the statement on family added to the *Baptist Faith and Message* and the boycott of the Disney Company.

IMB Report

Despite unprecedented missions advance, Southern Baptists have yet to see a fraction of what God could do through them, messengers to the SBC annual meeting were told during the report of the International Mission Board June 10.

"As we stand only 570 days before the year 2000, we are seeing the greatest opportunity for global evangelization since the first century," said IMB President Jerry Rankin.

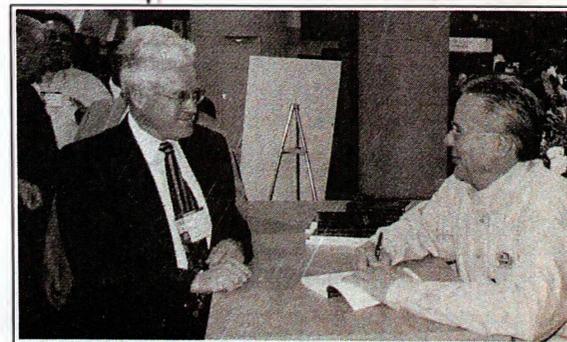
A record 628 new missionaries were appointed last year. And during the Wednesday evening session, 38 more missionaries were appointed (see separate story on Tennessee missionaries in next week's issue). In addition, Southern Baptists gave a record \$100 million to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering last year.

"God's purpose of exalting the unchanging Christ among the nations is being realized as more than 3,300 previously unreached people groups are being impacted with the Gospel," Rankin said.

NAMB Report

The North American Mission Board challenged Southern Baptists to "Get in the Game" of reaching the United States and Canada for Jesus Christ during the agency's report June 9.

The charge was illustrated by thousands of miniature basketballs tossed by the NAMB staff to over a crowd estimated at 8,500 at the close of the evening session.



SBC ANNUITY BOARD President O.S. Hawkins, seated at the board's booth in the exhibit area, signs a copy of his book *Shields of Brass or Shields of God?* for Ronnie Wilburn, director of missions in Shelby Association.

In a presentation that combined live reports and music with video, NAMB President Bob Reccord detailed the vast scope of the agency's work in its first year of existence and provided a glimpse of new initiatives that will help define it in the future.

At the forefront, in addition to focusing on the efforts of thousands of appointed and volunteer missionaries, is a new emphasis on inspiring an evangelistic spirit in each individual Southern Baptist, Reccord said.

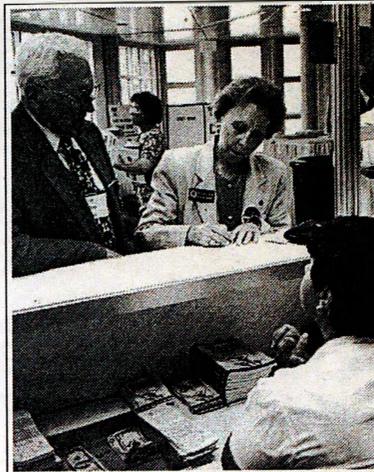
"As gifted as these wonderful (missionaries) are and as committed to the mission of reaching North America as we are, our strategic planning process has led us unanimously to the same conclusion: The key to reaching North America for Christ is God renewing the evangelistic soul of our churches," Reccord said.

A highlight of the NAMB report was a special appearance by Bob Carlisle, the Christian recording artist best known for the song, "Butterfly Kisses," who performed his new release, "We Fall Down."

Carlisle told Baptist Press he cancelled a concert date in Atlanta to make the appearance for NAMB "because my greatest passion is to see people saved."

LCR Report

Reflecting a broader scope and increased diversity in its ministries, the Sunday School Board presented its first report June 9 under its new name — LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.



TENNESSEE SUMMER MISSIONARY LeAnn Linton, seated, and SBC Registration Secretary Lee Porter watch as Jennette Briggs of Fort Worth, Texas, registers as the one millionth messenger for SBC annual meetings. Linton is a member of Second Church, Memphis.

Earlier that day messengers had approved the name change.

Draper said the new name is based on John 14:6 and corrected a misconception by some that the name change is an indication the agency is moving away from Southern Baptists.

"We have never been more Baptist and will continue to support our vision — supporting the local church," he said.

Draper and other LCR representatives presented reports about various aspects of the agency's work.

LifeWay employees Stephanie Huffman, Kathy Franz, Kirk Kirkland, and Kenny Holcomb introduced the agency's new theme song, "I am the Way," an original composition based on John 14:6 by Mark Blankenship, director of the music ministries department.

Seminaries Report

Southern Baptists' six semi-

nary presidents shared reports of success stories involving their faculty and students during their combined report.

The presidents also pledged to continue efforts to effectively prepare the church leaders of tomorrow.

Tennesseans elected

Two Tennessee Baptists were among 70 people named to the 1999 SBC Committee on Nominations.

Serving will be Dean Haun, pastor of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, and Bobby Maxwell, layman, First Church, Millington.

Other Tennesseans elected for the first time on an SBC board were Jerry Tidwell, West Jackson Church, Jackson, Executive Committee; Randy Davis, First Church, Morristown, IMB; Kenneth Jones Two Rivers Church, Nashville LCR; and Glen Putman, Ellendale Church, Ellendale, New Orleans Seminary.

Other News

Two IMB appointees to Asia — Mark and Jenny Roberts of Columbia, S.C., — were struck by an automobile June 9. Police say the driver was at fault.

Mark Roberts had a vertebral crushed. By wearing a temporary back brace and riding in a wheelchair, he was able to participate in the commissioning service along with his wife who was bruised and sore from the accident. ■

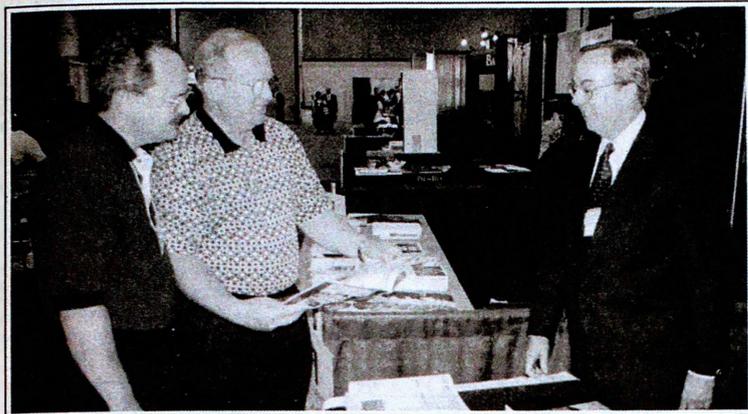
Contributing to this story were Baptist Press writers Mark Kelly, Keith Hinson, Art Toalston, Steve Achord, James Dotson, Louis Moore, Dwayne Hastings, and Tammy Ledbetter; and Associated Baptist Press writer: David Winfrey and Mark Wingfield.



JERRY TIDWELL, left, pastor of West Jackson Church, Jackson, I welcomed as one of the newest members of the SBC Executive Committee by John Wallace, a layman from First Church, Morristown. The Executive Committee met both prior to and during the SBC annual meeting in Salt Lake City.



Tennessee Baptists fellowship in Salt Lake City



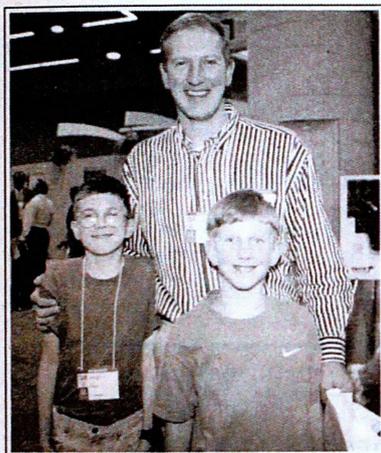
UNION UNIVERSITY President David Dockery, right, visits with pastors Gary Watkins, center, of First Church, Collierville, and Randall Pressnell of First Church, Harrogate, in the exhibit area of the Salt Palace Conference Center. Union and Carson-Newman College both had exhibits at the SBC annual meeting.



PASTOR KEN HUBBARD of First Church, Smyrna, and his wife, Faye, take a brief pause from the hectic pace of the convention.



SUMMER MISSIONARY LeAnn Linton of Second Church, Memphis, works in childcare during the SBC annual meeting in Salt Lake City.



PASTOR DAVID ALLEN of First Church, Crossville, enjoys the convention with his sons, Jonathan, left, and Joshua.



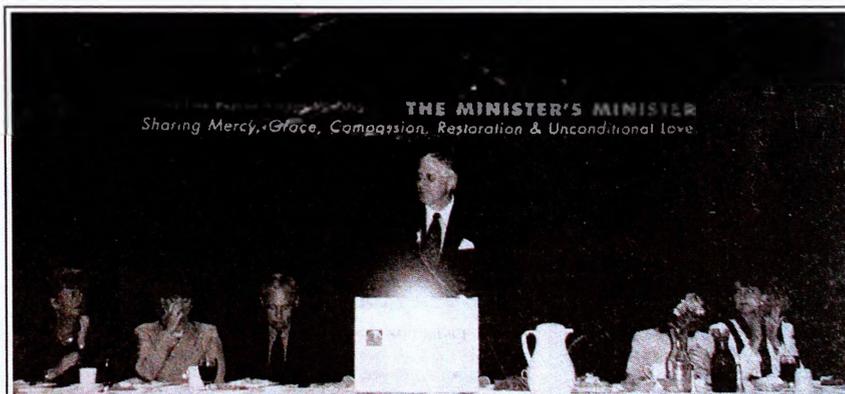
TRAVELING TO UTAH from Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, were Pastor Ken Clayton and his wife, Joy.



SERVING AS SBC pages were, from left, Nathan Barrett and Kris Daw of Brainerd Hills Church, Chattanooga. They were joined by Mark Conway, a volunteer with the pages, and pastor of Zion Church, Brownsville.



ABOVE Don Pierson, center, director of missions in William Carey Association, and his wife, Trish, visit with Norman Wood of the International Mission Board. The Piersons formerly served in Belize. **BELOW**, from left, Clint, Clay, Seth, and Marcia Gravatt browse in the exhibit area. Her husband, Dale, is pastor of Wells Station Church, Memphis.



JERRY SUTTON, pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, served as emcee of the Wounded Heroes Luncheon held prior to the SBC annual meeting. Wounded Heroes is a ministry created by evangelist Freddie Gage of Texas to rehabilitate ministers who endure bad experiences during Christian service. Sutton said his life changed when a pedestrian stepped in front of his car and was killed several months ago. He noted Wounded Heroes provided a 'God-sized healing in my life and my ministry.'

WMU members challenged to pay price of peace making

By Mark Kelly
For Baptist Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Bringing God's peace to a world in turmoil requires an intimate relationship with Jesus, significant personal sacrifice, and reconciliation with our enemies and those despised by the world, Woman's Missionary Union members were told during their annual national meeting June 7-8 in Salt Lake City.

Almost 1,200 women assembled in the Salt Palace Convention Center under a "Peace Builders" theme for two days of WMU business, missionary testimonies, inspirational music, and messages challenging them to take the peace of Christ beyond the walls of their churches into a lost and hurting world.

Building peace begins with prayer, Minette Drumwright, former prayer consultant for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, said. She showed the assembly how to use prayer-walking — a technique of praying for an area while walking through it. In each of the meeting's five sessions, Drumwright and WMU staff members joined visiting missionaries in prayer-walks on the floor of the convention center, asking participants to join them in prayer for those missionaries and the people to whom they minister.

Stan and Marlene Lee, international missionaries to Rwanda, were among nine missionaries who testified to God's power to bring peace to the people and communities where they serve.

Though they live in a country that has become a byword for senseless violence, Stan Lee told the assembly they cherish the privilege of pouring out their lives so Rwandans have an opportunity to find reconciliation and healing in the love of Christ.

"The world doesn't know that Rwanda was the scene of the greatest movement of God's spirit in this century, the great East African Revival that began in the late 1930s and spread to all the countries of the Great Lakes region," he said. "Our missionary team members are literally staking their lives on the fact that God is going to do it again, and we plan to be there with faithful Rwandan brothers and sisters when he does."

Southern Baptist efforts to build peace around the world have been enhanced with a new sense of partnership between the convention's two mission boards, the women were told.

Robert Reccord, president of Southern Baptists' North American Mission Board, and Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board, made a

joint appearance to emphasize the alliance that is emerging between the two agencies.

Record numbers of new missionaries, short-term volunteers and missions offerings are lifting Southern Baptists to a new level of participation in God's mission of bringing a lost world back to himself, they said.

The two presidents said working on the cutting edge of missions depends on the agencies' — and Southern Baptists' — willingness to change.

"The world is changing," Rankin declared, "and we must keep pace with the changes in the world if we want to stay on the cutting edge of missions."

"God is breaking down the barriers to sharing the Gospel in the Last Frontier," he said, referring to the areas of the world where there has been limited access to the Gospel. "Our challenge is to stay in touch with what God is doing. ..."

Reccord said Southern Baptists need to embrace change to enable the denomination to

"reach the people who need to know Christ."

The "Peace Builders" theme centered on WMU's 1998-2000 Project HELP: Violence. The two-year emphasis will challenge Southern Baptists to pray; to discover the causes and consequences of violence; and to become peacemakers in their communities through one-time, short-term, and ongoing ministry projects.

In her address, Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director-treasurer, challenged her listeners to become peace builders through Project HELP: Violence.

Outlining the epidemic of violence in the United States, O'Brien said, "Through Project HELP: Violence, we will seek to alleviate the tragic effects of this epidemic here in the U.S. I invite you — challenge you — to find your own role for service in the Project HELP emphasis."

O'Brien said to be a peacemaker will take a commitment of time, intentionality, and the grace of God. "What could it mean to the kingdom of God — and to our nation and the world in general — if we, with intentional effort and through the grace of God, truly committed to be his peace builders?" ■

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PART-TIME: Shellsford Church, McMinnville, is looking for part-time music director. Send resume to David Daugherty, 4149 Shellsford Road, McMinnville, TN 37110.

PART-TIME: Hickory Hills Church, Mt. Juliet, is looking for a part-time music director and pianist. Send resume to Paul West, 502 Suzanne Ct., Mt. Juliet, TN 37122, or call (615) 758-0340.

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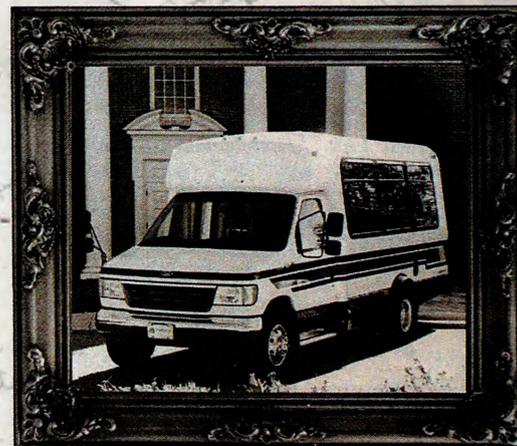
Accepting Resumes

The Pastor Search Committee of First Baptist Church, Sherwood, Ark., is accepting resumes. Church has four full-time ministerial positions, averaging 375 in Sunday School, located in progressive suburban community near Little Rock. Send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 6268, Sherwood, AR 72124.

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Apathy

By Paul Medley

Focal Passage — Romans 12:11; Revelation 3:14-22

Dr. Genter L. Stephens, former professor of Church Music at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, taught us "preacher boys" that the key to good music and to a good life is fervency. I will never forget his enthusiastic rendering of this at the beginning of every class period. I believe he was absolutely correct. The Christian ought to be the most excited, enthusiastic person in the world.

Have you ever considered why we should be so excited? It is because we have been forgiven of our sins. God in his infinite mercy and grace has forgiven and forgotten our sin because of Jesus.

We can be excited because as a Christian we are never alone, never given more than we can bear, never asked to do a task he has not prepared us to do. And, if that wasn't enough, we have the hope and promise of eternal life. William Barclay wrote, "The Christian may burn out, but he must not rust out." Our enthusiasm should be like a raging fire, fed by the unveiling of God's purpose for our lives and by the revealing of God's truths in our lives.

The accusation against the church at Laodicea is that they were lukewarm, or apathetic. They looked like a church, sounded like a church, went through the motions and rituals of a church, but they were unconcerned about doing God's will and reaching the lost. Apathy is often clothed in robes of self-righteousness, hidden behind busy schedules, and spoken of in terms of programming. Apathy leaves out the genuine concern for lost souls that one had when he or she was first saved.

The cause of apathy varies. In the case of the Laodicean church it was due to prosperity. The people of Laodicea were not dependent upon others for their livelihood. They were proud of their wealth and felt they needed no one. Because of this they had become less dependent upon God. Their self-sufficiency led to "spiritual cataracts." They became blind to the will of God. Even the "eye salve" they produced could not rid them of this plague.

Apathy often is a problem of the wealthy. It also is associated with those who have "burned out" in the ministry. Many believe that if you give a new convert responsibilities they will become acclimated to the church much easier and sooner. However, they may become so overwhelmed that they do nothing through apathy.

Christians today run the risk of apathy when they fail to be true to their first love. Programs, personalities, finances, projects, fellowships, even preaching should take a back seat to one's personal relationship to Jesus. When that relationship is correct then the winning of the lost and the deepening of one's spiritual walk will be in balance. Of course, our first love is Jesus.

Jesus discusses the remedy for spiritual apathy in his address to the church at Laodicea. Out of a deep and genuine love Jesus offers to fellowship with the believer. He uses the analogy of knocking at the door to show the reader that apathy is overcome by getting actively involved with him. Not activity for activity sake, but becoming involved in the ministry of Jesus with Jesus.

"To him that overcometh" refers in part to the one that will overcome the desire to do nothing and get up and get busy for God. The key is that it is our choice to get up and answer the door when Christ is knocking or to leave him on the outside of our hearts and lives. Will you answer the door? — Medley is pastor, First Church, Jasper.

Job's unhelpful friends

By Richard Skidmore

Focal Passage — Job 2:11; 4:1, 6-7; 8:1-6; 13:1-4

We are often at a loss for words when tragedy befalls a friend or loved one. Job's friends came, perhaps that was their most significant comfort to him, their presence. Perhaps we, too, should realize how important that is for others, that we be there.

Their "comfort" for Job consisted of continual urging of him to repent so that there might be some hope for his recovery. Their understanding of tragedy was that it was the direct result of sin in the suffering one's life. The crux of this argument was stated by Eliphaz in his opening remarks to Job. "...whoever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?" It is significant that this was the primary belief of Jesus' disciples hundreds of years later.

Family Bible Lesson

How fortunate we are to live in our time when more understanding has been given us. We are not yet acquainted with all the causes of human suffering. We do know, however, that there is much more cause for our condition than chastisement for our sins. At least four reasons come to mind.

► First, it is true that some suffering is a direct result of our actions. Sin brings its own terrible harvest. Alcoholism causes liver disease; gambling results in financial ruin; promiscuity opens the door to sexually transmitted disease. It would seem that God is not so much declaring punitive results in each instance as we are merely reaping what we have sown.

► Secondly, some suffering is a result of the actions of others. The slaughter of the innocents by Herod, children killed as an act of war, persons injured or killed by drunken drivers are victims of other people's pride, self-

ishness, avarice.

► Thirdly, we are disciplined for our misbehavior by our Heavenly Father. By Jeremiah's day, the prophet would relate to God's people, "...I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." The Scriptures reveal to us that God deals with us as a loving parent. His design includes our maturing and equipping for his service. One of the great hymns of our faith includes the line, "When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, my grace all sufficient shall be thy supply. The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."

These three are inadequate to account for the suffering of Jesus. He certainly was not enduring any result of his own behavior. He was not a victim; he said no man could take his life. It was within his own choosing to lay it down or take it up again. He needed no purifying chastening. Our revelation is such that we know his suffering to be on our behalf, "...the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God."

Is some of our suffering related to our bringing glory to God, displaying our faith, manifesting his greatness in the use of such vessels? It would seem from John 9:1-3; II Corinthians 12:7-10, I Thessalonians 1:6-7, and II Thessalonians 1:4-5 that this does happen.

How remarkable of Job, without the majority of the biblical record that we have, to maintain the basic goodness of God. His primary plea is for a hearing with God, or for someone to mediate with one hand on God, the other on himself.

Even though we have a much fuller revelation in our day, it is still true that we see through a glass darkly; we know in part. Often we find ourselves like Job's friends, without understanding enough to speak with wisdom. Often we find ourselves like Job, wanting to walk by sight instead of by faith. — Skidmore is director of missions, Weakley Association, Dresden.

People of God

By Jim Powers

Focal Passage — I Peter 2:1-12

When Christ is received as Savior there is an evident transformation. This transformation occurs as spiritual growth takes place.

Negative characteristics such as malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking should stop in the believer's life. As modern Christianity is observed those evil traits still raise their ugly heads in today's church.

The study of God's Word is imperative if we are to become healthy, growing, and maturing followers of Christ. We are to long for spiritual maturity with all our being. Every ounce of our strength should focus on growth.

The Lord is a gracious host. He has provided a total diet in his Word. The total of that Word is needed for the maturing process. And as we work together in unity we become pleasing to God.

We rally around Jesus, the living stone. This may be a reference to Jesus' superiority over the Old Testament temple. Jesus is the cornerstone of God's new building. Every believer is a part of God's new temple. We are alive. Believers

Explore the Bible Lesson

are part of God's spiritual house. As believers, all are priests, and have the privilege of offering spiritual sacrifices to Father, God.

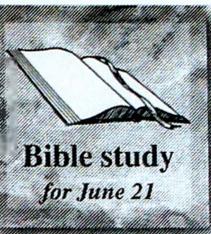
Jesus is the foundation stone and all the living stones must be built upon him. No shame or embarrassment should come to those who trust their lives to Jesus.

Unbelievers reject Jesus and therefore the rejected stone has become the main part of God's spiritual building. For many, Jesus has become a repugnant obstacle in their path. He is a cause for disapproval and anger.

There is a direct contrast between those who believe and those who do not. A saved person has accepted the invitation to become part of God's chosen generation.

Because we are chosen and royal priests we have the responsibility of displaying and modeling the standards of God before lost humanity.

It is our privilege to display



Bible study
for June 21

God's person in the darkness of society. Believers are set apart for God's use. When people become children of God they are no longer in darkness, but God's mercy is theirs.

Every child of God is special and is protected by him. Although we should have been condemned, we have obtained mercy and have received forgiveness.

Because of God's benevolent mercy we have become strangers in this world. This world is not our home. Since we are believers, abstinence from desires of the flesh should be our practice. Sinful actions are in conflict with God's desire for us to be holy and pure. Faithfulness in the struggle is imperative.

Behavior speaks much louder than words. Peter also tells us that we are not to be discouraged when we are slandered by unbelievers. God asks believers to persevere in our faith as a response.

When the second coming occurs even the pagans will glorify God because of the believers' good deeds. At the "visitation" every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus as Lord. — Powers is director of missions, Concord Association, Murfreesboro.

state events

■ **Fishers of Men** will meet June 26-27. On June 27 men will meet at Paris Landing Marina on Kentucky Lake where a fishing tournament will be held. On June 25 the men will meet at Point Pleasant Church, Highway 79, Buchanan for a gathering and fish fry. Deadline for entry is June 21. For more information, contact Gene Williams of Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries, (615) 371-2064.

people

■ **Price's Grove Church**, Rogersville, recently ordained **Randy Maddox**, **Tony Crigger**, and **Daryl Steele** as deacons.

■ **Rosy Dallas**, a member of Westover Church, Jackson, recently served in Venezuela.

leaders

■ **Bruce Hullette** has been named honorary associate pastor, Oak Grove Church, Mount Carmel. In that role, he will help people who are ill, in nursing homes, and families in crisis. The church also named **Greer Ruble**, retired from Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board ministries, as minister of education, and

Robbie Jenkins as minister of youth and young adults. Jenkins is a recent graduate of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

■ **Pine Grove Church**, Duck River, has called **Bobby Cates** as pastor.

■ **Chamberlain Memorial Church**, Chattanooga, has called **Gary Akins** as pastor, effective June 28. He comes from Northside Church, Chattanooga.

■ **Hopewell Church**, Cleveland, has called **Richard P. Lee** as pastor.

■ **War Creek Church**, Sneedville, has called **William Swafford**, interim pastor, as pastor.

■ **Andy Martin** of Hickman, Ky., was called as pastor, Pleasant Hill Church, #1, Martin.

■ **Ball Camp Church**, Knoxville, recently honored **Randy Dill**, associate minister/music and senior adults, for five years of service there.

■ In the June 10 edition of the *Baptist and Reflector*, seminary graduates were reported. In that story, the seminary reported **Gregory Church** earned a diploma in church music. Instead, he earned a master's degree in church music. His home church is Stoney Creek Church, Elizabethton.

■ **John David Laida**, retired pastor, First Church, Clarksville, has been called as interim pastor, First Church, Goodlettsville, effective June 21. Since his retirement in 1987, he has served on the



PAUSING during recent retirement activities at Lynn Garden Church, Kingsport, are Janis and Carl Strickler, center. Strickler, who has served as pastor for 27 years, will remain until a pastor is named. The couple stands with Rosa and A.V. Nichols, who was pastor, First Church, Fall Branch, in 1961 when Strickler was ordained by the church and when the couple was married. The Stricklers will retire in Kingsport.

staff of 20 churches.

■ **Southside Church**, Dyersburg, called **Scott Tyler** as pastor, effective June 7. He comes from Second Church, Bulford, Ill.

■ **West End Church**, Columbia, has called **Eric Vandiver** as summer youth director.

■ **Tom's Creek Church**, Linden, has called **James Smith** as pastor.

churches

■ **Westover Church**, Jackson, held a banquet May 30 to honor senior adults. Members of single adult and young couples classes prepared and served food at the banquet to honor and thank the senior adults.

■ The Chapel Choir of **Trinity Church, Cordova**, will participate in "The Great Festival of the Southwest," June 25-28 at Park Cities Church, Dallas, Texas. The event will draw over 500 teenagers.

■ Two groups of youth from **Trinity Church, Cordova**, will participate in World Changers. World Changers is a program of the North American Mission Board which involves youth in missions projects. They will work in Effingham, Ill., and Murphy, N.C.

■ **Charleston Church**, Stanton, will conduct revival June 28 - July 1. Harold Hunter, evangelist of Hermitage, will speak and Mike Cole will lead the music.

■ **Russell H. Dilday**, past president, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, will speak at **Trinity Church, Cordova**, July 1 and July 5. Dilday is distinguished professor of Homiletics, George W. Truett Theological Seminary and special assistant to the president,

Tennescene

ville, will hold youth revival June 21-24. Speakers include Wade Holbrook, pastor, and Mark Caldwell, of Union Church, Wartburg.

hospitals

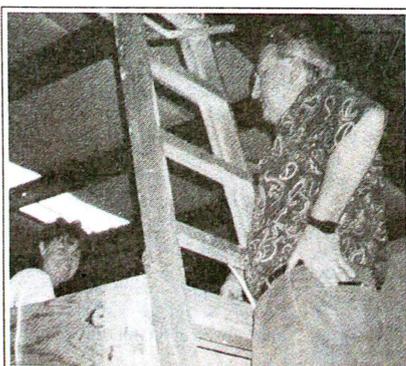
■ The Pastoral Care department of **Baptist Memorial Health Care, Memphis**, has developed an interactive Web page. It's address is <http://www.bmhcc.org>. The Web page offers spiritual resources, including a section for children, and allows people to e-mail comments, concerns, and prayer requests.

schools

■ **Oliver Benton "Ben" Curtis Jr.**, professor in the School of Religion, **Belmont University**, Nashville, has been named the Chaney Distinguished Professor. The award is given annually to the instructor who best exhibits excellence in teaching.



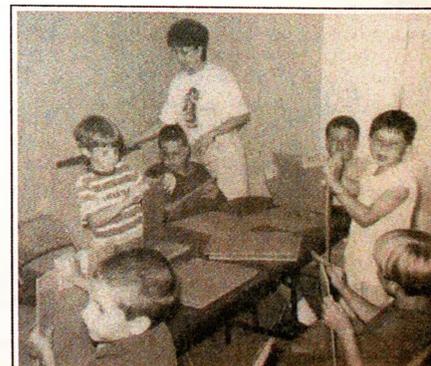
BEING honored recently for serving 10 years in the ministry is **Tony Terrell**, pastor, Moore's Chapel Church, Greenfield, and his wife, **Tomi Sue**, and children, **Teala** and **Trevor**. He was given several gifts.



PACKING two crates of clothes for people in the Ukraine are **Roger Stacy**, director of missions, Central Association, and his wife. The Stacys were missionaries to the Ukraine. The association recently hosted **Slavic Borsyck**, a Baptist pastor there.



RECEIVING a plaque and gift recently is **Garlon Whaley**, center, director of Camp Smoky, and his wife, **Judy**. Presenting the gifts are **Richard W. Everett**, director of missions, Sevier County Association. Whaley served the camp, which is owned by the association, for eight years.



MAKING 48 lap boards for people being helped through the Mississippi River Ministry of Southern Baptists are the **Royal Ambassadors of East Union Church, Jackson**. Leaders are **Ray** and **Vonnie Wiggins**.