

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

Volume 164/ Number 47

Statewide Edition

December 9, 1998

this week's news

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

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Truckstop ministry assists needy travelers

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

FRANKLIN — The truckstop located at Exit 61 of Interstate 65 in Middle Tennessee is the site of activity 24 hours a day.

Dozens of trucks enter and exit the parking lot. Sometimes as many as 100 "big rigs" or 18-wheel tractor trailers park here. Most trucks fill an outer corner of the 10 acre lot set aside for them.

Other trucks, along with cars, are queued for gas. Passengers join the orderly bustle, making their way to the main building.

Some travelers enter separate entrances of the main building to a restaurant or vehicle repair garage. Others pass through the main en-

trance into the truckstop headquarters.

Truck drivers or "truckers" seem at home inside as they check out the amenities, milling around the aisles of snacks and drifting upstairs.

On the second floor they find a home away from home of sorts. They discover laundry facilities, showers, a somewhat private room where they can use a bank of phones, a room hosting a big screen TV where they can relax, and a library of free materials.

They also find more than physical comfort offered here. Travelers see signs announcing a chaplain and a Sunday service in the TV room. If they peruse the library materials, they find most are on spiritual themes. And if they report a need, they find the chaplain,



CHAPLAIN Jack Taylor of Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries in Franklin visits with Mary Babineaux, a driver from Cankton, La., by her truck.

worship leaders, or the owners/managers of Franklin 76 Auto/Truck Plaza will try to

help them, whether they have a physical or spiritual need. — See Truckstop, page 3

State Evangelism Conference to provide inspiration and training, Weathersby says

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — The State Evangelism Conference will provide both inspiration and training, says Ken Weathersby, evangelism specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The annual meeting will be held Jan. 18-19 at Judson Church, Nashville.

The conference will introduce the "Tennessee School of Evangelism," 12 seminars designed to provide training in various aspects of evangelism.

The seminars are designed to provide tools for churches so they can be mobilized to proclaim the Gospel to the hurting and lost of Tennessee, Weathersby said.

"The Evangelism Conference will inspire and motivate God's people to do what Christ has called us to do," Weathersby said.

Former TBC Executive Director D.L. Lowrie, now pastor of First Church, Lubbock, Texas, returns to provide the interpretations for the theme, "Mobilize the Saints '99."

Featured speakers include Bob Record, president of the North American Mission Board and evangelist Junior Hill of Hartselle, Ala.



HILL



LOWRIE



PORCH



RATLIFF



RECORD



SANCHEZ

Speakers and time of message follows:

Monday afternoon, Jan. 18, session begins 1:45 p.m.

2:20 p.m. — D.L. Lowrie

2:50 p.m. — Junior Hill, evangelist, Hartselle, Ala.

3:25 p.m. — Benny Jackson, evangelist, Germantown

4 p.m. — Bill Stafford, evangelist, Chattanooga

Monday evening, Jan. 18, session begins at 6:45 p.m.

7:10 p.m. — Bob Record, president North American Mission Board

8:25 p.m. — Junior Hill

Tuesday morning, Jan. 19, session begins at 9:15 a.m.

9:45 a.m. — D.L. Lowrie

10:20 a.m. — Daniel Sanchez, professor of missions, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas



RECORD



SANCHEZ

Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 19, session begins at 1:25 p.m.

1:35 p.m. — Allan Lockerman, pastor, First Church, Cleveland

2:05 p.m. — Joe Ratliff, pastor, Brentwood Church, Houston, Texas

3 p.m. — Tennessee School of Evangelism

Tuesday evening, Jan. 19, session begins at 6:45 p.m.

7:35 p.m. — D.L. Lowrie

8:30 p.m. — Joe Ratliff

For more information, contact Weathersby at (615) 371-2059. ■

CP gifts up for month; below budget needs

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist gifts to the Cooperative Program in November were \$129,597 over the amount given last November, but short of budget needs.

Tennessee Baptists gave \$2,203,992 in November during the first month of the new fiscal year.

The year-to-date amount to meet budget is \$2,622,253.

The TBC budget was amended at the annual meeting in November to add \$100,000 to the budget of Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy. The convention action resulted in a total budget increase of \$160,000 to allow for funds to be sent to the Southern Baptist Convention.

TBC Executive Director James Porch expressed appreciation for the November gifts and expressed optimism about reaching the challenging budget goal.

"We are grateful for the support shown by Tennessee Baptists in November and are confident they will rise to the challenge of meeting our budget for 1998-99." ■

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Tennessee Baptists begin work in Central America

By Marcia Knox
For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief has helped send three teams to Central America and will send a fourth team this week (Dec. 10-17), according to state Disaster Relief director Tim Bearden.

Early assessments in Honduras show that 27 Baptist churches were destroyed along with 23 pastors' homes and 367 homes of Baptist church members. Plans are being put into place to begin sending reconstruction teams from across the Southern Baptist Convention as early as February. Reports from other countries were not available at press time on Monday.

Gene Williams, TBC Baptist Men's Ministries adult missions awareness specialist, is scheduled to return Dec. 11 from an assessment trip that included visits to Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

An eight-member medical team, which

included two Tennessee Baptist nurses served in Nicaragua Dec. 1-7, led by Michael Wall, an Edmond, Okla., pastor.

Serving on the team were Kathy Myers of East Maryville Church, Maryville, and Gail Mulberry of Hillcrest Church, Clarksville.

A five-person general cleanup team is in Honduras this week, led by Bill Curington, a member of Roseberry Church, Mascot. Other team members are Curington's wife, Joyce; Keith Lyle, Central Church, Johnson City; Bob Stephenson, First Church, Hendersonville; and Bethany Irvin, a BSU student at Motlow State Community College, Tullahoma. The team will work through Dec. 12.

A 12-member medical/translation team also is in Honduras this week, led by physician Harold Hurst of Virginia. Tennessee Baptists on the team are Alvin Word, enterostomal therapist and member, First Church, Cleveland; Jean Quinn, nurse and member of First Canaan Church, Clarksville; Brenda Hebert, nurse and member of Knob Creek

Church, Columbia; Judy Jackson, pediatric nurse and member of Faith Church, Bartlett; Roy Renfro, retired surgeon and member of Forest Hills Church, Nashville; and Hilda Cobb and Gene Elliott, both translators and members of First Church, Fairview.

A 10-member construction team will work in Nicaragua this week (Dec. 10-17) and will be led by Louie Hailey Jr., a member of First Church, Jackson. Other Tennessee Baptists on the team are Lynn Edmonson, Steve Lea, Bryan Freeman, Mike Sherrad, and Mike Primeaux, all of First Church, Jackson; Ray Hailey, West Jackson Church, Jackson; David Hoover, Parkview Church, Jackson; and George Atwood, First Church, Trezevant.

Bearden said financial donations for relief work are still being accepted. He noted almost \$53,700 has been received to date.

Financial donations can be sent to the TBC designated for "General Disaster Relief" or "Hurricane Mitch" to TBC Disaster Relief Office, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728. ■

Nashville ethicist says nation is in need of moral repair

By Pat Cole
For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The moral crisis that has prompted presidential impeachment hearings is symptomatic of a collective ethical breach that needs repair, according to a Baptist ethicist.

"While President Clinton did not create our moral ethos, he soiled it, despite his campaign for personal responsibility and his advocacy for public responsibility," said Robert M. Parham, director of the Nashville-based Baptist Center for Ethics and member of Woodmont Church here. "He is the most visible symptom of our eroding values and a transmitter of the virus deadening ethics."

Nevertheless, Clinton did not create "the hole in our moral ozone" as some have charged, Parham said. "Faulting him only enables the rest of us to escape further from our own failures of omission and commission."

Parham made his comments about the nation's moral breach in a commentary on BCE's new website. The site can be accessed at www.baptists4ethics.com.

Even before the release of independent counsel Kenneth Starr's report that described in detail the affair between Clinton



and White House intern Monica Lewinsky, Americans were pessimistic about the nation's moral climate, Parham said. He cited a study, conducted by *The Washington Post*, Harvard University and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation prior to the disclosure of the Starr report, that found three out of four Americans saw "a dangerous decline in the values on display in the national culture."

Respondents expressed worry

about declining respect for tradition and authority, the coarse content of movies, television, and music, personal dishonesty, and sexual promiscuity.

Parham called for a three-step approach that would help move the nation toward moral repair. They include:

(1) A renewed commitment to the Golden Rule. An emphasis on the simple code of behavior, treat others as you would want them to treat you, is not naive, Parham insisted. Some form of the Golden Rule is taught in numerous religious traditions, and therefore it provides ethical common ground in a multicultural society.

(2) A vision of life as a seamless garment. Parham said that too often people compartmentalize their lives in ways that position individual rights against social responsibility, private life against public duty, moral values against personal freedom and social capital against eco-

nomical capital.

(3) A transformation of personal responsibility into social obligation. Americans need to commit to the African-based proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child," Parham said. Every segment of society, he explained, must contribute to the mending of the moral breach.

"It is in our self-interest for every individual and entity to stop finger pointing and start pitching in," Parham stressed. "When more truth is told, promises are kept, decent speech is voiced, and respect is promoted the common good advances. When the homeless are housed, the hungry are fed, the poor are given hope, justice is served, and fairness is more frequent, the public well-being expands."

While the Clinton crisis will end, the nation's "moral mess" will continue until there is a comprehensive effort to repair the moral breach, Parham said. ■



WILLIAM G. JUSTICE, center, recently received the T.C. Wyatt Award at the 1998 Annual Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the pastoral care department of Baptist Hospital of East Tennessee. Justice, a member of Meridian Church, is a former chaplain and department director with the hospital. He retired in 1990. With Justice are Dan Hix, left, pastoral care director; and Dana Fachman, pastor, Meridian Church.

Riverside DOM Ken McMullen dies

For Baptist and Reflector

LIVINGSTON — Ken McMullen, director of missions for Riverside Association since 1991, died on Monday morning, Dec. 7, of an apparent heart attack. He was 62.

Prior to coming to Riverside, McMullen was pastor of several churches in his native state of Mississippi.

The Pontotoc native was a graduate of Blue Mountain

(Miss.) College.

He was an active member at First Church, Livingston.

McMullen is survived by his wife, Sarah, and four children — Angela Anderson, Lynn Campbell, Amy Carr, and John McMullen — and three grandchildren. ■



McMULLEN

Block layers needed at Camp Carson

For Baptist and Reflector

NEWPORT — Block layers are needed between now and Jan. 1 at Camp Carson to begin work

on the new maintenance building.

For more information or to volunteer, call Curt Fowler at (423) 671-4733. ■

Tennessee evangelist undergirds families

By Kelli Williams
For Baptist Press

JACKSON — As Southern Baptist evangelist Jerry Drace traveled the country in the early 1990s, he asked pastors he met, "Who's hurting the most in your church?"

"Almost 100 percent said the family." So Drace decided to take action.

The current president of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (COSBE) and father of two teenagers used his background in psychology and spiritual values to develop "Families Are Individuals Touching Hearts" (FAITH) weekends to address specific concerns of individuals in the local church — from teenagers to single moms to senior citizens.

"The family today is hurting, and that affects our churches," said the founder of the Jerry Drace Evangelistic Association here. "It doesn't matter if you have a church of 50 members or 50,000 members; if you don't have solid families, you don't have a solid church."

In 1993, Drace began conducting the FAITH weekends, which today fill nearly half of his evangelistic team's yearly schedule. A typical weekend begins with a Friday night married couples banquet. Drace shares "80 Ways to Strengthen Your Marriage"

from a booklet he developed which doubles as an 80-day devotional guide.

Family devotions are the key, Drace said. "I've heard that 92 percent of Southern Baptist families don't have family devotions consistently, and 43 percent never do. That's why our churches are in such trouble today."

Brian Ivey, senior pastor of Highland Church, Vicksburg, Miss., said that message was exactly what his 750-member congregation needed to hear. "A lot of our families know that they need to do devotions together, and the FAITH weekend's focus on making God and prayer time a priority in their home lives was a nice reminder to do that again," he said.

On Saturday morning, Drace invites senior citizens to a session called "Myths of Old Age," which challenges them to see the potential of their elder years. Later in the day, Drace holds a "Dynamics of Divorce" seminar for separated and divorced church members addressing practical issues of time management and career demands, forgiving an ex-spouse, and supporting children impacted by family strife.

A contemporary Christian music concert featuring Drace's music ministry team, Ken and Lois Holland, usually takes place on Saturday night. Afterwards, teenagers attend a session with Drace on such issues as sex, dating, and divorce, with an invitation to a first-time commitment to Christ or a recommitment clos-

ing the evening.

"It's sad when you hear that more church kids watch MTV than non-church kids and that the abortion rate is the same," Drace said. "When I go to eat in people's homes on these FAITH weekends, I always ask the kids if I can see their rooms. You wouldn't believe the stuff on their walls, MegaDeath, Madonna. These kids wake up every morning and see this stuff staring them in the face, and the parents are saying, 'What? It really matters? Yes! It does!'"

During the Sunday School time, Drace talks with single young adults to age 30 who have never been married. "We discuss careers, the challenges of being single and choices of a mate" the evangelist said. "Many young adults don't realize that God cares deeply about these decisions. I tell them he cares not just for their souls, but for everything in their lives."

Drace's sermon on Sunday morning targets the local church's moms and dads.

"I preach on the American family building a home life, how men should be spiritual leaders, and I always give an invitation for families who will commit to daily Bible reading. I ask the husbands to come forward, but sometimes whole families do. At the end of the service, the front of the church and the aisles are packed with people."

On Sunday afternoons, parents of pre-teens and teenagers learn about the characteristics of teenagers, how to communi-

cate with their children, and how to discipline. When the parents ask questions, Drace often lets other moms and dads from the audience field them. That way, all the parents in the church know they're in this together, he said.

On Sunday evening, Drace talks about different people Jesus met in his ministry and how he communicated with them.

The weekend's aim of opening lines of communication and learning once again the importance of the family has inspired and challenged participating churches to become more involved in family ministries.

While churches should do more for the family, Drace said Southern Baptist evangelists also have a responsibility. To enlarge their vision, Drace, as president of COSBE, accepted an invitation from James Dobson to bring two dozen COSBE members and North American Mission Board staff to the Focus on the Family headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo., last August to learn more about vital issues facing the American family — in hopes that the information would help them reach more hurting people.

"I think evangelists who are qualified need to use their ministries to address family issues," Drace said. "If we all work together and recommit to making the Lord the center of our families, I believe we'll soon be a stronger church, a stronger nation, and a stronger world." ■



Dunlap pastor joins TBC staff

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Fred A. Davis will join the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Evangelism/Missions Strategies Group as a church starter strategist for Middle Tennessee, effective Jan. 1.

Davis has been pastor of Victory Church, Dunlap, since 1995. He has held several pastorates across the state.

Davis has planned and conducted field surveys for new mission churches, personally started four congregations; consulted on several new church starts, developed planning models for new church starts, led Sunday School conferences, and more.

He holds three degrees from Andersonville Baptist Seminary, Camilla, Ga., including the doctor of ministry degree.

Davis and his wife, Ann, have two grown children and four grandchildren. ■



DRACE



DAVIS

Truckstop ministry assists needy travelers ...

— Continued from page 1

There are "many hurting people," said Chaplain Jack Taylor, who has led the ministry for the past two years. Taylor, who also is pastor of Santa Fe Church, Santa Fe, said his experiences here are some of the best of his ministry efforts.

The truckstop ministry, which is officially Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries, is sponsored by Maury Baptist Association, which is based in Columbia, by churches, and by individuals. And although the efforts are interdenominational, explained Taylor, the ministry is uniquely Southern Baptist.

Truckstop managers/owners Ron and Terri Lee Clinger, who attend Thompson Station Church, Thompson Station, began the ministry and continue their strong support.

And Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries, a nationwide organization based in Enon, Ohio, is directed by Glen Cope, a Southern Baptist.

Hurting people

Taylor can barely tell some of his experiences here without tears.

He recalled the woman he met one day as he was out among the rigs visiting with truckers.

She was waving to him from the win-

dow of her cab. When Taylor climbed the ladder and she rolled down a window, he saw tears on her face as she asked him for one of the cassette tapes he was distributing. She explained she saw from his identification that he was a Christian chaplain. She said she was lonely and knew a Christian message would comfort her.

Taylor also remembered the family with two young children who were stranded at the truckstop without enough money to return home. Maury Association helped provide the funds they needed.

Some Christians told Taylor the family wouldn't honor their commitment to meet him just prior to leaving. But they did, including children who were clean and dressed in what seemed to be their best clothes for the trip.

He recalled the young man who was a janitor at the truckstop. Taylor also ministers to the about 55 employees of the business.

The man was a Muslim, but he and Taylor had many conversations about their respective faiths. The man was showing a deep interest in the Christian faith before he left the job, Taylor explained.

He also has helped an employee who

lost a family member to suicide and others with family struggles.

Day to day efforts

Taylor spends a lot of time on the parking lot speaking to truckers and distributing materials. The ministry offers New Testaments directed to truckers, audio cassettes of Gospel music and the plan of salvation, and nationwide directories to ministry sites of three Christian organizations — Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries; Truckstop Ministries, Inc.; based in Atlanta, Ga.; and Transport for Christ International, based in Ephrata, Pa.

Taylor said every trucker he has approached has accepted the materials and usually they are glad to receive them.

A few have reported they have been helped by materials or the ministry by writing or calling him, reported Taylor, but the responses are few and far between.

The feedback may not be numerous, but the day to day blessings are enough to drive Taylor, who serves without pay, and lead him to encourage others to participate in the ministry.

With help from others

Taylor said he is inspired by the many Christian truckers.

One day he met a Christian trucker who asked him to pray for his shoulder, which was hurting. Taylor agreed, especially when the trucker stopped him again, asking him to pray for him right then. The two men knelt in the parking lot and prayed. Later in Taylor's office, the new friends were joined by another Christian trucker, who offered some oil to anoint the man in pain. They did that and prayed. As they parted, the man in pain reported it had disappeared.

Taylor is encouraged by the Christian truckers who have assumed the role of chaplain. Some of these chaplains ride with truckers in order to minister to them.

And Taylor is inspired by local Christians. Managers/owners Ron and Terri Lee Clinger help many people, he said, even providing motel rooms and bus tickets for travelers. Now other Baptists help travelers in these ways when they support the ministry. And many Baptists provide materials Taylor distributes and places in the library or Family Life Center.

"People are hurt and burdened and unless you speak to them and ask them you'll never know," said Taylor. "They might just be a prayer from eternity in heaven." B&R



about letters

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

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

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

► Send original copy.

Form letters and 'open' letters will not be published.

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

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

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

Blessings of Christmas

On Christmas Day we celebrate Jesus' miraculous birth by the virgin Mary. Jesus the Son of God was born in flesh but did not inherit the sinful nature that Mary had because he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. The Baby Jesus born in Bethlehem that day in the first century was the Messiah that the prophet Isaiah prophesied about in the Holy Scripture. The custom of exchanging gifts began in memory of the gifts the wise men brought the Christ child. Christmas is the happiest time of the year for Christians all over the world.

The life of Jesus marks the turning point of all history.

The greatest gift that mankind has ever known is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In Jesus' birth we find new hope in our life. In his life we find new strength and in his love we find new acceptance. From the Bethlehem manger to Calvary's cross, Jesus meets every need, and our every purpose in life.

The world is realizing more and more that life is at its best when it is lived most closely in accordance with Jesus' teachings and spirit. Human life fails when it fails to look unto him.

This Christmas as we tell the story of Jesus and share the wonder of his love, I pray that your heart will be filled with joy and gladness.

Frank Stoffle
Seymour 37865

Special thanks

A special "thank you" is in order to Barbara Owen and the TBC staff for making us feel welcome at the Kingsport convention.

PCA International is pleased to provide photography service at the TBC.

Jon Rice
Rockvale 37153

Applauds actions

I wholeheartedly applaud our messengers for the votes at the convention. As one of our retired pastors so passionately stated, we should be "family," but Carson-Newman by the vote of their trustees in April voluntarily withdrew from the "family." Should we reward them with our monies for doing so?

As for the vote to replace Howard Olive, a member of the Executive Board, he should never have been appointed since he has been waist deep in promoting the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Atlanta for many years. The Committee on Boards was wrong in their support and retention of Mr. Olive; therefore, the convention sent a clear message that we want only those who are loyal to our state and national conventions to serve on our Executive Board.

Thank you to the majority of messengers to our state convention who were willing to say "enough is enough."

We love Carson-Newman and Rev. Olive; however I believe that sometimes our Lord expects us to use "tough love."

George L. Gassett
Dickson 37055

Feeling good

For once, I came away from the annual Tennessee Baptist Convention meeting feeling very good about what went on. Opinions were freely expressed, the body of the convention was finally able to influence the decision-making process, and the business sessions were well moderated by our president.

I am concerned, however, by remarks you made in your editorials of Nov. 18. You suggest that the convention should set aside the rules that have always governed our deliberations and make arbitrary decisions based upon some well-meaning sense of "love, compassion, and healing."

You also state that we should "be willing to trust the decisions" of our elected committees. But I must point out that the Executive Board came to the convention ready to present two recommendations which had to be withdrawn or referred to committee because they were in violation of the

bylaws. In addition, four motions were made to amend the annual budget. One was withdrawn, one failed by a narrow margin, but two were overwhelmingly passed over the objections of the Budget and Program Committee. Add to these the two changes that needed to be made in the Report of the Committee on Boards, and one can easily see how many of the leaders of the convention have been seriously out of step with the messengers elected from our many churches.

Let us leave the rules in place and let us allow the messengers to continue to have a say in how their convention operates.

Chris Frances, pastor
Fellowship Church
Knoxville 37920

— I was referring to the fact most messengers came to the convention wanting to discuss the Protocol and wanting to resolve the Carson-Newman issue. I agree wholeheartedly that messengers need to have a say in how their convention operates. Time-honored convention processes provide an orderly method for messenger participation. — Editor

Thanks for reminder

I am writing in regard to the Nov. 18 editorial, "Escrowing funds could have long-term implications."

Thank you for a job well done. Your editorial is well presented and is on target for those on both sides of this very important issue. Thank you for reminding Tennessee Baptists "that our ultimate authority is not our Constitution and By-laws and it is not *Robert's Rules of Order*, it is God's Holy Word, the Bible."

Charles Conley
Whitwell 37397

Support BSUs

Concerning Carson-Newman, our Baptist colleges are cost prohibitive for most people, so in time they probably need to go in their own directions anyway.

The best all around stewardship of our CP money in regards to influencing students is to give it to the BSUs across the state. They have operated quality ministries on shoestring budgets long enough while sending more students to missions and equipping more laity for ministry in the local church than any other organization we have.

P. Tinsley Gunn
Hermitage 37076

Congratulations

Congratulations to those who organized and led Con-

cerned Tennessee Baptists. Your letters, rallies, and efforts are to be commended. You successfully challenged the appointment of my father, Howard Olive, to a second term on the Executive Board, and you escrowed funds for Carson-Newman College.

One who is aligned closely with the CTB organization stated to my father following his election to the Executive Board in 1995 that "your kind of Baptist is not the kind of Baptist we want in the Tennessee Baptist Convention."

With that said, thanks be to God for my father and others like him who are the "kind of Baptists" they are. In a post-denominational age, I thank God for my spiritual heritage in the Baptist tradition because that heritage will transcend the life of organizations or structures created by man (literal interpretation intended).

Thank God for the priesthood of every believer. Praise God for the ever-loving grace to forgive and redeem. Thank God for the new life offered through Jesus Christ.

If "control" is the objective, enjoy the spoils.

But just as civil and religious authorities in 1573 were unable to silence Anabaptists from proclaiming the Gospel, so shall live on the truth of Jesus in Baptists like me.

David W. Olive
Concord, NC 28025

Proud of trustee action

I am not a graduate of Carson-Newman College. In fact I hardly knew anything about the school when I moved to Jefferson City in 1971 as a staff person at First Church. In the years I have been here I have seen Carson-Newman grow to become well known and acknowledged for a committed institute of higher learning. It is a school of committed faculty and students.

I have had many opportunities to become involved in the time I have lived here. It is amazing that so many students spend their spring holidays in missions projects. This past spring some 213 students were involved in SPOTS (special programs other than summer). Many of them are involved in a variety of mission activities in the surrounding area.

Carson-Newman College has been a target of a number of persons going back to the dancing issue years ago. Now they have been pressured because of the allegations that C-N was too liberal to suit their views. Then came the vote of the trustees to change the charter and as a result C-N has been penalized by the withholding of funds.

I'm proud of the action of the trustees because it was done to preserve the integrity of the school, and their continued effort to be a free and faithful institution for those students who come to this campus. May God continue to bless the school and may her friends rise up to give support in these trying times.

Marshall E. Hargrave
Jefferson City 37760

Respectfully disagrees

In the Nov. 25 *Baptist and Reflector*, a letter writer referred to "the ownership argument" and stated, "The TBC has never owned Carson-Newman College." I respectfully disagree. Moreover, the official history of C-NC, written by Isaac Newton Carr, published and copyrighted by the trustees in 1959, contradicts this statement.

I quote from *History of Carson-Newman*, page 320, paragraph 7: "As the convention assumed greater responsibilities for its colleges, the charters were changed to make all of them the property of the convention. Carson-Newman secured this new charter May 31, 1930. From 1918 to 1930 this relationship was based on a strong contract between them, but under this new charter, Carson-Newman became a full-fledged agency of the convention."

Prior to this new charter of 1930, the proposition that the trustees deed the college property to the Baptist Educational Commission of the Tennessee Baptist Convention had been under consideration for more than a year. In a special meeting of the C-NC trustees, Dec. 16, 1919, they submitted their report which recommended that "... the proposition of the Education Board be accepted and the deed transferring our property be executed by the officers of the board." (Minutes, board of trustees, pp. 84-85).

The college conveyed title to all its property to the Educational Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention properly signed and recorded on April 19, 1919. (*History of Carson-Newman*, pages 83-85. For the full text of the contract/trust deed, see pages 389-394.)

Many of us disagree with other opinions expressed by the letter writer. However, the facts cited in this letter speak for themselves.

It is my prayer that the Carson-Newman trustees will restore the trust necessary to continue an ongoing relationship.

James Stroud, pastor
Third Creek Church
Knoxville 37921



SBC CP totals up for month, year

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for November and for the fiscal year both showed increases over the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

For November 1998, CP receipts totaled \$11,942,959, an increase of \$73,178 or .62 percent over last November.

For the first two months of the SBC fiscal year, CP gifts totaled \$27,469,016, an increase of \$2,423,208, or 9.69 percent over last year.

CP receipts exceeded the SBC's Program Allocation Budget by \$1,634,729, or 6.33 percent. ■

Georgia Baptists split vote on controversial issues

Baptist Press

COLUMBUS, Ga. — Messengers to the 177th annual session of the Georgia Baptist Convention divided over cultural/theological issues in voting on proposed constitutional

requirements for church membership within the convention.

An amendment to the state constitution had been proposed by the convention's executive committee that would have put into place a process for withdrawing fellowship from member churches that (1) affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior or (2) engage in non-biblical charismatic worship practices that are divisive and disruptive. Opponents of the amendment stated their objections were based on Baptist polity and that the issue ran deeper than homosexuality and charismatic practices.

At the suggestion of the committee bringing the report, the amendment was divided before the vote so that the homosexuality issue and the charismatic issue could be dealt with separately.

The part of the amendment dealing with homosexuality did pass by a large majority, but the vote related to charismatic practices was close enough to require a ballot vote. The vote was 1,190 for and 747 against. The 61.44 percent voting yes did not meet the two-thirds re-

quirement for passage.

In other business Georgia Baptists approved a record \$42.6 million CP budget and elected Marietta pastor Gerald Harris president by acclamation. The 2,400 registered messengers was the lowest registration of any Georgia convention in more than 10 years. ■

Kevorkian charged with murder; CBS receives criticism

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — A Michigan prosecutor charged Jack Kevorkian with first-degree murder as a criticism of the CBS television network mounted after its showing of a video tape of the assisted-suicide promoter injecting a terminally ill

man with lethal drugs.

The Nov. 22 telecast by CBS' "60 Minutes" of the fatal injection by Kevorkian and the death of Thomas Youk, 52, of Waterford, Mich., prompted an investigation that led to a Nov. 25 indictment in Oakland County (Mich.).

Kevorkian was charged not only with murder but with illegally assisting in a suicide and with delivering controlled substances, according to *The Washington Post*.

CBS and "60 Minutes", meanwhile, received some harsh rebukes for what critics charged was using death for ratings and promoting assisted suicide and euthanasia. Criticism came not only from religious, pro-life, and disability movement leaders, but

also media critics and editorial writers ■

Falwell begins TV talk show nationally

Associated Baptist Press

LYNCHBURG, Va. — Saying he is tired of being the "token conservative" on America's "liberal" talk shows, Jerry Falwell has launched his own weekly television talk show.

"Listen America with Jerry Falwell" premiered in October and is carried on broadcast and cable outlets and to individuals with satellite dishes. By January the program should be carried on networks that reach 60 million homes, Falwell said. ■



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MINISTER: First Baptist Church of Chattanooga, Tenn., is receiving resumes for Minister of Youth and Recreation. This position is one of six full-time pastoral ministers for a regional congregation averaging 600 on Sundays. Inclusive in theology and creative in ministry, FBC is supportive of both SBC and CBF. Resumes should be mailed by Jan. 15 to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 401 Gateway Ave., Chattanooga, TN 37402.

PEWS: 24 solid oak pews, 12 ft. long, blonde with mauve pad. Riverside Church, Harriman, (423) 882-2247 or 882-9646.

MINISTER: Heritage Baptist Church of Douglasville, Ga., is seeking a full-time Minister of Music and Youth. If you are available for consideration and would like more information about the church and the position, please mail your resume to 8800 Rose Avenue, Douglasville, Ga., 30134 or fax to (770) 947-0544.

ORGANIST: Sunday multiple services and Wednesday rehearsal. Moeller organ. Contact Ralph Brown at (901) 772-9753 or send resume to P.O. Box 177, Brownsville, TN 38012.

PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN: FBC, Joelton, seeks a part-time Director of Preschool & Children's Ministries. The church, 25 minutes from downtown Nashville, averages 550 in Sunday School total attendance, with 150 in the preschool/children's departments. Send resumes to FBC, P.O. Box 86, Joelton, TN 37080, Attn: Personnel Committee. For further info, call church office: (615) 876-0527.

PIANIST: Needed at small Baptist church Sunday mornings only, Hickory Valley, Hardeman County, (901) 764-2605.

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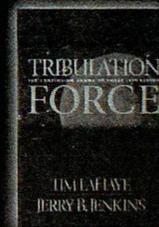
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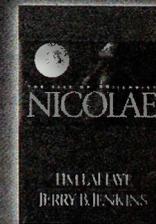
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leftbehind.com

Gift of creation

By Martin Babb

Focal Passage — Psalm 104:1-5, 13-15, 24, 29-34

I recently spent three months with our senior adults on a New England Fall Foliage Tour. It was a wonderful time to enjoy the beauty and fullness of God's creation, both the foliage and the senior adults. God has given us a beautiful world in which to live, and he expects us to take care of it. As we begin, I need to offer a word of caution. This is a lesson on stewardship. Please, before you change the channel, realize that I am not going to ask for money. Many of you have recently survived church budget planning for 1999 and the last thing you want to hear is stewardship. I feel your pain. To put it in biblical terms, fear not! This is about being good stewards of God's creation.

Our focal passage is taken from the 104th Psalm, and speaks to the majestic power of God. In the first verse, the Psalmist praises God for his greatness. In verses 2-5, he tries to describe his wonder by using poetic language. Do you know anyone who likes to impress people by using big words in normal conversation? Well, even that person would have difficulty describing the majesty of God. (Be sure to consult your teacher's guide or a Hobbs Commentary for a more complete picture of this poetic language.) The following lines are from one of my favorite hymns and just scratch the surface of wonderment: *All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays. Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise. Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea. Singing bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.* (Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," p. 7, The Baptist Hymnal [Nashville: Convention Press, 1991]).

Verses 13-15, 24, and 29-30 bring out the magnificent provision of God. What is the provision of God? He not only created us, he sustains us. We are dependent on God for our daily existence. He causes the rain that makes the grass grow for the animals and the crops grow for the farmers. He is not some mad doctor who formed his creation and then sat back and watched everything happen, uninterested. God cares about every aspect of his creation. Jesus tells us in Matthew 10 that God knows the number of hairs on our head. That's the kind of God we have. Even the smallest detail does not go unnoticed, or without care. During this season of Advent, it is appropriate that we remember the coming of God's greatest provision — Jesus.

In verses 31-34 we see the Psalmist, overcome with joy and gladness over God's creation, offering matchless praise to God. Here is one person who is committing himself to rejoice in the Lord. Each of us could probably use a dose of that joy and commitment in understanding fully God's creation. We should be awed and overwhelmed just by looking around at God's beautiful world, inspired to celebrate and worship him. Maybe in the midst of our celebration we would realize that one of the best ways to acknowledge God is to take care of his world.

You are welcome to enter my house because there is a mat in front of the door that says so. You are not welcome to leave trash on my carpet ... forgiven, but not welcome. God has not only welcomed us to his world, he has given us charge over it. Let us be good stewards ... and really rejoice in the Lord. — Babb is associate pastor, education, Springfield Church, Springfield.

Why accept the Good News

By Edgar Pierce

Focal Passage — Luke 1:1-4; I Corinthians 15:1-4; I John 1:1-4

"Why accept the Good News?" To answer we look to the God-inspired pens of Luke, Paul, and John.

Luke, a Gentile physician, gives us a Gospel account of the life of Christ addressed to Theophilus. Luke also addressed the book of Acts to Theophilus. Luke's record was not the first Gospel account written. He was a writer and historian who researched the events diligently. He interviewed the eyewitnesses of the events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Luke gives us his purpose for writing the Gospel in verse four: that Theophilus would have no doubt about the events of the life of Christ. The official story in the day of Luke from the authorities was that Jesus did not die and rise again but that his followers had stolen the body. However, with all of these eyewitnesses of the events the facts could not be denied. So why should we accept the Good News? First, because it is based on eyewitness accounts of real events that happened to a real man, Christ Jesus.

they had been saved.

I Corinthians 15:3-4 has been called the Gospel in a nutshell. The Gospel is the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The death of Christ was no accident, nor was it a failed plan of God, but it was the sacrifice of the Lamb of God sacrificed before the foundation of the world in the eternal redemptive plan of God. The reason for his death was for our redemption.

After he died he was buried in the Garden Tomb. He lay there until that great resurrection morning when the giver of life rose from the dead and is now alive forever more. Two times Paul states that all these things were done "According to the Scriptures."

These events had been prophesied by the prophets of the Old Testament and had come to pass as foretold. Another reason we should accept the Good News is that it was not an emergency plan but was in fact the eternal plan of God for our redemption. He had nor has another plan.

Remember Luke said he talked with eyewitnesses about the events. The beloved apostle John speaks to us from I John 1:1-4. Many today would deny that Jesus was both human and God. Some say he was only human, others only God. John says that he was both human and divine God.

John leaves no room to cast doubt on the divinity of Jesus. John testifies that he had seen him with his eyes and touched him with his hands thereby leaving no doubt that he was fully human.

John says this testimony is so we would have eternal life, fellowship, and joy. Certainly another compelling reason to accept the Good News is that we might have life in Christ Jesus, thereby giving us fellowship with the Father and the Son which alone can bring joy to the hearts of men. — Pierce is pastor, Cedar Grove Missionary Church, Kingsport.

Family Bible Lesson

The myths of paganism, while they contain stories of resurrections and great feats, are all based on fabricated men or false gods and not on men who lived in time and space as Jesus did.

So what is the Good News? I Corinthians 15:1-4 records Paul's declaration of the Gospel. Paul had preached the Gospel in Corinth on his second missionary journey. The unbelieving Jews were always calling Paul's ministry into question. As he writes the Corinthians he reminds them of the Gospel which he preached by which

Authority for action

By Maurice Hays

Focal Passage — Mark 1:21-22, 32-35; 2:5-7, 9-12a; 3:4-5

As you read different translations of the Bible you will find the words "power" and "authority" used by different translations of the same Greek word. In the work and ministry of Jesus the word authority seems to be the more appropriate word for our understanding today. The word authority seems to indicate not only the power to do something, but the right to do so. Many people do things they have the power to do but do not have the right to do them. Saddam Hussein had the power to invade the country of Kuwait but the world said he did not have the authority to do so. Jesus has not only the power to heal physical bodies, transform people with mental illness and demon possessed, speak peace to the elements of nature and to forgive sin, but he has the "right" to do so.

Early teaching — ch. 1:21-22

Doing what was natural for Jesus was to go to the synagogue at the time of worship. His parents had taught him well. They assembled at the synagogue for prayer, Bible reading, and teaching. For 300 years little had been different but Jesus changed that. His teaching was new, different, revolutionary. The scribes taught by quoting others who had preceded

Explore the Bible Lesson

them, but Jesus taught from personal authority and they were astonished.

Healing — vv. 32-35

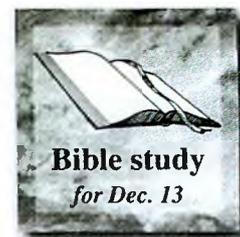
Mark says "in the evening they came bringing the sick." This would be the end of the Sabbath and would not break any of the laws of the Sabbath. The Greek language shows that a steady stream of suffering humanity flooded the door of Peter's house to see Jesus, according to Johnnie C. Goodwin. He healed many of various diseases and cast out demons. How remarkable that the demons recognized that Jesus was God's Messiah. Jesus would not let them disclose, until later, who he was.

The text uses three adverbs to emphasize the time Jesus arose to pray (very, early, by night). After an extremely busy day and evening of ministry, Jesus took the time to be alone with the Father. If Jesus had that need how much more should we.

Controversies over authority — ch. 2:5-7

Mark begins a series of five stories of conflict showing the opposition of the religious leaders, especially the Pharisees, had to Jesus.

In healing the paralytic it was a response to the man's need and to his faith and the faith of those who



brought him to Jesus. His curing diseases was a representation of his pardoning sin, for sin is the disease of the soul. The scribes accused Jesus of blasphemy for the first accusation against him and it would also be their last accusation (Mark 14:64). As Jesus healed the man of his physical problem he demonstrated his ability to forgive sin also, which could not be seen. The scribes did not think a person could be physically healed until they were forgiven of sin. The paralytic was healed, no one could deny, so they could not deny the forgiveness of his sins. Forgiving sin and healing still are the work of Jesus.

Doing good and evil — ch. 3:4-5

In this, the fifth conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders, Jesus questions them about doing good and evil on the Sabbath, but they will not answer. Some think Jesus was even saying not to do good is to do evil. Jesus was angry and grieved at their attitude. He was grieved at the hardness (maybe a better translation is hardening) of their hearts. We are, as they were, in the process of becoming like Christ in our nature or hardening our hearts to Jesus and to the needs of needy people. May we not become so committed to the law and ritual that we overlook the needs of people. — Hays is collegiate ministry specialist, Jackson State Community College, Jackson.

churches

■ The adult choir of **Parkway Church, Goodlettsville**, located at 505 Cunniff Parkway, will present its Christmas musical, "The Father's Gift of Love," Dec. 12-14. The public is invited. The program begins at 7 p.m. on the 12th and 14th and 6 p.m. on the 13th.

■ **North Jackson Church, Jackson**, in conjunction with **Oakfield Church, Oakfield**, will present "I Have Seen the Light — The Search for Christmas" at North Jackson Church on Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 13 at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call (901) 664-9618.

■ **First Church, Greenfield**, will have a dedication service for their new church facility on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 11 a.m. James Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, will bring the

dedication message. An open house will be held that afternoon from 2-3:30 p.m.

■ **Liberty Grove Church, Jackson**, will present a light-hearted musical, "The Christmas Post," on Dec. 19-20 at 7 p.m. Tickets are free by calling (901) 422-4941.

■ **First Church, Bon Aqua**, has voted to sponsor a new work in the Little Lot community in the east Hickman area. Highway 230 Mission is located on Highway 230, two miles south of Highway 100. David Homan is mission pastor.

■ **Southeast Church, Murfreesboro**, will hold its 17th annual staging of the "Bethlehem Marketplace" from 1-6 p.m. on Dec. 12-13. The marketplace is a walk-through drama that re-enacts how the village of Bethlehem might have appeared the morning after the birth of Jesus. The program has been featured in *Southern Living* magazine and visitors have come from several

states as well as Tennessee, to stroll the marketplace. There is no admission, no donations, and nothing is actually for sale. The church is located at 708 Minerva Drive. For more information, call (615) 896-0940.

■ The adult and youth choirs of **Ardmore Church, Memphis**, will present "Meet Him at the Manger" on Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 13 at 6:30 p.m. The church is located at 3430 Overton Crossing. The community is invited. Admission is free and reservations are not needed. For more information, call the church at (901) 358-1570.

■ **Trinity Church, Cordova**, will again present its Alpine Village Christmas Dec. 10 through Dec. 13, 6 to 9 p.m. nightly. For the first time village guests will be asked to sign the "Bethlehem Census" in the church foyer as they are greeted by Roman soldiers. Upon entering the village, children will receive a variety of gifts as they

roam through 11 different shops. A new edition this year is a Model Train Village and the telling of the biblical story of Christmas through Christian art of the Renaissance. Admission is free and the public is invited.

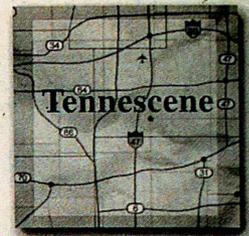
associations

■ **Clinton Association** hosted a retirement reception for T.D. Hooker, director of church and community ministries for the association since 1992, on Dec. 8 at Bethel Church, Clinton. Prior to joining the association's staff, Hooker held pastorates in Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky, and Texas. He and his wife, Pat, have three daughters. The couple reside in Norris.

■ The search committee for **New Duck River Association** is accepting resumes for the director of missions position, following the recent retirement of Harold Smith, after approximately 10 years in the post. Send resumes to: New Duck River Baptist Association, P.O. Box 624, Shelbyville, TN 37612.

TBC

■ **The Men's Ministries Team, Missions Awareness and Involvement Group**, is accepting applications in the Tennessee Royal Ambassador Camp summer camp program. Positions are available for young men, age 17 and older. Qualifications include a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a desire to work with children, and a 10-week obligation for the summer. The paid positions available are serving as counselors. For more information, contact Bob Davison at (615) 371-2074 or 1-800-558-2090. Applications will be received through February 1999.



FIRST CHURCH, DYER, recently honored Pastor Jerry Legg and his wife, Elaine. Legg resigned earlier this summer after almost 15 years as pastor to be more available to God's calling in mission work. The church presented the couple a plaque, a scrapbook of letters, and a love offering. Special music, testimonies, and a dinner after the service helped convey the church's love and appreciation for the Leggs.

missions

■ During a recent meeting, 190 members of Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship pledged their support for a three-year commitment to minister to and witness to the Bedouin people of Jordan as part of CBF's Adopt-a-People project. CBF missionary **Elizabeth Richards** of Memphis, a member of Trinity Church, Cordova, works as a nurse practitioner at a clinic in Mafraq, Jordan.



GRACE COVENANT CHURCH, KNOXVILLE, celebrated its site dedication and groundbreaking on 8.3 acres of property owned by the church on Dutchtown Road near the Pellissippi Parkway in west Knoxville for a new 5,000-square-foot multipurpose facility on Nov. 22. The new facility will provide space for worship, education, recreation, and fellowship. The church was organized with 19 members in 1993 as a church plant of Third Creek Church, Knoxville. The church now has 68 members. The facility is scheduled for completion by April 4, 1999, for the Easter celebration and dedication service. Participating in the groundbreaking were, from left, David Jeffries and David Yarnell, church leaders; Ernie Owens Jr. and Ernie Owens Sr., contractors; Alan Smith, present and founding pastor; Mike Fuller, chairman of the property development committee; and Margaret Ann Jeffries, Lynn Carter, Ann Coleman, and Bertie Slagle, members of the property development committee. The house in the background presently provides space for church services and activities.

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