

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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April 14, 1999

this week's news

- ▶ Legislature to consider Released Time bill. — Page 2
- ▶ Belmont names interim president. — Page 3
- ▶ IMB allots money for refugee relief. — Page 10

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

Transitional interims provide boost for churches

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Interim pastors have been around forever, yet a new type of interim is gaining popularity — the transitional or intentional interim pastor.

The traditional interim pastors, with a few exceptions, basically have been "Sunday preachers," said Aubrey Hay of the church-ministers relations office of the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Church Staff Leadership Group.

He stressed there is nothing wrong with the traditional interim and observed it works especially well with churches with large staffs which can continue the ministries of the church without interruption. "There will always be a place for the traditional interim," Hay said.

An intentional or transitional interim is more specialized and requires the individual to become the "pastor" and become fully involved in the life of the church, Hay said. The true intentional interim should be for a limited time and the person should not be a candidate for the pulpit, he added.

Hay currently is serving in a transitional interim at Haywood Hills Church, Nashville.

Intentional or transitional interims can be for churches where a long-tenured pastor has retired or in a church where the pastor has left amid conflict.

In the latter situation, the transitional interim "can help enter into a period of healing," Hay said.

"Often in church life, the ending of the ministry of the pastor leaves the congregation vulnerable to a variety of risks," Hay observed.

"However positive his ministry or timely his departure, a vacuum of leadership is created making it easy, and even likely, for some negative things to arise," Hay said.

Hay noted that when a church lacks direction "more often than not, it is a time when far more negative events come to pass" that ultimately "can play havoc with a church's ministry and fellowship."

Hay, a long-time Tennessee Baptist pastor himself, stressed that the time between interims need not be "a time of malaise and spiritual decline."

"The ministry of the church

does not cease when the pastor leaves. Furthermore, the church needs safe-guards against the pitfalls of a vacuum in leadership," Hay said.

That safe-guard can be in the form of an intentional interim pastor.

"At Haywood Hills we are rethinking every facet of the church's ministry. I'm facilitating and guiding that process," Hay said, adding that the

Brown's task has been "to help the church deal with the past, learn from it, feel good about the present, and prepare for a fruitful relationship with the next pastor," he said.

An intentional interim provides an objective platform, especially in the beginning of the relationship, Brown observed.

The intentional interim can ask questions which helps a congregation discover their strong assets as well as barriers to relationships, he noted.

Frank Hawkins, retired pastor of First Church, Kingsport, is now available for transitional interims.

He observed that churches that choose to go the "intentional" route "have made a decision to do the interim period in a different way — with intention."

This is a time for a church to do its homework, go through the visioning process, and prepare for future leadership, Hawkins said. "There is a lot that needs to be done during the interim period," he said.

In order to help churches in the future that want an transitional interim ministry, Hay's office is offering training to those who may be interested in serving as transitional interim pastors.

— See Transitional, page 3



HAY



BROWN



HAWKINS

"transitional interim period relies heavily on involvement by the laity of the church."

Truman Brown, a former staff member of the Baptist Sunday School Board (now Life-Way Christian Resources) has now devoted his ministry to helping churches in transition.

For almost a year Brown has served as the intentional (transitional) interim pastor of First Southern Church, Pikeville (see separate story on page 3).

As the intentional interim

Hundreds attend Summit, Congress

Meetings enable RAs, Acteens to experience missions



LEADING A SESSION of Acteens Summit '99 are musicians including Melody Morris, right of center, worship leader, Franklin; and members of the State Acteens Advisory Panel, from left, Amanda Whitten, Kingsport; Kristal O'Malley, Collierville; and far right, Anissa Smith, Dickson. Panelists not pictured are Heather Bates, Dresden; Amanda Westerman, Dickson; and Erica Harms, Franklin. — See page 7 for more photos



MIKE DAVISON, center, gives last minute instructions to Royal Ambassadors serving as the Color Guard for the Parade of Flags held in conjunction with the 45th Annual Royal Ambassador Congress. Participating were, from left, Cory Lambert, North Etowah Church, Etowah; Matthew McCuddy, Ardmore Church, Memphis; Robbie Blunkall, Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory; and Andrew Etheridge, Ardmore Church, Memphis. — See page 7 for more photos.

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In Tennessee

Support sought for Released Time bill

For Baptist and Reflector

KINGSPORT — Support is being sought for Released Time Christian Education in Tennessee.

Senate Bill 973 and House Bill 1209 are currently in education committees in both chambers with votes tentatively scheduled on April 20 (House Education Subcommittee) and April 21 (Senate Education Committee).

Released Time provides public school students, who have written parental permission, the voluntary opportunity to receive off-campus, moral, biblical instruction as an elective class during the school day, according to Ann Bennett, director of the Christian Life department of Sullivan Association.

In Released Time, public students have the legal opportunity to pray, learn moral values taught from the Bible, and be taught the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, Bennett noted.

She related Released Time has been legal since 1952, yet few churches are aware they can provide this educational ministry to public school students. Currently, there are approximately 1,000 Released Time programs in more than 20 states. Tennessee has three counties with Released Time Christian Education, she said.

"It is important for more of

our churches and communities to get involved in offering this wonderful program for children," she said.

"However, based upon our own experience here in Sullivan County and other places such as Knox County, we know that many school boards will not welcome Released Time.

"School boards may realize Released Time is legal, but they often do not know the legal guidelines to implement the program. The only policy they have is 'when in doubt, don't.' That is why Released Time legislation is so important," she stressed.

Bennett said the Released Time legislation "takes away the doubt and provides the legal parameters for school boards to follow. At least 21 other states have already passed Released Time law, and it is time for Tennessee to do the same."

Bennett encouraged Tennessee Baptists to contact their legislators and ask for their support of Released Time Christian Education as well as members of the following committees.

Members of the Senate Education Committee, their hometowns and their Nashville phone numbers (all use the 615 area code) are: Andy Womack, Murfreesboro, 741-1066; Rusty Crowe, Johnson City, 741-2468; Charlotte Burks, Monterey, 741-3978; Ben Atch-

ley, Knoxville, 741-3791; Bobby Carter, Jackson, 741-2676; Roscoe Dixon, Memphis, 741-4148; Gene Elsea, Spring City, 741-2525; Jo Ann Graves, Gallatin, 741-1654; and Kenneth Springer, Centerville, 741-4987.

Members of the House Education Subcommittee are: Leslie Wittingham, Huntsville, 741-6852; Ronnie Davis, Newport, 741-6934; Mark Maddox, Dresden, 741-7847; Ulysses Jones Jr., Memphis, 741-4575; Joe McCord, Maryville, 741-5481; Kim McMillan, Clarksville, 741-2043; Richard Montgomery, Seymour, 741-5981; Arnold Stulce, Soddy Daisy, 741-4381; Joe Towns Jr., Memphis, 741-2189; Larry Turner, Memphis, 741-6954; and Zane Whitson Jr., Erwin, 741-6800.

Other members of the full House Education Committee are:

Eugene Davidson, Adams, 741-3979; Dewayne Bunch, Cleveland, 741-3730; Gene Caldwell, Clinton, 741-4400; Barbara Cooper, Memphis, 741-4295; Jamie Hagood, Knoxville, 741-1648; Beth Harwell, Nashville, 741-0709; John Hood, Murfreesboro, 741-7849; Douglas Jackson, Jackson, 741-4499; Michael McDonald, Portland, 741-1980; Bob Patton, Johnson City, 741-2511; Phillip Pinion, Union City, 741-0718; and W.C. Pleasant, Arlington, 741-7084. ■

Solemn assemblies on go across state

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptists are encouraged to participate in solemn assemblies to be held across the state this month.

In March TBC President Larry Gilmore announced plans for three solemn assemblies to be held in each region of the state during April.

The first was held yesterday (April 13) at Union University in Jackson.

The second solemn assembly will be held Thursday, April 15, at Belmont University. The actual assembly will take place in the worship center of Belmont Heights Church, adjacent to the campus.

The third solemn assembly will be held April 20 at Carson-Newman College from 1-3 p.m., following Carson Newman College's Spring Pastors' Conference.

The solemn assemblies are designed to seek God in personal renewal, to pray for partnership missions in general, the Rio de Janeiro crusade in late May specifically, and for the convention as a whole, according to Gilmore, who also serves as pastor of College Heights Church, Gallatin. ■

North Korea focus of 1999 Day of Prayer and Fasting

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptists will fast and pray for 22 million people of North Korea during the 1999 Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization, scheduled from 6 p.m. Friday, May 21, to 6 p.m. Saturday, May 22.

The country has been afflicted by sever-

al years of drought and flooding, soil erosion, and crop loss. Up to two million North Koreans have died of hunger and related diseases since 1995, according to some estimates.

Southern Baptists have responded repeatedly to North Korea's physical needs. Now God is calling on them to blanket the country in prayer — not because North

Koreans are "on their knees" as a nation, but because he loves them, said Randy Sprinkle, director of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's prayer strategy office.

Southern Baptist churches interested in the prayer emphasis can obtain a free resource kit by calling toll-free 1-800-866-3621. ■

First, Franklin, opens 2,000-seat Worship Center, other facilities



MEMBERS of the task force which planned the new facilities were, from left, front row, Dick Wells; Leon Stanford; Rick White, senior pastor; Ed Moody; Diane Cobb, and Anita Powers; second row, Ed Smith, minister of business and finance; Gordon Inman, David R. White, Ed Alexander; and Bruce Kryder.



NEW FACILITIES at the church include a 2,000-seat, 40,000 square-foot Worship Center and renovation of other areas to add classrooms, conference space, office space, 300-seat chapel, bookstore, and a total of 2,000 parking spaces.

Intentional interim helps church look to future

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

PIKEVILLE — Thanks to the help of Truman Brown who began an intentional (transitional) interim pastorate with the church last May, First Southern Church here has a vision and plan for the future.

Church members admit the future did not appear quite so bright last year before the arrival of Brown.

"We had lost our focus, our vision for the future," said Gary Burton, a deacon and interim transition team leader for the church.

"We had turned our attention inward. We needed someone to help us deal with our emotions so we could go out again to the highways and hedges. You cannot do that when you're hurting," Burton continued.

Burton learned of the concept of the intentional interim from Buddy Strickland, director of missions for Sequatchie Valley Association where First Southern Church is located.

Strickland suggested Burton contact Aubrey Hay, church-ministers relations specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Hay then told the church about Truman Brown, a former Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources) staff member who had been trained as an intentional interim pastor.

The deacons met to talk about the concept, then met with Brown before the church voted to enter into a one-year contract with him to serve as



MEMBERS OF THE interim transition team at First Southern Church, Pikeville, included, from left, front row, Bill Hurd, Kathy Little, Carolyn Roberts, Sandy Farris; back row, Philip Cagle, Gary Burton, Sandy Dodson, and Pat Foster.

intentional interim pastor, Burton said.

"The church decided we needed a time of intentional reflection," Burton recalled, adding that "we were not ready for a new pastor. We had to get our house in order."

He admitted there was brokenness in the church and many people were hurting.

While noting the church is not completely healed, Burton said the church is well on the road to recovery.

To help the church during the transition an interim transition team was formed.

Meeting with Brown the team began to look at the church both past and present.

"One of the biggest parts of the healing process came within the committee," Burton said.

He noted that during the first couple of meetings the

members were hesitant to talk with each other. "After three or four meetings we saw that hesitancy begin to go away."

"All the members on the committee had the same goal — to see healing and reconciliation occur," Burton said.

He said the committee learned "a significant part of healing comes on focusing on who you are and where you are going. That brings unity, healing, focus, and vision."

The team held several churchwide meetings to give members an opportunity to provide input and to have a say in the vision, Burton said, adding that the committee simply processed the information they gathered.

The team developed a new vision statement (Vision 2002 Plan) which detailed where the church has been, where it is now, and where it is going. It

is a systematic look at where the church thinks it ought to be, Burton said.

The plan was presented to the church members who gave their approval. Sandy Farris, a member of the interim transition team, said they discovered a lot of people had the same vision.

"We thought we had differences, but we had the same vision and goals."

The process of examining the past will help in finding a new pastor, Burton said.

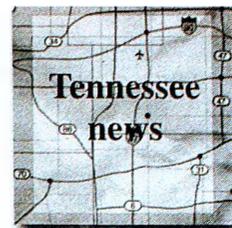
"Instead of talking about challenges we faced in the past, we can talk about challenges in the future — where we are going with our ministry," he added.

The team is grateful to Brown who has served as pastor in every way to the congregation during the past year. A resident of Hendersonville, Brown travels to Pikeville each week and stays five days. He preaches and handles regular pastoral duties.

"His (Brown) being there to listen has helped a lot of us," Burton said.

An intentional interim pastor can be a catalyst for identifying a church's barriers for unity and growth and can seek ways to identify the strengths and positives of the church as well, said Brown, whose tenure has been extended until a new pastor is called.

He noted his task at Pikeville has been to help the church "deal with its past and to learn from it, to feel good about the present and the future, and to help prepare the church for a fruitful relationship with its next pastor." *B&R*



Director of Missions Omer Painter to retire June 30

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Omer Painter, director of missions, Tennessee Valley Association, for almost 14 years, will retire June 30. He will be 65 years old.

Painter also has some personal news. He will marry Clara Cate of Jefferson City July 31. Painter has lost two wives to death — his first wife died after



PAINTER

a long struggle with cancer and his second wife in a car accident after being married only nine months.

Before serving Tennessee Valley Association, Painter served as pastor of churches for 29 years. He served North Cleveland Church, Cleveland; First Church, Blountville; Towering Oaks Church, Greeneville; East Alcoa Church, Alcoa; and Rittertown Church, Hampton.

Painter, a native of Chuckey, is a graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He served as president of Tennessee Directors of Missions Fellowship during 1997-98.

Painter will retire in Jefferson City. *B&R*

Rio volunteers still sought

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Time is running out for people who have been thinking about participating in a city-wide crusade in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, May 23-June 1.

One hundred and fifty evangelism teams from Tennessee are needed for this crusade, according to Terry Sharp, partnership missions specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

As of April 8, 25 teams were still needed. Pastors are urgently needed to participate in the partnership effort, Sharp said.

The approximate cost of the trip is \$1,940 per person which includes airfare, visa, housing/meals, translator, insurance, in-country travel, water, Bible/tracts, tourism.

May 1 is the absolute final day for signing up for the Rio crusade. For more information, call Terry Sharp or Kim Huff at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2021, or (615) 371-2021. ■

Belmont begins search for Troutt successor; Warren named as interim

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The search is on for a new president at Belmont University and, according to the school's board of trustee chairman Larry Thraikill, it will involve all of the university's diverse constituencies.

"Belmont is blessed with a varied constituency representing the many communities which it serves — our students, faculty, and staff; the Tennessee Baptist Convention; our neighbors in Sunnyside and the Belmont-Hillsboro areas; our partners in the music, healthcare, and business leadership of Nashville; and many others," Thraikill said.

"We will be seeking the prayers, advice, and counsel of all these friends as we move through the process of identifying and selecting our next president."

On April 7 Belmont's board of trustees established a 12-member Presidential Search Committee which will be chaired by Thraikill and include six board members, three members of the university's board of regents, and representatives of the faculty, staff, and student body. Within the next few days, the chairman will name individ-

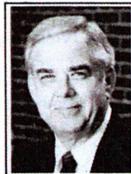
ual members to the committee with the approval of the board of trustee's executive committee.

The search committee is charged with recommending a replacement for current Belmont President William E. Troutt, who was named president of Rhodes College in Memphis on March 30.

The board named Jerry Warren, current university provost, as interim president, effective July 1. Warren, who joined Belmont in 1969 as chairman of the music department, has served as provost since 1992 and was the first dean of the university's School of Music when it began in 1983.

"For the past 18 years Bill Troutt has helped shape the identity of this university," Warren said.

"While it will be difficult to see him leave, we are fortunate to have an outstanding senior leadership team in place. I am honored to accept the challenge to lead this team during this interim period," he added. ■



WARREN

Transitional ...

— Continued from page 1

"We believe that the time is right for an emphasis on a different style for the interim pastor. We believe there are many churches and pastors, whose passion for ministry, can claim the "time between" for the glory and honor of our Lord," Hay said.

For more information about training or the transitional interim pastorate, contact Hay at (615) 371-2010. *B&R*



letters from readers/opinion

about letters

- > Make it concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be edited for length.
- > Name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Include address and phone number.
- > Avoid personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone.
- > Send original copy. Form letters and "open" letters will not be published.
- > Only one letter in a three-months period per writer will be published.
- > If letter does not conform, it will be returned.
- > Opinions and ideas expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the *Baptist and Reflector* and its staff.

Needs pastor

The North Sea Baptist Church is in need of a pastor. We are an English-language congregation of approximately 75 families from 20 countries. The congregation is composed of approximately equal parts English-speaking permanent residents, NATO military personnel, and oil industry personnel.

The church is located in Stavanger, Norway, and is affiliated with the European Baptist Convention (English Language) and is founded on the principles and doctrines of the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message.

If God is leading you to pastor in an international setting, please contact me at the address below.

William P. Dixon
Liljeveien 11
4022 Stavanger
Norway

Poses question

Dr. John L. Campbell, one-time chair of Bible at Carson-Newman College, wrote *The Bible Under Fire* in 1928. His purpose was to speak against higher critical methodology.

He wrote: "So now a false and misguided scholarship wearing the mask of friendship and uttering courtly words of reverence and respect has been sharpening the ax of an impossible criticism with which to cut off the head of our holy religion. There is, therefore, no wonder that there is unrest among the people. Where can our young people be sent to receive an education without having their faith in the Scriptures weakened or completely destroyed? ... Surely, just as parents and all others interested in the welfare of our youths have a right to protect the rising generation from other dangers, they have at least an equal right to protect them from this peril."

He also presents two distinctives of Christian colleges: (1) "(Students) should be made acquainted with the attacks that are now being made on this blessed old Book and also furnished with the abundant answers by which these attacks are triumphantly met. ... A Christian college that does not do this does not function." (2) They are to have "the very highest standards" of scholarship.

C-N excels in academics, but

in my estimation, she falls critically short of her foremost qualification — an orthodox view of Scripture. Thus, the question for our prodigal sister is twofold: will she return organizationally and theologically?

Wayland Payne, Jr., pastor
Lee Village Church
Harriman 37748

Asks for help

On June 14-15 Southern Baptists will gather in Atlanta, Ga., for the last meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in the 20th century. As such, there is an historical significance attached to this convention. But what is more crucially important is that the theme of the Atlanta convention, "His Tears, Our Task," will be a focus on the strategic cities of America and the obligation of the mandate of Christ to love the peoples of those cities sufficiently to take the Gospel to them.

This letter is an earnest request from your president to set aside those dates and plan to be elected a messenger of your church for the 1999 SBC annual meeting. My request is that you join us in a giant

prayer meeting and strategy planning session led by the North American Mission Board in the pre-convention "Arms Around Atlanta" effort culminating in Crossover Metro Atlanta from June 6-19, as we gear our hearts toward the evangelization of the great unreached masses in the cities of our country.

The SBC program will feature testimonies from those who have made the Gospel come alive in the inner cities of our country, such as Green Bay Packer Reggie White, our own Duane and Iris Blue, and the remarkable story of Charles Lyons and the Armitage Baptist Church in Chicago. As a launching pad to the 21st century, I do not think Southern Baptists will ever have met in a more critically important and strategic convention.

Will you be willing to lay before the Lord with urgency the possibility that you should join us for this year's convention in Atlanta? If God so prompts, we will see you at 8:15 a.m. on June 14 in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta.

Paige Patterson, SBC president,
Wake Forest, N.C. 27588

Sunday School needs balance of Bible study, evangelism

New column begins

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — In an effort to speak to family concerns which are encountered on a daily basis by Tennessee Baptists, we are introducing "That's Life," a new column written by Linda Jackson Roebuck, a freelance writer and wife of Jon Roebuck, pastor of Woodmont Church, Nashville.

"Linda Roebuck has the ability to look at everyday life with a sense of humor. I trust our readers will enjoy this new feature," said Editor Lonnie Wilkey. ■

making Christ known

by Tim Holcomb
TBC staff



Recently in a conference setting I asked this question: What do you want to happen on Sunday morning in your Sunday School? Responses included: be on time; be prepared; teacher motivated; involve evangelism; feel good about being in Sunday School; fellowship; encourage learners to be prepared; and plant seeds for continual learning.

I'd like to encourage you to

answer this question for your Sunday School as well. I've taken the liberty to focus on a few items that may help you with your response.

In Tennessee, we are focusing on Sunday School as a process that helps churches reach lost people and then become believers and secondly assist believers to become more fully involved in God's kingdom. This is really our way of following the Great Commission's command to make disciples.

In Tennessee, we want to be intentional about Sunday School. So, what does that mean? First, it means we provide Bible study for as many different age groups as we can. It also means that our Sunday

School reflects the community in which the Sunday School exists. This means creating and sustaining Sunday School classes for whoever lives in a one to two mile radius around your church. For some, this means creating more classes for children, some beginning Hispanic classes, and others collegiate classes.

In Tennessee, we want to balance Bible study (teaching, learning, and ministry) with evangelism.

Many of our churches are intentionally using their Sunday School organizations to reach out to lost people — some with FAITH, others with G.R.O.W. or C.A.R.E. Their hard work and God's blessing are creating other problems like assimilating these

new members while expanding their organization to make room for these new believers. All wonderful problems!

While many are experiencing these issues of growth and expansion, others have given up on evangelism, even given up on outreach, and are experiencing plateau. Sometimes we are fooled by using the term "quality Bible study" to save our declining attendance.

If your response to the initial question doesn't call for equal portions of Bible study and evangelism, then your response will probably be the same condition of your Sunday School. ■ — Holcomb is leader of the Christian Growth Development Group of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

When moving, don't forget hairdressers, casseroles, and kids

that's life

by Linda Jackson
Roebuck



You never really understand what you're doing when you move to another city until you're in the middle of it. That's because if you did know what to expect, you'd never move. Some things you think through: new pediatrician, new orthodontist, new nurse who may or may not have a good technique giving those allergy shots, new piano

teacher, new baseball team, new gym, and, of course, the most important and life-changing transition of all — a new hairdresser. I mean, a doctor is a doctor. They all have to pass some tests I think. But your hairdresser. This is a person who affects your ever-fragile emotional and psychological well-being and can significantly alter the very image of who you are. And, you know, they make you look cute.

We also knew we'd be moving into a temporary, furnished house while we went through the house selling process and knew that a wonderful young adult Sunday School class had

volunteered to bring us supper when we moved in. Supper for two weeks! Now, you've just got to like that plan. Good food, too. I couldn't cook like that in my 20s. Or, well, ever. So, we all ate like royalty until that third week when I realized that they would only bring me more food if we (a) move again or (b) have a baby. That's when I went out and discovered the nearest grocery store.

Of course, you expect to go through some sadness, missing old friends, loneliness, frustrations of starting all over. And you expect your kids to go through the same things; you just don't know how.

There's the unexpected. After almost a week of school and our first Sunday at a new church I told my husband Jon that it seemed just a little too easy on the children. I was right. On Jon's day off, we were shopping (those boxes could wait one more day) when his pager went off.

Our first grade daughter was having a bad day. I found her in the lunch room where she was still quietly crying as she had been for several hours. "Why are you crying?" I asked repeatedly. "I don't know," was the consistent reply. She didn't. Just too much change in her young life. We went home and I

cried with her for a little while, then we both perked up.

We talked about the fun things to do in our new city, about plans and hopes, and new friends. We talked about doing what God wants you to do and going where he wants you to go even when you don't understand it sometimes.

And, once again, God was true to his Word and we felt peace. Then we went to the fridge and had that very last helping of homemade banana pudding. ■ — Roebuck is a freelance writer in Nashville where her husband, Jon, serves as pastor of Woodmont Church. Her column will appear regularly in the *B&R*.

Cooperative Program remains strong after 74 years

By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

In 1925 messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Memphis approved a concept of cooperative missions that is the envy of other missionary-sending denominations — the Cooperative Program.

Seventy-four years later the Cooperative Program is still going strong. The concept had to be from God. Southern Baptists over the years have tried to alter or bypass the Cooperative Program; yet churches continue to give in record amounts to the missions, evangelism, educational, and benevolent causes of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. God had a good plan and he has not allowed us to "mess it up" despite the efforts of some who occasionally have threatened to withhold funds and those who actually have reduced or given very little to cooperative missions.

Yet, despite all that, CP giving remains strong today.

Ironically, messengers to the 1925 annual meeting did not realize the impact that affirmative vote to begin the Cooperative Program would have.

In his president's report to the SBC Executive Committee in February, Morris Chapman observed "many messengers in that day

Church of the Covered Dish By Thom Tapp, pastor, Oral Church, Lenoir City



thought the convention to be rather routine and uneventful. ... They had not grasped the historical significance of what the convention had done."

Today, we can see the significance of that action. Hundreds of thousands of people have come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior because Southern Baptists cooperated and pooled their resources.

Chapman, in his February report, noted that N.F. Greer of Alabama once said: "The Cooperative Program allows me to go where I cannot go, and do what I cannot do." How true.

One person's \$25 per week will not go far. But when that \$25 is added to the money contributed by thousands of other Baptists each week, there is no limit to what God can do with those funds.

According to Chapman, Southern Baptists

have defined the Cooperative Program as "a financial channel of cooperation between the state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention which makes it possible for all persons making undesignated gifts through their church to support the missionary, education, and benevolent work in their state convention, and also the work of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Tennessee Baptists have taken the concept of the Cooperative Program to heart and for the past several years have given record amounts. God has blessed those gifts.

Sunday, April 18, is Cooperative Program Day. Thank God for the concept he gave Baptists nearly three-quarters of a century ago. More importantly, let us not be the generation to "mess it up." *B&R*



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Sue: "When you and your husband have a fuss at night, do you wake up grouchy the next morning?" Sandy: "No, I let him sleep until I get the kids off to school."

Take this truth

One cynic said, "Some mornings I feel I need a head start in order to finish last." Another said, "Mornings are so nice they ought to make it later in the day."

Memorize this Scripture

"In the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord." — Exodus 16:7

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to remember time is a precious gift and we all have the same amount of it — 24 hours per day." ■

Amazing grace can help people to forgive

heart talk

by James Porch, TBC executive director



Immediately following the Korean War several detachments of American troops received the challenging assignment to seek out and detonate unexploded bombs and shells. Tragically, a number of soldiers received serious injuries in this ordeal. Some, in fact, were

killed in the process of locating the explosives.

Throughout the course of daily living, old explosives can become stored up in hearts and minds. These include unresolved sins, the overpowering need to blame someone, and even quite often, the overpowering and inescapable feeling of being a victim of another person's selfish exploits. Recently, I rediscovered a hidden and potentially active bomb in my own experience.

Years ago a quite manipulative church member and local businessman pressured me to support a new business ven-

ture. I remember his exact words, "Your name attached to this plan will help me convince city government of a need for a building permit. All you have to do is to allow me to use your name." I refused. Recently, I saw him again for the first time in over 15 years. Even in the casual meeting, I realized the bomb was still ticking. Ironically, the meeting happened at the same time when within a few miles of our home well-trained Army demolition teams were undertaking to locate and render harmless unexploded shells left from training exercises conducted during World

War II over 50 years ago. I realized time alone settles nothing. We expect too much when we expect time alone to temper and resolve feelings — how risky.

This reality even happens in churches and denominational life. No one can ever be expected to agree with everything that happens in the life of a local church or in a denomination. Nevertheless, we have an amazing measure of grace that can enable us to resolve old explosives through forgiveness. Part of forgiveness is surrendering the power to explode again. ■

Special days of prayer were crucial to past awakenings

Awaken Tennessee!

by Greg Frizzell, Memphis pastor



From Genesis to Revelation and throughout all Christian history, God's method of bringing sweeping spiritual awakening has never changed. Intense times of solemn assembly and ongoing prayer meetings are always the essential elements. Before past awakenings, vast numbers began to attend thousands of special prayer gatherings. It is essential to note that God watches what we "do in" prayer far more than what we "say about" prayer.

In America, the second great awakening came only after

many evangelical denominations set one night of every month to meet in churches and fervently pray for a sweeping nationwide revival. Many denominations consistently promoted these meetings as an ongoing top priority. The prayer meetings started small but with consistent emphasis over many months, they became huge. It wasn't long until God had poured out his Spirit like a mighty tidal wave.

We must recapture the understanding that God only sends massive floods through intense, sustained prayer. (Jeremiah 29:13, James 5:16). No generation has ever "programmed" or "strategized" their way into a genuine great awakening. When we again embrace prayer evangelism as truly the "main" thing rather than just one of many things, we will see

the next awakening. Until we do, we will not see the revival so desperately needed.

God has given us an awesome opportunity through the leadership of TBC President Larry Gilmore. Please let us heed his recent statewide call to solemn assemblies on our college campuses. The first was held April 13 at Union University.

The other two are set for April 15 at Belmont University in Nashville from 1-3 p.m. and on April 20 at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City from 1-3 p.m. Each association also has an assigned day for its churches to unite in fervent prayer. If you are unsure of your day, call your association office.

We will have yet another important opportunity on the National Day of Prayer, scheduled

for May 6. On that day, millions of believers will unite in prayer for revival and spiritual awakening in America. It is crucial that we take these special days of prayer seriously. After all, prayer does make a difference and God is watching to see how we respond. Whether our churches respond will largely depend on whether our pastors promote the special times of prayer.

Pastors, in regards to prayer, so much depends on our leadership.

May God find us faithful in this urgent season of prayer. For America, it may be now or never. ■ — Frizzell is pastor of Georgian Hills Church, Memphis, and director of the Spiritual Awakening Council of Shelby Association and frequently conducts prayer conferences to assist churches and associations.

Partnership Prayer Requests

April

- 15 — Pray for IMB missionaries to Costa Rica and for God to bless the Costa Rica Baptist Mission.
- 16 — Pray for IMB ISC missionary Wendy Stout in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, who is working with Tennessee volunteer teams.
- 17 — Pray for the Cooperative Missions Committee in the Baptist State Convention of Michigan as they search for a new language missions leader.
- 18 — Pray for Christian teenagers in Newfoundland, Canada, who are seeking to influence secular schools with the Gospel now that their churches no longer run the schools.
- 19 — Pray for Benny and Ann Sprouse, IMB missionaries to Rio. Ann is on medical leave in the U.S., receiving treatments for a malignancy.
- 20 — Pray for the National Women with a Mission organization in Costa Rica.
- 21 — Pray for Melfort Christian Fellowship in Saskatchewan, Canada. The church is reaching out to the children in the area which is 80 percent unchurched.

Pastor ministers through several professions

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Since college, he's been a pastor, minister of music, chaplain for a mental health institute, hospital chaplain, military chaplain, denominational worker, accountant, public school teacher, and grocery store worker.

But Lemuel Wade, pastor, Glenwood Church, here, isn't a restless or difficult person who has trouble holding a job. In fact, he's never been without a job.

Wade explained everytime he has entered a new profession, God has "opened a door" for him and he just stepped through, he said. "It's almost scary," he added.

He views his many different professions as varied experiences which have strengthened his ministry.

For example, his work as an accountant for Ingram Book Company of Nashville (now LaVergne) enabled him to help start and lead in a part-time capacity Hickory Hollow Chapel while providing for his family, which includes three sons. And the accounting experience



PASTOR Lemuel Wade pauses outside Glenwood Church, Nashville.

helped him lead Glenwood Church to seek a loan for renovations.

To enable him to serve Hickory Hollow Chapel part-time, he began serving as a chaplain in the Army Reserve to supplement his income. But Wade had time to earn his bachelor's in accounting degree which had been a personal interest for some time. Then he discovered he didn't like full-time accounting work.

When he needed a job at another point in his ministry, Wade wasn't ashamed to turn to grocery store work, which he had done as a child, teenager,

and while attending seminary. And he had that work to return to after serving nine months in Desert Storm.

He benefited from the work in the grocery store business, Wade said, which culminated in the job of assistant grocery manager. He learned how to meet and talk with strangers. He was reminded how hard many people have to work for little money. He worked about 60 hours each week. And he got to know a lot of people and minister to them, he said.

He has worried about jobs, he admitted. When he was serving as a chaplain in Saudia Arabia, he worried about finding a place of ministry when he returned. He prayed, asking God if he was through with him.

Soon after he prayed, a bird, a rare sight in the desert where he was assigned, lit near him and sang for several minutes. He felt that serendipity was God's assurance he was going to use him further.

When Wade returned to the U.S., he worked for a while in a grocery store until he was called as part-time music director at Glenwood. When he

quit the grocery store job to spend more time with his family, he was called as pastor several weeks later.

Wade recalled another message from God he received about his profession. While teaching music in a public school, he was struggling with a call to the ministry. But he ignored it and began planning to build a house.

Then in the period of just one year, he had three car accidents. Although no one was hurt, his car was damaged each time and his income suf-

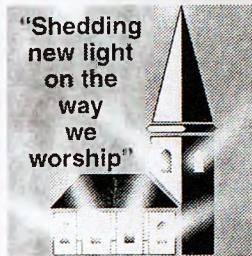
fered. Finally, he answered God's call to the ministry, said Wade.

"God has been faithful and almost amazing to me at times," he said. People "worry and we shouldn't because he's (God's) working all the time behind the scenes for us." B&R



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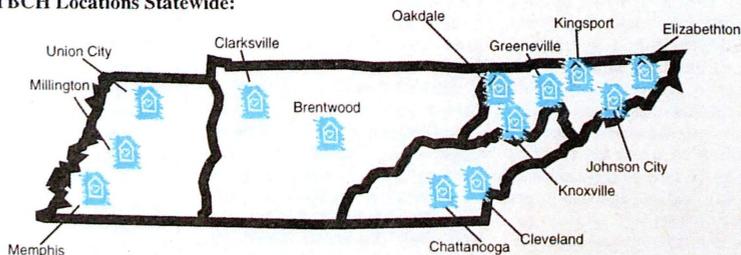
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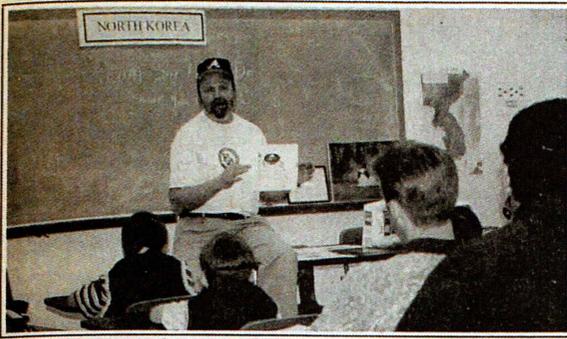
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Hundreds of RAs, Acteens attend Congress, Summit

For Baptist and Reflector



STEVE YORK, a Nashville businessman and member of Tulip Grove Church, Old Hickory, leads a missions conference on North Korea. York participated in Tennessee Baptists' efforts to send food boxes to North Korean famine victims last year.



ENJOYING THE RA Congress from Sylvia Church, Dickson, were, from left, seated, Bobby Elmore, Michael Street, and Robert Grover; standing, Ryan Keaton and Aaron Hyndman.

BRENTWOOD — Nearly 1,500 Royal Ambassadors and Acteens experienced missions firsthand during the recent Easter weekend.

The Acteens Summit held April 1-3 drew 676 registrants for the meeting which was held in a downtown Nashville hotel.

Approximately 400 of those Acteens participated in hands-on ministry projects on Friday, April 2. They worked in nursing homes, participated in a Feed the Children project, worked at the Nashville Rescue Mission, and prayerwalked in downtown.

Acteens also brought six large boxes full of vitamins which will be sent to Bosnia for refugees.

Acteens met with missionaries who described their work both overseas and in the United States.

Girls also had the opportunity to attend conferences on a variety of topics including "How to Witness," "Developing Relationship Skills," and "Becoming the Teen God Wants Me to Be."

On Friday night, Acteens were recognized during the StudiAct/MissionsQuest Service. MissionsQuest is the new individual achievement plan replacing StudiAct.

Meanwhile, in East Tennessee at Carson-Newman College, the 45th annual Tennessee Royal Ambassador Congress was held April 1-3. About 886 participants and staff attended this year's Congress.

During Congress RAs attended mission conferences, mission events, and worship services, as well as participating in activities such as Campcraft Rodeo, Missions Bowl, Missions Speak Out, Project Hall, and RA Racers.

A special Congress Missions Offering totaling \$1,884 was raised through a 5K Walk/Run, the Missions Carnival, and an offering taken during the Friday night worship service. The offering was given to a Tennessee Baptist ministry project — Disaster Relief for the April 1998 tornado victims.

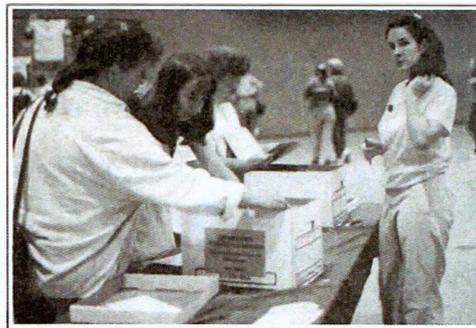
Leading worship opportunities was "The Amazing Nathan Dorrell," a Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary student who juggled and rode a unicycle, while sharing his testimony.

Kris Daw and Nathan Barrett, both members of Brainerd Hills Church, Chattanooga, were re-elected as the 1999-2000 president and vice president respectively.

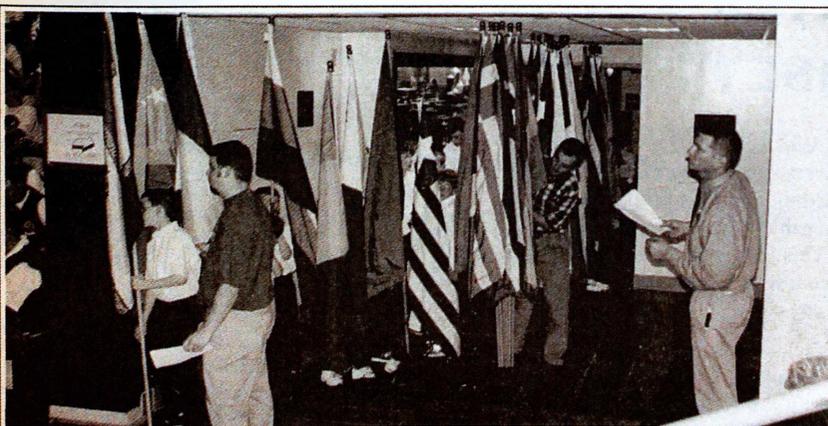
Next year's RA Congress will be held April 20-22 at Belmont University in Nashville. *B&R*



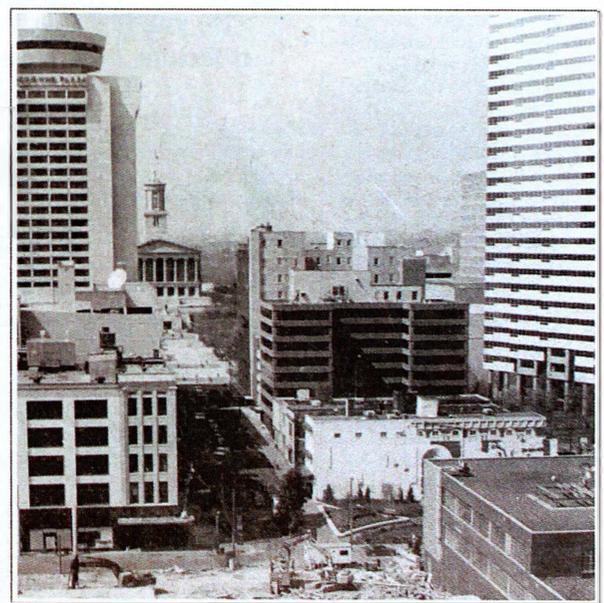
ROYAL AMBASSADORS from East Rogersville Church, Rogersville, test their ability to begin a campfire during the Campcraft Rodeo held at the 45th annual RA Congress. From left, are Cory Gibbs, Russ Hughes, James Thompson, and Tray McMillen.



UNION UNIVERSITY student Alanna Morris, right, a past Acteens Panelist, assists Acteens and leaders participating in the Adopt a Missionary project at the recent Acteens Summit in Nashville.



THE PARADE OF FLAGS helped set the tone for the Friday night worship service during the 45th annual Royal Ambassador Congress held April 1-3 at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City.



DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE was the focus of ministry efforts by approximately 400 Acteens during the recent Acteens Summit. Approximately 200 of the girls prayerwalked around the city.

Aging unavoidable, not disabling, says health specialist

By Linda Lawson
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — While aging may be unavoidable, it doesn't have to be disabling.

"They say, 'As we age, we get weaker.' I say, 'As we age, we stop doing some things that make us strong.'" Branda Polk, health ministries specialist in the discipleship and family adult department of LifeWay Christian Resources, told senior adult ministry leaders attending a session of the National Senior Adult Leadership Summit, March 29-31.

"They say, 'As we age, we lose our balance.' I say, 'As we get older, we stop doing things that help us maintain our balance'" Polk continued.

"We age as quickly as we choose to age. We age because

we decide to age."

The issue for leaders of senior adult ministries is, "How can you take care of yourself and serve God as long as he has called you to serve him?" Polk asked.

"We really are created to live long and fruitful lives," she said. "The better you care for yourself, the longer you'll be able to live."

Polk cited several ways Christians can maintain health, beginning with staying "spiritually active and keeping a positive, Christ-centered attitude."

"In many situations, your attitude may be the only thing you can control. Your attitude and how you respond to the world will either extend your life or kill you," she said.

Second, she said, people need to take deliberate actions to stay mentally active. She suggested

memorizing Scripture.

"Is it a little harder? Probably. Is it worth it? Absolutely!" Polk said.

She cited regular medical checkups as a third key action, noting every person should know the numbers of their blood pressure, total cholesterol level, glucose level and healthy 10-pound weight range.

"Build strong relationships with your family and friends," Polk listed as the fourth action. "When we develop strong relationships, we don't feel isolated."

Fifth, she said, drink at least eight glasses of water daily.

"Did you know your brain is 80 percent water?" Polk asked. "Bodies are 50-75 percent water. As we get older, our bodies begin to dehydrate. If you drink enough water, your skin won't wrinkle as bad."

She warned that coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks don't count because caffeine has a dehydrating effect. "For every glass of tea you drink, you need to drink a glass of water."

Polk urged as a sixth action staying physically active. Activities should include strength training, muscle-building actions, stretching, and walking.

"Walking is one of the best activities you can do," she said. "You've got to walk like you're in a hurry. But if you can barely walk, barely walk and you'll see improvements in barely walking."

Polk said "it is very important to stay strong and stay flexible. Being able to get down on the floor and back up is important. If you fall, then you're strong enough to get back up."

Seventh, she said, "choose good nutrition." Older adults

focus
on
ministry

need more antioxidant vitamins that can be obtained by eating five daily servings of fruit and vegetables. A good rule of thumb for daily intake is 20 percent fat and 30 grams of fiber.

Practice good safety habits, get six to eight hours of sleep each night and be smart in the sun rounded out her list of actions to maintain health.

"You can make each day better by supplementing and shoring up what you're already doing to stay healthy." ■

Care for seniors 'with willing hearts'

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — If you're going to provide care for senior adults, you better do it with a willing heart, a pastoral care expert told senior adult ministry leaders during a seminar here.

"Care is the fundamental capacity to cherish a person to the degree one acts willingly in the person's behalf," said Bob Sheffield, a church consultant for LifeWay Christian Resource's pastor-staff leadership department. Sheffield led a seminar on "Quality Care Giving for Seniors" during a National Senior Adult Leadership Summit held March 29-31.

"One of the greatest challenges facing the church involves ministering to the ever-increasing number of older adults," Sheffield wrote in *Forward Together: a New Vision for Senior Adult Ministry*. Several authors contributed to the LifeWay Press manual, which serves as a guide for senior adult ministry.

People who offer care to senior adults should follow several principles, he said. They should:

► Come to grips with their own aging.

► Care with and not for seniors. "Seniors need to feel they are independent. ... Instead of making decisions for them, give them the facts and let them make their own decisions."

► Show genuine respect for who they are and where they are.

► Mobilize your resources. "Make a list of people in your church who could serve as resources for senior adults, whether they are lawyers, plumbers, or electricians."

► Don't assume memory lapses indicate senility.

► Minister to the extended family. ■

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Senior Minister
First Baptist Church
Cleveland, Tennessee

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Dr. Wade Bibb
Carson-Newman Faculty
Assistant Professor
Biblical Studies

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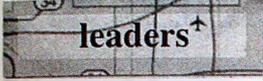
klawson@cncadmtt.cn.edu

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

You are also invited to join Dr. Larry Gilmore, area church leaders, and the Carson-Newman family when we gather in a solemn assembly of prayer for the ministries of the Tennessee Baptist Convention from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. in the Phoenix Theater of Henderson Humanities Building.



■ **Pat Mulloy** of the Executive Leadership Group, Tennessee Baptist Convention, will retire April 30. She has served on the TBC staff for 31 years. She will be honored April 29 at 2 p.m. at the Baptist Center.



■ **Brent Colley** was called as minister of youth and children, First Church; Savannah, effective April 5. He is a graduate of Blue Mountain (Miss.) College, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He formerly served on the staff of a church in Biggersville, Miss.

■ **Germantown Korean Church** recently called **James P. Breckenridge** as associate pastor. He is a student at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Germantown.

■ **Mark Caldwell**, pastor, Union Church, Wartburg, has been called as pastor, New Providence Church, Loudon.

■ **Glenwood Church**, Nashville, called **Jason Pearson** as minister of music and youth, effective April 11. He formerly was a staff member of Woodbine Church, Nashville. Pearson will serve bivocationally.



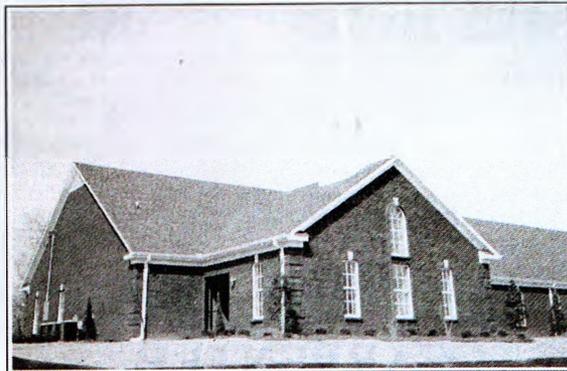
PAUSING during a recent retirement reception for Lequita Rose are Rose and Greg McCoy, former pastor, Friendship Church, Culleoka. Rose served Friendship Church as treasurer for 42 years and secretary for 20 years.

He teaches at Brentwood Middle School, Brentwood. Pearson was a US-2 missionary for the North American Mission Board.



■ **First Church, Smyrna**, will meet in its new facility for the first time April 18. A parade and open house will be held April 17 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. For more information, contact the church at (615) 459-3311 or www.fbcsmyrna.org.

■ **Evangelist Freddie Gage**



THIS NEW facility of Keeling Church, Stanton, was dedicated by members March 7. Although located in a rural area, the church needed more space because it has experienced steady growth since 1991. The church is led by Pastor Arthur Nute.

of Dallas, Texas, will speak at **Mt. Hermon Church, Murfreesboro**, May 2 in the 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. services. Gage is also founder and president of Wounded Heroes, a ministry to hurting Baptist leaders.

■ **Southeast Church, Murfreesboro**, will celebrate its 40th anniversary April 18. Activities include the 11 a.m. worship service during which Archie King, the church's first pastor will speak. Following will be a potluck luncheon, and a celebration service beginning at 1 p.m. For more information, call the church at (615) 896-0940.

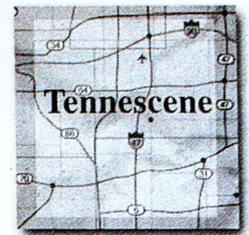
■ On April 4 **Lincoln Heights Church, Tullahoma**, dedicated its newly decorated sanctuary, which fea-

tured new carpet, choir chairs, stained glass windows, and refinished pews and furniture. The windows were a gift from a foundation in honor of Mr. and Mrs. W.T. Johnson, members since 1961.

■ **Haywood Hills Church, Nashville**, will hold Days of Renewal April 25-29. Gary Rickman will speak and Dale Campbell, minister of music, First Church, Waverly, will lead the music. For more information, contact the church at (615) 832-6909.

■ **East Brainerd Church, Chattanooga**, will hold revival April 25-28. Activities include evening meals prior to services. Bob Patty, a pastor in Trenton, Ga., will speak and Tommy Gooden of First Church, Hixson, will lead the music. For more information, contact the church at (423) 892-4253.

■ A second annual **Area Wide Crusade** will be held in Wilson Park, Maynardville, May 2-15. A special feature of the crusade is morning services held for students of public schools. The crusade is the effort of 36 area churches and Northern Baptist Association. Students will attend using "release time" after receiving per-

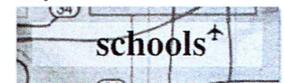


mission from their parents. Last year 411 people made professions of faith. Speaking will be Charles Oliver, pastor, Milan Church, Maynardville, and Gary Beeler, pastor, Fairview Church, Luttrell. Last year more than 10,000 people attended the services. For more information, call (423) 992-LOVE.

■ **Solomon's Temple Missionary Church, Kingsport**, will hold revival April 25-30. David Powers, pastor, Emmanuel Church, Kingsport, will speak. Choirs from different churches will perform in each service, which will begin at 7 p.m.



■ **Cumberland Gap Association** is leading an effort to build a chapel in Brazil June 17 - July 1. The association and Nolachucky Association have raised \$11,000 for the chapel.



■ The King's Academy of **Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour**, will hold an Information/Get Acquainted event for prospective students and their families beginning at 2 p.m. in the Ashe Cafeteria April 18. Students attending kindergarten through grade 12 in 1999-2000 are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Janice Mink, director of admissions, at (423) 573-8321.

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Registration Form May 14-15 ■ Camp Linden

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national/global news

IMB allots \$100,000 to help Kosovo's Muslim refugees

Baptist Press

TIRANA, Albania — The Southern Baptist International Mission Board has allocated an initial \$100,000 to help minister to some of the estimated 634,000 ethnic Albanian refugees fleeing their homes in southern Yugoslavia's Kosovo province.

Southern Baptist missionaries will use the money to buy blankets and food and are assessing needs in both Albania

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and Macedonia to identify how they can best respond to the physical and spiritual crises the mostly Muslim refugees are facing.

Albania has absorbed much of the flood of refugees and marshaled airplanes and relief supplies over the weekend to help those who have crossed its border with Kosovo. Macedonia has refused to

accept more refugees, and NATO countries organized an airlift for tens of thousands of people stranded at the border.

Ethnic Serb military forces have been driving ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo, and the flood of refugees has swollen since NATO began bombing military and government targets in Yugoslavia in late

March. Over the Easter weekend, refugees stranded at the Macedonia border huddled in a muddy field polluted with human waste and fought over precious loaves of bread. Officials feared a cholera outbreak.

Bill Steele, a Southern Bap-

tist missionary in Bosnia, joined missionary Lee Bradley in Albania to assess the refugee situation there while missionaries Kyle and Jackie Kirkpatrick are evaluating needs in Macedonia, said Jim Brown, IMB consultant for human needs ministries. ■

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YOUTH: Part-time Youth Minister. Send resume: Personnel Committee, Georgian Hills Baptist Church, 3759 N. Watkins, Memphis, TN 38127.

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YOUTH: Seeking full-time Minister of Youth, Whitten Memorial Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn. Send resume to: Mike Golding, Whitten Memorial Baptist Church, 6773 Macon Road, Memphis, TN 38134. Call (901) 386-5444, Fax (901) 382-3999.

MUSIC: Seeking full-time Minister of Music. Please send resumes to Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 121, Martin, TN 38237.

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Through depression to hope

By Roy Graves

Focal Passage — I Kings 19:1-8, 9-16

Physician Paul D. Meier of the Minirth-Meier Clinic, Richardson, Texas, writes, "Who gets depressed? At some period of life, nearly everyone does!" Christians have been led to believe Christians do not get depressed, or are not supposed to get depressed. Moses wanted to die (Numbers 11:15), so did Job (Job 3:20-21), as did Jeremiah (Jeremiah 8:3), and Jonah (Jonah 4:3). Have you ever felt depressed? Are you depressed now? There is hope.

Elijah went from vigorous victory to depressing defeat in a short period of time. He started walking by sight and sound and not by faith. He listened to the words of Jezebel and not the words of Jehovah. He started worrying about saving himself instead of giving himself. Elijah's journey into the wilderness and on to Horeb was not his most important journey. His most important journey was from depression to hope.

Overcome by depression — vv. 1-5

Elijah began to doubt God, self, and the value of his ministry. For three and a half years God had provided for Elijah, yet in a short time he went from faith in God to fearing the gods of Jezebel. Doubt and fear combined can lead to depression. Elijah saw himself as "one left alone."

A depressed person has a tendency toward "delusional thinking" and can lose touch with reality. Elijah temporarily forgot that God had given the victory at Mt. Carmel and was a real presence there.

The psalmist of Psalms 42 and 43 expressed his depression when he wrote several times, "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?" Being overcome by depression can occur when a person thinks God is far away, has forgotten him or her, and heaven is like a low ceiling made of cold steel. If you are overcome by depression, you can overcome it. There is hope.

Overcoming depression — vv. 5-16

What should a person do when depression overcomes them? The Scripture gives us good advice from the life of Elijah. Start by having "hope in God" (Ps. 42:5,11;43:5). Elijah came out of his cave and spent time in the presence of God. Private and public worship are great ways to find oneself.

Look toward the future (vv. 15-21). "Stop feeding on your feelings and start feeding on the Word of God." Walk by faith and not your feelings.

According to the *Disciple Journal*, there are several ways to care for people going through depression. These should not be thought of as a cure, but as a way to care — ► Encourage the person to talk and cry. ► Be a good listener. ► Give answers sparingly. The depressed person often lacks the ability to absorb or act on good advice. ► Pray daily for God's plan to be played out. ► Call or visit frequently. ► Offer social invitations. ► Mail Scripture verses that declare God's faithfulness and love. ► Refer the person to professional care. — Graves is pastor, First Church, Kingston

Jesus, the Bread of Life

By Tommy Ferguson

Focal Passage — John 6:1-59
"Feeding of the 5000" (When people get on your nerves) — vv. 1-13

Opposition of the disciples — vv. 1-4

Desire — The disciples were exhausted and Jesus encouraged them to rest awhile (see Mark 6:31).

Delay — No doubt the disciples looked forward to some moments of reflection and relaxation from the crowds of people. The opportunity to delay their tiresome journey with Jesus was soon interrupted by a great company of people approaching them — 5,000 men plus women and children. Jesus immediately sensed the need to feed this multitude of hungry people.

Family Bible Lesson

Disappointment — Mark's gospel indicates that the disciples were tired and perhaps disappointed that Jesus was planning to respond to the needs of the people. John records the willingness of Jesus to help the people.

Dilemma — For a moment the disciples had to refocus on the ministry of Jesus. They were thinking of their own tired bodies and spirits. They failed to see the multitudes as an opportunity for ministry.

Opportunity of the Savior — vv. 5-13

Jesus was interested in a plan of action, that of purchasing food for the people. Philip responded that there was not sufficient money to buy food. Andrew discovered a young boy in the crowd who had a lunch. That discovery became Jesus' opportunity.

Give me your "heart throne" — v. 14, 15

Some of the crowd, seeing this miracle of feeding the hungry, wanted to seize Jesus and make him king of the

All I need

By Jerry Reagan

Focal Passage — Psalm 23:1-6

In this psalm the psalmist makes one statement, "The Lord is my shepherd." All the other words in the psalm describe the ways in which the Lord "shepherds" the psalmist.

The Lord shepherds the psalmist (and us) by providing basic needs. The needs mentioned are rest, refreshment, and restoration.

Rest (v. 2a). "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" The words picture a safe place to rest, with the thought that the shepherd is always near, keeping watch over all the sheep.

Refreshment (v. 2a). "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Here the words picture the nourishment of food for sheep. It is interpreted by some to mean "places of tender grass."

The shepherd also provides a safe water supply. "He leads me beside still waters," (v. 2b). Sheep are afraid of running water. The shepherd would sometimes dam up a stream and cause the current to slow down so the sheep could safely drink. Or when the flock was in an area where water was scarce, he would use a large two-handed bucket to carry water to the sheep.

Restoration (v. 3). The psalmist

Explore the Bible Lesson

then refers to a shepherd's duty of putting a straying sheep back on the path with the rest of the flock. He sees the Lord as "restoring my soul." The Lord sought him when he had strayed and led him back to "paths of righteousness," just because of who God is "for his name's sake."

The Lord also shepherds the psalmist (and us) by being present in threatening situations. "The valley of the shadow of death" can mean a place of "deep darkness" or any situation which might be discouraging or distressing. The text mentions the word death.

Whether this expression refers to some dark experience, or to the end of life itself is important. The psalmist says that the Lord is with him when he "walks through the valley of the shadow of death." He is not walking to it, he is walking through it.

Shadows can be deceiving. They can appear to be bigger or smaller than they really are. Shadows depend upon light for their existence.

The reference to death as a shadow can mean that death doesn't

land. Jesus was more interested in the people recognizing him as the Lord of their lives.

The bread of life — vv. 25-59

Contrast of "bread" from Moses and "bread of life" from Jesus

1. Jesus offers spiritual bread; Moses offered manna
 2. Jesus gives spiritual life! Moses' bread sustained physical life. Each morning the Hebrews had to gather the bread that the Lord left for them to eat that day. It lasted only for the day. The bread Jesus offers is for life.

3. This bread is free, a gift from God (v. 28-33). In contrast, the manna was good for only 24 hours and the process to gather it was a daily job. We receive the "true bread," not by what we do, but because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross.

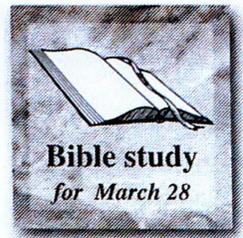
4. Moses' bread gave temporary satisfaction. The bread Jesus offers satisfies every area of our lives every day.

Comparison of bread from Jesus and from Moses (see W. Wiersbe)

1. The manna was a mysterious thing to the Hebrews; in fact, the word means, "What is it?" (see Exodus 16:15). Jesus was a mystery to those who saw him.

2. The manna came at night from heaven. Jesus came from heaven to earth when sinners were in moral and spiritual darkness.

3. The manna was given to a rebellious people; it was a gracious gift of God. All they had to do was stoop and pick it up. If they failed to pick it up, they walked on it. The Lord is not far from any sinner. All the sinner has to do is humble himself and take the gift that God offers. If he doesn't, he tramples the blood of Jesus (see Hebrews 10:29). "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" — Ferguson is pastor, Ivy Memorial Church, Nashville.



threaten some people. They don't fear death. To others, death occupies their minds constantly.

It all depends on their relationship to the light. If their back is to the light, the shadow falls ahead of them and they walk in darkness. If they face the light, the shadow falls behind them and they walk in the light.

It is a comforting thought to this writer that above and beyond "the valley of the shadow of death" is "the light of the world." When I am rightly related to that light, I will walk in the light, and "through the valley of the shadow of death." The psalmist (and we) will not fear because of the presence of the Lord and his ability to correct and protect us.

The Lord also shepherds the psalmist (and us) by sustaining us in places where we might be unwelcome. "You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies."

He tends every bruise and injury. "You anoint my head with oil." His healing power is far greater than our injury. "My cup runneth over."

He actively pursues us to bless us. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." He provides for us an eternity in his presence. "And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." — Reagan is pastor, South Fork Church, Friendship.



Liberia seminary reopens after seven years of civil war

Baptist Press

MONROVIA, Liberia — After a seven-year shutdown during a brutal civil war, the campus of the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary reopened in March, launching a new era of training leaders to evangelize and start churches in the West Africa country.

Although the campus had been closed since the civil war began in 1990, the seminary offered classes at another location in downtown Monrovia between 1993 and 1996. During the seven years the campus was closed, Ghanaian peace-keeping soldiers lived on the campus and protected it from looters.

Currently 95 students take classes at the seminary. ■

NOBTS trustees approve new campus master plan

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — A master plan document detailing a progressive total renovation of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's current buildings and property received unanimous support from the seminary's board of trustees during their annual spring meeting.

The deliberations culminated a third year of intensive examination of every aspect of the 81-year-old seminary. Last year trustees unanimously vot-

ed for the seminary to remain at its current location after reviewing data from a two-year feasibility study of whether to continue operating the seminary's campus in an urban environment.

The facilities condition assessment concluded that just under half of the campus, most of which was constructed from 1947-54, is in "good" condition and can continue under normal usage. Some 16 percent of campus buildings needs complete renovation or replacement. The remainder of the campus needs varying degrees of renovation.

In other business, trustees endorsed a full restructuring of existing masters degree programs, with a new core of classes, including an emphasis on interpersonal skills, and a one-year mentorship with a professor and a small group of peers, and a new competency-based curriculum. According to NOBTS President Chuck Kelley, it is "the largest curriculum change in the history of New Orleans Seminary, putting the local church at the heart of the curriculum." ■

NAMB's Graham documentary earns MovieGuide award

Baptist Press

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. — A North American Mission Board documentary on evangelist Billy Graham has won an award from *MovieGuide* magazine

"Common Ground," a documentary on the life and influence of Billy Graham, received the Swiss America Golden Eagle Award for outstanding redemptive documentary at the seventh annual *MovieGuide* awards banquet in March.

Produced by NAMB's broadcast communications group for ABC Television, the program featured testimonies from former U.S. presidents and cabi-

Crossover decision came at right time for Utah girl

Baptist Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Tracking the long-term results of the thousands of commitments made to Christ during the annual Crossover evangelistic effort is often difficult, but anecdotal reports testify to its eternal significance.

In Salt Lake City last summer, for instance, more than 1,700 individuals made first-time professions of Christ through Crossover. Three of those were girls who met a group of summer missionaries on a city bus, and eventually prayed with them to receive Christ. The missionaries had been working with childcare during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, and providentially had found themselves forced to ride the bus because of transportation miscues.

After Crossover, the missionaries wrote the girls to find out how they were doing, recounted Rob Lee, religious education consultant for the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention, who wrote about their story in one of his regu-

lar newspaper columns. One of the girls wrote them a letter back. "She shared how excited she was about her relationship to Christ and about all the wonderful things he was doing in her life," Lee wrote.

The missionaries responded with a follow-up letter, but this time did not receive a reply.

Then they got a letter from the girl's aunt later in the summer informing them her niece had been hit and killed by a car one month after Crossover. "The aunt was writing to say thanks to the summer missionaries for being friends with her niece," Lee wrote.

Lee's column, based on reports submitted by summer missionaries, addressed the issue of whether Crossover was "worth all the effort."

"For this one teenager the answer is, yes! She is with Jesus right now because we said yes to sharing the Good News during Crossover," Lee wrote. "And yes, many of us will be hearing a thank you when we get to heaven for our involvement in Crossover." ■

net members, entertainers, and Olympic athletes on the impact of Graham's influence on their lives.

MovieGuide is a publication of Good News Communications, a ministry dedicated to redeeming the values of the media according to biblical principles by influencing media executives. ■

Disney ends ties to anti-Catholic film

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Disney Company, by sidestepping a film belittling the Catholic Church, has evidenced a glimmer of moral/religious concern for the third time in less than five months.

Disney's Miramax subsidiary is dropping a film titled "Dogma," according to media reports April 8. By several assessments, the film promises to offend Christians as deeply as the 1988 film, "The Last Temptation of Christ."

Donald Wildmon, president of the American Family Associ-

ation, said Disney's decision is another evidence "that the boycott is having an impact" through the efforts of numerous evangelical groups, including the Southern Baptist Convention. AFA began a boycott of Disney in 1995 and other organizations or denominations have since joined the effort.

In addition to dropping its involvement with "Dogma," Disney has twice acknowledged problems with its fare in the past five months. ■

Patterson addresses evangelical-Catholic accord controversy

Baptist Press

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Southern Baptist Convention President Paige Patterson has issued a statement addressing both sides of a controversy over an evangelical-Catholic accord which was signed by two SBC agency leaders.

Patterson said:

"While I wish that our Southern Baptists who signed

the Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium document would not have done so, I understand why they signed it." Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, and Larry Lewis, then president of the SBC's former Home Mission Board, were among 40 signers of the 1994 document. After a year of controversy, however, Land and Lewis removed their signatures from the document.

Then, concerning Southern Baptists who continue to call for Land and Lewis to repent of having signed ECT, beyond removing their signatures from the document, Patterson said:

"On the other hand, those who demand repentance on the part of leaders who signed ECT are misguided." About 600 people met recently and issued a call for ECT signers to renounce their action and ask the church at large for forgiveness.

Signing ECT, Patterson said, was "in my judgment, an error, but not a sin demanding repentance." ■

YouthLink 2000 will feature live satellite links with Israel

By Celeste Pennington
For Baptist Press

JERUSALEM — Randy Horenstein stands in the courtyard of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, scanning the sky with a small, silvery instrument that is part compass, part inclinometer. From the readings he takes — direction and measurements of trees, walls, and other obstacles overhead — he makes a quick sketch.

At the moment, his job is to determine how much clear sky is available for transmission to a satellite parked 22,300 miles above the Atlantic. He is checking this and other sites around Is-

rael representing significant moments in the life of Jesus Christ.

In December, Horenstein will be the engineer in charge of orchestrating the technical side of precision satellite links among Israel and the seven U.S. cities hosting YouthLink 2000, the millennial event for 200,000 teenagers and college students.

From different sites in Israel each night of the Dec. 29-31 event, students will trace the earthly walk of the historical Jesus Christ who taught in this desert countryside, died on the cross, was buried in a borrowed tomb, and rose from the dead.

"In a sense we want to roll back the

centuries to 30 A.D., to bring our U.S. audience here via satellite to ponder how Jesus and a handful of followers changed history," explained YouthLink 2000 project coordinator Doyle Pennington.

"Then we will challenge this generation of students to carry Christ's life-changing Gospel into the next millennium."

The Israel link will be a brief but momentous piece of each day's packed YouthLink 2000 program, which is designed to challenge students to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and to share the Gospel with every other American student by the end of 2000. Cross-coun-

try satellite links will make the YouthLink 2000 event in seven different cities seem like one.

Split-second timing will be critical as Horenstein and more than 250 employees of Crawford Communications Inc., of Atlanta link all 200,000 students in Anaheim, Atlanta, Denver, Houston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Tampa.

Satellite signals from all sites will come to the master control center in Atlanta, where they will be switched and immediately sent back out to all seven sites.

For more information visit the youthlink2000.org Web site or call toll-free 1-888-YOUTHLK. ■