

T E N N E S S E E ' S B A P T I S T & REFLECTOR

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Statewide Edition

January 13, 1999

this week's news

- ▶ Tennessee Baptists take advantage of Web site. — Page 2
- ▶ Baptist state editors rate top SBC news stories in 1998. — Page 2
- ▶ Tennessee placekicker Jeff Hall has priorities in place. — Page 3
- ▶ Leslie and Phyllis Bruce of White House tell of accident in Kenya. — Page 4
- ▶ Southern Baptist Convention CP receipts show large increase. —Page 6

UT football chaplain since 1993

Knoxville pastor on sideline for Fiesta Bowl win

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Pastor Larry Fields is the first to acknowledge that God does not get involved in who wins or loses football games.

Yet, after recent experiences with the University of Tennessee football team, no one could fault him for wondering.

Fields, pastor of Central Church, Bearden, here, has been the UT football team's chaplain for the past six years. He has witnessed some huge wins, but none bigger than the Vols 23-16 win over the Florida State Seminoles Jan. 4 which earned them the national championship.

On the Sunday prior to the national championship game held at the Fiesta Bowl in Tempe, Ariz., Fields arranged for the team to attend the morning worship service of North Phoenix Church.

The Florida State team was supposed to have attended as well, but opted out because Florida State's assistant coaches felt the team needed more time to prepare, Fields related. Only Florida State head coach Bobby Bowden represented his team at the service, he noted.

The entire UT team, including the coaching and support staff, attended, Fields said. UT football coach Philip Fulmer and Florida State football coach Bobby Bowden were interviewed by North Phoenix pastor Dan Yeary during the services. Both men are Christians and Bowden is a South-



UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE football chaplain Larry Fields stands alongside Peyton Manning Pass in front of Neyland Stadium. Fields has served as chaplain for the 1998 national champions for six years. He is pastor of Central Church, Bearden, in Knoxville.

ern Baptist.

Also during the service, UT placekicker Jeff Hall, a member of First Church, Concord, shared his testimony.

According to a press release from North Phoenix Church, Yeary told those in attendance: "We rejoice because Fiesta Sunday drew people to hear the Gospel. Both coaches prioritized their relationship with God, and there was a clear presentation of the Gospel." The press release also noted numerous spiritual decisions were made as a result of the coaches' testimonies and Yeary's message on building championship families.

After the service, Fields noted he joked with someone, "I

hope God honors the team that attended worship together on Sunday."

It was not the first time Fields has helped get the Volunteer team into church. The team attended services at First Church, Orlando, Fla., prior to their two Citrus Bowl wins in recent years, he said. Last year the team was unable to attend a service in Miami prior to the Orange Bowl. The UT team lost convincingly to the University of Nebraska. Coincidence?

On the day of the Fiesta Bowl, team members had another chance for spiritual help. Fields, who regularly schedules chapel speakers for the team, arranged for former Washington Redskins player

Danny Buggs to speak to the team.

Fields said he truly believes the players' spiritual unity was a key to their success this year. This year was the first during his six years that the entire team attended every chapel service, Fields said. Chapel services are voluntary. He attributed some of that to UT strength coach John Stuckey who has a strong Christian background. He also noted the leadership and influence of several key Christian players such as Hall and defensive standout Al Wilson.

Fields is appreciative of the opportunity Coach Fulmer has given him to serve as chaplain for the football program and to be able to have an impact on lives of both players and coaches. "Coach Fulmer encourages this. He wants his players to be good examples."

Fields has been able to help players and coaches when they have faced crises in their lives.

In essence, he is a "pastor to the group" and for some players, he may be the only pastor they have. Many of the players do not have a strong church involvement, Fields observed.

Over the years, however, the Knoxville pastor has seen some players accept Christ and others grow spiritually.

While he enjoys his role as chaplain, Fields is careful not to let it interfere with his ministry at Central, Bearden. He attends all home games but limits his road trips. "My responsibilities at Central Bearden are a priority." B&R

TBC committees begin nominating process

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Committee on Boards and Committee on Committees of the Tennessee Baptist Convention met in December to initiate the extended process of nominating persons from Tennessee Baptist churches to serve on convention boards and committees.

During the meeting the committees reviewed the convention-adopted guidelines for their work and surveyed the scope of their assigned tasks.

In addition, the recommendations form to be sent to each TBC church and association were studied and changes were made to enable committee members to receive additional informa-

tion on persons recommended for their consideration. A sample of the form will be printed in the Jan. 20 issue of the *Baptist and Reflector*. These forms will be mailed to TBC churches and associations the week of Jan. 18.

All recommendations should be made to the Committee on Boards and/or Committee on Committees, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728.

Also, forms may be faxed to the committees at (615) 371-2093. The deadline for recommendations is March 1.

Members of all cooperating Tennessee Baptist churches are eligible to be recommended. Tennessee Baptists are encouraged to participate in the process. ■

State Evangelism Conference begins Monday, Jan. 18

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The State Evangelism Conference will be held Jan. 18-19 at Judson Church, Nashville.

Anyone needing to reach someone attending the conference can call the conference office at Judson (615) 333-3957. ■

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TBC Web site growing in popularity

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists increasingly are going to the World Wide Web (www.tnbaptist.org) to find out what is going on in the convention, according to 1998 statistics on use of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Web site.

Since going online June 2, 1998, more than 26,000 visitors have explored the TBC site, according to Denise Scott, communications specialist for the TBC Executive Board who manages the site.

"We are pleased with the tremendous response to the TBC Web site," she said. "We continue to receive e-mail from users requesting information about the various events, ministries, and services provided by the Tennessee Baptist Convention," she said.

Scott noted the number of people visiting the site may de-

pend on many factors, such as events taking place during any given month, current promotional efforts, and any number of external causes.

The most active times on the TBC Web site are generally on weekday afternoons; whereas, the least activity is generated on the weekends and pre-dawn hours, she said.

In June, during the first month of operation, the site received 1,751 visits and rose to a record monthly high of 5,446 visits in November.

Average visits per day to the site ranged from a low of 58 in June to 181 in November. In December there were 4,092 visits, with an average of 132 per day.

June 2 and Nov. 13 have been the two most visited days to the site. June 2 was the first day the site went online. The high number of visitors to the site on Nov. 13 is directly related to the TBC annual meeting held in Kingsport.

"This data tells us that a growing number of Tennessee Baptists now have Internet capability and are using this new communication tool to access

the latest news and information," Scott said.

The TBC Web site has been visited by people from approximately 30 countries outside of the United States.

Since going online, the TBC home page has been the most popular Web site page. The most popular pages include "Services for Churches," "Web Site Help," "Who We Are," and "Baptist and Reflector."

"As an increasing number of Internet users visit the TBC site, the Communications Services Group is challenged with the opportunity to provide helpful features and timely content," Scott observed.

"A new addition premiering in January is the bimonthly calendar of events," she said.

Tennessee Baptists can view TBC-sponsored events for the current or upcoming month (from the home page, to Services for Churches, and then Services and Events), Scott related.

She noted a popular feature of the TBC Web site is its links to Tennessee Baptist churches and associations with Web sites.

An ongoing project, Scott noted, is identifying Tennessee Baptist churches that have Web sites and providing a link from their site to the TBC Web site.

"We have been surprised by the rapid growth of churches and associations going online. We currently have links to 78 Tennessee churches online."

She observed that an important component in determining what Tennessee Baptists are interested in is the use of Web Trends Log Analyzer, a leading Web site tracking and monitoring software program used by more than a third of all Fortune 500 companies.

"This program provides the Communication Services Group with useful statistics that give a basis for determining the needs of site visitors and consequently areas of the site needing expansion and development," Scott said.

"As we continue to develop the TBC site, we encourage Tennessee Baptists to let us know how the site can better serve their needs (info@tnbaptist.org)."



SCOTT

During 1998

State paper editors rank top SBC news stories

By Bob Allen
For Associated Baptist Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — A family amendment added to the Southern Baptist Convention's official doctrinal statement led a ranking of top news stories in 1998 by Baptist editors.

In an informal survey conducted by Associated Baptist Press, editors ranked the June adoption of a family amendment to the *Baptist Faith and Message* as the top story of the year.

The family statement, the first amendment to the *Baptist Faith and Message* since its adoption in 1963, captured widespread attention in the national media with its call for wives to "submit graciously" to their husband's "servant leadership." The statement, written by a seven-member committee appointed by the SBC president, also affirms the family as "the foundational institution of human society" while criticizing divorce and rejecting homosexual unions.

Mississippi convention educates church members about gambling

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Miss. — A new publication for educating church members about gambling has been released by the Mississippi Baptist Convention's Christian Action Commission. *Tables of Fortune: Lost Hope ... Lost Lives, Gambling in America* is the title of the 52-page book, with an accompanying 48-page leader's guide.

The book was co-authored by Elizabeth K. Holmes, CAC consultant for women's

and family issues and chair of the education committee of the Mississippi Baptist Gambling Task Force; CAC Executive Director Paul G. Jones II; Larry Garner of Mississippi's Metro Baptist Association; and William H. Perkins Jr., editor of *The Baptist Record*. It was produced by a special allocation from the Mississippi Baptist convention board.

Tables of Fortune is the direct result of the task force. "During the period in the 1980s when there was a push for a state

lottery, we came to realize that the people in our churches were woefully ignorant about gambling and had no convictions about the moral problem," Holmes said.

Copies of the book were mailed to every Mississippi Baptist church and orders were taken for the book's second printing.

"We want to put (this book) in the home of every family in Mississippi," Jones said.

Future plans include children and youth editions, plus an expanded version of the adult book, Jones said. ■

tion's largest non-Catholic faith group.

- ▶ Congress' rejection of Ernest Istook's Religious Freedom Amendment which would have allowed religious practices that courts have ruled violate the First Amendment's requirement of the separation of church and state.
- ▶ A mandate that current faculty at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, must sign the new family amendment to the *Baptist Faith and Message*.
- ▶ Prominent independent Baptist Jerry Falwell attending the SBC annual meeting in Salt Lake City as a registered messenger. Falwell's Thomas Road Church earned the right to be represented after giving \$10,000 to Southern Baptist causes through a new conservative state convention in Virginia.
- ▶ Passage of a bill in Congress protecting churches against having members' tithes and offerings seized under federal bankruptcy laws. ■

UT placekicker Jeff Hall knows there's more to life than winning a national championship

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

WINCHESTER — Jeff Hall has seen his share of glory, particularly in the last four years.

The University of Tennessee placekicker is a four-time All Southeastern Conference performer. He also has been named four times to the conference's academic all-star team as well. On Jan. 16 he will kick in the East-West Shrine all-star game and participate in the Hula Bowl game on Jan. 24.

Just this year alone he kicked the game-winning field goals against Syracuse and Florida. He was a key player and a co-captain of the team which won the NCAA national championship at the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 4.

Yet, despite all the glory and acclaim he has earned, Hall spends his time making sure people know all the glory goes to God and not himself. "What makes me who I am is Jesus. That's the only thing special about me," he said.

Hall, a December graduate of UT and a member of First Church, Concord, in Knoxville, admitted that was not always the case.

"During my freshman and sophomore years I wanted to praise God so I could play football," he said, noting he had an ego then "as big as Neyland Stadium."

"Now," he said, "I want to play football so I can praise God."

Though he accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior at the age of 11 in a United Methodist church in his hometown of Winchester, Hall was not pleased with his spiritual condition.

Particularly during his first two years of college, Hall said he did things, such as drinking, that he knew were displeasing to God. "I was involved in things I should not have been involved with."

In early 1997 he was having personal struggles with his faith because he knew he was not turning everything over to God. In addition, he had undergone back surgery that potentially threatened his football career.

Hall, who was active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, heard Doug Sager, pastor of First Church, Concord, speak at a meeting and liked what he heard. He be-

gan to attend First Church and joined in February of 1997, which he says is a turning point in his life.

Hall received encouragement and support from the church and also from Rob Merriman, who at the time was on the FCA staff and was a member of Central Church, Bearden, in Knoxville. "He encouraged and challenged me in my life in Christ and was an inspiration to me," Hall said.

Hall's life began to change for the better. He began reading Christian books and studying God's Word.

He discovered that "God is bigger than any sin you could ever commit."

"Jesus is not just your Savior, he is your Lord. Regardless of who you are, what you have done, God's love surpasses all that," Hall said.

Looking back on his life Hall now sees that though he was a Christian in his early days at UT, he was not "as sold out to God as I could have been."

Hall said he has scars on his heart from mistakes he made, but has "claimed a victory over that with Christ. I can't change the past, just like I can't change a missed field goal," he said.

Hall said that he has learned that just like in football, a person should never be satisfied with his or her Christian walk. "No matter how much I study the Word of God, it will never be enough." The Winchester native has reached the point in his life where he takes success and failure in stride.

At the Fiesta Bowl, Hall missed a 34-yard field goal on his first attempt, normally an easy distance for him. "I did not get down on myself. When I got back to the sideline I told myself that God had that all planned out."

Hall attributed the miss to a lack of focus and corrected the problem on his next attempt.

"If I miss a field goal, I put it behind me and go on to the next one. There is no perfect athlete. The great ones are those who learn from their mistakes."

Hall hopes to have a career in the National Football League, but it will not be the end of his world if that does not hap-

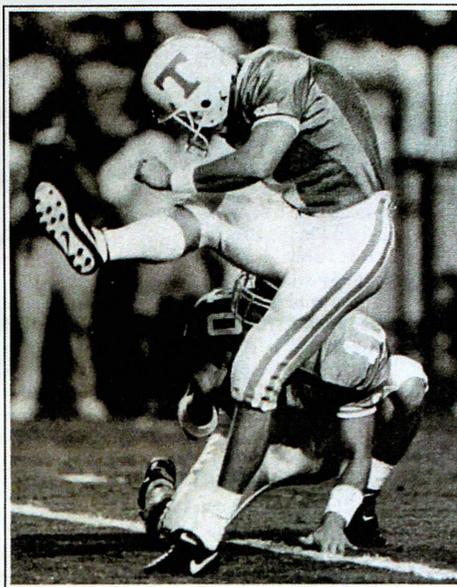
pen. He already has a job with a Knoxville investment firm lined up. "God will put me where he needs me the most," he affirmed.

Hall noted that if his last field goal was against Florida State, then "God has been good to me." He noted the Fiesta Bowl win was a climax to a good career. He dreamed of playing for UT when he was only 9 or 10 years old. "I've been so blessed to play on a great team with great players."

He knows there is much more to life than winning football games or national championships. "There will not be a record of made field goals in heaven," he predicted.

"God doesn't care if we win or lose. He cares about how much glory he gets and how much we learn from the situations he places us in."

"I know we won this year simply because God will get a lot of glory from it, from a lot of different people. And I will be one of them," he affirmed. *B&R*



TENNESSEE BAPTIST Jeff Hall displays the form that has made him a four-time All Southeastern Conference performer at the University of Tennessee. He ranks first in UT career scoring and is the all-time leading scorer in the SEC. He is a member of First Church, Concord, in Knoxville.



Lead change in third millenium: church strategist

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Church growth strategist George Bullard will lead a seminar "Leading Change in the Third Millenium: Transforming Your Church" Feb. 8-9 at the Baptist Center here.

Conference times are 1-8 p.m. on Feb. 8 and 8:30-3:30 p.m. the following day.

Bullard is widely recognized as a church growth strategist, an authority in conflict management, an advisor to key church leaders, and an extensive writer.

"Transforming a church is the ultimate test of leadership," notes Archer Thorpe of the TBC Executive Board's Church Staff Leadership Group.

He also observed change is inevitable and that "no church today, large or small, is immune to change."

The conference led by Bullard is designed to accomplish several tasks, Thorpe said.

- Help learn how to overcome the most common mistakes that are the source of most change failures.

- Help learn how to build momentum by developing a guiding coalition.

- Help learn how to establish a sense of urgency by identifying and discussing the major opportunities, potential opportunities, or crises.

- Help learn how to create a vision to direct the change effort and develop strategies for achieving the vision.

- Help learn how to celebrate incremental improvements and sustain commitment to victory.

- Help learn where the most resistance to change is most likely to be found in your church.

- Help learn how to consolidate improvements and produce still more change.

The cost of the conference is \$35 per person and includes participant manual, Monday dinner, and Tuesday lunch.

For a registration form or to find out more about the conference, call Archer Thorpe at 1-800-558-2090 or (615) 371-2014. ■



HALL

As summer missionaries

Partnership missions offers students opportunities

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Several opportunities in summer missions exist for college students, says Terry Sharp, partnership missions specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"We have many missions opportunities for college students to go overseas, as well as opportunities right here in the United States," Sharp said.

Serving as a summer missionary offers several benefits,

- Have attended at least one year of college; two years is preferred.
- Abstain from use of tobacco and alcohol.
- Raise funds to pay your own way (international).
- Attend a scheduled orientation.

Several missions opportunities exist in Rio de Janeiro between June 6-Aug. 3, Sharp noted.

Projects include working at a women's home, serving at a re-

socialization home for street boys and girls, and working at a home for senior citizens.

Summer missionaries also are needed in Michigan June 10-Aug. 12 and in Canada June 27-Aug. 15 to do a variety of tasks including surveys, block parties, evangelism, and more.

Costs vary, Sharp noted. For national projects, the North American Mission Board offers some assistance.

For more information, call Sharp or Kim Huff at 1-800-558-2090 or (615) 371-2021. ■

Bruces hold faith despite injury in Kenya

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

WHITE HOUSE — It was the last day of their 12-day missions effort in Kenya, Africa. Three members of the Bruce family — Leslie Bruce, pastor, First Church, White House; Phyllis Bruce, his wife; and Lee Anne Bruce, their daughter of Forest Hills Church, Nashville, were traveling in a van on their way home.

Then the van was struck from behind and collided with a truck. Phyllis and Lee Anne Bruce, who were sitting in the front seat, were injured. It took an hour to extract Phyllis, who was the most seriously hurt. Then they traveled nine hours to a hospital in Nairobi, where they discovered Phyllis' ankle and knee were crushed.

Evaluation

Six months later, sitting in their home here, Leslie and Phyllis admit they've been reminded bad things happen to Christians, even Christians doing good things. But that fact doesn't discourage the couple. They plan to return to Kenya.

And Phyllis, who is still recovering from six weeks of hospitalization and several surgeries, said if she had known what would happen to her in Kenya, she still would have gone because of the miracles she has witnessed and the spiritual insights she has gained following the accident there.

Amazing work

Phyllis Bruce, an employee of LifeWay Christian Resources of Nashville, became involved in the effort through LifeWay, which coordinated the trip through the International Mission Board. Bruce led her husband and daughter to join a total of 29 employees or family members of employees in the effort.

It was the first foreign missions experience of the Bruces and they had an amazing time, they reported. Leslie and Phyllis explained they experienced "the greatest joy" of their lives as they walked down little paths

from hut to hut witnessing to people. As a result, most became Christians — about a hundred people each day, the Bruces reported.

The team led about 6,000 people to God and started 27 congregations.

A son in Christ

One reason she was supposed to go to Kenya was Ben, explained Phyllis Bruce.

Ben was a driver for the tour company which transported the team members. A few days after her arrival, Bruce led him to commit his life to God. Then Phyllis spent much of her free time discipling Ben in the Christian faith. Thankfully, he wasn't hurt in the accident.

"How can you say what a leg is worth compared to a person's eternal destiny?" she asked.

And Ben, who has been adopted by the Bruces as a "son in Christ," has learned much about the Christian faith from the accident, Phyllis added.

He lost his job because of the accident although he wasn't at fault. But he got to spend two more weeks with the Bruces as they received health care there. And the Bruces have helped Ben and his family financially, along with members of First Church, White House, after learning of his situation.

Miracles along the way

The Bruces cite other reasons for their effort in Kenya besides Ben and the other Kenyans who met God because of their witness. Other miracles occurred which have strengthened their faith and that of others, they said.

An angel helped those trying to extract the two women from the van, they reported. The angel, said Leslie Bruce, was in the form of an African girl who provided a huge crow



LESLIE Bruce, pastor, First Church, White House, and Phyllis Bruce, relax in their home where she is recovering from the injury to her knee and ankle.

bar. The crow bar allowed the workers to pry open a van door and remove the two women. When the workers tried to find the girl to thank her, she had disappeared.

Another miracle was that missionary Connie Burton had returned to Nairobi the day of the accident. Burton is an area health care coordinator for the IMB.

God provided good health care workers, they reported. And the local missionaries helped them. For instance, the missionaries probably depleted their supply of red jello to help her, noted Phyllis. Only red jello was appetizing, she explained.



The insurance of LifeWay and the International Mission Board has covered all of their expenses, including the journey home by jet.

At home, both Phyllis's mother and Leslie's mother were well. Phyllis's invalid mother, who lived with them until her death in November, added to the needs in the Bruce household. The Bruces' daughter, Beth Hilbert of Elizabethton, helped. And members of First Church, White House, helped the family then and continue to do so, the couple reported.

Today, Lee Anne's flesh wounds on her legs have healed and Phyllis is walking short distances.

Lessons learned

Both Leslie and Phyllis admitted seeing each resting a forehead on a door jam during the past six months in weariness or pain.

But they knew each was praying.

And Phyllis always will remember experiencing a spiritual epiphany. During the accident she thought Lee Anne was dead. Later she realized her feeling must have been the same as God's when he gave his Son. She'll never forget that depth of despair, she said. So she's sure God loves her, she explained.

B&R

Fellowship of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists Evangelism Conference

January 18, 9:45 a.m. - Noon
(Preceding the State Evangelism Conference)

Judson Baptist Church, Nashville, Main Sanctuary

Come early to the State Evangelism Conference and be inspired and blessed by some of the best Preachers and Singers in the state!

Fellowship Officers — Benny Jackson, president; Don Womack, vice president; Tim and Amy Wuester, music

President



Benny Jackson

Conference Speakers



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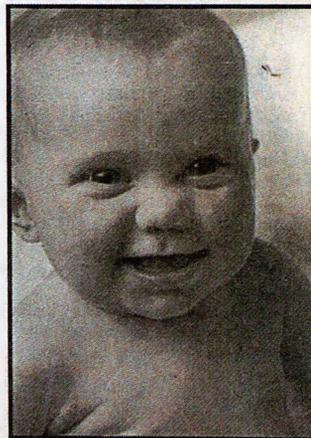


Gene North, Morristown



Jim Lindsay, Elizabethton

Music presented by Tennessee Baptist Music Evangelists!



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supports the

Sanctity of Human Life

at each of our 13 locations statewide through the following ministries:

- homes for unwed mothers
- housing for young homeless mothers and their children
- residential campuses for children who have no place to call home due to family crisis
- foster care services
- family preservation and counseling services

Tennessee Baptists are providing alternatives to abortion AND improving the quality of the lives of children through Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. On Sunday, January 17, churches are encouraged to give attention to both the lives and the quality of the lives of children in our state and across the nation during Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Visit TBCH website at www.tbch4kids.org to learn more about the ministries to children YOU and YOUR CHURCH make possible.



Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, Inc.

Dr. Gerald L. Stow, President/Treasurer

P. O. Box 2206

Brentwood, TN 37024

1-800-624-8591 • 615-376-3140 • www.tbch4kids.org

now in Knoxville & Union City!

Every human is a work of God's hand

guest editorial

by Richard Land
President
Ethics & Religious Liberty
Commission, SBC

God reveals in the very beginning of the Bible that he created human beings "in his own image" (Genesis 1:27), as his special, unique creation, and then breathed into their nostrils the breath of life (Genesis 2:7).

Our Heavenly Father further reveals that he is particularly involved in each person's conception, development, and life. God tells Jeremiah that he "knew" him before he was in his mother's womb and that while he was a fetus, God "sanctified" and "ordained" him "a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).

Isaiah uses the evocative imagery of the potter molding and shaping the clay to express the personal, intimate nature of God's involvement with each person — "We...are the work of thy hand" (Isaiah

64:8). As the Psalmist reminds us, this personal shaping and molding begins before we are born as God "weaves" and "knits" us together in the womb (Psalm 139:13, 15).

This personal involvement and intimate knowledge predates conception and continues throughout the various stages of human life. The Bible tells us that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30).

When society denies the uniqueness of each human life as well as the sacredness of all human life, it rejects God's clear revelation concerning the special, unique, and invaluable nature of each and every human life at every stage of existence, from conception to natural death, and at every



*Sanctity of Human Life
Sunday — Jan. 17
"The work of thy hand" — Isaiah 4:8*

stage in between.

When society begins to arbitrarily assign differing values to "wanted" and "unwanted" babies, "healthy" and "unhealthy" adults, and

"productive" and "unproductive" senior citizens, then society has entered into complete revolt against God's revelation and will.

Each and every human being, whatever his or her stage of life, whatever his or her health or productivity, is "the work of thy hand."

That divine design, involvement, and watchcare is the only sufficient protection and firebreak against a resurgence of the euthanasia, infanticide, and full-scale assault on human life which was the plight of our pagan past before

the Gospel of Jesus Christ triumphed over the barbarous Roman paganism that many among us would once again make our dark and dangerous future ■



just for today

by Fred Wood,
pastor emeritus,
Eudora Church,
Memphis



Start with a smile

Teenager Joan: "How was your birthday?" Teenager Jill: "Wonderful, I got everything I asked for." Joan: "You made a terrible mistake." Jill: "What do you mean?" Joan: "You didn't ask for enough."

Take this truth

Even from this story comes a good point. Set your goals high enough and work to reach them. Someone said, "If your church pledges its budget the first day, you set the budget too low."

Memorize this Scripture

"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press toward the goal." — Philippians 3:13, NIV

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to keep my goals realistic, but never to limit my aspirations because I lack either faith or dedication." ■

Wood can be e-mailed at docfred1@Juno.com

Bible verse provides approach to daily living in 1999

heart talk

by James Porch
TBC executive
director



Last week I was privileged to participate in a memorial service for a faithful and retired Tennessee pastor, Reverend Harold Stevens of Shelbyville.

During the service, Rev-

erend Stevens' friend, Harold Smith, reminded us of an Old Testament description of Bro. Stevens' attitude toward life "My times are in thy hand" (Psalm 31:15). This is a commendable approach to daily living for each one of us in 1999.

The verse confronts us with the choice to manufacture a personal perception of time. Seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years can be seen as God's gift, his intentional expression of another

of life's ongoing graces.

This gives birth to an opportunity to recognize the value of time. We have a new clock in our apartment. It ticks! For years, Lynn and I have been dependent on battery or electric time pieces. I now welcome the rhythmic tick tick, tick tick. Now we possess a renewed degree of the awareness of the passing of time.

Maybe for many of us, the loss of the sound of time passing by may have robbed us of

the value of time.

David, the fugitive, wrote this Psalm at a time when he felt exposed and vulnerable to his enemies. However, he used the occasion, whatever length, to announce a declaration of trust in his God of his time. A similar commitment promises to offer each of us a worthy approach as we face Y2K. And, facing time together, the time in God's hands just may give us a new understanding of having time together in his hands. ■

Columnist offers three basic guidelines for discipline

families matter

by Paul Barkley,
counselor,
educator, pastor



The word "discipline" comes from the Latin root for disciple which means to teach or guide. Paul admonishes us to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Proverbs 22:6 reminds us to train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.

The discipline of children is one of the hottest topics in the area of family therapy today.

Opinions are expressed on every side with heated commitment and resolve. Our society has been influenced strongly by the humanistic psychology of Carl Rogers and childrearing philosophy of Benjamin Spock. Many do not believe in strong or forceful directive discipline and especially not in physical punishment.

While I believe in and practiced a strong directive discipline in my own home and recommend it to my clients, I want to give three basic guidelines for discipline in the home no matter what style you may want to adopt.

Discipline must first be **consistent**. Raising children is not a part-time position. Parents cannot afford to ease up, drop their

guard, or take a vacation. Everyone is busy, but you cannot be too busy to discipline your child. I hear all kinds of excuses. "I'm tired," "Time out doesn't work, so you might as well give up," "They won't mind my anyway." While all that is true, parents must realize that the discipline of children is a 24-hour-a-day, seven day a week, 365 days a year job.

Secondly, discipline must be **consistent**. Do what you say you are going to do when you say you are going to do it. I, like most of you, have been guilty of saying to my child, "If you do that again, I am going to spank you." Later I said, "I mean it this time. If you do it one more time, I am going to spank you." Then later the child hears me

say, "How many times do I have to warn you? If you do that again, I am going to spank you." Well, I've already told him three times and have not done a thing. We must be consistent. The same infraction must get the same consequence each time to be effective.

Finally, discipline, must be **caring**. Studies have shown over and over again that discipline is best carried out and most effective when there is a close bond of relationship between the child and the parent. The child must understand that we discipline because we love, not because we are angry.

May I suggest these three guidelines for effective discipline? ■

Partnership Prayer Requests

January

- 13 — Pray for Dwain Lawrence, a retired DOM in Michigan who is recuperating from a heart attack and recent surgery.
- 14 — Pray for a church in Tavira, Portugal, which has started a new building project which includes a sanctuary and pastor's residence.
- 15 — Pray for Canadian churches that will partner with a Power 2 campaign, which premiers in SBC churches in February.
- 16 — Pray for Tennessee Disaster Relief volunteers who served last month in Nicaragua and Honduras. Ask him to bless volunteers who will go to Central America this month.
- 17 — Pray for Costa Rican missionary kids as they grow and mature.
- 18 — Pray for Don and Rose Marie McClain, IMB missionaries to Portugal who are working on degrees at New Orleans Seminary.
- 19 — Pray for the first Canadian National Prayer Conference to be held April 22-30.



world/national news

SBC Cooperative Program gifts up

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for December increased nearly 19 percent over last year and the fiscal year's first quarter showed an increase of more than \$4 million over last year's first quarter, according to Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president.

For December 1998, CP receipts totaled \$12,495,070, compared to \$10,518,445 in December 1997, an increase of 18.79 percent.

For the SBC's fiscal year first quarter (October-December), \$39,964,086 was given to the CP, an increase of 12.37 percent over the same period last year.

Designated gifts for December were \$3,800,963, an increase

of 42.84 percent over December 1997. For the first quarter designated gifts totaled \$8,558,859, an increase of 11.04 percent over the same period last year.

For the SBC's Program Allocation Budget, at the end of the first quarter, the required budget amount of \$38,751,430 was surpassed by 3.13 percent. ■

LifeWay to keep Grant music in stores

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The music of Amy Grant will remain in LifeWay Christian Stores, an 81-store chain operated by LifeWay Christian Resources (formerly Baptist Sunday School Board).

Grant, a popular Christian recording artist, and her husband Gary Chapman, a Christian singer-songwriter, announced their separation Dec. 30. They have three children.

"We regret to hear the announcement and we will pray for them, as they have requested," said Bruce Munns, LifeWay Christian Stores' vice president for operations. No further state-

ment from LifeWay officials is being made, according to a spokesman for the agency Jan. 4. ■

IMB, NAMB expand World Changers

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — The presidents of the North American Mission Board (Bob Reccord) and the International Mission Board (Jerry Rankin) signed an agreement in December to expand the fast-growing World Changers mission program during a meeting in December.

"As far as we can determine, this is the first time the entire management staff of the two national mission agencies have ever met together to discuss mission vision, philosophy, and direction," Reccord said.

The IMB will have responsi-

bility for conducting International World Changers projects in association with NAMB. ■

Abortion figures, facilities decline

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The number of abortions and abortion-providing facilities in the United States has decreased markedly in the 1990s, according to a survey by a research organization identified with the abortion industry.

Not only has a decline in both categories been recorded in recent years, but the number of abortions is at its lowest in 20 years and the number of abortion facilities has decreased by nearly one-third from its highest point in the early 1980s, The

Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI) announced in December.

The number of abortions in the country fell 11 percent from 1992, the last year for which AGI had performed research on abortion providers, to 1996. The 1.37 million abortions for 1996 were a slight increase from the 1.36 million of 1995, but a larger decline from the 1.61 million reported in 1990, according to AGI. The 1990 total was the highest since abortion was legalized in 1973, according to AGAI.

The decline in facilities providing abortions has impacted some states more than others. Tennessee was among states that showed at least a 50 percent decline from 1982 to 1996 in the number of abortion providers — 47 to 20. ■

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Pictured are Ed D. faculty (L to R) Warren Benson, Brian Richardson, Jack Cunningham, Mark Simpson and Dennis Williams.

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Life and Work Lesson

Moving beyond abortion

By Martin Babb

Focal Passage — John 8:1-11; James 5:16, 19-20

Jesus always seemed to find himself helping someone in need. One does not have to read very far into the New Testament to discover that while Jesus was consistently concerned about sin, he was convincingly caring toward the sinner. Our lesson today is about moving carefully beyond abortion and ministering compassionately toward those involved.

The scriptural basis begins with a group of scribes and Pharisees interrupting Jesus in the temple by bringing a woman in and accusing her of adultery. Our first point is that we must see sensitively. The Pharisees always viewed people through legalistic eyes. Their main concern was to trick Jesus, the woman actually being nothing more than bait for a trap. No matter how grave the sin, we must see the sinner as a person of worth or we will never be anything more than a Pharisee.

Verses 6b-9 give us our second point. If we are going to be a healing influence we should criticize cautiously. Jesus tried to ignore the accusers by writing on the ground, but they continued to bug him. Finally he told them that whichever one was without sin could throw the first rock. Jesus knew how to clear a room. He still does today, because his message is the same for us. We seem to point effortlessly at other people when they sin, nearly always forgetting that we probably have sinned at one time or another. Instead of pointing accusing fingers, we need to extend a merciful hand.

In verses 8-11 Jesus gave us the example we need to forgive faithfully. He asked the woman where her accusers had gone and who was left to condemn her. She had committed a dreadful sin but he was not willing to give up on her. That was the way of Jesus, giving people a second chance. What an example for us to follow. The only one there who could have thrown the first stone was Jesus and he chose to be the Rock of Ages.

We move to James 5:16 and see the need to pray powerfully. I do not know if the woman mentioned above had a support group in her town who committed to pray for her. I do know this verse tells us there is power in prayer. In the circumstances of abortion, there is much healing to be done — spiritually and emotionally. Praying for one another accomplishes much more than braying at each other. There is power in prayer because there is power in the one who hears us.

Finally, we learn in verses 19-20 that we must counsel compassionately. These verses tell us that if we can convince someone to change their ways we have done a mighty thing in God's kingdom. If we are ministering to someone considering abortion, we must be strong in our convictions and compassionate in our speaking. Our counsel may be before or after the fact. If our before-the-fact counseling fails we must be even more committed to a ministry of restoration afterward. One death in an abortion is enough, and our goal should be to salvage the lives of the living.

Sunday School classes were never meant to be training grounds for debate teams but springboards for evangelism and ministry. It is very difficult to be a healing agent if all we ever do is pour salt on the wound and never apply the healing ointment to a hurting world. — Babb is associate pastor/education, Springfield Church, Springfield.

Promote Kingdom life

By Edgar Pierce

Focal Passage — Matthew 18:1-10; 19:13-15

There are fewer things more helpless in life than a newborn or a pre-born child. They are totally dependent on others for everything. Our lesson today will focus on children.

Kingdom attitude. People that heard Muhammad Ali's fight rhetoric heard him proclaim, "I am the greatest." He then went on to prove he was the greatest fighter of his day. This in some ways typifies the world opinion of greatness. The most successful, richest, and most famous are considered the greatest.

How does God define greatness? Jesus defined it in this passage as being humble as a child. He says the mark of greatness is childlike faith as we depend on God. The disciples had been discussing this matter outside the presence of Jesus and had argued over who was the greatest.

Family Bible Lesson

Now the disciples ask Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of God?" The kingdom they had in mind was probably an earthly kingdom. Jesus called a little child to illustrate greatness. He tells them they must be converted, which is translated change in the NIV, and means to reverse. He says this change or conversion is necessary to even get into heaven let alone be the greatest in heaven. He connects humility to greatness as inseparable parts of greatness. Without one you cannot have the other.

Abraham is a great example of humility that showed his greatness. When Abraham and Lot's herdsmen were having a problem over grazing land Abraham allowed Lot to choose where he wanted to live. Abraham practiced humility and greatness. This is totally opposite of the

world's way of thinking concerning greatness?

Kingdom acceptance. It is a sad indictment against a church or a Christian that does not have a heart to love little

ones. Jesus said, if we accept them we accept him. Could we not say, if we reject them we reject him as well?

As we think back to our childhood most of us could name someone who was an encouragement to us. Maybe a parent, friend, neighbor, someone at church, or someone else took the time to accept us and show love to us that made an impact on our lives.

Kingdom warning. "Shall offend," according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, means figuratively, "stumble .. or entice to sin." Jesus said it would be better for him if a millstone were hanged around their neck and drowned. This millstone weighed a considerable weight and probably was one that had to be turned by a donkey.

Are verses eight and nine to be taken literally? If so many of us would need to sever hands, feet, and put out our eyes. Instead Jesus was giving us a warning that illustrates the seriousness of sin. Sin is a matter of the heart and not of the hands, feet, and eyes.

This strong warning seems somehow out of place until we realize the seriousness that Jesus put upon mistreatment of children. He warns that the angels of the little ones have special access to the face of God to plead their case of abuse. Might I say also, each time there is a silent scream in the womb of a child being aborted, God hears the cry loudly and if it were possible the angels would weep.

Kingdom concern. Here the disciples were involved in the rebuke of the little one. Jesus took time to show them they were very special. He said for them, and us, to not hinder them coming to Christ. Each human life is precious and worth something in the eyes of God. For us to become part of the kingdom we must come as a child, or should I say as a new-born child. — Pierce is pastor, Cedar Grove Missionary Church, Kingsport.

Jesus cares — sanctity of life

By Maurice Hays

Focal Passage — Mark 5:25-29, 40-42; 7:26-30, 34-35

In the last few years as I have read new and different translations of the Bible many of the old translations used the words "made whole" in reference to Jesus healing people. Then there was a time when the words "made well" were used. Many modern translations are again using "made whole" because this wording is again better understood. Doctors and health care people have begun to realize that a person is more than a physical being. They have learned that man is not merely physical, but mental and spiritual. Jesus always demonstrated his knowledge of this fact in his ministering to people. To Jesus the spiritual was always the most important part of the person.

Physical health — 5:25-29

When Jairus came to Jesus to beg him to heal his daughter, Jesus showed compassion on him by immediately going with him. As he proceeded through the crowd on his way to Jairus' house he was met with a different kind of faith — the timid, bashful faith of a woman who was at her ropes end. She was not only physically distraught because she had been sick 12 years, but she had been used by the doctors. The Scripture, according to Mark, not Luke, was that she had grown worse under

Explore the Bible Lesson

the doctor's treatment. She was desperate. She was poor, weak, ceremonially unclean, friendless, unknown, and suffering. She thought if she could just touch Jesus' garments she could be made whole. Secretly and from behind she touched Jesus and she was touched, for instant healing came. Jesus amazed his disciples when he said, "Who touched me?" Jesus spoke words of comfort to her, calling her daughter and telling her to go in peace. Jesus reminded her it was his power that had made her whole, but it was in response to her faith.

Life — vv. 40-42

When Jesus completed the journey to the house where the young girl had died, he rewarded Jairus' faith by raising his daughter back to life. His faith and Jesus' love and power was the difference in death and life. The people laughed but they did not know the Great Physician. Jesus not only raised her from the dead, but healed her of her disease. He instructed her parents to give her food.

Spiritual health — 7:26-30

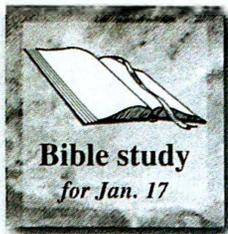
In healing the Syrophenician woman's daughter, Jesus shows us

that it is not what nation in which we were born or what religion we endorse, but that Jesus must be the one of our faith and belief. There are only two times in the Gospels when Jesus commended "great faith." Both times it was concerning faith by Gentiles. The faith of this Syrophenician woman and the Roman centurion (Matthew 8:5-13). It is also noted that in both cases the healing, by Jesus, happened at a distance. Her faith was a faith that held on against many odds.

Wholeness — vv. 34-35

To be in the presence of Jesus as he worked this miracle was to be astonished, "beyond measure" according to the Scripture. Though they were encouraged by Jesus to keep quiet, they could not hold their spontaneous testimony. Jesus broke down the walls of non-communication that was an obstacle to this man's living. Mark is the only writer who shares this healing. It too is significant that Jesus healed the man at the urging of the people. You and I have a great responsibility to bring people to Jesus and then pray urgently that he move in their lives.

These Scriptures show that Jesus is concerned about every aspect of our lives. This message should be of great comfort as we enter this new year. — Hays is Baptist Student Ministries specialist, Jackson State Community College, Jackson.



leaders ↑

■ **David S. Dockery**, president, Union University, Jackson, was appointed recently to a five-year term as a commissioner to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS). The commission monitors SACS members, starts new programs, and sets the academic agenda for member colleges. It is located in Decatur, Ga., and serves 800 colleges in the South.

■ **Oak Grove Church**, Dresden, has called **Don Pruitt** as interim pastor.

■ **Paul Woodford**, retired pastor, First Church, Lewisburg, has been named interim director of missions, New Duck River Association, which is based in Shelbyville.

■ **Michael Duff**, evangelist who leads Michael Duff Ministries in Springfield, has added **Luell Smith** to his staff. Smith is retired from LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, and a former staff member of First Church, Greenbrier. Smith will help churches prepare for revival and produce resources for the ministry.

■ **Morris Anderson** has resigned as pastor of Central Church, Winchester, Ky., and begun a full-time evangelism ministry in Maryville. Anderson is the former pastor Pigeon Forge, and Dotson Memorial Church, Maryville. He is a former president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference and trustee of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. He is available for revivals and special events and can be contacted at (423) 984-6982.



ANDERSON

Anderson is the former president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference and trustee of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. He is available for revivals and special events and can be contacted at (423) 984-6982.



MEMBERS of Goodsprings Church, Etoawah, Arlin and Grace Loveday, recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. The Lovedays, who were married on the way to Sunday School, have been members of the church for over 50 years, where he is a deacon and they have both served in many roles.

■ **John Kurtz**, a retired pastor of Mount Juliet who performs with a dummy named the Great Professor, will conduct an evangelistic service Jan. 17 at Burns Church, Burns.

■ **Wayne Barber**, pastor, Woodland Park Church, Chattanooga, has announced he will resign in several months to begin a conference ministry.

deaths ↑

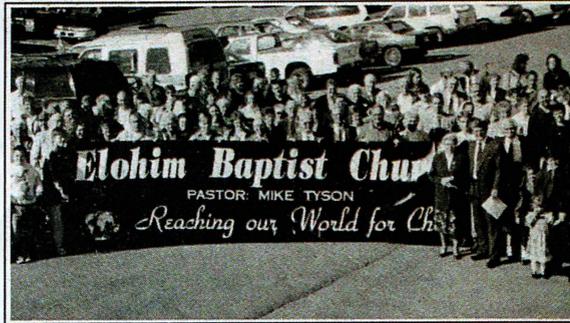
■ **Lynn Ledbetter**, Woman's Missionary Union director, Shiloh Association, for many years, died Dec. 15 after an extended illness. Ledbetter was a member of First Church, Savannah. She is survived by her husband, Edwin Ledbetter, daughter, and son. The association is based in Adamsville.

■ **Clifford Holcomb**, 90, of Lebanon, died Jan. 1. A memorial service in his honor will be held Jan. 16 at Woodmont Church, Nashville, at 1 p.m. Visitation with the family will follow in the church's parlor. Holcomb was retired from the music area of Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, (now LifeWay Christian Resources). During his tenure from 1952-73, he became a leader in church music. He was author of *Methods and Material for Graded Choirs*, other books, and many articles in "The Church Musician." Holcomb is survived by his wife, Louanah Riggs Holcomb; two daughters; a son; eight grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

churches ↑

■ **Hillhurst Church**, Nashville, is hosting Ricky Russell, who will present a concert on Jan. 31 at 4 p.m. For more information, call the church at (615) 226-1260.

■ **Inglewood Church**, Nashville, will hold its 75th anniversary during March. Activities include an anniversary/building dedication celebration March 20 and March 21. A



GATHERED DURING its third anniversary celebration recently are some members of the congregation of Elohim Church, Knoxville. The members also burned a note to represent the debt-free status of land bought only 18 months earlier. The land was owned by Ruth Hawkins whose family farmed it as tenants. Hawkins began praying 50 years ago for a church in the area, reported Mike Tyson, pastor. The area also has much potential since the land is part of a much larger farm which will become a subdivision for homes.

video also is being produced. For more information, call the church at (615) 228-2546.

■ **First Church, Centerville**, moved into its new building Jan. 3.

■ Two members of **First Church, Linden**, have served in Venezuela with a health care team.

■ To continue the relationship of **Westview Church, Chattanooga**, with a church in Los Mochis, Mexico, the Ruth Class of Westview sent 75 shoe box type gifts for children of Templo Bautista Emmanuel in Los Mochis and children in the community. The project was led by Pat Long, teacher of the Ruth Class. The relationship between the churches began when Westview Church served the church in Los Mochis in June 1997. Members of Westview plan to return in June 1999. The efforts are coordinated through Tommy Beard, a Southern Baptist missionary in Mexico.

■ **First Church, Greenfield**, dedicated its new building and held an open house to present it Dec. 13.

■ To prepare for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, **Mack's Grove Church, Dresden**, held prayer meetings in homes for a week. Then to raise money for the offering, youth held a supper and teens held a Rock-A-Thon and offered a post office which allowed members to get Christmas cards to other members without spending postage. Then the postage could be given to the offering.

associations ↑

■ **Hamilton County Association**, based in Chattanooga,

will hold an Associational Royal Ambassador Banquet Jan. 25 at First Church, Chattanooga, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Scott Brown, a cowboy with a ministry, will speak. For more information, call (423) 267-3794.

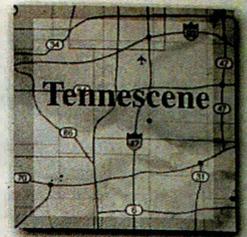
■ Volunteers from **Hamilton County Association** have been helping construct a building for West Hills Church, a mission of First Church, Lebanon. The volunteers have been coordinated by Ben Griffin, Volunteer Construction Coordinator for the association. For more information, contact him at (423) 842-1975.

■ **Cumberland Gap Association** based in Harrogate will host the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Freguesia, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to support the Tennessee/Rio Baptist Partnership. He will speak Jan. 13 at Carrs Chapel Church, Speedwell, at 7 p.m.; Jan. 14 at an Association Youth Fellowship at Gap Creek Church, Arthur, at 7 p.m.; and Jan. 17 at Pump Springs Church, Harrogate, at 8:30 a.m., Haynes Flat Church, Speedwell, at 11 a.m., and Shawanee Church, Shawanee, at 6 p.m. The association will be serving in Rio de Janeiro doing construction and evangelism May 27 - June 9.

■ **Jefferson County Association**, based in Jefferson City, has the following new e-mail address — jeffcobapt. @worldnet.att.net.

■ **Madison-Chester Association** will hold a women's retreat Feb. 19-20 at the Holiday Inn in Jackson. The theme will be "Transformed." For more information, call the association, which is based in Jackson, at (901) 668-5690.

■ **Churches of Western District Association** are involved in a program entitled 60 Days of Prayer for



the 32 Churches in Western District Association.

■ A Conversational English Workshop will be held by **Hamilton County Association** on Jan. 29-30 and Feb. 5-6. For more information, please call the association, which is based in Chattanooga, at (423) 267-3794 or e-mail staff at hcbs@baptistassociation.com.

schools ↑

■ The Jack C. Massey Graduate School of Business at **Belmont University**, Nashville, will offer the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) Strategies Course beginning Saturday, Jan. 16, to help students prepare for summer and fall admittance to graduate business programs. The GMAT is required for admissions to most graduate business programs/management schools in the U.S. and abroad. To register for the course or for more information about The Massey School, call (615) 460-6480.

Discipleship 2000 Forums scheduled

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Discipleship 2000 Forums are planned for January and February across the state.

Leaders from bivocational, small, medium, and large churches will share what they are doing in their churches to make disciples. This one-of-a-kind meeting will take place in five locations throughout the state from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. each day, according to Jerry Chapman, Discipleship coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Dates and sites are:
Jan. 26 — Baptist Center, Brentwood
Jan. 28 — Englewood Church, Jackson
Feb. 8 — Tri-Cities Church, Johnson City
Feb. 9 — Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville
Feb. 11 — Red Bank Church, Chattanooga.

There is no fee or registration. For more information, call Chapman at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 7932. ■