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**Miss. Baptists adopt record CP budget**

Baptist Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Messengers to the 172nd annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention unanimously adopted a record Cooperative Program budget during their Oct. 30-31 sessions at First Baptist Church here.

The 2008 CP budget of \$34,263,763 reflects an overall 3.24 percent increase over the current budget. Giving to Southern Baptist Convention causes, remaining at 35 percent of the total budget, likewise will increase by the same 3.24 percent in the new budget.

Mickey Dalrymple, pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Columbus, was chosen by acclamation as the new MBC president — the fifth consecutive time an MBC president has been elected with unanimity.

Dalrymple has been serving as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville. He succeeds two-term MBC President Clarence Cooper, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Grenada.

David Hamilton, pastor of West Heights Baptist Church in Pontotoc and the convention's second vice president, was elected as the new first vice president.

Steve Mooneyham, missions director for the Gulf Coast Baptist Association in Gulfport, was elected second vice president.

Longtime MBC recording secretary Gus Merritt, a retired pastor from Newton, was re-elected by acclamation. □

**Caribbean storm triggers DR effort**

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A Southern Baptist relief effort is being planned in the aftermath of a Caribbean storm which killed at least 117 people and drove more than 50,000 people from their

homes in the Dominican Republic.

Slow-moving Tropical Storm Noel dumped rain for more than two days on the Dominican Republic, triggering mudslides and floods that damaged homes, roads, and bridges. Noel killed 73 people in the Dominican Republic, 43 in Haiti, and one in Jamaica before brushing Cuba and heading toward the Bahamas, according to the U.S. National Hurricane Center.

The storm has since strengthened into a hurricane and headed toward New England and Nova Scotia.

Two days after the storm hit the Dominican Republic, rain still was falling, making it difficult for rescuers to reach communities cut off by flooding.

"Southern Baptist field partners are in the process of assessing the needs," said Jim Brown, Americas area director for Baptist Global Response, a Southern Baptist international development and relief organization that will be coordinating relief efforts in cooperation with Southern Baptist personnel and local Baptist churches. □

**NAMB completes sale of FamilyNet**

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Charles Stanley, founder and president of In Touch Ministries, and Geoff Hammond, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, signed documents Oct. 25 finalizing the sale of NAMB's FamilyNet television network to In Touch.

"This is an historic day for us at the North American Mission Board and as Southern Baptists," Hammond said at ceremonies held at In Touch's Atlanta headquarters. "Dr. Stanley is America's preacher. And we come to celebrate the launching of FamilyNet to new heights here at In Touch."

Hammond was joined by NAMB trustees Bill Curtis, Tim Patterson, and Tim Dowdy.

Stanley said In Touch Ministry's acquisition of FamilyNet is "an awesome responsibility, not just an opportunity. ...

"One of the things that excites



**CWJC leaders honored**

Candy Phillips, right, executive director of Tennessee Women's Missionary Union, and Creely Wilson, a member of Brentwood Baptist Church, Brentwood, were presented Founders Award Christian Women's Job Corps of Middle Tennessee on Nov. 5. The organization celebrated its 10th anniversary at Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville. Both women were associated with Nashville Baptist Association WMU when the ministry began. The organization recently expanded its ministry with satellite locations in Madison and Williamson County. — Photo by Linda Lawson

me most about this is that we have the privilege not only of getting the gospel out, but with the help of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, God will help us build a network — on FamilyNet's awesome foundation — that will impact other networks when it comes to things that are righteous, godly, holy, and helpful to the life of our nation."

Stanley said he believes other TV networks will watch what happens with the programming In Touch builds into the new network.

"It will say to them that there's a whole vast group of American people who don't want filth, trash, and junk. They want things that are good, wholesome, and helpful to their families. That's our conviction and our pledge. We'll give our best and our all to building a network that pleases God, impacts the gospel, and influences television in this country," Stanley said.

Negotiations between the two

ministries began several months ago and were announced in letter of intent from In Touch to NAMB in August.

Under the agreement, In Touch will continue to have 30 minutes of programming on both television and a satellite channel each week. A NAMB representative will hold a chair on FamilyNet's board of directors. □

**LifeWay stores collect shoe boxes**

LifeWay news office

NASHVILLE — LifeWay Christian Stores around the country will host an Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box Collection Day Saturday, Nov. 10.

Customers may drop off completed shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, at their local LifeWay store.

"LifeWay is excited to partner with the community to support Operation Christmas Child," said Mark Scott, vice president of LifeWay Christian Stores, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Samaritan's Purse, a Christian relief and evangelism organization led by Franklin Graham, began Operation Christmas Child in 1993. Through the program, donated shoe boxes with gifts and toys are distributed to children in desperate situations around the world. Children also receive a booklet written in their own language.

LifeWay Christian Stores owns and operates 143 stores in 24 states with headquarters in Nashville. □

**Union receives gift of \$2.5 million**

Union University news office

JACKSON — Carl and Peggy Jo Grant of Germantown have given a gift of \$2.5 million to Union University for the enhancement and expansion of the university's Germantown campus.

"We offer our deep gratitude for Mr. and Mrs. Carl Grant and their generosity to Union University," Union President David S. Dockery said.

"Their gift is another example of God's goodness to Union in recent days, and this gift will help advance in a significant way the work of the Germantown campus."

Since 2000, the Grants have given several hundred thousand dollars to Union for student scholarships through the Carl J. Grant Gift Fund. This gift brings the Union 2010 capital

campaign total near \$100 million. The campaign goal is \$110 million.

Carl Grant is a builder, realtor, and developer who has been Builder of the Year and Realtor of the Year in Memphis.

The Grants are active members of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova.

Grant said he has received many unsolicited letters from Union students thanking him for the scholarships he has provided.

"The good Lord has been favorable to me and my family, and we thought Union would be a good place for us to try to return something of what the Lord has given to us, that would be good for Christianity," Grant said.

The couple was recognized for their donation Nov. 2 during Union's annual Alumni Awards Dinner. □

# Special needs community can serve and be served

Brooklyn Noel  
Lifeway news office

NASHVILLE — Walt Micksch has cerebral palsy. He also has a wife, two children, a business degree, and 15 years of experience in the field of operations management and logistics.

From the time I could hear, I was told 'God has a plan for your life and there is a reason you are here,' " said Micksch, who credits his parents, Joe and Ella Micksch, with his childhood physical therapist, Dorothy Spark, with convincing him to "be involved in the world" regardless of his cerebral palsy.

It was Spark, a member of the church Micksch attended as a child, who introduced Micksch to special needs ministry by encouraging him to volunteer with a special needs community group when he was a young teenager. She used that to show how God could really use these people," Micksch recalled.

That early understanding Micksch said, however, that contact with several families that include children who have cerebral palsy has awakened his desire to serve in special needs ministry.

The timing, then, was perfect for Carlton McDaniel, Lifeway's special needs specialist, to approach Micksch about helping lead a leadership team composed of people who have special needs.

"This new leadership team is the next step toward more fully integrating the special needs community into the larger church community. Anywhere that we go to typically in our community, whether it be at the gas station, we see people with special needs. But when we go to our churches, why don't we see people with special needs?" McDaniel said during the Inside LifeWay podcast.

Inside LifeWay is the official news podcast of Lifeway Christian Resources.

Finding ways to not only minister to, but also through, members of the special needs community is the mission of the special needs ministry team of Lifeway Christian Resources.

It's not just about ministering to them [members of special needs community],



**SPECIAL EDUCATION TODAY**, a publication of Lifeway Christian Resources, publishes quarterly and offers knowledge and encouragement for special needs families.

"We're helping them to see that they are called by God to be leaders as well," said Ellen Beene, editor of Lifeway's *Special Education Today* magazine, Access curriculum, and the special needs edition of Lifeway's Vacation Bible School curriculum.

**An evolving ministry**  
Lifeway has a heritage of providing resources for special needs ministry that began in 1979, McDaniel said. The min-

istry has developed considerably during the last 28 years, and, in particular, during the past couple of years.

"Society as a whole is more accepting and aware of special needs and more churches are recognizing the need to create ministries to reach the special needs families in their community," McDaniel said. "This generation of parents is more likely to expect the church to provide a place for their child with special needs."

In 2007, Lifeway launched [www.lifeway.com/specialneeds](http://www.lifeway.com/specialneeds), an online resource housing articles, downloadable items, event information, and other materials intended to meet the growing demand for special needs ministry resources.

Also this year, Lifeway introduced a new five-year study plan for Access, a resource for adults and older youth with special needs that uses a storytelling approach to communicate biblical truths.

The Access curriculum has been available since 2000, but the fall 2007 edition represents the first curriculum designed specifically for learners with special needs to follow a five-year plan.

In addition to this change in the Access curriculum, Lifeway's church resources area also introduced a new line of curriculum for children in grades 1-6 called Special Buddies.

Beene said the education strategies of Special Buddies grew out of what Lifeway learned from years of working with local special needs programs.

"Special Buddies is a new resource, but not a new thought," McDaniel said, adding that the curriculum is intentionally designed for compatibility with the mainstream Bible Teaching for Kids curriculum. This compatibility means that Special Buddies can be used as a resource for adapting lessons for learners who may need additional help or for the teacher who may be teaching a self-contained class.

**More than a study**  
Having access to specially tailored curriculum is important, but training, McDaniel said, is where church leaders, parents, and volunteers garner encouragement and skills for building a successful special needs ministry.

In the past, special needs training opportunities and curricula focused on older youth and adults. Lifeway, however, has recently expanded its special needs ministry to include tools for effectively teaching all ages of learners with special needs.

According to McDaniel, Lifeway is the only organization doing the type of hands-on training that takes place during the Learning Lab offered annually at Lifeway's Sunday School events at Ridgecrest and Glorieta conference centers.

During those events, McDaniel or a Lifeway staff member coordinates a Learning Lab where conference attendees volunteer to serve as teachers to children and adults with special needs in

## Tips for integrating members with disabilities into ministries

Lifeway news service

function on their heart.

NASHVILLE — Walt Micksch has filled a variety of ministry roles throughout more than 30 years in church in spite of having mild cerebral palsy. He offers the following tips for involving individuals with special needs in church service:

(2) Offer to pray with them as they seek God's direction toward service.

(3) Create a list tailored to what you know to be each individual's strengths. Ask them to pray through those options. Often this generates additional ideas not on the original list.

(1) Ask them whether God has already laid a service or

(4) Involve loved ones in the process. □

addition to attending seminars focused on special needs ministry. The students in the Learning Lab are often adults who attended the conference with a church group. Sometimes the students are the children of parents attending the Sunday School events.

While teachers in the Learning Lab gain valuable experience in special needs ministry, the students in the class gain exposure to biblical truths through Vacation Bible School.

McDaniel also conducts training seminars with local churches, associations, and other groups as requested. In these settings, he said he strives to keep the ministry individualized and personal.

"We don't start classes — we start ministries," he said. "We want to teach Jesus in understandable ways, but we have to get families in the door to start that ministry."

Beene said that special needs ministry impacts nearly every aspect of church life, including the church building itself.

"You have to consider how they get to the choir loft or the pulpit. How do we adapt the playground?" she said, pointing out that Lifeway's church architecture area can renovate existing churches as well as design original structures that anticipate the need for accessibility.

As churches develop special needs ministries and involve members of that community, McDaniel said church leaders should think in terms of individuals and consider where each person's strengths lie.

"Most of the time we begin a special needs ministry thinking of the impact it will have on the members," McDaniel said. "It doesn't take long to realize that our members with special needs are actually ministering to us."

Micksch has spent nearly 30 years serving the church in some capacity, so he knows the breadth of service that individuals with special needs can perform.

"The goal of every Christian is to serve God," Micksch said. "People usually ask, 'How can we serve this segment of God's people better?' but I think the question is 'How can they serve us?'"

"Their special need is to serve God, just like everyone's special need is to serve God." □

## VBS curriculum to provide for children with special needs

Lifeway news office

NASHVILLE — Beginning in 2008, Lifeway's Vacation Bible School materials will feature resources customized for children with special needs.

Outrigger Island: Special Friends is a VBS resource that provides leaders with tools for working with children, youth, and adults with special needs in either self-contained or mainstreaming environments.

Lifeway's VBS specialist Jerry Wooley said Lifeway decided to offer a VBS resource geared toward children with special needs partly because of confusion over the special needs curriculum offered for adults in the past.

"People saw that we offered VBS curriculum for people with special needs and they assumed it was for children," Wooley explained. "It actually was for adults."

Additionally, Lifeway recently launched Special Buddies, a Sunday School line for children with special needs.

"As churches began using this Sunday School material, we wanted them to have something to offer when it came Vacation Bible School time," Wooley said.

For more information about the VBS materials, go to [www.lifeway.com/vbstools](http://www.lifeway.com/vbstools). □

“Most of the time we begin a special needs ministry thinking of the impact it will have on the members. It doesn't take long to realize that our members with special needs are actually ministering to us. — Carlton McDaniel”

Last week's column regarding the Baptist Faith and Message was initiated on my own in response to things that have happened across the convention in recent weeks. I knew it would not be popular with everyone, but that is part of being an editorial writer. I stand by what I wrote, but in the interest of fairness, I am printing letters, some in opposition to my views, in this issue.

Since this is the last issue prior to the annual meeting, no additional letters will be printed until after the convention.

An additional note: An exception to letter length was granted to the writer of the first letter because he offered the amendment to the motion that requested information from nominees for TBC boards or committees as to their affirmation of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. — Lonnie Wilkey

## Motivation

I have read and heard discussions by some who are questioning the motivation of those who want to know whether the leaders in the Tennessee Baptist Convention are willing to affirm their belief in the Baptist Faith and Message.

Since I am the messenger who offered the amendment which was approved and added to the motion which requested information from nominees to the various committees and boards of the TBC concerning their affirmation of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, other messengers might be interested in what my motivation was and why I believed such information should be made available to the voting messengers. Some may be wondering who I am and whether or not I am recently arrived on the scene. Therefore, I offer the following background. I was raised a Southern Baptist by parents who were both Southern Baptists and whose respective parents were members of Southern Baptist churches. I was saved and baptized at age 10 in a Southern Baptist church in Tennessee.

Soon after college and being married, I acquired a modern version of the Bible and began to read and study it with a genuine interest in what it said and what it meant for me. During the mid 1970s, I also began attending some Bible conferences and reading books by noted authors. I soon came to the conclusion that many members of Southern Baptist churches as well as many pastors did not truly know what God's Word had to say or actually believed its teachings. Through these experiences I felt God's call upon my life to be a minister of the gospel. In the fall of 1978 I announced my call to the ministry and attended my first Tennessee Baptist Convention meeting. About the same time, I was invited to present a paper to a select group of

nuclear engineers in Washington, D.C. While sequestered for two nights in my hotel room on a side street in our nation's capital, I spent my time researching and writing a position paper for myself on the inerrancy of Scripture and its importance to a minister of the gospel. I studied carefully every relevant Scripture passage and reviewed the four or five books on the subject that I had taken with me.

I soon came to the conclusion that many, if not most, of the elected leaders in the TBC did not hold to the inerrancy of Scripture and in fact made decisions based more on their political hold on power, rather than what the Bible teaches.

Because of concerns at some SBC seminaries, I attended a new seminary that had just begun in Memphis — Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. I have remained in the state and have preached in churches literally from Memphis to Kingsport and have served as pastor or interim pastor in seven different TBC churches. In the meantime, I have seldom missed attending a TBC annual meeting.

Through the years, I discovered that the same pastors were being elected over and over again to the Executive Board and Committee on Committees and that many of the men that I knew quite well were serving on the trustee boards of our colleges. The problem was I knew most of those men did not accept the inerrancy of Scripture and in fact did not accept the clear teaching of the Bible in several important areas. So, I was concerned that the messengers to the TBC might get to know more about these men and what they really believed. The only way I could see that messengers might be informed about the beliefs of the leaders they were electing, was to have them reveal whether or not they affirmed their belief in the basics of the Baptist Faith and Message. After all, Southern Baptists have repeatedly voted to adopt the BFM as their general statement of what we as Southern Baptists truly believe as foundational doctrinal truths.

I know from firsthand experience that the failure of Tennessee Baptists over the years to be concerned about the doctrinal positions of trustee board members, rather than just how much money their churches gave to one cause or another, has resulted in the crises we have experienced at Belmont University and Carson-Newman College. It may not be a perfect way to discern what is in a man's heart and what his doctrinal positions are on some essential matters of faith, but at least we now have some information on which to base these important decisions about who will lead our institutions in the future.

May God bless our faithful-

ness to His inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word.

Chris Francis  
Knoxville

## Disagrees

I read with interest your editorial in the Oct. 31 edition of the *B&R*. I could relate to just about everything you said. The one issue that I disagree vehemently with is your statement that "our committee process in Tennessee works."

If that statement were true then Belmont would not have done what they have done. Another thing that seems to be ignored by your editorial is the fact that the convention itself overwhelmingly voted to add the question about the BF&M to the committee's questionnaire. Why? Because we all felt like the process didn't work and just saying you believe the Bible just like the rest of us isn't sufficient anymore.

I do not know why the Committee on Boards chose to nominate individuals who said they would not affirm the 2000 BF&M, but it shows the system has a flaw and we need to fix it.

The question is not a litmus test for being nominated, but it is a litmus test to receive my vote. I am only one vote among many though, and the convention will decide.

Scott Linginfelter, pastor  
Mt. Carmel Baptist Church  
Maryville

## Liked editorial

I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed and appreciated your editorial re the BF&M in last week's *B&R*. I am one of those nominees who answered honestly "No" that I had not read the 2000 BF&M. I have a copy of the 1963 and had read that in its entirety. Quite honestly, I had never seen a copy of the 2000. I, like you, have been a Baptist from head to toe, all of my almost 62 years, born in 1945, accepted Christ as a 12 year old, serving Him now because of God's grace.

Since my nomination, I have read and I do accept the 2000 BF&M. I do wish that I had realized the "importance" of this issue earlier on. I am not a "slacker" and guess I am at fault for not having read this earlier. I do wonder how many lay people in our convention have been aware of this issue.

Keep up the good work, as long as we stay true to God's Word, we will surely prosper.

Doug Duncan  
Dyer

## Promoting agenda

I have never written to any editor before, but your article on the BF&M just shows the need for input from the people you are supposedly representing.

It is obvious to every interested party that there is a division within the TBC ranks over some very fundamental issues. It is also very obvious where your loyalties lie. The paper is

no longer just printing the truth, it is using the editorial page to promote an agenda...

How dare you use worldly political tactics, printing this editorial weeks before the TBC meets in order to influence the messengers. Your language is deplorable, using words that insight indignation among the uninformed. Example: "pledge allegiance to the 2000 BF&M."

Some statements are actually intentionally misleading, such as "Seems like if that is good enough for SBC service, it should work for Tennessee as well."

I have always respected you even though I have not always agreed with you. Quite honestly I am disappointed in you, although I am quite sure that this editorial was initiated higher up than you. If there was any integrity in the *Baptist and Reflector*, it would print the rest of the truth from an opposing view point in an article next week so the Baptists of Tennessee could make up their minds on this issue previous to the convention.

Don Jones, pastor  
First Baptist Church  
Lafayette

## God's litmus test

Thanks for the well written article under the heading "Random thoughts about the Baptist Faith and Message" in last week's edition of the *B&R*.

I hope many in churches all across the state will read it. I have felt for quite some time that as we serve God in our Christian lives we should wake each morning asking ourselves two questions.

First, how can I love my Lord today with all my heart, soul, mind, and body and second, how can I manifest that love as I interface with others.

I have an idea that those two questions are God's litmus test for each of us.

C.T. Cozart Jr.  
Chattanooga

## Belmont matter

This letter is a call for the Tennessee Baptist Convention to get down on its knees in confession and repentance for the damage it has done to the cause of Christ. I confess that I have sinned in not writing this letter for a year and a half even after God laid it on my heart. The recent article in the *Nashville Tennessean* newspaper (October 28, 2007) describing the current state-of-affairs at Belmont University re-instilled in me God's earlier leadings.

At the May 2006 TBC meeting to discuss the "Belmont situation," I actually heard a TBC pastor say, "I know the Bible tells us to not take our brothers to court, but it also tells us not to lie, cheat, and steal, and we have been lied to, cheated, and stolen from." He then went on to endorse the suit against Belmont. To that I respond, Thank

God that my Lord Jesus did not have that attitude. He went to the cross, been lied to, cheated, and from, not to mention been killed, but he chose to and seek reconciliation. Matthew 5:44-45 Jesus to "love your enemies as for those who persecute that you may be sons of Father in heaven." When say the Bible tells us something, followed by "b" have a major sin problem we are not acting as sons of Father!

The TBC may well have lied to or stolen from, and personally disagree. I view or yours on the doesn't really matter. What is our response to it as it currently exists. Honor Christ and our ment to Him as Lord? Or take matters into our hands instead? Will we His command to love University and to pray for its leaders? Or will we take what we believe is right? Jesus had every be respected by His corearies and could have fo issue with "10,000 angels." He chose to make Himself ing and, humbling Himself became obedient even to death. We appear to be unwillingly obedient even unto loss of life!

If Belmont wants to "coat," should we not be willing to give him our also? Or is that just one "metaphorical" passage? He really didn't mean "People of the Book" to be precisely?

Where do you stand following God's will as through His Son and His ten Word?

Ken  
Tulsa

## Great interest

I read with great interest your article "United States becoming a 'reverse' nation" the Oct. 10 issue. I also read article "Guidelines for what churches can do in elections." Both articles the head just what is happening in America.

I understand that preaching the gospel is number one for church; however, if all the Baptist churches do not inform congregations and encourage members to write their officials and give their views, we as a nation will in fact, it might be too late to turn things around.

As a Baptist and a Christian I would like to see a strong committee in every church in America to keep people informed. Pastors cannot do it all themselves.

I heard some time back our government will not be the test of time. Is the hanging on the wall?

B.G.  
Miami

# Daily paper gives both sides of the story

## Reflections



Lonnie Wilkey, editor

As the editor of the official journal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, I know anything I write about Belmont University will be subject to some.

Those who know me well know that I will always do the best I can to be objective and fair. But I am realistic and I understand why some people would think that I cannot be completely objective on the Belmont situation.

With that background, I want to commend *The Tennessean* newspaper in Nashville and reporter Colby Sledge.

Like any newspaper, *The Tennessean* receives its share of criticism (some justified, some unjustly), but the paper has published an excellent article about Belmont and the Tennessee Baptist Convention in Sunday, Oct. 28, issue.

The article, entitled "Belmont, Baptists find parting painful," presented a balanced account of what has transpired between the TBC and Belmont.

Now, I imagine both parties would have preferred more of their story being told, but the article presented the key points for both sides.

There was a brief page one article, followed by a more in-depth article on page 17A.

The page one story summed up the matter for both parties. Sledge quoted TBC Executive Director James Porch: "They chose to write themselves out of the family story."

He then followed with the observation that Belmont trustees made the move to sever ties with the convention and elect its own trustees for the sake of diversity and fundraising.

"There are very committed, dedicated Christians that don't happen to be Baptist who love Belmont," board of trustees chairman Marty Dickens told *The Tennessean*.

The primary article on the inside of the paper was much more extensive, quoting people from both the TBC and Belmont.

The story featured several Belmont students and quite frankly their comments were pretty revealing about the school.

Sledge did his homework and approached the story from all angles. Porch was not the lone spokesman from the TBC perspective. Executive Board president Jerry Massey of Paris and TBC President Ron Stewart of Knoxville also were quoted.

Stewart observed that he did not understand why Belmont felt the need to change something that "has been a very successful formula for the last 50 years."

While some have accused the TBC for focusing on the \$58 million which is the amount Tennessee Baptists have given Belmont through the Cooperative Program since the convention founded the school in 1951, Dickens even told the *Tennessean* the lawsuit is not about money.

"For the TBC it's about control," according to Dickens.

It may be about governance, but why shouldn't it be. The TBC birthed Belmont and has kept its trust, funding Belmont all these years until they chose

not to accept the funding two years ago.

The article adequately described the TBC's position when it quoted Porch: "There are many people who put time, energy, money, hope, and trust in this. Belmont has chosen not to honor the trust the convention expressed in the institution."

Belmont's position is that the institution had become less dependent on convention funds and that TBC funding had become a small portion of its budget. True, but in my opinion, Belmont would not be the institution it is today were it not for ordinary Baptists in the pew who gave not only money through the Cooperative Program, but other funds as well to help a fledgling institution in its early years.

Sledge reported how Belmont lost a building (Blanton Hall) in 1974 due to fire and how then president Herbert Gabhart asked for a special offering from Baptist churches. He noted that the trustees, all Tennessee Baptists, pledged \$100,000 toward the effort in addition to what the churches and members of the Belmont family contributed.

I sat in on the interview Sledge did with Porch and Clay Austin, chairman of the Belmont Study Committee.

Space prohibited Sledge from reporting all that he learned during this meeting.

He heard how Tennessee Baptists paid many of Belmont's debts after 1951, including a bond program that lasted for years. Paying off those debts took money from other TBC ministries.

To be fair to Belmont, it should be noted that the offices of the TBC were housed on the Belmont campus for many years.

Porch also detailed how the convention has never failed to do what Belmont (and the other educational institutions) needed in order to grow so it could become a major player in the Middle Tennessee educational community.

Porch described how policies were changed so the colleges could offer master level degrees and that it was Belmont that made the request.

The TBC leader also described how the convention equalized the CP allocation so that Belmont and Union University received the same amount of funds as Carson-Newman. I was not around at that time, but I cannot imagine that the equalization of funds was received by open arms from supporters of Carson-Newman.

Porch also noted that nei-

ther the convention or the Executive Board ever had a role in the internal affairs of any related entity. Trustees of each institution ran the school. When Belmont saw the need to have alumni who were Baptist outside the state of Tennessee, the convention worked to give them and the other institutions the right to go outside the state on a limited basis.

"Never in these years was there any indication we were not adequate," Porch told the *Tennessean* reporter. "For 50-plus years, Baptists were all that was needed for governance."

As Sledge pointed out, Porch feels the issue is not money, not control, but a broken trust.

"For Baptists it comes down to the heartache of a loss of trust and surprise that a part of the family said to us, 'You're not important anymore.'"

So, now we are headed to court which most Baptists, myself included, do not want to see. Christians, of all people, should be able to settle matters outside a court of law. Scripture tells us not to "sue our brother."

Pray for convention and Belmont leaders that they will get to the heart of the matter and end this issue before May of 2008 when it is to be placed on the court docket.

At that time a judge will decide if an agreement signed by representatives of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Belmont University in 1951 is valid. That agreement stipulated that if Belmont ever left convention control (the convention electing Belmont's trustees), then Belmont would be required to return the funds given to it by the convention.

How unfitting it is for a secular court judge to determine the outcome of a dispute between two Christian entities. The TBC has repeatedly emphasized their door is open to Belmont leaders to continue talks. Let's pray that they will "return to the table." Both sides need to be willing to make concessions to settle the issue once and for all.

*The Tennessean* reporter ended his story with a quote from Dickens that "this is an ugly chapter in Baptist life."

Very true. It is an ugly chapter, but it does not have to be the final chapter.

By God's grace there can be a conclusion that will ultimately bring glory to Him. We must pray for this end.

When God is involved, stories can still have a happy ending. □ — Sledge's article can be found at [www.tennessean.com](http://www.tennessean.com).

guest columnist



By Frank Page

## Building bridges

As president of the Southern Baptist Convention, I regularly am given books to read. I also often am asked for endorsements and recommendations.

While it will take many years for me to finish reading all the books I've been given, on occasion I find one that is in desperate need of being read by me as well as by others. One such book is *Building Bridges* by David Dockery of Union University in Jackson, and Timothy George of Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala. I commend this little book to you. It is filled with wonderful encouragement to us as Southern Baptists.

One of the things that it points out is that our diversity is profound. We have a bad tendency to label people in two or three groups. Dr. Dockery does a phenomenal job of accurately describing a large number of subgroups that are currently active within our convention. While you may or may not fit into one of these categories, it helps us to see that we are far more diverse than maybe we previously had thought.

The book points to the truth that our potential is awesome. I have stated around our convention that if we move in the common direction of supporting missions and evangelism as we should, God can do great things through us. It is my prayer that we truly will get behind the task of world missions and evangelization. Please give serious support to our missions offerings and most of all to the Cooperative Program so that we might be able to fund the work God has called us to.

One other thing that is evident in this little book is that our calling is clear. We stand together in a belief that God's Word is the authoritative source for direction in our lives. The Great Commandment and the Great Commission are abidingly clear in their commands. Let us love one another and let us take that love to the entire world. Yes, our calling is clear.

It is time for Southern Baptists to build bridges, rather than tear them down. Let us start by reaching out within our convention, building a unity that is commanded by God, blessed by God, and enabled by His precious Holy Spirit. □ — Page is president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C. Reprinted from Baptist Press.

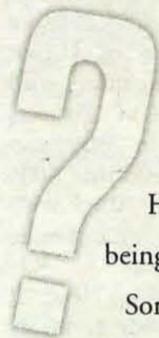
## CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp





# Church Health Matters

"Building healthy churches empowered by the presence of God"



## Fellowship Matters

A minister must wear many hats. Usually he manages these different roles quite effectively. However, two roles that many ministers confuse are being a minister and being a father.

Some have trouble just being a dad or a husband, while others take care of the spiritual needs of everybody, but not their family.

A few years ago a pastor, who is now in heaven, told me about an experience with his 10-year-old son. He was in his chair at home studying when his son tried to get his attention. He told his son to leave him alone, because he was busy. After another failed attempt, his son stomped out of the room with these words, "I wish I was one of your members. Then, maybe you would talk to me."

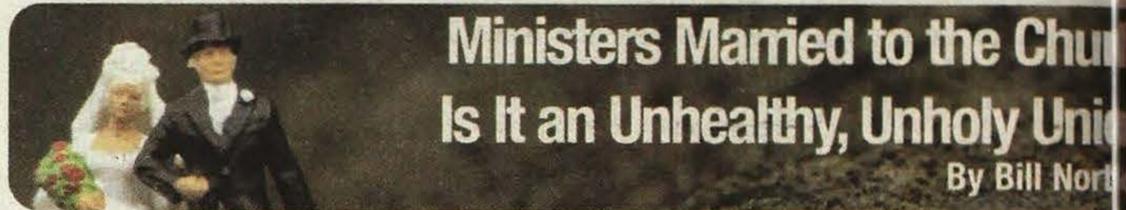
Many ministry children are angry at the church, because they feel it has stolen their dad. My daughter gave me a great honor when she said about her wedding, "On that day, I just want you to be my daddy."

On the other hand, many ministers neglect the spiritual needs of their family. They force their children to attend church activities, but they do not try to develop their spiritual life. When they get older, the children may rebel.

The greatest sermon, any minister will preach, will be preached through the life of his family.

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

- Lana Rose**
- Ministers Wives Ministries (615) 371-2008
- Tony Rankin**
- Counseling and Family Ministries (615) 371-8136
- Bill Northcott**
- Church-Minister's Relations (615) 371-2010
- Ray Gilder**
- Bi-vocational Ministries (615) 371-7907



## Ministers Married to the Church Is It an Unhealthy, Unholy Union?

By Bill Northcott

Pastor or staff member do you remember standing beside the woman you love, your beautiful bride, and asked these or similar questions:

"Do you accept this woman to be your wedded wife; to live together in the covenant of faith, hope, and love, according to the intentions of God for your lives together in Jesus Christ? Will you listen to her inmost thoughts, be considerate and tender in your care of her, and stand by her faithfully in sickness and in health, and, put her above all others, accept full responsibility for her every necessity so long as you both shall live?"

Of course you answered in the affirmative, and you meant it with all your heart. Has the passing of years made your marriage sweeter and your commitment deeper? I certainly hope so.

However, I am afraid that some ministers succumb to the inherent danger of unrealistic congregational expectations. We like to say that as ministers we are on call 24 - 7. That is certainly the commitment of servant-leaders.

Any minister worth his calling will bring God's presence, through his own presence, into the midst of his people in times of crisis. We need to be with the members of our congregation when we need to be with them.

However, I am afraid that some ministers use a formula to rationalize their inordinate and unwise compulsion to have their finger on everything that goes on in the church. I have heard it said about certain members, "They are there every time the church opens!"

Usually, that is intended as an affirmation of their faithfulness. However, it can become a prescription for failure in other areas of people's lives. While the church is important, other areas of our life are also important: health, recreation, etc. That is surely the case for ministers.

Another way of saying this, especially as it applies to ministers, is, "He is married to the church." In my opinion, that could be one of the most telling signs of an impending danger in the minister's home. It speaks volumes about "unhealthy" in the pastor's family when he is really talking about biblical stewardship.

In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul compares the husband-wife relationship to the relationship between Christ and the church; and while it is not explicitly stated in the text, some have described the church as the bride of Christ.

The text clearly states, "Jesus loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25b). One thing is for certain, the pastor was never intended to be wed to the church. Many ministers, who would never think of betraying their spouse by having an adulterous affair, will be unfaithful to their wife and children by their "unholy" relationship with the church.

There is more than one way to be unfaithful to your spouse/family. There is more than one way to lose your marriage and family. Beware!

The church is Christ's bride not the pastor's; nor are the church members the children of the pastor. What does it profit a pastor if he climbs the ecclesiastical ladder to attain a mega-church, or become president of a convention, but he loses his family on the way up?

Pastor, if you don't take care of your marriage, you may wake up some day to discover that you no longer have one.

Here are some suggestions for keeping faith with your family:

1. Have a weekly date-night with your spouse.
2. Take your evening meals at the table with your family.
3. Attend your children's special events (ballgames, recitals, school plays, etc.)
4. Make a big deal of special occasions (wedding anniversary, Valentine's, birthdays, etc.)
5. Have an open door and telephone for your spouse and children.
6. Invite your spouse to accompany you occasionally on your pastoral visits.
7. Intentionally carve out time for your children; put it on your calendar; talk to your children.



## Give Yourself the Freedom to Be Yourself in the Ministry

By Ray Gilder

Do you know who you are? If you do not, it is unfortunate that anyone else does. Every one of us struggles with our identity at some time or another.

The Bible teaches that God has specific plans for us (Isaiah 43:1-3; Jeremiah 1:4-5).

He told Jeremiah that he knew him before he formed him in his mother's womb and that he had plans for him (Jeremiah 1:4, 5.) Moses had a great struggle with letting God use him (Exodus 3:10-12A; 4:1, 10, 13).

I struggled with just being myself in the early days of ministry. I tried to volunteer others to do what I was being asked to do. One day I was impressed to make a covenant with the Lord to walk through every door He opened.

I thought I had an inferiority complex. The Lord said I was not a complex. I was inferior, because "without me you can do nothing." However, He told me, "I can do all things through Christ."

I am comfortable with God's ability to use me.

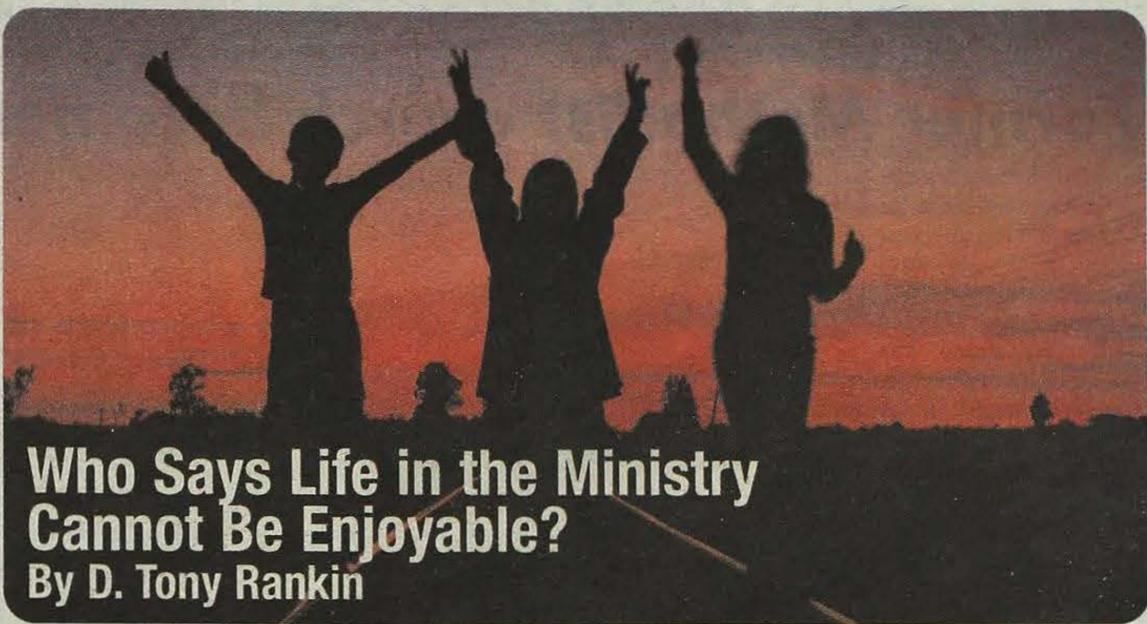
I am a lousy Billy Graham, but I am the best Ray Gilder God has.

### Reasons Why We Do Not Want to Be Ourselves

- A poor self image – maybe stemming from childhood.
- A feeling of inadequacy.
- A false concept of the lack of humanity of others – thinking that they are not like us.
- A refusal to die to self and walk humbly before God (1 Samuel 15:17).

### The Importance of Being Yourself

1. If you do not want to be yourself, you are insulting your maker.
2. If you are not yourself, the best you can be is second best.
3. You are the best you that there is or ever will be.
4. No one can speak from your experience but you.
5. No one can tell your story like you.
6. You can do what comes natural instead of trying to remember a part.
7. Only you can decide what God has planned for you. Being Yourself Frees You to:
  - o Dream – get a dream and live it.
  - o Develop – talents and skills.
  - o Discover – gifts and abilities.
  - o Depend on God – (Philippians 4:13).
  - o Dare to be different.
  - o Delight the heart of God – "This is my child in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).



## Who Says Life in the Ministry Cannot Be Enjoyable?

By D. Tony Rankin

I grew up in a minister's home, and then I became one myself. I had a wife and three children that were a part of a minister's home, too. It wasn't all that bad.

Yes, there were the times when deacons or needy church members would call late at night with the most bizarre and insignificant questions or comments, but for the most part times were normal and enjoyable.

Well, there were times when I was a youth minister when the pastor would call and ask (or tell) me what needed to be done while he was out-of-pocket (or at a sporting event, or party, or on vacation).

Yes, there were times when we would have to go to the Thanksgiving Day breakfasts, Christmas Eve services, and miss other significant family times.

There were times when my salary and my family's livelihood were talked about on the floor of the church. Well-meaning or maybe not well-meaning people would talk about what it took to live, and how the youth minister needed to know how to live on \$45,000 fewer dollars than other staff members.

I loved the time when one of the church members suggested that the congregation make up our salary difference and needs by bringing fruits, vegetables, meats, and canned goods to the church so we could supplement our income with food gifts. The funny thing is they really meant it!

I always wondered how we could have kept all of that stuff from spoiling. We would have had to

rent a larger apartment that would have taken more money. You see how you have to find some humor in being on staff?

I love being a minister and serving the church. Enjoying being a member of a minister's family is a choice. The church will not do it for you.

Here are some suggestions:

- o Don't wait until you retire or think you have enough money to do something.
- o Show your children what forever love looks like.
- o Refuse to be a spectator. Do not wait for fun to happen. Make it happen!
- o Make a list of 10 fun things to do (ask your family to do the same thing) and put it on the refrigerator for a reminder when you cannot think of anything fun to do or there is a huge family "discussion" going on.
- o Set your fun times (and as soon as you complete it, set another one.)
- o Take turns making the plans or at least come up with an idea.
- o Stop going to the same old places unless its fun for everybody.
- o Don't be remembered as a pain.
- o Tell another family member when they are fun.
- o Learning to laugh at stories about living in the gold fish bowl, or after observing and hearing some of the funny things that church members do or say, will help you realize that living in the minister's home does not have to be miserable. Live it up!

## Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

- Nov. 7-10 Preschool/Children's Fall Getaway, Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory
- Nov. 11 Tennessee Men's Chorale Concert, Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Kingsport
- Nov. 12 Missions Extravaganza, MeadowView Convention Center, Kingsport
- Nov. 12 Tennessee Baptist Pastors Conference, MeadowView Convention Center, Kingsport
- Nov. 13-14 Tennessee Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, MeadowView Convention Center, Kingsport
- Nov. 13 Annuitants Luncheon, Bloomingdale Baptist Church, Kingsport
- Nov. 13 Ministers Wives Luncheon, Higher Ground Baptist Church, Kingsport
- Nov. 13 Youth Ministry Luncheon, Damon's Grill, Kingsport
- Nov. 13 Celebration of 300th Anniversary of Associations in Baptist Life, MeadowView Convention Center, Kingsport

For information visit the TBC website at [www.tnbaptist.org](http://www.tnbaptist.org).

# Former Methodist church becomes Southern Baptist ...

— Continued from page 1

Before the move took place Denny Moore, director of missions for Sweetwater Baptist Association, met with the congregation several times.

Blevins noted Moore was very helpful and answered their questions about the process of becoming Baptist. "He did not interfere with our decision. We thank him for that," Blevins said.

Moore said that he talked to the church about Baptist distinctives, including giving through the Cooperative Program and the local association as well as the traditional mission offerings.

The church voted unanimously to become Southern Baptist more than a year ago and was accepted into "watch-care" status by the association last fall, has been giving to the association and will begin giving a percentage of its budget through the Cooperative Program, Moore reported.

The church became a full member of the association at its annual meeting in Oct. 15-16.

"We are excited to have them in the association," Moore said.

The transition of the church from Methodist to Baptist was begun by the Methodist church's pastor, Jim Haggard.

Haggard's dad had been a Southern Baptist pastor so he was acquainted with the denomination.

Haggard resigned from Walnut Grove late last year and the church called Chad Kirkpatrick as pastor in February.

Kirkpatrick formerly was pastor of Rocky Springs Baptist Church, Madisonville, and has been a Baptist most of his life.



**PASTOR CHAD KIRKPATRICK** recently baptized 89-year-old Glen Simpson, a former Methodist, during the first baptismal service held at Walnut Grove Baptist Church, Vonore. — Photos by Denny Moore

He was reared at Vonore Baptist Church in the same community as Walnut Grove.

Though the church had already made the transition to Baptist, Kirkpatrick saw it as a challenge.

"I trusted God that it would grow and it has," he said.

He gives a lot of credit to the former Methodist members who refused to close the doors of the church.

"They wanted to grow. To be told they were going to be shut down was a tough blow," Kirkpatrick said.

"They stood up and refused. They were faithful," he said.

Kirkpatrick noted the church's motto is "Where everybody is somebody."

"The church provides a loving

atmosphere," the pastor said.

He noted the congregation has a willingness to accept anybody and they will be ministered to regardless of background.

And the church has sprung to life.

After the transition the church's attendance increased from 30 to about 50-60, Anderson said.

Since Kirkpatrick's arrival, attendance has climbed to an average of about 90 each Sunday, with a high of 130 one week.

The growth has been the biggest transition for the former Methodists, said Sherri Anderson.

"It was a big change to see how quickly God was moving,"



**DENNY MOORE**, director of missions for Sweetwater Baptist Association, constructed this portable baptismal tank for use at Walnut Grove Baptist Church and other churches in the association.

Anderson said, noting "it was a good thing."

But, she continued, it meant people had to "step up and take on responsibilities they had not done before."

Anderson attributed the growth to having a pastor in the community. Though Kirkpatrick is bivocational he lives in the area.

Anderson noted that as a Methodist congregation they had a "circuit-riding" pastor who only came to preach once a week.

Charlotte Watson, a member of the church for about 10 years, is excited about the new growth at Walnut Grove. "That's what we needed — people to join with us," she said.

"It is so great to see the excitement on these people's faces and to see where they were and where they are now," Moore said.

"The growth has been amazing," the DOM added.

A strategic event in the life of the new Baptist congregation happened in September when the church held its first baptismal service.

Since a baptismal tank would have been a normal part of a Methodist church but Moore solved the problem by building a portable baptismal tank. It will be used at other churches in the association as needed.

On Sunday, Sept. 2, the church baptized 22 people, including the pastor's 6-year-old daughter and Glen Simpson, the oldest member of the church at 89 years of age.

Though a Christian most of his life, Simpson wanted to be baptized by immersion as an example, Kirkpatrick said.

The pastor is grateful for the growth, but refuses to take credit.

"All I am doing is preparing the people and God is blessing the faithfulness of those few Methodists who persevered. All that goes to God."

Church members are insistent that God gets the credit for all that has happened at the church since the transition.

"God has blessed us abundantly," said Sherri Anderson. "It is God's hand at work."

**PAID ADVERTISEMENT**

## To Keep Tennessee Baptists as Family

In the interest of harmony and cooperation, while honoring the cherished principles of soul liberty and the priesthood of the believer, we, the undersigned, wish to encourage you to vote for the following motion in Kingsport;

"Any person serving the Tennessee Baptist Convention may

affirm any of the Baptist Faith and Message statements — 1925, 1963, or 2000."

We believe this action can unite us and encourage cooperation and participation for everyone in our Tennessee Baptist family.

**Former presidents of the Tennessee Baptist Convention**

Herbert Higdon, Grant Jones, John David Laida, Raymond Langlois, Tom Madden, Calvin Metcalf, Jim McCluskey, William L. Palmer, Bill Sherman, Fred Steelman

**Interested Baptists**

- |                  |                        |                     |                         |                     |                   |
|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Mike Adams       | Bruce Coyle            | Larry Fields        | Cordell Maddox          | Jack Pennington     | Bill Stephens     |
| Jim Alexander    | Bryan Courtney         | J. L. "Pete" Ford   | Bob McCray              | Lee Porter          | Bill Shiell       |
| Fletcher Allen   | Robert Chambers        | Gordon Donahoe      | James McCulla           | Bill Powell         | Sonny Strange     |
| Harold Allen     | Sarah Cox              | Tom Gholson         | Paul Miles              | Carl Price          | Lon Shoopman      |
| Perry Austin     | Frank Crawford         | Aubrey Hay          | Don Mitchell            | Michael Prince      | Matt Tomlin       |
| Louis Ball       | Robert Dalton          | Jim Hutson          | Paul Moody              | W. H. "Dusty" Roden | Bobby M. Turner   |
| Charles Ballard  | Don Dixon              | Jewell Jennings     | Ron Mouser              | Jim Robertson       | Gene Wilder       |
| Jerry Barker     | Reed Dixon             | Mac & Melba Lambert | Ron Murray              | Jon Roebuck         | Earl Wilson       |
| Dick Baumgardner | Russ Dunham            | Ralph Lee           | Kelver & Mattie Mullins | Carl Scarlett       | Roy & Joyce Wyatt |
| Kerry Bond       | Steve Durham           | Ray Lloyd           | Joe Nickell             | David Sharp         | Phil Young        |
| Dean Buchanon    | Stan Elliott           | Rich Lloyd          | Bill Palmiter           | John Sharp          |                   |
| Mack Bingham     | Archie & Susan Fendley | Mike Madewell       | James Pardue            | Julian Suggs        |                   |

## Deaths

**James Ernest Westland Jr.**, 44, of Cumberland Furnace, pastor of Gums Baptist Church, Cumdam, died Oct. 27 following a heart attack. A native of Gaston, N.C., he formerly served as pastor of a church in Gaston. He also served churches in Greenville, S.C., Henderson, N.C., and Norlina, N.C. Westmoreland also was professor, Covenant Theological Seminary, Columbia, S.C., and registrar, professor, Foothills Theological Schools, Landrum, S.C. Survivors include mother, Betty D. Westmoreland, Gaston, N.C.; wife, Patti Westmoreland-Cumberland Furnace; and a daughter.

## Leaders

**Hal Kitchings**, pastor of Germantown Baptist Church, Germantown, has been elected senior pastor effective Nov. 11. He is a doctor of ministry from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., and two masters degrees. Kitchings has served as senior pastor for over 14 years. He has served churches in Florida and Texas. He was president of the Florida Baptist Convention's Pastors Con-

ference in 2005.

◆ **Ted Painter**, pastor, New Salem Baptist Church, Soddy Daisy, recently celebrated his 37th year as pastor of the church.

◆ **Roy Miller**, who is retired from the staff of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, has resigned as associate pastor/senior adult minister of Manley Baptist Church, Morristown, effective Nov. 4.

◆ **Life Community Church**, Nolensville, recently called **Jay Watson** as pastor. A native of

Nashville, he is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, and Beeson Divinity School of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

◆ **Hermitage Hills Baptist Church**, Nashville, has called **Chad Smith** of Brunswick, Ga., as minister of preschool effective Nov. 11.

◆ **Keith Mowery** has resigned as pastor of Tusculum Baptist Church, Greeneville, effective Sept. 2. Buffalo Trails Baptist Church, Morristown, has called him as pastor.



**LEADERS OF Church Grove Baptist Church, Newbern, pause at the annual meeting of Dyer Baptist Association, based in Dyersburg, held recently. The church was placed in watchcare by the association. The church's leaders are, from left, front row, Don Martin Jr., Rose Hogue, and Paul Hogue, pastor; back row, Terry Pledge. The association now has 44 member churches.**

## Churches

◆ **New Harmony Baptist Church, Paris**, will present its 10th annual live nativity nightly Nov. 30 - Dec. 1. A drive-thru event, the drama depicts the life of Christ through nine scenes. For information, call the church at (731) 593-5276.

Church, Union City. Celeste Clydesdale, children's music creator, will speak. For information and registration, visit [www.uccalvary.com](http://www.uccalvary.com). Registration fee includes handout materials and lunch. The evening finale features a 250-voice children's choir, led by Clydesdale.

◆ **Cumberland Baptist Association, Clarksville**, will be a drop off center for Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritans Purse, at the CBA Shoulders Building Nov. 12-18. For details, call the CBA office at (931) 358-9036.

## Associations

◆ **Beulah Baptist Association, Union City**, will hold a children's choir conference on Dec. 1 at Second Baptist



**HOLSTON VALLEY Baptist Association, based in Rogersville, held its annual meeting and elected officers. They along with the director of missions are, from left, John Parrott, DOM; Jason Roach, pastor, Shady Grove Baptist Church, Rogersville, associate moderator; Rick Dinkins, pastor, Henards Chapel Baptist Church, Rogersville, moderator; and Linda Williams, association ministry assistant, clerk.**

# Thank You Tennessee Baptists!

The moment I stepped on campus, I had a family and people who cared about me. Carson-Newman is a place full of people who worked so hard to make sure that I could afford to get my education here. And after I was here, the support only became greater. Professors always have their doors open to talk not just about class, but about life and the circumstances that come your way. Fellow students were warm and open, helping me get connected to organizations and friends almost immediately. And all of this in an atmosphere of school spirit with a thriving campus life.

Carson-Newman will give me the education I need to back up my passions and my talents. Without the foundations I receive here I don't know how I'd be prepared to face the world and survive, much less make a difference. So as I prepare for a life helping people in an inner city or international environment, whether through social work or Christian ministry, it is with deep appreciation to all of those scholarship donors who are making my education possible.

~ Kelly Ferguson '09



**CARSON  
NEWMAN  
COLLEGE**

## BGCT candidates have Tenn. ties

Baptist Press

AMARILLO, Texas — Joy Fenner, a retired missionary and Texas Woman's Missionary Union executive, was elected president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas over David Lowrie, pastor of First Baptist Church in Canyon, Oct. 29. In one of the BGCT's closest presidential votes, 900-840, Fenner became the first woman elected as BGCT president.

Fenner and her husband Charlie were missionaries with the International Mission Board in Japan for 14 years in the 1960s and 1970s. Later, she served 21 years as the executive director-treasurer of the Texas Woman's Missionary Union and is now executive director emeritus.

Fenner also served as interim executive director of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union from 2001-03.

Lowrie is the son of D.L. Lowrie, a Tennessee native and former executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Fenner, a layperson from Gaston Oaks Baptist Church in Garland, will preside over a state convention whose staff is in transition and budget is tightening. BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade will retire in January, Chief Operating Officer Ron Gunter's resignation takes effect at the end of November and last month the BGCT terminated the employment of 29 convention staff members due to budget cuts. Another topic of concern this year is the ongoing law enforcement investigation into reports of the misuse of more than \$1 million BGCT mission dollars by church planters who allegedly started hundreds of phantom churches in the Rio Grande Valley.

In the Oct. 30 business session, a motion calling for a no-confidence vote on the BGCT executive board was defeated via a vote using Robert's Rules of Order.

BGCT President Steve Vernon of Levelland ruled that a subsequent motion in opposition to the no confidence action could be voted on and, if passed by a two-thirds majority, would eliminate the original motion from further consideration. Messengers easily tallied the necessary margin.

As the incumbent BGCT first vice president, Fenner had said the previous day she is well aware of the challenges ahead.

"I think one of our biggest challenges is communications," Fenner said when asked what her role would be in light of the BGCT's transitions.

Fenner also said she wanted to reach out to people in the BGCT who are leaders but might currently be sitting on the sidelines of leadership. "We have a myriad of gifted people in our churches," she said.

BGCT messengers adopted a 2008 total budget of \$50.1 million, down from \$50.6 million in 2007. □



FENNER

## CP giving drops from October '06

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — October contributions of nearly \$14.8 million through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program were 3.77 percent below CP gifts received in October 2006, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman.

As of Oct. 31, Cooperative Program gifts of \$14,779,886.76

were \$579,068.79 below the \$15,358,955.55 received last October.

Meanwhile, designated giving of \$3,062,336.98 during October was 6.00 percent, or \$173,466.25, above gifts of \$2,888,870.73 received last October.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the October total of \$14,779,886.76 is 88.41 percent of the \$16,716,794.69 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America.

Southern Baptists surpassed for the first time the \$400 million mark in combined Cooperative Program and designated giving during the last fiscal year. Gifts through the Cooperative Program by SBC churches reached \$205.7 million during the fiscal year spanning Oct. 1, 2006, to Sept. 30, 2007, while designated gifts, including the SBC's missions offerings, topped \$204.9 million. CP gifts increased 2.55 percent during the year while designated gifts increased 7.09 percent. □

## DR meals in Calif. top 100,000

Baptist Press

FRESNO, Calif. — The number of meals provided by Southern Baptists to victims of Southern California wildfires has topped 120,000, according to disaster relief leaders.

California Southern Baptist

## New Lower Rates For Term Life Insurance!

Low, low non-smoker monthly cost (male)

Age	\$150,000	\$300,000
25	\$11.08	\$13.39
35	\$11.35	\$13.91
45	\$19.76	\$30.45
55	\$42.45	\$73.24
65	\$103.46	\$194.78

Please call The Insurance Store (Knoxville, Tenn.) Toll Free 1-800-583-0970, 9-9 Mon.-Sat.

Level premiums that do not increase for the first 15 years. Written by an A+ life insurance company. Preferred Male rates illustrated above. Please call for other ages and Female rates.

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — OTHER

Lincoln Park Baptist has need for a financial secretary. This is a 3-day-a-week position. Computer skills in ACS would be very helpful. Resumes may be sent by regular mail, e-mail, or fax to Lincoln Park Baptist, 830 Chickamauga Ave., Knoxville, TN 37917, Fax (865) 687-0481.

### MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale: two portable classrooms, Nashville church. Call Tom, (615) 832-1642.

Mt. View Baptist Church, Antioch, Tenn., is looking for a used 25-30 passenger bus. We will take over payments or purchase outright. The bus must be safe and reliable. Please contact the worship pastor at (615) 598-1807.

Convention's four kitchen units are preparing up to 25,000 meals per day, including one unit activated Monday, Oct. 29, which can provide 16,000 meals daily. CSBC also has a shower unit in use and one on standby.

Around 200 Southern Baptist volunteers have worked in Southern California in the aftermath of the two dozen wildfires that have burned more than 500,000 acres. Four fires still are not 100 percent contained, fire officials have said.

Don Hargis, the California convention's disaster relief director, noted one of the greatest current needs — along with an ongoing need for financial assistance — is for chaplains. He said trained chaplains are needed to minister to both victims and emergency relief workers. □

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — MUSIC

Part-time music minister, First Baptist Church of Pegram, Tenn., (18 miles west of Nashville). The candidate must be able to read music and be familiar with both modern praise and traditional hymns. The candidate should be able to lead a choir. Since this is a part-time position, the candidate should live within driving distance of the church. First Baptist of Pegram is a small, rural church with approx. 100 in attendance on Sunday A.M. Please send resume to Mike Quin at DQUIN1@comcast.net.

Walker Baptist Church is looking for a part-time minister of music. We offer both a traditional and contemporary style of worship. Our music minister would be responsible for leading both services, working with adult choir and praise band, and working with staff to plan each worship service. Please forward resume to Personnel Team, c/o Walker Baptist Church, 1350 West Main Street, Franklin, TN 37064.

FBC LaFayette, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking a bivocational music leader. Send resumes to fbclafayette@nctc.com. For more information contact Don Jones at (615) 666-3127 or (615) 388-0926.

West Tennessee church seeking part-time minister of music. See www.sanfordhill.com for job description. Send resume to Sanford Hill Baptist Church, 644 Sanford St., Henderson, TN 38340.

Stock Creek Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking a full-time worship/music leader. Anyone interested, please mail resume no later than November 15th to Stock Creek Baptist Church, Attn: Todd Brang, 8106 Martin Mill Pike, Knoxville, TN 37920.

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — PASTOR

West Tenn. SBC seeking pastor. Rural area with growth potential. Current 188 membership. www.mfr Please send resume to Middlefork Road Baptist Church, Middlefork Road, Luray 38352 Attn: Pastor Search mittee.

Crawford Baptist Church Mobile, Ala., is seeking a pastor. Applicant should have 5 years of ministry experience, possess college and seminary degrees, have strong leadership skills, skilled in expository preaching style, and be a supporter of the Baptist Faith Messages. Resumes should be submitted to Benny Johnson, 4500 Harvest Blvd., Semmes 36575, E-mail: Bjohns74@aol.com.

Lincoln Park Baptist Church now accepting application for pastor of this inner city church. Resumes, personal statements and references should be sent to Pastor Search Committee, 830 Chickamauga Ave., Knoxville TN 37917. Visit our website at LincolnParkChurch.org for more information about our church and apply online.

### MINISTRY — STUDENT

North Etowah Baptist Church, Etowah, Tenn., is seeking a vocational minister of youth. The individual must be outgoing, enthusiastic, and well grounded in traditional Southern Baptist theology. A married individual preferred whose spouse be willing to take an active role in this ministry as well. Please send resume to Minister of Youth, North Etowah Baptist Church, 231 Pa. Ave., Etowah TN 37331.

West Tenn. SBC seeking youth minister. Rural area with great growth potential. Current membership at 188. www.mfr.org. Please send resume to Middlefork Road Baptist Church, 3955 Middlefork Road, Luray 38352, Attn: Youth Committee.

Minister of students needed to organize youth Bible study and fellowship activities. This is a part-time staff position. Resumes can be mailed to First Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, P. O. Box 100, Jamestown, TN 38556, or to firstbaptist@twlakes.net

First Baptist Church of Henderson, Tenn., is accepting resumes for the position of full-time minister to youth. Please mail to Youth Search Committee, 100 Main Street, Henderson TN 38340.

To the best of our knowledge all ads in the *Baptist and Reflector* represent legitimate companies and offerings. However, one should always use caution in responding to ads.

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## minister's corner

## Deacons as servants

by Gene Wilder

One of my favorite Internet sites is Dictionary.com. I'll go to this site to glean new meanings for familiar words.

I recently looked up the word "deacon" and, while I expected the definitions, I uncovered some surprising ones. Not surprisingly, the noun "deacon" was defined as "an appointed or elected officer in the church with variously defined duties." But "deacon" can also be used as a verb. The verb "deacon" can mean "to pack vegetables or fruit with only the most attractively side view." I'm not really sure how you get from an officer of the church to packing vegetables, but I'll readily admit that deacons often represent the most attractive side of the church.

For me, the word "deacon" is best described by the Greek term from which we derive the English word. The Greek word, "diakonos," simply means "a servant." In its original usage, the term had little to do with an ecclesiastical position of power or authority. Instead, the term described a household domestic, someone who performed menial tasks so their master might find more comfort.

I'm not sure when it changed but somewhere down the line of church history the term "deacon" lost its original meaning (and its original significance). Those who were Christ's servants became congregational bureaucrats. Deacon fellowships evolved more into congregational boards of directors more interested in power than in people service.

Over the last few decades many churches have rediscovered the significance of servant deacons. By shifting administrative functions to other groups, these congregations have empowered deacons to fulfill their original calling, that of serving. This rediscovery has not only strengthened churches but it has allowed laypersons to experience the joy of Christian service.

The deacons we elect for the next three years will not take the positions on a board of directors. Instead, they will become church servants, working with our ministerial staff to meet church members' needs.

Each deacon will be assigned a dozen or more families. Each deacon will visit members of his or her family when they are sick, comfort them when they are distressed, and console them in times of loss and bereavement. They will create church policies, review church budgets, or administer the church's business. In fact, they will only meet as a group because their call is that of serving individuals.

Thankfully, our deacons are not congregational bureaucrats. They are humble servants attempting to follow the example of Christ. Instead of demonstrating the love of God, they humbly demonstrate the power of love; and when you pack them all together, they do, indeed, represent the most attractive side of the church. □ — Wilder is pastor, First Baptist Church, Jefferson City.

## a way with words

## My heart's always home in Tennessee

by Hugh X. Lewis

A mockingbird sings sweeter in the morning  
The fragrance of the iris in the wind.  
The poplars all the hills adorning —  
They say that you can't go home again.

When I left Tennessee the tears were falling  
Oh how I missed the country way.  
Now my native land keeps calling;  
It hurts me so that I can't go and stay.

My mind might be where I earn a living;  
My address is any place that shelters me.  
My soul to heaven one day I'll be giving,  
My heart is always home in Tennessee.

Copyright by Hugh X. Lewis. Lewis, a Baptist layman, is a laureate of Christian country music in Tennessee. He is able to speak to church and senior adult groups. For more information, call (615) 883-0086.

## The cure for anxious care

By Jim Clayton

## Focal Passage: Matthew 6:19-34

What worries you as you are reading this? "I don't worry about anything," you say? Well, that places you in a very small minority of people, believers and non-believers. Most people DO worry, about things like life, money, family, and security, especially job security. Yet, Jesus taught His followers that when they put God first, they avoid being overcome by anxiety. Think about that in light of the Scripture passage for today.

**Love God above all (vv. 19-24).** We are endlessly bombarded with ways to attain "the good life," while being told we can and should have it. However, seeking security in what our world has to provide is a recipe for anxiety. Jesus' warning here is about the obsession of attaining wealth. We would do well to remember that, according to Matthew 19, possessing treasures on earth apparently kept at least one person out of the kingdom. In the final analysis, money was more important to him than eternal life. Jesus offers His followers an alternative. Instead of spending our lives gaining and hoarding wealth, we need to be more concerned about collecting treasures with an eternal value, heavenly treasures. We have a choice to make about spiritual values, because no one can have it both ways, collecting earthly treasures and heavenly

treasures. Eventually, one will take second place to the other. We simply cannot be slaves to both God and money!

**Trust God for all (vv. 25-32).** Jesus does not change the subject entirely here. He had taught about two kinds of treasures, two kinds of sight, and two masters. Now, He gives two perspectives on worry, and significantly, He addressed worry at a greater length than the other three. Believers have become basically divided into two camps when it comes to the subject of worry. Some believe that being concerned about anything is a sin because Jesus said, "Don't worry." On the other hand, some have turned worry into a full-time job, even an art form. This is an area where one must maintain a biblical balance in order to have a clear perspective.

So, how should we interpret Jesus' teaching? Actually, this entire passage revolves around verse 33. If Jesus' followers are kingdom focused, they will not allow the worries of life to keep them from doing kingdom business. They will have such confidence in the King that they will continue to serve Jesus despite their circumstances.

Jesus then proceeds to use examples from everyday life to clarify His point. He talks of what to eat or drink, what to wear, of birds and wildflowers, all of these being under the watchful eye of the

## A place for all

By Steven S. Nelson

## Focal Passage: Matthew 19:1-15

As "Bob" sheepishly walked into the church foyer, he knew the sense of the stares directed his way. His grease stained coat, toboggan hat, faded flannel shirt, and worn out tennis shoes were a stark contrast to the neatly pressed shirts, suits, and ties around him. When through his impeded speech, he asked if he could come to church there, the uncomfortable usher said, "sure," but then did nothing to make him welcome. As he sat down, it was clear that he would have his own pew that day. During the greeting time, three people shook his hand, most with great reluctance.

However, one gentleman sat down next to him and introduced himself. With great warmth, he said he told "Bob" that he was glad to have him today as our honored guest. Bob thanked him and responded that he did not have a tie to wear. The dear Christian brother said, "You don't have to have a tie to worship Jesus. If it would make you more comfortable though, I will give you this one."

During my tenure as Director of Hunger Concerns for the Southern Baptist Convention, I portrayed "Bob" at several different churches, showing up as a homeless man. This account was of one visit, but just as easily could have described

them all. In each instance, a few people truly reached out to "Bob" while the rest avoided him. Jesus made it clear that the kingdom of God was for all who would receive. In today's lesson, we learn that He was indeed no respecter of persons. However, most of our churches have a way to go before we truly become "a place for all."

The Word warns us against what I call "God's Pet Peeve." James wrote in James 2:1-4:

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," have you not shown partiality among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

He makes it clear that we should see people only in terms of their value to God and not measure their worth by earthly standards. As humans, we have a natural tendency to size people up and quickly judge whether we want to be around them or not.

Paul wrote in Romans 2:1 "Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another

Sunday School Lesson  
Bible Studies for Life  
Nov. 11

Father, who can take care of all our needs. He notices and cares for us at all times, and nothing is too small or mundane to Him if it is important to us.

**Seek God before all (vv. 33-34).** Are you familiar with the "health and wealth gospel?" It is one of the most dangerous movements in the Christian community in the last century. Basically, it teaches that God wants us to be healthy and wealthy, and if we are not attaining both, something is wrong with us spiritually. We are simply lacking in faith. Two questions should immediately come to mind in response to this view. Does the New Testament in general support this gospel? And, does Matthew 6:33 mean what this movement claims it means? The answer to both questions is NO! In verse 34, Jesus closes this passage by basing His argument against worry on something very practical: tomorrow will worry about itself. We don't need to send any more on ahead. We need to take on each set of problems one day at a time. Tomorrow's difficulties will arrive soon enough! Let's trust Him for today. □ — Clayton is senior pastor of Dixie Lee Baptist Church, Lenoir City.

Sunday School Lesson  
Explore the Bible  
Nov. 11

you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things." The word for judge literally means to "have an opinion." In this case, that opinion concerns placing a value on a person using surface circumstances rather than as a soul for whom Jesus died.

When portraying "Bob," my heart was always saddened by the shuns of God's people but warmed by the reception of those who truly demonstrated Christ's love. As we see in the lesson how Jesus cherished the children, spoke of moral purity, but also showed loving grace to all who believe, my prayer is that we will also demonstrate His grace while standing firm for His truth.

Some lifestyles may offend us. Some dress styles we may find repugnant. But we have no choice as believers but to look past those traits and value the heart of that person whom God loves very much. We must ever remember that, while we cherish the fellowship of our church family, church is not primarily for socializing. It is about God's kingdom. So long as this truth stays before us, we can truly create "a place for all." □ — Nelson is pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Hendersonville.

## Leaders

◆ **Stan Smith** was named director of missions of Big Hatchie Baptist Association, based in Covington, effective Oct. 8. It was incorrectly reported that the association was based in Watauga. The *Baptist and Reflector* regrets the error.

◆ First Baptist Church, Morristown, has called **Dean Haun** as senior pastor effective Dec. 2.

Haun comes to the church from Georgia where he served as senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Ga. He previously served in Tennessee as senior pastor of Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Hermitage. He also served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Sparta, and Calvary Baptist Church, Alcoa, and as pastor of churches in Florida and Texas. He is a graduate of Trinity Theological Seminary, Newburg, Ind.;



HAUN

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and Cumberland College, Williamsburg, Ky. Haun has served on committees of the Georgia Baptist Convention, Southern Baptist Convention, and the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He was chairman of the TBC Executive Committee and chairman of the *Baptist and Reflector* board, both in 1995.

◆ **Robert English**, pastor of Snow Memorial Baptist Church, Johnson City, resigned effective Sept. 16.

◆ Poplar Springs Baptist Church, Atwood, has called **Billy Joe Hanks** as minister of music.

◆ Lakeshore Road Baptist Church, Talbott, has called **Chris Pearce** as interim pastor. Pearce previously served as interim senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Morristown.

◆ Donelson View Baptist Church, Donelson, has called **Brian Baker** as youth minister effective Oct. 7. He comes to the church from Eastland Baptist Church, Nashville, where he served as youth and out-

reach minister for nine years and office administrator for two years. His wife, Bernie, is a ministry assistant at the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

## Churches

◆ **Trinity Baptist Church, Clarksville**, hosted a Women on Missions World Craft Party on Nov. 3.

◆ **CrossWay Baptist Church, Murfreesboro**, will hold its second annual "Night of Praise and Worship" on Nov. 11 at the Christiana Middle School, Christiana. Regi Stone, worship leader, Christ Church, Nashville, will be the special guest. For information, call the CrossWay Baptist office at (615) 278-0000.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Clifton**, will sponsor an evangelism mission trip May 31 - June 7, 2008, to Sinaloa de Leyva, Mexico. Volunteers from Indian Creek, Lawrence Coun-

ty, Giles County, and Alpha Baptist Associations are team members. Other specialized volunteers needed are a lead medical doctor and Spanish translators to assist. Randall Runions, pastor of First Baptist, is the team leader. To volunteer, contact him at (931) 766-2481, (931) 676-5346, or randall.runions@firstbaptistchurchclifton.org.

◆ The Sanctuary Choir of **Haywood Hills Baptist Church, Nashville**, will present "An Old Fashioned Christmas" complete with costumes during its evening worship service on Dec. 2. For information, call the church office at (615) 832-6909.

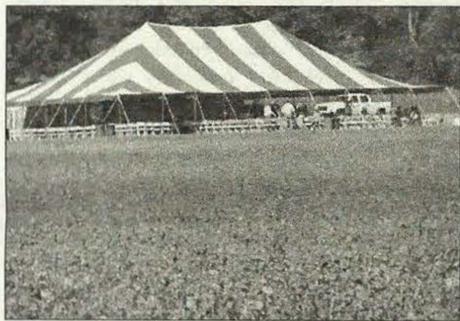
◆ **Hillcrest Baptist Church, Clarksville**, will hold revival services Nov. 11-14. Bobby Melton, director of missions, Christian County Baptist Association, Hopkinsville, Ky., will speak. In addition, the church ordained

**Greg Walker** into the ministry on Oct. 7. For information, call the church office at (931) 8915.

◆ **Russwood Baptist Church, Springville**, is having a nightly fall revival Nov. 9. Guy Milam, pastor of Knoxville Baptist Church, Knoxville, will speak. Long, music minister of Sna Baptist Church, Gibson, lead the music. For information, call the church office 644-0318.

## Association

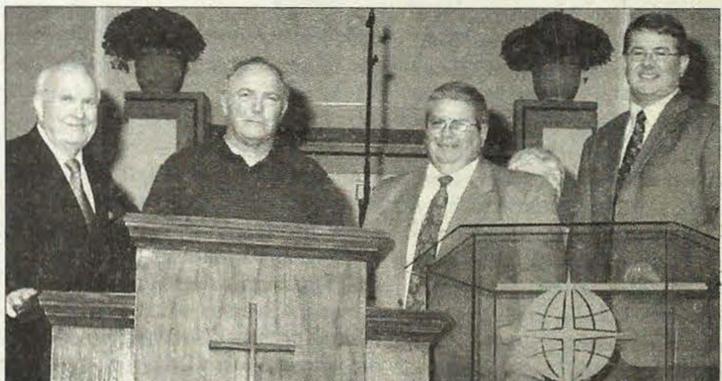
◆ The Woman's Mission Union of the **Nashville Baptist Association, Nashville**, hosted a Baptist World Day of Prayer Nov. 10 at Brook Hollow Baptist Church, Nashville. The event featured World Crafts and International Mission Board missionaries. Valarie Payne of Thailand ministry project was gift for disaster relief.



A SERVICE WAS held by First Baptist Church, Trenton, in this tent on its new property. The service was a Harvest Day Celebration. Ronnie Coleman is pastor.



PARTICIPATING IN AN Acteens Coronation recently at Liberty Baptist Church, Wartburg, are, from left, Crystal Reno; Molly Griffith; Brittany Cooter; Erica Sill; Elizabeth Chapman; Crystal Fournier; Danielle Greene; Lauren Byrd; Jessica Whaley; and Carol Bunch, Acteens leader. The girls earned the award of queen and queen with scepter of the Acteen program. Bunch reported that the church baptized five Acteens in the past two years.



GATHERED FOR THE 50th anniversary of Grace Baptist Church, Tullahoma, held recently were former pastors and the present pastor. They are, from left, Louis Rideout, 1959-64; Jewell Pruitt, 1970-73; Russell Flatt, 1982-86; and Tim McGehee, current pastor. Grace Baptist was started by Highland Baptist Church, Tullahoma.



CUMBERLAND GAP BAPTIST Association, based in Harrogate, held its annual meeting Oct. 22-23. Leaders and officers for the coming year are, from left, Robert Ziegler, First Baptist Church, Harrogate, treasurer; Robert Lloyd, Gap Creek Baptist Church, Arthur, clerk; Robert H. Owens, New Salem Baptist Church, Speedwell, moderator; Clayton Dunsmore, director of missions; Gary Fletcher, pastor, Riley Memorial Baptist Church, Tazewell, vice moderator; Bonnie Manning, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Tazewell, assistant clerk; and Helen McCarter, Gap Creek Baptist Church, Arthur, Woman's Mission Union director.



ELECTED TO LEAD Indian Creek Baptist Association, based in Waynesboro, at its annual meeting held Oct. 15 are, from left, David Miller, director of missions; James Smith, pastor, Philadelphia Baptist Church, Waynesboro, vice moderator; Linda Griggs, Ray's Chapel Baptist Church, Waynesboro, clerk; Lawrence Steiner, pastor, Grace Baptist Church, Collinwood, moderator; and Gary Anderson, Philadelphia Baptist Church, Waynesboro, treasurer. Griggs has served as clerk for 10 years.



LEADERS OF DYER BAPTIST Association, based in Dyersburg, pause during annual meeting held Oct. 22-23. They are, from left, Trent Bullock, pastor, First Baptist Church, Halls, outgoing moderator; Larry Fowlkes, Fowlkes Baptist Church, Dyersburg, treasurer; Bill Taylor, pastor, Mt. Tirzah Baptist Church, Newbern, moderator; Vickie Shelton, association secretary, clerk; and John Compere, pastor, Westside Baptist Church, Halls, vice moderator.