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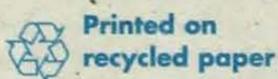
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SBC CP gifts up 2.45 percent

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program are 2.45 percent ahead of the same time frame in 2006, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman.

As of June 30, the year-to-date total of \$154,975,007.13 for Cooperative Program (CP) missions is \$3,700,532.67 ahead of the \$151,274,474.46 received at the same point in 2006. For the month, receipts of \$17,907,132.76 were 4.22 percent, or \$724,626.69, ahead of the \$17,182,506.07 received in June 2006.

Designated giving of \$186,634,803.62 for the same year-to-date period is 7.92 percent, or \$13,698,065.49, above gifts of \$172,936,738.13 received at this point last year. The \$25,217,983.16 in designated gifts received last month is \$62,840.69 above the \$25,155,142.47 received in June 2006, an increase of 0.25 percent.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$154,975,007.13 is 105.45 percent of the \$146,961,316.91 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. □

Land elected vice chair of panel

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Southern Baptist church-state specialist Richard Land has been elected as a vice chair of the U.S. Commission on International Freedom.

Land, who has served a total of five years on the bipartisan panel, is president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Michael Cromartie, vice president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, is the new chair. Preeta Bansal, a New York lawyer, was elected as the other vice chair. One-year terms for Land, Cromartie, and Bansal began July 1.

Land was last appointed to the commission by then-Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist in 2005.

Previously, he had served as an appointee by President Bush for two terms totaling three years. He completed his second term as a Bush selection in 2004. The president first appointed Land to the commission for two years in September

8,000-plus professions of faith made for Christ in Tennessee during VBS in 2006

By Stacy Murphree
Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Reaching children and families through Vacation Bible School continues to be a vital ministry by serving as an important evangelistic tool and one of the largest single outreach events for Tennessee Baptist churches.

"Because VBS is different from other church activities, people are attracted to the church facility during this time. Using every avenue of promotion available, VBS can be a great evangelistic tool to bring in people who would not attend any other time," says Kathy Trundle, TBC Vacation Bible School specialist.

In 2006, more than 268,000 individuals were enrolled in Vacation Bible School. This number is up by more than 15,000 from 2005. Trundle notes that these reports are based on 1,790 TBC churches reporting on their VBS.

Also, 8,187 decisions to accept Christ were reported. "The number of decisions made only reflects the actual number recorded at VBS. Many times, other decisions are made by family and friends during follow-up visits," says Trundle.

VBS also provides a way for churches to discover prospects by following up on those who made decisions for Christ and discovering other ministry needs around their community. "Follow-up is the key. Through VBS, churches have opened doors to many individuals who may be lost and hurting and are looking for the missing element in their life that can only be filled with a relationship with Jesus Christ," says Trundle.

Trundle notes that in 2006 more than 19,000 prospects were discovered, and by following up on these, churches have been able to share the gospel with other family members as well.

"We need to understand that there is just as much opportunity for ministry and evangelism in follow-up as there is in the actual teaching time during VBS. Therefore, planning for follow-

up on those who attend VBS is just as important as the promotion and teaching. It has been that VBS is not over until all prospects have been contacted and paired with a Sunday class or care group," says Trundle.

Since it takes a full year to receive information from the reports, VBS 2007 will be available next year. Current information for 2007 is still being processed. Reports can still fax their report information to (615) 371-2014 or mail to TBC, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024.

Even though VBS is a one-week event, most churches, training, planning, preparation occurs weeks and months in advance.

"Several associations began VBS training events for associational VBS leaders from 1,100 churches were trained in various VBS areas that included planning, and age-group teaching. Trundle notes that three training events were conducted in the state.

The 2008 LifeWay VBS theme, based on Psalm 86:11, "Teach me your ways, O Lord, and I will live by Your truth" (HCSB), and I will live by Your truth of all ages, the stability they need to face a world of change and wavering options.

In addition, LifeWay is also offering a new theme, Canyon: Blazing Trails with the Good Shepherd, the Club VBS theme.

"Many churches have discovered that VBS materials are perfect for Wednesday night activities, mission trips, retreats, and other events," says Trundle.

For more information about Vacation Bible School, contact Kathy Trundle at ktundle@tnbaptist.org or visit the Tennessee Baptist Convention website at www.tnchildhood.org. □



TRUNDLE

2001. He reappointed Land to a one-year term in 2003.

The panel's nine members are chosen by the president and leaders of both parties in Congress. The president selects three members of the panel, while congressional leaders name the other six. The State Department's ambassador at large for international religious freedom serves as a non-voting member.

The USCIRF researches the status of religious liberty in other countries and provides reports and recommendations to the White House and Congress.

The commission compiles a yearly report, which includes its recommendations to the secretary of state of countries it believes should be designated as the world's most severe persecutors of religious adherents. □

BWA elects Jamaican pastor as new president

Associated Baptist Press

ACCRA, Ghana — Neville Callam, a Jamaican pastor, the-

ologian, and author, was unanimously elected July 6 as the first non-white general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance. He is also the 102-year-old alliance's first leader not from the United States or Europe.

Callam, senior pastor of two congregations in Jamaica, is a former BWA vice president and former president of the Jamaica Baptist Union. Active in BWA for more than 20 years, he currently serves on its implementation task force, which restructures the organization's work for the future.

Denton Lotz, the retiring general secretary, affirmed his "100-percent support" of Callam's election. "I think God has blessed you in a wonderful way and has prepared you for this," Lotz told his successor.

Search committee chairman John Sundquist said the 13-member committee included representatives from eight nations. He also described Callam as "an articulate Baptist statesman with a global reputation ... and a faithful follower of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Citing Callam's "unusual depth of theological knowledge,"

Sundquist said he and other leaders have never met."

Burchell Taylor, president of the Caribbean Baptist Convention, described Callam as "part of a glorious unfolding of God's purpose." He said Callam's election would add a "new dimension ... to Baptist history." □

Missional retreat set for Aug. 5-11

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The annual Leadership Retreat sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention, will be held Aug. 5-11 at the Carson Springs Center in Newport.

The \$50 cost includes meals, break materials. Lodging is not included but is available at a special rate. The retreat will be led by Rev. Slyva and David V. More information, or call Willie McLaur at (615) 371-2011. □

Bob Segrest retires from children's homes service

by Davis Bushey
and Reflector



BOB SEGREST, vice president of the East Region of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes based in Chattanooga, stands with **Kim Poss, 18**, resident. Poss, a long-time resident of the Chattanooga campus of TBCH, recently graduated from high school and is enrolled at Tennessee Temple University, Chattanooga.

CHATTANOOGA — Bob Segrest can tell a lot of stories about children. Some stories have happy endings, but most have unfinished endings they are yet to be con-

cluded. He explained that even when children only stay at the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home for a year or two, their stay actually makes the difference in their lives.

Former residents years later to tell the story of what they experienced as a child. Bob Segrest, retiring vice president of the East Region of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, "saw the difference it can make" in their life,

and TBCH has "more power" over groups "to make that difference because I think we're right," said Segrest of his ministry.

Segrest served the TBCH for nine years and was on the board of trustees of TBCH for two years prior to that. He served on the board of the pastor of Concord Baptist Church, Chattanooga, from 1990. Then he led a church in Sonoma, Fla. Segrest was pastor of three churches, serving churches as long as 30 years. He is from Texas. Segrest also served in the U.S. Marines for 15 years.

Segrest said "of the past because," said Segrest, he has seen his staff on occasion bring a child. In one instance, a pastor asked the staff to consider taking a 10-year-old boy. The boy

was living with his grandmother who needed to move to a nursing home. They had no other family to care for him. After an interview the staff decided the boy couldn't be helped by the children's home.

The pastor asked them to reconsider. Segrest accepted him and the boy, now 16, is doing well, he said. "He's a wonderful Christian boy," said Segrest, adding he is a leader in his church youth group.

Besides the Chattanooga campus, Segrest oversees the work at TBCH cottages for children in Oakdale near Harri-man, in Kingsport, and in Johnson City. Additionally he oversees Bill Chastain, family preservationist who works out of Knoxville, and Jean Shelton, family preservationist based in Greeneville.

Segrest supervises about 36 staff members who are "excellent," said Segrest, and "are

called to this kind of work."

For instance, Robert and Abby Rogers, houseparents of the Oakdale home, have an amazing ministry, said Segrest. They have served so long and so well that the TBCH ministry is well known in the needy community. Residents, including government and court officials, know of and respect the TBCH, Segrest explained.

TBCH receives children from the court system by order of judges. That is especially true in Oakdale, because of the influence of the Rogerses.

Formerly the TBCH also received children from the Tennessee Department of Children's Services. DCS stopped placing children at TBCH in 2002 after a class action lawsuit was filed against DCS, explained Segrest, charging them with placing children in facilities which were too restrictive. Several other Baptist chil-

dren's homes systems in other states have experienced the same changes, said Segrest.

Statewide the TBCH has about 85 percent of the number of residents that it had before DCS stopped placing children at TBCH, reported Segrest.

In addition to receiving children through the court system, TBCH receives children by private referral. TBCH keeps children on campus and places them in foster homes. At the Chattanooga campus, 17 children are residents and six are in foster homes. The Chattanooga campus may have more residents when a cottage is reopened this fall, said Segrest. It is closed as a houseparent undergoes treatment for cancer.

Thankfully, the TBCH never accepted government funds for caring for children, said Segrest. A local Christian home for children had to cut its ministry several years ago because the state changed its relationship with the home.

Segrest also praised folks like Tom and Marty Biller, psychologists/counselors who are members of First Baptist Church, Cleveland. For about 25 years the couple have provided counseling to all the residents here at a reduced rate, said Segrest. They have recently been joined by their son, B. J., in their ministry.

Segrest hopes his initiative to send children at the Chattanooga campus to a local Christian school can continue. Funds to do so are raised at an annual golf tournament held by the Chattanooga campus.

What the staff has discovered is when these children attend the area public schools, they gravitate to the wrong

kids, explained Segrest. When they attend Grace Baptist Academy, Chattanooga, they do much better.

One resident of the Chattanooga campus who attended Grace Academy is Kim Poss, now 18 and a graduate of the academy.

"I'm proud of Kim. She's a beautiful Christian girl," said Segrest. Kim moved to the TBCH Chattanooga campus at the age of six with several siblings. She is the first person in her family to graduate from high school and is enrolled at Tennessee Temple University, Chattanooga, this fall.

"She'll make it in anything she chooses to do," said Segrest.

Another resident, Jackie Crum, is a student at Lee University, Cleveland, studying music. TBCH residents continue to live at the TBCH through college so they will have a home, explained Segrest. Crum is on the school's dean's list, the national dean's list, and has been selected as a member of two of the school's major choirs.

Segrest also told of a boy who is a resident. He is 14 years old, six feet seven inches tall, and playing AAU basketball. He is an up-and-coming player, said Segrest. He's also doing well in the other areas of life, Segrest added.

"In many ways it's kind of hard to hang it up because in the continuing stories you want to hear the end, but I'll be around to figure it out," said Segrest.

He will retire in Ooltewah with his wife, Barbara. He may accept some part-time leadership positions in churches and do some writing. □

COM combines love for camping and missions ...

Continued from page 1
...love being a part of it. ...the camaraderie and ...own by everybody in ...that is necessary to ...ers," she said.

Participants at the national rally had opportunity to attend numerous seminars. In addition, campers heard from inspirational speakers and musicians each night.

James Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, spoke June 20.

He challenged those in attendance to "turn loose" of whatever may be distracting them from the priorities of their lives.

"What is limiting your life tonight that if you were free of it would allow you to be more effective for Jesus Christ?" he asked.

Porch noted a life can be limited by "what you allow to bind it."

He acknowledged that it is not simple to turn loose of the binders in life.

Porch suggested that first you must identify what is binding your life and then offer it to God and seek His help in turning it loose. If that is done, Porch suggested, "you will be more effective as a missions person for God."

Other speakers during the

national rally included Kevin Shrum, pastor, Inglewood Baptist Church, Nashville; Morris Chapman, president, Executive Committee, Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville; and Charles Lowery, motivational speaker and author from Linedale, Texas.

Jim Burton, director of the volunteer mobilization team for NAMB, also spoke to the campers.

He reflected on what the national organization accomplished in 2006.

COM worked on 1,178 projects and had 29 percent of its membership involved in some form of missions activity.

Burton said members of COM donated 346,521 hours of free labor and witnessed 697 professions of faith last year.

"You have had a good year. There is much to celebrate," Burton said.

He challenged the organization to continue to be on the "front lines" of missions and evangelism.

Wintford Haynes, who along with his wife Martha, serve as national COM coordinators for NAMB, praised Tennessee COM for their efforts in hosting the 2007 rally.

The Tennessee members have put in a lot of work and have cooperated in making the rally a success, Haynes said. "They have done a fantastic job."

Smothers also expressed her appreciation for the Tennessee chapter and its leaders.

"I was proud and honored to have been a part of the host state," she said.

"I was extremely proud of the Tennessee chapter for the gracious and dedicated manner in which they served as hosts," she said. □



JAMES AND JEAN BEARDEN of Belle Aire Baptist Church, Lebanon, enjoy a moment of rest during the national rally of COM on Mission held June 20-22 in Lebanon.

Never forget that our Heavenly Father loves us

words from
the Word



By Johnnie C. Godwin

Editor's note: Though Father's Day has come and gone this year, the following article regarding fathers is timeless.

"What do you like most about your dad?" That was the question I asked 15-year-old grandson John Paul Godwin as the calendar turned to the month of June. John pondered the question for a long moment before he replied, "That's tough!" So I replied the question: "Just name one thing you like about your dad." After a briefer moment, John replied, "He loves us."

That question and that reply make up the heart of what I have to say about fresh reflections on fatherhood. The relationship between a father and his child may range from adoration to anger or many other complex feelings. I have come to believe the relationship is best of all when a child simply and honestly answers, "He loves us." That warm affection often shows up in the name or expression we use to talk to our father.

Dad, not "father"

John Franklin Godwin died over 15 years ago, but my siblings and I still quote him almost daily. To my memory,

none of us ever called him Father; we always affectionately called him Dad. He was a character who had feet of clay but a heart of gold and a bear-hug he gave his children till the day he died. He was uncomfortable with "Mr. Godwin," but responded well to Johnnie or Dad. We children would have felt uncomfortable calling him "Father." What did we like about him most? That's tough; but I believe our answer would be, "He loved us."

Father — favorite name for God

Ironically, "Father" is my favorite prayer name for God.

Old Testament Jews did not use their native word for father to address God. They felt it would be disrespectful. Their awesome respect for God and concern over how to address Him was commendable. It sure beats referring to God as the Man Upstairs or other overly familiar terms in addressing God.

But when Jesus came upon the earthly scene, He taught us to pray directly to God as our Father (Matthew 6:9). Instead of being disrespectful to God the Father, Jesus reflected the relationship of Son to Father that included love, warmth, affection, and approachability as well as holiness and authority. The only way humans can enter the family of God is through adoption (Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5). Upon adoption, we too have the relationship with God that allows us to know Him as Father and

call Him by that name.

Before I knew much of anything I just told you, I found myself praying to God most often as Father. Sometimes I use the term "Lord" or "God" or phrases such as "Creator of everything." Still, Father is my favorite way to address God. I've wondered why, and I think I know at this age and stage of life — after being one of God's children for over 60 years. It evoked in my life and understanding.

Jesus is the model

"Abba, Father" appears just three times in the New Testament: (1) Mark 14:36, as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane; (2) Romans 8:15, as Paul underlined that we are adopted children of God who can approach our Father as Jesus did and without fear; (3) Galatians 4:6, as the Holy Spirit reassures us we are God's redeemed, adopted children who are heirs; and we are free to cry out, "Abba, Father!"

We understand "Father," but why the "Abba?" "Father" translates the original Greek. "Abba" remains in English versions of the Bible as the original Aramaic for father. To translate "Abba" would cause the biblical texts to read "Father, Father!" Why the doubling up? Why leave the Aramaic word "Abba?" Because "Abba" distinctively includes the relationship of father as loving, warm, affectionate, approachable — much like the English word "dad."

Though the concept is in the Bible, I don't think I would ever feel comfortable praying to God as "Dad." I guess it would be all right, but my childish heart must have known that praying to God as "Father" also carried the sense of "Dear Heavenly Father." I wouldn't presume to tell you what words to use in praying to God. For me, though, I like "Father." It reminds me of the love, warmth, affection, and approachability I felt with my earthly dad. Further, "Father" retains the sense of how awesome and perfect God the Father is. Now, let me say a further word about the Father being both good and loving.

God, the Father, is love

Yes, I know God is good (Matthew 19:17; 20:15; Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19). I give thanks every day for God's goodness that shows up in blessing after blessing and answered prayers. Goodness is a moral quality that God uniquely has without any mixture of bad. When things go well, Christians say, "God is good." We sing, "God is good, all the time." Our recognition of this quality of God ranges from profoundness to upbeat glibness. This truth about God is good, but by itself it's not good enough to cover all of life.

How do we speak to God and about God when life is not good? When life's griefs cut to the marrow of the soul and break the heart? When tragedy comes? When a child dies?

When war brings down a loved one? When cancer and death follows remission? When countless griefs won't go away? When there when he cries "God I had died!" When ours died, "Would you die!" When God told his heart, "Would you die!" it was not an accident. Yet, I know God felt David's grief, my grief, and that of others.

Where is comfort for me, I find comfort that God the Father stand, I pray with faith, "Though He will I trust Him." the Father loves me any earthly father lovingly trust Him too.

Conclusion

We never know we only know "of" infinite and perfect Finite man may say "My kind of God" or that, which would to the mind of one child.

God is all and in God the Father. If I ask me what I like the Father, I could answers; but, without I would say, "He That's my best a reflection on "Father" — Copyright 2007 C. Godwin. E-mail: win@comcast.net.

Going 'wherever' to show 'whoever' that you care

guest
columnist



By Matt Cannon

A member of my church was being beaten and I stood idly by, mouth agape at the sight. I'm what some would call a "big ole boy" at 6 feet 7 inches and over 300 pounds, so I was surely big enough to intervene. However, like so many others that night, I watched as his assailant threw him against the wall and feared the worst as the fight spilled into the bathroom.

After a long minute, Billy staggered out with a dazed look on his battered face wearing a toilet seat around his neck. The response from the crowd was unrestrained laughter. The spectators were not sadistic; this was a "professional" wrestling match and the toilet seat was part of the show.

How did I end up here?

You may wonder: How did you, a pastor, end up at a wrestling match? Believe me, as I sat with my wife and little girl in the sweltering heat inside the National Guard Armory I asked myself the same question.

Some of the people in the church where I had just become pastor had more easily relatable interests. One man raised beagles and my wife had previously been employed at an animal clinic. Others were diehard Tennessee football fans, which was right down my alley. A few others had gone to the same high school that I had attended, so we shared a common point of reference.

But Billy was different. His interests were a particular heavy metal rock band and wrestling, and he took both very seriously. He had one room in his house that his wife had allowed him to fill to overflowing with memorabilia from his favorite band and he wrestled with a local organization. I didn't have much interest in

either one. However, I did have an interest in faithfully fulfilling my mission to be a shepherd to every sheep in the flock. This included Billy.

What would Jesus do?

When he asked me to come see one of his matches, I used the old faithful saying of someone non-committal: I might. I had watched wrestling as a child, but stopped as I became convicted of how raunchy it had gotten. Billy told me that the group he wrestled with wasn't like that at all. In fact, he said, it was family oriented and some of the wrestlers encouraged the kids to go to church.

Still, I was conflicted until I asked myself: Where Would Jesus Go? As we see in Scripture, Jesus went wherever the people he cared about were. He ate with what the religious establishment considered the bad people of the day; tax collectors, drunkards, and the otherwise defiled. Scandalously, He even let a prostitute unashamedly touch Him.

Looking at my situation

with the example of my Savior as a guide, I knew there was only one decision to make. So I went. And going made me realize that we all too often miss out on showing forth God's love and His glory by not going to places that make us uneasy.

Going where He leads

People generally do not like to feel uncomfortable. We spend a lot of time and energy shielding ourselves from the people, places, and things that cause us anxiety or aggravation. I wonder is this mindset causing us to miss out on ministry opportunities? It appears that we often allow our need for comfort to override our mandate to show the love of Christ to all people, not just the ones who are like us.

Maybe you need to go where you know you will encounter some of what society considers "the worst." Prostitutes, drug peddlers and users, and alcoholics are still people who Jesus came to seek and to save. We, the followers of this Jesus, are now His hands and feet in this world. If Jesus embraced

them and went where they were, then we should. By the way, don't let your reputation be degraded or your company. Jesus faced criticism and it turned out right for Him.

Blessed to be a

We have not been merely enjoy the blessing to in turn be a blessing. Our light of faith has been lit to shine on as we do in church but to blaze out into the world. It would be a blessing to remain in our "home" and refused to find a way to engage our culture. As for me, I'm seeking the Lord's will for how our church could be more outward focused. You should be doing WWJG? Wherever to in order to show care. Let's all strive wise. ☐ — Cannon, pastor at Calvary Church, Rockwood.

See you next year in Manchester — at Bonnaroo



Larry Gilmore

message of hope!

The greatest surprise I had was not the dreadlocks that some wore, nor the weird ideologies and far out philosophies of life that many had, but the absence of hundreds of soul winners and committed Christians sowing the seed of the Word in the midst of the mission field.

Admittedly, this was our first year at Bonnaroo, but it won't be our last! Traveling to Brazil, Grenada, Montana, Africa, and many other places on mission trips has been exciting. But when the people from every state of our country and several foreign countries come to us, shouldn't we hear the call to be salt and light?

Kerry Walker, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Manchester, is the one who has provided leadership in pioneering ministry over the years at Bonnaroo. He and a handful of faithful Christ followers began a few years ago by handing out bottles of water to those stranded in the long lines outside of the festival.

This year, the ministry progressed to a 40x60 tent with Christ followers providing free coffee, fruit, donuts, juice, sweet tea, water, and shade. Christian literature was on each table and volunteers engaged the festival goers in conversation, asking questions, listening, and sharing the Good News of the gospel.

The festival goers appreciated the free food, enjoyed the fan generated breeze in the shade, and interacted with openness

with our volunteers. Their gratitude was often expressed to those who graciously served them and their openness to the gospel increased as the week progressed. This especially came to light when some other well-intentioned believers marched through the area with a large cross commanding repentance and telling everyone they were going to hell. Needless to say, the servant approach made a greater impact and left a better witness than the message of condemnation. One said, "You guys are doing it the right way!" Another, "Your ministry is an oasis in the middle of the desert. You'll never know the impact you have made."

How can the impact of our witness at Bonnaroo be calculated? God knows the financial and people support that came from Duck River, William Carey, and New Duck River associations. Some hauled equipment, others served food, others played their instruments and sang, and others shared a verbal witness for Christ. The Tennessee Baptist Convention invested in the cluster project which means that all Tennessee Baptists participated through our Cooperative Program. Committed Christians from other denominational groups also participated.

Where did the seed of our witness go? Seed was sown on all kinds of soil ... and we pray that some of it was good soil! Could it be that Caesar, a prof-

fessed atheist from Poland, will think about the truths he heard and begin to seek the Savior? Will Dakota and Sunshine, a young couple traveling from one festival to another, finally conclude that the music doesn't last and that there has to be something more? Will Bill, a university professor, come to believe that we do need a Savior and that Jesus is His name? When will Chance find his religious ideologies unfulfilling and discover real Truth? Will Linda, a bar owner who claims to be a Buddhist, turn to our Christ?

And what about the many others who heard about the resurrection of Jesus and were challenged to disprove it or begin to follow this One who claimed to be God in the flesh?

No, our local churches probably won't have great growth because of Bonnaroo, but we know that God's Word will not return unto Him void and that His Word is now going throughout every corner of our country in the lives of those who heard it. Maybe the kingdom will expand!

Maybe a new missionary will be born in Maine, or Seattle, or North Dakota, or New York. It may be that Jesus will smile because the mission field spent their money to come to the missionary this year. Now isn't that a new twist!

See you next year at Bonnaroo! □ — Gilmore is evangelism director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

One vote does matter

Election time is upon us once again. All you have to do is pay attention to the sudden "bloom" of political signs in your town or neighborhood. They seem to pop up like dandelions.

Often, elections for city or county council members, judges, sheriffs, etc., are not as popular as elections for a president or United States senator. But they are important and should be taken seriously.

How many times have we heard, especially in the lesser known elections, that one vote doesn't matter? No matter what the election, one vote (your vote) could make a difference. Just ask the folks in Sweetwater where a liquor-by-the-drink referendum failed — by one vote (see story on page 7).

The fact that a liquor referendum failed is news. Phil Lovelace, a former pastor in the state who now heads the Tennessee Drug Awareness Council, based in Nashville, acknowledges that the Christian community rarely wins one of these battles.

Yet, in Sweetwater, the Christian community rallied together and defeated the referendum by one vote. Imagine how Christians would have felt had they lost by one vote because someone had taken the attitude, "My vote doesn't matter."

We have just finished celebrating the Fourth of July holiday. This holiday not only marks our nation's birthday, but also serves to remind us that the freedoms we have today are because men and women have given their lives over the centuries to ensure we have certain freedoms. And one of those freedoms is the right to vote.

That right should never be taken for granted. And, we as American citizens, need to exercise that right every time we can. We need to make sure also that the election process is not abused by encouraging our elected officials to keep safeguards in place that will keep non-citizens from voting.

No matter what political party you prefer, study the candidates and see what positions they hold. If they don't value Christian principles and beliefs, find someone who will.

As Christians, we have a greater obligation to uphold God's "platform," not the platforms of Republicans, Democrats, Independents, or any other party of choice.

Make sure you're registered to vote and do so. Your vote could make a difference. □

Threat to well-being, even driving, is a moral issue

Gushee

Probably the most interesting moral issue those raised by practices we take for granted. No one asks about the morality of baseball, wearing socks, or taking a shower. Likewise, no one asks about the morality of driving cars.

Actually, the Vatican does. The Catholic headquarters recently issued "Ten Commandments" for the drivers. These commandments include refraining from road rage, speeding, driving off, rudeness, or driving while intoxicated. The AP reporter who offered the "road to salvation" story was cleared.

State ad that arrived this week did not mention much ground for amusement. All it says is that each year nearly 6,000 teenagers are killed in car crashes — a number that hasn't changed in a century. This means that 60,000 American teenagers have been killed in car accidents in the past century, which means that cars have caused more teenage American lives than were lost in the entire Vietnam War.

Quindlen, a columnist for the Washington Post, rarely writes much of anything about driving. But in her June 11 column she wrote as a parent. In that column she lamented the sad rite of passage that teenagers nearly every other high school senior — the funeral of the dead teenager killed in a car accident.

I've seen all too many such funerals in the West Tennessee. I am not even talking about the horrifically stupid accident in

Selmer, in which a drag-racing stunt gone terribly wrong claimed the lives of six young people. I wasn't there, but the very idea of what was attempted on an average city street without guardrails and thronged with people seems incomprehensible.

No, my focus today is the garden-variety car accident involving the garden-variety teenager who is set loose at 15 or 16 years old driving a deadly piece of heavy machinery whose successful operation requires virtues and skills that are not always in abundant supply.

Since my daughter's near-fatal accident last year, and the birth of Loaves and Fishes ministry to meet the needs of local families hit by similar catastrophes, we have helped 14 families, almost all of them affected by car accidents involving teenagers. Given the fact that at least one-third of all 16-year-old drivers is involved in serious accidents, who will be the next to die?

With modern advances in health care and life expectancy, it seems that if you can get through the age of 21 without getting killed in a car accident, you will likely live to be about 90. But altogether too many are not making it to the age of 21.

Teen driving makes for an excellent example of the power of the law as a kind of social teacher. When the law books say that 15-year-olds are ready for a learner's permit and 16-year-olds are ready for a driver's license, most people tend to assume that 15-year-olds are ready for a learner's permit and 16-year-olds are ready for a driver's license. But what if the law is wrong? Can we think of any other examples where the

law has ever been wrong about anything?

What I teach in Christian ethics classes is that the law is a floor, not a ceiling. That is, it sets minimal social expectations in keeping with a society dedicated to the maximum range of freedom consistent with social order. So most states have decided that, all things considered, the law should permit people to drive cars when they are 16. This ends up meaning that every 15-year-old expects to be a licensed driver the day they turn 16, as a kind of birthright or rite of passage. And on it goes.

Both Allstate and Anna Quindlen argue for changes in the law. Allstate wants to see comprehensive, graduated driving-license systems in every state. Anna Quindlen suggests that we look at Europe, socially liberal on almost everything but its driver's license laws — in most European countries, that age is 18.

I believe in a consistent pro-life ethic. This means that any and every threat to human well-being is a moral issue. Any behavior that regularly ends human life must become a matter of especially intense moral engagement.

Driving takes the lives of 1.2 million people a year around the world, and injures another 50 million. Driving, therefore, is a moral issue of the first magnitude. I think that it must be entirely reconsidered in a culture that loves its cars but buries altogether too many of its occupants. □ — Gushee is university fellow and Graves Professor of Moral Philosophy at Union University in Jackson. Reprinted from Associated Baptist Press.

King's Men of Westside Baptist, Halls, help neighbors

By Connie Davis Bushey
Baptist and Reflector

HALLS — The King's Men of Westside Baptist Church here simply help their neighbors, explained Dale McCaslin, president.

In fact, the group intentionally doesn't keep track of the number of jobs they do, he added, though it probably comes to about 100 hours a month and some expense. Every wheelchair ramp built by the group costs about \$500, said McCaslin, retired manager of Delta Airlines who returned to Halls, his boyhood home, several years ago from Florida.

Funding comes from various sources — King's Men members, other members of Westside Baptist, those they are helping, and the community, said McCaslin.

The King's Men has about 40 members of which about 20 are involved in the work projects, which are led by Sonny Thurmond. They also mow lawns, power wash houses and decks, paint houses, do other repairs, and even regularly check on their neighbors.

The group has been joined by ladies of the church in a recent project of painting a house and the ladies help the men check on people who have that need.

The group also has helped Janet Compere, wife of their pastor, John, to provide a cookout for campers attending a camp held nearby. The camp is for people with men-

tal and physical needs.

The men of the group also gather for an occasional breakfast and Bible study.

McCaslin explained the King's Men mainly help people in Halls, which has about 2,500 residents of whom many are needy and elderly, though the group has extended its service to Lauderdale County and Dyer County.

It is a privilege for him to be involved in the King's Men, said McCaslin, because he lacks the skills of other members, such as those who are electricians and builders.

The King's Men was started in the 1980s by Stan Anderson, pastor of Westside Baptist at that time, basically to help widows.

Today the group helps people like Ronnie Blue, a member of Westside who suffers from cancer. He is a Vietnam War veteran who was exposed to agent orange. Members of the King's Men mow Blue's lawn when he doesn't feel up to it, said McCaslin.

The group also helps Jane and Wendell Wiley of Halls. McCaslin and Wendell ran into each other in the community about six months ago and renewed their acquaintance.

They grew up together in Halls and learned they had both worked for Delta Airlines in Florida. They also learned they had both experienced prostate cancer. McCaslin discovered that the Wileys were recovering from a car accident



MEMBERS OF the King's Men of Westside Baptist Church, Halls, include, from left, Jer Michael Leggett; Alvis Leggett; Rickey McCaslin; William Cowan; Sonny Thurmond; Dennis Wayne Broglin; Jessie Broglin; Dale McCaslin, president; Russell Robertson; Jimmy Hutch Andy Cox. They were gathered for a recent breakfast at the church.



DALE MCCASLIN, left, president of the King's Men of Westside Baptist Church, Halls, sits with Wendell Wiley of Halls whom the King's Men have helped. The Wileys are recovering from an accident, and Wendell is recovering from cancer.

in 2005 which left Jane with a broken back and Wendell with a broken sternum and injured back. Jane is a member of First Baptist, Dyersburg.

Because Wendell was unable to do much work following cancer surgery, the King's Men mowed the grass and worked on their small farm for three

days. They continue to mow for them.

"When they offered that meant more to you'll ever know," said

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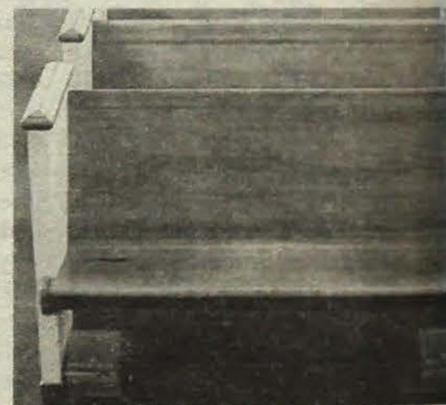
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Dorothy Elrod leads music at FBC, Woodbury, for 39 years

By Davis Bushey
and Reflector

WOODBURY — Not surprisingly to those who know her, Dorothy Elrod is working in the music offices of First Baptist Church here. She is sorting and organizing music, she explained, to help the church members now that she has retired as minister of music. She also is doing it, she said, because it makes sense — she is familiar with the music and the files.

Elrod, known as "Dot," has served as a minister of the church for 39 years. She said that, she was music director of First Baptist Church, Springfield, Tenn., from 1964-64.

At that time she was a young married woman who was well-known in Springfield for her musical abilities. She performed with a community chorus as a soloist in the "Messiah." She had performed operas by Mozart and Mendelssohn. Elrod also had played the violin and snare drum.

Her director of missions asked her to consider serving as music director of First Baptist. She agreed to do so when hired, Elrod recalled. She soon learned that God had called her to church leadership, she added.

Elrod was not prepared to direct music, she said, so she traveled to the Bank Store in Nashville and bought a piano to help her.

Several years later Elrod moved to Woodbury County in 1968, with the comfort of knowing she would continue to use her musical talents, she noted.

Elrod and her family were attendants at First Baptist, Woodbury, and she was a member of a children's choir. When the church was out of the church was out of music directors, Elrod would lead and serve.

When the church called her as music director in 1972 and she served until 1991 when she resigned to spend more time with her two teenaged children.

At a year later, she approached the church's Bobby Zumbro, who served the

church for 18 years, when she learned the current music director was leaving.

"I offered my services if the church wanted them," she explained.

"I realized I was not happy unless I was involved in church music," said Elrod.

She was called as minister of music and served from 1979-2006.

Of course, that was not the only thing Elrod was doing musically, pointed out friend Doug Jennings. Jennings is organist at First Baptist and has served in that role for 31 year along with Barbara Nichols Parker, pianist for 31 years also. They were both members the Junior Choir Elrod directed.

Jennings noted that Elrod started and directed the Cannon County Ladies Choral Society. The group even traveled to perform. Elrod also began a choral group of employees of the Bank of Commerce, where she was a loan officer for 24 years. The bank became Union Planters and is now Regions Bank. The choral group presented a Christmas pageant for many years.

"Many of the people there didn't think they could sing," said Elrod, with a smile.

In 1976 Elrod helped direct the Cannon County Bicentennial Celebration of the United States which included a stage show. That was so popular that the next year the bank developed the Cannon County Good Ole Days, a week-long event held each year which showcases local talent. Elrod helped lead it for about 20 years until recently.

In the church, Elrod said she was glad to have Jennings and Parker to help her. The trio have experienced the ups and downs of ministry common to a church, they agreed. Parker noted that they have spent so much time together they can nearly read each other's minds.

They laugh — now — about mistakes such as not having the current week's bulletin or copies of hymns or mistakenly playing the hymn on an adjoining page.

They fondly remember attending Music Week at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center together for many



SOME OF THE LEADERS of Dorothy Elrod Day of First Baptist Church, Woodbury, stand with Elrod, first row, center, who is the retiring minister of music. They are, from left, first row, Barbara Parker, pianist; Elrod; Richard Bray, pastor; back row; Donnie Odom, chairman of deacons; Douglas Jennings, organist; and Julian Suggs, interim minister of music who is retired from the Tennessee Baptist Convention staff. The event was held June 24.

years which some years drew 3,000 Baptist musicians.

Both Parker and Jennings noted Elrod was patient while being innovative with them, the choir, and the congregation. For instance, Elrod, partly to respond to comments that too many unfamiliar hymns were being sung, instituted a hymn-singing service in which the congregation chooses the hymns sung. That service still is held and is one of the favorite services of the congregation, noted Parker, who works for the Tennessee Department of Education.

Elrod also never raised her voice though she had to repeat instructions to the choir many times, recalled Parker.

Jennings noted Elrod led over 35 Easter programs, 35 Christmas programs, plus patriotic services and other special events in the church.

"I have no idea how many funerals we've done together," added Jennings, who operates a Woodbury car dealership. He also is a member of the Tennessee

Baptist Convention Executive Board.

Jennings said a person once remarked to him that anyone who knew Elrod "would know that she is a Christian."

Last December Elrod developed a vocal problem that kept her from singing and speaking. Thankfully, Julian Suggs, retired church music specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, was a member of the choir and could step in to help the choir present its annual Christmas cantata and other Christmas music. He is now serving as interim minister of music.

Elrod has been told at Vanderbilt Hospital, Nashville, that therapy will help her vocal chords heal. She is looking forward to singing again in the choir. She hasn't stopped attending choir rehearsals. She explained she wants to know the music when she can sing.

"I've just been blessed by the church," said Elrod. "It's been my life. This service has been the greatest personal joy of my life." □

Christian involvement helps defeat referendum in Sweetwater by one vote

By Lisa Knox
and Reflector

SWEETWATER — The City of Sweetwater liquor by the referendum lost by one vote, 654-653, according to election officials who certified the vote June 25. Three votes were not counted due to being not properly registered to vote.

Local Christians in the area organized into an ecumenical action committee to keep liquor by the referendum out of their city, were active at the June 14 one-vote referendum.

Roy, a Baptist layman and member of First Baptist Church in Sweetwater, who served as spokesperson for Citizens for a Call to Action (CALL).

Legalized Liquor by the referendum was "a moral issue and not an economic issue."

He said the restaurant bar would have permitted liquor on Sundays in convenience stores in the city of

Sweetwater and in unincorporated areas countywide.

A proponent group called the Sweetwater Alliance for Smart Growth sought to have the liquor by the drink question on the ballot.

Local news reports indicated proponents of liquor by the drink pushed to get the question on the ballot, because they said legalized alcohol sales in restaurants is needed to spur economic growth in Sweetwater.

"Had the followers of Christ not united, the referendum would have passed," Roy added. He thanked their supporters, all those who voted against the referendum, and the churches and pastors who rallied to their cause.

"First and foremost, I thanked Jesus Christ for giving them the strength and conviction to fight the referendum. I hope and pray Sweetwater will be blessed by taking the right stance."

Joining the forces with CALL was the Tennessee Drug Awareness Council (TDAC) of

Nashville, a group funded from the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions.

Phil Lovelace, Tennessee Drug Awareness Council executive director, said, "The Christian community got together to fight liquor by the drink in Sweetwater."

Lovelace sat down with the CALL group to provide alcohol facts and figures. "I helped them get up a PAC to fight and organize their efforts to defeat liquor by the drink in Sweetwater," he said.

"We don't do many fights such as this one. They are hard to win."

"I'm excited. Praise God. It encouraged the people who stood up and spoke up. The community saw what can happen when Christians stand up and get involved."

According to Lovelace, the first organizational meeting for the PAC was held May 1 at a local optometrist's office, Tom Foster, a member of the First Assembly of God Church,

Sweetwater, with 12 ecumenical community leaders in attendance. Of the leaders several were Baptists including two area pastors, Don Rockholt, pastor of North Sweetwater Baptist Church and Phil Holmes, pastor of First Baptist, Sweetwater, and Roy, a local businessman, deacon, and Sunday School teacher, who served as spokesperson for the PAC. Both Roy and Foster served as co-leaders of CALL.

"We've done around six PACs on liquor by the drink before here in Tennessee," added Lovelace.

"This is the only referendum vote that we've won."

"This shows what can happen when the community gets together and takes a stand," Lovelace said.

The group held two prayer rallies prior to the vote. The first rally was held downtown with 130 people in attendance and the second rally was held at Roy's business on Hwy. 68 with over 100 in attendance.

"TDAC gets involved because

we teach drug education in schools, and we talk to kids in schools about liquor. The 'for' people advertised the voting issue as a restaurant referendum, rather than a liquor referendum. We were working in the local schools and saw the 'for' billboard."

Roy noted that the non-organized opposition group contacted Lovelace early on to get information, because of the group's history with Tennessee Baptists and its message against alcohol and drugs.

According to Roy, Foster also called some chain restaurants to verify that they needed a community of 30,000-45,000 people to support their businesses to enter an area instead of open bar options.

"We based our arguments for CALL as a moral issue and on the population of Sweetwater being only 6,500 and not whether a restaurant would come or not to do business," Roy noted.

"The opposition group's argument just didn't make sense." □



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Missions Matters

The local Baptist association plays a key role in the missional efforts of Southern Baptists. This year is the 300th anniversary of Baptist associations in our nation.

Over these 300 years, the Baptist association has gone through many changes. But through all of the changes, the association has been and is today a strong mission partner with churches, state conventions, and the Southern Baptist Convention seeking to make a kingdom impact in their world.

The state missions staff would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to each of the associations in our state and the directors of missions who serve them for the work that is being done to "Make Christ Known" in Tennessee. You are essential partners in carrying out the Acts 1:8 strategy, given to us by Jesus.

Included below is the contact information for members of your state missionary staff with direct assignments for working with associations. They are:

Ministry Coordinator/State Directors of Missions

Gary Rickman(615) 371-2020

Ministry Strategists

Jerry Essary(615) 371-2059

Steve Holt(615) 371-2019

Mark Miller(615) 371-2024

Archer Thorpe(615) 371-2017

Associational Ministry Centers

Beverly Smothers(615) 371-2044



Baptist Cooperation Begins with the Local Association

By Gary Rickman

The roots of Baptist cooperation go back 300 years to the beginning of churches coming together to form the first association in America, the Pennsylvania Baptist Association in 1707. Thus began the movement of Baptists coming together to cooperate around common needs.

Over these 300 years, the association has been challenging churches and people to come together to work for a common purpose of reaching their Jerusalem for Christ. Today, as in 1707, the local Baptist association is positioned in one of the most strategic and crucial places where it can resource churches that are focused on mission and seeking to carry out their unique God-given vision of reaching their community and the world for Christ. However, they can only accomplish this vision if churches and their leadership join hands with the association.

Today some church leaders may ask the question, "Are associations still relevant?" If you have this thought, let me just quickly say, "Yes!" I agree with E.P. Allmonester, Jr. who wrote in the *Southern Baptist Handbook* sharing about his conviction concerning the association as the basic starting point of Baptist cooperation. He said, "... the way of enlisting our great mission causes and bringing them back to the day of Pentecost and triumph ... is to carry the battle for these great causes to the associations. I believe there is but one great agency among us that can solve this great problem of churches not giving to Southern Baptist causes ... I believe our only possible solution lies in the Baptist associations."

Why is this statement true? Because the association is the closest entity of Southern Baptist Cooperation to the local churches, which is interpreting what it means to be a cooperative Baptist.

Your local Baptist association needs your cooperation and support. The most powerful force on earth is the life-changing message of Jesus Christ. Your local association is poised and ready to assist and resource your church in a multitude of ways to get the message of Jesus to a world that needs to hear. They cannot do it without your church.

For cooperation to work, all of us need to do our part. Your part is becoming involved with the work of your local association. Do not let another month go by without learning what your association can do to help your church carry out the Great Commission."

How to Show Appreciation to Directors of Missions

By Jerry Essary

Every year many of our churches follow the practice of Clergy or Pastor/Staff Appreciation Day. When I was a director of missions, I would send out letters to the directors of deacons of the churches in the association encouraging them to lead their churches to show appreciation to their pastors and staffs.

I would offer some suggestions as to how they could show appreciation. Some churches would use the suggestions, and others would come up with really creative and meaningful ways to show their appreciation. This year we are celebrating the 300th anniversary of the association. I would like to make a special mention to the leadership of all the associations across our state. As you have the opportunity to celebrate all that your association has meant to your churches, please consider how to show your appreciation to your directors of missions. Many times these men have served over during the Clergy or Pastor/Staff Appreciation Day each year, but they are not on staff at a local church.

You can count on the fact that these men are the local church. They do all they can to help your church be all that it can be for the kingdom of God. They are concerned about the lostness of their area and the frustrations that churches deal with. They come to impacting that lostness. They pray with you and cry with you. They rejoice with you and celebrate with you. Many of them lie awake at night thinking of ways the association can better equip the churches to impact their culture. They are missionaries in every sense of the

word. They truly understand and live by the philosophy that says "you grow by giving yourself away."

Show your appreciation to them and all that God has called them to do. I realize that some associations are able to do more than others, but here are some ways to show appreciation to your director of missions. They are:

1. Do something special for his wife and family.
2. Take a love offering among the churches.
3. Have Director of Missions Appreciation Day in your church and take a love offering.
4. Give him some extra days off, and send him and his wife somewhere special with all expenses paid.
5. Give him a sabbatical (one to three months) so he can retool or rejuvenate.
6. Pay his expenses for a mission trip of his choice.
7. Give him a raise.
8. Take care of some special and unknown need he may have.
9. Pick up all of his insurance expense.
10. Make an investment in his retirement.
11. Start a scholarship fund in his name.

These are but a few ways to show your director of missions appreciation. I know many of you can come up with more creative ways to do this. The thing to remember is this: as NIKE has said for years, "Just Do It."

How to Celebrate 300th Anniversary of Associations

At the annual meeting of the Tennessee Baptist Convention to be held in Memphis Nov. 13-14, during the Tuesday evening session, the convention will emphasize Baptist associational ministries.

This will be a time of celebrating the work of the associations in our state. Make it a point now to be at this anniversary party.

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

- ▶ 13-15 Blind Retreat, Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center, Newport
- ▶ 14 Introduction to English as a Second Language Ministry, First Baptist Church, Tullahoma
- ▶ 24-27 Christian Women's/Christian Men's Job Corps National Certification Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- ▶ 30 Extreme Makeover Sunday School Conference, First Baptist Church, Millington
- ▶ August 4 Church Weekday Early Education Conference, New Vision Baptist Church, Murfreesboro

For information on upcoming events, see the TBC website at www.tbcbaptist.org.

Building God's Kingdom Through Partnership Works

By Steve Holt

The genius of the Baptist concept of associationalism is the idea that churches can accomplish more by working together than by themselves. For 300 years Baptist churches have banded together for fellowship, encouragement, support, and cooperative ministry.

I believe that my own ministry was greatly enhanced, because the churches where I served as pastor were active participants in associational life. I am especially grateful to the directors of missions who served those associations. They were all great partners in ministry and wonderful mentors and friends.

Over three years ago your state missionary staff began an effort to strengthen our partnership with all the associations across our state. That effort was a result of a series of listening meetings across the state in which church and associational leaders gave us insight into how our work could be more effective. A continual theme in those meetings was the importance of relationships and working together.

As a result of what we heard, your state missionary staff radically shifted the way we approached our work. We clustered the associations of our state in groups of two to six, depending on their proximity, and assigned four members of our state staff to work directly with these cluster groups.

As we meet with the directors of missions in each cluster, we are able to uncover opportunities for cooperative ministry that have made the ministries of our churches, associations, and the state convention more effective. The cluster "idea" has allowed our staff to "get closer" and "go deeper" with many of the 3,000 churches that make up the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

We get closer by being able to bring associational and church leaders into the process of creating the strategies, processes, and training events that are planned across the state. We can go deeper by having the chance to better understand the unique needs and opportunities of our churches as we interact with church leaders in the clusters.

Your state missionary staff exists to "Make Christ Known by Serving Churches." We are convinced that one of the most effective means of accomplishing that mission is by working with the directors of missions across the state to mobilize and partner with church leaders in reaching Tennessee and the world for Jesus Christ.

Yemen hospital leaves legacy of love and grit

By Erich Bridges
Baptist Press

RICHMOND — Southern Baptist doctors Judy Williams and Bruce Roach used to have a friendly competition at Jibla Baptist Hospital in Yemen: Who would work the longest “shift” without walking out the front gate?

“I think the longest for me was three months,” recalls Williams, a surgeon who arrived in the isolated Arab nation in 1999.

“People would bring me food, and we had a commissary on the compound. I’ll be the first to admit I’m a workaholic, and my work was in the operating room. That’s where my friendships with Yemenis were made.”

Williams was one of the last in a long line of Southern Baptist workers who gave their skills, their hearts — and in the case of three missionaries slain on the job, their lives — to the hundreds of thousands of Yemenis who came to the hospital for care.

When Williams and several co-workers walked out the gate of the hospital compound for the last time this spring, their departure marked the end of four decades of full-time Southern Baptist presence at the hospital, which was begun by missionary doctor Jim Young in 1967.

Second ending

Official involvement of Yemen Baptist Mission personnel at Jibla Hospital ended May 1. That date actually marked a second ending: The hospital passed from International Mis-

sion Board administration into Yemeni hands more than four years ago.

On Dec. 30, 2002, Southern Baptist workers were trying to complete a complicated transfer of the institution to Yemeni control when physician Martha Myers, hospital administrator Bill Koehn, and purchasing manager Kathy Gariety were shot by a Muslim militant who burst into Koehn’s office. Myers died on the spot. Williams and other hospital workers tried to save Koehn and Gariety, but their point-blank gunshot wounds were fatal. A Southern Baptist pharmacist also was shot and seriously wounded in the attack, but later recovered.

Jibla reopened in early 2003 under Yemeni administration. Several Southern Baptist workers, including Williams, continued to serve on the staff, providing critical management and medical support. Late last year, the eight remaining Baptist workers (seven Southern Baptists and a Mexican Baptist doctor) decided the time had come to end full-time involvement at the hospital.

“We completed what we set out to do,” Williams said of the decision. “From a medical perspective, the hospital had been transitioned to the Yemeni government and was treating more

patients than it ever had — with minimal input from Yemen Baptist Mission personnel. Regarding matters of the heart, they too were progressing. In many ways, our presence in Jibla was hindering growth.

“If we hadn’t completed our work, the rest of the team would still be living on the compound in Jibla, continuing to work in what can be a very difficult and yet rewarding field of service — both medically and spiritually.”

Yemen Baptist Mission workers will continue involvement in several ministries begun at the hospital, including aid to needy widows, orphans, and migrant Bedouin camps in the area. One Baptist physician still works in the hospital’s outpatient clinic twice a month. Workers also hope to continue partnering with the hospital in medical education and life-saving community immunization programs in Yemen’s countryside.

In a letter to veterans and supporters of the hospital, Williams said: “We do not see this as a sign of failure, but rather as a sign of growth. That does not mean it will be easy or without a sense of loss and grieving. I know from previous experiences that this process may actually be easier for those

of us physically here than for you from afar.”

Only the dedicated band of missionaries, workers, and volunteers who served at Jibla can understand the depth of those words.

40 years on the front line

Over the past 40 years, they endured extended civil war in Yemen, a disastrous fire, numerous financial crises, ongoing personnel shortages, political pressures, legal battles that threatened to shut down the hospital, kidnappings — and the murder of three of their own.

And always, they faced the daily challenge of treating — and loving — the endless stream of patients who came to the little hospital from all over the impoverished Middle Eastern nation of more than 19 million people.

At its peak, the 77-bed mission hospital employed several hun-

dred workers, treated 40,000 people a year, more than 400 surgeries and operated a busy clinic. For a time it offered a chapel that was the Christian worship service for conservative Muslim patients.

Patients included from villagers who laid eyes on a doctor-sheiks and government. They knew Jibla offered the best — and most complete — medical care in the area.

“So many times I can’t do anything else they just kept coming,” remembers nurse Kelly Hawkins, who changed for security.

“We struggled with setting, the intensity, the length of hours put in while trying to care for our young family.” □

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Benin missionary couple rebounds after home invasion

by Lyautey
news office

IN, West Africa — Bob and Becky Coutses have served international Mission missionaries in Benin for 23 years. They've experienced the joy of new converts, and the sadness of people who reject Christ, but on June 25 they were faced with a situation other than they had experienced — a home invasion.

Bob was looking up news on the Internet and Becky was preparing dinner dishes in their kitchen in the Oueme Valley, two hours north of the capital city of Porto-Novo, when four men forced their way into the house.

Bob held the Coutses, and tied them up. They killed their dog. The men had machetes and

lead pipes," Becky said. "They asked for our money, so I led them to the safe and gave them all the money."

For 45 minutes, the men ransacked the Coutses' home, loading all the electronic devices — TV, VCR, projector, laptop, and camera — into the Coutses' truck. They also took the couple's residency papers, including their passports.

The men then locked the couple in their shower and drove away.

Bob, age 62, took the shower rod and broke a hole in the ceiling of their shower. He climbed onto the shoulders of Becky, age 63, and worked his way across the dividing wall to the toilet area. Bob broke another hole in the ceiling to climb back down into the house to let Becky out. Then, they walked to a neighbor's house to call the police.

When they returned the next day, they were met by pastors and evangelists from the Weme (way-may) people group, whom the Coutses work among.

"[The pastors and evangelists] sang and thanked the Lord for our safety," Becky said.

"They told us the whole valley was upset, not just the church members. In the nine years we have lived here, we have never heard of a home invasion."

Born in Altus, Okla., Becky grew up as a missionary kid in Hawaii. She uses her nursing skills as an RN to care for the neighboring village children and to help medical volunteers. She also continues to build relationships with the countless African women she has trained to lead Sunday

School and women's groups.

Bob, a native of Springfield, is known for having a story for everything. With 33 years of experience in Africa, his stories center around his African friends, but often also include references to Tennessee football.

Despite the Coutses' friendly nature, it hasn't been easy planting churches in Benin, the birthplace of Voodoo. For more than nine years, the Coutses have worked to plant churches among the 163,000 Weme people.

Recently, they have seen their hard work pay off. In May, they baptized 16 new believers in the Oueme River to start the Kessounou (kayssa-na) church. The new church already is going to two nearby villages to share Jesus.

Most of the other 11 churches they work with are so new that they need instruction on how to teach children Bible stories. In response, **First Baptist Church, Springfield**, taught a group of believers how to hold Vacation Bible School this past summer.

The Coutses watched as children sang Bible verses

while kicking a soccer ball in front of ancient Voodoo idols in the area. More than 1,700 Weme children learned Bible stories, Scripture verses, and Bible songs.

In addition to planting churches, the Coutses train local believers to be pastors and evangelists. This was something they had done for 23 years in Porto-Novo before moving to the valley.

When the pastors in Porto-Novo found out about the robbery, they came to encourage the Coutses.

"They came with a heavy heart and burden for us," Bob said. "It was very moving and touching."

Believing that God still has a purpose for them in Benin, the Coutses plan to stay there until their scheduled retirement in about a year and a half.

"We have young churches to nourish," Becky said. "We are doing a lot of leadership training. We don't know why it [the robbery] has happened, but the Lord has purpose in it all."

"The Lord hasn't called us away yet. There is still a lot for us to do." □



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"GRATEFUL"

I'm grateful to God and to the wonderful pastors and churches in Tennessee who have opened their doors for me to preach revivals over the years. In addition to many revivals in other states, I've been privileged to preach in more than 400 revivals in the great state of Tennessee, and they have all been wonderful experiences. My heart overflows with joy when I think of how a gracious God has blessed this revival ministry, and still continues to do so. I'm deeply grateful to every pastor who has allowed me the privilege of preaching the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ from their pulpits. I'm also grateful, in advance, for the gracious pastors who will call me for future revivals — either four-day meetings or one-day harvest revivals. Following are just a few of the Tennessee pastors and churches with whom I've worked — I wish that I could list them all.

PASTORS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SERVED:

- Fred Steelman (Ret): Red Bank, Chattanooga
- Hollie Miller: Sevier Heights, Knoxville
- Doug Sager: First Baptist, Concord
- Dan Ruehling: New Union, Dayton
- Mike Thompson: Second Baptist, Clinton
- Bob Stitts (Ret): Bayside Baptist, Chattanooga
- Bob Pitman: Kirby Wood, Memphis
- Jim Chatham: First Baptist, Dixon
- Ken Duggan: Dallas Bay, Hixson
- Larry Gilmore: Evangelism Secretary, Tennessee
- Eric Jones: First Baptist, Savannah
- J. W. Taylor: New Market Church, New Market
- Phil Jett (Ret): Englewood, Jackson
- Billie Friel (Ret): First Baptist, Mount Juliet
- Ernie James: First Baptist, Bolivar
- Ed North (Ret): First Baptist, Humboldt
- Bobby Mullens: Central Baptist, Oak Ridge
- Tim McGehee: Grace Baptist, Tullahoma
- W. D. Thomason: Calvary Baptist, Lebanon
- Hoyt Wilson (Ret): First Baptist, Lexington
- Tommy Pierce: Towering Oaks, Greenville
- Richard Emmert: Manley Baptist, Morristown
- Steve McDonald: Calvary Baptist, Oak Ridge
- Paul Mason: Wheelaton, Tennessee



Listed below are a few good open dates still available for this fall. I'm also booking 2008 revivals and will go to any size church.

August 19-22

September 9-12

October 14-18

November 4-7

Educators' group elects Corts to succeed Bob Agee

Associated Baptist Press

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — Board members of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities have elected Thomas Corts, president emeritus of Samford University, as executive director of the association. The new post is effective immediately.

Corts, 65, succeeds **Bob Agee of Jackson**, who announced last December he would retire at the June 2007 meeting. Agee, who is recovering from a heart attack he suffered in April, was unable to attend the meeting.

Corts' brother, Paul, is president of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, an organization similar to IABCU. About 30 schools are members of both.

Thomas Corts served as interim chancellor of the Alabama College System for the state of Alabama for six months in 2006. Prior to the Alabama position, he served as president of Samford University from 1983 to 2006.

He also served as president of Wingate University in North Carolina from 1974 to 1983 and as coordinator of the Higher Education Consortium of Kentucky from 1973 to 1974. He began his career at Georgetown College in Kentucky, where he worked as a professor, assistant to the president, director of planning and development, executive dean, and executive vice president. The IABCU corporate office is in Nashville, but Corts will continue to reside in Birmingham, Ala.

David S. Dockery, president of Union University in Jackson, was elected as a member of the IABCU board. □

McKissic resigns as SWBTS trustee

Baptist Press

GRAPEVINE, Texas — Dwight McKissic has resigned from the trustee board of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, citing "too much mental, physical, emotional, and even spiritual energy" spent on his role in a conflict over speaking in tongues and private prayer in the past year.

McKissic, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, emphasized his love for the seminary and its president, Paige Patterson, in a lengthy conciliatory letter June 20 to trustee chairman Van McClain and copied to Patterson, SBC President Frank Page, SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman, and three trustees.

"Furthermore, I don't want any possible future relation-

ships or involvements with other missions or ministry opportunities to in anywise be misconstrued as a conflict of interest with my role as a trustee at SWBTS. I do not want my exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of associations in any way to create conflicts of interest or violations of SWBTS policies. Therefore, I must resign," McKissic wrote.

Patterson issued a statement in response: "My personal relationship with Pastor McKissic has been a long one and overwhelming a happy one. I anticipate that relationship will continue and that Brother McKissic will continue as a faithful supporter of the seminary. It is well known that we have not always agreed but we are brothers in Christ and I love this pastor."

McKissic caused a stir in a Southwestern chapel sermon last August when he said he speaks in a private prayer language and criticized the International Mission Board's then-policy on refusing prospective missionaries who speak in tongues.

Subsequently, the seminary refused to post audio of McKissic's sermon on its website and later the trustees, with McKissic's sole dissent, voted that Southwestern staff would not advocate private prayer language or charismatic practices nor hire faculty who did.

McKissic said in his resignation letter he was encouraged by the IMB's changing the tongues policy to a more flexible "guideline," by the SBC's decision June 12 to adopt a statement on the Baptist Faith and Message confessional statement as a "sufficient" policy guide for SBC entities, and by a LifeWay Research poll indicating about half of SBC pastors believe private prayer language is a possible spiritual gift.

McKissic said he plans to remain a Southern Baptist "as long as I see hope that the convention is moving in what I consider to be the right direction." □

CBF pares budget

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly 2,600 registered attendees, including about 94 from Tennessee, adopted a reduced operating budget and participated in a joint worship service with the American Baptist Churches USA June 28-29 at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly here.

The Fellowship also affirmed its participation in the New Baptist Covenant, a broadly inclusive Baptist movement called for by former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton to counter what they call a negative image of Baptists and to address poverty, the environment, and global conflicts.

The General Assembly adopted a 2007-08 operating budget of

\$16.5 million, a decrease from last year's \$17.05 million operating budget.

As of May 31, the CBF was operating at 88 percent of its 2006-07 operating budget. Through May, the organization had projected bringing in \$15.8 million in revenues but had received only \$13.6 million, or 86 percent of its projection.

At a CBF Coordinating Coun-

cil meeting June 26, CBF's executive coordinator, Daniel Vestal, warned that the CBF is in financial trouble and needs "radical rethinking" to reduce costs.

"I think staff has done a good job in trying to contain costs, minimize administration, reduce overlap — doing absolutely what we have to do and no more. But in all candor to you as a council, I think we've done about

all we can do as staff us to reduce costs some ways would re-pretty radical re- Vestal said.

He added, "It's tin really appeal to our cy to support CBF m mission with their de

The 2008 CBI assembly will be Jun Memphis. □

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Retiring Tennessee missionaries grateful that God used them

by Betty Poor
Dentist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — In the Caribbean, a group of missionaries decided to ask the Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) to appoint a missionary to the island of Grenada. Knoxville, missionary can-

didates Carter and Charlotte Davis agonized over where the Lord would have them to serve. There were requests from all over the world. Which one should they respond to?

They would soon know. As the Davises arrived in Richmond, the mission board's headquarters, for a meeting

leading up to appointment, Dr. Charles Bryan, area director for the Caribbean was receiving the request from the missionaries in the Caribbean.

Dr. Bryan told the Davises, "I have a request that has just come to my desk. This is a position in Grenada. This is a place that I think will fit your gifts."

"We recognized it was God's will for us," says Carter. "We said, 'Yes, that's it!' That was a big weight off of our shoulders."

They were appointed as missionaries by Nov. 4, 1976 and began serving in Grenada in 1977. The Davises are now retiring after 30 years of missionary service.

missionary I led conferences for children's work in Tennessee," Charlotte said. But the Caribbean ministry meant British spelling and thinking "indigenous," she added. "God prepares you for an assignment that you don't even know you will have," Charlotte said.

Called to new work

In October 1996, Carter was asked by the International Mission Board to become an associate to the area director for the Brazil and Caribbean region.

After being on Grenada for 20 years, the decision was difficult for the Davises, but they knew it was God's will for them to take up this new leadership responsibility.

"Our hearts were there. We thought we'd always be there," Carter says.

In 1997 Carter was asked to become the administrative Associate for the Caribbean Basin

Region. However, in his new job, Carter had the opportunity to help with meeting human needs and disaster response all over the area.

After 9-11 he also worked on the issue of security for missionaries in the region in addition to financial, medical, and other administrative matters.

Although he had given up dentistry, Carter found his new work fulfilling. "That was a big surprise to me; however, I am confident that serving where God calls is the most important work to do" he said.

Three years ago, Charlotte, who has been busy serving as the chronological Bible "storying" trainer for the Caribbean Basin, took on a new challenge. Through a re-organization of IMB areas, the Davises became part of the missionary team for the area designated as "Middle America and the Caribbean." Charlotte became the prayer coordinator for this region.

"One of the greatest joys of my life has been helping the new region to have a culture of prayer," Charlotte said. She has sought to see all the people groups "covered with prayer."

She has worked to lead prayer advocates to be strategic in praying, and has developed a regular prayer bulletin that goes to more than 1,000 people.

Now that the Davises are retiring, Charlotte wants to continue to promote prayer.

"We want to be mobilizers in the churches. We hope to be a 'face' to missions," Charlotte said.

The Davises will retire to Knoxville where they lived prior to their missionary journey. □ — The Poores are former IMB overseas correspondents.

Journey begins

The road to Grenada began for Carter in Knoxville, where he was born in 1941. He lived in the Knoxville area until finishing college at the University of Tennessee. He met his future wife, Charlotte, while a high school student at Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy. "We were high school sweethearts," he recalls.

Carter graduated from U.T., then followed in his father's footsteps and became a dentist, graduating in 1964. He then

set up his practice in the Karns Community near Knoxville before being drafted. He continued his dental practice in the Army for two years. After getting out of the Army, he went into practice with his father for eight years.

Carter's spiritual journey began when he accepted Christ as Savior when he was 11 years old. In 1970 a fellow dentist, Jack Fuson, invited Carter to go with him on a two-week mission trip to Guyana, South America. He continued to go with Fuson to Guyana for the next six years.

A missionary suggested they attend a Foreign Missions Week at Ridgecrest, N.C. in 1975. It was there that the couple surrendered to God's call to become missionaries.

Greatest joy

Charlotte Davis, a Nashville native, was evacuated on the last helicopter out of Grenada during the political upheaval there in 1983.

But that's not what she remembers about her family's years of missionary service in Grenada and later throughout the entire Caribbean region.

"My greatest joy is that the Lord allowed us to do training and disciplining," Charlotte said. Now God is using the people of the Caribbean to do the work, she added.

When Charlotte, who is a registered nurse, was appointed as a missionary in 1976, along with her dentist husband, she thought she would work with him in dental clinics. "I've been everything but a nurse," she joked.

Instead, the Lord led her to do Sunday School training courses for teachers of children. "Before I was appointed as a



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More parents protecting their kids from media

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Parents are revealing the dangers posed by the abundant forms of media in the 21st century, and they're taking measures to protect their children, the Kaiser Family Foundation said in a study released June 19.

The poll of 1,008 parents found that 73 percent said they know "a lot" about what their children are doing online, 87 percent said they check their kids' Instant Messaging buddy lists, 82 percent review their children's profiles on social networking sites, 41 percent use parental controls to block access to certain websites, and 76 percent look to see what sites their kids have visited after they've been online.

"While parents are still concerned about a lot of what they see in the media, most are surprisingly confident that they've

got a handle on what their own kids are seeing and doing — even when it comes to the Internet," Vicky Rideout, director of Kaiser's Program for the Study of Entertainment Media and Health, said.

Fifty-one percent of parents surveyed said inappropriate media content is a big concern for them, and another 23 percent said it's one of their top concerns, Kaiser reported. The study also found, though, that many parents still don't understand the TV ratings system and few have ever used the V-Chip to block unwanted content. Sixty-six percent of parents favor government regulations to limit television content during early evening hours.

Overall, two-thirds of parents surveyed were closely monitoring their children's use of media.

"This awareness of parental responsibility over media use is a major step forward in protecting children from negative cultural influences," Janice Crouse of Concerned Women for America said. □

Koreans aim for 1,000 SBC missionaries

Baptist Press

HOUSTON — An intense focus on "Empowering the church to be on mission" marked the 26th annual meeting of the Council of Korean Southern Baptist Churches in America.

Korea-born missionaries serving in the Mideast, Ukraine, Brazil, Venezuela, Guatemala, and Canada were on hand for the June 18-20 sessions in Houston, along with the presidents of the Korea Baptist Convention and the Korea Baptist Seminary and other guests from Korea.

Jerry Rankin, president of Southern Baptist International Mission Board, headlined the Tuesday and Wednesday

evening services with sermons related to penetrating the darkness of the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Wanda Lee, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, was the guest speaker at Monday evening's opening service.

The missions focus was in keeping with the Korean Council's emphasis during the past year: to have 1,000 Korean missionaries appointed by the SBC by the year 2010. Rankin reported that 280 have been appointed to date; another 200 are in the process.

At least 50 individuals responded to an altar call issued by Rankin at the closing session of the meeting; more knelt at their chairs. Gihwang Shin, an IMB liaison with Asian cultures, said before the service that three people had signed up at the IMB display just outside the conference hall at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, site

of the gathering, to appointment process.

The Korean annual included reports from missionaries serving in Guatemala, Venezuela, Ukraine and, stateside, church planter and a the deaf. A video of World Vision narrated well-known Korean also was shown. □

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Providence Baptist Church, a mid-sized traditional church in Seymour, Tenn., is seeking God's man to lead our traditional music ministry. If interested please send resume, letter, and sample DVD to Providence Baptist Church, Personnel Committee, P.O. 127, Seymour, TN 37864.

Monterey First Baptist Church, a growing congregation, east of Cookeville, TN, is seeking a dynamic, creative, spirit-led worship leader position, at present, is part-time but as the church grows become full-time. Will work with all age choirs. Send resume to 106 N. Chestnut St., Monterey, TN 38574, Attn: Personnel Committee or to dgc@charterinternet.com.

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MINISTRY — CHILDREN
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First Baptist Church of Bolivar, Mo., is seeking a director of children's ministry to complete its nine-member ministerial staff. The position includes directing the educational and fellowship activities for children birth through grade five. The candidate should have an educational background in childhood education and have a minimum of three years experience working in a multi-staff church. A seminary degree is a plus. Resumes will be accepted from June 1-Aug. 1. Please send resumes to Children's Minister Search Committee, Attn: Missy Vestal, 316 N. Main Ave., Bolivar, MO 65613.

MINISTRY — STUDENT
Smyrna Baptist Church of Chapel Hill, Tenn., is seeking a bivocational youth minister. Please send your resume to Smyrna Baptist Church, P. O. Box 456, Chapel Hill, TN 37034.

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

book review

Ferguson

Simple Church

by Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger
B & H Publishing Group, 2006

the Sadducees and the Pharisees tried to trick and asked Him what the greatest commandment was. He took their 600-plus laws and summed them up for them to love God. He then told them to love neighbors. And when asked who their neighbor was, He gave the parable of the Good Samaritan and illustrated it with a story about service.

Today's vibrant churches are focused along those same principles: loving God. Loving others. Serving.

According to research conducted by the authors of *Simple Church*, churches that are growing have clarity, alignment, and focus. They have simplified. The things in the church are being transformed and are open to others; they aren't just busy.

Thom Rainer, who is the president and CEO of LifeWay Resources, and Geiger, who is the executive director of Christ Fellowship in Miami, included more than 100 churches from different denominations and 37 states in their research. The results of their study are so statistically significant that "the probability of the results occurring with one church by chance is less than one in a million."

One of the biggest differences the study found is that growing churches are simple churches. They are designed to be simple with opportunities for spiritual growth. Complex churches are run by programmers. Complex churches focus on their programs while simple churches focus on results — people becoming more like Christ.

The research also proves that while churches are becoming more and more, as a whole, they are less and less complex. The churches that are doing things well are doing fewer things. And, the churches that are doing fewer things and having fewer special events are growing numerically and spiritually.

Four key elements to having a simple church are: clarity. Everyone knows the church is structured to help people to spiritual growth. When there is no clear structure, people assume or invent one. The simple churches have mission statements that are simple, clear, and easy to communicate. For example, Love God. Love others.

Clarity. What causes a person to go to the next level spiritually. This is how the church is designed to help a person from being an observer to being a contributor.

Alignment. All ministries and staff are arranged in the same simple process. "In a church that lacks alignment, everyone is competing for the same space, money, volunteers, and time on the calendar ... It is like a building that houses a wide variety of businesses."

Simplicity. The abandonment of everything that falls outside the simple ministry process. This is the most difficult to implement, especially if a church has been complex for a long period of time. Focus involves eliminating the unnecessary.

The book *Simple Church* builds the case for simplicity and it does well, not only with the author's research, but with corporate studies of such successful companies as Apple and Google. But Part II, focuses on how to build a simple church — which is no overnight process. Naturally, the longer a church has been complex, the more difficult it will be to streamline — to eliminate the unnecessary. But Rainer and Geiger provide a blueprint for builders interested in making their churches simple by becoming simple.

Every church leader should read this study. It is fascinating because of the simple, proven truth that less really is more.

In any churches today there is so much happening, so many programs to produce that the energy, resources, and people are divided. Activity abounds, excellence is missing. Complexity is synonymous with mediocrity. And, God has been impressed with less than the best. □ — Ferguson in Gallatin and is a correspondent for the *Baptist Reflector*.

Sharing Christ with all people

By Trent Bullock

Focal Passage: Acts 10:24-29, 34-36, 42-48

Introduction: In Acts 10, Luke describes the breaking down of barriers that enabled the early church to begin taking the gospel to all people and fulfilling the Great Commission. Chapter 10 introduces a centurion named Cornelius. You might say he was as close to being a Jew as he could get without actually being a Jew. Yet, he was still a Gentile. He was a religious man, yet he was still lost. One day God sent an angel to Cornelius and instructed him to send for a man named Peter.

While God was working in the heart of Cornelius, He was also working in the heart of Peter preparing him to be a witness to Cornelius. God spoke to Peter through a vision to convince him that he was no longer to make a distinction between Jews and Gentiles when sharing the gospel. When the messengers from Cornelius arrived, Peter quickly agreed to go with them to meet Cornelius. The focal passages that follow help us understand three necessary steps for sharing Christ with all people.

Overcome our barriers (vv. 24-29): When Peter arrived in Caesarea, he entered into the home of Cornelius who had "called together his relatives and close friends." For Peter to enter the home of a Gentile was a huge step in breaking down the barriers between Jews and Gentiles. In the course of the conversation, Peter acknowledged, "You

know it's forbidden for a Jewish man to associate with or visit a foreigner. But God has shown me that I must not call any person common or unclean." Peter followed God's lead and began overcoming barriers to share the gospel with Gentiles.

Tim Beougher in his booklet, *Overcoming Walls to Witnessing*, identifies five barriers we must overcome in sharing our faith: (1) Fear — Many believers are afraid to witness because they fear not being able to answer questions or they fear being rejected; (2) Ignorance — Some believers say they do not know how to witness; (3) Apathy — Some believers lack the desire to witness; (4) Introspection — Some believers think they need to get their own life in order before they share their faith with others; and (5) Busyness — many believers simply think they do not have the time to witness. Whatever barrier stands in our way, we must overcome these barriers and intentionally make the time to share the gospel with all people.

Share the gospel (vv. 34-36, 42-43): Cornelius explained to Peter why he sent for him and indicated that he, his family, and his friends were ready to listen to what he had to say. Verses 34-43 record the message that Peter shared with them. He began by emphasizing the new found truth that "God doesn't show favoritism, but in every nation the person who fears Him and does righteousness is acceptable to Him." He then presented the key elements of the gospel. God sent Jesus to earth. He taught with power and

Sunday School Lesson Bible Studies for Life July 15

ministered to those in need. He was crucified, but God raised Him from the dead on the third day. Now, "everyone who believes in Him will receive forgiveness of sins."

Once we have overcome our obstacles to witnessing, we must share a clear presentation of the gospel. Sharing our faith does not have to be complicated, but we must emphasize the important truths that we are all sinners unable to save ourselves and thus destined for eternal separation from God in a place called hell. God in His grace has provided a way for our sins to be forgiven through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus. We must respond to God's offer of grace by repenting of our sin and placing our faith and trust in Him. The message is primary. The method is secondary.

Call for commitment (vv. 44-48): Even while Peter was still speaking, his hearers responded to the gospel message, believed, and received the Holy Spirit. Once they had given evidence of their belief, Peter called them to demonstrate their commitment to the Lord by calling them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Sharing our faith includes calling for a commitment from those to whom we witness.

Conclusion: What barriers do you need to overcome to share the gospel with all people? — Bullock is pastor of First Baptist Church, Halls.

Repentance

By Billie Friel

Focal Passage: Zechariah 1:1-6; 2:7-13

Introduction: Today a common approach to religion in the United States is to affirm either that no religion has any truth or that all religions have some truth. People reason that all religions are equally bad or equally good. Many take an individual approach, picking and choosing teachings according to what seems good to them. They thus deny the truth of God's Word and ignore God's call to repent of their sins and turn to Him. The visionary prophet, Zechariah, calls people of all ages to repent and return to the Lord. Judgment awaits those who refuse but blessings are reserved for those who obey.

Accept the invitation (1:1-3). Last week we studied how God raised up Haggai to encourage the Jews in rebuilding. Haggai preached four sermons in four months and then disappeared from the scene. Two months after Haggai delivered his first sermon, Zechariah began his prophetic ministry. His name means "Yahweh remembers." Though a book of consolation, Zechariah began his message with a call to repentance. He announced that the Lord was extremely angry with their ancestors — note that the name, "Lord," is the One who enters into covenant with His people. The covenant had not been kept by the people who had ignored God's Word.

Is it possible that America, like Judah, thinks that God will bless regardless of one's spiritual condition? God issues an invitation: "return to me and I will return to you."

Avoid the judgment (vv. 4-6). Experience is not the best teacher: experience is a painful teacher. The people of Zechariah's day did not have to experience the judgment of God — they could learn from the experience of their ancestors. Their forefathers did not listen to God and were punished accordingly. "The Lord of Hosts" is a name for God that shows His might as the supreme Commander. Judah did not want to face God as the Lord of Hosts and neither does America! God's words and statutes were like policemen, following the footsteps of Judah's ancestors, finally catching up with them and delivering them over to imprisonment and death. We must realize that God will "deal with us for our ways and deeds." Accepting God's invitation to repentance and faith not only brings us into fellowship with Him but also avoids dire and eternal consequences.

Acclaim the protection (2:7-9). The Jews (Zion), yet in Babylon, were admonished to leave the city and join the remnant in Jerusalem. History tells us that, even though Babylon had already fallen to the Persians, Persia had to put down two subsequent rebellions by the Babylonians. God affirms His protection for His people: "anyone who

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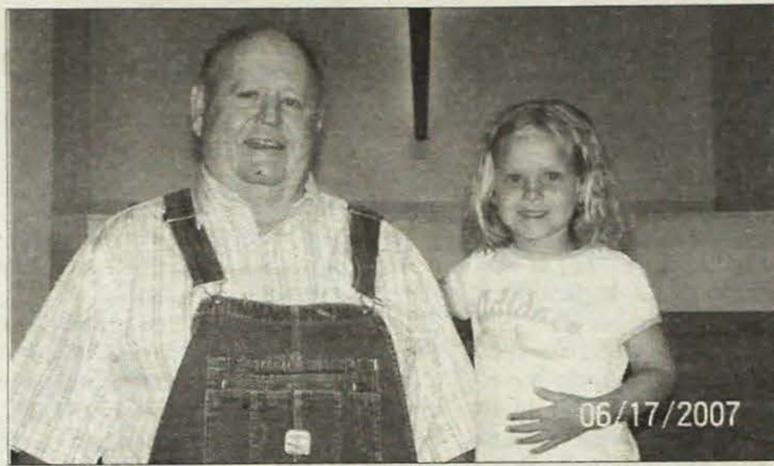
touches you touches the pupil of His eye." God called the Jews the "pupil of His eye" — the pupil is the tiny opening in the iris that lets in the light and this is a very delicate and important area of the eye. Anything dear and precious is like the pupil of the eye (Deuteronomy 32:10). As God's chosen people, the Jews were precious to God and were called to return to Jerusalem where they would be protected. Today, we are chosen in Christ and can praise God for His promise of protection that extends to eternal security.

Anticipate the joy (vv. 10-13). Zechariah's vision anticipates the coming of the Messiah to earth to dwell among His people. The emphasis is upon the Second Advent when God's blessings on Israel will overflow to the nations. Because missions and evangelism are such precious goals for us, we should shout for joy as we read these promises: "Many nations will join themselves to the Lord on that day and become my people."

Conclusion: "Let all people be silent before the Lord, for He is coming from His holy dwelling." — Friel is pastor emeritus and staff evangelist at First Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet, and interim director of missions for Wilson County Baptist Association, based in Lebanon.

Deaths

◆ **Julius Mahon**, 85, retired minister of Charleston, died recently. He had served as pastor of churches in North Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, and West Virginia, delbarton, W.Va., in 1983. Mahon also was interim pastor of churches in Polk and McMinn counties. He was a member of New Friendship Baptist Church, Cleveland. Mahon was a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army. Mahon is survived by his wife, Lorene; one daughter, and two grandsons.



OSCAR DILLEHAY, left, and **Rieves Eastep** stand together the day they were baptized at First Baptist Church, Mt. Pleasant. Oscar is the great grandfather of Rieves and they were baptized on Father's Day. Oscar made a profession of faith after he suffered a stroke in 2006. He delayed being baptized to recover use of his left arm and leg damaged by the stroke. But when he learned Rieves had made a profession of faith and would be baptized, he decided to be baptized too, reported Frank Webb, pastor. "I waited too long, but not too late," said Oscar Dillehay after he was baptized.

Leaders

◆ **Eastland Baptist Church**, Nashville, called **Israel David Brooks** as pastor effective July 1. A graduate of the University of Memphis, Memphis, and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, Brooks is a native of Nashville and Ridgeway. He previously served as a pastor,

missionary, and counselor for Royal Ambassador camps of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. Brooks also was assistant to the pastor at a church in Louisiana and at First Baptist Church, Greenbrier. Brooks was a member of Baptist Collegiate Ministries of the University of Memphis.

◆ **Puncheon Camp Mis-**

sionary Baptist Church, Washburn, has called **David Acuff** as pastor.

◆ **Washburn Baptist Church**, Washburn, has called **Doug McGinnis** as interim pastor.

◆ **Grace Baptist Church**, Elizabethton, has called **Jamie Peters** as minister of music. He is a student at East



MEMBERS OF A MISSION team from Beulah Baptist Association, based in Union City, pause during their recent service in Nebraska. In three days the team built 75 bunk beds for the Eastern Nebraska Baptist Association center. The beds will be used by summer missions teams serving there. The team also brought funds for the project. Team members were, from left, front row, Rob Naylor, team leader; Jack Long, director of missions, Beulah Association; and Donnie Little; middle row, Patsy Bailey and Sherry Naylor; back row, Buddy Wirt; Tony Cloar; Bobby Forrester; Don Bailey; Jeff McBride; Ricky Daniel; Timmy Wright; Bill Anderson; and Randy Lynch. Not pictured was Robert Lee.



MEMBERS OF MACK'S GROVE Baptist Church, Dresden, pause during their missions trip to the Double "B" Boys Ranch in Millington of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. The church members served there recently.



B. CARTER ELMORE, pastor, Pomona Baptist Church, holds a plaque he received on June 3 when he was receiving 50 years in the ministry. Elmore was ordained by Belmont Heights Baptist Church, Nashville. He has served as pastor of Pomona Baptist for six years and of 10 other churches in Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas. Elmore also has served as interim pastor of seven churches in Idaho, Washington, Texas, and Florida. He received a memory book and was honored at a meal held by Pomona Baptist.

Tennessee State University, Johnson City.

◆ **Lucy Baptist Church**, Millington, recently called **Ron Radcliffe** as minister of music.

◆ **Shelby Avenue Baptist Church**, Nashville, has called **Matthew Anderson** as minister of music. A graduate of Campbell University, Buies Creek, N.C., Anderson previously served as an intern in a church and as a vocal instructor in a music school, both in North Carolina. He also worked as a music studio intern in Nashville.

Churches

◆ **Milton Baptist Church**, Milton, will hold revival services July 22-25. Thurman Seber, retired director of missions of Salem Baptist Association, Liberty, will speak. Wayne Ray will lead the music. For more information, call Clark Robinson at (615) 273-2377.

◆ **Grandview Baptist Church**, Maryville, recently held a revival. As a result, eight people made professions of faith and many other people rededicated their lives. Henry Linginfelter, evangelist of Alcoa, spoke.

◆ **Zion's Chapel Baptist Church**, Louisville, held a revival July 8. Morris Anderson, an evangelist of Maryville, was the speaker.

◆ **Shady Grove Baptist Church**, Somerville, is renovating its facility after a fire in July 2006. Churches willing to sell or donate 12 good, used church pews, a communion table, and two chairs are asked to call Pam Clift at (901) 465-5082.

◆ **New Corinth Mission-**

ary Baptist Church, recently celebrated its 125th anniversary.

Associations

◆ **Grainger Association**, Rutledge, is sponsoring a water and tomato festival July 28-29 at the 20th anniversary. Besides water and tomato, volunteers are also needed for face painting and puppet performances. Call Johnson at (865) 924-2000.

◆ **Shiloh Baptist Association**, Adamsville, is sponsoring a Heart Ministry, which was incorrectly reported as the *Beulah Reflector* that First Baptist Church, Adamsville, is sponsoring the trip. In Shiloh Association, sponsor a missions trip to Iowa, July 21-27, through the Tennessee/Low Partnership. For information on this effort, call Johnson, director of missions, at (731) 632-0145.

◆ **Royal Ansonia University** will be held July 17-18 at Camp Retreat and Conference Center, Cordova. This event is held in August to train new leaders for the year which begins in September. Accommodations for female RA leaders are available. The event is sponsored by Mid-South Royal Ansonia Baptist Association, Bartlett, and Tri-State O-Ree. For more information, contact Mike Freeman at 849-0867 or e-mail m_freeman1@comcast.net

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Final SBC meeting statistics released

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Official registration figures for the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio were released July 12 by SBC registration secretary Jim Wells.

Texas Baptists sent the largest number of messengers, 1,605, of the 8,630 who registered for the June 12-13 sessions at San Antonio's Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center. Texans comprised 18.52 percent of the registration.

Other leading states were Tennessee with 653 messengers (7.58 percent of the total); North Carolina, 627 (7.28 percent); Georgia, 602 (6.99 percent); and Florida, 525 (6.09 percent).

Messengers were sent by 3,567 churches from 49 states in addition to the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

By gender, according to data from 642 messengers who provided additional information during the registration process, 58.71 percent were male; 41.29 percent female.

By age, 18-29-year-olds accounted for 3.12 percent of the 642 messengers; 30-34, 4.67 percent; 35-39, 5.30 percent; 40-44, 5.92 percent; 45-49, 11.06 percent; 50-54, 15.73 percent; 55-59, 18.85 percent; 60 and over, 35.36 percent.

By vocation, 36.92 percent of the 642 messengers were senior pastors; 9.66 percent were other church staff; 4.05 percent worked in associational missions; 3.12 were state convention staff members; 2.34 percent were involved in North American or international missions; 1.71 percent in evangelism; 1.25 percent were other denominational employees; 1.56 percent were seminary students; 17.91 percent were homemakers; and 21.50 percent listed "other."

For 95 of the 642 messengers, the convention in San Antonio was their first SBC annual meeting, or 14.80 percent of the 642 total; 162 had attended an SBC meeting five times or less, or 25.23 percent; 124 had attended six to 10 times, 19.31 percent; and 261 had attended 11 or more times, 40.65 percent.

In traveling to San Antonio, 48.91 percent of the 642 messengers came by plane; 48.13 percent by car; and 2.96 listed "other." In terms of expenditures to attend the annual meeting, 179 of the 642 messengers estimated they would be spending \$600-999, or 27.88 percent; 154 estimated \$1,000-1,499, 25.55 percent; 133 estimated \$1,500-1,999, 20.72 percent; 57 estimated \$2,000 or more, 8.88 percent; 76 estimated \$300-599, 11.84 percent; 23 estimated \$100-299, 3.58 percent; and 10 estimated under \$100, 1.56 percent.

Of the 642 messengers who provided the additional information at registration, 139 said no

other family members were with them in San Antonio, or 21.65 percent; 417 brought one family member, 64.95 percent; 76 brought two to four family members, 11.84 percent; and 10 brought five or more family members, 1.56 percent.

Last year's SBC registration total in Greensboro, N.C., was 11,639. □

Former TBC president J. Ralph McIntyre dies

Baptist Press

TULLAHOMA — J. Ralph McIntyre, who served as president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1977, died July 12. He was 82.

A native of Galveston, Texas, McIntyre served as pastor of Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga, for 19 years and was an associate pastor at Bellevue Baptist, under Robert G. Lee. He also was pastor emeritus of King's Cross Church, Tullahoma, where he was a founding charter member.

McIntyre served on the staffs of the former Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources) and Baptist World Alliance.

In addition he was a trustee of the BSSB, Baptist Memorial Health Care System, in Memphis (for 40 years), and on the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

He is survived by three children and 10 grandchildren. □

As floodwaters recede, relief efforts mount

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — With floodwaters finally receding, 28 Southern Baptist mud-out, feeding, shower, and laundry disaster relief units are on site or en route to help people impacted in flood-ravaged Kansas and Oklahoma.

In addition, the North American Mission Board's disaster operations center here is helping volunteers in the field manage and coordinate requests for assistance in the two hard-hit states.

"We're continuing to provide support and some manpower for Oklahoma and Kansas in the work they're doing locally," said Mickey Caison, NAMB's director for adult volunteer mobilization. "We're in Coffeyville, Neodesha and Osawatomie, Kan., and in Miami, Okla., and Bartlesville, Okla."

"The rain has backed off significantly in the last few days. The water is dropping and we can finally get into the affected areas," Caison said.

In response to requests from local Southern Baptists in Kansas and Oklahoma, the

DR teams sent to Kan.

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief has sent a laundry unit, mud-out teams, and other volunteers to help victims of recent floods in Kansas.

A laundry unit from First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, with four volunteers was activated July 8 to work at First Southern Baptist Church, Coffeyville, Kan., to assist flood victims and emergency responders. The laundry unit which went into operation July 10 is located in the parking lot of the Kansas church where it is used by the National Guard and other responders, and disaster relief volunteers. It is expected to be in operation for several weeks.

A 10-member mud-out team, composed of four from Cumberland Baptist Association, Clarksville; three from William Carey Baptist Association, Fayetteville; and three from Duck River Baptist Association,

Tullahoma, 12 for Coffeyville mentioned out of First Baptist. A nine-member out team from Bee Baptist Association, Dayton, also left July 11 for Coffeyville.

In addition, Mike Shiloh Baptist Association, Adamsville, was activated July 13 to work for relief incident system operations based in Osawatomie. Stricklin will serve NAMB incident commander.

Tennessee Baptist relief director, Dave Holmer, has also requested a mud-out team volunteer this response and for cleanup response for British Columbia. Holmer, contact information, off-site address, contact officer, at 1-800-477-7926, or e-mail: dholmes@tnbaptist.org

NAMB center is coordinating and mobilizing mud-out teams, along with laundry and shower units.

Kansas is still in need of mud-out units, with up to 400 homes in Coffeyville alone putting in requests for cleanup assistance. Another 200 homes in Neodesha are now ready for mud-out crews, while as many as 625 living units are affected in Osawatomie, Kan. See story on Tennessee disaster relief involvement on this page. □

Exchange student accepts Christ; loses family

Baptist Press

SCOTT, Ark. — Sherzod Odilov, an exchange student from Uzbekistan, did not anticipate the high price he would pay for his decision to follow Christ, but knowing the price Christ paid for him, he stands firm.

When Sherzod, who recently graduated from Jackson (Ark.) High School, telephoned his Muslim parents in Uzbekistan to tell them of his newfound faith, his father disowned him, making it clear he was no longer welcome in his home and was never again to speak to his mother or his siblings. He withdrew all funds from Sherzod's U.S. bank account, arranged to cancel his son's U.S. sponsorship and college scholarship and even drew up legal papers declaring Sherzod is no longer his son.

As devastating as that must be for an 18-year-old, Sherzod remains strong in his commitment to Christ.

"I am not sorry I accepted Christ," he said. "I am not sorry for getting baptized. Even

though my parents are not sorry for any of what happened."

He faces his uncertainty with confidence that Christ will lead him.

Sherzod was led to Christ by Kari Han, who befriended him and led him to the Savior.

"I was strictly Muslim for five times a day, prayed the Koran and loved my heart. I kept it with me, and I believed in Islam, and I believed in the Koran."

Then he met Kari Han at a basketball game.

"After that, when she came to her, she always talked about Christianity and he talked about Grace Baptist Church in Scott, Ark.," Sherzod said. "When she talked about Christianity, I used to get mad at her. I didn't tell her that I didn't want her to follow the time, she spoke about Christianity and about the Koran. She gave me some books about Christianity, too. I was strange because I had heard Christian things didn't believe in Christ. I used to get mad at her when she spoke about Christianity."

As time passed, Sherzod's money and witness reached him. Then he read the Bible and the difference between Christianity. He rethought Islam and his mind to Christianity. He decided to attend her church and made a profession of faith.

Odilov plans to return to the U.S. and attend college. Baptist is helping him with the paperwork needed to return to his country and also helping him secure funds for living expenses.

Robinson Road Baptist once again showing signs of life

Retired pastor emphasizes evangelism amid construction

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

GULFPORT, Miss. — Unlike oil and water, evangelism and construction can mix.

Just ask Champ Thomas Jr., a retired Baptist pastor and member of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova.

Thomas began serving May 22 as coordinator of spiritual emphases for the Gulf Coast Baptist Association and the Tennessee Baptist Convention partnership here.

Thomas first came to Robinson Road Baptist Church in April with a team from Bellevue. "I couldn't to construction, but I could witness on the job site," he said.

Thomas and two ladies from Bellevue began knocking on doors in the neighborhood. They were joined the next day by a man who had been injured slightly and was unable to continue construction. By week's end they saw 21 people pray to accept Christ as Savior.

A few weeks later the need arose for someone to be employed who would continue to stress evangelism on the Coast while working with volunteers who stay at Robinson Road.

Although hesitant at first to take on the role, Thomas did so after much prayer. "Evangelism ought to be the number one priority of anything Southern Baptists do," he stressed.

"We had space in the church. It made sense to open it up and let volunteers stay here," he said.

Thus, a partnership with Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief and the Tennessee Baptist Convention was formed.

Volunteers have been vital to the overall recovery of the area and the region, Everett stressed.

How long it will take to recover is known only by God, the pastor observed. "But up to this point the volunteers have

played and will continue to play a vital role in the recovery," he said.

And though it has been slow going at the church, it too is beginning to show signs of new life.

Until just a few weeks ago the church was still operating at about 50 percent of where it was prior to Katrina.

As of June 24 the church had seen 13 new additions.

"Seeds that were planted earlier are starting to bear fruit," Everett said.

Everett

He acknowledged, however, that the construction work is desperately needed.

"After two years (following Hurricane Katrina), there is still a genuine need. We need to re-emphasize the construction," said Thomas, a former pastor at Ashport Baptist Church, Ripley.

But at the same time, he continued, "we need to be evangelizing."

Thomas encouraged Tennessee Baptist churches to not only send construction crews, but also teams that can do evangelistic outreach, either through Vacation Bible Schools or door-to-door evangelism.

If both evangelism and construction is emphasized, there can be something for every volunteer to do, he noted.

The retired pastor also provides a soul-winning class for volunteers early in the week to enable them to witness on the job site and in the community.



CHAMP THOMAS, right, a retired pastor and member of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, visited recently with pastor Jeff Bennett of First Baptist Church, Taft. Thomas helps coordinate spiritual emphases at Robinson Road Baptist Church while Bennett led a team from his church to do construction and evangelism projects in the area in late June.

Thomas also coordinates morning devotional for volunteers who stay at Robinson Road Baptist Church.

Thomas observed that the construction teams are "having a tremendous impact on the people."

After seeing a "godly witness through the construction volunteers," residents of the area are open to the gospel, Thomas said. □

is pleased that more volunteers are coming to assist with evangelization.

"We need both — evangelism and construction," he said.

"It is important to meet the physical needs, but we have to meet spiritual needs as well," the pastor continued.

"We need volunteers who can witness door to door — people who can take someone whose life has been touched by the sweat of another and lead him or her to a relationship with Christ."

Everett is appreciative for the help given by retired Tennessee Baptist pastor Champ Thomas (see story above).

He (Thomas) has helped focus on the spiritual needs, Everett observed.

Thomas is encouraged by what he has seen happen at Robinson Road in recent weeks. In early June, 25 children made professions of faith at a camp led by volunteers from several Tennessee Baptist churches. During follow up visits, two parents and a sibling also prayed to accept Christ," Thomas said. "All appear to be genuine decisions."

"God is moving at Robinson Road Baptist Church," Thomas affirmed. "The church is being revived."

Everett also is concerned about the larger picture as well.

"I am pastor of Robinson Road Baptist Church but if what is taking place inside our doors can help a sister church, that is fine.

"I am interested in kingdom growth," Everett stressed. □

Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

GULFPORT, Miss. — Pas-

Rocky Everett of Robinson Baptist Church here

admits that his congrega-

tion has had its share of ups

and downs over the years.

"We have fought discour-

agement many different

ways," said Everett who has

been pastor of the church for

over 10 years.

When Hurricane Kat-

rina hit late August of 2005,

within a few months, a

church of about 60 in atten-

dance on Sundays was cut in

half.

Everett recalls the storm

very clearly. He noted that the day

that Katrina hit he had

to vacate his family

in the area.

They went first to Mont-

gomery, Ala., then on to

Atlanta, Ga. As the hurri-

cane rolled through, Everett

and his wife were trying "to

figure out what to expect," he said.



ROCKY EVERETT, right, pastor of Robinson Road Baptist Church, Gulfport, Miss., enjoys a visit in his office with Robert Lutz, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dayton. Lutz and a team of volunteers from his church recently spent a week at Robinson Road Baptist Church helping repair homes for victims of Hurricane Katrina.



JOHN MCCLURKAN, left, a volunteer from Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory, talks with pastor Rocky Everett of Robinson Road Baptist Church in Gulfport, Miss., where he and other Tennessee volunteers are being housed. They were at a new construction site for a resident of nearby Pass Christian, Miss.

Doing missions is a guiding principle at FBC, Taft

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

GULFPORT, Miss. — Members of all ages, whether they can swing a hammer or not, are involved in missions at First Baptist Church, Taft.

This church which sits near the Alabama border in southern Middle Tennessee may be relatively small (about 100-125 in Sunday morning worship), but there is nothing small about its commitment to hands-on missions.

"Missions is who we are," says pastor Jeff Bennett, who has been with the congregation for 23 years.

"We feel like church is the place where we assemble to prepare to go outside and actually do the work," he observed.

Twenty-eight members (nearly a quarter of the church's Sunday morning worship attendance) recently spent a week on the Gulf Coast.

Some team members worked on homes for victims of Hurricane Katrina while a large segment, primarily youth, shared the good news of Jesus Christ through a puppet team and other means of evangelization.

Bennett estimated the team handed out about 500 programs of where the puppets would perform. Each program included a printed plan of salvation, he added.

The percentage of members who went to Gulfport is not unusual, Bennett said. The church has sent out numerous mission teams in recent years to places like Las Vegas, Nev., and Mexico, and a large percentage of the membership goes on the trip, he said.

Bennett stressed that the actual trip is just a part of the overall plan. "I constantly stress that the preparation for



YOUTH AND ADULTS from First Baptist Church, Taft, recently spent a week doing evangelism work, along with construction work, at Robinson Road Baptist Church in Gulfport, Miss. The youth performed a puppet play "God's Katrina Kitchen" in Gulfport. From left, front row, are Becky Rose, Bennett Self, Jake McKearin, Pam Bennett, Hicks, Amber Knight, Victoria Self, Crystal Atchley, Halie Pitts, and Beth Anna Self; back row, Josh McKearin, Joseph Paul Weeks, Kristy Reeves, Jeff Bennett, pastor, Eric Lohmeyer, Colyn Self, Andrew Quaiife, and Casey Knight.

any trip we do for the Lord is as important as the mission itself," he said.

"Using that theory, we constantly try to please the Lord in our planning and preparation."

Bennett observed that FBC prefers to be "a sending church rather than a sitting church. We believe in going out."

Bennett said the church has been doing these kinds of trips for about 10 years. He acknowledged that a lot of what they do is "planting seeds."

It's not necessary that "we see the harvest," he noted.

His wife, Pam, agreed. Often someone else will come along and water and then someone else will actually do the harvesting, she said.

"In the end, Jesus Christ gets the glory."

An important element of the mission trips, Bennett said, is the involvement of the youth in the missions at an early age. He noted the youth trains for mis-

sion trips on Wednesday nights during the year and even do local projects.

"It plants seeds in their minds of the importance of doing missions," Bennett said.

And, many of the youth

continue that involvement as they become young adults. This year's team in Gulfport included adults who participated in the mission trips sponsored by the church when they were teenagers.

In addition, Pam Bennett noted that several of the youth from their church have gone on to become



YOUTH FROM First Baptist Church, Taft, recently shared the message of Christ in areas near Gulfport, Miss., using puppets

ministers and pastors.

Bennett offers a theory on why Baptist has sent out so many on projects over the years.

"If you love the Lord with heart and you love your neighbor and you love your neighbor yourself, it will get you beyond your church and outside the walls of church," he affirmed. □

Gibson County volunteers share Christ in 'the Big Easy'

By Marilyn Stewart
For Baptist and Reflector

NEW ORLEANS — As pioneers for Gibson Baptist Association in New Orleans working with Operation NOAH Rebuild and New Orleans Baptists, First Baptist, Rutherford, and First Baptist, Trenton, found The Big Easy an easy place to share the gospel.

After a full work day with Operation NOAH, the partnership of Louisiana Baptists and the North American Mission Board to reach New Orleans for Christ while rebuilding flooded homes, Rutherford and Trenton teams passed out tracts and shared the gospel around the city.

Thirteen-year old Andrew Peevyhouse, one of Trenton's youngest team members, shared the gospel with tourists and businessmen along the Riverwalk in downtown New Orleans, adjacent to NOAH's housing facility, "Volunteer Village." Peevyhouse called the trip, "a great experience."

Operated by NAMB to house and feed volunteers, Volunteer Village occupies three floors of the World Trade Center, located along the Mississippi River just blocks from the French Quarter.

"I came because the Lord asked me to come," said Peevyhouse. "I will always remember how nice the people were when we helped them."

The teams totaling 30 members were the first representatives from Gibson Baptist Association since the formalization of its commitment to NOAH and the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans last fall. Miles Powell, Trenton's missions coordinator and an associational missions committee member involved in forming the alliance, said he woke up one night with New Orleans on his mind.

"I had prayed a long time about this year's mission trip and had not thought of New Orleans until then," said Powell. "I really believe God led us here."

Rather than their typical international mission trip, Powell said he wanted a shorter term, less expensive trip that didn't require a passport so more church members would get involved. "NOAH made it easy," said Powell.

Trenton's team worked on the home of an elderly couple who were confined to their FEMA trailer due to health issues. But the gentleman came out to greet the team "with a twinkle in his eye," said Powell. "We are making a difference in lives here."

The minor frustration of getting lost in a busy city became an opportunity for witness as team members handed out tracts while asking directions. Trenton pastor Ronnie Coleman shared the gospel with one woman who had assisted them.

"She was so appreciative of us being here, she hugged me," said Coleman. Team members were also thanked by another resident who recognized their NOAH badges as they came out of a fast-food restaurant.

Rutherford's seven-man team worked during the day reframing walls and putting up ceiling joists in a home that had housed a family for two generations. In the evenings, the team passed out hundreds of tracts, including the remainder of the tracts placed at a converted ammunition plant in their area that had sheltered New Orleans evacuees.

"It's fitting that we handed out the last of the tracts from the evacuee shelter in Louisiana," said Scott Jewell, who as the mayor of Dyer has experienced first-hand a natural disaster's affect on a community.

Jewell said the Rutherford team postponed a trip last year to New Orleans due to the tornado that tore

through their communities in Louisiana.

"The Lord has burdened our hearts for missions," said Rutherford leader Danny Dunn, who with brother, Stewart, put their res contracting business on hold for a time to come to New Orleans. "The great need here."

A lunch conversation at restaurant turned from the Louisiana crawfish to the go Rutherford team member, Moody, nicknamed "D.L.," shared two young men about the Lord.

"Terry loves to share his faith," Dunn in explanation of Moody name after the nineteenth century American evangelist, D.L. Moody. "Hours of walking the streets and passing out tracts, Dunn said, "We're not just sowing the seed. God has the rest."

"There is a window of opportunity for witness here because the people are still appreciative of people who come and help," said Moody. "The people are getting back in their homes and the window is slowly closing. Fields are white here, but the harvest are few." □ — Stewart is a correspondent for the Louisiana Baptist Association's communications team.

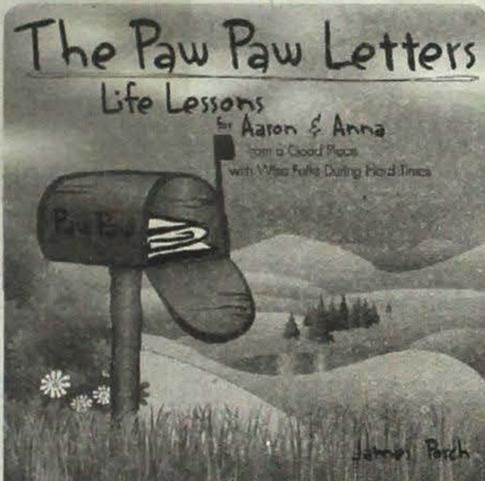
Lesson from mother — leave revenge to God

es Porch
aron and Anna:
mother, your great
Mom," seldom missed a
to teach me a big lesson,
her curriculum required
ag extreme and painful
res.
idly recall the afternoon
lightness set her off on a
ple moment about con-
An urge, inner voice,
feeling — all have been
identify the indefinable
conscience. My best
n describing con-
cludes "recog-
I have the chance
right over against
while still leaning
the right act." Pos-
the inadequacy of
ords can be helped
n a story. As you
Paw Paw's disdain
nition makes room
stories. The follow-
ent, verified in the
les of Pelahatchie,
my young illustri-
tation, but I sur-

to a six year old as a dressed
up, very serious old fellow who
cared little for children.

Our family home sat beside
a gravel road apart from other
houses, so much of my outside
playtime included the constant
companionship of my little dog,
Bobo.

One hot July noontime, Mr.
John came down the road
going home to dinner (he lived
with his sister). Nearing the
porch of our house, Bobo, who
never knew a stranger, ran out,
tail wagging to greet Bro. Cau-



John Cauthen, a
togenarian in my home
eisurely strolled past my
d home four times each
days a week (on Sun-
made one trip to the
list church). Daily, only
ted by extreme
ent weather, he made his
essed in a seasonal suit,
white shirt and tie, bright-
ed shoes, and carrying a
g stick. In the 1940s, he
the distinction as a
." A retired single fellow
n nobody knew his earli-
ation), he appeared even

then. Immediately, the elderly
gentleman hit Bobo on the
head and across the back with
his walking stick and uttered
some words I had never heard
before. Bobo cowered down,
cried and squealed and ran
back to me shaking and whim-
pering. I picked up my little
abused dog and ran into the
house. Mama came to my res-
cue, offering comfort to both
her son and his devoted friend.
She knew my hurt and anger,
and lovingly and patiently
rationalized, "Everyone does

not like dogs, or maybe Bobo
scared Mr. John, or possibly
our elderly friend has been
attacked at some time earlier
by a dog and he did not mean
to hurt Bobo." Her final coun-
sel must have really pushed
my button, "James, it is over.
Let's tell God we forgive Mr.
John and then you go back and
play."

Mama's wise parental
rationale did not work. While I
could not label my intentions or
all of my feelings, I was already
bent on revenge. Putting Bobo
in his back yard pen, I
watched for Mr. John to
return to town after "dinner."
As he slowly climbed
the hill leading to our
house, I went outside and
began to uncoil 50 feet of
water hose attached to
the yard faucet. (Some of
these details were relat-
ed to me years later by
my Mother.) According to
Mama, I began watering
her flower beds with the
hose nozzle on full force.
Once the dog abuser
reached a spot just in
front of our house, I ran
out and wet that old man from
head to toe. Once again I heard
new words, this time in a very
high pitched voice.

Mama, alerted by Mr. John's
cussing, ran out this time to
rescue my enemy. She picked
up his hat, retrieved his walk-
ing stick, helped him to a chair
on the front porch and brought
out towels to dry off the old fel-
low, all the time apologizing for
my behavior amidst Mr. John's
silence. Once he calmed down
and dried out a bit, Mama car-
ried the dog-beater home after

giving me a stern command to
sit still on the porch "until I
come back." I knew I was in big
trouble.

After driving back into the
driveway, Mama hastily
walked up onto the front
porch, pointed to a nearby
peach tree and commanded,
"Go get me a long switch." My
fear jumped a notch as I
remembered I was wearing
short pants. I got a whopping
that left welts on my legs for
days. Child abuse? Oh, no!
Child discipline? Yes! Then
Mama began the dreaded talk
with a question, "Did you feel
better after you wet Mr. John?"
Honestly, at that moment all I
felt was the stinging, burning
welts on my precious little
legs. She continued, "James,
you decided to hurt Mr. John
because he hurt Bobo, didn't
you?" Painfully, I answered,
"Yes ma'am." Then she made
her big point, "Son, you never
feel better hurting someone
because they hurt you."

Years later, I learned the
label for that episode —
revenge, and understood
Mama's counsel. Revenge is
never sweet, or in the words of
our Living Lord Jesus Christ,
"Vengeance is mine, I will
repay."

Now a final confession, I
cannot plead consistency in
practicing the old teaching or
claim innocence from tempta-
tions to get back at someone
who brings hurt on my life or
family. However, by His grace, I
keep trying to let go and abide
by my Savior's expectation. □
— Porch is executive director-
treasurer of the Tennessee Bap-
tist Convention.



reflections

By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

One person's weed could be another's flower

In late June I traveled to
Gulfport, Miss., to report on the
efforts Tennessee Baptists are
making to help residents on the
Gulf Coast who lost their homes
to Hurricane Katrina almost two
years ago. See stories throughout
this issue.

But I also did "double duty" as
a volunteer with 24 other people
from Tulip Grove Baptist Church
where I am a member.

We had the opportunity to
help build a home from the
"ground up" for Mrs. Spencer, an
81-year-old lady who had lost
everything she owned during
Katrina and was living in a small
(actually tiny is a better word)
trailer on her property.

Some of us went to the job site
on Sunday to check it out before
beginning work on Monday. Mrs.
Spencer was so excited that peo-
ple had arrived to begin work on
her new home.

As we surveyed the site we
noticed it was overgrown with
high grass and weeds. We
thought how much better it
would be if the area could be cut
before beginning work.

One of our volunteers, J.P.
Kirkham, seemed to have brought
every tool he owned with him,
including a weedeater. He imme-
diately volunteered to go to the
house and clear out the area
where we would be working.

As he worked several of the
team members talked with Mrs.
Spencer who was keeping an eye
on J.P. As he neared her trailer
she asked the ladies to make
sure he didn't cut her "flowers."

All I saw was weeds. Now, I
know most men are not that
knowledgeable about flowers, but
the ladies in the group, including
my wife Joyce, who used to be a
florist, agreed with my assess-
ment.

But we honored her wishes
and kept the "flowers" around
her trailer intact.

For someone who had "noth-
ing," those weeds/flowers repre-
sented something special to her.

We should never forget that
what may be insignificant or
meaningless to us may be impor-
tant to someone else.

We need to continue to pray for
the people of the Gulf Coast who
lost everything they own and con-
tinue to help them rebuild. And
while doing so, we must share the
gospel of Jesus Christ.

People are starting to accept
Christ from seeds that have been
planted on the Gulf Coast by
Christians who care. Let's keep
spreading the truth that one who
has nothing is indeed rich if he or
she knows Jesus Christ as Lord
and Savior. □

Public speaking can be an asset when God calls



Parent asks
By Carolyn Tomlin

he book of Exodus, God
Moses to lead the children
Israel into the Promised
land. But Moses says "O Lord,
I have never been eloquent,
neither in the past nor since
I have spoken to your ser-
vants. I am slow of speech and
tongue." (Exodus 4:10, NIV).
God does not allow excus-
es. Instead he tells Moses he
will help him, be with him, and
send his brother Aaron to help him.

Bible does not reveal
why Moses felt unprepared to
lead or why he lacked these
skills. Only that he felt uncom-
fortable addressing a crowd of
people, encouraging them to
leave the slavery of Egypt, and
lead them into a land flowing

with milk and honey.
If Moses had been efficient
in public speaking, perhaps he
would have been more eager to
become a leader when God
called.

Parents who involve their
children in a church program
find opportunities to develop
leadership and public speaking
skills. Whenever a young per-
son stands before a group, the
anxiety and tension lessens
each time. Youth choir, mission
projects that require speaking,
Bible drills, participating in a
small group discussion — all
these prepare youth for public
speaking. Any new experience
produces stress. Soon, you real-
ize this is fun and the stress
has disappeared. But due to
individual differences and few
opportunities to speak, not
everyone develops this skill at
the same time.

Why is public speaking
important? If a youth says that
developing the skill of public
speaking is not important, how
would a church leader respond?

Just like learning algebra or
American history, learning to
stand before others is a skill —
and a skill can be learned. We
are often judged on communica-
tion skills, both written and
spoken. Being an effective
public speaker can make the
difference between success and
failure in your life and commu-
nity. Youth who plan a career in
Christian education will be
expected to give reports, pres-
ent curriculum workshops,
preach, teach Sunday School
classes, guide staff and person-
nel, and address region, state,
and national conventions in
their denomination.

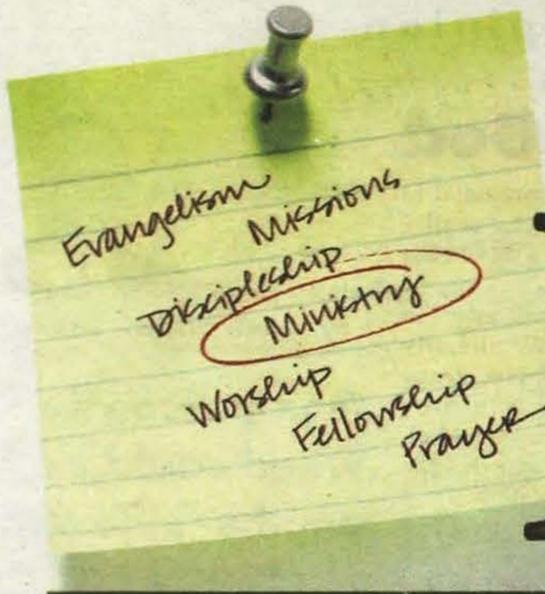
Start training a child early
for public speaking.

The fear of public speaking
rates above the fear of killer
bees, automobile accidents, or a
terrorist attack in some people.
The church that offers a loving,
caring attitude toward children
and youth has an opportunity
to help develop these skills
without the fear that may
accompany them. Start early in

the life of a child. Use these
suggestions to help your child
or youth get started:

- Promote confidence and charisma.
- Offer praise for accomplishment.
- Learn as you go.
- Explain how to develop a speech. Break it down into an introduction, quotes, data, approximately 3 main parts, and conclusion.
- Provide instruction on using the World Wide Web to find data, illustrations, quotes, and research.
- Pray for guidance.

These young people are the
leaders for the future of the
church. The burden is heavy
upon their shoulders — they
must be prepared to lead. And
as parents, we must have our
children regular in attendance
so they have the opportunities
to learn. □ — Tomlin writes for
numerous publications. She lives
in Jackson where her husband,
Matt, is pastor of Ward's Grove
Baptist Church.



Church Health Matters

"Building healthy churches empowered by the presence of God"



MINISTRY Matters

Exciting growth is being experienced in Men's Ministry groups at various locations all across Tennessee. This growth is produced by a spiritual maturing process that is leading men into better stewardship, lower divorce rates, and more ministry fruit for the church.

Most churches are familiar with the structured monthly program for men that has been popular over the years. Today's Men's Ministry is not restrained by time, place, or program. Current thinking for a ministry to men will more nearly resemble a smorgasbord of opportunities rather than a structured program.

In fact just like hunters, many successful ministries change with the seasons. Part of the secret of building a successful Men's Ministry is just letting your community know that your church is significantly interested in men.

This issue of "Church Health Matters" is devoted to two very different testimonies of pastors who have experienced growth in their church through their own unique men's ministry. In one instance, a church near death is now on the verge of bursting at the seams through a mentoring ministry begun by the pastor.

The second church is experiencing rapid growth, because the pastor has encouraged and empowered the men to start and carry out their own ministries. Hundreds of baptisms are being recorded every year at the church where he serves, because the men are doing ministry.

The common thread to these two stories is the transforming power that Christ brings into a man's life as he discovers his God-given purpose in life and his reason for being.

No, we are not restricted to a program any more. In fact, I have a document I'd be glad to send you that lists about 125 different ways that men are gathering in groups and doing ministry.

Just send your request to gwilliams@tnbaptist.org or call the number listed, and I will send it to you.

Included below is the contact information for members of your state missionary staff that are available to help you and your church with Men's Ministry.

- Men's Ministry and Restorative Justice, Gene Williams(615) 371-2064
- Royal Ambassadors, Frank Green.....(931) 935-8201
- Deacons, Steve Holt.....(615) 371-2019
- Leadership Greatness, Willie McLaurin.....(615) 371-2011
- Disaster Relief and Construction, David Acres(615) 371-7927
- Faith Riders Motorcycle Ministry, Larry Gilmore(615) 371-7915
- Prayer, Don Pierson(615) 371-7909

How to Give the Ministry to the Men and Hold Them Accountable

By Brian Holloway



God has a purpose, a plan for all believers. When a believer realizes that plan, he gets excited and will often come to a church staff member and share his idea.

The conversation will usually go something like this, "Pastor I would love to see us have a _____ event." At which time the pastor might say, "That's a great idea, I WILL GET RIGHT ON THAT!" with every good intention of doing the event, yet it fails.

Why? Because God did not give this vision or plan for that event to the pastor, he gave it to the parishioner. What should have taken place was when the parishioner came to the pastor with the idea, the pastor should have told him he would support him anyway he could, but God had given him the idea so run with it. By supporting and empowering the parishioner, the event will be a success.

Why? Because God gave the idea to that individual, and He will also give them the resources that's needed to pull the idea together.

This does four things for the church body and for the pastor. They are:

1. Pastors will get more people involved in ministry. Ministry comes in many shapes and sizes. As pastors we all want more ministry opportunities don't we? Jesus called 12 men to help Him; all of them had a different personality, talents, and ideas, with a common goal in mind, to glorify Christ! Pastor, God has given you men with ministry ideas; free them, let them try an idea. What will happen when you do this is? They will get excited and will pull more men into their ministry thus getting more and more men involved in your church. How many of you pastors would like to have more men involved in your church?
2. Pastors, by equipping and empowering the men of the church to run with the ideas God has given them concerning ministry opportunity, a wonderful thing will take place. The men will get excited about what God is doing through them and in the church, and they will start telling other men about it. They will tell neighbors, friends, and co-workers about these ministry opportunities, and you will start seeing more and

more visiting families walk the doors of your church wanting to their friends are so excited about many of you pastors would like to visitors come to your church each

3. You will see souls saved! At e or activity make sure you hold accountable that there will be an i moment when the gospel and plan tion is presented. You will see G this and save souls.

4. When you free your men up no you have some very creative minis tunities, you will notice your me desiring a deeper relationship Why? I believe for the first time their lives they have first hand e God moving and working thro This creates a hunger to study G so they will be better equipped fo ministry opportunity. You will see start attending Bible studies and faithful to the church.

You might be surprised at how G your men and what creative ministr nities will arise in the church, when and empower your men to try the ideas. As the senior pastor of Moul Baptist Church, Johnson City, last y 660 people saved.

How? The men of our church h hunting, basketball, softball an events, car shows, hay rides, all included an intentional moment. organized and led local, national, at tional mission trips, disaster relief ed Tuesday night Bible study groupl lowship breakfasts, etc. Do you many of the events I personally f None, it was all by our men.

Take Jesus' example to equip an your men as He did His disciples i your ministry to grow. Our churc faith goal this year of 1,000 souls sav are off to a great start.

(Brian Holloway is also a former p archer and the founder of N Ministries.)

What Is a Church Renewal Journey?

One of the best kept secrets in the Southern Baptist Convention is a process of awakening, equipping, and discipling today's church through a process that has become known as Church Renewal Journey.

Church Renewal Journey (CRJ) is a ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention, American Mission Board and the Tennessee Baptist Convention, which has been available for over 25 years. It is a ministry of laymen to laymen under the overview of the local church pastor and coordinated by a visiting team of Baptist laymen that are invited by the local church.

Space does not permit an in depth description of the preparation process, but further information is available by visiting www.churchrenewaljourney.net. About everything that you need to know about the process can be found there.

If you would prefer to speak to someone about the process, contact Don Hanle, Tennessee coordinator of the CRJ, by mail at: 1013 Sandy Court, Maryville, TN 37803-7533, by phone at (865) 681-1465 or (865) 250-1547, or by e-mail at donalddhanle1@aol.com.

How to Train Faithful Men

By Tony Trunnell

I began meeting with men individually with the desire to see the Lord transform their lives, their marriages, homes, and children through His Word as they were challenged go to a deeper level with Him.

I did this as an act of obedience to what the Lord had placed on my heart and that which was very clear in the Scriptures to do which is make disciples.

In addition to using the Bible and some of my own materials and ideas, I have through these past 12 years called our mentoring ministry, "Training Faithful Men," and used the book by that same title from the Institute in Basic Life Principles during our times together each week.

I recently came from an early morning prayer time being so blessed from hearing the men praying the Word back to their Heavenly Father; verses they had memorized in Training Faithful Men. I didn't set out for this to happen, it's just part of the over-flow of getting the Word of God into the hearts of men. Challenging them to pray with their wives and children has been another blessing.

Recently a young college student with overwhelming excitement told me his dad was going to disciple him in Training Faithful Men. I said, "You are going to be blessed." He said, "I have already been blessed, hearing my dad quoting the Bible verses he has memorized."

Our mentoring style is biblical, practical, personal, and holds both the pastor/mentor and learner/trainee accountable to each other and to the Lord. It is changing hearts one-on-one for the glory of God.

Biblical, practical, enjoyable, personable, accountable, reproducible, transferable, unpredictable, transformable, and sacrificial are all words that come to mind as a result of training the faithful men that I have met with over the years. Each man's personality is different and getting to see many of them approach a subject in a totally different manner has been a blessing as well.

Mentoring men is the model the Lord used in training His leadership. He called those 12 men to be with Him. What a blessing it is to me to see those I spend time with go on to mentor others. How rewarding it is to each of us.

Mentoring men has become a lifestyle for me. I am committed to discipling men, one-on-one, until Jesus calls me home either through the air or through the grave. It's part of what He has called me to do. By God's grace and mercy I want to be able to say, like Paul, "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ," I Corinthians 11:1.

(Tony Trunnell is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Bristol.)

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

- August 24-27 Christian Women's / Christian Men's Job Corps National Certification Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- August 30 Extreme Makeover Sunday School Training Conference, First Baptist Church, Millington
- August 4 Church Weekday Early Education Conference, New Vision Baptist Church, Murfreesboro
- August 6 Extreme Makeover Sunday School Training Conference, First Baptist Church, Clarksville
- August 7 Extreme Makeover Sunday School Training Conference, First Baptist Church, Crossville
- August 7 Extreme Makeover Sunday School Training Conference, First Baptist Church, LaFollette
- August 9-10 Associational Secretaries Celebration, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- August 9 Sunday School Conference, First Baptist Church, Morristown
- August 10-11 Music Ministry Leadership Conference, Brentwood Baptist Church, Brentwood

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

Keep the leaders in your church informed.

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

Tennesseans battle heat, insects to aid Katrina victims ...

— Continued from page 1
 "It has been a great thing," he said.

Most volunteers, especially those on their first trip to the Gulf Coast, are amazed that the devastation of Katrina is still so apparent after two years.

Many of those who make that first trip are eager to return.

"After coming down last year, I looked forward to coming back and helping the people again," said Lynn Pitt of First Baptist Church, Baileyton.

Not only did he return, but Pitt led the 16-member team from his church this year. "There is still so much to do. It will take several years to get it all built back," he said, acknowledging that last year's trip "changed" his life.

Robert Lutz, pastor at First Baptist Church, noted that you can only imagine what a missions trip will be like if you have never been on one.

"When you go, it is fascinating to see how God uses you." And, he continued, "when you go and help people, it can't help but change you."

Kay Dender of Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory, and her husband, Johnny, also were on their first mission trip.

"It was a growing experience for both of us," she said.

She was especially touched by the reception the group received from not only the homeowner they helped, but people in the community.

She recalled the joy expressed by the 81-year-old woman for whom the Tulip Grove group was building a home. "She was so grateful. It reminded me of a child on Christmas morning."

The trip reminded her that people on the Gulf Coast are still "in desperate need of help" even though it has been two years since



MARY HOLLAND of Central Baptist Church, Bearden, Knoxville, drives a nail, assisted by John Cox, left, and Chris Rhodes. They were working on a home for a family in Pass Christian, Miss., who lost their home during Hurricane Katrina almost two years ago.

Hurricane Katrina.

The experience "touched both of our hearts to see the needs and being able in a small way to return her life (the homeowner) to normalcy," she said.

Lynn McBride of Central Baptist, Bearden, has been on four trips to the Gulf Coast to help Katrina victims.

"It has been a blessing to meet the homeowners and hear their stories. They have a wonderful testimony to give," she observed.

Sellers has been impressed with the volunteer teams that have come to Gulfport.

They have been able to do

all kinds of work, from building homes from the ground up to providing plumbing and electrical work, he observed.

"That has to be driven by the Lord. He is sending the people to do what has to be done," Sellers aid.

He noted that since January Tennessee Baptists have helped begin between 12-14 homes from the ground up and refurbish about 80 other homes. That does not include all the other homes that were helped by Tennessee Baptists in 2005-06.

Acres observed that many people on the Gulf Coast are in



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Baileyton, recently purchased a new trailer and used it for the first time in Gulfport, Miss., in late June. Members from the church included, from left, kneeling, Joyce Pierce, Tr Tucker, Andrew Tucker, Brett Roberts, Kenni Carter, Stewart Weems; standing, Tucker, Robert Lutz (pastor), Janice Justis, Barbie Mullendore, Lynn bie Pitt, Brenda Hensley, Todd Pierce, Mark Gaby, and Don Hensley.

homes today who would have been struggling to still find help had it not been for Tennessee Baptist volunteers.

Yet, there is much work to be done. "We need volunteers in the months to come," Acres stressed.

Acres said the arrangement with Robinson Road Baptist Church is set through January of 2008, but negotiations are underway for an extension.

"We have the hope and prayer of going through October of 2008, but to keep the facility open we need volunteers to continue to come and help the residents of the

Gulf Coast," he said.

For more information, send a team to Robinson Road Baptist Church, call Jim Sellers at (615) 427-1413 or Both can also be reached by calling the church at 328-0534. □



DARRELL HANEY, left, and **JOSH MCKEARIN** of First Baptist Church, Taft, put siding on a house in Pass Christian, Miss.

"Jackie Kay ... An Evangelist For The Church"

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Dr. Alan Stewart
Rehoboth Baptist Church
Soddy Daisy, TN

"God used Jackie Kay in a powerful way. He delivered God's Word in a manner that was clear, concise, and challenging to believers and unbelievers alike. We praise the Lord for the many professions of faith and the many believers who responded. Additionally, many relinquished burdens, doubts, and fears that have plagued them for years. I look forward to having Jackie with us again at FBC."

Dr. Clay Hallmark
First Baptist Church
Marion, AR

"Jackie Kay is one of the finest expositors of God's Word I know. His integrity is beyond reproach. I have used Jackie four times and my people always want to know when he can come back. I will definitely have him again."

John White, PhD
First Baptist Church,
Lake Charles, LA (4)



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MINISTRY — ST
Smyrna Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, Tenn., is sponsoring a youth group. Please send your resume to Smyrna Baptist Church, Box 456, Chapel Hill, TN 37040. ♦♦♦♦

Vinton Baptist Church, Va., is looking for a youth minister who is capable of leading a youth group to help them in their personal relationship with Christ through Bible study, prayer, and service. The minister should be able to work with youth with discovering their gifts, and using their spiritual gifts. Please respond by July 15 to P.O. Box 306, Vinton, VA 22601. ♦♦♦♦

MINISTRY — O
Organist needed. 8:30 AM service only, First Baptist Church, Tullahoma. Call Debra at 455-5461. ♦♦♦♦

First Baptist Church, Bloomfield, NM, is seeking to hire a licensed mental health counselor to provide Christian counseling for San Juan County. Monthly stipend, office secretarial support, and housing provided. Anticipate a heavy caseload within three months. For more information about the position, please send resumes to La Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, 200 W. Bloomfield, NM 87411. Call lmorin@qwest.net.

Tennessee children help provide farm animals in Croatia

Forlini & Dana Garcia
News office

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Do you jump rope for a goat's honor? If you say "yes," you're not alone. Recently, Project MOST, a ministry of WMU's International Initiatives ministry, partnered with WMU children's missions organizations, making it one of the best of WMU ministries in

Through Project MOST, people make donations to provide goats, sheep, pigs, or cows for struggling families in war-torn Croatia. The family in return then receive immediate benefits of the animal (milk and meat from the offspring) and learning to farm and

raise livestock.

The initial goal was \$5,000, and donations were steadily coming in. But it was after Project MOST was featured in the February 2007 materials for WMU's Girls in Action® (GA®) and Children in Action® (CiA) organizations that things dramatically took off. Through these materials, girls and boys learned not only about missionary Robert Jordan (name changed for security reasons), and his ministry, but also how they could make a difference through Project MOST.

The response was extraordinary — individual children, as well as those involved in these GA, CiA, and Sunday School groups, raised more than \$250,000 in just five months (February – June, 2007).

Children from missions

organizations in 55 Tennessee Baptist churches collected \$17,751.41 for the effort.

However, Project MOST is about more than raising money; the children learned about another culture, as well as ways to share the gospel. On several occasions, the children themselves accepted Christ as a result of the ministry experience. They did more than learn about the ministry — they became a part of it. They mobilized to faithfully answer the need they saw in Croatia, believing the ministry could make a lasting difference in Croatians' lives.

"Missions education really does propel children to make a difference in the world, and Project MOST exemplifies this," said Jean Cullen, ministry consultant for national WMU who oversees International Initiatives.

Girls and boys of all ages responded in creative ways to raise money for Project MOST. One child decided to raise funds through a jump-a-thon. He and his Children in Action group called the project "Jumping Rope for a Goat" and asked for pledges from members of their church and community to buy a goat for \$139. Another child in a GA group made a scrapbook with a picture of a goat in it and divided the goat into 139 parts. She took the scrapbook with her everywhere and colored in a different part of the goat every

time someone gave her \$1. She raised enough for the entire goat. Other children made banks, sold baked goods, did chores, cleaned Sunday School rooms, and went class-to-class in the church, involving the entire congregation. Some even showed their support by tasting goat milk.

WMU Foundation President David George said, "I learned a lot from these kids. They worked hard, involved everyone in their church, and they believed God is who He says He is."

Creating a Bridge to Hope

Project MOST is living up to its name. Croatians know "most" as the word for "bridge." Bridges are lasting structures that move people from one location or situation to another. Today, Project MOST serves as a bridge to move Croatians from poverty to self-sufficiency and economic stability, from bitterness to hope, and from cultural dogma to a thriving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Project MOST began in 2004 as a response to poverty in the tiny and little-known region of Dalmatia, Croatia. Civil war during the 1990s ravaged Croatia's already tenuous economy, rendering many of its citizens jobless, homeless, and hopeless. The aftermath continues today, and Croatia's history is marked by events "before the war" and "after the war." Croatia remained off the radar for most people in the United States. WMU's International Initiatives

ministry, however, saw the need.

International Initiatives partnered with Robert Jordan, a missionary in Croatia, to assess the needs of the people. Jean Cullen made a simple proposal — for WMU to establish a partnership with Jordan that would channel monetary support through a fund held by the WMU Foundation.

Jordan explained, "My original thoughts about how Project MOST would turn out were a lot more humble than the way it is going right now. I expected we would have a few families that we'd work with — primarily people that we could not include in our larger development projects."

"We met a lot of people, so many people, that we could just not help them out. This was a way, we thought originally, to reach some of those people, but it has grown to include more people than I ever imagined."

Jordan believes that spiritual change will happen for people in Croatia, though it will take time to see the results.

"I believe the real results of Project MOST will come in the next three to four years. Things move slowly here, and there's a lot of baggage to get rid of before they can understand the beautiful simplicity of grace. But God is at work, and I am convinced that He is working in Croatia, and that Project MOST has been part of His plan." □

Rick White, Senior Pastor of The People's Church, invites you to attend The Leadership Summit.



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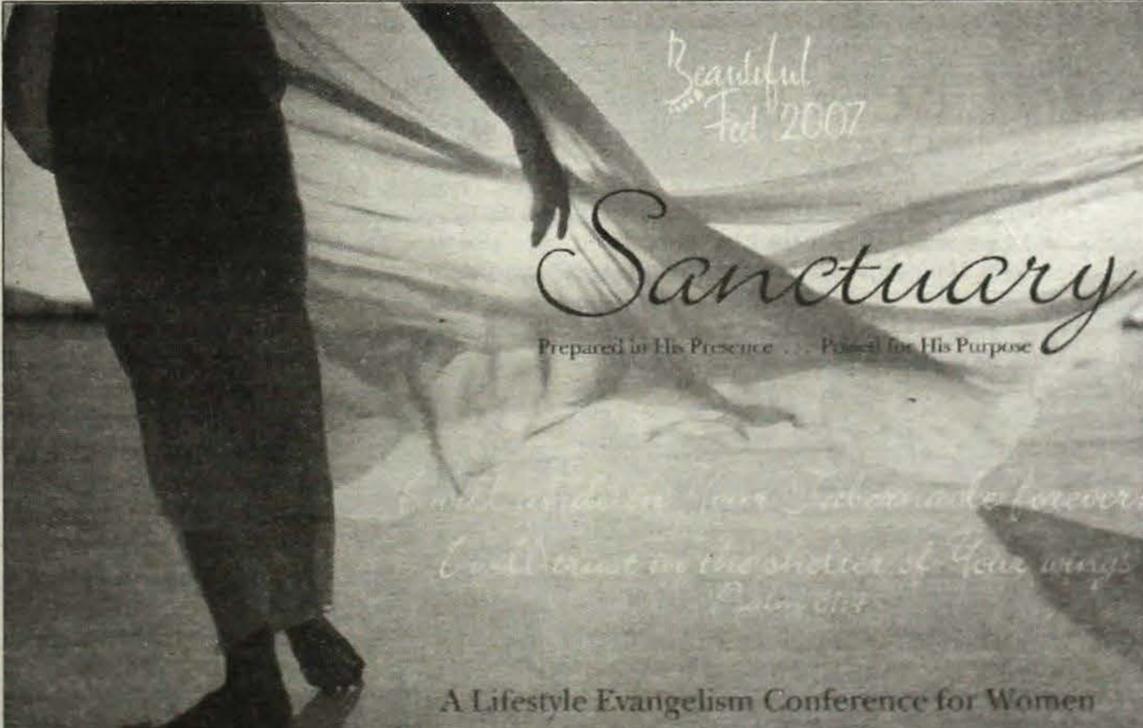
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NAMB appoints missionaries with Tennessee ties

NAMB news office

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Four missionaries with ties to Tennessee have been appointed by the North American Mission Board.

Ronald "Ron" and Joy Barker are serving in Columbia, S.C., where Ron has been appointed as a church planting missionary. Prior to his new post, he worked in the personal evangelism training and spiritual awakening areas for the Missouri Baptist Convention, Jefferson City, Mo.

A native of Kingsport, he earned a B.S. degree in speech at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, and an M. Div. degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Joy, also a Tennessee native, earned a B.S. degree in mathematics at East Tennessee State University. The Barkers have one daughter, Jenny, 21.

Jeffrey "Jeff" and Julie Calloway are serving in Cleveland, Ohio, where Jeff has been named as a core church planting missionary pastor. Prior to his new position, he served as church planter/pastor at Bridge



THE BARKERS



THE CALLOWAYS

Church, Perry, Ohio.

A Knoxville native, Jeff earned an associate's degree in business administration at Roane State Community College, Harriman, and bachelor and master's degrees in pastoral ministry at Trinity Theological

Seminary and College, Newburgh, Ind. He also attended Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

Julie, a Michigan native, earned an A.S. degree in computer science at Roane State Community College. The Calloways have two daughters, Sarah, 20, and Emily, 16. □

Teen birth rate at historic low

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — In a culture replete with dismal statistics, one positive report is that the number of teenage mothers is at a record low, continuing a 14-year downward trend.

Using data from the National Center for Health Statistics, the nonprofit Child Trends research center reported in June that the 2005 birth rate for teens ages 15 to 19 was 40.4 births for every 1,000 female teens, which is 35 percent lower than the peak of 61.8 percent in 1991.

Though birth rates varied

across racial and ethnic groups, numbers were down across the board, Child Trends said. For white teen females, 26 out of every 1,000 gave birth in 2005. The same year, the birth rate for black teen females was 60.9, and for-Hispanics it was 81.5.

"The trend lines on teen births are generally moving in the right direction, and we should pause and savor that fact," Jennifer Manlove, who helped prepare the report, said in a news release. "But it is far too early to declare this problem solved since the U.S. teen birth rate is still higher than that of any other developed nation."

Texas had the highest teen birth rate for 2005 with 63

births for every 1,000 ages 15 to 19 with Hampshire had the lowest — 18 births for every 1,000 females. □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — CHILDREN
Oak Street Baptist Soddy-Daisy, Tenn., is seeking a person/couple to lead to children. Male or female students, or older. Contact Pastor at brojtm@comcast.net. Resume to 11340 N. Soddy-Daisy, TN 37373. Website www.oakstreet.net.

◆◆◆◆

Position available for Sunday trained children's preschool - 5th grade. Previous successful experience. Send resume, photo and photo to Hixson First Baptist Church, Attn: Preschool Search, 5800 G Hixson, TN 37343, (423) 246-7100.

◆◆◆◆

First Baptist Church of Memphis, Mo., is seeking a direct ministry to children's ministry to coordinate nine-member ministry. The position includes the educational and activities for children through grade five. The candidate should have an education background in childhood and have a minimum three years experience in a multi-staff church. A master's degree is a plus. Will be accepted from Aug. 1. Please send resume to Children's Minister Search Committee, Attn: Missy Vest, 1000 Main Ave., Bolivar, MO 64608.

MINISTRY — ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Bon Air Baptist Church, Bon Air, Va., seeks an associate pastor for discipleship ministries. The church has 1,800. The discipleship program is developed, organized, and directed as part of an overall strategy for both spiritual and numerical growth of the church and surrounding community. The associate pastor should think creatively; positively motivate members and leaders; and utilize traditional and innovative means to reach, disciple, and train all age groups. Candidates should have experience consistent with the mission of the church. The position includes member mobilization, multi-ethnic mentality, and multi-site move. A master's degree is preferred and a seminary degree at least five years relevant experience is preferred. Visit bonairbaptist.org for details. Send resume and letter to apdmsearch@bonairbaptist.org.

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

First Baptist Church, Bells, Tenn., is seeking a full-time pastor. Interested persons should send a resume to First Baptist Church, 55 West Main St., Bells, TN 38006, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

MISCELLANEOUS

FOR SALE: 1992 Ford Chassis 29-passenger church bus (no name on the bus), V-8 engine, very clean. Price: \$10,000. Contact church office at (615) 893-7221 or (615) 604-9812. You may e-mail also if interested to bro_dave@comcast.net. Picture available upon request.

MINISTRY — MUSIC

Providence Baptist Church, a mid-sized traditional church in Seymour, Tenn., is seeking God's man to lead our bivocational music ministry. If interested please send resume, cover letter, and sample DVD to Providence Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, P. O. Box 127, Seymour, TN 37865.

◆◆◆◆

Monterey First Baptist Church, a growing congregation, 10 miles east of Cookeville, Tenn., is seeking a dynamic, creative, and spirit-led worship leader. The position, at present, is part-time, but as the church grows it will become full-time. Will work with all age choirs. Send resumes to 106 N. Chestnut St., Monterey, TN 38574, Attn: Search Committee or to dgarrett@charterinternet.com.

◆◆◆◆

First Baptist Church, Bloomfield, NM is actively seeking a full-time associate pastor/worship minister. Must oversee all worship/music ministries including three weekend worship services, each a unique worship style. More information at the church at www.fbcblomfield.org. Please send resumes to Lamar Morin, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, 200 W. Sycamore, Bloomfield, NM 87413 or e-mail lmorin@qwest.net.

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268102	2007	Ford/ElDorado	15	\$13,000
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Why revival tarries

Harry Blackaby

Ezekiel 18:31b-32 is the heart cry of God to His people, Israel: "... why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who turns to the Lord God. 'Therefore, turn and live!' " God has reminded His people that if "a righteous man turns away from his righteousness ... and dies ... it is because of the iniquity that he has done that he dies" (Ezekiel 18:24-26).

But the "house of Israel," God's people continue to sin against God in our day and live without any awareness of the consequences.

They seem to be totally indifferent to any judgment whatsoever as if that only happened in the Old Testament. But, that's just not true. It was to the people of God in the New Testament that Paul wrote: "... the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord." For anyone who continues to sin without repentance — that is, God's people — it leads to "death."

Did Jesus not warn God's people that they must repent or perish? Read the accounts in Matthew 4:17, 23:1-9, and Luke 17:20-36. Repentance among God's people requires an immediate turning that changes our hearts, our will, and our actions. Repentance requires a changed heart. Therefore, we too must heed Christ's warning for our generation.

We must possess a wholehearted desire to return to God.

Many of us today are aware that America is in desperate need of revival, but we haven't made the connection. We see the spiritual darkness around us, we do not realize that the greater problem is with the light! Darkness dispels darkness! Jesus said that His disciples are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14-16). When the light is dimmed by our sin, the darkness flourishes. When we repent, His light shines in us and through us, watching world; people "see" and God is glorified! However, America continues to move steadily toward God's judgment. And there remains a prevailing darkness among God's people concerning this activity.

Revival tarries because God's people will not repent, we see no reason to do so. So, even if we recognize the times are urgent and the spiritual climate is dire and even if we cry unto God for a mighty revival, He will refuse to hear us because of our iniquity in our hearts.

Therefore, heed His call: "... Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 3:7). We must repent and return to Him in holiness, love, obedience, or the nation will surely perish under the weight of our sin! (II Peter 3:9). □ — Blackaby is the founder and president emeritus of Blackaby Ministries International, based in Atlanta.

a way with words

police officer

Hugh X. Lewis

Uniform, a badge, a gun,
Give a halo on their heads —
The wisdom of a Solomon
They should always be well read.

Or in an accident,
A sinner against all booze,
Or in an argument,
A sinner when there's bad news.

For their livelihood they make
They're qualified to give.
Could they ever have to take
A bad job so they can live?

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

Sharing Christ in all places

By Trent Bullock

**Focal Passage: Acts 13:1-3;
14:1-7, 21-23**

Introduction: The church at Antioch started when persecution against the church at Jerusalem caused believers to scatter throughout Judea and Samaria. In Antioch, the church began sharing the good news of Jesus with Gentiles in the area. Luke records, "The Lord's hand was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord" (Luke 11:21). The church at Jerusalem heard about what was happening in Antioch and sent Barnabas to investigate. "When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he encouraged all of them to remain true to the Lord with a firm resolve of the heart" (Luke 11:23). Barnabas then brought Paul to Antioch and the two of them met with the church for a year. Luke 11:26 notes, "the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." Our focal passages draw attention to the commitment of the church at Antioch to share Christ in all places.

Go! (13:1-3): God blessed the church at Antioch with several gifted leaders and Luke mentions five of them, each from diverse backgrounds, in verse 1. In verse 2, Luke recalls an occasion when the Holy Spirit clearly spoke to the church. They were "ministering to the Lord and fasting." In other words, they were intently seeking the Lord through prayer and fasting. The church was quite likely seeking

God's guidance for reaching more people with the good news of Jesus Christ. The Lord responded through the Holy Spirit who instructed them to, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to." The next phase of sharing Christ in all places was about to begin. The church responded by once again fasting and praying, and then encouraged Barnabas and Saul with their support before sending them on their mission.

As churches and as individual believers, we must follow the example of the church at Antioch by seeking God's guidance about how He wants us to take the gospel to all places. He may be calling us to participate in a short-term missions experience or He may even be calling us to career missions. Our part is to respond to His call with obedience as well as support and encourage those individuals He calls to go.

Evangelize! (14:1-7): On their first missionary journey, Barnabas and Paul followed a simple strategy. They first went to the Jewish synagogue in each city and shared the gospel with the Jews. Many Jews and Greeks would often respond favorably to their message. However, Barnabas and Paul also encountered opposition from Jews who were unwilling to accept the gospel message. They resolved to continue boldly proclaiming the message of the gospel to the Gentiles with the Lord's help. The Lord affirmed their ministry by performing signs and wonders to authenticate their message. However, when the Gentiles,

**Sunday School Lesson
Bible Studies for Life
July 22**

the Jews, and their rulers in Iconium attempted to stone Barnabas and Paul, they moved to other places and "kept evangelizing."

When we follow the Lord's guidance to go and share the gospel, we can know without a doubt that He goes with us. When we encounter opposition, we can know that the Lord will uphold us. Even if one door of opportunity closes, God will open another door of opportunity for us.

Strengthen! (vv. 21-23): After Barnabas and Paul had evangelized and made disciples of many people, they began to retrace the steps of their journey. They even went back to the places where they were "run out of town." Their purpose in returning to these places was to "strengthen" and "encourage" the many new disciples they had made along the way. They also identified mature leaders in each church who would continue the important task of discipleship.

Leading people to Christ is not the end. Christ calls us to make disciples. We must commit ourselves to helping new believers become rooted and grounded in the faith. We must also challenge all believers to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Conclusion: Consider how God is calling you to go, evangelize, and strengthen others. — Bullock is pastor of First Baptist Church, Halls.

Dependence

By Billie Friel

Focal Passage: Zechariah 4:1-14

Introduction: God's people today employ many methods, programs, and promotions in seeking to carry out their mission to make disciples of all nations. Many churches organize for outreach through the Sunday School and provide training in personal evangelism and follow-through. Others have taken the marketing approach of business, using mass mailings, and designing radio and television ads to attract particular groups of people. The prophet Zechariah would have us remember that only God's Spirit produces spiritual and eternal results.

A vision to ponder (vv. 1-5). We remember Zechariah's ministry was during the rebuilding of the Temple (see 4:9). Modern man will have difficulty picturing what Zechariah saw in his vision. The Bible student is helped as he recalls the golden lampstand (Hebrew, menorah) in the original Tabernacle and Temple (Exodus 25:31-40). In providing light for the priests ministering in the Holy Place, care was taken for the lampstand to keep it well supplied with oil. The primary differences between the original lampstand and the lampstand in Zechariah's vision were: a bowl for storing oil was suspended over the lampstand; the oil was transported from the bowl through seven channels (conduits) to each of the seven lamps; and the lampstand was flanked by two olive

trees whose oil flowed constantly into the bowl (v. 12). This was a vision to ponder because the angel refused to explain what the prophet saw. The Lord reveals His truth to us today primarily through His Word; therefore, He expects us to read it and ponder its meaning so we can live according to its truth.

A message to heed (vv. 6-10a). Have you ever been through a church building program? Then you know the various forms of concerns, obstacles, and problems. After many years of frustrating effort, the governor/builder, Zerubbabel, received this message for comfort and encouragement. He was told that God's building would be completed, not by military might or human effort, but through the abundant supply of God's Spirit. Zechariah 4:6 should be on each Christian's "most quoted verse list!" Before the mighty Spirit, problems ("mountains") would not block them but would fall flat, like a "plain." The completion of the Temple would be an occasion of great joy. When Zerubbabel finishes the building, the critics will be put to silence. All will know that God's hand was on His people and that He sent Zechariah the prophet. Don't scorn the "day of small things" — it pleases and glorifies God to work through seemingly insignificant ways and means. Remember Moses' rod, David's sling, the little boy's lunch, and the disciples.

A master to serve (vv. 10b-14). Finally, Zechariah's questions are

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Explore the Bible
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answered concerning the details of the vision. He was told that the two olive trees are the "two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth." As such the two olive trees represented the kingly and priestly offices through which the blessing of God was to flow. God was strengthening the two men who occupied these supreme positions in those offices at that particular time: Zerubbabel, a descendent of David, and Joshua, the High Priest. As the olive trees served the lamp, so the two persons are portrayed as the Lord's servants. Through them the Spirit of God will accomplish the work of God in the nation and in the world. Together, Zerubbabel and Joshua foreshadow the Messiah, in whom these two offices are combined (6:13).

Conclusion: Ho, Tennessee churches! Do not attempt to work, worship, or witness without being totally dependent upon the Spirit of God! This vision indicated that Israel would be a blessing to all nations of the world through an abundant supply of the Spirit of God as the result of the coming of the Messiah. — Friel is pastor emeritus and staff evangelist at First Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet, and interim director of missions for Wilson County Baptist Association, based in Lebanon.

Leaders

◆ Eastwood Baptist Church, McKenzie, has called **Warren Darden** as pastor effective June 17.

◆ Grace Baptist, Elizabethton, has called **Jamie Peters** as minister of music. A native of Carter County, he is a student at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City. He will assume the position of minister of music and adult education when he graduates in December 2007.

◆ Rock Springs Baptist Church of Maury County in Columbia has called **Richard VanCleave** as pastor. VanCleave formerly served as pastor of Lynwood Baptist Church of Oswego, Ill., for 16 years.



VANCLEAVE

◆ First Baptist Church, Rutherford, held an ordination service into the gospel ministry for its pastor **Jason Bogardus** on July 15.

◆ **Richard Minton** recently resigned as pastor of Dogwood Heights Baptist Church, Tazewell, to become a director of missions in Virginia.

◆ **Kenny Williams** has resigned as pastor of Wolfenbarger Chapel Baptist Church, Tazewell, effective June 17.

◆ Vine Ridge Baptist

Church, Crawford, has called **Richie Farley** as its pastor. He was ordained June 10.

◆ First Baptist Church, Lexington, recently called **Bob Hull** as its minister of music.

◆ Waldens Creek Baptist Church, Sevierville, recently called **Thomas Clay** as its pastor.

◆ First Baptist Church, Dyer, has called **Steven Littleton** as minister of youth and children.

◆ **Bob Dennison** has resigned as pastor of Latham's Chapel Baptist Church, Medina.

◆ Northside Baptist Church, Milan, has called **Johnny McCartney** as associate minister/minister of students.

◆ Central Baptist Church, Erwin has called **Larry Wiley** as music minister. He previously served at First Baptist Church, Greeneville.

◆ Pinecrest Baptist Church, Johnson City, has called **Junior Martin** as minister of youth.

◆ Clear Branch Baptist Church, Erwin, has called **Frank Proffitt** as pastor. He previously served the church as its interim pastor.

Events

◆ **A Missional Leadership Retreat**, sponsored by the Tennessee Baptist Convention, will be held Aug. 6-8 at Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center in Newport. For more information, or to register, call Willie McLaurin at the TBC at



LYNNWOOD LYNNRIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH, Elizabethton, held a dedication service for its new building and an open house for the community. More than 77 people attended including members of area churches and its sponsors — Willow Springs Baptist Church, Elizabethton; and the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Brentwood. The church now meets in a small house where the church now meets sits on eight acres of property. "This makes it the church in the Watauga Association with the largest amount of property," said Jack Greer, pastor. The purchase of the site was given by the 66 churches of the Watauga Association, Tennessee Baptist Convention, and other donors. The new church was meeting in an apartment complex, which grew out of a laundry ministry and Bible study church moved Mother's Day, May 13, to its new building located at the entrance of the complex. Renovations are continuing on the building. — Photo by Ray

(615) 371-2011 or David Thompson at (615) 944-3679.

Churches

◆ **First Baptist Church, Middleton**, will hold an annual homecoming service July 22. Herbert Higdon will speak. A noon meal and afternoon song service will follow the morning

worship. For information, call Eric L. Taylor, pastor, at (731) 376-8373.

◆ **North Etowah Baptist**

Church, Etowah, revival service July 15. **Anderson**, evangelist Maryville, spoke.



Baptist and Reflector Day Sunday, Aug. 19

Your church is invited to join hundreds of other churches across the Tennessee Baptist Convention in observing Sunday, Aug. 19, as *Baptist and Reflector Day*.

Inform friends and family about the *Baptist and Reflector* as the staff "tells the story of Tennessee Baptists." The *B&R* brings you news, features, inspirational columns, editorials, Sunday School commentaries, and more each week.

To help more people become aware of their Baptist paper, we offer your church free copies of the Aug. 15 issue to distribute on *B&R Day* to every member in your church.

Complete this form and mail to *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024. You can also fax it to (615) 371-2080 or call Susie Edwards at (615) 371-2003 or Mary Nimmo at (615) 371-7929 to request free copies. The deadline is noon, Friday, Aug. 10.

_____ Number of free copies requested

Church Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Person Placing Order _____

Title _____

Phone Number _____



BANGHAM HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH, Cookeville, collected an **Annie Armstrong Easter Offering** in April. The church had a goal of \$1,550 but collected \$1,771.46. Honoring a promise if the church met the goal, Pastor Keith Tosh, right, wore an "Easter bonnet" during the offering on May 6, homecoming day. The bonnet contained a flower and \$50 collected. If the church surpassed the goal, a "surprise leader" also would wear a bonnet. Deacon Jeff Null earned the



SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH, Trenton, celebrated July 4th with an ice cream social July 1 using its old church bell on the grounds. With 100 percent attendance, the congregation recited the Ten Commandments and rang the bell on each commandment. Pastor Joel Pigg said, "Our nation celebrated the freedom of our country and remember those who made our freedom possible, Salem Baptist celebrates the freedom that we have in Jesus Christ. Our desire is to ring the truth of God's Word with love and fellowship." Pigg who is standing by a stone bench led the congregation as church member SFC Terrence rang the bell.