

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

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Statewide Edition

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During State Evangelism Conference

Ministers, laity reminded of 'mandate'

By Connie Davis & Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Speakers representing various aspects of Southern Baptist life echoed a common theme during the Jan. 15-16 State Evangelism Conference held at Judson Baptist Church here — the need to follow the Great Commission's "mandate to multiply."

The meeting featured messages from pastors of large and mega churches, a church planter, denominational leaders, evangelists, and a seminary professor.

Larry Robertson, TBC evangelism specialist, estimated nearly 1,200 people attended portions of the conference during the two-day event.

Savannah pastor

Randy Isbell, pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church, Savannah, noted that in order to develop a soul-winning strategy a person must enter into a partnership with "an evangelism specialist" who has been

involved in bringing people to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ from Genesis to Revelation. "He's the Holy Ghost of God."

This same evangelism specialist is the one who directs evangelism efforts today, Isbell reminded. "It's not up to you," he told those in attendance.

However, he added, "It is up to you to listen, to cooperate with the Spirit of God."

Isbell noted that one thing needed today in the Christian life is for people to come back to that partnership with the Holy Spirit.

"We need that Holy Spirit takeover," Isbell stressed. "We are too predictable. I can stay home and know what goes on in the average church on a Sunday morning."

Isbell also challenged the laity in attendance. "God's man is to help you do your job better. He is not to do your work. You need to be involved in the work of ministry."

Isbell observed churches



PASTOR RANDY ISBELL, right, of Hopewell Baptist Church, Savannah, visits with Randy Moser, left, pastor of Alta Loma Baptist Church, Madison, and Charles Couey of Radnor Baptist Church, Nashville, following the evening session of the State Evangelism Conference Jan. 15. Isbell spoke on "Developing a Soul-Winning Strategy."

have more spectators than participants. "We're not going to win our world. Pastors, get in your study, get to God, get the Word in your heart, and preach the Word and equip the saints. The Holy Spirit will take over and motivate them."

Tennessee church planter

The pastor of The Church at Madison Creek in Goodlettsville, David Thompson, told of his experiences planting the church since he left Alta Loma Baptist Church, Goodlettsville, as pastor, about a year and a half ago. — See Ministers, page 6

Belmont receives \$10 million gift for new events center

By Greg Pillon
For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Belmont University has received a \$10 million gift from music executive Mike Curb, chairman

of Curb Records.

The gift was announced Jan. 12 at a gathering on Belmont's campus. Among those attending was legendary performer Eddy Arnold, a long-time friend of Curb.



LEGENDARY PERFORMER Eddy Arnold, left, joins Mike Curb and his daughter Courtney, and Belmont University President Robert C. Fisher, right, in announcing a \$10 million gift to the school which will include the construction of a new events center on campus.

In addition to expanding the education opportunities for the Mike Curb School of Music Business, the gift will fund the construction of the Curb Events Center on the southern end of Belmont's campus. The facility will be part of a larger complex that will include a student center and a multi-level parking facility.

The 5,000-seat Curb Events Center will provide the university with a venue for various types of activities including athletic events, graduation ceremonies, and concerts. In addition to being the new home court for the TAAC-affiliated Belmont Bruins, NCAA Division I basketball and volleyball teams, the center will feature superior acoustics and equipment for the recording of live concerts.

Belmont's music business studios and some of its administrative offices will be relocated to the new facility. The Curb gift will also provide a unique addition to Belmont's campus by establishing a performance cafe for aspiring student artists. The cafe will be Belmont's own version of popular Nashville performance cafes. The Belmont

campus as well as the general public will be invited to patronize the cafe which will be staffed by students and serve as a laboratory for music business majors.

"We are extremely grateful to the Curb family for their leadership in enhancing the music business school by making this new events center possible," said Belmont President Robert C. Fisher.

"Together with the new student center, this project will literally transform our campus as the complex will benefit every student, faculty, and staff member. It will also enhance Belmont's service to the community as an additional avenue for special events," Fisher added.

During Curb's 30-year career in the music industry he has earned success as a songwriter, producer, and record company owner.

In making the gift, Curb said, "Our family made our first gift to Belmont several years ago. We knew how important it would be to grow the school of music business. ... Through this gift, we can continue to be a part of that work." ■

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state/national news

Former TBC staffer takes seminary post

Baptist Press

MEMPHIS — Jere L. Phillips, executive director of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists, will join the faculty of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Germantown on Feb. 1.

Phillips will serve as associate professor of practical theology and director of the practical missions office and denominational relations office.

Phillips, 49, has led the West Virginia convention since June 1995. He previously served as missions department director for the Tennessee Baptist Convention from 1990-95.

Phillips was reared in Dyersburg and made his profession of faith at First Baptist Church there in 1957. He holds degrees from Union University, Jackson, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Glenda, have two grown daughters. ■



PHILLIPS

Most or all SWBTS professors sign new faith statement

Associated Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — "Almost all" the faculty members at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, have signed the 2000 version of the "Baptist Faith and Message," according to Scotty Gray, vice president for academic administration.

"I think they are probably all signed, but I don't know that they're all signed," Gray said Jan. 9. He cannot say for sure, he said, because each school's dean is responsible for obtaining the signatures of their own faculty members. Also, some faculty members are on sabbatical and may not have been reached.

"There may be some sabbatic people and one or two others" who haven't yet signed, Gray said, but "almost all" have signed the revised faith statement.

The signatures of all faculty members should be collected by March, President Ken Hemphill said. Hemphill also said he doesn't know the exact status of the process at this point because he has not been briefed by the other deans since the Christmas break.

All full-time and adjunct faculty — including those at Southwestern's off-campus centers in Houston, Lubbock, San Antonio, and Shawnee, Okla. — are required to sign

the new "Baptist Faith and Message" in order to teach, Gray said.

While Gray could not name any full-time faculty members who have refused to sign the statement, he acknowledged some adjunct faculty have refused. He could not give an exact number of those refusing to sign but said he believes it is small.

"What is being signed by the faculty members is that a person will affirm this, abide by it, teach by it, and not teach contrary to it," Gray said. ■

Bush sworn in as 43rd U.S. president

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — George Walker Bush was sworn in as the 43rd president of the United States Jan. 20 and began his first full day of his presidency with a prayer service at Washington's National Cathedral and a declaration of Jan. 21 as a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving.

About 3,000 people attended the Sunday service in which Franklin Graham, son of evangelist Billy Graham, delivered a sermon.

"We have gathered here today with renewed hope for America," Graham said. "I pray that God will place his great hand of protection on each and every one and especially upon you, Mr. President, and your family."

"This prayer service demonstrates our recognition and need for help from the

Almighty," Graham said. "We affirm that we are indeed a free and independent people, but in a far more profound sense, we are a people that are dependent on Almighty God."

Graham delivered a stirring, evangelical message that explained salvation through Jesus Christ and that true hope abides in God.

"Only a personal relationship with the Living God can fill the moral vacuum that exists in the world today," Graham told the nation's leaders. "It is God, and God alone, that can solve the crises in which we find ourselves — and he uses people to carry out his work."

The day before, Graham delivered the invocation at the inaugural ceremonies for President Bush.

Bush, in his inaugural address that was filled with spiritual and religious imagery, asked Americans to match "a commitment to principle with a concern for civility."

"Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment," Bush said in relatively brief inaugural address, which he delivered from a platform outside the United States Capitol under a thick cover of clouds. As hundreds of thousands of spectators huddled against chill winds, he said: "It is the determined choice of trust over cynicism, of community over chaos."

Bush pledged to dedicate himself to that ideal and, his voice and words as muted in their way as the gray scene around him, spoke of unity and duty and responsibility. ■

Baptists minister in aftermath of El Salvador earthquake

Baptist Press

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — Southern Baptist missionaries and their Christian co-workers moved quickly to minister to human needs following a 7.6-magnitude earthquake Jan. 13 in El Salvador.

Using Southern Baptist emergency funds, missionary Mark Grumbles and a layman in San Salvador began delivering tarpaulins to families left without shelter after the quake, which killed at least 400 people and left more than 1,300 homeless.

A massive mudslide engulfed as many as 500 middle-class homes in the Santa Tecla suburb of the capital, San Salvador, when the quake hit at 11:35 a.m. Saturday. Survivors in neighboring towns were left without food and water after roads were blocked or swept away by landslides.

The quake was centered off the Pacific coast, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It was felt across El Salvador,

Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief establishes fund for the victims

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief has set up a fund to help the thousands of victims of the 7.6-magnitude earthquake Jan. 13 in El Salvador, according to Tim Bearden, state Disaster Relief director.

"Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers are already volunteering to go to El Salvador," Bearden said.

Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras and as far north as Mexico City.

Up to 500 aftershocks, some of them powerful, hampered the efforts of hundreds of emergency workers and volunteers.

"The earthquake lasted 50 seconds. The house was shaking and things were falling out of the cabinets and off the shelves," missionary Pam

Bearden said. "However, a Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief assessment team will enter the country Jan. 22 to determine the Disaster Relief needs including the necessity of volunteers," he added.

In the meantime, Tennessee Baptists can donate to the "El Salvador Relief Fund" through Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728. ■

Grumbles reported Sunday evening. "We were literally afraid the house would fall."

Foreign aid began flowing immediately from the United States, Mexico, Switzerland, Spain, and Venezuela, and relief experts felt most people's immediate needs for food and water would be met, according to news reports.

Southern Baptists will send a four-person evaluation team

into the country Jan. 22, said Jim Brown, human needs consultant for the International Mission Board. The team expects to bring back recommendations for long-term projects like rebuilding church buildings and cleaning up homes and neighborhoods.

The \$5,000 in emergency funds sent immediately to missionaries would soon be exhausted, Brown said. Requests for further assistance are expected.

Baptist churches in the towns of Santiago de Maria and Berlin had opened their kitchens to feed neighbors who needed help, Brown said.

Emphasizing the need for prayer, Pam Grumbles stated, "Continue to pray as we evaluate how to participate in relief efforts and minister to human and spiritual needs."

Specific ways Southern Baptist volunteers may be able to help will be outlined after the evaluation team returns to the United States Jan. 25, Brown added. ■

WMU director visits Myanmar (Burma)

by Connie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Carrol Kelly said she knew Adoniram and Ann Judson were the first Baptist missionaries to serve in a foreign land. They sailed in 1812 to Burma.

But she didn't realize the continuing impact of their work which can be viewed today in Myanmar (formerly Burma). Kelly, executive director/treasurer, Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union, saw much of that impact and served as a volunteer missions worker in Myanmar, and Thailand Dec. 25 - Jan. 10. She was part of a 20-member team of Southern Baptist missions leaders and students.

Impact of Judsons

Kelly said Myanmar is like many other countries after missions work is withdrawn. Christians in those countries increase despite their small numbers and other obstacles, she noted.

Myanmar is located between Southeast Asia and India and its population includes 7 percent Buddhists, five percent Christians, four percent Muslims, and three percent animists. Southern Baptist missionaries were forced to leave the country in 1963.

Kelly said Baptists in Myanmar revere the Judsons because they realize their faith is the result of the Judson's

work. Adoniram Judson translated the Bible into the Burmese language.

The memory of the Judsons "lives on in that country through photos and artwork depicting the work they did," described Kelly.

And the evidences were living. On New Year's Eve she attended a service at an English-speaking, multi-ethnic congregation. The large, well-directed choir performed a Christmas cantata. The choir and soloists were outstanding, she described.

Kelly also visited the site of Adoniram Judson's imprisonment on an island near Mandalay, Myanmar.

In Bagan, Myanmar, Kelly and the team members visited a church which was begun 23 years ago but had not been able to build a facility until eight years ago. Then the congregation worked five years to get the necessary permits and three years to build. The facility was small and without any luxuries, said Kelly.

The congregation, which was led by a female pastor, has about 300 members. The members teach about 70 children in a Bible study offered by the church.

The Americans learned the Baptist convention in the country provides theological institutes in English and Karen (a tribe of people pronounced Kah-reen) and a Christian



MELODY MAXWELL, left, a student of Union University, Jackson, and member of First Baptist Church, Collierville, and Carrol Kelly pause by a baby elephant they saw during a tour of an Elephant Farm in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

women's leadership center. Some women attend the school although they are not Christians. Kelly also learned many of the churches have schools.

While in Myanmar, the team was guided by a resident who was a retired lab technician. When the team gave him a love offering of \$145, they were surprised to learn it equaled about half of the average annual salary of a day laborer.

In Thailand

Kelly also visited Thailand, where the team toured and led a missions project at a refugee camp for residents of Myanmar. Most of the refugees fled a war there 8-15 years ago although some refugees are still arriving. The people are of the Karen tribe to whom the Jud-

sons also witnessed.

When the Americans arrived at the camp in Mae Sot, the team was greeted by a sign in English, the second language of the refugees.

Kelly described the camp. "Though they (refugees) are really quite poor, they keep the camp clean. Their clothes are clean and brightly colored."

She said of the about 37,000 refugees there, about 500 attended the Sunday morning Baptist worship service. It was very rewarding to see the residents conduct a service on prayer and fasting, quoting Scripture from memory with such fervor, said Kelly, and to view such poor people giving an offering.

"They have so much to teach us," she said.



The Baptist women in the camp are organized and hold events, Kelly learned. Americans divided into small teams and taught the Bible and sewing. American students worked with youth and children in the camp.

Kelly taught a conference on prayer which drew about 100 women and men.

Overall recollections

Kelly said the trip reminded her to "be more thankful for the many things we consider common." Those things include shock absorbers on automobiles, good roads, adequate electricity, street lights, adequate drinking water, modern restrooms, air conditioning, ice for drinks, fresh vegetables which can be eaten raw, washing machines and dryers, bright lights in houses, and TV with more than one channel in English!

However, she would not have missed the experience, she said. "Every moment of the trip was memorable."

She was sent on the trip by the Tennessee WMU Executive Board in recognition of her 15 years of tenure on the staff.

She thanked Tennesseans for praying for her. ■

in 2000

Eighty-eight members of church read entire Bible

By Cyndi Cox
For Baptist and Reflector

MANCHESTER — Brenton Cox, pastor of First Baptist Church here, challenged the congregation to read the entire Bible in 2000 to observe the beginning of a new millennium.

In December 1999 Cox told his congregation the only thing in Manchester which was guaranteed to last through the next millennium was the Bible and its teachings. So he challenged members to "signify their faith in the Bible" by reading it, he said.

The pastor provided members a schedule for reading the entire Bible and outline of each book as it was due to be read throughout the year.

He also preached an introductory sermon on each book of the Bible as members got to the point of beginning another book of the Bible.

Many members accepted the challenge. Of course, Cox didn't know how many would continue reading the Bible the whole year. But in January a group of members who were following the assignments decided to meet weekly to discuss what they had read that week. And he began getting calls from members who had questions about sections or wanted to discuss biblical information they had learned.

Toward the end of the year Cox said he

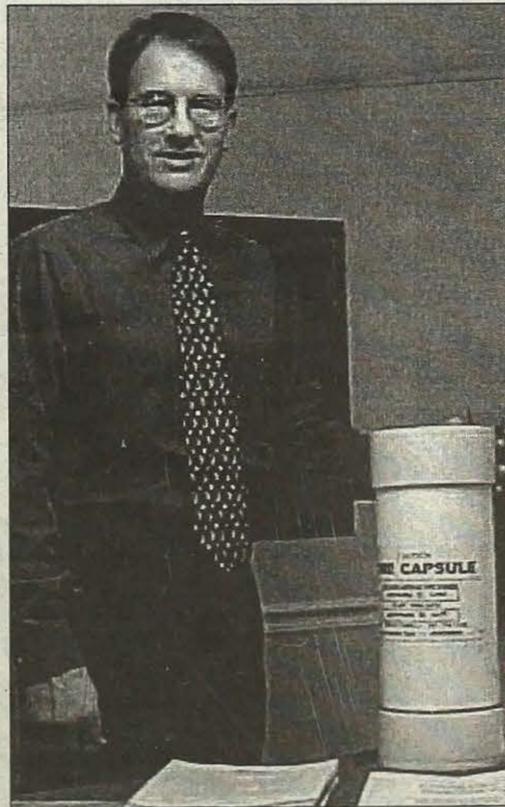
was amazed to learn 88 members were still completing the assignments, which they did at the end of the year. The church draws about 400 to Sunday School each week.

To commemorate the undertaking, in December the congregation compiled a time capsule which is to be opened in the year 2100. It was filled and sealed Dec. 31 during a ceremony. The capsule will be installed in the church's brick sign. Because of a fire which destroyed the facility in 1980, members wanted to place it away from the main buildings.

Included in the capsule were the signatures of the 88 members who completed the Bible, a challenge to the church members of 2100 to repeat the project, letters from Sunday School teachers and classes, a compilation of church programs, coins issued in 2000 including a state quarter and gold dollar, and other items which might be of interest to members of 2100.

Cox said during the ceremony several members spoke about the good impact of the project on their lives. And because of requests, the church will distribute a bound version of outlines of books of the Bible.

The project "has served to engage our congregation in the Bible as much as anything else we've done," said Cox. — Cyndi Cox is director of Christian education at First Baptist Church, Manchester.



BRENTON COX, pastor, First Baptist Church, Manchester, stands with the time capsule which was secured at the church Dec. 31 to commemorate a Bible-reading project of 2000 and to challenge members who open it in 2100. — Photo by Cyndi Cox

Association calls missionary as director

For Baptist and Reflector

COLUMBIA — Maury Baptist Association based here has called Dale Ledbetter, missionary to the Ukraine, as director of missions, effective May 1.



LEDBETTER

Ledbetter has served in the Ukraine for six years. Prior to that he was pastor, Sylvia Baptist Church, Dickson, 1991-94; associate pastor/minister of youth, Eastwood Baptist Church, Memphis, 1988-91; and minister of youth, Heflin Baptist Church, Heflin, Ala., 1981-84. He was ordained by Central Baptist Church, Crossville.

Ledbetter is a graduate of Jacksonville (Ala.) State University; and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, where he earned the master of divinity and doctor of ministry in missiology. ■

Building was condemned

FBC, Roan Mountain, battles back from 1998 flood

For Baptist and Reflector

ROAN MOUNTAIN — On Jan. 9, 1998, the Doe River flooded this upper northeast Tennessee town leaving behind millions of dollars of property damage to businesses, families, and churches.

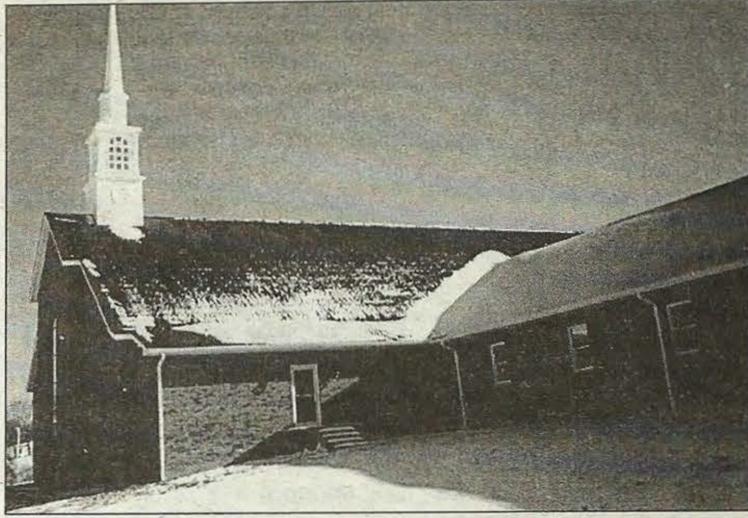
Among the devastation was the sanctuary of First Baptist Church. Flood waters moved the sanctuary off its foundation and damaged much of the inside. It was later condemned for use and the site was declared to be in a flood plane by the government, so the church had to relocate.

The church had no flood insurance and lacked funds to rebuild.

Many churches and individuals, as well as the Tennessee Baptist Convention, rallied to supplement the church's building fund in 1998.

Tennessee Baptists and others also provided physical labor to help the church clean up the church's fellowship hall which they used to worship in after the flood.

Pastor Richard Stout told the *Baptist and Reflector* in



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Roan Mountain, recently dedicated its new facility in a new location overlooking Highway 19E, just outside the city limits. The church's former facility was condemned after being severely damaged during a flood in 1998.

March 1998 that "Tennessee Baptists poured in from every nook and cranny in the state" to help his congregation. Many people also donated food and clothing to help people who lost much of what they owned in the flood.

On a recent Sunday, First Baptist dedicated its new facility in a new location overlooking Highway 19E, just outside

the city limits.

It was the conclusion of an inspiring story that began with that January 1998 flood, said Ray Sorrells, director of missions in Watauga Baptist Association.

"The dedication of the beautiful new house of worship is a wonderful testimony of how God can turn obstacles into opportunities as his people de-



PASTOR RICHARD STOUT of First Baptist Church, Roan Mountain, stands outside the stained glass window church members dedicated in his honor.

pend on him and work together," Sorrells observed, who cited the efforts of Pastor Richard Stout.

"Under the selfless and dedicated leadership of their pastor, the members of First Baptist Church moved from tragedy to

triumph," Sorrells reflected.

He noted Stout wired the building for electricity and gave general oversight to the work.

Prisoners from the Carter County Work Camp did much of the work as did mission groups from both within and without the association, Sorrells added.

Among the features of the new sanctuary is a large stained glass window depicting the figure of Christ which can be seen by those passing by.

On the day of the building dedication, church members informed Stout that the stained glass window was being dedicated in his honor, Sorrells said.

The church also gave Stout and his wife, Sharon, a cruise to the Bahamas to show their appreciation for the pastor's efforts in constructing the new church building, he added. ■



Tennessee students graduate from NOBTS

For Baptist and Reflector

NEW ORLEANS — Six students with Tennessee ties were among graduates of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in December.

Receiving doctor of philosophy degrees were Larry Robertson and Victor "Shawn" Parker. Robertson, of Savannah, was reared in Hopewell Baptist Church and now is evangelism specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Parker is from Michie and now serves as a pastor in New Orleans.

Other degree recipients include Robert Benjamin Hall, a Knoxville native, doctor of ministry; James Monroe Hance, a Newport native reared in Mount Zion Baptist Church, master of divinity; Donnie



HALL

Starkey, a native of Sevierville, master of arts in Christian education; and Bonnie Sue Skipworth (photo not available), administrative assistant, First Baptist Church, Joelton, women's ministry certificate. ■



HANCE



PARKER



ROBERTSON



STARKEY



Staffers honored

Three Tennessee Baptist Convention employees were recognized for tenure during the recent meeting of the TBC Executive Board in Brentwood. Pictured are Beverly Smothers, left, of the Evangelism/Missions Strategies group, and Bruce Edwards of the Christian Growth Development group. Both have served five years. Also honored, but unavailable for a photo was Carol Kelly, Tennessee WMU, 15 years.



Union trustees begin service

Union University President David S. Dockery stands with newly elected or re-elected trustees during their recent meeting on the Union campus. From left are Jerry Winfield, pastor, Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville; Mike Weeks, Tupeolo, Miss.; Bill Adcock, First Baptist Church, Newbern; Dockery; Charles Perkins, Forest Hills Baptist Church, Germantown; and Harry Smith, Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova. — Photo by Jim Veneman

Foundation ready to assist during Make Your Will Month

By Gary Coltharp
For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Did you know you can give your estate more than just once? How? Read on.

This is not just another piece of sales hype. And the odds of your being able to accomplish this miracle are in your favor (unlike your odds of being struck by lightning or winning the Publisher's Clearing House Sweepstakes).

When you die, you will leave everything (your estate) behind. If you die without a personal Last Will and Testament (Intestate), the state of Tennessee has a plan that will determine how your estate is dis-

tributed. If you die with a valid Last Will and Testament (Intestate), your will determines and directs how your estate is distributed. Sadly, only three out of 10, or 30 percent, of Americans have personal wills.

A simple Last Will and Testament will probably distribute your estate only once, usually to your family heirs and possibly to the "tax man." But it really is possible for you to do much better than that.

With a properly drawn and perfectly legal estate plan you can give your entire estate multiple times, first to your family, and then to Kingdom causes. Plus, you may be able to greatly reduce or eliminate state and federal estate taxes on your es-

tate, thus enabling you to pass on even more to the persons and causes you want to bless.

Your Tennessee Baptist Foundation is anxious to help you accomplish this marvelous feat.

January is "Make Your Will Month." Call W.L. "Bo" Childs or myself to learn how you can give your estate more than once. Both the telephone call (1-800-552-4644) and your personal consultation with the Foundation's professionals are provided at no cost as part of the Tennessee Baptist Foundation's ministry. ■ — Coltharp is vice president for estate planning with the Tennessee Baptist Foundation.

Are we serious about the mandate?

by Lonnie Wilkey, editor

I have been attending the State Evangelism Conference for about 13 years. The one just concluded last week ranks among the best.

There are some who probably feel the conference is just a "pep rally" and serves no worthwhile purpose.

There's nothing wrong with getting "pepped up" occasionally. Sometimes we need a fire lit under us to make us do what we should be doing in the first place.

This year's conference speakers addressed the theme, "The Great Commission: Our Mandate to Multiply."

Speakers from nearly every aspect of Southern Baptist life gave insight to what may be among the best known of

all Scripture passages — the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20.

As I listened to the speakers, I could not help but think, do we as Tennessee Baptists take that mandate seriously?

Several speakers talked about how many church people today are "comfortable" in their pews.

We "talk a good game" when we say we want to see more people come to Jesus Christ, but when it's time to hit the field and play the game, are we doing it?

Statistics say we are not.

Larry Robertson, TBC evangelism specialist, notes that in 1950 Tennessee Baptist churches reported the most baptisms in the convention's history — 34,550. That was done with a church membership then of about 600,000.

In 1999, Robertson noted, Tennessee Baptist churches reported 29,445 baptisms. This was done with a church membership of about 1.1 million people.

Now I'm not a mathematical genius, but even I can see we are baptizing fewer people today than we did 50 years ago even though we have more Tennessee Baptists. Why?

Robertson suggests we need to reclaim the essence of the Great Commission.

He reminds us that the Great Commission tells us to do more than go and reach people and baptize them. We are also to disciple them and teach them to go out and reach new disciples.

As Robertson says, "We have regulated discipleship to a one-hour block of



time on Sundays and many churches aren't even doing that anymore."

If Robertson's stats don't give you cause for concern, consider this statement from John Yarbrough, vice president of evangelism for the North American Mission Board.

"Over 90 percent of Southern Baptists will die having never shared their faith with anyone."

The question all of us must answer is: Will I be among that 90 percent or will I take the mandate seriously? **B&R**

Guest editorial

Promoter of Golden State offering is now recipient

Editor's Note: Because of the nature of this editorial, the name of the pastor is withheld.

Most of the time pastors are so overwhelmed by the plethora of things they must do that it is difficult, and sometimes annoying, to be bothered by another mission promotion. Yet most of us seem to find the time and energy to encourage our people to give financially, and in some instances, become personally involved in a mission project.

Over the years I have been involved in a great number of missions projects, some of them through partnership missions both at home and abroad and some have come about through my own personal involvement with International Mission Board missionaries. I have always been a staunch supporter of the Cooperative Program and our special missions offerings throughout the year. Each season brings another offering emphasis and another opportunity for Tennessee Baptists to make a difference at home and around the world. As a pastor I have advertised, promoted, prodded, challenged, and occasionally even tried to shame folks into giving to our special offerings. Most of the time I have been successful in raising awareness

of the great need of peoples around the world. I have not tried to keep up with the amount of money our churches have raised, the total is not important. The important thing is that we raise the money necessary to do the work that is needful, and in that, I have been successful.

In my wildest dreams I would not have imagined that, some day, I would be the one in need of missions money to help my wife and me through an extremely difficult time.

Yet that day came. After serving a Tennessee Baptist church for almost 10 years I was pressured into resigning. The church decided to go in a direction that I, in good conscience and integrity, could not agree with nor support. This left me no alternative but to resign. The church was gracious and gave us a small severance package, however, that did not last very long and very soon we were without money, ministry, or home. How would we pay our insurance, rent, utilities, bills, or buy groceries?

I was in my mid-50s and for the first time in my life I was unemployed and unable to find work or a place of ministry. Also, in a couple of months we would have to move out of the parsonage and we

had no money with which to buy a home. I sent out resumes on top of resumes and nothing happened. What would we do? Where would we go? How could we survive? How could we pay our bills? How could we maintain the utilities? These, and a torrent of similar questions overwhelmed me. In reality, my wife and I were homeless and unemployed. In my 25 years of ministry I had been unable to save enough money to buy a home or even have enough to make a down payment on one. Even if I had the money to make a down payment, who would finance a house for a person that was unemployed and could not even draw unemployment compensation? But God IS faithful to those he has called and to those who belong to him.

Upon contacting the Church-Ministers Relation department of the TBC I was told of the minister's aid fund that was set up to give temporary help to pastors who were in dire straights. Well, I certainly qualified for the "dire straights" category. Aubrey Hay of the TBC suggested I fill out an application for minister's aid. I was informed that this fund was set up to help pastors, like myself, and it would pay my health insurance and give

me a small stipend to help with rent or groceries for a short period of time. This program has been a lifesaver for my wife and me. Through the dedication and generosity of Tennessee Baptists our health insurance has been paid and we have had a small stipend to help us through a very rough period. During this past year we have both had major health problems that required major hospitalization and medication. This would not have been possible had it not been for this wonderful program that is supported by the Golden State Missions offering.

My heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Hay and the caring staff that keeps his department running smoothly. They are doing a great job helping both ministers and churches.

I would also encourage Tennessee Baptists to support the Golden State Missions offering as well as our other seasonal offerings and the Cooperative program. These are lifelines to people you may never meet but God knows their needs. Please support the ministries of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Who knows, you may be the next one who needs help.

Thank you Tennessee Baptists for caring and giving. ■

Parents play an important role as their children's teacher

A parent speaks

by Carolyn S. Tomlin



Angela listened as her daughter read her daily Bible reading after dinner.

"I'm glad you're using the new Bible you received for your birthday," Angela said. "And your Sunday School teacher mentioned how fast you're finding Scripture verses."

After church Bob and his son, Todd, walked to the car with Todd's teacher.

"It's amazing how much Todd is learning about the Bible," said Bob. "I see him applying biblical principles to

his life at home."

Fortunately, both of these parents are in churches that understand the role of evangelizing and ministering to the family. These churches believe that a parent is a child's first and primary teacher. Church teachers have a responsibility to help parents with this important task.

Numerous articles and books on parental involvement are available. Today's youth face problems unknown to former generations. Former Secretary of Education William J. Bennett gives statistics from 1960 to the present to show what influences have corrupted the young:

- > 500 percent increase in violent crimes
- > 400 percent increase in out-of-wedlock births
- > 3 times as many children raised in single parent homes

> a tripling in teenage suicides

> twice as many divorces

> a drop in student SAT scores (*The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of the World's Great Moral Stories*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

While parents cannot completely control the influence society has on their children, they can expect the church to teach them important values.

Even children raised in Christian homes by loving parents may still have problems. But the odds of societal influence are greater when the home life is not what it should be. Luke 2:52 says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Parents can help their children grow intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually.

Here are seven ways parents can teach God's love:

> Use the five senses. Young children learn best by relating new material to something they know. Guide children to use everyday experiences they understand. Suggest they talk about how God has given us a wonderful body.

> Find both quantity and quality time. Have you ever heard parents say, "My child knows how busy I am, so I make sure we spend quality time together." Do children know the difference?

> Take time to play. Dr. Bruno Bettelheim, a child psychologist, believes parents' attitude toward play strongly affects their children. Commitment to family fun — without competition — shows you choose to enjoy your children without the dictates of rules.

> Role model completing a task. When children observe parents completing one project before beginning another, they usually follow the example.

> Obey God's laws. God's laws never change. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (NIV).

> Discipline with love. Disciplining a child says, "I love you enough to want the best for you."

> Parents, the child's first teacher, can discover ways to become their child's "best" teacher. ■ — Carolyn R. Tomlin is the wife of Matt Tomlin, pastor of Ward's Grove Baptist Church, Jackson. She is a frequent contributor to the Christian market and leads writing workshops.

Ministers, laity reminded of 'mandate'

— Continued from page 1

"The best evangelistic tool of all time is planting new churches," said Thompson. And it's needed because Southern Baptists are not growing, he said, citing a recent report.

Starting the congregation was "as exciting as when I got saved," said Thompson.

He said the second reformation of the Christian world was about content and the third reformation will concern container, or the package of the Gospel. He explained he referred to music/worship style and site. The Church at Madison Creek meets in a public school facility.

He works to develop "believers not Baptists; disciples not denominationalists."

Thompson reported he has seen amazing miracles while working to plant the church. For example, the greatest contributor to The Church at Madison Creek is a couple who are members of a nearby Church of Christ church.

He said he has tried to avoid the pitfalls of churches — politics, personalities, and programs. The Church at Madison Creek emphasizes togetherness and excellence without a hierarchy except God, he noted.

Ministers who ask for and receive God's vision for their lives and pursue it must realize it may cost them their ministries, their peers, even their lives if serving in other countries, said Thompson.

When he left his pastorate to begin the church about 15 people said they would help him. They left a few weeks later. It was a depressing time, admitted Thompson.

Since then he has been poorer but happier; the work is harder but it is better, he said.

The first member of the new church was a black woman who had been a Mormon. Thompson had the privilege of leading her to make a commitment to God, he explained. He also prayed in a house in which family members were involved in spiritism and New Age beliefs and saw family members saved.

"I believe everybody in here (the sanctuary) can help somebody plant a church if you don't do it yourself," he declared.

Pastor, church planter

Ike Reighard, pastor, NorthStar Church, Kennesaw, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta, spoke twice on his experiences of starting the church four years ago. NorthStar has started 16 other churches and is in the process of starting three more.

God is a God of process, said Reighard. He may give us a dream but may not bring it to fruition because God is waiting on us to be ready to carry out the dream, he said.

One of the biggest problems among ministers is so many have lost their dream, he noted. Many ministers would respond they didn't lose it; it was

beaten out of them, he noted.

But ministers must hold on to their God-given dream or vision because "you become neutral when you lose your dream," he suggested.

Reighard encouraged ministers to search for the dream God has for them, not that of another person such as Bill Hybels, pastor, Willow Creek Community Church, South Barrington, Ill., or Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova.

To begin NorthStar Church he and six other ministers began the effort without any money. They realized they must defy conventional wis-

dom on church planting, Reighard added, and be "spiritual entrepreneurs."

The church starters adopted a S.A.L.T. philosophy which stands for seeing, accepting, loving, and touching people the way Jesus does.

As the church began to grow, the church starters also realized if the congregation "reached out" it was going to live and if it "reached in" it was going to die.

— Continued on page 7



TBC EVANGELISM SPECIALIST, Larry Roberston, right, visits with Ike Reighard, left, pastor of NorthStar Church, Kennesaw, Ga., and David Thompson, pastor of The Church at Madison Creek, Goodlettsville. The two men shared their experiences in starting churches during the annual State Evangelism Conference held Jan. 15-16 at Judson Baptist Church.

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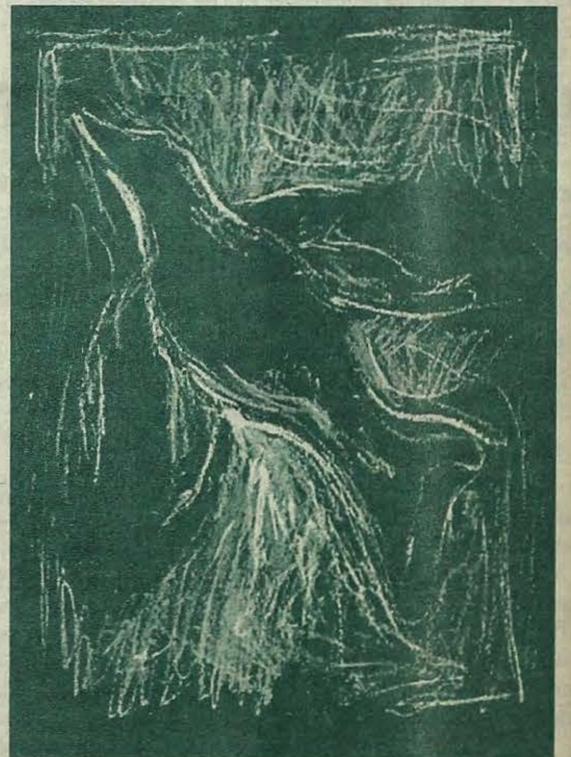
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Ministers, laity reminded of 'mandate'



Continued from page 6

The ministers of NorthStar wouldn't allow any hierarchy or sacred cows," said Reighard. And the staff led the members to realize when they were baptized they became ministers. The staff was to administrate, added Reighard.

This approach to a congregation cuts down on the complaints of members and resistance to ministry, he pointed out.

Reighard encouraged churches to "go and do" rather than direct others to "come and see. Do you think they're out there knocking down the door; that they can't wait to hear another preacher preach?"

He encouraged ministers to grow people and not a church, develop disciples rather than use money.

At NorthStar the staff holds discovery Classes for new members and tries to be accountable for disbursement of funds so members will give money.

He recommended churches get involved in their communities, such as joining retail stores and banks in partnerships with schools. "We've made ourselves irrelevant," he said, "by not being involved in such things. Hopefully these efforts will lead businesses to come to churches and ask to help fund them," said Reighard.

He questioned how society views the ethics of a church staff which reports 10,000 members but only has a 1,400-seat auditorium.

"Why not love your community so much they finally ask why?" he asked.

Seminary professor

Robert Smith Jr., associate professor of divinity, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., spoke three times during the conference.

On Tuesday morning Smith reminded those attending the conference there are no hopeless people. "There is no one Christ cannot raise or bring back."

He challenged that churches must become known by who they attract, not who they repel. Jesus attracted publicans and sinners and repelled hypocrites.

"Churches today attract hypocrites and repel publicans and sinners," Smith maintained.

He noted churches like "folks who help our budgets," there are pastors who are hesitant to preach against sin because they are afraid those people will leave the church.

At the closing session, he spoke on the time when Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son Isaac and paralleled that to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ by God. He added it is not heretical to say God killed his Son.

Smith suggested Abraham struggled over killing his son as



THE FELLOWSHIP of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists held their meeting prior to the start of the State Evangelism Conference. In addition to worship and praise they also conducted business. Outgoing president Henry Linginfelter of Alcoa welcomed the new officers. From left are Linginfelter; DeWayne and Natalie Howard, Athens, music directors; and Michael Duff, Springfield, president. Not pictured is Harold Hunter, Hermitage, vice president.

God must have wrestled over killing his son Jesus although it is not mentioned in the Bible.

Abraham faced killing Isaac whom he had received miraculously after waiting 99 years. And Isaac was to save God's chosen people, added Smith. Yet God wanted Abraham to love the God of Isaac rather than the Isaac of God, he detailed.

Smith described God as a "show and tell God. It's amazing how God will give us further direction when we're obedient to present revelation," he said.

He said instead of having a living faith of the dead many Christians have a dead faith of the living because they cancel out further revelation from God by disobeying him, continued Smith.

He questioned the "rapid fashion" of current ministry and charting it according to a calendar or beeper and directed ministers to rest at times.

Jesus went to bed and slept without guilt over not helping everyone, described Smith.

Christians can see God's action toward Abraham as kicking away his props. "Anything that competes with God he will not have," he explained.

Finally, Smith encouraged the ministers to move from exegesis or study of the inerrant Bible to encountering and experiencing it.

"God's not looking for smart preachers; he's looking for faithful preachers."

Tennessee evangelist

Evangelist Henry Linginfelter of Alcoa observed that lying has become acceptable in modern day America.

Unfortunately, he noted, lying does not happen only in the secular world, but has spread to the church as well.

"When we reject truth all we have left is a lie," Linginfelter observed.

He noted that "this blessed nation of ours has been rejecting truth for many years and we are about to go under."

He called on ministers and

laypeople to stand up for the truth. Linginfelter appealed to pastors to "stand on the Word of God and stop being pulpit panders to a secular world society.

"It's not easy to stand against the flood tides of evil, but if we don't who's going to?"

TBC executive director

TBC Executive Director James Porch reminded conference participants the importance of making people feel welcomed.

"Everyone likes to know they belong and they belong where they are."

Porch observed that Jesus came "telling us we belonged to the Father."

Porch used the example of the woman at the well who met Jesus.

Jesus moved from the Jewish culture to the Samaritan culture by allowing the woman to minister to him by giving him a drink of water. He ministered to her despite her background.

Jesus did not overlook the woman's sin, but he told her she was still welcomed, Porch said, noting the same truth holds today.

"No matter where you are, you are still welcomed in the sight of God because of one word — grace."

NAMB leader

Basing his message on Acts 20 and 21, John Yarbrough reminded conference participants of the "extreme faith" exhibited by Paul.

Paul said he was ready to suffer and to die for Christ, noted Yarbrough, vice president of evangelism for the North American Mission Board.

"When was the last time you took a risk for the Gospel?" Yarbrough asked.

Yarbrough issued a challenge to "get ready, get set, and go" to spread the Gospel of Christ.

In getting ready, an individual must commit to God's command, count the cost, and consider the consequences.

He noted that getting set is

purpose driven, passion fueled, and person focused.

As to going, Yarbrough asked, "Will we finish or fail? Will we do it now or never? and If not now, when?"

Missionary

Wade Akins, missionary to Brazil and South Vietnam for 22 years, spoke two times during the conference on evangelism approaches he has used and Tennesseans have practiced in Brazil. Tennessee has been a part of the 1997-2003 Tennessee/Rio Baptist Partnership.

He noted just like Paul and Silas of Acts 17 the work of Christians will never be easy, but it can "turn the world upside down.

"If you've been changed then you can change the world. It matters not who you are or what talents you have," said Akins.

He said evangelists should shape a strategy or method to be culturally relevant to a situation, but they should never change the message from that in the inerrant Word of God.

"A simple, humble servant of God can turn the world upside down for God," declared Akins.

He suggested using "scratch" evangelism or conducting efforts to meet people's needs, starting churches, seeking to save the lost, and staying until the end.

Ministers should follow the example of Jesus and disciple a small group of people who can multiply efforts in greater numbers, said Akins. He encouraged the crowd to serve in places where residents are open to the Gospel such as South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique, and Brazil.

Alabama evangelist

Scott Dawson, an evangelist based in Birmingham, Ala., said despite Christian bookstores, Christian cartoon videos, and True Love Waits, nine percent of students believe in absolute truth and 12 percent attend churches. He added pollster

George Barna reports only four percent of millennials or students will become Christians.

Dawson suggested the reason for these statistics is that families are crumbling, churches are cold and uninviting especially toward students, and ministers are in crisis.

Concerning ministers, Dawson directed them to find God's passion which will direct and drive them. "Sermons are habit without passion," he said.

He also noted ministers must struggle against affluency. "Your possessions have become your obsession," said Dawson.

He directed the crowd to God. "It's not if you worship; it's what you worship. It's not if we have passion; it's where our passion is."

He asked participants whether they carried more business cards or tracts with them. When Christians witness, the response can be positive, negative, or undecided. That's two out of three good responses, and even when a Christian receives a negative response, they receive a blessing, noted Dawson.

Related events

In addition to the state conference, two additional conferences were held the weekend prior, one for bivocational ministers and one for Hispanics.

The bivocational conference at Village Baptist Church in Mt. Juliet attracted 130 participants while nearly 200 Hispanic ministers and laypeople attended the session at Judson Church.

Also, the Fellowship of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists held a session prior to the state conference. On Sunday the evangelists participated in 22 one-day revivals in the Nashville area. They reported 40 salvations, 148 rededications, and one person called to ministry. ■



EUGENE MARTIN, left, of Parkview Baptist Church, Lewisburg, visits with Robert Smith Jr., after the Tuesday evening session in which Smith spoke.



Pulaski youth minister has role in World Hunger video

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — From storm-ravaged villages in Honduras, to the decaying ghettos of New York City, to the war-torn Balkans, missionaries and volunteers are ministering to hungry souls through the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

To raise awareness of the World Hunger Fund's support of ministry evangelism worldwide, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, in cooperation with the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, LifeWay Christian Resources, and the Woman's Missionary Union, has produced a new video that takes viewers on visits to several ministries funded by the Southern Baptist year-round anti-hunger emphasis.

The video — titled "When Will We Cry?" — challenges viewers to find their place of service in a Christ-centered ministry to those in need as well as stressing the importance of regular giving to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. The video explains the distinctive characteristics of the World Hunger Fund, such as the fact that 100 percent of all donations are used for hunger needs and that all ministries are carried out in Jesus' name in a demonstration of his love to a lost and hurting world.

The production features an original song by **Lewis Thomas, minister of youth at First Baptist Church of Pulaski**. Lewis told Baptist Press that his involvement with the video stemmed from his newfound awareness that much could be accomplished with just

pennies a day given to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

Just 12 cents will provide a meal for a homeless child in northern Uganda and a gift of \$1.05 will provide a 15-pound food packet to a hungry family in Washington, D.C., said Steve Nelson, director of hunger concerns for the SBC.

Nelson said the video is designed for use during Wednesday night or Sunday night services or with a Sunday School class or a mission group meeting as part of a larger church effort to increase awareness of the World Hunger Fund.

Nelson has high hopes the production will raise awareness of the fact that God calls his

people to be involved in ministry evangelism.

"Southern Baptist hunger ministries often go unnoticed," said Nelson, a staff member at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and executive producer of the video. "Many people are probably not aware that in the year 2000 over 26 million people in other countries and over 2 million in the United States were touched with God's hand of caring through Southern Baptist hunger and relief ministries."

Copies of "When Will We Cry?" can be obtained from the ERLC for a suggested gift of \$7 plus shipping.

Contact the ERLC at 1-800-975-3127. ■

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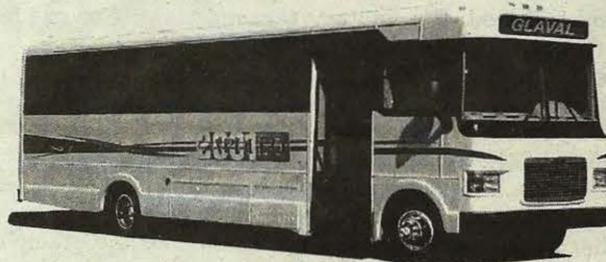
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MINISTRIES — MUSIC

First Baptist Church, Martin, is seeking a person to fill the position of minister of music. The church has an aggressive music program with more than 400 persons enrolled in its age-graded choir program. The candidate must have a degree at either the undergraduate or graduate level in music, music education, or a related field. He must have a proven track record of competency in conducting multiple choirs, administering an age-graded choir program utilizing multiple volunteers, and orchestrating musical arrangements for a variety of musical instruments. First Baptist Church is a multigenerational congregation in a rural-urban university setting. The church actively supports and cooperates with the Beulah Baptist Association, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and Southern Baptist Convention. Please submit recommendations to Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 289, Martin, TN 38237.

MINISTRIES — OTHER

The Loudon County Baptist Association is now accepting resumes for a director of missions. Please mail to Search Committee, Loudon County Baptist Association, 814 Webb Circle, Lenoir City, TN 37771. Deadline for accepting resumes is Feb. 15.

Cordova Retreat and Conference Center is receiving resumes for manager of operations. Send resume to Personnel Committee, Shelby Baptist Association, 795 Rocky Point Rd., Cordova, TN 38018.

Growing church is seeking an administrative assistant for music and student ministries. Excellent computer and organizational skills needed. Graphic experience and musical knowledge helpful. Prefer you to apply in person please. 3475 Lebanon Road, Hermitage, Tenn., or fax resume to (615) 883-5105.

Children's ministries director. Growing South Georgia church. Must have a love for the Lord and children. Oversee comprehensive ministry, birth through 6th grade. Send resume to Children's Minister Search Committee, FBC Tifton, 404 Love Ave., Tifton, GA 31794.

Walker Memorial Baptist Church is seeking a full-time administrative assistant/financial secretary. Please submit resume for this position to Walker Memorial Baptist Church, 1350 West Main Street, Franklin, TN 37064, Attn. Personnel Committee.

Director of missions position available. Buncombe Baptist Association in Asheville, NC, is receiving resumes for the position of director of missions. Resumes will be received until March 1, 2001. If you are interested or know of someone who might be interested, please send a resume to Dr. Jerry Pereira, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 39, Swannanoa, NC 28778.

churches

tion to Church Planting; The Book of Genesis; and Christian Theology, Part 1; will begin Jan. 29. For more information, call Dean Denton at (865) 983-5114.

■ **Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville**, will present a Broadway musical revue, "Some Enchanted Evening" and dinner Feb. 9-10 to fund a June 11-23 missions effort in the Ukraine to help orphans there. Money raised will be used to buy socks, underwear, and Bibles for the orphans. About 80 members of the church have committed to go. Selections from "Godspell," "Guys and Dolls," "Annie Get Your Gun," and other plays will be performed. For tickets (\$15) and more information, contact Rachel Corum at (615) 507-1762.

■ **First Baptist Church, Flintville**, which has about 80 people attend Sunday School, raised \$8,400 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. The church's goal was \$6,500. Members also gave their regular of-

■ **Second Baptist Church, Memphis**, will host Larry Norman in concert Feb. 22 at 7 p.m. Tickets, which range from \$10-\$17 must be purchased before Feb. 22. For more information, call the church recreation office at (901) 682-3308.

■ **Larry Wright, pastor, First Baptist Church, Florence, Ala.**, will speak at **First Baptist Church, Jacksboro, Tenn.** on Jan. 28. He will teach principles of spiritual awakening and revival at a breakfast at 8:45 a.m. and in the service at 10 a.m. Wright is a graduate of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

■ **The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's East Tennessee Extension Center at Broadway Baptist Church, Maryville**, will offer three classes on Mondays for 13 weeks. The classes, Introduc-



J.D. AND SUE Anderson stand with their daughter **Debbie Silvers** while being honored on their retirement at the recent annual meeting of **Watauga Baptist Association**. J. D. Anderson was custodian of the association center for more than 20 years and Sue was office and financial secretary for over 22 years.

ferings, which came in without any decline in giving, reported Charles Keller, pastor.



■ **Eastwood Baptist Church, Cookeville**, called **Chris Sparkman** as pastor, effective Jan. 7. Formerly he was youth pastor and associate pastor of Eastwood Church. Also the congregation ordained on Jan. 7 **Earl D. Cowan** and **Maurice Presley** as deacons.



SPARKMAN

■ **Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville**, called **Todd Bishop** as minister of youth, effective Jan. 15. He came from Broadway Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.

■ **First Baptist Church, Gordonsville**, has called **Tony**



DOTTIE AND Philip Claymon were named **managers**, **Watauga Lodge, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Ridgecrest, N.C.**, at the recent annual meeting of **Watauga Baptist Association**, based in **Elizabethton**.



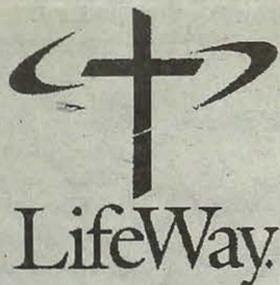
Higgins as minister to children and youth.



■ **R. H. Falwell Jr., 85**, emeritus missionary to Hong Kong and South Korea, died Dec. 26. He and his wife, **Rowena Gunter Falwell**, served from 1970-79 and 81-85. Prior to his missionary service, he worked for **LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville**. Two of his four children live in Tennessee, **Jane Bryan** of **Murfreesboro**, and **Catherine Falwell** of **Morristown**.

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MINISTRIES — YOUTH

Growing church is seeking a full-time youth/education minister to lead and develop program reaching our community for Christ. Must be Christ-led and have a passion for youth and education. Candidate must have 3-5 years experience in this bivocation and at least 3 years college or seminary training. Degree preferred. Church located close to Nashville. Please send resume Attn. Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 10, LaVergne, TN 37086 or email at bobmel@dellnet.com.

Growing SBC church seeks innovative, dynamic minister of youth. Full-time experience required. Seminary degree preferred. Great salary and benefits package. Send resume by Jan. 31 to First Baptist Church, 164 Dalton St., Ellijay, GA 30540, e-mail: fbcellijay@ellijay.com.

Eastview Baptist Church, Huntingdon, is seeking a youth minister. Please submit resume for this part-time position to Eastview Baptist Church, 4700 Veterans Dr. N., Huntingdon, TN 38344, Attn. Personnel Committee.

Conservative SB church in Colorado Springs, CO, is seeking an experienced minister of youth/education. Need is immediate. Fax resumes to (719) 633-0520 or call (719) 633-4625 for information.

Deacons Doing Ministry

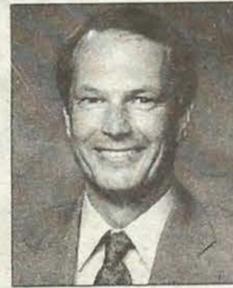
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7:00 p.m. — Conference Begins	Conference Begins
9:30 p.m. — Conference Adjourns	12:30 p.m. — Conference Adjourns

Conferences:

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Please call, fax, or e-mail registration information to

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(800) 558-2090, ext. 7932; FAX: (615) 371-2014
e-mail jchapman@tnbaptist.org



SBC agency endorses Ashcroft for position; BJC expresses doubts
Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has endorsed John Ashcroft as attorney general in a letter to the members of the U.S. Senate.

ERLC President Richard Land urged confirmation of Ashcroft in a Jan. 15 letter to each of the 100 senators. The endorsement came on the eve of the start of confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Some committee members were expected to grill Ashcroft, a former senator, regarding issues such as abortion, church-state relations, and race relations. They were expected to question him especially on his ability to



LAND

enforce laws with which he does not agree. Ashcroft is an outspoken evangelical Christian who is strongly pro-life and has rejected a separationist view of church-state relations for a more accommodationist approach.

President-elect George W. Bush's nomination of Ashcroft ignited a campaign of opposition from abortion rights, homosexual rights, church-state separationist, and civil rights organizations. Among the vocal foes of Ashcroft's confirmation are Planned Parenthood Federation of America, People for the American Way, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, and the Human Rights Campaign, the country's largest homosexual political group.

It marks the first time the ERLC has endorsed a cabinet nominee for confirmation by the Senate. It was called for this time, Land said, because there are "extremely significant issues concerning abortion and religious liberty itself" at stake.

"John Ashcroft is being opposed in the main because he is strongly pro-life and he is an open and avowed evangelical Christian," Land said Jan. 16.

"Many of his opponents are evidently attempting to construct a defacto, anti-evangelical test for office, which would at the very least require that people of evangelical faith declare that they would not allow their faith to impact the performance in office. That is unconstitutional and, more important-

ly, it's wrong."

Meanwhile, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a church-state agency supported by various Baptist groups, including some Southern Baptists, expressed doubts about attorney general nominee John Ashcroft's ability to work on behalf of Americans of all religions when he possesses such well-known evangelical Christian convictions.

BJC Executive Director Brent Walker said at a Jan. 15 news conference the agency does not support or oppose nominees but questioned whether Ashcroft is "up to the job."

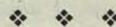
The BJC applauds the "fact that Senator Ashcroft's deeply held religious convictions inform his commitment to governmental service and the policies which he espouses," Walker said. "However, Senator Ashcroft must not confuse his constitutional right to the free exercise of religion with the obligation of government officials not to establish religion but to serve all of the people regardless of religion."

On the eve of Ashcroft's confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Walker called on senators to investigate church-state issues in order to satisfy themselves of Ashcroft's "ability to put aside his personal, ideological predilections, and enforce the law in a way that comports with the First Amendment's religion clauses and the separation of church and state." ■

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRIES — OTHER

Church preschool director. Responsibilities include the evaluation, promotion, and coordination of educational and ministry programs for church's preschool age group. Primary duty includes directing church day care program of approximately 100 children. Must meet DHS criteria and be experienced or trained in working with preschoolers. Must exhibit Christian principles and become active member of church. B.S. degree in early childhood education or elementary education is preferred. Submit resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 268, Clinton, TN 37717, fax (865) 457-0713.



Resumes for youth minister, music minister, education, associate pastor, full, part-time, or combined positions are being accepted by Sylvia Baptist Church, 1415 Old Sylvia Rd, Dickson, TN 37055 or e-mail leekeaton@aol.com.

MINISTRIES — PASTOR

Walker Memorial Baptist Church, Franklin, Tenn., is seeking a full-time associate pastor. Please submit resume for this position to Walker Memorial Baptist Church, 1350 West Main St., Franklin, TN 37064, Attn. Personnel Committee.



Bethel Baptist Church, Niles, Mich., invites resumes for prospective pastor or interim pastor. Send to the church at 1605 Silverbrook, Niles, MI 49120 or call Betty Smith, (616) 683-8663.



First Baptist Church, Spencer, Tenn., is looking for a full-time pastor. If anyone is being led by the Lord to a new field, please submit a resume to Lester Bouldin, P.O. Box 236, Spencer, TN 38585.

MINISTRIES — EDUCATION

Westwood Baptist Church, 2200 Peerless Rd, Cleveland, TN 37311, is seeking aggressive and innovative minister of education. Now relocated to new 55-acre campus, averaging about 1,200 per Sunday. Send resume in care of Steve Stewart or fax (423) 339-5669.



Central Baptist Church, Corbin, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister of education. Candidates are expected to have an undergraduate or seminary degree in religious education or related field. Prior experience is required, full-time or part-time experience is acceptable. Compensation package includes full benefits. Please send resumes to Personnel Committee, Central Baptist Church, 201 W. 4th St., Corbin, KY 40701.

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minister's corner

by Ken Clayton



I have been asked several times over the years since God knows everything, "why pray?" Many apparently

interpret prayer as informing God of our situation, needs, cares, concerns, or the problems of others. However, we do not pray to keep God posted on our lives!

The Lord calls us to pray, commands us to pray. Almost any Psalm you read will demonstrate the call to prayer. We do not initiate prayer, it is God's way of calling us into his presence. Prayer is our response to God's grace revealed through the cross of Jesus Christ.

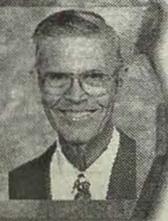
Also, as pastor Lloyd Olgilvie says, we do not pray to change God's mind, "but to receive the mind of God." Our prayers do not coerce or manipulate God, but rather open us to the will of God, which we are able to obey through faith!

We also pray because God has ordained that there are blessings and powers that will not be given to us unless we ask. "If you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

True prayer involves adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and intercession for others. What truly makes a church is when the people pray for each other. When I came to Tulip Grove as pastor over 17 years ago, the Lord revealed to me and I said to the church that "I would be your pastor, if you prayed for me." A pastor is not really a pastor until his congregation prays for him. In fact, what makes a church family is when they pray for each other. Praying for others automatically gives us hundreds of reasons to pray. ■ - Clayton is pastor of Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory.

just for today

by Fred Wood, pastor emeritus, Memphis



Start With a Smile: Young man to minister: "Do you think it's ethically right for a man to profit from the mistake of another man?" Minister: "Definitely not, young man, never!" Young man: "Are you sure?" Minister: "I'm absolutely positive." Young man: "Then would you mind refunding me the \$100 I gave you last year for performing the wedding ceremony for my wife and me?"

Take this Truth: Goethe said, "Choose carefully. Your choice is brief, yet endless."

Memorize this Scripture: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." — Joshua 24:15

Pray this Prayer: Lord, help me to realize when I choose one end of path to travel on I also choose everywhere it leads. ■

Partnership Prayer Requests

January

- 24 — Pray for Evangel Chinese Church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, as they seek a youth pastor.
- 25 — Pray for Konny and Dorothy Jane Wiggins, IMB's master volunteers to Brazil who are working in Rio de Janeiro with the Tennessee partnership.
- 26 — Pray for Art and Dottie Dennis, IMB ISC Nicaragua Disaster Response Volunteer coordinators, who worked with volunteers to help victims of Hurricane Mitch. Ask God to bless the couple as they return to the United States.
- 27 — Pray for River South Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, as they do a vision quest to seek their purpose as a church. Ask God to bless their efforts.
- 28 — Pray for Tennessee volunteers who will work in Iowa in 2002. Ask God to bless their efforts.
- 29 — Pray for Dixie Church in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Ask God to bless the pastor's family as they minister to three young women of the First Nations who have come to live with them.
- 30 — Pray for the IMB Leadership Development Team in Portugal as it promotes six new church groups in theological education extension.
- 31 — Pray for Tennessee volunteers who will work in Las Vegas, Nev. Ask God to call out volunteers.

Transforming power

By Kenny Cooper

Focal Passage: John 2:1-11

John wrote his Gospel from a theological perspective. Consequently, much meaning is packed into the Gospel's record of Jesus' life. This can be seen in a dramatic way in the account of the wedding at Cana. It was the first of seven signs. Verse 11 is the key to understanding the story. The purpose of this sign was to reveal Jesus' glory and to instill faith in his disciples.

Three days after calling the first five of his disciples Jesus accepted an invitation to attend a wedding in Cana of Galilee just north of Nazareth. That his mother was there as well suggests that the wedding involved either a member of the family or a close family friend. Jesus, contrary to any suggestion of religious separation, freely and gladly joined in social events. He even dined with tax collectors and sinners!

Soon we learn that there is a crisis discovered by Jesus' mother. She said to Jesus, "They have no more wine." Not having more information, we are left guessing as to whether she was merely making an observation, suggesting that they excuse themselves from the feast, or that she was expecting Jesus to do something about the problem. His answer has puzzled English readers of this story. To call his mother "Woman" sounds crass and disrespectful in our culture. However, in that culture the term could be one of endearment though it was a more formal means of address. He asked her in effect what this situation had to do with him and her. Jesus concluded by saying, "My hour has not yet come." We sense a struggle in his own heart and mind as to whether or not this was an occasion appropriate for revealing his power. In his answer he differentiated himself from his mother. His role was not to be defined by his mother or any other earthly relationship. Everything he was to do must be consistent with his purpose as the Son of the Heavenly Father. Jesus' mother seemed to acknowledge this in saying to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Sharing your testimony

By Terry Bradshaw

Focal Passages: Acts 22:3-4, 6-13, 16-21

Imagine traveling down a highway in broad daylight. Suddenly a bright light appears, and a voice comes thundering down from heaven saying, "... Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (v. 7). What would you do? How would you respond to such an event? In our Scripture lesson today we see how Paul used his personal experience (testimony) to share Jesus. This lesson speaks plainly about the fact that born-again Christians have something to say about Jesus. I personally have found that sharing my personal testimony can open doors that might otherwise be closed. It simply puts a human face on a heavenly experience. It helps to build a dialogue between you and the one to whom you are witnessing. It does not mean that everyone will come to Jesus simply because you share your testimony, but it does mean you have fulfilled what God requires of all of us — witnessing.

My life before Christ (vv. 3-4). In Jerusalem things had not gone well for Paul. He had been accused of doctrinal error, violation of temple protocol, and even allowing Gentiles to enter the temple. To say that the Jews were angry is an understatement. They wanted revenge. Certain Jews felt they needed to eliminate the problem. So, they began to beat

and abuse Paul. They would have taken his life if the Roman guard had not intervened. This is where chapter 22 picks up. We find Paul in the custody of the Roman guard requesting permission to address his accusers (vv. 1-2). Paul, speaking in Hebrew, introduces himself as a Jew born in the city of Tarsus but raised in Jerusalem. By claiming to have been born a Jew, raised a Jew, and educated a Jew, he sought to authenticate his Jewish roots. He wanted them to understand that he was not some uneducated, undisciplined Jew that really knew very little about God or the Jewish religion. He claimed to have been "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers and was zealous toward God" (v. 3) as they were. Verse four tells us that he proved his commitment to the Jewish faith by executing or imprisoning both men and women that followed Christ. But then something happened that changed his entire life. He met Jesus on the Damascus Road.

How I became a Christian (vv. 6-13, 16). After establishing his Jewish roots, he proceeded to tell them that something spectacular had happened on his way to Damascus. He said that a great light appeared, and he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (v. 7). It is said in verse

The first miracle Jesus performed was done in the background — not out in the open. He told the servants to fill with water the six stone jars used for ritual purification, then to draw some out and take it to the toastmaster of the feast. They did as they were commanded, and when the toastmaster tasted the wine he remarked to the bridegroom that, contrary to custom, he had brought out the best at the last. The guests enjoyed it, but only Jesus, his mother, his disciples, and the servants knew its source.

The symbolism of this event at the beginning of Jesus' ministry would not be lost on John's readers. The prophets had often used the wedding as a metaphor for God's relationship with his people. After destruction, exile, and years of hopelessness, they

proclaimed that God had appointed a day when he would gather his people as his bride and provide a feast of great rejoicing (cf. Isaiah 62:1-5). The six stone water jars used for purification represented the stale religion of legalism and ritual. Jesus "filled to the brim" the law and exceeded it with the joy only he could bring. Likewise, the wine he made from the water gladdened the hearts of those who shared in it. This wine which symbolized abundance and joy was also the same element he would take up at the Last Supper to say, "This cup is the new covenant [wedding?] in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20 NIV). This was "his hour" he spoke of.

The transforming power of changing water into wine was more than just saving a social event; it was more than pacifying a mother's request; it was none other than a revelation that Jesus is the Son of God who came to transform people by his power. As a result, the disciples "put their faith in him" (v. 11) and we are invited to do the same! — Cooper is president of Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes and is filling in this week for Jerry King, who is recovering from a recent heart attack.

six that this event happened around noon. This is significant in the fact that the sun would have been shining brightly. I believe the writer wanted to emphasize the overpowering nature of the encounter by noting that the light was far brighter than the noonday sun (v. 6). As a matter of fact, the flash of bright light not only knocked Paul to the ground, it also blinded him (v.

11). Paul's traveling companions saw the light, but could not hear the voice. They, no doubt, were confused as to what was happening. Paul responded to this event by asking, "who are you, Lord?" (v. 8). Jesus identified himself and accused Paul of persecuting him. This was a reference to the way Paul was living and persecuting those that followed Christ. The subsequent verses tell of Paul's obedience to God that day on the Damascus Road. In essence Paul had been given his marching orders which included all people, even the Gentiles. Paul shared with his accusers his personal encounter with God in hopes of defending his actions and winning some to Christ.

In closing, if you are a Christian, you have a testimony to share. Who knows, it could be you that God uses to lead someone to Jesus today. — Bradshaw is pastor, First Baptist Church, Bruceton.



**Family Bible
SS Lesson — Jan. 28**

**Explore the Bible
SS Lesson — Jan. 28**

Fitness can affect witness, ministry, says Draper

By Charles Willis
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Shortness of breath and a dose of old fashioned guilt brought Jimmy Draper to the point of improving his personal fitness.

Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, recalled recently that he had never weighed more than 200 pounds until he left the pastorate to head the SBC publishing agency here.

The change in his ministry focus in 1991 also resulted in several lifestyle changes, including many more hours sitting at a desk, in meetings, on airplanes, and in automobiles. The result was an increase in his weight to 212 pounds.

Two years ago, he said, friends listening to him preach at First Baptist Church, Dallas, commented that he had

seemed out of breath. Shortly thereafter, a retired preacher who had heard him on the radio made a similar observation. Within a period of six weeks, several persons who did not know each other had commented to Draper that they were concerned about his health. Among those was LifeWay's wellness consultant, Tommy Yessick.

"I had heard him preach at the National Conference for Church Leadership, and I could hear a rhythmic wheezing as he preached. I made an appointment and I told him, 'This is kind of awkward, because you are my boss. But I want you to stay around. Let's see what we can do.' I made a chart of things he could do, and we met periodically to check on his blood pressure and other measures of progress."

"The most obvious thing I

could do was lose weight," Draper said.

To make matters worse, he said, "I not only felt bad; I also felt guilty. Before I could deal with my weight, I had to look at it as a sin. It was a matter of spiritual stewardship, a matter of example. How we maintain our physical well-being is a testimony to our faith. Our appearance conveys some things about our discipline and self-control."

Yessick worked with Draper on some lifestyle changes he could accommodate in his travel schedule and long in-office, desk-bound days in Nashville. Those included modified eating habits and increased exercise.

"I'm not a flat belly or a marathon runner," Draper said. "Realistically, I'm probably 10 pounds heavier than the doctors want me to be."

But at a weight that hovers between 25 and 30 pounds less than he weighed two years ago, Draper said he has learned that fitness, like faith, is a journey, not a destination.

"My goal is not a certain weight, but a certain level of health," he reflected. "I've learned I can manage my weight and my diet. I am not dieting. I could go on a diet, but if I go on one, I gain again when I go off of it."

Instead, Draper has modified his approach to eating, watching fat grams, rarely eating fried foods, eating more fruit, almost never adding salt to foods, and drinking more water and fewer caffeine drinks. He walks 45 minutes on a treadmill every day that he is at home, and he takes some vitamin and mineral supplements. An additional exercise tool is an elastic exercise band to do resistance exercise and tone muscles.

On the road, he walks whenever he can. If time permits between flight segments, he walks between arrival and departure gates and terminals rather than riding trams and trains.

"I can walk airport concourses, and if I have stair access, I try to walk up stairs,"



he said. "I work exercise in where I can."

Draper said like others of his generation, he was taught to clean his plate. Now he has broken that habit, eating only what he wants and leaving the rest.

"I'm not a slave to it," he said of his new eating plan.

Now 65, Draper said his age was a motivating factor. He lost his father at 52 and a brother at age 47.

"When you find yourself huffing and puffing, that's not the way you want to live," he said. "Steps can be the hardest. At my former weight, it really wasn't easy. I had to ask myself if, in my older years, I wanted to be where I couldn't do a lot of things without unnecessary pressure."

Today, he said he feels better, has more energy, and an added benefit is that his snoring, which was contributing to sleep apnea, is improved.

Yessick said Draper's accomplishments are documented in the results of annual physical examinations.

"His heart rate has gone down by 10 beats per minute, and his good cholesterol has improved," Yessick said. "His time on the treadmill, part of his annual physical, has increased by 2 minutes, thereby raising his fitness category from good to excellent for a person his age."

Most ministers are so consumed with what they do, they fail to take care of themselves, Draper believes.

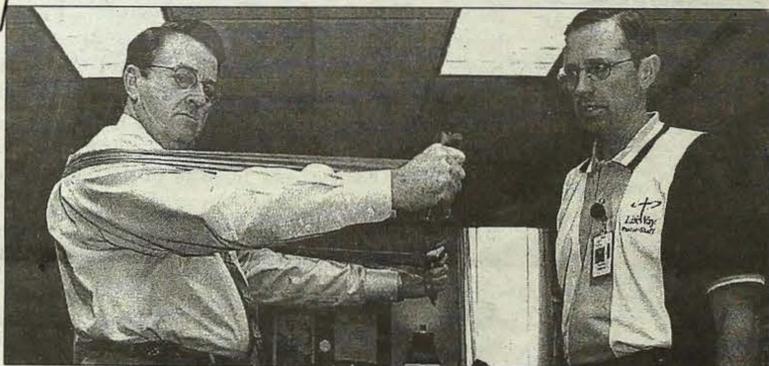
"Nearly every pastor is a slave to his job," he observed. "He has no time for himself or doesn't know how to use the time he has. No one has any more time than anyone else. It's how we manage our time. But pastors feel so many demands."

"I know I am going to die some day," he acknowledged. "and I know God is in control. But while I am alive, I need to be as fit as I can so I can do as much as I can."

LifeWay offers resources to assist persons who want to improve their personal fitness. Through LeaderCare, a ministry of personal development resources for ministers and their families, wellness consultation and resources are available by contacting Yessick at tommy.yessick@lifeway.com. LifeWay's discipleship area offers "Fit 4," a goal-oriented educational health plan that stresses a balanced approach to wellness. For more information about Fit 4, visit www.fit4.com. ■



SHORTNESS OF BREATH and a dose of old fashioned guilt brought Jimmy Draper to the point of improving his personal fitness. Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, recalled recently that he never weighed more than 200 pounds until he left the pastorate to head the Nashville-based publishing agency. Draper is shown preaching three years ago. — Photo by Jim Veneman



JIMMY DRAPER, LifeWay Christian Resources president, worked with LifeWay consultant Tommy Yessick, right, on some lifestyle changes he could accommodate in his travel schedule and long office hours. The changes included modified eating habits and increased exercise. — Photo by Morris Abernathy

First person account

Finish the race well and in good health

By Jimmy Draper
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Through a Baptist Press news story, I have recently shared my personal journey in learning to manage my level of health. I admit to some discomfort in doing so, but if it helps someone serve God longer and healthier, I will be grateful.

The long hours and stress of ministry roles today can lead to a multitude of problems — bad eating habits, lack of exercise, and a general deterioration of health, including high blood pressure. I had all of these as well as a family history of medical problems. My father died at 52; a brother died at 47.

Thankfully, I had a lot of help in making some changes, beginning with LifeWay's wellness consultant, Tommy Yessick. He had the courage to talk with me personally when he perceived I had a problem. He also willingly invested his time in helping me to make needed changes. The other six members of LifeWay's Executive Management Group

went on weight loss programs to support me.

I also am grateful for the partnership LifeWay shares with the Annuity Board in promoting wellness. Because they manage medical coverage for more than 31,500 Southern Baptist ministers, the Annuity Board was well aware of the significant health problems suffered by many. Their emphasis, Focus on Your Well Being, provides help in preventive care. They also offer a health management program.



DRAPER

While one result of better health of ministers will be lower medical costs, that is not the primary purpose of the actions of the Annuity Board. Their real concern is to help ministers serve God better and longer because they have the health to do so.

If you have lifestyle-induced health problems or need to change some habits to avoid them, I urge you to take action. Thankfully, there are a multitude of re-

sources to help you make lasting changes, including LifeWay's LeaderCare ministry and "Fit 4," a goal-oriented educational health plan that stresses a balanced approach to wellness. By initiating a personal wellness program, you will not only help yourself and your family, but also you can be an example to others.

I am saddened to read about and observe the increasing number of overweight children and teenagers. They have simply followed the example of many of us. As a grandparent, I want to set an example for those of my family who may be influenced by my actions, as well as by my words.

Having recently observed my 65th birthday, I have reflected often on my desire to finish well the race set before me. Accomplishing this goal requires maintaining the integrity of my relationship to Christ and relationships with others. But it also includes doing all I can to maintain good health to serve him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. ■ — Draper is president of LifeWay Christian Resources.