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# Baptist & Reflector

Statewide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

Vol. 172 / No. 11; March 22, 2006

## Compensation study planned

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The 2006 Southern Baptist Convention Compensation Study is now being compiled.

The study provides vital information for personnel, church, and finance committees as well as directors of missions and church staff regarding salary and benefits provided for church staff members.

Tennessee Baptist Convention churches have an opportunity to join other churches across the SBC in the 2006 study.

Forms requesting information were mailed to churches in January. They are to be returned by April 15 to be included.

The survey data will be available on the Internet or by calling the financial support area of the TBC. No information specific to a participating church is revealed. See Compensation, page 9

## LifeWay staff helps 'Extreme Makeover'

By Russ Rankin  
LifeWay news office

DEWEY, Okla. — On March 12, America was introduced to the White family, courtesy of Ty Pennington, ABC's hit show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" and a brand new house.

And LifeWay Christian Resources was there behind the scenes to help make it happen.

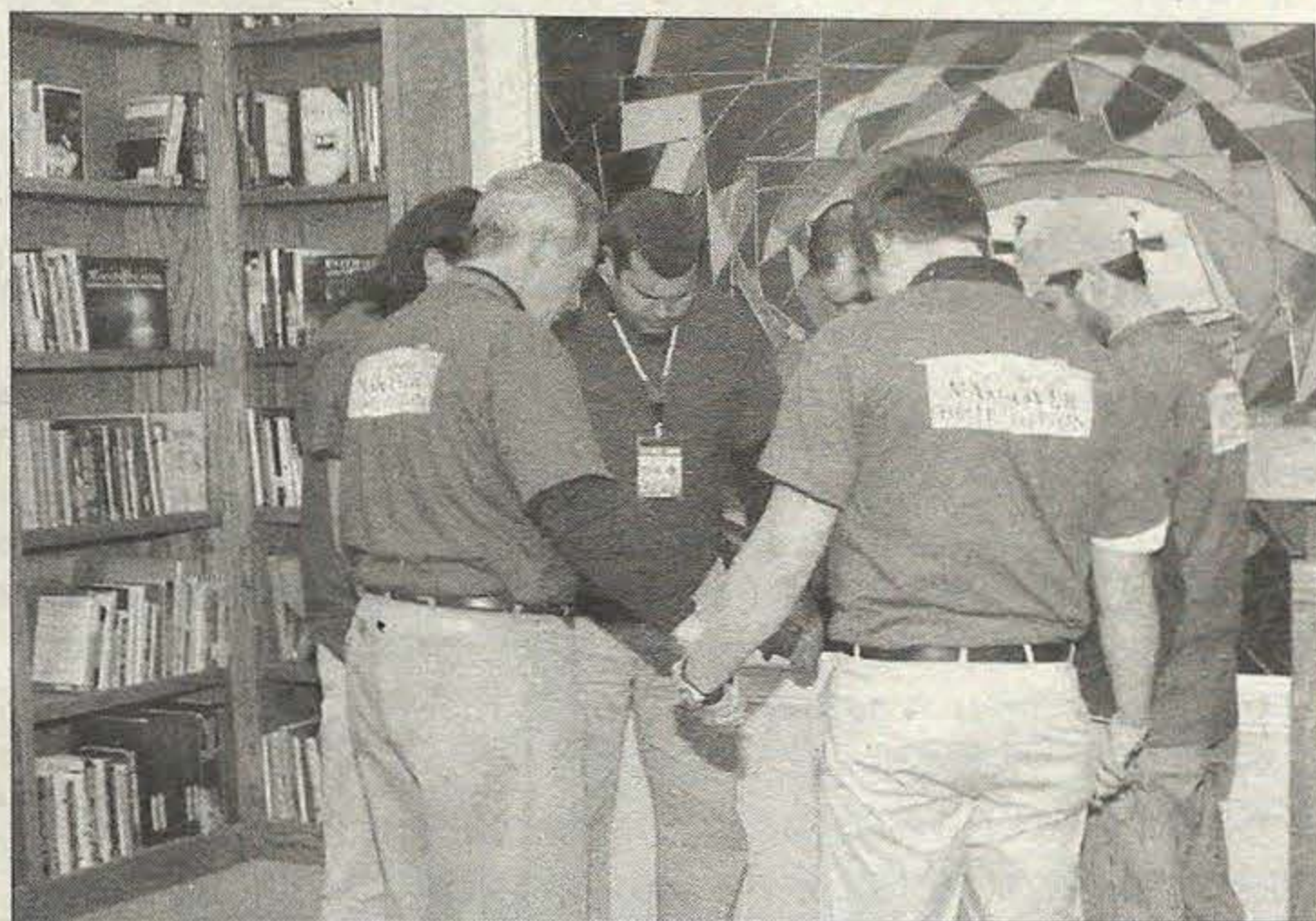
John White, a second-generation pastor in Dewey, Okla., was known as a tender pastor with a big heart and a big family. John, his wife, Danna, and their five children filled the parsonage of Bluestem Baptist Church and were known throughout the small community 45 minutes north of Tulsa as selfless people who exemplified and lived the two greatest commandments. They loved the Lord and their neighbors.

In April 2005, joy turned to tragedy when John's earthly life ended with a massive heart attack on the day of his 19th wedding anniversary. Instead of a celebration, Danna was made a widow, and Sarah (17),

Esther (16), Zeb (15), Rebekah (14), and Ruth (13) lost their father.

With John's meager life insurance and some community fundraisers, Danna was able to purchase two old trailers. But with no carpet, power, working kitchen, heat, or even locks on the doors, the children often spent the colder nights at friends' homes just to stay warm.

"Danna has such amazing strength," said Cindy White, who is married to James — John's brother. "It's been such a tough year, but (Danna) has always been such a welcoming and giving person. When you've got five kids at home ... they always had friends over, kids who didn't have a place to go. They always knew they'd find love at Danna's. Even with a two-bedroom house, there was always room for people to come." Despite the hardship of the past year, Danna continued to have a missionary's heart, and expressed repeatedly on the March 12 show her desire to minister to others in need.



LIFEWAY EMPLOYEES Phill Burgess, Chad Price, Marcus Rich, Landon Gaines, Chrysta Jerigan, and J.R. Phillips pray together after setting up the White family chapel in Dewey, Okla. — Photo by Russ Rankin

In the White Family episode of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," the design team built on Danna's desire to be a ministry beacon in her community. Providentially, the show contacted LifeWay to play a special role in its plans to help stock a chapel being built inside the home.

Karin Jarlstedt, a design pro-

ducer on the show, contacted Phill Burgess, executive director of LifeWay's Holman Bible Outreach International — which facilitates the translation, production, and distribution of affordable Bibles and Scripture portions for evangelism, mission projects, and training.

— See LifeWay, page 8

## Jackson couple encourages others while battling cancer

Linda Lawson  
Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — As Libby Gray battles a medically incurable cancer, she and her family express gratitude for a network of brothers and sisters around the world offering prayers on her behalf.

She and her husband, Bradley, minister of music at Greenwood Baptist Church in Jackson, seek opportunities to help others even as they are

receiving ministry from many. Bradley Gray reports daily to a list that has grown to more than five thousand people via [www.carepages.com](http://www.carepages.com), a web site enabling people dealing with serious illnesses to communicate with family, friends, and other interested persons.

"We're just a family of five praying for our wife and mother and best friend to be healed," he said.

Although she has never been a smoker, Libby was diagnosed

with medically incurable stage four lung cancer in January. She was found to have a large mass restricting her right lung and nine cancers on her brain. She is being treated with an aggressive regimen of radiation and chemotherapy and has seen the lung tumor deteriorate from the inside out as a result of the treatment. While good news, the collapse of the tumor also sent infection into her body, requiring a lengthy hospital stay.

While Bradley acknowledged he began using CarePages simply as a tool to send one message that could be read by the many interested in Libby's condition, the posts from readers and the growing guest list has become a daily source of encouragement.

"I read every post to Libby," Bradley said.

"Sometimes what blesses us the most is just scanning down the list of people who accessed the site that day. Here are folks that know us and haven't known us who have read the update and probably have prayed a short prayer. It is very hard for us to imagine how much prayer is offered on our behalf."

In addition to e-mail messages, the Grays have received prayer grams, cards, and letters from individuals and churches where they have served and from those where they have never been.

Bradley cited a prayer gram signed by 60 people from a small church in Oklahoma they have never visited. They have heard directly or indirectly

from people throughout the United States and from Brazil and Romania.

They are blessed when people comment that, in praying for Libby's healing, they have also begun praying for others.

"That's the miracle of God's people," Bradley said.

In updates on Libby's health, the Grays also seek to encourage others.

In his Jan. 24 message, Bradley asked readers to pray that Libby's cough would subside so she could sleep. He also praised God for opportunities to bear witness to faith:

"Libby and I can't help but smile as nurses, technicians, and fellow patients watch Libby's testimony of faith play out with such quiet strength. God is using this in our lives to give a testimony of who God is, even in tough times."

At a time when Libby was experiencing breathing problems, having to drink large amounts of water, had lost her voice, and was losing her hair, she wrote the following on Jan. 30:

— See Jackson, page 9

## son's illness spurs creation of CarePages

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — When Eric and Sharon Langshur's son, Matthew, was born five years ago with congenital heart defect, they created a simple web site to provide updates, a message board, and a photo gallery for friends and family. Seeing the value of the site for ease in posting one update for all interested persons, along with the encouragement of messages received at the site, the Langshurs launched CarePages ([www.carepages.com](http://www.carepages.com)), a free service offered by more than 300 health care facilities. It also is available at no charge to others. More than one million families are using the site today.

Families dealing with the illness of a loved one can go to the site and set up a CarePage. As their site manager, they can post updates and photos, receive posts from registered guests, and view a guest list showing how many have registered to visit the site and who has visited on a particular day.

Registered guests can visit the site at any time to view patient updates, read messages from other guests, and post messages to the family. They also receive an e-mail telling them whenever a new update has been posted. Occasional newsletters are sent to readers and other resources are available at the CarePages site. □ — Linda Lawson



## about your newsjournal

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

**Connie Davis Bushey, news editor**  
(615) 371-7928,  
cbushey@tnbaptist.org

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

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

**Marcia Knox, special features  
assistant**  
(615) 371-2089,  
mknox@tnbaptist.org

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

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

**Phone — (615) 371-2003**

**FAX — (615) 371-2080**

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## Billy Graham likely preaches his final sermon

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — In what he called his last sermon, Billy Graham voiced a message of thanks and encouragement during the March 11-12 "Celebration of Hope" at the New Orleans Arena.

"This is probably the last evangelistic sermon I'll ever preach," the 87-year-old evangelist told an overflow crowd of 17,800 people on Sunday. "But it's been wonderful to be here. Thank you."

"I'd like to thank my friends George Beverly Shea and Cliff Barrows for all these years we've been together," Graham continued as he sat on a special chair that raised him to the wooden pulpit's appropriate height, as thousands of cameras flashed throughout the arena.

"I look forward to a big reunion one day in heaven," Graham said. "God bless you all."

Graham's last visit to the city was a six-week crusade 52 years ago. This time, he delivered a single 22-minute message of hope to a city desperately in need of encouragement.

Graham said he watched in shock as Hurricane Katrina destroyed New Orleans' levee system, flooding much of the city.

But days later, he said, "We saw the great men and women who helped carry people [to safety] in helicopters ... and we knew the God of love was watching over us. God loves you."

More than 215 New Orleans-area churches, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse sponsored the Celebration of Hope to offer hope to victims of Katrina.

In addition to Billy Graham, his son Franklin Graham delivered the Saturday evening message. Officials estimated attendance for the two-day outreach at 30,500 and they counted 1,432 people who either had accepted or rededicated their lives to Christ. □

## FCC levies large fines on networks

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Responding to the public's growing concern about the content of television programming, the Federal Communications Commission March 15 handed down its first fines since 2004 and upheld a ruling regarding a controversial Super Bowl halftime show.

FCC commissioners released decisions resolving more than

300,000 consumer complaints about nearly 50 television programs broadcast between February 2002 and March 2005, proposing a total of \$3.9 million in new fines.

"Congress has long prohibited the broadcasting of indecent and profane material and the courts have upheld challenges to these standards," Kevin Martin said in his first ruling as FCC chairman. "But the number of complaints received by the commission has risen year after year. They have grown from hundreds to hundreds of thousands, and the number of programs that trigger these complaints continues to increase as well."

"I share the concerns of the public — and of parents in particular — that are voiced in these complaints."

The largest fine issued was for a record \$3.6 million against dozens of CBS stations and affiliates for airing an episode of the crime drama "Without a Trace" with the graphic depiction of "teenage boys and girls participating in a sexual orgy."

CBS, which justified the show because it "featured an important and socially relevant storyline warning parents to exercise greater supervision of their teenage children," has 30 days to appeal.

Additional proposed fines totaling about \$300,000 included an episode of The WB's "The Surreal Life 2" and an episode of "The Fernando Hidalgo Show," a Spanish-language program airing on a Miami station.

"These decisions, taken both individually and as a whole, demonstrate the commission's continued commitment to enforcing the law prohibiting the airing of obscene, indecent, and profane material," Martin said.

Commissioners also rejected an appeal by CBS that said Janet Jackson's exposure during the halftime show of the 2004 Super Bowl was not indecent, holding to their previous decision that CBS is responsible for the show and failed to take actions to prevent the broadcast of the material.

"We appropriately reject the argument that CBS continues to make that this material is not indecent," Martin said. "That argument runs counter to commission precedent and common sense."

FCC rules, which do not apply to cable or satellite, ban radio and television stations from airing obscene material at any time and from broadcasting indecent material between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. The current maximum fine per incident is \$32,500, but some lawmakers have proposed increasing the fine to \$500,000.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, commended the FCC for its stance against objectionable material, especially when broadcasters broke the law.

## Bivocational ministers to help counterparts affected by hurricane

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Bivocational ministers and their laity are invited to participate in a national effort to help hurricane victims in Mississippi and Louisiana.

"Bivos helping bivos is the theme of the effort to help two hurricane-damaged churches rebuild," said Ray Gilder, bivocational ministries specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and coordinator of the projects.

Work projects at churches in Waveland, Miss., and New Orleans, La., will be held May 1-5 and May 8-12, Gilder said.

During the weekend between the two work projects (May 5-6), the National Bivocational Celebration will be held at the camp of Pearl River

Baptist Association in McNairy, Miss. The theme of the celebration is "Victory Through Storms."

The camp also is where volunteers who work either will be lodged, Gilder said.

Gilder noted that Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief is providing the cost of lodging, meals, which will be cooked and served from the Dyer Baptist Association feeding unit.

Bivocational pastors encouraged to bring members from their congregation assist in rebuilding the churches damaged by the hurricanes, Gilder said, noting that both churches are served by bivocational ministers.

For more information, Gilder at 1-800-558-2090, 7907 or e-mail rgilder@tnbaptist.org. □

"Friends and supporters of decency on America's publicly owned airwaves should be very encouraged by the FCC's stiff fines against these egregious violations of the public trust by the offending networks," Land said. "It shows that when the public expresses its outrage, it can make a difference in the way their government responds." □

## Welch encouraged at midpoint of 'Everyone Can'

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The push for Southern Baptist churches to baptize one million people in a year will reach the halfway point at the end of March.

"I'm extraordinarily encouraged by what I'm hearing from all across the country," Bobby Welch told Baptist Press, "because I've never heard so much positive talk about witnessing, winning, and baptizing as I'm hearing now."

Welch, with his election as president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 2004, initiated the "Everyone Can' Kingdom Challenge!" to call Southern Baptist churches to "Witness, Win, and Baptize ... One Million" during the 2005-06 church year.

"There's no way to even remotely quantify how things are going numerically," Welch said. "However, several churches that have told me they have baptized more than 100 people in a single baptismal service. Just about every day I'm hearing from small churches that they are breaking records in baptisms. Sometimes it's only three baptisms and sometimes it's only eight. But that's more than they've ever done before and that's a great thing."

"What we're hearing from our

Baptist associations across country is overwhelmingly positive," Welch continued. "We got associations in the mix we've never had before."

Several avenues of involvement remain a vital part making the next six months productive as possible for witnessing and baptizing the lost.

• Pastors can schedule baptisms as part of their Sunday services, April 16, the three special days. Welch has asked Southern Baptist churches to help build Everyone Can momentum in addition to Easter Sunday Nov. 27 of last year, Welch asked that churches also light baptism on Sept. 30, final day of the SBC's church year and the closing date of Everyone Can initiative.

• Baptist associations still schedule baptism rallies. Last fall, Welch asked the associations to call their churches together for two such rallies Sept. 30, 2006, on dates best suit their calendars.

• Baptists from across country can participate in Crossover evangelistic opportunities preceding this year's annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C. This year's "Crossover Triad" evangelistic thrust scheduled for Saturday Sunday, June 10-11, with SBC's annual meeting to follow on June 13-14 at the Green Coliseum Complex.

Links to Crossover and a downloadable video use in enlisting volunteers for Sunday services or settings can be accessed at everyoneacan.net.

• Churches can begin witnessing their baptism totals the Everyone Can web site provide "a ballpark figure" of what kind of progress making," said Jay John, director of FAITH/evangelism and discipleship at Life Christian Resources. □



## Hamilton County Baptist Association

# Association provides 40 language classes each week

Connie Davis Bushey  
Baptist and Reflector

CHATTANOOGA — When Becky Witt of the Hamilton County Baptist Association staff thinks of the association's language ministries, she thinks of people like Betty.

Betty, who was from the Sudan, was taking English as a Second Language classes at Avondale Baptist Church, Chattanooga. Betty had escaped the Sudan by walking into Egypt with her five children and while pregnant. She immigrated to the United States.

Witt had the privilege of see-

ing Betty's face, Witt recalled, when she was given a Bible in the Arabic and English languages by her English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. Betty had asked for a Bible though she was Muslim.

"She was so excited to get a Bible in her own language," said Witt.

Then Betty asked her new friends and teachers at Avondale Church to pray she would obtain a job.

When she was hired at a discount store, Betty said, "Your God has answered our prayer."

### Language Ministries

Hamilton County Association has provided language min-

istries for about 24 years, said David Myers, director of missions. Witt, administrator of finance and language ministries for the association, has coordinated them for 10 years.

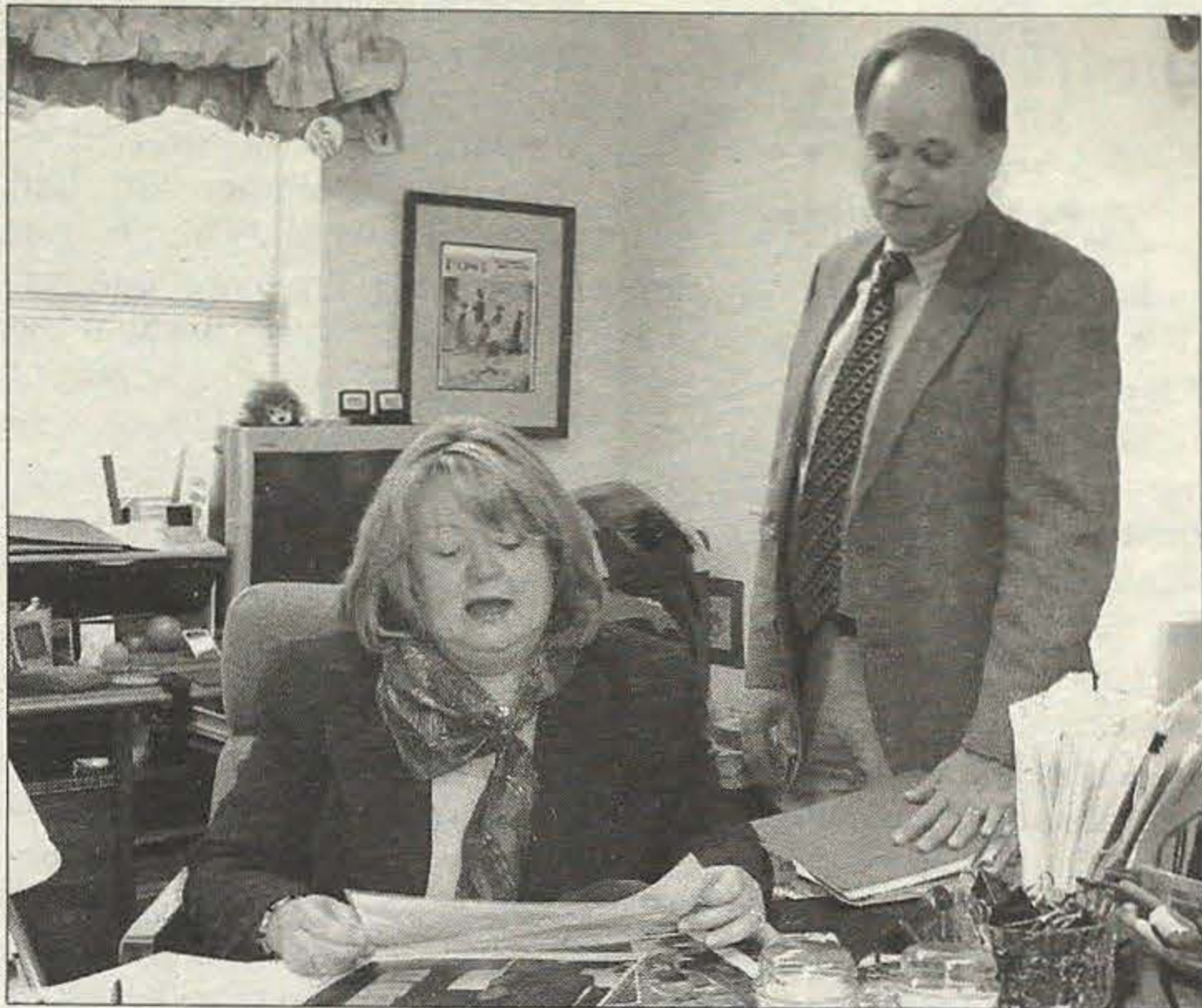
ESL classes are offered at 10 Baptist churches and the 40 weekly classes are led by about 137 volunteers. Last year the free classes drew about 600 students from 37 different countries. People are referred to the program from agencies in the community and individuals. Details can be found at [www.baptistassociation.com](http://www.baptistassociation.com).

The program includes a devotional and refreshment time during class. Materials including Bibles in the student's language and training for teachers are provided by the association. At times, the association has even given used computers to students. Nursery also is provided.

Teachers further the ministry by helping the students outside of class, added Witt. Many of the students are unfamiliar with how to enroll their children in school, how to make a doctor's appointment, and how to buy a car legally. Each year students make professions of faith and are referred to churches who baptize them, reported Witt.

In addition to the ESL program, literacy classes, tutoring for children and youth, and Spanish classes are offered by the association. In the past few years many Latinos have moved to the area, many of whom are illiterate in Spanish so they need literacy classes. Training also has been adapted to prepare short-term missionaries who wish to teach ESL in another country.

The ESL and other classes are held mainly at English-speaking churches but also in three Latino mission churches, a Korean mission church, and a Cambodian mission church, said Witt.



BECKY WITT, administrator of finances and language ministries, Hamilton County Baptist Association, Chattanooga, visits with David Myers, director of missions of the association, about the language ministries of the association in her office.



SAN WESTBROOK, right, a member of Red Bank Baptist Church, Red Bank, teaches an English as a Second Language class recently at the church.



AN BRYE, second from left, of Signal Mountain Baptist Church, Signal Mountain, pauses with her students recently during an ESL class at Red Bank Baptist Church, Red Bank.

As the program has become well-known, teachers and students have been called upon to help folks in the health department, hospitals, companies, and nursing facilities, said Witt.

Classes are weekly but students can attend classes in several sites, as many as they wish, explained Witt. People can begin attending classes at any time.

### Volunteers

"It takes a real group of committed people with a passion," said Witt of the volunteer teachers. Amazingly, she has never had to recruit teachers beyond letting the community know of the opportunity. "That's why it has to be a God thing."

Just recently she received a call from a Baptist man who said he was concerned about the Hispanic people and had heard the association helped them. She also has volunteers from other denominations and the association has trained Baptists from several other associations.

Training is through the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Teachers often face a daunting task, explained Witt. They have people in their class at several levels of English ability. They are placed considering their ability. Students have cultural differences. Some have learning disabilities and distinct ways of learning.

But the teachers don't complain, she said. Instead, they always welcome more students and few ever want to quit. She has some teachers in their 80s.

"Somehow the energy and the finances are sustained," said Witt. She noted the cost of materials has increased steadily over the years.

The students are the reward, she continued.

"Some become aware that there is hope for a better life in this country through learning English. They are appreciative beyond words," she said. □

## Carson-Newman College hosts personnel recruiter from IMB

Mark Brown  
Carson-Newman News Office

EFFERSON CITY — Church and college missions are important for the growth of Christianity, says Tom Hearon, a personnel recruiter for the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

God is speaking to this generation of young people about His kingdom," said the pastor of Nashville's First Baptist Church while taking a break from visiting with Carson-Newman students during the college's Career Showcase 2006. He is doing it through their willingness to volunteer for short-term mission experiences. Although he often visits campus to talk with students individually and in small groups,



TOM HEARON, personnel coordinator for the International Mission Board, talks with a Carson-Newman College student during the college's Career Showcase 2006.

Hearon said C-N's showcase last week was his first college job fair. "I have talked with several students today who want to

know more about our Journeyman program and short-term opportunities, he reported. They are saying things like, 'Where in

the world is God leading me?'"

Carson-Newman, which was recognized just last month by the SBC's North American Mission Board (NAMB) as a leading partner in supplying student missionaries, saw more than 300 volunteers take part in domestic and international service opportunities in 2005 alone.

"That's more than 15 percent of our student population," said Renee Leake, vice president for C-N's student affairs division. "I am grateful and excited that (C-N campus ministers) Jim Wilson and Nenette Measels have made missions opportunities such an important part of the Carson-Newman experience. It's a natural manifestation of our mission that our students look beyond themselves as a real demonstration of their faith."

Hearon said he had spoken

with several experienced student volunteers who expressed interest in the field as a career option.

"One young lady has been to Thailand and she wants to go back," he said. "She wanted to explore more about other channels for ministry."

Mission trips and short-term service opportunities are important components of vocational development, said Hearon. He cited a 2004 statistic that 45 percent of the IMB's long-term missionaries had served two-year roles, like the journeyman program.

"That's why we must keep challenging college students to go out into the world as part of their experience of faith," concluded the personnel coordinator. "It influences the number of missionaries we will have well into the next 10 or 20 years." □



# Forgiveness does not cancel consequences of sin

families  
matter



By Paul Barkley

For the past two articles (Feb. 8 and March 8 issues) I have been dealing with the issue of forgiveness as we move into a new year. I have invited you to consider the possibility that as Christians, we may not be responsible or even morally justified to give blanket forgiveness to all who have wronged us, whether they ask for forgiveness or not. In giving what God has not given, we may become culpable in a sense of false security to the offender who would believe that God has forgiven him or her since we have. We may not be responsible for forgiving, but we are required to be willing to forgive and offer that forgiveness to all.

I also asked that you consider that it is impossible to "forgive and forget" as some Christians have implied. God could not possibly do this since He is, by definition, omnis-

cient, and knows everything. It is tacitly impossible to know everything and forget anything. God does choose in His tender mercy to behave toward the forgiven in the present as though his or her sin had never occurred. This is not from some type of forgetfulness, but rather through the blood of Jesus which covers the sin so that God chooses to see the blood and not the sin.

There is now a third issue that I wish to address in the area of forgiveness. When a person is forgiven, does the forgiveness nullify the consequences of the behavior that was forgiven? Many Christians believe that if we are forgiven there is no penalty (or consequence) for past sin. This is a thorny and complicated issue. One might say, since I am forgiven, I am not going to hell. This would be true. There is a sense in which God's forgiveness wipes out the penalty of my sin. But it does not always do away with the consequences of my sin in this life.

I think that the biblical narrative of David makes this point clear. Nathan confronted David about his sin with

Bathsheba. David asked for forgiveness and God granted it. Nathan went on to tell David that "the Lord also has taken away your sin: you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die (II Samuel 12:13b-14)." Nathan had said earlier that the "sword shall never depart from your house" (v. 10). Where did David's son Absalom get the idea that he could take his father's throne? Was it not the result of watching his father take whatever he wanted? You see that forgiveness does not take away the consequences of our sin.

Moses sinned against God and God said that he would not be able to enter the Promised Land. The consequences of sin do not go away simply by obtaining forgiveness.

In dealing with couples in which infidelity has occurred, I think that it is imperative that they understand this principle. The offending spouse comes back and asks for forgiveness and the other spouse

grants it. In the weeks and months to come they find that trust is not easily reestablished. The consequence of the sin does not go away because the forgiveness has been granted. The offended spouse is sometimes made to feel guilty because he or she is not able to get over the suspicion that he or she feels when phone calls come that are kept secret or there is time unaccounted for when the offending spouse is out. If the offending spouse wants to be trusted again, he or she must go out of the way to show himself trustworthy.

Our culture has the mindset that when forgiveness is granted the consequences of the sin are abolished. "Didn't I say I'm sorry? What else do you want? What else can I do?" If the relationship is to be restored, the consequences of the sin must effectively be dealt with so that the consequence of past behavior does not become a future barrier to the rebuilding process. □ — Barkley is associate professor of psychology and religion at Baptist College of Health Sciences in Memphis.

a parent  
speaks



By Carolyn R. Tomlin

## Build self-esteem

When a baby comes into a family, most parents never think that parenting is tough work. Parenting requires wisdom, thoughtfulness, attention, and a heart filled with patience and love. Moms and dads would agree: There's nothing simple about raising a child.

However, there are ways to make parenting more fun while building your child's self-esteem and confidence.

Realize that no one can instill this confidence in a child as well as Christian parents. And what happens if children grow up in homes where they lack value? Unless there is a significant person in their lives they may never reach the level needed for emotionally stable adulthood. Understand that there is no one exact pattern for building a child's self-esteem. However, the following suggestions provide youngsters with a firm foundation for developing confidence.

- Give honest praise and compliments often. When a child makes good grades, does something out of the ordinary, or uses positive behavior instead of negative — find ways to praise. Think of different ways to reward instead of money.

- Help your child avoid criticism of "self." Criticism of actions is a learning process. Your child experiences failure — watch his actions. This will indicate how the child actually feels about himself. Never allow an area in life to equate performance with the whole person. Remember that when a child fails at one task — they have not failed at being a child!

- Teach good manners through example.

- Encourage your child to make decisions. Learning to make decisions is one of the most important skills your child will ever learn. Not only for the present, but its value carries into the future. Begin with choice between two items: clothing, or a choice of entertainment.

- Ask your child's advice or opinion. It may come as a surprise, but children have opinions, too.

- Trust God's Word for raising children. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Christian parents who use biblical truths commit their children to God and live according to His ways. □ — Tomlin writes for the Christian market. Her husband, Matt, is pastor of Ward Grove Baptist Church, Jackson.

## Another view

I read with interest the letter from Jerry Daughtry in last week's issue entitled "Tongues ceased." One must agree that this is a difficult issue with Southern Baptists. However, his letter expresses only one interpretation of I Corinthians 13.

Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology*, used in theology classes at SBC seminaries addresses the "perfect" in I Corinthians 13. He writes:

"The meaning of verse 12 seems to require that verse 10 is talking about the time of the Lord's return ... When shall we see 'face to face'? When shall we know 'even as we have been known'? These events can only happen when the Lord returns."

He continues, "So when Paul says, 'but then face to face' he clearly means, 'but when we shall see God face to face.' Indeed that will be the greatest blessing of heaven and our greatest joy of eternity" (page 1,033).

For too long we have let our interpretation of Scripture be based upon our own personal experience or the traditions of men. Therefore, if I have not had a certain experience or so and so says it is not true, then it is not valid, so the logic goes.

Why not just let the Word say what it says? Why are we always trying to twist it to meet

our personal preferences?

One of my professors at Southern Seminary told us, "You had better get familiar with the Holy Spirit if you are going to be in ministry. Your generation is going to be serving in a world unseen since the early-church age and you will need all the help you can get."

We must all agree that our world is getting darker by the day and we cannot accomplish the Great Commission in our own strength. We need all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be effective.

It is always profitable to hear another side of the story!

Barry Davis, pastor  
First Baptist Church  
Madison 37115

## Blessed by pastor

On April 2, Bloomingdale Baptist Church, Kingsport, and our pastor, Joe W. Byrd, will celebrate the completion of his 55th year behind our pulpit.

Pastor Byrd was called by our church on April 1, 1951 and has served here ever since. We would like to honor our pastor for what may well be one of the longest serving tenures of a pastor at a single and only church within the entire Southern Baptist Convention.

Ephesians 4:11 tells us, *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.*

Pastor Byrd has been the embodiment of the faithful servant called and gifted by God as pastor and teacher.

As chairman of the deacons I would like to share the thoughts and observations of our deacon body as to his pastorate at our church. Perhaps they will provide some insight as to his longevity behind the pulpit and, more amazingly, at a single church.

Pastor Byrd exhibited a willingness to build on the good foundation laid by our first pastor, James Taft Richards.

Physical health and spiritual strength has enabled our pastor to perform the tasks that lie before him. In 55 years of service, God has always provided the pastor a message.

Our pastor has always put God and his church family first and has given his all to the ministry of Bloomingdale Baptist.

Being blessed with a good and understanding family has allowed Pastor Byrd to fulfill his ministerial duties. His wife and all four of his children attend and serve our church.

Through his faithful service to the church, and in earlier years, the local schools, Pastor Byrd has touched the lives of thousands. He has ministered to and shared the family's grief at more than 3,100 funerals he has officiated. He has experienced the joy and happiness of holy matrimony as he has unit-

ed more than 1,000 couples in marriage.

He has faithfully served God in the pulpit by preaching without fear or favor from the members. Many souls have been saved and united with the church under his preaching.

Pastor Byrd has always guarded the pulpit and not permitted preachers to stand in our pulpit and preach anything contrary to Baptist doctrine or not to the edifying of the church.

Our pastor has always kept the church financially informed. No money is spent on anything unless approved by the church through the budget or business meeting. Our church records are open to any member that desires to see them.

He has served a faithful people — members who are faithful in their attendance and tithing, in their willingness to serve, in their support and love, and who show a willingness to hold their pastor and deacons up in prayer. He also has served alongside deacons who are willing to submit to the pastor's leadership or work out any disagreement in friendship and love.

May God bless Pastor and Mrs. Byrd with many more years as pastor of our church and serve to the Lord and His people.

H.C. Vaughn  
Kingsport 37660

## Letters to the editor



## Reflections on the 'home place,' God's gift



By James Porch

Kelly and I reside in a part greater Nashville that once comprised a large sprawling farm. Years ago, many more in the age of our mortgage, the farm was sold off in four to five acre plots. Our house, a modest place, sits on a high hill and features basic living amenities. Actually the house has a front door, a double front door, somehow the long steps up the walk seem to redirect friends and strangers to the back porch. After all, we reside in the comfort of being "Back Porches."

The original builder, apparently offended by light, limited each room to one window. We have added a sun room and

challenged the designer to put in as much glass as possible in order for all to see God's place for us. Three features attracted us to this abode. The basement space exceeded the square footage of the house and afforded an abundance of storage for two pack rats. Second, a diesel tractor complete with mower and hydraulic lift came with the house.

This took me back to my bucolic upbringing. I have just enough equipment and space to farm at my leisure. The space, four acres plus, lured us strongly as we envisioned our grandchildren running and playing and enjoying God's big world.

At no other address can I hear the sound of wind rushing through scores of pine trees. Nearby, a neighbors' schizophrenic rooster crows day and night. In several directions, I can only see grass and trees; and in the spring, the gradual greening of God's earth. If I rise early enough, I

am rewarded with the sight of a nine-point buck and his does at the salt block. And the birds, whether red, blue, or brown, doves or crows, they all make good music. But most of all, I just enjoy the gift of space the two of us share here at God's gift home. These lines echo my witness to a big side of contentment in my life. Wow, what a blessing.

Sometimes the water pressure lacks enough force. The wiring predates codes, and occasionally some of the "plumbing" causes anxious moments. The roof shows signs that its warranty will soon expire, and the heating and air conditioning system regularly emits a disharmony of sounds. The house sits on a wet weather spring and a big rain can easily wash out the basement. Regularly, four acres of grass must be cut. Kelly possesses a passion for grass cutting and I respectfully specialize in mower maintenance. You can look toward all four points of

the compass and see limbs to trim, leaves to rake, rocks to move, and other needs meriting our energy and sometimes beyond our perception. But aside from all of the challenges, the whole place is our gift from God. The mortgage may exceed my lifetime, but always Rehobeth will be our gift from God.

Yes, we affectionately call the place Rehobeth — an Old Testament reference to a meeting place. My dad's family, all tenant farmers, migrated back and forth across Mississippi and repeatedly came back to the Rehobeth Baptist Church community in Rankin County.

They called Rehobeth home. Rehobeth will always be the first chapter in our family story and I suppose my choice of names echoes my hope to write my own chapter. Yes indeed, God is very good! □ — Porch is executive director-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

### reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

## 47 years later and still relevant

When Fletcher Allen was researching material for our history, *Telling the Truth in Love: A Brief History of the Baptist and Reflector from 1835*, he showed me the following letter from Hoyle Edwards of Jefferson City:

"I was privileged to spend three years in Montana while I was in service and I feel that there is no place in greater need of the gospel than Montana. I am sure this would hold true to the entire northwest section of the United States. When I first went to Montana our Southern Baptist work was just in the beginning stages. Although Southern Baptists are well on their way in Montana today, the work has just begun — there is so much to be done.

"If any church is interested in helping our Southern Baptist missions and churches in Montana I would be glad to tell them all I know concerning the needs there.

"I believe that if the people of the northwest are won to Christ it will have to come through our Southern Baptist churches. The fields of the northwest are today ripe unto harvest — they are waiting for the truth of the Word of God."

These words could have been written in 2006, but actually were penned in 1959.

Forty-seven years after this letter was published, Tennessee Baptists are now in partnership with Baptists in Montana.

And the fields are definitely ripe for harvest. I had the opportunity to join some other Tennessee Baptists on a vision tour of Montana last summer and we were told about 85 percent of the state's population have no relationship with Jesus Christ.

Many Tennessee Baptists are planning to minister in Montana this year and in the years to come — to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Pray for these teams and others who will make the sacrifices necessary to travel hundreds of miles to share the gospel message in Montana.

During this season of emphasis on North American missions, we also need to pray not only for the people of Montana who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior, but for all non-believers across our nation.

Southern Baptists, through the Cooperative Program and special offerings such as the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, can make a difference.

Pray, go, give. That is our challenge today, just as it was in 1959. □

## Tennessee soldier sees God at work in Iraq

Editor's Note: Kevin Ray is a member of Laneview Baptist Church, Kenton. Following is a first person account of how God is at work among the soldiers serving our country.

By Kevin Ray

God is in control and saving souls in Iraq.

When I received word that the 913th Engineer Company from Union City, which I have been a member of for over 2 years, was getting an order to do a tour of duty in Iraq, my thoughts were, what am I to do while I am deployed here. I knew what my duties would be as a soldier. I had trained for over 20 years for this very mission. I had concerns how God would use me while I was deployed.

I knew that I was being deployed for more than one reason. There was no doubt that God had a mission for me while serving in Iraq. I started praying from the time I received word of deployment that God would open doors for me. I have a true concern for soldiers. I worry about their welfare, their families, but most of all their souls.

This is a hard, cruel country. At any minute you could be struck by small arms fire or an IED (improvised explosive device). Any day could be the day God calls us home. Families worry about their soldiers, fearing if their soldier will return home.

I know that my wife, Jana, and my two children, Lance and Lydia, worry about me. I always reassure them that I will be fine, that God will lead, guide, and protect me. I also reassured them

that if I didn't return home that I would meet them in heaven. I am a born again Christian, washed in the blood of the lamb ready to meet Jesus in heaven.

Well to make a long story short, God has used me while I have been here. God has used me as a witness and thus far two lost soldiers have been saved. The first soldier was saved while I was on a mission just four miles from the Syrian border.

The 913th was asked to build an 11-mile road so logistical supplies could be transported to an undisclosed location. The 913th sent a platoon-size element to conduct this mission. I was part of the command and control of the project. We had been there for several weeks. There was not a chaplain present to conduct any type of spiritual services.

I felt led to conduct devotionals and try to be an encouragement to others. While I was there a soldier approached me and asked me if I could tell him what it took to be a Christian. I began to explain the plan of salvation. Well the



KEVIN RAY

overnight stay in Al Aasid, Iraq. While I was there the Lord worked again. A young female soldier, also a member of the 913th, approached me and asked if I would pray with her. I asked what her prayer request concerned and she informed me that she was scared of dying and she knew she was not a Christian. Again I explained the plan of salvation to her and she accepted Christ. This soldier has since been baptized here in Iraq.

I just want to thank God for saving these soldiers. No matter what happens now there will be two more souls in heaven. I knew God had a plan for me. I am just thankful these two soldiers made a decision that will change the rest of their lives.

I ask that you continue to pray for all soldiers deployed throughout the world, that God will be with each and every one of them and their families. I ask that you say a special prayer for the soldiers who are not Christians.

God is in control. □

No matter what happens now there will be two more souls in heaven. ... I ask that you say a special prayer for the soldiers who are not Christians. God is in control.

rest is history. The soldier asked Christ to come into his life. At that point I knew why I was in Iraq.

The next soldier was saved while I was returning from the above mission. Traveling here is very difficult. A short trip, 50 miles, may take as long as 12 hours. The convoy I was in had an





# Church Health Matters

"Building healthy churches empowered by the presence of God."

## EVANGELISM Matters

This edition of *Church Health Matters* highlights the church health function of evangelism. Included below is the contact information for members of your state missionary staff that are available to help you and your church in any area related to evangelism.

Your state missionary staff is committed to the vision of "Making Christ Known By Serving Churches." Visit [www.tnbaptist.org](http://www.tnbaptist.org) for information about how the Tennessee Baptist Convention can serve your church.

### State Evangelism Director

Larry Gilmore .....(615) 371-7915  
*Evangelism Planning, Conferences, Revival Preparation, Witness Training, etc.*

### Church Planting

Bill George, West TN .....(615) 371-2043  
Wayne Terry, Middle TN.....(615) 355-7905  
Fred Davis, East TN .....(865) 988-7783  
Tim Hill, Ethnic Church Planting .....(615) 371-2032  
Chuy Avila, Hispanic Church Planting .....(615) 371-7913  
*New Church Starts, Interfaith Evangelism, ESL training classes, etc.*

### Youth Evangelism

Kent Shingleton .....(615) 371-2077  
*Youth Evangelism Conference, Connect Rallies, Youth Evangelism Strategies for local churches, etc.*

### Vacation Bible School

Kathy Trundle.....(865) 805-9946  
Barbara Owens.....(615) 371-7905

### Ministry Evangelism

Beverly Smothers.....(615) 371-2044



## Sunday School, Outreach-Not an Oxymoron

by Ken Marler

"Preacher you reach 'em and we'll teach 'em." That really seems to be the march of many churches. If the church is not reaching souls, then whose fault is it? It is the preacher's fault, right? I do not think so.

The Great Commission is given to every believer. Each believer has equal responsibility in reaching others.

Outreach is who we are and what we are as a body of believers. Perhaps it would be better said that outreach should be who we are and what we are about as a body of believers. Too often the church turns inward with more emphasis on "us" than on "them."

Acts 1:6-11 gives clear instruction as to who we are and what we are about. "You will receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come," (Acts 1:8a, NIV).

Those words of reality give a clear picture of where the emphasis should be in the church. So knowing this, why then aren't we doing a better job of reaching others?

We are not organized to do outreach. We build the organization for us. We create environments of learning so we can "know more" not "do more."

Therefore, Sunday School has become a place where we only learn. It should be a place of learning and doing.

Outreach is a way of life, and we should know how to share Christ with others.

Remember, outreach is a way of life in the

New Testament church. If outreach becomes a program in your church, it is a quick death.

## How To Do Outreach

Attend a FAITH clinic. Attend a GRAC clinic. Attend a training event that will sharpen your outreach skills.

Conduct one-on-one enlistment for outreach partners. Then mentor the new outreach partner.

Provide materials for parents to use with their children. Parenting classes on how to raise your children come to know Christ must.

Have an outreach team from each Sunday School class.

Train teachers and members in how to do outreach. This can be done during an evening worship service, a Sunday School class, a discipleship class, or other small group meeting.

Present the gospel in Bible study classes on a regular basis. The teacher would end each class with a brief gospel presentation. This is for the benefit of all. It may help those who do not think that they can do this to see it being done.

Follow up with those who make decisions for Christ. Often reassure their decisions and offer help in the assimilation process. Provide a new members class and a Christian class.

Cultivate unsaved prospects. Invite them to homes, outings, hunting, fishing, ball games, etc. Don't just always hang out with your saved friends.



## What Are Divine Appointments?

By Larry Gilmore

Divine appointments are all around you. Consider this approach to sharing the Good News! Jerry Essary, Tennessee Baptist Convention ministry strategist, was traveling across the state and stopped in a fast food restaurant. He received his food and walked into the dining area to take a seat. Another man was seated by himself.

Essary greeted him and simply remarked, "I work for a religious organization and while traveling across the state, often take a survey to get people's opinions. Would you mind if I joined you and asked you a few questions?"

The man agreed. After a few minutes, he prayed to ask Jesus to come into his life and be his Savior and Lord. The conversation wasn't forced, and the questions and genuine sharing of how one could have a relationship with the living God struck a tender chord in the man's heart. It was a Divine appointment!

We would like to hear your stories of Divine appointments to share with our readers. Please e-mail them to [lgilmore@tnbaptist.org](mailto:lgilmore@tnbaptist.org) or mail them to me at: Larry Gilmore, State Evangelism Director, Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 28, Brentwood, TN 37024-0728.

## How to Develop an Evangelistic Strategy

In preparing and leading a church to develop an evangelistic lifestyle, there are at least four areas that when defined open the door for all the believers to be involved in some form of evangelism. They are:

Prayer Evangelism  
Personal Evangelism  
Event Evangelism  
Ministry Evangelism

The TBC Evangelism Team can assist you in developing your strategy. Contact: Larry Gilmore, State evangelism director, at (615) 371-7915 or (800) 558-3090 or e-mail him at: [lgilmore@tnbaptist.org](mailto:lgilmore@tnbaptist.org).

## Pastor's Retreat August 7-10

A Pastors' Retreat will be held at Carson Springs Conference Center, Newport. The theme is: *Staying the Course...I Corinthians 15:58*

In Your Home  
In Your Preaching  
In Personal Holiness  
In Leadership Development  
In Being a Pastor  
In Personal Evangelism  
In a Changing Culture  
In a Secular Society  
In Kingdom Relationships  
When Your Heart is Broken  
In Preparing for a Church Revival

Women's Sessions will be led by Leighann McCoy, pastor's wife and author. Music will be led by music evangelist Jim Murray (a former member of the Imperials and Gaither Vocal Band) and Terry Weeks, Round Lick Baptist Church, Watertown, minister of music. For information, contact Diana Cox, TBC Evangelism administrative assistant, at (615) 371-2058, or (800) 558-2090 ext. 2058, or e-mail her at [dc Cox@tnbaptist.org](mailto:dc Cox@tnbaptist.org).

*Beautiful Feet*

A Lifestyle Evangelism  
Conference for Women

A TBC premiere event for women, *Beautiful Feet*, will be held Saturday, Sept. 9, at Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, with keynote speaker Becky Pippert of Salt Shaker Ministries and music by *Evidence*.

The purpose of the conference is to inspire Tennessee laywomen and women in leadership toward a lifestyle of intentional, relational evangelism by validating their identity in Christ, affirming their calling, and cultivating their spiritual gifts through worship, motivational teaching from the Word, and through instructional focus group workshops.

There will be 12 focused workshops offered to address key needs of women in the community. Registration and brochures will be available in April.

For information, contact Diana Cox, TBC Evangelism administrative assistant, at (615) 371-2058, or (800) 558-2090 ext. 2058, or e-mail her at [dc Cox@tnbaptist.org](mailto:dc Cox@tnbaptist.org).

## Suggested Reading on Evangelism

*The Church of Irresistible Influence*  
Robert Lewis  
(Zondervan, 2001)

*The Art of Personal Evangelism*  
Will McRaney Jr.  
(Broadman & Holman, 2003)

*Reaching Generation Next*  
Lewis Drummond  
(Baker Books, 2002)

a.k.a. "Lost" -  
*Discovering Ways to Connect with  
the People JESUS Misses Most*  
Jim Henderson  
(Waterbrook Press, 2005)

*Post-Modern Pilgrims*  
Leonard Sweet  
(Broadman & Holman, 2000)

## Your Opinion Matters!

We want to hear from you...  
*no, really!*

What would you like to see  
more of in the Church Health  
Matters section of the *Baptist  
& Reflector*?

What can we include in these  
pages to serve your church  
better?

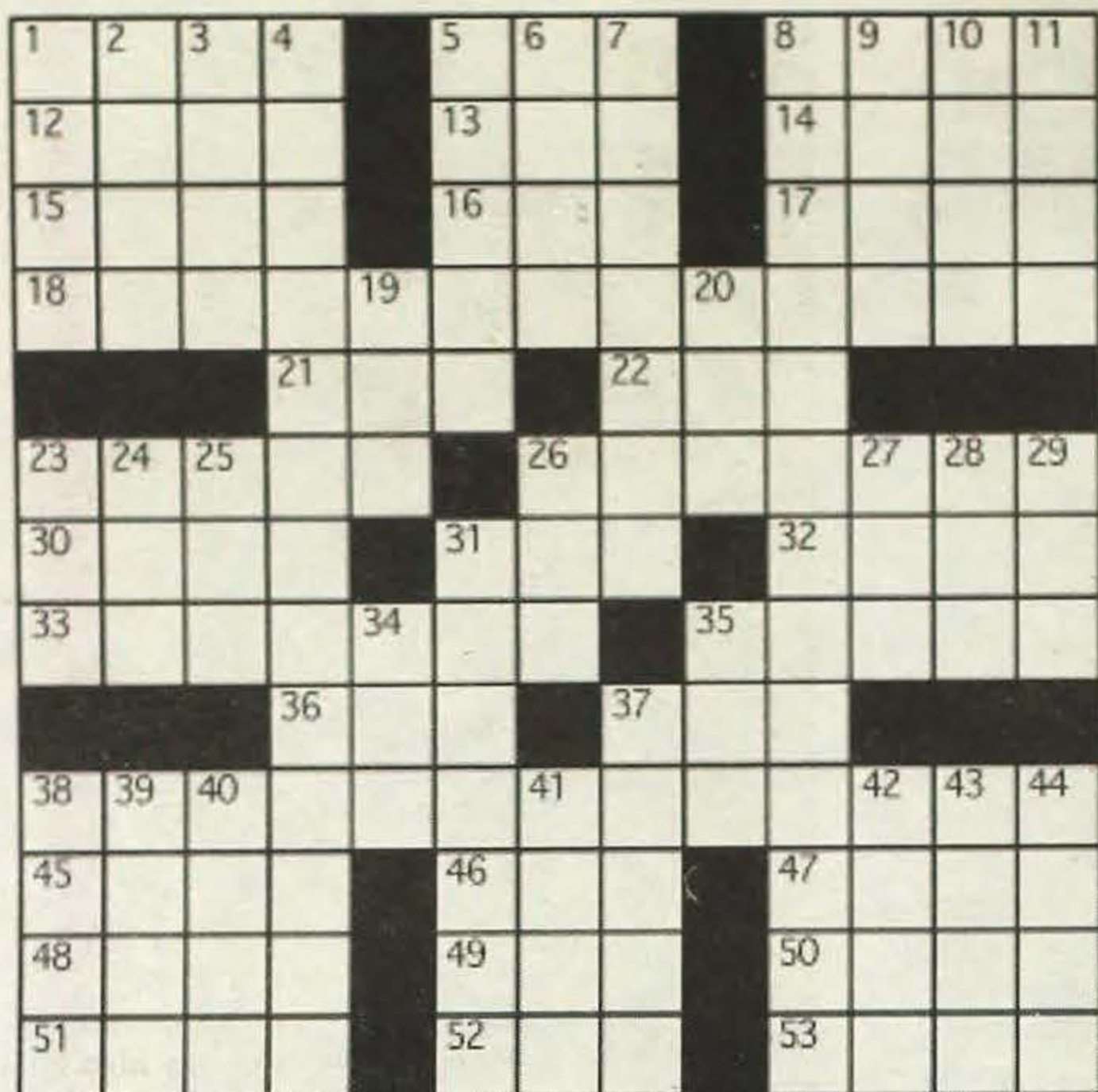
Please take our very short  
online survey at  
[www.tbcsurvey.org](http://www.tbcsurvey.org)  
to help us help you. Thanks!

## Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

March 31 - April 1 .....Dramatic Arts Festival, First Baptist Church, Nashville  
March 31 - April 2 .....Spring Collegiate Leadership Conference, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden  
April 1 .....Bible Fun Field Day, Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville  
April 3 .....New Church Staff Orientation, Baptist Center, Brentwood  
April 3 - 4 .....Church Administration Conference, Brentwood Baptist Church, Brentwood  
April 9 .....Cooperative Program Day, Statewide

For information on upcoming events, see the TBC web site at [www.tnbaptist.org](http://www.tnbaptist.org).





See answers on page 11

Barbour Publishing

## ACROSS

1. Fellow
5. Halfway, prefix
8. Charles, for short
12. Aircraft, prefix
13. Summer, Fr.
14. Alley Oop's girlfriend
15. "And he beat down the tower of Penueel, and \_\_\_\_\_ the men of the city" (Judges 8:17)
16. Resident, abbr.
17. "Shall \_\_\_\_\_ words have an end?" (Job 16:3)
18. "We are troubled on every \_\_\_\_\_ we are \_\_\_\_\_" (2 Cor. 4:8) (2 words)
21. To make free of
22. Boy's name
23. "The \_\_\_\_\_ and flags shall wither" (Isa. 19:6)
26. Belonging to the author of much of the New Testament (2 words)
30. Referring to the nose, prefix
31. "Let me \_\_\_\_\_ the death of the righteous" (Num. 23:10)
32. Belonging to the National Security Agency, abbr.
33. Stutter
35. Sticks with a knife
36. Adjective suffix
37. Weep
38. "That the \_\_\_\_\_ might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Cor. 4:15)
45. Elbow-shaped pasta, for short
46. "But let your communication be, \_\_\_\_\_" (Matt. 5:37)
47. "\_\_\_\_\_ that great city, that was clothed in fine linen" (Rev. 18:16)
48. \_\_\_\_\_ Domini
49. "Of \_\_\_\_\_, the family of the Erites" (Num. 26:16)
50. "But this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to \_\_\_\_\_ my feet" (Luke 7:45)
51. Chinese food
52. Noise
53. Feminine name ending

## DOWN

1. One of the Mamas and the Papas
2. Sun, prefix
3. "They bring thee \_\_\_\_\_ heifer without spot" (Num. 19:2) (2 words)

4. "Far above all principality, and \_\_\_\_\_, and might, and \_\_\_\_\_" (Eph. 1:21) (2 words)
5. "The sons of Ezra were, Jether, and \_\_\_\_\_" (1 Chron. 4:17)
6. Roman road
7. "Hath done \_\_\_\_\_ unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29)
8. "My \_\_\_\_\_ they \_\_\_\_\_, although I was an husband unto them" (Jer. 31:32)
9. Deception
10. "A strong delusion, that they should believe \_\_\_\_\_" (2 Thess. 2:11)
11. "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the sea" (Rom. 9:27)
19. Greek letters used for the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter
20. What you lose when you stand
23. Drs.' assistants
24. "Therefore, the children of Israel \_\_\_\_\_ not of the sinew which shrank" (Gen. 32:32)
25. That, Sp.
26. "And he answered ... I go, \_\_\_\_\_, and went not" (Matt. 21:30)
27. Abbreviation for America
28. Where scientists work
29. Selective Service System, abbr.
31. "I made haste, and \_\_\_\_\_ not to keep thy commandments" (Ps. 119:60)
34. "I said of laughter, it is \_\_\_\_\_" (Eccles. 2:2)
35. Soak
37. "I will \_\_\_\_\_ all my raiment" (Isa. 63:3)
38. "Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from \_\_\_\_\_" (Num. 23:7)
39. "Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek \_\_\_\_\_" (Ps. 3:7)
40. "Babukiah and \_\_\_\_\_ ... were over against them in the watches" (Neh. 12:9)
41. "Salathiel, which was the son of \_\_\_\_\_" (Luke 3:27)
42. Got down from
43. "Have ye not \_\_\_\_\_ out the priests of the Lord" (2 Chron. 13:9)
44. To be, Lat.

## LifeWay staff helps 'Extreme ...

— Continued from page 1

Jarlstedt had an urgent request for Burgess: 50 pew Bibles and 50 Baptist Hymnals - all embossed with "The White Family Chapel." An additional 1,000 Bibles to give away to the volunteers would be great, she added, as would some new books to stock a library.

"And she needed them yesterday," Burgess recalled with a laugh. "But after hearing the story of Danna White and her kids, we knew there was no way we couldn't participate in blessing this family."

Just 48 hours after being contacted by the show, everything the producers asked for was headed to Tulsa on a LifeWay truck driven by Chad Price, a member of Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory, and Marcus Rich, who attends First Baptist Church, Ashland City. Both are employed in LifeWay's logistics department. There, they joined Burgess, a member of First Baptist Church, Franklin (The People's Church) and employees of the Tulsa LifeWay Christian Store.

Landon Gaines, manager of the Tulsa LifeWay Christian Store, said it was gratifying to watch the show on Sunday night, knowing the intense amount of work that went into building a house in five days. Even though the LifeWay work didn't make it to the screen, the results were equally as gratifying, he said.

"Our mission was to be a part of this show and to have a hand in impacting this family in a very



**KARIN JARLSTEDT**, a producer for "Extreme Makeover" cries. **Phill Burgess** and **Chad Price** present Bibles and hymnals donated by LifeWay Christian Resources. — Photo by Russ Rankin

positive way," Gaines said.

"Even though we weren't shown, it feels rewarding to know our hard work and involvement will help spread the gospel of Jesus Christ for generations to come. By helping people to know Christ, our vision statement was fulfilled again through this event."

Price said the entire experience was incredible. Noting the show was secular in nature, it had a "faith and family focus throughout."

"You could definitely see that God was in it," Price said.

The LifeWay group began setting up the chapel at 10:30 p.m. the night before the project's completion. After unpacking boxes of books and Bibles and stocking

shelves of the library, the LifeWay employees prayed together in a chapel, again committing the fruits of their effort to God.

"Her husband may have gone home, but Danna White's ministry is just getting started new way," Burgess said.

"LifeWay is blessed to have been able to come alongside in this way. This is the perfect example of seeing where God works and joining Him there."

"We have no idea where this could lead and what impact the show will have," Burgess added.

"God's Word does not remain void, so we know something will happen. I am so thankful we were able to play a role in helping this family make an impact in their community." □

"Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes provides a local opportunity to transform God-centered intentions into God-centered actions. My family and I have developed wonderful friendships with the TBCH staff and children while serving our Lord Jesus Christ together. Give God your best and do not miss this blessing!"

—Wes Bowen  
Memphis, TN



P.O. Box 2206 • Brentwood, TN 37024-2206 • www.tbch4kids.org • 800.624.8591

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## Jackson couple encourages others while battling ...

Continued from page 1  
Brad has been an awesome regiver, always by my side, and has helped me through the ups and downs of this journey. It's the best." She went on to note lyrics of the song, "Be strong in the Lord," and then served, "When I am weak, He is strong!"

Bradley described a poignant family moment in his Feb. 2 message:  
"Last night the three Gray children gathered around our wife and mother and helped her shave the rest of her scalp. We all do look like twinkies! Libby was so great! She is still the most beautiful woman I've ever known. The boys stepped out with the haircut and anup and took some great pictures for a scrapbook. These young men stood strong and supported and told mom she was

pretty. It was very moving." On Feb. 6, Bradley acknowledged to readers of Libby's CarePage they were starting on the third week of their journey: "It's not exciting anymore," he wrote. "Each day as we face new challenges and poison continues doing its work, not only killing the bad stuff, but slowing Libby's body overall, staying 'on track' becomes more difficult. ... To know you are still praying is an indescribable blessing!"

The day before Valentines Day, Feb. 13, Bradley took note of the next day's celebration of love and the many he and Libby have enjoyed together. "We have been blessed to make every one special," he noted, "but reminders that we cannot assume endless V-days have made tomorrow very rich for us. Libby and I encourage you to do the same. Tell someone you love

them and that Jesus does, too." Bradley noted on Feb. 27 the continuous surprises of their journey in learning more about who all is praying for them.

"Yesterday I thanked a Christian Motorcycle Association member for their prayer and for the prayer being given on Libby's behalf by fellow members all over the country, a connection I couldn't have guessed Libby would ever have!"

In his March 7 update, Bradley acknowledged their feelings about the long hospital stay.

"Libby has been such a great light of God's grace in the hospital. But we would be less than honest if we didn't say we are both physically and emotionally exhausted. ... God is still good, even when we want to go home. Libby only has four more radiation treatments before a four-week rest. Praise God. Have a great day, friends; make every moment count for the kingdom. Somebody you meet today is desperate for hope."

After hoping Libby would be released from the hospital on March 10, they learned she would have to stay to continue

treating infection in her lung. Bradley asked if it would be possible to move Libby to another room so they could have a different view.

The medical personnel on the floor decorated the new room with an island theme and ordered

theme-related food from the hospital kitchen so the Grays could enjoy a special evening together.

Also on March 10, Bradley reflected on lessons he and Libby are learning on their journey:

"One of God's gifts to us in suffering is that we are granted to see and experience depths of His Word that a life of ease would never yield. I testify from my small experience that this is true. Disappointment, loss, sickness, and fear send me deeper into God and His Word than ever. Clouds of trifling are blown away and the glory of unseen



**THE GRAYS** — Libby, Bradley, Lauren, Austin, and Evan — are appreciative of the prayers and support shown during Libby's battle with cancer.

things shines in the heart's eye."

Readers wishing to pray for Libby and Bradley Gray and their three children, Lauren, Austin, and Evan, may also visit her CarePage by going to [www.carepages.com](http://www.carepages.com), registering a user name and password, and, when asked to fill in the site name, type Bamuzing. □

### Compensation ...

— Continued from page 1

Salary and benefit information is provided based on attendance, membership, and church budget and on age, experience, and education of the staff members. Both full-time and bivocational staff information is gathered.

To obtain forms or to participate in the study, contact Joyce Harvey at the TBC, at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2053, or e-mail [jharvey@tnbaptist.org](mailto:jharvey@tnbaptist.org).

Individuals may also contact their associational office for assistance. □

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### Carson-Newman College East Tennessee Pastors' Conference Tuesday, April 11

Theme: "What I Would Want to Say to Pastors Today"



**Paul Powell**

Paul Powell is dean of the George W. Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and retired president/CEO of the Annuity Board (now GuideStone) of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dallas, Texas.



**Fred Luter**

Fred Luter is pastor, Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, La., where he has served since 1986 and trustee of LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville. He is a commission member of the "Bring New Orleans Back" effort and former second vice president of the SBC.

Registration deadline is Friday, April 7.

Conference begins with coffee and registration at 10 a.m.  
in the Henderson Humanities Building.

Cost is \$25 which includes conference materials and a luncheon banquet.

Call or e-mail Kathy Lawson to reserve your place for the conference and lunch  
at (865) 471-3218 or [klawson@cn.edu](mailto:klawson@cn.edu).



## Most American teens oppose gay 'marriage'

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — As it turns out, American teenagers may not be as supportive of "gay marriage" as previously thought.

A new Gallup survey shows that teenagers ages 13-17 are almost evenly split on the issue of "gay marriage" — 51 percent supporting it, 49 percent opposing it. That runs counter to the common perception that younger people overwhelmingly support "marriage" for homosexuals and older people oppose it.

The Gallup question asked

teens: "Do you approve or disapprove of marriage between gay couples?"

Most polls show that at least 60 percent of all Americans oppose "gay marriage."

Male teens are split evenly at 50 percent each on the issue of "gay marriage." Female teens are slightly in favor of redefining marriage, with 52 percent supporting it and 48 percent opposing it.

The poll also found that:

- 55 percent of teens support civil unions, 45 percent oppose them. The question that was posed asked if teens favored or opposed "a law that would allow same sex couples to legally form civil unions, giving them some of the legal rights of married couples."
- 59 percent of teens

believe "being gay is due to outside factors, such as upbringing and environment." Forty-one percent believe "being gay is something a person is born with."

"These are fairly conservative responses," Gallup's Frank Newport wrote in an online analysis. "Almost six

out of 10 teenagers believe that being gay is 'nurture' rather than 'nature,' a position at odds with some gay and lesbian activists."

The Gallup poll of 546 teenagers was conducted in December and January and is based on a random sample of mail and Internet surveys. □

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### CLASSIFIED

#### MINISTRY — COMBINATION

Due to the recent retirement of our minister of music, Grace Baptist Church, in beautiful and historic northeast Tennessee, is seeking the right person for a full-time minister of music/education, with music being primary. The ideal candidate would be able to lead orchestral and choral music, and would have responsibility for all musical ministries of the church. We need someone who can effectively lead blended worship services. In addition, there would be some visitation and administrative responsibilities. Experience with G.R.O.W. would be a big plus. If interested, please submit a resume to Grace Baptist Church, Attn. Minister of Music Search, 1114 Broad St., Elizabethton, TN 37643.

### CLASSIFIED

#### MINISTRY — PASTOR

First Baptist Church, Monterey, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor position. Please send resume to Monterey First Baptist Church, 106 N Chestnut St., Monterey, TN 38574. Post to the attention of Sonny Gilpatrick.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

West Fork Baptist Church in Murray, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resume to Kenneth Greer, 115 Shadow Circle, Murray, KY 42071. Resumes taken through March 31, 2006.

#### MINISTRY — MUSIC

Middle Tennessee church seeks part-time music director. Send resume to Parkview Baptist Church, Attn. Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 1668, Lewisburg, TN 37091.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Middle Tennessee church seeking an interim to permanent minister of music. Send resume to Miracle Baptist Church, Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 10, LaVergne, TN 37086.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Associate pastor/worship leader: theologically conservative Southern Baptist Church is seeking a man who uses a blended style of worship. Must exude a love for Jesus and have a servant's heart. Reply to First Baptist Church, 106 West Oak St., West Frankfort, IL 62896, (618) 932-2105, fax: (618) 932-2106, rkarroll@verizon.net.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Calvary Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, Ala., is accepting resumes for minister of music. Responsibilities include administration of the music program from preschool through senior adult ministries in addition to worship leadership during our 8:30 a.m. traditional and 11 a.m. blended/contemporary services on Sunday mornings. Please send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, Attn. Music Search, 1121 Paul Bryant Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

#### MINISTRY — OTHER

Part-time church secretary. Approximately 20 hours per week at \$10.00 per hour. Hours can be flexible to meet mutual needs. Must have good computer and communication skills as well as a pleasant personality. Fax resume to HHBC at (615) 646-1710 or call (615) 646-5050. Harpeth Heights Baptist Church is located in the Bellevue area of Nashville, Tenn.

### CLASSIFIED

#### MINISTRY — STUDENT

Central Baptist Church, Springfield, Tenn., is looking for a part-time youth minister. If interested please send resume to P.O. Box 192, Springfield, TN 37381 call (423) 365-6385.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Bethel Baptist Church, Henderson, is seeking a bivocational associate pastor/minister to students. This person will have responsibility for children and youth ministries as well as some pastoral duties. Please send resume to Bethel Baptist Church, 125 St. Hwy. 125, Henderson, TN 38340, Attn. Search Committee. Interested candidates can obtain information about our church at [www.bethelfamilyoffaith.org](http://www.bethelfamilyoffaith.org).

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Full-time associate youth pastor (with additional responsibilities such as education). Contemporary/traditional worship West St. Louis County, MO. Send resume to Youth Search Committee, Ballwin Baptist Church, 15101 Manchester Rd., Ballwin, MO 63011-4629, e-mail [youth@ballwinbaptist.com](mailto:youth@ballwinbaptist.com).

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

First Baptist, Pulaski, is seeking a full-time minister of student for a growing youth ministry. Please send resume to [dphillips@bellsouth.net](mailto:dphillips@bellsouth.net) or FBC, P.O. Box 306, Pulaski, TN 38478.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Harpeth Heights Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn. (Bellevue area) is looking for a part-time interim youth pastor. If interested, send resume to HHBC, 8063 Highway 100, Nashville, TN 37221, Attn. Personnel Committee, or call (615) 646-5050 ext. 33.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

First Baptist Church, Hayti, Mo., is seeking a full-time youth director. \$28,000 plus insurance. Send resume to Youth Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 201 East Lincoln, Hayti, MO 63851.

#### MINISTRY — DOM

Sullivan Baptist Association 32-church association Kingsport, Tenn., is currently accepting applications for director of missions position. Send resume by March 31 to SBA DOM Search Committee, Attn. Arden Taylor, 171 Pror Land Dr., Gray, TN 37615, or email to [ataylor@tcbchurch.org](mailto:ataylor@tcbchurch.org) and include a statement telling why God is leading you to this position.

#### MINISTRY — CHILDREN

Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark., is seeking a minister to children. Send resume to [jstatton@gsfbc.org](mailto:jstatton@gsfbc.org), P.O. Box 31510, Little Rock, 72260. Information at [www.gsfbc.org](http://www.gsfbc.org). Previous children ministry experience expected.

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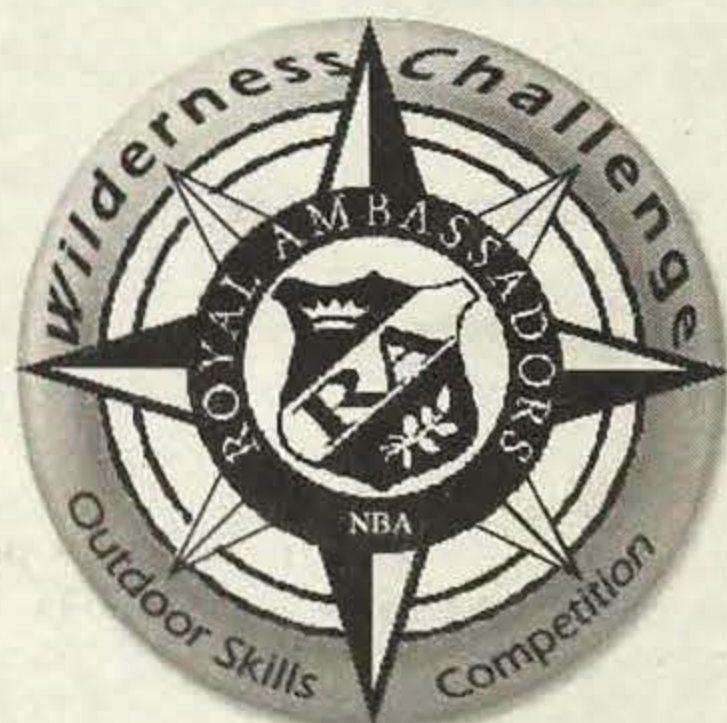
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staying fit

Preventative care begins with you

Tamara Quintana

We hear a lot these days about rising health care costs. Now when I see a bill from my doctor, I'm sure glad I have health insurance. But insurance isn't enough. I only believe that if health care costs are ever going to stabilize, it's up to me to do my part to stay healthy. By taking some common sense steps, with a little help from doctors, each of us could potentially save thousands of dollars on health care and prevent injury, illness, disability, and premature death.

Making responsible lifestyle choices is the first step toward good health:

- Don't smoke, and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Get regular exercise.

- Choose a diet low in fat and rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.
- Do self-exams of your breasts or testes, as well as skin.
- Fasten seat belts and be sure that kids ride in proper safety seats.
- Brush and floss regularly.
- See your doctor and dentist regularly.



One of the most important things you can do for your health and your family's health is to schedule regular checkups with your physician. You should discuss any risks due to your lifestyle, family history, or other factors, and follow up regularly with appropriate preventive tests.

Preventive care guidelines

Preventive care is as important for your health as treatment is when you're sick. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force has developed guidelines to help keep you and your family on track with preventive care screenings and exams needed for your particular age and gender. Discuss with your doctor the types of tests and timeframes for your age and health history.

For adults, the focus of preventive care is to eliminate high-risk behaviors and screen for chronic and/or life-threatening diseases. For children and young adults, the focus is on maintaining or developing healthy lifestyle habits and eliminating high-risk behaviors. For infants and young children, physical and mental development, immunizations, nutrition, and safety are key.

The guidelines have been created for the general population who do not currently have symptoms or disease. If you have a medical condition like heart disease, asthma, or diabetes, recommendations for some tests may be different. Your doctor can help you determine how often certain tests should be performed to maintain your health.

You can help put prevention into practice by working with your doctors to make sure you get all the preventive care you need. Take charge of your health and live a longer and healthier life! □ — Quintana is a graduate of Saints Episcopal Hospital School of Vocational Nursing and the director of the employee wellness program for GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

# Honor Christ

By Phil Taylor

Focal Passage: Luke 19:28-48

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem He was the King of Peace. Less than a week later, the city rejected and crucified Him. How rapidly the days closed on His public ministry, but what a great example He gave so we can honor Him.

His humility causes us to honor Him with our humility. On the morning of Jesus' triumphal entry (vv. 29-34) He had sent two of His disciples ahead to prepare for His entry into Jerusalem. They found the colt as Jesus had instructed them and upon loosing the animal were asked what they were doing. The very fact of His selecting such a lowly and despised animal indicated His humility. They replied, "The Lord hath need of him." Quite willingly the owner consented to its use by the Lord. The lesson for us is to humbly dedicate our possessions for the use of the Lord and His work.

As Jesus seated Himself on the colt (vv. 35-40) some people must have asked, "Who is this that rides in regal procession?" The disciples and others answered, "It is he who comes in the name of the Lord." The shouting of the crowd was infectious. As soon as someone began to chant "Hosanna," others took up the cry. Soon the roadway echoed with shouts of praise. Anyone could shout at parades,

but soon it would become humiliating because soon they would begin to cry out "Crucify Him!"

Some of the Pharisees requested Jesus to rebuke the shouting disciples, but Jesus replied that if the people held their voices, the stones would cry out. Even with the humiliating voices of Pharisees it was the day of the King's triumphal entry into the city, and everyone joined in shouting "Hosanna." Everyone was happy; everyone was in a holiday mood. Everyone, that is, except Jesus.

His tears cause us to honor Him with our tears. In the midst of all this shouting for joy, there was One who wept. What a contrast of emotions! Shouting and weeping; triumph and tragedy! The wild demonstration of affection by the fickle multitude moved Jesus to weep.

We can cry over a lost love (vv. 41-44). What we hear in these words is the agony of the Savior over a lost city. The phrase "how often" is a sorrowful summing up of the tenderest love story ever told. Never had a people been as loved as had the children of Israel. "How often" as a love story started with Father Abraham 18 centuries before. But now their day of grace was about over and they still refused God's call of love. Jesus sorrowfully said, "And ye would not."

How often He would love and bless us, but we refuse. In childhood by a mother's love and tender care, in youth by a good father's wisdom,

Sunday School Lesson  
Family Bible Series  
March 26

and as we age by Christian friends and the voice of the church. The tragedy then is repeated now — "Ye would not." Enacted here is the conflict between a love that desires to save and an obstinate heart that will not respond.

"If thou hadst known ... the things which belong unto thy peace" (v. 42). The "if" speaks of an opportunity offered and refused and lost forever. Israel had her time of visitation. She had it when God gave them Moses and the prophets, when King David stretched the kingdom from Dan to Beersheba, again when she returned from Babylon to rebuild, and now in the person of Jesus the Messiah. But they killed the prophets and stoned those who were sent to deliver them. Now they would soon crucify the Son of God Himself.

Jesus wept that day for what Israel might have been had she remained true to her calling. But Israel missed her chance; she lost her opportunity. This is the sad story of too many lives. God has a purpose for your life. For, as Jesus said, these are the "things which belong to thy peace." □ — Taylor is director of missions for Bradley County Baptist Association, headquartered in Cleveland.

# Do you think you are unaccountable?

By Marvin Nail

Focal Passage: Isaiah 17:1-3, 7-9, 18:1-7

The background for this week's lesson is to be found in the events at the heart of last week's lesson. In that lesson we looked at the plot against Judah by Israel and Syria (Damascus).

They had wanted Judah to join them in fighting against the Assyrians, and were preparing to force them to do so. God told the people of Judah that the two neighbors were no real threat and would be desolate in a short time. Those who dishonor God, who rebel against Him, who seek to harm His people, face ruin at the hands of God.

Abusers of power beware (17:1-3)

As you read these verses, you get the impression that these events are already completed. However, they are actually still in the future. That is the way with prophetic utterances. They are so certain that it is as though they had already taken place.

Damascus (Syria), who thought she was powerful enough to make Judah do her bidding by dragging her into a war against her will, would soon see just how powerless she would become. Her choicest cities would be as desolate as open fields.

Almost with sarcasm, the prophet indicates that Syria and Ephraim will be no better off than Judah was then. That was quite a

come down for those two who had thought themselves so powerful.

Sooner or later those who throw their muscle around will encounter someone who will humble them. It happened in the old westerns and throughout all of history. The powerful one day lose their fangs and are themselves pushed around.

False religionists beware (vv. 7-9)

For the powerful, religion is a convenience or even an unnecessary burden. In their strength they sense no need for God and think that lip service to Him is quite enough. In some cases they invent for themselves a religion that encourages their pursuits rather than calls them into question.

Ephraim, who had once depended on God, had outgrown Him. In their power and prosperity, they became loose with their religion. They became so "open-minded" that any old religion would do. The prophets often spoke of them worshiping the Asherah on the high places. That god was convenient and made no demands.

But those false gods failed them. They lost their strength and their wealth and became so frightened that they turned, in the end, with admiration to the Holy One of Israel, the God of Judah.

The gods they had invented showed themselves no more powerful than their worshipers. With their strength gone, they lost everything and stood helpless before the very people they had

Sunday School Lesson  
Explore the Bible  
March 26

thought they would dominate.

It is at times like those, when man-made religions prove inadequate for the difficult circumstances of life, that followers of Christ find themselves in a unique position to be of help in leading them to a real faith that does not disappoint.

All who oppose God's people beware (18:1-7)

This section of Isaiah's prophecy seems to allude to the alliance Ahaz had made with Egypt instead of seeking God's aid. That nation would discover when they arrived that the foes of Judah, the people of God, had already been cut off by the intervention of God.

Just when the Assyrians seemed poised like a bird of prey to swoop down on yet another helpless nation, God stepped in and struck them down leaving them as prey for the birds.

In all these circumstances, God will yet be glorified. When He comes to deliver His children, all the world will take notice. Even those who were intent on doing harm will turn to acknowledge the maker of heaven and earth. □ — Nail is a former pastor and current member of First Baptist Church, Nashville. He is an employee of LifeWay Christian Resources.

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## Leaders

◆ First Baptist Church, Decatur, has called **Jimmy L. McCarter** as senior pastor and Jamey Davis as youth pastor recently.

◆ Unity Baptist Church, Jacks Creek, called **James Huggins** as pastor, effective March 1. He is a professor at Union University, Jackson.



HUGGINS

◆ First Baptist Church, Union City, called **Matthew Wohlfarth** as pastor effective March 12.

◆ Gath Baptist Church, McMinnville, recently called **Steve Littleton** as minister of music and youth effective March 26. He comes to Gath Church from the same position at Bethpage Baptist Church, Kenton.

◆ First Baptist Church, McMinnville, recently called **Bill Martin** of Kansas as its senior pastor. He is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater; University of Tulsa, both in Okla.; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. Martin comes to McMinnville from a church in Kansas, where he also served



MARTIN



**CHILDREN OF** Sims Chapel Baptist Church, Sevierville, who earned a perfect Sunday School attendance award for 2005 were, from left, front row, Malina McCroskey, Erin Rolan, Katie Whaley, and Belle Whaley; back row, Dakota McCroskey, Caitlin Ball, Shandi Ownby, Megan Burchfiel, Seth McCroskey, and Issac Ball.

as senior pastor.

◆ First Baptist Church, Selmer, called **Greg Gaddis** of Ringgold, Ga., as senior pastor effective March 19.

◆ Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, will celebrate pastor **Jerry Sutton's** 20th anniversary on Sunday, March 26. Fred Wolfe of Alabama will be the guest speaker for the 9:30 and 11:01 a.m. services. Jerry Falwell, pastor, Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Va., and founder of Liberty University, Lynchburg, will preach at the 6 p.m. service. A reception will follow that service.



SUTTON

◆ East Commerce Baptist Church, Lewisburg, celebrated the 20th anniversary of serv-

ice of **James Hickey**, pastor, and his family during both morning and evening services March 5. Expressions of love for the pastor were given through testimonials, gifts, and a trip.

◆ Thompson Creek Baptist Church, Como, recently ordained **Grant Ostrom** to the ministry. Participating in the ordination were Wayne Perkins, director of missions, Weakley County Baptist Association; Bill Phipps, pastor, Three Oaks Baptist Church, Dyersburg; Thomas Winchester, pastor, Union Friendship Baptist Church, Paris; and Billy Ross, pastor, Thompson Creek Church. Ostrom has been called as pastor of Springcreek Baptist Church, Paris.

## Churches

◆ Shaun Alexander, who plays with the Seattle



**LEADERS OF WEST HILLS** Baptist Church, Lebanon, burn a tree to represent the debt-free status of all of its buildings. Some of the buildings were built beginning in 1998 and some in 2002. Pictures are, from left, Jonas Taylor, pastor; Julian Stone; Jim York; and Cathcart. The church has begun a third building program of a sanctuary, offices, and music room.

Seahawks of the National Football League, will speak at **Hillcrest Baptist Church, Lebanon**, on Thursday, March 30, at 7 p.m. Alexander was the 2005 NFL Most Valuable Player, led the league in rushing, and set a new NFL record for most touchdowns in a season. He formerly played for the University of Alabama. He will speak at a Youth Rally at the church on March 30 and in several schools. The events are being sponsored by the church, CrossTraining Student Ministries and the Middle Tennessee Fellowship of Christian Athletes. For more information, call the church at (615) 444-5923.

◆ **Parkers Creek Baptist Church, Burns**, will hold revival Sunday - Wednesday, March 26-29. Ronnie Owens, evangelist of Tazewell, will speak. For more information, contact Ntwlkrns@aol.com.

◆ **East Commerce Baptist**

**Church, Lewisburg**, held their third annual game dinner recently with 400 in attendance. Guest speaker was Nashville's Rudy Ivis, WSMV-TV sports anchor.

## Associations

◆ A Sunday School Workshop will be held by **Duck River Baptist Association**, Tullahoma, and **New Duck River Baptist Association**, Shelbyville, and **William Carey Baptist Association**, Fayetteville. It will be Monday, April 3, 6:45-8:45 p.m. at First Baptist Church, Manchester. May, state Sunday School consultant and pastor, A. B. Baptist Church, Apison, is the leader. Pastors, ministers, education, church Sunday School directors, and SS association directors are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Duck River Association at (931) 455-5072.

## Mt. Olive Church, South, Knoxville, adopts FBC, Gautier, Miss.

By Stacy Davis  
For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Up until September



**BRENDA DAVIS** of Mount Olive Baptist Church, South, Knoxville, pauses during her work in a house in Gautier, Miss., to help Katrina victims.

of 2005, most of the members of Mount Olive Baptist Church, South, Knoxville, had never heard of a small place called Gautier, Miss., and had church members heard of it, they surely would never have been able to pronounce it. Gautier (pronounced go-shay) is tucked in between Pascagoula and Ocean Springs, Miss.

First Baptist Church, Gautier, is one of the first churches one sees coming to

Gautier from the east. Before Aug. 29, 2005, it was just a typical Baptist church in a small town along the Gulf Coast. But since Hurricane Katrina, First Church, Gautier, has become much more in that community.

Pastor David Aultman and the congregation of First Church have used this disaster to reach out to those in the community who need help restoring their homes, whether they are church members or not.

Although their building was flooded

and damaged during the storm, they have seen restoring the community as their main priority.

Mount Olive Church has had the wonderful opportunity to be partnered with First Church, Gautier, as part of the Adopt-A-Church initiative of the American Mission Board to help hurricane victims. As a result, Knoxville get to do a small part in helping the region that has been all but forgotten by the media.

Members of Mount Olive have helped by sending teams of workers to help with sheetrock and paint homes. They are just one of many partners doing what they can to minister to the people of Gautier. They know the labor provided has been helpful in getting people back in their homes, but the real blessing has been the new found friendships with the wonderful people in the Gautier community.

The lives of those who have gone on these trips have been immensely enriched, and they have returned to Knoxville with a greater understanding of what it means to be the hands and feet of God.

Mount Olive has sent three teams and plans to send three more. Each group involved about 20 volunteers. □ - Co is disaster relief coordinator for Mount Olive Baptist Church, South, Knoxville.



**NEW FRIENDS** pause in Gautier, Miss. They are, from left, Francis Blagg and Fred Self of Mount Olive Baptist Church, South, Knoxville; Betty Scheffer of Gautier, and Barbara Hensley of Mt. Olive Church.