

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

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this week's news

Churches can offer grief ministries for those who have lost loved ones. — Page

Tennessean on IAMB trustee board puts into practice that agency reaches. — Page 3

Hair rumor is just rumor. See guest editorial. — Page 5

Crossville couple do overseas missions work. — Page 6

18th woman begins ministry for women. — Page 7

Arson cause of Humboldt fire

Fires demolish West Tennessee churches

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

HUMBOLDT — Fires swept through two West Tennessee Baptist churches last week leaving behind a mass of rubble in both locations.

But members from both churches are adamant that only the buildings burned; the churches (people) are still standing, the two pastors told the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Smyrna Baptist, Humboldt

The first fire took place in the early morning hours of March 18 at Smyrna Baptist Church.

The Jackson Sun reported that Kay Porter, a church member who lives across the street, heard a "boom" at 2 a.m. She looked across the street and saw the church where she has attended for 17 years going up in flames.

The 25-year-old church was in the midst of building a new 8,000-square-foot sanctuary and educational space for children and preschoolers. The new construction was nearing completion. A volunteer team from Brookhaven, Miss., was to have put the finishing touches on the facility begin-

ning March 30, said Pastor Patrick Henry. In addition to destroying the new sanctuary, the wind pushed the fire into the present sanctuary, destroying it as well, Henry said.

Ron Powers, a state arson investigator, told *The Jackson Sun* that the cause of the fire was "definitely arson." He declined to release details because of the continuing investigation.

The church met for worship at the City Hall in Humboldt on March 19 and there was a strong spirit, Henry said, not-

ing they reminded themselves they are the church, not the building.

Though they can continue to — See Fires, page 4



FIREFIGHTERS attempt to put out a fire at First Baptist Church, Selmer, on March 21. The fire destroyed the church sanctuary and damaged other portions of the facility. — Photo courtesy of The Independent Appeal



DESPITE A FIRE which wiped out new construction and the old sanctuary, the cross atop Smyrna Baptist Church, Humboldt, remained standing. The fire occurred March 18.

Legislators to consider Released Time Christian Education

By Bonnie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

WINGSPOUR — Ann Bennett, chair of the Sullivan Baptist Association Christian Life Department, is a proponent of Released Time Christian Education. She hopes more Christians would join her. She knows it works, because she has led a Released Time Christian Education program for a middle school in Wingspour in the 1997-98 school year. In cooperation with school officials, Christians from 11 churches led a class which was a substitute for a related arts class, which offered physical education, computer, and other subjects on a rotating basis. The middle school stu-

dents could choose to attend the Released Time Christian Education class, which was held across the street from the school in a church.

The class was very successful, reported Bennett, who is a member of Indian Springs Baptist Church here. It grew from 10 students to about 45. Many of the students became involved in churches for the first time. And many of the students made professions of faith, she added.

The pilot program lasted only 25 weeks that school year and was canceled because of legal confusion over the law.

Released Time was legalized by a 1952 Supreme Court decision allowing religious study during elective parts of

the school day in schools across the United States. But as in Sullivan County, administrators deny this opportunity because of confusion over legal details.

In response, bills have been written by Tennessee legislators addressing the confusing details, reported Bennett. For instance, schools may provide released time programs if requested to do so by three different parents. Released time programs are limited to those requested by parents.

Released time cannot be substituted for any core curriculum. School boards are not required to take any action. Programs must occur at a site other than the school and the released time provider covers the cost

and assumes liability.

The bills will be acted upon soon by the Senate Education Committee and a subcommittee of the House Education Committee, she reported.

Gary Anderson, Tennessee Baptist Convention public affairs consultant, endorses the bills and encourages Tennessee Baptists to contact members of the two education committees and the governor to express their approval. Other Baptists have joined a Tennessee Released Time Christian Education Statewide Advisory Committee to lobby for the bills and program.

For more information, contact Bennett at (423) 288-3785 or obtain more information at www.isbc.org/rt. B&R

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► **Subscribe to the Baptist and Reflector** for one year and receive 48 copies. Individual subscriptions, \$10; Church Leadership Plan, \$8.50 per subscription; other plans available

► **Lonnie Wilkey, editor** — (615) 371-2046, lwilkey@tnbaptist.org

► **Connie Davis, news editor** — (615) 371-7928, cdavis@tnbaptist.org

► **Susie Edwards, circulation/executive assistant** — (615) 371-2003, sedwards@tnbaptist.org

► **Mary Nimmo, church pages/administrative assistant** — (615) 371-7929, mnimmo@tnbaptist.org

► **Betty Williams, bookkeeper** — (615) 371-7930, bwilliams@tnbaptist.org

► **Office — Baptist and Reflector**, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, TN 37027

► **Mailing address** — P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024

► **FAX** — (615) 371-2080

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As people die

Grief ministries key outreach for churches

By Polly House
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Churches should begin ongoing grief ministries because death is a constant and people need to learn to deal with loss, Betty Hassler told senior adult leaders gathered at LifeWay Christian Resources.

"The whole purpose of grief is to bring you to the point of making necessary changes so you can live with the loss in a healthy way," Hassler, an editor of discipleship materials, said during the March 22-24 Senior Adult Leadership Summit at the Southern Baptist agency here.

"Grief is completely personal. Some people are expressive and cry a lot. Others want to talk. Some people are just quiet. People just have to be who they are," she said. "There really is no right or wrong way to grieve."

Using an example from history, Hassler recalled how people admired the bravery and composure Jacqueline Kennedy demonstrated as a young widow after the 1963 assassination of her husband, President John F. Kennedy.

"Some people aren't that stoic, and trying to be that way isn't going to let them grieve appropriately," Hassler said.

"In our culture there is a huge fallacy about grief. We say the more you can hold it together and stay composed, the better you're handling your grief. The stoicism may really delay the resolution of the grief," she said.

In addition to being person-

al, grief should be specific, she said.

"If you don't grieve each time you feel like it, it will build, and somewhere down the line you will explode," Hassler said, citing an example of a woman who fell apart when an acquaintance died.

"She wasn't grieving for the friend. She was grieving for her father who had died when she was 12 years old."

Also, she said grief needs a time limit. "There has to be a period of time from the death to the resolution. You need to be able to say, 'I'll need this much time to grieve,' and then work toward that."

When establishing an ongoing grief ministry in a local church, Hassler suggested leaders determine whom they hope to reach.

Church members and non-church members, Christians and non-Christians lose people they love. Everyone has grief experiences.

"Think of the outreach implications," Hassler said.

Hassler defined five components or groups that can help develop successful grief ministries. They are:

► **Sunday School** — supply food, flowers, phone calls, visits, and physical, tangible help.

► **Pastor and staff** — prepare for the funeral, the graveside service, and counseling.

► **Deacons** — pray and visit the family.

► **Senior adult organization** — fulfills some of the same roles as a Sunday School class, but can also lead in organizing

the process.

► **Other** (perhaps a bereavement committee) — divides the responsibilities among church members and facilitates support over a period of weeks.

Church leaders need to emphasize the importance of notifying the church when a death occurs, she said.

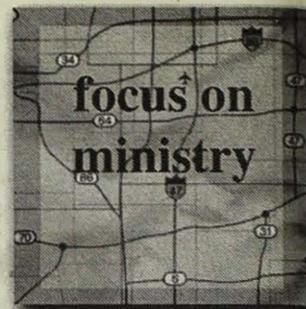
"The pastor can't know if someone doesn't tell him. Someone needs to be sure the calls get made," Hassler, a pastor's wife, said.

Practical needs must also be met, she said.

"With their permission, of course, do something like mow the yard or wash a load of laundry. If there will be family from out of town coming in and staying in the home, change the sheets on the beds," Hassler suggested. "You might even need to help the survivor get appropriate clothing for the funeral."

On the day of the funeral, other types of help will be needed. Someone can make sure to get the names and addresses of the people who sent flowers and what the arrangements were like. Someone else could make trips to the airport to pick up people who come in from out of town.

"House-sitting is something that needs to be covered," Hassler said. "How often do you hear of someone's house being robbed while the funeral is going on? The death notice is in the paper, along with the address and the time the house will be empty. Somebody needs to stay there."



In the days and weeks after the funeral, the needs will change. A widow might need to learn how to handle the household business. A widower might need to learn how to do the laundry. "For many senior adult couples, the roles of responsibility were clearly defined," Hassler said.

Support groups can be helpful to people working through their grief, she noted. Resources are available to help churches establish these groups. Hassler mentioned *Recovering from the Losses of Life* by Norman Wright, a study of his own grief journey following the death of his son, published by LifeWay Christian Resources.

Mentoring or counseling can also help someone work through grief.

Finally, have a group who can provide services around the house, such as a homemaker helper, financial/business helper, or home maintenance helper. "Think about how hard it might be for some people to do simple tasks like changing light bulbs," Hassler said. "This type of thing is really needed and appreciated."

"With 30,000 senior adults dying every day, there is need for grief ministries in our churches," Hassler said.

"We can be there for people God can use if we are available." ■

For many Americans

Nursing home care will be needed

For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — While 75 percent of Americans think they will never need long-term care, almost half (48.6 percent) who reach age 65 will spend some time in a nursing home, participants in a session on preparing for long-term care were told.

The session was part of the March 22-24 Senior Adult Summit which drew more than 350 seniors and leaders to LifeWay Christian Resources.

"The average nursing home stay in the United States today is two and one-half to three years," John Marshall of Signator Financial Network said. Ten percent of nursing home residents stay five or more years and the average Alzheimer's patient will need long-term care for eight years.

"Many obviously will not be prepared for the expense associated with long-term care," Mar-

shall said. The average annual cost for a private room in a skilled nursing home is \$125 per day, \$3,800 per month or \$46,000 per year. In 10 years the cost is projected to increase to \$6,250 per month or \$75,000 per year.

He cited three common misconceptions about long-term care, beginning with "it will never happen to me." Others think family members will care for them or that Medicare will pay the costs.

In planning for the future, he said, people have the option of funding all or part of the risk themselves, looking to Medicaid or purchasing long-term care insurance, an option currently only exercised by 10 percent of Americans.

Pressed by participants who suggest an age when people should buy long-term care insurance, Marshall said, "The best time is before you need it." ■



Planning retreats

Lead teachers for the 2000 Spring Weekend Retreats for people with mental retardation met recently to plan the retreats, which are scheduled for Carson Springs Conference Center, Newport, April 28-30 and Linden Valley Conference Center, Linden, May 26-28. Cost for the weekend is \$50. Registrations are now being received. The retreats are held by the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Contact Gene Nabi of the TBC staff at 1-800-558-2090, (615) 371-2083, or 662-0327. Teachers are, from left, standing, Joy Schleifer, Sandra Hensley, Lisa Moser, Bobbie Jo Woods, Beverly Foropoulos; seated, Jerri Brown, Julie Hutchins, Chris Hutchins, and Lucille Smith.

Goodlettsville

NAMB trustee works to begin new church

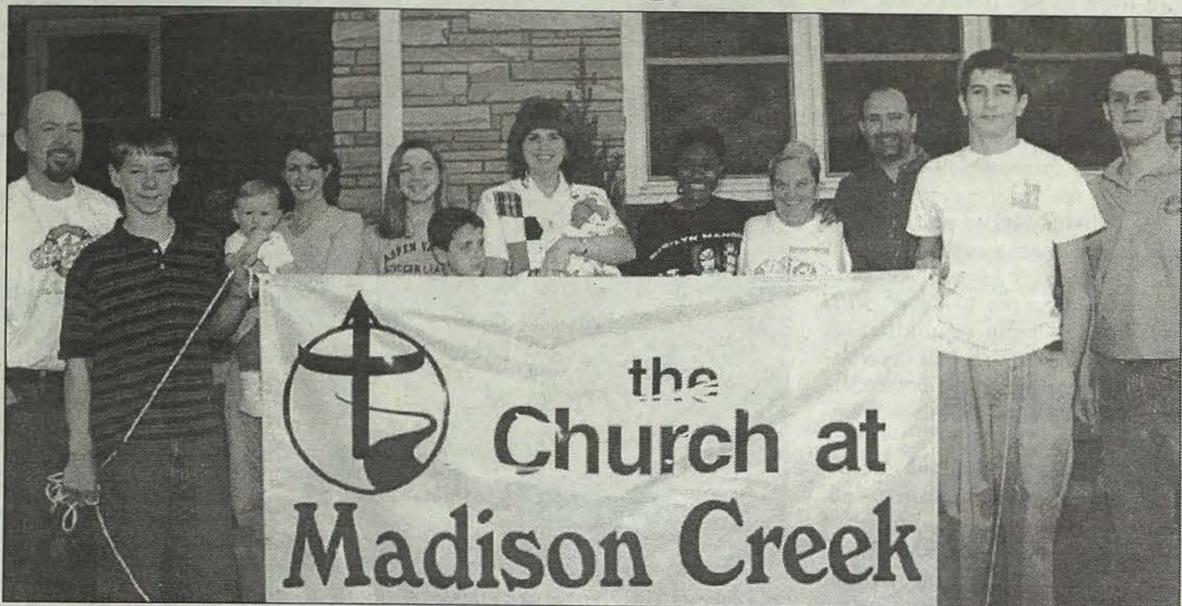
Connie Davis
 Staff Writer and Reflector

GOODLETTSVILLE — A year while David Thompson was pastor of Alta Loma Baptist Church, Nashville, he led the effort of Nashville Baptist Association to believe congregations. The association, with help from the North American Mission Board, had conducted studies and found several communities which needed congregations. One included an area near another association, but the Nashville Baptist Association pursued it. The area around the Madison Creek community in Sumner County and the Goodlettsville Baptist Association.

Thompson was contacted by the association staff and asked if he would help start a church in the area. He agreed partly because he was a new trustee of the North American Mission Board, which is focusing on church planting, and began to fall.

As he started making contacts with people and began developing relationships, he began to get excited about the opportunity. According to the survey, 70 percent of the community's population was not involved in a church. Thompson gradually realized he was being led by God to start the church full-time.

He and his family would like to take a huge step of faith if he did that, described Thompson. He has been in the ministry for 20 years, but he has always served existing churches in a staff position. Thompson met with his wife, Treva. At first, she added, she thought her husband was crazy. The couple has three children and were planning to adopt a baby so Treva had just quit her job outside the home. But after Treva agreed they



A WEDNESDAY NIGHT group of the Church at Madison Creek, Goodlettsville, which is a new congregation, stands around a sign used to identify the meeting place of the church. This gathering is at the home of its pastor, David Thompson, third from right. — Photo by Connie Davis

should pursue the call. Thompson contacted the Tennessee Baptist Convention which agreed to help him. Fred Davis of the TBC staff was assigned to assist him and he was given a monthly stipend. Then he took the final step; he resigned as pastor of Alta Loma Church last November.

Groundwork for a church
 Thompson started the venture by becoming familiar with the area of Madison Creek located northeast of Nashville between Goodlettsville and Hendersonville. He and Davis did some groundwork like identifying Madison Creek Elementary School as a potential meeting site.

Thompson began coming into contact with people who lived in the area and wanted to help. In December he began holding small group meetings on Sunday afternoons at his home.

The response was so good he and leaders developed a vision and strategy for the church,

which they named the Church at Madison Creek, and published a pamphlet describing it and its purpose. They developed a web site on the Internet because they are trying to reach young people who are computer savvy. And they set a target date of Jan. 9 to begin the church at the school.

Thompson had his disappointments. Several initial leaders chose not to be involved. But Thompson and other leaders continued working.

They continued holding meetings and in January began holding "preview services and activities" at Madison Creek Elementary School and at the Thompson home on Wednesday evenings.

Encouragements
 God began providing for the congregation, claimed Thompson. For example, a member of the youth group Thompson led at Silver Springs Baptist Church, Nashville, Daniel Williams, agreed to serve as associate pastor. A fellow student with Thompson at South-

ern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Lee Fesler, agreed to lead outreach. Family members of a friend who is a current student at Southern Seminary, Steve and Traci Lynn, joined the group.

Leaders canvassed about 100 homes, asking residents for basic information on the people living in the homes. They also gave residents a package of microwave popcorn which asked them to "pop in and see us" at the Church at Madison Creek.

Rewards
 During a Sunday afternoon Bible study, a young woman who was a Mormon attended. After the study and many hours of counseling that evening, she became a Christian.

That woman brought a fellow Mormon to the study. Soon she became a Christian, reported Thompson.

The enthusiasm of these new converts seemed to energize the new congregation, he described. It has been as large



as 55 on Sunday mornings. And nine people have made spiritual commitments and been baptized.

"The unity and spirit we have is more special than we've ever observed," said Thompson, explaining it has reminded him of what must have existed in the early church.

He gives credit to an *Experiencing God* study he is leading on Wednesday evenings, which he said coincides well with "defining a faith ministry." The study also teaches Christians to "walk by faith," he added.

Dreams
 Thompson hopes the congregation will keep reaching unchurched people who may not have a church background, such as Mormons.

For that reason, the church name does not include Baptist. The worship style is non-traditional. Potential members will have to attend a four-session Discovery Class to become a member. And members will be trained via mentors.

These approaches will help the congregation become a church which will begin another church every three years, said Thompson.

The Church at Madison Creek will begin to officially meet April 16. To prepare, leaders will mail a flyer to 10,000 homes, advertise in newspapers, and conduct some servant evangelism, said Thompson.

The experiences of starting this new congregation have been "like walking on water," he stated. "You never know what God can do through you until you get out of the boat." **B&R**

Children's worship leaders urged to return childhood to children

Charles Willis
 Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Today's children, many of whom have their childhood taken from them early in life, should have their spiritual childhood returned to them, a Southern Baptist pastor told children's worship leaders meeting in Nashville.

The Children's Worship Conference, March 20-22, was held at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. Frank Lewis, pastor of First Baptist Church, Nashville, said Southern Baptists have become proficient in evangelism but deficient in worship. "Worship can be evangelism," he said, "but it has other elements, too. If

we are going to give our children a spiritual childhood, we have to help them to understand the value of God's Word and to have the ability to listen to it."

Adults need to help children "realize God still speaks and that what he says is precious," Lewis said.

Children's worship leaders need to lead parents "to reclaim the biblical responsibility of blessing their children," he continued. When his first child was still very young, he recounted, he began the practice of blessing her after she had said her prayers at bedtime. The tradition has continued with both his children, and

he said he hopes they will remember that blessing when they face temptations as youth.

"It is as simple as placing my hand on their heads and saying, 'Be wise, be strong and be pure. In Jesus' name, amen.'"

Whether children worship with their parents or in a separate children's service, Lewis said pastors and leaders should ask themselves if what takes place is meaningful and spiritually transforming to boys and girls.

Lewis listed five factors necessary for every worship service: God must be honored, the culture of the congregation should be engaged, intellect should be stimulated, hearts should be moved, and lives should be changed.

Today's children are growing up in

a landscape completely different from that of their parents, Lewis noted.

"We must do everything we can to get our children to Jesus," he said. "If we don't get them to Jesus, there are too many other places that will get them."

LifeWay's church resources division sponsored the Children's Worship Conference. Special-interest seminars were offered, along with demonstrations of varied children's worship services.

Information about next year's Children's Worship Conference, March 19-21 in Nashville, may be directed to Pamela Boucher, children's worship consultant for LifeWay at (615) 251-3614 or by e-mail to pboucher@life-way.com. ■



LEWIS

Fires demolish West Tennessee churches ...

— Continued from page 1
use the City Hall building, church members were anxious to return to their own site. And, on March 26 they did, at least temporarily.

The evangelism office of the Tennessee Baptist Convention provided a large tent that was set up on site, Henry said. "We had a great service on March 26," he said. The church will have use of the tent for about four weeks before it will have to be moved to another church that already had the tent scheduled for a revival, the pastor said.

"We're down, but not out," said Georgia Brisentine. She noted the general feeling of the church was "we'll come back stronger than we were before."

Another church member agreed. "Even as we watched it burn, we knew we would come back," said Charlotte Cole. Both women serve on the church's building committee.

Henry, who is in his third year as pastor of the Gibson County Baptist Association congregation, too, is optimistic.

"From seeing the building burned, we are more determined

than ever to see it through," he said.

While the church did have insurance on both the old building and the new construction, they do not yet know how much of their loss will be recouped, the pastor said.

He noted churches and individuals have been supportive and they have received some cash gifts and even an organ to assist with their soon-to-begin rebuilding effort. The church also had been assisted with construction before the fire by Lane Baptist Church, Kenton, Henry said.

One pastor who called and offered encouragement, Henry said, was Daniel Donaldson, pastor of Salem Missionary Baptist Church, a black Baptist congregation, that was burned by an arsonist a few years ago.

"It's amazing how you can receive blessings from something so tragic," Cole said.

Henry said he feels no animosity toward the arsonist. "My son-in-law said he's the one we need to be praying for," the pastor noted.

Though the fire demolished the new building and the sanctuary, the fire stopped short of the



PASTOR PATRICK HENRY, right, looks over building plans at Smyrna Baptist Church with members, from left, Georgia and James Brisentine, Charles Flowers, and Charlotte and Warren Cole.

steeple on the front of the church.

"The cross is still standing and we're still preaching the cross," Henry said.

Individuals or churches interested in assisting the church can contact Henry at (901) 824-3812 or Cole at (901) 686-9653, the pastor said.

FBC, Selmer

The sanctuary was destroyed and the two educational buildings received extensive damage from a fire that occurred mid-morning on March 21.

According to Pastor Max Walker, the exact cause of the fire has yet to be determined. Arson, however, has been ruled out, he said, although the in-

vestigation is still going on.

Walker said the preliminary damage estimate is \$2 million.

Ironically, Walker said, one of the church's best spiritual services was held the Sunday before the fire. "Our people made a strong commitment to pray and you could feel the Spirit of the Lord," he re-



WALKER

called.

The fire is a reminder that material things can disappear, he added.

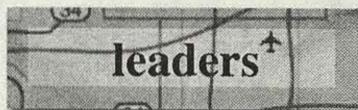
The fire began as workers were on the roof welding a frame for a new steeple, which was to be part of a renovation project for the church, Walker said.

Normally, the church's daycare would have been in session, but thankfully they were out for spring break, he said.

Walker said some office equipment was salvaged but his personal library was damaged.



SMOKE BILLOWS out of the sanctuary of First Baptist Church, Selmer. The church received extensive damage from a March 21 fire. — Photo courtesy of The Independent Appeal



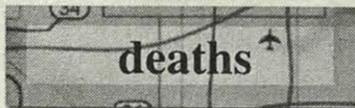
■ **Floyd Simmons**, pastor of Elliston Baptist Church, Memphis, will celebrate 50 years in the ministry on Sunday, April 2. The special service will begin at 10:30 a.m. followed by lunch. All former members of the church and friends of the Simmons family are invited.

■ **William Lane Harris** has been called as pastor of First Baptist Church, LaFollette. He had been serving as pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, New Brockton, Ala., since 1986. He and his wife, Brenda, have two sons. Harris is a graduate of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

■ Allons Baptist Church, Al-

lons, ordained **Jim Bowman** and **Vance Williams** as deacons on March 19.

■ **Joey Jones** has been called as bivocational minister of youth and children at Temple Baptist Church, White House. He and his wife, Lynn, have two children.



■ **Everette M. Sherwood Sr.**, a member of Dixie Lee Baptist Church, Lenoir City, died March 10. He was 85. Sherwood was a minister with many East Tennessee churches for more than 62 years. He is survived by his wife, Frances, and four children and five grandchildren.

■ **Georgia Snodderly**, a

member of Bethany Baptist Church, Powell, died March 18. She was active in Midland Baptist Association and served on the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Historical Committee.

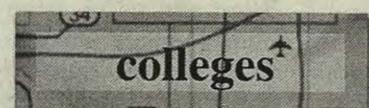


■ **Harmony Baptist Church, Brownsville**, will hold revival April 30-May 3 with Maurice Hays, collegiate ministries specialist at Jackson State Community College, as guest evangelist. Bennie Morrison will lead the music.

■ **First Baptist Church, Gleason**, will hold revival April 9-12 with evangelist Phil Glisson of Memphis.

■ **First Baptist Church,**

LaFollette, will host the 43-voice Southwestern Singers from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary on April 4 at 7 p.m. (see more information on the group on page 9).



■ **Union University's Center for Faculty Development** in Jackson, was recently awarded a \$126,000 grant from the Teagle Foundation, a private foundation whose major interest is strengthening private higher education. The grant, which will be distributed over three years, will assist the center in the development of five important areas including teaching, professional development, advising, commu-



"It's a terrible loss," he said the fire.

Walker observed there been a tremendous outpouring support from the community including churches of all denominations.

The church held prayer meeting the night after the fire in church parking lot, Walker said. He noted someone observed, "are the church right here. What's over there is only a building."

"Our people can rally around something like this."

Noting he preached from 8:38-39, he said the fire will cause us "to find out who we're made of."

The church met on March 27 at McNairy High School. "We're trying to locate a permanent temporary location until we get back into the facility," Walker told the *Baptist and Reflector* late last week.

It was a powerful commitment service, Walker said. His message focused on "rising above the ashes," he said.

"We made a commitment to God and each other that we will be a stronger and better church. We rise above the ashes and build."

There were about 350 people at the service and there were professions of faith," Walker said. Two others joined the church, he added.

Walker, in his 18th year as pastor of the Selmer congregation, said, "This will be the hardest thing I've ever dealt with. But with prayers, patience, and courage, it will get done," said.

A temporary church office has been set up. For information to offer assistance, call (901) 645-3058 or 645-5326. ■



nity service, and faith integration.

■ **Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City**, will host the Southwestern Singers at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at 3 p.m. on April 4 (See page 9 for more information on the group). Also, Bill Leonard, founding dean of the Wake Forest University Divinity School, delivered the T.B. Maston Lecture on March 28 at the school. The lecture was titled "Being Baptist: What Does It Mean and Is It Worth Anything?"

CP makes Southern Baptists unbeatable team

Lonnie Wilkey, editor

One of my all-time favorite movies is "The Sandlot." It is based on the true story of a basketball team from a tiny Indiana school that shocked the state in the early 1950s by winning the state championship. Along the way they knocked off teams from schools much larger than they were.

The team defied all odds to win the state championship. On paper there was no way they should have won. But, thankfully, you have to play the game and anything can happen.

Today, Southern Baptists, in particular, Christians, in general, are like that Indiana team. We live in a world that seems stacked against us. Satan is a driving force. Evil is rampant.

When we look at it "on paper," we think that can one Tennessee Baptist or one Christian do? How can we win?"

But, we can and we will. We have the ultimate weapon in our arsenal — God. With nothing is impossible.

One thing that helps to "level out" the playing field for Southern Baptists is the



PARTNERS IN THE HARVEST

Matthew 9:37-38

Cooperative Program. For 75 years the Cooperative Program has been the instrument God has used to share his message with a lost and dying world.

The Cooperative Program allows one Tennessee Baptist in the smallest of churches to have the same impact as one Tennessee Baptist in the largest of churches.

Combining all those dollars and channeling them through the Cooperative Program enables Tennessee Baptists, regardless of size of church, to be involved in missions and ministry in Tennessee, in North America, and around the world.

This year Southern Baptists are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Cooperative Program. The theme is "Partners in the Harvest." Churches and individuals are being asked to pray for missions and missionaries, to participate in a missions project, and to increase the percentage they currently give through the Cooperative Program.

April 9 is Cooperative Program Sunday on the SBC calendar. Take time to thank God for planting the CP idea among Southern Baptists 75 years ago and consider being a "partner in the harvest." Many lives have been changed because Southern Baptists have given through the Cooperative Program all these years.

But, one look at the world today will remind us there is still plenty of work to be done. We cannot stop until we can do all we can to help reach our world for Christ. **B&R**



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Husband to wife: "What are you doing with a paint brush and bucket?" Wife: "Can't you see? I'm painting these dingy walls." Husband: "Why are you wearing a ski jacket and a fur coat?" Wife: "The instructions say, 'For best results, put on two coats.'"

Take this truth

The tongue-in-cheek one liner says, "If all else fails, read the instructions."

Memorize this Scripture

"Go learn what that means." — Matthew 9:13

Pray this prayer

"Lord, deliver me from being one of those who hears but understands not." ■ — Wood can be e-mailed at drfredwood@aol.com

Guest editorial

One more time — O'Hair rumor is indeed a rumor

Anthony W. Cartledge

Some rumors take on a life of their own and simply refuse to die. Such is the case with the ongoing panic among well-meaning believers who keep buying into the 25-year-old claim that Madalyn Murray O'Hair is out to take over the television airwaves and ban all references to God from public broadcasting.

Bogus, bogus, bogus.

In all its several varieties, the rumor is a hoax and the threat is non-existent.

The latest re-incarnation of the rumor comes in the form of an urgent e-mail that claims the popular TV program, "Touched by an Angel," may be canceled because it no longer uses the word, "God."

Bogus.

Most people know by now that O'Hair has been missing for years and is presumed dead, so current rumormongers speak of another petition filed by "a daughter," "supporters," or "members of her organization."

Bogus.

The recent version also cites a different petition number from the one usually given, stating that it represents a new action.

Bogus.

Different numbers probably resulted from a typo when someone passed the "call to action" along to a friend.

We received so many queries at the paper that we called the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and asked for an official response. Here are a few facts about this unfortunate business:

► In December 1974, Jeremy D. Lansman and Lorenzo W. Milam filed a petition asking the FCC to inquire into operating practices of stations licensed to religious organizations.

The petition, routinely assigned the number RM-2493, asked that no new non-commercial broadcasting licenses be granted until the inquiry was completed. The petition was denied by the FCC Aug. 1, 1975, and it has been dead ever since.

► The FCC explained in 1975 that it is required by the First Amendment "to observe a stance of neutrality toward religion, acting neither to promote nor to inhibit religion." Indeed, "the Communications Act (the law that established the FCC and defines its authority) prohibits the FCC from censoring broadcast material and interfering with freedom of speech in broadcasting," according to the memo.

► No federal law or regulation gives the FCC the authority to prohibit radio and television stations from presenting religious programs. A recent FCC opinion that received much negative publicity in Christian

circles ruled that purely preaching programs did not always qualify as "educational" programming. This ruling concerned educational licenses only, however, and it was quickly reversed.

► According to its memo, "The FCC cannot direct any broadcaster to present, or refrain from presenting, announcements or programs on religion, and the FCC cannot act as an arbitrator on the insights or accuracy of such material." Broadcasters alone — not the FCC, nor any other governmental agency — are responsible for selecting the programming aired by their stations.

► Since 1975, the FCC says it has received and responded to millions of inquiries about these rumors, yet they keep persisting. The advent of e-mail just spreads them more quickly.

Let Baptists do their part to squelch erroneous rumors such as this and the equally insidious and persistent claim that Proctor & Gamble promotes satanic worship. God is not honored by the spreading of falsehood, even by well-meaning believers who don't know the rumor is a hoax.

In any event, now you know better. You've got the facts to support you. ■ — Cartledge is editor of the *Biblical Recorder*, the Baptist state paper in North Carolina.

Daily living, words go hand in hand in sharing Christ

ny answer

by Billy Graham evangelist



Dear Dr. Graham: Which is more important, to bear witness to our faith by our lives or to talk with others about it? I know we are supposed to be witnesses to our faith but I have a hard time talking with others about something that is

so personal. — K.R.

Both our lives and our words are important, and both go hand-in-hand as we seek to share Christ.

If our lives don't support what we say to others about Christ's ability to change us, then few people are going to believe what we tell them. The opposite is true also. If we never tell anyone about Christ but only hope that somehow our lives alone will bring them to faith, then few people will ever come to Christ through our witness.

I like the illustration someone once used about this: Just as an airplane needs both wings to fly, so our witness needs both our words and our works. One wing is not more important than the other wing! James put it this way: "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:26).

What can you do to be a better witness? Pray for those around you who need Christ. Only God can open their eyes to their need of him. Praying for them will also help you be

more concerned for their salvation.

Ask God to give you opportunities to speak about Christ and what he has done for you, even in small ways. We aren't all called to preach but often the most effective witness is the person who daily experiences Christ's love and quietly shares it with others. ■ — Write to Dr. Graham in care of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, P.O. Box 779, Minneapolis, MN 55440. Copyright 1999 Tribune Media Services Inc.

Partnership Prayer Requests

March/April

30 — Pray for Westlynn Church in North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, which is holding seminars in March and April to promote the Christian life.

31 — Pray for a 14-member team from Highland Baptist Church, Pulaski, who will prayerwalk March 31-April 9 in the Algarve region of Portugal.

April 1 — Pray for the team from Highland Baptist Church, Pulaski, who are prayerwalking in Portugal.

2 — Pray for missionaries Brenda and Eddy Hallock in Rio de Janeiro, as they work with Tennessee volunteer teams.

3 — Pray for Georges and Carolyn Boujakly, church planters and strategists in Quebec, Canada.

4 — Praise God for a 12-member Disaster Relief construction team from First Baptist Church, Pulaski, who worked March 4-12 in Nicaragua building homes for hurricane victims.

5 — Pray for Philippine International Baptist Church, Sterling Heights, Mich., which is searching for a building to buy. The church, which is led by Pastor Ray Bosi, is meeting at Memorial Baptist Church there.

To serve in Mozambique

Couple committed to overseas evangelism

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

MONTEREY — Rodney and Lee Ann Smith may seem to be unlikely overseas missions volunteers.

Rodney Smith is the retired head of a division of the United States Treasury Department for New Mexico and Orlando, Fla. Lee Ann Smith is a former school teacher.

They were active Baptists when they met on a missions trip in the Ukraine. They were single, both having suffered failed marriages.

Although Rodney Smith lived in New Mexico and Lee Ann lived in Texas, they eventually married, settled in Tennessee, and have continued their missions work, traveling overseas about three times a year.

The unusual part is they have seen about 100,000 people make professions of faith. And they have served, at their own expense, in some of the most remote and dangerous places in the world.

For example, Rodney was serving in Rwanda in 1993 during its civil war. He evacuated with Peace Corps volunteers. The couple served in Kosovo in August 1999, where they saw "what man has done

to man," explained Rodney. And the couple has served in Bangladesh, Burma, Russia, Indonesia, New Zealand, and Romania.

Compulsion to serve

The Smiths described a compulsion to serve despite many challenges to service. They recollect experiences with people rather than dangers, bone-weary fatigue, and sacrifices they make to participate. They spend about \$13,000 a year on missions efforts.

Their commitment is spiritual, they explained, so the rewards are spiritual. But they also experience worldly rewards, the couple added.

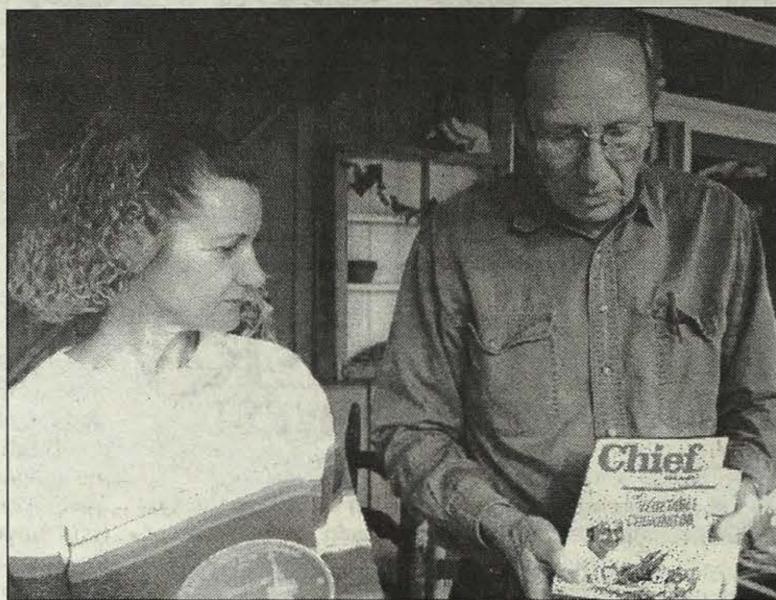
"We have personal Christian friends all over this world," explained Rodney.

Lee Ann recalled the arm outstretched by a woman in Bangladesh and the concern reflected on her face as Smith tried to cross rice patties.

Rodney remembered the women and children who came to him on a street in Kosovo begging for the food he was distributing.

Lee Ann remembered climbing into a tree house to play with some boys in Burma.

In Russia, the couple was shocked to meet a translator who helped them several years previously in the Ukraine. The



RODNEY SMITH shows a food tin used as a musical percussion instrument by Christians in Rwanda which was given to him as a gift. Lee Ann Smith holds a remembrance given to Rodney by Christians in India. — Photo by Connie Davis

man had traveled two days by train to be with the American Christians.

They recalled the outdoor memorial service they were invited to attend in Kosovo where they viewed about 50 caskets surrounded by crying women. And Lee Ann remembered the woman there who stopped her on the street to tell her how Serbs took her son and cut his throat in front of her.

The Smiths understood why their insurance through the International Mission Board had increased from \$4 to \$53 a day when they heard bullets and explosions in Kosovo.

In a Bangladesh village they recalled the faces plastered to the windows of their van to see the white people. And they remembered the guileless interest of people there in Jesus. The residents had never heard of him.

They remembered the very large, progressive church they helped in India.

The Smiths also told of the Burmese. When a person was told about Jesus and how to become a Christian, he or she

prayed to make that decision. The couple saw no one refuse.

Finally, the couple told of the realization in Kosovo that Christians were guilty of the atrocities against the Muslims. Instead of referring to themselves as Christians, they had to identify themselves as followers of Christ.

The Smiths will serve in Mozambique April 3-16 distributing seed and farming implements to help flood victims there.

Process of serving

The couple want other Christians and Baptists to experience what they have experienced. And people shouldn't hesitate because Christians do not have to be uniquely skilled or called to conduct overseas missions work, they said.

They know this because they were so inexperienced and untrained, they reported.

Lee Ann said before her first trip she experienced cold sweats in sleep and during initial trips she literally shook she was so nervous. But God allowed her to just "stand there and look American" and still be effective, she said, be-



cause of the Christian trans-
tors who were assigned to h
And Rodney recalled bei
sent to a place where peo
became Christians just
reading tracts he distributed

Concerning cultural cha
lenges, the Smiths said n
when they stay in hotels th
miss staying with residen
even though they've slept w
chickens and goats nearb
said Lee Ann. But the "peo
just love you to death," s
said.

They want to encoura
Christians who are wary of
direct evangelism. After their
periences they choose t
evangelism-oriented effor
rather than construction pr
ects. This is true despite t
fact they are skilled in co
struction. One of Rodney's h
bies is woodworking and th
helped build their house.

God will use anyone who
willing, they assured. Lee A
said, "We're certainly n
saints." And she still car
quote much Scripture, s
added.

They are glad to report Ce
tral Baptist Church, Cros
ville, where they are membe
has served overseas for th
past three years. The Smi
have seen about 30 members
the church participate in ove
seas missions work for the fir
time.

God's provision

God has led them in eve
effort, they claimed. For exa
ple, he led them last year to
in Texas on vacation so th
could help tornado victims
Oklahoma through Southe
Baptist Disaster Relief.

God also provides for the
service, the Smiths suggeste
Rodney still serves as a bat
examiner to help subsid
their efforts.

"It's just been all in h
plan," said Rodney Smith. B



PAUSING FOR a photo with new friends in Kosovo are Rodney Smith, left, and Lee Ann Smith, third from right. They served there as part of one of the first American relief teams, which was sent by Southern Baptists there. The Smiths and other Baptists distributed food to residents.

Computer training set for Church Media Libraries

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Two Church Media Library computer conferences are slated for Tennessee Church Media Library workers in April and May.



MOYE

The conferences will feature the library software Concourse/MLS.

These events, appropriately called "Super Cyber Saturdays," are co-sponsored by the Church Media Library Ministry of the Tennessee Baptist Convention based here and Book Systems Inc., Huntsville.

The conferences will be held April 29 at Union University, Jackson, and May 20 at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

The conferences will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m.

The events include training for beginning and experienced users of Concourse/MLS software. Mini-conferences will include Ready ... Set ... Automate, Exploring Cyberspace, Help ... We Need Timesavers, and To Barcode or not to Barcode.

Pre-registration is requested 10 days prior to the event and conference fees are \$25.

For more information, call Jay Moye, TBC Christian Growth Development Group, Church Media Library Consultant, at 1-800-558-2090, (615) 781-8921, or jmoye@tnbaptist.org. ■

Meeting slated for church secretaries

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The annual Tennessee Baptist Secretaries Conference will be held April 10-12 at the Baptist Center in Brentwood.

Some associations are providing transportation. For more information, contact Lana Rose at 1-800-558-2090, (615) 371-2008, or lrose@tnbaptist.org. Information also is available at www.tnbaptist.org. ■

Annual congress scheduled for boys

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The annual Tennessee Royal Ambassador Congress will be April 20-22 at Belmont University in Nashville. Participants may include boys and girls, young men and women, members of MissionKids, EZRAs, and Roy Ambassadors, and their leaders.

For more information, contact Carol Davidson at 1-800-558-2090, (615) 371-2025, cdavidson@tnbaptist.org. ■

Dealing with addictions

Woman begins ministry for struggling women

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

ATHENS — In 1988 Robin Nation worked at the McMinn County Justice Center here and she and her family attended Wildwood Baptist Church, Athens.

Although she had attended Baptist churches since childhood, Nation realized she wasn't a Christian and made a commitment to God. Soon she began to view the women inmates at the justice center with compassion, she explained.

Nation gradually tried to witness to them by giving the women greeting cards, spiritual literature, and having short conversations with them. But just as she was developing a ministry, a new sheriff was elected and she left the job to make way for the new staff.

Four years later the new sheriff asked Nation to return to the department to work for him, which she did. She also negotiated a time for a Bible study for the women inmates

because her faith was stronger, Nation said. She had been involved in an *Experiencing God* study and several Kay Arthur studies.

At the first session of the Bible study, Nation felt led by God to portray the woman at the well in the Bible. The women responded to it, she recalled. "They related; that story is for them," she said.

She got to know her students. She would see the women make professions of faith and complete their sentences. But they had to return to situations which contributed to their original problems. Those situations usually included poverty, unhealthy and/or abusive relationships,

and addictions to drugs and alcohol which result in destructive behavior, said Nation.

Helping one woman

Nation got to know Carrie Watson. Watson was a Christian and a Baptist but had made some mistakes which led to her incarceration. When she was released, she entered a residential program for people with addictions of the Assembly of God Church called Teen Challenge located in Philadelphia, Penn.

When Watson returned to Athens she got in touch with Nation and told her she needed a support group to continue her progress. Nation started meeting with Watson weekly.

Several other women joined the support group. And the word spread about the ministry, which

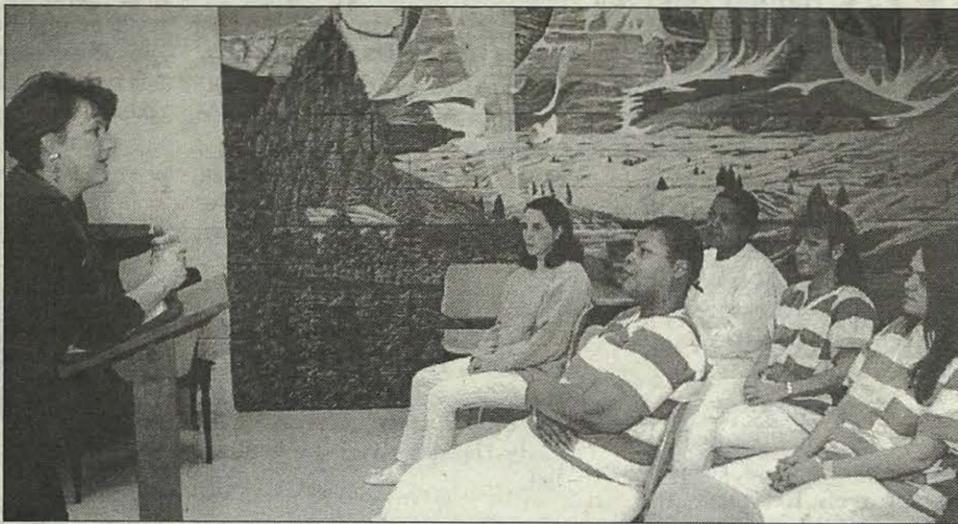
Nation named "Women at the Well Ministries."

A board of directors for the ministry was formed by people from Baptist churches, other churches, and from the McMinn-Meigs Baptist Association. So when Watson, a registered nurse, had a difficult time getting a job, an office was opened and she was hired as the ministry's first employee.

Helping more women

In April 1999 Nation took another leap of faith. With the support of her husband, Tommy, and her teenaged sons, Don and John, she quit her job at the justice center so she could give more time to the ministry. Then God provided a part-time job near the downtown Women at the Well Ministries office, she reported.

Nation developed more aspects of the ministry and began sharing her dream of a home for recovering women. When she spoke at Mt. Harmony Baptist Church, Riceville, Scott and Kim Bailey learned about the opportunity. Soon the couple gave five acres of their land for the home. Their



ROBIN NATION speaks to residents of McMinn County Justice Center in Athens who attend a weekly Bible study she leads. — Photo by Connie Davis



gift was a sacrifice, noted Nation, because Scott is physically disabled.

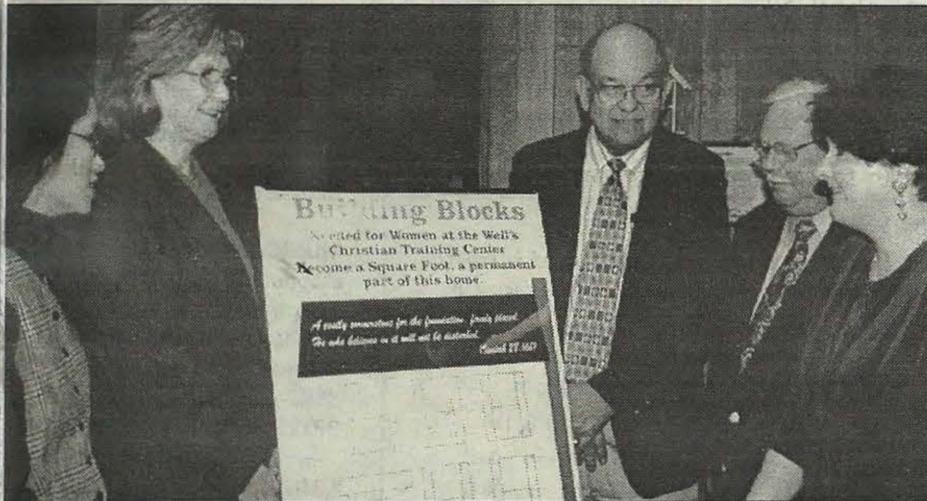
Since that time, many people have joined the effort, and construction of the home for Christian Training Center has been started, Nation reported. Garry King, pastor, Mt. Harmony Baptist Church, laid the blocks for the foundation. The ministry received funds from the Tennessee Baptist Convention Golden State Missions Offering. And many items for the center have been donated, such as 15 computers for a job training lab for residents.

Program for women

Nation can relate to women with "life controlling problems" because she was close to being in the same situation at one point in her life. Women with these problems may have addictions, compulsions, or obsessions, such as eating disorders, she explained.

When the center is completed, Women at the Well Ministries will offer a 12-month "intensive care" program for women, Nation described. In the program they can deal with the root of their addictions which probably stem from unmet needs. They can participate whether or not they have had legal trouble. She is preparing the program by studying materials and visiting similar programs.

Through the ministry, women will learn "God gives us ... needs. It's the devil that distorts them," Nation said. They will learn "they can depend on God instead." **B&R** — To be a construction volunteer, contribute to the capital campaign, or gather other information on Women at the Well, contact its office at (423) 745-0010.



LEADERS of the Women at the Well ministry study a chart describing the ministry's building project. They are, from left, Linda Hudson, Central Baptist Church, Athens; Willie Bryant, associational Women on Mission consultant and member, East Niota Baptist Church, Niota; Roy Fowler, director of missions, McMinn-Meigs Baptist Association; Jimmy McCarter, pastor, Zion Hill Baptist Church, Englewood; and Robin Nation, director of the ministry.

Union Association to hold simultaneous revivals, host Heath Shuler

By Cheryl Pruiett
For Baptist and Reflector

SPARTA — The Union Baptist Association based in Sparta, is anticipating great things during the week of April 3-8. Sixteen of the 20 churches in the association will participate in a simultaneous revival April 3-6. Four groups of four churches will meet at a different church and swap speakers each night.

A unique twist to the revivals is a simultaneous revival also will be held that week in India.

Three men from the association, Steve Farris, pastor, Pistole Baptist Church; Tracy Gross, pastor, Boiling Springs Baptist Church; and Mike England, music director, Laurel Hill Baptist Church, served in India in Febru-

ary along with Rose Harris, Stevens Street Baptist Church, Cookeville. They worked through International Crusades to train Banjara Indians to conduct a crusade. While there they saw 1,250 people make professions of faith.

Associational leaders believe it wasn't just a coincidence the crusade in India will take place the same week as Union's simultaneous revivals. Both dates were set without conferring with the other and they were both set the same week.

Gross said he was amazed that God could use the small association to not only encourage each other to reach out into our community, but also to reach Indians.

The association will close the week with a Victory Rally Saturday night,

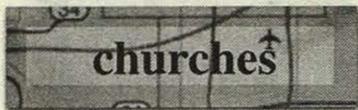
April 8 at 6:30 p.m. at the White County Middle School in Sparta with special guest Heath Shuler, former quarterback of the University of Tennessee football team. Phil Hoskins, pastor, Higher Ground Baptist Church, Kingsport, will speak. In India, Christians also will hold a Victory Rally.

Farris said he hoped other simultaneous crusades would be held with other countries through International Crusades, which is endorsed by Southern Baptists. Twenty-five countries are ready to participate in this type of event, he said.

Plans are underway by Farris for a missions effort in India in January 2001. ■



DRESSED in traditional clothing of India are recent missions volunteers to the country, from left, Tracy Gross, pastor, Boiling Springs Baptist Church, Boiling Springs; Rose Harris, Stevens Street Baptist Church, Cookeville; and Steve Farris, pastor, Pistole Baptist Church, Sparta.



■ **Holly Grove Baptist Church, Lascassas**, will hold revival services April 2-7. Guest evangelist will be Jim Powers, director of missions for Concord Baptist Association.

■ Charles W. Sullivan, executive director of the Indiana Baptist State Convention, will lead revival services beginning April 2 at **Friendship Baptist Church, Maryville**.

■ **First Baptist Church, Strawberry Plains**, held revival services Feb. 6-9 with evangelist Morris Anderson. There were 25 recorded decisions, 15 of which were for salvation.

■ **Forest Hill Baptist Church, Maryville**, recently held a crusade for Christ revival with evangelist Morris

Anderson. There were more than 100 decisions, including 19 professions of faith.

■ **First Baptist Church, Trimble**, held a Soulquest Crusade March 12-17 with evangelist Ronnie Coleman. There were 55 professions of faith, along with many other decisions for the Lord.

■ **First Baptist Church, Gainesboro**, will hold revival April 2-5 with Mark Phillips, pastor of Brotherton Baptist Church, Cookeville, as guest evangelist.

■ Mark Conway will be guest evangelist for revival services April 9-12 at **First Baptist Church, Kenton**.

■ **Mt. Hermon Baptist Church, Murfreesboro**, held a dedication service March 19 for their new 596-seat, state of the art worship center. The church has had continuous growth for the past 19 months.

The new worship center will enable them to have one Sunday morning worship service, rather than the two services previously.

■ **Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville**, will hold a special presentation entitled "Hope for the Heart" on Sunday, April 2 at 10:45 a.m. with Christian speaker, singer, and author Renee Coates Scheidt. For more information, call (423) 523-9419.

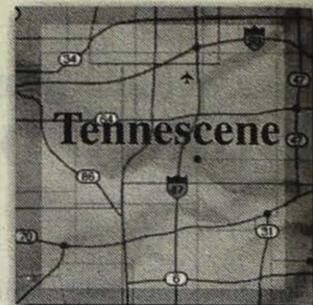
■ **Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Kingsport**, will hold a spring revival, "Answering the Call to Pray" April 2-5 with Cody Deese as visiting evangelist.

■ Evangelist Ron Herrod will lead a crusade April 9-12 at **Mt. Harmony Baptist Church, Knoxville**.

■ **Whitehall Baptist Church, Trenton**, will host a Soulquest Crusade April 2-7

with evangelist Ronnie Coleman.

■ **Lyons Creek Baptist Church, Strawberry Plains**, held spring revival March 12-15 with evangelist Morris Anderson. There were 39 recorded professions of faith and six other decisions. The revival had an average attendance of 337 per night.



A Conference for Pastors and Lay Leaders
The Church Responds to Alzheimer's Disease



Tuesday, April 11
 9-2 p.m.

Ridgedale Baptist Church
 1831 Hickory Valley Rd.,
 Chattanooga

To register: \$15 per person (includes lunch). Send check by April 7 to Gene Nabi, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024. For more information, call TBC Christian Growth Development at 1-800-558-2090 or (615) 371-2083.

Sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Hamilton County Baptist Association, and the Southeast and Eastern Tennessee Chapters of the Alzheimer's Association

Missions Skills School

May 5-6

Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden

Speakers: Dwight Ashley, Louisville, Ky.; Tim Bearden, TBC

Sponsored by TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group

Check-in — 4-6 p.m., Friday, May 5; Conclusion — Commissioning Service, 2:30 p.m. Saturday, May 6



Registration Form (Registration required; no walk-ins)

- Freeing Your Imagination in Creativity
- Conducting Block Parties
- Multi-Housing Ministries
- Construction for Overseas Mission Trips
- Prayerwalking
- Royal Ambassador Leaders
- Challengers Leaders
- Baptist Men on Mission Leaders
- Men's Ministries
- Witnessing Overseas
- Mission Survival Skills
- Adventure Recreation for Mission Trips
- Legacy Outdoor Ministries
- Disaster Relief

Conferences

- David Burke
- Don Whatley
- Carol Vaughn
- Keith Lyle
- Betty Summers
- Herschel Wells
- Max Thomas
- Gene Williams
- Johnny Baker
- Charles Pratt
- Max Thomas
- Mike Davison
- Kyle Woodfin

- Continuous Conference — III & IV
- Continuous Conference — I, II, III, IV
- Repeat Conference I & II
- Repeat Conference — I & II
- Repeat Conference — III & IV
- Continuous Conference — I & II
- Continuous Conference — I & II
- Repeat Conference — I & III
- Repeat Conference — II & IV
- Repeat Conference — I & II
- Continuous Conference — III & IV
- Repeat Conference — I, II, III, IV
- Repeat Conference — III & IV

- Mike Stricklin
- Tom Black
- Mike Stricklin
- Bill Curington
- Tim Bearden
- Curt Fowler
- Richard Howard
- Ronnie Snoderly

- Repeat Conference — I & II
- Repeat Conference — II & III
- Repeat Conference — III & IV
- Continuous Conference — III & IV
- Continuous Conference — III & IV
- Continuous Conference — I & II
- Continuous Conference — III & IV
- Continuous Conference — I, II, III, IV

Register me for Conferences:

- Session I — Friday, 8 p.m. _____
- Session II — Saturday, 8 a.m. _____
- Session III — Saturday, 10 a.m. _____
- Session IV — Saturday, 1 p.m. _____

Housing Request:

- _____ Couples housing in Conference Center Motel Rooms (includes linens). Cost: \$120.
- _____ Single bed in camp lodging (linens not included). Cost: \$50.
- _____ Single bed in center motel (linens included). Cost: \$85.

Name _____ Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Day Phone _____

Evening Phone _____ E-mail address _____ Church _____

Make checks payable to Men's Ministries Team. Enclosed is \$ _____

Send Registration Form to: Tennessee Baptist Convention, Missions Awareness and Involvement Group, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728, Attn: Carol Davidson. For more information, contact Davidson at 1-800-558-2090 ext. 2025, (615) 371-2025, cdavidson@tnbaptist.org.

CLASSIFIED

NEEDED: Missionary-minded couple to serve the Lord in a Christian home (not a behavior modification facility) that has been meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of children for 103 years. Competitive salary and compensations include housing, food, insurance, and retirement. Call Jerry Taylor, Palmer Home for Children, (601) 328-5216.

MUSIC MINISTER: Bakers Grove Baptist Church is seeking part-time music minister, Hermitage/Mt. Juliet area. Send resume to Bakers Grove Baptist Church, 3562 Earhart Rd., Mt. Juliet, TN 37122 or call (615) 883-5039.

MUSIC MINISTER: Lucy Baptist Church (near Memphis) is seeking a part-time bivocational music minister. Send resume to Search Committee, Lucy Baptist Church, 4005 Lucy Rd., Millington, TN 38053.

CHURCH GROWTH: Glenwood Baptist Church is searching for a full-time minister for church growth and family outreach. Please contact Glenwood Baptist Church, 7212 Central Avenue Pike, Powell, TN 37849, telephone (423) 938-2611.

YOUTH MUSIC: Full-time minister of youth and music to guide the youth ministry and overall music ministry. Send cover letter and resume to FBC of St. Charles, 136 Stoddert Ave., Waldorf, MD 20602, Attn. MYM Search.

PASTOR: Long Heights Baptist Church, friendly, growing Southern Baptist church is actively seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, 6960 Hwy. 423 E, McKenzie, TN 38201. Resumes will be accepted until April 15.

leaders

■ Haywood Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, has called **Phillip Barnett** as pastor, effective April 2. He has been serving as associate pastor at First Baptist Church, Shelbyville. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He and his wife, Pam, have three grown children.



BARNETT

■ **Trey Gambill** has been called as assistant pastor/students at Mt. Hermon Baptist Church, Murfreesboro.

Conference Feb. 27-March 1. Leaders were John Phillips and W.A. Smith.

■ **West Union Baptist Church**, Dresden, licensed **Troy Hollis** of Greenfield to the ministry on Feb. 17. He is a student at Mid-Continent Bible College in Mayfield, Ky.

■ **Mark Gregory**, a member of the TBC Executive Board, resigned recently as pastor of First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro. He is serving as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Murfreesboro.

associations

■ **Haywood Baptist Association**, based in Brownsville, conducted a Prophecy

Conference Feb. 27-March 1. Leaders were John Phillips and W.A. Smith.

■ **Western District Baptist Association**, based in Paris, held its annual evangelism rally March 15 at First Baptist Church, Paris. The choir from New Harmony Baptist Church, Paris, presented special music. The rally, attended by about 600 people from 23 churches, was led by Larry Robertson, TBC evangelism specialist.

■ **The Loudon County Baptist Association** leadership team dedicated a "Peace Pole" Feb. 20 at the association office in Lenoir City. Director of missions Ray Luck presented a message on peace and led

in prayer. Inscribed in the pole was the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth," written in several languages.

events

■ The 43-voice Southwestern Singers from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will present a program of sacred music Monday, April 3, at 7 p.m., at **Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville**. The Singers are under the direction of A. Joseph King. The concert

is part of a seven-day, four-state tour. As the official touring choir of Southwestern Seminary, the world's largest evangelical seminary, the Singers have performed in nearly every state in the nation. The concert is presented free of admission and is open to the public.



Southeastern Bus Co.

"Over 15 Years in Business"

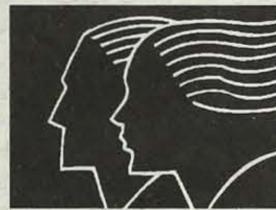
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1-800-795-6682

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Marriage Enrichment Retreat

April 28-29

Holiday Inn Express, Pigeon Forge
Friday, 7 p.m. - Saturday, noon

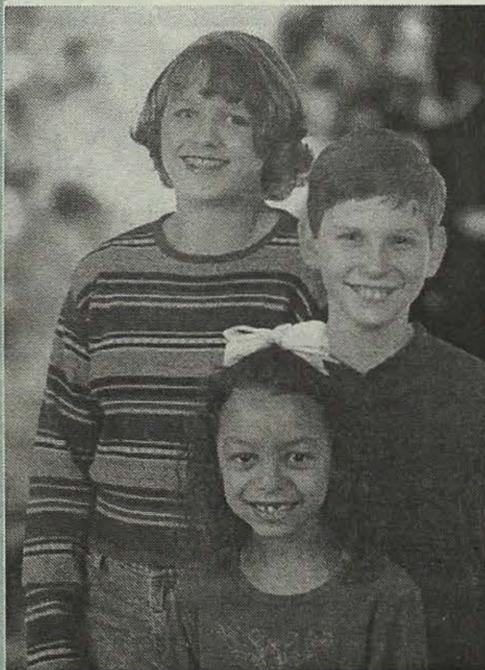
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Women carry heavy load in churches: Barna

By Bob Allen
For Associated Baptist Press

VENTURA, Calif. — Women are the backbone of Christian congregations in America, according to a recent survey by the Barna Research Group, an independent marketing research company located here.

While women comprise half of the United States population, there would be nearly 60 percent fewer Christians without them, according to a March press release on the Barna Web site.

Nearly half of the nation's women have beliefs which classify them as "born again," compared to just over a third of men, according to the study. That means there are between 11 million and 13 million more born-again women than men.

Women also tend to be "spiritual heavy-weights" when compared to men, the study says. Nearly eight in 10 women (79 percent) said the term "spiritual" describes them accurately, compared to 63 percent of men. Nearly seven out of 10 women (69 percent) identified with the phrase "deeply spiritual," compared to 50 percent of men.

More than 40 percent of female respondents said they

have set specific spiritual goals they hope to accomplish during the next year or two. That compares with 29 percent of men.

Women are also more likely than men to say that religious faith is very important in their life, by a margin of 75 percent to 60 percent.

The study found women more active than men in 12 of 13 areas of religious participation. They are twice as likely to be involved in discipleship; 57 percent more likely to attend adult Sunday School; 56 percent more likely to hold a leadership position at church; 54 percent more likely to participate in a small group; 46 percent more likely to disciple others; 39 percent more likely to have a devotional or quiet time; 33 percent more likely to volunteer for a church; 29 percent more likely to read the Bible, attend church and share their faith with others; 23 percent more likely to give to a church; and 16 percent more likely to pray.

"Women, more often than not, take the lead role in the spiritual life of the family," said George Barna, president of the firm that conducted the research. "Women typically emerge as the primary — or

only — spiritual mentor and role model for family members."

Barna said the trend "puts a tremendous burden on wives and mothers" and indicates an "apparent lack of spiritual leadership exhibited by millions of Christian men."

Barna said the results were not surprising, since men often emphasize issues such as career attainment and financial independence, while most women place a value on faith.

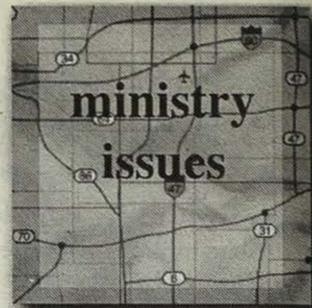
When asked to identify conditions that would create a desirable life, 75 percent of women said that having a close personal relationship with God was "very" desirable, ranking only behind having one marriage partner for life and good health.

While 59 percent of women said that being deeply committed to the Christian life is very desirable and 49 percent strongly desire to be personally active in a church, Barna said there is evidence that many women are "burning out" from too much involvement. He noted a 22 percent slip in church attendance since 1991 and a 21 percent decline in the percentage of women who volunteer in a church.

"Churches need to consider whether or not they are providing sufficient opportunities for women to receive ministry and not just provide ministry to others," Barna said. Otherwise, he warned, churches might continue to lose women dropouts by the thousands.

While women dominate the ranks of lay leaders in the typical church, Barna said, that is not true of ordained clergy. Only 5 percent of the nation's churches are led by a female senior pastor.

The research is based upon six telephone surveys late last year and early this year among



4,755 men and women in 48 states. The margin of error is estimated at plus-or-minus 2 percent. ■

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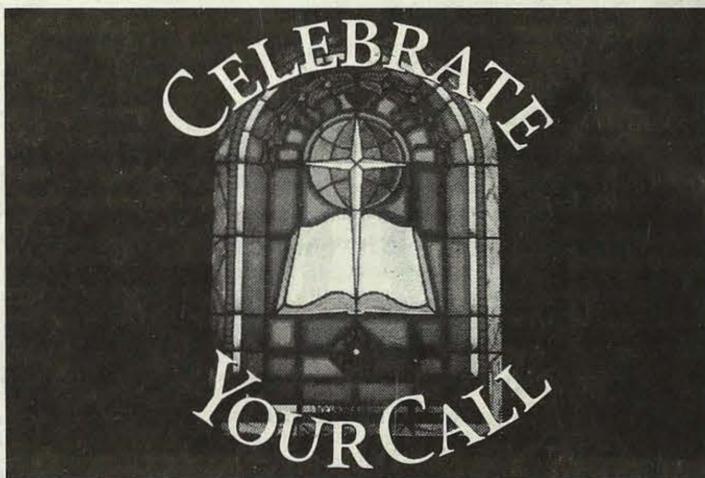
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What about the judgment?

Jimmy Gentry

Focal Passage: Revelation 20:1-15

Revelation 20 is the most debated passage in the book. Ironically, Pastor John never envisioned his hearers debating its contents. The dispute centers around "The Millennium" – a 1,000-year messianic reign on earth. There are three broad interpretive modes. First, there is the pre-millennial position which says Jesus will return to establish a specific and literal 1,000-year reign. Within pre-millennialism can be found two schools of thought – historical and dispensational. Second, there is the post-millennial view which says Christians, not Christ, will establish the 1,000-year reign prior to Christ's return through missions and evangelism. The third system is a-millennial which contends the 1,000 years to be symbolic of the rule of Christ in the hearts of believers in the present age.

Various Southern Baptist theologians have championed each pattern. B.H. Carroll, founder of Northwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was a post-millennialist. W.A. Criswell, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, is a pre-millennialist. Herschel H. Hobbs, denominational spokesman, pastor, and author, was an impassioned millennialist. Suffice it to say that most evangelists today are either "pre" or "a."

Unfortunately, many well-meaning Christians come so obsessed with the millennium that they are unable to grasp the real point of chapter 20. Its primary thrust is that Satan is defeated once and for all. In this quelling some significant truths are affirmed concerning the judgment.

The dead in Christ shall rise (vv. 4-6). John affirms the reality that believers will be resurrected at the Lord's return. Two groups are in mind here: those who suffered martyrdom as indicated by the word "beheaded" and those who didn't suffer martyrdom, yet refused to worship the beast. These reign with Christ in a state of perfection because they do not have to fear the "second death" which is metaphorical for final and complete separation from God. Since numbers are used symbolically in Revelation, the 1,000 years may suggest completion of flawlessness, thus interpreted as an indefinite reign with Christ. Believers may take heart in knowing that Christ currently reigns in their lives and they will reign with him for eternity when he returns.

The binding and destruction of Satan (vv. 1-3). Verses 1-3 constitute a continuation of Revelation 19:20. The language reminds of the sovereignty of God and the limitation of Satan by employing war symbols – a key, chain, pit, and seal. The text says Satan is set free for a time. John does not tell the hearers why. God and Magog, images from Ezekiel 38-39, suggest evil. Evil takes one last stand against God. Yet, no battle is actually fought. Satan falls from heaven and consumes evil and its author, Satan, and casts them from God forever.

The destiny of the unsaved (vv. 11-15). This vision of judgment of the death is surprisingly short. The dead in this scene are the damned. Two books are used to offer evidence in the judgment. One contains a record of deeds. The other contains the names of the redeemed. Judgment is based on what people have done and whether their names are written in the book of life. While the precise criteria of judgment are not laid out, the emphasis throughout Revelation is holding fast to Jesus and refusing to conform to the culture. Those without Christ are destined to eternal separation from God while those with Christ are destined to the eternal presence of God. — Gentry is pastor Springfield Baptist Church, Springfield.

Different marital standings

By Joe Sorah

Focal Passage: I Corinthians 7:1-5, 8-16

Our focal passage deals with questions directed to Paul. Let us take a different approach, as if Paul were a guest on a radio call-in program.

Host: Welcome to "Talk to an Apostle." Our guest today is the Apostle Paul. The topic today is "Different Marital Standings." We will be taking calls from Corinth.

Caller #1: I am a single man, 25 years old. Others say I ought to get married, but I enjoy serving the Lord as a single man. Is there anything wrong with me?

Paul: I wish everyone were single, just like me. There are some advantages to being single; for instance, you can go on mission trips anytime you have the opportunity and you can devote all your time to the Lord's work. Singleness is a wonderful lifestyle choice.

Family Bible Lesson

But, I must caution. Some people cannot cope with being single. It takes a special calling. Some would be consumed with passion and lust if they remained single. You must make the choice after much prayer but don't let anybody tell you something is wrong with you for remaining single (vv. 1, 7).

Caller #2: My wife and I have been married for 10 years. We have been hearing all sorts of teachings about marriage. Some teach you should not have sexual relations in marriage. Others say we are free to have relations with anyone we choose. Who is right?

Paul: God created each of us as sexual beings. One of God's gifts is human sexuality. God's plan is for sex to be reserved for the exclusive relationship of a husband and wife. Each partner has sexual needs and as a couple you are to meet one another's needs. Your body does not belong to you alone. It belongs to your spouse, too.

Claiming an inheritance

By Garry Miller

Focal Passage: Joshua 14:6-15

"Got any rivers you think are uncrossable? Got any mountains you can't tunnel through? God specializes in things thought impossible. He does the things that others cannot do." I do not know who is responsible for penning those lines, but they seem to be a perfect representation of Caleb's outlook on life. At 85 years of age he was ready to take on the toughest assignment of his life. He was prepared to claim the inheritance promised to him 45 years earlier by God through Moses. In his mind he was just now reaching the prime of his life when he stood before Joshua and said, *Give me this mountain* (v. 12a).

"But," you may say, "he was 85 years old! Shouldn't he step aside and let the younger generation take their turn?" I am constantly amazed at the tendency of some to think that just because someone has reached a certain age they are no longer useful, nor do they have anything to offer in service to the Lord. Many times those individuals themselves have the attitude that their day has passed and that they should just fade into the woodwork.

There is not one single verse in the Bible that says that a person ever gets too old to make a worthy contribution to the kingdom. Churches and individuals do a disservice to the

Explore the Bible Lesson

kingdom when they write off the "elderly" as less valuable or less important members of the body of Christ. The writer of Proverbs 16:31 (NKJV) advises us that, *The silver-head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness.*

As long as parents continue to be older than their children there will be a "generation gap." That is not necessarily a bad thing. The older can teach the younger out of their years of experience and the younger can keep the older fresh, vibrant, and alive. Whether you are a young adult, median adult, or older adult you should cultivate the same kind of attitude that Caleb had. The attitude that believes and obeys God regardless of circumstances or the consequences.

Moses had declared that the Land that Caleb had spied out would be his inheritance because he had *wholly followed the Lord* (vv. 9, 14). He believed God's promise through Moses and for him that was all that was needed. God said it. That settled it. He was an example of the kind of individual the church needs today: those who believe God, obey God, and praise God for his faithfulness.

You should not withhold sexual relations from your spouse except when you both agree to do so, and only for a limited time. You don't want to give Satan an opportunity to tempt you in this area (vv. 2-5).

Caller #3: I am a 55-year-old widow. I desire companionship. Is it okay if I remarry?

Paul: I would recommend that you remain single like me, but if you desire a marital relationship there is no reason why you should not marry. It would be better for you to marry than be consumed with wrong thoughts (vv. 8-10).

Caller #4: My husband is threatening to divorce me. What should I do? If he divorces me, can I get remarried?

Paul: God's ideal is for marriage to last a lifetime. I urge you to pray for your marriage. Your marriage vows are sacred.

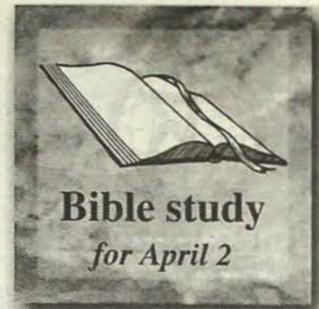
If your husband divorces you, the Lord said you ought to not remarry (Matthew 19:9). I encourage you to work on your marriage (vv. 10-11).

Caller #5: When I married my wife, we were both unbelievers. I am now a Christian. She is not. Should I divorce her or stay with her?

Paul: The Lord did not address this directly but the Spirit leads me to say you should stay with your wife. Your being in the home brings a spiritual dimension. Through your presence, God is calling your spouse to himself. Your daily witness may be what it takes to bring your spouse to Christ.

Your children are legitimate children. Your marriage is real. Your Christian influence is impacting all the members of your household. Hang in there! Keep the faith and live out the Christian life (vv. 12-16).

Host: We're out of time today. Some say your opinions are as out of date as leisure suits and eight-track tape players, but I think you are right on target. Thanks for tuning in to "Talk to an Apostle." — Sorah is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Elizabethton.





global/national
news

West Va. Baptists mobilize to combat video poker in state

Baptist Press

CHARLESTON, W. Va. — The onslaught of video poker in West Virginia is among the issues fueling Baptist plans to form a Christian life committee.

The committee will be charged with "devising a strategy to mobilize Southern Baptist churches on ethics issues," said Jere Phillips, executive director of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists and a former Tennessee Baptist Convention staff member.

The committee will be proposed to messengers attending the November annual meeting of the state convention.

Phillips said he expects the committee to be very involved in educating churches about pending legislation and ethical issues, including gambling.

"It's a big issue in our state," he said. "Unfortunately, there are huge investments in the gambling industry throughout West Virginia and they have a strong influence on the politics here."

Phillips said he is especially concerned about the video poker industry. Several other states also are dealing with the issue of video poker, including North Carolina. "Right now, it's a gray area under West Virginia law. Our position is the state should enforce the current law which says the machines are illegal," Phillips said. "Some in the legislature want to legalize the machines and tax them."

Currently, West Virginia does not enforce laws against video poker and the machines also are untaxed.

"We've been battling this gambling issue for quite some time," Phillips added. ■

Dilday retires at Truett Seminary

Associated Baptist Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Russell Dilday, who was dismissed in 1994 as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, is retiring after six years as a professor at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas. Dilday, 69, will retire in

Following recent floods

Baptists help Mozambicans recover lives, find new life

By Sue Sprenkle
For Baptist Press

MACIA, Mozambique — When Rebecca Augusto surveys the Macia relief camp, she doesn't see the makeshift tents made out of torn tarp or children crying because of hunger. Instead, she sees a miracle.

"Without God's help, I would not have survived. Look at me! I am a cripple," Augusto said, pointing to her shriveled legs. "When the water came with such power, I got up and ran. I don't know how God did it, but I got up and ran to a tree. I am alive today because of him."

From Augusto's perch in that tree, she watched homes and churches destroyed. Since the flooding began in early February, nearly one million people have lost their homes in this impoverished African nation.

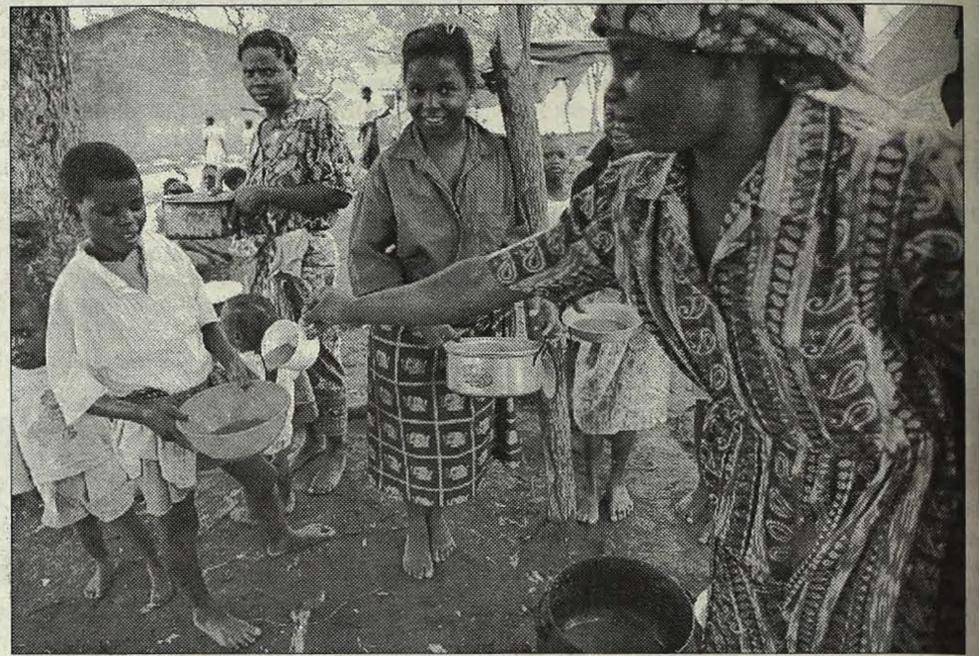
Tragedy struck when Cyclone Eline hit Mozambique and rains spread west into South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and Botswana. As the rains thundered into inland catchments, streams became rivers, rivers became torrents and dams overflowed, sending sheets of water east through Mozambique to the sea.

The Limpopo River, not long ago reduced to almost a trickle by drought, swelled to an estimated 16 kilometers (9.6 miles) wide. It washed away village after tiny village, as well as the regional capital of Xai-Xai.

Though the official death count is less than 500, aid workers fear it will climb well into the thousands as floodwaters recede. With food scarce and livestock rotting in the water, the tragedy only worsens.

Many Mozambicans escaped with only the clothes on their backs. When the waters finally recede, there will be nothing for them to go home to.

As the reality of what happened sinks in,



PEOPLE AT the Samora Michel camp usually receive two meals a day of soup mixture. Baptist volunteers purify drinking water that is distributed to the refugee camp and nearby villages. — Photo by Grace Robinette

Southern Baptists hurry to help soften the blow.

A long-term relief project is scheduled to help people like Augusto. Southern Baptist missionary Dianne Randolph realizes that most of the aid currently circulating will meet only short-term needs. Whereas the people are hungry now, she said they still will be hungry next year if no one helps them replant their farms.

"All of their crops were washed away. This means that not only do they not have food, but they also don't have seed to start all over," Randolph said. "If they don't replant now, the hunger could last

up to 18 months or more."

With planting season starting in April, missionaries and Baptist volunteers from the United States and South Africa put together an "agriculture bucket" to help farmers get back on their feet. The bucket contains seeds for planting everything from corn to okra. Farming tools also are included in the package, as well as New Testaments and tracts.

Contributions toward the relief effort in Mozambique can be sent to: International Mission Board, Hunger and Relief Fund — Mozambique Flood Relief, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. ■

August, Baylor officials announced March 17.

Dilday also served briefly as the seminary's interim dean in 1995. ■

Court rules student fees can be used for objectionable matters

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Public colleges and universities may use mandatory student activity fees to fund organizations Christian and other students object to on ideological or political grounds, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled March 22.

The unanimous decision by the justices overturned opinions by both a federal court and a U.S. court of appeals that the free-speech and association rights of three law students had been violated by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The students, all conservative Christians, had specified 18 student-funded organizations they objected to, including pro-homosexual ones, such as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Campus Cen-

ter and the Ten Percent Society; the pro-choice Campus Women's Center; and the International Socialist Organization.

In an opinion written by Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy, the high court acknowledged the students were required to subsidize "speech they find objectionable, even offensive," but it said the lower federal courts based their rulings on Supreme Court precedents that did not apply in the university setting. ■

Vermont action strikes blow against marriage

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The approval of same-sex unions by the Vermont House of Representatives could be the first step in undermining marriage and the family in the United States, said the head of the Southern Baptist Convention's ethics agency.

The Vermont House voted 76-69 in favor of legislation establishing "civil unions" for ho-

mosexual couples, thereby providing benefits and rights previously bestowed only on spouses in marriage. While the bill designates marriage as only occurring between a man and woman, it enables homosexuals to receive licenses from town clerks and to be joined together in a union that can be dissolved only in a family court.

The Senate is expected to vote soon on the legislation, and Gov. Howard Dean has indicated he will sign it.

If the bill becomes law, it will place Vermont at a level far surpassing any other state in supporting homosexual unions.

"Vermont's action is one more example of the full-scale onslaught of the radical homosexual agenda to normalize and have affirmed by the state and society their cohabitation relationships," said Richard Land, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

"This is a further argument for every other state passing its own Defense of Marriage Act so it will not have to accept these relationships that are

legally condoned in Vermont," Land said. ■

Rental bill for faith groups vetoed

Baptist Press

FRANKFORT, Ky. — A proposal to exempt religious organizations from renting facilities to groups that hold incompatible religious views has been vetoed by Kentucky Gov. Paul Patton.

The bill would have excluded church camps and other religious-related facilities from Kentucky's civil rights laws. The bill passed the House by a vote of 82-17 and then passed the Senate 17-12. Patton held the bill two weeks before vetoing it March 8, the day it would have become law with or without his signature.

Supporters of the bill view it as a religious freedom issue while opponents voice concerns over limiting civil rights.

The Kentucky Baptist Public Affairs Committee has voted to urge the legislature to override Patton's veto. Kerr said he disagrees with the veto and will lead efforts to override it. ■