

Baptist & Reflector

Statewide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

Vol. 172 / No. 29; Aug. 9, 2006

this week's news

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TBC CP gifts dip in July

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Cooperative Program gifts from Tennessee Baptist Convention churches dipped sharply in July.

TBC churches gave \$2,335,883 in July. For the year to date, Tennessee Baptists have given a total of \$26,911,326 through the Cooperative Program.

The amount is \$217,724 over the amount given at the same time last year, but is \$619,998 or 2.25 percent below budget needs after nine months of the current fiscal year.

Part of the reason for the decrease is the way the month ended, explained TBC Executive Director James Porch.

Funds given by church members on July 30 for the CP will not be received until August, Porch noted.

"We are confident we will have a strong CP month in August as Tennessee Baptists strive to meet ministry and mission needs not only in our state, but around our nation and world," Porch said. □

For Baptist Health System of East Tenn.

Executive Board approves partnership

Editor's Note: The portion of the special called meeting of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention involving discussion of the partnership between Baptist Health System of East Tennessee and Triad Hospitals, Inc., was held in executive session, meaning *Baptist and Reflector* staff were not allowed to be in the meeting. Information for this portion of the story was gathered from a handout provided to the Executive Board, the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, previous stories, and James Porch, TBC executive director.

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention unanimously approved a new partnership between Baptist Health System of East Tennessee and Triad Hospitals, Inc., during a called meeting Aug. 1 at the Baptist Center here.

The board also was given an update by the special study committee dealing with the Belmont University issue.

Board members voted 73-0 in a ballot vote to accept the BHSET's request to enter into partnership with the Texas-based company. Earlier the hospital's board of trustees also unanimously voted to accept the proposal.

The partnership must still receive approval from the state attorney general before it becomes official.

The new partnership is a joint venture, not a sale. Triad will have 80 percent ownership and Baptist will retain 20 percent in the new company. Baptist and Triad will share 50/50

governance of the new company, which will retain the Baptist name.

BHSET CEO Warren Payne told hospital employees in an e-mail following TBC approval that "this was an important step in our process to complete this partnership," according to the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*.

"The TBC was very pleased with our efforts to keep them informed of our process and I believe this was reflected in the vote today," Payne noted.

At the May 9 special called meeting of the convention, messengers authorized and approved the TBC Executive Board "to carry out all rights, powers, actions, and remedies of the convention with respect to Baptist Health System of East Tennessee."

The resolution adopted by the Executive Board on Aug. 1 noted that "it is in the best interest of BHSET, its affiliates, and the TBC for BHSET to enter into the proposed transaction with Triad and now desires to ratify, approve, and confirm that proposed transaction."

Under the partnership, Triad assumes the health system's nearly \$220 million in debt. Triad also will give physicians an opportunity for ownership in the new company.

During the past three years the hospital system has lost \$36 million after interest and depreciation.

According to the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, Triad currently operates 51 hospitals and two ambulatory surgery centers in 16 states with approximately 9,300 licensed beds.

The TBC will continue to elect the board of the Baptist

Health System of East Tennessee. That board, in turn, will appoint 50 percent of the boards of trustees of the individual hospitals of the system.

The four hospitals in the system include Baptist Hospital of East Tennessee, Baptist Hospital West, and Baptist Hospital for Women, all in Knoxville, and Baptist Hospital of Cocke County in Newport.

TBC Executive Director James Porch observed the unanimous vote was "unusual," but said he felt it reflected the hard work and quality presentation of hospital officials.

"Under the circumstances, we feel like this is a win-win situation," Porch said. "We feel this is a wise, new relationship by the hospital."

Porch applauded the "efforts of the BHSET trustees."

"We witnessed the right way to respond to a critical and challenging matter with the practice of quality Christian ethics," Porch said. "I also believe most Tennessee Baptists appreciate the fact that the board of BHSET consistently and fervently considered the concerns of the entire Tennessee Baptist family."

Belmont update

Clay Austin, president of the Executive Board and chairman of the Belmont Study Commit-

tee, updated board members on progress since the May 9 called meeting of the convention.

The committee, which was expanded by seven members per action at the May meeting, has met twice, Austin said.

"The bottom line" for the two meetings, Austin said, "was to get seven more members to where the previous members were."

Austin said he is hopeful the committee will convene in August with Belmont representatives for a "we are all part of the same family, let's talk again" kind of meeting.

Phil Jett, TBC president and committee member, urged the board to pray for the committee and to offer encouragement.

"This is a process that is very delicate. There will be no winners in the process that I can see," he said.

Austin agreed. "This is not going to be a win situation. It is damage control." He noted the convention empowered the committee to deal with the Belmont matter. "They are doing it in prayer, seeking God's will."

Porch encouraged the entire board to help provide "damage control. It is a shared burden," he said.

Porch observed that when the matter "has passed," everyone will have to answer the question, "How did I help us get through?"

The TBC leader said he will not allow the Belmont matter to "be the defining season of our life as Tennessee Baptists in the kingdom of God."

"God has much more for us ahead than this season we are moving through. I believe He will bring us through," Porch told board members. □



AUSTIN



PORCH

Christians shouldn't drink alcohol, B&R readers agree

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The response to the first online survey sponsored by the *Baptist and Reflector* has been overwhelming, according to Lonnie Wilkey, editor.

In the July 26 issue, the paper ran an article entitled "Baptist debate over alcohol consumption continues." In conjunction with the article, readers were given an opportunity to answer the question "Should Christians abstain from alcohol?"

Approximately 36 readers

responded to the online survey, Wilkey said. In addition, several other responses were received.

Wilkey said the online response is significant because "there may be weeks where we do not receive any submissions for 'letters to the editor.'"

The web site provided a quick, easy method for Tennessee Baptists to share their views on a timely topic, Wilkey said. He noted the paper will consider additional topics in the future for online responses.

By a margin of five to one readers overwhelmingly agreed

Christians should abstain from alcohol. Even among those who voted to abstain, there was not a consensus that drinking alcohol is a "sin" or that it is forbidden by the Bible.

One reader wrote, "While I do not believe alcohol drank in moderation is prohibited in the Bible, I feel we as Christians must not do anything that would cause anyone to fall into sin."

"Causing a brother to stumble" was cited by many readers as a reason for Christians not to drink. Other reasons cited

included alcohol leads to addiction and abusive situations within families.

Readers who feel it is all right for Christians to drink emphasized the Bible speaks against drunkenness, not drinking. One reader wrote, "Every drunk drinks alcohol, however, not everyone who drinks alcohol is a drunk."

Many of the responses are printed on pages four and five of this issue. These and other responses will be posted on the *Baptist and Reflector* page at www.tnbaptist.org. □

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Polls shows Tenn. residents favor amendment

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — New polls show constitutional marriage amendments in Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin are favored to pass this November, while an amendment in South Dakota is trailing in voter approval.

A Mason-Dixon poll of 642 likely voters in Tennessee discovered that 76 percent say they back a proposed marriage amendment, while 15 percent oppose it.

In Virginia, 56 percent of likely voters say they support the state's proposed amendment, while 38 percent are opposed.

In Wisconsin, 52.5 percent of adults said they favor the proposed amendment, while

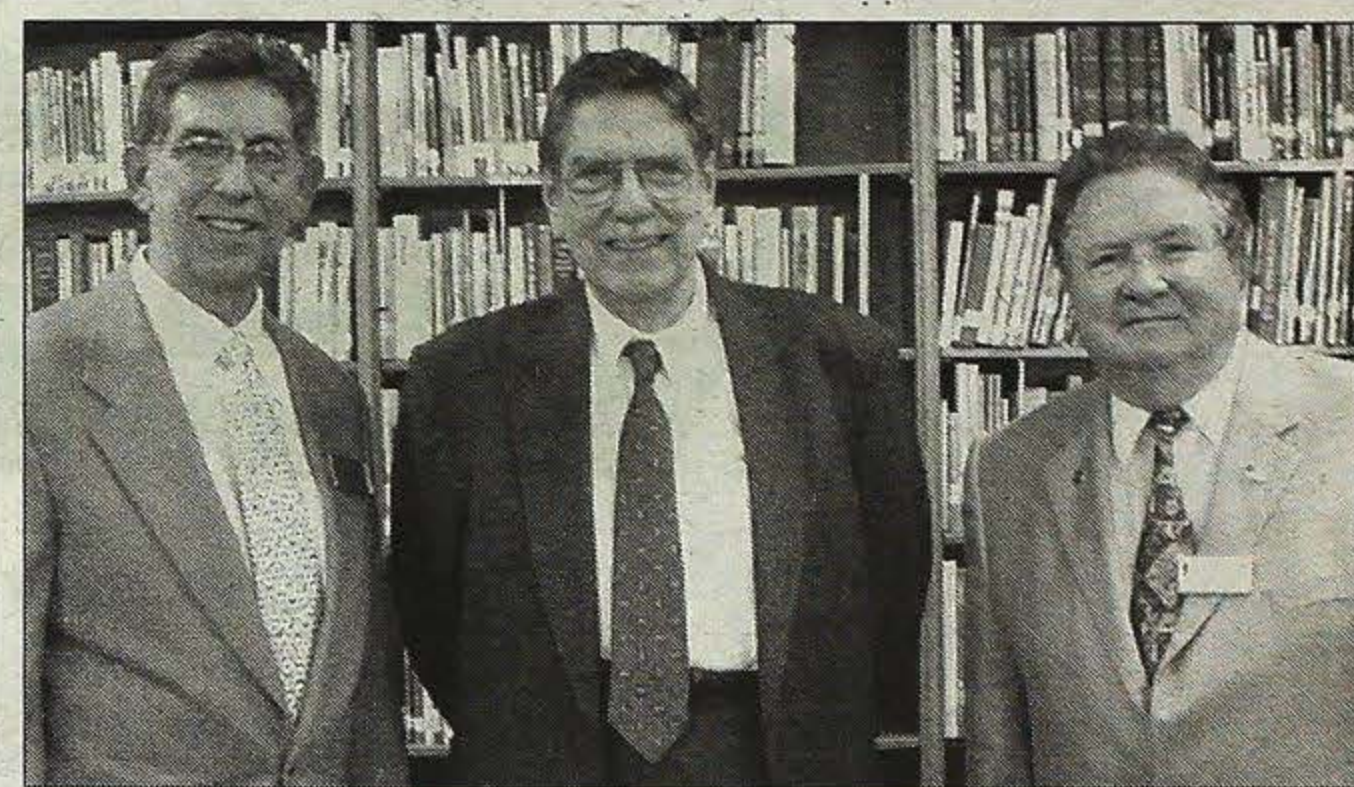
43.8 percent voiced opposition. The sample in Wisconsin was of adults and not of likely or registered voters.

In South Dakota, considered to be a conservative state, 49 percent of those questioned oppose the amendment while 41 percent said they favored it. The Mason-Dixon poll in South Dakota was conducted for the *Argus Leader* newspaper and KELO-TV.

The amendments in each of the states are aimed at prohibiting state courts from following the lead of the highest court in Massachusetts in legalizing "gay marriage."

Voters in 20 states have adopted marriage amendments, and so far, none of the votes have been close, passing by an average of 71 percent.

The tightest vote was in Oregon, where 57 percent of the voters approved that state's amendment in 2004. □



Academy receives \$150,000 grant

Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy in Seymour has been given a \$150,000 grant from the Richard D. VanLunen Foundation of Columbia, Md., to establish a development office. The grant is to be used over a two-year period to hire a development director and organize the academy's advancement and fundraising program. At the present time all fundraising activities are coordinated in the president's office. Approximately one-fourth of the school's operating budget is in the form of gifts from churches, alumni, and friends. The new office will be charged with expanding the academy's support base. James Ellis, center, a trustee with the VanLunen Foundation recently presented the grant to Walter Grubb, left, academy president, and Carroll Reagan, chairman of the HCBA trustee board.

Struggling to live at Vanderbilt Hospital

Seminary couple proceeds with baby adoption plans

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Randy and Delia Burns had dreamed of adopting a baby even before they were married seven years ago, and they encountered the perfect opportunity to give a child a home when they met a 17-year-old girl from Guatemala who had been raped and did not have the means to care for the baby she was expecting.

Delia Burns, who translates for Hispanic patients at the local health department in Morgantown, Ky., had been in the habit of somewhat jokingly telling expectant mothers that she and her husband would be glad to take their babies if they decided they did not want them.

When the Guatemalan girl came into the health department in the spring, Randy, pastor of Monticello Baptist Church in Kentucky and a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, just happened to be there visiting his wife. The girl, whose name has been withheld, and her boyfriend mentioned that they were considering putting the child up for adoption, and Randy and Delia listened intently.

"When she left, Randy said he wasn't going to get his hopes up and we'd just have to wait and see," Delia recounted to Baptist Press about the prospects of adopting the girl's child.

Months passed and Randy and Delia further investigated the option of adopting the baby, when suddenly something went wrong. Delia received a call from the boyfriend on Saturday, June 24, saying some plastic tubes had fallen and hit the expectant mother in the stomach while she was at work.

"He said she didn't fall or anything, they just kind of hit her. He said, 'This morning she woke up at 6 with pain every five minutes,'" Delia recounted.

At a hospital in nearby Bowling Green, Ky., doctors discovered through an ultrasound that the girl was lacking a significant amount of amniotic fluid, though the baby was seeking refuge in the part of the womb that held the most fluid.

The girl was rushed to Vanderbilt Children's Hospital in Nashville, where doctors tried to delay labor because she was only 20 weeks along and they feared the baby would

not have developed fully. Randy and Delia had driven the boyfriend down to Nashville, but they needed to return to Monticello for church the next morning.

After church, the couple received a message from a doctor saying the girl was going to deliver the baby, so they rushed back to the hospital just in time for the birth. The girl gave permission for Randy and Delia to be in the delivery room, and Delia helped her through the process.

Doctors soon realized that the baby, Elena Grace, did not have working kidneys and her lungs had not fully developed. They told Randy and Delia that the baby, who they already considered their daughter, would not live much more than a week. She weighed only 3 pounds and 13 ounces at birth.

An option was to put the baby on dialysis and a respirator, but at least one doctor was against it.

"He said, 'It's going to be too much pain and a lot of work,'" Delia said. "I was like, 'If I had given birth and the baby was sick, I couldn't just let her die. I couldn't say, 'Here, put her to the side and let me try again.'"

"I said, 'God has blessed us with her, and if we do nothing, then we have failed. But if we try everything and just leave it in God's hands, then He will help us through this,'" Delia said. "And I said, 'No matter what happens, we will walk out of this hospital. If God chooses to use you doctors to help our daughter, then He will. And if He chooses to take her home, no matter what, we'll walk out of this hospital with grace.'"

Randy said doctors took Elena Grace off the respirator about a week after she was born, and she did well. "Her lungs were beginning to grow and she wasn't requiring the assistance of the respirator, so they were shocked by that," he said.

On July 7, doctors performed surgery on the baby to insert a catheter in order to give her fluids to help clean the toxins from her body as a result of her failed kidneys.

"Right now, they're saying she'll be on dialysis until they can get her a kidney transplant, and she has to be about 20 pounds before they can put her on the transplant list," Randy said, adding that the fluids alter her actual weight but they think she weighs about 5 pounds.

Randy and Delia — both in their 30s —

are taking the trial one step at a time, fully intent on making Elena Grace officially their daughter as the adoption process is ongoing. The birth mother likely will play a role in the baby's life, Delia said, and she has been to visit the baby a few times.

"I told her that we still wanted the baby, but if she changed her mind, no matter how hard it would be on us, God would take care of us," Delia said. "She said that she knew she couldn't take care of her even if she was healthy because she didn't have the means. I told her that no matter what, we will take care of her and love her."

Ken Hemphill, national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth initiative, said the ordeal is "a moving story about the value of human life." Randy was scheduled to take a class at Southern Seminary that Hemphill was teaching in June, but he had to drop the class in order to care for Elena Grace in Nashville.

"Our class prayed for them daily and anxiously awaited the news," Hemphill told BP. "The early news was discouraging and prayers flowed. I think I was most impressed by Randy and Delia's love for this little child who the doctors gave little chance of surviving. When the child was born prematurely with multiple complications, they asked us not only to pray for her survival, but also for the adoption process."

"I remember what it was like to be a seminary student," Hemphill added. "I knew they probably had barely enough money to keep up with seminary expenses. This young couple had such a passion for life and this child they were willing to adopt even in the circumstances."

Randy said he has already learned some major life lessons from just a few weeks of fighting for Elena Grace's life.

"We got to be in the room when she was born, and we both just knew when we saw her that she was our daughter and that her life was worth fighting for," he told BP. "I've been asking myself that same question, 'Why is this important?' I guess at that moment, the idea of sanctity of life stopped being theoretical and started being personal. I believe that every life is sacred, but when it was my little girl, I knew I would do anything I could to see her have a chance at life." □

Facing Life's Challenges

Former college history professor turns caregiver

By Linda Lawson
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Lucile and Albert Wardin had been married 30 years in 1999 when she began showing signs of dementia.

Since then, the former Belmont University dean, wife, hostess, and Bible teacher has lost the ability to communicate. She can read aloud but doesn't remember what she has read. She requires help with dressing and eating.

Albert Wardin, who taught history at Belmont for 26 years before retiring in 1993, had never cooked, cleaned, done the laundry, or cared for the personal needs of his wife. She had always managed the home while he took care of the yard and the cars.

While they have the resources to place Mrs. Wardin in a nursing facility, her husband has chosen to care for her at home, a daunting task that has required him to learn new skills such as cooking, sewing on buttons, cleaning house, and even putting makeup on his wife before they go out.

He does these and many other tasks with love and gratitude for the strength to carry them out. He knows the time may come when Mrs. Wardin will require care only available in a nursing home, but, for now, home is where he wants them to be.

Wardin is grateful for small things. Mrs. Wardin is pleasant. She recognizes him. She smiles. When he places her in a chair, she is content to stay even when he leaves the room or the house. This allows him to leave home for a few hours to run errands or to attend meetings of organizations in which he continues to be active.

In a devotional he gave in his Sunday School department at First Baptist Church, Nashville, a few months ago, Wardin said the tragedy of dementia is that "it takes away the personality of your spouse."

"So we could be like Job's wife and say, 'Curse God and die,'" Wardin said in his devotional.

"I would never have such a thought in my mind," he said.

Normal routine

Instead, Wardin set out to give his wife what he terms "as normal a rou-

tine as possible in an abnormal situation."

He takes Mrs. Wardin for a walk every morning except Sunday. He takes her to get her hair done. They go out to eat one or more times each week. They attend Sunday School and worship each Sunday and prayer meeting and supper most Wednesdays.

"I think it is important that she go to the Sunday School class because she sees friends she would not otherwise see. That stimulates her," Wardin said. "Also, she is able to pick up the hymns in the service. She can still sing the old hymns. That, I think, is helpful."

He tries to anticipate the tasks Mrs. Wardin can do — like applying her own lipstick and opening the door after their walks — and allow her to complete them.

When they have their morning devotional, he has Mrs. Wardin read it aloud. If he is fixing a fruit salad, he hands her an apple and she peels it. When he washes dishes, he helps her to dry them.

And he does all these things with love and tender kisses.

Caring for the caregiver

Wardin recognizes that, in addition to caring for his wife, he must give attention to his own needs to maintain his health and strength. Occasionally, he leaves town to visit family or attend a conference. During these short trips he places Mrs. Wardin in a nursing home.

In addition to his daily walk with Mrs. Wardin, he takes an extra walk by himself. He tries to eat sensibly. He works at his computer and in his 7,500-volume library. He continues to do historical research and writing, having recently completed and presented a paper at the International Conference on Baptist Studies on "The Penetration of Baptists into the Russian Empire."

The author of the history of Tennessee Baptists continues to be active in organizations such as the Tennessee Baptist Historical Society, Friends of American Baptist College, Friends of the Mill Creek Baptist Church Graveyard, and Belmont Mansion Association.

Attitude of gratitude

How can Wardin, now in his seventh



ALBERT WARDIN learned to cook, do laundry, and a variety of other chores in order to care for his wife, Lucile.

year of caring for his wife, persevere?

He believes attitude is the critical factor.

"When I gave that devotional in the Sunday School department, I took that (Bible) verse, 'In everything give thanks' (I Thessalonians 5:18). I raised the question, 'How can I give thanks? Can I give thanks for my wife's condition?'"

"I don't think the Lord expects us to give thanks for the tragedies of life. When you have such a devastating, tragic illness as this, do you give thanks for that?" Wardin asked.

"My attitude is this: I am thankful for what I do have and not what I don't have," he said. "Therefore, I am very thankful that I did have 30 years of wonderful married life. I am thankful that she still recognizes me, to a degree. She still responds to me. I'm so thankful I still have her."

Wardin also is thankful for a friendship that began on the Shanghai waterfront in China in 1985. He and Mrs. Wardin had been listening to some young people practicing their English.

He was looking for street signs so he could find his way to the International Book Store when a young man approached and asked, "May I help you?"

The young man, Qin Bin Lin, took the Wardins to the store, and then they went to the Wardins' hotel for further conversation that continued with long distance correspondence. Qin Bin Lin became in 1987 the first recipient of a scholarship to Belmont established by the Wardins for international students. He now owns a restaurant in Nashville and his son, Qin Ke, is working on an MBA degree at Belmont.

"And so we have a Chinese family here who would do anything for us," Wardin said. "We didn't know in 1985 what was down the line for us. Maybe the Lord knew what was going to happen. Was it coincidental that he asked me, 'May I help you?' or was it providential?"

To others who may be contemplating a decision regarding the care of a loved one, Wardin emphasizes every situation is different and circumstances require making different choices.

"First of all, as much as possible, try to develop as much of a normal lifestyle as close as possible to what you have had," he advised. "Also, have a willingness to adapt. Third, check your own spiritual attitude as to your relationship with God and the degree of thankfulness you have for what you do have. Do not dwell on the past."

Wardin acknowledges the strain of caregiving.

However, he said, "I think there is a benefit in caring for someone else. By giving to somebody else, you get a benefit in return."

While he doesn't dwell on death, Wardin has given some thought to the transformation Mrs. Wardin would experience.

"I have thought that if I were still living and if I were at her funeral and able to respond that I would like to go to that verse in I Corinthians 13, *We now look through a glass darkly but then face to face.*"

"Certainly we look forward to a transformation. Whatever the situation will be, it will not be what she now has," he said. □

Crossville minister's wife speaks of real life issues to women

By Connie Davis Bushey
Baptist and Reflector

CROSSVILLE — When Kay Hinson speaks to women's groups, she speaks of real life and the Bible's answers.

Those illustrations and answers are presented especially for women in terms of "A Spiritual Life Makeover."

Hinson said she feels called to a ministry of speaking to women. She is the wife of Eric, who is associate pastor of First Baptist Church, Fairfield Glade.

Hinson has spoken to a group at their church and at First Baptist Church, Crossville.

She shares life lessons and Bible truths gleaned from many years of study. About three years ago, Hinson said she started reading the Bible like a novel

after receiving a new Bible, which she said she didn't deserve because of its expense. It is leather-bound.

She read it through in nine weeks while working a full-time job and taking care of her family and home. Then the Lord told her to read it again. Her study led her to write a Bible study titled "A New Creation — A Spiritual Life Makeover."

As she looks back on her life, said Hinson, she has always been interested in this metaphor for the Christian life. Her personal symbol is the butterfly.

She enjoys being in front of people. In

churches Hinson has been involved in puppets, clowning, singing, and playing the autoharp. She also has portrayed women in skits and dramatic presentations.

Hinson worked 16 years as an activity coordinator in retirement/nursing homes in Middle Tennessee, where she used many of her skills as a ministry.

When she speaks she shares stories from her life, which hasn't been easy at times. She has spoken of the time her family had a car repossessed and how God provided in several ways, even providing comfort. She tells of trying to do the right thing like taking a cooking pan back to a discount store to pay for it after realizing she didn't pay for it.

She tells of experiences with her three children and Eric, her husband of 32

years. He has served on the staff of churches in Tennessee, Louisiana, and Georgia.

Hinson said she likes to speak to women because she can tell more personal stories to which women can relate.

As she speaks, the Lord leads her, explained Hinson. In one seminar, a woman asked her a question. She remembered something from 30 years ago which helped her respond.

Hinson said she has gained much from preparing to speak. For instance, she learned how to stop worrying from Philippians 4:8-9. If one follows God's prescription for holy living described in these verses, he or she won't have time to worry, she predicted.

Hinson can be contacted at hinsoneric-kay@frontiernet.net or (931) 456-8005. □



HINSON

Responses to 'Should Christians abstain from alcohol?'

Editor's Note: The following are samples of responses to the question, "Should Christians abstain from alcohol?" which appeared in conjunction with an article in the July 26 issue. The response to the online survey was overwhelming. See story on page 1. As many responses as possible have been printed. These and other responses will be posted on the web site at www.tnbaptist.org.

Yes. Because of the death, disease, divorce, and the like associated with alcohol, everyone should be able to agree that alcohol is at least an "appearance of evil." I Thessalonians 5:22 says to "abstain from every appearance of evil." I don't want to be legalistic, but I believe Christians have the responsibility to be the "salt and light" in our communities. Our decisions should never cause someone else to stumble.

Brian Petty
Trenton 38382

Yes. I do not want to cause my brother to stumble.

John Irby
Nashville 37215

Yes. Even though my salvation is secure, nor am I bound by the law, there are still some things that are unwise. 1 Corinthians 6:12 "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful." Even if I had the faith that alcohol would not hurt my relationship to God, could my partaking cause someone else to sin? 1 Corinthians 8:9 "But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak." 1 Corinthians 8:13 "Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble."

Bill Alexander
Pulaski 38478

Yes. I believe that the Word of God teaches that abstinence is the correct definition.

Wayne Pwather
Bartlett 38133

No. I firmly believe in the inerrancy of Scripture and agree that many sins flow from the "bottle." However, our freedom in Christ is constrained only by that same Scripture and abstinence is not taught in Scripture. Look at Psalms 4:7 and 104:14-15 as support for alcohol (though never for abuse or over indulgence). I do agree with Dr. Aikin's point of being an example (which is why I abstain) but do not believe it can be taught as prohibitive from God's Word. It should not be a "litmus test" for church leadership.

James Langston
Chattanooga 37363

No. Emotional health, physical injury, family well-being, and drug addiction. If we're submitting resolutions on these criteria, let's add tobacco, caffeine, potato chips, and sky diving to

the list of substances as dangerous as "addictive pornography." Should Christians abstain from alcohol? Probably, but that's not what this resolution is about. We need to stop seeing alcohol as an evil enterprise, like it's pornography, like we used to feel about dancing and playing cards and long hair. All this resolution does is reinforce the assumption that consuming alcohol is an affront to personal holiness. Goodbye scriptural accountability, we'll miss you.

Scott Johnson
Nashville 37211

Yes. Scripture indicates that the person that is deceived by alcoholic beverage is unwise (Proverbs 20:1). We are told to be wise as serpents, yet harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16). Anyone that thinks a person can become a drunk without ever drinking alcoholic beverages is deceived and unwise. Adrian Rogers once commented that the best Scripture reference he could think of for not drinking was the one that deals with offending (to put a stumbling block or impediment in the way, upon which another may trip and fall) a little one that believes in Jesus. It would be better that a millstone be hung around that person's neck and be cast into the sea. Little ones are caused to stumble when they see those, in whom they have confidence, drink alcoholic beverages. Furthermore, Scripture indicates that excess (things that are not wholesome) enters a person's life through being drunk (impaired at all) with wine (Ephesians 5:18).

Phillip Senn
Troy 38260

Yes. While I do not believe alcohol drunk in moderation is prohibited in the Bible, I feel we as Christians must not do anything that would cause anyone to fall into sin. Some look at drinking as a sin and it could make our witness to them fail. I also know that it can only take one drink to make an alcoholic. So why take that chance?

Paul Wilcox
Jackson 38305

No. Both my father-in-law and myself have a glass of wine before we each go to bed each night, per doctor's orders. My father-in-law suffered a heart attack several years ago. His doctor suggested he drink a glass of red wine each night to help lower his cholesterol. I also suffer from high cholesterol and my doctor has also suggested I have a glass of red wine before bedtime. We both have lowered our cholesterol levels and only drink one glass at home.

Jeff Kerley
Smyrna 37167

No. Matthew 5:11 says, "It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what

comes out of the mouth; this defiles the person."

Lee Anne B.
Brighton 38011

Yes. In Leviticus 11:44 and many times throughout the Book it clearly states that, "You shall be holy for I am holy." The book of Leviticus unveils the holiness of God and His love for His people of all generations to pattern their lives. In Colossians 3:9-10 and Romans chapter 6 the analogy of "renewed in knowledge" and "slaves of righteousness" reveals how Christians should live their lives. The man who responds to God's invitation, "Oh my son, give me your heart" (Proverbs 23:26) will find that addictive behavior will be cleaned up by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Also, read Proverbs 23:29-35.

Denise Phillips
Bells 38006

Yes. I think it is wrong.

J.L. York
Ramer 38367

No. Christians should abstain from drunkenness. The authors of the resolution, based on their four arguments, presupposes all who drink alcohol will suffer detrimental consequences. This is simply untrue. Every drunk drinks alcohol, however, not everyone who drinks alcohol is a drunk.

Debbie Buckner
Knoxville 37938

Yes. First of all, it ruins your witness. Not everyone who drinks becomes an alcoholic, but every alcoholic began with one drink.

David Gorden
Pigeon Forge 37868

Yes. The dangers inherent in alcohol are so well known as to need no explication. I have seen its ill effects in destroyed marriages, abused and neglected children, and lives ruined by drunk drivers.

Jim West
Petros 37845

Yes. Alcohol continues to be a major problem in America. The reason we are debating the use of alcohol by Christians is because it has lost its stigma. Growing up in my hometown, there were two "beer joints" on the south side. I remember when driving by these places my mother telling me that they were bad places because alcohol was sold there and it caused people to do things they normally would not do. But these days, alcohol is sold in convenience stores, restaurants, ball parks, and other places. Drinking alcoholic beverages is a terrible witness. It is offensive. But Christians have become so much like the world, we refuse to deny ourselves personal pleasures. Therefore, we eat in restaurants where it is sold, shop at stores

where it is sold, and buy gas where it is sold. Now we are even debating the right and wrong of Christians drinking alcohol. Sometimes we must deny ourselves.

Phil Mitchell
Adamsville 38310

Yes. I believe we are called to be different from the world. To be different, we need to exercise self control. When we aren't different, we ruin our testimony. Just look at Mel Gibson and his recent admission concerning alcohol addiction. Non-believers can now say he's no different from anyone else — which may negate, at least for them, any good he achieved with his movie *The Passion of Christ*. The greatest disservice we do our faith is not being who we profess we should be — giving those outside the church more opportunity to call us hypocrites. God's Word says our body is a holy temple. We should treat it as such.

Dawn Ferguson
Gallatin 37066

Yes. I can think of a lot of reasons why one shouldn't drink, but can't seem to think of any why one should. There's a huge number of beverage choices available to us today (unlike Bible times). Knowing the social impact of drinking, why would a Christian choose alcohol even in moderation? People associate alcoholic drinks with worldliness. Drinking may not send someone to Hell, but it sure will damage your witness. It just doesn't fit who we are in Christ!

Billie Foster
Goodlettsville 37072

Yes. Ask any alcoholic if he intentionally set out to be an alcoholic and he will answer with a resounding "No!" That is the first clue that it is addictive. Even if you can successfully maintain a moderate drinking habit, the message you're sending is that drinking is OK. Why take a chance on destroying your health, life, marriage, bank account, image or influence and perhaps leading others into a bad habit?

Gerry Cantrell
Sparta 38583

Yes. I believe consuming alcohol is a sin. The final product of the brewers art can be seen in the carnage on our roads and the heartbreak of families of drinkers and alcoholics. I have been a pastor for over 40 years and I have seen the results of alcohol consumption. I can't believe that any follower of Jesus Christ would think that drinking would not destroy their witness. We will never win our neighbors to Christ by living the same non-God honoring lifestyle they live.

Ken Clayton
Old Hickory 37138

Yes. An alcoholic took two years of my life: A drunk driver hit my wife in the rear. Two years later she had recovered physically but she never fully recovered mentally or psychologically. On the date the wreck happened, she was pregnant with our first child. The decision had to be made whether to abort or for her to remain in the hospital until she delivered eight months later. She stayed in the hospital. No one who drinks alcoholic beverages should be allowed to be an example by having a leadership role in any Southern Baptist church.

Anthony B. Bull
Englewood 37329

Yes. I actually agree with both men. We are free in our Christian liberty, but cannot use that freedom to put a stumbling block in front of others. We should abstain for one reason, and that is to die to ourselves, and follow Christ. I do not believe it is wrong to have a drink as a Christian. But it is wrong to use my freedom to hinder a less mature Christian's growth. I will abstain in order to follow Christ, not because the Baptists passed a resolution, Romans 14:13-17, 21-23 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 10:23-33.

David Davis
Huron 38345

Yes. I'm a 44-year-old male. I was saved in 1974. I've never tasted a beer in my life. I do not drink wine, but I think having a glass of wine with dinner is perfectly all right. A case could be made that it is healthy to do so. The reason I/we do not drink any alcohol is that if an unbeliever saw me with alcohol, it may affect my witness. This alone is more than enough reason to never drink alcohol.

K. Brian McGlaughn
Mt. Juliet 37122

Yes. There are many reasons Christians should abstain from the use of alcohol, and from among them I offer only these few: (1) "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." (Proverbs 20:1) It's hard to be led astray by something that you never touch. (2) The wine of our day is always the equivalent of what the Scripture would classify as "strong drink." The use of strong drink is condemned throughout the Bible. (3) Some of the greatest men of God made it their practice to stay away from alcohol (John the Baptist, Paul, Timothy, etc.). Why wouldn't we want to follow their godly example? (4) A great number of us attend churches whose covenants forbid the use and sale of intoxicating beverages. Thus, it is a matter of integrity. (5) Alcohol has ruined enough lives — why allow it to ruin yours?

Todd Stinnett
Morristown 37813

Baptist schools offer both/and, not either/or

guest
columnist



By David S. Dockery

"It's good to go to a college that is religious, but it doesn't matter to me. What matters to me is getting my education." So claimed a Georgetown College sophomore in a July 22 *New York Times* article titled, "Feeling Strains, Baptist Colleges Cut Church Ties."

The quote summarizes a perception that often exists in secular contexts and, unfortunately, also in some church-related ones. It raises a very interesting question. Can religion and education go together? Furthermore, can genuine confessional Christianity thrive within a context that values serious scholarship and authentic intellectual inquiry?

Some would say that such an idea is a paradox, an antinomy, or at best an oxymoron. Yet the very motto of the institution where I serve is "religio et eruditio," which is a clarion call for us not just to tolerantly hold these ideas together, but to joyfully embrace them.

"Religio et eruditio" affirms both our love for God and our love for study, the importance of devotion, and the importance of instruction, the place of genuine Christian commitment and the place of serious scholar-

ship, the priority of affirming and passing on the Christian intellectual tradition, and the significance of honest intellectual inquiry. Granted, these matters at times are in tension, but not in contradiction — and rightly understood, they can be seen as connectives that are bound together, and not as exclusive categories.

We begin with "religio" — a faith commitment that informs "eruditio," all learning, which in turn shapes expectations for living. The conjunction of faith and learning is the very essence of a Christian university. This joint mission defines the distinctive difference of Christian higher education. Some of our friends in the academy regard such a notion as a medieval remnant at best, or in the words of Kris Kristofferson, "a walking contradiction, partly truth and partly fiction."

Yet, in recent years, among an increasingly large number of intellectuals, there has arisen a deep suspicion of today's thoroughly secularized academy, so that there is indeed a renewed appreciation for and openness to what George Marsden of Notre Dame calls "the outrageous idea of Christian Scholarship." While the recent *New York Times* article suggests that now is the time for Baptist colleges to sever their ties with Baptist conventions, I would suggest that just the opposite is true. It is time for us once again to capture afresh the dreams of Richard Furman, Basil Manly Sr., and other sig-

nificant shapers of Baptist higher education.

Being a faithful Christian university will involve much more than mere piety or spirituality, which by itself will not sustain the idea of a Christian university. The Christian intellectual tradition calls for rigorous Christian thinking in all areas, as historically exemplified in the work of Origen, Augustine, Aquinas, Bernard of Clairveaux, Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Kepler, Edwards, Kuyper, Broadus, and others. This tradition confesses the sovereignty of the triune God over the whole cosmos, in all spheres and kingdoms, visible and invisible.

This unifying framework helps avoid the error of a spiritualized Gnosticism on the one hand or a purely materialistic metaphysic on the other. This confessional starting point forms the foundation for our affirmation that all truth is God's truth, whether revealed or discovered. Thus, on the one hand, we respond with grateful wonder at what has been made known to us, and on the other, with exerted effort to discover what has not been clearly manifested.

Our choice is not to be faithful to our Baptist heritage or to be participants in the academy. It is not an unquestioning acceptance of the Christian tradition or open-ended inquiry. Certainly the unquestioning acceptance of tradition can degenerate into traditionalism. Yale historian Jaroslav Pelikan

was fond of claiming that if tradition is the living faith of the dead, then traditionalism is the dead faith of the living. Such traditionalism is often characterized by inflexible and at times anti-intellectual dogma at every point and in every discipline. This approach fails to engage our society or influence our culture.

On the other hand, free inquiry, untethered to faith and tradition, often results in unbelieving skepticism, advancing the directionless state that characterizes so much of higher education today. Such an approach cannot sustain the Christian tradition and its truth claims. Neither of these approaches represents the best of Christian higher education.

Our unique calling is not to be forced into inappropriate "either/or" choices, but to be appropriately "both/and" as proclaimed in the motto: "religio et eruditio." We reject those who call for us to create false dichotomies or join together unrelated ideas in an irrational, pluralistic fashion. Instead, we call for a commitment to the "divine and" grounded in Jesus Christ, who is both fully God and fully human and who is for us both light and life.

May God's grace guide us in the pursuit of these vital truths as we work together to advance Baptist higher education in the years to come. □ — Dockery is president of Union University in Jackson.

a parent
speaks



By Carolyn R. Tomlin

Ready for school?

Summer vacation is almost over and children across Tennessee return to class. No longer may students sleep late on week days. And for parents, getting back into a routine may be as difficult as for children. Do you wonder, "How can I get my children out of bed, catch the school bus on time, and not forget their belongings?" If this is a problem at your house, could the following suggestions work for your family?

- Pray as a family. Ask God for guidance and patience as your family begins another school year.

- Plan the night before. After homework is completed each afternoon or evening, designate a place for the book bag and any school projects. Always use the same place, preferably near the door you exit each morning.

- Assemble lunch boxes ahead of time.

- Select clothing and accessories. Another way to save precious time in the morning is to lay out all the clothes the night before. One rule: Whatever is chosen the night before — wear the next day.

- Eat a nutritious breakfast. Did you know that children who eat a healthy breakfast have a higher rate of retention, possess more mental and physical energy, and report liking school?

- Expect the best from each child. Let your child know you expect good grades. Realize not every child is capable of making an "A" in every subject, but every child should be encouraged to do their best. Never compare one sibling with another. Focus on individual differences and how each one has special God-given talents.

- Develop a calendar. Do you wonder how some parents keep up with all the activities their child is involved in? Most well-organized parents keep an activity calendar — usually on the refrigerator.

- Make time for free play.
- Show love to your child. These suggestions make for an easier transition from home to school. However, the most important one is to send your child to school with a hug and a smile. Start out on a positive note. Tell your child they are loved. Be an encourager. And say, "Remember who you are! You are a special person. I believe in you! And God loves you!" □ — Tomlin contributes to numerous Christian publications. Her husband, Matt, is pastor of Ward's Grove Baptist Church, Jackson.

letters to the editor

Editor's Note: Following are more responses to the question, "Should Christians abstain from alcohol?" which appeared in conjunction with an article in the July 26 issue.

Yes. Why should Baptists debate this issue at all? When I joined the Baptist church the third paragraph of the Church Covenant says, "to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage." As Christians we should be using our time to win the lost, not debate over alcohol.

Shirley Chesteen
Sevierville 37862

Yes. This Baptist doesn't have to debate over alcohol. The Word says no. God does not condone what He condemns. Praise God for men like Mr. (Danny) Akin who will stand up and say it's wrong. Evidently Mr. (Benjamin) Cole was reared in a home of a father who abused alcohol, according to his own words. I am sorry that he didn't have that godly father in his life but he needs to break that chain for himself

and his family and let the Holy Spirit interpret the Word. How can anyone improve on perfection.

Drama Watson
Maryville 37804

Yes. It never ceases to amaze me that followers of Christ continue to be surprised that Satan will quote Scripture to confuse the issue of sin. It makes me sad that professed Christians will waste precious time debating an issue that even un-Christian, good moral people won't touch. We need to be on our faces before God, pleading for mercy.

Cathy Hathcock
Saulsbury 38067

Yes. At age 13, I promised God that with His help I would abstain from drinking alcohol. I have never regretted that decision. One grandfather was absent from my life because he had a drinking problem. I only met him when he came back to die. I have been around enough people using alcohol at social events to observe that it does not help them to have real fun,

to be as witty as they think they are, or to be as courteous as they usually behave. In 38 years of ministry, I saw many negative effects because of drinking.

Charles Parker
Antioch 37013

Yes. I feel that anything that effects my thinking or judgment would not be pleasing in the Lord's eyes. Even in moderation, why should I indulge in something that has the potential to destroy my life along with my family's? How would this help my witness to an unbeliever?

Ron Thornton
Lenoir City 37772

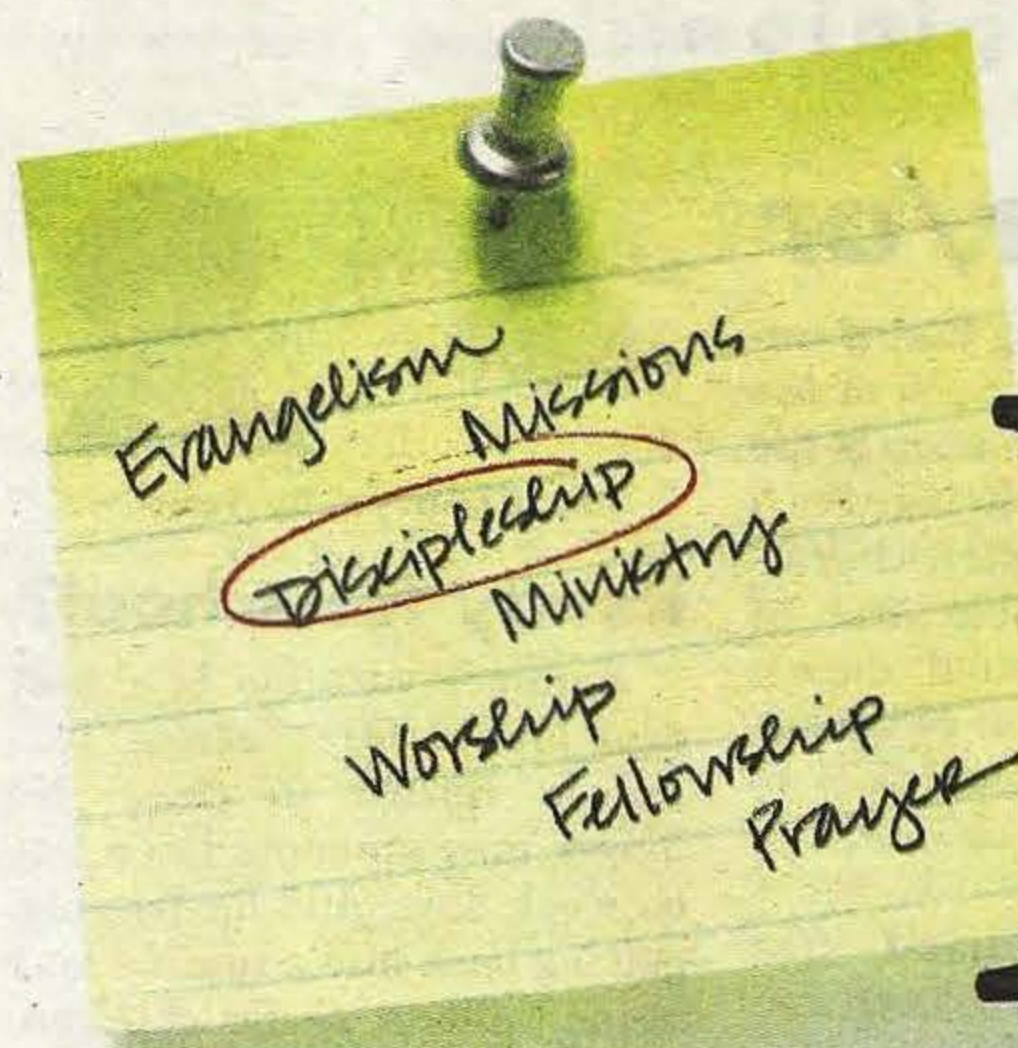
Yes. I grew up in an alcoholic home, and know first hand about the destruction of alcohol. I began drinking when I was 12 years old and this led me to self-destructive decisions during my youthful years. God freed me from the clutches of alcohol in September of 1996. Today God is still healing me from a painful past that once surrounded alcohol

abuse. If I were to visit a brother/sister who drank alcohol, I would be highly offended. His/her drinking could cause me to become weak, tempting me to stumble. See Romans 14:21

Susan Powers
Union City 38261

Yes. We know that alcohol is a powerful drug, a depressant and it can do just that — depress an entire family. When the drug gets a grip on a person it consumes him or her. It is no respecter of age and can be deadly. This doesn't happen to everyone who consumes alcohol, but the chances are great that it will. You may never drink too much. You may never become abusive. You may never get behind the wheel and drive drunk. I grew up in an alcoholic home. We need to redefine the word "abuse." I never got anything from my father, including his attention, his guidance, or his love. Neither did he hit me. I got nothing. Is it worth the risk? No.

James W. Ellis
Johnson City 37604



Church Health Matters

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



Sunday School Matters

This is the time of year when churches are gearing up for a new Sunday School year. This issue emphasizes the Sunday School ministry of the local church. A healthy Sunday School has been and continues to be a significant outreach and evangelism ministry of the 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 related to Sunday School.

Mark Miller.....	(615) 371-2048
<i>State Sunday School Director</i>	
Tim Holcomb, <i>Adults</i>	(615) 371-2055
Bruce Edwards, <i>Youth</i>	(615) 371-2094
Bill Choate, <i>College</i>	(615) 371-2057
Vicki Hulsey, <i>Children</i>	(615) 371-2081
Klista Storts, <i>Preschool</i>	(615) 371-2082

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 email her at sedwards@tnbaptist.org.

Does Sunday School Training Make A Difference?

By Mark Miller

"I don't need training. We've got a good Sunday School class. We are doing okay as we are. Why should I go to training?"

First, training produces more effective leaders. Would you choose to visit an untrained doctor? Would you send your child to school if you knew the teacher was uneducated? No! But do we hold the same expectations for our Sunday School leadership?

A good heart and a willingness to prepare each week are essential to their effectiveness. However, an understanding of Sunday School and their distinct leadership role is also imperative. They work best when they know what their job is and are trained to carry it out competently.

Second, trained leaders are less likely to burn out. It's a common scenario in the majority of our churches. Summer is almost over and the Nominating Committee is frantically searching for Sunday School leaders!

As we develop an ongoing strategy for training leaders, we will discover more and more leaders who are committed to Sunday School for the long haul. Training provides the encouragement and motivation that many of our leaders need to remain faithful and committed to the tasks of reaching, teaching and ministering through the Sunday School.

Third, trained leaders multiply themselves. A trained teacher understands the concept of multiplication. A trained leader knows the



joy of serving. A trained Sunday School worker is committed to sending out "missionaries" from their class to work in preschool, children, youth, and other adult departments.

Fourth, training leaders is biblical. Jesus called the disciples to a task, but He didn't leave them alone with their responsibility. Effective Sunday School leaders are encouraged, motivated, and trained by staff and lay-leaders who know firsthand the joy of serving Christ. As Paul reminded young Timothy, "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you..." (II Timothy 1:6).

Check the web site www.equippingu.com for a complete listing of Sunday School training events. Equipping U Sunday School training offers:

- Practical experience from trained professionals with a heart for ministry
- Encouragement and fellowship with other Christian leaders
- The tools you need to be successful in your ministry
- Confidence to lead your Sunday School class
- Fresh ideas and new approaches
- Peer learning opportunities

No registration is necessary for the 17 offered 3D Sunday School conferences or the two Equip for Excellence Sunday School Conventions, which are provided at no cost.

What Really Is an Evangelistic Sunday School?

By Mark Miller

Sunday School is a strategy, a plan for doing the work of the church. Ken Hemphill, Empowering Kingdom Growth National strategist, wrote in *Revitalizing the Sunday Morning Dinosaur* (Broadman & Holman Publishing Group, 2005):

Sunday School must be plugged into a passion for evangelism. Otherwise it will settle into the comfort zone of a maintenance organization. By ignoring the evangelistic potential of the Sunday School, we have reduced Sunday School to a stagnant pool of introverted groups looking primarily to their own needs and interests and ignoring the plight of the unsaved.

The problem with non-evangelistic Sunday Schools is not the program itself; the problem is the failure to use the program as an intentional evangelistic tool.

The following are some suggestions for keeping the Sunday School plugged into a passion for evangelism:

- Be sensitive to the spiritual needs of the lost.
- Be trained to share your faith.
- Participate in outreach visitation to newcomers and unchurched.
- Adult and youth teachers should teach evangelistically.
- Children and preschool teachers must be sensitive to pupil's spiritual questions.
- Concentrated prayer is needed for the lost and unchurched.
- Each class sets an annual new member goal to enroll people in Sunday School.
- Provide events and avenues for Sunday School members to invite their lost and unchurched friends to Sunday School.
- Multiply by starting new Sunday School classes.
- Build accountability by assigning prospective members to classes for follow-up.

In order for Sunday Schools to be evangelistic, lost people must be present. As we teach God's Word, the Holy Spirit will bring conviction and people will be saved. Our Sunday Schools in Tennessee will become increasingly evangelistic and be continually filled with lost relatives, friends, business associates, and strangers.

How to Get Ready for the New Sunday School Year

1. Evaluate your Sunday School organizational structure in light of your purpose, enrollment, and leadership needs.
2. Evaluate your Sunday School meeting space. Is the space designed for the age group and the needs of those being taught? Is the space the appropriate size for the number of learners to be taught in the space?
3. Personally enlist every leader. Communicate clearly to every leader his specific assignment for the new year and with whom he will be working. Encourage each leader to make a commitment to effective service.
4. Provide training for every leader and set goals and action plans for the new year.
5. Update all Sunday School member records.
6. Inform members and leaders about the details of the Sunday School organizational structure for the new year of ministry. Especially let parents know to which class and/or department their children have been assigned.
7. Encourage leaders to contact every class/department member before the start of the new year.
8. Distribute Bible study curriculum materials to all leaders and learners. Provide leaders with all the teaching resources they need.
9. Update your prospect records. Prospect records need to be organized to match the new Sunday School organizational structure. This means you will need to "promote" prospects.
10. Launch the new year with excitement and expectation. Use the launch event to communicate that exciting things are going to be happening through Sunday School ministry in the coming year.
11. Guide leaders and members in praying that God will work through Sunday School ministry to lead people into a transforming relationship with Christ.

(Adapted from *Multiply Your Ministry – Beyond the Walls*, Sunday School Annual Planner by Ron Brown, LifeWay, 2001).

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| August 14 | 3D Sunday School Training, Pomona Baptist Church, Dickson |
| August 15 | 3D Sunday School Training, Long Heights Baptist Church, McKenzie |
| August 15 | 3D Sunday School Training, Bayside Baptist Church, Chattanooga |
| August 19 | Equipping Missions Leaders, Bellevue Baptist Church, Nashville |
| August 19 | Equipping Missions Leaders, First Baptist Church, Knoxville |
| August 19 | Keys for Success Keyboard Training Workshop, West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson |
| August 19 | Preschool & Children's Music Leader Training, Monte Vista Baptist Church, Maryville |
| August 19 | Sunday School Convention, Bartlett Baptist Church, Bartlett |

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

Online resource helps churches develop salaries

Baptist Press

DALLAS — GuideStone Financial Resources has released a new online resource, "Planning Financial Support," for use by church personnel and finance committees in planning staff members' compensation packages.

The presentation, along with a workbook by the same name, are being offered at no charge by the Southern Baptist entity.

"Our goal with this new presentation is to help churches provide for their pastors in a comprehensive, holistic manner," said Chris Elkins, a financial solutions and services staff member at GuideStone.

"Sometimes a church tries to pay its pastor in a lump-sum, or 'package' approach," he explained. "That forces a pastor to absorb ministry expenses into his income, cutting his take-home pay."

The presentation's launch comes on the heels of the release of the 2006 SBC Compensation Study, which showed the average salary and housing allowance for full-time Southern Baptist pastors was \$49,952, an increase of 7.4 percent since 2004. Income statistics for other positions, including bivocational pastors, support staff members, and other positions also are reported in the bi-annual compensation study.

The Planning Financial Support can be helpful for churches large and small in preparing their budgets and in preparation to call a new pastor, according to a GuideStone news release. The compensation study and the Planning Financial Support presentation and workbook, can be obtained through GuideStone's web site, www.Guidestone.org, or by calling GuideStone at 1-888-984-8433. □

No rate increases, says GuideStone

Baptist Press

DALLAS — No rate increase will be enacted in 2007 in the personal medical plans of GuideStone Financial Resources,

marking the third year in a row that the Southern Baptist entity has held the line on rates.

GuideStone trustees approved the annual re-rate recommendation during their July 31-Aug. 1 meeting in Denver.

Other than regular age increases, GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins noted in his report to trustees, 100 percent of personal medical plan participants will receive no rate increase and more than 40 percent will receive a rate decrease. Hawkins credited the good report to the continued improvements in the administration and design of GuideStone's medical plans.

"During the past several years, we have provided a greater variety of choices in our medical plans with varying deductibles and rates. We have also realized greater discounts by using a single network. We are beginning to see positive results from our wellness emphasis and more and more churches are taking responsibility in meeting their pastor's benefits needs," Hawkins said.

All state Baptist conventions that have their medical coverage with GuideStone's group plans will receive no rate increase in 2007 and 46 percent of the conventions will receive a rate decrease, Hawkins reported. For all other group plans, he said 88 percent will receive no increase and 53 percent will receive a rate decrease.

There will be no increase in medical plan rates for the senior plans, Hawkins also noted.

The stability of GuideStone's medical plan rates is even more significant since medical inflation is increasing by 8-12 percent per year, Hawkins said. More information related to GuideStone's medical plans will be mailed to participants and group administrators. □

Immigrate reform remains stymied

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Immigration reform remains stymied as Congress nears its final month of work before the fall election.

Members of Congress appear to have made no progress in finding a way forward on an issue that has sharply divided the Senate and House of Representatives. Both houses have begun month-long recesses, with the Senate set to reconvene Sept. 5 and the House Sept. 6. Congressional leaders hope to adjourn by early October, giving members another month to campaign before the Nov. 7 election.

The Senate version, which was adopted in May, includes provisions intended to secure the border with Mexico but also would establish a guest worker program and enable most illegal immigrants to enter a process to become citizens. Some House Republicans and other conservatives have charged it would provide amnesty to those who are in this country illegally.

The House version, which was passed in December, focuses

on border security and enforcement against illegal immigrants and those who aid them. Hispanic leaders and Senate Democrats have sharply criticized it as lacking in compassion.

President George W. Bush, meanwhile, pressed Congress again Aug. 3 for a comprehensive solution that would seem to be more in line with the Senate-approved measure.

"I expect [Congress] to do its duty and pass comprehensive immigration reform," Bush said in a speech on the Texas-Mexico border. "There's an important debate facing our nation, and the debate is: Can we secure this border and, at the same time, honor our history of being a land of immigrants? And the answer is, absolutely, we can do both. And we will do both." □

NOBTS steeple to be replaced

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — A beacon of hope following Hurricane Katrina, the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary steeple, is down, but only for a season.

The aluminum-clad steel steeple, which stretched 170 feet above the seminary campus,

remained in place during the storm and suffered only minor external damage. However, the internal steel structure was damaged beyond repair and seminary officials opted to remove the steeple so it can be replaced. For the next four to six months Leavell Chapel will be without its steeple.

Patterned after the steeple of the first Baptist church in America, First Baptist Church of Providence, R.I., the NOBTS steeple was installed atop Leavell Chapel in 1975. Over the years the steeple became a symbol of the seminary's mission to be a "lighthouse" for the gospel in the city of New Orleans.

"We hope this will be the last time the steeple is absent," said NOBTS President Chuck Kelley. □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — MUSIC

First Baptist Church, New Tazewell, Tenn., is searching for a part-time worship and music pastor. Related education and/or experience required. Resumes will be received until Sept. 1st. Send resume with cover letter to newtazewellfbc@centurytel.net or to Worship and Music Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 248, New Tazewell, TN 37824.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

MINISTRY — OTHER

The Human Resources Office of the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention announces that applications are being accepted for the positions of Senior Graphic Designer and Graphic Designer in the Shared Ministries Group. General information about these positions is available on the web site: www.tnbaptist.org. Please contact the Human Resources Office, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024, (615) 371-2013 for further information. Interested persons must submit an application to be considered for a position.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

MISCELLANEOUS

Scenic Hills Baptist Church, The Church of New Beginnings, has a set of handbells for sale. The cost is \$6,000. For more information, contact Sister Lavelle Byrd at (901) 626-5464.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

MINISTRY — CHILDREN

Full-time children's minister, First Baptist Church of Eustis, Fla., accepting resumes for full-time minister for the children's ministry, babies through 5th grade. Mail resumes to FBC Eustis, P.O. Box 129, Eustis, FL 32727 or e-mail to james_wells@fbceustis.com

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Minister to Children — Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, AR. Send resumes to jstatton@gsfbc.org or P.O. Box 31510, Little Rock, AR 72260. Information at www.gsfbc.org. Previous children's ministry experience required.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Western North Carolina church seeks a full-time minister of music with a unique opportunity. For further details and information go to www.hazelwoodbaptistchurch.org and click on "Job Opening."



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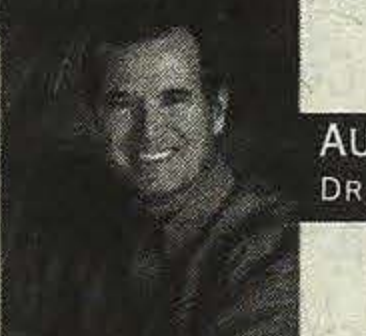
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DR. DEAN REGISTER



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"Go Light Your World" is the theme for the 2006 Singles Labor Day Weekend retreat at Ridgecrest Conference Center. For more information call 1-800-588-7222 or visit www.life-way.com/singleslaborday.

Leaders

◆ **Frank Orr**, a member of Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, and retired architect, has written his memoir, *Alabama Boy: An Architect's Memoir*. Orr was an architect for 43 years. He helped found Orr/Houk Architects in Nashville. He and Ed Houk, a retired architect who also is a member of Forest Hills Church, helped design the additions to Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden, and Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center, Newport, completed in 2000. Orr, who still works as a consultant, also was the architect or member of the design team in nearly 200 church projects. Additionally, he has designed resort and retirement communities, schools, and conference centers and is an author of books and articles on architecture. The book is published by Xulon Press. For more information, contact Orr at forr1@comcast.net.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Ramer**, has called **James Young** as pastor.

◆ **Bethel Baptist Church, Yorkville**, has called **Wesley Gordon** as minister of youth.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Rutherford**, has called **Tim Sanderson** as interim pastor.

◆ **Spring Hill Baptist Church, Trenton**, has called **Thomas Griffin** as pastor.

◆ **Dearled King**, a chaplain at Tennessee Veterans Nursing Home, Humboldt, and a member of First Baptist Church, Milan, will celebrate 50 years of preaching ministry on Aug. 16.

Churches

◆ **Hillcrest Baptist Church, Clarksville**, will host a Woman's Missionary Union Prayer Retreat Aug. 26 entitled "Pray All the Way: From Fear to Faith." Leighann McCoy, author and pastor's wife of Thompsons Station Baptist Church, Thompsons Station, will speak. Meals and childcare will be provided. Deadline to register is Aug. 11. For information contact Carolyn at (931) 217-3316.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Tiptonville**, hosted "God's Devine Design," a leadership workshop, July 8. Guest speaker was Willie McLauren of the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff. Spiritual gifts and personality assessments,



MEMBERS OF Sylvia Baptist Church, Dickson, youth group and their leaders served a week in Evansville, Ind., doing missions work as World Changers. This group was a part of 235 total World Changers working there. The Dickson group included, from left, first row, Caleb Davidson; David Davidson, youth pastor; Richie Martin; back row, Aaron Hyndman; Joyce Turman; Allison Long; Cassie Byrd; Ryan Keaton; Andrew Deason; Brandon Smithson; and Richie Hasley.

assessment teams, and team building exercises were offered.

◆ **Leoma Baptist Church, Leoma**, bought three pieces of property that adjoined the church last year. Recently the church received an offering which paid off the property debt of \$262,000.

◆ **Dogwood Heights Baptist Church, Tazewell**, and **First Baptist Church, New Tazewell**, sent a combined construction team recently to Living Hope Fellowship Church in Lolo, Mont., to sup-

port the Tennessee/Montana Baptist Partnership. Richard Minton, pastor of Dogwood Heights Church, and Randy Pressnell, pastor of First Church, served as team leaders.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Benton**, is nearing completion of its new family life center and is planning a dedication service later in the year.

Associations

◆ **Cumberland Plateau Baptist Association, Crossville**, and **Sequatchie Valley**

Baptist Association, Whitwell, sent a mission team to First Baptist Church, Pearl River, La., July 8-15. The team built two houses for families who were victims of the last fall's hurricanes.

◆ **Holston Baptist Association, Johnson City**; **Holston Valley Baptist Association, Rogersville**; **Sullivan Baptist Association, Kingsport**; and **Watauga Baptist Association, Elizabethton**, recently joined together to form the Upper East Tennessee Disaster Relief Group.

HEARTS ON FIRE

XX

20th ANNIVERSARY

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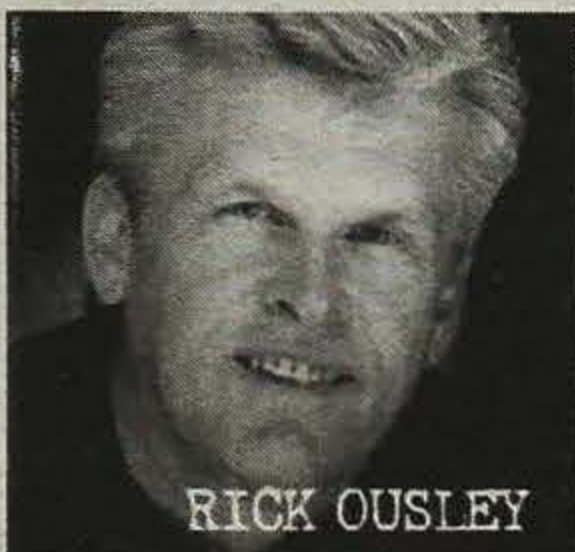
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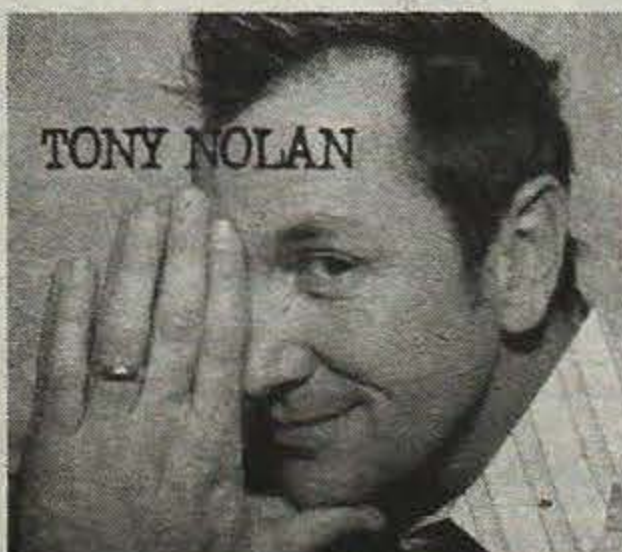
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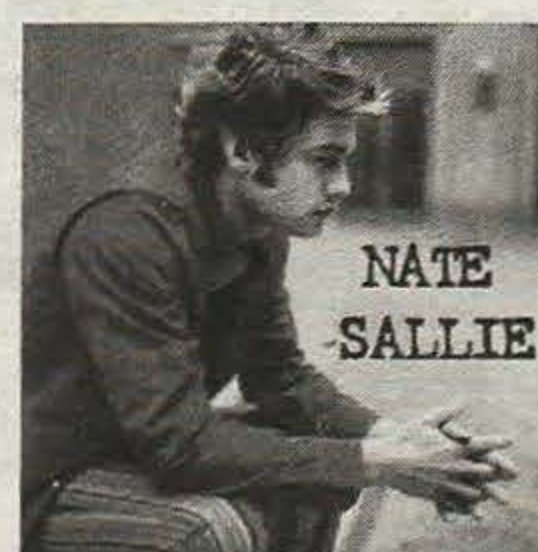
TONY NOLAN



NEWSONG



NATE
SALLIE



Page weeps for 1.4 billion lost souls in Asia

Baptist Press

SOUTH ASIA — Loving the lost, as Christians should, begins with revival, Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page told a group of International Mission Board missionaries in southern Asia.

"In order for that revival to come, we have to be the people of God" and follow the instructions God gives Christians in 2 Chronicles 7:14, Page said.

"I believe you can serve the Lord the way you want to serve Him only when you've experienced the tears of regret and the action of repentance." Then, Page said, tears of rejoicing and restoration of service will follow.



PAGE

Page, elected as SBC president in June, is pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C. The South Carolina Baptist Convention has a three-year ministry partnership with the International Mission Board's South Asia region, which includes India and six surrounding countries.

"Frank Page is a longtime friend of the International Mission Board and the Great Commission," IMB regional leader David Garrison said. "That is why three years ago we invited him to come and share God's

Word with our missionaries and their families serving Christ in south Asia."

As Garrison launched this year's regional theme of "Loving the Lost" with a video presentation of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, and tribal faces, Page did not hold back his own tears in early July for southern Asia, which is home to about 1.4 billion non-Christians concentrated in an area less than half the size of the United States.

Thus, one of Page's first acts as SBC president "was to weep for the lost of south Asia," Marty Hunter, strategy associate in the region, reflected.

"Anybody who weeps for the lost of south Asia — our hearts are knit together."

South Asia has 1,432 people groups, and 345 of those have more than 100,000 people. But they remain unengaged by any evangelical mission organization, Garrison said.

Together, they comprise almost half a billion people," he said. "The remaining task is enormous."

"Frank Page has challenged, fed, counseled, renewed, and equipped our missionaries to go back into the harvest fields of south Asia's teeming millions." □

SBC CP gifts exceed last year's pace

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program are 2.41

percent above the same time frame in 2005, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman.

As of July 31, 2006, the year-to-date total of \$167,602,584.40 for Cooperative Program (CP) Missions is \$3,940,702.57 above the \$163,661,881.83 received at the same point in 2005. For the month, receipts of \$16,328,109.94 were 12.43 percent, or \$2,316,647.99, below the \$18,644,757.93 received in July 2005.

Designated giving of \$182,780,345.82 for the same year-to-date period is 2.27 percent, or \$4,054,557.93 below gifts of \$178,725,787.89 received at this point last year. The \$9,843,607.69 in designated gifts received last month is \$2,015,837.23 above the

InTouch Ministries — Representative

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\$7,827,770.46 received in July 2005, an increase of 25.75 percent.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$167,602,584.40 is 105.93 percent of the \$158,221,045.80 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and region-

al conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention.

It is separate from the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Fund of which 100 percent of monies go to aid the needy in the general public. □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

First Baptist Church, Atwood, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for the position of full-time pastor. Please send resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 40, Atwood, TN 38220, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

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

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Progressive rural church seeking a man of God with an excitement for interacting with his church family; a desire to promote missions locally and internationally; an example of what they preach and teach. Seminary and five years pastoral experience preferred. Is God telling you that you are this man? Send your resume to Pastor Search Committee, 2728 Unionville Rd., Halls, TN 38040.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Coalfield, Tenn., seeks a pastor. Church parsonage is available if needed. Send resume and tape to Pastor Search Committee, 1306 Fairview Road, Coalfield, TN 37719 — for more info see www.pleasantgrovebaptist.net/seek_pastor.html.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Wilkesboro Baptist Church, Wilkesboro, N.C., is accepting resumes for senior pastor. We are a mission-minded church supporting the Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. We are an 1,100-plus member congregation with a full-time staff of six and part-time staff of 14. Applicants must have a degree from an accredited seminary and a minimum of five years experience as pastor responsible for multiple church staff. Exceptional biblical knowledge with effective leadership, preaching, and interpersonal skills required. A strong commitment to missions, discipleship, evangelism, education, outreach, and spiritual growth is essential. Compensation commensurate with education and experience. Please send cover letter and resume by Aug. 31, 2006 to Chairman of Pastor Search Committee, Wilkesboro Baptist Church, P.O. Box 61, Wilkesboro, NC 28697. More information about the church is available at web site: www.wilkesborobaptist.org.

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — DOM

Gibson Baptist Association is accepting resumes for the position of associational missionary. Please send resume to Search Committee, c/o Bob Dennison, 95 Latham Chapel Road, Milan, TN 38358.

MINISTRY — COMBINATION

Director of music ministries and Christian education, full-time. Salary to be negotiated. Applications now being accepted. Send resume to Eastanallee Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 3148, Riceville, TN 37370 or call (423) 462-2620. For more information, see our web site www.eastanallee.com.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

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 Street, Somerville, TN 38068.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

First Baptist Church, New Tazewell, Tenn., is searching for a full-time pastor to students/associate pastor. Some music background helpful but not required. Resumes will be received until Sept. 1st. Send resume with cover letter to newtazewellfbc@centurytel.net or to Student Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 248, New Tazewell, TN 37824.

MINISTRY — STUDENT

New Hope Baptist Church of Dyer, Tenn., is searching for a bivocational minister of students. If you are interested or know of someone who is, please contact Pastor John Fields at (731) 414-4566 or Chm. Joey Hays at (731) 643-7427 or you may send resume to New Hope Baptist Church, 876 North Main St., Dyer, TN 38330.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Full-time pastor of students with 3+ years experience needed. Please send resumes to Rocky Knoll Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1100 Walhalla, SC 29691, Attn: Student Pastor Search Committee.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY

10TH ANNIVERSARY 2006

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book review

By Dawn Ferguson

Fighting for Dear Life

by David Gibbs

Bethany House, 2006

On the day her feeding tube was pulled for the third time, Terri Schiavo tried to say "I want to live," according to her parents' attorney David Gibbs. But Terri couldn't pronounce consonants and only got as far as "Ah waaa." Her tube was pulled, and 13 days later Terri died.

Terri had been diagnosed as in a persistent vegetative state, which refers to a condition in which individuals have lost cognitive neurological function and awareness of the environment. According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, spontaneous movements may occur and the eyes may open in response to external stimuli, but the patient does not speak or obey commands.

In October 2004 when Gibbs first met Terri, he says he was shocked by what he saw. Based upon her diagnosis, he had expected to see someone in a vegetative state lying in bed. What he saw was someone sitting up, dressed, and animated. She reacted with glee to the voice of her mother and attempted to kiss her. She followed people around the room. "Was Terri brain-injured? No question . . . She was not, however, brain-dead."

But the public never saw this Terri because her husband Michael never let any media see her. In fact, he kept Terri isolated in her room at a hospice for years, forbidding the staff to even move Terri's bed where she could look out into the hall and forbidding them or anyone else to take her out of her room.

Gibbs' book is troubling. Many people sat on the sidelines during the public debate about Terri's life and thought government should stay out of it — that this was a family matter pitting the wishes of Terri's parents to maintain their daughter's life against her husband who wanted to end it. And while it may have been a family matter, the judicial and the legislative branches of government did get involved and the course of events that occurred following their involvement is what is so troubling.

Terri did not have a living will or advanced directives. Therefore, the only "evidence" the judge had regarding her desire to live since she could not speak for herself was Michael's assertion that they had had this conversation and she had stated that she would never want to live that way. However, Michael's remembrance of this conversation came a couple of years after his testimony in a court trial where he was awarded a million dollar malpractice settlement on Terri's behalf and he promised to use the money for Terri's rehabilitation — a benefit Terri never received.

Gibbs points out many flaws in the whole procedure regarding this life and death decision and ultimately questions our right to play God. Gibbs writes about the sanctity of life and states there are three guiding principles from Scripture: God is the giver of all life; God allows any disability; and God and God alone should decide when life ends.

For Christians, there should be more to this matter than whether or not someone wants to live. "If honest, the quality of life position begins and ends with a consideration of self . . . it essentially says, I want to live life on my terms . . . If life isn't going your way, who gives you the option to choose to end it? Do you have the right to alter what God may want for you? Is it really our choice to short-circuit the impact you might have on your family, friends, and beyond? What gives you or me the right to shrug and say, 'I'm unhappy. I want this to be over.'"

Regardless of what you may believe about this case, there may come a time in your life when you're faced with a similar decision. For that reason, this book merits your time and thought. □ — Ferguson, of Gallatin, is a correspondent for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

Maintaining a heavenly focus

By Matt Cannon

Focal Passage: Colossians 2:20a; 3:1-10, 12-14, 17

One challenge in teaching my children how to walk was to get them to look up and pay attention to where they were going. By looking down at their feet or to one side or the other, they put themselves in danger of running into objects that could cause them harm. They also could miss out on something that they would like to see if they are constantly looking down.

Similarly, believers run into problems when they keep their eyes on the troubles and trials of this world and fail to look at things from a heavenly perspective. We must remember that we are not of this world, so we cannot look at things from a temporal perspective. In doing so, we cheat ourselves out of the blessings that come with realizing that God is on His throne and that His purposes will not be thwarted.

Colossians 2:20a; 3:1-4: Living as though we belong to this world causes us to become depressed about what is going on in the world. Granted, there are awful things that occur on a regular basis. However, a heavenly focus goes a long way in helping us to remain joyful and hopeful even in distressing times.

Christians have died with Christ to the forces of this world and been raised to newness of life. Because of this, we need to develop the "mind of Christ" and keep our focus on those things that have eternal significance. Because we still struggle against our fleshly nature, we have

to make this a daily effort through prayer, Bible study, and obedience.

The thing that makes it easier is knowing that when the glory of Jesus is fully revealed, we will share in the glory. What should cause us to praise Him even more is the fact that we did absolutely nothing to deserve it. It is because of His awesome grace.

Colossians 3:5-10: The two best words in this passage are "but now." There was a time when each and every Christian was lost and bound for Hell because of their sin. We were headed toward a showdown with God's wrath as we lived a life without giving in to His love.

But now, praise God, we have been given the free gift of salvation. Along with the passageway to Heaven being opened for us, we have also been given the ability to shed our old ways and put on the new man. As we accepted Christ as our Savior, the shackles of sin fell away and we began being made like Christ.

The shedding of our old ways is not always an easy transaction. Even Paul struggled with doing those things that he shouldn't do and not doing those things that he should. However, the way is made easier as we rely on the Holy Spirit to lead us.

Colossians 3:12-14, 17: While we are commanded to shed the old ways, we are also encouraged to put on the new ways. Having the knowledge that we are God's chosen ones should help us to do this with gladness.

This section tells us of some char-

Sunday School Lesson
Family Bible Series
Aug. 13

acteristics that we should put on. Unfortunately, many well-meaning Christians are so busy doing ministry that they forget about what they are supposed to be as Christians. Doing things for God is wonderful, but it cannot replace having a relationship with God and becoming more loving, forgiving, kind, humble, etc. I



CANNON

Corinthians 13 basically says that if we do everything but don't have love, we are nothing.

One of the points of the passage to me is that if I have the proper characteristics and lifestyle, the actions will follow. If I truly have love and compassion, I will be involved in actions that show it. Conversely, I can do seemingly loving things and not have real love. We must make sure that we do not put the cart before the horse.

Having a heavenly focus will help us to keep everything in a proper perspective. It will enable us to be joyful in the midst of sad situations. It will help us become more like Christ, which is the main point of being a Christian. □ — Cannon is bivocational pastor, Cardiff Baptist Church, Rockwood.

How can I handle life's uncertainties?

By Randall Adkisson

Focal Passage: Ecclesiastes 9:1-11:6

Enjoy life. It is an oddity of life that those who profess Jesus too often live in worldly despair. Though life is short, God grants life as a blessing to be enjoyed. Trusting God, Christians can experience abundant life even in the midst of the most difficult circumstance (John 10:10, 16:33).

Ecclesiastes nine centers upon the theme of life's brevity. Solomon writes, *There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked; . . . afterwards they go to the dead* (9:2 & 3). Yet, the theme is not one of despair, but one to encourage enjoyment of each day as a blessing from God.



ADKISSON

Old Testament saints did not possess the knowledge of eternal life as revealed in the New Testament. They knew of existence after death, but did not have revelation of its nature or the state of the soul. Old Testament figures saw death as an enemy and as the ultimate "evil." Paul rejoices in the fuller revelation of eternity when he writes, *For (Jesus) must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death* (I Corinthians 15:26-27).

In light of death's sudden encroachment (9:12), man is not to give up hope, but to live each day fully in the pleasure of God's blessings.

Marriage is one of God's blessings. *Enjoy life with the wife whom you love all the days of your fleeting life*, he writes (9:9). Christian marriage is meant to be a source of encouragement and joy for the believer. Too often men and women relegate marriage to a place of drudgery rather than giving it the place of joy it deserves. From the beginning, God intended marriage to be a refuge in a fallen world. Christian marriage has the opportunity to be a refuge of joy as believing men and women give their marriages the attention that God intended.

Work is a blessing. Solomon's words "Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might" are echoed in Paul's letter to the Colossians. *Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men* (Colossians 3:23). The completion of a project is not work's only joy. Neither is it the monetary reward God's only blessing. The experience of work itself is a blessing for mankind. In work, men and women fulfill their nature in joining in the creative work of God.

Though life certainly has its share of pain and tragedy, God redeems our time upon earth with joy and gladness. Even in life's diffi-

Sunday School Lesson
Explore the Bible
Aug. 13

culties, we are called to enjoy the pleasures of God's blessings. Solomon says, *eat your bread in happiness, and drink your wine with a cheerful heart* (9:7). Too often believers fail to witness to the grace of Christ by failing to live in the joy of life's pleasures.

Invest in life. The beginning of chapter 11 sounds like the advice of a good investment counselor. *Cast your bread on the surface of the waters and it will come back to you* is an admonition to invest your time and talents in life. Those who invest themselves in others will find good return in joy. To "divide your portion to seven, or even to eight" is advice for diversification in your ministry and your service. What works with money, works with your life.

Jesus said, *Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return* (Luke 6:38).

Though life may seem brief, sowing our seeds in the morning and evening of life will pay dividends even in eternity (11:6). □ — Adkisson is pastor of First Baptist Church, Cookeville.

Deaths

◆ **Pauline (GiGi) Scarlett**, 62, of Smyrna, wife of retired pastor, Miracle Baptist Church, LaVergne, Carl Scarlett, died Aug. 3 suddenly. She was a member of Living Springs Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet. Survivors include her husband; one daughter; two sons; and grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Living Springs Church.

◆ **Dan G. Farmer**, 70, of Greenbrier, died July 31 at his home. A native of Kingston, Farmer served as a minister for 42 years. He was pastor at Rosedale Baptist Church and Valley View Baptist Church, both in Nashville; Ebenezer Church, Greenbrier; and First Baptist Church, Greenfield. Survivors include his wife, Jo Ellen Farmer, Greenbrier; three sons; and grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to the building fund of Ebenezer Church.

◆ **Patsy J. Bargiol**, 72, widow of Bill Bargiol, retired director of missions for Big Emory Baptist Association, Harriman, died July 24, at St. Mary's Hospice, Halls. She was a member of Calvary Baptist Church, Oak Ridge. Survivors include two daughters; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren. Gifts may be given to St. Mary's Residential Hospice, 7447 Andersonville Pike, Knoxville, TN 37917.

Leaders

◆ First Baptist Church, Dunlap, has called **Fred Steelman** as interim pastor. Steelman recently retired as pastor of Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga, where he served for 32 years.

Churches

◆ Higher Ground Baptist Church, Kingsport, will offer "Let's Go Huntin'!" seminars on Wednesday nights from Sept. 6 - Nov. 8 for 10 weeks, according to Nathan Light, church seminar coordinator. For information or to register, contact Light at (423) 349-6868 or uglyheadjig@aol.com; or the church office at (423) 245-3141.

◆ **Central Baptist Church, Alcoa**, will hold its homecoming celebration Aug. 20 during the morning worship service. Former pastor Gary Baker will speak. A fellowship luncheon will follow the service.

◆ **Maple Springs Baptist Church, Medon**, will hold revival Aug. 13-17 beginning with Sunday morning worship service and continuing nightly. Benny Jackson of Germantown will speak. Wayne Dorris, Maple Springs Church minister of music, will lead the music. For information, call the church at (731) 935-7033.

◆ **Mount View Baptist Church, Antioch**, will hold a historic and futuristic celebration Aug. 25-30 for its 110th anniversary. The historic celebration will be Aug. 25-26 with a homecoming, a catered dinner, and a cookout with a clown and children's activities. The Aug. 27 morning worship will feature musician Angel Mullins, former pastors, and current pastor Daniel Carr. The futuristic celebration features a nightly discovery café revival Aug. 27-30. Christian artists scheduled to perform are Ann Downing, Jason Barrett, and Greg Miller. For information, contact Gary Mullins at (615) 641-7171.

◆ **Mount Tirzah Baptist Church, Newbern**, recently held Vacation Bible School. It averaged 41 participants each day. Pastor Bill Taylor reported that this was the first time in many years that Mt. Tirzah Church hosted a five-day VBS. About 54 people attended family night on Friday. Five children prayed to receive Christ, 10 new prospects were identified for Sunday School, and one family attended morning worship.

◆ **Round Lick Baptist Church, Watertown**, recently had seven members serve nine days on the Amazon River in Brazil. The team reported 550 people made decisions for Christ as their Savior.



VOLUNTEERS FROM Riverside Baptist Association, Livingston, stand in Owego, N.Y., July 10-14 at Living Water Baptist Church. The 41 workers from five churches did general repairs on two church facilities and helped two families remove debris from their homes which were flooded recently. The Tennesseans conducted a children's camp and a nightly youth service. They visited residents handing out bottles of water and inviting people to "discover the living water," described Chris Ward, director of missions. The team also prayerwalked. "It was a great week of serving, encouraging, and bonding with each other and the folk of Owego," added Ward.

◆ **Mount Zion Baptist Church, New Tazewell**, recently held revival services. Ronnie Pressnell, pastor of Midway Baptist Church, New Tazewell, and Clayton Dunsmore, director of missions, Cumberland Gap Baptist Association, spoke. One person made a profession of faith and several people rededicated their lives.

◆ **Tazewell Baptist Church, Tazewell**, recently held revival services. Eddie Bolin of Gaffney, S.C., was the speaker. One person made a profession of faith.

◆ **Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Hermitage**, held "The Arctic Edge" Vacation Bible School recently. The church reported an enrollment of 970 children and leaders with 47 people making decisions for Christ. The church also recently send a 49-member youth team to conduct a sports camp and do hurricane cleanup in New Orleans and Grand Isle, La. The church additionally sent a six-member disaster relief chain saw team to Slidell to help hurricane victims.

◆ **Campbell County Baptist Association, LaFollette**, recently hosted a youth choir from a church in Stark, Fla. The youth choir held four Backyard Bible Clubs, performed three concerts, and led

three worship services in churches. The youth choir also scraped and painted the building at Pruden Baptist Church, Pruden.

Statewide Events

◆ **Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief** recovery teams are continuing to help storm victims in Illinois following July 21 tornados and severe thunderstorms, according to David Acres, state disaster relief director. Working July 31 - Aug. 6 in Swansea, Ill., were Tennessee chain saw teams from **First Baptist Church, Jackson; and Beech River Baptist Association, Lexington.**

Associations

◆ **Campbell County Baptist Association, LaFollette**, recently hosted a youth choir from a church in Stark, Fla. The youth choir held four Backyard Bible Clubs, performed three concerts, and led



PARTICIPANTS OF the recent Vacation Bible School of Cub Creek Hall Baptist Church, Parsons, stand together. The church was holding its second VBS. The first was held in the 1970s. The VBS enrolled 23 students although the church normally draws about nine children and youth in Sunday School and worship. The VBS theme was SpaceQuest. The church didn't imagine it would have so many participants, reported Shirley Brewer, church clerk and VBS director.



MEMBERS OF Tusculum Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, pause in Vancouver, Wash., where they served recently. The team helped finish construction of Cross Pointe Baptist Church which they worked on last year. "It was a delight to help them finish the building in preparation for an Oct. 1 occupancy date," said Bill Highsmith, team leader and minister of the church. Workers were, from left, front row, Jan Noland, Barbara Lampley, Shirley Stevenson, Maree Taylor, Carolyn Staten, Lynn Richmond, Sylvia Slagle, Wanda Smith, and Shirley Craig; back row, Nancy Brown, Alton Brown, Bill Slagle, Phil Lampley, Paul Stevenson, Lyle Taylor, Bo Irvin III, Gerald Richmond, Cathey Bartlett, Alan Bartlett, Ed Smith, Earl Craig, Rachel Patterson, and Ray Patterson. Not pictured is Bill Highsmith.



MEMBERS OF Pine Eden Baptist Church, Crossville, participate in a groundbreaking for a Family Life Center. The event was July 2. Tony L. Wilson, pastor, speaks to the congregation. The facility will provide space for youth activities and a fellowship hall.