

this
week's
news

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After 14-year ministry there

LifeWay's Cleary forecasts single ministry needs

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — To meet the needs of single adults in the future, Southern Baptists should call more single adults as church staff members, use more single adults as leaders, and adopt a single adult friendly culture, said Tim Cleary last weekend to participants of the National Single Adult Ministry Institute here.

Cleary was making one of his last presentations as single adult ministry specialist for LifeWay Christian Resources. He spoke to about 80 people from 12 states attending the meeting. Cleary, who also is minister to single adults, First Church, Nashville, has been called as minister to senior adults, North Phoenix (Ariz.) Church (see story, page 2).

"The culture of the church has given the impression that the only way to be happy is to find another person to marry and that there's someone out there especially for you. If you work with single adults very long, you know that's not the whole truth," said Cleary.

He referred to John 10:10 which identifies the source of lasting happiness as a rela-

tionship with Jesus Christ. Jesus, the Apostle Paul, and many other unmarried biblical characters are models for single adults as leaders in ministry, Cleary suggested.

Yet 95 percent of Protestant ministers in the United States are married, he cited.

The church of the future must be led by both married and single adult leaders, he said, operating in a church culture which includes dual married and single adult models.

Changing society

To develop a single adult culture in a church, the church must consider today's society, noted Cleary.

People are becoming consumer oriented, less impacted by authority because of the many choices available, and less discerning of cultural divisions between entertainment, education, and tourism.

Finally, the modernism to post-modernism shift in culture reveals that people are adopting fewer heroes, are less concerned with definitions or science, and are more concerned with people's real needs.

A new church culture will allow members to operate within these parameters, he said.

But the church won't have



VISITING at the National Single Adult Ministry Institute are Tennesseans, from left, Becky Brooks, First Church, Nashville; Max Holt, minister with single adults, Hilldale Church, Clarksville; and Tim Cleary of LifeWay Christian Resources and First Church, Nashville. — Photo by Connie Davis

much of an audience if it doesn't target single adults, said Cleary. Half of adults in the U.S. are single, according to the Census Bureau. And projections are that by 2010 a majority of adults will be single, he reported.

Of single adults in the U.S., more than half are unchurched because the church has not provided for them, he noted.

"Single adult ministry cannot be a token ministry for the people that are there (at

church, but it must be for the people not there, the unchurched out in the community," said Cleary.

From 20 years of experience

Cleary admitted he is one of the many single adult leaders who is married. He said he had to learn the single adult culture.

He admitted one of the first church programs he planned for single adults was on loneliness. It was inappropriate be-

— See LifeWay's, page 3

Missionary works with church to baptize

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

GATLINBURG — Sunday mornings for Missionaries Bill and Cindy Black are busy. They lead worship services at three camp sites here at 9, 10, and 11 a.m. But on a recent Sunday morning Bill squeezed into the schedule a baptism at a local church.

Bill Black, who has served as a missionary here for 17 years, closed his last service on a recent Sunday a few minutes early and jumped into a car driven by semester missionary Wendy Avrett of Georgia.

About nine miles of twisting road later, Black rushed into

First Church, Gatlinburg.

Inside, John Roebuck, pastor, was preaching and waiting for Black's signal that he had arrived. Then Roebuck began to conclude his message and introduce the invitation.

A few minutes later, Black baptized Jackson Kappenman, 10, as the congregation watched.

It was a good experience, said Black, a blessing to him personally, and an illustration of missions. Black noted several missions efforts led to the baptism of Jackson Kappenman.

Cooperating, said Black, were a local church and the entities which support the ministry he leads, Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries, including Sevier County Baptist Association, the Golden State Missions Offering, and the national Cooperative Program.

That support allows him

and his staff to lead activities at area campgrounds, like Outdoor Resorts of America Campground, where he and Cindy met Jackson and his parents, Ken and Mary Ann, a few months ago.

The Kappenmans moved to the area from Georgia. The Blacks got to know them, found out the couple were Christians and Baptists, and that Jackson wasn't a Christian. The Blacks referred the family to First Church, where they could take advantage of more activities than offered by Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries at the campground.

And they encouraged Jackson, along with his new friends at First Church, to make his commitment to God.

"This is an example of the powerful blend of all we're trying to do in resort missions," said Black. *BER*

Rick White added to TBC program

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Franklin pastor Rick White has been added to the program of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

White, pastor of First Church, will speak on Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 11, according to Joe Stacker, chairman of the committee on arrangements.

White takes the place of Lawrence Hudson of Memphis who is unable to speak due to illness, Stacker said. "We appreciate Dr. White accepting this late assignment and we encourage Tennessee Baptists to pray for Pastor Hudson's recovery." ■



WHITE

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During speech for Union University

Thatcher urges Western nations to stand firm

By Michael Dudit
For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — In an address presented at Union University, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher challenged Western nations to stay firm in their support of democratic values in the face of challenges posed by dictators and economic difficulties around the globe.

Lady Thatcher's address to more than 1,700 people was part of Union University's annual scholarship banquet, and also marked the conclusion of a national conference on "Christian Faith and Public Policy" sponsored by Union's Center for Christian Leadership.

Speaking on "Challenges Facing the 21st Century," Thatcher observed that the 20th century has been characterized by an ongoing conflict between two forms of government — democratic, which draws power from the people, and collectivist states, which imposes their will upon the people.

"We now know that states, societies, and economies which



LADY MARGARET THATCHER poses with Kate, Thomas, and Josh Moore of First Church, Dresden, as others look on during her appearance last week at Union University's annual scholarship banquet.

allow the distinctive talents of individuals to flourish, themselves also flourish," Thatcher said.

"And those which dwarf, crush, manipulate, or ignore those talents cannot progress. It's only western civilization that has discovered this secret of continual program, because it's only western civilization that has developed a culture in which individuals matter, a society in which private property

is secure, which backs up the freedom of the individual, and a political system in which a range of competing views is accommodated."

Thatcher pointed out that "fewer than half of the world's countries are democracies. The political conflict between collectivism and freedom is not over. We have to fight boldly and persuasively the intellectual and practical battle for freedom as it faces new chal-

lenges," said Thatcher, who led Britain's Conservative Party from 1975 until her resignation as Prime Minister in 1990.

Thatcher was the first woman to hold the office of Prime Minister and was the first British Prime Minister in this century to occupy the office for three consecutive terms.

"We were honored that Lady Thatcher agreed to be our speaker for this event, which is part of the celebration of Union's 175th anniversary," said Union President David S. Dockery. "She is one of the key world leaders of the postwar era, and her firm advocacy of conservative political and economic principles has made her an influential leader on both sides of the Atlantic."

The Union Scholarship Banquet was sponsored by the university's board of presidential associates, an organization whose members support the mission and work of Union.

Participation in the 1998 banquet, through sponsorships and individual tickets, provided more than \$200,000 in financial support. ■

Tennesseans play key role in Christian country music

By Ken Walker
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — He once traveled the world, earning a seminary degree, working as a newspaper reporter, and serving as a missionary to Bangladesh.

But Daniel Johnson, a Tennessee Baptist, recognizes his biggest challenge lies ahead of him. He hopes to help jump start Christian country music, an industry trying to regroup after various setbacks.

"The music's not dead," said Johnson, a promoter, songwriter, and performer based here. "It doesn't matter what [record companies] do, the music is still getting out there and people are hearing it."

Johnson's reference concerns restructurings and cutbacks at a number of Nashville record labels that once promoted Christian or positive country artists. In addition, earlier this year the influential *Contemporary Christian Music* magazine eliminated its Christian country song chart.

But Johnson and other performers haven't given up hope. In early September, they staged a "Number One" party on Music Row to honor seven Christian artists with chart-topping hits. The next day, 45 participants gathered for a symposium on the challenges facing their specialized music field.

Johnson said they discussed what the music should be called ("Christian country" or "country Gospel"), the need for a universally recognized chart, for resources, and for seeking God's direction. The group agreed to meet again in December.

"I was trying to bring factions together and talk about some of the issues that have divided us," Johnson said. "There were some people who said nothing was accomplished. But any time you get 45 people together from all over the country ... I think God did a miracle. Who knows what's going to happen out of this?"

Whatever takes place, Southern Baptists will play a key role, said Johnson, a member of Creeewood Church, Nashville.

Among Southern Baptists who spoke at the meeting was Larry Dunlap, a songwriter and pastor of Grace Church, Pleasant View, who led the devotional. He drew his message on breaking down walls from Joshua 6.

"The walls are things that keep Christian country from being all we can be," said Dunlap, who co-wrote the number one tune, "He Is There."

"It's an instrument of ministry. Whether we have a chart or not, or gold records, doesn't matter. It's a tool to reach people who won't listen to Southern Gospel [music] or go to church."

Dunlap added, "There's people out there like the guy who has a hangover, or his wife just left him. He needs a message of hope and to know there is a better way. People can't pray to the Lord until they know him."

While the lack of commercial success forces many artists to record, distribute, and market their own music, Johnson said that may be a blessing in disguise.

While they don't have someone else to pick up the bills, Christian singers have more freedom, he said, while retaining music rights for future sales.

"I think God is doing something special

here," he said. "He's giving people experience in the music business, to let them know how to get things recorded and to market. When they're no longer recording or touring, they will be able to concentrate on helping others."

"We don't want to be in the Nashville music industry, we want to be above that," he added. "We want to do things in a godly way, the way the Lord wants us to do them."

Despite the medium's Southern Baptist influence, members of many other denominations likewise minister through this music, he said. It reaches a lot of people, including church members who want to listen to country, he noted. "We want to give them an alternative to what is normally on radio," he said.

While his tour schedule kept him away from the meeting, the Fox Brothers' Randy Fox, another Tennessee Baptist, believes audiences in America's heartland appreciate this brand of music.

Concentrating on fairs and events like the Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City, the group plays about 200 concerts a year. While they have a recording contract, they sell most of their 14 albums on tours or through their fan club.

Fox, a member of First Church, Franklin, said the industry needs an impartial association to back syndicated radio and TV productions. Such exposure would create visibility and spur more promoters to book Christian country acts, he said.

Backers must remember that it takes time for any brand of music to develop a following, Fox said. ■

Offers suggestions for 'what not to say'

Director of missions copes with son's death

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

LA FOLLETTE — June 5, 1997 is a day Glen and Jane Petrie will never forget.

Petrie, director of missions for Campbell County Association, was away from the associational office when he received a page from his secretary.

Petrie learned that there had been an explosion at Pyroshows, a fireworks manufacturing plant where his 22-year-old son, Tim, worked.

When Petrie arrived at the plant, his worst fears were confirmed. The plant building was demolished as was an independent Baptist church across the street.

He knew immediately his son could not have survived such a blast.

Tim Petrie and three others, including his fiancée, Allison Hale, were indeed killed in the tragic explosion.

Petrie learned later that his son was not killed instantly. One of his last acts, according to a rescue worker on the scene, was to pray and to inquire about his fiancée.

"We know where Tim is," Petrie said, noting his son was a fine Christian and served as the first president of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter at Campbell County High

School. "He loved the Lord and didn't mind sharing his faith with people," his dad recalled.

At the time of Tim's death, however, the knowledge of Tim's salvation, while a comfort, was overpowered by a flood of emotions, ranging from shock to a total numbness.

Looking back, Petrie knows his family, which includes two other sons, Matthew and Luke, were sustained by God's grace.

"I don't know how people could survive something like this without the Lord Jesus," Petrie said, noting he was especially encouraged by reading of Job's struggles in the Old Testament. "I knew God was there with me," he affirmed.

The Campbell County DOM noted churches responded well to him and his family immediately following Tim's death. After a period of time, however, people really don't know what to say and they avoid asking, "How are you doing?" Petrie observed.

He noted he has had opportunities following Tim's death to minister to others.

He visited a church in his association recently and a man came up to him after the service and asked if they could just talk, Petrie said.

The man had lost a child and knew Petrie could relate to his feelings. Petrie noted he really did not say much to the man. "We just stood in the park-

'Courage in Ministry' series resumes

Due to the tremendous response, the "Courage in Ministry" series resumes in this issue. These articles consider ministers and family members who continue to minister during extreme trials in their lives.

If you know of a minister or minister's spouse who has undergone difficult times but has continued to minister effectively, call Lonnie Wilkey or Connie Davis at (615) 371-2003. *B&R*

ing lot and cried together," he said.

Therein lies what his son's death has taught Petrie. "As ministers, unless we have personally experienced that depth of hurt, we don't know what to say.

"We often say words that are not comforting," he said.

"The best words we heard were nothing but simply a hand on the shoulder."

Words like "He's in a better place" and "God knows best" are not what people want to hear when they are hurting, Petrie confirmed. "I knew that but that's not what I needed to hear," he stressed.

"We all want to say something to heal when there is really nothing we can say."

Sometimes the best thing a person



can do is to listen and even cry with the person, Petrie said. He also suggested sending care notes or "thinking of you" cards.

Petrie has used his experiences in a ministry Campbell County Association has in conjunction with the Campbell County Cancer Association.

"We are the contact point for people who need cancer-related services," Petrie said.

The effort allows the association to meet both spiritual and physical needs, Petrie said, noting that often cancer patients come in and just need to talk.

"It has been one of our better ministries," the DOM confirmed. "It amazes me how many people have had cancer."

Since his son's death Petrie said he is more keenly aware of the cancer patients' struggles and with "our own immortality."

People and things are temporary, Petrie stressed. "We must learn that family and wealth are gifts from God. He can take them from us when he chooses.

"That does not mean God is mean, but rather that he is sovereign. I had to be reminded of that." *B&R*



PETRIE

After 14-year ministry there

LifeWay's Cleary forecasts single ministry needs ...

— Continued from page 1
cause single adults may experience loneliness, but it is not a unique characteristic of single adults only, he said.

He learned singles adults "are a family of one and they need to be a part of our (church's) extended family as well."

Cleary said he also learned to ask single adults what they need. One time he was daunted as to how to minister to a group of eight single adults in a church from the ages of 22-85. He asked them what they needed and they decided they needed to be a family to one another. They also led Cleary to see how that was needed and possible, he said.

He is more and more convinced of the need for intergenerational activities in churches, he added.

Although trend studies predict generational wars, they also predict generational shifts, he explained. And more research on generational characteristics should be conducted in light of this and other trends, Cleary continued.

Finally, intergenerational relationships should be encouraged in the church because the New Testament church was

and is an intergenerational community, he pointed out.

The future

Although single adults span the generations, most today

are young, thus the need for trend spotting, said Cleary.

Among single adults today, 75 percent are under the age of 35, most are never married,

and most are unchurched, he said.

Leaders must know "how to be in touch with the secular culture and know how to use it," said Cleary.

Churches have been doing this for many years through the use of socializing opportunities, contemporary music, coffeehouses, and teaching directed to modern problems, he said.

To avoid becoming "just another YMCA," said Cleary, a church's single adult ministry must meet one criteria. If a program or project doesn't help accomplish the Great Commission, it shouldn't be adopted, he continued.

Single adult ministries should avoid referring to single adults as singles. By doing this, singles are not identified as adults.

Finally, every church can have a ministry with single adults if church members begin making "friends for Christ" with single adults, he said.

Cleary encouraged churches to determine their church culture by using the *Single Adult Ministry Solution Resources Pack* from LifeWay, which offers a single adult user friendliness survey. *B&R*

Ministry Trends

- ▶ **Single adult leaders need to give the glory to God** if they are going to be successful in the future, Cleary said.
- ▶ **Create a "PrayerWorks Company"** or a ministry based on prayer, he said.
- ▶ **Develop a needs-based ministry** which is led by lay leadership teams. The teams can be a "bridge of ministry to needy areas of lives," he said, which takes the pressure off of the main leader to do it all and empowers single adults to lead their own ministry.
- ▶ **Become servants** as Jesus was a servant to others while also a leader, he said.
- ▶ **Adopt God's perspective on people and circumstances.** God not only views people differently than humans, but "he sees who they can become," Cleary said.
- ▶ **Leaders should develop a support community.** This follows the model of the Apostle Paul who had a network of supporters, he said.
- ▶ **Live out a Great Commission-driven ministry** which can make sense out of cultural trends for a very confusing future, Cleary said.

Cleary accepts call to Arizona

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Tim Cleary, single adult ministry consultant, LifeWay Christian Resources, for 14 years, and part-time minister to single adults, First Church, Nashville, for five years, has accepted the call as minister to senior adults, North Phoenix (Ariz.) Church.

Cleary has led single adult ministry for almost 20 years. He was single adult ministry consultant for the Missouri Baptist Convention while minister of education/youth at Sherwood Church, St. Louis, Mo.

Cleary said he is not leaving single adult ministry in his new role, which he begins Nov. 8. About 58 percent of senior adults are single adults, he noted, and the number of senior adults is growing. He will be developing a prototype ministry for senior single adults, he said.

Most importantly, he said, he knows his new calling is of God. *B&R*



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.
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- 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.

Partnership Prayer Requests
October/November

- 28 — Pray for Laura Lane, IMB missionary to Costa Rica, as she holds cooking classes and home Bible studies.
- 29 — Pray for the staff and ministries of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.
- 30 — Pray for Christians to mobilize for spiritual awakening in Canada.
- 31 — Pray for Craige and Ellen Steele, IMB missionaries to Brazil. Steele is the team leader for the state of Rio de Janeiro.
- 1 — Pray for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan's annual meeting to be held Nov. 3-5 at Thunder Bay Church, Alpena, Mich.
- 2 — Pray for churches in Michigan that currently are without pastors.
- 3 — Pray for Patrick Binns, premier of Prince Edward Island, Canada. Ask God to bless Mr. Binns with walking with integrity.
- 4 — Pray for 62 Tennessee volunteers who led simultaneous revivals Sept. 27-Oct. 6 in the Jacarepagua area of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Ask God to bless their works.

Dislikes 'Protocol'

I would like to respond to the guest analysis by L. Joseph Rosas (in the Oct. 14 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*). He stated that the proposed Protocol for College Trustee Selection provides a WIN-WIN situation. If he meant it was a win for Carson-Newman's trustees and the Executive Board, then it is a WIN-WIN situation. When there are winners there are usually losers and everyone that cherishes their right and the long-held tradition of electing trustees to our colleges will lose if this Protocol is adopted in its present form.

If this passes, Tennessee Baptists will no longer elect any college trustees. We will be allowed to approve trustees but if we fail to approve any trustee, the Committee on Boards, along with the trustees, will bring a new nominee — but not to the convention. The new nominee will be presented to the Executive Board. If this sounds like an election to you, then you would have been very comfortable with the election process in the old Soviet Union. You will be welcome to vote for the nominee but if you vote against one, then the higher wisdom of the Executive Board will take over to relieve us of the responsibility.

When my rights are taken away I do not feel like a winner.

Carson-Newman's trustees will win because they will be rewarded for breaking our trust and the Executive Board will win because they will take over the convention's place in yet another area of decision-making, but we as Tennessee Baptists will lose a very precious right and responsibility.

If our colleges need more freedom in selecting trustees, let us consider some reasonable changes without asking us to give away the store.

Charles D. Bailey
Louisville 37777

Superb article

The article in the Oct. 14 issue regarding the decline of

Writer chooses not to observe Halloween

This time of year, store shelves are stocked with merchandise for Halloween. As usual, gruesome masks and costumes are plentiful.

As a child, Halloween was so much fun. Even in my 50s, I eagerly looked forward to the day and delighted in decorating and planning parties for my Sunday School class.

Three years ago a dear friend told me her pastor had preached an anti-Halloween message. I thought: This was my time of year and nobody was going to spoil it. I was a pastor's wife and was well aware of its pagan origins, but I was not into all that evil, gory, and perverse stuff. Then she related she'd told another member: "The way I look at it, if it's all right with Ann and Larry, it has to be OK." I was troubled by that statement and the trust it implied.

Despite being raised in a Christian home, being saved at 16, and married to a loving husband, lasting peace and joy eluded me. I experienced bouts of depression and panic attacks.

In 1996 while attending an *Experiencing God* weekend for couples, God in his grace and mercy healed by life. He revealed to me that the problem all along had been a heart problem — bitterness.

It's amazing what a cleansed heart and an intimate personal relationship with the Creator of the universe will do. Pleasing him and desiring to be like him became the compelling desire of

my heart.

Deep down I knew that Halloween had to go. All Halloween items were smashed with a hammer or cut to shreds. The trash man had quite a load. I called my friend to ask forgiveness for misleading her family all those years into believing that this Halloween business was OK.

But it wasn't over. That Halloween in an unwise, last minute decision, I bought some candy. As I leaned down to drop candy in a little boy's bag I was overwhelmed with the deepest sense of sorrow. I realized that my obedience had only been partial. Turning off the porch light, I repented and promised the Lord that I would never again associate with Halloween.

The message was clear. Every time I celebrated Halloween, I associated with those very principalities, powers, and rulers of darkness mentioned in Ephesians 6:12. The Bible says that Christians are to be light in a lost and dying world. All appearance of evil is to be avoided. A Christian participating in this holiday opens themselves as well as their families to an association with darkness beyond imagination. It is not debatable. Celebrating Halloween is incompatible with a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Ann Salmon
Murray, KY 42071

forced termination of pastors was superb. It fits my situation perfectly and one layman even commented that it could have been written by a member of our church. I survived a vote-out attempt in August. The deacons cited petty doctrinal differences in calling for a vote, but the real issue was the number one reason in your article — control. The real battle was over who was going to run the church.

Thankfully, the congregation voted to retain me as pastor with a two-thirds majority and we have now elected a new slate of deacons who support me.

Although it was a heart-wrenching experience for me, my family, and many church families, I felt the strong leading of the Lord to stay and it has proven to be very beneficial. I am now closer to the Lord, my family, and to many more people in church as a result of this trying experience. Many of my opponents have left the church, thus paving-the way for God to

move in a great way.

I would strongly encourage any pastor who feels pressured to leave to stay with his flock. In John 10, Jesus told about the "hireling shepherd" who sees the wolf coming and flees. A "good shepherd," however, will remain and face the enemy.

It may be easier to circulate resumes and move on to another church when trouble comes, but the thing to do is to stay and confront the "wolves in sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15). Following this advice will also lead to a decline in forced terminations.

Nathan Livingston, pastor
Knob Creek Church
Seymour 37865

Not looking forward

I am writing to comment on the ad (Sept. 30) from Carson-Newman College on page 17 of the *Baptist and Reflector*. Although there may be some who look forward to sending their children to Carson-Newman

College, I am not looking forward to sending my children, neither do I have any intention of sending my children to this "school of higher learning."

How can I send my children to a college that takes the "higher critical" approach of learning the Bible, which lends itself to weak pragmatism and existentialism?

We have a deacon in our church whose daughter attended Carson-Newman College some years ago. He does not rejoice in what she learned there. His daughter came home and began to question the doctrines and values of her dad and her church theologically after attending her first semester at Carson-Newman College.

No, we do not look forward to sending any of our children to Carson-Newman College until we see a move on Carson-Newman's behalf to hire a more conservative faculty in its theology department.

Terry R. Tuley, pastor
Smoky View Church

Church of the Covered Dish

By Thom Tapp, pastor, Oral Church, Lenoir City



Column asks question: to applaud or not?

By Lonnie Wilkey, Editor

I recently read a column by Tom Adams which appears regularly in the *Illinois Baptist* state newspaper.

The headline immediately caught my attention: "No applause in church, please."

I am old-fashioned to the point I do not personally applaud in church except on rare occasions. Sometimes I have felt like I was the only person in the world who does not applaud in church. Thus, the title was particularly intriguing.

Adams, a retired director of missions in Illinois, wrote: "To applaud or not to applaud? That's the question. How does a congregation respond to stirring music? Some burst into spontaneous applause. Others unite in a vigorous chorus of 'amens.' Still others combine a mixture of all of these, obviously uncertain as to what is appropriate."

I have been in churches that do all of the

above. What really is appropriate?

A case can be made for both sides of the applause issue, especially following music.

On one hand, is the applause for the "performance or performer?" Or, on the other hand, is it a sincere form of appreciation for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?

It's a tough call to make. I was reared in church with the teaching that the house of God is a holy, reverent place and that applause is not appropriate. Many feel it is OK to clap in church.

Adams, in his column, agreed that a case could be made both pro and con for applause. He related about one church in Illinois which took an "official" stand on applause. The newsletter of this church listed several reasons for withholding applause after the performance. The primary reason noted: "Applause tends to bring attention to the messenger rather than the message. In a worship setting the message should be emphasized. (Some say we should 'give the

Lord a handclap.") OK, but why is it the Lord always gets a better handclap when the performers are better and less when they're mediocre? Also, if it's the Lord getting the praise, why don't we give the preacher an occasional standing ovation? Or maybe we should cheer when someone exercises the gift of service or drops his offering in the plate."

Adams went on to write that the church does make exceptions for children, non-worship situations, and special performances that have required much preparation.

So, do we applaud in church or not? That can only be answered by the individual or the church. For those who do applaud, be considerate of those who do not.

We all need to honor God in our own special way. Prolonged applause is sometimes distracting for those who prefer to honor God silently. The important thing is to make sure God is glorified through our actions. *B&R*



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Teacher: "Johnny, how can we prove the world is round?" Johnny: "I never said it wasn't."

Take this truth

Someone said, "If you can't make it, fake it." Will Rogers once said: "We're all ignorant — it's just on different subjects." People will forgive you for admitting a weakness, but will despise you for trying to deceive them.

Memorize this Scripture

"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court." — Matthew 5:25 (NIV)

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to know when to hold and when to fold." ■

grading the movies

helping families find videos with values

by Rod Gustafson

Movie: "Quest for Camelot"

U.S. Rating: G

Time: 83 minutes

Overall: B-

Violence: B-

Sexual Content: A

Language: A

"Quest for Camelot" is Warner Brothers Studio's latest attempt to pull in some of the big profits that Disney has enjoyed from its never-ending line of animated features. Certainly Disney and their animation department has turned out some, may I say, performances of less than Herculean splendor. Yet, after watching "Quest for Camelot," it seems the home of Bugs Bunny is still no match for the mouse house.

This umpteenth adaptation of the Camelot story has teenage Kayley seeking revenge against Ruber, a wicked knight who killed her father and fled the kingdom.

Violence takes a front seat during most of this film and the music fails. This movie shows Warner Brothers' capacity to use computer effects, but they need that "wascally wabbit" to put some character (s) into their work. ■ — © 1998, One Voice Communications

Are we to judge our brother? No and Yes

from the church

by Kevin Shrum, pastor Inglewood Church Nashville

The events of the last several months have provided many "teachable moments" for my children concerning the nature and scope of truth, forgiveness, and grace. In many ways, the crisis we face as a nation could be a defining moment for us in a good way if we will learn from the situation at hand. This is why I have addressed some of the important issues that continually emerge in conversations about the crisis. One such issue is the issue of judging another person.

You may have heard someone say, "I can't judge someone else." What does the Bible actually say about this issue? I believe we must clearly explain this issue to

our children so that it can help them divide between right and wrong, between the truth and a lie.

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:1-6), Jesus gave an extended explanation of having a "judgmental attitude," which is the issue Jesus was attacking. Many have quoted the first verse of this passage and then stopped, avoiding the rest of the passage. Verse one reads, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged." Sounds perfectly simple, right? Maybe! Jesus does say that the way we judge people is the way we will be judged (v. 2). This means that when we look at a person's actions we must begin with the premise of grace. We are not in the place of God.

Read on, however. Jesus states "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? Here Jesus addresses two further issues: first, the issue of hypocrisy and second, the issue of propor-

tionality. That is, notice the difference between the words "speck" and "plank." We have to keep things in perspective.

Read on. Verse five goes on to say, "You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Notice two things. We are to cleanse our vision and then take the speck out of our brother's eye." So, we are not prohibited from helping our brother see the error of his way, but we are to do so in humility, having made sure our own seeing is clear.

Then, are we to judge our brother? No and Yes. No, in that we cannot judge the ultimate motive or condition of a person's relationship with God. Yes, in that God and his Scripture have called us to judge/discern between matters of right and wrong, good behavior and bad behavior, good ideas and bad ideas. Does the Scripture not instruct us to discern between the spirits (1 John: 4:1-3)? In fact,

isn't discernment a spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:10)? We can judge the fruit of a person's life without becoming "personal" or "judgmental." If we can't judge or discern in this way, then we are left open to a "moral free-for-all."

In summary, by living non-judgmental lives what are we saying? We are saying that we are not in the place of God to judge a person's eternal relationship with God. However, God has called us to judge/discern between behaviors, ideas, and concepts. If we send our children into the world with a non-discerning attitude they are in trouble because they are going to hear many ideas that are not right and see many behaviors that are simply wrong. So, if someone tells you not to judge, make sure that you don't buy into a wrong understanding of what the Scripture says, or what God has called us to do. ■ — Reprinted from the newsletter of Inglewood Church with permission.

Authors offer suggestions for 'the war against parents'

FamilyFAX

Edited by Char Gray

Shhhhhhhh! One of the best-kept secrets of our generation is that big business, government, and society wage a silent war against parents. Caring, nurturing, and cherishing — the essential components of good parenting — are nonmarket values.

Authors Sylvia Ann Hewlett (a conservative) and Cornel West (a liberal) identify three waves of attack against parents in *The War Against Parents*.

(1) Managerial greed — 17.1 million managers are paid \$1.3 trillion (50 times the federal

budget for Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

(2) Governmental red-tape — In 1996, six million low-income households paid more than 50 percent of their income for rent.

(3) Poisonous pop culture — Sixty percent programming on MTV links violence to degrading sexual portrayals. Many radio and TV talk shows bombard both children and parents with negative images of moms and dads.

These authors discovered remarkable consensus across gender, race, and income levels for what parents need to fight these waves — time and money.

Ninety-one percent of the people want flexible work hours; 72 percent want matching hours for school and work days.

Eighty-six percent want tax breaks for parents with kids; 81

percent want to raise wages above the poverty level.

What can society do to revitalize and revitalize the art and practice of parenting thus replenishing our children and renewing our nation?

Hewlett and West offer "A Parent's Bill of Rights" as a systematic response to relieve pressures on parents. They believe that rewriting our cultural script will lend new status to the parental role. Mothers and fathers are entitled to:

► Time for children — paid parental leave

► Economic security — a living wage

► A pro-family electoral system — incentives to vote

► A pro-family legal structure — stronger marriages, support for fathers

Rutledge Falls in Tullahoma

Small rural church reaches beyond county

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

TULLAHOMA — Two years ago 60 people at Rutledge Falls Church on a Sunday morning was considered "a good day."

On Sunday, Oct. 4, Rutledge Falls had 162 people in two morning worship services, something the church has had to do since last December.

Cosmo Roberts, chairman of deacons at the small rural church outside Tullahoma in Coffee County, says leadership is the key.

That leadership has been provided by T. Frank Smith, a former Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources) employee and director of the church development division for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan for about 10 years before "retiring" and returning to Tennessee about two years ago.

After moving to Beech Grove Smith contacted Duck River Association Director of Missions Baylon Hilliard and said he would be available for supply or interim pastorates.

In just a few months Smith was contacted by Rutledge Falls where he preached for several Sundays in a row.

"God was working things out," Smith said.

Smith preached the entire month of December 1996 and on Jan. 1 became the full-time pastor at Rutledge Falls. His predecessor had been a bivocational pastor and the church decided they wanted a full-



T. FRANK SMITH, second from left, pastor of Rutledge Falls Church, is flanked by lay leaders, from left, Dave Koops, Bill Gannon, and Cosmo Roberts. Roberts and Gannon are long-time members while Koops has been a member for about a month.

time pastor, said Roberts, who also was a member of the pulpit committee which recommended Smith.

"We all decided we wanted a shepherd — someone to lead us, to visit, to witness — rather than a great evangelist," added Bill Gannon, another member of the pulpit committee.

The bonus, he added with a grin, is Smith also "preaches pretty good."

Four months after Smith became pastor attendance had climbed from about 60 in worship to 125.

In his 20 months at Rutledge Falls the church has had 103 additions. This church

year Rutledge Falls has had 62 additions, including 38 by baptism.

The growth has expanded beyond the church's traditional "territory." Members have come from six different counties and from towns such as Murfreesboro, Shelbyville, Lynchburg, Winchester, and Summitville.

"We've suddenly become a regional church out in the midst of the boonies," Smith said.

Church leaders admit they stepped out on faith. When Smith was called the church had a budget of \$59,000. This year will end with more than \$100,000 in receipts. "Not bad

for a little church in the sticks," Gannon said.

Smith also has led the church to be more missions minded. Before his arrival Rutledge Falls was giving 8 percent to the Cooperative Program and 2 percent to associational missions. Those figures have now been increased to 10 and 5 percent, respectively.

Gannon noted their pastor "instills in us that it's everybody's job to be a soul winner. We have had some go out to beat the bushes who never did before."

"I've tried to put our focus on touching lives," Smith said.

The church has developed as its theme "Touching Lives with the Love and Good News of Jesus Christ," Smith said.

In the brochure he developed about the church, Smith wrote that the intent of Rutledge Falls is to be "God centered, Spirit powered, Bible based, purpose driven, and people focused."

Smith noted God is building a team at Rutledge Falls. "Little by little, God is bringing in leaders and pulling together a team to give us the foundation for what he has in store for the future," Smith said.

He noted two years ago 12 members were doing everything and, as a result, they were experiencing burn out.

This year, 70 people have been elected to some position in the church, Smith noted.

One of the church's newest members, Dave Koops, moved recently from California to



Manchester. Someone there told him and his wife "something is going on at Rutledge Falls."

"We decided to come and experience it for ourselves. The love of God was evident here," he said.

Rapid growth has consequences, Smith acknowledged. "For the most part our people recognize growth has problems and we work through them."

Already the church has "saturated its Sunday School space," Smith said. "In another year, without relief space the growth will stop. It already has slowed down," the pastor observed.

"We have outgrown this building in just about every way," he added.

Though the 105-year-old church has little room to expand at its present site, it does have a 500-acre farm that is being held in trust for the congregation. The church will have full access to the property in 2001. For now, the church has a parsonage and an activities building on the site.

Smith sees the possibility of a satellite church in the future. "When God's timing is right I believe we will have two congregations in two locations," he said. "The Lord will work those things out," he affirmed. *B&R*

First Church, Rickman

Rickman congregation holds foundation service

For Baptist and Reflector

RICKMAN — Members of First Church here held a foundation service Oct. 11 to celebrate the addition of a new sanctuary.

Pastor Mike Gay conducted the service, based on Ezra 3:8-13.

The congregation gathered on the foundation of the sanctuary and sang praises and offered prayers to God just as the people of Israel did when they began rebuilding the temple.

Gay emphasized the church has been chosen by God to build life-changing ministries in the community, not to just construct a building.

First Church has experienced a growth explosion the past year as the present sanctuary has been filled to capacity.

The addition of the building

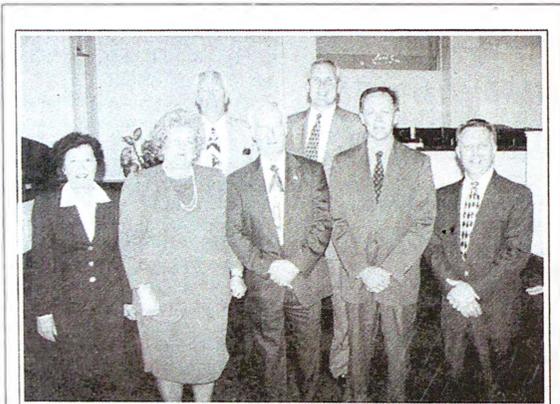
is seen as only the beginning of what God wants to do with the church, Gay said.

Construction was set to be-

gin Oct. 19. The congregation hopes to have its 1999 New Year service in the new sanctuary. ■



FIRST CHURCH, RICKMAN, held a special service Oct. 11 to celebrate the addition of a new sanctuary. Participating in the service were, from left, front row, Randall and Randy Dial, building committee; back row, State Representative John Mark Windle, Pastor Mike Gay, Kevin Cantrell, Clarence Spicer, Dannie Phillips, building committee; and Ken McMillen, director of missions, Riverside Association.



Chilhowee Association elects officers

Chilhowee Association messengers elected new officers during their Oct. 15 meeting at Everett Hills Church in Maryville. From left are Carol Williams, Dotson Memorial Church, WMU director; Edith Churchman, Madison Avenue Church, financial secretary; Glenn Grubb, First Church, Friendsville, moderator; John Churchman, director of missions; Danny Davis, Calvary Church, Alcoa, clerk; Bob Brown, Broadway Church, Maryville, vice moderator; and Richard Holder, First Church, Alcoa, outgoing moderator.

In East Tennessee resort area

Missionaries lead outreach to craftsmen

By Cornie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

GATLINBURG — Each year as autumn arrives with the promise of brightly colored hillsides, thousands of people travel to the most famous hillsides of the South, the Smoky Mountains, to enjoy the view. While in the area, many of those travelers also attend the Gatlinburg Craftsmen's Fair which is held during October.

Once again this year thousands browsed through the Gatlinburg Convention Center which hosted so many craftsmen showing their wares that they spilled over from the main hall into the center's foyers.



BLACK

As visitors browsed, they might have met a person manning a booth who was wearing a brightly colored patch reading Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries. The SMRM workers were "booth-sitting," or giving the craftsmen a break from 10-hour days.

Booth-sitting was one of the ways SMRM workers ministered at the annual craftsmen's fair, explained Bill Black, missionary who directs SMRM here along with Cindy, his wife. The Blacks have directed the effort for 16 years.

As SMRM workers booth-sat, they often got to explain they were helping the craftsmen without charging for the service because of their love for God, explained semester missionary Wendy Avrett and volunteer Sara Barnes, who led the fair ministry this year.

In addition to booth-sitting, the ministry workers, who included about 20 local volunteers, provided 200 care



ADMIRING A PAIR of earrings made by craftsman Sandi Branson, center, of Asheboro, N.C., are Wendy Avrett, left, semester missionary of Georgia, and Sara Barnes, missions volunteer of Mississippi. Avrett and Barnes became acquainted with Branson at the Gatlinburg Craftsmen's Fair, where they worked with Missionaries Bill and Cindy Black, who led a ministry to fair craftsmen. — Photo by Connie Davis

packages with assistance from Woman's Missionary Union of First Church, Gatlinburg. The care packages included information about the ministry. The fair ministry workers also led Sunday morning worship services and provided booth reminder cards to fair visitors.

The cards allowed visitors to record booths they wanted to visit again and the location of that booth. The booth reminder cards also included a spiritual message from the fair organizers and the missionary couple.

In past years, the ministry workers have found unusual ways to help the craftsmen, said Bill Black. When

craftsmen have become ill, ministry workers have taken them to local physicians, he reported.

And one year the ministry helped a couple who was caring for their grandchildren. The Blacks took the two young boys to day camps which were being conducted in the area by SMRM workers. Then the missionaries cared for the children several more hours each day to assist the couple, recalled Black.

This year the experience was a good one, according to Avrett and Barnes, who participated in the fair ministry for the first time although both have served SMRM before. Avrett is a recent



graduate of Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and Barnes is a Missions Service Corps worker of Crystal Springs, Miss.

Barnes said she felt comfortable because she and her late husband had been craftsmen.

She said she was particularly blessed after she shared during a Sunday morning worship service her struggles following the recent death of her husband, Glenn. Many who attended the service told her of similar struggles and how they were encouraged by her, said Barnes.

Unfortunately, many Christians think they don't have the skills to be a missions volunteer, but they're wrong, said Barnes.

"People have no idea about the areas of ministry opportunities here," she explained. In fact, she has had trouble explaining that she has not been on vacation here.

Avrett said she has learned much about God's leadership, which led her to her present position, and about witnessing. She said Black helped her by explaining a Christian needs to earn the right to be heard but needs to be an intentional witness.

And her efforts have been fruitful, she said. The free booth-sitting effort intrigues people, she said. "When you can offer them that and then the grace of God, it's even better," said Avrett. **B&R**

David, Sarah Tydings to retire from Grainger Association

For Baptist and Reflector

BLAINE — David Tydings, director of missions, Grainger Association, and Sarah Tydings, secretary, announced their retirement during the Oct. 16 meeting here, effective Jan. 31.

He has served the association for 10 years and she for five years. David also has

served as pastor, Chinquapin Grove Church, Bluff City; Bowmantown Church, Jonesborough; Clarkson Church, Clarkson, Ky.; Baileyton Church, Greeneville; and New Lebanon Church, Greeneville. He is a graduate of Carson-Newman College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

They will retire in Bean Station. ■



SPEAKING TO Sarah and David Tydings after they announced their retirement plans during the Oct. 16 association meeting are Mike Webber, associational Sunday School director, and Delena Johnson, associational WMU director.



Grainger Association Leaders

Leaders of Grainger Association who will serve during the next year were thanked by messengers during the Oct. 16 meeting. They are, from left, back row, Garry Samsel, treasurer, Blue Spring Church; Terry Greenlee, music director, New Blackwell Church; Gary Satterfield, vice-moderator, New Blackwell; and Robert Spradlin, moderator, Block Springs Church; front row, Sarah Tydings, office secretary and clerk, Blue Spring Church; Carla Lee, substitute pianist and assistant clerk; Indian Ridge Church; Gina Hipsler, pianist/organist, Adriel Church; and David Tydings, director of missions. — Photo by Connie Davis

President seeks forgiveness from home church

Baptist Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — President Bill Clinton has written a letter in which he asks forgiveness from the fellow members of his home church. Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church here, read the two-page letter at the conclusion of the congregation's morning worship service Oct. 18.

Clinton "expressed repentance for his actions, sadness for the consequence of the sin on his family, friends, and church family, and asked forgiveness from Immanuel," Horne said in a two-sentence, written statement released to the *Arkansas Baptist* newsmagazine.

The letter "was the right thing for the president to do," Horne told the *Arkansas Baptist* in an interview following the statement. Horne said he "sensed an affirmation of the president's request for forgiveness" from "the great majority of the people" attending the Oct. 18 morning service. ■

SBC Annuity Board seeks retirees in need

By Thomas E. Miller Jr.
For Baptist Press

DALLAS — The Annuity Board of the Southern Baptists Convention is asking laypersons, active pastors, and association directors of missions to help locate retired ministers or their widows in financial need.

O. S. Hawkins, president of the Annuity Board, said the agency needs assistance because "these dear people often are reluctant to ask for help. We know there is suffering, and we are prepared to help, but someone who lives close to these people must help us locate them."



HAWKINS

"What we need," said Hawkins, "is for people in local churches to be sensitive to the living conditions of aged ministers or their widows, and call us or write us to give us names and addresses. We'll provide applications for relief and guidance for completion of the forms."

Anyone with knowledge of a possible eligible person should write Ileen Bray, manager of supplemental assistance, Annuity Board, SBC, P.O. Box 2190, Dallas, TX 75221; or call 1-800-262-0511.

Relief for ministers or their widows is one of three ministry

assignments given the Annuity Board by the Southern Baptist Convention. Since 1918, the board has been the primary arm of financial relief for aged ministers or their widows.

The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program Allocation Budget provides just over \$1 million each year to the Annuity Board, and the board distributes this money without administrative charge. In addition, the board, through its Retired Ministers' Support Fund (RMSF), supplemented the Cooperative Program money with almost \$600,000 last year. The RMSF receives direct gifts and bequests.

The average relief recipient is 78 years old, with total monthly income of \$802 and monthly expenses of \$980. Monthly supplemental assistance grants allowing recipient

discretion on expenditures are up to \$200 per month for single persons or \$265 per month for couples. Expense relief grants may be paid toward specified expenses including utilities, telephone service, prescription drugs and medical bills, eyeglasses and dental expenses,

hearing aids, medical or burial insurance, minor household or auto repairs and funeral expenses.

Expense grants usually are paid directly to the provider, but may be paid as reimbursement to the recipient for approved expenditures. ■

Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Union University continues its search and invites nominations and applications for the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The College is the largest academic unit of the university, comprising ten departments and approximately 70 full-time faculty.

In addition to responsibilities in the areas of performance evaluation, long range planning, budget planning and administration, professional development, salary, promotion, and tenure, the dean also provides support to department chairs in recruiting and selection of new faculty and program development and evaluation. The dean is the College of Arts and Sciences principal liaison with other academic and administrative units within the university and is the College's representatives to many off-campus constituent groups.

Applicants must have an earned terminal degree in one of the disciplines of the College of Arts and Sciences; a research doctorate is preferred. Those applying must have five years of full-time teaching experience, with a proven record of excellence in teaching, interdisciplinary perspective, and commitment to the objectives of Christian liberal arts education. A strong record of effective academic administration in higher education at or above the department chair level is required. The successful candidate will have a history of vibrant innovative leadership, communication skills, and openness with faculty and other groups on and off campus. In addition to evidence of professional achievement, applicants' academic background and scholarly pursuits should warrant appointment to the faculty of one of the disciplines in the College.

Union University is located in Jackson, Tennessee, and has a student population of over 2,300. Now one of Tennessee's fastest growing colleges, Union is built on a 175-year heritage of academic excellence and Christian commitment. The undergraduate liberal arts curriculum is central to the mission of the university. All faculty and staff are professing Christians and are expected to be active members of an evangelical Christian church. Preference in hiring will be given to Southern Baptists.

Review of applications will begin Fall, 1998, and will be accepted until the position is filled. To apply, send a letter of application, curriculum vitae, and names of three references to: Cynthia Powell Jayne, Chair, Dean of Arts and Sciences Screening Committee, Union University, 1050 Union University Drive, Jackson, TN 38305, fax: (901) 661-7175, e-mail: cjayne@uu.edu.

For more information about Union University, please see our web site at www.uu.edu. Union University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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RE-OPENING SEARCH VICE PRESIDENT for ACADEMIC AFFAIRS Campbellsville University

Located in the South Central Kentucky city of Campbellsville (population 11,000), on a 70-acre campus, Campbellsville University is re-opening a search for a Vice President for Academic Affairs and chief academic officer, effective January 1999. The Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for all faculty, degree programs in five Schools and Colleges; enrollment management, advising and academic support areas including the library and institutional research.

Campbellsville University is a private, comprehensive coeducational university undegreed by a strong liberal arts component. Affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Campbellsville is open to students of all denominations. The student population has grown 150 percent during the past 10 years to an enrollment of approximately 1,660 (fall 1998), from 32 states and 25 foreign countries making it one of the fastest-growing institutions in the Southeast United States.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- A successful candidate will have the following attributes:
- An earned doctorate (Ph.D. preferred) and teaching experience
- Support for independent higher education institutions
- An interest in strategic planning and innovative leadership
- Understanding and respect for the mission and goals of Campbellsville University as an affiliate of the Kentucky Baptist Convention
- Commitment to enhance teaching, research and administration through advanced technology
- Ability to understand and interpret the complexities of private and public higher education
- Ability to recognize growth opportunities for lifelong learning through undergraduate, graduate, and distance learning programs
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills to interact successfully with faculty, staff, students, alumni and community groups
- Ability to foster intellectual community and provide creative leadership to a diverse and talented faculty.

Salary is dependent upon qualifications and experience.

The Search Committee will begin its review of candidates' credentials immediately and will continue until a candidate is selected. Applicants should send a letter of interest, transcripts and curriculum vitae, along with the names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses if available of three persons who agree to serve as references. Submit materials to:

Mrs. Betty Kidwell, Director of Personnel, e-mail betty@campbellsvil.edu, Fax: (502) 789-5060
Campbellsville University, 1 University Drive, Campbellsville, KY 42718-2799.

Campbellsville University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, or national and ethnic origin in admission, financial aid, student activities, employment or other policies.

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MINISTER: Full-time Minister of Education, Colonial Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn. Send resume to Sonny Randle, 1659 Cranford, Memphis, TN 38117.

MINISTER: Norwood Baptist Church is searching for a full-time Minister of Youth/Education. Please send resume to Norwood Baptist Church, 1725 Wilson Road, Knoxville, TN 37912.

MINISTER: First Baptist Church of Black Mountain, N.C., is seeking a full-time Minister of Youth and Children. Send resume and inquiries by Nov. 15 to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 656, Black Mountain, NC 28711.

MINISTER: 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.

LEADER: Desiring part-time Music/Worship Leader. Contemporary and traditional music. Resume to First Baptist Church, 7310 Overbey Rd., Fairview, TN 37062. (615) 799-2944.

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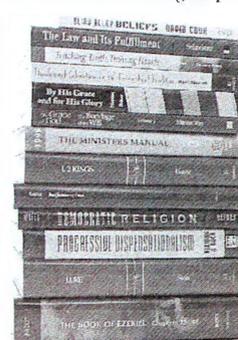
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leaders

■ **Mansfield Gap Church, Jefferson City**, has called **Kyle Cate** as pastor.

■ **Hillcrest Church, Manchester**, has called **Jeff Myers** as pastor. He formerly served as pastor in Sweetwater.

■ **First Church, Deer Lodge**, honored **Pat McGee** for 10 years of service as pastor Oct. 4. Speakers were J. W. Bargiol, director of missions, Big Emory Association; Omer Painter, director of missions, Tennessee Valley Association; Mike Jones, and Jerry Lester spoke along with several deacons and members from the church. The church has added classrooms and a fellowship hall during McGee's tenure.

■ **Gateway Church, Atoka**, ordained **Bodie Young** to the ministry Oct. 25.

■ **Randall Runions** has been called as interim pastor, **First Church, Clifton**. He is chaplain at South Central Corrections Center.

■ **Tony Earl** has resigned as pastor of **Marbledale Church, Knoxville**.

■ **Alamo Church, Rives**, has called **Terry Sturdivant** as youth director.

■ **Beaver Dam Church, Knoxville**, has called **Tim Hopkins** as minister of education/administration. He has been associate pastor, education/administration, **First Church, Tupelo, Miss.** The church ordained **Luckey Steele**, minister to youth and young adults, Oct. 11. Also, member **Jeremiah Russell** accepted the call to ministry and will be ordained.

■ **First Church, Fairfield Glade**, has called **Cris Okeefe**, a student at Bryan College, Dayton, as youth minister.

churches

■ **Memorial Church, Crossville**, celebrated its 29th anniversary Sept. 29.

■ **Dixie Hills Church, Bolivar**, bought a 30-passenger bus recently.

■ **Hickory Hills Church, Mount Juliet**, will hold its annual fall revival Nov. 8-11. Terry Wilkerson, pastor, Round Lick Church, Watertown, will speak. Gary Buck, minister of music, Richland Church, Nashville, will lead the music.

■ **Brints Chapel Church, Middleton**, will hold a Preachers' Conference Nov. 5-7.

■ **Oak View Church, Walland**, will hold revival Nov. 15-18. Phil Glisson, evangelist based in Memphis, will speak.

■ **Berclair Church, Memphis**, will celebrate Homecoming Nov. 8. The morning worship service will feature a music program and Tibby Rankin, a former member, will speak. A luncheon will follow. For more information, call the church at (901) 683-3585.

■ **First Church, Mount Juliet**, held revival recently. More than 100 people made spiritual commitments, of which 35 made professions of faith and 12 joined the church by letter. Henry Linginfelter, evangelist based in Alcoa, spoke.

■ **Fairview Church, Sweetwater**, held revival recently. More than 100 people made spiritual commitments, of which 15 made professions of faith and 11 joined the church by letter. Henry Linginfelter, evangelist based in Alcoa, spoke.

■ **Trinity Church, Brighton**, will celebrate Homecoming Nov. 8. Since it is a mission of Smyrna Church, Burlison, J.V. Reeves, retired pastor, Smyrna Church, will speak.

■ **First Church, Woodland Mills**, will hold revival Nov. 2-8 and Harvest Day Nov. 8.

■ **First Church, Obion**, has voted to buy some land next to the church to allow it to build a Fellowship Hall.

■ **First Church, Gleason**, will hold its annual Harvest Day Nov. 8. Chris Ward, former pastor, will speak. A meal and afternoon music program will follow the morning worship service.

■ **Friendship Church, Knoxville**, will hold a Judgment House Oct. 29-31. For more information, call (423) 693-1031.

■ **Women on Mission of First Church, Bluegrass**, will hold a Craft Fair Nov. 7 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

■ The college ministry of **Calvary Church, Knoxville**, will present Judgment House '98 Oct. 27-29 and 30-31. For more information, call (423) 523-9419.

■ **Arlington Church, Knoxville**, is collecting items for several churches in Russia and needs an amplifier, acoustic system, microphone, electric guitar, computer, and copier. For more information, contact Ray Ridgeway at (423) 522-5180 or 522-5189.

■ **First Church, White**



BREAKING GROUND on Oct. 11 for a new facility are leaders of **Raleigh Church, Memphis**, at a new church site in North Bartlett. Leaders are, from left, Jimmy Grinder; John Finley, pastor; Buck Farmer; Gwen Blair; David Russell; and Bill Pace, a businessman. The new facility will be a 50,000-square-foot sanctuary and gym with educational space. Special guests were Ronnie Wilburn, executive director, Shelby Association, and the mayor of Bartlett.

Pine, will hold "The Verdict" an alternative to haunted houses, Oct. 28-31. To make reservations, call the church at (423) 674-0566.

■ **First Church, Strawberry Plains**, will hold an old fashioned revival Nov. 15-18. Speaking are Glenn Grubb, Al Smith, Hubert Bunch, and Ken Richey.

■ **Pomona Church, Dickson**, will hold revival Nov. 1-4. Harold Carman will speak and Neil Stretcher will lead the music. Stretcher also will perform on the piano on Nov. 1 at 1:30 p.m. For more information, call the church at (615) 446-3018.

associations

■ **Riverside Association** will hold a Youth Gathering Nov. 7 at First Church, Jamestown. Kent Shingleton of Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board Ministries will speak and Amanda Peavyhouse will present music. For more information, contact the association at (931) 823-2612.

■ **Beulah Association** will hold a Senior Adult Meeting at Calvary Church, Union City, on Nov. 6. Tom Pope will speak.

■ **Holston Valley Association** held its annual meeting Oct. 13-14 drawing 590 messengers and visitors. Linda D. Williams, administrative assistant, was recognized for 20 years of service with a gift of \$2,000. Messengers added Indian Ridge Church, Church Hill to the association. Glenn Ketron is the pastor. Messengers commissioned 36 volunteers to serve in Venezuela next year.

■ **Big Hatchie Association** churches will host Union University students who will

speak during church services Nov. 1.

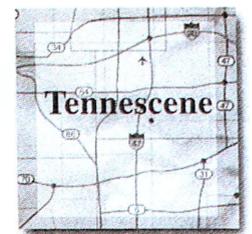
■ The Day Baptist Women of **Knox County Association** will observe World Day of Prayer Nov. 2 at Smithwood Church, Knoxville. For more information, contact Mitzi Lundy at (423) 546-3731.

■ **Dyer Association** held its annual meeting recently and voted to repair and renovate its associational office and to conduct a Mission Probe next year. And it passed a resolution in which messengers committed to pray daily for the president and vice president of the United States and for other government leaders and "for the return of morality and spiritual integrity within the Oval Office and a quality of life that will be exemplary for the families of America." Finally messengers added Beech Grove-Viar Church, Dyersburg, to the association.

■ **Truett/Stewart County Association**, which is based in Dover, has a Web Page on the Internet. It can be accessed



LEADERS OF HOLSTON VALLEY association pause during the annual meeting. They are, from left, Gene Nelson, minister of youth/education, First Church, Rogersville, newly elected moderator; Benny Keck, pastor, Oak Grove Church, out-going moderator; Linda Williams, associational administrative assistant; John Parrott Jr., director of missions; and Delmont "Seven" Gibson, pastor, Elm Springs Church, newly elected associate moderator.



at <http://homepage.usr.com/w/wmgray>.

schools

■ **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**, honored retired music professor Charles H. "Fessor" Jones on Oct. 10, Homecoming, by introducing the Charles H. Jones Endowment for the A Cappella Choir. The endowment was developed from gifts by alumni of the school's A Cappella Choir and is the first to support a school program.

hospitals

■ **Baptist Hospital, Nashville**, has announced it has no shortage of flu vaccine and continues to offer flu shots at its seven walk-in medical centers. For more information, call (615) 284-1879. Also the hospital recently donated equipment to the Metro Fire Department to enable paramedics to provide better care to accident victims.

■ Three state hospitals, of which two were Baptist hospitals, were named among the nation's quality health care leaders in an annual survey by National Research Corporation. **Baptist Hospital, Nashville**; **Baptist Memorial Hospital - East, Memphis**; and the University of Tennessee Medical Center, were cited in the survey's report, which appeared in *Modern Healthcare*, the leading trade publication.

God requires stewardship, money expert tells leaders

By Charles Willis
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Stewardship — the careful and responsible management of resources entrusted to people — is a requirement of God, not an option, money management expert Larry Burkett told state Baptist convention stewardship directors recently.

Burkett, founder of Christian Financial Concepts, Gainesville, Ga., told state leaders meeting at LifeWay Christian Resources here that stewardship "is not complicated. It's just that common-sense stewardship isn't being taught in America."

Burkett, whose daily radio broadcasts, "Money Matters" and "How to Manage Your Money" are carried on more than 1,100 outlets worldwide, maintains Southern Baptists "have been duped into not dealing with this, in part because some people feel it is wrong to talk about money (in church).

In some cases, pastors aren't practicing it themselves."

A believer in using the Bible as a guide to money management, Burkett said an initial search of Scripture for references to money led him to more than 700 entries that deal with subjects such as borrowing, lending, and saving money.

Evangelical Christians average giving 2.4 percent of their income to all the religious causes to which they contribute, Burkett said. In contrast, they average paying 11.5 percent interest to repayment on personal debt.

"They don't have a material problem," he said. "They have a spiritual problem related to finances. What we see financially is a spiritual indication

of what is inside the heart.

"You won't change those attitudes with financial programs," he continued. "You change attitudes by changing their hearts. You can't tell them they need more money; you need to train them to be good stewards."

Burkett said he believes God's plan is extremely simple. For example, he said scriptural guidelines for borrowing money include only three principles: Borrowing should be short-term; it should be uncommon; and one should not take on an obligation without a sure way to repay it.

"We, as a denomination, are

the best," said Burkett, a Southern Baptist layman. "We do significant work in missions and evangelism. If we have one fault, it is that we haven't done enough (education) on money. It isn't a matter of talking people into doing the right thing. If you can talk them into something, someone else can talk them out of it."

"You need to in-undate people with Scripture related to money until no one can come along behind you and undo that," he said.

Urging state leaders to lead the way in "freeing God's people," Burkett told them, "you cannot be financially bound and spiritually free. Christians have

financial bondage of debt, greed, or even having too much money.

"In no way does the Bible say Christians should not have a surplus," he continued, "but in the SBC we probably have \$3 trillion among members. Money is being hoarded by people who have no useful purpose for it. No one has ever challenged them on, 'How much is enough?'"

Others have drifted away from God "and are buying things they cannot afford. They don't see how much they could give to God," he added.

Burkett said Southern Baptists need to teach people Scripturally about money "and help them, including how to make out and live within a budget." ■



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Identifying job

By Dale Denning

Focal Passage — Nehemiah 1:1-6a, 11; 2:1-8

The first step in dealing with a need is to identify the need. Nehemiah recognized the great vulnerability that was created by the absence of the wall around Jerusalem. Having been destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 B.C., the great city would never regain its strength without the reconstruction of its walls. Matthew Henry describes the situation thusly, "This made the condition of the inhabitants both very despicable under the abiding marks of poverty and slavery, and very dangerous, for their enemies might when they pleased make an easy prey of them." Nehemiah recognized the situation and then began to move.

His first step in handling this great task began on his knees. One of the more common mistakes that occurs in the Kingdom's work centers around tasks begun without the direction of God. An example would be a Christian who identifies a need and attempts to meet that need without first seeking the direction of the Father. Nehemiah recognized the need for the wall around Jerusalem, but before he moved into action, he sought God for guidance.

Alvin Walker tells of an amazing race he witnessed years ago. The young girl who won was completely blind. Her coach stood behind the starting line in her lane and watched her carefully. He used a radio to talk to her. She wore a band around her head that concealed a receiver at her ear. If she got near the edge of her lane, he would coach her back into the center, and near the end of the race, he told her that another girl was about to overtake her. He advised her that it was time to sprint. With a final burst of "full speed ahead," she broke the ribbon. If we are to be victorious in the challenges that God reveals to us, we must be in constant communication with the Lord.

We can also see in our text the great concern that Nehemiah had for the rebuilding of the wall. When he stood before the King Artaxerxes, the king realized that something was troubling him. It was the compassion for the rebuilding of the wall that existed in Nehemiah that opened the door for the beginning of the project. Zeke Moore tells of an interesting pastime in which many Christians are becoming involved. "Many of God's people are involved in the practice of 'prayerwalking' these days. In prayerwalking one simply walks through a pre-designated location (perhaps a neighborhood, or a mall, or a downtown area; the location can be a familiar or an unfamiliar one) and prays silently for the buildings, vehicles, and persons he or she sees. Enthusiasts testify that prayerwalking is a great way to re-sensitize yourself to the acute spiritual needs which exist all around you. You are able once again to see others as Jesus himself might see them ... and to be moved with compassion."

After the need is identified, no adequate steps will be taken to resolve the situation until the right attitude is achieved. Are you moved by the needs that exist around you? Are you sensitive to the plights of those around you? Nehemiah's success in beginning the rebuilding of the wall originated out of a heart that simply cared.

Finally, Nehemiah stood before the king and offered his request boldly. He identified the need, he sought God's direction, his compassion opened a door, and he resolutely walked through the opened door. Not only was the wall rebuilt, but Nehemiah was appointed governor of Judah. God honored the compassionate boldness of Nehemiah. Caring is important, but it does not stop there; that care must be translated into bold action. — Denning is pastor, Chapel Hill Church, Milan.

Courage to speak for God

By Darrell Nimmo

Focal Passage: Amos 6:1; 7:7-15

Amos was one of four unique prophets of the eighth century BC. He was accompanied by Hosea in the northern kingdom Israel while Isaiah and Micah preached in the southern kingdom Judah. Amos was the first prophet to emerge during this period. Hosea soon followed and could have very possibly overlapped some of Amos' ministry and work. Amos prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II. Uzziah was the king of Judah. Even though God had called Amos to be the prophet for Israel, he was actually from the southern kingdom of Judah and from a little town called Tokoa. Hosea, on the other hand, was a native of Israel. Amos was indeed a true prophet and delivered his charge with boldness and courage.

Family Bible Lesson

Sure judgment on the complacent rich (ch. 6:1-14). This was a very prosperous time for Israel. Assyria had not emerged as a real threat. Both Israel and Judah had extended its borders. Because of this success and prosperity the people had become complacent. They also had become desensitized to the needs of the poor and suffering. They indulged themselves in the very best of everything while giving an apathetic ear to the cries of the poor. They prided themselves on the lie that God was pleased with them because he had prospered them. However, he was not pleased.

God has always had a special place in his heart for the poor and afflicted. An apathetic attitude toward the poor and suffering will bring sure judgment from God. This was the case with the wealthy Israelites. Amos prophesied that since the wealthy would not heed the plight of the poor, everything they had would be taken away and they would become destitute.

Working with God's leaders

By Calvin Metcalf

Focal Passage — Exodus 17:8-13; 18:17-22

Somewhere in the archives of history, the record of human achievement must describe a God who enables it to happen. In the arena of life we are always faced with contestants toward which we are no match. If God were not our greatest ally and a willing participant in the battle, the enemy would soon conquer. God is the author of our destiny, and only in him do we find the inspiration to confront the obstacles that lie before us.

Israel was being nurtured by God to face the challenges of their wilderness sojourn. God did not remove all danger and conflict from their path. Rather, he used danger and conflict as a source of discipline and teaching. If Israel made it to the Promised Land, they would have to participate in the struggle with God. Our lesson today deals with conflict outside and inside the community of God's people.

Israel faced her first military conflict with the Amalekites. This was a new experience for them since they had not been trained for battle. The only thing they knew was slavery and work. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau. This made them the distant kin of the Israelites. The Scripture writer identifies them as the aggressor in as much as "they came and

Explore the Bible Lesson

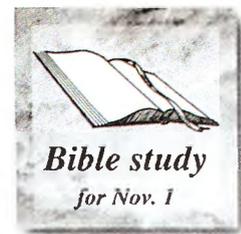
fought against Israel." The presence of several thousand people moving through the region was a threat to the Amalekites as well as others.

Moses was faced with the task of organizing an army. He gave the assignment to Joshua, who led a select group of men into battle. Once again the writer projected God as the source of victory. Moses went to the top of the hill and held up the rod of God. When it was held high, Israel prevailed; when it was lowered, Amalek prevailed. As Moses grew weary, he was assisted by Aaron and Hur.

This accents the importance of using the skills of others in confronting the enemy. Some are front-line folk; they engage in battle at the point of conflict. Others serve behind the scenes, offering spiritual and moral encouragement. It took both for Israel to be victorious.

The second part of this lesson focuses upon conflict within the community of Israelites. Internal problems were a constant drain upon Moses' time and energy. The people were dependent on him to settle their disputes. From morning to evening he listened to their grievances.

Jethro, the priest of Midian and fa-



Visions of mercy and judgment (ch. 7:1-9). Amos had three visions in the seventh chapter. The visions of locust and fire were so

disturbing that Amos prayed that God would forgive the people and not bring upon them the disaster he had planned. God withheld judgment twice because of the prayers of Amos. However, in the third vision God made it very clear he would no longer withhold judgment. He used the analogy of a plumb line set in the midst of the people. A plumb line is used to measure a structure to exact vertical standards. Here, God was telling Amos that the people did not line up on his divine standards. The religion they practiced was empty and full of hypocrisy. They would give the appearance of worship, but were committing injustices against the poor and the helpless at the same time.

Confrontation with Amaziah (vv. 10-17). Whenever we stand up and speak for the Lord we can expect opposition. There will be those who try to discredit our message and distort the truth. Christians today experience the same opposition as Amos did when they express and live out their convictions. Amos was undaunted by Amaziah's accusations. Amaziah was a professional priest appointed by the king. He had concluded, that like himself, Amos was a professional priest too and told him to go prophesy in his own nation Judah. Amos informed him that he had been a farmer and herdsman. He was just an ordinary man with an extraordinary calling. His calling came from God, not a king, and because God's authority was greater than a king, he had all the authority he needed to prophesy wherever God told him to.

Amos understood his calling. We must do the same. We must always remember the poor and homeless. God expects us to participate in the relief of those less fortunate. We must not blind ourselves to those who shiver in the cold under an overpass. And, we should speak the truth of God unashamedly and with courage and boldness. — Nimmo is a member of First Church, Hendersonville.

ther-in-law of Moses, paid a visit to the camp of Israel. He brought with him Moses' wife, Zipporah, and their two sons. Apparently they had remained with Jethro while Moses went to Egypt to confront Pharaoh. Moses reviewed the great things God had done for the people of Israel. Jethro was impressed and praised Yahweh for what he had done for his people.

Jethro observed Moses' role as a judge and saw it as more than one man could perform. He strongly advised Moses to share the judicial responsibilities, lest he weary himself. In fact, Jethro gave Moses a plan of shared leadership. In this plan, Moses would certainly maintain his position of leadership with the people. He would make known the will of God and the way they should live. However, Moses would select able men who feared God, who were trustworthy, and would not accept a bribe to handle the minor disputes. Moses would be free to handle the major problems.

Moses' character is revealed here in two ways. First, he was willing to accept the counsel of another religious leader as to a better way of governing his people. Second, he was willing to delegate responsibility and trust the skills of others. Moses was indeed a servant leader rather than an egotistical dictator. — Metcalf is pastor emeritus, Central Church, Fountain City, Knoxville.



global/national news

Draper receives Mullins award

Baptist Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — During an Oct. 20 chapel service, Jimmy Draper, president of the Nashville-based LifeWay Christian Resources, received Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's highest honor — the E.Y. Mullins Distinguished Denominational Service Award.

Southern's President R. Albert Mohler Jr. said the rarely conferred award was given to Draper "in recognition for his remarkable legacy of leadership" and for his courage and conviction "at a time of great controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention when a clear theological voice was so badly needed."

Draper has been at LifeWay (formerly Baptist Sunday School Board) since 1991. He was pastor of First Church, Euless, Texas, for 16 years prior to moving to Nashville. Draper served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1982-84.

The E.Y. Mullins award is



DRAPER

named for the fourth president of Southern Seminary who led the seminary from 1899 until his death in 1928. ■

New Lottie Moon video notes call to faith, sacrifice

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — A new video on the life of legendary Southern Baptist missionary Lottie Moon offers insight into God's will for the largest evangelical denomination in the United States as it enters the 21st century.

"A Journey of Faith and Sacrifice" retraces Moon's life from her roots in Virginia and Georgia to China, where she spent her adult years sharing the good news of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, ultimately at the cost of her own life.

The 32-minute video tells Moon's story from the perspective of International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin, who reflects on Moon's life through his own experience of calling and missionary service a century later.

The video is available for \$12.95 from the IMB by calling toll-free 1-800-866-3621. ■

IMB missionary Debbie McCord dies

Baptist Press

WACO, Texas — Deborah Wall McCord, a Southern Baptist missionary to South Korea, died of cancer Oct. 11. She was 45.

A native of Atlanta, McCord and her husband, Steve, were appointed missionaries to Korea in 1981 by the SBC International Mission Board. She served as a church and home outreach worker in Taejon and Seoul until 1997, when her husband was named administrative associate director for IMB work in Southeast Asia and Oceania.

The family returned to the U.S. in April after she was diagnosed with cancer. In August they accepted a position as missionaries in residence at the board's Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va.

She is survived by her husband and two children. ■

Volunteers needed in Puerto Rico

Baptist Press

SAN JUAN — Southern Baptist disaster relief feeding units began pulling out of hurricane-ravaged Puerto Rico Oct. 21 as efforts shift to securing volunteer teams for rebuilding and repairing damaged homes and churches.

The withdrawal, however, is far from an indicator that conditions are back to normal. One month after Hurricane Georges blasted through the island on its deadly path across the Caribbean, about a fourth of the population is still without power — many with no relief in sight for several months. More than 250,000 residents have applied for federal disaster assistance due to Georges in Puerto Rico, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Five SBC disaster relief feeding units prepared more than 88,000 meals through Oct. 20.

Individuals and groups interested in long-term rebuilding efforts in Puerto Rico should contact Mickey Caison, disaster relief coordinator for the North American Mission Board at (770) 410-6442.

IMB needs more overseas summer missionaries in '99

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptist missionaries need more than twice as many college students to fill overseas summer missions assignments in 1999 than they had in 1998.

Although more than 700 students participated in overseas summer missions assignments in 1998, almost 500 requests went unfilled that year, said Mike Lopez, who directs student missions recruitment for the SBC International Mis-

Public wants stiffer policies against underage drinking

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Americans strongly support tougher policies to restrict the drinking of alcohol by people under 21 years of age, a recently released survey reported.

The national survey found 96 percent of the more than 7,000 people interviewed are concerned about teenage drinking. The report said a majority of Americans favor limiting underage drinking by stiffer controls on the sale and advertising of alcohol, as well as restrictions of drinking in public places.

Survey results also indicated 61 percent of respondents favor a ban on television advertisements of beer and wine, 67 endorse a prohibition of hard liquor advertisements on TV, 83 percent favor penalties for adults who provide alcohol to underage

drinkers, and about 75 percent agree with a "zero tolerance" policy for underage drivers who test positive for alcohol in their blood.

The survey was commissioned by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

"Whether Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative, citizens across the country clearly want effective regulation of alcohol promotion and sales," said Alexander Wagenaar, who directed the survey.

A Southern Baptist specialist on alcohol and other drugs said he was "extremely encouraged" at the survey's results.

"Such strong public opinion about the disgrace of underage teenage drinking sends a clear message to those who profit from the sale of alcohol," said Barrett Duke of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. ■

sion Board.

Now, overseas missionaries have requested more than 1,500 college students next summer.

"This is an urgent situation," Lopez said. "These are real needs that students can meet during Christmas or spring breaks, during J-term or summer breaks, or even up to nine months in a semester assignment. We want to make sure there is not one need overseas that goes unmet."

To apply for summer, semester, or short-term assignments, call 1-800-789-GoYe (4693). The application deadline for summer assignments is March 10, 1999. ■

Historic N.C. church cuts ties with SBC

Associated Baptist Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Following a three-month study, members of the historic First Church here, have voted overwhelmingly to end the congregation's 153-year relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention. Members of the church, which was established in 1812, voted 264-23 at a business meeting in late September in favor of a "resolution of identity" saying, "regretfully, we no longer identify our church with the SBC."

Though the moderate church has a long history of disagreement with conservative leaders of the SBC, the final straw leading to the break was a denominational state-

ment this June calling for wives to submit to their husbands. Another factor was the attendance at this year's convention for independent Baptist leader Jerry Falwell as a voting messenger, according to a report in North Carolina's *Biblical Recorder*.

The vote does not affect the church's relationship with the Raleigh Association or the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. ■

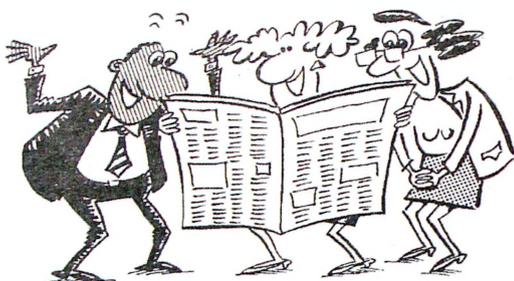
Medical plan rates to remain level

Baptist Press

DALLAS — The Southern Baptist Annuity Board has announced there will be no general rate increases for its insurance and health care plans on Jan. 1, 1999. Also, the board announced plans to expand access to preferred provider organization networks and a new nationwide integrated pharmacy program for prescription drugs.

"We are keenly aware that affordability of health care is a huge concern for most pastors and other church staff members," said Annuity Board President O. S. Hawkins. "Avoiding a Jan. 1 increase, and introducing other cost-saving measures, is the kind of good news we like to deliver."

In addition to the PSP medical plan, the board's long-term disability, life, accident, and accidental death and dismemberment plans also will have no rate increase Jan. 1. ■



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