

Baptist & Reflector

Wide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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Renovated Stokely Chapel dedicated at Carson Springs

St and Reflector

NEWPORT — Stokely Chapel, a landmark at Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center since 1952, has a new thanks to the completion of a \$3 million renovation project.

The total cost fell far below the \$1.3 million total due to volunteer labor coordinated by Bill Porch of Goodlettsville.

Tennessee Baptists dedicated the refurbished facility on Nov. 10.

Addressing the approximately 150 people in attendance, James Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, recounted the history of Stokely Chapel. That happened inside this building affected those who stepped outside these walls as they heard the message of the living God with them," Porch said.

He observed that some of the campers have since "literally carried that message around the world. The impact of the message for the gospel preached in this place is known fully only to God," he added.

Porch also expressed appreciation to the Stokely family and the more than 500 volunteers from 30 different groups who donated approximately 30,000 hours to complete the project.

"Today we are celebrating this occasion because of the generosity of a great Baptist family — the Stokelys — and the many hours of hard work by scores of Tennessee Baptist volunteers," Porch said.

William Maxwell, TBC administrative director, agreed.

"Stokely Chapel is a great statement to the faith heritage of a family," he noted.

"The chapel was originally finished through a generous gift from William B. Stokely Jr. Now, more than 50 years later, the family continues his legacy through a matching gift making the renovation possible."

Members of the Stokely family were present and William B. "Bill" Stokely III participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony along with Porch.

Maxwell noted the completed chapel is "a great statement of cooperation, as volunteers from churches from all across the state gave of their time and talents to come and work on the renovation project."

"Only the Lord will ever know the number of lives that will be touched by those who come through this facility and the many, many more lives that will be touched by those same folks when they leave the Carson Springs grounds and go around the world sharing the love of Jesus," he added. □



ABOVE, James Porch, left, executive director/treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and Bill Stokely III prepare to cut the ribbon to dedicate the newly renovated Stokely Chapel at Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center in Newport. In the background is Tim Bearden, senior manager of the conference centers. LEFT, members of the Stokely family stand outside the refurbished chapel which was constructed by their family in the 1950s. A significant portion of the chapel's renovation was contributed by the Stokely family. From left are Kevin and Shelly Stokely Przewrocki and Kay and Bill Stokely III. — Photos by Mark LeMay

Grisham's Christ through novel

Jackson attorney writes legal thriller

Donnie Wilkey
St and Reflector

JACKSON — As a student at the University of Mississippi law school in Oxford, Jerome Teel still remembers the day when best-selling author John Grisham spoke to his class.

"I thought that writing a novel would be neat, not knowing the difficult process that it is," said Teel, now an attorney here who co-teaches a 12th grade boys Sunday School class and is an ordained deacon at West Jackson Baptist Church.

Writing a novel became a goal that he delayed until he was established in practice. In 2000, while on vacation with his family Teel began writing. Fifteen months later, he had a manuscript completed for what would become *The Election*, his first novel released in September by Howard Books, a division of Simon & Schuster.

The published book did not happen overnight. He encountered numerous rejections and overcame discouragement before Howard Books signed a contract in December of 2004. Teel also

credits Terry Whalin, an editor who became his "champion" for about three years.

Though Grisham was an inspiration, Teel's novel, while a legal thriller, is written for the Christian market, a market he knew very little about in the beginning.



"I didn't even know about Christian fiction at first," he acknowledged.

"When I realized there was an industry there, I knew that was the direction I wanted to go."

The Christian approach is a natural fit for the Union University graduate. His dad, Carl, is a retired Baptist pastor and now a part-time staff member at Madison-Chester Baptist Association and his brother, Alan, is church and community director for the association and campus minister at Jackson State Community College.

There is no profanity, no "gory" scenes, and no sexually-explicit details portrayed in the book.

"I wanted to write something my children and my mother could read," Teel explained.

— See Jackson, page 3

State voters overwhelmingly approve marriage amendment

By Linda Lawson
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Tennessee voters on Nov. 7 overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the Constitution defining marriage as a contract between one man and one woman.

The Tennessee amendment drew the highest percentage of support among voters in eight states considering similar amendments. It further states that same-sex marriages taking place in other states or countries will not be recognized in Tennessee.

With only a small number of votes outstanding from three counties as of Nov. 8, a total of 1,414,582 or 81.3 percent voted in favor of the amendment while 325,297 or 18.7 percent voted against it,

according to the Tennessee Division of Elections.

Passage of a constitutional amendment in Tennessee requires one vote more than one-half of all votes cast in the gubernatorial race. With 1,810,160 votes cast for governor, the 905,081 votes needed for passage was easily surpassed. Earlier, the amendment had been passed in 2005 and 2006 by the Tennessee House of Representatives and the Senate, as required by state law for an amendment to be considered by voters.

"This strong vote celebrates a vote for biblical truth," said James Porch, executive director-treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. "Thank you, Tennessee Baptists, for supporting this important issue with your vote!"

— See State, page 8

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Tennessee WMU board honors outgoing officers

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Executive Board of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union, during its Nov. 4 board meeting, honored two officers whose tenure will end in 2007.

New officers will be elected at Tennessee WMU's annual meeting set for March 17 at the Gatlinburg Convention Center.

Shelby Lord of Lenoir City presided over her last fall board meeting as president. Lord and Sharon Lunsford, recording secretary from Nashville, were presented with gifts of appreciation for their four years of service to Tennessee WMU.

Recommendations made by the policy-finance committee and approved by the board included:

- "Hands-On Tennessee," a simultaneous community ministry day, will be promoted statewide and all churches encouraged to participate Feb. 17, 2007.

- Designated the annual offering which will be taken March 17, 2007 to benefit underprivileged school-age children in Montana who do not have school supplies.

- Cancelled the Jan. 26-27, 2007 training for Acteens Activators, missions day camp leaders, and Point Teams.

- Revised the policy manual of Tennessee WMU.

- Approved revisions for the bylaws of Tennessee WMU. The process of revising the bylaws involves a further step before they are final. The recommended revisions must be printed in the *Baptist & Reflector* prior to the annual meeting and will be effective only if two-thirds of the delegates present at the meeting in Gatlinburg March 17, 2007 approve. □

Americans have split views on S. Baptists: poll

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Southern Baptists were viewed favorably by 57 percent of adults interviewed as part of recent research conducted by the North American Mission Board's Center for Missional Research through Zogby International.

The positive outlook toward Southern Baptists, United Methodists, and the Catholic Church was about the same in the survey, while the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), and Muslims received less favorable ratings, 32 percent and 27 percent, respectively.

Southern Baptists received unfavorable impressions from 17 percent of the respondents, while another 24 percent said they were not familiar with

Southern Baptists. The NAMB research polled 1,210 American adults across the country.

Southern Baptists made the best impression where they are most prevalent, in southern "Bible Belt" states. Two out of three respondents in the South expressed a favorable opinion of Southern Baptists, compared to only half of respondents in the West and East, where Southern Baptists have a smaller presence.

Catholics were rated more favorably in the East and West, regions where their presence among survey respondents is proportionally greater, according to the research.

The NAMB/Zogby poll indicated that a sizeable number of younger adults either have an unfavorable impression of Southern Baptists or are not familiar with the nation's second-largest denomination.

About 24 percent of respondents age 18-24 expressed a "very unfavorable" or "somewhat unfavorable" impression of Southern Baptists, while 39 percent of the 25-34 age group said they were "not familiar" with Southern Baptists.

Middle-age adults think highest of Southern Baptists, with 66 percent of those 55-69 reporting a favorable impression.

Because the word "Baptist" may not always appear in a Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) church's name, the research also looked at what the significance of knowing that a particular church is indeed Southern Baptist would have on someone's decision to visit or join that church.

The survey showed that 31 percent of respondents said this knowledge would positively affect their decision to visit or join that church, while 36 percent said it would have no effect and 25 percent said it would have a negative effect.

Among adults age 18 to 24, more than 40 percent of those surveyed said knowing that a church is Southern Baptist would negatively affect their decision to visit or join that church. But 36 percent of persons 35 to 54 reported that the Southern Baptist label would positively affect their choice of a church.

"The scope of this study stopped short of asking why there are unfavorable impressions of Southern Baptists depending on region or age group," said Ed Stetzer, senior director of NAMB's Center for Missional Research in Alpharetta, Ga. "Is it because of the stand Southern Baptists take on marriage as between one man and one woman for a lifetime? Is it Baptists' consensus belief on the inerrancy of Scripture? Or, are there other factors at work that cause many people to reject our churches? Is it a reputation that has been earned because of issues other than the gospel? Clearly, more research is needed," Stetzer said. □

Tenn. Baptists re-elected as U.S. representatives

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — An eight-term member of the House of Representatives was the sole Southern Baptist in Congress to lose in voting Nov. 7.

Rep. Charles Taylor, R.-N.C., lost to Democrat challenger Heath Shuler, a former standout quarterback at the University of Tennessee, in his bid to continue representing the western North Carolina district. Shuler, who grew up in the district, defeated Taylor with 54 percent of the vote.

Shuler also is a member of a Southern Baptist church, Biltmore Baptist Church in Arden, N.C.

There were no Southern Baptist members of the Senate seeking re-election this year.

Following is a list, as obtained by Baptist Press, of the ballot results for members of Tennessee Baptist churches who sought re-election to the House of Representatives. (The vote totals are from the web site of CNN as of 11 a.m. Eastern time Nov. 9. The number of precincts reporting varied from 92 to 100 percent.)

Rep. Zach Wamp, R., Third District, seeking seventh term, Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga, defeated Brent Benedict, D., 130,770-68,305, 66-34 percent.

Rep. Lincoln Davis, D., Fourth District, seeking third term, First Baptist Church, Byrdstown, defeated Ken Martin, R., 123,418-62,386, 66-34 percent. □

MBC disqualifies 19 churches; acts on Wal-Mart

Baptist Press

CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo. — Messengers to the Missouri Baptist Convention elected a slate of theologically conservative officers for the 10th consecutive year and disqualified 19 churches under the convention's single-alignment stipulation approved at last year's annual meeting.

Messengers also approved a resolution encouraging Missouri Baptist church members to exercise moral stewardship regarding the businesses they patronize, keeping in mind that Wal-Mart in August asked and received permission to join the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, pledging to give them \$25,000 annually and helping Wal-Mart to "advance diversity" or homosexuality.

Mike Green, 24-year pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Republic and the MBC's current first vice president, was elected president without opposition.

A total of 1,550 people, includ-

ing 1,162 messengers, re for the annual meeting. the 19 churches disqualified convention MBC mem were First Baptist church Jefferson City, Cape Gir Independence, and Lee mit, each of which have the Cooperative Baptist ship or the rival Baptist Convention of Missouri.

Missouri is unique approach to single align that no other state conve the SBC has passed such nite statement articulation to the SBC.

A representative of or disqualified churches, Baptist in St. Louis, church would be praying Missouri Baptist Con and requested that mess respond in kind. It was public comment before gers voted on the disqualifications. □

Iowa meeting follows retreat

Baptist Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Baptist Convention of Iowa combined its 11th annual with its annual Partners Ministry Retreat, which mess said enhanced both even 2-3 at the Holiday Suites in Des Moines.

"Abide in Christ" was theme for the annual which registered 122 sers from 44 churches with 26 guests.

Messengers elected Stout, pastor of Quimby Church in Quimby, as president.

A budget of \$1.6 million approved for 2007, a 4.2 decrease from the previous year's budget.

Messengers approved resolution affirming marriage, holy covenant and faithful relationship between one man and one woman. □

National even planned for girls

WMU news office

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — stage is set in Kansas City as thousands of girls prepare for "Blume" — for fruitful days of worship, creative conferences, hand-sessions and ministry p concerts, fun, nightly ac and new friends.

This event was known as the National Convention or NAC.

On July 10-13, 2006, than 8,000 girls from across nation are expected to attend Blume, a mission designed to challenge, recognize their gifts and age them to live out the given purpose. Blume German word for "flower" — sending growth, youth, a life. The event is open to ages 12 and up, including young women. □

Green finds RA ministry and business to be compatible

Marcia Knox
Photographer and Reflector

BON DE CROFT — Nestled in the community here on top of a hill near Sparta, the Royal Ambassador and Challenger ministry and a wooden mission craft kits, and business continue to grow in a woodworking shop behind a farm house with burgundy siding.

"To make sawdust," said Frank Green, RA/Challenger time consultant for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, gives tours of a family-owned woodworking shop and shows off the different customized saws that he has used over the years to make tracks, mission crafts, and cars.

His wife, Dean, is the brains behind the outfit," he continued. "She handles the checks, takes and fills orders, and runs the business. She can operate most of the machinery. We get along with each other."

After having been married for 34 years, Frank and Dean's business has grown over the years. Their family with three children and then later with nieces and nephews, who also help with the RA race cars. The family works together to turn 8 1/4-inch white pine furniture grade into little blocks, then into pre-cut patterns with packed wheels and weights, and then them to RA groups to make fast race cars.

RA racers are part of the giving and outreach tools, which come under the RA interactive activities," noted Frank. The cars can also be used to promote church missions by raising money for the Southern Baptist Convention and the offerings and local missions. The entry fee for each car



FRANK GREEN cuts wooden blocks for Royal Ambassador race cars at his woodworking shop at his home in Bon de Croft.

can be a donation for Lottie Moon to a canned good for a local food bank. Today, fast cars can go on to compete at regional RA events."

However, the RA racers were always a tradition and exciting part of the former TBC RA Congress for years. The tracks that the cars ran on were first borrowed and then taken to Congress for setup, according to Frank.

"At Congress people were always fussing about the RA tracks that the race cars ran on," said Frank. "All the tracks were different in lengths, widths, and design. They were not standardized race tracks."

Frank decided to start making the tracks in 1984, and the Make Tracks Company was formed. While working at Camp Carson in Newport as the camp manager from 1980-1994, Frank made a "batch" of eight tracks for the Tennessee Congress races in 1987.

Around that time, the former SBC Brotherhood Commission in Memphis decided to standardize the race tracks for the state RA Congresses. The

national standard for the tracks was given by the Brotherhood (BH) Commission to Make Tracks to supply the tracks in 1989. The tracks now range from two to six lanes but all are 32 feet in length, and all the racing lanes are the same width.

When Frank was not working as the camp manager at night, he made the tracks. Dean also worked as the camp food service manager and assisted with the track company. In addition, Frank and Dean have served as long time RA leaders in churches and associations as parents of two boys and one girl.

In the early 1990s, Frank talked about making mission craft kits, which made unique gift items and became mission teaching tools that were also a part of the Project Hall competition part of the Congresses. He started with adapting plans for the RA bird houses to lumber specifications. Soon he was taking the plans out of the RA books and putting them into eight mission craft kits, complete with patterns with simplified directions and made



DEAN GREEN prepares orders for RA race cars to be shipped from their home in Bon de Croft. — Photos by Marcia Knox

safety conscious for children. Next the BH Commission standardized the mission craft kits in 1992.

The mission craft kits and the other Make Tracks products have grown in numbers over the years and can be viewed at www.royalracers.com. Some of the kits which have a missions theme are Oriental Puzzle, Bolero, and there are other kits that link teaching missions by design.

In 1994 the Greens moved to Memphis where he served as property services manager for the Brotherhood Commission and held a similar position at Faith Baptist Church, Bartlett. During those years, he and his wife continued making tracks and even expanded during that time.

In 1999 under the brand name of Royal Racers, Frank and Dean began producing RA race car kits. Make Tracks/Royal Racers became the official RA race car supplier in 2003.

While living in Bartlett his dad's health became an issue and her mom's health became

frail, and the Greens decided that they were a long way from their family on the Cumberland Plateau. They didn't know where they were supposed to be. Then they prayed about it, and asked the Lord where He would send them.

"We ended up back on the plateau by default, and we didn't know then why we came back," noted Frank looking back now with hindsight. "But God directed us back home for Dean to help take care of her mother."

The Greens moved to their family farm in 1999 to help care for Dean's aging mother and the wooden tracks, mission kits, and car business kept growing.

In 2003 Frank came to the TBC as the RA/Challenger field contract worker, which means he is constantly on the road. He became a TBC staff specialist in 2005. He has written RA curriculum materials for the past four years and is currently writing the new materials for 2007-08. He just finished his eighth RA magazine and also writes RA manuals. □

Jackson attorney writes legal thriller; shares Christ ...

Continued from page 1
also wanted to have an overriding redemptive element in the book."

In the novel, the main character, a Jackson attorney who is

a non-believer, comes to know Jesus as his Lord and Savior. An actual plan of salvation is detailed in the book.

Another character in the book, who is a Christian, constantly demonstrates her faith despite difficult circumstances in her life.

The Election is set in Jackson and Teel repeatedly uses names of familiar places and landmarks in Jackson and West Tennessee throughout the novel.

Yet, the book is purely fiction and the characters are not based on anyone Teel knew, he said.

By using Jackson as the setting for the novel, Teel said it lends credibility to the book because people can read real names and places and visualize what is taking place.

Since the book deals with two subjects Teel is well acquainted with — law and politics — he did not have to spend a lot of time on research. "You tend to write about things you know about," he said.

Teel admitted one of the hardest tasks in writing *The*

Election was depicting the evil represented by the "bad guys."

"I didn't know anyone like that. I had to use my imagination," he said.

Teel has already penned his second novel, *The Divine Appointment*, which will be released by Howard Books in June 2007. The book, though not a sequel to *The Election*, also has redemptive elements throughout, Teel said.

And, Teel has left the door open for possible sequels to both books in the future.

Teel said he has had full support from his wife, Jennifer, and his three children — Brittney, Trey, and Matthew.

He noted that Jennifer did not want to read *The Election* until it had been published. His mother, Nona, however, read the book and critiqued it, Teel said.

His daughter, now 14, read his second novel and critiqued it for her dad.

"My family has been very supportive and was excited when we first learned that Howard Books would publish *The Election*," he said.

Just like any author, Teel is hopeful the book is successful and sells well.

While acknowledging that the Christian market is "like preaching to the choir," Teel already knows of people who have bought the book and given it to non-Christian friends.

"It can be a witnessing tool," he affirmed.

"I hope the book has an impact on people's lives and that there will be people who come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ because of the book," he stressed. The more books that are sold, the more lives that can be impacted for Christ, he said.

For more information about the book, including how to purchase copies, go to Teel's web site: www.jerometeel.com. □



JEROME TEEL, an attorney and member of West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson, holds up a copy of his first book, *The Election*, written specifically for the Christian fiction market. The book has a redemptive element woven throughout the novel.

Union soccer player now living for a different purpose

By Tim Ellsworth
Union University news office

JACKSON — Soccer was Nikki Burau's life. God was way down the list of priorities.

But that changed about a year ago. A brain tumor will do that to you.

"My time in the hospital is when I really started realizing how real that God was and how much He did for me," said Burau, a sophomore at Union University and forward on the women's soccer team. "That's when I really grew with Him."

A native of Memphis, Burau didn't grow up in a Christian home. Her mother was a single parent.

Burau started playing soccer when she was 8 years old, and that became everything to her. All that mattered was getting a soccer scholarship, and Union University gave her that opportunity.

"I didn't even own a Bible when I came here," she said.

During her first year on the team, Burau started to develop some leg problems. She was diagnosed with compartment syndrome, and after the season had leg surgery.



BURAU

Throughout the ordeal, her teammates began planting seeds in Burau's life.

"You need to start finding God," they'd tell her.

Burau thought about it, but then she recovered from her surgery and decided she really didn't need God that much after all. She thought she was healthy and that soccer would again be her priority.

She was wrong.

Shortly after her leg surgery, Burau started getting headaches, almost every night. They became more and more debilitating. Finally, they landed her in the hospital, where a CAT scan revealed a golf ball-sized tumor embedded in the right

side of Burau's brain. She had surgery on Christmas Eve last year to get it removed.

Doctors warned her mother that Burau would be paralyzed on her left side. They said her personality would change.

They were wrong.

A surgery that was supposed to last seven hours took only three. A recovery that was supposed to take months took only weeks.

Burau wasn't supposed to be able to run until August. But she came back to school for the spring semester, started practicing with the team in February and played the whole spring season.

"The doctors still scratch their heads and don't understand," she said.

Along with her physical recovery came a spiritual one as well. Whereas soccer was the driving force in her life before,

now she has relinquished role to the Lord.

"I'm just living for a purpose," Burau said. "The thing in my life is 'How it for God?' more than myself."

A marketing major, hopes one day to open a non-profit soccer facility in Memphis. She'll run the time, and spend the her time on the mission. She may even use soccer as a means of telling other stories, in hopes that they be changed the way she been.

"I know now that time is valuable," Burau said. "I've been granted so much. I'm close to losing everything I've worked hard for. I realize I have to do things while I have them — because I may not have them tomorrow and not be able to get them again." □

TBCH provides positive push for resident

By Emily Lamkin
TBCH news office

MEMPHIS — When Dominic first came to the Double "B" Boys Ranch, one of the nine campus locations of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home, it was not an easy transition. He was only 15 when he arrived but the situations he had experienced at home had already caused him to grow up and be the man around the house. It was the unstable home life that brought him and his sister to TBCH.

"When he first came he had a chip on his shoulder," said Dominic's house dad, Jeff Epps. Sherman Flynn, Dominic's house dad when he first came to the ranch, commented that while Dominic was never disrespectful, it was a bit difficult for him to deal with men authority figures.

Everyone at the ranch worked hard to show Dominic the love of Christ through supporting his areas of interest and encouraging him to just be a kid and have fun with life, he said.

When asked about the changes they had seen in Dominic, Epps and Flynn stated, "He's

learned how to just be a kid."

It took some time for him to learn that he was a teenager and it was OK if he wasn't in control of everything or if some things got messed up. "He had to learn that those emotions were OK," said Epps.

Epps commented on Dominic's relationship with Jesus Christ and said, "He was saved before he came to the Ranch, but he wasn't living his life as tightly with the Lord as he does now."

Dominic's changes over his years at the ranch are not only noticeable to the houseparents and staff, but even Dominic, himself.

"When I first came I didn't really want to listen and didn't really want to be here, but I've grown to love it and have learned that Jesus loves us no matter what."

After spending four years in ROTC in high school, Dominic hopes to eventually join the Navy and become a Navy Seal.

In the meantime he is grateful for his experience with TBCH. "I've learned that it isn't always about me, it's about doing something for the grace of God." □

TENNESSEE BAPTIST Adult Homes

THANK YOU

TENNESSEE BAPTISTS!!

With gratitude to God and Tennessee Baptists, Tennessee Baptist Adult Homes represents your intergenerational ministry to more than 350 senior adults and 50 developmentally disabled adults at seven locations. We are grateful that more and more Tennessee Baptists are recognizing the need for this ministry and are joining hands and hearts with us to promote Adults Homes in their churches and associations.

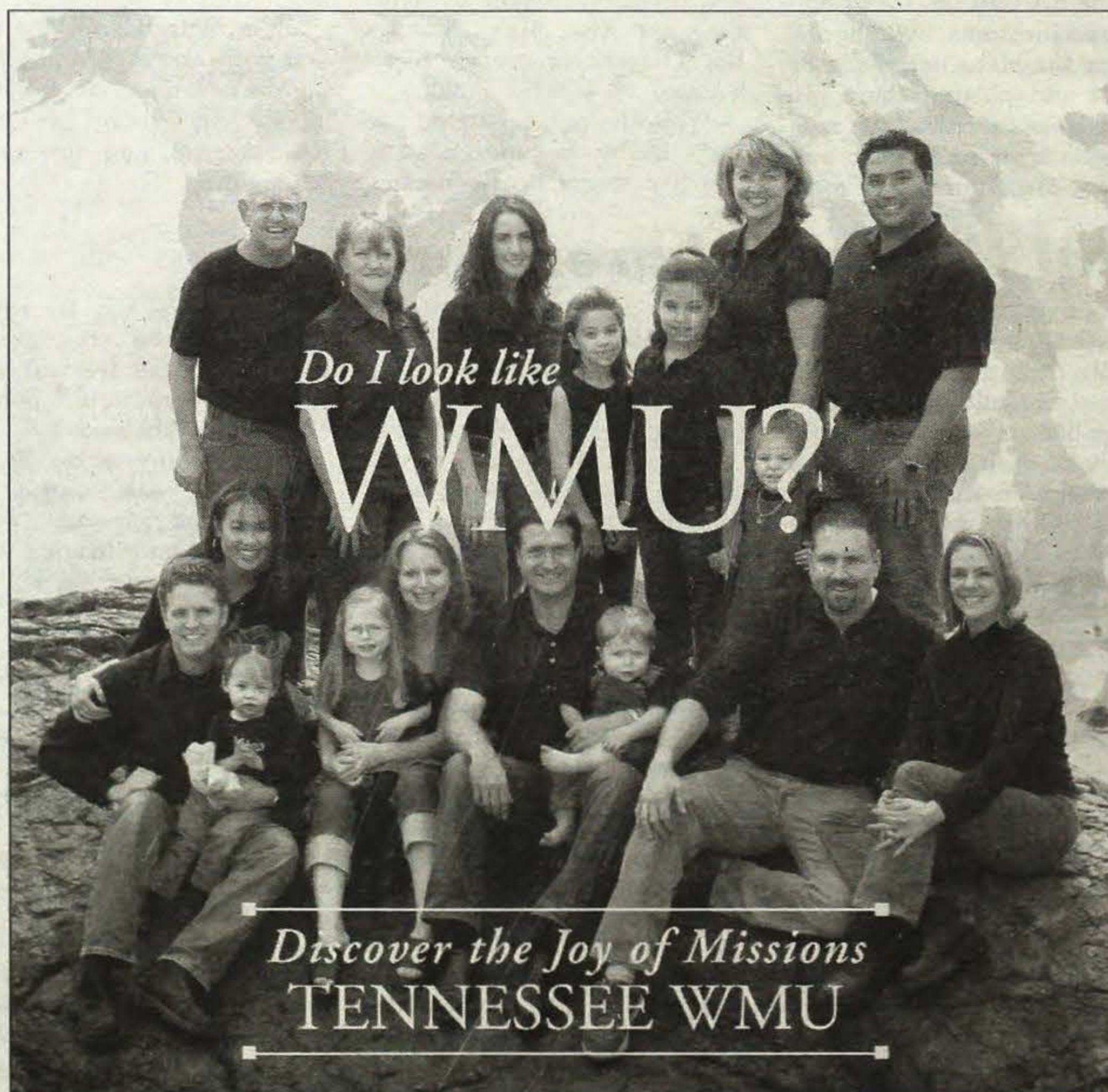
We are pleased to announce that we have exceeded our Father's Day Offering Goal. The goal was raised this year to \$200,000 and the gifts received were \$201,263.67. To God be the glory! Our prayer is that more churches will join us in 2007.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of Tennessee Baptists. The Cooperative Program underwrites our ministry. The Father's Day Offering allows us to provide care for those with limited financial resources. Another Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions is the largest source of funding for the Special Friends Camps.

Please continue to keep your Adults Homes ministry in your prayers that we may proclaim Christ as we provide care for seniors and developmentally disabled adults.

C. Kenny Cooper
President/Treasurer
(615) 371-2050

Web site address:
www.tnbaptisthomes.org



Elections are over — now serious prayer begins

Lonnie Wilkey, editor

I don't know about you, but if I never hear these words again, I will be happy: "My is (take your pick) and I approve this

election Day is finally over. As Tennessee we can rejoice that an overwhelming majority of the people in our great state for the Tennessee Marriage Amend-

have said to the world that regardless of other states do, marriage in Tennessee is the union of one man and one

can take pride in the fact that Tennessee Baptists and other Christians in our did not "drop the ball" when it came to this moral issue. A few years ago when approved a lottery in Tennessee, Christians could not make such a claim. We dropped the ball" on that issue.

It gave us another chance to let our voice be heard and for that we should be thankful.

In the elections of the various offices, statewide and locally, there are people

who are pleased with the outcomes and those who are extremely disappointed.

Tennessee is such a diverse state. We have people who will vote Democrat no matter what and Republicans who will do the same for their party. Add to that numerous people who will not vote for either party. Then throw in the multitude of people who will vote more on the credentials of the candidate than party affiliation. There is little wonder that prior to the elections there were so many closely contested races statewide.

In some of the races, more emphasis was put on how bad the opponent was, rather than the good points of the candidate.

It's hard to remember a year when there were more negative campaign ads than in 2006, and it wasn't even a presidential election year. For that reason I am glad the elections are over.

And for those of you who decided it wasn't worth the trouble to vote, shame on you. Voting is a privilege we must never take for granted. Too many men and women over the years have given their lives to assure us that freedom.

Whether you voted or not, whether you voted Democrat, Republican, both, or neither, now, it is time for the serious business to begin. While I am confident that many Christians prayed about the election and who to vote for, it is now time to pray even more than before.

Instead of complaining about who was elected or who was not, we need to be on our knees praying for all of our elected officials — from the national level, down to our state level, all the way to our local politicians.

We need to remember that, regardless of political party, these are the men and women who will be making decisions that will affect everyone.

Pray for wisdom for our elected officials. Pray they will have hearts open to God's direction and His will. Pray that they will seek to do what is right, not what is popular.

Also, pray that God will continue to bless our state and our country. No matter what anyone or any organization says, our country would not be the great nation it is today without having had God's hand upon it. Pray that He will not remove His Hand. If He does, then we all are in trouble. □

reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

A black mark

By now I'm sure most people have heard the tragic story of Ted Haggard, pastor of New Life Church in Colorado Springs, Colo., and president of the 30-million-member National Association of Evangelicals.

Haggard, who has since stepped down from both of those positions, was accused of homosexual behavior and drug use, allegations which he originally denied.

In a letter, however, that was read to his church on Nov. 5, Haggard admitted, "The fact is, I am guilty of sexual immorality, and I take responsibility for the entire problem. I am a deceiver and a liar. There is a part of my life that is so repulsive and dark that I've been warring against it all of my adult life."

After the news first broke someone asked me, "Is he a Southern Baptist?"

I replied that he was not and felt a sense of relief. Then I felt convicted by God. I was so relieved that his actions would not be an embarrassment to Southern Baptists that I forget what was most important.

Haggard's actions are an embarrassment to Christianity and to God. Forget denominational affiliation, this is another "black mark" against Christians.

During a time when Christianity is being attacked in our country, the last thing we needed was for a high profile Christian to give additional ammunition to a non-believing world.

Before we start casting rocks at Ted Haggard, however, we all probably need to examine our own lives.

All of us are sinners, saved by the grace of God. Each of us can be susceptible to temptation of some sort. Because of that we must constantly be on guard against Satan's attack. Satan will use whatever he can to keep us from doing what God wants and expects from us.

If Ted Haggard truly repents and seeks forgiveness, God will forgive him just as He will forgive us when we "mess up."

As Christians we need to be very cautious. We need to strive to live a life that will bring glory and honor to Christ. A non-believing world is out there, constantly on watch, waiting for a Christian to stumble.

We need to stand watch against attacks from Satan. We need to bathe ourselves, our family, our friends, our church in prayer and ask for God's protection.

Let us all be on guard against allowing our life to become another "black mark" against God and Christianity. □

Kingdom consciousness — 'think on that awhile'



By James Porch

I need to think on that

old saying expresses a response to the idea of "kingdom consciousness."

In the course of a day's time, a range of subjects ramble through my mind, including periodic wonder about the eternal concept of the kingdom of God. Of late, I have intentionally narrowed the big theme to trying my understanding of daily living and serving my neighbor with abiding consciousness that I abide in His kingdom by His gift of grace.

Quite possibly, my concern stems out of another old saying, "As you think, so you are." Initially I have discovered

that kingdom teaching does not come naturally, rather intentional mind work, reading, and studying Holy Scripture can begin to condition my kingdom pursuit. Out of the ebb and flow of organized study, I carry kingdom principles out into daily life that (1) affect my perception of God's world, (2) sensitize my awareness of non-kingdom folk, and (3) enable me to experience great awareness that my Heavenly Father has a claim on my life as His child.

I grade my grasp of kingdom consciousness as elementary in relation to what I can understand provided my focus on king Jesus prevails over my own distractions. In addition, through kingdom consciousness, I believe I will experience new insights into church health. After all, a local church's calling includes a visible expression of God's kingdom on earth. My urgency for responding to kingdom consciousness denies waiting for a group think-tank. Instead, I

must embark on a personal trip employing the priesthood of the believer accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

On my own never-ending trip to and through kingdom consciousness, I made a long stop in Matthew 13. The tax collector recorded a series of Jesus' stories, undeniably necessary for thinking on my chosen subject.

Two parables, one descriptive of soils and another focusing on a tiny seed offer a compatible insight that small yet good beginnings take place in a variety of lives. A wide range of diverse conditions affect the development in risky seed-sowing ministry. Then Matthew moves from the farming culture to remind me that value in kingdom living comes both by diligent search and amazing discoveries.

Quite possibly, Jesus borrowed a scene from His mother's kitchen to succinctly enlighten me in opposition to my arrogance toward patience.

Leaven, or yeast, works slowly but pervasively through changing the nature of a whole lump of dough. The metamorphosis results in better bread — tasty, light, and easily digested. In the kingdom, my lifestyle can be totally changed for the better, provided I am willing to be His lump of dough exposed to His yeast.

Finally, in parabolic form, Jesus announced the coming reality of finality and separation. So I must carry in my mind a recognition of judgment and justice.

In conclusion, I return to the beginning of my analogy. Kingdom consciousness really depends on His seed sown in my life in a receptive way. Thus, my kingdom consciousness really is a mind thing, a healthy church mind thing. My journey continues as I live in wonder and anticipation of more joys in kingdom consciousness. □ — Porch is executive director/treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

God's reviving power needed in Southern Baptist Convention



By Frank Page

Recently, I have been calling the Southern Baptist Convention to ask God to send His reviving Holy Spirit. I believe the future of our convention and our churches will be in God's willingness to use His reviving power. I believe that that reviving power is needed in several places. Last week, I focused on the need for God's spirit to transform our churches.

Today, I call us to seek the reviving Holy Spirit of God in personal repentance and confession.

II Timothy 3:1-5 paints an accurate yet sad picture of our society today. It tells of what we have become. It speaks about people who have become reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. Verse 5 gives the real reason behind all this for it describes people who are "holding to the form of religion but denying its power." The heart of every problem is a problem of the heart. God commands us to love Him supremely and our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:34-40). If we love ourselves supremely, we will not love God or

our neighbors.

In this world, there is God and people and things. We should worship God, love people, and use things. If we start worshipping ourselves, we will ignore God and start loving things and using people. This is a formula for a miserable life.

I am afraid we have become people who worship ourselves, or at least have become arrogant in our actions and attitudes. We have felt that we can exalt one cause to the exclusion of other clear biblical commands and causes.

We must be on a mission together to be Jesus people. Our emphasis must be on allowing His Holy Spirit to confront us

and to bring us to true repentance and confession. We need the power of God exhibited in our lives, our churches, and our convention.

Let us together pray for God to do a work that only He can do.

Let us remember the words of II Chronicles 7:14 which tell us what needs to happen before God is going to bless us with His reviving Holy Spirit, "and My people who are called by My name humble themselves, pray and seek My face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land." □ —

Page is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church, Taylors, S.C.

Billy Criswell is named Bivocational Pastor of the Year

By Connie Davis Bushey
Baptist and Reflector

UNION CITY — Billy Criswell is full-time manager of the O'Reilly Auto Parts store in Union City.

He is bivocational pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, Yorkville, where he has served for 10 years.

He is husband to Melinda, and father to Matthew, 12, and Austin, 8.

And he recently was named 2006 Bivocational Pastor of the Year by the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"I don't take credit for any of this," said Criswell recently.

He explained one reason he doesn't take credit is that God has surrounded him with great people, both at work and at church. Most of his eight employees are Christians and great workers, he said.

His church is filled with deacons and missions leaders who allow him to focus on preaching the gospel and equipping the saints, he added. Yet Criswell has been a leader of Royal Ambassadors at Bethel and he served part of the week this past summer on Bethel's first missions trip. Criswell took vacation to be a part of the World Changers trip to Tupelo, Miss., but he said it was worth it.

"It was such a blessing," he said, to the eight church members who participated and to those who supported them. One result was that two Bethel students helped lead another student in the neighborhood to be saved, said Criswell. He credited Rhonda Poor, Woman's Missionary Union director of Bethel and Gibson County Baptist Association, for planning the trip and motivating members to go.

Ten years ago when Criswell accepted the pastorate of Bethel he did it without the right attitude, he admitted. He only did it because he knew God had called him to preach and he had to fulfill that "contract" with God.

He had served as a bivocational pastor or full-time pastor for about 11 years and then taken about three months off. But like his late father W. L., Criswell felt called to bivocational ministry. W. L. Criswell was a bivocational pastor for 40 years. He subsidized his family by working in auto body repair. Billy has done general auto repair work for 15 years and worked in auto parts stores for 10.

But Bethel has been a blessing to Criswell, he continued.

When he came, Bethel drew about 35 to Sunday morning worship. The church was confined by its lack of educational space. It needed to buy land to expand.

The family who owned the adjoining land responded to a request by explaining the land couldn't be sold. The church

asked to buy just 50 feet. Amazingly the family gave Bethel the land. The church built educational space and this past year built a family life center with a gym. Much of the labor was done by church members. Folks in the community even helped, said Criswell.

Currently Bethel is debt-free and draws about 110 to Sunday morning worship. In the past 10 years about 90 people have been baptized, six of which were baptized last year.

Another big step for Bethel was the recent calling of Wesley Gorton as part-time youth director. Now the church faces budgeting for student activities, said Criswell. He also tries to consider ways Bethel needs to update its methods. He recently preached a series on the family in which he discussed divorce and single parents. He also apologized to the church for preaching the series

too late to help some members.

"I'm blessed to have a church like I've got. They're just too good. It's just been one blessing after another. But that's how God operates," said Criswell.

If he has any secrets to his ministry, it is his "personal quiet time" with God and the Bible, he noted.

"If you don't have a quiet time you're like an engine without oil. You'll break down."

He uses the computer and the Internet to do research. But he also gains from his interaction with people as people say things "that trigger thoughts" with help from the Holy Spirit.

Criswell admitted his life as a businessman, pastor, and family man is a "balancing act. It isn't easy all the time." He has his "down times and valleys."

That's when his "good support system" makes the difference, he said. Pastors should



GARY POE, left, visits with his boss, Billy Criswell, at the O'Reilly Auto Parts store in Union City. Criswell is the 2006 Bivocational Pastor of the Year of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He serves Bethel Baptist Church, Yorkville.

learn "there are people around you that are willing to help." He said his wife, Melinda, is his biggest support outside of God. She has worked outside of the home for many years.

He doesn't deserve the award, he said, but he is glad to represent the many other who like him "support our families and preach the Word with different calling." □

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James Pulliam named bivocational minister of the year

annie Davis Bushey
st and Reflector

member of the TBC Executive Board.

He is retired from Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company where he worked in the accounting office for 30 years. Louise is retired from raising their son and operating a dry cleaning business. James is 86 years old and Louise is 85.

They keep going because they enjoy people, they explained, and enjoy their church service.

"I don't need any pay because I'm not worth it," James said with a grin.

West Shiloh was without a pastor for about a year until recently. So the Pulliams felt the congregation needed their help despite the commute of 84 miles round trip from their home. They travel there usually once a week, on Sundays. They will travel to the church also on Wednesday nights to prepare the Christmas music.

"We wouldn't have anything



JAMES AND LOUISE Pulliam stand outside First Baptist Church, Bolivar, where they served for many years on the staff and still serve as senior adult coordinators. The couple also serve at West Shiloh Baptist Church, Stantonville, where James is bivocational minister of music. He is the 2006 Bivocational Staff Minister of the Year of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

to do without these people," said James, referring to the folks at the two congregations they serve. James also directs the Golden Sounds, a senior adult

choir at First, Bolivar.

He may have gained his musical ability from his family. Both his father and brother were music directors of church-

es. His mother believed he was called to the same ministry though he disagreed for years. He was able to confirm her feelings before she was killed in a car accident, James said emotionally.

Directing music has never been a challenge for Pulliam. Loving people is what he works on, he explained.

He never lets a person hold anything against him if he knows about it, he said. He doesn't think it's wise for folks in churches, especially church leaders, to ignore a disagreement they've had with someone in the church. Even if the other person is in the wrong according to most people, Pulliam "cultivates them," he described, until the relationship is mended.

"You've got to get along. Life is too short," he observed.

Louise said she has learned from her ministry that Baptist leaders should be organized, use people, and let somebody else get the credit. James added that church leaders also should try to put people "at ease," sometimes even taking the blame for a mistake rather than correcting them in front of others.

He thinks Christians and Baptists should use a "blended style" of music to meet the needs of older and younger folks. He has advocated for better salaries for instrumentalists. And he is a proponent of singing from memory.

At First, he led the choir in presenting the Christmas portion of the "Messiah" and a Christmas tree presentation involving about 75 choir members for several years. He also has led churches who prefer Southern Gospel music. That's their style and it isn't his job to "go against them," or "bring in" a style of music, he said.

"In every one of the churches [I have served] I have wanted to be one of them," said Pulliam.

If he did introduce different styles of music, he would do it gradually, he added.

Baptist churches can be different, he said. "We're Baptist and we're supposed to be different. We're not supposed to fit in a mold."

The couple is so thankful for their "boys," they call them, who came through First and its youth choir and were called into full-time ministry. They named about five men currently serving churches.

The Pulliams have also served First Baptist Church, Middleton, twice; First, Bolivar, twice; Hornsby Baptist Church, Hornsby; Maple Springs Baptist Church, Medon; Malesus Baptist Church, Jackson; Zion Baptist Church, Brownsville; and First Baptist Church, Adamsville.

"The most exciting thing in the world to do is what I've been doing. I've been blessed beyond measure," said James Pulliam. □

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Gambling wins in three states; loses in two

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Residents of Ohio, Rhode Island, and Nebraska said no to gambling measures Nov. 7 although gambling advocates outspent their opponents by millions on the campaign trail.

Voters in South Dakota, however, failed to repeal video lottery, while Arkansas lifted a statewide ban on charitable bingo and raffle games.

In Ohio, a proposed constitutional amendment known as Issue 3 would have allowed up to 31,500 slot machines at nine sites, including seven racetracks and two non-track locations in Cleveland. Issue 3 lost by a 56-44 percent margin.

Rhode Islanders defeated by a 63-percent margin a referendum that would have allowed a casino in West Warwick operated by the Narragansett Indians and Harrah's Entertainment Inc. The defeat came despite a campaign in favor of the casino in excess of \$15 million.

Nebraska voters said no to video keno in a 61-39 percent decision.

In South Dakota 67 percent of voters rejected a repeal of video lottery known as Initiated Measure 7.

In Arkansas, voters approved Constitutional Amendment 1 to lift a ban on charitable bingo and raffle games in the state. The amendment restricts the games to authorized nonprofit groups that have existed for five

years, including religious, educational, veterans, and civic organizations.

With 75 percent of precincts reporting, 70 percent of voters approved the amendment. □

Pro-life efforts lose three states

Baptist Press

PIERRE, S.D. — The nation's most ambitious attempt to restrict abortion in the past 33 years was turned back in the Nov. 7 election, as voters repealed a ban passed last winter by the state legislature.

The referendum known as Referred Law 6 was defeated by a 56-44 percent margin, the secretary of state's office reported. The measure gathered approximately 186,000 votes opposed to the ban while nearly 149,000 voters supported it.

Combined with the failure to enact parental notification laws in California and Oregon, the pro-life movement suffered three key setbacks on Nov. 7.

In California, Proposition 85 lost by a 54-46 percent margin, with more than 2.9 million votes in favor and 3.5 million against. It would have required parents to be notified 48 hours before a minor could obtain an abortion.

Oregon's State Ballot Measure 43 also would have required a 48-hour notice to parents of any girl 15 to 17 (state law requires parental consent for any medical procedure on children under 15). It lost by an identical 54-46 percent, with nearly 416,000 votes in favor and 482,000 in opposition. □

State voters overwhelmingly ...

— Continued from page 1

"Thank you, Tennessee Baptist churches, for educating people about Christian marriage and the significance of this amendment. Assuredly, prayer strengthened us in the campaign for this moral triumph. May we now be fervent in thanking God for His faithfulness," Porch continued.

The marriage amendment drew strong support in all four of the state's metropolitan areas with Hamilton County (Chattanooga) topping the list with 80.1 percent. Shelby County (Memphis) was second at 79.7 percent; Knox County (Knoxville), third, with 71.5 percent; and Davidson County (Nashville), fourth, at 68 percent.

Among the eight states considering marriage amendments, Arizona was the only state to apparently reject the proposal. As of Nov. 9, the vote stood at 48.6 percent voting yes and 51.4 percent voting no, with votes remaining to be counted in two counties.

States approving marriage amendments included:

- Colorado — 55.7-44.3 percent with 88 percent of precincts reporting;
- Idaho — 63-37 percent with

90 percent of precincts reporting;

- South Carolina — 78-22 percent with 99 percent reporting;

- South Dakota — 52-48 percent;

- Virginia — 57-43 percent; and

- Wisconsin — 59-41 percent.

Previously 20 states had approved marriage amendments, but a state court later overturned the amendment approved by voters in Hawaii. Approval by the seven additional states brings the total number of states with amendments to 26.

Porch warned Tennessee Baptists that additional attacks on Christian values are likely to surface.

"Let us not allow this vote to cause us to become apathetic toward the reality that Christian values are under attack in our society. We must be vigilant and we must be willing to stand up and be counted."

Porch said the TBC "will seek to keep you informed as issues arise in our state that require our attention and our voices. Let us learn from this vote that we can make a difference when we stand together." □

Efforts to legalize marijuana fail

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Voters defeated three pro-marijuana measures Nov. 7 that would

have legalized use of the drug in three states — Colorado, Nevada, and South Dakota.

Barrett Duke, a staff member with the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, noted: "Despite the plays on people's emotions, the

majority of voters recoiled that it is foolish to weaken on marijuana usage. Marijuana is a very dangerous drug thing we can do to help people access to it will result in lives being spared its destructive effects," Duke said. □



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25429	2005	Ford/Eldorado	26	\$47,920
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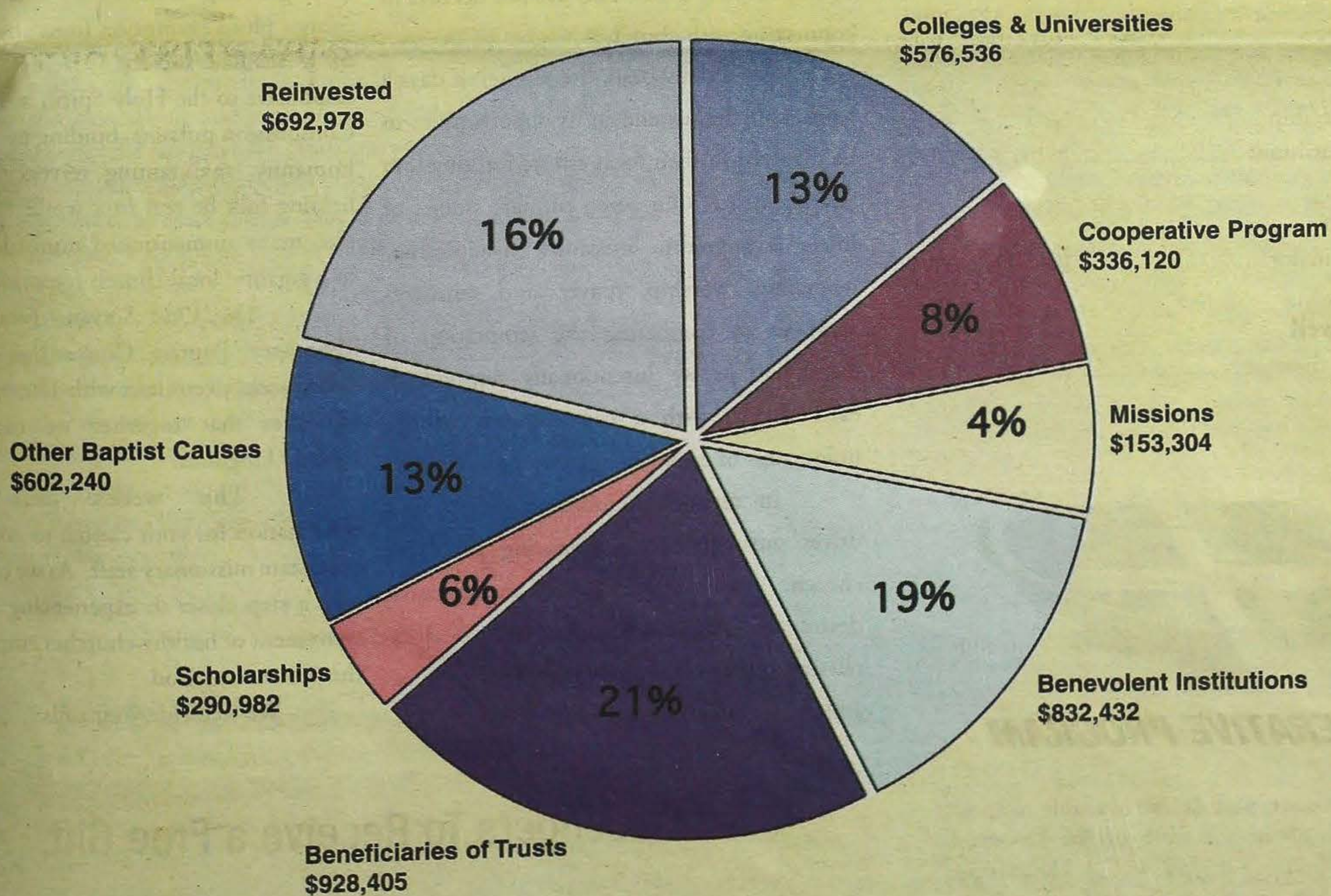
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If you have a ministry need and do not know who to call, please contact the following members of your state missionary staff.

James Porch

TBC executive director-treasurer (615) 371-2090

Phyllis Bates

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administrative assistant (615) 371-2092

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COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

Your state missionary staff is also available to speak at your church about the work of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. If you would like a state missions speaker to come to your church or Cooperative Program materials to distribute to your church, please contact Gary Rickman at (615) 371-2020 or e-mail grickman@tnbaptist.org.

How to Connect Your Church to the Tennessee Baptist Convention

By James Porch

The ministry of the One Servant Family revolves continually around the idea of connecting with churches.

On a daily basis, literally seven days a week, churches extend to us opportunities to be involved in their local efforts for kingdom advancement. Our seven primary points of focus (evangelism, missions, discipleship, fellowship, worship, prayer, and ministry) assist us in combating the temptation of distraction as we intentionally respond to each church with a consciousness of the uniqueness of each local community of faith.

In turn, such mind-set directs and drives our energies in honoring the local church. Connecting magnifies an aggressive desire to establish and nurture healthy relationships with church members, pastors, and other staff members.

Today's local church encounters an ever growing number of challenges that cannot plead exemption from any allusion of a secular society. Being Christ-responsive to the Holy Spirit, active in Commission pursuits, binding up the hearts of humanity, maintaining fervency in helping folk be real in a world of hypocrisy plus many unmentioned ministries, add to a gigantic local church responsibility.

The One Servant Family of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board seeks to connect with Tennessee churches that together we can advance Christ's kingdom.

This week's issue provides information for your church to connect with your state missionary staff. As we connect, we take a step closer to experiencing a dynamic movement of healthy churches empowered by the presence of God.

We welcome your calls.

Messengers To Receive a Free Gift

If you are attending the Tennessee Baptist Convention Annual Meeting on Nov. 14-15 at Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, come by the Executive Board Display in the Display Area to receive a free gift.



Baptist & Reflector:

The official news journal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. The

Baptist & Reflector is published 47 weeks of the year, bringing editorials, stories, regional Baptist news, weekly Sunday School lessons, and news stories, and more. *Church Health Matters* is a weekly feature in *Baptist & Reflector*. Two pages each issue focus on various aspects of church health. What's more, *Church Health Matters* provides even more and appropriate information to help build strong, healthy churches in Tennessee. For more information or to subscribe to the *Baptist & Reflector*, contact Susie Edwards at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2003, or e-mail sedwards@tnbaptist.org.



TeD:

Otherwise known as the Tennessee Electronic Database. TeD is the repository for the statistical and leadership information, provided each year by churches. This is the first year that churches were provided user names and passwords to go online and enter their annual church data directly into TeD. This data entered into TeD by a church is immediately available to the association and state offices, and membership data may be updated by churches year-to-year. In previous years, data entry was done at the association level and the state offices, and it could take several months to complete. Once the data is entered, churches can print out reports including the current year Annual Church Profile statistics, church profiles, and a multi-year digest that provides a summary for the church's ACP data for many years. Statistical data collected in TeD can be used by churches to help identify strengths and weaknesses in local ministry. For more information about TeD, contact Libby Eaton at (800) 558-2090, ext. 1997, or e-mail leaton@tnbaptist.org.

1-800-558-2090:

The toll-free number for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. This number is available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, Central Standard Time. You can bypass the main switchboard by calling any member of the state missionary staff directly. Those extensions are available online at www.tnbaptist.org, click on the *Contact Us* tab at the top of the page, and select *Staff Directory*. Your missionary staff exists for the purpose of *Making Christ Known by Reaching Churches*. Please contact us if we can help you or your church in any way.



Resource Directory:

A comprehensive reference guide that contains information about the many resources and services available through the TBC state missionary staff. It contains the telephone numbers of Tennessee Baptist churches, directors of missions, and the state missionary staff. A special feature is the Services Directory (yellow pages), where names and telephone numbers are listed topically by concerns and interests. In addition, the *Resource Directory* provides a list of toll-free numbers; a list of Southern Baptist Convention related web site addresses; photo directories of the directors of associational missions and the state missionary staff, as well as other data of general interest on Tennessee Baptist life. For more information or to receive a copy of the resource directory, contact Nicki Brooks at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 2045, or e-mail nbrooks@tnbaptist.org.

Tools and Resources Every Church Office Needs



TBC Journal:

Sometimes referred to as "the Annual," the *Journal* contains the proceedings of the Tennessee Baptist Convention annual meeting. The *Journal* includes statistical information for churches in each association, listings of the Executive Board Ministries staff, including collegiate ministers, directors of missions, TBC institutions and agencies. The *Journal* also contains the addresses of all TBC pastors, churches, retired pastors, and other ministers. For more information about the *TBC Journal*, contact Linda Estey at 1-800-588-2090, ext. 2088, or e-mail lestey@tnbaptist.org.



www.tnbaptist.org:

The official web site and online resource guide for the ministries and events offered by the TBC. The TBC web site includes a calendar database of events, database of ministries and services, staff directory including contact numbers and e-mail addresses, news and events, association links, church database with contact information, and much more. For more information about the TBC web site, contact Mike Salva at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 1989, or e-mail msalva@tnbaptist.org.

C-N students help 'turn the lights on' in Mexico

By Andrew Glibbery
For Baptist and Reflector

JEFFERSON CITY — Money was extremely tight at a faith-based mission in Matamoros, Mexico this past summer. The average electric bill was \$400, but, the mission staff managed to pay it each month. That was until July, when the bill jumped up to \$2,250. The electric company said that somebody was probably stealing the power but it was the mission's problem, not theirs.

While all of this was going on, Carson-Newman student Jon Trevor was serving as the summer mission director there. This problem prompted him to do something about it. When he returned to C-N for the fall semester, he and some of his friends started a fund called "Turn the Lights on in Mexico" to help raise awareness of the mission's struggles and needs.

Over fall break, Trevor, Stacy Hawley, Matt De Rose, and Katy McBroom packed up and headed down to the mission.

"As I began to talk about it with my friends, the trip began to take shape," said Trevor, who had planned to make the trip alone. "I still wanted to go be with the family, but now that my friends were going, I wanted them to be able to experience some of the things that I had this past summer. I wanted to see them stretched and growing. I wanted it to be a time in which not only could we encourage Christian growth in the lives of those

we ministered to, but that God would shape and mold our lives as well."

They made the 18-hour drive down to Matamoros, just across the border from Brownsville, Texas, meeting with missionary David Garza and his family. With them they brought \$700, some of which they had raised and some of that out of their pockets.

"God worked in several hearts, and people would just come up and give us money to help with the trip," said Trevor of the love gift. "Friends gave, friends' families gave, and friends of friends gave. The response was completely unexpected; I figured that we would go solely on the money we had in our pockets."

They stayed Friday, Saturday, and headed back Sunday at midnight. In the short period of time, the group was able to do a lot of work, including finishing a painting project on the chapel and repair work on one of the storage sheds. They also spent time working with local kids and leading worship services in what had once been a chicken coup.

The student group left Mexico, but not before leaving their impact on the people there.

"This summer I got to lead a kid named Daniel to Christ," recalled Trevor. "Even after accepting Christ he still struggled with the pain and depression of not being with his family and not being able to get to the States. We built a very strong bond over the summer and many tears were shed when I had to leave at the end of the summer. He was very



CARSON-NEWMAN student Matt De Rose shares his faith with women and children at a mission in Matamoros, Mexico. He was one of four C-N students to take a three-day mission trip to the center during the college's fall break in October. — Photo by Katy McBroom

young in his faith, and I did not know how he would fare. He was coming from a life of alcohol, cocaine, and other stimulants and the guys he used to hang around with were still around."

The fall trip gave the college student hope.

"When I went back down to the whole compound looked great," smiled Trevor. "Daniel is living there now and taking care of it. He seemed so happy and had such a peace about him. I found out that

he wants to become a pastor, and Sunday he helped lead worship. Time when we departed there were tears, for he was finally happy where God had him. I love how God care of my brother."

Trevor continues to raise support and monitor the situation at the Matamoros mission. □ — Glibbery writes for *Orange and Blue*, the student newspaper at Carson-Newman College. The story was used with permission.



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Small Church Pastor of the Year

Latham leads rural church to be 'faithful and fruitful'

inie Wilkey
and Reflector

WOOD — Tony Latham is
ionary at heart.

only difference now is
ne also has a pastor's
Instead of serving in per-

son on the mission field, Latham is pastor of a rural West Tennessee church that has a passion and love for missions.

For 25 years, Latham and his wife, Kathy, served as Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines and

later in the Ukraine.

Latham was diagnosed with a chronic illness in 2001 that prevents him from serving overseas. "I would still be there if I could," he said.

After returning from the mission field to his native home

of Jackson, Latham began serving as pastor of Howse Baptist Church in Atwood in neighboring Carroll County.

Returning to the pastorate after an absence of almost 25 years was not an easy adjustment for Latham, even though he had been a pastor several years before serving on the mission field.

Prior to his missionary appointment Latham was pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Trenton and had also served as pastor of churches in Maryland and Oklahoma.

While serving as an IMB missionary, however, Latham was involved in theological education at seminaries in both the Philippines and in the Ukraine. He holds two master's degrees and a doctor of philosophy degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Education had become a major part of his life.

Yet, he is convinced that the Lord led him and his wife to Howse Baptist following their decision to remain in the States.

As he began to readjust to the ministry of a pastor, doors opened at Union University in Jackson, where he earned his undergraduate degree in 1968, to serve as an adjunct professor of Christian studies.

He readily admits it was not easy for his family to adjust to life in the United States after spending 25 years on the mission field. "There were so many changes in our culture," he recalled. One of the hardest things Latham had to get used to was that Americans "do not have time for anything."

"Americans have less time for the organization of the church than ever before," he acknowledged.

Latham also discovered very quickly upon his return that being a pastor does not generate the automatic respect that it did 25 years ago. "You have to earn that respect," he said.

And Latham is convinced that the only way a pastor can do that is to plant himself in the

community. "A pastor needs to be somewhere for four to five years to learn the church before attempting much change," he said.

Latham, who serves on the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and has been moderator of Carroll-Benton Baptist Association, said he was shocked when he learned that he was named Small Church Pastor of the Year.

He credits his congregation for the award. "This is a great church. A pastor cannot receive a recognition like this without a great church behind him," he said.

Latham cited the church's strong love for missions. The church gives 12 percent of its undesignated offerings through the Cooperative Program, plus an additional 6 percent to Carroll-Benton Association. The church also normally exceeds its goals for special missions offerings. "Our people have a heart for missions."

Although the church has experienced overall growth in Latham's five years, he is realistic about future growth due to the church's location.

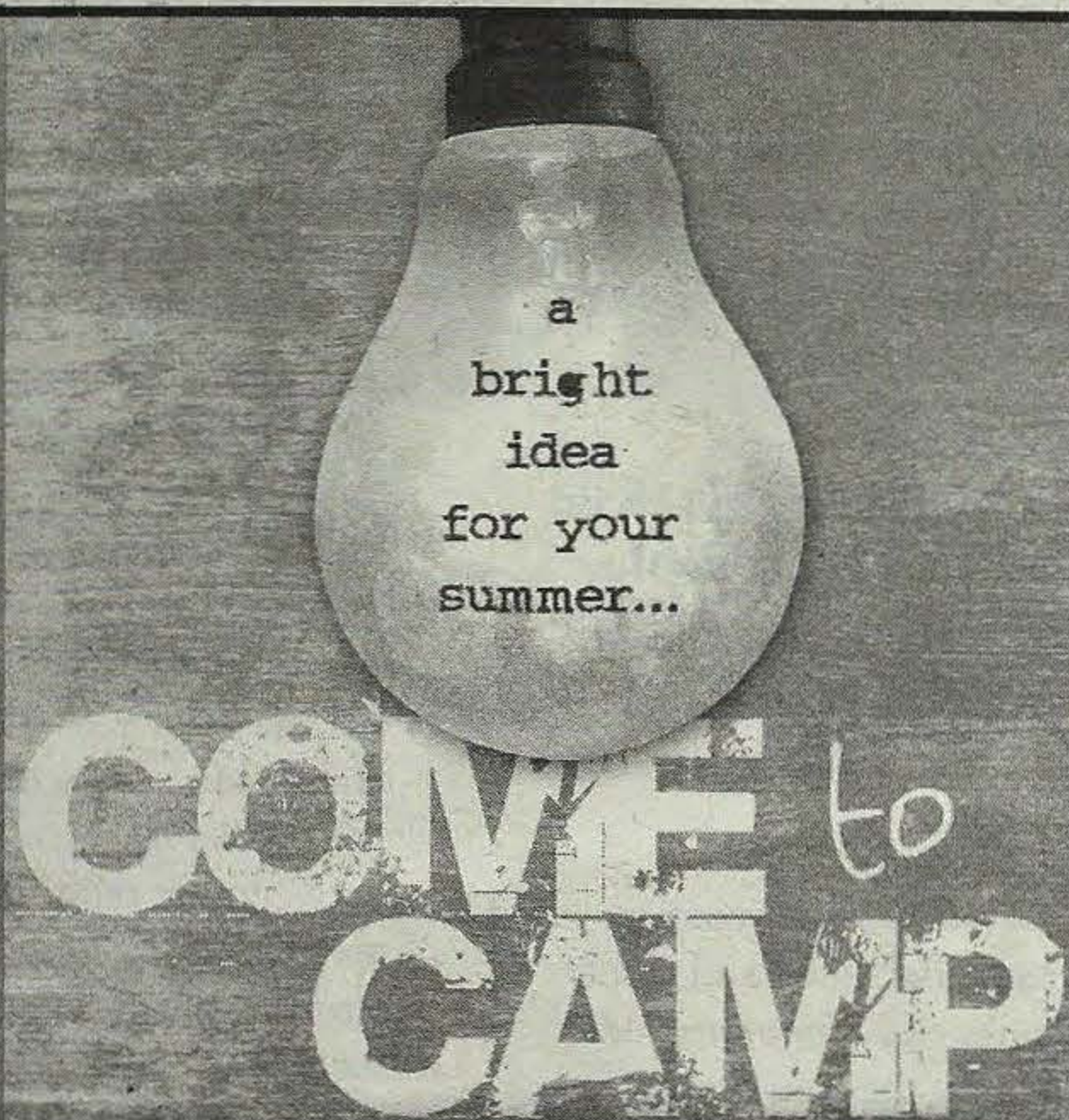
Yet he is convinced that a small church can have an effective ministry.

He has told his congregation they are not likely to see the growth that some sister churches in nearby towns have experienced. "For that to happen we would have to see an influx of people moving into our area."

And while noting it could occur in the next 10 years, Latham said it is important for the church to "be about our task of being the body of Christ in this place, faithful and fruitful."

"There may be a day when this church grows beyond our greatest expectations, but for now, we must seek God's face, listen to His voice, and be obedient to His will," Latham said.

"Even if we are not, then, a church large in numbers, we can still hear Jesus say, 'Well done, good and faithful servants.'" □



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July 9-13, 2007 LindenValley Baptist Conference Center

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Tennessee
BAPTIST CAMPS



PASTOR TONY LATHAM stands outside Howse Baptist Church, Atwood, where he has served for the past five years. Latham is the 2006 Small Church Pastor of the Year.

Who Is Your Man?

Every young bride has a preconceived notion of what her husband should be like. When she realizes that he fails to meet that standard, she spends the remainder of their marriage trying to change him.

by Debi Pearl

A bride's foundational mistake is not taking note of and accepting the fact that God makes men in three different types or images, just like His own nature—that of the Godhead. Which type is your man?

God the Father is dominant—sovereign and in command. He created a few men who are like him in this aspect; they are *Command Men*, born with more than the average share of male dominance and, seemingly, a deficit in gentleness. They are often chosen by other men to be military commanders, politicians, preachers, and heads of corporations. *Command Men* see life as if they were on a high mountain; they look at the big picture, rather than individual, personal needs. *Command Men* show little tolerance. They are not as intimate or vulnerable as the average man in sharing their personal feelings or vocations with their wives. As a King needs a Queen, a *Command Man* wants a faithful wife to share his fame and glory. Without a woman's admiration, the glories of his victories are muted. With knowledgeable handling by an admiring wife, a *Command Man*, over the years, can become more yielding and gentle. In time, his adoring wife will discover all the secret portals to his heart.

If you are married to a "king," honor and reverence is something you must give him on a daily basis if you want him to be a benevolent, honest, strong, and fulfilled man of God. He has the potential to become an amazing leader when he knows you have made it your life's goal to become his queen.

God the Holy Spirit is visionary, omniscient and focused on carrying out his plans. Some of you are married to men who bear this image. That is who they are, movers and shakers, changers and dreamers. These men can get the entire family upset about peripheral issues, such as: Should we participate

in Christmas? Should we use state marriage licenses? The issues may be serious and worthy of one's commitment, but, in varying degrees, these men have tunnel vision, tenaciously focusing on single issues. They will be noticeably more subjective, concerned about feelings, moods, and spiritual insights. *Visionaries* are often gifted men or inventors. These men are street preachers, political activists, organizers and instigators of any front-line social issue. They love confrontation, and hate the status quo. "Why leave it the way it is when you can change it?" *The Visionary* is consumed with a need to communicate with his words, music, writing, voice, art, or actions. He is the "voice crying out in the wilderness," striving to change the way humanity is behaving or thinking. Every *Mr. Visionary* needs a good, wise, prudent, and stable wife who has a positive outlook on life. If this is your man, you need to learn how to be flexible, and to remember always to be loyal to him. This man will be miserable if you try to put him in a box and tame him. On the other hand, you will be amazed at how good and adventuresome life with him can be if you learn to just go with the flow—his flow. Over time, this type of man will become more practical, but, for now, let your dreamer dream and enjoy the ride with him.

God the Son, Jesus Christ, is faithful and steady, caring, providing—the same yesterday, today, and forever, our faithful High Priest. A much larger number of men are created in that image. The *Steady Man* does not make snap decisions or spend his last dime on a new idea, and he doesn't try to tell other people what to do. He avoids controversy. Like the other two types, being married to a *Steady Man* has its rewards and its trials. On the good side, your husband never puts undue pressure on

you to perform miracles. You do not spend your days putting out emotional fires. The women married to *Visionary Men* look at

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— Deborah Wuehler, Devotional Editor
The Old Schoolhouse Magazine

you in wonder that your husband seems so balanced and stable. The wife of a *Command Man* marvels at the free time you seem to have. When you are married to a man who is steady and cautious, and you have a bit of the impatient romantic in you, you may not see his worth and readily honor him. You may be discontented because he is slow and cautious to take authority. He seems to freely let people use him. There are times when you wish he would boldly tell you what to do, so you would not have to carry all the burden of decision-making. He will be confused with your unhappiness and try to serve you even more. Typically, *Steady Men* do not become as well-known as *Command* or *Visionary Men*. They are neither irritating nor particularly magnificent. Women and men alike often envy and even desire a *Command Man*. People are drawn to and

compelled by the *Visionary Man*. Yet, of the three types, *Mr. Steady* is the one that will be most liked by everyone; he is always in demand. He belongs to people. He does not focus on the eternal, mountain-top, panoramic picture like *Mr. Command*, nor is he looking through a microscope as *Mr. Visionary* does, but he does respect both views as important. His vision is as a man seeing life just as it is. He is a bridge between the other two types of men. *Mr. Steady's* wisdom and steadfastness bring stability to the Church, the community, and the nation. Thus, he needs a resourceful, hardworking woman who is characterized by dignity and honor. It is important to *Mr. Steady* that his wife be self-sufficient in performing all the mundane tasks of daily living. If you are married to *Mr. Steady*, let him become the servant of God he was destined to become—a foot-washer just like Jesus. When you come to know your man for whom God created him to be, you will stop trying to change him by tailoring him into what you think he should be. A wise woman will seek to know her man, to learn exactly how God has equipped him to be her husband and the father of their children. The husband of such a woman will be greatly blessed, and will, accordingly, bless God for giving her to him as his wife.

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Arkansas Baptists approve task force report

United Baptist Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Messengers to the 153rd annual convention of the Arkansas Baptist Convention approved a task force report that makes recommendations to realign Executive Board territories, increase the percentage of Cooperative Program forwarded to Southern Baptist Convention causes, and bring the Arkansas Baptist News, currently a con-

vention agency, under the Arkansas convention Executive Board.

Each recommendation from the Oct. 31-Nov. 1 meeting will be referred to other Arkansas convention committees or boards for further deliberation.

The 837 messengers also authorized the Arkansas convention Executive Board and its officers to build a Baptist building in a new location if the existing building in downtown Little Rock sells. The potential relocation results from the donation of five acres of land in West Little Rock by an anonymous Baptist deacon and hinges upon the start of construction as soon as possible. The land was appraised at just under \$1 million.

For a second year, messengers also approved giving agency status to the Arkansas Baptist Assembly at Siloam Springs. Because the action involved a change to the convention's Articles of Incorporation, it required passage at two consecutive conventions.

Other business included a slight revision to the Cooperative Program unified budget formula and adoption of a 2007 Cooperative Program budget of more than \$20 million. Ministries within Arkansas will receive 58.23 percent and SBC ministries will receive 41.77 percent of 2007 Cooperative Program receipts.

In other business, recommendations from a nine-member task force, appointed in early 2005 to study Baptist life, included a request that the Executive Board consider "more effective ways of communicating" Arkansas convention services and ministries to churches.

Another recommendation asked that the president of the Executive Board and the president of the *Arkansas Baptist News* board each appoint a committee of no more than three board members, including themselves, to discuss the possibility of merging the *Arkansas Baptist News* and the *Vision* publication under the Executive Board ministries of the state convention. The committee will be appointed and a meeting likely will be scheduled in early 2007.

The referral recommendations passed with a scattering of no votes.

Additionally, messengers re-elected Harry Black, a Washington-Madison Baptist Association

missionary, to a second term as convention president. □

Association ousts church with female associate pastor

Baptist Press

MOBILE, Ala. — Hillcrest Baptist Church here recently was ousted from the Mobile Baptist Association by an overwhelming vote on the grounds that the church's hiring a female associate pastor violated the association's membership guidelines.

The action, which passed 204-44 at the association's annual meeting Oct. 19 at Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile, followed the recommendation of the association's executive committee to disaffiliate with Hillcrest Baptist. At issue was Ellen Sims' position as associate pastor, a title Bill Whitfield, chairman of the association's membership committee, said is "interchangeable" with senior pastor in Scripture and thus at odds with the association's adherence to the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message.

Leaders of the Mobile association called the first meeting with Dudley Wilson, Hillcrest's pastor, two months ago after learning of Sims' new role, which she assumed officially Aug. 1. During the meeting, Hillcrest leaders were presented with the opportunity to withdraw before the committee recommended disaffiliation.

"We met with them and it became very obvious throughout the meeting that they were

using the Baptist Faith & Message ... in a creed like way," Wilson said. "We realized quickly that they had settled in their minds that pastor and associate pastor were synonymous."

Hillcrest members felt that the decision to choose a female associate pastor was done in the tradition of the autonomy of Baptist churches, Wilson said.

But associational leaders felt that it likewise was within the autonomy of the association to require its members to adhere to its guidelines, said Whitfield, who serves as minister of senior adults at Dauphin Way Baptist Church.

"This was not an ugly fight. We didn't argue, debate, or complain ... We didn't want to withdraw because we had no reason to withdraw," Wilson said. "Ultimately I asked the question, 'If she bore the title of minister of congregational development, we would not be having this conversation, would we?'"

According to Wilson, the answer was no.

Whitfield confirmed that answer. "We encouraged them to change the title. We told them they were outside the guidelines," he said. □

Budget in N.M. tops \$4 million for first time

Baptist Press

CLOVIS, N.M. — Messengers to the annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico approved a record budget of \$4.1 million during sessions held here Oct. 24-25.

The 411 registered messengers, the highest attendance at an annual meeting since 1994, elected Rick Sullivan, pastor of First Baptist Church, Artesia, as president.

Resolutions were passed that included opposition to gambling and its expansion in the state, urging prayer "in Jesus' name," affirming the biblical view of marriage and support of passage of a marriage protection act in the state, and opposition to embryonic stem cell research. □

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MINISTRY — PASTOR

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rch of a senior pastor for a medium-sized Southern Baptist church. Please send a resume to Drive Baptist Church, P.O. Box 38, Anderson, SC 29622.

MINISTRY — MUSIC

Baptist Church in McKenzie, Tenn., is currently accepting resumes for a full-time minister of music/family. Send resumes to attention of the Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 619 Wall St., McKenzie, TN

MINISTRY — STUDENT

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Springfield's Babb writes second book of essays

Baptist and Reflector

SPRINGFIELD — Martin Babb, associate pastor and minister of education at Springfield Baptist Church here has written his second book of humorous essays entitled *It's A Dog Eat Dog World And Cats Are Waiting Tables*.

The book was released Oct. 3 by Howard Books, a division of Simon & Schuster.

The book is a follow up to his first effort, *When did Caesar Become A Salad and Jeremiah A Bullfrog?*, also published by Howard Books.



BABB

Babb has written numerous articles for newspapers and magazines and is a former Sunday School lesson writer for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

His new book contains 100 humorous essays with titles ranging from "What Would Happen If Beauty Ignored the Beast?" to "Does God's Plan Have Roaming Charges?"

"Humor, like Baptists and cockroaches, can be found almost anywhere," Babb notes.

The essays, however, are more than just humor. Each one has a Christian theme or message woven throughout. □

Miss. Baptists OK record budget

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Miss. — A record Cooperative Program budget of \$33,188,934 — a 5.99 percent increase over the current year — was approved without opposi-

tion during the Mississippi Baptist Convention's annual meeting Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at First Baptist Church here.

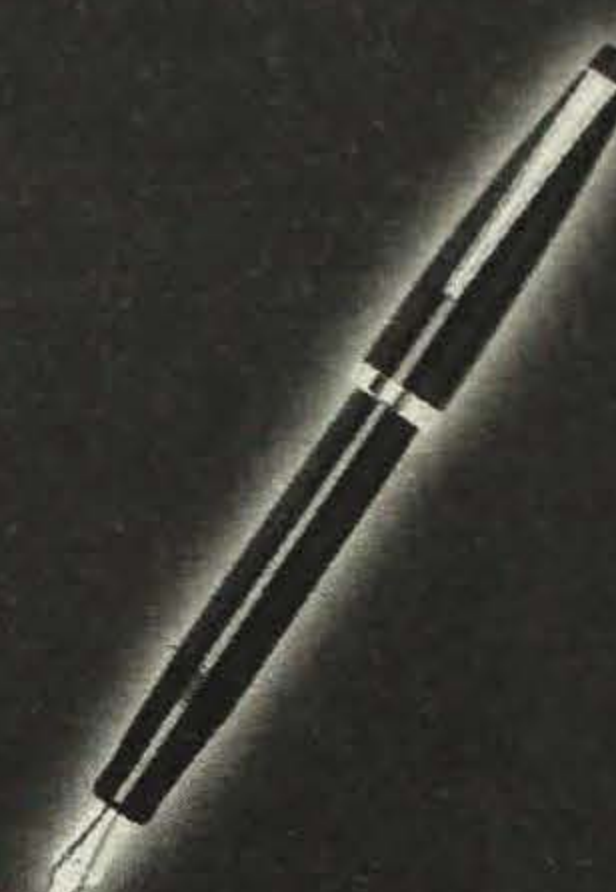
Last fall, messengers voted to freeze the 2006 CP budget at the same level as 2005 due to Hurricane Katrina's devastation

across the southern portion of the state in August of 2005. But with recovery and rebuilding efforts underway, messengers signaled a new giving goal.

The 1,126 registered messengers also voted to permanently close its Gulfshore Baptist

Assembly near Pass Christian and sell the property after completely destroyed by a hit from Hurricane Katrina. The center will relocate.

In other business, messengers re-elected Grenada J. Clarence Cooper as presi-



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Deaths

Grady Randolph, 86, of Louisville, retired executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Foundation, Louisville, and a former Baptist minister, died Sept. 24. Randolph

served as the third KBF director from 1969-1985. He served in the U.S. Maritime Service, a branch of the U.S. Coast Guard. He joined the staff of Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville, as an associate pastor in 1947. He graduated from Peabody Col-

lege, Nashville, and he helped Woodmont Baptist establish a mission, which eventually became Glenwood Baptist Church, Nashville. He was called in 1952 as Glenwood's first pastor and served the church until 1955. Receiving a degree from

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1954, he later accepted calls to pastor churches in Louisville, Ky. and Harrisburg, Ill. He also served as director of missions in Lexington, Ky. Following his retirement with the KBF, he worked for the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (now GuideStone). He is survived by his wife, June; one son, Wayne Randolph, associate minister, music and worship, Second Baptist Church, Memphis; two daughters, and four grandchildren.

Churches

◆ **Round Lick Baptist Church, Watertown**, sent 23 volunteers recently to complete renovations, landscaping, and evangelism work in New Orleans, La.

◆ **Mount Olivet Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet**, is a collection site Nov. 13-19 for Wilson County Baptist Association's Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes. For information, call (615) 481-9536.

International Missions ...

Right: Wendy
ah, Cameroon; Gar-
owlands, Wales;
Pasmir, Ecuador;
Upadhyaya, India



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Left to right: Ran Gao,
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I wholeheartedly recommend, to students and parents alike, that they seriously consider Union University for those important college years.

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Dr. Phil Jett

Pastor

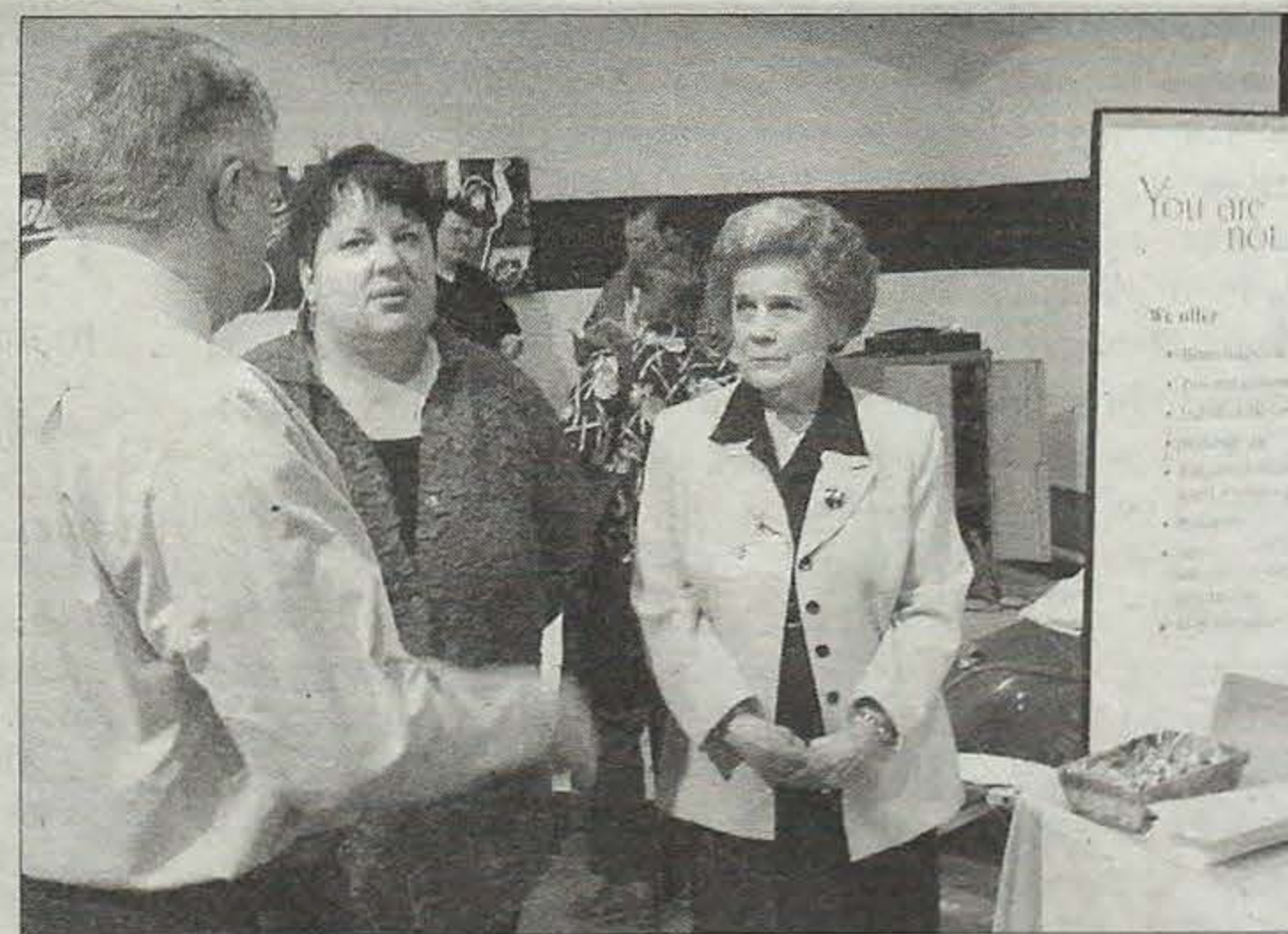
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CRIEWOOD BAPTIST Church, Nashville, held a Ministry Fair Oct. 29. It drew about 150 people and presented 30 ministries involving Crieewood members. **IN PHOTO ABOVE**, Hoff and Martha Catheryn Harless discuss the Nashville Baptist Association Toy Store with Lucy Rudolph. **IN PHOTO BELOW**, Stephen Campbell asks a question about Alive Hospice of Pam Brown, center, and Elween Graves.



KERRY IVEY, second from left, of Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, works with several Polish children in a day camp held there by the church. The church served for the 10th year in Radoso, Poland, where about 15 volunteers led the day camp for children and youth at the Baptist seminary. The ministry drew about 150 students including orphans. The church also sponsored Polish pastors and their families who attended the day camp. About 20 youth accepted Christ. Tennesseans also visited Poles in their homes to share the gospel.

minister's corner

By Deborah Wuehler

Created To Be His Help Meet

by Debi Pearl

No Greater Joy Ministries, 2004

I have never reviewed such an incredible, life-changing book — and I am not prone to exaggerate! This book reminds us of our God-given roles as wives and challenges us to step up and be just what that requires. The cover of the book states, "Discover how God can make your marriage glorious" and Debi Pearl certainly does guide the way toward a more glorious marriage as she cheers you on toward loving that man you live with — as being more than just a man you live with — but being placed there as God's authority in your life who is deserving of your full respect and admiration. Is he not even close to admirable in your eyes — is he even intolerable? Your view of your husband will change as you read this book. As an old pastor of mine used to say, you will learn how to "love the unlovable, reach the unreachable, and teach the unteachable" without a word! You will be convicted of sin, yet at the same time spurred on towards loving and reverencing your man as you love and reverence Christ; "that the Word of God be not blasphemed" in your own life (Ephesians 5; Titus 2).

Chapter 8 will make you laugh and cry as you realize who it is you are married to and the God-like qualities he possesses. I happen to be married to a "visionary" as described by Rebekah Pearl Anast and I have been hanging on for the wild ride through the years. After reading this chapter, I now know how to sit back and enjoy that ride! You, too, will discover how to love your man the way God has wired him and give up the burden of trying to ever change him into being your help meet. This book is chocked full of very practical nitty-gritty advice and goes over everything from taking out the garbage, to wearing a smile, to being the love of his life.

I highly recommend this book if you want a new marriage relationship; if you want to know what your role as a wife truly is from both biblical and practical perspectives; if you are hurting in your marriage or even if you are seemingly content, but especially if you want to see a fresh glimpse of your husband bathed in a brand new light of respect and awe. If you see your husband as a man to be respected, instead of a burden to be endured, and then begin to be the help meet God has designed you to be, your entire marriage relationship will undergo a remarkable change.

Thousands of marriages have been helped and multitudes of women have been changed by reading and adhering to the biblical and practical principles presented in this book. This book will not only change your mind about your man, it will change your marriage! It is doing its work in mine already! □ — Wuehler is devotional editor of *The Old Schoolhouse Magazine*.

a way with words

America's finest

By Hugh X. Lewis

Their branch of service matters not,
When all is said and done.
We know the right stuff they've all got,
And they're heroes every one.

They know the cause is worth it all
Though lives are worlds apart,
Their minds must be where duty calls,
Back home they leave their hearts.

A way of life worth fighting for
Is why they take up arms,
And serve with pride in peace and war —
God keep them from all harm. □

Copyright by Hugh X. Lewis. Lewis, a Baptist layman, is poet laureate of Christian country music in Tennessee. He has written more than 250 songs and is featured daily on 110 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.

Live in reality, not delusion

By Craig Christina

**Focal Passage: Isaiah 40:18-23;
41:5-7; 44:9,18-20; 45:20-22**

In our contemporary times, the idea of worshipping idols seems archaic and antiquated. We can't imagine anyone who would seriously believe that a piece of metal, wood, or stone was a god. How could they possibly bow down to it? How could they pray to it? How could they spend so much time, energy, and money on it? How ridiculous!

Yet, we live in a culture of idol worshippers. Only our idols are not little wooden images. Our idols are more sophisticated. We worship the gods of professional athletics, the gods of Wall Street, the gods of youth and beauty, the gods of social power and influence, and the gods of freedom and self-sufficiency. We worship all kinds of gods. Whether it is an object or an idea, we invest our time, energy, and resources in things other than the worship of Almighty God.

So how can we avoid living in these delusions rather than the reality of Christ? Isaiah offers us a simple formula for faithfulness to the one, true God.

(1) Remember God's transcendence (40:18-23). This first step should be enough to snap most people back into reality. Isaiah offers a comparison between God and pieces of wood. God does not need a craftsman to fashion Him. God is the craftsman of the universe! For "God is enthroned above the circle of the earth" while "its inhabitants are like grasshoppers" (v. 22). God is the One who spreads out the heavens like a tent. He is mightier than the greatest

princes or judges of the earth.

In other words, God is bigger than our idols and we should treat Him with the reverence and respect He deserves by giving Him first place. It is absolutely mind-boggling to me why so many people (even Christians) go through the day without giving God a second thought. Unfortunately, many people wait until they find themselves in a situation beyond their control before they remember the one who is big enough to help.

(2) Remember God's trustworthiness (41:5-7). In these verses, God speaks through Isaiah to foretell the rise of Persia and the demise of Israel. The people put their trust in idols rather than God. But they will have to nail down their idols to keep them from toppling over when the Persians strike. The irony is that they will have to work to protect their idols because their idols certainly can't protect them.

The issue is one of trust. Do we turn to God and trust in God to protect us, or do we trust in our financial security, our excellent health, or our stable marriage. When will we realize that all of these other things can be lost in an instant? The only one truly trustworthy is Almighty God who will never leave us nor forsake us.

(3) Remember God's treasure (44:9, 18-20). Idol makers would use half a piece of wood to make an idol and the other half as fuel to bake bread. In other words, the same piece of wood could be used for something common or something "holy." But they are only deceiving themselves by treasuring something that is worthless.

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The only lasting treasures are things of God. Living for Christ, and telling other Christians about Christ are the kinds of investments that reap eternal dividends. When we passionately pursue God's purposes, we build our lives on a priceless foundation that will pass the test of God's judgment (I Corinthians 3:9-15).

(4) Remember God's truth (45:20-22). God explains the line, "There is no other God but I, the righteous God and Savior; the one except me" (v. 21b). The truth is this: only God is God, and He can save our souls from all. He will save us if we turn to Him, repenting from sin and self, and confessing Jesus Christ as Lord.

When we trust in earthly things, our lives are wasted. When we trust in Jesus, our lives have meaning and purpose for eternity. Even if we are not worthy of worldly measures of success, we will be triumphant in the kingdom of God.

So are you living in reality or delusion? Just check your calendar, your checkbook, and your conscience. Would they tell us that you are faithful to the one, true God? Christina is pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson.

CHRISTINA

Persevere amid difficulty

By Bob Orgeron

Focal Passage: Hebrews 12:1-29

Call for endurance (vv. 1-3). In one of the great, moving passages of the New Testament, the writer points the reader to the cross as motivation to face the difficulties involved in living out their faith.

The personal pronoun "we" in verse 1, links the writer to his readers. He places himself as a fellow runner in the race. The word "cloud" refers to a throng of people. The "witnesses" are those who have given witness to the faith. The writer pictures athletes in a relay race, running for the finish line. The great gallery of witnesses about us encourages us to run well. We are exhorted to prepare to run the race, to "throw off everything that hinders."

In verse 2, we are to run the race with our eyes fixed on Jesus. He is the one toward whom we run with undivided attention. The "author and perfecter of our faith" indicates that Jesus walked the way of faith first and brought it to completion.

In the expression rendered "for the joy set before him," the preposition translated "for" sometimes has the meaning "for the sake of," which is preferable here. With this understanding of the term, Jesus went to the cross — "because of the joy," that was set before Him. He looked right through the cross — to the coming joy.

Call for discipline (vv. 4-11). Suffering comes to everyone. It is

part of life, but it is not easy to bear. Yet, it is bearable if it can be seen as meaningful. The writer has just pointed out that Christ endured His suffering on the cross on account of the joy set before Him. His suffering had meaning. The writer points to the importance of discipline and proceeds to show that for Christians, suffering is rightly understood only when seen as God's fatherly discipline, correcting and directing His children.

Call for consistency (vv. 12-17). From the acceptance of life's discipline in general, the writer turns to the way this discipline is applied in Christian experience.



ORGERON

In verse 12, "therefore" links this exhortation to what has gone before. Because of what they now know of God's loving discipline, they must put forward their best effort. The "hands" as pictured are "limp" and useless. The knees are "weak." "Therefore strengthen," presents the picture of someone whose hands and legs are out of action. The exhortation implies that the readers are acting as though they are spiritually paralyzed. They are urged to put things right and get moving.

Verse 13, is a quotation from Proverbs 4:26, the idea is to put the paths into better shape in order to

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facilitate travel, specifically to Jerusalem. The writer is mindful of the fact that Christians belong to the world. They must have consideration for the weak among their members.

The New Testament contains a number of exhortations to be at "peace," either with God or with people in the world. For them peace is imperative; they must put forth "every effort" to attain it.

Coupled with the call to holiness is an admonition "to be holy." Holiness means being set apart for God. It is characteristic of believers to live differently from the world. It is characteristic of believers to live differently from and separate from the world.

Call for gratitude (vv. 18-29). Verse 18, shows that the ultimate reality is of God's sovereignty, in contrast to earthly systems. It is not until we understand how we should understand the expression "let us be thankful" be literally rendered "Let us be thankful to God's grace."

Verse 29 is an expression entirely taken from Deuteronomy that emphasizes that God is not trifled with. □ — Orgeron is pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville.

An Eternal Investment



William Burton and Dolores Wells, both of Morristown, use scripture to encourage pastor José Daniel in front of Jesucristo es La Puerta Baptist Church in La Puerta, Cujillo, Venezuela.

In 2005 alone, Americans bought 3.34 million second homes. A staggering 40% of all private housing transactions in this country are not for primary residences. More than 900,000 of them were chased strictly for investment purposes.

William Burton, a 1989 Carson-Newman graduate, understands the lure of investment property. He and his wife, Maria, own one. The house is located in Venezuela, but the investment is in eternity. They bought the house, which is located some 7,500 feet above sea level in the Andes Mountains, as a staging area for mission work. In 1999, the Burtons decided to withdraw William's funds from the SBC Annuity Board, believing they needed to invest in kingdom work. Two families who wanted to support their efforts sold the house off. With planning, the seven bedroom facility can accommodate 21 volunteers, covering many specialties from medicine to sports participation groups. Missions work is at the heart of all of them.

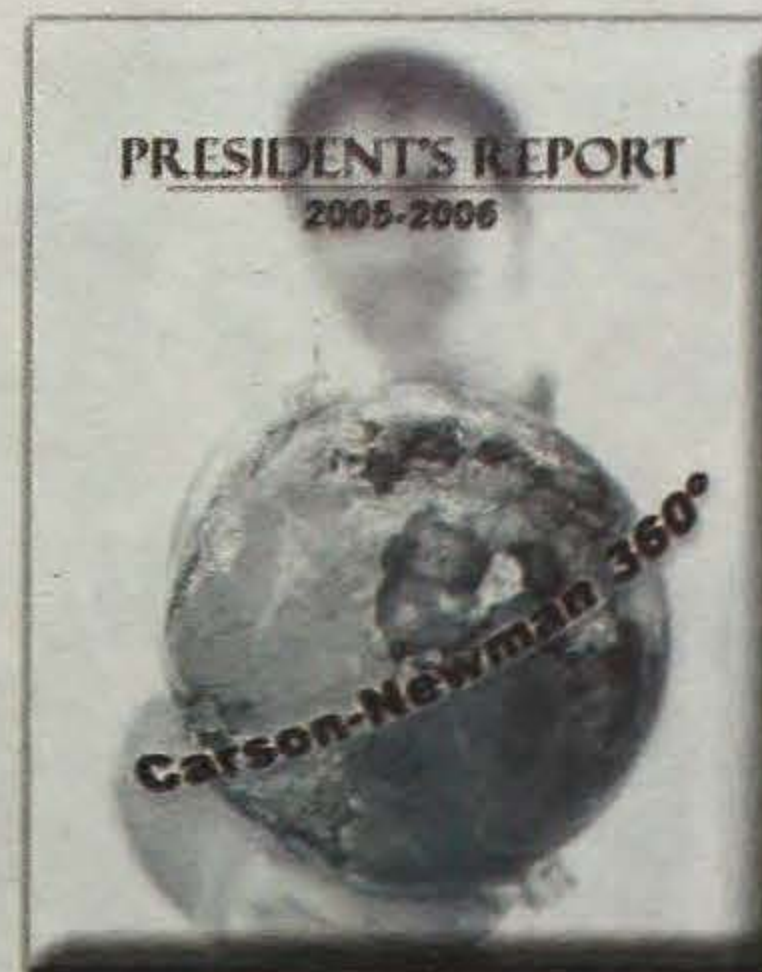
William spends between 100-125 days in Venezuela, but he also has a full-time calling in Morristown, where he grew up, as pastor of Iglesia Bautista La Gran Comision (Great Commission Baptist Church). He founded the church while he pastored Montvue Baptist and realized that East Tennessee's Hispanic population was on the rise. Since opening its doors for the first time in 1990, the congregation has grown from 19 to a membership of 160.

Recently, one of the men William led to salvation began teaching a Sunday school class. He was inspired to lead them to use the Book of Psalms to write their own songs of praise. William sat in the class.

"There were men, some who work two and three jobs so they can support a family and send money back home, and they were writing praises to God," he says. "It was an amazing experience."



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Leaders

◆ **Clark Street Baptist Church**, Johnson City, has called **Keevin Wilson** as youth director.

◆ **Cedar Bluff Baptist Church**, Knoxville, has called **James "Jamie" Burke** as pastor.

◆ **Mike Towler** has resigned as pastor at Eastwood Baptist Church, Knoxville, to become pastor of a church in Florida.

◆ **Carol McEntryre** has resigned as college minister of First Baptist Church, Knoxville, to become community minister of Buckner Children and Family Services in Texas.

◆ **Friendly Chapel Baptist Church**, Knoxville, has called **Jerry Crye** as pastor. He previously served as pastor of Lakeview Baptist Church, Knoxville.

◆ **Immanuel Baptist Church**, Knoxville, will ordain **Norman Holland** to the ministry during morning worship on Nov. 19. He is serving the church as minister of music.

◆ **Dwight Jenkins** has resigned as pastor of Island Home Baptist Church, Knoxville, to become a pastor of

a church in Wilmington, N.C.

◆ **Northwest Baptist Church**, Knoxville, has called **John McGaha** as pastor. He previously served as pastor of the former Fort Sanders Baptist Church, Knoxville.

◆ **Tony Earl** has resigned as pastor of Oakwood Baptist Church, Knoxville, to become director of Angelic Ministries, a community ministry in the Christenberry Heights area of Knoxville. He will serve at Oakwood Baptist until the end of 2006.

◆ **Hunter Memorial Baptist Church**, Elizabethton, has called **Trisha Thompson** as youth minister.

◆ **Oak Street Baptist Church**, Elizabethton, has called **Bill Fancher** as minister of worship and discipleship. He formerly served the church as its music interim.

◆ **Tecky Hicks**, pastor of Speedwell Baptist Church, Bulls Gap, has resigned after 19 years of service to the church. He is available for supply preaching and interim work.

◆ **Rock Creek Baptist Church**, Benton, has called **Jackie Martin** as pastor.

◆ **Cherry Grove Baptist Church**, Jonesborough, has called **Tommy Clark** as pastor. A graduate of Union University, Jackson, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, he most recently served at Summertown Baptist Church, Summertown.

◆ **Mike Tyson** has resigned as pastor of Unaka Avenue Baptist Church, Johnson City.

◆ **New Victory Baptist Church**, Jonesborough, has called **Kelly Edens** as children's director.

◆ **Trinity Baptist Church**, Karns, has called **Tim Hedrick** as minister of music.

◆ **North Knoxville Baptist Church**, Knoxville, has called **Phil Glass** as assistant to senior pastor and youth pastor. Glass is the former associate pastor, youth and children, of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Martin.

Churches

◆ **Springfield Baptist Church**, Springfield, will host "A Girlville Christmas" the evening of Dec. 5. Kim Bolton, inspirational author, singer, and speaker, will be the

special guest. Admission is a new unwrapped toy for inner city kids. For information, call the church office at (615) 384-3581.

◆ **Sand Ridge Baptist Church**, Lexington, will host the Community Thanksgiving Service the night of Nov. 21. A fellowship will follow the service. For information, call the church at (731) 968-4597.

◆ **Riverview Baptist Church**, Elizabethton, held a noteburning celebration on the loan for its fellowship hall during its homecoming on Oct. 15. The church paid off the \$40,000 loan in three years for the project, and named the fellowship hall in memory of its former pastor, Homer Salyer.

Association

◆ **Salem Baptist Association**, Liberty, added First Baptist Church, Smithville, to the association during its annual meeting Oct. 17-18.

◆ **Sullivan Baptist Association**, Kingsport, re had six disaster relief teams serve in New Orleans, at the World Trade Center where they prepared meals, washed, sanitized, and bished the kitchen equipment.

◆ **Watauga Baptist Association**, Elizabethton, purchased a tent to be used in its feeding unit in Upper Tennessee associational relief work.



ELECTED AS OFFICERS of Riverside Baptist Association, at its annual meeting Oct. 19-20 were, from left, Chris director of missions; Angie Anderson, Fellowship Baptist Church, Kingston, clerk; Jeff Amonett, pastor, Moodyville Baptist Church, stown; and Jeff Monday, pastor, Rickman Baptist Church, Rickman.

SALEM BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, Liberty, held its annual meeting Oct. 17-18 during which messengers elected officers and heard several speakers. They were, from left, Thurman Seber, retiring director of missions; Richard Bray, pastor, First Baptist Church, Woodbury, vice moderator; B. J. Thomason, pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Smithville, speaker; Randall Reid, First Baptist Church, Woodbury, moderator; David Mahan, pastor, Horton Springs Baptist Church, Smithville, speaker; Michael Pinegar, Horton Springs Baptist Church, treasurer; Donna Nichols, Auburn Baptist Church, Auburntown, clerk; Robert Robinson, Salem Baptist Church, Liberty, trustee; and Jackie Rigsby, Indian Creek Baptist Church, Smithville, trustee.



NEW AND OUTGOING officers of Stone Baptist Association, Cookeville, pause at the Oct. 26 annual meeting. They are, from left, front row, Earl Dirksen, Trinity Baptist Church, Cookeville, outgoing moderator; Anna Lee Wiles, Baptist collegiate ministries, Tennessee Tech University, clerk; Beth Prowse, association office, assistant clerk/treasurer; Joe Wiles, Baptist collegiate ministries, TTU, parliamentarian; second row, Rick Burnett, minister of youth and education, Wilhite Baptist Church, Cookeville, moderator and youth coordinator; Frank Hickman, director of missions; and Randy Roberston, West View Baptist Church, Cookeville, music director.



OUTGOING AND new leaders of Madison-Chester Baptist Association, Jackson, pass the gavel during the annual meeting. Ken Skelton, left, vice moderator, and Jerry Barker, center, outgoing moderator, pass the gavel to Ron Rogers, new moderator. Barker is of Parkburg Baptist Church, Pinson. Rogers is a retired director of missions who is a member of West Jackson Baptist Church, son.



JOE BYRD, pastor, Bloomsdale Baptist Church, Kingston, stands with Whittemore, Oct. 22 ordination to the ministry. Whittemore serves as assistant to the pastor.