

Baptist & Reflector

Wide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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TBC messengers reject Belmont offer; vacate trustees

Donnie Wilkey
TBC President and Reflector

ASHVILLE — Tennessee Baptist Convention messengers turned down a \$5 million offer that would basically severed all ties with Belmont University and proceeded to vote to pursue any future relationship with the university using "any all means deemed necessary" to "protect and enforce the rights of the convention relating to Belmont University."

Messengers also voted overwhelmingly to declare each trustee on the Belmont board vacant.

At the May 9 meeting at Two Rivers Baptist Church here, 1,754 registered messengers gathered for the opening of the convention since 1979 when 1,396 messengers gathered at Belmont Baptist Church, also in Nashville, to deal with a matter related to Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes.

The majority of the morning session dealt with a motion the TBC Executive Board the convention accept a \$5 million

from Belmont, terminate its relationship with the university pursuant to TBC bylaws, release "all its rights and remedies under the 1951 agreement with Ward-Belmont College (predecessor to Belmont), and authorize and direct its officers to finalize, execute, and deliver, in the name of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, any and all documents necessary to effectuate these actions."

While the motion came from the Executive Board, it became apparent that not all members were in agreement with or grasped the reason for the recommendation that was crafted the day before in closed session from which the *Baptist and Reflector* was excluded.

Board leadership, including convention attorney Randle

Davis, made it clear later in the meeting that the Board had no choice but to recommend the motion. "For you to have a offer on the floor it had to be referred with a recommendation of approval from the Executive Board," Davis said.

"Do not conclude that this committee (Belmont Study Committee) or the Executive Board is not in concert with your feelings, your beliefs because they brought this recommenda-

tion to you," he continued.

TBC President Phil Jett, pastor of Englewood Baptist Church, Jackson, opened the meeting by reminding messengers, "None of us has chosen this day. This day has chosen us."

Clay Austin, pastor of First Baptist Church, Blountville, served as chairman of both the Belmont Study Committee and the Executive Board.

In presenting the recommendation, Austin said "the

historical relationship with Belmont has come to an end."

Austin observed that Belmont leadership felt the need to expand beyond Baptist life and "include non-Baptist Christians" on its board of trustees.

On Nov. 10 of last year Belmont University unilaterally changed its charter, officially taking the Tennessee Baptist Convention out of the election process.

— See TBC, page 3

Bivo pastors, members of their churches serve hurricane victims

Donnie Davis Bushey
Bivo Pastor and ReflectorMISSISSIPPI, LOUISIANA
About 100 Baptist bivoca-

tional (bivo) pastors and members of their churches from various states helped bivo ministers and others who were victims of last fall's Gulf Coast

hurricanes May 1-12. They also attended the Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministers Association Annual Celebration May 5-6, joined by bivo ministers who

were hurricane victims. The meeting and mission project were based at the Pearl River Baptist Association retreat center in McNeill, Miss.

The association added the hands-on project to the national meeting for the first time, said Ray Gilder of the Tennessee — See Bivo pastors, page 7



BY WAYNICK, left, bivocational pastor, Midland Baptist Church, Bell Buckle, presents a prayer made by members of the church to Elosia Leslie of east New Orleans. Leslie stands in front of a mobile home trailer she has been living in. It is in front of her house, which was flooded by 7 and then 4 of water. Others watching are, from left, Marilyn West, Georgetown, S.C.; and Kay and Doug Bell, Midland Church. Doug is bivocational children's minister of the church.



RUTH COUCH of Looney's Chapel Baptist Church, Surgoinsville, receives a hug from Frieda Armour of east New Orleans for helping her repair her kitchen.

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Tsunami victims in Indonesia assist Katrina victims

Baptist Press

ALEXANDRIA, La. — Louisiana Baptist Convention officials opened an envelope filled with \$854 cash. Receiving cash in an envelope is not that uncommon for non-profit ministries such as the LBC. However, this money was extraordinary and downright miraculous.

The cash was an offering from several citizens who live in a community on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, a region decimated by the Dec. 26, 2004, tsunami that claimed an estimated 300,000 lives worldwide. Twenty men from this area of the world, where the average monthly income is around \$100, reached deep in their shallow but generous pockets to send aid to Louisiana, which they heard was hit by Hurricane Katrina.

During the tsunami disaster, these 20 men experienced firsthand not only the tragedy of the natural disaster but also the help of Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers from several state conventions. Teams from Louisiana traveled to the tsunami-stricken area to help with the recovery and relief work. The Indonesian men remembered how these particular Americans helped them, cared compassionately for them, and loved them unconditionally.

The Indonesians gave the offering to a Southern Baptist humanitarian consultant who was in Sumatra recently to assess the progress of current relief efforts.

Thanks to ever-increasing global news and information, the news about Katrina and the

Most Americans believe Bible over 'Da Vinci': poll

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — While *The Da Vinci Code* has sold more than 40 million books and hits movie theaters worldwide May 19, most Americans are not buying its key theological premises, according to a poll commissioned by the North American Mission Board.

The complex plot of Dan Brown's fictional suspense-thriller revolves around a central theme alleging not only that Jesus Christ was married to Mary Magdalene, but also that the couple produced a child. Tom Hanks stars in the movie version.

NAMB commissioned Zogby International, a well-known research firm, to conduct the poll, which involved a sample of 1,200 adults surveyed by telephone in March.

Twenty-three percent of Americans have read it while 43 percent said they had not read the book but were familiar with the content.

Among those who had read it, more than 60 percent believed that the Bible is closer to the truth, while 10 percent believed *The Da Vinci Code* is more truthful. Thirty percent of those who had read the book believed neither was truthful or were not sure.

Among the entire sample, 72 percent believed that the Bible was closer to the truth; six percent accepted the novel's account as the truth; and 22

percent were not sure or believed neither.

"The most striking result from the survey is that after either reading or hearing about *The Da Vinci Code*, 44 percent of respondents were more likely to seek the truth by studying the Bible, while only 20 percent were less likely to study the Bible," said Ed Stetzer, mission director of NAMB's Center for Mission Research near Atlanta.

Stetzer said Christians should view *The Da Vinci Code* as an opportunity for outreach.

"Perhaps an invitation to Bible study would be a more effective response to the hoopla surrounding *The Da Vinci Code* than protesting at the theater," Stetzer said. "There's not wide acceptance for the book's claims, and since many are unsure of the truth, the Southern Baptists' best response would be to lead them to the Word of God. We Christians can trust the Word and the Spirit to work in people's lives."

"So rather than protesting *The Da Vinci Code*, why not invite people to read a better book — the Bible — that tells the dramatic story of God sending His son, who lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and who rose again to break a curse on the world? That's an opportunity we Christians shouldn't miss," Stetzer said.

More information about the study can be found online at www.namb.net/cmr. □

extensive damage it caused in New Orleans reached Indonesia.

"This is huge! Why would they even care?" the consultant said. He said the Indonesians told him, "It is because we were so moved and touched by the volunteers who helped us and now we are compelled to give."

The Indonesians received a freewill offering, had it converted to American currency, placed it in an envelope and presented it to the consultant.

They asked that their gift be specifically delivered to the people in Louisiana because they wanted their gift to be an expression of gratitude from Indonesian tsunami victims to

those impacted by the storms that hit the Louisiana coast, according to the consultant. □

Another nominee joins hunt for SBC second vp position

Baptist Press

WESTWEGO, La. — Louisiana pastor Jay Adkins will be nominated for second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the SBC's annual meeting June 13-14 in Greensboro, N.C., by Joed Rice, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Ashland, Ky., according to a news release.

Adkins has been pastor of First Baptist Church in Westwego, La., for four years and is a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Jay Adkins exemplifies the best qualities of a new generation of young leaders now emerging in the Southern Baptist Convention," Rice said.

Adkins is the third nominee for SBC second vice president, joining fellow pastors Drake of Buena Park, Calif., J.D. Greear of Durham, N.C., and J. Lee Grady of Dallas. According to the 2005 Church Profile, Adkins received \$4,981 (6 percent) of the \$82,582 through the Cooperative Program. □

Patterson endorses Ronnie Floyd for SBC presidency

By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Seminary president Paige Patterson has endorsed Ronnie Floyd for Southern Baptist Convention president (see page 14), prompting a rare rebuttal from SBC chief executive Morris Chapman and exposing a growing rift between the two SBC executives.

Meanwhile, critics of Floyd's "dismal" financial support of the denomination are trying to enlist another presidential candidate with a better record of cooperation. In recent days, that search has focused on Frank Page, pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C. But as of May 15 he had not made a decision about the nomination.

Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., is the presidential choice of convention leaders, who have controlled the presidency for almost three decades, usually without opposition.

Floyd's nomination, announced May 7, focused new attention to his church's lackluster support of the Cooperative Program, the SBC's central ministry budget, and high-tech evangelism methods, particularly the firetruck-shaped baptistry and confetti cannons used in Springdale's children's ministry.

In his May 12 endorsement of Floyd,

which was released by the seminary's public relations office, Patterson praised the Springdale church's evangelistic commitment, which he said "inculcates the ethos of New Testament Christianity."

He also praised Floyd's denominational service and support of seminaries, adding: "Southern Baptists need a man whose moral fiber is unscathed by compromise with the world in respect to his home, his purity of life, and his integrity. Ronnie Floyd is such a man."

In a cautiously worded commentary May 13, Chapman took issue with any SBC agency head serving as a convention officer or endorsing someone else for office.

"Nominating or being nominated for an elected officer of the SBC, or endorsing a nominee for an elected office, in my opinion, lessens the importance of the work to which the entity head has been called," Chapman wrote in his blog, morrishchapman.com.

"When a president of an entity publicly endorses a potential nominee or nominates a candidate for elected office, he potentially alienates some who otherwise hold him in high esteem because they differ with the person he has embraced publicly for an elected office."

"Today political strategies, agendas, and power politics threaten to distract us from

empowered possibilities of a people relying solely upon God's guidance," Chapman wrote.

Conservatives have long acknowledged the behind-the-scenes feud between Patterson and Chapman, but it has never been made public.

Chapman has a long record of calling for more openness in SBC leadership.

Complicating the picture for Floyd is that, ever, a blue-ribbon SBC panel is calling for the election of officers who come from churches that contribute at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts to the denomination's central budget — a standard recent presidents could meet.

First Baptist Church of Springdale, its satellite congregation, the Church of the Pines, contributed a total of \$3,000 to the Cooperative Program in 2005, according to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. That's 0.27 percent of its undesignated receipts of \$11,952,137.

The church reports giving \$189,000 to the national Cooperative Program, which bypasses Arkansas ministry. That's 1.8 percent of undesignated receipts.

The church's CP giving has declined since at least 1986, including the years Floyd was chairman of the Executive Committee, which sets and promotes the Cooperative Program. □

TBC messengers reject Belmont offer; vacate ...

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We do not think it is in the interests of Tennessee Baptists to have a relationship with an institution when we cannot control its trustees," Austin told the messengers.

Issue debated

Bill Seale, a messenger from the First Baptist Church, Morrisville, and member of both the Executive Board and Executive Committee, spoke in favor of the proposal.

Seale said the committee looked at all the issues any could come up with. The committee also understood that Belmont's settlement offer of \$5 million "is not the \$58 million TBC has given (through the Cooperative Program) to Belmont for 55 years."

Seale noted that Belmont has sent out many students throughout the convention "who have become great witnesses for the Lord. We have received good things in return."

Tom McGehee, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Tullahoma, and a member of the Executive Board, spoke against the recommendation.

McGehee acknowledged that the Bible clearly speaks against lawsuits, but he also noted "the Bible says thou shalt not steal and thou shalt not lie. We've caught Belmont both lying and stealing from us."

Bill Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fairview, observed the world is watching the convention and the convention will take a stand. "We can be Christians. The best thing we can do is reject the recommendation," he said.

Harry Reagan, second vice president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and pastor of the First Baptist Church, Nashville, spoke against accepting Belmont's offer.

Reagan acknowledged the "difficult thought" of the study committee and their efforts to



TBC MESSENGERS vote on an issue during last week's called meeting at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville.

"avoid a lawsuit." He commended Tennessee Baptists for gathering "to help us do the right thing in the right way."

However, Reagan questioned, "What is the right way? God has entrusted Belmont to the Tennessee Baptist Convention." He urged messengers to ask themselves, "Did Belmont do the right thing?"

"If you believe Belmont is right and has been doing the right thing, then you should vote for the proposal (to accept Belmont's offer). If you believe Belmont has not been doing the right thing, you should vote against the proposal."

L. Joseph Rosas III, pastor of Creeview Baptist Church, Nashville, favored the recommendation, noting that the convention has been unable to dramatically increase dollars going to the colleges. He also added that all three schools have requested broadening the trustee selection process over the years.

"This proposal is in the best interest of all parties," Rosas said.

Phillip Senn, messenger from

Blessed Hope Baptist Church, Troy, spoke against the recommendation. He said he didn't think it was "about \$58 million."

Senn observed that relinquishing Belmont is like relinquishing a church. That should not be done "simply for the sake of not allowing dissension in our community."

"Belmont University is not Tennessee Baptists', not the trustees of Belmont University. It is the Lord's," said Senn.

"I oppose any illegal act to remove it from the control of Tennessee Baptists who have directed it over the years," he concluded.

Jameson Work, pastor, Candies Creek Baptist Church, Charleston, asked if the convention is "bowing down to the intimidating tactics of Belmont?"

Austin replied that it was not his perception the convention is bowing down. "We are coming to a conclusion. We are letting go."

Randa Perry, a member of Friendship Baptist Church, Friendship, questioned why the convention was acting "powerless" in response to the actions

Belmont issues statement

Belmont University

The *Baptist and Reflector* requested an interview with Belmont's president. Belmont stated that this was a Board of Trustees matter and the board would be addressing it. The following statement from the chairman was provided via e-mail to the *B&R*.

"We are disappointed that the messengers did not approve the recommendation brought to them by the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention."

"We look forward to meeting with representatives of the TBC to continue our dialogue

and reach an agreeable solution that honors our mutual Christian missions."

"Neither state law nor Belmont's governing documents support the convention's vote to remove the trustees. We feel that the involvement of our supporters from other Christian denominations will strengthen our mission and take us to the next chapter in our service."

"We will continue to be a student-focused, Christian community of learning and service with a rich Baptist heritage that we intend to foster and nurture. That is our promise and our covenant." □

of Belmont and "seeking peace at any price."

Tennessee Baptists have invested much time and money in the school, she said.

Perry encouraged the convention to act "with all vigor to restore back" the property, money, and authority taken from it by Belmont.

Harold Curtis, pastor, Delano Baptist Church, Delano, said if the convention votes for the recommendation it would send the message to the other two Tennessee Baptist colleges that they could sell them to the convention for \$5 million.

"Are we willing to sell our three institutions for \$15 million?" he asked.

Eric Bean, a messenger from First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, who will be a freshman at Belmont in the fall, favored the recommendation. He noted his positive experiences with Belmont and its president, Robert Fisher, as he was deciding what college to attend.

"Even with the separation, Belmont leadership will continue in the right, Christian direction," he said.

André Dugger, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Nashville, and member of the Executive Board, said the recommendation was not what is best for Tennessee Baptists.

"Some folks in here are afraid if we disagree we don't love each other. Folks, we're Christians, we're adults, we're able to share (our disagreements). In my heart of hearts, I do not believe this is in the best interest of the convention."

Several others debated the issue back and forth before the question was called late in the morning. A ballot vote was taken before adjournment for lunch.

After lunch, Jett announced the recommendation had been defeated by a 923-791 vote or 54-46 percent.

Alternate motion

The Belmont Study Committee was prepared in case the first motion failed. "We are fol-

lowing process," Austin said.

Austin presented an alternate motion authorizing and directing the Belmont Study Committee (which would be expanded to 14 members) of the Executive Board "to carry out all rights, powers, actions, and remedies of the convention with respect to Belmont University through any and all means deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, private negotiations/settlement, mediation, arbitration, and/or litigation, in order to protect and enforce all rights of the convention relating to Belmont University, including, without limitation, all of the convention's rights and interests under applicable governing documents, under the 1951 agreement, and under the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act."

Concerns were voiced by messengers about the language of the new recommendation as to whether it would allow for a monetary settlement which the convention had voted against earlier.

Jameson Work introduced an amendment which would require another special called meeting of the convention so the messengers could approve any agreement reached before it was enacted.

Convention leadership explained that such a motion would legally take mediation and arbitration out of the options because in mediation both parties must have the authority to accept a decision and in arbitration the final ruling is binding and enforceable in court.

An attempt to amend Work's amendment to give the committee all options except surrender of the institution failed.

Others spoke both for and against the amendment before it was defeated overwhelmingly.

Roger "Sing" Oldham, pastor of First Baptist Church, Martin, asked the convention attorney if he thought the TBC would prevail in litigation.

— See TBC, page 4



AUSTIN, chairman of the Belmont Study Committee, addresses messengers of the Tennessee Baptist Convention during a special called meeting last week at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville. In the background are committee members, from left, Lynn King, Buddy Boston, Jerry Massey, Rich Rice, and Bill Seale. — Photos by Connie Davis Bushey

TBC messengers reject Belmont offer; vacate ...

— Continued from page 3

Attorney Randle Davis said the convention would have at least two causes of action.

The first would be the governing documents and applicable state law — “We’d say what they (Belmont) did was unlawful. That’s the same argument the Georgia Baptist Convention used against Shorter. They (GBC) prevailed after four-and-a-half years of litigation. But they prevailed by a 5-4 vote in the Georgia Supreme Court. This is uncharted territory in Tennessee. In Missouri, it’s the same thing only against five institutions. They’ve been in litigation a little over four years. My best guess is it’s a 50/50 chance we’d prevail.”

The second cause of action, Davis continued, would be the 1951 agreement.

“Belmont’s position is that this is an historical document. TBC’s (position) is that it’s a legal document and still binding. What we’ve determined so far under this cause, it’s more a 75/25 chance that the TBC would prevail.”

Oldham responded, “I believe this committee and our attorney have demonstrated tremendous integrity. Belmont has taken unilateral action.

“Irrespective of all problems with how and why they (Belmont) did what they did, it potentially severed relations. I believe this committee has shown tremendous integrity.”

Beth Sizemore of First Baptist Church, Englewood, thanked Tennessee Baptists for paying for her education at Belmont. She suggested that mistakes have been made by both parties, not just Belmont.

Less than 30 percent of Belmont students are Baptist, she reported. That argues for non-Baptist trustees to represent them. She added that the TBC only gives the school 3 percent of its budget. Does the convention even have “a vote” here? she asked.

Sizemore asked if the committee would consider allowing Belmont to have non-Baptist trustees.

Austin responded that the committee would be open to any suggestion as it began its work.

Sizemore appealed for the convention to “continue to have a working relationship with Belmont.” She added that “Belmont needs to have something given to them too.”

The question was later called and a ballot vote taken. The alternate motion passed by a margin 1,383 to 103 or 93-7 percent.

Messengers then proceeded to vote to declare each trustee office at Belmont vacant. TBC bylaws require that each

Convention leaders answer questions in press conference

By Linda Lawson
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — After a day-long called meeting May 9 to deal with the Tennessee Baptist Convention’s relationship with Belmont University, leaders commended the more than 1,700 messengers for expressing differing viewpoints in a civil manner and following due process.

“Today Baptists honored their processes and procedures,” TBC Executive Director-Treasurer James Porch said in a news conference after the special session at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville. “There has not been a desire on our part to deal with this issue with Belmont, but the convention had to respond to this. What happened today was a response of the head and the heart.”

TBC President Philip Jett, pastor of Englewood Baptist Church, Jackson, said the session was marked by “strong differences of opinion, but there was not a disruptive spirit. There is never a right to do something the wrong

way. The action today was right and I believe we did it in the right way.”

In almost six hours of debate, messengers declined to accept an offer from Belmont to pay the TBC five million dollars and terminate the relationship between the two entities. They also approved a recommendation to enlarge the study committee from eight to 14 members and to use “all means deemed necessary” to “protect and enforce all rights of the Convention relating to Belmont University.” In a legal action that would be required if negotiation efforts fail and litigation takes place, messengers voted overwhelmingly to declare Belmont trustee positions vacant.

Asked why no one from Belmont spoke during convention sessions, Clay Austin, TBC Executive Board president and chairman of the Belmont Study Committee, said, “We were dealing with the convention side of the issue.” He said anyone from Belmont attending as an elected messenger would have been free



AUSTIN



JETT



PORCH

to go to a microphone and address the convention.

To implement convention actions, Austin said the first step is to expand the committee by six members as authorized. “We know we need some more Middle Tennessee representation.”

The next step, Austin said, will be to “explore avenues of communication with Belmont, beginning with, ‘let’s sit down and talk.’”

TBC attorney Randle Davis said future TBC actions regarding Belmont will focus on two issues: (1) whether the Nov. 10, 2005, action by Belmont to change its charter to

elect its own trustees lawful, and (2) the legality of the 1951 agreement between Belmont and the TBC requiring repayment of funds if the school should cease to be Baptist.

“We believe what exists today. We would not have a relationship with Belmont,” Davis said. However, “if a judge or other (mediator or arbitrator) determines the Belmont action is lawful then the default position is restitution.”

In response to a question, Porch expressed regret at the necessity of allocating the first \$100,000 of any overage in Cooperative Program funds given in 2005-06 to legal fees. He said additional funds would be budgeted in 2007.

“We’re giving more to Southern Baptist Convention (40 percent) than we have in a long time and we don’t want to disrupt that. At the same time, we have to respond to the guidance of God to us with this,” Porch said. □

trustee position be dealt with separately so messengers were given a handout with each trustee listed and an opportunity to vote yes or no on whether to remove each one.

The votes varied slightly on each, but it was reported that each position was vacated by at least a 10 to 1 margin.

Elsie Danley of Jackson, chairman of the Executive Board’s Program and Budget Committee, then presented a motion that the first \$100,000 from any overage of this year’s budget be used for expenses in resolving the Belmont issue. The motion was approved.

East Tennessee hospital

TBC messengers also dealt with a recommendation regarding Baptist Health System of East Tennessee.

The recommendation authorized the Executive Board, or its designee, “to carry out all rights, powers, actions, and remedies of the convention with respect to the Baptist Health System of East Tennessee Inc., including, but not limited to, (1) rights as the sole member under applicable sections of the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act with respect to a sale, merger, consolidation, or other transfer of the organization or its assets, and (2) as the convention acting in session concerning a termination or modification of the relationship with BHS pursuant to Article IV, Paragraph 7 of the

bylaws, if deemed necessary upon the nature of the proposed transaction recommended by the board of trustees of BHS.”

Messengers were given a handout which included the history of BHS and its current problems.

During the past three years the hospital system has lost \$36 million after interest and depreciation. Through the first nine months of the current fiscal year the hospital has lost an additional \$6 million, the report indicated.

“The loss of \$42 million in less than four years has left BHS without the necessary capital to invest in the hospital facilities going forward,” the report continued.

A task force of BHS has been working “to preserve and protect the Christian healing mission of BHS.”

The task force is seeking a joint venture with either a for-profit company or another local nonprofit hospital in order to continue its ministry and its relationship with TBC.

The report noted that to find the best solution the trustees “need both flexibility and the ability to move quickly.

“For this reason, the trustees are asking the convention to authorize the Executive Board to approve (or disapprove) any proposed transaction requiring TBC approval.

“Unfortunately, given the

realities of the financial situation, it is not feasible to wait until the TBC convention in November to finalize a transaction.”

The TBC Executive Board approved the recommendation at its May 8 meeting.

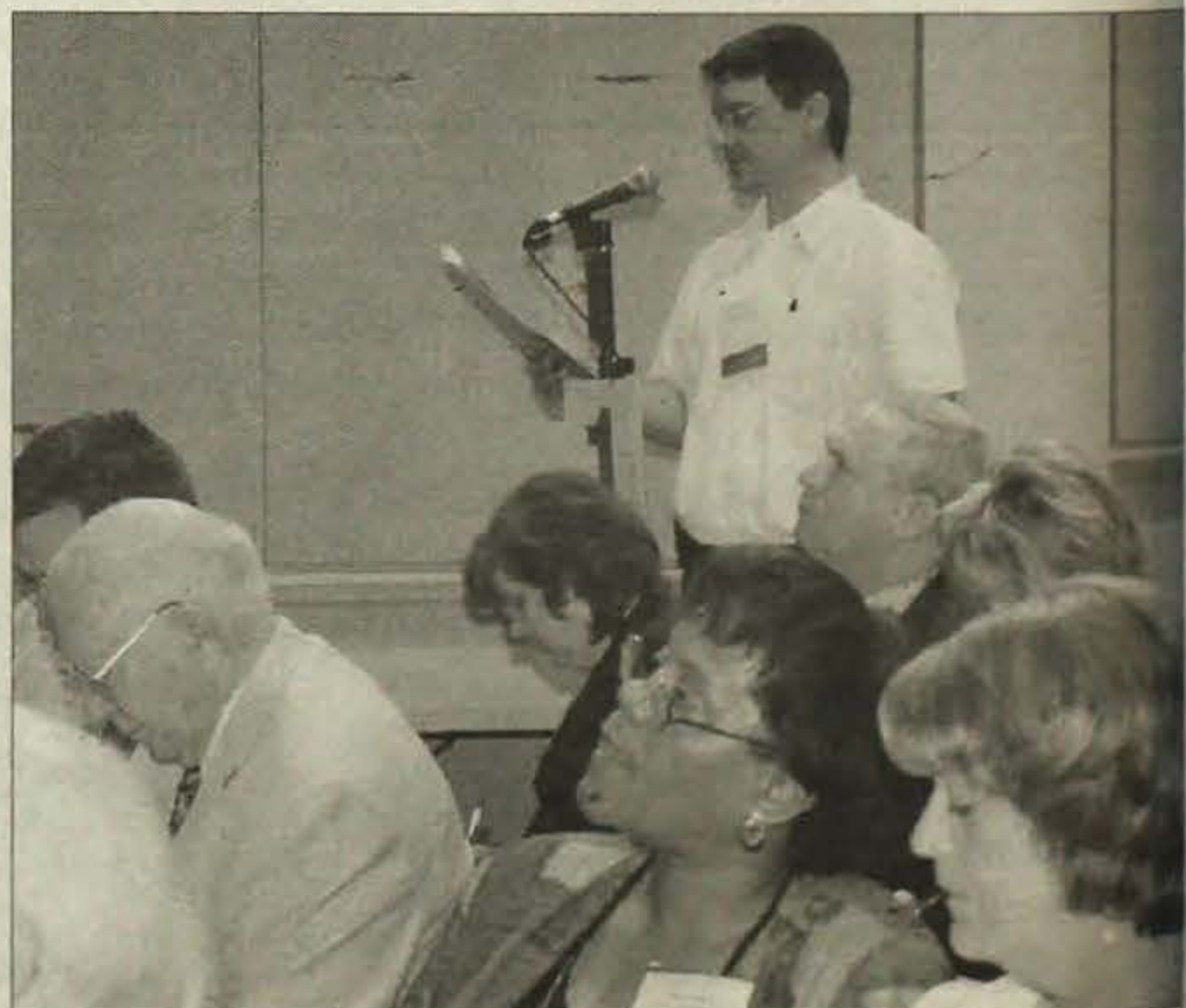
Richard Cramer Jr., First Baptist Church of Concord, Knoxville, and trustee chairman of the Baptist Health Care System of East Tennessee, spoke to messengers. “We want our hospital to survive. We want our hospital to survive as Baptist Hospital,” he said.

He noted hospital officials are negotiating “to try to make

that happen.” However, he said parties they are negotiating with would not agree to until TBC action at the convention in November.

After comments from messengers for and against the recommendation, messengers voted by ballot.

Results were announced before the convention officially adjourned. The recommendation passed by a margin of 1,015 to 22, or 98-2 percent. — Article includes reporting on Connie Davis Bushey, Mike Knox, Linda Lawson, Dawn Guseon, Tim Ellsworth, and Steve Murphree.



MITCHELL KARNES, pastor, Walker Memorial Baptist Church, Franklin, comments on a recommendation during the special meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention held May 9 at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville. — Photos by Connie Davis Bushey

Meeting had great spirit but matter not resolved



Lonnie Wilkey, editor

commend the spirit of the messengers who registered for last week's special meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

For the most part, messengers behaved in a manner that honored Christ.

I also commend TBC President Phil Jett. He presided fairly and when things bogged down he did not hesitate to call the convention into prayer. It is to "mess up" when heads bowed and people are communicating with God.

Still, when all was said and done the issue of our relationship with Belmont University settled. Messengers voted not to accept an offer that Belmont University put on the table that would have given the TBC \$2 million and \$1 million over the next three years.

Some see the rejection of this proposal as a mandate that the convention wants the relationship with Belmont restored so that we continue to elect all the trustees.

Quite frankly, I am not sure that was the intent of all who voted against the recommendation. Some (how many I don't really know) simply felt \$5 million was not enough to let go of an institution which the convention birthed, saw it through a lot of "growing pains," and helped it achieve the status it has today.

As one messenger put it, he was not ready to let Belmont go for a "penny on the dollar."

So where does that leave the Tennessee Baptist Convention?

The recommendation later approved by messengers expands the Belmont Study Committee to 14 members and empowers them to "protect and enforce all rights of the convention relating to Belmont University." It also empowers the committee to use "any and all means deemed necessary." Those means could include litigation.

Over and over I heard mes-

sengers say that litigation should be used only as a "last resort" as all pretty much affirmed the Scripture that admonishes us not to sue.

But we can't have it both ways. Unless God works a miracle through this committee and Belmont leadership (and we all know God is still in the miracle business), we are headed down the path toward litigation.

During the called meeting some messengers noted the cost of litigation and how it could tarnish our reputation. Just remember, Belmont will have those same problems. In fact, Belmont could be hurt even more by litigation. I imagine high dollar donors would be wary of giving money to the school while they are entangled in a legal battle.

In reading some media accounts and letters to the editor in secular papers the TBC is being portrayed as the "bad guy." As I wrote a few weeks ago that the TBC Executive Board should not be viewed as the "bad guy," neither should our convention because of that vote. I believe messengers, for whatever

reason, had the convention's best interests in mind. Belmont started the process when it unilaterally changed our relationship and then changed its charter to take away the election of trustees.

With that said, Tennessee Baptists need to allow the committee to work and to negotiate and, if necessary, offer some considerations. Belmont is not all of a sudden going to say, "The convention was right. Let's go back to where we were." If litigation is to be avoided until the "last resort," both sides will need to be willing to compromise.

Pray diligently about this matter. Pray for Clay Austin, chairman of this committee, and the members currently on the committee as well as those who will be added to it. Pray for Belmont and its leadership.

We need cool heads on this committee who will try to work out a solution that is agreeable to both parties, but most of all, meets the greatest of all criteria — being in God's will.

When all is said and done, being in God's will is what matters most. □

heart talk



By James Porch

Family affair

It may not be written precisely in Scripture but I believe one of my primary Christian responsibilities is to stay out of other people's business as best as I can. And, such an effort requires challenge.

The recent special called Tennessee Baptist Convention meeting has generated much attraction by the secular press. Regardless of their attempts to be candid, truthful, and to "explain" Tennessee Baptist Convention life as related to the issues, much misinformation and limited information becomes trafficked by reporters just doing their job.

I work with such dilemma and keep trying to close the gap that the true message of the Tennessee Baptist people may prevail.

While my efforts as information officer of the Executive Board will continue, I urge Tennessee Baptists to rely primarily on the *Baptist and Reflector* and our Tennessee Baptist web site for information. Quite frankly the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Belmont matter is a family affair. Therefore, Baptist family members can best avail themselves through Baptist sources.

O.K., so you may build a case for potential bias through Baptist reporting. Sure our efforts will never become perfect and we will come down on the side of the best attempt for integrity and truth.

During my tenure as executive director-treasurer I have maintained an open door, open phone, and intentionally open mind. Assuredly some perception can question the open mind. That part is a judgment call and after all I am a human being also.

After the May 9 special called convention we moved into the talking and wondering stage with already some false rumors and pre drawn conclusions.

No decision has been made since the convention. The *Baptist and Reflector*, our web site, and the open line of communication from the Executive Office of the Tennessee Baptist Convention will truthfully provide information as the special Belmont Study Committee pursues its defined task.

Meanwhile, let's use our best communication energy skills in talks with our Heavenly Father. After all, this effort must be in grace and wisdom and He has promised to supply both such needs. □ — Porch is executive director-treasurer of the TBC.

Encourager — a word that the world needs more of



Johnnie Godwin

About nicknames

usually don't get a chance to choose our own nicknames. Others give them to us. For example: Stick, Seed, Slick, Goblin. But there are exceptions when we get to choose our own nicknames. In CB radio days, I chose "Macho Man" since I was from Texas and ate lots of nachos. It was the best choice since too many people thought my handle was "Macho Man," which I was.

When personal computers and the Internet provided us with bulletin boards and chat rooms, I found the need to give myself a new nickname. This time I chose "Encourager." My nickname showed up every time I logged on to one of these Internet families.

Soon, unseen friends I had met would write, "Welcome, Encourager!" More than one person like your moniker, and I assure you some encouragement.

The whole world needs encouragement. Ever since I became a member, I've wanted to encourage people in words and actions and that's why I chose the nickname "Encourager."

In the Bible, more than one person has the nickname "Encour-

ager" long before I assumed it. Further, the New Testament has a lot more to say about encouragement than most people are aware. Now, bear with me: It can be a "eureka moment" to look at the New Testament Greek word for encouragement. The Greek word got used so much that it also became an English word and is in our English dictionaries. So it's not all Greek.

The divine encourager: the Paraclete (PAIR-uh-KLEET)

The literal meaning of "paraclete" is one called alongside to help. It is the Greek word translated "Comforter" to refer to the Holy Spirit in John 14:16, 26; 16:7, KJV). Other translations use these English words to translate "Paraclete": helper, counselor, intercessor, advocate, strengthener, standby, encourager, friend.

This term refers to more than words of sympathy and feelings for the suffering and grieving. It's more like the empathy that actually comes by your side, enters into your being, lifts your spirit, consoles you, and does the work with you of getting beyond "Heartbreak Hill."

I've read of Boston marathoners' testimony that they couldn't make it over "Heartbreak Hill" if it weren't for the crowds of encouragers calling their names and numbers to urge them to continue and finish the race. We all have our "Heartbreak Hills," and we need the Paraclete and His encouragers to help us meet the

crisis and finish life's race as victors.

My hardest and most grievous journey up life's Heartbreak Hill came in the sudden death of our second son. The power to make it over that hill and continue the race became possible because of the Comforter and those who knew Him. They yoked together with each other and with me to provide the strengthening of ongoing encouragement. It's good to receive encouragement. It's our calling to be encouragers.

A disciple nicknamed encourager

Acts 4:36 identifies a man named Joseph who was nicknamed Barnabas, which is translated the Son of Consolation (Acts 4:36). The nickname included consoling others, but it meant much more than that. Contemporary translations translate, "... which means son of encouragement" (NRSV). He didn't choose his nickname presumptuously, as I did; rather, his life, spirit, words, and actions earned the nickname.

Barnabas stood by Paul and introduced him to the Jerusalem church when others knew Paul only as a persecutor of Christians. Barnabas sold land and laid the gift out to help the helpless. Barnabas encouraged the Antioch Christians to remain true to the Lord (Acts 11:23, NASB).

Barnabas encouragingly went alongside Paul on missionary journeys. Barnabas had the courage to stand by John Mark and give him a needed

second chance — even though it meant Barnabas had to stand in opposition to Paul in the matter. As humans go, Barnabas was an encourager par excellence. He is a worthy model for us to follow.

My next birthday I will be three-score and 10 years old (D.V.). I was born, reborn, lived, ministered, and exist because of the encouragers in my life. I am totally indebted. My only repayment is to try to pass on words and deeds of encouragement to you on behalf of the Paraclete and all those who have encouraged me. Take heart! Be encouraged!

Invitation to become an encourager

We don't "beseech" at my house; we just ask, urge, beg, and persist. But some 40 times or more in the KJV Bible, the word "beseech" translates the basic word that means, "I call [you] alongside [me]."

The less literal translation refers to a strong encouragement to be or do something. While Paul was a prisoner for our Lord, he wrote, "I strongly encourage you to come alongside me to live a life worthy of the calling wherein you are called" (Ephesians 4:1, Godwin paraphrase).

One best way to answer that call is to live life as an encourager of others. The choice is yours, but I wanted to issue the invitation. Thanks for letting me. □ — Copyright 2006 by Johnnie C. Godwin, whose encouragement is available via johnniegodwin@comcast.net.

Sutton, Weekley challenge Tennessee Baptist messengers

Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — The special called meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention held at Two Rivers Baptist Church here May 9 featured more than business issues.

Two local pastors shared from God's Word during worship times.

Preaching from James 1:2-8, host pastor Jerry Sutton reminded TBC messengers during the morning session there is a need for wisdom. He defined wisdom as "the ability to see life through God's perspective."

And, if there is one thing needed today, it is God's perspective, Sutton continued.

In order to get God's perspective, people need to realize the problem. Sutton noted Scripture says "to consider it a great joy when you

experience trials.

"We need to remember we are small enough to let God Himself be God," Sutton said.

"We need to thank God for our various trials. He has a reason and purpose."

Sutton also observed that when times are tough it is not because "God has forgotten you. He may be using you."

Sometimes God will allow difficulty in people's lives. "Instead of quitting God wants us to shake it off and step up. We need to look at life from the eternal perspective."

Finally, Sutton reminded messengers that "faith is the gate between man's perils and God's power."

In the afternoon session, Glenn

Weekley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, asked messengers, "How do you discern God's will?"



SUTTON



WEEKLEY

Basing his message on Acts 16, beginning at verse one, Weekley observed that sometimes "God leads us with good ole common sense."

There are times God "allows us to make decisions on our own, based on common sense," Weekley continued, stressing, however, that does not mean people are not to pray for wisdom, read His Word, or seek counsel from Christian friends.

Weekley also observed that sometimes God leads people to discern His will through circumstances. "A lot of times, a closed door is part of God's

total answer," he said.

And, finally, Weekley cautioned messengers against thinking they always be able to discern God's will in a dramatic way. "It's not always that," he said.

Weekley also cautioned messengers about saying something is God's will "when He hasn't told you anything."

The Hendersonville pastor cautioned aged messengers to use common sense in discerning God's will. "God has given us faculties to reason with."

Related to the special called meeting, Weekley observed that "God is not going to allow a decision we make as a body to thwart His will. God can take whatever the convention does. He will honor His name. He will bless. He will bring people to Him."

Music was provided throughout the sessions by the worship team from Englewood Baptist Church, Jackson.

Germantown members reject move to add elders

Compiled from news reports

GERMANTOWN — After a divisive and highly publicized debate about the role of elders in Baptist church governance, members of a large Memphis-area church have defeated a motion to switch from congregational polity to the elder system.

The May 7 vote at Germantown Baptist Church was 2,183-1,542 in opposition to the proposal, or nearly 59 percent opposed to elders. The new constitution and bylaws would have required a two-thirds majority to win.

Clark Finch, one of the founding members of a group organized to oppose the change, said while the outcome of the vote didn't surprise him, the winning ratio did. He and other opponents created a web site, www.savegbc.org, to rally members against imposing elder rule on the 9,000-member church.

"We had a count of maybe 1,500 who we thought would vote against the motion, but I was just in awe that it was 2,183," Finch told Associated Baptist Press. "To me, that says that God looks out for His children."

Pastor Sam Shaw, who had encouraged the elder proposal, did not return an ABP reporter's phone calls requesting comment for this story.

Shaw told the *Commercial*

Appeal in Memphis that he told his congregation after the vote on Sunday that "healing needs to begin. Of course, that takes place person to person, individual to individuals, and I think that is beginning."

Shaw also told the Memphis paper, "I'll lead the church until God moves me. I have no plans to quit the church."

Finch, however, told the *Commercial Appeal*, "I honestly do not know if he can continue to lead with that much of a negative vote."

The conflict spilled over into the local media, with the *Commercial Appeal* and other news outlets reporting on it. If the motion had been approved, Germantown likely would have been the largest Baptist congregation to adopt the Presbyterian-style system.

Finch, who attended the meeting, said the sanctuary was filled almost to capacity during the vote, but the atmosphere was surprisingly relaxed.

"It was as godly a meeting as you could expect to have," he said.

As a result of the vote, the church may face an unknown future with regard to its leadership. Members were to have met May 9 at nearby Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary to discuss future plans.

According to Finch, his group plans to "stay the course" and let

"the staff" make the first move toward any future change. For now, he's just happy the church remained together during the conflict.

The proposed amendment would have allowed church members to nominate elder candidates, put them through a screening process by an elder interview team, and then approve the interviewers' decision. Part of that interview team would have consisted of the church's present deacons and pastors.

Opponents to the elders said the men would rule instead of lead the church — something they saw as a dangerous departure from biblical descriptions of elders. In a May 3 ABP article, Finch said a close reading of Germantown's proposed bylaws revealed that elders would have the key decision-making power in the church.

Others, including Shaw and his supporters, said elders would be godly leaders devoted to shepherding the church in "spiritual and administrative matters."

Prior to the May 7 meeting, Shaw used open letters to the church to assure members that elders would not control everything. Instead, he sees the change as a way for the 170-year-old church to be "better shepherded."

"Godly laymen will be more

intimately involved in discussing and determining the spiritual direction of our church," Shaw wrote, explaining the benefits of elder leadership.

"The senior pastor will have a godly group of church-elected peers (elders) to serve with him and provide leadership in spiritual and administrative matters."

In his statement, Shaw said congregants would still nominate and approve changes relating to the pastor and elders, the church budget, and church discipline. Members would also have regularly scheduled meetings with the pastor and elders. Many congregants view the proposal with alarm, warning it is ambiguous enough to leave room for complete elder rule.

The *Commercial Appeal* reported that in retrospect Shaw said the journey was worth it.

"I think we've learned a lot. I think we've changed," Shaw told the paper.

"I know we've prayed more than we've ever prayed as a church. I think we've seen ourselves in a different light and as a result, we're going to be better Christians and better people," Shaw was reported as saying in the *Commercial Appeal*. □ — Article includes information from two articles written by Hannah Elliott for Associated Baptist Press.

Union honors Chapman with Dodd award

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Morris H. Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, has been selected by Union University's trustees to receive this year's M.E. Dodd Award, the university's highest denominational service award.

The award is named for the Union alumnus who served as president of the SBC and who was the author of today's Cooperative Program.

"Morris Chapman is a leading statesman and champion of the Cooperative Program across the Southern Baptist Convention," Dockery said. "He rightly deserves this recognition." Chapman has been president of the Executive Committee since 1992. He was president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1990-92 and of the SBC Pastors Conference in 1986.

Chapman was pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, for 25 years. During that time, the church's Cooperative Program gifts and baptisms were in the top 1 percent of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Last year's Dodd Award recipient was Adrian Loggins, former pastor of Little Rock Baptist Church, Arkansas, who died later in the year.



CHAPMAN

Convention offers training for weekday children's workers

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The annual Church Weekday Conference sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention is planned for Aug. 4-5 at First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, according to Klista Storts, TBC preschool/weekday specialist.

Storts said a new feature of the conference this year is advanced and beginner tracks for two-hour core conferences for program directors and age-group teachers of babies through pre-kindergartners.

Storts also noted the second annual directors banquet will be held on Aug. 4 "to provide an opportunity to meet the faculty for the conference in a relaxed atmosphere."

The keynote speaker for the conference is Cindy Lumpkin of LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville.

A member of Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, Lumpkin serves as editor in chief of ministry and leadership resources in the childhood ministry publishing area.

She currently serves as the editor in chief of *in mInistry* with kids, a magazine designed for preschool and children's leaders.

Lumpkin also compiled *Toward 2000: Leading Preschoolers in Sunday School and Preschool Sunday School for a New Century*. She has served as designer and editor of various other preschool publications.

For registration questions, contact Barbara Owens at the TBC at (615) 371-7905 or 1-800-558-2090, ext. 7905. □

Bivo pastors, members of their churches serve hurricane ...

continued from page 1
ist Convention staff.
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the meeting, also up to a
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he hurricane relief project
a natural thing to do to
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ministers who are hurri-
victims.
bout 400 Baptist churches
Louisiana were damaged,
Gilder. About 70 percent of
ches in the Southern Bap-
Convention have 92 mem-
or less. Projections are that
of those churches are led
vo pastors.

Gilder noted involvement in
project was a challenge for
ministers because they
arrange for time off from
other jobs. But if they
do that, it enabled them to
church members to be
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Many of the volunteers are
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pastor of Gath Baptist Church, McMinnville, where he served 11 years. He has served on the TBC staff for 14 years.

Personally, Gilder said, he was inspired by the bivo ministers who were hurricane victims.

Ed Murphy, pastor, Shoreline Park Baptist Church, Bay St. Louis, Miss., was one of the pastors the Bivo Ministers Association worked with in the project.

The church, which is located five miles from the ocean, was flooded to the ceiling of the second-story sanctuary. The first worship service held back in the church building after the storm was held on Easter.

Murphy's home was not damaged. But he lost his maintenance job at Gulfport Baptist Conference Center, Gulfport, Miss. The conference center was too damaged by the hurricane to remain open. His wife also lost her office job because the office building was destroyed.

Despite the personal blows, Murphy has led his church to "become a hub for the community," said Gilder.

Murphy spoke at the Bivo Ministers Association and explained, "If we don't have people in the community we won't

be able to reach anybody."

Gilder said Murphy also doesn't want to come out of this better than he was before the storm, referring to gifts received by the church and himself and the work of many volunteers. Murphy said he didn't want to benefit from the tragedy of others.

Gilder said he also was very proud of the number of Tennesseans involved, which was 39. That included 14 from Dyer Baptist Association, Dyersburg, who provided meals for the entire project and meeting period. Those volunteers were led by Joe Wright, director of missions.

Tennessee participants included a group of 11 from Westwood Baptist Church, Nashville, led by Mitch Martin, bivo pastor and pastoral ministries specialist, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville. Martin's work includes providing help to bivos. Also a four-member team from First Baptist Church, Sevierville, served.

Lloyd Elder of the Moench Center for Leadership Training, Belmont University, Nashville, spoke at the association meeting. He and his assistant, Joyce Bird, also worked in the project.

Bell Buckle group

Pastor Bobby Waynick of Bell Buckle led two other people from his church, Midland Baptist Church, to participate. Doug Mitchell, bivo children's minister, and Kay Mitchell participated. They brought 101 prayer quilts from the ladies ministry of the church for bivo ministers who were hurricane victims.

Kay Mitchell, who was participating on her first mission project, said making the quilts was a

challenge but a labor of love. The ladies group has made them for some time, mostly to cheer people who are sick. The idea of making the quilts for the bivo ministers was the idea of Waynick, she said. About 20 ladies and men worked five Saturdays to complete them.

The quilts are a witnessing tool because they include crosses of different colors to represent the plan of salvation. A pamphlet given with each quilt — See Bivo, page 10



FRIEDA ARMOUR receives a prayer quilt from Bobby Waynick, pastor, Midland Baptist Church, Bell Buckle, in the renovated den of her house in east New Orleans. Flood damage can be seen on the door. Armour is the wife of Lawrence Armour, bivocational pastor, Epiphany Baptist Church, New Orleans.



KAY MITCHELL of Midland Baptist Church, Bell Buckle, shows one of the 101 prayer quilts made by the ladies ministry of her church for hurricane victims. The crosses represent the salvation process, which is explained in a pamphlet and given with the quilt.



A GROUP OF BAPTIST VOLUNTEERS with the Bivo Ministers Association pause to pray before they leave two families they have helped. One family, Lawrence and Frieda Armour, live in the house to the right which is located in east New Orleans. The couple has been living in the FEMA trailer until recently. Lawrence Armour is bivocational pastor of Epiphany Baptist Church, New Orleans, and professor at the University of New Orleans. Frieda also taught at a New Orleans college but lost her job because the school closed.



MEMBERS OF Westwood Baptist Church, Nashville, pause at the Pearl River Baptist Association retreat center, McNeill, Miss., where they participated in the Bivo Ministers Association meeting/project. They are, from left, first row, Wayne Pewitt; Teresa Richardson; Maxine Pewitt; Brenda Moorhead; Ruth Barnes; and Judy Burns; second row, Marie Cothran; Mitch Martin, bivocational pastor who also is pastoral ministries specialist, LifeWay Christian Resources; and Barry Smith, minister of education; back row, John Richardson and Harold Felker. — Photos by Connie Davis Bushey



PLETING THE countertop in the kitchen of Frieda Armour of east Orleans is Bobby Waynick, pastor, Midland Baptist Church, Bell Buckle.



Church Health Matters

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

? Missions Matters

This issue highlights healthy missions education in the local church. 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 of missions education.

WOMEN'S MISSIONS

Candy Phillips, *Executive Director-Treasurer, WMU*
(615) 371-2039
Denise Bronaugh (615) 371-7920
Vickie Anderson (615) 371-7918

MEN'S MISSIONS

Gene Williams (615) 371-2064

CHILDREN/YOUTH MISSIONS

Andrea Knight - Girl's missions (615) 371-7919
Frank Green- Boy's missions (615) 371-2025

PRESCHOOL MISSIONS

Andrea Knight (615) 371-7919

VOLUNTEER MISSIONS

Kim Margrave (615) 371-2021

VOLUNTEER CONSTRUCTION

David Acres (615) 371-7927

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM MISSIONS

Gary Rickman (615) 371-2020

Keep the leaders in your church informed.

Subscribing to the *Baptist and Reflector* for your church leadership will ensure they receive not only state and national news each week, but pertinent information provided in the Church Health pages. The *Baptist and Reflector* provides a Church Leadership Plan at a reduced rate for two or more members. Contact Susie Edwards for circulation information at (615) 371-2003 or e-mail her at sedwards@tnbaptist.org.

Why Do Adults Need Missions Education?

by Denise Bronaugh

Many adults who attend Baptist churches today did not grow up Southern Baptist. Many are coming into the church as brand new Christians.

If they are expected to be faithful givers and to participate in mission offerings, it is our responsibility to provide information on what they are giving to support and why. If they are expected to pray for our missionaries, they must understand who the missionaries are and why their prayers are so important. If adults are expected to go out into the world to witness or into their own neighborhoods to do missions, we must teach them how and give them the necessary "tools" to use.

God gave us the challenge for missions in Acts 1:8, "... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." If adults are faithful to please God, they will look for ways to be on mission for Him. Adults can develop a missions lifestyle.

Organizations are not necessary to missions education in the church, but level organizations are the best tool to educate adults. Leaders must create interest by providing innovative pathways to introduce missions such as:

- Host a missions fair to educate church family
- Plan a church wide emphasis for each of the three major mission offerings: Go Offering for Tennessee Missions, A Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, and Lottie Christmas Offering for International Missions
- Invite a missionary to speak
- Associations can host an On Mission Celebration
- Maintain a prayer room at church focuses on missionaries and their needs
- Sponsor periodic church wide mission projects such as collect supplies for the homeless, families of inmates, food drive, etc.
- Churches or associations can sponsor community service day

Men's Missions Education Resources

Men@WORK: The Magazine for Baptist Men On Mission is a quarterly publication of Baptist Men On Mission that contains stories for Baptist Men On Mission, WORK group, how-to ideas, North American and International volunteer opportunities, missionary profiles, mission blueprints, and extra helps for leaders. Request enough copies for each member.

Baptist Men On Mission Planbook is the annual planning book for BMEN. It contains helpful resources for coordinating your Baptist Men On Mission group throughout the year.

Leading Baptist Men On Mission is the definitive guide for establishing, maintaining, and growing BMEN in your church.

My Purpose, His Plan is a key study to help transform your men's group into Baptist Men On Mission by helping them discover the "on mission" process and take their part in fulfilling the Great Commission.

The Adventure of His Mission will not only help train and send lay missionaries on short-term mission project, but it will also prepare your men for mission work in their backyards all year round. This and other strategy materials are available from the North American Mission Board (NAMB) in Alpharetta, Ga. To order these materials, call (800) 407-NAMB (6262).

For additional resources visit the BMEN web site at www.bmen.net. After July 1, all resources will be downloadable free from bmen.net.



Building Blocks Lead to a Solid Foundation

By Frank Green

As a child at Fredonia Baptist Church near Crossville, my uncle Gordon was the "song leader." He had never heard the term "minister of music" even "choir director."

One hymn that I remember was "How Firm a Foundation." That old song referred to building our foundation on God and His Word.

Later in life when I became involved in construction work, I began to learn how important a solid foundation is to a structure and my Christian life.

There are many "blocks" to building a solid foundation for a healthy church. With Sunday School, SS, choirs, etc., many churches include mission education in their curriculum for children and youth.

For boys in Grades 1-6, Royal Ambassadors (RAs) provides a quality plan for growing "On Mission Christians." RAs help boys understand that missions is not a meeting or project, but a lifestyle. The curriculum is built around the RA pledge plus on leading the boy to Christ and then helping him learn his place in God's plan.

Building Christian character is an ingredient in RAs. RAs learn that their mission field starts with their own family and extends to the world. RAs are encouraged to pray for and support their church, association, state convention, national missionary and international missionaries. RAs are taught what the Cooperative Program is and how it helps their church partner with other Southern Baptist churches to reach to the world.



Challengers groups are for junior high and senior high young men. Challengers lead young men to a deep commitment to study God's Word and find their place in His plan. It helps former RAs continue their journeys, and it can help teenage guys learn what their calling is even if they never were RAs. Challengers seek to help young men who are not Christians understand salvation and know Jesus as their savior.

Christian teenagers are called to a deeper commitment. Challengers have a strong component of accountability built in. It teaches young men to pray for one another and to become accountable to God and each other. Challengers encourage involvement in other youth and church activities and programs. Young men involved in Challengers along with Acteens are often the most active of a church's youth.



"Go" and "Tell" are two of the eight Kingdom-Growing Responses to the Acts 1:8 Challenge. Hundreds of current pastors, directors of missions, state convention leadership, and other key Southern Baptist leaders credit their foundation in RAs as a key component of their calling. About 90 percent of current NAMB and IMB missionaries say that RAs or GAs were an important part in their call to missions.

Is your church building a solid mission's foundation through your children and youth ministries? The world is waiting to see if what we have is better than what they have. We have to be ready to tell them about Jesus.

Why Missions Education for Preschoolers, Children and Students?

By Andrea Knight

Through missions education preschoolers, children, and students learn about the world, how to pray, the value of tithing and giving offerings, how to become a leader, and why showing compassion to others is important.

Children will grasp some of these concepts through other programs in the church. But the best place for children to learn about Southern Baptist missions is through Mission Friends (for preschoolers), Girls in Action (GAs for girls in grades 1 through 6), Royal Ambassadors (RAs for boys in grades 1 through 6), Children in Action (CiA) for children in grades 1 through 6), Acteens (for girls in grades 7 through 12), Challengers (for boys in grades 7 through 12); and Youth on Mission (for students in grades 7 through 12).

How many of you reading this article can go to a map or globe and quickly find the countries of Bolivia or Mongolia? Probably not many, but ask a GA, RA, or CiA member and they'll be able to do it quickly. They are studying about Southern Baptist missions efforts in those countries (and more) next year.

But GAs, RAs, and CiAs studies are about more than just maps. While studying about missionaries, children also learn to pray for missionaries and Missionary Kids (MKs). Plus children learn the value of giving tithes and offerings to the church. As a preschooler, child, junior high, and high school student, children learn that God calls us to give a tenth of all that we own to Him. But He also calls us to give beyond our tithes to special emphases, such as the Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

Children also learn the importance of showing compassion to others by responding to needs of others. I think about the Acteens at Indian Creek Baptist Church, Smithville. The girls saw the need for an ice machine at the East St. Louis Baptist Center in Missouri while serving on an Acteens Activators trip last summer. The girls returned to Smithville, shared the news with their church, and worked with the children attending Vacation Bible School and other church members to raise the money for the ice machine. A need was met, because of the compassion of these girls.

So why do your kids need missions education? Not just to locate little-known countries on the map, but they need missions education so children know how to minister to people from all walks of life through many different avenues such as prayer, giving, and meeting physical and spiritual needs.

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

July 22-23	New Church Staff Orientation, Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center, Newport
July 22-24	Transitional Interim Pastor (TIP) Training, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden
August 3	Tennessee Baptist Nursing Fellowship, Baptist Center, Brentwood
August 5-9	All Nations Camp, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden
August 13-14	Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, Greensboro, N.C.
August 15-17	Black Church Leadership Conference, Baptist Center, Brentwood
August 22-23	Associational Secretaries Celebration, Baptist Center, Brentwood
August 23-24	Regional Disaster Relief Training, Trinity Baptist Church, Jonesborough

For more information on upcoming events, see the TBC web site at www.tnbaptist.org.

Bivo pastors, members of their churches serve hurricane .

— Continued from page 7

explains the plan of salvation. The quilts are called prayer quilts because each knot is tied with prayer, explained Mitchell.

Doug Mitchell, her husband, said the congregation "was pulled together because of it," referring to the quilt project. Mitchell, who works at Bunny

Bread of Murfreesboro, took time off to participate. Waynick is a building contractor who did the same.

The team, joined by others from other states, renovated the kitchen of Lawrence Armour, bivocational pastor, Epiphany Baptist Church, New Orleans, and his wife, Frieda. They became

acquainted with a lady living across the street. Several ladies weeded her garden. Repairs in her home were on hold.

The Tennesseans also helped Lawrence Armour determine that another home the couple owns and planned to use as a church meeting place could not be repaired.

Church, Surgoinsville, who accompanied their pastor, Rick Dinkins, were participating in their first mission project.

Ruth Couch said she was so glad she participated and wished she could return soon even though the work was demanding. "I will never forget my experience. You can't explain it," said Couch.

Dinkins, who also is a counselor for the Department of Children's Services, said he and his wife, Becky, both planned to

come. They were going to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on the trip. Instead, Becky's father had to have surgery so she stayed at home with him.

Dwayne DeBord of church took time off from his job as service manager of a dealership to serve. He said when he learned of the opportunity, he asked Dinkins if he could go. He had wanted to help the hurricane victims since the storm, he explained. His son, Dustin, 16, also joined the team.

Dwayne helped clean up three homes. He was glad to help the homeowners. Some of the workers met one homeowner. They said he was very thankful for the help.

DeBord said he had many good friends among the volunteers and would return and serve for a month if his responsibilities back home allowed.

Volunteers from Dyer Association

Among the cooking crew was Lanny Abernathy of First Baptist Church, Newbern, and Wilson of Westside Baptist Church, Halls. They both served sacrificially. Abernathy, although his home was damaged in the April 2-3 Tennessee floods. Outbuildings, including his barn, were destroyed. He had to leave some lumber and other things unprotected from rain, he said. Thankfully, they are storing some items.

engines. Abernathy

time off from his job at a printing factory to serve. Wilson left several jobs and his family to serve for several days. Wilson is a national youth minister in his church, apart from maintenance work as a realtor, and he has sheep. His wife, Kim, and two daughters made it possible for him to serve, he said.

Seeing the destruction and hearing the stories "caught our hearts," Wilson. □

DUSTIN DE BORD, 16, of Looney's Chapel Baptist Church, Surgoinsville, tosses a piece of molding he just removed into a pile on the floor. He is working in a house in Waveland, Miss.



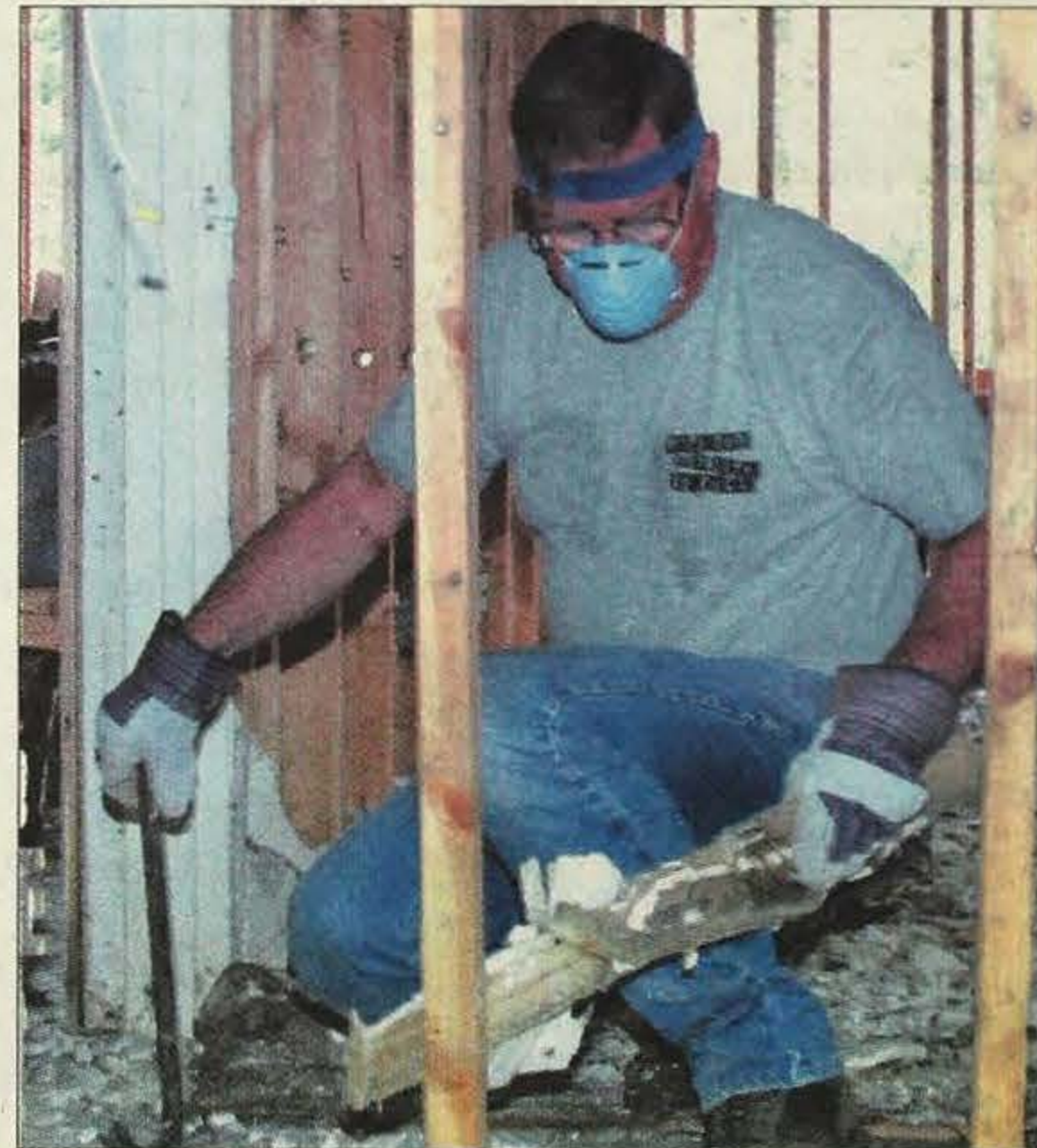
DWAYNE DE BORD, a member of Looney's Chapel Baptist Church, Surgoinsville, shows the water line on the kitchen cabinets in a house he was working in. The house was located in Waveland, Miss. Outside walls were damaged on both ends of the house. Mold can be seen on a kitchen wall where appliances sat.



PART OF THE MEMBERS of the Dyer Baptist Association, Dyersburg, team which prepared meals May 1-12 for the Bivo Ministers Association meeting and project participants were, from left, first row, Donald and Vickie Shelton and Lindsay Shelton, 14, First Baptist Church, Newbern (Vickie is also administrative assistant, Dyer Association office); and Lanny Abernathy, First Church, Newbern; back row, Joe Wright, director of missions and leader of the group; and Gary Wilson, Westside Baptist Church, Halls. They stand by a charcoal grill they brought with them.

Volunteers from Surgoinsville

All three members of Looney's Chapel Baptist



RAY GILDER of the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff removes drywall and molding from a house in Waveland, Miss. — Photos by Connie Davis Bushey



RICK DINKINS, pastor, Looney's Chapel Baptist Church, Surgoinsville, wheels out refuse he and other volunteers removed from a house in Waveland, Miss.



RAY GILDER of the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff carries some damaged wood from a house in Waveland, Miss., to a pile of refuse near the street. The house is being gutted so it could be renovated.

About 80 TBC volunteers help tsunami victims in Thailand

Marcia Kriox
East and Reflector

RENTWOOD — Around 80 Tennessee Baptist volunteers recently served on tsunami construction teams in Thailand, including a team from Middle East Tennessee, a team from Middle and West Tennessee, and a team from Holston Baptist Association, Johnson City. They were coordinated by Tennessee Baptist Volunteer Missions Team.

The TBC was working on a construction project scheduled for the stateside tsunami project coordinator of the North American Mission Board.

An eight-member team from Middle and East Tennessee arrived March 5-18 in Baan Nam Khem where they finished houses which had been rebuilt after being destroyed by the tsunami. The team hung windows, put in windows, and painted. The team was led by Mark Stinnett, director of missions, New Salem Baptist Association, Carthage. Stinnett, who served as a tsunami volunteer before, is also pastor of New Holston Baptist Church, Greenville.

According to Ann German, Middle/East Tennessee, they worked on three houses. A homeowner showed an act of kindness by giving team members soft drinks and letting them use bathroom facilities, the plans returned later in the day to personally thank the homeowner.

This "thanking" strategy helped Ann to converse with the resident through an interpreter. "Since we didn't know we could do for them, we said if we could pray with them about their perished and living family members.

They told them that God loves us, and that we show His love by praying for one another.

We were there to plant the seeds of the gospel with the Buddhists." Along with her husband Dick, she also handed out Thai tracts and Bibles.

Ann witnessed to an upper class older woman who happened to be at the doctor's office in Bangkok when the tsunami struck her village. The woman noted that she was spared and that 45 people used her three-story home's roof to escape death.

Before the tsunami destroyed the area, there were two Bible studies, now there are 20 Bible studies that meet weekly.

Joe Bowman, a member of Towering Oaks Baptist Church, Greenville, said he was blessed by the experience, which was his first international missions trip.

"It literally crushed my heart to see the devastation in Thailand."

What really got his attention were the smiles on the Thai people's faces. "It made me wonder about the pain that they must have been hiding deep inside. It made me want to tell them about Jesus even more.

"Seeing how other people live showed me how truly blessed I am. This mission trip helped me grow closer to the Lord and get a better perspective of what means the most to me.

"The Thai people wondered why we would travel so far to help them. But ... I found that



MARK STINETT and Joe Bowman paint the interior of a house built by volunteers for tsunami victims in Thailand. Stinnett is from Carthage and Bowman is from Greenville.

the time spent in travel was nothing compared to the blessing that I received."

Working March 21 - April 4 in a combined Middle/West Tennessee team were nine volunteers.

For two weeks the team painted five houses in the Baan Nam Khem area to help finish the work on the concrete homes, according to David Acres. Acres, who is state disaster relief director, Tennessee Baptist Convention, led the team.

"Things came together for us. We completely painted the homes from top to bottom. The people were already living in the houses. In fact, we had to move the homeowners' stuff and paint around the kids.

"The Thai people were so receptive to us and talked to us through their interpreters. The people wanted to interact with us, and they were appreciative of what we were doing."



HEADING OUT for work on an island by boat are several Baptist teams including Holston Baptist Association team members and other teams from Alabama and Mississippi.

Acres said the Tennesseans shared the gospel with Thai people, but nobody responded. Some of the team members also attended Bible studies which have started in the area, he added.

Acres noted that his team appreciated the work of the missionaries who organized and coordinated the work. "We knew what we were going to do on the mission trip."

Deb Lokey, team member of First Baptist Church, Columbia, said, "I knew ahead of time that the work would be very grueling with temperatures hovering daily at 100 degrees with high humidity," said Lokey. She went although she doesn't enjoy painting and only knew her sister on the team.

"But I soon found that I had many friends that I would soon count on while in Khao Lak."

When Lokey had a severe allergic reaction to a Thai salad she ate, she reported God protected her through a miracle. Her team members gave her several antihistamine pills and

prayed for her.

"When I finally regained my composure ... I knew that God had spared my life.

"It was not only my pleading with Him, but also the prayers of those sitting around me and those at home who had been praying for me that got me through it."

Serving April 16-29 also in Thailand were 10 volunteers from Holston Association, led by director of missions Tal Thompson.

The Tennessee team left Easter Sunday and returned April 29 from Khao Lak along with other teams from Alabama and Mississippi. They all worked in the Koh Kho fishing village on an island off Khao Lak where homes were destroyed by the tsunami. The Holston Association team painted 22 homes and shared the love of Jesus with the people there, according to Thompson.

Acres reported that at the end of April, the last Tennessee team requested for the construction project in Thailand had returned. □

Johnson City woman gives Tennessee WMU award-winning quilt

Baptist and Reflector

RENTWOOD — Glennie Googe of Johnson City donated an award-winning quilt to Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union recently. The quilt was made for and displayed at the 50th anniversary celebration of WMU in Richmond, Va., in May, 1988, where it received a recognition. She also provided the funds to make the quilt. It has been hanging on the wall outside the Tennessee WMU office located at the Tennessee Baptist Convention center here.

Googe is a member of South Baptist Church, Johnson City, who now lives in a nursing home. She served as chair of the WMU centennial committee in Holston Association 1987-88. She is a retired registered nurse and operating

room supervisor at Mountain Home Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Johnson City. She was one of five recipients of the GEICO Public Service Award for her volunteer work in 1997.

She retired from the V.A. in 1981 after 31 years of federal service. She used her nursing skills to benefit others in the community. Googe set up a hospital room in her home and many times brought friends or family members to recuperate there. She was known to make house calls to assist patients without accepting payment for her efforts.

Googe served seven years on the Advisory Board for Widowed Persons Services, an outreach program of AARP that trains volunteers in supporting newly widowed persons. She served as

the director of Widowed Persons Reach Out in Holston Association for several years. WPRO offers annual seminars on grief and recovery.

As a volunteer health history nurse, Googe worked 11 years with the American Red Cross Blood Services. She also served as nurse at the TBC's Camp Carson, Newport, for Girls in Action camp.

Candy Phillips, executive director-treasurer of Tennessee WMU, expressed appreciation for the generous gift of the centennial quilt. The anniversary of the founding of WMU is May 14. □



SHELBY LORD, left, Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union president of Lenoir City, stands with Candy Phillips, state WMU executive director-treasurer, by the quilt.

NAMB cancels contracts to renew Baptist trust

Associated Baptist Press

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — The North American Mission Board has canceled four controversial contracts initiated by former president Bob Reccord that critics said were wasting Southern Baptist missions money.

The cancellations, which reportedly will save millions of dollars, were among the steps reported to trustees May 2 in an attempt to rebuild the agency's credibility after Reccord resigned under pressure April 17.

During their recent meeting, trustees canceled consulting contracts with two public relations firms, ended NAMB's relationship with 316 Networks to sell broadband services to churches, and bought out of the contract for use of a private jet.

"We are not flying that plane anymore," Carlos Ferrer, interim chief operating officer, told trustees May 2, reflecting criticism directed at NAMB over the arrangement. "I want to be sure all of our supporters hear that loud and clear. We are not flying that plane anymore."

The contracts came to light during a trustee investigation of charges raised by the *Christian Index* newspaper. The 19-page investigation report, released March 23, eventually prompted Reccord's resignation after nine years at the helm of the Southern Baptist agency.

The report faulted the missions leader for poor management, autocratic decision-making, extravagant spending on failed ministry projects, apparent conflicts of interest in no-bid contracts for a friend, and creating a "culture of fear" that prevented staffers from questioning the abuses.

NAMB will end its relationship with InovaOne Aviation, immediately saving \$40,000 in unused pilot hours and aircraft maintenance. The agency was committed to a four-year contract with InovaOne, which is run by a friend of Reccord's, that obligated NAMB to purchase 45 flight hours annually for use of a corporate jet.

NAMB was only 18 months into that contract, which already had cost the agency \$142,000. Officials thought it was best to buy it out and not be liable for future expenses. Trustee Tim Patterson of Jacksonville, Fla., said he and others were not even aware that the agency had entered into such a relationship. NAMB said the agency was unable to resell the hours to another company.

NAMB will begin saving \$12,000 monthly through termination of its relationship with two public relations firms that were hired without trustee knowledge. The firms were asked to place Reccord on broadcast and cable TV shows and promote NAMB's disaster-relief work.

The agency already has a two-person public relations office at its Alpharetta, Ga., headquarters.

As of April 28, NAMB terminated its relationship with 316 Networks, a broadband Internet site that had cost the agency \$1.4 million but only generated \$30,000. Trustees said it would have cost an additional \$2 million, with little hope of ever becoming profitable.

"Employee morale at NAMB is improving," Ferrer told the trustees. "We need stability in our building so that our staff know they are valued, trusted, and that we care for them."

"Outside the board, we need credibility. We need to rebuild credibility with our state convention and association partners, with our missionaries, and with Southern Baptists," he said. "They need to know that we are trustworthy and will do what we say we will do. And we are committed to doing everything in our power to do that." □

GuideStone cancels SBC wellness event

GuideStone news office

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — The Living@YourBest Wellness Walk/Run scheduled to be held during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Greensboro, N.C. has been canceled for this year, but will resume at the convention to be held in San Antonio 2007.

"We are disappointed that we won't be able to hold the event this year," said GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins.

"However, with most of the

convention hotels located several miles from the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, we are concerned that the lack of transportation will prevent individuals from getting to the walk site on Tuesday morning and then back for scheduled convention meetings.

"Although we won't be having the walk this year, we encourage SBC attendees to take advantage of other health resources provided at the convention," Hawkins said. "GuideStone's Wellness Center offers a free, comprehensive health screening valued at over \$150 to all SBC attendees."

The Wellness Center will be located on the exhibit floor in the Coliseum Complex. Attendees can stop by during regular exhibit hours to receive their free health screening that includes a Heart Health Profile, blood pressure and cholesterol check, blood sugar check, body

mass index measurement for women, an osteoporosis screening.

As a provider of life health care coverage, Southern Baptist employment GuideStone has challenged Southern Baptists to responsibility for their health by getting regular health screenings, making healthful food choices, including regular physical activity in their everyday lives.

"Preventable diseases affect all of us directly or indirectly. Increased health care costs are a major concern in our medical plan rates," Hawkins said. "Conditions like heart disease and diabetes, many of which can be prevented or controlled by lifestyle changes, account for a significant portion of the prescription drug medical claims for GuideStone medical plan participants each year." □

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Women find 'New Beginnings' in Christian Women's Jobs Corps

Baptist and Reflector

MARYVILLE — The New Beginnings Christian Women's Jobs Corps celebrated the graduation of six women on Saturday, April 29 at Madison Avenue Baptist Church here. Tennessee State Representative Doug Overby offered words of encouragement and presented each graduate with a certificate from the State of Tennessee and a copy of the Tennessee Blue Book. Representatives from Gidday International also presented each graduate with a certificate. A reception followed. During the ceremony, several graduates shared their testimonies of how the New Beginnings CWJC program helped them. Graduate Rebecca Estes shared that as she nears 50

years of age, she can now add earning her GED to her list of accomplishments. Estes thanked CWJC for the encouragement and support that helped her achieve that goal. New Beginnings CWJC Executive Director Pat Thompson said that Estes showed up at a church prayer meeting one night. Her husband had left her with two teenage boys. She was struggling to keep her family together. She had lost her car, lost her job, and was feeling desperate. A woman at the prayer meeting told Rebecca about Christian Women's Job Corps and how the program could help her get back on her feet. Thompson said, "It's been a delight to watch Rebecca grow

emotionally stronger. She now believes she has value. The people in the community who knew her before cannot believe how her countenance has completely changed. It's exciting to see seeds of hope get planted in her heart." To graduate from New Beginnings CWJC a woman must attend the program for four months. During this time she attends classes, meets one-on-one with a mentor, sets goals, strives to meet those goals, and gives back to the community through community service. Each participant attends faith classes to help her strengthen her relationship with Christ, according to Thompson. The women also attend life skills classes such as setting healthy boundaries, money



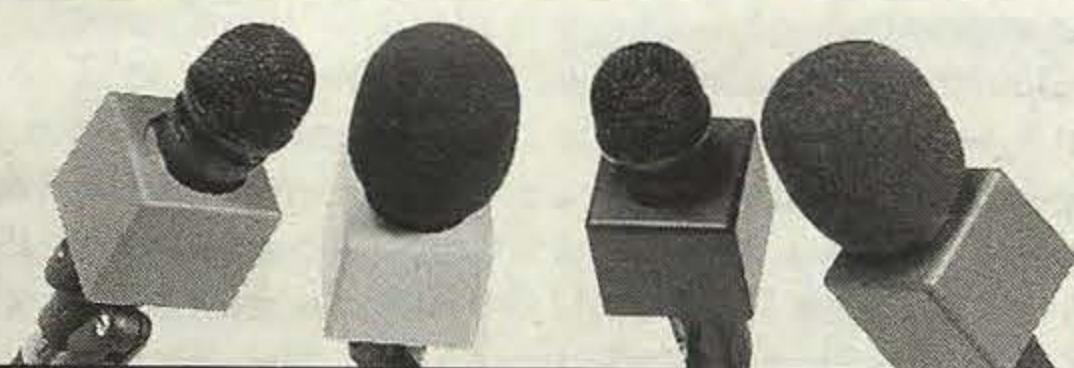
GRADUATES OF New Beginnings Christian Women's Jobs Corps in Maryville, from left, Patty Cooper, Liz Reagan, Rebecca Estes, Carla Pierce, are recognized for their efforts by state representative Doug Overby.

management, self-defense, priorities, and organizing. Participants also attend work skills classes such as computer skills, interviewing, resume

writing, office skills, and telephone etiquette, Thompson related. Participants are often encouraged to dress for class like they were going to the office, she added.

New Beginnings CWJC is located in the Joshua Resource Center at Broadway Baptist Church in Maryville.

For more information about New Beginnings CWJC contact Thompson at (865) 380-5370. □



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CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — MUSIC

Full-time minister of music and worship at Hope Valley Baptist Church (CBF/SBC), Durham, NC. Blended worship style including traditional and contemporary elements. Requires degree in music (seminary degree preferred) with experience in music ministry. Send resume and letter of interest by June 10 to HVBC Personnel Committee, 6900 Garrett Road, Durham, NC 27707, or submit to info@hvbc.org.



Church pianist/keyboardist needed at Fairfield Glade First Baptist Church, Fairfield Glade, Tenn. Proficiency in sight-reading, improvisation, and accompanying desired, with a primary focus on enhancing worship. Must be a Christian who is available every Sunday morning and evening, Wednesday evening, and for occasional special events/rehearsals. Please contact Rev. Eric Hinson @ (931) 200-4171.

MINISTRY — COMBINATION

First Baptist Church, Somerville, Tenn., is seeking a full-time minister to students & church activities director. Experience in a Southern Baptist church preferred. We are a growing church with 350-400 in worship. Job description available upon request. Interested applicants send resume to Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church 12685 South Main St., Somerville, TN 38068.

Floyd to be nominated for SBC presidency

Associated Baptist Press

SPRINGDALE, Ark. — Ronnie Floyd, pastor of the largest Southern Baptist church in Arkansas, will be nominated as president of the Southern Baptist Convention next month.

Georgia pastor Johnny Hunt, who until a week ago was the nominee favored by the SBC's conservative leaders, will instead nominate Floyd, whose candidacy was first reported in Associated Baptist Press May 5.

"As most would know, I had been asked to have my name placed for nomination as president," Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., said in a news release posted May 7 on the web site of Floyd's church, First Baptist of Springdale, Ark.

"In fact, at the Jacksonville pastors' conference [in February] the announcement was made," Hunt continued. However, "due to not getting the real peace I needed in my heart to do this," he said, he called Floyd to say with "an equal conviction that I believed he was the man God had raised up for such a time as this to lead Southern Baptists."

Hunt said Floyd "called me last Wednesday and informed me that he will humbly accept this nomination due to God speaking to him dramatically through Acts 16:6-10. He never sought it one moment, but was

drafted supernaturally to let me nominate him to be our next president."

This is the second time Hunt has stepped aside for another candidate. In 2004 he was in line to be elected president before current president Bobby Welch's nomination was announced. Hunt ultimately nominated Welch, the Florida pastor who concludes his second term this year.

Unlike most previous years, however, the leadership's candidate likely will face opposition from one or more other factions in the convention — most notably a loose-knit group of younger conservatives protesting what they call the leadership's narrow and exclusivist track record. The election is set for the first day of the June 13-14 convention in Greensboro, N.C.

The dark horse in this year's presidential election could be Wade Burleson, the International Mission Board trustee whose complaints about exclusionary IMB policies almost cost him his spot on the board.

Complicating the picture this year, a blue-ribbon SBC panel is calling for the election of officers who come from churches that contribute at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts to the denomination's central budget — a standard few recent presidents could meet.

First Baptist Church of Springdale reported \$221,000 in gifts to the SBC's Cooperative Program budget in 2005, representing 1.85 percent of undesignated receipts of \$11,952,137. However, the

church reported a total of \$489,862 given for all Southern Baptist causes, which would include special missions offerings, and more than \$2.6 million given to all world evangelism and mission causes.

Burleson's church would meet the 10 percent standard for SBC giving. Emmanuel Baptist Church gave \$105,000 to the Cooperative Program in 2005, representing 14 percent of undesignated receipts of \$750,000. □

Reinstated couple says IMB report not accurate

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS — Wyman and Michelle Dobbbs, the Southern Baptist missionaries recently threatened with termination by the International Mission Board and then reinstated, say the IMB's description of their reinstatement is "inaccurate and inappropriate."

The Dobbbses, missionaries for eight years to the Fulbe Fouta people in Guinea, West Africa, were cited for dismissal in mid-April because IMB leaders said the couple had failed adequately to follow guidelines for planting churches with non-Southern Baptist missionaries.

"If you read the IMB response to our reinstatement, you are led to believe that [we] were out of alignment but now agree to do better," the Dobbbses wrote in a letter posted May 6 on www.friesville.blogspot.com,

the weblog of seminary student Micah Fries.

"This is inaccurate and inappropriate and does not address the real problem of not holding leaders and trustees accountable for misrepresenting policy," they wrote.

An IMB news release May 2 said: "West Africa mission leadership came to an impasse with the Dobbbses in determining their commitment to the appropriate level of partnership and a clear commitment to planting indigenous Baptist churches. They recommended the couple resign or be terminated after the Dobbbses refused to follow the guidelines."

The release said Gordon Fort, the IMB vice president for overseas operations, agreed to reinstate the Dobbbses after meeting with the couple April 29. The news release added: "The Dobbbses told Fort they are committed to partnering appropriately within IMB guidelines for levels of mission partnership. In addition, they agreed to plant indigenous Baptist churches and said they would work under the authority of IMB leadership in West Africa and in harmony with leaders' policy decisions."

But the Dobbbses, in their May 6 letter, said they believe their termination was rescinded not because they recanted their beliefs but because it was determined that they had followed IMB policy all along.

"What was not reported is that we have always been committed to following policy," the letter said. "Returning to

Guinea means we would with the same [non-Southern Baptist missionaries] a tinue what we were before all this occurred.

For their part, IMB stuck by their initial Wendy Norvelle, a spokesperson, said she speak only to the fact the April 29 meeting, the ses "did agree" with IMB ers about the resolution conflict.

"Our understanding of our conversation with Dobbbses is that they stood the terms," Norvelle ABP. "We came to an ment." □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., is now ing resumes for the po full-time senior pastor. send resume to P.O. Box 100, Knoxville, TN 37938, or to pastorsearch@bdbc.org.

First Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor. Please send resume to First Baptist Church, 100 Chestnut St., Memphis, TN 38574. Post to the attention of Sonny Gilpatrick.

French Broad Baptist Church, Dandridge, Tenn., is seeking a pastor. Interested parties send resumes to French Broad Baptist Church, P.O. Box 100, Dandridge, TN 37725. Website is: www.frenchbroadbaptistchurch.org.

Bivocational pastor. If interested, please send resume to Search Committee, Vicksburg Baptist Church, 108 Commercial Ave., Vicksburg, MS 38574.

Full-time administrator/pastor: Please send resume to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 57, Campbell, AL 35581. mail, mooreescott@aol.com.

Parkview Baptist Church, Alexandria, La., seeks minister of education. resume to Minister of Education Search Committee, c/o Baptist Church, 2101 M Dr., Alexandria, LA 71301.

Church is seeking person to fill the full-time position of minister of childhood. Minimum of two years experience in full-time children's ministry and a degree required. Send resume to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, South Main Street, Boro, AR 72401.



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book review

John Ferguson

American Idols: The Worship of the American Dream

by Bob Hostetler

Broadman & Holman, 2006

er wonder if the first commandment — “You have no other gods before Me” — is the number one commandment for a reason? Are the gods we worship today any different from those of silver and gold depicted in the Old Testament?

Author Bob Hostetler believes our gods may be subtle and therefore, harder to identify. “The purpose of this book,” he writes, “is to help you recognize and overcome the idols you worship Our American idols may be harder to recognize than the tip of a stone idol. They may also be harder to corrupt. But they are attitudes and lifestyles that are impositions to God, and if we don’t do something about them, they will corrupt and devastate us just as they did the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai.”

He identifies 14 idols by Hostetler are: consumerism; naturalism; individualism; celebrity; gratification; humanism; experience; success; sexuality; sexual freedom; choice; appearance; commonness; and busyness.

Is busyness an idol? How can that be? Hostetler argues that if we’re busy for the wrong reasons, we’re making busyness an idol. Our society judges our worth by our busyness. So we have this false sense of importance, based on the fact that we’re busy. In addition to being busy because it makes us seem important, “Many of us are busy because we don’t have God. The rest of us are busy because we don’t have God.” We should instead find our significance in our service to Him, says the Ohio pastor and author.

Is instant gratification an idol? Hostetler cites a study where preschoolers were given the choice of having one marshmallow now or waiting 15 minutes to receive two. Most of the children decided to take the one now. Researchers followed these children for a year and found that those who waited were happier and more successful as teens. “They were less prone to react to peer pressure, less likely to panic under stress. They tended to be more self-reliant, confident, and trustworthy.”

Two years ago, *Entrepreneur Magazine* named instant gratification the idol of our society. Hostetler points out that he believes it’s “no coincidence that temptations in the wilderness were all temptations to instant gratification.”

But choice as an idol? Choice has become our god in America. It’s something people are willing to fight for, or even die for. We have adopted a “let live” mentality. Hostetler believes that to the extent we adopt this philosophy toward right and wrong, “we are worshiping the false god of choice. If we are inured to such things as obscenity, profanity, pornography, abortion, and prostitution because ‘people should be free to choose’ such things, we are bowing to the god of choice. If we accept our culture’s view that ‘all choices are created equal’ — that right for me isn’t necessarily right for you — we are putting choice above Adonai our God.”

Hostetler has written a very thought-provoking book. You may not agree with everything he identifies as idols. In the right amount, for the right reasons, with the right attitude, these things do not have to be idols.

When they become obsessions — at least to the extent where they may be separating you from God — they become idols. And the only way to rid our lives of idols is to identify them, repent, pray, and discipline ourselves. To that extent, Hostetler’s book is an excellent read! □ — Ferguson is correspondent for the *And Reflector*.

Lydia: willing service

By Phil Taylor

Focal Passage: Acts 16:11-15, 40; Philippians 1:3-11

The story of Lydia’s conversion is contained in two verses only — Acts 16:14-15. It is told with simplicity, and there is a sublime beauty about it. Paul evidently felt just as happy in ministering to a few God-fearing women as to a great crowd in the synagogue. In all probability there would have been no synagogue in Philippi, a Gentile city, so here by the riverside at Philippi these women met for prayer at regular times.

Paul recognized a God-given opportunity for preaching the gospel to them. One of these women who met for prayer was Lydia; of her we read, “whose heart the Lord opened.”

When the jailer was converted there was an earthquake; when Lydia came to know the Lord it was a silent, unemotional movement of the Holy Spirit in her heart.

God works very differently with different kinds of people. He understands our background and our temperament, and He knows just how to meet our deep need and the way to approach us in our need. Some people are suddenly connected, others come gradually; some come publicly and some privately; some come with great emotion and others without much emotion.

Though Lydia was a very obscure and humble woman, it was

through her opened heart that God passed into Europe. She was a native of Thyatira and a seller of purple. She was a businesswoman, but her name would not have hit the headlines in Holy Scripture had it not been for God’s gracious dealings with her.

God delights to choose ordinary people and use them for His glory. The significant thing for us to notice here is that when God wanted to enter into a new continent so that multitudes of people in that continent might be saved, He chose Lydia as the channel through whom He would work — just as He chose Carey when He wanted the message of the gospel in India, or Livingston when He wanted to demonstrate His power in Africa.

Think what God can do through one life when He gains complete control of it! Think what God can do through your life if it is fully yielded to Him!

Lydia’s testimony was blessed to those in her own home. Lydia lost no time in confessing her Lord and we see that by her baptism. She was not the only one to be baptized. The members of her household were baptized also — which means, of course, that they also believed on the Lord Jesus and their hearts were opened to receive Him as their Savior, and thus they confessed Him openly by baptism.

In Psalm 68:6 we read, *God setteth the solitary in families*. What does this mean? Lydia is an exam-

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ple of this statement. God saved Lydia, and through her the members of her household came to know the Lord. This is His plan and intention in saving you — that through you, those who are loved by you and known by you should hear and receive the gospel.

Lydia’s faith showed itself in good works. She was not saved by good works, because no one is saved in that way. It is true, however, that faith without works is dead and where there is true faith there will be works to demonstrate the reality of that faith. Lydia’s open home was the evidence of her opened heart. She was quick to show hospitality to the missionaries. According to Luke, she “begged” them to be her guest (v. 15).

Lydia’s one desire was to be faithful to her Lord. This is clearly stated in verse 15. She longed to be true to the one who had done so much for her. Is this our consuming desire — just to be faithful to Him, at all costs? □ — Taylor is director of missions for Bradley County Baptist Association, headquartered in Cleveland.



TAYLOR

Get real

By Marvin Nail

Focal Passage: Isaiah 58:1-6; Micah 6:6-8

Most forms of worship described in the Bible had good beginnings. They were intended to draw our attention to God. But like most of the things we do as believers, they soon turned to drawing God’s attention to us. Through our singing and praying and even fasting, we strive to show God and others how devout we are and how deserving we are of His favor and blessing.

We, as worshipers, become the center of things. We put on a show that pleases us and makes us feel better about ourselves. Sometimes our antics are little different than those who dance feverishly or beat themselves in attempts to gain the attention of the Almighty.

Though our worship has many differences from that described and even prescribed in the Bible, we still need to be reminded of why we are called upon to come into His house.

It’s not about me
(Isaiah 58:3-5)

Isaiah pointed to the basic problem with the worship of the exiles. They were doing things that could have been worshipful; but their goal was to draw God’s attention to their plight and show themselves more worthy than their captors.

They did some very good religious things, at least when they came to the synagogues; but their religion did not get far beyond

those doors. They were mistreating those who worked for them. They seemed to be carrying on their pious acts in an effort to distract from their misdeeds.

Through the prophet, God asks them to judge if what they are doing is right. He shines the light of His holiness on their worship and demands that they see it for what it really is.



NAIL

It is about others (58:6-12; Micah 6:8)

Many of the evangelistic denominations, including Baptists, went through a time in the early part of the 20th century when they turned their backs on what they called the “social gospel” and directed all their energies to the saving of lost souls. Only recently have many begun to catch the teaching of Scripture about true religion.

Almost overnight, though after far too long, we have again discovered that our faith manifests itself in service to God and others.

The self-denial called for in a fast was for the larger purpose of turning our hearts away from our own desires.

One of the ways the prophets could always tell when the people had turned away from true faith was when those in need were being neglected in the midst of their religious piety.

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It is about God
(Isaiah 58:13-14)

Our worship and any other religious activity always begins with God and our love for Him. Everything else we do is built on that. We have the strong assurance from His Word, as well as from experience, that God is blessed by our service that draws us away from ourselves. In the process we find a blessing always comes back to us.

We have always known this and seen it in our lives. We get the greatest joy in life when we become other-centered. As the prophet says: “If you draw out your soul to the hungry . . . then shall your light rise.”

We tell ourselves often that the things we have are not the most important things in our lives. And yet, our prayers often reflect a different mind-set that exposes what we truly are.

The Bible tells us that the reason we do not get what we want in prayer is because we ask for the wrong things. When we seek His glory and the betterment of those around us we will find ourselves blessed beyond all measure. □ — Nail is a former pastor and current member of First Baptist Church, Nashville. He is an employee of LifeWay Christian Resources.

Leaders

◆ **Unaka Avenue Baptist Church, Johnson City**, has called **Wayne Miller** as its youth director. It was incorrectly reported in last week's paper that he was called to Unaka Baptist Church, Elizabethton.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Elizabethton**, has called **Tim Smith** as minister of music and seniors.

◆ **New Zion Baptist Church, Athens**, recently called **Michael Coleman** as pastor.

◆ **Bill Williamson**, Nashville Baptist Association recreation director, recently retired after 21 years of service. He was formerly pastor of Neely's Bend Baptist Church, Madison. **John Yancey**, pastor of Hope Christian Fellowship Church, Nashville, has agreed to serve in the role.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Baileyton**, has called **Robert Lutz** as pastor. He is a graduate of the University of South Alabama, Mobile, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Churches

◆ **Bordeaux Baptist Church, Nashville**, will hold a revival May 24-26 at 7 p.m. with Dan Guider of Atlanta as speaker. The church also will hold a cookout and singing June 27 at 6 p.m. For information call (615) 255-3395 or (615) 384-6343.

◆ **Center Hill Baptist Church, Michie**, will hold a revival June 18-21 at 7 p.m. Kenny Digby, director of missions, Alcorn Baptist Association, Corinth, Miss., will speak.

◆ **River Rock Baptist Church, Murfreesboro**, will host the **Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova**, Middle School Choir May 31 at 6:30 p.m. The 60-member choir is under the direction of Ken Wright. Admission is free to the concert. For information, contact River Rock Church at (615) 898-1239.

◆ **Round Lick Baptist Church, Watertown**, will hold a revival May 21-23 with evangelist Willie Rains of Atlanta, Ga., as speaker. Rains is a member of the Power Team.

◆ **Calvary Baptist Church, Elizabethton**, will host a Women's Ministry Spring Luncheon May 20 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Rhonda DeVoe will speak. DeVoe and her husband, who is pastor of First Baptist Church, Roan

Mountain, served as International Mission Board missionaries in Caracas, Venezuela.

◆ **Fordtown Baptist Church, Kingsport**, recently sent nine construction volunteers to Bay Vista Baptist Church, Biloxi, Miss., where they gutted homes, cleaned out debris, and worked on homes which were damaged by last fall's Gulf Coast hurricanes.

◆ **Calvary Baptist Church, Shelbyville**, will host the **New Duck River Baptist Association** "Highways and Byways" outreach event May 20 at 9:45 a.m. Volunteers will visit residents and invite them to association churches. Materials will be provided by Calvary Church. For information, contact Jeff Haynes at (931) 695-5726 or (931) 607-6255.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Nolensville**, will hold a Youth-Led Revival May 19-20 with Don Dewey as speaker. For information, contact Lowell Thompson, associate pastor, at (615) 945-4352.

Associations

◆ **Nashville Baptist Association** churches will host over 300 World Changers July 23-28 in the metro area. Churches are needed to host work crews for worship and lunch July 23 and for daily lunches at the work sites. To host a team, call the NBA office at (615) 259-3034.

◆ **Hale Community Ministries of Watauga Baptist Association, Elizabethton**, needs additional volunteers for June Backyard Bible Clubs at Roan Mountain State Park, Roan Mountain. Contact Becky Brumitt, director of church and community ministries, at (423) 727-1521 to serve. The ministry also has begun a weekly Monday night worship service in Elizabethton at 6 p.m. It is being led by Alan Koch, pastor, Cobbs Creek Baptist Church, Butler.

Partnership Missions

◆ **Belmont University, Nashville**, sent a sports evangelism basketball team May 15-26 to Venezuela as part of the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnerships. The team was led by Belmont professor of athletics Betty Wiseman.

◆ **Alpha Baptist Church, Morristown**, is sending a 25-

member Bells of Praise and Praise Team to Porto, Portugal, May 26 - June 3. The team will be a part of the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnerships.

◆ **Willie McLauren** of the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff led an April 11-20 mission trip to Burkina Faso, Africa, as part of the 25th Anniversary Celebration of TBC Partnerships. McLauren and his team of three volunteers visited several mission sites started by Tennessee Baptists in the 1980s.

◆ **Bill Northcott** of the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff led three breakout sessions at the annual evangelism conference of the Iowa Baptist Convention March 30 - April 1. He was supporting the the Tennessee/Iowa Baptist Partnership. The meeting was held in Des Moines. Northcott taught "Early Warning Signs of Conflict"; "The Levels of Conflict"; and "How to Handle Conflict Positively."

◆ **Knox County Baptist Association, Knoxville**, will host mission teams from Metro Baptist Association, Des Moines, Iowa, this summer to support the



HONORED FOR THEIR tenure as Tennessee Baptist Convention staff members by the TBC Executive Board on May 9 at the center in Brentwood were, from left, Mary Nimmo, 15 years, and Reflector; Charles Nored, 25 years, collegiate minister, State Community College, Tullahoma; and Bill George, 10 West Tennessee church planting strategist.

Tennessee/Iowa Baptist Partnership. The Iowa teams will be led by John Shaull, director of missions, Metro Association. Knox County Association has had a partnership agreement with Metro Association, since 2001.

◆ Both Tennessee Baptist Convention volunteer missions partnerships to Iowa and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, have been extended, according to Kim Margrave of the TBC staff. The **Iowa partnership** has been extended to 2010, and **Rio partnership** has

been extended to 2008.

◆ **Kim Margrave** Tennessee Baptist Convention staff along with 11 volunteers recently returned from Montana on the Lostness Tour to support Tennessee/Montana Partnership. The arrived in Billings, April 24 for orientation. During the week they broke into smaller areas in the Big Sky Association and the lowstone Baptist Association. They returned home April



REPRESENTATIVES of the churches participating in the first Spring Fellowship of Oak City Church, Seymour, on April 22 are, from left, first row, Thomas McCarter; Bill Stephens, pastor, Creek Baptist Church, Sevierville; Billy Whaley; and Thomas and Carla McMillan; back row, Miller; David McCarter; Tim Fleeger, pastor, Oak City Baptist Church, Seymour; Danny Jett; and L. Parton, pastor, Knob Creek Baptist Church, Seymour. In addition to Knob Creek Church and Creek Church, Grace Baptist Church, Seymour, participated. The event drew 260 people. A included music and children's activities.



ABOUT 49 TENNESSEE directors of missions gathered for the annual Tennessee Baptist Convention annual DOM retreat May 3-5 at Pigeon Forge. Thirty-one wives of the DOMs also attended the Speaking is Roger "Sing" Oldham, pastor, First Baptist Church, Martin. The DOMs elected officers. They are, Roy Davis, Cumberland Plateau Baptist Association, Crossville, president; DeZearn, Jefferson County Baptist Association, Jefferson City, vice president; and Mike Midland/Northern Baptist Association, Maynardville, secretary/treasurer. — Photo by Mike Th