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REFLECTOR

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Statewide Edition

October 21, 1998

this week's news

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During simultaneous revivals in Rio

Tennessee volunteers see 1,200-plus professions

By Marcia Knox
For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Spirit of God is moving across Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as evidenced by more than 1,200 professions of faith that have been reported by volunteers in the Sept. 27-Oct. 6 simultaneous revivals held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A total of 62 Tennessee volunteers worked in 30 evangelism teams which covered a section of the city of Rio de Janeiro during the revivals. The volunteer teams made up of preachers, musicians, and laypersons are reporting "transformations" in their ministries after returning home.

One of those teams that experienced a ministry transformation were TBC staff members, Gary Rickman, TBC Ministry coordinator and Julian Suggs, TBC church music and worship specialist.

"This mission trip experience has reminded me that no matter what my role in the church may be as a Christian my primary role is to proclaim the Gospel," said Rickman.



TRANSLATOR Nizel Carlos helps Julian Suggs of the Tennessee Baptist Convention as he selects hymns to sing during revivals held recently in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

"When the Gospel is proclaimed in its basic message, there is great power.

"We went to preach the Gospel, and to get familiar with the Rio area in order to encourage other Tennessee Baptists to go in May 1999 for the Simultaneous Revivals and Citywide Crusade," Rickman added.

"For anybody who goes on these Rio revivals, it will be a learning experience because

Brazilians can teach us about worship with a freedom of expressing praises to God. It's also a very humbling experience to find yourself so dependent on others to help you communicate.

"On this mission trip, I received more than I gave, and I learned more than I taught," said Suggs. "In all my 42 years in church music, I witnessed through interpretation the awesome power of God in these revivals.

"I trusted more the words that were shared by the interpreter. I became the instrument of the message through which Christ flowed," he observed. "My interpreter was the conduit."

As a musician, Suggs covered new ground with his music ministry from leading tunes that he didn't know, singing in English while the congregation sang in Portuguese, accompanying a 100-voice youth choir on a travel trumpet, to leading music at a mission church that was a capella.

Terry Sharp, TBC Partnership/Volunteer Missions specialist, said the volunteers' daily schedules consisted of meeting every morning at the hotel, celebrating what God had done the night before with the number of decisions, and praying for the new day. Then the teams would travel for at least one hour to a central church where they would eat lunch. At the central church, the teams would meet with their pastors and translators and then travel to their respective church fields.

— See Tennessee, page 2

Societal ills due to gambling recounted at U.S. conference

By Orville Scott
For Baptist Press

ruptcy, higher crime, and personal destruction.

ST LOUIS — Gambling can destroy communities and an entire nation, psychologists, educators, and United States senators warned at the conference of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling and National Coalition Against Gambling Expansion here.

The late September meeting was within a mile of several "boats in moats," large casino complexes operating without state sanction in manmade basins adjacent to the Mississippi and Missouri rivers and whose fate will be determined in the Nov. 3 Missouri general election.

U.S. Sen. John Ashcroft, R-Mo., said communities embrace gambling because they're buying into a lie, a quick-fix mentality which results in bank-

"Gambling is not an industry but a parasite, taking money from the poor and redistributing it to the rich promoters and a few winners," said Ashcroft, who is expected to be a candidate for the U.S. presidency in the year 2000.

Noting casinos are still operating in Missouri a year after the Missouri Supreme Court declared them unconstitutional, Ashcroft said, "We will never get casino owners to agree with us politically, but we must get them to obey the law."

"For every dollar received in taxes from gambling, socioeconomic expenses caused by gambling total at least \$3," said John W. Kindt, professor of commerce and legal policy at the University of Illinois, Champaign.

— See Societal, page 2



Association welcomes new church

Chilhowee Association members voted at their annual meeting Oct. 15 at Everett Hills Church, Maryville, to accept its first African American congregation into its fellowship of churches. Welcoming Pastor Tyrone Steen, center, of New Pilgrim Missionary Church, are John Churchman, left, director of missions, and Glenn Grubb, First Church, Friendsville, newly-elected moderator for Chilhowee Association. — Photo by Lonnie Wilkey

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Tennessee volunteers see 1,200-plus professions ...

— Continued from page 1

For the Rickman-Suggs team, there were always more people than were anticipated during their afternoon home evangelism visits.

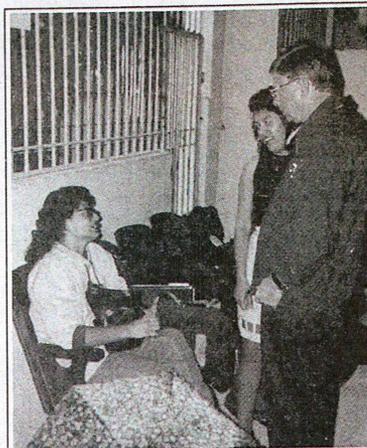
"In one sixth floor apartment of a 12-floor building, there were 18 in attendance and four people who made decisions of faith," Suggs said. During the four nights of revival, 40 people responded to the invitation to receive Christ, Suggs also noted.

Of the 27 Tennessee churches that sent volunteers the largest number came from Brentwood Church, Brentwood, with 16. The second highest number of volunteers came from Two Rivers Church, Nashville, with nine. Third highest number came from Talbott Church, Talbott.

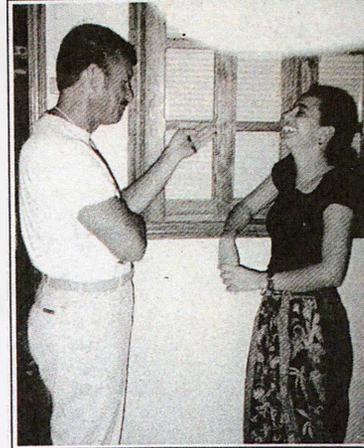
"This mission trip reaffirmed for me what I already knew about the power of the Gospel," said Jerry Highfill, Two Rivers Church minister of evangelism and missions. "People in America may not be responding to the Gospel, but there are other areas of the world where they are responding."

He noted "it enflames me and excites me to talk to people about Jesus for the first time. All the ministry teams that went were forced to reach the people out of their comfort zones."

Highfill's team included his wife Barbara Highfill, who served as the soloist musician, and Steve Johnson, an architect



GARY RICKMAN, ministry coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, visits with Brazilians in Rio de Janeiro. Rickman was among 60 Tennessee Baptists who participated in simultaneous revivals in Rio.



MARK MARTIN, of First Church, Sevierville, talks with an interpreter in Rio de Janeiro. Martin participated with 59 Tennessee volunteers during simultaneous revivals held recently in Rio.

who preached at the mission of Rios das Pedras Church.

"Not only are the new believers transformed, but all the Tennessee volunteers who participated on the trip were transformed," said Sharp.

"Brazil has always led the way in baptisms. Last year they reported 50,000 in

baptisms. The 1999 May Simultaneous Revivals and Citywide Crusade are expected to produce more than 50,000 baptisms between May 1999 and May 2000 for the Carioca Convention.

"We will have over 500,000 names to visit so we need at least 150 evangelist teams for May 23-June 1," Sharp said. ■

Societal ills due to gambling recounted at U.S. ...

— Continued from page 1

"The ABCs of gambling are addiction, bankruptcies, and crime and corruption," Kindt said. "While drug-abuse problems are costing the U.S. \$70 billion per year and going down, gambling abuse is costing the U.S. \$80 billion per year and rising."

Kindt said pathological gamblers — between 3 percent and 8 percent of the population — almost always resort to crime to support and cover their gambling habits.

"The 35-mile radius or 'feeder area' around casinos experience a 100 percent increase in crime following the opening of a casino," he said.

He warned national security may be in jeopardy because of the growing number of U.S. military personnel who have become pathological or problem gamblers.

Former Sen. Paul Simon of Illinois, who sponsored the bill that led to the National Gambling Impact Study Committee, which is expected to report its findings this fall, deplored governments using a lottery to raise funds for education.

Noting the relationships between gambling and bankruptcy and gambling and crime, he said, "It is morally reprehensible to take advantage of some people who will become addicts."

Simon, who now heads the

Institute for Public Policy at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, urged concerned citizens to "put candidates on the spot concerning gambling, use referendums and support campaign finance reform."

Simon said something is wrong if, in spite of the fact that the economy is doing well, bankruptcies in the United States continue to increase, and he noted the "fastest-growing legal business in our country is gambling. That should tell us something."

"This is the only addiction that government promotes. If we saw a billboard that said, 'Drink more whiskey, have a great time,' and the state of Illinois was paying for it, we would be shocked. Yet we see lottery advertisements all the time."

Simon faulted government leaders for looking to gambling as an easy fix for difficult economic problems, but he understood their predicaments. "Go to the poorest sections of Chicago or St. Louis, and you will see thousands of people buying lottery tickets."

"I hear that gambling money helps good causes. Well, I must confess, there are areas where I understand that that answer might look tempting — areas like East St. Louis, or the Indian reservations," Simon said. "But the answer, my friends, is for people who care

to pay attention to the problems of East St. Louis and the problems of Indian reservations. Don't force them to reach out in desperation to gambling."

Barrett Duke of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said the wave has crested for organized gambling because of the efforts of groups such as NCRALG and NCAGE.

"Compulsive gamblers are a growing embarrassment, but they are the people gamblers depend upon to make their money," Duke said.

He urged anti-gambling forces to use the most current and correct data in countering claims of the gambling industry that economies have been helped by gambling, to establish clinics to train anti-gambling activists, and to elect public officials who oppose all forms of gambling.

Bob Fuesel, director of the Illinois State Crime Commission, emphasized "the devastation that gambling does to the business community" and said "legalization of casinos fueled the renaissance of organized crime."

"Any increase of legal gambling increases the base of illegal gambling. At a time when violent crime is still at an all-time high, gang crime is running rampant and the limited resources of law enforcement

are stretched to the breaking point, it is inconceivable that state governments even consider gambling as a solution to financial problems."

Three of the nation's leading psychologists on gambling's impact on the family warned against buying into the gambling industry's effort to tie compulsive gambling to genetic factors.

"Without doubt, the strongest contributing factor to the family," said psychologist Valerie Lorenz of Baltimore.

Calling compulsive gambling "the most serious of the addictions," Lorenz said, "don't know of any compulsive gambler who came from a stable family situation. About 60 percent of the fathers of compulsive gamblers have a history of alcoholism, and the mothers often have a history of depression in which they're not there for their children."

Psychologist Durand Jacol of Redlands, Calif., said the numbers of juveniles in trouble because of gambling will increase in the late 1990s and early years of the new millennium unless conditions change.

Another psychologist, Dennis McNeilly, a Jesuit priest, said studies show 60 percent of Americans over 65 gamble as a social pastime, but there is a growing number, especially women, with gambling disorders. ■

Dealing with problems is just a part of the call

Reflections

by Lonnie Wilkey, editor



It's been slightly more than a month since I was elected editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*. I have been overwhelmed by the affirmation I have received through numerous cards and letters. I am grateful for that support.

I am often asked, "How is it going as editor?" or "Is the job what you expected it to be?"

My standard reply has been "so far, so good." The five months I served as interim editor provided a good indication of what an editor deals with on a daily basis. Editing a newspaper is a process which is not immune to problems. I knew there would be difficulties to face. I just try to view them as opportunities to grow.

If I had to list my two greatest sources of stress it would be letters to the editor and finances.

I encourage Tennessee Baptists to write letters and voice their opinions. I am a firm believer that the letters provide an important and needed forum for Tennessee Baptists.

My concern is letters that are not written in a Christ-like spirit. It is appropriate to disagree with an action, opinion, insti-

tuition, or even an individual through the letters forum. It is not appropriate, however, to do so in a manner that attacks or condemns. Read the guidelines before composing your letter. Then, after you write the letter, ask the question, "If someone was writing this letter about me, how would I feel?"

Finances have been the second source of my graying hair. We are committed to operating the *Baptist and Reflector* within our budget.

We face trying circumstances at time, however. In late September I received a notice that our postage rates would increase in October with the possibility of another increase in January. We never know how much the increase will be until we receive our bill from the post office after the paper is mailed. This makes it difficult as we try to maintain costs for the churches who are faithful to subscribe for their members.

As of now, we do not plan to increase rates this year, BUT if the rates in January are substantial, we may be forced to implement a mid-year increase. That will be a last resort. If it happens, remember we have not increased rates for our church subscription plans in about seven years. Beginning next year it will be necessary to make small, incremental adjustments.

We do plan, with approval from our board of directors, to increase individual

subscriptions from \$8 per year to \$10.

We also plan to implement a new rate we are calling our "Church Leadership Plan."

We will be asking churches that do not send the paper to their entire membership to consider sending the paper to their leaders — deacons, church council, Sunday School teachers, etc. Our proposed rate for this plan is \$8.50 per subscription with no minimum requirement for the church. Once the leaders of a church begin to receive the paper, we feel other members will be interested as well.

We also plan to aggressively promote our Church Page Edition. Churches can print their newsletter on the back page of the *Baptist and Reflector*, in many cases cheaper than they can do their own. What's more the Church Page Edition enables Tennessee Baptists to get the news of their own church and convention in one package.

The staff of the *Baptist and Reflector* is committed to making your state paper a vital resource and tool for ministry. As I said in an earlier editorial we want the paper to be "unashamedly Tennessee Baptist."

I am convinced the *Baptist and Reflector* is a bargain at any price. We pledge to do our best to keep the cost affordable. I covet your prayers for me and the staff of the *Baptist and Reflector* as we try to provide a paper that you, as a Tennessee Baptist, can read with pride. *B&R*



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Terry: "When I applied for a job, the manager asked me if my punctuation was good." Tommie: "What did you tell him?" Terry: "I said I have never been late for work a single day in my life."

Take this truth

Things that sound alike and even look alike are not always even "close" to being similar.

Memorize this Scripture

"There is a way that seems right unto a man, but in the end it leads to death." — Proverbs 14:12 (NIV)

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to distinguish the things that are different." ■ — Wood can be e-mailed at docfred1@juno.com

Want a Christian home? Follow the Master Builder's plan

families matter

by Paul Barkley, counselor, educator, pastor



The psalmist said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it..." (127:1) I would like to take that concept and share a passage of Scripture that the Lord spoke to me through last summer after I returned from a building project with our church's mission builders. I would like to make application to this concept to the building of a Christian home. This is an

adaptation of Ephesians 6:10 and following.

"And finally, my brothers, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

"Take up all the tools of God that you might be able to build effectively in the face of all the obstacles and adverse conditions that will be brought against you by the evil one. For we do not struggle against the mistakes of suppliers and subcontractors but against rain, storm, lightning and all the forces of the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

"Take up, therefore, all the tools of God that you may be able to stand in the evil day

and having done all to have your work endure.

"Stand, therefore, having put on the tool belt of truth, wearing the work boots of the eagerness of the Gospel of peace and the hard hat of salvation.

"Take up the hammer of the spirit, which is the Word of God, by which you will be able to drive home the truths that hold the building of God together. Use well the square of God which is the Holy Spirit, by which God is able to keep his building true and sale. Take up the level of God, which is the Law, that shall make you stand straight and build true to the master plan.

"Remember the cat claw of Christian fellowship with

which you will be able to correct the flaws that will naturally occur from our human and fallen natures

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, keeping alert with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

In order to build Christian homes we must follow the master builder's plan. The tool belt of truth, on which hangs all the tools necessary for the building of a good home is not a philosophical concept or even a theological treatise.

Truth is a person. Jesus is truth (John 14:6). The key concept of a Christian home is to be centered on him, his will and his teaching. ■

grading the movies

helping families find videos with values

Movie: "The Jungle Book: Mowgli's Story"

U.S. Rating: G

Time: 77 minutes

Overall: B

Violence: B

Sexual Content: A

Language: A

They say a good book can be read again and again, so I guess the same theory applies to creating movie variations. Fortunately, this live-action creation of Kipling's *Jungle Book* is much more child-friendly than the violent version from another studio produced a few years ago.

The tale follows Mowgli (Brandon Baker), the young boy who is separated from his parents and winds up being raised by a pack of wolves.

As typical in translating a cartoon feature into real life, there are certain problems that crop up. The animals all speak in this film, but generally their lips don't move. Corny jokes and monkey shines are relied upon that interest the young "but not the old."

But what's great about this movie is that it's aimed at a young audience and has no flatulence jokes or unnecessary violence. ■ — © 1998, One Voice Communications

Church of the Covered Dish

By Thom Tapp, pastor, Oral Church, Lenoir City





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.

Commends RFG

I want to commend the Relationship Focus Group for their report in the Aug. 19 B&R.

Recognizing diversity among Baptists is a return to what I have understood as being a Baptist way of doing things from the beginning. It is refreshing and encouraging to know that leaders of integrity can sit down together and focus on the larger issues, those issues which unite Baptists with differing ways of interpreting and applying the message of the Gospel.

We cannot afford to cut out fellow Baptists who disagree on secondary issues.

We need each other.

Milt Hughes
Antioch 37013

Gifted servant

For Irene Hodgkins, working in the church library was a true "labor of love." Since 1956 Irene invested countless hours in the work and ministry of Crieveview Church, Nashville, not only through the work of the media library, but also as a Bible teacher.

Irene's sudden homegoing on Oct. 1 left family members, friends, and fellow church members at a loss for words. Knowing that Irene was at her place in the library on Wednesday night before her death on Thursday assured us in our grief that she had been able to do what she loved on the last day of her life.

The large and impressive library collection at Crieveview is through the efforts of many people in both time and money. But it was Irene's hands that through the years touched every book and tape — either to purchase it, to catalog and process it, or most importantly, to place it in the hands of a user. More recently, with the help of her husband, Roy, Irene lead in putting the entire catalog for books on the computer.

Her sweet spirit touched fellow church members from the youngest to the oldest. She knew children by name and greeted them personally as they entered the library. Her contagious smile is remembered by many of those children who are now teenagers.

In recent years she began to turn over the reins of the library to the next generation. As her co-director, Melissa Lanz, said on the day of Irene's death, "There were so many more things I wanted to learn from Irene." That's exactly how we all feel.

Pat Brown
Nashville 37211

A plea

This letter is a plea for honesty and justice. For years, the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention promised all employees: (5) For employees TBC pays 50 percent of dependent medical costs, and (6) Those who retire before age 65 will be responsible for the total cost of dependent medical coverage until retiree reaches age 65 when TBC assumes 50 percent of dependent costs," (excerpt from printed guidelines given employees, italics added).

In 1993 this promise was broken. Employees were informed that those who did not retire by November 1994 would not receive the promised retirement benefits for dependents. Even Johnnie Hall, who worked 38 and one-half years, almost his entire ministry, for Tennessee

Baptists, lost this promised retirement insurance benefit for his wife. The Executive Board said funds were not available to cover incurred liability.

Committee processes have thwarted efforts to bring this matter back to the Executive Board.

Since 1993 funds have been found for Brentwood office renovation, program expansion, and staff enlargement. Now, the board has dollars to fund a retreat center, but no funds to restore the promised retirement benefits to those whose trusts were betrayed.

One hundred, thirty-five persons have been denied promised retirement insurance so that funds can be directed to other causes. I believe honesty, justice, and integrity require broken promises be kept before new works are developed. Christians keep their promises.

Restoring the promised retirement benefits would do much to restore trust, honesty, integrity, peace, unity, and supportive cooperation within the convention.

J. William Bargiol
director of missions
Big Emory Association
Harriman 37748

The writer refers to a confidential personnel matter acted on by the TBC Executive Board in 1992. When the employee benefit package was changed for all Executive Board members at that time, a window of time was provided for qualified employees, including Mr. Bargiol, to take the benefit. Some chose the option, others did not. Executive Board committees have reviewed the 1992 action on occasions and have declined to change the benefit package. Also, 10 years ago the Executive Board employed 115 people in Brentwood. There are now 102 employed. — Editor

Concerned

The editorial "Pray for our president and our nation" and the article "SBC president calls for Clinton to resign" in the Sept. 16 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* concerns me as a Christian and also as a supporting member of a TBC/SBC church.

I agree we are not to "judge not lest we be judged" and we should be careful about "casting the first stone." However,

why is it we are so quick to ask a person in public office to "resign," yet we do not carry out our duties in the Christian church according to "the rules of our Savior" (Matthew 18:15-17) — abbreviated form of the Articles of Faith and the Church Covenant, TBC, Brentwood.

The nation fails because its leaders fail, the leaders fail (assuming they are Christians, and of course, Bill Clinton claims to be Christian) because the church fails, the church fails because the family fails, the family fails because family members fail, and thus we all fail because we are not exercising "the rules of our Savior" in our personal life.

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). Teach the Word, preach the Word, practice the Word, pray, and it will do (with the aid of our "Helper" of course) what the Bible says it will do. That is the only thing to do and that is the right thing to do.

We need to get off this "judgmental thing" and start encouraging, admonishing, and yes, even, exhorting one another in brotherly love, even if it "hurts" because that is the right thing to do, and I thoroughly believe God will be well pleased in our doing it.

Kirby Logan
Clinton 37716

Hungry for absolutes

Our society is hungry for absolutes. It needs someone to unabashedly stand in the gap and say, "This is right, and this is wrong. I'm going to do right."

I'm afraid Southern Baptists have really dropped the ball in this regard when it comes to the scandal surrounding the White House. Seemingly, we are just as confused and paralyzed as is society as a whole. Our indecision is impotence, and the world is corrupting around us because we lack either the knowledge or the foresight to take the correct stand on this issue.

Thank God Paige Patterson and others have taken a stand, but we need to stand in unison. We need to purge our ranks of politicians who take ungodly stands in Washington yet weasel home to our churches

and try to draw our support.

We need pastors who will stand in the pulpit and tell their congregations that if they voted for Bill Clinton they are wrong.

Just as there are absolutes when it comes to spiritual matters, there are absolutes just as strong when it comes to making choices for our leaders. Christians need to vote, and we need to vote right.

Until we do, we will continue to be pawns of evil-doers as our influence and testimony are slowly sapped away.

Lee Elder
Clarksville 37040

Born again

"Born again" has become a widely used phrase in our society. It is applied to a number of things and endeavors of life. Unfortunately, this beautiful term has been taken out of context and misused.

Who originated this phrase anyway? What did he mean by it? The originator was Jesus Christ. The Master Teacher used the "born again" or "rebirth" terminology when approached by Nicodemus, a Jewish lawyer. This man came to Jesus desiring spiritual help. Jesus told him, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

The only true rebirth is spiritual in nature. It is experienced when a person turns in genuine faith and repentance to Jesus Christ and receives God's gift of salvation.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature, old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

Frank Stoffle
Seymour 37865

Firm conviction

It is my firm conviction that we, as Southern Baptists, have turned the experience of salvation into something that man does. What a great difference there is between this way, and the way that is found in Holy Scriptures, which is totally dependent upon a real experience with the holy, living, and triune God of all creation. As Scripture says in Jonah 2:9, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Greg Taylor
Bowling Green, KY 42101

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The Macedonian Call

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Newsletter

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

Partnership/Volunteer Missions Team, TBC; P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024

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From your missionary

The transforming power of the Gospel still works! Last week in the city of Rio de Janeiro, 62 missionary volunteers were witnesses to that transforming power as more than 1,200 people personally accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, mediator, and Lord.



SHARP

An elderly man, who had lost his entire family and was contemplating suicide, accepted Christ and discovered a new family — a family of faith. A man dying of AIDS accepted Christ. Even though weakened from this disease, he lifted up from his bed to sing a praise song about Jesus. Countless others saw their lives transformed.

Throughout the week people said to our volunteers, "Thank you for coming," and "God sent you from the other America to tell me about Jesus."

One lady breaking down in tears said, "I have been reading and wanting something to transform my life. I was afraid to ask, but I prayed someone would come and show me how to change. Your coming to my home is an answer to my prayers."

Over 500,000 appointments are being made now for missionary volunteers to share the transforming message of the Gospel there next May. People are waiting. Will you allow God to use you in sharing the Good News?

In Christ,

Terry

Simultaneous Revivals in Rio — May 1999
150 teams needed

Of Jacksboro

Parker family trip to Rio confirms call

By Joy Parker
For *The Macedonian Call*

My family had a couple of reasons for going on a mission trip July 13-22 to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to teach VBS and do revival services through the Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnership/Volunteer Missions team.

The first was to "let me get my feet wet" to the possibility of being an overseas missionary. I have felt this calling since I was seven-years-old when my father, Charles Parker, pastor of First Church, Jacksboro, read me a book about Lottie Moon. God said, "Go" to China. I said, "Okay."

Since then my practice at being a missionary has been limited to two US mission trips and conducting various Bible schools. My parents wanted me to get a better idea and understanding of the demands of an overseas career missionary.

Our second reason for going was to let my mother, Barbara Parker, get acquainted with mission work in another country. My father went to Peru about nine years ago, but my mother and I have never had that experience before Brazil.

My mother has increasingly become interested in missions since my decision to

go to China and because of her leadership as the church WMU director.

As a mother she also wanted to get a glimpse of what my life is going to consist of someday.

Of course self-centered reasons were not our only reasons for going to Brazil. We felt God calling us to work for him in Brazil and we expected a mighty work.

We loved the way God used us as we worked with Central Church in Ramos in Rio. Our tasks for the week were visiting church members and nonmembers in their homes, assisting in VBS, and preaching and singing in revival services.

What we enjoyed most about Brazil were the people who were honest, warm and relaxed, open to receive people, and proud of their country. They showed a distinct difference between believers and nonbelievers. When our interpreter explained Brazilian customs, she always told us whether or not

the customs were for believers.

On the night of our first work day, the three of us divided up and did our own Bible studies for people in their homes. This was not a problem for Dad since he's a preacher with 27 years of experience.

Mom had taught Sunday School before so she had some practice. In high school I was in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and had lead a few devotionals.

I was also able to be prepared. We didn't have much notice, but God gave us the — Continued on page 6



TALKING TO a child she is teaching during a Vacation Bible School at Central Church, Ramos, is Joy Parker.

Nashville area teachers train Brazilian translators

By Marcia Knox
The *Macedonian Call*

Two Nashville area English As A Second Language teachers recently turned their educational skills into spiritual gold by teaching translators in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for Tennessee volunteers.

"If two Nashville area English As A Second Language

teachers had not traveled to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to teach translators for Tennessee volunteers, then the recent simultaneous revivals would not have been as successful," according to Terry Sharp, Partnership/Volunteer Missions specialist.

Since Tennessee Baptists are coming to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and they don't speak

Portuguese, many translators are needed and continue to be needed for Partnership/Volunteer Missions trips. This need for translators created a project for two Nashville area ESL teachers.

Mary Ann Pangle of Nashville, a Metro Nashville ESL teacher and a member of Woodmont Church, Nashville, and Janell Puryear of Nashville, a Williamson County ESL teacher and a member of Calvary United Methodist Church, Nashville, taught a three-week, intensive English course July 12-Aug. 4 in Rio de Janeiro.

"Much time and planning was done by IMB missionaries Elizabeth Oates and Sharon Fairchild to arrange the classes for Christian Brazilians," said Pangle. "The classes were taught in three different locations so that more Brazilians could participate."

"The locations of the classes were in churches in three suburbs of the city. There were daily afternoon and night classes, and an all day Satur-

day class.

Pangle taught the intermediate classes and Puryear taught the beginning classes. The materials, used to teach the ESL classes, were from LifeWay Christian Resources.

"How refreshing it was to teach students who were so eager to learn," Pangle said. "Many of them traveled at least two hours to come to class. The curriculum was based on religious materials, which would reinforce their knowledge of the Bible. The students had a rich background from their Christian church training."

"All of the students had a basic knowledge and vocabulary of English, but translating this information into English was a challenge for the students. By the end of the three-week course, the students were ready and anxious for Tennessee Baptists to arrive to practice their translating skills!

The students had various occupations such as computer — Continued on page 6



MARY ANN PANGLE, second from right, back row, of Nashville, poses with students who received the English As A Second Language instruction she offered at Igreja Baptista Memorial of Tijuca.

The Macedonian Call

Greenfield church team builds, leads revival in Costa Rica

For The Macedonian Call

A Partnership/Volunteer Missions trip to Costa Rica recently inspired a Tennessee Baptist pastor's wife to do missions in a new way.

"If we had only built the building and not held the revival services in Costa Rica, we would have only been in contact with three nationals and their families," said Millie Brown, wife of Clark Brown, pastor of Bethel Church in Greenfield. "But by holding the revival services, preaching the Word, giving testimonies, and working with the children, we touched the hearts and hands of over 125 people."

Bethel Church of Greenfield sent 10 members on a partnership trip Aug. 7-14 to LaFortuna, Costa Rica. LaFortuna is in the South Zone, located 25 miles from Panama.

Besides the Browns the Bethel team included: Billy Stricklin; Teresa Porter and her son, Drew Porter; Vernon and Alice Smith; Phil Rowlett and his daughter, Ginger Rowlett; and Crystal Skelton.

While in Costa Rica, the team worked alongside IMB missionaries Bill and Linda Egbert at Canaan

Church. They held revival services, did puppet and children's ministries, and constructed a three-room structure for Sunday School space.

Before the revival started, the ladies went out on Saturday in two groups giving out salvation tracts and invitations to the revival meeting, and telling the children about the puppets.

"Sunday evening we began the children's ministry as the puppets sang three or four songs in Spanish with them," Brown said. "We had a Bible lesson telling the children that God made them special and that he loves each one."

"Each evening during the revival, we had a song, skit, and memory verse in Spanish with the puppets. Two members of the team gave testimonies, and Clark preached with an interpreter."

The team also gave out hard-backed Bibles, Spanish tracts, school supplies, candy and gum, toothbrushes, toothpaste, power bands, two-year calendars, and W.W.J.D. bracelets.

"The men were at the church early each morning working on the construction doing every job by hand. They dug holes, set poles, and prepared the way

for us to put up the walls. The building progressed each day.

"We painted the bare wood with a mixture that contained diesel fuel and arsenic to help fight termites. We all drove nails when the walls were in place. Next the men built the tresses for the roof, and we filled the nail holes and seams with putty.

"Then we sealed the building by painting it with a thin plaster. While the men put the roof on, the ladies painted the building blue. The last full day we were there, the men mixed and poured the concrete.

"The people were so proud of the three Sunday School rooms," Millie Brown said. "They occupied the rooms



PAUSING during their work in Costa Rica are, from left, front row, a Costa Rican national missionary; Vernon Smith, Millie Brown, Crystal Shelton, Alice Smith, Ginger Rowlett, all of Bethel Church; and three members of Canaan Church; back row, Phil Rowlett, Clark Brown, pastor, Drew Porter, Bill Stricklin, and Teresa Porter, all of Bethel Church.

the next Sunday. We also learned from the Egberts by e-mail that the revival had resulted in the largest crowds that they had ever seen in the area.

"Bethel Church has a vision for missions. Let us be faithful not only sending our money, but also in going, sending supplies, and sharing the word of God with people everywhere." ■

Nashville area teachers ...

— Continued from page 5
programmers, secretaries, military personnel, pastors, health professionals, and retired persons, according to Pangle.

"Besides our teaching experience, it was a wonderful opportunity to learn about Brazilian culture. The people were very friendly, and they made these two Nashvillians feel at home."

The teachers attended Sunday worship in four churches with differing types of services, and lived in a mission apartment where they got to know the missionaries.

"Although we went to teach the Brazilians English, we received more blessings than we gave to these students," Pangle said. ■

Cleveland residents teach Costa Rican children

For The Macedonian Call

During the week of July 11 a group of six people from Macedonian Church in Cleveland taught VBS in the South Zone of Costa Rica near the Panama Border.

The group included: Macedonian Church pastor G.W. Young and his wife, Wanda Young; John and Phyllis Corbin, Eva Green, and Anne Chastain.

When the team arrived in San Jose, IMB Volunteer coordinator Sue Smith met them. She warned them about a mosquito problem found near the area where they were to work.

"We were given the opportunity to stay in San Jose or continue on to the South Zone," said G.W. Young. "We all felt that God was with us so we should continue to the South Zone. We put on our bug repellent and continued our six-hour drive in a tropical storm.



A VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL class of children held at a Community Center in the South Zone is led by, from left in the background, Phyllis Corbin, Eva Green, and John Corbin.

"We made it safely to our destination of Rio Claro. Bill Egbert, IMB missionary, welcomed us."

On Sunday the team attended LaFortuna Church where the Youngs served last year in the simultaneous revivals.

"Our work began on Monday morning with VBS in the

mornings and revival meetings in the evenings at the San Ramon Community Center. Our VBS began with 43 in attendance and increased throughout the week to 90. Our theme for the week was 'Jesus Loves You.'"

The Youngs taught the teenagers VBS and averaged

around 10 for the week.

The Corbins taught the intermediate group and averaged around 20. Chastain and Green taught the preschool and averaged around 30.

Out of the VBS, one young man expressed the desire to become a missionary and one young lady received Christ. The young man wrote G.W. Young a thank you letter.

Revival services in the evenings went well with attendance reaching over 50 every night. Chastain and Green provided special music during the week. "The children loved the music during the service and it was a joy to see their excitement as they sang about Jesus," said G.W. Young.

"We traveled back to San Jose on Friday afternoon, and we spent Saturday sightseeing in the area. We look forward to our next opportunity to return to Costa Rica." ■

Parker family trip to Rio confirms missions call ...

— Continued from page 5
words to say to the 30 people in each house.

A highlight of our trip was when Dad addressed a vocational high school class that was held in the church. Dad gave his testimony and compared being a citizen of the US or of Brazil to being a citizen of heaven.

The youth asked intelligent questions about being a Christian. They wanted to know how Dad was different since he was saved, and if he had more problems since he was saved. When Dad asked them to raise their hands if they weren't believers, most of them

raised their hands, and said they would like to know more about being saved.

Deep seeds were planted by this classroom discussion since this was something that the church had been unable to do. The class had neither a teacher, nor most of the students that were believers.

When we had our first night of revival, it was a service for 10-15 families who received food baskets from the church each week. Two ladies who had never been to church came forward to receive Christ.

On the second night of revival, I

sang and gave my testimony. When I sang "Come Just as You Are," I realized just how much I wanted these people to come to Jesus just as they were. As I sang of what God gives us, I knew that the Holy Spirit was singing with me. I didn't doubt my calling to China as I had earlier on the trip.

Our last night was very difficult and wonderful because the church was so generous. They gave us gifts we didn't expect; they hugged us and cried with us.

Anna Rocha, the pastor's wife at Central Church in Ramos, sang a song to us in English. Five people came for-

ward to receive Christ.

It was a good trip for us as a family to grow together and to grow in Christ. Mom realized that mission work was never easy for anyone. Missions work isn't about glamour or numbers of people coming to Christ. It's love by a higher calling.

Pastor Paulo Rocha learned two important English words while we were in Brazil. They're a call to arms for families in America. The words mean to stop sitting around thinking about being a missionary. They're a decision to do it. In the words of Pastor Paulo, "Let's Go." ■

The Macedonian Call

Two Rivers Church teams minister in Nova Scotia

For *The Macedonian Call*

Two Tennessee volunteer mission teams from Two Rivers Church, Nashville, recently returned from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, where they helped Living Hope Community Church establish a community presence with highly visible mission teams.

The first Two Rivers team of 29 musicians and vocalists had two additions from Brentwood Church for the week of July 27-Aug. 3 while performing concerts, doing evangelism, and teaching music camp in Halifax.

The second group of 20, mainly senior adults from Two Rivers Church, also had other churches represented. This team worked the week of Aug. 6-17 where they did evangelism and Back Yard Bible Clubs for Living Hope Church.

Each group went with different expectations for the mission trips and returned with different experiences.

"I think our excitement about our upcoming week trip was only surpassed by our anxiety," said Donna Hughes, wife of the minister of orchestra at Two Rivers Church.

"Prior to our leaving things seemed to go from bad to worse. We had three people who had to drop out of the team at the last minute leaving vacancies to be filled. We secured our last team member the Friday before we left on Monday.

"In an amazing way, the mix of the group seemed to be perfect with 12 vocalists, three strings, seven brass, two woodwinds, a percussionist, a pianist, and a soundman. There were also two clowns who did drama and made balloon animals.

"Even more amazing was the combi-

nation that God worked out since we had never played together until the first concert. We were actually surprised that it all came together."

On Tuesday morning seven members of the team kicked off the music camp after being dropped off at an apartment complex. The group taught outside to whatever children showed up for the camp, which averaged 17 children each day.

"Friday evening the children performed three songs in the middle of our concert at Privateer's Wharf," said Hughes.

The entire team performed two other concerts at the Wharf, in a local mall, and in front of the downtown library. They led the morning worship at Living Hope Church in the Empire IMAX theater.

"Five people accepted Christ that morning including a mother and a child from the music camp. Another gentleman was saved who came to church after hearing us perform at the library," Hughes added.

"One word our group jokingly used throughout the week was 'flexadaptability.'"

"Most of us were stretched beyond our comfort zones especially in the door-to-door witnessing. However, our visits resulted in new prospects for the church and one profession of faith on Sunday."

In between concerts and door-to-door witnessing, the team also handed out over 1,000 cans of free soft drinks at Privateer's Wharf with notes from Living Hope Church inviting people to the services.

"Most in our group had never been on a mission trip. All of us agreed it would not be our last mission trip.

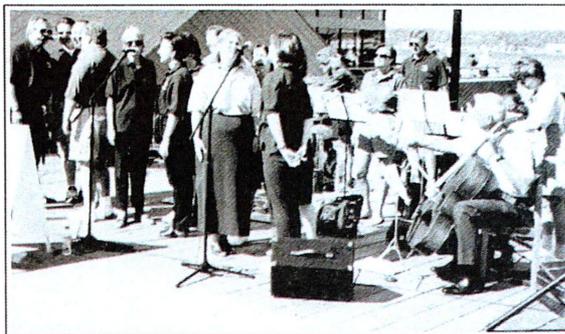
Though we weren't the most prepared team, God blessed our willingness to go and to do what was asked. We all came back changed, and our wills forever stretched to reach beyond our comfort zones."

Besides stretching comfort zones, mission trips to other countries can be learning experiences. It all depends on the volunteers' perspectives on how the trip is perceived before, during, and after they return home.

The Senior Adult team had an edge on the first team due to their vast wealth of experience. The Senior Adult team was also more diverse in make up with 15 people from Two Rivers Church, four from Park Avenue Church, Nashville, and one from First Church, Donelson.

In addition to teaching four BYBCs in different locations, the Senior Adult team did opinion polls in the community, and also Random Acts of Kindness at the Buskers Festival at Privateer's Wharf.

"This was my first mission trip, first time to be away from my husband for 10 days, first airplane flight, and first time out of the country," said Mary Dodson of Nashville, who is a member of Park Avenue Church. "It was a very



PERFORMING at a wharf in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, are members of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, who helped Living Hope Church there celebrate its one-year anniversary.

exciting time. I saw God so faithful as he supplied all our needs on the trip.

"I was allowed to share songs and Bible stories at the Buskers' Festival using my vent partner, 'Danny.' I saw a group of people work together like the body of Christ should. I never felt like I was out of the country and over a thousand miles from home. I just saw people who had the same kind of needs that we have in Nashville."

Mark Evans, Senior Adult minister at Two Rivers, said his first mission trip was an eye opening experience, a lesson in God's grace, and God's work.

"I learned that Senior Adults can roll with the punches," Evans said. "God uses some things to teach us to rely upon him instead of planning."

"We did have a few good visits while doing opinion polling in a neighborhood near the church," he concluded, and "an excellent response to Backyard Bible Clubs." ■

Talbott Church teens lead VBS in Michigan

By Laura Shisler
For *The Macedonian Call*

A total of 13 members of Talbott Church in Talbott, traveled July 18 to Madison Heights Church, Michigan, outside Detroit. The Talbott team members were teens, their leaders, and youth teachers in the church.

Many weeks of preparation and prayer were invested in the trip to the Madison Heights Fellowship Church in Michigan.

They arrived later that same evening and met Ollie Trout, pastor of the Madison Heights Church. After receiving instructions, the team prepared for VBS.

Doors and walls were decorated with the theme "Hooked on Jesus." Fishing poles, fish, other sea creatures, and Bible verses adorned all areas.

Sunday morning the Talbott team worshiped with two churches because Madison Heights congregation shares its building with a Romanian fellowship.

The Talbott team visited surrounding communities in the mornings to share the Good News and to invite children to VBS. Afternoons were spent sightseeing, but the evening time VBS was the most exciting with children arriving early just to talk.

The first night 50 participants came to VBS ranging in ages from preschool to adult. The children told their friends about VBS, and all classes grew in size throughout the week. High attendance was 81.

Talbott members worked in pairs to teach each VBS class lessons about being fishers of men, living the beatitudes, and receiving salvation. They also led singing and craft construction of fishing poles, trivets, key chains, and t-shirts. Madison Heights Fellowship provided the craft materials and refreshments.

On July 24 commencement night was held. Each group gave a presentation of singing and reciting verses including the adults.



TEACHERS Teresa Collins and Adam Couch pause during a Vacation Bible School session they are leading at Madison Heights Fellowship Church in Madison Heights, Mich.

For many Talbott teens this was their first mission project, and they were surprised at the needs of a world whose interest were not Christ-centered. Members of Madison Heights Fellowship are praying for revival in the area.

The Talbott team returned to Tennessee where teen members underwent a change of attitude about many things after seeing a world unlike their

own world. The most radical change was the glow on their faces after leading 11 children in VBS to Christ.

The team came back to Tennessee energized about helping others with physical and spiritual needs. They are continuing to pray for the children and churches in Madison Heights. They are also anxiously awaiting news of the next mission trip. ■

Partnership Prayer Requests October

- 21 — Pray for missionaries to Costa Rica, Clive and Nancy Buttmore.
- 22 — Pray for the churches in Michigan without a pastor.
- 23 — Pray for the residents of Nova Scotia, Canada, as they try to minister to the families of the victims of Swiss Air 111, which crashed recently.
- 24 — Pray for Grace Thru Faith Church, Memphis, which is a part of the Mississippi River Ministry. It gained 25 new members during 1998.
- 25 — Pray for San Pedro Church, Costa Rica, as it tries to reach residents of Valley of the Saints.
- 26 — Pray for First Church, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada. The members need to be refreshed, healed, and to renew their vision.
- 27 — Pray for Brenda and Eddy Hallock, missionaries to Brazil, as they work to start a church at Barra Da Tijuca in Rio de Janeiro.

people

■ **Clara Hall** of Brentwood, wife of Paul Hall, retired from Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board Ministries and as interim director of missions for several Tennessee associations, has suffered a stroke and at press time was at Baptist Hospital, Nashville.

■ **Carol Easterday**, pianist for Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville, was honored Oct. 11 for serving 40 years. The church's new concert grand piano was dedicated in her honor and a reception was held for her. She was a volunteer pianist for the first 20 years of her tenure. She has been active in other phases of church life including involvement in mission trips. Her husband, Jack, is a deacon. They have a daughter, Angela Easterday, a music professor at Georgetown (Ky.) College.

■ On Sept. 27 First Church, Concord, Knoxville, ordained **Steve Berube**, **Bud Bowden**, **Tim Conner**, and **Kenny Sizemore** as deacons.

leaders

■ **Michael Pearson**, director of missions, Wilson County Association, has undergone foot surgery. He is recovering at home and can be reached by contacting the association office at 220 East Gay Street, Lebanon, TN 37087, or (615) 444-8820.

■ First Church, Middleton,

has called **Kevin Rinehart** as youth minister.

■ **Dale Smith**, director of missions, New River Association, will retire effective Sept. 30. The association is based in Oneida.



SMITH

Smith has served as director of missions since 1975. Formerly he was pastor of First Church, Caryville, for six years. He also was a bivocational pastor at First Church, Huntsville, for five years, and in Maryland for five years. Smith and his wife, Flonnie, have three adult children. They will retire in Oneida.

■ First Church, Cookeville, called **Randall L. Adkisson** as pastor Aug. 30. He has been pastor of First Church, Monroeville, Ala., since 1991. He also has served as pastor of churches in Mississippi and in other staff roles for churches in Georgia. He is a graduate of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and the University of Georgia.



ADKISSON

■ Bethel Church, Henderson, has called **Ricky Mitchell** as minister of music, and his wife, **Kim Mitchell**, as pianist.

■ New Bethel Church, Saulsbury, has called **Ernie**



Ray King as pastor, effective Sept. 20. King was ordained to the ministry Sept. 13 by Walnut Grove Church, Germantown, his home church. **Robert Harman**, who served as interim pastor, was thanked by the church for his service.

■ **Tom Mathis** is the new pastor at First Church, Collinwood. He comes from Red River Church, Adams.

churches

■ **David Ring**, evangelist based in Franklin, will speak at **Forest Hills Church, Nashville**, Oct. 25 at 6:30 p.m. Ring was born with cerebral palsy. For more information, contact the church at (615) 373-8074, e-mail at fhbc@nashville.net.

■ U.S. Senator **Bill Frist** and State Sen. **Mike Williams** spoke recently at **Milan Church, Maynardville**. Frist, who didn't plan to speak, agreed to do so and reported on the Senate Prayer Breakfast held each Saturday morning in Washington D.C. Frist also

ROYAL AMBASSADORS of Pine Eden Church, Crossville, stand with food they collected recently for the church's pantry to recognize World Hunger Day. The RAs are, from left, **Jarred Lamb**, **Dustin Burgess**, **Tyler Stone**, **Jeremiah Watson**, **Jeremiah Limburg**, **Brian Pugh**, and **Mathew Shipe**.

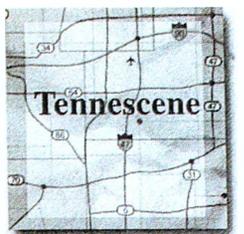
spoke on his recent visit to Sudan to assess health care needs. Frist also attended an after-service fellowship and visited with individuals.

■ **South Fulton Church, South Fulton**, will hold revival Oct. 25-28. **Bobby Moore**, pastor, Broadway Church, Olive Branch, Miss., will speak and **Allen Lewis**, minister of music, First Church, St. Peters, Mo., will lead the music.

■ **First Church, Greenfield**, will hold revival Nov. 1-4. Also on Nov. 1 the annual Harvest Day will be held followed by a luncheon. **Randy Hope**, a pastor in Abbeville, Miss., will speak and **John Norvell**, minister of music, First Church, Bemis, will lead the music.

■ **Vaughn Chapel Church, Lenoir City**, will hold revival Nov. 1-4. **DeWayne Howard**, staff evangelist of Lee Village Church, Harriman, will speak. The Howards will present music. For more information, call the church at (423) 986-9608.

■ **Brainerd Church, Chattanooga**, will celebrate its 70th anniversary Nov. 1. **J. Ralph McIntyre**, former pastor, will speak during both worship services. Activities include a luncheon, open house in the church's Heritage Room and Library, and presentation of the church's history written by **Mary Lynn**



Wilson, church historian.

■ **First Church, Grand Junction**, celebrated its 140th anniversary Oct. 18.

■ On Oct. 25 **Toone Church, Toone**, will hold a hayride, fellowship around a campfire, and pumpkin decorating contest.

■ **Eastview Church, Waynesboro**, will hold revival Oct. 23-25 with guest evangelist **Jerry Flippo** of Upper Green River Church, Waynesboro.

associations

■ **Shelby Association** will hold a Conversational English Workshop Nov. 13-14 and 20-21 at Germantown Church, Germantown. The association is based in Cordova. For more information, call **Nina Clark** at (901) 751-3808 or **Jean Thompson** at (901) 682-4298.

■ Twenty-three churches of **Hardeman County Association** will participate in a World Missions Conference Nov. 1-4. The association is based in Bolivar.

events

■ **Tennessee CBF** will hold a Fellowship Dinner Nov. 10 at 5:30 p.m. at First Church, Kingsport. Cost is \$5 at the door. Call (615) 907-8525 for more information.

CLASSIFIED

PASTOR: Brandy Branch Baptist Church seeks resumes for full-time pastor, country church with 200-plus members. Send to BBBC, Rt. 1 Box 396, Bryceville, FL 32009, Attn. Mitchell Reeves.

LEADER: Desiring part-time Music/Worship Leader. Contemporary and traditional music. Resume to First Baptist Church, 7310 Overbey Rd., Fairview, TN (615) 799-2944.

MINISTER: Seeking a full-time Minister of Music and Youth. Average Sunday School attendance is 140. Send resumes to Pastor Mark Mangrum, Holly Grove Baptist Church, 8488 Poplar Corner Road, Bells, TN 38006.

MINISTER: Education and Student Minister needed, full-time position, responsible for education and student (6th grade through college) ministries, compensation package negotiable. Send resume to Gary McNabb, 2950 Parkview Drive, Morristown, TN 37814.

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Pastor's Conference

OCTOBER 29, 1998



Dr. Timothy George

Dean, Beeson Divinity School
Noted Church Historian
Author of several books
Senior Editor of *Christianity Today*



Dr. Walter Crouch

Carson-Newman Faculty
Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies
Recently Pastored First Baptist Church
of Weslaco, Texas

This event, offered at no charge to pastors of East Tennessee, will feature a keynote sermon by Dr. George and Dr. Crouch's overview of Joshua, the 1998 Southern Baptist Winter Bible Study.

9:00 a.m to 12 noon
with a complimentary lunch to follow

To register, or for more information call (423) 471-3218 or (423) 471-3245

Tough situations

By Dale Denning

Focal Passage — II Corinthians 7:6-9, 13b-15; 8:6, 16-17, 23; Titus 1:5, 10-11; 2:15, 3:14

"Here's the scenario," the instructor announced to his class of novice truck drivers. "You're in an 18-wheeler with a heavy load, barreling down a mountainous two-lane highway. Ed, your co-driver, is asleep. There are six trucks behind you, and as you come over the top of a hill, they pull out beside you to pass. Suddenly, you see several trucks coming in the opposite direction, pulling into your lane to pass. What did you do?" "That's simple," a student called out. "I'd wake up Ed." "Why would you do that?" asked the instructor. "Because, Ed ain't never seen a truck wreck like this before!"

I suppose that is one way to handle a problem, but in our text the apostle Paul offers an alternative. The church at Corinth had caused Paul a great deal of grief and heartache. In his first letter, Paul "raked them over the coals" for their petty arguing, misuse of spiritual gifts, and lack of unity (just to name a few). Our lesson does a good job demonstrating a biblical formula for handling tough situations that may arise.

First of all, tackle the problem head-on. In his book *I Surrender*, Patrick Morley writes that the church's integrity problem is in the misconception "that we can add Christ to our lives, but not subtract sin. It is a change in belief without a change in behavior." He goes on to say, "It is revival without reformation, without repentance." The Corinthian church expressed this philosophy by their behavior. In his second letter to the church at Corinth, he explained to the members that he did not enjoy chastising them with his first letter, but that it was necessary.

Secondly, one needs to take the initiative. Some years ago a former American astronaut took over as head of a major airline, determined to make the airline's service the best in the industry. One day, he saw an employee resting his feet on a desk while the telephone on the desk rang incessantly. "Aren't you going to answer that phone?" the boss demanded. "This isn't my department," answered the employee nonchalantly, apparently not recognizing his new boss. "I work in maintenance." "Not anymore you don't" snapped the president. A lack of initiative can be destructive in any area of life, but especially when dealing with problems.

Kitty Genovese was the young woman who was murdered in a New York residential section while at least 38 neighbors watched from their windows. During the course of the 30-minute assault, no one even telephoned the police. Recent studies have uncovered some surprising facts about these people. The main reason nobody did anything was that each person thought someone else would take the initiative to get help. How many people in the Kingdom of God sit idly by waiting for someone else to act? When Titus carried the first letter to the Corinthians, it must have been difficult due to the nature of the letter. Titus agreed to go, nevertheless, because he knew that it was a task that had to be done.

Finally, complete the tasks that are unfinished. Grant Lovejoy uses this illustration. "A recent television documentary pointed out that the cheetah survives on the African plains by running down its prey. The big cat can sprint 70 miles per hour but cannot sustain that pace for long. Within its long, sleek body is a disproportionately small heart, which causes it to tire quickly. Unless it catches its prey in the first flurry, it must abandon the chase.

Sometimes Christians seem to have the cheetah's approach to ministry. We speed into projects with great energy. But lacking the heart for sustained effort, we fizzle before we finish. — Denning is pastor, Chapel Hill Church, Milan.

Work of the prophets

By Darrell Nimmo

Focal Passage: II Kings 5:2-6, 9-14

It is my belief that our testimony as a Christian is far more powerful during adversity than in prosperity. Someone has said that faith is not real faith until it is all we have to hang on to. That is not to say we should not praise God in the good times for indeed we must. Nor am I saying we should not praise God and give him the glory for all his blessings. But as far as the power of our testimony, adversity can be one of the strongest ingredients. Let me explain.

When we are prosperous and blessed, it is easy to be optimistic and express our complete trust in God. Those around us who may be less fortunate will perhaps have problems believing what we may say about our faith. They may say it is easy for us to say we fully trust God's promises for we are in the midst of his blessings.

However, when we testify about God's provisional care when corporate downsizing has taken our livelihood, our testimony takes on power. The world takes notice when we do the unexpected. Jesus talked about this when he said if someone asks us to go one mile we should go two. And, if someone asks us for a cloak to give them the tunic as well.

Family Bible Lesson

If we respond to adversity with pessimism and bitterness, then the world will not be effected by our testimony. They expect us to respond that way. However, when we respond with hope, faith, and trust then our testimony takes on a whole new perspective and God's power flows through us in a mighty way. We should praise God in the good times, yes, but we must also let his power manifest itself in the bad as well.

Testifying about a prophet (vv. 1-7). Syria was a

very powerful nation at this time. The Syrians had been testing the strength of Israel by performing raiding parties on the outlining regions of the Northern Kingdom. During these raids they would gather captives and carry them back to Syria as slaves.

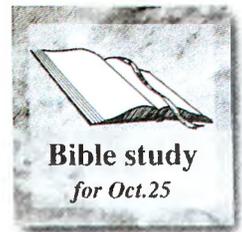
Here we find a young woman in servanthood, a slave, confined against her will in a foreign nation. She was one of the captives no doubt. She had every reason to be bitter and obstinate against her perpetrators. Yet, she bears testimony to God and her faith in his ability to heal her adversary and master.

Naaman being the commander of the Syrian army was a very powerful man. No doubt he was much more used to giving orders than taking them. However, God speaking through a little slave girl would cause Naaman to take a path that would eventually change his life.

Responding to a prophet's word (vv. 8-14). Many of us look for God in the spectacular. Unless we see something like the parting of the Red Sea, everything takes on the ordinary or coincidental. However, each day is filled with the miracles of God. We sometimes miss the blessings of God because they come to us in simple ways.

Such was the case for Naaman. Elisha had told him a simple procedure to follow. But, his pride and expectation of something spectacular almost robbed him of the blessing of healing. Again, we see God's people rising to the occasion. His slaves encouraged him to look at the plain simple truth. When he did, he not only received healing, but also a new life serving God.

Many today are like Naaman. They miss a new life in Christ because they are waiting on the spectacular. The simple truth of the Gospel is powerful to not only give them a new life, but to also give them life everlasting. We must compel them to look at the simple truth. It started with a slave girl's testimony in the midst of adversity, a simple little word, which changed a man's life. It must start with us as well. — Nimmo is a member of First Church, Hendersonville



Trusting God for physical needs

By Calvin Metcalf

Focal Passage — Exodus 15:23-26; 16:11-14; 17:2b-3a, 5-6

The unknown often holds frightening possibilities for us.

We are paralyzed by the prospect of what seems to be an uncertain future. We are overwhelmed by that which we cannot adequately predict. We quickly lose our nerve in the midst of life's issues which are not easily defined. We can accept that which is new if only there is more about it we can know. We can adjust to the challenge of the future as long as we are reasonably sure of its agenda. It is the mystery of life's uncharted channels that causes us stress. It is always a matter of faith that we are able to find meaning in the midst of the unexplainable.

At this juncture on their journey, Israel moved in the realm of the unknown. They had knowledge of their deliverance from Egypt, but they were not acquainted with their promised land. Many uncertainties lay between them and their destination. Every conflict and inconvenience caused them to doubt their ability to survive.

The water at Marah was bitter. The people complained to Moses, who quickly became the convenient target of their criticism. No doubt the Israelites were extremely thirsty. The movement of thousands of bodies across dry, arid land created a need

Explore the Bible Lesson

for water. They anticipated refreshment at Marah, only to find its waters bitter and undrinkable. In characteristic fashion, God came to their rescue. It is thought that the water was bitter because of the salty condition of the soil in the wilderness.

God commanded Moses to put a certain tree or bush into the water, which most likely had purifying qualities. The water became sweet and usable. At this point Moses gave Israel some kind of legislation as a means of proving or testing them to see how they would obey God. The promise for their obedience was clear — Yahweh was their healer, and if they responded to him properly, none of the Egyptian diseases would be imposed upon them.

The problem of hunger became another reason for the people to murmur against Moses. How do you feed a starving mass of people in a barren wilderness? Only God can perform such a miracle. As he had done many times before, God heard their grumblings. Meat and bread were provided for Israel in an unusual way.

The Scripture reminds us that "quails came up and covered the camp." We are told that in the spring of the year, quail migrated from

Africa to Asia. As Lord of creation, God used this process to provide food for his people.

A bread substitute was provided in a substance referred to as "manna." When Israel first saw this dew-like food,

they asked in Hebrew, "Man hu?" or, "What is it?" Thus this question identified this strange food for Israel, which was collected each morning. Greediness was discouraged when collection of manna was limited to a one-day supply except on the day before the Sabbath.

As the exodus moved onward, the problem of no water was faced again at Rephidim. The people's thirst, as before, caused them to find fault with Moses. Moses seemed frustrated and called for God's help. God revealed himself once more as the source of life-giving water.

This time the miracle involved the elders of Israel as well as Moses. God appeared on the rock at Horeb (another name for Sinai). At God's command, Moses struck the rock with his rod, and it provided water for the people.

Israel standing thirsty and helpless before a barren rock is symbolic of their national existence. Only God had the power to revive them and make out of them a people worthy of his holy name. Thirst was a recurring need for these pilgrim people, as was their dependence on God. — Metcalf is pastor emeritus, Central Church, Fountain City, Knoxville.



SBTS trustees adopt mission statement

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Trustees of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary unanimously adopted a new mission statement and heard an upbeat report from the seminary's president, R. Albert Mohler Jr., during their biannual meeting Oct. 11-12 at the Louisville, Ky., campus.

"My greatest purpose with you today is to submit for your consideration a new mission statement for this institution," Mohler said. The statement will govern "what we do, how we conceive our task, and how we understand our accountability to the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Mohler said he and Southern's executive cabinet wanted to compose a statement that "really, truthfully, genuinely, plainly, and unambiguously declares what it is we are here to do." Then he read the statement:

"Under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the mission of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is to be totally committed to the Word of God and to be a servant of the churches of the Southern Baptist Conven-

tion by training, educating, and preparing ministers of the Gospel for more faithful service."

Mohler reported on-campus enrollment is up more than 7 percent from last year. As of Oct. 10, headcount enrollment at the Louisville campus and off-site extension centers totals 1,759, with more fall enrollment in off-campus centers yet to come. ■

NAMB, Southern launch new project

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The North American Mission Board and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary have jointly named Ed Stetzer to head the first seminary center for church planting as part of the board's Nehemiah Project.

"I am elated at the strategic alliance formed between Southern Seminary and NAMB. The Nehemiah Project puts church planting front and center as both entities step into the 21st century," said NAMB President Bob Reccord.

The Nehemiah Project ultimately will establish a church-planting center on each SBC seminary campus in the United States and Canada. Each center director will be chosen through a twofold process that includes each seminary's faculty selection procedures and NAMB's missionary approval process.

NAMB officials intend the Nehemiah Project to help reverse the growing number of unchurched people in North America. According to re-

WMU's O'Brien released from hospital

By Teresa Dickens
For Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM Ala. — Dellanna W. O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, was released from a Birmingham, Ala., hospital Oct. 13, a little more than two weeks after suffering a mild stroke. She will continue to receive physical therapy as an outpatient.

National WMU President Wanda Lee told employees at the national WMU headquarters here Oct. 14 that she continues to be pleased with the progress O'Brien is making. "She has had a wonderful beginning to a terrible situation," said Lee, a registered nurse of more than 25 years.

"Dellanna is past the crisis stage," Lee assured employees. "She is now in the recovery stage. And I believe it will be a full recovery, based on

the rapid progress she has made and the determination she exhibits."

In a statement released Oct. 15, O'Brien expressed gratitude for the expressions of prayer support she has received in the past two weeks.



O'BRIEN

"I have been so overwhelmed with the cards, notes and phone calls that I have received," O'Brien said.

"It is no surprise that I am so quickly regaining the things lost in my stroke," she continued. "I am learning to walk with a brace, my speech is reasonably clear if I speak slowly, and my arm is beginning to respond. My hand is not responding much, but I am becoming a very good

left. In the next few weeks, I will slowly begin to resume my duties."

Lee told employees that O'Brien has been told that she can return to the office when she feels ready. In the meantime, Lee said, O'Brien's administrative assistant will be working with her a few hours each week at home.

The O'Briens continue to ask that in lieu of flowers and other gifts that contributions be made to the Dellanna West O'Brien Christian Women's Leadership Development Fund, a fund established earlier this year to honor O'Brien on her 10th anniversary with WMU. The fund's address is WMU Foundation, PO Box 11346 Birmingham, AL 35202-1346.

Cards and notes may be sent to her at the WMU mailing address: PO Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283-0010.

searcher George Barna, the United States is the world's third largest unchurched nation, whose unchurched population exceeds 195 million.

By partnering with Southern Baptist seminaries and churches, students can be sent out as Nehemiah church planters into strategic church planting opportunities, according to David Putman, recruitment development associate for NAMB and coordinator of the Nehemiah Project.

The overall goal of the project is to equip students to "plant churches that plant churches," he said. ■

that Billy Graham will conduct a crusade here next year.

The Greater St. Louis Crusade is set for Oct. 14-17, in the TWA Dome. It will be Graham's third crusade in St. Louis. Others were held in 1953 and 1973. ■

SWBTS faculty begin signing SBC amended statement

Compiled from BP & ABP reports

FORT WORTH, Texas — Faculty members at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will be required to sign the updated *Baptist Faith and Message* statement. Some faculty members already have begun signing the statement.

The *Baptist Faith and Message* confessional statement, as revised during the 1998 SBC annual meeting to include a article on the family, was sent by Southwestern President Kenneth S. Hemphill to seminary deans in early October, and a number of faculty members requested a copy and have returned the document with their signature, said David Porter, SWBTS public relations director.

Failure to sign the revised statement could result in a faculty member severing his or her relationship with the seminary, according to Hemphill, who issued this statement:

"Southwestern is a confessional institution, and our charter and bylaws are clear and have been clear for decades. As a matter of conviction and conscience, as an SBC institution, we gladly teach ac-

ording and not contrary to the *Baptist Faith and Message*. We are under the patronage, general direction, and control of the SBC which established the *Baptist Faith and Message* and amended it in 1998.

"Employment at the seminary has for decades been based on a faculty member's signing the *Baptist Faith and Message* and teaching with and not contrary to that statement of faith. Our faculty manual specifies that when a faculty member can no longer subscribe to the seminary's articles of faith, he or she would voluntarily sever relations with the institution.

"We're going to do the right thing in the right way."

Porter said no deadline has been set for faculty members to sign the statement.

However, one faculty member told a reporter the underlying message given to professors was "sign on or sign off." The primary objection of many faculty members, he said, is that the policy under which they were employed and granted tenure — signing the 1963 statement — has been changed. And he said it was implied that the new signing would mean that "we agree with anything passed in the future."

Faculty spokesman James Spivy said it was not his understanding that the faculty would be forced to sign the revised document, but that it would be "entirely voluntary." He said faculty members were not told they would have to resign if they refused to sign it.

The faculty "is overwhelmingly supportive" of the family and the amendment, he said. ■



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Congress passes anti-persecution law

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Congress, acting as it sought to wrap up business for the year, passed without opposition a bill to equip the federal government to help deter religious persecution overseas.

The Senate voted 98-0 Oct. 9 for the International Religious Freedom Act. The House approved it without dissent the following day. President Bill Clinton confirmed he would sign the legislation. ■

Billy Graham plans '99 St. Louis effort

Baptist Press

ST. LOUIS — More than 300 clergy and other religious leaders gathered recently to celebrate the announcement