

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

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Technology helps Tennessee Baptists reach communities

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The thought of reaching into every home in Tennessee and even America is mind-boggling, admits Larry Robertson, Tennessee Baptist Convention evangelism specialist.

"But," he noted, "it's not that overwhelming when we realize the United States Post Office makes contact with every home in America at least six times a week."

Robertson and the TBC Evangelism/Missions Strategies Group are working to help Tennessee Baptist churches know their communities better by utilizing similar technology used by the Post Office.



ROBERTSON

The EMS Group is working with the Mapping Center for Evangelism & Church Growth, a Lenexa, Kan.-based ministry committed "to equipping the body of Christ to pray for and share the Gospel with every person," to help Tennessee Baptists gain names, addresses, phone numbers, and limited demographic

data for people in a specific zip code or community.

Though not a program of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, the Mapping Center is endorsed by NAMB and includes a NAMB staff member on its board, he explained.

The data supplied by the Mapping Center can be used in a number of ways, Robertson said, including prayer walks, mail-outs to the community, and door-to-door ministry.

The name of the software used by the Mapping Center is "Kingdom Combine," Robertson said.

Robertson noted the technology is not limited to one church. Several churches or even an association can target areas to reach people with the Gospel, he said.

"As we enter the harvest field, we have the opportunity to join with sister churches and not miss anyone."

John Ledford, consultant for the TBC and Nashville Baptist Association, who does the Mapping Center work, said the data "is supposed to be the most accurate residential data base in existence."

He said the Mapping Center strate-



JOHN LEDFORD, right, consultant for the TBC Evangelism/Missions Strategies Group, maps out an area for Tommy Dye, pastor of First Baptist Church, Morrison, in the exhibit area at the State Evangelism Conference, held Jan. 17-18 at Brentwood Baptist Church.

gy and software is a direct tool for the Celebrate Jesus 2000 strategy of taking the Gospel into every home in America by the end of the year.

The Southern Baptist Convention is among more than 60 major denomina-

tions in the U.S. that are part of Celebrate Jesus 2000, Ledford said.

In addition to names, addresses, and phone numbers of people within a specified area, the information that can be — See Technology, page 2

Forms re-sent to churches

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Nomination forms to submit names of Tennessee Baptists to fill vacancies on Tennessee Baptist Convention boards and committees have been re-sent to all TBC churches by the TBC Executive Office.

The original form for the Committee on Boards inadvertently left off Carson-Newman College.

The error was discovered by the Executive Office on Monday, Jan. 24, in time to print the replica of the correct form in last week's issue of the *B&R*.

The new forms will be printed on ivory-colored paper. The original form, printed on peach-colored paper, can be discarded.

The deadline for nominations is March 1.

The Executive Office regrets the error. ■

Tennessee Baptists give nearly \$3 million

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering receives record gifts

By Martin King
For Baptist Press

TALLEDEGA, Ala. — Southern Baptists gave a record \$43.5 million to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions in 1999, reported Robert E. Reccord, president of the North American Mission Board. The agency uses the funds to support more than 5,000 missionaries in the United States and Canada.

Through Jan. 25, Tennessee Baptists have given \$2,991,073 for the 1999-2000 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, according to Deborah Taylor, accounting services manager for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Funds received through February will be credited to the 1999-2000 offering, she said.

Tennessee Baptists gave \$3,134,020 to the Annie Armstrong offering in 1998-99,

Taylor noted.

Speaking to the executive board of Woman's Missionary Union meeting in annual session at Shocco Springs Conference Center, Reccord expressed appreciation to WMU — the agency which initiated the missions offering more than 100 years ago.

"Thank you and your thousands of WMU members across the country for helping Southern Baptists give \$43,550,000 to the Annie Armstrong Offering last year," Reccord said. "This is the seventh year in a row the offering has set a new record, and we are so wonderfully thankful for what God is doing through this offering to reach people for himself."

Every dollar of the offering — received in most Southern Baptist churches in the spring — directly supports the work of Southern Baptist missionaries, most of whom are jointly

appointed and supported by the North American Mission Board and partner state Baptist conventions.

The offering supplies 38 percent of NAMB's budget with another 34 percent from the SBC's unified giving plan, the Cooperative Program, and the remainder from individual gifts, investments, and other income.

Acknowledging that the 1999 offering fell short of its \$45 million goal, Reccord said, "While all of us wish there were more, we

realize there will never be enough to meet the overwhelming challenges of reaching North America for Christ. Therefore, every one of us must redouble our efforts at

personalizing the mission and ministry of the 5,000 missionaries supported by this offering." The national goal for the 2000 offering is \$47 million.

Reccord also reported that the mission offering was not the only record set by the agency last year. He reiterated the recent announcement that for the first time in history, the number of NAMB missionaries exceeded 5,000 in 1999 — a key goal of the denomination's 25-year growth plan called Bold Mission Thrust.

The number of missionary appointments for the year also was up, Reccord said, as were the number of missionary candidate interviews, mission volunteers, and endorsed chaplains. He said he is also anticipating that Southern Baptists started more new churches last year than any year in history, although final reports have not yet been completed. ■



RECCORD

about your newsjournal

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Vision of former Tennessee minister

FBC, Orlando, set to open homes to SBC messengers

By Ken Walker
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — In a modern twist to the parable of the Good Samaritan, First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., will provide free housing for pastors, ministerial staff, and missionaries attending this June's Southern Baptist Convention.

The "Good Samaritan Inn" will rely on members of the congregation willing to open their homes to qualifying messengers and their families between June 10-15.

To qualify, applicants must be current or retired ministerial staff or missionaries. They also must forward a letter from their church verifying their status and messenger credentials.

Pastors can sign up by e-mailing a message to GoodSamaritanInn@fbcorlando.org or by leaving a voice mail message at (407) 514-4411. The church plans to add on-line registration; check its Internet site — www.fbcorlando.org — for details. The deadline to apply is April 15.

This option is for housing only and does not include transportation or food. The number of spaces available has not been determined.

There is no set limit on the number of family members who will be able to visit, said J.B. Collingsworth, First Baptist's assistant pastor. That will depend on the space available in a host's home, he explained.

Visitors will not be able to bring pets. While first discussed with the congregation last September by senior pastor

Jim Henry, a Tennessean and former pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, the project was officially unveiled via a video presentation at services Jan. 30.

A lay coordinating committee plans to follow up in February with visits to Sunday School classes. They plan to target seniors classes, since the elderly often have larger homes and more empty bedrooms, said chairman David Reed.

"This is a great tool to do what Jesus said, to give cups of cold water to people in need," Collingsworth said. "There are times when I was younger and struggling that it would have been nice to have that option offered."

Henry's vision for the unique ministry goes back some 30 years, when he was a young pastor attending North Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. En route to an annual convention he slept in his car on the way because he couldn't afford a hotel room. That week, he slept at the YMCA.

On the return trip, he stopped at a church's Wednesday night service, where a couple invited him to stay in their home, Collingsworth said.

While the Orlando Local Arrangements Committee working with the SBC Executive Committee coordinates special housing requests, Collingsworth said this is

the first time a church in a host city has organized a lodging program.

Although they discussed working with other churches, First Baptist's committee decided that could be a logistical problem, he said.

In addition to housing, the 10,000-member church will host a free luncheon for visitors and host families on Sunday, June 11, before the annual Pastors' Conference begins. Lodging is extended a day after the convention to allow guests to visit area tourist attractions.

With hotel rooms in the vicinity of the Orlando Convention Center costing \$60 to \$150 a night, the Good Samaritan Inn will provide a valuable service, said Dan Brown, vice chairman of the coordinating committee.

"There's anticipation and excitement that's building," said Brown, also a deacon and trustee. "It comes from helping families who couldn't afford to come to the convention because it's so expensive."

First Baptist understands the value of hospitality, Reed, the committee chairman, said. On past choir tours to Wales and other countries, hundreds of members stayed in the homes of local residents. Many of them are expected to volunteer as hosts, he said.

Reed said he hopes First Baptist's generosity will be duplicated.

"We're hoping this starts a trend for future host cities," he said. "We anticipate if pastors take advantage of this and come, they'll be looking forward to the next time." ■



HENRY

FCC reverses decision on religious broadcasting

By James Dotson
For Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — The Federal Communication Commission — in the face of massive public outcry — has reversed a portion of a Dec. 29 ruling on what constitutes permissible programming under a noncommercial educational television broadcasting license.

"The FCC reversal on this critical First Amendment issue on Friday was the result of God's providential grace and the

Christian community standing united for religious freedom," said Robert E. Reccord, president of the North American Mission Board, of the 4-1 vote by FCC commissioners.

Reccord thanked "the two FCC commissioners who opposed the original ruling and now have the privilege of voting with the majority for a reversal."

The decision, said Brant Gustavson, president of the National Religious Broadcasters organization, "is a beautiful demonstration of democracy in action. We

are grateful for the NRB members who spread the news and motivated citizens to call their representatives, senators, and the commissioners expressing their outrage over this unconstitutional decision."

The North American Mission Board's FamilyNet subsidiary filed a "Petition for Reconsideration" less than two hours before the announcement of the reversal on Jan. 28. Others who joined in filing the petition included Channel 38 Christian Television, a FamilyNet affiliate in El Paso,

Texas, and several church broadcast ministries — including those of two former SBC presidents, pastors **Adrian Rogers of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova**, and Ed Young, and two other leading pastors, James Merritt and Ronnie Floyd.

Randy Singer, NAMB's executive vice president, called the reversal a "victory for the little guys — the noncommercial stations just trying to broadcast God's Word through television ministries reaching their communities."

Technology helps Tennessee Baptists reach ...

— Continued from page 1

supplied through the software program includes things such as average household size, household incomes, age, race, and education breakdowns, and more, Ledford said.

He observed the Mapping Center tool not only organizes data for church and outreach leaders to use, it provides them confidence to go out into their communities.

"It empowers church members to carry out the four important evangelism steps of prayer, personal witnessing, proclamation, and preserva-

tion," Ledford said.

Ledford observed that the Mapping Center data and software, which is updated yearly, brings churches to a level playing field with businesses, politicians, and others that have used such data bases for years to meet their goals and objectives.

"The Mapping Center brings churches to a new level of efficiency and professionalism," he said.

Both Ledford and Robertson encourage larger churches to purchase their own software because it would be invaluable

in their ministries. For churches that purchase their own, Ledford is available to train and equip church staffs to use the software program.

He also is available to actually do maps and provide data for smaller and medium-sized churches that do not have their own software.

The demand for the data and software is really growing as Tennessee Baptists learn about its capabilities, Ledford said.

Ledford has set up tables at various conferences and meetings across the state to educate

people about the program. At the recent State Evangelism Conference in Nashville, he received requests for information about 160,000 homes.

Since last May, Ledford has mapped out information for 250,000 homes.

"That shows our churches are serious about reaching those people," he said.

For more information about the Mapping Center, or to request maps and demographic information for a specific area, contact Robertson at (615) 371-2059 or 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2059. ■

Carroll-Benton Association

Association provides ministry to truckers

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

SUGAR TREE — Exit 126 on Interstate 40 near here draws many truckers because of its two truck stops and one service station/convenience store. And the exit is popular because it is about halfway between Nashville and Jackson.

Truckers who pull off find food, service for their big rigs, a break, and help for their spiritual lives.

On Sunday morning they often meet a Baptist who is introducing himself or herself to the truckers, visiting, and inviting people to a Sunday service at the Trucker's Christian Chapel. The Baptists also are distributing cassette tapes and printed materials on spiritual matters.

The truckers find displays of the materials including New Testaments directed to truckers in the customer areas of the truck stops and the service station. And during the week they might meet Earl Rinehart, coordinator of the ministry and member, Chalk Level Baptist Church, Camden, as he replenishes materials and visits with people.

Chapel

On the road intersecting the interstate sitting among the massive, rambling truck stops is a tiny, pristine, white building bearing a sign reading Trucker's Christian Chapel Service, Sunday, 8:30 a.m., 1-800-348-6188.

The chapel is a busy place on Sunday mornings. Rinehart is assisted by Keith Willhite, associate pastor, Chalk Level Church, and other volunteers who lead the service and help in other ways. For example, members of Salem Baptist Church, Parsons, of-



LEADERS OF THE trucker's ministry stand in front of the chapel and include, from left, Billy Murphy, pastor, Howse Baptist Church, Atwood; Leon Smith, Chalk Level Baptist Church, Camden; George Hill, director of missions, Carroll-Benton Baptist Association; Earl Rinehart, Chalk Level Church; Keith Willhite, associate pastor, Chalk Level Church; and Ken Zike, pastor, Missionary Grove Baptist Church, Camden.

ten bring refreshments.

Services have drawn as many as 11 people to the one-room chapel. Sometimes after the chapel service volunteers take truckers to their churches for the morning service. Other times, the men remain at the chapel, counseling and praying with truckers, said Willhite.

Many have problems in their families and with drugs, they reported.

Willhite has invited several truckers to spend time with his family on Sundays. They have had a good time together, he said.

Impact of ministry

Last year five men made professions of faith through the ministry. Truckers receive about 200 cassette tapes each week. And many call the toll-free phone number, which connects them to the office of Carroll-Benton Baptist Association.

The association, which directs the ministry, is based in Huntingdon.

About once a week George Hill, director of missions of the association, talks to a trucker using the toll-free number. Some are very distressed, he reported, and need counsel. Hill also follows up on needs of truckers and spiritual decisions by contacting Baptists near the homes of the truckers.

Three years ago the ministry was begun with financial help from the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Tennessee Baptist Foundation.

The ministry is continued by many people, said Hill. A total of about 30 members of five churches lead the ministry while all churches of the association fund it through the association budget, said Hill. Funding also comes from individuals.

Other help has come from the owner of the service station. He loaned the land for the chapel, which was built so it can be easily moved if the owner needs the land, noted Rinehart.

Christian truckers help by inviting truckers to the chapel, visiting the chapel regularly, and witnessing via CB radio. One trucker has been given a key so he can stop for a quiet time no matter what time it is, said Rinehart.

The owners of the nearby truck stops and service station have helped by giving space for ministry materials. And one owner announces the services on a broadcasting system.

The ministry shows what an association can do, said Hill, by giving Baptists an opportunity to minister and watching them and God work. ■



Association plans to distribute book covers to students

For Baptist and Reflector

CARTHAGE — New Salem Baptist Association based here plans to distribute 10,000 book covers bearing the ten commandments to public school students in Smith County this fall.

When school begins this fall, students who are members of the association's 11 churches will distribute the book covers by giving them to their friends, explained Ricky Scott, pastor, Rome Baptist Church, Lebanon. Other book covers may be distributed from churches, he added.

Scott, who presented the idea to the association, reported his research showed distribution of the book covers by students is lawful in schools if done at times other than class time. Both students and others can distribute book covers in a religious club held at school, he noted. However, he found the book covers bearing the ten commandments could not be distributed by someone other than a student on the campus of a public school.

The association has bought some book covers from the Family Research Council of Washington D.C. for 18 cents a piece. Scott also found book covers bearing the ten commandments available from Love Worth Finding, a ministry of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova.

To fund the project, the association gave \$400, an individual gave \$400, and the churches are giving \$120 each. The association also may buy adhesive versions of the ten commandments for young children who don't have books, but have folders and notebooks, noted Scott.

Scott felt led by God to initiate the project after the shooting at Columbine School in Colorado last year.

For more information, contact Scott at revricrome@cs.com or (615) 444-0801. ■

Volunteers build ramp for Memphis church

For Baptist and Reflector

MEMPHIS — Last fall volunteers from two churches gathered at Monument of Love Baptist Church here to build a ramp so people in wheelchairs could attend the church.

George Fulghum, a member of First Baptist Church, Memphis, led the project although he is 84 years old. Helping were Joseph Young and Bill Morris of First Baptist Church; and Wayne Wilson, Martin Romine, Jimmy Staten, Fenwick Chappell, and Jim Brown of Union Avenue Baptist Church, Memphis.

Fulghum, a retired general contractor, has helped build 19 ramps for churches and homes mostly in Memphis. He has served through World Changers, Disaster Relief, and other Baptist volunteer programs in Michigan six times, in eight other states, and in Burkina Faso, Venezuela, and Jamaica. He also has worked with Habitat for Humanity.

Fulghum said, "It's really fun work for me. In fact, I don't know what I

would do if I weren't doing this. It's just my way of doing my part and it feels good."

Lawrence Hudson, pastor, Monument of Love Church, initiated the project and said it would help the church reach people. He explained members of his church who could do the labor must work during the day.

Hudson said he was impressed by the eagerness of the volunteers and their labor despite their age. All of the volunteers were senior citizens except for one.

The volunteers were like the good Samaritan of the Bible responding to a Macedonian call for help, said Hudson. The



VOLUNTEERS build a ramp for people with handicaps at Monument of Love Baptist Church, Memphis.

work "sends a statement," he observed.

Funds for this project came from the Golden State Missions Offering and it was begun with help from the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff.

The ramp was dedicated by the church recently. ■

Report urges awareness of alcohol abuse

By Sarah Griffith
For Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Alcohol-related deaths outnumber deaths from drug use 4-to-1, yet parents are less concerned about their teenagers using alcohol than drugs, according to a new study.

While alcohol-related deaths vastly outnumber deaths from illicit drugs in America, 21 percent of parents fear their teenagers using drugs, while only 5 percent fear teenage abuse of alcohol, according to a report by the non-profit organization Drug Strategies.

That is due to effective public-awareness campaigns about the dangers of drugs, according to a report titled "Millennium Hangover: Keeping Score on Alcohol."

Drug Strategies, a Washington-based research group, said the media ought to give equal attention to alcohol abuse, which the report termed "America's most pervasive drug problem."

Though its ill consequences are less recognized, alcohol abuse is more widespread than abuse of illicit drugs, Drug Strategies said.

Of the nation's 113 million drinkers, 10 million are underage and 33 million "binge drink," or have more than five drinks at one time. An estimated 14 million Americans need treatment for alcohol problems, the report said.

Alcohol's consequences also cost society more money than

Churches can discourage use of alcohol, Ross says

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Churches can take several steps to discourage the use of alcohol by teenagers, says Richard Ross, youth ministry consultant at LifeWay Christian Resources.

First, Ross said, pastors should preach clearly about alcohol from the pulpit.

He also encouraged churches to provide each student a copy of the 24-Hour Counselor CD-Rom which provides 24 half-hour counseling sessions on crisis topics including "I'm Thinking About Stopping Drinking" and "My Parents Drink Too Much." These resources are available from LifeWay (1-800-458-2772), Ross said.

Churches also should make abstinence from alcohol a requirement for being elected as a youth leader or teacher, Ross encouraged.

He also noted churches can invite students who have made firm commitments against alcohol to give testimonies before the church or youth group.

Without being overly critical of parents,



ROSS

church leaders also can remind teenagers that they do not have to replicate the mistakes many parents have made by drinking, he observed.

Churches can also do parents a service by assisting them in making decisions to shield teenagers from events where there is overwhelming pressure to drink, such as unchaperoned parties, spring break trips, after-prom parties, etc., Ross added.

He cited the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission as a resource for churches and encouraged them to observe Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention on the third Sunday in March. The SBC agency also has promise cards that teenagers can sign saying they will not use drugs or alcohol. For more information about the cards and other ERLC resources, call (615) 244-2495.

"The admonition that 'Baptists don't drink' has little or no importance to our church teenagers," Ross said.

"What matters most is that pastors, youth leaders, and parents hold high the teachings of Scripture on the issue and model a lifestyle centered around these principles, he concluded. ■ — Lonnie Wilkey

drugs, the report continued.

Estimated costs for alcohol abuse in America due to health problems, accidents, crime, and "lost productivity" total \$167 billion annually.

"Even though the costs of alcohol abuse to society are 50 percent greater than all illicit drug abuse costs combined, voters are not telling elected officials that alcohol abuse presents a pressing problem," the report maintained.

More federal money is al-

located for research on illicit drugs than for research on alcohol. There is an Office of National Drug Control Policy, but there is no similar federal program for alcohol abuse.

The report calls alcohol the "drug of choice" among teens, used more than all illicit drugs combined. While less than half (42 percent) of parents said they thought their children had consumed alcohol, a majority of teenagers (79 percent)

said they had, according to a Hart Research poll cited in the report.

Alcohol abuse contributes to 7 out of 10 child-abuse cases, the report continued. And despite health risks to unborn children, drinking among pregnant women is increasing. Four in 10 violent offenders said they were under the influence of alcohol when they committed their crimes.

"These problems will persist well into the 21st century un-

less greater leadership emerges to address alcohol abuse and its consequences," the report maintained.

Among ways to fight alcohol abuse, Drug Strategies called for:

- Increased alcohol excise taxes.
- Physicians communicating alcohol's health risks to patients.
- More youth treatment programs.
- More employer-intervention programs.
- Raising the price of alcohol for the military.

A Baptist ethicist said church members should take advantage of the election cycle to make their voices heard on alcohol policy.

"Southern Baptists have historically spoken forcefully about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs," said Robert Parham, executive director of the Nashville-based Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville, and member of Woodmont Baptist Church.

"During this presidential-election cycle, one of the best ways to exert our influence is to speak loudly for an increase in the federal excise tax on alcohol, a proven strategy to fight alcohol abuse," Parham said. ■

Book offers tips for helping children face tough issues

By Sammie Jo Barstow
For Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Only a few decades ago tough issues children faced might include being sent to the school principal for chewing gum in the classroom or for not having completed a homework assignment.

Many middle-aged adults cannot remember having friends in elementary or junior high school whose parents were divorced.

Now, however, children face the threat of violence in their schools, not to mention the pervasiveness of drug and alcohol use and an astonishing variety of family problems. Many studies estimate that 60 percent of all children now will live with a single parent before they reach adulthood.

It's a fact that the tough issues facing children today have gotten tougher. And parents find themselves at a loss for combating issues with which they have had little or no personal experience. Children have always depended on the adults in their lives — parents, teachers, church workers, neighbors, parents of friends — to help them recognize issues and to learn appropriate, healthy

ways of dealing with these issues.

Tackling Tough Issues (New Hope Publishers), edited by Rhonda R. Reeves, provides helpful advice for parents and other adults who deal with preschool children. Nine experts, including Fred Rogers of "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" and Grace Ketterman, a renowned physician and child psychiatrist, have written from their fields of expertise.

Other contributors include prominent educators and children's ministers who each address specific topics on timely issues concerning children.

Hedda Sharapan, associate executive producer of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood and co-author with Fred Rogers of a chapter on helping children deal with anger, stressed the importance of parents and other adults having the right attitude about children's anger.

"Adults must acknowledge that anger is not a bad feeling, not a negative feeling," Sharapan said. "Anger is not the first thing a child feels. Usually anger is a reaction to feeling powerless, helpless, or rejected. So adults need to look for the reasons for the anger."

Joye Smith, author of the chapter on the spiritual development of preschool-

ers, noted, "The main task of the early years of life is the development of trust."

Smith, preschool/children's consultant for Woman's Missionary Union, said this trust, which should be instilled by parents and other caregivers, is essential to the child's future spiritual development. Since younger preschoolers have limited vocabularies and understanding, their most important concepts grow from the love and security provided by adults who care for them, she said.

Ketterman, author of the chapter on helping children deal with illnesses, disease, and death, notes that it is important for parents and church workers to know how to communicate with children about these serious issues. Helping children relate to other children who are ill or have physical disabilities is sometimes a challenge for parents, she said in an interview.

"Adults who work with children need to strike a balance in being sympathetic with parents, empathetic with children, but also matter of fact," she said. "Usually children do best when they understand something about the illness or disability. If parents of the disabled child are willing, a teacher can benefit by

helping other children understand the illness or disability and how to respond to that child. Children can be taught how to assist a child in need in a matter-of-fact, casual way, so not to make a big issue of it."

Other topics covered in *Tackling Tough Issues* are: appropriate learning for young children, helping young children deal with family violence, divorce, blended families, moving, and adoption. Each chapter begins with a synopsis of the topic to help parents and other adults understand the problem, followed by advice offering options on ways to resolve the problem. Space is provided at the end of each chapter for readers to record their reflections about how they might apply the information given.

Even though times have changed and the issues children face have changed, it is still true that children need adults who know and understand the issues they confront and who are able to help them cope with tough issues.

Rhodes, the book's editor wrote: "My prayer is that God will empower you with his Holy Spirit to move in a mighty way for his children. May he also strengthen and encourage you as you begin tackling tough issues." ■



Christians should be aware, form opinions on news

By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

Editors, talk show hosts, and the American public in general have not had a shortage of things to discuss in recent weeks. Popular topics have included:

Titans and the Super Bowl

I don't know about you, but I am glad it is over. I wish the Titans could have made one more yard, but despite the loss it was a great season, not only for the team, but for the state and city. There was a great deal of positive media attention focused on our state the past few weeks. Unfortunately, there was an overkill by the Nashville media. Believe it or not, there were some people who really wanted to hear more on the news than the Titans' Super Bowl hype. The Nashville media let the excitement caused by the Titans' performance override their news judgment. As a sports and Titans fan, I am excited about what they did, but I have other concerns than a win or loss by a sports team. One positive aspect after the loss was the way Rams quarterback Kurt Warner handled the media after the game. Before he would answer any questions, he thanked Jesus Christ, his personal Lord and Savior. Sadly, but not surprisingly, those comments were taken out of most replays I saw later.

Elian Gonzalez

I have mixed emotions about the plight of 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez, the Cuban boy who was rescued off the Florida coast after

he and his mother attempted to escape from Cuba. His mother died and Elian was placed in the custody of some distant relatives living in Florida. His father wants him returned to him while his relatives do not want him returned to Cuba. Congress has even gotten into the act. Some Congressmen want to grant Elian U.S. citizenship. I don't believe anyone should be granted citizenship on the whim of Congress. For those who are not born in our country, there are rigid guidelines in place to gain citizenship. Those guidelines should apply to everyone. While I hate to think of Elian returning to a country that for the most part rejects Christ, my instincts as a dad take over. I can only imagine how the father must feel. Elian should be reunited with his dad and family in Cuba. We need to trust God that some day Elian will learn about and come to know Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.

The lottery

Once again, legislators are lobbying to legalize a lottery in Tennessee. So far, the state senate has successfully blocked all efforts. Lottery and gambling proponents will continue to force the issue. The call by some for a state income tax only makes the matter worse. When given the choice between a lottery and a state income tax, there is little doubt the people will choose the lottery. When and if that decision is made the quality of life in Tennessee will fall. Pray that the senate will stand firm against lottery

efforts in the weeks and months to come. Let them and other legislators know we do not want legalized gambling in the state. Removing the word "lottery" from the state constitution could allow other forms of gambling such as casinos.

The presidential election

Get ready for an all-out media blitz as the presidential campaign begins to intensify. No matter which political party you prefer, get the facts before you vote. A person should not vote for an individual merely because he or she is a Democrat or a Republican. We need the best possible person for the job, regardless of political party. Look at the issues, research, discover the facts, form opinions, and make good decisions based on what you find. The future of our country is dependent upon what we do. God has blessed us with the privilege of living in a great country. We should never take that privilege for granted and should always exercise our right to vote.

These are just a few issues that have occupied the minds of Tennesseans in recent weeks. There are undoubtedly more.

We should examine daily what is going on in our world because it affects us, our families and friends, and our churches.

Sometimes, we as Christians want to put our heads in the sand and ignore what is happening. We have a responsibility to be aware of current events and to share the message of Jesus Christ with a world that is leaving him out. **B&R**



just for today

by Fred Wood,
pastor emeritus,
Eudora Church,
Memphis



Start with a smile

Sunday School teacher to class of Sr. Adults: "Fifty years from now what would you like for your grandchildren to say about you?" Tom: "He was a loyal family man." Charlie: "He was successful in business and a generous man." Sam: "I would like them to say, 'He gets around real good for a man of his age.'"

Take this truth

"The hour draws near, howe'er delayed and late/When at the Eternal Gate/We leave the words and work we call our own/And lift void hands alone." — Whittier

Memorize this Scripture

"With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation." — Psalm 91:16

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help us always to live with an eye to eternity." ■

Partnership Prayer Requests February

- 3 — Pray for Covenant Fellowship Church in Kingston, Ontario, which is now in its new location. Ask God to bless its outreach.
- 4 — Pray for Kevin Williams and his ministry as interim pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Michigan.
- 5 — Pray for Nikki Chandler, an IMB youth team journeyman to Portugal who is recovering from pneumonia. Ask God to fully restore her health.
- 6 — Pray for Ann Sprouse, an IMB missionary to Rio de Janeiro, who is on medical furlough in the U.S. She has a malignancy.
- 7 — Pray for Greek Gospel Church in Toronto, Canada, that God will bless church leaders as they make decisions for future church growth and outreach.
- 8 — Pray for the Bible study at the Baptist Friendship House in Rio de Janeiro that God would bless the people who may be reached by this ministry.
- 9 — Pray for the IMB Leadership Development Team in Lisbon, Portugal, as it works with the Lisbon Cell Group Ministry.



letters from readers

What would Jesus do?

Thanks for your editorial, "Board does its job — time to move on" in the Jan. 19 issue of the *B&R*. You say: "Leaders ... need to sit down" and come up with "a reasonable solution that can be accepted by the majority of Tennessee Baptists." I don't believe you mean a court of law as is being threatened.

Some seem truly more concerned about "legal" issues than "what is really important." I pray that a spirit of love and cooperation will prevail in the Tennessee Baptist Convention. I also pray that the spirit of negativism among some of our members will change when we all realize we serve a God of love and forgiveness. Perhaps we each need to ask the question popular with our youth today. What would Jesus do (WWJD)?"

Lola Byrd
Powell 37849

Disagrees with leader

Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, should ei-

ther apologize or resign for his views in the agency's recent newsletter. Land asserts that anyone who disagrees with the 1998 "Family Amendment" (with the "A wife is to submit herself graciously ..." line) to the "Baptist Faith and Message" rejects the authority of Scripture.

Land states, "Religious critics (of the Family Amendment) should remember that there are many kinds of submission. There is the submission to the divine authority of the Bible, and then there is submission to the pervasive pressure of a secular culture which rejects the authority of Scripture."

Once again, a Baptist leader has confused biblical hermeneutics with biblical authority. Two individuals with a devout commitment to the authority of Scripture can come to different conclusions about the meaning and application of a passage.

Land's hermeneutical meth-

odology on the "wifely submission" issue was once employed by his Southern Baptist predecessors in their vigorous defense of slavery by citing "slaves submit to your masters" passages. Many reject Land's method.

A recent Barna report shows that Southern Baptists have a divorce rate higher than the national average, significantly higher than that of atheists and agnostics, and the highest rate of any American denomination. Yet, Land uses time and resources on a misdirected culture war with radical feminists and militant homosexuals by helping to draft and then defending an ill-advised "Family Amendment."

The Great Commission instructs us to teach the flock and spread the Gospel. The "Family Amendment" political folly does neither.

Marty Lasley
Soddy-Daisy 37379

Wants explanation

Is there not a "called" (Romans 1:1, I Corinthians 1:1) man of God in the Southern Baptist Convention that can write an explanation on "the revelation?" — one that can say with the apostle Paul "I neither received it (Gospel) of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:1, 12).

Why are ministers not teaching church history? Was 1,300 years of "tribulation" (Matthew 24:21) and "affliction" (Mark 13:19) not enough, first under pagan Rome and then under papal Rome?

If one wishes to read (and there is no excuse for the Christian not doing so), a short, concise church history can be found in *Halley's Bible Handbook*.

What is our Lord's commandment? "Watch" and "be ready."

Mildred Woods
Lebanon 37087

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



For March 10-11 in Nashville

Youth Evangelism Conference plans set

For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The 2000 Youth Evangelism Conference will be held March 10-11 at Vanderbilt Memorial Gym here. It's being referred to as Yec2k, a take off on the Y2K reference to year 2000.

The theme this year is "core radiation" based on Matthew 5:16 calling for Christians to be a light or radiate God's love to the world.

Dan Moran, staff evangelist, The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, Ala., is the main speaker for sessions at Vanderbilt Gym. The sessions are duplicated Friday and Saturday to provide for the crowd, which

is expected to be from 20,000-25,000, said Kent Shingleton of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Youth groups are divided by the area code they use.

For smaller groups

One change this year is the smaller group offerings. Instead of Personal Witnessing Conferences, which are targeting youth who are Christians, several kinds of conferences will be offered, Shingleton said.

One conference will train and encourage youth to witness. Another conference will target youth who aren't Christians by presenting the Gospel through multimedia, drama,

and contemporary praise and worship music.

A gathering will focus on campus ministry through principles of the program, First Priority. A final conference will prepare youth to defend their faith by helping them consider why they believe what they believe.

This training, which will be presented by a former skeptic of the Christian faith who now is a seminary professor, also will offer teens facts supporting Christianity which could dispel the doubts of many people.

Conferences include Sharing My Faith by Ronnie Hill, evangelist of Ft. Worth, Texas;

Contemporary Evangelistic Focus; Campus Ministry by Todd Roberts of Atlanta, Ga., associate of North American Mission Board; and Defending My Faith by Frank Harber, professor, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas.

The conferences will be held at area churches.

Main sessions

In addition to Moran, leaders of the sessions at Vanderbilt Gym are Chris Rice, recording artist of Franklin and graduate of Union University, Jackson; Rebecca St. James, recording artist of Franklin and member, First Baptist Church, Franklin;



Small Town Poets, recording artists; Ted and Nancy Lowe, dramatists of Atlanta, Ga.; and The Skit Guys, Tommy Woodard and Eddie James, youth ministers in Texas.

Deadlines

Youth groups can receive the early bird rate of \$7 per person until Feb. 11, said Shingleton. For more information, contact him or Penny Tyler, TBC, (615) 371-7933, kshingleton@tnbaptist.org, or ptyler@tnbaptist.org. ■



MORAN



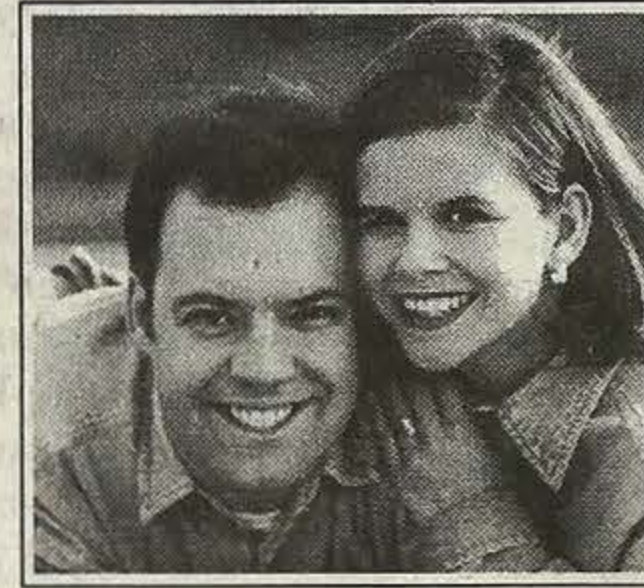
RICE



ST. JAMES



SMALL TOWN POETS



LOWES



THE SKIT GUYS

Attend College Heights Baptist, Gallatin

Gospel music's Steeles carry family message across U.S.

By Stacey Hamby
For Baptist Press

GALLATIN — Before they became a household name in Gospel music, the Steeles were like many Baptists. Jeff Steele was a pastor in rural Mississippi. He and his wife, Sherry, were raising three children. They sang together as a family.

Then life took a sudden turn. "We had two No. 1 songs before I ever left the church for full-time Gospel music," Steele recounted. "I had no idea God was calling us to the forefront of a culture war. I had no idea there was a culture war."

That culture war is what the Steeles' signature song addresses. "We Want America Back" — named Song of the Year in 1997 in the *Singing News* — was written to call a nation to repentance.

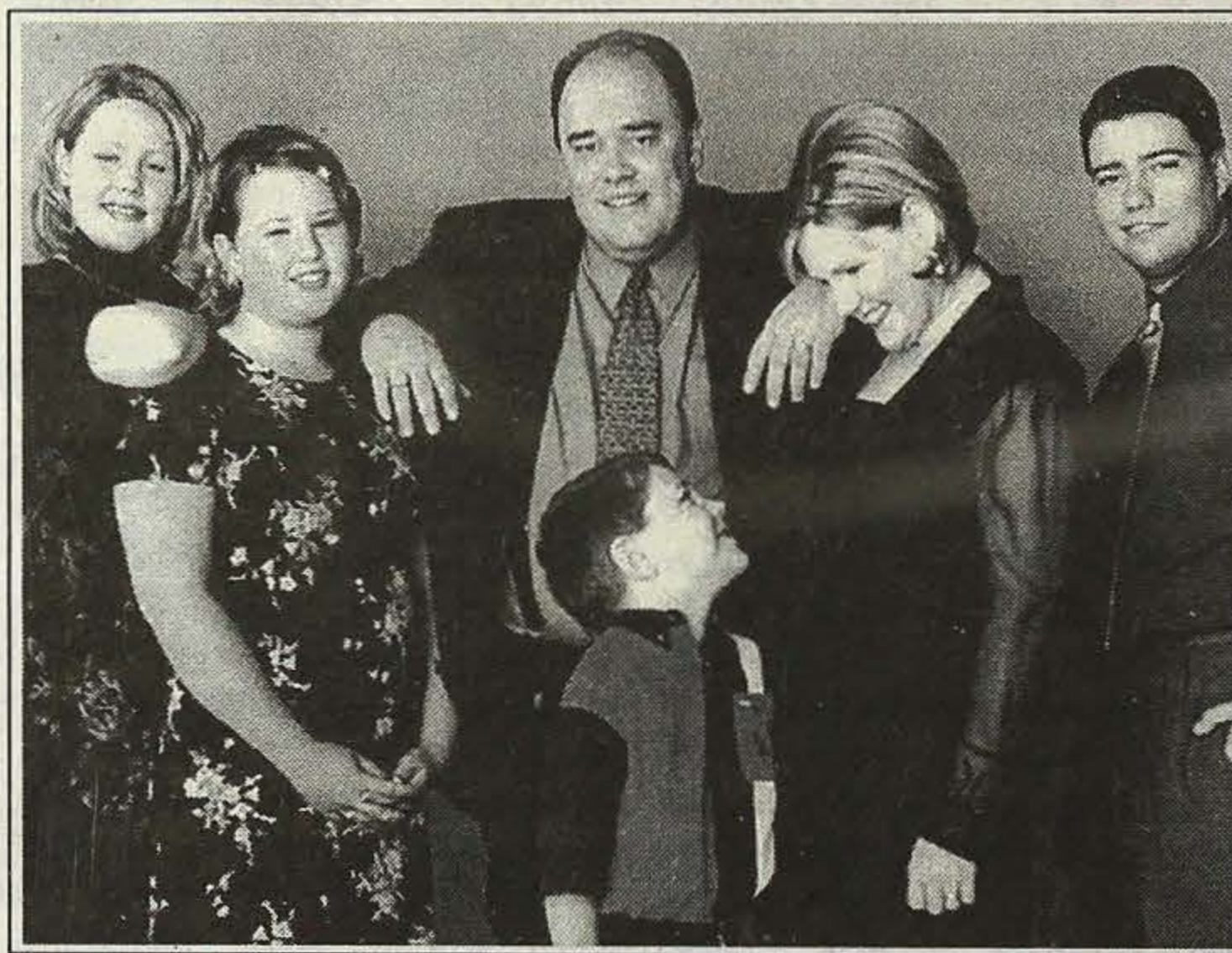
"The response to that song was so overwhelming," Steele recalled. "It took us far beyond Southern Gospel music to places where Southern Gospel is not usually heard. We've sung it in Washington, D.C., the Alabama state capitol, college campuses, and TV stations. There were some country radio stations that played the song, and it became No. 1 at those stations."

Daywind Music Group's president, Ed Leonard, said Steele's writing talent is one of the most renowned in the industry. "The Steeles have enjoyed tremendous achievements and success as artists, but beyond the awards and honors lies a greater mission," Leonard said. "They have a heart for today's family, and they continually go the distance to see that they are obedient in obeying their call to challenge and encourage families."

The success of "We Want America Back" turned Steele's head, he now admits. "All the awards, sales — I got my eyes on all that stuff, and lost my focus," he said. "I promised God, if he gave me another vehicle like this, I'd not lose my focus."

God did give Steele another song. "For the Sake of My Children" already stands at No. 5 on the *Singing News* chart. As opposed to the usual question society asks — "What has happened to our children?" — Steele's song asks, "Where are the parents?"

"I was prompted by the Holy Spirit to write 'For the Sake of My Children' in response to what I was seeing going on in America," he said. The song's message is meant to call par-



SOUTHERN GOSPEL recording artists The Steeles are comprised of, from left, Christy, Kayla, Jeff, Bradley, Sherry, and Paul Ladd. The Steeles attend College Heights Baptist Church in Gallatin when they are not on the road.

ents back to their responsibility in raising their children.

"I don't blame the kids for what's happened," Steele said. "God said for them to obey their parents. Parents have abandoned the guidebook for their homes. We're not called to be friends, we're called to be parents."

The Steeles are taking that message to cities across the nation, leading "We Want America Back for the Sake of the Children" rallies. Unlike regu-

lar Gospel music concerts, they conduct these without charging admission.

"Since our message is so strong and we do call people to a decision, I got real uncomfortable drawing a rope around the church and saying, 'If you can buy a ticket, you can come in here and hear the truth,'" Steele said. "God has been faithful to meet our needs. This is ministry only."

As part of the rallies, Steele conducts private meetings with

parents to show them the lyrics to today's most popular rock songs. He also addresses concerns over country music, video games, and movies.

Steele said he was the first one who had to clean house. "I used to like to watch wrestling on TV with my son, but I can't do that anymore," he said. "God is not obligated to answer one single prayer offered up from a home ... where his name is cursed through the TV set, and we're paying for it."

Though he's calling Christian parents to assume their responsibilities for their homes, Steele insists he's not a legalist. "If so, I'd be preaching all this holiness as a means to keep salvation," he said. "But I'm preaching it as a means to keep America together, homes together, kids safe."

"I try not to compromise the truth, but the truth is what's controversial."

When the Steele family isn't on the road, they attend College Heights Baptist Church in Gallatin. The couple's three children — Christy, 15, Kayla, 11, and Bradley, 6 — are homeschooled. Christy sings with the family full-time, and the younger children make special appearances. Another member of the group is Paul Ladd. ■

Charles Orr serves 51 years at First, Paris

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

PARIS — When Charles Orr, minister of education, First Baptist Church, Paris, began serving the congregation as more than a member, his job was to arrive early each Sunday to clean the coal furnace of klinkers and fill the hopper with coal.

Orr was a student at Murray State University, Murray, Ky., and needed the small salary he received for the job.

When Orr was a sophomore at college, in 1948, he was named young people's worker by the church. He also did secretarial duties. Soon he began directing Vacation Bible School and Disipleship Training and was named church clerk.

After he graduated, in 1951, he was called as minister of education.

Changes he has seen

Orr said he wonders how the congregation endured him because he was "so green." They learned together, he surmised.

For instance, Orr recalled preparing mail-outs to members by typing the address of each member on an envelope and using a mimeograph machine to duplicate the information sent.

He recalled the church's "folding machine," as it was facetiously called. With a sly grin Orr showed a paper weight made by a VBS participant but left behind. Orr explained the "folding machine" helped workers press folds into letters. Thankfully, the staff now uses computers and other office equipment, said Orr.

Orr also has seen Southern Baptist programs and agencies come and go and political climates ebb and flow. But he's majored on education, using Southern Baptist materials, he said, presented with love, he added.

Rewards

One of his great joys has been leading Vacation Bible School each summer, he said. The church still offers the school during the morning. Last year Orr led his 50th school, which was the largest he has led.

It's a unique program, he explained, which draws a lot of children and youth who don't regularly attend church. And because of the number of hours spent with participants, it has a great impact on them, he added. Orr said he often meets adults who aren't members of First Church who recall a good VBS experience.

Orr also has enjoyed time spent at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Ridgecrest, N.C. He has served on the staff several times, taken groups nearly every year, and still enjoys it. A group of recent participants dubbed him an official Ridgecrest tour guide.

Finally, Orr said his ministry has been a joy because he has seen "my children" grow and become church leaders and associates. Orr suggested the

reference to children is more literally true than not because he doesn't have any natural children.

Orr is amazed to report he has been able to work with five generations of several families.

Evaluations

He doesn't see his lack of experience in other churches as a detriment. Because of his permanence at First Church, he has gotten to know people well, both in the church and in the community, he said. This has led to relationships with people in other churches and outside of church.

One way Orr has developed this aspect of his ministry is through serving as an organist for weddings. Playing the organ is a hobby, he noted. He also has developed relationships through service as clerk, Western District Baptist Association, based in Paris, for 27 years.

Orr praised the church for his successes, which have been many. For

example, in 1996 he was awarded the first Washburn-Piland-Taylor Director's Award. The annual recognition of LifeWay Christian Resources, based in Nashville, is given to a church staff person for creative contributions to the Bible teaching-reaching ministry.

Although members call him Noah or Moses because of his tenure, Orr said "in all 51 years I have never had an occasion to doubt their love, encouragement, and support."

"My ministry has been so rewarding to me that I never think of what it would have been somewhere else."

"I've been able to touch a lot of lives and I just hope for the good," confided Orr. **B&R**



CHARLES ORR visits in his office at First Baptist Church, Paris.



DURING A Jan. 30 reception in his honor Charles Orr, center, pauses with two pastors with whom he served, Jerry Massey, left, current pastor; and Carroll Owen, who served from 1962-79. — Photo by Barbara Owen

Union University, association provide home for missionaries

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

CAMDEN — Several years ago Union University started a missionary-in-residence program. The school invited missionary families to live on cam-

pus while they are on stateside assignment. The school provides them a home in exchange for their work teaching classes and relating to students in other ways.

Then Union University was given a home for missionaries

in Camden by Polly Glover of Obion, a member of First Baptist Church, Obion. The house was built by her parents, the late Brooks and Zula Mae Stone, members, First Baptist Church, Camden. It is too far from the school (about 55 miles)

for a daily commute.

Paul Veazey of Union contacted George Hill of Carroll-Benton Baptist Association. They decided both entities could benefit from a home for missionaries in Camden.

Carroll-Benton Association agreed to renovate the home in exchange for the chance for Baptists in the association's

churches to relate to the missionaries who would live there. And Union University agreed to allow the missionaries enough time to relate to Baptists in Carroll-Benton and other area associations while still using them some at Union.

Renovation

Led by Wayne Purcell, pastor, Chalk Level Baptist Church, Camden, volunteers of the association began renovating the home last August.

About 20 volunteers gave some 1,500 hours of labor, said Hill, who is director of missions. The association spent \$13,821 on the project.

Although the house is small, major renovation was done, explained Ken Zike, chairman, Missions Development Council of the association and pastor, Missionary Grove Baptist Church, Camden. A staircase to the attic was removed and replaced with a pull-down stairway to enlarge the kitchen.

A back porch was transformed into a room. And superficial renovation of each

room was completed.

Use of house

Because of the diligent work of volunteers, the house is ready before expected. The first missionary family is scheduled to arrive in June, 2001, reported Veazey, but missionaries are being sought for this year.

He thanked the association's volunteers who "worked tremendously hard to make a dream become a reality."

Union will benefit, said Veazey, because the missionaries will periodically visit the campus, especially for special events. And the relationship between the school and churches will be strengthened, he added.

The association will benefit, suggested Hill, as many and hopefully all of its 31 churches involve the missionaries in at least one church activity so members can get to know them. Most families will stay for a minimum of a year.

"I think it will increase the number of missions volunteers in the association," Hill said. **B&R**



RECALLING the work they did in the kitchen of the missionary house are, from left, Earl Rinehart, Chalk Level Baptist Church, Camden; Ken Zike, pastor, Missionary Grove Baptist Church, Camden; and Leon Smith, Chalk Level Church.

Through teaching, giving money and cars

Pastor, church lead people to debt-free status

For Baptist and Reflector

SMYRNA — When Amos Howard was called as pastor, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, here, six years ago, most people would agree he had everything going for him. He was 24 years old, had a graduate degree, and was ready to begin a career he felt called to by God.

However, he was deeply in debt. Howard owed \$30,000 in student loans and \$30,000 in credit card debt.

Realizing ministry as a profession wasn't very lucrative, he knew he couldn't provide for a family and pay creditors. He wondered where the abundant life was God had promised.

Soon after he began his ministry, Howard was in a bookstore and saw the book, *How to Manage Your Money*, by Larry Burkett. After studying it and the Bible, Howard felt this was the answer to his prayer.

He not only began working out his personal finances, but felt a calling by God to help others address their financial situations from a spiritual perspective.

Mt. Zion Baptist Church

Howard has developed a series of cassette tapes, "Breaking the Spirit of Poverty and Debt," which teach biblical principles on debt-free living. And Howard has led his congregation to give tens of thousands of dollars to help others become debt free.



HOWARD

The church has had services in which members have ceremoniously cut up credit cards. On Easter Sunday last year the church paid over \$20,000 to creditors on behalf of members.

Howard and the congregation are also helping their members and others travel debt free. Recently Mt. Zion Church gave four used cars to members, and they are committed to helping the members buy vehicles without paying the markup normally added by car dealers.

Howard and the congregation are not only committed to the membership, but are will-

ing to respond to the needs of others. During a recent conference led by Howard, he responded to the need of a single mother with three children.

She didn't realize it would take her a year to recover from money spent to buy Christmas gifts and she would lose the opportunity to pay back other debts or possibly become debt free. The church is developing a program for people living in low-income housing to assist them in moving to a new standard of living.

God's teaching on money

Howard believes many have misinterpreted God's teaching concerning money. One teaching that is often quoted is I Timothy 6:10, "for the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

There are some who use this Scripture to imply that Christians should be poor or not have any money, said Howard. But God affirms repeatedly in his Word he wants Christians to have abundant life. Howard

further stated that while America is enjoying God-given prosperity, statistics show poverty is rising at an all-time high across the nation.

Howard said people should be reminded of what Jesus said in Matthew 25:40, "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." The Bible also teaches he who gives to the needy shall never lack anything, he added.

Difficult message

Howard believes churches should focus on discipleship rather than membership, teaching Christians to develop an intimate relationship with God and not treat him as a genie who responds to their requests. And often this is difficult "because we become concerned with things," he said.

When he first began teaching the program at Mt. Zion Church during Wednesday night Bible study, attendance dropped by half. He was criticized by members, but Howard was persistent with his message.

Today, several years later, many of his critics are enjoying

the fruits of his teaching on debt-free living. Through this members learned although he was "in their face and finances he was doing it because he loved them," he said.

As a result of Mt. Zion using Howard's teachings on finances, the congregation has been able to purchase and renovate the facility formerly owned by First Baptist Church, Smyrna. The congregation also has developed a computer lab to help members train for jobs, and has started classes on personal financial budgeting.

His program is different from others who promote debt-free living in that his teaching are more biblically based, he said.

"Debt-free living is a sacrifice, but God blesses those who walk according to his financial plan," he said. "You can never be spiritually free as long as you are in financial bondage." B&R



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Conclave is coordinated by the State Baptist Conventions of Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, & Tennessee with support from the Crosspoint and Centrifuge office of Lifeway Christian Resources.

leaders

■ **Thomas H. Vinson**, pastor of Leawood Baptist Church, Memphis, for more than eight years, has resigned, effective Feb. 6, to accept the pastorate of First Baptist Church, Winter Park, Fla., a suburb of Orlando. Vinson is a member of the TBC Executive Board and served on the Board's Convention Communications Committee which relates to the *Baptist and Reflector* and the TBC Communication Services Group. Vinson and his wife, Rose, have three grown children. Leawood plans to honor the Vinsons with a church-wide fellowship on Sunday, Feb. 6, at 7 p.m.



VINSON

■ **Jim Whitaker** accepted the call as pastor of First Southern

Baptist Church, Pikeville, effective Jan. 30.

■ **Center Hill Baptist Church**, Woodbury, elected **Eric Durham** of Morrison as pastor on Jan. 9.

■ **Gary W. McEwen** resigned as pastor of Trace Creek Baptist Church, New Johnsonville, effective Jan. 16. He is available for pulpit supply and revivals. McEwen can be reached at (931) 535-2642.

■ **Krystie Robinson** has been appointed by the North American Mission Board to serve at the Samaritan House



ROBINSON

in Jefferson City as a US/C-2 missionary. The US/C-2 program allows college students under the age of 30 to serve for two years in North American missions. She is a graduate of Winthrop College, Rock Hill, S.C., and has served on vari-

ous church staffs in South Carolina in youth, children, and family ministries positions.

■ The North American Mission Board has appointed **Ray and Angel Maynard** of Sparta



THE MAYNARDS

to serve in associational missions in Bismarck, N.D. Maynard formerly served as director of missions for Union Baptist Association, based in Sparta. He has held several positions in Tennessee, including the pastorates of East Niota Baptist Church, Niota, and First Baptist Church, Tracy City. He also served as director of missions for Central Baptist Association, based in McMinnville.

■ **T. Richard Harris** will retire from the pastorate of Glenwood Baptist Church, Kingsport, effective March 12. He will be available for pulpit supply and limited interim

work. He can be reached at (423) 245-6994.

■ **Ray Malotte** recently resigned as pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Ripley.

■ **Ben Curtis**, pastor, Midland Baptist Church, Bell Buckle, will be ordained Feb. 27 at the church. He is serving at his first church after accepting a call while he was a member at River Rock Baptist Church, Murfreesboro. He has been a summer missionary for Concord Baptist Association, based in Murfreesboro, and has been named associational director of summer missions for this summer.

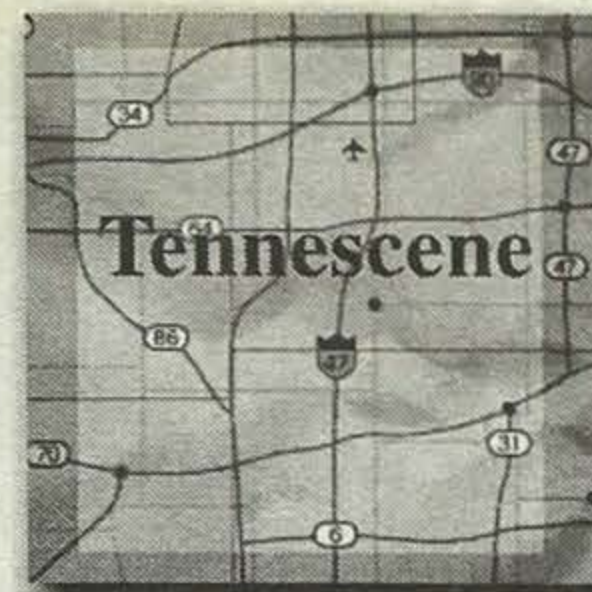
associations

■ **Big Hatchie Baptist Association** will hold its associational evangelism conference Feb. 10 at First Baptist Church, Ripley, with Harold Hunter of Nashville as guest evangelist. The conference will also feature seminars.

■ **William Carey Baptist Association** will hold its evangelism conference Feb. 28 at Parks City Baptist Church in Fayetteville. The guest evangelist will be Memphis pastor Bob Pittman.

CLASSIFIED

HOUSEPARENTS: Missions-at-home job opportunity. The Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes in Chattanooga and Cleveland are seeking a Christian married couple (preferably Baptist) to serve as Relief Houseparents. Can have no more than two children living at home. High School diploma or GED required. Full or part-time employment. Contact Dr. Bob Segrest or Bill Dockery at (423) 892-2722.



TBC events

■ **The State Deacon Conference** will be held Feb. 18-19 at Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga, and First Baptist Church, Jackson. The theme for the conference is "Developing Deacon Ministry Teams." Larry Garner of Jackson, Miss., will lead the conference at First Baptist Church, Jackson, while John Temple of Madison, Miss., will lead the sessions in Chattanooga. There is no registration fee, but those attending should register for the Friday meal. For more information, call the TBC Church Staff Leadership Group at (615) 371-2024, or 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2024.

■ **Handbell choirs** from across the state will participate in the **Handbell Festival 2000** in two locations. The first will be held Feb. 18-19 at Judson Baptist Church, Nashville, while the second will be held Feb. 25-26 at Second Baptist Church, Memphis. The registration fee is \$30. For more information, contact the TBC Church Staff Leadership Group at (615) 371-7908 or 1-800-558-2090, ext. 7908.

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MUSIC/YOUTH: Southside Baptist Church in Fulton, MO is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Send resume and references to: Search Committee, Southside Baptist Church, 501 Business Hwy. 54 S., Fulton, MO 65251.

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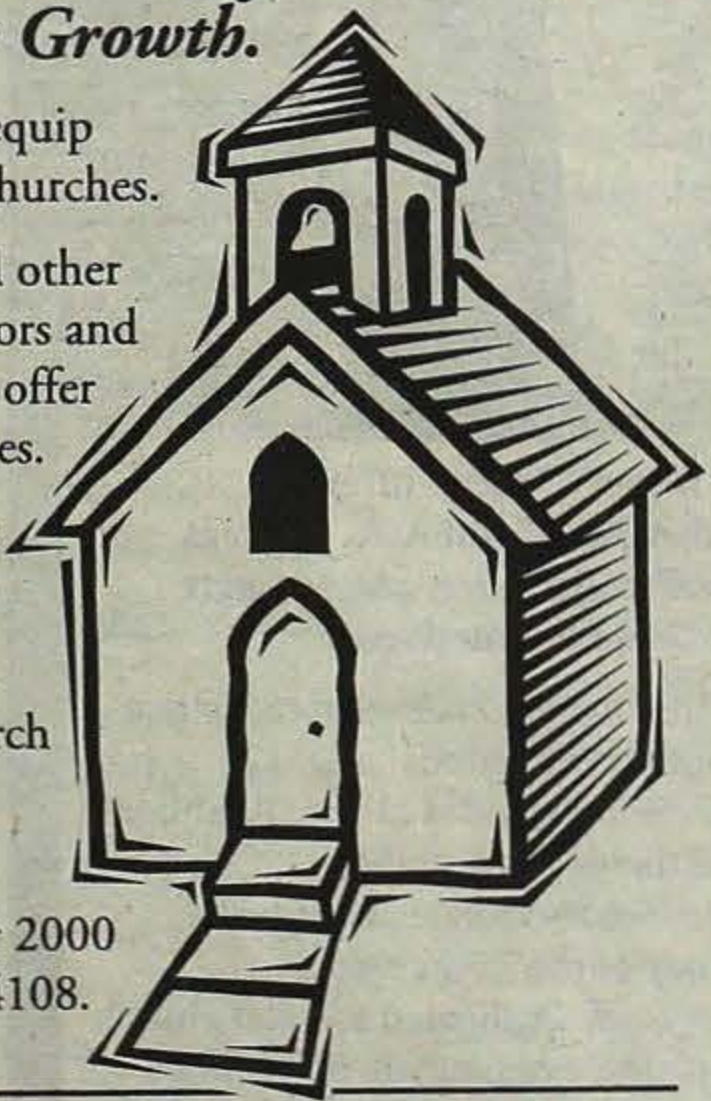
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Hixson pastor shares charismatic views in new book

Associated Baptist Press

CHATTANOOGA — A Hixson pastor attempting to spearhead a resurgent charismatic movement among Southern Baptists hopes his new book will earn a wider hearing for his view that spiritual gifts are still in operation.

Awakened By The Spirit will likely stir controversy as well. That is nothing new for author/pastor Ron Phillips. He has seen more than 600 members leave his Central Baptist Church since 1995 over its exuberant worship, prayers for healing, and speaking in tongues.

Nearly 2,000 new members have joined the congregation

during that time, however. More than half were new converts to Christianity. The church was second in the Tennessee Baptist Convention in the number of baptisms during the past church year, with nearly 300, said Phillips, a former TBC president. More than 100 have been baptized since Oct. 1.

The church has become a lightning rod in a debate about growing charismatic influence within the Southern Baptist Convention with its annual "Fresh Oil and New Wine" conference.

The next, scheduled in May, will feature a variety of well-known charismatic speakers.

While several prominent leaders in the charismatic movement have Baptist backgrounds, such as Pat Robertson and James Robison, the denomination has discouraged the movement's strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit and unconventional worship practices like speaking in tongues or being "slain in the Spirit."

Charismatics are not allowed to serve as SBC mission-

aries, and at least one Baptist state convention has withdrawn fellowship from charismatic Baptist churches.

Despite the controversy, Phillips said he doesn't want to stir animosity with his latest writings.

Phillips, once considered a leader in the SBC conservative movement, acknowledges his spiritual stance now puts him at odds with many former colleagues. ■

Gunman's family gives \$10,000 to Wedgwood Church

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — The family of the gunman who opened fire and killed seven and wounded seven others at Wedgwood Baptist Church has donated \$10,000 to the Texas congregation.

Aaron Ashbrook, the brother of gunman Larry Gene Ash-

brook, presented the check to Wedgwood pastor Al Meredith during a ceremony at the Altamesa Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas, in December. The \$10,000 came from the sale of the Fort Worth property owned by Larry Ashbrook.

Meredith said the \$10,000 gift was comprised of three checks from Ashbrook and two sisters. The pastor said he was not sure how the money would be used. Wedgwood is currently involved in a \$4 million expansion of church facilities.

The family donated the money from the property sale to provide closure to the terrifying events that transpired on Sept. 15. That was the night Larry Ashbrook went on a bloody rampage at Wedgwood during a See You at the Pole youth worship service. Ashbrook killed seven people and wounded seven others before killing himself.

The ceremony was held at the Church of Christ because Ashbrook could not bring him-

self to visit the place where his brother had committed the violent crime. ■

Franklin manager honored by LifeWay

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Mick Houston, manager of the LifeWay Christian Store in Franklin, was named 1999 Manager of the Year for the 86-store chain.

Houston won the award based on a formula that takes into account each store's financial performance and the manager's leadership style as rated by regional directors.

Houston will receive the award in May. ■



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Life and Work Lesson

Reasons to be faithful

Wayne Rowan

Focus Passages: Revelation 1:1-8, 12-18

Every time I read from the Book of Revelation, I want to sing that great old standard, "Victory in Jesus." What joy it gives me to think of all that Jesus has done for us so we can have a home with him someday. We are the "called out ones," or the church and we should be happy to be a part of the kingdom. So many of our fellow church members have fallen to the wayside in the faithfulness of the church in many ways and we all need to encourage them to remain faithful. How do we do that? Well, we can teach faithfulness by our own actions. We must be faithful to ourselves.

The Lord calls us to faithfulness (vv. 1-3).

These verses remind us of who Jesus is and what he did for us. We are to be his servants and at means we are to do the Master's will. This message is for us and we must share that message with everyone we come in contact with. Some will respond to the message with a no, while others will say yes. Following the will of God in your life is telling God that you are a surrendered servant and that you know him and respect his judgment in your life.



ROWAN

Those who hear this message and do not take it to heart are those who fail to witness, tithe, forgive, and even thrive on holding grudges. It is not that they have not heard the same message that others hear. It is that they choose not to obey the Lord. They were given the Word and they were expected to obey the Word. These folks are living on dangerous ground by failing to honor the Lord and his will in their lives.

The Lord has redeemed us (vv. 4-6). These verses reveal the completeness of this revelation of the Lord. There is nothing else to be said. We must learn from these examples and change our lives accordingly. God revealed his great love for us through his son Jesus. Jesus is that faithful witness that will judge us someday for our faithfulness to him. We have been freed from sin by his blood and then we become ordained priests in the kingdom. That carries much responsibility. We should be faithful to him because he has redeemed us.

The Lord will return (vv. 7-8). These verses share with us the truth that everyone who sees him coming will not be ready to face him. Some will be ashamed because of their lifestyles. They know him as Savior, but have never allowed him to be Lord of their lives. Their haphazard, Christian lifestyle will bring about this uncertainty. The world influenced them. Are you ready to meet Jesus and tell him why you were not as faithful as you could have been?

The Lord is worthy (vv. 12-18). These verses tell us of the majesty of the Lord. Even John fell at his feet afraid of what was coming next. John was the beloved one and a close co-worker with the Lord. He was even given the responsibility of seeing after Mary at the death of the Lord. Jesus is shown walking through and around his people, the church. There is nothing hidden from him. Jesus comforts John and assures him everything is all right. We should be faithful to Jesus because of who he is and what he has done and because of what he is doing now in your lives and in the life of the church. Believers need to renew their commitment to the Lord and his church as the end draws closer. — Rowan is pastor, Calvary Hill Baptist Church, Ripley.

Guidance of the Word

By Thomas James

Focal Passage: Matthew 21:1-13

On March 18, 1995, a great coronation took place. With the simple words, "I'm back," Michael Jordan, hailed by many as the king and savior of basketball, announced he was coming out of retirement to rejoin the Chicago Bulls. Our passage for this week's lesson looks at a much higher coronation. This King had not yet spoken those words announcing to a listening world what they needed to hear. It was still seven days until the King of Kings would rise from the dead proving he had conquered sin and the grave. Yet, as Jesus entered Jerusalem, many proclaimed him Messiah.

Family Bible Lesson

Our passage illustrates three important points. First, we see a demonstration in verses 1-6. Jesus demonstrated his deity. Many debate whether he had prearranged the donkey with its owner. I believe these verses show Jesus' omniscience. In Matthew 17 he did not "prearrange" with the fish that would be caught to have the coin in its mouth, yet he knew it would be there. Not only do these verses demonstrate his deity but also his authority. Jesus was well known in this area, as it was not far from where he had raised Lazarus from the dead. When the two disciples made it known that Jesus "had need" of the donkey, the owner willingly submitted to his authority. We are probably quick to give witness to the deity of Jesus but do our lives reflect the authority of Jesus as well? When the Master desires to use us for his glory, I pray we will recognize his authority, his lordship in our life, and allow him to work his good pleasure in and through us.

Secondly, we witness a manifestation in verses 7-9. The Bible manifests or displays two attributes here. First, we see the lowliness of our Lord. When a victorious Ro-

man General would return from battle, his processional would be filled with elephants, tigers, him in a chariot, and his soldiers with swords raised high. Our Lord's processional is marked by a Nazarene carpenter on a mule being greeted by commoners. Also manifested here is his loftiness. The shout of "Hosanna" literally means "save now." It was an appeal for deliverance as the multitude proclaimed him "Messiah." Not fully understanding, the people praised the One who alone is worthy of our praise.

Thirdly, our passage portrays an examination. Verses 10-13 record the events surrounding the Lord's examination of his people. First, he examined the city. Luke 19:41 records that as Jesus approached Jerusalem, he wept. He wept over a wicked city filled with sin-wrecked lives. When we "look" at our cities I wonder if we see what Jesus sees? Do we weep over wicked cities and sin-wrecked lives? Do we weep over the lost multitudes? We must let God touch our hearts in regards to our cities.

Jesus also examined the church. Verses 12-13 record what happened when he entered the Temple. He knew what the Temple was called to be; namely a place of worship, a "house of prayer." He also knew that in its present state it was far from its intended purpose. So our Lord drove out those who mocked the House of God. I wonder what Jesus finds when he examines our churches? Are we truly "Great Commission" churches fulfilling his plans for us? Or have we reverted to a social-club where fellowship is the goal? My prayer for Alpha, as well as the church you serve, is that we would be churches with a heart for the lost, so that when the Lord examines us, there is no need to weep! — James is pastor of Alpha Baptist Church, Morristown.



JAMES

Developing confidence

By Kevin Shrum

Focal Passage: I John 5:13-21

The believer's confidence for living often wilts when it comes to dealing with personal sin. Though the believers know Jesus Christ, the struggle with our sin nature is still present as long as we live in the flesh (Romans 7:14-25). Is it possible to live a confident, bold life while dealing with our personal sin? The answer is an unequivocal YES!

In fact, this is why John had written these things so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us (vv. 13-14). This confidence is important when it comes to personal sin. How should the believer deal with personal sin?

We must know that sin is deadly (vv. 16-17). These two verses mention a sin that leads to death. What does this mean? Some make a distinction between "mortal" (deadly) and "venial" (non-deadly) sins. It appears that John is speaking of a sin that is so harmful that it goes beyond the bounds of God's tolerance, especially when it comes to sound doctrine and the unity of the body of Christ.

That is, it is possible that a sin that leads to death is simply a sin that leads to the full expression of God's judgment through death. This is a possibility if we take seriously the example of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 who were struck dead by God

in order to keep the church holy in its infant state.

As a pastor I have learned this: if a person continually causes trouble in the church or if a person teaches outside the bounds of sound doctrine, I have seen God take care of his church in various and unusual ways. This is why John says that if we see a brother in sin we should pray and God will give him life. But still this is a mystery. Yet, it is clear that the result of sin is always death — sometimes physical, often relationally, always destructive. This essentially means that believers should deal ruthlessly with their own personal sin before it deals with them in destructive outcomes. Sin always destroys.

We must know that sin can be overcome (vv. 18-21). But Kevin, how can I fulfill verse 18 where it states, *We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin?* I believe, but I still sin! Does this mean that if I commit one sin then I'm not saved? NO! Believers sin. But sin is different in the life of the believer.

Sin in the life of the believer 1)

Explore the Bible Lesson



SHRUM

should grieve the believer. If your personal sin doesn't bother you then you may not be a believer. Sin in the life of the believer 2) should not dominate the life of the believer. That is, if a believer deliberately continues in sin then faith may not be present. Further, 3) if a believer sins then there should be an immediate desire to mend the unbroken relationship with their heavenly Father through Jesus Christ (I John 1:9).

Finally, the believer can deal with sin because we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true — even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life (v. 20).

What this means is that we find not only eternal life in Jesus Christ, but the power to deal with our daily sin in him, as well. Positionally, we are free from sin and declared not guilty through Jesus Christ. Practically, the believer still seeks to purge sin from his life through the power of Jesus Christ and the ministry of the Spirit.

For this reason, John ends his letter with that simple phrase *keep yourselves from idols* (v. 21). Idolatry of self was what led to original sin in the first place. Avoiding the idolatry of self, things, ideas, etc. is a sure way to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as he convicts us of our sin even as we daily seek to live for Jesus Christ. — Shrum is pastor, Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville.



Baptist college students killed

Associated Baptist Press

BOLIVAR, Mo. — Two students at Southwest Baptist University were among 10 people killed Jan. 23 in a fiery chain-reaction crash on Interstate 29, north of Kansas City, Mo.

Sara Nicole McGaha of Papillion, Neb., and Jay Wetzel of New Salem, N.D., were returning to school in Bolivar from Christmas break when their car became involved in a 24-vehicle pileup that killed 10 and injured 24.

According to news reports, the couple were sweethearts who became friends in September and started dating in October. Friends said they were inseparable and had discussed marriage. Wetzel had picked up McGaha at her home following a five-week break for the start of a new semester. ■

Gospel singer Rex Nelon dies

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Rex Nelon, one of the most respected men

in Southern Gospel music, died suddenly in London after suffering a heart attack on Jan. 23. He was 68 years old.

Nelon was in London to record music for the Gaither Homecoming Tour. Following a daylong session in Northern Ireland, Nelon returned to London on the night of Jan. 23. He died in his hotel room with his wife, Judy, by his side.

Nelon, a Southern Baptist, was remembered during a memorial service Jan. 31 at Christ Church in Nashville. Graveside services were held Feb. 1 in Marietta, Ga.

Nelon began his professional music career in the 1950s with the Homeland Harmony Quartet. He later joined The LeFevres, serving as their bass singer for 20 years. He later bought The LeFevres and changed the name of the group to the Rex Nelon Singers.

Nelon is survived by his wife and two children. ■

Theme song for CP gets nominated for Dove Award

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — "I Will Follow Christ," the theme song for the Cooperative Program's "Partners in the Harvest" campaign and written by Christian artist Clay Crosse, has been nominated for a 2000 Dove Award.

The announcement was made Jan. 26 here, during a ceremony recognizing nomi-

nees for the 31st annual Dove Awards, sponsored by the Gospel Music Association.

Crosse, a Southern Baptist, co-wrote the song with Steve Siler.

The video used to promote "Partners in the Harvest" featured a performance of "I Will Follow Christ" with Crosse, Bob Carlisle, and BeBe Winans.

The Dove Award winners will be presented April 20 at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House. ■

High court rejects challenge to state's Good Friday holiday

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court has left standing a Maryland law requiring public schools to close on Good Friday.

The justices refused without comment Jan. 18 to hear claims by a former teacher that the mandated holiday violates the separation of church and state.

Judith Koenick challenged the holiday statute in a lawsuit filed against the Montgomery County Board of Education. A federal district court ruled against Koenick in an opinion upheld by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The appeals court said the Maryland law does not endorse or advance Christianity and serves a "secular purpose" of closing schools on days when a

large number of students probably would not attend. ■

Kansas-Nebraska paper prints last issue in December

Associated Baptist Press

TOPEKA, Kan. — The *Baptist Digest*, the monthly news journal of the Kansas-Nebraska Southern Baptist Convention, published its last issue in December.

The newspaper, published since 1953, will be replaced by two publications. One will target pastors and other church leaders while the second will be a lay-oriented piece that will emphasize missions and evangelism.

John Hopkins, the *Baptist Digest* editor for 21 years, will lead an editorial committee in publishing the *Heartland Leadership Journal* while Randy Cowling, an associational director of missions and former newspaper editor, will lead a similar team to develop *Images of the Heartland*, a quarterly missions magazine for Southern Baptists in the two states. ■

GCU severs ties with ASBC

Baptist Press

PHOENIX — Anguish in the Arizona Baptist family mounted Jan. 13 when Grand Canyon University trustees re-

moved the institution from formal relationship with Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

The convention's executive board, which was to have a Jan. 31-Feb. 1 was to "explore all options open to us," said Steve Bass, executive director of the Arizona convention. He said they would formulate a response to the GCU trustees' action which he described as having been taken "unilaterally."

According to a four-paragraph statement issued by GCU's 28-member trustee board and the university's president, Gil Stafford, the trustees "voted to reorganize the university's corporate ownership and control so as to define its relationship with Arizona Southern Baptist Convention."

The Arizona convention founded GCU 50 years ago and elects its trustees. Now with 2,000-plus students, it is the state's only private Christian liberal arts university.

The trustees' statement said GCU will now be in "voluntary cooperation" with the state convention, which last year faced the shock of the Arizona Baptist Foundation's collapse with investors owed nearly \$600 million from estimated assets of \$160 to \$200 million of the 50-year-old agency.

The trustees' statement does not set forth specifics about its new governance, or whether any trustees voted against the action. ■

NAMB plans to appeal FCC ruling

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — The Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board plans to file legal action formally seeking reversal of a Dec. 1 Federal Communications Commission ruling affecting a number of Christian television stations.

The ruling places new limits on the amount of certain types of programming that could be aired by stations operating under a non-commercial educational license.

Unless the decision is revised within the next few days, a "Petition for Reconsideration" will be filed with the FCC, said Robert E. Reccord, NAMB president. If that is not successful, he said, the agency will appeal the ruling in federal court.

The filing would be done on behalf of FamilyNet, a NAMB subsidiary that provides Christian television programming to approximately 100 affiliated stations. ■

Got a great idea for a book? Here's what you should do

By Kristin Searfoss
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — If you've got a great idea for a book, or a manuscript already written, it always helps to know the procedure to follow for approaching a publishing company.

Bucky Rosenbaum and Gail Rothwell of Broadman & Holman Publishers, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, recently offered practical advice to would-be authors.

First, they said writers need to know that, due to the high volume of unsolicited manuscripts, many Christian publishers have had to re-evaluate their policies.

In the next few months, B&H trade and academic books and children's books likely will have a new policy requiring manuscripts to be submitted through agents.

Rosenbaum, vice president for trade and academic books, said writers can get a good idea of what publishers are looking for by reading their writers guidelines. These are available free from publishers and should be obtained before writing a formal book proposal or submitting a manuscript.

He said writers for adults should:

- (1) Ask themselves if there is a clear need for their book in the marketplace and tell the publisher what is already on the market on this same subject.
- (2) Send a query letter to the publisher.
- (3) Submit a formal book proposal if the publisher is interested. Include: premise; chapter outline/synopsis; competitive analysis; audience; author bio; marketing ideas; and two sample chapters with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send a manuscript unless specifically requested.

Rothwell, senior acquisitions and development editor for children's books, cited a list of issues for children's writers to consider:

- (1) Know about the publisher you are writing for.
- (2) Know the age group you are writing for.
- (3) Remember that research is the key for any writing process. Check the accuracy of facts contained in your book. Research the competition from other publishers. Search your local library for additional resources.
- (4) Send a book proposal. The cover letter or information sheet should list:

type of book; format of book (page count, hardback, four-color art, about how many words total or words per page, and a very brief sentence about how you envision the book would look); audience or age group; "Why" of your book (the hook) — What makes this book different or special?; delivery (when the manuscript will be finished and/or when the author is available); competition from other publishers; and author bio with address and phone number.

Those interested in taking up writing or getting their manuscripts published may attend one of three writers conferences sponsored by LifeWay components.

A conference, the Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference, will be held at Ridgecrest (N.C.), a LifeWay Conference Center, on April 2-6, 2000. For more information, call 1-800-588-7222. Writers, editors, and agents will be featured on the program.

The annual LifeWay Writers Workshop will be held July 30-Aug. 3, 2000, at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville. Writing for LifeWay publications is a primary focus of this conference. Information may be obtained by calling 1-800-254-2022. ■