

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

Volume 166/ Number 18

Statewide Edition

May 3, 2000

this week's news

Union University expands capital campaign. — Page 2

Tennesseans named to SBC boards, committees. — Page 3

SBC messengers to elect new president, consider BFM. — Page 6

Royal Ambassadors, Acteens hold events over Easter weekend. — Page 7

SBC churches continue strong CP support

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist churches gave \$2,363,858 through the Cooperative Program in April.

After six months of the current fiscal year, Tennessee Baptist churches have given \$17,299,704 through the Cooperative Program, a 6.29 percent increase over the same period last year.

The year-to-date budget stands at \$16,826,885.

"We are grateful that Tennessee Baptists continue to place great importance on the missions and ministry needs not only in our state, but around the world," said Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Director James Porch. ■

Of church in LaFollette

Lighthouse draws community to prayer

By Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

LA FOLLETTE — The Lighthouse of Prayer of New Horizon Baptist Church here is an imposing structure against the backdrop of the mountains of northeast Tennessee. The three-story structure sits in a valley which hosts Middlesboro Highway.

And the structure doesn't disappear when the sun goes down. Then it becomes a beacon, although a landlocked one, as its 2,500 watts of light pierce the darkness.

The lighthouse is designed so it will draw visitors. It is open 24 hours a day and includes an entry-level room with about 10 chairs, Bibles, and materials about the church. Although lacking any means of security, the lighthouse has not been vandalized since it was built about six months ago. And if it is, it will

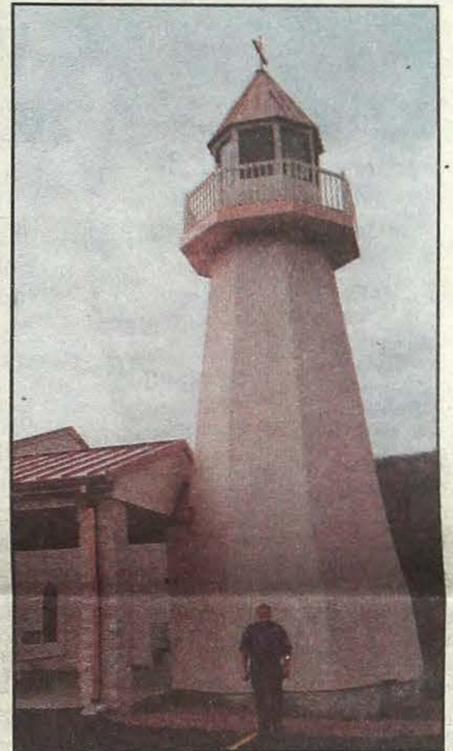
be repaired and reopened, reported Jim Wilcox, pastor.

The congregation would do this because "we truly want to be the light in this community" said Wilcox, referring to spiritual help.

New Horizon Church is helping people spiritually according to verbal feedback, thank you letters, and even unsolicited gifts of money from individuals in the area.

A man who prayed at the lighthouse gave the church \$1,000. Staff of a local funeral home reported clients have come to the lighthouse to pray. Others have said they come regularly for prayer. Some drive some distance to visit it.

The lighthouse also has become a symbol for the congregation, reported Wilcox, who helped start the church about



PASTOR Jim Wilcox stands in front of the lighthouse of prayer which he was inspired to lead the church to build.



STANDING BY the door to the lighthouse are leaders of New Horizon Baptist Church, LaFollette, from left, Jim Wilcox, pastor; Glen Petree, director of missions, Campbell County Baptist Association, based in LaFollette; Phyllis Fannon, director of education/youth; E.G. Cline, trustee; Donna Morris, pianist; and Jim Lively, deacon.

a year and a half ago.

Idea of lighthouse

The idea of an actual lighthouse of prayer was introduced to Wilcox when he visited First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., for a conference. The

— See Lighthouse, page 3

First Baptist, Henderson

Church gives 'praise' gift to missions

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Director James Porch had an unexpected, but welcomed visitor last week.

PASTOR STAN SMITH, left, of First Baptist Church, Henderson, presents a check for \$15,374 to James Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The church received an offering designated for missions on Easter Sunday.



Stan Smith, pastor of First Baptist Church, Henderson, stopped by the Baptist Center to present a check in the amount of \$15,374 to Porch. The check represented a special offering taken up on Easter Sunday to be used especially for missions, Smith said.

church's weekly budget is \$8,100. "We have been giving over budget since then," Smith said.

He related that he shared with his deacons an idea about having a Sunday where the entire offering would be given to missions. Easter Sunday was chosen, Smith said. "We decided that every penny given that Sunday would go to missions."

When the offering was collected, \$14,168 had been given. Additional gifts later raised the total to \$15,374.

"It was a praise offering to our Lord for what he has done for First Baptist Church," Smith said.

"Our folks are so giving and generous. It has been exciting to see that," Smith shared.

Porch thanked the church for their generous gift to missions. "We are grateful for this wonderful display of support for missions," he said. ■ — Lonnie Wilkey

The pastor explained that the church began a stewardship emphasis last November.

Members began to give generously, Smith recalled. "God has honored that." The

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Union expands campaign to \$60 million

By Sara Horn
For *Baptist and Reflector*

JACKSON — With more than 80 percent of its original capital campaign already committed two years ahead of schedule, Union University's trustees voted unanimously April 28 to expand the campaign goal set in 1997 from \$35 million to \$60 million by 2005.

The expansion makes it the largest fundraising effort ever initiated in West Tennessee.

The expanded campaign was adopted as part of a major five-year plan, "Vision and Values 2005" and will serve as

the resource base for a new overarching strategic plan which calls for many new developments including expanded enrollment in quality and quantity in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Though the plan provides needed support for the success of the new Germantown campus, scheduled to open in September, it also calls for a renewed emphasis on tradition-

al, residential, liberal arts undergraduate education on the Jackson campus.

Work already has begun on several projects included in the newly expanded campaign including Jennings Hall which will house the music, theatre, and Christian studies departments. The new facility is scheduled to be completed in September.

"We are thrilled and grateful to the board for their vision for Union and their continued willingness to look toward the future of this great university," said President David S. Dockery. ■



DOCKERY

Vermont ruling expected to affect other states

By Todd Starnes
For Baptist Press

MONTPELIER, Vt. — Vermont's governor on April 26 signed into law landmark legislation granting the full benefits of marriage to homosexual and lesbian couples in the state, prompting warnings from opponents that it could spawn similar legislation in other states.

Gov. Howard Dean signed the bill into law following a closed-door meeting with supporters following a 79-68 vote by the Vermont House on April 25 and a 19-11 Senate vote April 19.

"This is a statement that Vermont values people for who they are, not what they are," Dean said in a prepared speech following the signing.

"This bill enriches not just the very small percentage of gay and lesbian Vermonters who take advantage of this partnership and get the rights that the court has determined that they are due. I believe this bill enriches all of us, as we look with new eyes at a group of people who have been outcasts for many, many generations." Vermont's Supreme Court in December ruled that state law discriminated against homosexual couples and that a legislative remedy was needed.

Family groups believe Vermont's "civil unions" law will have a negative impact on the state and may be used to undermine marriage laws across the country.

"We hope at least to establish a residency requirement and broaden the bill so that it's not

sex-based," Craig Bensen, vice president of Take It to the People, told CNSNews.com after a closed-door meeting with the bill's opponents.

Take It to the People is one of the largest grassroots groups opposed to civil unions, with a membership of approximately 15,000.

Under the U.S. Constitution's full faith and credit clause, same-sex couples from out-of-state may use civil union certificates obtained in Vermont after July 1, when the bill goes into effect, to challenge marriage laws passed in other states.

Robert Knight, of the Family Research Council, told the Rutland (Vt.) *Herald*, the new law will not help homosexuals.

"It creates the fiction that what they are doing is normal and healthy. It sends a message to young people that marriage-based families are irrelevant. It gives people a powerful reason to support other homosexual activist ideas — such as teaching children that homosexuality is the equivalent of marital love," Knight said.

"It also creates problems for the rest of the nation as gay couples will get their certificates and fan out to the other states and demand that these benefits be given to them where they live," Knight added.

Vincent McCarthy, a lawyer for the American Center for Law and Justice, agreed. "I think there is a concern, justifiably so, that people in Vermont might try to take this decision to another state, seeking somehow to get another state to recognize the rights given in Vermont," McCarthy said. ■

Court rules Ohio cannot use 'God' in motto

By Todd Starnes
For Baptist Press

CINCINNATI — The Sixth U.S. Court of Appeals ruled April 25 that Ohio's state motto, "With God, all things are possible," violates the U.S. Constitution and must be thrown out.

The federal court sided 2-1 with the American Civil Liberties Union, which pressed the suit, contending the words had no secular purpose and appeared to be a government endorsement of the Christian religion. The lawsuit was originally filed by Matthew Peterson, a Presbyterian minister who objected

to the state's use of the motto.

"I read it to mean it's thrown out completely," ACLU attorney Mark Cohn told the Associated Press. "It cannot be used by the state as its motto."

The motto was adopted by the state in 1959 and is taken from Matthew 19:26, a passage of Scripture that quotes Jesus, "...with man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

The Ohio attorney general was reviewing the decision and had no immediate response, according to the Associated Press. The state could appeal the ruling to the full 13-judge appellate court or ask the Supreme Court to review the case.

The decision by the federal court reverses a 1998 decision by a judge in Columbus that allowed Ohio to display the motto as long as it does not cite its biblical origin.

Days after that ruling, former Gov. George Voinovich, now a U.S. senator, had workers install a bronze plaque bearing the state's seal and the motto in a plaza sidewalk at the state capitol.

According to the Associated Press, Voinovich said he got the idea to place the motto at the statehouse during a trade mission to India where he spotted a public building that bore the phrase, "Government Work is God's Work." ■



Resources nurture generous giving

For *Baptist and Reflector*

BRENTWOOD — The Tennessee Baptist Convention has partnered with neighboring state conventions to produce and provide two new resources that will help churches encourage generous givers, according to Archer Thorpe of the TBC Church Staff Leadership Group.

Each resource is distinctly different from the other and both are available at no cost because of gifts through the Cooperative Program, Thorpe said.

Each resource can be used anytime during the year, he added.

New Century Giving! — This emphasis is intended for use on three consecutive Sundays using the normal church schedule. Resources are provided to make this emphasis especially effective for use when the church's annual budget is being presented and adopted.

The emphasis can also be used for a mid-year giving promotion or a "catch-up" offering. The plan includes age-graded Bible study, drama, preaching, worship handouts, clip art, posters, offering envelopes, and more.

Tithing Counts! — Do you want to enlist tithers? This emphasis has been used by churches with outstanding success. It can be used anytime during the year and is also intended for use on three consecutive Sundays using the normal church schedule. The plan includes age-graded Bible studies, testimonies, preaching, offering envelopes, responsive reading, posters, celebration, personal consecration, and more.

Order forms for both resources can be found at www.tnbaptist.org or by calling Archer Thorpe, TBC Church Staff Leadership Group at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2017. ■





Tennesseans chosen to lead SBC entities

Compiled from Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Nominees to serve on the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, the four denominational boards — International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, LifeWay Christian Resources, and Annuity Board — the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, the six seminaries, the Committee on Order of Business, and the Baptist World Alliance have been selected by the 2000 SBC Committee on Nominations.

Nominees will serve if elected by the messengers to the June 13-14 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at the Orange County Convention Center here.

Appointments to two key committees to serve during the June 13-14 SBC annual meeting of the also were announced by SBC President Paige Patterson.

Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., announced the appointment of the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Resolutions April 28. The SBC bylaws require the president to announce the appointments "at least 45 days in advance of the meeting."

Tennesseans chosen to serve include:

Executive Committee — Melissa Gay, member, First Baptist Church, Hendersonville

Annuity Board — Larry A. Standridge, member, First Baptist Church, Martin

International Mission Board — Doug Sager, pastor, First Baptist Church, Concord, Knoxville (second term)

North American Mission Board — Ted J. Ingram, interim pastor, Norwood Baptist Church, Knoxville; Bobby R. Hathcock, member, Central Baptist Church, Martin

LifeWay Christian Resources — Debbie A. Ramage, member, Parkway Baptist Church, Goodlettsville

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary — Robert C. Burch, pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville (second term)

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary — Bob Fargarson, member, Brownsville Baptist Church, Brownsville

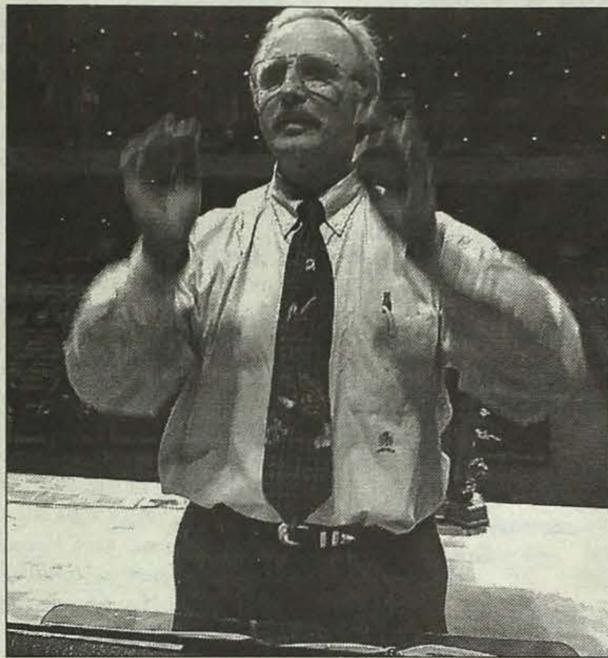
Baptist World Alliance — Margot D. Dixon, member, Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova

Committee on Committees — Randy Davis, pastor, First Baptist Church, Morristown; Tom Biller, member, First Baptist Church, Cleveland. ■

Create symphony of praise

Performing arts ministry trains students

By Charles Willis
For Baptist Press



CARTER THRELKELD, minister of instrumental music at Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, directs the church orchestra during Wednesday evening practice.

CORDOVA — A church's 16-year commitment is reaping rewards through an increasing number of aspiring and accomplished musicians who use their abilities in church and in the community.

In 1984, Bellevue Baptist Church here opened a performing arts center with a goal to teach 12 students to play stringed instruments. By fall of the same year, the center had grown to 28 students with 12 teachers.

Today's center offers classes in voice and 16 instruments. Almost 340 students and 34 teachers keep the center's classes full. Both private and group lessons are offered at modest fees that pay faculty and cover some expenses.

Bellevue's long-term investment in training musicians has contributed to a strong music ministry of 3,200 persons, 1,000 of them in graded choirs. Instrumental groups include three marching bands, 18 ensembles and 11 handbell choirs. More than 4,100 persons participate in various choirs.

One day, while still a young minister of music, I realized I was praying for some minister of music to develop singers so they could send them to me," recalled Jim Whitmire, who has served for 25 years as Bellevue's minister of music. "I realized I needed to develop my own musicians and then send them out. It's a two-way street. Our church has 27,000 members and I think God will hold us account-

able for the people we do not teach or at least offer to teach.

"I don't want large numbers to discourage small churches," Whitmire said. "The principles I use to build a music ministry work in any size church."

The context in which numbers are important is in the wide involvement of the congregation for major music events, such as the singing Christmas tree, the Easter

pageant, and a Fourth of July extravaganza.

Carter Threlkeld, minister of instrumental music for 17 years, said 800-900 persons are required for special events. Some of those serve as ushers, scene painters, seamstresses, cast, orchestra, nursery workers, and hostesses.

PAC teachers, all members of Bellevue, also participate in either the orchestra or choir.

The center's goals are to grow musicians and teach them to use their talents for ministry. For example, the bands march in the Strawberry Festival and at the Christmas parade in Memphis. Providing opportunities for students to play or sing at schools and nursing homes makes participation in the center a ministry with a mission. Threlkeld said he believes in marrying music and ministry.

The maturing of students comes in three phases — learning to walk (learning to play or sing), living out a witness (through performances in nursing homes, prisons, and other community ministries), and leading in worship (becoming part of the adult choir or youth and adult orchestras).

Creatively named instrumental ensembles are closely associated with the center. For example, there are Victory Violins, High Strung (strings), Flutes of the Spirit, Fiddlers of Faith, and King's Brass, among others. ■

Lighthouse draws community to prayer ...

Continued from page 1

Church had built a lighthouse in the sanctuary to encourage people to pray.

Wilcox kept thinking about the lighthouse when he returned home but he knew it would be impossible to build it in the sanctuary of New Horizon. The church was meeting in a renovated exercise facility, so the ceiling was lower than most church sanctuaries. Then it occurred to Wilcox a lighthouse could be built on the church parking lot.

Although the congregation was only six months old and was facing the renovation of the existing building and the addition of educational space, members "did not even hesitate when I mentioned it," said Wilcox. During discussion, he stressed the church could reduce building expenses if it eliminated the lighthouse, but the congregation voted to build it, he said.

Unique congregation

New Horizon was begun by a few people from a local church dissatisfied with a staff decision. They didn't try to work against the church they came from, but met for prayer. After the prayer time, someone suggested they meet again at the empty exercise building. Several days later, reported Wilcox and church leaders.

About 45 people representing many different churches attended that meeting. Two weeks later, a group of 75 met for Wednesday evening worship. When they constituted several months later, people from 11 different churches were represented.

Wilcox, who was a part of New Horizon from the beginning, explained he felt called to lead a church in LaFollette; he just didn't know it would be New Horizon.

Confirmations

The beginning congregation received

many confirmations from God that they were following his direction.

The new congregation rented the building for six months and then the owner gave them use of the building free for six months. Also the owner dropped the price on the site, which included four acres of land.

A woman whom Wilcox visited gave the church \$10,000. She is not a member of a church nor a Baptist.

The congregation has received consultation from Campbell County Baptist Association based here, the Tennessee Baptist Convention based in Brentwood, and Kirby Woods Baptist Church, Memphis, their sponsoring congregation. They received \$25,000 from the TBC.

New Horizon also received a van from Mueller Industries of Clinton; electrical work and lights worth about \$30,000 from a Knoxville company; and assistance from many others in the community, reported Wilcox and leaders of the church.

As needs for leadership arose, the leaders seemed to appear, said Phyllis Fannon, director of education/youth. And the people who were available even had experience in the areas of leadership needed, she added.

For example, Fannon said she was amazed when she recruited Vacation Bible School leaders last summer. She didn't need to use Sunday School teachers, which requires too much work from leaders, she explained.

A few months after the congregation began using its new facility, the congregation supported a sports ministry from North Carolina last October which resulted in 45 people making professions of faith. The ministry held a worship celebration at New Horizon. The meeting drew about 400 people to the church.

Describing the development of the church, Wilcox said, "Only God could have done this. I truly believe this church is what this community needed."

Giving back through missions

New Horizon is committed to missions, partly because they have received so much help from missions gifts, described Wilcox.

Last summer, New Horizon Church sent a team to Ohio to do inner city missions work. At Christmas, the church led a project to meet needs they discovered in Ohio.

And the church allocates seven percent of its offerings for the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program and six for the association.

Today, New Horizon draws about 175 people to Sunday morning worship services, has seen 35 people make professions of faith since its inception, and has outgrown its facility.

Lighthouse continues as symbol

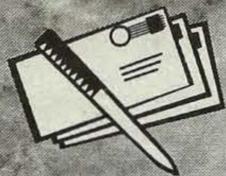
The Lighthouse of Prayer has helped the church accomplish these things and will continue to help the church, claimed Wilcox.

He told of the man who visited the church and admitted to Wilcox he had been an alcoholic for 20 years although a Christian. The man joined the church. Then he suggested a group be started to help people struggling with their past. He and Wilcox began a group in the lighthouse studying *Moving Beyond Your Past*.

Wilcox was glad to report the man recently began leading a new group in the study. He is a changed individual, Wilcox described.

The lighthouse is a symbol of the importance of prayer, said Wilcox, but it also seems to be a place where miracles occur.

B&R



letters/opinion

about letters

The editor is not bound to print all letters that are submitted for publication. No letters will be published that contain known factual errors. It is the responsibility of the individual submitting the letter to meet guidelines. Notification of the failure to meet guidelines is not the responsibility of the *Baptist and Reflector*. Letters:

► Should deal with issues relevant to Tennessee Baptists and should not deal with personalities or attack people.

► Must not be libelous or potentially libelous.

► Should be 300 words or less

► Must not be "form" or open letters.

► Will be accepted from writers once in a three-months period.

► Should be clearly marked they are intended for publication.

► Be signed and include address and phone number. Faxed letters are accepted, but must be signed. Letters that are e-mailed should be followed with a signed, mailed or faxed copy.

Enjoyed festival

What a joy to have attended the recent Dramatic Arts Festival in Franklin!

I was blessed abundantly at the festival by Clair and Becky Sumrall in their choreography workshop, and by the workshops of Greg Cagle. I was delighted to be in his workshops learning movement to Christian songs and hymns. I "stumbled" upon him thanks to Becky Sumrall, as the titles of the songs he was teaching didn't make it into the program. I am thankful to be part of the movement to restore the arts to the Kingdom of God, and am thankful to those who organized and prayed for this wonderful event.

Interpretive movement, or dance as it is called in the Bible, is the human expression of joy. We as Christians have more reason than anyone else to be expressing this joy. I believe interpretive movement to be a valid and valuable vehicle to share Christ with the lost and to encourage the Body of believers.

Mary Beth Duke
Smithville 37166

Enjoys tapes

It has been my privilege and joy to count Julian Suggs as my dear friend and colleague in ministry. I have always looked forward to hearing the Tennessee Baptist Chorale under his leadership. They have always done an outstanding job of ministering to me in their music.

It was my privilege to be in the congregation at Forrest Hills Baptist Church on Nov. 15, 1999, when they recorded their most recent album. It was an awesome presentation.

I have purchased four cassettes and twelve CDs both to use and to give away. Recently I drove nearly a thousand miles on a trip and enjoyed listening to this latest concert over and over on the road. It will almost make you shout!

I would encourage Tennessee Baptists to call the Church Music Office at 1-800-558-2090 and order either a CD or cassette of that wonderful worship music. I can guarantee it to minister to you.

May God richly bless Dr. Suggs in retirement, the Tennessee Baptist Chorale, and Dr. Suggs' successor when he comes on the field. Thank God for a wonderful music ministry among Tennessee Baptists.

Donald Cobb, pastor
First Baptist Church
Livingston 38570

Defends Mullins

In the April 19 article, "Al Mohler critiques 'soul competency,'" Mohler, in a Founders' Day address at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, attacks former Southern Seminary President E.Y. Mullins for emphasizing soul competency, thereby accusing Mullins of infecting the Southern Baptist Convention with an "autonomous individualism" which undermines biblical authority.

For the record, Southern Baptists did not elect Mullins as Southern Seminary president in 1899 and as SBC president in 1921 and Baptists worldwide did not elect him as Baptist World Alliance president in 1923 because he taught doctrines which undermined biblical authority. Southern Baptists knew exactly what they were doing when they named Mullins chair of the 1925 Committee on Baptist Faith and Message; that committee inserted a strong statement on biblical authority in the BF&M.

The Southern Baptist Historical Society has a pamphlet titled *E.Y. Mullins: Shaper of Theology*. This pamphlet contains a major section titled "His Doctrines of Biblical Authority." The Society will gladly send a complimentary copy to anyone who requests it. Simply write: Southern Baptist Historical Society, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728.

One more thing, Mullins was not alone in emphasizing the soul competency of the believer. That concept has permeated Baptist writings since the early

1600s. Baptists in England and Colonial America were whipped, jailed, banished, and otherwise persecuted defending soul competency and other freedoms for Baptists and all other people.

George W. Truett, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, and president of the Baptist World Alliance, addressed the BWA in 1939. He described the soul competency of the individual as "the keystone truth of the Baptists." In fact, "Out of this cardinal, bed-rock principle, all our Baptist principles emerge." Truett also observed that in the New Testament, "we find that supreme emphasis is everywhere put upon the principle of individualism" (*Official Report*, Baptist World Congress, 1939, p. 26).

Charles Dewese
executive director, SBHS
Brentwood 37024

Likes materials

As a Southern Baptist who reads the state Baptist newspaper, I am always wondering when and how Baptists will embarrass each other.

The April 19 issue was no exception. In the article on page 2, "...SBTS staffer criticizes 'Experiencing God' study," I find it hard to believe that someone would seek to criticize the "Experiencing God" study.

Having taken and taught this study, the belief that Dr. (Henry) Blackaby is putting experience above the Word of God is wrong. On page 9 of *Experiencing God*, Dr. Blackaby writes: "The Bible is God's Word to you. The Holy Spirit honors and uses God's Word in speaking to you. The Scriptures will be your source of authority for faith and practice. You cannot depend on traditions, your experiences, or the experiences of others to be accurate authorities on God's will and ways. Experiences and tradition must always be examined against the teaching of Scripture." Dr. Blackaby in the study settles that issue right here at the very beginning.

Hundreds of thousands of people around the world have grown in their Christian faith as a result of taking the "Experiencing God" course. I do not see the need in the life of our convention for seminary employees to be casting doubt on something that God has placed his hand of blessing on.

David Blanton
Maryville 37803

Agrees with criticism

A brief review of the "Experiencing God" discipleship study material supports the criticism of Sean Lucas (April 19 issue) that it is "imbalanced" and has "little doctrinal content."

But, I do not believe that LifeWay Christian Resources intentionally promotes experience over Scriptures. However, that is what has occurred with the "Experiencing God" study course. With the advent of the "seeker" phenomenon — which is directed at personal experience — the "Experiencing God" series has become linked together in that endeavor for personal experience. Today, for many, the yen for an experience has become the dominating factor for church attendance and worship.

Professing Christians fail to understand and recognize that Christianity is about experiencing God. In recognition of this spiritual immaturity, the "Experiencing God" study can be viewed as a response to that condition. Unfortunately, it has resulted in emphasizing individualism and personal experience.

In recognizing this craving for experience many worship leaders present worship formats designed to promote and produce an experience. Today's revival meetings have digressed to religious pep rallies. Congregational worship, in many cases, has become nothing more than religious hoopla with toe tapping, hand clapping, hip swaying music with emotionalism being viewed as a spiritual experience.

To know God through an established personal relationship is to experience God. (Jimmy) Draper is correct in saying, "When you get saved, you had an encounter with God. You experienced it." But therein lies a problem. Surveys indicate that nearly 51 percent of those expressing a belief in Christ have no recollection of an experience.

Johnny Miller
Dickson 37055

Saddened by editorial

I am very disappointed and saddened by your comments in your editorial in the April 12 issue.

It is unrealistic to expect everyone in the church/Christian community to appreciate the same type or types of music. It is very realistic to expect some people to be completely "turned off" by certain forms of music. Individual tastes and preferences

are fine. Unity in the church does not necessarily mean conformity.

It is, however, disappointing to have someone in a leadership position make such a pharisaical and judgmental statement as: "Such hard rock music has no place in God's house."

Simply put, if you have examined the lyrics that these performers sing and found them out of line with the Scriptures, or if you have taken the time at a concert or some other opportunity to meet the artist and found that their walk does not match their talk ... or read their publications and found their testimonies lacking in conviction, then you are correct, they should not be used to present the Gospel message to our youth in or out of "God's house."

However, if all you can object to is the volume, the beat, or a mode of presentation that does not suit your personal tastes, then you need to restate your objections as opinions or preferences, not as "convictions."

Please do not blame your being a "fuddy-duddy" on your age. I am 46 years old with two married children and a 16-year-old, the latter of which I accompanied to the Billy Graham "Rock the City" youth event. We liked some of the same music and disliked some of the same music. Still, I cannot say that the music I disliked "has no place in God's house" just because it does not suit my musical tastes.

What I can say is that there were thousands of young people (and a few of us old-timers) who came together in Jesus' name and had a great time enjoying some exciting music, heard a stirring and convicting message and then witnessed over 500 folks make decisions for Christ.

Some of the styles of contemporary Christian music take a real effort to get used to and some of it, some of us will never get used to.

I would suggest, however, that you not slam a judgmental door on a very effective witnessing and edifying tool just because you do not like it.

Vincent R. Harrison
Hendersonville 37075

It is obvious from responses I have received concerning this editorial and a related letter that Tennessee Baptists have strong, sincere opinions on both sides of this subject. Both views have been adequately covered in the "letters to the editor" forum. — Lonnie Wilkey

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



Vermont lawmakers mock marriage

Lonnie Wilkey, editor

Lawmakers in Vermont have made a mockery out of marriage (see story on page 2).

In mid-April, the Vermont Senate approved legislation which legalizes "civil unions" for homosexuals. The Senate passed the bill 19-11 on successive days. Their action followed a 76-69 victory for same sex unions in March by Vermont's House of Representatives.

The Senate version, according to a Baptist Press story, which differed slightly from the House version, was returned to the House where it was ratified by a 79-68 vote on April 25. It was then sent to Gov. Howard Dean who signed the bill into law on April 26. Their actions followed a decision of Vermont's Supreme Court last December that ruled state law discriminated against homosexual couples and that a legislative remedy was needed.

Exactly what does passage of this bill mean?

It means that in Vermont, two people of the same sex would have the privileges and rights of marriage without the name and without the federal benefits given to

marriage. The measure would provide state benefits and rights previously bestowed only on spouses in marriage, according to the Baptist Press article.

The article went on to state, "while the legislation describes marriage as only between a man and a woman, it enables homosexuals to receive licenses from town clerks and to be joined in a union that can be dissolved only in family court."

It is one thing to be tolerant of homosexuals and respect their rights to choose their own lifestyle. It is quite another to give credence to an immoral lifestyle through legislation.

Has Vermont become a modern day version of Sodom and Gomorrah?

The lawmakers in Vermont have overstepped their bounds in "redefining" what constitutes a marriage.

Marriage is a God-given institution between a man and a woman. Period. Exclamation point.

No matter how we try to hide it (calling it civil union rather than marriage) or make it "legal," homosexuality is a SIN. God's word is plain when talking about homosexuality: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is

abomination" (KJV).

If the Vermont action is limited only to that state, that would be one thing, but Vermont's action may trickle down to other states, including Tennessee.

There is no residency requirement in the Vermont law. According to the Baptist Press article, David Coolidge, director of the Washington-based Marriage Law Project, predicts homosexual couples in other states will go to Vermont to register their relationship as a civil union, then return to their home state to seek recognition of their union, possibly by challenging existing marriage laws.

Tennessee Baptists, we need to start now and let our elected officials know we do not want this recognition of "civil unions" for homosexuals to become law in Tennessee. While we do have a law in place prohibiting such "unions" and recognizing those performed in other states, it is not beyond reason to think that law will eventually be challenged in our court system.

Our country cannot continue to de-emphasize sin and expect God to ignore what we do. He will bring judgment upon us as a nation. And, if we as Christians do not speak up, God will judge us as well. **B&R**



just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Eudora Church, Memphis



Start with a smile

Tourist to Indian shopkeeper: "This is a beautiful hut. It feels like a real hide." Shopkeeper: "It's from Buffalo." Tourist: "You mean you killed a buffalo to make a lousy, two-bit hut?" Shopkeeper: "No, material came from Buffalo, N.Y."

Take this truth

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Memorize this Scripture

"... do not ye after their works: for they say and do not." — Matthew 23:3

Pray this prayer

"Lord, help me to imitate good examples, avoid hypocritical actions, and recognize the difference." ■ — Wood can be e-mailed at drfredwood@aol.com

Take time to honor your mother this Mother's Day

guest column

by Bryant Millsaps
President/Treasurer
Tennessee Baptist
Children's Homes

They were two completely different women.

One was born in the early 19th century and experienced her teenage years during the early days of the Depression. The other, while born later, nevertheless grew up in the austere times of post-depression South Carolina.

One took a work scholarship to a small, Christian college 100 miles from her home because it was her only way out of the cotton fields of west Tennessee. The other never had the opportunity to fully complete her high school education because her earning power was needed to keep her family to-

gether; what should have been a time of wonder and growth as a young woman became a time of difficult labor in the cotton mills that still spot the South Carolina landscape.

One of these ladies was a teacher who over a career of nearly 40 years taught Latin, Algebra, English, Latin, French, Biology, and Typing, all the while balancing her love of teaching with her love of home long before the modern discourse on the same topic began. Between school and home, she worked 14-16 hour days so that she and her school-teaching husband could provide a better life for their two sons than either of them had had as children.

The other lady, after having the first of three daughters, made a conscious decision to devote her entire life to raising her children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. She worked 14-16 hour days at

home to create an environment of great comfort and happiness for her children and shift-working husband.

At different times and in different ways, both of these Godly women poured themselves into a boy, a teenager, a young father and husband, a businessman, and a public servant who would one day surrender his life to full-time ministry. They encouraged him. They challenged him. They chastised him. They prayed without ceasing for him. Today, they enjoy the glory of Heaven. And the man they nurtured now serves the Lord at Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

Unfortunately, the number of children without the self-sac-

rificing love of a mother continues to grow. They have rarely, if ever, experienced the stability of a dedicated mother. Instead, their precious lives have been filled with heartache, abuse, neglect, and abandonment.

This Mother's Day (May 14), be sure your mother knows how much you love and appreciate her. Even if she has not been what you consider perfect, she is your mother and the Word instructs you to honor her. Tell her and show her your thankfulness.

You can also honor or remember the special mothers in your life by supporting the Mother's Day Offering for your Tennessee Baptist Children's Home and making a difference in the lives of children in crisis.

That's how my wife and I will honor the memory of these two very different women this Mother's Day — one who was my mother and the other who was my mother-in-law. ■



MILLSAPS

Individuals are responsible for own actions, sins

my answer

by Billy Graham
evangelist



Dear Dr. Graham: My children are all grown, and I never see or hear from them except when they want something. This really hurts me. Where did I go wrong as a mother to make them grow up so selfish and thoughtless? — Mrs. A.V.

You didn't "make" or force them to be selfish or thoughtless. They decided to be that way on their own.

In other words, they alone must bear the responsibility for the way they act, and you should not blame yourself alone because they are so self-centered.

That doesn't mean you were a perfect parent, of course. No parent is perfect, and we do influence our children in wrong directions when we fall short. Sometimes we do it by what we teach them (or fail to teach

them); sometimes we do it by the way we act. If your children saw you acting selfishly or thoughtlessly toward others, for example, they could easily have grown up thinking this was the way they should also treat people.

Ultimately, we each are responsible for our own actions and sins. The Bible says, "... The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. ... (Ezekiel 18:20).

Don't be burdened by the past, constantly worrying

about what you should have done differently. Instead, bring your sins and failures to Christ, asking him to cleanse you and live in your heart.

Pray for your children, that God will convict them of their selfishness and their need of him. Christ can change their hearts and he will, as they open their lives to him. ■ —

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

May

- 3 — Pray for the Laotian Church in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada, as the church seeks a pastor.
- 4 — Pray for Dianna Hughes, TBC MAI administrative assistant to the group leader, and her husband, Harry, who are working April 28-May 7 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They are among four other people from First Baptist Church, Fairview, leading a revival at First Baptist Church of Barros Filho.
- 5 — Praise God for HeartCall Training, evangelism training for women held recently in the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.
- 6 — Pray for four children in Portugal who recently accepted Christ during a camp led by IMB missionaries Steve and Sharon Ford.
- 7 — Pray for Royal Heights Baptist Church in Delta, British Columbia, Canada, as it seeks spiritual renewal.
- 8 — Pray for a 16-member group from the Tennessee Baptist Foundation who will work May 19-28 doing construction and evangelism in Rio de Janeiro.
- 9 — Pray for Nicki Chandler, an IMB journeyman missionary who has begun a Bible study group for single women in Lisbon, Portugal. Ask God to bless this new work.

New president, doctrinal review top agenda

By Todd Starnes
For Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — The election of a new president and possible revisions to the historic Baptist Faith and Message confessional statement are on the agenda for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14 at the Orange County Convention Center, here.

The theme of the meeting, "Partners in the Harvest Worldwide," is taken from Matthew 9:37-38: "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers." The theme also ties into this year's 75th anniversary celebration of the SBC's Cooperative Program channels and ministry initiatives.

SBC President Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., is completing his second one-year term in office.

To date, James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga., is the only named nominee for the SBC presidency. His name will be placed before messengers by Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas.

An SBC official predicted messenger registration of 16,500 messengers for the 143rd session of the SBC in its 155-year history.

"A lot of Southern Baptists will take this opportunity to vacation in central Florida as well as attend the annual meeting," said Lee Porter, longtime SBC registration secretary.

Messengers at the Tuesday-Wednesday SBC annual meeting will hear preaching, singing, and reports from SBC entities as well as vote on various important matters, including possible recommendations from the Baptist Faith and Message study



committee.

Messengers to the 1999 SBC in Atlanta gave Patterson approval to form a study committee to review the Baptist Faith and Message, a statement of Baptist beliefs drafted in 1963 and amended to include an article on the family in 1998.

The study committee's recommendations will be made public following its meeting in May.

Messengers will be asked to adopt a 2000-01 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget for SBC entities in the amount of \$167,996,385. More than \$8.4 million over the current year's budget, the proposed budget will retain the same distribution percentages to 12 SBC entities.

Also on the agenda is a proposed change in the Annuity Board's mission statement and ministry assignments. In February, the SBC Executive Committee approved a proposal for the Annuity Board to expand its ministry assignments to include personal investing for Southern Baptist ministers and employees. The Annuity Board also would be allowed to offer institu-

tional investment management services for Southern Baptist organizations.

If messengers approve the measure, it would clarify the Annuity Board's responsibilities "to assist the churches and other denominational entities by making available retirement plan services, life and health coverage, risk management programs, and personal and institutional investment programs."

In addition to Patterson bringing the annual message of the SBC president, the convention sermon will be preached by Bailey Smith, an Atlanta-based evangelist and former SBC president.

The two evenings of the annual meeting will feature missions presentations by the International Mission Board on Tuesday and the North American Mission Board on Wednesday.

The week prior to the SBC, the annual Crossover evangelistic effort coordinated by NAMB and Florida Baptists, will penetrate metro Orlando with the Gospel. Hundreds of teenagers and adults will participate in mission opportunities through

out the city.

The two-day schedule for the annual meeting will mean messengers wanting to introduce resolutions for consideration must do so before the start of the Tuesday afternoon session. Messengers who want to have resolutions considered are urged to send them to the Resolutions Committee before the annual meeting.

The registration area, at the main entrance to the Orange County Convention Center, will open at 4 p.m. on Sunday, June 11, and at 8 a.m. on the following Monday through Wednesday. It will close shortly after 9 p.m. each night.

In addition, a number of satellite meetings, such as the annual Pastors' Conference and Woman's Missionary Union meeting, will be held Sunday and Monday prior to the SBC annual meeting.

And in an effort to attract younger Southern Baptist messengers, the North American Mission Board is hosting a youth rally on June 11 beginning at 7 p.m. in the convention auditorium. Evangelist David Nasser will speak and the contemporary group "Foreverafter" will lead in worship.

On June 12, students are invited to attend a leadership conference, with a morning session led by NAMB President Robert E. Reccord, who will speak on principles of leadership, and Scott Grissom, a student evangelism associate for NAMB, who will lead campus evangelism training. For more information or to register for these events, visit the www.studentz.com/sbc Internet site. ■ — EDITOR'S NOTE: A complete schedule of the SBC meeting is available at www.sbc.net or by sending a SASE to: Baptist and Reflector, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024.



WMU to install Lee; elect new president

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — The installation of a new executive director/treasurer, election of a new national president, and a missions celebration will highlight the June 11-12 Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting and Missions Conference.

The yearly meeting of WMU members and guests will be held at the Orange County Convention Center on Sunday and Monday prior to the Southern Baptist Convention's June 13-14 annual meeting. Sessions begin at 2 p.m. Sunday afternoon and conclude Monday evening. The meeting will develop the theme, "Dispelling the Darkness."

Along with five annual meeting plenary sessions, the WMU event will also include a missions conference. Participants will attend four one-hour conferences covering such topics as women and the Web; storytelling; missions in the 21st century; and money management.

The missions conference sessions will be held in the Peabody Hotel and restricted to registered participants only. The cost is \$35 per person. Registration may be done in advance or on site. The annual meeting sessions are free and open to the public.

Wanda S. Lee will be installed as WMU's seventh executive director/treasurer in the opening session of the organization's annual meeting. Lee, who was elected Jan. 22 by the WMU executive board, served the organization as national president from June 1996 until assuming her new post March 1.

Among those scheduled to participate in the installation service are WMU's three previous executive directors, Dellanna W. O'Brien, Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, and Alma Hunt.

A new national president will be elected during the Monday morning session and assume office at the conclusion of the annual meeting. The WMU executive board will bring a nomination before the WMU members present for their approval. The new president will be eligible to serve five one-year terms. National recording secretary Janet Hoffman is eligible to be re-elected to a fifth and final term. ■



LEE

Pastors' Conference takes on style of 'old-fashioned revival'

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Anticipate an old-fashioned camp meeting-style revival at the Pastors' Conference preceding this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, said Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, and president of the Pastors' Conference.



SUTTON

"We are really excited about this year's conference," Sutton said of the June 11-12 event in Orlando, Fla. "It's looking more and more like a camp meeting revival."

In what Sutton called a first for the conference, this year's overall theme, "Partners in the Harvest," will reflect the SBC's Cooperative Program emphasis for 2000.

The theme for Sunday evening is "Harvest in My Personal Life." Themes for Monday's sessions include "Harvest in My Church" and "Harvest in My World."

In a departure from tradition, the Pastors' Conference will begin on Sunday night instead of the usual Sunday afternoon kickoff. "In the past, many pastors could not attend the first session because of responsibilities at their churches," Sutton said. "Starting in the evening will allow those pastors to attend their churches in the morning and make the first session in Orlando."

Pastors' Conference speakers, session by session, will be:

Sunday, June 11, 6 p.m.: Jim Henry, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla.; Hayes Wicker, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Naples, Fla.; Jay Strack, evangelist from Orlando; Jerry Vines, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.

Monday, June 12, 8:30 a.m.: Rodney Gage, family author from Fort Worth, Texas; Ken Whitten, senior pastor, Idlewild Baptist Church, Tampa, Fla.; Charles Lowery, senior pastor, Hoffmantown Church, Albuquerque, N.M.; and James Merritt, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga.

Monday, June 12, 1:25 p.m.: Charles "Chuck" McAlister, senior pastor, Second Baptist

Church, Hot Springs, Ark.; Curt Dodd, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Merritt Island, Fla.; Steve Gaines, senior pastor, Gardendale's First Baptist Church, Gardendale, Ala.; Albert R. Meredith, senior pastor, Wedgwood Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

Monday, June 12, 6 p.m.: Ken Freeman, evangelist from San Antonio, Texas; Adrian P. Rogers, senior pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn.; Johnny Hunt, senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.; and Fred Wolfe, evangelist from Mobile, Ala.

Special musical guests include Dan Oxley, a former member of the contemporary gospel group Truth; Tom Shumate; John and Suzanne Rushing; and Carolyn Reed. ■

755 attend 2000 RA Congress at Belmont



For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The 2000 Tennessee Royal Ambassador Congress, held April 20-22, at Belmont University here, drew 755 participants and staff.

The 46th annual RA Congress was open to boys and girls, young men and young women, and their leaders who are participants in MissionKids, EZRAs, RAs, Challengers groups, and others.

Sponsored by the Baptist Men's Ministries team of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Congress is the statewide convention and competition for all RA chapters and Challenger groups from TBC churches.

During Congress, participants attended missions conferences, missions events, and worship services.

A special Congress offering of \$2,427 was raised and will be given to the Wade Watts family of Memphis. Watts, an IMB missionary to Peru, is on medical furlough recuperating from an overseas traffic accident.

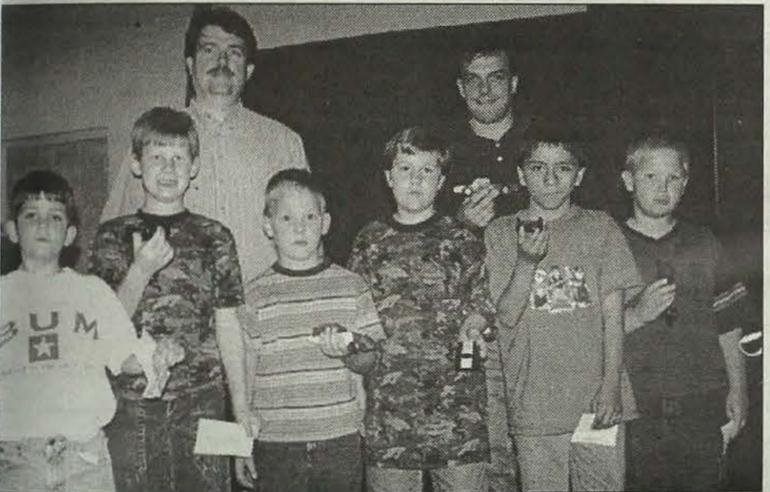
New officers were elected for 2001. They are Nathan Barrett, president, and Kelly Benefield, vice president, both members of Brainerd Hills Baptist Church, Chattanooga. Benefield is the first young woman ever elected as a Congress officer. ■ — Marcia Knox



ABOVE, Christopher Davison, an RA from Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory, makes sure his flag is with him during the Parade of Flags. **BELOW**, M.B. Howard of Oak Grove Baptist Church, Covington talks with RAs about how their chapters could make wooden toys for missionaries to use on the field in areas where toys are not plentiful. — Photos by Marcia Knox and Lonnie Wilkey



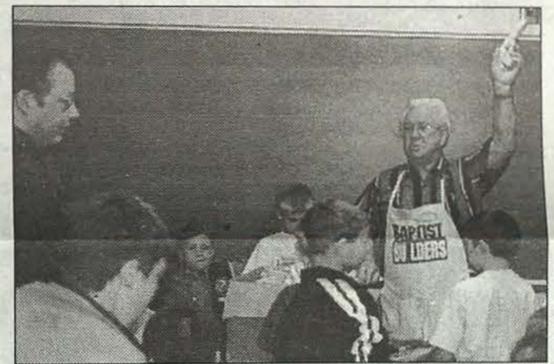
MISSIONARY Jeanie Seale of the Caribbean Basin talks to Royal Ambassadors from Southside Baptist Church, Martin. Boys, from left, are Sa'el Al-Hagal, Cory Sandefer, Alex Whiteman, Zach Hardy. With her are Pastor Fady Al-Hagal, left, and David Spencer, right.



DISPLAYING THEIR RA race cars are a group from Woodland Baptist Church, Brownsville. From left, front row, are Joey Moore, Kody Littles, Cody Lambert, Wes Porch, Joseph Rodriguez, Cody Lambert; back row Pastor Mike Moore and Barry Sceals.



BOB DAVISON of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Missions Awareness and Involvement staff, introduces incoming officers for the 2001 RA Congress. They include Nathan Barrett, center, president, and Kelly Benefield, vice president.



Acteens 'take the stand' during Summit 2000 in Nashville

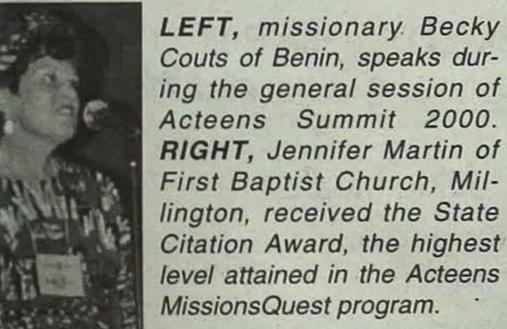
For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Acteens Summit 2000 drew 590 participants to the Nashville Convention Center April 20-22.

In addition to attending conferences and meeting missionaries, Acteens received hands-on missions experience.

Acteens conducted mission projects in Nashville, Madison, and Franklin.

Projects included door-to-door surveys for new church starts, nursing home ministry, filling "goody bags" for participants in the Music City Marathon held April 29 (a ministry of First Baptist Church, Nashville), ministry to the homeless in a local shelter, and a project at the Christian Woman's Job Corps site in Nashville. ■



LEFT, missionary Becky Couts of Benin, speaks during the general session of Acteens Summit 2000. **RIGHT**, Jennifer Martin of First Baptist Church, Millington, received the State Citation Award, the highest level attained in the Acteens MissionsQuest program.



FORMER Acteens Panelists assisting with Acteens Summit 2000 included, from left, Amanda Westerman, Sylvia Baptist Church, Dickson; Melody Maxwell, First Baptist Church, Collierville; Erica Harms, First Baptist Church, Franklin; and Kristel O'Malley, Germantown Baptist Church, Germantown.



TENNESSEE STATE ACTEENS PANELISTS visit with Amanda Day of the state WMU staff during Acteens Summit 2000. From left are Carrie Perkins, Cottage Grove Baptist Church, Dresden; Connie Cooper, First Baptist Church, Dickson; Day; Robyn Welshan, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Maryville; and Janette Robbins, Liberty Hill Baptist Church, West Point.



WORKING in a clothes closet of Christian Women's Job Corps - Nashville, are, from left, Chantell Southern, Erin Littrell, and Alana McCormack, of First Baptist Church, Ethridge, and Char Gray, chair of the CWJC council.

leaders

■ **Robert "Jody" Gamble**, director of missions for Maury Baptist Association, based in Columbia, since 1993, has resigned, effective May 8, to become pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in his hometown of Scottsboro, Ala. Gamble formerly served as pastor of Pleasant Heights Baptist Church in Columbia. He and his wife, Wanda, have three children.



GAMBLE

■ **Ben Pierce** has been called as pastor of Pleasant Grove Piney Baptist Church, New Market. He and his wife, Aluna, have two preschool daughters.

■ Nance's Grove Baptist Church, New Market, has called **Chris Hutchins** as pastor. He and his wife, Julie, have three sons.

■ Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, Covington, has called **Craig Batson** as pastor.

■ **Bryan Watson** has resigned as minister of youth at Sharon Baptist Church, Knoxville, effective May 7.

deaths

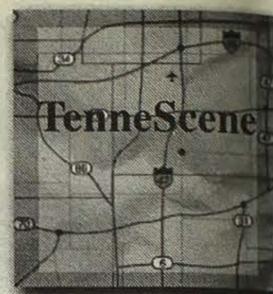
■ **Vernon Webster**, retired director of missions in Sequatchie Valley Baptist Association (1951-69), based in Whitwell, died April 22. He was 95. Webster also served as pastor of several churches in the state.

■ **Virgil Blankenship**, 70, a retired pastor from Weakley County, died March 7. He served as pastor of four churches in Weakley County,

three in Henry County, and three churches in Kentucky. He was a member of First Baptist Church, Gleason. He is survived by a daughter and two grandsons.

■ A Belmont University staff member and his family were killed in a private plane crash April 21 in Norton, Va., while en route to Roanoke, Va. Killed were **William "Bill" McCulley**, 34, director of institutional research, his wife, **Cynthia**, 32, and children **William Ryan**, 4, and **Megan**

Kendra, 21 months. killed was Mrs. McCulley father, **Ira Brown Walker**, 65. McCulley joined Belmont staff last October.



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DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS: Muscle Shoals Baptist Association is accepting resumes from May 1 until May 31. Send resume to Rev. Steve Agee, 2412 County Rd. 317, Moulton, AL 35650.

wounded ministers

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May 12-13

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Call the TBC Missions Awareness and Involvement Group for
more information at (615) 371-7926 or 1-800-558-2090.

Schedule of Events — Meeting in New Conference Center

Friday, May 12

3 p.m. — Rally Registration Opens
6 p.m. — Meal in Dining Hall
7 p.m. — Session I in Conference Center — Welcome, testimonies, introductions, worship, music, National Response update
8:30 p.m. — Break, Fellowship Time

Saturday, May 13

6 a.m. — Coffee in Dining Hall

7 a.m. — Breakfast in Dining Hall
8 a.m. — Session II in Conference Center — Introduction to Disaster Relief Update
9-9:30 a.m. — Break
9:30-11 a.m. — Session III in Conference Center — Feeding and Cleaning Update
11-11:30 a.m. — Closing Session in Conference Center
11:45 a.m. — Lunch

leaders

- **Stephen Shelhammer** accepted the pastorate of First Baptist Church, Deurville. He and his wife, Mela, have three children.
- **Ben Wood** has been led as pastor of Poplar Kings Baptist Church, Huron.
- **Sheldon Hale** recently signed as pastor of Blessed Hope Baptist Church, Troy, to

accept a pastorate in Kentucky. His last Sunday at Blessed Hope will be May 7.

- **Eddie Berry and Hershel Lyon** recently were ordained as deacons at Green River Baptist Church, Waynesboro.
- **Roger Phillips** recently was ordained into the Gospel ministry at Cedar Hill Baptist Church, Baxter.
- **James Nabors** will be ordained into the ministry May 7 at Eastwood Baptist Church, Cookeville.

2000 Senior Adult Conference

Theme: "Serve with Gladness"
 First Baptist Church, Sevierville, TN
 Sept. 12-14, 2000
 Bible Study — Paul Powell
 Music — Scott Andrews
 Entertainment — Joe Mason

Topics: Senior Adult Leadership, Gerald Qualls; Be intentional About Our Later Years, Pam Pilote; Laughing Matters, Mary Allen; How to Involve Senior Adults in Criminal Justice Ministry, Bill Howse; Opportunities of Service and Involvement, Bryant Millsaps; The Art of Being Humorously Fit, Joe Mason; Caring for Alzheimer's Caregiver, Gene Nabi; Touching Tomorrow: The Power of Christian Estate Planning, Gary Coltharp; Long-term Care for the New Millennium, Kenny Cooper.

Registration is \$15 per person. For more information, a schedule, and a motel list, contact Don Mauldin, Tennessee Baptist Convention, 1-800-558-2090 extension 2047.

churches

■ **First Baptist Church, Lexington**, will dedicate its expanded and renovated sanctuary on Sunday, May 7.

■ **Charlotte Road Baptist Church, Nashville**, will hold an *Experiencing God* Weekend Conference May 5-7. The Friday and Saturday evening sessions will begin at 6:50 p.m. and the Saturday morning session at 9 a.m. The Sunday service will begin at 9:30 a.m. The conference is divided into small groups for children through senior adults. The public is invited to the free sessions. For more information, call the church at (615) 356-5810.

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Church, Woodbury, will be in revival services May 17-20 with a different speaker each night. Slated to speak, in order beginning on Wednesday night, are Dean Northcutt, Phillip Rowland, Charles Gresham, and Steve Puckett. Neiman Kell will lead music.

■ **Plainview Baptist Church, Woodbury**, has a new building under construction.

■ **Cumberland Baptist Church, Knoxville**, will host a forum on "The Future of College Ministry" on May 18 from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The forum will feature Mike Woodruff, director of the Ivy Jungle Network. The usual fee is \$45, but those who register through Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship will pay a \$10 fee which includes lunch and a notebook. To make reservations before May 12, call 1-888-661-8223.

■ **Hickory Hills Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet**, invites the community to a special "Harvest Days" revival May 7-

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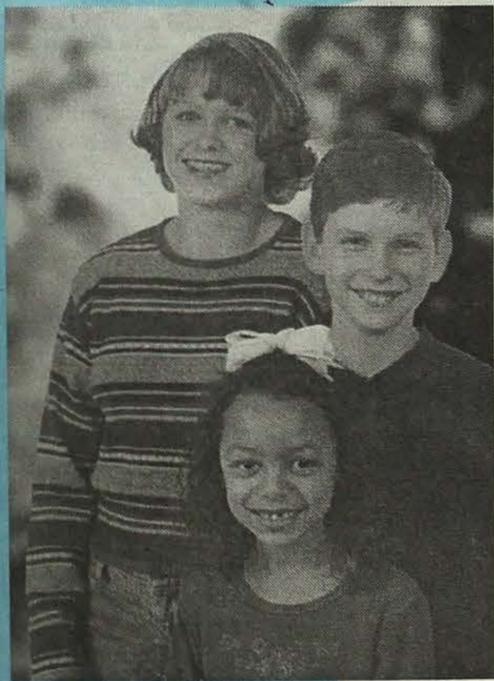


8. Leading the Sunday service will be Christian vocalist Elizabeth Montgomery and W.D. Thomason, senior adult minister at Immanuel Baptist Church, Lebanon, and former pastor of Green Hill Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet. Leading the Monday service will be Gary Buck, a former member of the Four Guys and minister of music at Richland Baptist Church, Nashville, and Kevin Shrum, pastor of Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville. For more information, call the church at (615) 754-2575.

associations

■ **Beech River Baptist Association** churches are sponsoring a Celebrate Jesus 2000 crusade with evangelist Harold Hunter. The crusade began April 30 and will continue through May 4.

Though my mother and my father forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Ps. 27:10



Mother's Day is almost here!

During the month of May, please give to the **Mother's Day Offering** for Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

For FREE Mother's Day Offering envelopes, bulletins, or bulletin inserts, call 1-800-624-8591 or order on-line at www.tbch4kids.org/form_mom.htm.

- According to Tennessee's Department of Children's Services, 17,679 children were placed in state custody last year; the state then places these children in various residential care facilities including Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. TBCH also receives children from individual and ministerial referrals. Last year, TBCH supported more than 450 children at 13 TBCH locations statewide.
- The Mother's Day Offering provides one-fourth of the funds needed annually to support this ministry to children in crisis. The MDO 2000 goal for the children is \$1,500,000.
- To honor your mother and help children in need, include your mother's name (and address if appropriate) on the Mother's Day Offering envelope distributed at your church. Or mail your gift and designation information directly to TBCH at the address listed on this ad. TBCH will then print your mother's name and yours in our Mother's Day newsletter and send you a copy of this special issue.

Thank you Tennessee Baptists for providing for our children through the Mother's Day Offering!

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Famine threatens Ethiopia; IMB mobilizes early response

Baptist Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Southern Baptists have mobilized to help some of the 7.7 million people threatened by an emerging famine in southeastern Ethiopia.

And thanks to a God-inspired gift, workers were able to begin helping even before the crisis hit television screens in the United States.

Three years of drought have destroyed crops and devastated livestock in Ethiopia and six neighboring countries in the Horn of Africa. Regional conflicts are making the delivery of relief supplies difficult, and children and the weak have begun dying from malnutrition-related illnesses.

A 1984-85 famine in Ethiopia — which claimed one million

lives — shocked the world with televised images of starving people. Now the United Nations estimates as many as 16 million people in seven countries are in danger. Governments are trying to deliver massive amounts of grain to the region, hoping a full-blown famine can be averted.

Southern Baptists are working with fellow Baptists and Great Commission Christians, as well as non-governmental organizations, to minister to people who might not be reached by the large-scale programs, said a missions strategist focusing on the region.

"We are seeking to find places where there are gaps that need to be filled in the relief efforts," said the missionary, who asked that his name be withheld for security reasons. "We want to

mount a response with a more human face than the massive relief projects and put Southern Baptist money and help where it will benefit some of the more forgotten people."

Southern Baptist workers, who have been dealing with the problem for six months, were delighted when an unexpected gift for Ethiopian hunger relief was received.

"Over a month and a half ago, before this crisis even hit the press, some Baptists sent us \$7,000 for Ethiopian hunger relief," he said. "We've been able to feed these people on the streets

and work through these churches because God moved in the hearts of some Southern Baptists even before the big organizations started moving in.

"In some ways, that couple of loaves and couple of fish are being multiplied because they were there early."

Contributions to assist with the famine relief effort may be sent to: International Mission Board, Hunger and Relief Fund - Ethiopia Famine Relief, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. All donations will go directly to Southern Baptist relief work in the region. ■



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MINISTER OF MUSIC: Growing evangelistic church is seeking creative minister of music to lead 100+ choir, praise and worship graded choir program, audio/visual ministry, and dramatic productions. For more information send resume to Search Committee, P.O. Box 15148 Greenville SC 29610.

YOUTH MINISTER: First Baptist Church of Sunbright, Tenn., seeking a bivocational youth minister. Please send resumes, FBC, Search Committee, P.O. Box 237, Sunbright, TN 37872 or mail to youth@fbcnsunbright.net

YOUTH/CHILDREN: Part-time minister of youth/children needed. Contact Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Martin, Tenn., (901) 585-5939.

YOUTH MINISTER: Part-time staff position is available at Boynton Baptist Church, Ringgold, GA. Church is located off I-75 South approximately 8 miles from Chattanooga. Interested youth ministers mail your resume Youth Minister Search Committee, 4093 Boynton Dr., Ringgold, GA 30736 or fax (706) 861-7238.

MUSIC MINISTER: First Baptist Church, Mt. Zion, Ill., is seeking full-time music minister. Please send resume to FBC, P.O. Box 137, Mt. Zion, IL 62549, Attn: Scott Doughty.

DAY CARE DIRECTOR: Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., is accepting application for director for their child care/kindergarten program. Send resumes to Inglewood Baptist Church, 3901 Gallatin Rd., Nashville, TN 37216, Attn: Rev. W. Riley.

PASTOR: Bloomfield Baptist Church, Bloomfield, Ky., prayerfully seeking a pastor. Bloomfield Baptist is a growth oriented church with an average attendance of 250 in morning worship. MDiv is minimal requirement. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, Bloomfield Baptist Church, P.O. Box 217, Bloomfield, KY 40008.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION: First Baptist Church, North Myrtle Beach, SC seeks a full-time minister of education. Experience preferred. Salary and benefits negotiable. Send resume to Personnel Committee, 200 Hwy 1 South, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582. No phone calls please.

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June 2 — George Jones in concert in the Amphitheater. Tickets on sale April 29, 2000.
June 8 - July 29 — "Incident at Looney's Tavern," Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 8:15 p.m. Outdoor musical drama relating true story of Winston County during the Civil War period. In the outdoor theater. Adults \$12 with discounts for groups and children.
June 8 - July 29 — "Alabama Music Revue," Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 7:00 p.m. A 30-minute show saluting Alabama singers and songwriters. Indoor theater. All seats \$2.
Aug. 10 - Sept. 2 — "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers," Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 8:15 p.m. A rip-roaring hit with audiences of all ages. In the outdoor theater. Adults \$15 with discounts for groups and children.
Aug. 10 - Sept. 2 — Broadway Music Revue, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 7:00 p.m. A 30-minute show featuring favorite Broadway tunes. Indoor theater. All seats \$2.



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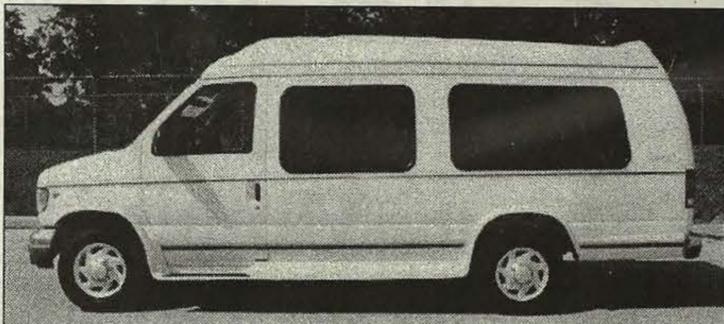
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Florida pastor to be nominated as first vice president at SBC

Associated Baptist Press

WINTER PARK, Fla. — A Florida pastor has announced that he will be nominated for first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention when it meets June 13-14 in Orlando, Fla.

Brad Hoffman, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Tusculawilla, Fla., announced his candidacy in a press release. The statement said he would be nominated by Richard Behers, pastor of First Baptist Church in Largo, Fla., and Alan Berry, minister of music and youth at Catawba Springs Baptist Church in Brewton, Ala.

Hoffman's church has been featured in *Growing Churches* magazine for its ministry-based approach. ■

Blackaby to speak to SBC evangelists

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Noted author Henry Blackaby and

pastor Ronnie Floyd are the scheduled speakers for a June 11 worship service here hosted by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists.

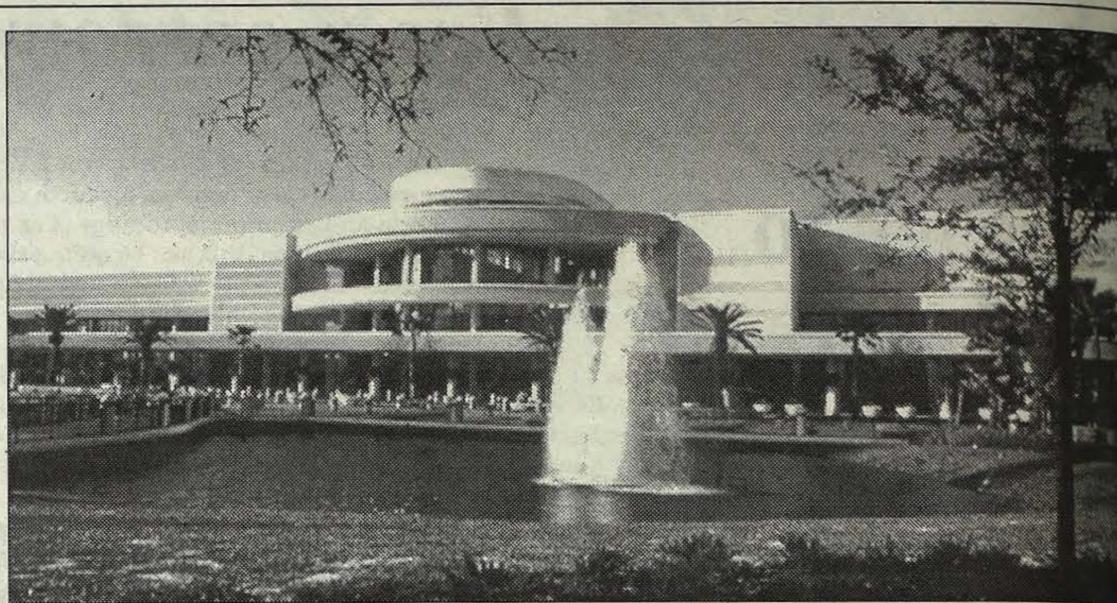
The Sunday morning worship service will be held at the Orange County Convention Center, said **Jerry Drace, the conference's president and an evangelist based in Humboldt.**

The Orlando convention will mark the third year COSBE has sponsored a Sunday morning worship service prior to the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

In addition to Blackaby, author of the "Experiencing God" discipleship materials and Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark., evangelist Sammy Tippit will share a word of testimony and Dale Crum will perform several dramatic sketches. The service will begin at 9:15 a.m. in the convention center auditorium.

Another outreach opportunity is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13. Tentatively called a "Homecoming Celebration," Drace said the musical event will be hosted by contemporary Christian artist Gary McSpadden. The celebration is scheduled immediately following the SBC's Tuesday night session.

The annual meeting of the COSBE, which will include the election of officers, is set for Tuesday, June 13, in Room 303C of the Orlando convention center. Last year, COSBE unanimously approved its new affirmations of accountability as well as the creation of a



Site of SBC annual meeting

The Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla., will be the site of the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 13-14. For more details on the annual meeting, see story on page 6.

Samaritan's Fund for evangelists in need. Drace said more than \$50,000 has been given to the fund since last year.

For additional information on the COSBE activities, contact Drace at (901) 784-0087. ■

Premiere slate to address DOMs

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — A premiere slate of speakers will highlight the 39th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions, said Charles Nunn, administrator and treasurer of the organization.

Featured speakers include

Calvin Miller of Samford University in Alabama; Wanda Lee, president of the Woman's Missionary Union; leadership speaker John Maxwell of Atlanta; Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church in California; and *Experiencing God* author Henry Blackaby.

The conference will be June 11-12 at the Radisson Universal Hotel here. This year's theme is, "Your Association Empowered by Christ."

The annual luncheon for retired directors and their spouses is scheduled at noon Monday, June 12. The orientation for new directors of missions will be at 1:30 p.m. Monday, with a dinner for them that evening at 6 p.m. ■

African American pastors plan event

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — The annual worship service and business meeting of the African American Fellowship of the Southern Baptist Convention will be June 11-12 at Tang Baptist Church here. Mark Croston, pastor of East E Baptist Church, Suffolk, Va., will be the featured speaker Sunday, June 11.

A pastors' meeting and annual luncheon will be held June 12 at the Omni Ross Hotel. Cost is \$30. For information, call Ethel Williams 1-800-999-3113, ext. 1423. ■

SBC seminaries plan luncheons for alumni and friends during SBC

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — The six Southern Baptist seminaries will hold alumni and friends meetings in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 13-14 at the Orange County Convention Center. A report on each meeting follows.

Southeastern Seminary

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's 2000 National Alumni and Friends Luncheon will be June 14 in the Orange County Convention Center's Valencia Ballroom, Section A, Level 4.

The luncheon will begin at 12:30 p.m., following the conclusion of the morning session of the SBC annual meeting. Southeastern administrators and staff will share updates from the seminary over the past year.

Luncheon tickets at \$12 each, should be reserved through Southeastern's alumni office by May 31. Make a check payable to SEBTS and mail to SEBTS Alumni Office, P.O. Box 1889, Wake Forest, NC 27588.

Southwestern Seminary

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will host its national alumni

luncheon June 14 at 12:30 p.m. in the Orange County Convention Center.

The seminary will present five distinguished alumni awards and SWBTS President Kenneth S. Hemphill will give a progress report on the seminary.

To order tickets, send a check for \$15 per person to Alumni Relations, Southwestern Seminary, P.O. Box 22480, Fort Worth, TX 76122. Make checks payable to Southwestern Seminary. For more information, call (817) 923-1921, ext. 7260.

New Orleans Seminary

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's annual Alumni & Friends Reunion will be held June 14 at noon in the Orange County Convention Center's Valencia Ballroom, Section A, Level 4.

The meeting will include the annual "State of the Seminary" address by President Chuck Kelley and the faculty's annual presentation of the distinguished alumnus award.

Tickets are \$12 each and may be ordered by mail or at the seminary's booth at the convention. Cost of the luncheon at the door will be \$15. Make check payable to NOBTS and mail to Melissa Peden, Alumni Office, New Or-

leans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126. Tickets ordered from the office after June 1 may be picked up at the seminary's booth in the SBC exhibit hall.

Southern Seminary

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will hold its annual alumni and friends luncheon June 14 at 12:30 p.m. in the Orange County Convention Center's Valencia Ballroom, Section C.

The luncheon will feature an address by SBTS President R. Albert Mohler Jr.

Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$23 at the door. For information, contact the seminary's office of institutional advancement at 1-800-626-5525, ext. 4143. Advance tickets must be purchased by June 9.

Midwestern Seminary

Alumni and friends of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will gather at noon on June 14 in Room 305 of Level 3 of the Orange County Convention Center for the annual alumni luncheon and an update on the seminary.

The seminary will honor outstanding alumni. Also, the seminary will honor long-time professors A.W. "Pete" and Jo

Ann Butler as honorary alumni of the year. He will retire this year as head of the music program but will continue as senior professor of church music. Ann Butler retired last year as associate professor of church music.

Advance tickets are \$15 if ordered before June 9 or \$17 at the convention by June 13. To place orders, write Alumni Office, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 5001 N. Country Trfwy., Kansas City, MO 64118 or (816) 414-3738.

Golden Gate Seminary

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary will host alumni and friends for the seminary's annual luncheon June 14 following the morning session of the SBC annual meeting. The luncheon will take place in Room 305 adjacent to the convention's general proceedings.

Seminary President William Crews will share a "state of the seminary" report and an Alumni Achievement Award will be presented.

Tickets for the luncheon are \$17 per person and may be purchased from the seminary's Office of Alumni Relations, 201 Seminary Drive, Mill Valley, CA 94941. ■