

Baptist & Reflector

Wide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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CP gifts head for year

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Gifts from Tennessee Baptist Convention churches through the Cooperative Program totaled \$49,198 in September.

With one month to go in the fiscal year, CP gifts total \$242,140, an increase of \$10,258, or 0.51 percent over the same time period last year.

CP gifts, however, are \$7,255, or 1.21 percent below budget needs.

"We remain confident that churches will respond to missions and ministry needs in Tennessee and throughout the world," said Executive Director James Porch.

"We are grateful for the increase over last year's giving, and, with one month remaining this year, we encourage our churches to help us meet our budget goal for this year," Porch added. □

From C-N faculty

Netherton receives vote of no confidence

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

JEFFERSON CITY — The faculty of Carson-Newman College have expressed a lack of confidence in college president James Netherton.

C-N faculty met in full session on Oct. 5 and considered a resolution regarding the president, according to David Nowell, senior vice president for advancement and administration.

Nowell said faculty have expressed concern over the president's management style.

Members of the faculty council, which presented the resolution, have been unavailable for comment, according to the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*.

The resolution noted "that we the faculty do hereby declare that we individually and as a whole have no confidence in President Netherton and respectfully request the board of trustees to act for the health, well being, and future of the college."

The resolution passed by a

vote of 129-71, Nowell told the *Baptist and Reflector*. Only 200 of the 244 full-time faculty and staff eligible to vote cast ballots, he added.

Nowell, who described the meeting as "very civil," said that one faculty member stressed before the voting that they were not calling for trustees to remove Netherton from office.

Instead, Nowell recounted, they were asking trustees to look into the matter "and do what trustees do best — to work to secure a bright future for the college and help to address the challenges we are facing."

Nowell said the president and the trustees "are taking this matter very seriously."

Trustee chairman C. T. Cozart released a statement later on Oct. 5.

Cozart said that the board of

trustees "respects the opinion and perspective of the faculty and will be attentive to this expression in future deliberations."

He noted the board also "appreciates the desire of the faculty to work cooperatively to secure a strong future."

Cozart, a retired businessman and member of Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga, stressed that the trustees is the only entity "legally responsible for making decisions in the best interest of the college."

"The president and board of trustees share responsibility for maintaining a balanced, overall perspective that appropriately considers the views and needs of all constituencies. All of us recognize and acknowledge there are concerns that need to be addressed, and we will do so in a constructive fashion, working with the trustees, administration, faculty, staff, alumni, and other friends of the college," the statement continued.

The statement concluded by assuring C-N constituents of

trustee support for "President Netherton and the faculty and that we are committed to doing what is in the best interest of the college and its mission."

"We are approaching this matter with prayerful diligence and faith that God will bring from this situation a positive solution and a brighter future for this great institution."

Trustee Marvin Cameron, pastor of First Baptist Church, Kingsport, was chairman of the committee which selected Netherton in 2000.

"When I was privileged to chair the search committee for a president of Carson-Newman College our committee did a diligent and prayerful search for the person God wanted to lead our college," Cameron said.

"I was convinced then, and I remain convinced today, that Jim Netherton is that person. I hope Tennessee Baptists will join me in praying for divine leadership for Dr. Netherton, our board, faculty, alumni, students, and all members of the Carson-Newman family." □



NETHERTON

Cookeville church aids sister congregation in Monterey

Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

MONTEREY — When First Baptist Church here was looking for someone to preach after pastor resigned, Tim Frank, associate pastor at Stevens Street Baptist Church

in nearby Cookeville, agreed to fill in one Sunday.

That one Sunday led to 15 months and an unusual but very effective partnership between Stevens Street and First Baptist Church, leaders from both congregation agree.

While Frank did the bulk of

the preaching during those 15 months, other members from Stevens Street and First Baptist also filled the pulpit. One of those men, Tony Fleenor, accepted a call to preach during that time and is now pastor of Cane Creek Baptist Church, Cookeville. All three congrega-

tions are in Stone Baptist Association.

First Baptist Church leadership all agreed that Frank did more than just preach. "He stepped in and filled in as pastor. That's what kept the church going," said Tim Murphy, a deacon and member of the pastor search committee at First Baptist.

"He was such a blessing. Tim took a burden off the search committee and allowed us time to seek the Lord's will," Murphy continued. "I hate to even use the word interim. He was our pastor for 15 months," he added.

The church accomplished a great deal during the interim, agreed Johnny Bowman, a layman at First Baptist, who during the process, felt God's call to preach and was later called as pastor (see story on page 3).

Frank also provided the church with his administrative skills. "He showed us how to do some things better in our church," said Jerry Hackworth, a deacon at First Baptist.

"Tim also had a heart and love for our people," Hackworth added.

First Baptist leaders readily acknowledged their church was going through troubled times and really needed assistance.

Paul Gilpatrick, chairman of the deacons, expressed appreciation to Stevens Street for having a vision and reaching out to First Baptist.

"We were falling on our faces. The vision they had saved us," Gilpatrick said.

First Baptist's need for assistance came at a time Stevens Street was trying to decide if they needed to plant a church or assist an existing church with needs, Frank said.

"Our heart has been toward our sister churches," noted Frank, who continued his duties at Stevens Street while working with First Baptist during the interim period.

"We support those who have the heart to start new churches, but we see the Lord leading our church to assist existing churches," Frank observed.

"I believe the Lord receives great glory when a church that has been through struggles catches that fresh vision and a fresh sense of purpose," he added.

— See Cookeville, page 3



LEADERS FROM First Baptist Church, Monterey, and Stevens Street Baptist Church, Cookeville, gathered recently at Stevens Street to share how both congregations benefited from a recent relationship between the two churches. From left, are, Tony Fleenor, a former member of Stevens Street and pastor of Cane Creek Baptist Church; Jerry Hackworth, a deacon at FBC; Tim Frank, associate pastor, Stevens Street; Johnny Bowman, pastor, FBC; Tim Murphy, deacon and member of pastor search committee at FBC; and Paul Gilpatrick, chairman of deacons at FBC.

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NAMB trustees adopt new policies

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — North American Mission Board trustees approved a new set of policies and guidelines at their Oct. 4 meeting designed to clarify existing procedures and implement new accountability for future leaders of the Southern Baptist entity.

The specially appointed Executive Level Policy Committee presented a report that was adopted unanimously by NAMB trustees. The committee, chaired by Larry Thomas of Heber Springs, Ark., was created following a March 24, 2006 trustee report that detailed concerns about former NAMB President Bob Reccord's leadership. Reccord resigned April 17.

A cover memo from the committee stated, "Throughout these recommendations, you will see certain threads repeated: Full disclosure, accountability, priority of NAMB ministry over personal ministries."

The committee report focuses on four areas of oversight: presidential accountability; issues raised by Capin Crouse, an independent auditing firm; changes to NAMB's bylaws; and a set of miscellaneous recommendations.

In the area of presidential oversight, trustees approved a requirement that NAMB's president spend no less than 60 percent of his time on campus at NAMB. The president can request an adjustment in this percentage from the trustee executive committee.

"Because the president is the administrator of NAMB, it necessitates time in the office," the document states. "He is also our public relations leader and needs to spend significant time with our cooperative partners. The 60-40 guideline provides a healthy balance."

In addition to an annual review process already in place, the new policies require the president to submit a "Quarterly Deliverables" report to trustees. The trustees' financial services committee also has been charged with conducting an audit of executive level financial transactions once every two years.

The new policies also require that NAMB's president obtain trustee approval before implementing a new strategy or initiative or before making a significant change in an existing initiative.

"We have consulted with the executive leadership team and NAMB human resources to formulate these policies," the committee stated. "We have sought to avoid overreaction or letting the pendulum swing too far in the other direction."

Areas addressed at the recommendation of Capin Crouse included conflicts of interest as related to NAMB staff engaging in outside employment, receiving honoraria, serving interim pas-

torates, and accepting gifts. The approved document also included guidelines for determining the ownership of intellectual property.

"NAMB is not a platform to profit from personal ministries," the committee stated. "Our concern for this perceived abuse is a primary motivation behind our management recommendations in this section." □

NAMB committee has 'select' list

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Trustees of the North American Mission Board approved 60 new missionaries, endorsed 38 Southern Baptist chaplains and heard a report from their presidential search committee during their Oct. 4 meeting at the board's Atlanta-area offices.

The board also passed a number of new leadership and management policies and heard from Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page.

Page opened the Oct. 4 meeting by telling trustees that God has given NAMB a "monumental task. Southern Baptists need NAMB to set the pace and give us a strategy to win this continent for Christ."

Page told the trustees it's not NAMB's job to win the United States and Canada to Christ; that is the job of the local church.

"It's NAMB's job to challenge our churches to do what God has called them to do, and then give us the tools and the direction needed to win North America for Christ," he said.

Greg Faulls, chairman of the NAMB trustee presidential search committee and senior pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky., updated the trustees on the search process.

"We are trying to make it a thorough, prayer-filled process," Faulls said. "We neither want to waste time or rush. We've got to get it right. We know that what we do will affect thousands of lives over the course of time. We take this seriously and covet your prayers."

Faulls reported that since the Sept. 1 deadline for submitting resumes, the committee has been deliberating and praying. "We've narrowed the candidates down to a select list — not a short list but a select list. But we're still only at the preliminary stages. If you hear that we've narrowed it down to one or two men, that's not true." □

60% of churches in New Orleans now 'functioning'

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — An ongoing study by Bill Day at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary revealed that only 60 percent of all the greater New Orleans-area churches are open

Statewide candidates endorse TM

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Campaigns of four candidates for statewide office have issued statements of support for the Tennessee Marriage Amendment on the Nov. 7 ballot.

The proposed amendment, approved by the state legislature in 2005 and 2006, defines marriage as a contract between one man and one woman. To be adopted as an addition to the state constitution, the amendment must receive one vote more than half of all votes cast in the governor's race.

Lydia Lenker, press secretary to Gov. Phil Bredesen, D-Nashville, said, "Governor Bredesen is against gay marriage. He believes marriage is a covenant between

a man and a woman."

Lance Frizzell, communications director for Republican gubernatorial candidate J. Bryson, said, "Senator Bryson heartily supports the marriage amendment. He voted for it twice" (2005 and 2006).

Todd Womack, political director for the senator campaign of Bob Corker, Chattanooga, said, "Bob Corker is a strong supporter of state constitutional amendment protecting marriage the union between one man and one woman."

U.S. Representative Harford, D-Memphis and a candidate for U.S. Senate, said voted against gay marriage in Congress and will vote for Tennessee ballot measure banning gay marriage." □ Linda Lawson

and functioning one year after Hurricane Katrina.

Day, associate professor of evangelism and church health and associate director of the Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Health, presented the preliminary findings of his study, "The Impact of Hurricane Katrina on the Viability of Churches in the Greater New Orleans Area," during the 29th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Research Fellowship Sept. 21 at New Orleans Seminary.

The goal of the research, Day said, is to determine which churches will close their doors because of the storm, which churches will survive, and which churches will actually see growth. The research study focuses on the five parishes that represent the New Orleans metro area — Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany parishes. Not limited to Baptist churches, Day is studying all area churches.

Day found that only 905 of the 1,508 churches that existed before Katrina are functioning one year after the storm. The research revealed that 60 percent of Southern Baptist churches in the five-parish area are functioning.

His research will not end there. Day wants to know why some churches survived and others did not. These findings could help churches in other areas overcome future natural disasters.

"Unfortunately, some churches will not survive. [They will] never come back after Katrina," he said. "Some churches, however, will survive. Actually, some churches will grow even after something like Katrina."

"I really wanted to know why churches grow, not just so we can learn something here that would help us later on New Orleans is not the only place that will ever suffer terrible devastation," Day added. "What can be learned from the greatest natural disaster that's ever struck the United

States that we can apply now here, but elsewhere?"

"This is not a question, answer right now, it probably isn't a question I can answer even a year from now," he said. "I'll be looking at it over the five years." □

Union symposium explores 'Baptists in America'

Baptist Press

JACKSON — The nature of the Baptist tradition will be the topic for the "Baptists in America: Baptist Way or Baptist Ways?" symposium at Union University Oct. 16.

The event will feature Cary A. Wills, professor of church history at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Leonard, dean and professor of church history at Wake Forest University Divinity School.

Greg Thornbury, dean of Union's School of Christian Studies, said the event will be an engaging conversation between two distinct Baptist voices.

"Bill Leonard wrote a book called *Baptist Ways*, which is an assessment of Baptist history," Thornbury said. "His argument is that at the end of the day, really is no center to what means to be a Baptist, that Baptist history there has been a diverse collection of traditions and emphases. He celebrates that diversity."

Wills, in his published work, takes a different opinion, Thornbury said.

"His argument is that the majority of the Baptist tradition, especially among Southern Baptists, there was a mainstream theological center of conviction with confessional boundaries," Thornbury said of Wills.

Cost for lunch is \$5. For more information, or to register, contact the office of the dean of Union's School of Christian Studies at (731) 661-5117. □

Churches can support Tennessee Marriage Amendment

By Linda Lawson
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — While churches and other non-profits with tax-exempt status are restricted by the Internal Revenue Service from endorsing or endorsing political candidates, they are allowed to take stands on public policy issues such as the Tennessee Marriage Amendment.

The marriage amendment on the Nov. 7 ballot in Tennessee specifies marriage as a legal contract between one man and one woman.

David Davis, counsel for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said a church is free to take a variety of positions on the Tennessee Marriage Amendment or other policy issues.

A church can speak for or against legislation. It can have pamphlets printed, can put information on its website, and just about any other way in this respect."

In an article titled "Churches May

Promote the Passage of State and Federal Marriage Amendments," Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, a non-profit litigation, education, and policy organization, listed actions churches may take, including:

- Preach about the importance of traditional marriage.
- Conduct seminars, conferences, or other meetings discussing traditional marriage and the amendment.
- Urge people to vote in favor of the amendment.

While churches are not allowed to endorse or oppose political candidates, Davis said they could "publish a pamphlet or hand-out which depicts side-by-side comparisons of the positions of all candidates for a particular election on issues key to the tax-exempt organ-

ization." Churches also may "assist with voter registration as long as they do not condition such assistance upon the way a potential voter is going to vote on a pending issue."

"Just because an organization is tax exempt does not mean it has given up its constitutional rights to speak out about those issues about which it has concern," Davis said. "The pro-

hibition is intended to prevent abuse of an organization's tax-exempt status, not take away the organization's constitutional rights."

The IRS has specified churches must not spend more than an "insubstantial" part of their total activities in one year directly lobbying, promoting, or opposing the passage of legislation or constitutional amendments.

While the IRS has not specifically

defined "insubstantial," that is generally understood to be approximately 5 percent of their total activities, according to Marcus S. Owens and Douglas N. Varley in an article, "Politics and the Pulpit," available on the web site of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Staver identified a range of 5-15 percent.

Davis said "there is no black-and-white, letter-of-the-law definition of 'insubstantial.'" He said the "insubstantial" test has been applied to church activities in some cases and to total finances in others.

"A church may speak about or even attempt to sway voters in favor of or in opposition to legislation that it feels has direct impact upon a basic element of the church's doctrine, tenets, and/or beliefs," Davis said.

"As long as the church uses reasonableness, it is not going to violate the 'insubstantial' limitation utilized by the IRS," he added. □



Cookeville church aids sister congregation ...

Continued from page 1

Frank stressed that Stevens Street never went to First Baptist with the intent of "replicating themselves." "We partnered with them and still intend to do so," he said. During the 15 years, the churches held joint services and partnered together in various ministries, including FAITH, an evangelism outreach program.

Jimmy Arms, pastor of Stevens Street, observed that some time God had been working in our hearts in relation to working with existing churches.

At times, we all need support, encouragement, and direction. Our experience of working with First Baptist Church, Monterey, has been wonderful," he said.

The goal was to have First Baptist moving in a positive direction so a new pastor could make a smooth transition, Frank said. "The Lord was in it," he said.

Frank credited First Baptist leadership for being willing to seek assistance. Some churches let pride get in the way, he observed.

He also noted sometimes churches are hesitant to partner with other churches because "their visions do not mesh. The agenda must be based on the Lord's purpose," he said.

Murphy noted a lot of walls and barriers were broken down. "Stevens Street never let us feel their way was the only way. They were there to help," he said, adding, "They prayed up and filled with the Holy Spirit."

Hackworth agreed. "They (Stevens Street) were willing to let their men leave their churches where they could

make a difference to help us."

"You could feel their desire to help a sister church that was struggling," Murphy added.

Frank admitted that there were times when Stevens Street wondered when he would be back with them totally. Frank would attend the first service at Stevens Street on Sunday, then go to Monterey to preach. Frank usually was at Stevens Street on Sunday night and arranged for others to preach at First Baptist during evening services.

But whenever people would question the partnership, Frank said Arms would remind the congregation "of what we were doing" and that "it is our ministry."

"While I know that it has been a blessing for them to have Bro. Tim leading our work with them, it has been a blessing for us to partner together in our Lord's work," Arms said.

Gilpatrick observed that the fact that Stevens Street would reach out to First Baptist has had a tremendous impact on

the church.

"We have seen what can be accomplished if our church could have the vision that Stevens Street had," he said.

"It has been a life-changing experience what a church could do that was prayed up," agreed Hackworth, referring to Stevens Street.

Frank said that Stevens Street will continue to partner with First Baptist Church.

"We are anxious to see all that the Lord does at Monterey," he said. □

Church's new pastor is 'home grown'

By Dale Welch, editor
Hilltop Express

MONTEREY — It's been a long, eight-year walk with the Lord for Johnny Bowman to get where he is now.

During his eight-year career with the Putnam County Ambulance service, he has helped save lives nearly every day. Beginning as a Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), he worked his way up to paramedic and then a supervisory position. But that has come to an end. Bowman is moving from saving lives to a more important job — helping save souls.

Bowman is the new pastor of First Baptist Church here. He was ordained to the ministry on Oct. 1.

Bowman felt God's call to the ministry and even attended seminary but was unsure what to do next. He was advised by a pastor to return home and find a job he liked so much that he

would do it for free.

"If that worked out," he told me, "then I'd know the ministry wasn't for me." Bowman did that and settled into a career he really liked.

"Two years ago I was at a crossroads," Bowman recalled. "It was either to continue to let me serve Him, or give up. It was there that I chose to totally sell out to God."

Bowman became active at First Baptist, working with the youth.

During the 15 months First Baptist was without a pastor, the church was led by Tim Frank, associate pastor at Stevens Street Baptist Church, Cookeville. He asked Bowman to preach on several occasions.

Frank acknowledged that during the process, several people approached him about becoming their pastor.

"I had a clear sense of the Lord speaking, giving me direction that I was not to go to First Baptist as pastor," Frank said.

Shortly after that clear direction, the committee began to consider Bowman, Frank said.

And after awhile, it became apparent to the search commit-

tee their next pastor was already in the church.

Tim Murphy, a deacon and member of the search committee, recalled that after Bowman's second sermon, someone said, "What about Johnny?"

Bowman began to pray about the matter, even before the committee approached him.

He recalled meeting and praying with Frank at one point and Frank said, "I think the next pastor is here at this table and it is not me."

Bowman acknowledged he was heading toward youth ministry, but "God grabbed me and headed me in another direction."

Bowman is appreciative of Frank and refers to him as his mentor.

"I'm Timothy and he is Paul. He has helped me tremendously," he said.

The new pastor is approaching his tasks with the knowledge that he must lean on God. "He is the potter, we are the clay," Bowman said. "We need to let Him mold the church and also mold me as pastor." □ — Lonnie Wilkey contributed to this article.

Former TBC leader dies

Baptist and Reflector

FRANKLIN — Bill Wilson, 75, a Tennessee Baptist Convention retiree and a Tennessee Baptist pastor with a passion for missions, died Oct. 4 following complications from a stroke.

A native of New Albany, Miss., he served from 1990-1997 as the TBC convention ministries director which included

supervising partnership missions. He served on and led several mission trips to the Philippines, Chile, Poland, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Canada, and Michigan.

Wilson also served as interim executive director-treasurer of the TBC following the resignation of D.L. Lowrie and the call of current executive director James Porch.

Wilson was the founding pastor of Brentwood Baptist Church, Brentwood, and served there for 20 years before joining the TBC staff. He was named pastor emeritus by the congregation.

He is survived by his wife, Creely, three children, nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. □



WILSON



BOWMAN

Editor's Note: As expected, the Sept. 27 column on Calvinism drew a number of responses. As is my policy, I try to allow all views to appear in the paper. Following are a sampling of letters regarding this column. Let me stress that I was not talking about people who believe just a few of the Calvinist points. I would say most Baptists, including myself, hold to some of those points.

Call is to preach

So, only 10 percent of Southern Baptist pastors fully embrace all five points of Calvinism. Let's see, that's roughly 4,000 pastors. I wonder how many of them would agree with Lonnie Wilkey's uninformed assessment that "Calvinists have no sense of urgency" in evangelism and missions, and are therefore "dangerous" to the cause of the gospel? I hope no one strikes a match near that straw man.

I propose we ask the 4,000 rogue preachers about their own sense of urgency surrounding the gospel. Someone could do a data search of the official records and report the average number of Calvinistic baptisms and percentages given through the Cooperative Program, and then compare those two numbers with SBC averages for all churches in order to discover just who it is that believes in the necessity of the gospel.

Surely Mr. Wilkey and LifeWay are aware that large numbers of reformed theologians have varying degrees of agreement and disagreement with modern portrayals of Calvin's soteriology (I once heard a pastor proudly proclaim that he was a two-and-a-half-point Calvinist!). But every Calvinist I know of is life-or-death serious about evangelism and global missions. Ask D. James Kennedy (*Evangelism Explosion*) or John Piper (a Baptist pastor who has written much about the need to proclaim the gospel) or Al Mohler (whose blog typically deals with apologetics-based evangelism), or ask any of the 4,000 rascals in our midst who dare to believe that it is God who is sovereign, and not man.

Here's a novel question: Since when did God call pastors to define themselves by, or defend, anyone's theological construction (be it Calvin, Kant, Arminius, the Pope or anyone else)? As I remember the Bible, the call is to preach the Word and proclaim the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. Preaching the "whole counsel of God" will mean dealing on occasion with hard matters like election and free-will, and not with one to the exclusion of the other. Both are in there, and neither one is dangerous.

Mike Womack
Athens 37303

Am I welcome?

George Whitefield is widely regarded as the greatest evangelist of the 18th century.

Though a native Englishman, his most fruitful evangelistic efforts were here in the United States. Whitefield was a passionate preacher of the gospel who literally preached himself to death at a relatively early age. He demonstrated a burning zeal to see people turn to Christ and be saved. He was also clearly Calvinistic in his doctrine.

The point that I am making is that it is a serious error to assume that those who hold to Calvinism, or the doctrines of grace, "have no sense of urgency," as you claimed in your editorial. Many critics of Calvinism make the typical error of equating it with hyper-Calvinism, which is a clearly unbiblical perspective. Iain Murray's book, *Spurgeon v. Hyper-Calvinism*, (yes, the great Charles Spurgeon was also a Calvinist) is very helpful in making this critical distinction.

Broadly speaking, Calvinists believe that God indeed has ordained who will be saved and who will be condemned. Admittedly, most evangelical Christians disagree with that assertion, while also affirming that, while God does not make such a judgment, He does indeed know who will and will not be saved. In either case, Mr. Wilkey, we as followers of Christ do not know who those people are. Our task is to faithfully preach the gospel to the world, and that commitment to the Great Commission is not diluted to any degree by Calvinistic convictions!

After reading your pronouncements against Calvinism, as a pastor who holds to those convictions while also being fervently committed to evangelism and missions, I must ask — am I still welcome in the Tennessee Baptist Convention?

Dean Sisk
Murfreesboro 37130

A sad day

Mr. Wilkey's editorial in the Sept. 27 issue demonstrates, quite sadly, that he misunderstands both reformed theology and the Bible itself.

It is indeed a sad day for Southern Baptists when a state paper's editor can write an article such as this. Missing is sound biblical exegesis, understanding, and consideration, and all that is there related to the Scripture is the subjective statement, "As I read about Jesus and His ministry I notice ..."

Granted, Mr. Wilkey expressed he has no theological training, but in his gathering from "God's Holy Word" surely he has encountered such chapters as Ephesians 1 and Romans 9.

And as far as urgency is concerned, it is agreed that we all need to urgently share the gospel. Yet if one believes the real determining factor in salvation is a person's free will, it is utterly deplorable if every Christian is not trying to persuade, cajole, and plead with people to "let go and be saved,"

24 hours of every day.

Anything less would not be urgency, would it? We have to ask again: Is the Bible alone determinative by itself, or not, for all matters of faith and practice?

Blayne Hall
Orlinda 37141

Disappointed

I was disappointed in the Sept. 27 editorial. I believe it shows some extreme misunderstandings of Calvinism. Paul had a sense of urgency. He didn't know who the elect were so he preached to everyone.

A good resource is a John MacArthur article, "Who Chose Whom." Al Mohler would be another source of information. In our fallen condition, our pride wants us to think that we have something to do with our salvation and that of others.

I believe the Bible teaches that it is all of God. Charles Finney hated Calvinism, evangelists hate Calvinism, and so does Rick Warren who claims he can lead anyone to the Lord if he can find their hot button.

Unless the Holy Spirit draws someone, they will not be saved regardless of how many hot buttons are pushed or how many manipulative altar calls they experience.

Bob Crye
Knoxville 37918

Know the subject

You didn't let your ignorance of a subject keep you from writing about it. Your assertions about Calvinism betray your lack of "seminary training." But, let's just assume for a moment that you are correct, and Calvinists don't have the appropriate level of "zeal" for evangelism. Oh, snap! Since they account for only 10 percent of SBC pastors, then Calvinists can't be blamed for the very public evangelistic failures of this denomination. Now, we'll have to find something else to blame, won't we?

You see, I believe that Calvinism was the great hope of the "good ol' boy" fraternity of leadership in the SBC/TBC. If they could show that Calvinism affected evangelism, they would have a case against it. Instead, now having been shown the relative smallness of the issue, what is to blame?

Mr. Wilkey, can you explain the apparent lack of "zeal" from most of the other 90 percent of SBC churches and pastors? For, certainly, if we all were appropriately zealous (as you suggested we should be) we should see great evangelistic success. Shouldn't we have baptized at least a million and more?

There is a problem in this convention, for sure. And the type of rhetoric used in your last editorial is symptomatic of the heart of the problem. It seems that some people in this convention need a "them" to always be against. First it was the "liberals," now it is the Calvinists, people who practice a private

prayer language, and those who don't have the "proper" baptism. Pretty soon, we will run out of enough of "them" to be against, and the only thing left will be a few of "us."

Mike Beach, pastor
Middle Springs Baptist
Church, Oliver Springs 37840

Do homework

Regarding your recent article, "Calvinists Have No Sense of Urgency — Jesus Did," I would most appreciate the chance to comment.

The article states: "In a nutshell, Calvinists believe that God has already selected or pre-ordained those who will be saved." If this is, in fact, a comprehensive summary of what "Calvinists" believe, then there ought to be no controversy among people of the Book, because Ephesians 1:4, Romans 8:29-30, and numerous other texts state this very truth. Where the disconnect comes is in the article's next paragraph, which states: "Now, I believe firmly that God knows the decisions people will make, but I do not believe He has pre-ordained anyone to spend an eternity in hell" (emphasis added). But the definition in the previous paragraph said nothing about hell, but "those who will be saved." The implication is that "Calvinists" do believe that God has pre-ordained people to hell. In debate terminology, this is a "straw man." It does not logically follow that a person who believes the biblical texts on God's sovereign freedom in salvation also believes that God has "pre-ordained anyone to spend an eternity in hell."

In the interest of brevity, let me characterize the article as perfectly illustrating a major problem in the ever-widening discussion of "Calvinism": no one seems to know what the word means. Or at least there are so many different opinions of what it means that they cannot possibly all be correct. Your disclaimer of "keep in mind I am writing from a layman's perspective with no seminary training" cannot be used as an excuse for not carefully seeking to understand the history of Calvinism, its prominence in the theology of the very founders of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the real issues surrounding the contemporary debate. Does it surprise you to know that some of the greatest evangelists and missionaries in the history of the church were, by your definition above, "Calvinists?" Men like John Bunyan, William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Charles Spurgeon, just to name a few. You don't need seminary training to read books about and by these men and conclude that they did have, contrary to the title of your article, a "sense of urgency."

Finally, I must reveal the reason for my interest in this topic. A few months ago I resigned my

position as pastor in one Tennessee Baptist Conv churches. A small but "Calvinist" and worked h run me off because they tl my theology would do harm to their church. The soning was much the sa what appears in your article. As editor of one state newspapers, I plea you to do your homework write responsibly on "h ton" issues where men's hoods and families are at Such articles as yours, I f do not contribute positively the discussion.

Mark Holling
Memphis 38119

Making us third

In your editorial for the Sept. 27 edition you state the purpose as an editor is to make his or her readers think. I hope that is the end result of your cavalier article.

Rather than cast a dark light upon those who hold to the doctrines of grace, might I suggest some other areas of investigation? Certainly we Southern Baptists need to consider how God saves a sinner. That is a more profitable discussion.

Could you possibly examine whether we are proclaiming the good news of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection or merely recruiting members to join our organizations? Do we embrace regenerate church membership or not? How about an examination of the theology of our Southern Baptist forefathers? There are many topics that play a beloved denomination far greater than whether a person embraces "Calvinism" or not.

The doctrines of grace are new to the Southern Baptist Convention. James P. Boyce, John L. Dagg, and others in our history were certainly ashamed to be labeled "Calvinists." It was their "urgency" that pioneered theological education within our beloved denomination. The prince of preachers, Charles H. Spurgeon, was an unashamed Calvinist to cast a disparaging light upon those who likewise embrace these truths is neither Christian nor biblical.

Now if you wish to speak to the issue of disobedience, which is what an absence of urgency is, then speak to that issue. There are only 10 percent who are "Calvinists" within the SBC, then there are many more non-Calvinists without a sense of urgency for the lost. May your next editorial can address them!

As Al Mohler recently said, "Almost all Southern Baptists embrace some form of Calvinism. When we go out to evangelize, we pray for the Holy Spirit to be at work ahead of our feet. We don't say 'Good Luck!'"

Thanks for making me think. I hope others will as well.
Ray Burks, senior pastor
Lakeview Baptist Church
Selma 38373

TBC decision to sue Belmont goes far beyond money

Reflections



Lonnie Wilkey, editor

Court. This provided more details than we could print due to limited space.

Since then other news media outlets have learned about the action and disseminated the news across the state.

As expected there have been a variety of opinions, ranging from outrage that the TBC would file suit to a sense of "there was no other recourse."

As a Christian I am saddened that it came down to the lawsuit. Christian brothers and sisters should be able to work out difficulties and disagreements without the aid of a court. I am well aware that Scripture says we should not sue. But sometimes circumstances and other parties leave no alternative.

Critics, through forums in secular papers, have blasted the TBC for being money hungry, too fundamental, power hungry, and so on. In the minds of many the TBC is the villain. I disagree.

I was not privy to the meetings of the Belmont Study Committee. In fact, the *Baptist and Reflector* has been excluded from meetings of the Executive Board in which the matter was discussed. Board leaders are aware that I disagree with those closed meetings and, like any journalist, feel meetings need to be open to the media.

But this is where trust enters the picture. I know most of the members of the Belmont Study Committee personally. I know their hearts and I am confident,

without a doubt in my mind, that it was not easy for them to "pull the trigger" and initiate that lawsuit. It was indeed a last resort for them.

While the Belmont Study Committee and the Executive Board are "taking the heat," keep in mind they were simply responding to an action taken last year by Belmont University.

When the convention convened last November, the Executive Board was prepared to refer to the convention a Resolution of Relationship which proposed that a fraternal relationship be established with Belmont. Had it been approved by convention messengers, it would have released the right of the convention to select trustees for the school that was begun by Tennessee Baptists in 1951. Only the convention can sever a relationship with one of its institutions.

But prior to the convention, Belmont unilaterally changed its charter, without convention knowledge, enabling the school to elect its own trustees. Changing the charter enables Belmont to have a self-perpetuating board of trustees. The change will allow Belmont to have non-Baptist trustees which they contend is needed because Baptist students comprise only 25 percent of the student body. The change, however, will also enable Belmont to "reward" high dollar donors with trustee positions if they so choose.

On top of that, convention

leadership discovered five days prior to the annual meeting a written agreement that was signed by representatives from both the convention and the university in 1951 that specifically outlined what would happen if the convention no longer elected Belmont's trustees. Basically, the agreement said that if the convention ever lost its right to elect Belmont's trustees, then Belmont must "refund, restore, and repay to the Executive Board all money and property which had been transferred to Belmont by the Executive Board," according to the "complaint" or lawsuit filed by the Executive Board.

With all that occurring in a short time, messengers delayed action on the proposed resolution until this past May when, during a special called convention, they rejected the resolution and a \$5 million settlement offer from Belmont and authorized the Belmont Study Committee to deal with the matter and to use all means necessary including private negotiations/settlement, mediation, arbitration, and litigation.

When Belmont made the move to take away the convention's right to elect trustees, they got "the ball rolling" so to speak. Now it is rolling downhill at a seemingly unstoppable pace.

The Belmont Study Committee was charged by the convention to resolve the issue and protect the best interests of the convention. The filing of the

complaint or lawsuit is merely another step in that process. It does not end private negotiations or mediation.

So what will happen? Tennessee Baptists need to pray that the matter can be resolved out of court. Both sides need to keep talking.

We all know that Belmont will never return to the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Despite what has happened, Belmont is a quality educational institution and has educated many ministers and lay leaders now serving in our churches. We should not be vindictive in our thinking and hope that the school "fails." Belmont is on sound footing now thanks to the efforts of faithful Tennessee Baptists years ago who sacrificed to save the school from financial disaster.

The question then is this: Should the TBC be compensated? That will be left up to the courts unless Belmont and TBC leaders step to the plate and get the matter resolved themselves.

I would much rather a decision of that magnitude be determined by Christian leaders trying to work together than a secular court of law.

The issue goes beyond any monetary settlement that can be reached. The issue boils down to simply "doing the right thing."

Pray that this matter can be resolved quickly and that, no matter what the result, the name of Christ will be exalted. □

letters to the editor

Observations

Some observations with reference to your recent editorial regarding Calvinism:

Some of the greatest preaching and ardent evangelists of the past and present are included among the proponents of Calvinism: George Whitefield; Charles Spurgeon; John Bunyan; Jonathan Edwards; James P. Joyce (first president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary); B. H. Carroll (founder and first president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary); Matthew Henry, the great biblical commentator; and, in our day, J. I. Packer, author of the best-seller, *Knowing God*; and D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, late pastor of Westminster Chapel, London, England, and at one time referred to as the "World's greatest living preacher."

Some pertinent Scriptures include the following:

While it is true that Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 28); He also said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Also, "No man can come to me except the Father draw him: and I will raise him up at the

last day" (John 6:44).

A belief in Calvinism does not automatically cancel one's evangelistic fervor, as even those with no such belief are often found lax and indifferent toward the unsaved.

Calvinists believe that God saves sinners as they hear the gospel, as they repent of their sins, and as they place their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. To paraphrase Dr. B. H. Carroll, "Both the sovereignty of God and the free will of man are taught in the Scriptures. While we cannot reconcile them, God can."

Excellent treatment of the subject is found in these books: *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer, InterVarsity Press and *Southern Baptists and the Doctrine of Election* by Robert B. Selph, Sprinkle Publications.

Ted J. Ingram
Knoxville 37918

Back to first point

Enjoyed your article on Calvinism and urgency, even if I am one of the 10 percent that believe the Bible teaches TULIP. I am even stronger than the five-pointer, I consider myself at least a seven-point Calvinist. I would add evangelism, missions, as well as prayer, (woops), that makes me an eight pointer!

This whole thing is subject to the first point. Is man totally dead or is there a spark of good to enable him to make a spiritual decision? Man's choices are always dependent upon his condition. Until God draws by the Holy Spirit he will always be dead spiritually. It doesn't matter how many sinners prayers he prays, or how many decisions one makes at the altar. How many times he's been down the Roman road, unless the Holy Spirit draws, the only place he will go is to Rome.

The good news is, God does have an elect people who will be reached by the gospel! These people will be reached by God's preordained instruments. That is why we urge people to come to Christ. We are the preordained instruments! "When the Gentiles heard the gospel, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). If you notice all were not saved, yet the message was given to all and God did the rest.

I'm with you my chosen brother in Christ, let's get going and preach with urgency, "come to Christ, He will save sinners!" Those that are appointed will come! Those that are not will continue to exercise the freewill of the condition they were born, total depravity. God does not

send them to hell, they freely exercise the nature inherit from Adam. The amazing thing about grace, is that God would even save one of us.

Alan Buckles, pastor
Springdale Baptist Church
Kingsport 37660

A joke?

The editorial in the Sept. 27 issue about Calvinism must be a joke. This is not for real. Only 10 percent of Southern Baptist pastors consider themselves to be a Calvinist. How does 10 percent equate to it being a "hot button" issue when 4 percent don't even know what they are?

Calvinism doesn't minimize the importance of the Great Commission, it only underlines it. It doesn't change the fact that God has called us to be His laborers; we are His ambassadors who spread the gospel through the world. He has chosen us and involved us and commissioned us to play an active role in His work of redeeming hearts and saving souls. Few people are saved the same way as the Apostle Paul, most accept Christ the way I did, because someone told them that God loves them and Jesus died for them. And because we are workers in the harvest, we shouldn't toss away a doctrine that

affirms that our work is not in vain. God is in control, He will cause our work to prosper, all for His glory. Now that is a very encouraging thought.

I get the feeling that you wanted to take the gloves off, that this is a very personal issue. Get over it. Calvinism is not a threat to your way of life nor is it a hill worth dying on. The statements you make in your editorial are generalized, narrow, and presumptuous — quite the exception to the sugar-coated wisdom normally found in your column. Calvinism is not the enemy. The enemy is laziness. More to the point, the enemy is worldliness. Urgency is bred from confidence that God will do what He has promised and that Jesus is coming soon. He commissioned us to send missionaries and to be missionaries, that means every Baptist in every pew, Calvinist or otherwise. We live with a sense of urgency (and a lasting peace) not because we have to go find that one lost sheep, but because God has promised that there will be a harvest and that time is now. Calvinists still believe that God is in the business of saving souls. I've even heard of Calvinists who give to missions, too (that's a joke).

Scott Johnson
Nashville 37211

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Church Health Matters

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Youth Ministry Matters

We all have heard that old saying "they will never care how much you know until they know how much you care." This is exactly what youth ministry today is all about! Caring.

Youth ministries have the amazing opportunity to help students put the pieces of their faith together and to help students connect the dots in their lives!

This issue of "Church Health Matters" focuses on reaching, teaching, and ministering to teenagers. The Youth Team of the Tennessee Baptist Convention stands ready to partner with you in Youth Ministry.

Listed below is the contact information for those state missionaries that are available to help you and church in any area of youth ministry.

Youth Sunday School, Discipleship, and Ministry

Bruce Edwards (615) 371-2094

Youth Evangelism

Kent Shingleton (615) 371-2077

Youth Missions Education

Acteens - Andrea Knight (615) 371-7919

Challengers - Frank Green (615) 371-2025

Impact Youth Camps and Retreats

Nancy Hamilton (615) 371-2085

What Makes a Youth Ministry Excellent?

By Bruce Edwards

Recently I asked, "What makes a youth ministry excellent?" to some Tennessee Baptist youth leaders. I got the responses that I knew that I would get even before I asked.

Is it the programming that makes an excellent youth ministry? Is it the relationships? What about the Bible study curriculum? What if we had a skate park? If we only had better leaders! Oh, if we only had that really cool youth room or building! And the list goes on and on.

Thinking about excellence in youth ministry, let me share with you some of the highlights from the very latest research related to youth ministry called the Exemplary Youth Ministry study. This current and very relevant research provides a portrait of the best in youth ministry. Churches of all sizes from seven denominations participated in this three-year study.

There are nine "big ideas" that point toward excellence in youth ministry.

Big Idea 1: It's About God!

The best youth ministry doesn't start with buildings, budgets, charismatic leaders, cutting-edge activities or even relationships. It is first and foremost built on a concrete sense of the presence of a living God.

Big Idea 2: God wants to transform and claim a teenager's life.

Youth ministry must be about changing lives. This compels us to accept youth as they are, but also to engage them in life-changing experiences.

Big Idea 3: God is passionate about using kids and adults to change the world.

If we hope to do the best in youth ministry, we must work hard to build a consistent desire to reach outside the walls of our church to a lost world.

Big Idea 4: Unless youth ministry matters to the church, it doesn't matter.

You might be able to have a successful exciting youth ministry without parental support or an uncaring congregation, is certainly doomed in the long run. Support has to be there — emotionally, prayerfully, financially, publicly, verbally.

Big Idea 5: Youth ministry works through quality relationships.

The most effective youth ministries are hard to build relationships. The heart of youth ministry is relational.

Big Idea 6: It takes a team to do youth ministry.

A primary responsibility of a youth minister is to equip, motivate, train, and challenge not only adult leaders, but also to mentor youth to be leaders.

Big Idea 7: It's all about family and family's influence.

The number one influence on a teenager's formation and life is their parents. Youth ministries today must strive to minister to families.

Big Idea 8: There are basic core practices that are effective.

Exemplary youth ministries are not about building traditions that don't look cutting edge.

Big Idea 9: There are unique, innovative creative practices that are effective.

Cutting edge and innovative ideas are needed to reach this generation of teenagers, but it does not guarantee effective ministry.

What we can learn from this research study is that youth ministry is truly a passion. It has to be about passion, commitment, and the deep desire to reach, teach, and minister to teenagers. Out the full results of the Exemplary Youth Ministry research project, visit www.exemplarym.com

Teaching Students: Have You Prayed about It?

By Kent Shingleton

If we are totally honest, most of us with the responsibility for running a youth ministry don't spend enough time asking God to give us vision, direction, and strategy to reach students.

Instead, we search for the latest and greatest resource, idea, or model that someone else has labeled "relevant" ministry.

Let me suggest that instead of chasing after the program or strategy that seems to work at the church down the street that we turn to what is most important: prayer. I'm not talking about a rote prayer every now and then. I'm talking about the pray without ceasing kind of prayer. I'm not very good at this. For whatever reason more often than not, I find myself easily distracted, missing out on what God really wants for my life and ministry.

Don't let this shock you, but in my 18 years of working with students none of them really gave a rip about the countless hours spent working to decorate the environment of our youth space or the really cool media shout images used during the worship set. Do you hear me? I said zero, nada, none of them.

With that in mind, let me suggest that as youth leaders, we turn to prayer. Here are three simple prayers focused on reaching teenagers:

Pray specifically by name every day for students you know who are lost.

Pray that God will give you opportunities to build meaningful relationships with students allowing you to share the gospel as He sees fit.

Pray that God will give you a compassionate heart that breaks through to students who desperately need to hear the message of hope in Jesus Christ.

Youth on Mission Resources

By Andrea Knight

A balanced youth ministry provides mission experiences and opportunities. Students today are ready to "change their world" if youth leaders teach them about missions, encourage them to seek opportunities, and plan mission encounters.

Listed below are some resources to help leaders train the next generation of missionaries as well as resources provided specifically to help teenage girls commit to a lifestyle of service and missions.

Top 5 Missions Resources for Students and Leaders

1. *The Big Book of Ministry Ideas for Students*, by Sarah S. Groves, with lots of ideas to get your group started in missions.
2. *Ministry Ideas for College Students*, by Tonya Heartsill, to impact a college campus with these great hands-on ministry ideas.
3. *Connections: A Daily Prayer Journal for Students*, by Gayla Parker, featuring devotions, activities, and more with a missions twist.
4. *Equipped for the Adventure: A Practical Guide to Short-Term Mission Trips*, by Scott Kirby, explains practical steps for a safe and hassle-free mission trip.
5. *I Can Do That! 100+ Ways to Be on Mission*, by Cathy Butler, lists easy-to-implement missions ideas.

Top 5 Resources for Working with Teen Girls

1. *Body. Beauty. Boys: The Truth about Girls and How We See Ourselves*, by Sarah Bragg, gives encouragement and advice for girls with a body image problem.
2. *Thin Enough: My Spiritual Journey Through the Living Death of an Eating Disorder*, by Sheryle Cruse, using faith, trust, and professional support help readers see how to overcome this addiction.
3. *Priceless: Discovering True Love, Beauty, and Confidence*, by Chandra Peele, set dating limits, learn how to dress modestly, and what to expect from guys in this Bible study.
4. *LifeSTYLE: Real Perspectives from Radical Women in the Bible*, by Whitney Prosperi, confronting issues of today's girls with stories of women from the Bible.
5. *Growing Godly Women: A Christian Woman's Guide to Mentoring Teenage Girls*, by Donna M. Greene, learn how to provide support and wisdom to teen girls.

All of these books and more are available through National Woman's Missionary Union at www.wmustore.com or (800) 968-7301.

Students and Solitude: Is It a Reality? By Nancy Hamilton

Band practice, competition cheerleading teams, catching up on the latest episode of "The O.C.," the list of extra-curricular activities for students these days could go on and on.

Do you wonder if students of today's times ever have time to rest, be quiet, and have solitude in their lives? Long gone are the days of coming straight home after school and spending quality time with family members and friends. Students are preoccupied with the need to fit in and to be part of a bigger cause. Because of this, they live jammed-packed lives that keep them on a constant cycle of going.

When's the last time you as a parent, student minister, leader, pastor, Sunday School teacher, or encourager of students helped these students carve out time for them to just seek some solitude?

A retreat can help them do just that. Whether a one night getaway, a Saturday afternoon, or a couple nights away to sneak out of their often cluttered world, students deep down are longing to have some quiet moments just to be still. When students are taken out of their ordinary, busy worlds that are crammed packed with stressed schedules and put into a calmer, more tranquil place, they are able to hear God in profound ways. There's value in getting away. In addition, allowing students to have time in small group settings with peers and those who share similar life patterns will help them identify with others along the journey.

Plan some intentional times of fellowship, recreation, worship, and quiet time. Help students see what they often can't see that God is ready and waiting to speak to them in ways they never thought.

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

- Oct. 12-13 YMU - Youth Ministry University, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- Oct. 13-14 Black Pastors Wives Retreat, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- Oct. 14 Girls in Action/Children in Action JAM, First Baptist Church, Dandridge
- Oct. 14 Tennessee Church Library Fall Clinic, Central Baptist Church of Bearden, Knoxville
- Oct. 15 Connect, Calsonic Arena, Shelbyville
- Oct. 19 Music & Worship Leader Roundtable - East Tennessee, Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Knoxville
- Oct. 21 Girls in Action/Children in Action JAM, Union University, Jackson

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



Baptist represents Wilson County in suit with ACLU

Baptist Press

LEBANON — Mike Jennings, attorney here, is representing the Wilson County School System, which is being sued by the ACLU for alleged religious practices. He said the school system "intends to defend this case vigorously."

Jennings, a member of First Baptist Church, Watertown, and mayor of Watertown, is representing the school system and system employees named in the suit filed by the ACLU Sept. 27 in federal court in Nashville.

According to *The Tennessean* the suit alleges Lakeview Elementary School in Mt. Juliet has violated the separation of church and state. Violations include a Christmas play, a group of praying parents, a national prayer day, and

teacher-led prayer in class, reported *The Tennessean*.

The suit names Wilson County School System; the system's director, Jim Duncan; Lakeview Elementary School's principal Wendell Marlowe; assistant principal Yvonne Smith; and school teacher Janet Adamson.

The suit was filed on behalf of two Old Hickory parents, who said the activities were "highly offensive," reported *The Tennessean*, and subjected their son

— a kindergartner at the school last year — to "religious proselytizing."

Jennings said the school system's policies are "in compliance with state and federal law." Investigation of incidents cited in the lawsuit will be conducted, he added.

One incident cited as illegal, the observance of See You at the Pole, is offered by many schools, Jennings observed. The event is held prior to

school hours, he noted.

Angi Kane, a leader of Praying Parents for Mount Juliet Elementary, a nearby school, said she feels the suit is "an attempt to intimidate us" by the ACLU and can be fought and

won. She is a member of T Grove Baptist Church, Hickory.

Jennings said, "It is early the lawsuit." The first off meeting of involved parties be held Nov. 27, he said. □

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BC churches

VBS of 2005 sees 7,107 children make decisions

t and Reflector

ENTWOOD — Reaching children and families through Bible School continues to be a vital ministry by being as an important evangelistic tool for Tennessee Baptist churches, reports Kathy Trundle of the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff.

Because VBS is different from other church activities, children are attracted to the facility during this time. Using every avenue of opportunity available, VBS can be a great evangelistic tool to reach people who would not come any other time," said Trundle, who is based in Knoxville. She is a member of the First Memorial Baptist Church there.

In 2005, more than 250,000 children were enrolled in Bible School in Tennessee, and 7,107 decisions for Christ were reported. Trundle noted that these statistics are based on 1,765 churches reporting on VBS.

VBS also provides a way for churches to discover prospects and follow up on those who make decisions for Christ and

discovering other ministry needs around their community.

Trundle noted that in 2005 more than 17,000 prospects were discovered, and by following up on these, churches have been able to share the gospel with other family members as well.



TRUNDLE

"Churches need to understand that there is just as much opportunity for ministry and evangelism in follow-up as there is in the actual teaching time during VBS. Therefore, planning for follow-up on those who attend VBS is just as important as the promotion and teaching," said Trundle.

Since it takes a full year to receive and gather information from the reports, VBS results for 2006 will be available next year. Current information for 2006 is still being processed. Churches can still fax their report information to (615) 301-0613.

Even though VBS is a one-week event for most churches,

training, planning, and other preparation occurs weeks and months ahead of time.

Throughout the fall and spring, 64 associations across the state conducted 89 VBS training clinics. More than 8,000 church leaders from 1,100 churches received training in various VBS areas that included planning, promoting, and age-group teaching.

"Church leaders are seeing the need for training in order to be prepared, to not only teach the material, but to also present the gospel to those who attend," said Trundle.

This year several associational VBS teams achieved the Associational Standard Level of Recognition. Those associations include Dyer, Holston Valley, Knox County, New Duck River, Sevier County, Tennessee Valley, and Union Association.

Trundle noted this achievement, awarded by LifeWay, recognizes associations which have completed at least 12 or more of 18 different VBS

requirements. These include things such as attending a state VBS clinic, developing a church plan for follow-up, and



encouraging Backyard Bible Clubs.

The 2007 LifeWay VBS theme, "Game Day Central:

Where Heroes Are Made," is based on Hebrews 12:1-2, "Run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith" (HCSB). The VBS material will help children learn how to become heroes both on and off the field by focusing on Jesus and following God's plan for their lives.

In addition, LifeWay is also offering Jungle Jaunt as the Club VBS theme. "Many churches have discovered that Club VBS materials are perfect for Wednesday night activities, mission trips, retreats, and camp experiences," said Trundle.

More information about LifeWay VBS materials can be found online at www.lifeway.com/yourvbs or www.lifeway.com/club-vbs.

For more information about Vacation Bible School or upcoming training events in Tennessee, contact Trundle at ktrundle@tnbaptist.org or visit the TBC web site at www.tnchildhood.org □ — Stacy Murphree

Brenda Harris speaks on loss of daughter, God's help

Donnie Davis Bushey
t and Reflector

CKSON — Brenda Harris, editor of *HomeLife* spoke at the Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women held here by the Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union Oct. 15-16. *HomeLife* is published by Day Christian Resources, Knoxville.

Harris formerly was a staff member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Harris told of the loss of her 23-year-old daughter, Amber, in 1999 after a 11-month battle with leukemia and how God helped her through the experience. At the time she was on the staff of the Cleveland Baptist Church, Knoxville. She and her husband, Mike, were enjoying an "empty nest." Their daughters had left home.

Amber was studying at Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, and had just completed the University of Tennessee — Chattanooga, majoring in high school sweetheart, and looking for her first teaching job. When the family entered "a world of grief," described Harris, as they learned Amber had leukemia.

When Amber was in Vanderbilt Hospital in Nashville receiving treatment, getting her long brown hair cut in preparation for losing her hair from the effects of chemotherapy.

Amber and the family had some special experiences during her hospital stays, said Harris. Early on a staff member sang, "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross" to Amber and others in her room.



BRENDA HARRIS, editor of *HomeLife*, speaks to women attending the recent Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women.

Amber also received a phone call from Reba McEntire, the country music star.

Thankfully, in a few months, Amber's cancer went into remission. She and her family had a great summer. In the fall she began teaching sixth grade. Then six weeks into the year, Amber relapsed. She returned to Vanderbilt for a bone marrow transplant, which she received in January 1999 from a donor in California who gave without knowing Amber's situation.

Harris said she wasn't doing very well during this second period of Amber's illness.

During the first time, "God's people carried me," she said. But this time she was struggling.

People were still reaching out to her family. She had contacts in Nashville

through her denominational work. For instance, Bruce and Ann Edwards of the TBC and LifeWay staff respectively opened their home to the Harises, giving them a set of keys so they could come and go when they wished.

However, Harris felt like Abraham. "I was wrestling with God over my child, too."

One day at the beginning of February a doctor meeting with the family "broke down," she recalled, and told them there was nothing else they could do.

One response of the family was to plan a visit to Disney World for Amber and her extended family.

A few weeks after their return Amber asked her mom to drive her back to Vanderbilt because she didn't want to go in an ambulance.

That night, after Harris and Mike got Amber settled, the couple went to the hospital's chapel.

Harris read a devotional guide for the day which referred to Psalms 27:14, "Wait on the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (NIV). The devotional ended with these words, "God will make a way when there seems to be no way."

The next day Amber "went home," Harris said emotionally.

"It was one of the most amazing things I've ever witnessed because I knew God was there."

But saying good-bye to Amber was "the hardest thing I had ever done. It's still the hardest thing I have to talk about."

Amber had written her parents a letter. In it she told them not to worry about her because she knew where she was going and she was not scared.

"Our hope is in Christ," she said, referring to Jeremiah 29:11.

"Life spins out of control a lot of times and we can't do anything about it, but God knows the plans He has for us," stated Harris.

"What's it going to take for us as women of faith to say, however You (God) decide my life's plan is going to play out, it's okay with me?"

"Those are hard words to say," she continued.

She also learned from Amber's death that "when you can't pray you can go to the Word and it can pray for you." She referred to Romans 8:26 — "And the Holy Spirit helps us in our distress. For we don't even know what we should pray for, nor how we should pray. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words" (NLT).

What got her through her grief, she said, was God's Word and God's people. Both helped her remember that she wasn't alone.

Of course, she can relate well to others who have lost family members. In her work on *HomeLife* she has met several. Their stories amaze her and strengthen her, said Harris.

"Let God speak," she said. "The advice of other people is a comfort, but not like God's Word." □

Union trustees OK new dorms; foundation begins

Union University news office

GERMANTOWN — Union University trustees approved the university's plans to build a new housing complex to accommodate its increasing enrollment.

The action came at the Sept. 29 trustee meeting held on Union's Germantown campus. Trustees also welcomed the board members from the Union Foundation, who held their inaugural meeting the night before.

"Our student housing is filled to capacity," Union President David S. Dockery said. "This new complex will allow for Union's future growth into the next decade."

The new complex will include both men's and women's facilities and will likely be located on the west side of Walker Road, adjacent to the Union intramural field.

The board of directors for the Union University Foundation spent their first meeting getting organized. Union University trustees in April approved the creation of the foundation and in August approved the list of people who would be invited to serve on the foundation board.

Charles Fowler, Union's senior vice president for university relations, will serve as the foundation's executive director.

A majority of the foundation's 16-member board of directors

will be either Union trustees or former trustees, according to the operating agreement between the university and the foundation.

Fowler said the foundation will be involved with such projects as a planned giving campaign, charitable gift annuities, and trusts. □

National CP gifts surpass \$200 million mark

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Cooperative Program surpassed \$200 million in gifts for national causes for the first time in the Southern Baptist Convention's history during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, according to an Oct. 3 announcement by Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

Chapman described the \$200-million record as "a remarkable reminder that so many are giving faithfully, Sunday after Sunday, through the Cooperative Program. These multiple-upon-multiple sacrificial contributions make it possible to achieve so much more together in cooperative missions, ministries, and theology than we could ever accomplish without each other."

In reaching the \$200-million

threshold, SBC President Frank Page stated, "To say that this [milestone] causes a great deal of excitement is a tremendous understatement."

As of Sept. 30, the final total for the SBC Cooperative Program's 2005-06 fiscal year stood at \$200,601,536.29 — \$4,653,113.74 above the \$195,948,422.55 received during the 2004-05 fiscal year, for a gain of 2.37 percent.

For the month, receipts of \$17,477,916.14 were 5.90 percent, or \$973,043.70, above the \$16,504,872.44 received in September 2005.

Designated giving of \$191,428,618.05 for the fiscal year was 0.90 percent, or \$1,698,784.18, above gifts of \$189,729,833.87 received last year. The \$3,876,404.00 in designated gifts received last month were \$2,562,201.38 below the \$6,438,605.38 received in September 2005, a decrease of 39.79 percent. CP gifts were 5.65 percent of budget needs for the 2005-06 budget year. □

AAEO giving sets record

Baptist Press

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Southern Baptist giving to the 2006 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American

Missions has been so generous that the offering has set a new record with three months still remaining in the giving period.

Carlos Ferrer, interim chief operating officer for the North American Mission Board, announced the record giving at the opening session of the Woman's Missionary Union national missions event Sept. 27 at the LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, N.C.

"Thanks to the sacrificial giving of Southern Baptists and the dedicated support of Woman's Missionary Union, we have already received in the first nine months of the year nearly \$55

million for the Annie Arms Offering," Ferrer announced.

Until this year, the most given to the home mission offering was \$53.8 million in and last year's total was slightly less at \$53.6 million.

Ferrer said not only will year-end total be a new record, the offering likely will exceed the 2006 national goal of \$60 million — which has only been achieved three times in the 25 years. □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

A northeast Tennessee Southern Baptist church with a student membership of over 100 is seeking a full-time senior pastor. The church conservatively subscribes to the SBC Faith and Message doctrine. To be considered, an applicant must be grounded and love the Word of God, have a passion for expository preaching and counseling of the whole counsel of God. All applicants must be willing to undergo thorough questioning and submit to credit and background screening. If led, resume to the Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 100, Kingsport, TN 37664.

Sidonia Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational pastor for a church in northwest Washington County, parsonage available. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Lloyd H. Goins, 3299 Sidonia Road, Sharpsburg, TN 38255.

Gap Creek Baptist Church, Arthur, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor position. Applicants must have biblical qualifications. GCBC is a conservative Missionary Church located in East Tennessee near Cumberland. Please send resumes to Lloyd Goins, 160 Yorkshire Drive, TN 37752.

Philadelphia Baptist Church, Wabeno, a rural traditional church, accepting resumes for the position of full-time or bivocational pastor. Parsonage available. Send resumes to Jeff Alford, Hwy. 99, Waynesboro, TN or e-mail icba@netease.com.

MINISTRY — MUSIC

First Baptist Church, seeks a bivocational minister in music. Please send resume to Bro. Brian Rainey, First Baptist Church, Michie, P.O. Box 100, Michie, TN 38357.

First Baptist Church, Crossville, Tenn., is seeking an interim worship leader for a congregation size of approximately 250+ members. Blend of styles is preferred. Please send resume to FBC of Crossville, Attn: Music Search Committee, 712 S. Main St., Crossville, TN 38555.

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — CHILDREN

LaBelle Haven Baptist Church is accepting resumes for a part-time children's minister. Interested applicants may submit resume to 6825 E. Holmes Rd., Memphis, TN 38141, fax (901) 547-1650 or labellehaven@bellsouth.net. Attn: Winford Baker.

Theologically conservative, methodologically creative East Tennessee church seeks a full-time minister for children and young families. Please send resume with references to Children's Minister Search Committee, Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, 3508 Wildwood Rd., Maryville, TN 37804.

New Union Baptist Church in Dayton, Tenn., is seeking a full-time preschool/children's director. If interested, contact the church at (423) 775-0515.

Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo, Miss., seeks full-time director of childhood education; prefer seminary-trained with large church Sunday School and children's worship experience. Send resumes to Gary Waters, 506 Lake Park Drive, Tupelo, MS 38801.

MINISTRY — STUDENT

Theologically conservative, methodologically creative East Tennessee church seeks a full-time minister for youth. Please send resume with references to Youth Minister Search Committee, Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, 3508 Wildwood Rd., Maryville, TN 37804.

Part-time minister of youth, Sanford Hill Baptist Church, Henderson, Tenn., (731) 989-5397 or shbc1964@charterinternet.com. See job description www.sanfordhill.com youth page.

Middlefork Road Baptist Church is currently seeking a part-time youth minister. Resumes will be received until Oct. 20. Please send resume with cover letter to Middlefork Road Baptist Church, 3955 Middlefork Rd., Luray, TN 38352.



Mission Groups Needed, Belize, Central America. More information see web site onmissionbelize.com or (931) 703-7595 or e-mail gary5147@bellsouth.net.

Northwest Tennessee Bible Conference

Hosted by Milan First Baptist Church
October 22-25

Guest speakers:

- Dr. James Merritt; Duluth, GA
- Dr. Sam Cathey; Oklahoma City, OK
- Dr. Steve Gaines; Memphis, TN
- Dr. Stan Coffey; Amarillo, TX
- Dr. Don Whitt; Medina, TN
- Dr. Fred Luter, Jr.; New Orleans, LA

Bible Conference Schedule:

October 22 — a.m. service — Dr. Don Whitt

Services begin nightly at 6:30 p.m. (Except for Sunday Evening, October 22 which will begin at 6:00 p.m.)

October 22 — Sam Cathey — Stan Coffey

October 23 — Stan Coffey — Fred Luter

October 24 — Fred Luter — James Merritt

October 25 — James Merritt — Steve Gaines

Sam McElroy and the FBC Worship Choir will be leading in Praise & Worship During the Bible Conference Services.

For more information please contact Milan, First Baptist Church at (731) 686-3385 or www.fbcmilan.org

guest columnist

Preparing for winter

By Howard Dayton

Winter's coming whether we want it to or not, and it's house-related problems we don't think about the rest of the year. Bob Villa might make it look easy on TV, when it comes to home maintenance, most of us are like Tim "The Tool Man" than Bob. But you can do

some areas of our country don't have wintry weather when we come visit you? — but most of us will face the season, even if winter is short where we live. But the possibility of frozen rain gutters, burst water pipes, and winter-related problems can be eliminated or reduced with a little time and effort in October or November. And the best thing is that a relatively small amount of money now can save a lot later on.

Heating

Check heating systems annually. Properly maintained furnaces, fireplaces, and wood-burning stoves prevent fire and smoke damage. Dust-clogged filters obstruct airflow, forcing heating systems to work harder, and increase energy bills. Check filters monthly during the heating season and clean or replace as necessary. During winter months, windows are sealed pretty tightly, increasing the risk of carbon monoxide (CO2) levels. Be sure all smoke detectors and fire alarms work properly. If you use oil-, gas-, or wood-burning appliances, inspect these sources of CO2 annually, and consider installing a CO2 detector.

Don't set thermostats above 70 degrees during the winter, unless your health or age requires it.

Plumbing

Disconnect garden hoses, close indoor valves to outside faucets, and know the location of water pipes and how to shut the water off. When the mercury dips below zero, open faucets on a steady drip and open cabinet doors to sinks are located adjacent to outside walls. Keep house temperature at least 65 degrees, because pipes freeze if temperatures are lower than 65 degrees.

If pipes do freeze, the quicker the water is shut off or the plumber gets to the problem the less chance that pipes will burst. Insulate unfinished rooms, attics, basements, crawl spaces, or garages that have exposed pipes, or wrap pipes with heating tape or foam sleeves.

Roofs

If possible, have the roof thoroughly inspected, replace missing or curled shingles, and secure loose shingles. Remove leaves and debris from the gutters.

Trees

Trim trees and remove dead branches. Ice, snow, and wind often cause weak trees or branches to break and can result in property damage or personal injury. There may be other things that need your attention at home, but this should keep you busy for a while. □ Dayton is CEO of Crown Financial Ministries, based in Marietta, Ga. Reprinted from Baptist Press

a way with words

The deacon

By Hugh X. Lewis

The deacon is most highly sought after to serve the Christian way; the greater lesson can be taught by his life on display.

Proven servant of the fold, the Holy Spirit is His guide, beyond reproach that he might hold his office qualified.

Humble calling to the world, yet sacred in God's eyes, the Lord awaits with arms unfurled and offers paradise. □

Copyright by Hugh X. Lewis. Lewis, a Baptist layman, is a laureate of Christian country music in Tennessee. He has written more than 250 songs and is featured daily on Southern Gospel radio stations throughout the country. He is available to speak to church and senior adult groups. For more information, call (615) 883-0086.

Take hold of contentment

By Craig Christina

Focal Passage: 1 Timothy 6:3-12, 17-19

Madonna got one thing right: we are living in a material world. The danger, therefore, arises when Christians confuse wealth with godliness. It's like the local preacher I once heard on the radio who said in his sermon, "There is someone who parked a beat-up, pickup truck in our parking lot. God is not pleased with that. He wants you to be driving a new truck." We forget that our model is Jesus, and He had "no place to lay His head" (Matthew 8:20).

Too many preachers proclaim the "health and wealth," "name it and claim it" gospel. They teach that God wants everyone to be materially blessed; that the abundant life Jesus promised is found in the power of positive, faith-filled thinking; that God wants us to realize our financial dreams and be happy. Wealth is a blessing from God; a blessing that comes with increased responsibility. The greater blessing comes when we follow Jesus in obedience and contentment.

How can we encourage one another to be content? According to Paul, there are three ways to take hold of contentment.

Examine God's preachers (vv. 3-5). First, Paul encourages Timothy to be on guard against anyone who "teaches other doctrine and does not agree with the sound teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 3). In other

words, we should not be passive pew-sitters, but active listeners. As a pastor, I expect my congregation to test my doctrinal fidelity. If I am preaching something inconsistent with Scripture, it should be challenged.

Christ calls us to the narrow gate and the "difficult road that leads to life" (Matthew 7:13); a road that few find. Our Lord was a suffering servant who came to serve, not to be served. He expects us to follow His example of sacrifice and service.

We do experience great joys and blessings for our faithfulness, but the goal of our lives should be to glorify God, not self. Those who preach or write books with a self-centered gospel of worldly success should be avoided at all costs. Satan tempts us easily enough as it is.

Escape greed's pit (vv. 6-12). Contentment's greatest enemy is greed. The ugly, green-eyed monster prowls around our hearts and minds and lures us to want more. After all, you deserve it! You've earned it! You should have it! There's only one problem with that attitude: it's not all about you.

We must run after "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness" as we "fight the good fight for the faith" (vv. 11-12). Contentment can only come when we realize that our lives are not about our happiness. God did not create us for our pleasure, but for His pleasure. God is not our Santa Claus, our 911 operator, or our last resort. God is our life, and we are here to serve Him.

Live in hope

By Bob Orgeron

Focal Passage: Hebrews 6:13-7:28

The writer opens this next section of our study by giving his readers an example of faith and endurance. Though Abraham had received God's promise, he had to live for many years in patient expectation with nothing to go on except that God had promised. He did this when appearances and circumstances were against the fulfillment of the promise. He showed perseverance and faith in God. Certainly the writer's message to his readers is, we must wait patiently, for He does it all in His own good time, not in ours.

Promise of God (6:13-20). In verse 13 the fulfillment of the promise made was not dependent upon Abraham but rather upon the Lord Himself. God made Abraham a promise and swore by Himself to fulfill the promise.

In verse 15, the writer conveys Abraham's confidence in God's promise. He waited in confidence. He endured confidently. It is striking to consider that Isaac was born 25 years after the promise was given to Abraham. His grandchildren were not born for another 60 years, which was 15 years before his death. The complete fulfillment of the promise, would not take place within his lifetime.

Certainly the original readers of the epistle as well as the contemporary reader may be encouraged to be patient and wait on God in their present circumstances. God did not go back on His promises to Abraham; He is completely reliable.

Verse 17 turns the readers attention from the oath of a man with a

man and turns to the oath God swore to Abraham. The operation of God's will is stressed and is further brought out by the reference to "the unchanging nature of his purpose." God's will does not change. He has His purpose and He works it out.

In verse 17, God appears, in a double posture: the giver of the promise and then the guarantor of the promise. Notice also the reference to "the heirs." The promise was not confined to Abraham or even to him and his immediate family. Since he was to have a mighty multitude of heirs, it was to all those who follow him, including not only physical Israel but also his spiritual descendants.

In Verse 18 God's swearing the oath gave us "two unchangeable things." Once God had spoken, it was inconceivable that either the promise or the oath could be altered in any way.

In verse 19 the metaphor of the anchor occurs only here in the New Testament. A ship firmly anchored is safe from idle drifting. Its position and safety are sure. So "hope," like an anchor to a ship, is a stabilizing force for the Christian. Those with a living hope have a steady anchor in all they do, giving them a solid footing and security.

Notice that hope "enters the inner sanctuary." The Christian hope is not exhausted by what it sees of earthly possibilities. It reaches into the very presence of God.

Priesthood of Melchizedek (7:1-10). The writer has mentioned Melchizedek before and has spoken of Jesus as a priest of the order of Melchizedek, but he has done so briefly. In chapter 7, he develops Melchizedek in greater detail. He

Sunday School Lesson
Bible Studies for Life
Oct. 15

Charles Lowery says that a cantaloupe seed can never become a watermelon. No matter how hard it tries, it will ultimately be what God has designed it to be. Be content with who God made you to be. We will escape greed's pit when we put Christ first and live to please Him instead of trying to be something we're not meant to be.

Encourage generosity's provision (vv. 17-19). Once we realize money is a tool instead of an idol, we will be free to invest our resources in God's kingdom. Rather than hoarding money, we will use it to further God's work. God expects 10 percent of our income to go to Him, so tithing is a matter of obedience. We become generous when we give beyond the tithe.

Some of the most generous people I've known were not wealthy, they were good stewards. They were satisfied with a modest lifestyle and invested the rest to bless the body of Christ. They have lived a "life that is real" (v. 19); a life that made a difference for the cause of Christ. Great will be their reward in heaven (Matthew 6:20). They have learned the blessing of contentment, and they are some of the happiest people I know. □ — Christina is pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson.

Sunday School Lesson
Explore the Bible
Oct. 15

begins with a brief notice of the incident recorded about Melchizedek, namely his meeting with Abraham at the return of Abraham from the slaughter of the five kings found in Genesis 14:18-20.

In verse 1, the writer begins his explanation of the significance of Melchizedek by referring to Melchizedek as the "king of Salem," which may mean "king of Jerusalem" for we learn in Psalm 76 verse 2 that "Salem" is another name for Jerusalem. Melchizedek was not only a king but also a "priest of the Most High God."

The writer focuses on what will help him make the points he has in mind about the work of Christ. The first of them is that Melchizedek "blessed Abraham."

In verse 2 Abraham gave Melchizedek "a tenth of everything," i.e., of the spoils from the battle. So then we see the writer identifying Melchizedek with his reference to the incident after the battle. Now he goes on to the significance of Melchizedek's name and title: "king of righteousness" and "king of Salem." The place name "Salem" comes from the same root, as shalom which is Hebrew for "peace." This word means more than the absence of war; it signifies the presence of positive blessing. In the New Testament "peace" means the result of Christ's work for us. □ — Orgeron is pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville.

Leaders

◆ Cumberland Korean Baptist Church, Knoxville, recently called **Young Seo** as pastor. Cumberland Korean Baptist is a mission of Cumberland Baptist Church, Knoxville.

◆ Ramsey Heights Baptist Church, Knoxville, has called **Jeremy Ruth** as pastor.

◆ **Bryan Roberts** has resigned as pastor of Unity Baptist Church, Knoxville, to take a similar position in a Michigan church.

◆ Shiloh Baptist Church, Decatur, recently called **Stan Hammonds** as pastor.

◆ **James Smith** of Decaturville is available as a transitional interim pastor and has completed the course on transitional interim ministry. Contact him at (731) 852-2451.

◆ Hillview Baptist Church, Goodlettsville, recently called **Stephen Ramsey** as pastor. He previously served on the staff of a church in Harrodsburg, Ky., for four years.

◆ Dickerson Road Baptist Church, Nashville, recently called **Raymond Langlois** as interim pastor. Langlois retired from the pastorate of Judson Baptist Church, Nashville.

◆ New Victory Baptist



HONORED SEPT. 10 by First Baptist Church, Whiteville, were, from left, Lurline Polk, 92 years old; Rudell Harvey, 92; Euphenia Cooper, 90; and Annie May Moore, 90. The women are all members of the church. They received corsages and plaques, reported **Bill Sorrell**, pastor.

Church, Jonesborough, has called **Parker Street** as associate pastor. The church has also called **Michael Tilson** as media director and **Kelly Edens** as children's director.

Churches

◆ **First Baptist Church, Donelson**, in Nashville, will hold a revival Oct. 22-25. Phil Glisson, an evangelist from Memphis, will speak.

◆ **Bordeaux Baptist Church, Nashville**, will hold a homecoming and old fashioned Sunday, Oct. 22, beginning with

the morning worship service. John Kurtz will speak. For information, call pastor Kelly LeBlanc at (615) 255-3395 or (615) 242-6179.

◆ **Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville**, will host a Stand for the Family Rally sponsored by Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, Colo., Oct. 16 at 6:30 p.m. James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, will speak, along with Tony Perkins, Ken Hutcherson, Richard Land, and Gary Bauer. For more information, contact www.tworivers.org or (615) 889-3950.

◆ **West Paris Baptist Church, Paris**, will hold revival Oct. 22-25. Steve Davis of Hollow Rock will speak. For more information, contact Scotty Davis, pastor, at (731) 642-5917.

◆ **Crosspointe Baptist Church, Millington**, will host "A Walk to the Well" Ladies Conference Oct. 20-21. Terri Clark will speak. There will also be music, drama, and break-out sessions. Childcare is available. For information and to register, contact the church office at (901) 872-4413.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Loretto**, will hold a revival Oct. 15-18. Morris Anderson, evangelist from Maryville, will speak.



HELPING LEAD THE 75TH anniversary celebration of Oral Baptist Church, Lenoir City, Sept. 24 were, from left, Gilbert Adams, Duncan Carver, and Wade Singletary, all former pastors, and Thom Tapp, current pastor. Singletary of Florida preached. Oral Baptist was started in 1931 in a log building on donated land.



THE KENYAN MAN seated, who is 105 years old, his wife seated on the ground to his right, and two other people were saved at Katsagani, Kenya, recently as a result of the ministry of a team led by John Ellzey, minister of music and outreach, East Acres Baptist Church, Millington, and his wife, Carolyn. The man had refused Christ several times before. The Ellzeys have led teams to Kenya five times since 1996 through Outreach Evangelism Travels of Lubbock, Texas. They have seen more than 6,000 people saved and three church buildings built. Also five Kenyan pastors are being sent to Bible school through their efforts.



FRIENDS OF CARSON-NEWMAN College, Jefferson Leonard Markham, left, pastor, First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, and Mike Boyd, right, pastor, Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville, stand with Walter Crouch of C-N at the L. Dan Taylor Golf Challenge held Sept. 19. Just over \$28,000 been raised by the tournament for ministerial scholarships since began in 1995.



LARRY GILMORE, right, state evangelism director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, leads evangelism leadership training for Salem Baptist Association, Liberty. The meeting was recently at First Baptist Church, Smithville. Participating are, left, first row, David Gilliland, James Vance, and Buck Barlow of Lakewood Baptist Church; second row, Kay Quintero and Marjorie McFeely of First Baptist, Smithville; and Marjorie McFeely of Lakewood Baptist.

◆ Grace Christian Academy, Knoxville, recently completed an \$8.2 million high school expansion and opened this fall with a 140-student enrollment in grades 9-12. The Knoxville school serves a total of 600 students in grades kindergarten-12. The 45,000 square-foot high school addition includes fully-equipped science labs and a collegiate-size gymnasium. The school is a ministry of **Grace Baptist Church, Knoxville**, which is lead by Ron Stewart, pastor.

◆ **Southside Baptist Church, Johnson City**, dedi-

cated its new mission center Sept. 3. Kelly Campbell, pastor, Appalachian Regional Ministries, was the featured speaker. Tal Thompson, director of missions, Holston Baptist Association, Johnson City, brought a statement of association endorsement.

◆ **Grace Baptist Church, Collinwood**, was damaged by fire Aug. 28, receiving soot and smoke damage throughout the building, according to Miller, director of missions, Indian Creek Baptist Association, Waynesboro. LaSteiner serves as pastor.



PARTICIPATING IN THE 125TH anniversary celebration of Hopewell Baptist Church, Savannah, held Sept. 9-10, were pastors, from left, Randy Isbell, current pastor; Johnny Walker; James Brown; Lauren Locke; and James Shutt. **IN PHOTO TO RIGHT**, Randy Isbell, left, pastor, stands with Terry Hampton of the church portraying S.W. Barnett, who founded Hopewell Baptist.

They hold Barnett's Bible, loaned by his family for the occasion. The church also celebrated the 25th anniversary of Isbell's service. Church members portrayed various eras of the church history in dramatic presentations. Lorene R. Isbell honored for 69 years as a member. A guest was Willie Alexander of Huntsville, longtime friend of Isbell.

