

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

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February 24, 1999

this  
week's  
news

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- ▶ Tennesseans finish hurricane response on St. Kitts. — Page 3

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

## In Disaster Relief Response Partnership

# Tennessee Baptists to assist Nicaraguans

By Lonnie Wilkey  
*Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists are forging new ground in the area of Disaster Relief and partnerships.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention has agreed to serve as the coordinating state in a Disaster Relief Response Partnership in Nicaragua which was devastated late last fall by Hurricane Mitch and severe flooding.

Tennessee will work with the Baptist General Association of Virginia along with conventions in Missouri and Arkansas and possibly Maryland, said Tim Bearden, state Disaster Relief director and leader of the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group.

The effort could begin a new paradigm in the Southern Baptist Convention, said Terry Sharp, TBC partnership missions specialist.

This is the first time that we are aware of that a Disaster Relief response overseas has been cast as a partnership, Sharp said. Tennessee Baptists are venturing into Nicaragua at the request of the International Mission Board and the Nicaragua Baptist Mission.

The new venture could begin as early as April, but for the most part will take place beginning in June and continuing through December of 2000, Bearden said.

"We want to hurry up and get there, but at the same time we must do so in an orderly process," Bearden said.

"We have to make sure everything is in place for the volunteers," Bearden said. One of the things they are waiting for is the placement by the IMB of an International Service Corps couple to serve as on-site coordinators of the project, Bearden said.

Bearden, Sharp, and Gary Rickman, TBC Ministry Coordinator, recently returned from a fact-finding trip to Nicaragua where they met with IMB missionary Keith Stamps and others to view the damage and assess needs.

Tennessee Baptists will be asked to construct "pole barns," houses comprised of four posts with a tin roof. Families who receive the new homes are responsible for finding material for the sides, Bearden said.

The new "squatter villages" will be on land given families who were displaced from their — See Tennessee, page 2



ABOVE, Gary Rickman, right, TBC Ministry Coordinator, and International Mission Board missionary Keith Stamps visit with a family living in a "borrowed" home in Nicaragua. To acquire the land from the government, she had to put a "house" on the land but did not have any money. The borrowed lumber will have to be returned. BELOW, boulders and uprooted trees surround one of the few houses left standing after flooding last fall.



## Gambling fever threatens the family, Dobson says

By Tom Strode  
For Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — His service on the federal panel studying the impact of gambling has convinced James Dobson the activity is a "destroyer" and the lobby behind it is the "most powerful force in the government today," the president of Focus on the Family said.

Dobson, widely recognized as the leading family advocate among American evangelical Christians, made his assessment in his January newsletter. Dobson is one of nine members of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, which is to issue a report in June after a two-year investigation.

His 19 months on the panel have caused him to "remain radically opposed" to gambling, said Dobson, whose appointment to the commission was criticized by

the gambling industry. Gambling fever "threatens the work ethic and the very foundation of the family," he wrote.

"Thirty years ago, gambling was widely understood in the culture to be addictive, progressive, and dangerous," Dobson wrote. "Parents taught their children about its evils, and some families, including my own, would not even permit playing cards in the home. More recently, however, betting has been given a facelift by the industry — even changing the name from gambling to 'gaming.'"

"The effect of this relentless propaganda has been dramatic. Most Americans now think of gambling not as a vice or unsavory habit, but as harmless entertainment."

Dobson cited statistics, newspaper accounts, and testimony before the commission in supporting his criticism of gambling's widespread, negative impact.

Among the statistics he used are:

- ▶ Americans spend more money each year on gambling than on groceries.
- ▶ Five to 8 percent of adolescents are addicted to gambling.
- ▶ More money is spent in Mississippi on gambling than on all retail sales.

Nevada, which legalized gambling nearly 70 years ago and is the country's leading gambling state, ranks first in several social ills, Dobson said: suicide, divorce, high-school dropouts, homicide against women, and gambling addiction.

Gambling "preys on the desperation of the poor and its promises are based on lies," Dobson said.

Among the lies, he recounted, is the assurance state lotteries will produce huge funds for public schools, "despite studies showing that after states legalize lotteries, they actually reduce spending for education." ■

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## Through IMB missionaries and partners

# Overseas numbers show increase in 1998

By Erich Bridges  
For Baptist Press

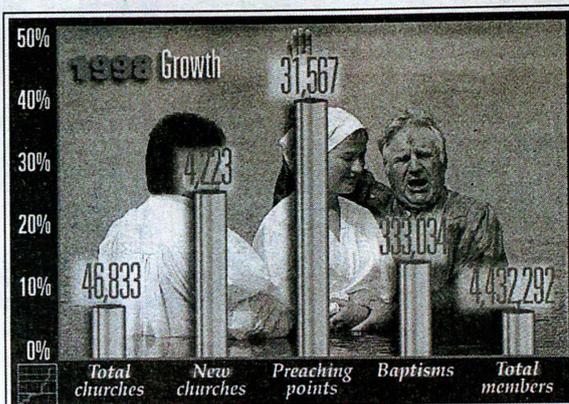
RICHMOND — More than 330,000 people are following Jesus Christ this year because servants of God like Little Wang and Liang were willing to die to tell them about Jesus.

That's the number of new believers — 330,034 of them to be exact — baptized around the world by Southern Baptist missionaries and their co-workers last year, according to International Mission Board statistics for 1998.

Little Wang traveled 10 hours with two other Christians to preach to a people group other than his own. He was met by a village mob and beaten to death. The other two Christians survived.

When his wife, Liang, learned of the news she went back with the survivors, stepped forward and said: "I am the widow of the man you killed. My husband is not dead, however. He is living in paradise with our God.

"If he were here he would forgive you. I forgive you as



**INCREASES IN baptisms, new churches, preaching points, and the overall number of churches and members were recorded in 1998 by Southern Baptist missionaries and their co-workers, according to 1998 International Mission Board statistics.**

well, because God has forgiven me. If you want to hear more about this God, meet us under the big tree outside town this evening."

That night most of the village came to hear about Liang's forgiving God. Many gave their lives to Jesus Christ that night.

Little Wang wasn't the only martyr of 1998 and Liang

wasn't the only Christian widow. Their courage and obedience typify the faith lived by millions of Baptists and Great Commission partners working worldwide with more than 4,500 International Mission Board missionaries.

God's power and their obedience brought those 330,034 new believers into the kingdom, a 13.1 percent increase

over 1997's total.

Here's what else his power wrought in 1998 through IMB missionaries and their partners:

► 4,223 new churches, a 25.4 percent increase over 1997's total.

► 31,567 new preaching points (potential future churches), a 41.7 percent jump.

► a 7.7 percent net increase in churches worldwide, bringing the total to 46,833.

► a 5.7 percent increase in total Baptist church members, to more than 4.4 million.

"We are absolutely overwhelmed by how God is moving throughout our world," said Jerry Rankin, IMB president.

"We cannot claim credit for spiritual results. While we are grateful for the devotion and passion of our missionaries for reaching a lost world, it's not the effectiveness of their efforts or the strategies of the IMB that are responsible for these results.

"It's the power and providence of God moving to make Christ known." ■

## Tennessee Baptists to assist Nicaraguans ...

— Continued from page 1  
homes by the flooding last fall. To keep the new land, residents must put a dwelling on the land or lose it, Bearden and Sharp said.

"Our hope is that while we are there being the hands of Jesus Christ, we will help people come to know him," Sharp said.

He observed that they hope to show the "Jesus" film at night and that volunteers will be able to give testimonies as well.

Sharp estimated that in the next 18 months, Tennessee Baptists will have a hand in building approximately 2,000 homes for the Nicaraguan homeless.

Volunteers do not need a lot of construction skills, Sharp said. They just need a willingness to work, he added.

Bearden noted the volunteers would be

working alongside Nicaraguans. "We are not doing the building for them. We are working with them to get it done," Bearden said.

In addition to helping the residents, the teams will be helping Southern Baptist missionaries there as well, the two men agreed. "We hope to help them establish three churches there," Sharp said.

Bearden said Tennessee Baptists are committed to sending at least one team per month over the time frame of the partnership. A minimum of six people and a maximum of 10 people per team are needed, Sharp and Bearden said.

Over the years the country of Nicaragua has had its share of natural and civil disasters.

The people there had needs before we

arrived and will have needs afterwards, Bearden said.

"We can help meet some of their needs while sharing the Word of God with them," he observed.

"We are planning on making an impact there," Bearden continued.

"We feel God is leading Tennessee Baptists to be a part of this, and we are going there with every intent of making a difference."

Tennessee Baptists interested in learning more about the efforts in Nicaragua should contact Sharp at (615) 371-7927 or by e-mail at www.tsharp@tnbaptist.org.

"We need names of people willing to volunteer and an approximate time they can go," Sharp said. Specific details of the trip are yet to be worked out, he said. ■

## Baptist reorganization will protect patient care

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The safest and most secure positions at Baptist Hospital are those directly related to patient care," said Baptist Hospital President and CEO Erie Chapman, following a management reduction in force last week.

"Baptist has reduced its management staff in order to protect and increase the number of front-line caregivers. We've had some enormous financial challenges," said Chapman, who joined Baptist as president and CEO Oct. 1, 1998.

"But along with some difficult, heart-breaking cuts, we have reduced our loss for the first seven months of this fiscal year to \$8.6 million. This is a significant improvement over last year's loss of \$73 million," he said.

"Our primary focus is to strengthen our internal operations and get back to good financial

health. While we are reducing the executive staff and payroll, we have added 100 RNs and are continuing to hire nurses."

Asked about rumors that Baptist might be for sale or merge, Chapman said, "Baptist is a strong institution with a vital, viable future. We have never made any secret of the fact that we are willing to listen to whomever has an interesting idea. However, there is purely and simply no truth to a rumor that Baptist is about to be bought by Columbia," he said.

Chapman acknowledged a merger could be in Baptist's future. "In our ongoing efforts to strengthen and preserve our Christian healing ministry in the face of serious challenges, we will look at partnership opportunities. But our preference is to partner with another not-for-profit institution which shares our values and

## Missionary family barely escapes harm

For Baptist Press

KAABONG, Uganda — Missionaries Bruce and Martha Schmidt and two of their children narrowly escaped when unidentified gunmen fired on their truck Feb. 14 near here. Family members sustained minor injuries.

The Schmidts, Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries in Uganda, were traveling from Kampala, Uganda's capital when assailants shot three bullets into their truck, said IMB missionary Mark Pierce, a co-worker. ■

## Association's first intentional church start in 34 years

# Gateway begins to blossom in Big Hatchie

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

ATOKA — It took four decades for Big Hatchie Association Baptists to begin a new work, but when they did, they chose the perfect location.

In 1992, Gateway Church here became the first intentional church start in Big Hatchie Association in 40 years, according to Director of Missions Ray Jones.

Jones credited former DOM Ira Perkins, now retired, with seeing the need for a congregation in south Tipton County, just about three miles from the Shelby County line.

Perkins led the association's 34 churches to pledge \$250 each for two years to help purchase the property in 1992. The Tennessee Baptist Convention also helped with the purchase of the property.

"Ira saw what was going to be happening all across the area. He was successful in getting the association to see this and to begin the mission," Jones observed.

The association bought land in a new subdivision. The church first met in the home of layman Jack Conner, still an active leader in Gateway, and later in the home of church planter Joe Rhinehart.

With volunteer labor the church soon constructed its first building.

Though begun by the association, Gateway was later sponsored by First Church, Covington.

### 3,000 houses

When building is complete in the subdivisions surrounding Gateway, there will be approximately 3,000 houses within walking distance of the church, Jones estimated. The area is growing at a rate of 15 to 20 percent per year, he added.

In its early days the mission had some struggles, Jones acknowledged. It was constituted as a church in 1995.

A year later the church



**GATEWAY CHURCH** in Atoka is surrounded by subdivisions. When building in the area is complete, there will be approximately 3,000 houses within walking distance of the church, according to Ray Jones, director of missions in Big Hatchie Association.

called Brad Whitt as its first official pastor. Whitt is the son of former Tennessee Baptist pastor Don Whitt, now evangelism director for the Baptist State Convention of Indiana.

Whitt brought a renewed enthusiasm and dedication to Gateway, Jones said.

When Whitt began as pastor the church had 35 in Sunday School his first day there. Now the church is averaging about 165-170 in Sunday School and 200 in worship.

In three years there have been 150 baptisms.

During the past two years Gateway has been among the top 10 churches in Tennessee in ratio of baptisms to membership.

Since Whitt's arrival the church has added a 16,000-square-foot worship center.

Whitt noted the church attempts to "reach those who don't like church, who don't go to church, and who moved out of Memphis to get away from church."

Many of those people are now in leadership positions at Gateway, Whitt laughed.

### Worship style

Unlike many new church starts, Gateway is not a "contemporary" church despite having a membership with an average age ranging between 20 and 35.

Gateway uses a blended worship style, leaning toward the more traditional style of worship, Whitt acknowledged.

"The idea you have to do a full contemporary worship ser-

vice to reach Generation X is not true," he said.

"If you do what you do well, the results will follow," Whitt said, adding, "We have a solid Baptist ministry here."

He gives a lot of credit to music minister Steve Douglas "who knows how to point the whole service to the invitation."

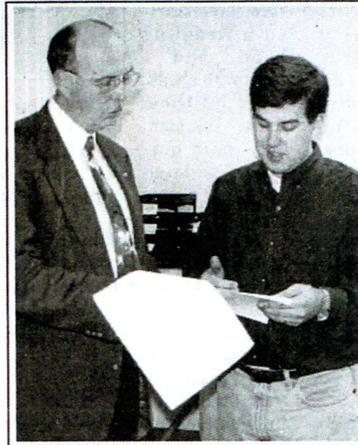
Whitt is a firm believer in a strong evangelistic preaching style as opposed to a teaching style of worship. People today are looking for strong preaching, Whitt said.

"The idea that 20 to 30 year-olds do not like hard preaching is not true. They want to know what is right and what is wrong," he stressed.

One thing Whitt uses as an evangelistic tool at Gateway is the Sunday School class he teaches, geared primarily toward prospects.

He is able to get to know the prospects, some of whom later join the church and they are able to get to know him better, Whitt said. In addition, he is able to discuss such things as who Southern Baptists are and what they believe about the Bible.

Whitt, a Union University graduate, has been able to help lead Gateway's growth while



**PASTOR BRAD WHITT**, right, of Gateway Church, Atoka, looks over church plans with Ray Jones, director of missions for Big Hatchie Association.

being a full-time student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Germantown.

While the church was in its most recent building program, he skipped two quarters to help with the construction, but has since gone back as a full-time student.

"The church has been gracious to me, and given me the ability to go to seminary," Whitt said.

He credits his seminary professors with helping to equip him "not just to be a preacher but to be a pastor" as well.

"I enjoy helping a church grow and watch it become what God wants it to be," Whitt said. *B&R*



## Charter member came as 'missionary'

For Baptist and Reflector

ATOKA — Louise Vandergrift had been a key member of Brighton Church, Brighton, for decades, working with children and Woman's Missionary Union for approximately 35 years.

Despite her long history in Brighton, she was interested in the new congregation being formed in south Tipton County in the early 1990s.

"I found out the church needed someone to work with children," she recalled. "I felt the Lord leading me to Gateway Church."

In a sense Vandergrift set out on a "missionary journey" like Paul to leave her familiar surroundings to help the new congregation.

"It's been a good experience," she said of the move. "I have seen a lot of changes (at Gateway). I have been blessed," she said.

Gateway Pastor Brad Whitt credits Vandergrift for helping the congregation to have one of the best children's programs in the area. ■

## Weakley County Association calls Perkins as DOM

For Baptist and Reflector

DRESDEN — Weakley County Association has called Wayne Perkins as director of missions, effective March 1.

Perkins has been pastor of First Church, Kenton, since 1991. He also has been pastor of five other Tennessee congregations — Bethel, Greenfield; Pleasant Hill, Martin; Gearins Chapel, Greenfield; Adams Chapel, Dresden; and Tumbling Creek, Gleason.

Perkins has held numerous positions at both the associational and state convention levels.

He is a **PERKINS** trustee of Union University, Jackson, and was 1998-99 president of the West Tennessee Pastor's Conference.

The Weakley County native and his wife, Linda Kay, have three grown children and five grandchildren. ■



## Tennessee volunteers finish repairs on island of St. Kitts

By Marcia Knox  
For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — A second Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer team worked Jan. 29-Feb. 15 on the island of St. Kitts repairing homes and churches following Hurricane Georges, which hit the island last September, and an additional rainstorm last November.

Herb Adams, Tennessee Disaster Relief team leader and member of First Church, Alamo, led the second disaster recovery effort which involved 10 Tennessee Baptist volunteers.

In addition to Adams, volunteers included Ronnie Snoderly, Dotson Memorial

Church, Maryville; David Adams, First Church, Alamo; Don Byrd, Curtis Fowler, and Jim Jones, West Lonsdale Church, Knoxville; Gordon Hill, Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville; Connie Starrsberry, Fort Hill Church, Knoxville; Gilbert Ray, Moran Church, Clinton; and John Walker, Fairfield Church, Morristown.

The team finished the roof at Mt. Carmel Church in Bourryeau Village on St. Kitts and did some interior remodeling of the church. This included work on the basement, painting, and putting up new doors. The team also reroofed three houses.

In addition to the Tennessee volunteers, Mt. Carmel Church members sand-

ed and revarnished the pews that had water damage.

Herb Adams, who had been on the island during the first week of November directing relief efforts for Hurricane Georges victims, coordinated all Disaster Relief volunteer teams on the island.

The church was first repaired by Snoderly, Fowler, and Bob Jones of Woodbury Church, Woodbury, who served on the island Nov. 10-19.

Following the flooding of the repaired church in late November, additional monies for church supplies, building materials, and a computer were donated by several Tennessee churches, individuals, businesses, and associations. ■

# Tennessee musician marches to different beat

By Betty Poor  
Special to Baptist and Reflector

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Dawn Goodwin is a Tennessee musician who marches to a different "beat."

Goodwin serves as a Southern Baptist International Service Corps missionary here in Haiti. She speaks Creole (a French-African dialect) and trains young Haitians to lead Christian music with the rhythms of this Caribbean island nation.

Although she grew up in Knoxville and later moved to Jefferson City, Goodwin has been working in Haiti since she came here as a volunteer for three weeks during the summers of 1991 and 1992. From 1992 to 1996 she taught music in the Quisqueya Christian School where missionary children study in Port-au-Prince. She began her service with the International Mission Board in 1996 when she was named administrator of the Baptist Agricultural Center in Marmont, Haiti, during the absence of missionaries Mark and Peggy Rutledge.

While Goodwin was teaching at the Quisqueya school, she took Creole lessons and began working with music in the Haitian Baptist churches.

Now she lives in the town of Hinche on Haiti's central plateau.

"It has been a wonderful place to be for developing a music ministry," she said. Sometimes she has rehearsals starting at 5 a.m. and meetings with various musical groups into the evening hours. "We have started a fledgling band, and I work with choirs, but I let them do it," she said. "My main purpose is to develop young people as musicians."

Many young people from surrounding rural areas live in Hinche temporarily to attend secondary school. While they are completing their secondary studies Dawn also teaches them to lead music in their churches. "Then they go back to their churches in the 'hills and hollers.' I'm from the 'hills and hollers' of East Tennessee," she added.



TENNESSEAN DAWN GOODWIN leads children in singing Haitian choruses during a Vacation Bible School in Port-au-Prince. She has enlisted one of the church's young people to help. — Photo by Betty Poor

Goodwin grew up in East Tennessee churches. Her parents were active in Ridge Dale Church in Knoxville when she was a small child. Then they became members of First Church, Fountain City. There she accepted Jesus as her Savior and was baptized.

When Goodwin was about 11 her family moved to Jefferson City and joined First

Church. "It is a church that is rich in music and missions and has a good discipleship program," she said.

She went to Girls in Action and music camps at Camp Carson.

"I felt called of the Lord to serve Him in music at camp when I was 16," said Goodwin, who holds a bachelor of science degree in music education from Austin Peay State University, in Clarksville.



She felt called to missions during music week at Ridgecrest when she heard a testimony about the work of "Musicians on Mission" in Iowa. She then went to Iowa herself on a mission trip.

In 1991 she heard of the need for a music team in Haiti and volunteered to go. "I went to Haiti that summer. Before I got off the plane, I knew Haiti was the place I needed to be," she said.

"I have seen people come to the Lord because of music," she said. This confirms for her the need of a music ministry in Haiti.

Now Goodwin is working on a project to find indigenous music to use in training the church music leaders. She visits different churches with a tape recorder and tapes the Haitian songs they sing.

"If we are going to evangelize the people who practice voodoo in Haiti, we need to use rhythms that are familiar to them," she said.

Haitian rhythms sung in Creole are very different from what Goodwin grew up with in Tennessee. But the Lord is using her through Haitian music to bless many lives. ■

## Churches need new sales tax exemption numbers

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — State sales tax exemption numbers have changed for all churches and organizations, according to William Maxwell, administrative director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Maxwell stressed the change applies only to the state sales tax exemption. The IRS exemption is a totally different issue, he said.

The state of Tennessee recently changed to a new computer system, explained Mike Green of the Department of Revenue.

Instead of the old 14-digit sales tax exemption numbers, the new numbers are now nine-digits and begin with either a 1 or 7, Green said.

Green said a majority of vendors are requesting the new nine-digit numbers and they are notifying the churches of the change.

Churches can contact the Tennessee Department of Revenue at 1-800-342-1003 or (615) 741-2594 and request the new number, Green noted.

"We will print out a new certificate with their number and either mail or fax it to the church," he said. ■

## Union University community grieves over coach's death

For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Lisa Hutchens, co-head coach of the women's basketball team of Union University here, was found dead in her home Feb. 20. The Jackson Police Department ruled the death was caused by a self-inflicted gun shot.

The Union community held a memorial service for Hutchens Feb. 22.

"Sadness, loss, and despair are only a few of the emotions we're feeling today, but we are trusting in God to provide help and hope for us," said Union President David S. Dockery to a standing-room-only crowd at the service.

Jerry Tidwell, pastor of West Jackson Church, where Hutchens was a member, also spoke.

In response to the grief expressed by students and athletes, the university has developed a counseling team.

Hutchens had just finished her classwork at the University of Memphis for her doctorate and was to begin her dissertation. She also earned a master of education there.

Since Hutchens joined the team in 1991 as assistant coach, the Lady Bulldogs reached the NAIA national tournament six times. They won the tournament and held the national title for the first time in Union's history last season.

Hutchens, who also was an assistant professor at Union, was an alumnus. She was the first women's basketball player at Union to be named NAIA All-American and NAIA Academic All-American.

She was a coach at South Side High School, Jackson,

from 1986-91. While at South Side, Hutchens was named coach of the year two years in a row. She also led the Lady Hawks to the first undefeated season in Madison County history and to the TSSAA state tournament in the 1989-90 season. ■

## Tennessee Baptist Man/Boy Day at Bristol Motor Speedway Saturday, June 5, 1999

2:00 p.m.

- Two big races:  
7:00 p.m. Dash Series  
9:00 p.m. NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series
- Worship and testimonies from racing team members
- Meet the racing teams and get autographs
- Share the Gospel, build relationships between men and boys
- Buy one \$5.00 adult ticket receive up to 5 free boy's tickets, meal ticket available \$3.00 per person

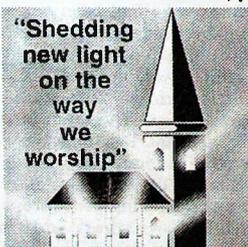
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# Everyone needed to reach N. America for Christ

## guest commentary

by Bob Record  
president, NAMB  
Alpharetta, Ga.

As I've traveled across the United States and Canada, it has been such a joy and privilege to see missionary after missionary in the very center of what God is doing. God is at work. And, your North American missionaries are serving sacrificially as they join him in that work.

These nearly 5,000 home missionaries are our models, our heroes in the war to win North America to Christ. But, they cannot win the war alone. The mission field is too vast. In the United States, 180 million people admit they have no relationship with Jesus Christ. And, in Canada, only 7 percent claim to be born again. That's more than 200 million unbelievers and less than 5,000 missionaries.

Our missionaries need our

support. They need Southern Baptists to come alongside them through fervent prayer, dedicated service, and sacrificial giving.

We need to be praying:

(1) Our missionaries will have a zeal, passion, and drive to share their faith.

(2) God will help them have eyes that see, ears that hear, and a heart that senses where he is working, and then the courage and faith to join him, and,

(3) And, that he would keep them safe and able to carry out his mission.

Although missionaries are the heart of everything we do at the North American Mission Board, I do not think anyone can do God's work by themselves. The key to reaching North America for Christ is God renewing the evangelistic soul of our churches. Our missionaries need a growing network of on-mission Christians and churches who will partner in evangelistic and church planting strategies throughout the U.S. and Canada.

For more than 150 years

## 1999 Season of North American Missions



Week of Prayer for  
North American Missions  
March 7-14

North American Missions Day  
in Sunday School  
March 14

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering  
National Goal: \$45 million  
Challenge Goal: \$50 million

Southern Baptists have joined together to provide the financial support necessary to meet financial needs of these servant heroes. God's giving through his people is expanding the Kingdom and making differences we can barely imagine. But the needs grow even faster than we can meet them.

Baptisms are increasing and we're starting more churches than ever before, but the lost population grows even faster.

Southern Baptists are surrendering to God's call to ser-

vice and completing mission applications in record numbers, but some await funded positions in which to serve.

The NAMB has budgeted more money for the mission field in 1999 than ever before. But vast needs remain unmet.

During this year's Season of North American Missions, won't you lead your church to pray for our missionaries, make commitments to be on-mission with him, and give sacrificially to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering? God is at work, and he wants to work through you. ■



## just for today

by Fred Wood,  
pastor emeritus,  
Eudora Church,  
Memphis



## Start with a smile

Patient: "How much do you charge for pulling a tooth?" Dentist: "\$100." Patient: "That's quite a lot of money for a job that takes only a few minutes, isn't it?" Dentist: "Oh, I can take a little longer, if you wish."

## Take this truth

Skills are tools! We are in a new age in all fields. Technology has made constant retooling necessary. The situation will not lessen, but will intensify.

## Memorize this Scripture

"Do your best to present yourself ... as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed." — II Timothy 2:15, NIV

## Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to realize the necessity for continual growth in all areas of my life." ■

# Starting new units helps Sunday Schools grow

## making Christ known

by Tim Holcomb  
TBC staff



Does your Sunday School have an abundance of frequent non-attenders, inactive members, or "out-of-habit" participants? Church growth commentators have said for some time now that 80 percent of Southern Baptist churches are plateaued or dead. Can anything be done about this situation?

A very interesting discovery that contributes to their situation is that Sunday School people don't want to embarrass themselves or their teachers. For whatever reason, when a

Sunday School member experiences difficulty in their class, instead of moving to another class, they simply drop out. Do you have many former Sunday School members that have dropped out?

Another related discovery is that most Sunday School classes stop growing after 18 months in existence. How many of your Sunday School classes have been around longer than 18 months?

If your Sunday School enrollment reflects a number of dropouts, inactive, etc., and if your Sunday School classes are all over 18 months old — here is something to consider: start new units.

Why is starting new units or Sunday School classes so important? New Sunday School classes provide many varied ways for new persons as

well as chronic absentees to participate in Bible study. Statistics show that each new unit grows faster in contrast to existing Sunday School classes.

How are new Sunday School units started?

First, never use the word "split" when referring to starting new classes. The best approach is to begin a "paper class." Enlist a teacher, provide a room, and give the teacher a paper list of prospects, chronic absentees, and inactive members. With these names as potential members, the teacher begins involving each one in meaningful Bible study. A variation of the paper class is called the "missionary class." Involve the same list of prospects but recruit two or three couples to join the teacher. After six months, the supportive couples

(missionaries) have the option to return to their original class.

Annual reorganization of the entire Sunday School is another possibility for starting new units. All regular, irregular attendees, chronic absentees, prospects, and inactive members are evaluated. New Sunday School classes are organized. This new organization reflects a more balanced grouping of the total number of adults. Contact your state office for details on how to initiate the reorganization process.

Those same church growth commendations say that new Sunday School classes are the most effective way of rescuing your church from that plateau! ■ — Holcomb is leader of the Christian Growth Development Group of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

## Church of the Covered Dish

By Thom Tapp, pastor, Oral Church, Lenoir City

MRS. ROUGHTUFFET. SINCE WE "FORGOT" TO PUT LITTLE BILLY IN OUR CHURCH PLAY...



I'VE DECIDED TO GIVE HIM A NEW PART DESIGNED JUST FOR HIM. HE WON'T EVEN HAVE TO MEMORIZE HIS PART.



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BRING IN THE CHAINSAW

## Partnership Prayer Requests

### February-March

- 24 — Pray for a church in Mem Martins, Portugal, which has formed "prayer triplets."
- 25 — Pray for the new building for the International Church in Costa Rica. Ask God to help the church meet its goal of being in the building by Easter.
- 26 — Pray for Dean Haun, pastor of Hermitage Hills Church, Hermitage, who led a pastors' retreat Feb. 25-26 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for pastors of churches that will host May simultaneous revival evangelism volunteers.
- 27 — Pray for Shirley Dill, wife of a Michigan Baptist director of missions who will have surgery this week.
- 28 — Pray for the Lord to manifest his power and wisdom in Costa Rica in 1999 and to bless the beginning of new congregations.
- 1 — Pray for the preparations for the Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, evangelistic crusade in May. Ask God to bless everyone involved in the preparations.
- 2 — Pray for Southern Baptist churches in Michigan that are without pastors.

# Y2K causes PK to drop plans for state capital rallies

Baptist Press

DENVER — Y2K concerns have been cited by Promise Keepers as part of the reason for dropping plans for rallies at each state capital on Jan. 1, 2000.

"The prospect of Y2K was made clear to us by all the people looking at the state capitals and the public safety officials," Steve Chavis, a PK spokesman, told *The Washington Times*.

Another PK spokesman, Steve Ruppe, told the *Detroit Free Press*, "People have expressed some concerns about

the computer bug. While predictions of its effect change from day to day, it's something we're concerned about."

Ruppe, in a Feb. 11 interview with Baptist Press, said a more important reason for the change is "more people will be reached in home and church opportunities than would have gone to state capital events."

"Y2K" refers to computer malfunctions that could interrupt utilities and other services when old computer programs misinterpret dates ending in "00" as meaning 1900.

In *The Washington Times* article, Chavis cited the logisti-

cal challenge of men traveling hundreds of miles to their state capitals and the cost of a national satellite hookup for the 50-state event as reasons for the change in Promise Keepers' plans.

PK joins InterVarsity Christian Fellowship in publicly shifting an event away from the turn of the millennium.

Promise Keepers, now in its

ninth year, has scheduled 15 men's conferences this year, beginning June 4-5 in Memphis.

Promise Keepers is a national men's ministry founded by Bill McCartney, former head football coach of the University of Colorado.

The ministry, in the face of a financial shortfall last year,

laid off its 345-person staff, but has since grown back to 175-plus paid staff members, Ruppe told Baptist Press. ■



## CLASSIFIED

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## CLASSIFIED

**YOUTH:** Temple Baptist Church of Old Hickory has an opening for a Youth Minister. It is a part-time position, Sundays and Wednesdays. If you have a heart for youth, please call Rev. Ray Clubb at Temple Baptist Church, (615) 847-5091.

**DOM:** The Graves County Baptist Association is a gathering of 44 churches and missions in the western area of Kentucky. The association is currently conducting a search for the position of Director of Missions. The successful candidate will have high administrative gifting with a visionary approach to missions in the local, small town, county setting. Preference will be given to those who have prior experience as a DOM or to those who have an educational background and experience from large multi-staff churches. Resumes are being received currently. Closure date for this opening will be Feb. 28. Address all correspondence to Director of Missions Search Committee; Graves County Baptist Association; Rev. Bob Swift, Chairman; 108 W. South St.; Mayfield, KY 42066.

**MUSICIAN:** Positions available for church organist and piano teacher in Music Academy. For additional information, call First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, (615) 893-2514.

**YOUTH:** Part-time youth minister needed at Richland Baptist Church. Contact Pastor Billy Hill, (615) 356-4409.

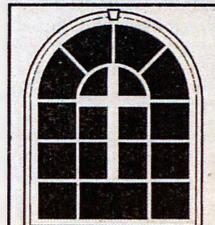
**CHILDREN:** Director of Childhood Education, full-time position, degree and experience required. Send resume: Trinity Baptist Church, 8899 Trinity Rd., Cordova, TN 38018.

**STUDENTS/YOUNG ADULTS:** Do you want to change the world? Mount Olive Church, Knoxville, is seeking God's person to join our pastoral team as Associate Pastor for Students (middle school - college) and Young Adults. This person must love students and be committed to a God-centered, creative ministry. To explore God's call, send resume to Search Team, 2500 Maryville Pike, Knoxville, TN 37920 or FAX (423) 577-5583.

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**Boys Ranch, Millington (Houseparents needed)** call or e-mail Bert Sutton, 901-872-0839 bsutton@tbch4kids.org

**Brentwood (Houseparents needed)** call or e-mail Ivan Raley, 615-377-6551 iraley@tbch4kids.org

**Memphis (Houseparents needed)** call or e-mail Gene Gafford, 901-386-3961 ggafford@tbch4kids.org

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# Call to service

By Martin Babb

**Focal Passage — Mark 5:18-20; 6:6b-13, 30-31**

Leo Tolstoy was a Russian writer of the late 19th century, probably best known for his phone book-sized novel, *War and Peace*. He became a Christian later in life and is credited with this quote: "The simplest and shortest ethical precept is to be served by others as little as possible, and to serve others as much as possible." It is a good lead-in to today's lesson on service, because part of God's call for us to be bold disciples involves answering his call to serve others.

**Share our story — ch. 5:18-20**

In the previous verses (1-14), Jesus encountered a demon-possessed man, healed him by sending the demons into some unsuspecting pigs who then took a one-way trip to the sea, and angered some really surprised herdsmen. Seeing this once-crazed person now rationally calm, the locals were upset and asked Jesus to leave. The healed man wanted to go with him but Jesus sent him to tell his story. The man obeyed and began telling "how great things Jesus had done for him" (v. 20). I admit our stories probably do not compare with this one, but one of the best witnessing tools we have is to simply tell others what Jesus had done for us.

**Maintain our mission — ch. 6:6b-13**

Telling our story is only part of our mission. In these verses, Jesus calls his disciples together and commissions them to preach and to minister in his name. He sends them two by two, which fit the Jewish custom of a testimony requiring two witnesses. They were to put their trust in God and depend on him to provide for their needs. Their mission was the same as ours, preach repentance and minister to people, wherever we go, and wherever we find people in need. That is the Gospel story. We are to encourage people to repent, to change the direction of their lives. Other needs may be more tangible. We deal with each one individually, with a common denominator of compassion.

**Respect our rest — vv. 30-31**

After ministering for a period of time, length unspecified here, the disciples gathered together with Jesus for sharing. Jesus called for them to go to a deserted place and rest. Some people thrive on being busy but all of us need a time of rest and renewal. Even God's original design called for six days of work and one day for rest. Unfortunately, we have not completely followed that particular pattern because for some of us, Sundays have become the busiest day of the week, and on many occasions our church "busyness" pulls our families apart. Jesus recognized and respected the need for rest and renewal, and we need to do the same.

Tolstoy tells a story of a lonely man who was given a New Testament. He read it and one day heard a voice say, "Look tomorrow on the street. I am coming." He watched ... no stranger appeared. While waiting he helped an old man, a child, and a woman. Still, no stranger came, and he returned home. The voice came again, "It is I!" Then he saw a vision of all the people he had helped that day. These words came to mind: "I was hungry and you gave me meat ... a stranger and you took me in ... inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto me." God calls us to serve. I hope we are never too busy to answer. — Babb is associate pastor/education, Springfield Church, Springfield.



BABB

# Express hope

By Edgar Pierce

**Focal Passage: Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 12:26-29; Revelation 1:17-20; 11:15**

You may have heard about the woman at a senior adult function who told a gentleman about her age that he looked like her fourth husband. He responded, "oh! and how many times have you been married?" She replied, "three." This is hope.

We can live for a few days without food, less time without water but it has been stated that we cannot live without hope. What is the hope we as God's children need to express? The Christian's hope is not an emotion, it is not a concept of psychology, and it is not a city in Arkansas. Hope is a person. Hope is the Lord Jesus. Peter called it the "lively hope."

## Family Bible Lesson

**Live with hope: Titus 2:11-14.** How can we live in hope? Paul links grace and hope together in Titus. He says that by grace the salvation of God has appeared. This grace teaches us to live right because we have hope. God's purpose of salvation is not only for eternity but for today as well. Christ gave Himself for us to be a redeemed people in this world not only the next.

**Serve with hope: Hebrews 12:26-29.** The writer of Hebrews contrasts the law pictured in Mount Sinai and the experience of Israel with the new covenant pictured by Mount Zion. Many erroneously think that the Old Testament shows a God of wrath and the New Testament a God of love. However, rightly understood we find the Old Testament also shows God is a God of mercy and the New Testament shows a God who judges sin as well. In verse 29 he is called a, "consuming fire."

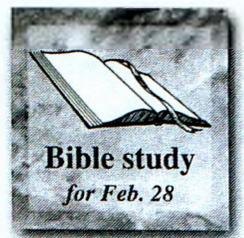
God shook the ground at Mount Sinai and will shake it

again for a final time in the future. Verse 26 is a quote from Haggai 2:6-7 and shows that the promise is not just a New Testament concept but is God's eternal plan. This points out the temporary nature of all that we think is unshakable and is not, and by contrast shows the eternal nature of the things of God.

So where is our hope as we serve? It is in the kingdom that cannot be moved. Do you remember the song we sang as children, "I shall not be, I shall not be moved..." Our hope is that we serve a God who's kingdom cannot be shaken by time or happenstance. No best-laid plans of God will ever go awry.

**Trust with hope: Revelation 1:17-20; 11:15.** Many times it has been said that we can read the end of the book and know that we win. Many times it seems like we face defeat but it is not over yet. John gives us our final picture of hope from the Isle of Patmos. Revelation was set in a time where hope might have been at a low point. The early church had to endure severe persecution. John sees a vision that can be of no other than the Lord Jesus for it can fit no other as it does him. The early church might have wondered if he would return and be victorious. John's vision leaves no room for doubt that the victory is his. When John fell at his feet he said, "fear not." Child of God we too should fear not. He is the first and the last and is alive forever more. He had the keys to death and hell. What else is there to fear?

Not only is this a message of hope yet to come but I think of today. The discouraged church needs to see that our Lord holds the churches in his hand as seen in Revelation 1:20. Many pastors are discouraged and down hearted. Look pastors, the Lord of glory is holding his messengers in his hand as well. Take heart dear faithful servant. The kingdom will soon become the kingdom of our Lord, forever and forever his. — Pierce is pastor, Cedar Grove Missionary Church, Kingsport.



PIERCE

# Ultimate victory

By Maurice Hays

**Focal Passage: Mark 15:25-26, 33-39, 46; 16:2-7**  
**Jesus crucifixion — ch. 15:25-26, 33-36**

Jesus' crucifixion took place at "the third hour," or at nine o'clock in the morning.

All four Gospels slightly differ in the wording of the accusation or charge against Jesus that was inscribed over Jesus' head. Mark has the shortest saying: The King of the Jews. Jesus had been hit, spit on, stripped of his clothes, his arms and legs drawn in unnatural positions, and nailed to the cross.

After six hours on the cross, listening to the ridicule from those who passed by, soldiers, religious leaders, and even one of the criminals crucified with him, Jesus died at three in the afternoon. Darkness had fallen over the earth at noon as the completion of God's salvation plan was taking place.

Mark gives only one of Jesus' statements from the cross. Jesus lived out his life in faith and obedience and he died the way he has called us to live, with complete faith in the Father.

**Jesus' death — vv. 37-39**

Verse 37 says that Jesus uttered a loud cry and "gave up the ghost," literally, "breathed out," or "ex-

## Explore the Bible Lesson

pired." Mark says at the same time the inner veil of the temple sanctuary, in the front of the Holy of Holies, was rent in two from the top to the bottom.

This event was not done by human hands but by a divine miracle. Hebrews 10:19-22, states that the symbolism of the event was that the way was now opened through Christ's death for all followers to enter the very presence of God at all times. We come into the presence of God through his son Jesus.

A centurion who was in charge of the crucifixion, stood near and witnessed all that had happened. Mark indicates he said, "Truly this was the Son of God." In the Greek, he may have said "a son of God," or this is, "a godly man." Luke has the centurion saying, "Certainly this was a righteous man." In either statement he saw the greatness of who Jesus was.



HAYS

**Jesus' burial — v. 46**  
 Jesus' burial was hurried, because it was about 4 p.m. and the Sabbath would begin at 6 p.m. Joseph hurried to remove Jesus' body from the cross and give him a royal burial. Joseph and Nicodemus placed Jesus' body in a nearby tomb. The Sabbath would last until 6 p.m. on Saturday.

**Jesus' resurrection — ch. 16:2-7**

The women had rested on the Sabbath, according to the law, but early on Sunday they came to the tomb. This was the third day since the death of Jesus.

They traveled to arrive at sunrise, and worried unnecessarily all the way, who would remove the great stone. When they arrived the stone was rolled away. Jesus was gone, and an angel was sitting at the right side of the tomb. They were instructed to go tell the disciples that Jesus had gone before them to Galilee. Tell them that he who was crucified has risen.

The risen Jesus is our key to an abundant life now, and our hope and assurance of an eternal life in heaven with him. Thanks be to God. — Hays is Baptist Student Ministries specialist, Jackson State Community College, Jackson.

## people

■ **Derrick Burrell** and **David Turpin** were ordained as deacons of First Church, Cleveland.

■ **Scott Childs** was ordained to the ministry by Lyons Creek Church, Strawberry Plains, Feb. 21.

■ South Liberty Church, Athens, ordained **Ricky Johnson** and **Randy Gryder** as deacons Jan. 17.

## leaders

■ **Everett Hills Church**, Maryville, has called **David Blanton** as associate pastor/minister of education, effective March 8.

■ **Walnut Grove Church**, Decatur, has called **Kirk Jordan** as pastor.

■ **Michael Christian** was called as pastor, Fairview Church, Lebanon, effective Jan. 3.

■ **Bob Ervin** has been called as interim pastor, First Church, Dyer.

■ **Chris Walton**, a student at Union University, Jackson, has been named youth minister, Fellowship Church, Milan.

■ **Michael Penny** has been called as interim music minister, First Church, Humboldt.

■ **First Church**, Rutherford, has called **Michael Troxel**, a student at Union University, Jackson, as youth minister.

■ **Marjorie Halbert**, minister of music, Glendale Church, Nashville, recently celebrated her 15th anniversary of service there.

■ **James Palmer**, pastor, Lakeview Church, Old Hickory, recently observed his 20th

anniversary of service there.

■ **First Church**, Greenbrier, has called **Jason Cruise** as interim minister of education.

■ **First Church**, Crossville, called **Sam Norrod** as music director, effective Feb. 17.

■ **Don Long**, pastor, North Knoxville Church, Knoxville, has been named chaplain, Tennessee Highway Patrol, Knoxville District. The district includes 11 counties. Long has served as volunteer chaplain, Chattanooga Police Department, for nine years, and with the Florida Highway Patrol, for four years.

■ **Michael Brown** was called as minister of music, Alpha Church, Morristown, effective Feb. 7. He formerly served a church in Columbus, Miss., as minister of music.

■ **William E. Troutt**, president, Belmont University, Nashville, has been elected vice chair of the board of directors of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). He assumed his new responsibilities Feb. 4 at the association's 23rd annual meeting in Washington, D.C. NAICU is the national organization representing private nonprofit colleges and universities on public policy issues with the federal government. It has more than 900 members.

■ **Mike Segers** has been called as pastor, Inskip Church, Knoxville.

■ **Terry Shannon**, minister of music and senior adults, First Church, Hixson, celebrated his 15th anniversary of service there Feb. 17.

■ **Jerry Chapman** of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Christian Growth Develop-



**STUDENTS** who attend the preschool of First Church, Mountain City, work at the Hale Community Ministries Center in Elizabethton. The youngsters delivered food they collected and helped assemble food boxes for needy families in Carter/Johnson counties. Hale Community Ministries is a part of the Watauga Baptist Association.

ment Group has been called as interim pastor, Ooltewah Church, Ooltewah.

■ **Lyons Creek Church**, Strawberry Plains, recently called **Gant Garner** as minister of education.

■ **Highland Heights Church**, Memphis, called **Ben Wilkins** as pastor, effective Jan. 10. Wilkins was pastor of a church in Springfield, Ill.

## churches

■ **North Knoxville Church**, Knoxville, gave its largest gift given by the church to the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions. Members gave \$8,000.

■ **Central Church**, Oak Ridge, will hold two conferences May 10-11. They are entitled "Double Your Class in Two Years or Less," which is for paid and non-paid youth and adult leadership in churches, and "Double Your Church in Five Years or Less," which is for paid church staff. They will be led by Josh Hunt, author and founder and president of 2020 Vision. For more information, contact the church at (423) 483-7495.

■ **Ten members of Rome Church**, Lebanon, showed the "Jesus" video recently to 28 inmates at the Smith County Jail. As a result, nine men and women inmates made professions of faith and an officer rededicated her life. Members of the church provided popcorn and drinks for viewers and after the showing shared the Gospel, gave testimonies, and prayed with the group. And tracts were left for other inmates. The church plans to repeat the effort.

■ **Rocky Hill Church**, Knoxville, will hold revival March 21-24. Sid Nichols will speak.

■ **Alta Loma Church**, Madison, held a revival in January and as a result 13 people made professions of faith and others made other spiritual decisions. Morris Anderson, evangelist, spoke.

■ **Second Church**, Memphis, will present "The Way of the Cross," an outside drama, April 1-3, from 7-9 p.m. Guided walking tours begin every 15 minutes and last 45 minutes. The drama has been presented by the church about every other year since 1974 so it has become a tradition to many groups. Scenes include entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, his visit to the temple, the Last Supper, entry into Gethsemane, Peter's denial, the trial, crucifixion, and the empty tomb. For more information, contact the church at (901) 682-3395.

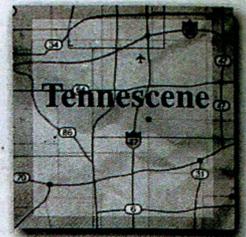
■ **First Church**, Columbia, will send a team of 17 to Riga, Latvia, Russia, in April. The volunteers will help construct a four-floor addition to a church building and work in an orphanage. The church is holding several fund-raising events for the effort. For more information, contact the church at (931) 388-2655.

■ **First Church**, Pulaski, will hold revival with the theme, "Miracles Begin With Prayer," March 7-10. Scott Dawson will speak.

■ **North Knoxville Church**, Knoxville, will hold revival March 28 - April 1. Don Whitt will speak.

## associations

■ **Churches of Riverside Association** will hold a World Missions Conference April 18-21 in the Jamestown area and April 22-25 in the Livingston area. A banquet for the conference will be April 17 at First Church, Jamestown.



■ **McMinn-Meigs Association**, based in Athens, will hold an Evangelism Conference March 16 at First Church, Athens. Morris Anderson, evangelist, will speak. For more information, contact the association at (423) 745-2248.

## TBC events

■ The conference, S.E.R.-V.A.N.T. Life: Developing Lay Leaders will be held Feb. 27 at Ridgeway Church, Memphis; March 13 at the Baptist Center, Brentwood; and March 20 at First Church, Morristown. For more information, contact Jerry Chapman of the TBC staff at 1-800-558-2090 or (615) 371-7932.

## Rockwood church honors three special members

For Baptist and Reflector

**ROCKWOOD** — Whites Creek Church here recently honored three members of distinction.

The members were Ford P. McCuiston, Nell McCuiston, and Faye James.

Ford McCuiston, 90, has been a member of the church for 55 years and a deacon for 51 years. He has served as chairman of deacons, trustee, treasurer, and teacher. McCuiston just recently retired from teaching a men's Sunday School class, but he continues to serve as a deacon.

Nell McCuiston, wife of Ford for 69 years, has served as a partner to her husband, helping him in his ministries at Whites Creek Church. And the couple raised five sons at the church.

Faye James, another longtime member of the church, has served the church for many years with her family, which consisted of her late husband Cordell and their three sons. Currently she is ill and unable to attend services.

But James and the McCuistons were present when they were honored recently. Each was given a plaque from the congregation to thank them for their service and ministry. ■



**MARY CHARLOTTE** and **Louis Ball** pause during a retirement celebration for Mary Ball, organist, First Church, Jefferson City, given by the congregation. Ball served the church as organist for 37 years. Mrs. Ball, a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., also served as organist of Sevens Valley Church, Elizabethton, Ky. Louis Ball served the church as interim minister of music and as a staff member of Carson-Newman College.