

Baptist & Reflector

Statewide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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Deacons should be servants, prayer partners: Henry

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — Pastors can be more effective if their deacons are servants and prayer partners, says Nashville native Jim Henry.

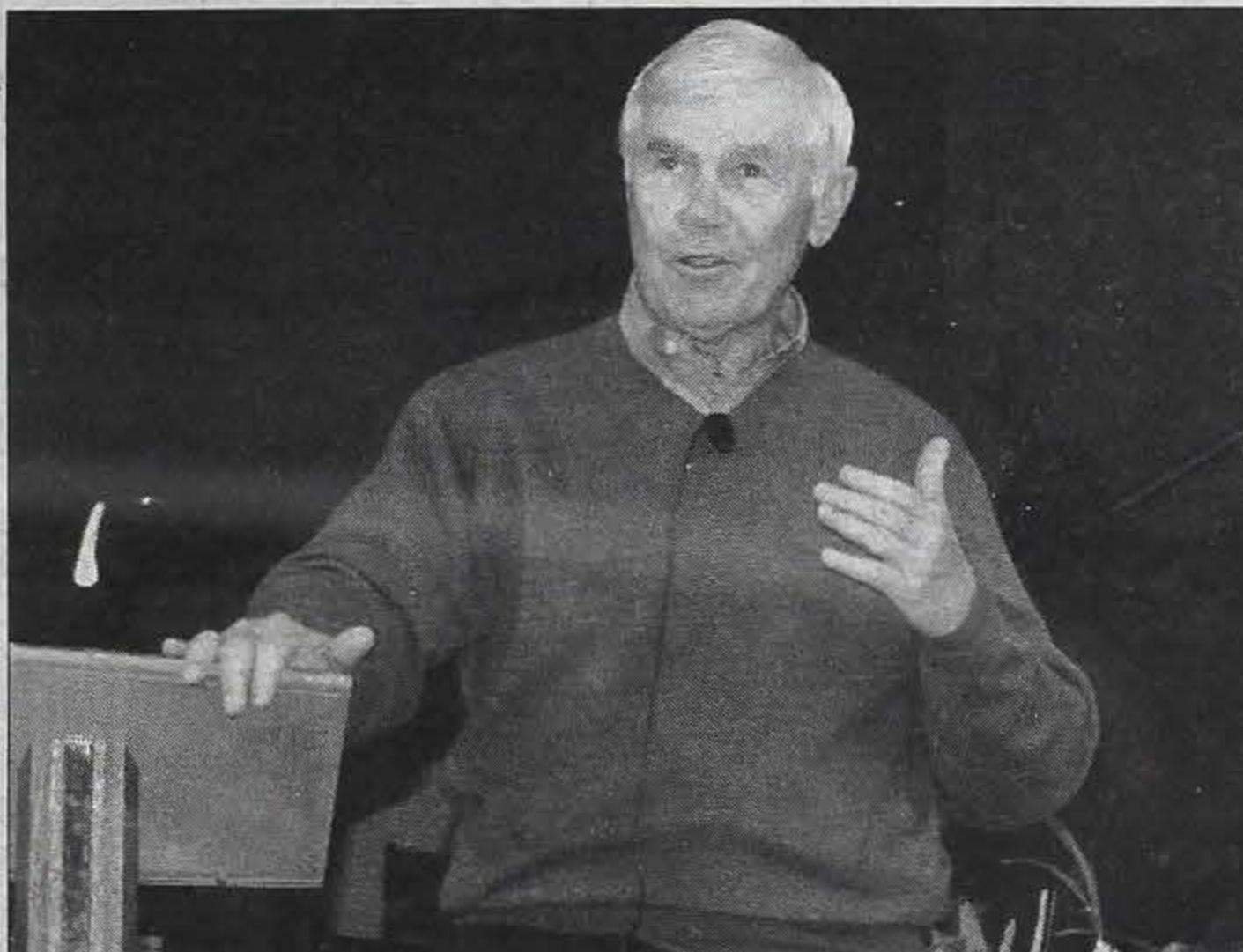
Henry speaks from experience, having served as a pastor since the mid-1960s beginning with a small rural church in Mississippi and continuing through his retirement two years ago from First Baptist Church, Orlando.

Henry also is a former pastor at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, and a past president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"A deacon is like a right arm," Henry said. "They stand with you and they can help make or break your ministry," he told the *Baptist and Reflector* while in Knoxville in early February to lead a deacon retreat co-sponsored by Knox County Baptist Association, Chilhowee Baptist Association, and the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Henry stressed that deacons must see themselves as servants. "When they do their job effectively, the level of respect for deacons is raised," he noted.

He observed that deacons as servants is the biblical model.



NASHVILLE NATIVE Jim Henry recently spoke about deacon ministry to nearly 300 deacons and ministers at an event in Knoxville co-sponsored by the Knox County Baptist Association, Chilhowee Baptist Association, and Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"Jesus took on the role of servant and He raised the bar on servanthood," Henry said.

While acknowledging that in some churches the deacons may have to do some "administrative work," ministry must be at the forefront.

"When deacons see their role as power brokers, it becomes disheartening to the pastor and the church," Henry related.

During his ministry as a pastor, Henry said he sought deacons to be his prayer part-

ners. "When you know your deacons are praying for you, you feel like you can tackle any issue because you know they stand with you," he continued.

Henry said he learned that lesson in his very first pastorate while he was still a student at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

He recalled that he was serving a rural Mississippi church during the mid-1960s when racial tensions were very high in the South.

Henry noted that the deacons of that small church stood by him when he had to take a stand on the race issue that was not popular.

"It was tough and gutsy for them to do that in Mississippi in the 1960s," Henry said.

That experience "bonded him" with the deacons there and deepened his appreciation for deacon ministry in general.

"If those guys had not done that (stood by him), I don't know what would have happened. They saved my ministry" he related.

From then on, he continued, "I knew that I wanted to work with the deacons."

Henry took those experiences with deacons in the small churches he served with him to Two Rivers and later FBC, Orlando. "With my deacons I could bring anything up and trust them to deal with it," he stated.

Henry noted that while the pastor is the "shepherd" of a congregation, the deacons are "shepherd servants."

Deacons and their pastor must work together, he stressed. "If they do, God's blessing will be on the church and harmony will rule."

Henry observed that conflicts in church might be fewer if pastors and deacons had a

healthy relationship.

He acknowledged that he has heard "the war stories" about deacons and pastors, but he is convinced those relationships can be strong.

Henry is convinced that deacons need to know their pastor loves and respects them and they can sense it when a pastor does so.

"You best lead by shepherding," Henry said. "The deacon will follow the shepherd if he is following The Shepherd."

Henry has tried over the years to share his ideas about deacon ministry throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

He developed a two-part video series on deacon ministry several years ago that is still used in many churches today as a training tool.

In addition, Henry is frequently asked to speak at deacon conferences and retreats and those requests have become more numerous since his retirement from FBC, Orlando. "I could do one every week if I wanted to," he observed.

There is a hunger for learning how to do deacon ministry, he continued.

"Deacons are wanting to get it (their ministry) right," he acknowledged. □ — See pages 3 and 5 for additional stories and columns on deacon ministry.

Groover answers questions about Day of Prayer and Giving

Baptist and Reflector

Editor's Note: The Administrative Committee of the Executive Board recently approved April 6 as a Day of Prayer and Giving for Union University. Chuck Groover, chairman of the Administrative Committee, answered these questions posed by Linda Lawson, correspondent for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

(Q) Why should churches consider participating in this special offering for Union University?

(A) The cooperating churches of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, along with institutions supported by the TBC, are family. When a family member faces a crisis, it is only natural for other members to rally around and support them. Recent events related to a tornado touching down on the Union campus, first, directs the Tennessee Baptist family to give thanks to our God that not one life

was lost. Second, as a Christian family we are called upon to comfort those who are in trouble with the same comfort we have received from the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 1:3-4). Third, make no mistake, the world is watching the Tennessee Baptist family to see what will be done to assist Union. God has opened a door of opportunity for Tennessee Baptist churches to show the world Christ's love in action ("Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me" Matthew 25:40). My prayer is that every Tennessee Baptist church will respond to this ministry opportunity as if they were doing it for Jesus.

(Q) In your opinion, what is the significance of Union University to the Tennessee Baptist family?

(A) Union University has answered the call to prepare the students from our

Tennessee Baptist churches for a world that no longer views life from a Christian perspective. Students who attend Union University receive one of the finest educations available anywhere in the world.

(Q) Is it appropriate to take church funds for this offering from those earmarked for the Cooperative Program? Why or why not?

(A) In my opinion, it would not be appropriate for churches to reallocate funds committed through the Cooperative Program to this special offering intended to assist Union University in its time of crisis.

Here's why. The financial needs of the ministries supported through Cooperative Program giving have not been altered in any way as a result of the situation at Union. These ministries are dependent upon Cooperative Program giving from Tennessee Baptist churches to provide the necessary resources for their work in the name of the Lord throughout the state of Tennessee and around the world.

— See Groover, page 3



A Gift from the Family

Union's commitment to walk under the banner of Christ while providing a high-quality education is a testament to its significance to the Tennessee Baptist family. Union graduates, regardless of their field of study, carry a distinctive Christian worldview into our world.

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SBC CP gifts ahead of '08 pace

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program are 1.25 percent ahead of the same time frame in February 2007, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman.

As of Feb. 29, the year-to-date total of \$88,174,995.22 for Cooperative Program (CP) missions is \$1,089,443.37 ahead of the \$87,085,551.85 received at the same point in 2007. For the month, receipts of \$20,475,432.60 were 3.74 percent, or \$738,638.79, ahead of the \$19,736,793.81 received in February 2007.

Designated giving of \$99,327,891.74 for the same year-to-date period is 6.27 percent, or \$5,861,061.00, above gifts of \$93,466,830.74 received at this point last year. The \$60,282,863.86 in designated gifts received last month is \$3,852,299.35 above the \$56,430,564.51 received in February 2007, an increase of 6.83 percent.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$88,174,995.22 is 105.49 percent of the \$83,583,973.45 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The SBC operates on an Oct. 1-Sept. 30 fiscal year. □

Online registration begins for SBC annual meeting

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Registration has opened for churches to register messengers online for the Southern Baptist Convention's June 10-11 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

For online registration, churches should go to the SBC website, www.sbc.net, which opened the 2008 registration process March 1.

Online registration can help messengers avoid waiting in line at the convention center while a registration worker types in various lines of information.

Jim Wells, SBC registration secretary, said, "Each year we are seeing a more streamlined process for churches using the online registration system, for which we are pleased."

Last year, the fifth year for the online service, 73.6 percent of messengers to the annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas, registered online.

When registering online, the SBC website gives a church a "messenger reference number" form to be printed out and presented by each messenger at the SBC registration booth in exchange for a name

New Montana exec aims to help churches

By Karen Willoughby
Baptist Press

BILLINGS, Mont. — Fred Hewett, whose background stretches from the corporate world to the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, is the new executive director of the Montana Southern Baptist Convention.

The Montana convention currently is in partnership with the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"We are excited about having Fred here and look forward to what he brings to Montana and the ministries we want to see grow here," said William Johnson, church planter/pastor of Gallatin Valley Fellowship in Manhattan, Mont., vice president of the state convention and a member of the executive board search committee.

"It's a great benefit for Montana that the executive director has the skills and background Fred has," Johnson continued. "He's expressed a passion for having healthy churches in Montana and that those healthy churches reproduce and start new churches, which will help our effectiveness in reaching the lost in Montana. And he's just a very personable guy, which goes along with the relational atmosphere that's needed in Montana."

The landscape of Montana is changing, Hewett said, referring to the landscape of its people, not the Big Sky Country's undulating wheat fields in the eastern part of the state or the craggy mountains to the west. The number of hardworking cowboys, lumberjacks, and copper miners are decreasing and the number of early retirees intent on enjoying a life of ease is increasing, the new executive director said.

"There's coming a day when we'll need to intersect our church planting strategy with



HEWETT

many of our churches that are in decline and want to start again or experience renewal," Hewett said while sitting at the desk that has been his since mid-February.

Hewett has a background in starting and strengthening churches, coming to Montana from the North American Mission Board, where he was a church planting coordinator for nearly four years in a 10-state/two-nation region stretching from Texas and Louisiana to Canada.

"I really have a heart for the local church and believe that if we're going to reach North America for Jesus Christ it's going to be done through the ministry of the local church," said Hewett, who honed his skills in a variety of roles during his seminary years. "God has gifted me with the spiritual gifts of administration and leadership, and my background is filled with both rural blue-collar and city white-collar experiences, and the blending of those two makes me a good fit in Montana."

"Not only am I very passionate about church planting, but I'm also passionate about strengthening local churches, and I have experience in both areas," the new executive director said.

The Montana convention, which attained that status six years ago, encompasses some 130 congregations in six regional associations. Out of every \$100 in Cooperative Program giving from Montana churches, \$22 is sent on to national and international missions and ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention. The remainder stays in Montana, as part of its \$1.5 million annual budget. The state also remains heavily dependent on NAMB funding and on the support it receives from its partnership with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and out-of-state churches and associations, Hewett said.

"We are thankful for the generous giving of those who partner with us and their generosity in other ways, through mission trips that build churches, lead in backyard Bible clubs and Vacation Bible Schools, do surveys, and more," Hewett said. □

tag and a set of ballots.

The appropriate church-authorized representative must complete all online registration.

The process includes entering information normally found on the traditional messenger card.

Online registration ends at midnight June 7 — after which registration must be done at the registration desk beginning at 4 p.m. June 8.

Names can be added, edited, and deleted online up to June 7. Each messenger must present the printed form that shows the messenger's reference number — given on the website — at the registration booth in order to receive a name tag and set of ballots.

Technically, a person is not a messenger until the messenger reference number is presented at the registration booth.

The traditional registration method also will be available for those churches without Internet access. □

'No right to homeschool,' says California judge

Baptist Press

LOS ANGELES — In a decision that has alarmed the homeschooling community nationwide, a California appeals court

has ruled parents have no constitutional right to homeschool their children and that those parents who do much be credentialed teachers.

The decision was issued Feb. 28 but wasn't picked up by national media until March 6. The court case arose in juvenile court and the parties had court-appointed attorneys, meaning that even some of the nation's leading homeschooling organizations, such as the Home School Legal Defense Association, didn't know about the case until the ruling was issued.

But despite that fact it flew under the radar, it could have broad implications on the state's estimated 166,000 homeschool students — and set a dangerous precedent for other such students nationwide. The decision is particularly troublesome, pro-family leaders say, because California's public schools have some of the more liberal laws in the nation regarding the teaching about sexuality and homosexuality. More than five years ago Focus on the Family's James Dobson said if he had children in California's public schools, he would pull them out.

Justice H. Walter Croskey wrote the ruling for the three-judge panel, which was unanimous in its decision.

"California courts have held that under provisions in the Education Code, parents do not

have a constitutional right to home school their children," Croskey wrote.

California law, the court ruled, requires that children be enrolled and attend a public or private school or be "tutored by a person holding a valid state teaching credential for the grade being taught." Parents who fail to follow the state law could face criminal penalties.

The court's ruling overturned a lower court decision that had ruled parents do indeed have a constitutional right to homeschool their children. The appeals court's decision is being appealed to the California Supreme Court.

The Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), a legal organization that defends homeschoolers, is gathering petitions to ask the California Supreme Court to "de-publish" the opinion. If the opinion is published it would have no authority, the organization said.

Another legal organization, the California-based Pacific Justice Institute, called the scope of the decision "breathtaking."

"It not only attacks traditional homeschooling, but also calls into question homeschooling through charter schools and teaching children at home via independent study through public and private schools," according to Brad Dacus, president of the Pacific Justice Institute. □

Deacons play key role in keeping unity in the church: Henry

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — One of the biggest challenges facing Baptist deacons is keeping unity in the fellowship, says long-time pastor Jim Henry.

Henry, a Nashville native, is retired from First Baptist Church, Orlando, and is a past president of the Southern Baptist Convention. Henry also is a former pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville.

"Deacons play an important role in keeping unity in the fellowship," Henry affirmed.

He noted that if there are problems within the church, they will eventually be known in the community.

"It is not the outside forces that affect us most. It is what happens on the inside," Henry told about 300 deacons and ministers attending a recent deacons retreat sponsored by Knox County Baptist Association, Chilhowee Baptist Association, and the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The veteran pastor shared several reasons why unity is important.

Henry noted that the Apostle Paul dealt with unity in the church in Philippians 2:1-4.

Paul made an appeal for unity, Henry related. "People in the New Testament were just like us. Human nature does not change."

Unity in a church body is vital because when the church is unified it is most like the Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit), Henry said.

What's more, he continued, Jesus prayed for the unity of

TBC survey indicates need exists for training deacons

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — A survey of Tennessee Baptist pastors indicates there is a need for training of potential deacons across the state.

The survey was conducted by the deacon affinity team of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The survey was sent to about 300 pastors across Tennessee representing a cross-section of churches based on size and location, said Steve Holt, TBC ministry specialist and leader of the deacon affinity team. The team received about 80 responses representing a good cross-section, Holt said.

According to the survey, 70 percent of the churches have no training process for potential deacons.

The survey has convinced Holt that there is a real need to provide training to deacons who serve in Tennessee Baptist churches.

"There is a ministry to deacons and churches from our perspective as a convention," Holt said.

"We need to be more involved in working with deacons and helping them in their ministry," he added.

Among the findings, the survey also indicated that 65 percent of churches surveyed do not have a rotation process for deacons.

the body (John 17:20-21), he added.

Unity also is necessary in times of war and our country is in a time of spiritual warfare, Henry stressed.

"When our world is in conflict, our churches must be together to stand strong amid spiritual warfare."

Henry noted that Satan wants churches to have

The Tennessee pastors also indicated that 65 percent of their deacons perceive themselves as servants, while 20 percent see themselves as a decision-making board.

Holt is hopeful that a significant number of deacons truly see their roles as servants because that is scriptural, he said.

"Sometimes you have to lead by example in sacrificial ways, giving oneself to the church and to the Lord," Holt observed.

Pastors also cited vision, personal development, and training as the three most significant needs among deacons in their churches.

When it comes to nominating deacons, 53 percent of those polled indicated they are nominated by the church.

Other methods for nominating deacons included a nominating committee comprised of deacons, appointment by a committee or deacons, or appointment by the pastor.

Among other findings, the majority of pastors agree:

- That they work well with their deacons.
- The deacons are usually united on important issues in the church.



HOLT

- The deacons serve alongside their pastor in ministering to the needs of the congregation.

Conversely, a majority of the pastors disagree that they work together to minister to needs of the community and that the deacons are the most spiritual individuals in their churches.

The last finding is the one that surprised Holt the most.

"I was surprised that pastors responded least positively to the statement that deacons are the most spiritual individuals in the church."

"You would think that if the deacons are going to be the spiritual leaders in the church they would be perceived that way."

Overall, Holt was generally satisfied with the survey.

"It highlighted the need for training opportunities for deacons, whether it be on a church, associational, or regional basis," he said.

Holt noted that Knox County Baptist Association and Chilhowee Baptist Association in East Tennessee held a deacons retreat in February.

"We are exploring the possibility of offering a similar retreat in each region of the state. We definitely feel there is a need for this training and deacons have expressed a desire for these types of learning opportunities," Holt said. □

Groover answers questions about Day of Prayer and ...

— Continued from page 1

To redirect funds committed through the Cooperative Program for this special offering has the potential of creating another crisis for ministries just as significant as Union. (It should be noted that each of the Tennessee Baptist Convention institutions have already participated in a cooperative effort to aid Union.) This offering is intended to assist Union University in its recovery effort, not to create problems for other ministries. This is a special offering that should be considered by every Tennessee Baptist church as being over and above their Cooperative Program giving.

(Q) How will Union use these funds? (A) As members of the Executive Board visited the Union campus on Thursday following the tornado, the words of Union's President, Dr. David Dockery, about their immediate need spoke to my heart. Seeing the destruction around us and recognizing the tremendous challenge facing Dr. Dockery and his staff to replace buildings destroyed by the storm, his main concern was for the students. I am certain a

portion of these funds will be used to assist in the ongoing process of meeting the needs of Union students.

In addition, insurance will not cover all of the loss Union has sustained (Union's latest estimates are they will have a \$15 million to \$20 million shortfall as a result of the tornado). Union is faced with needing capital funds to replace buildings destroyed by the tornado. I am certain a portion of the funds from this special offering will be used in the rebuilding of the Union campus. There are other needs that Union may have that we are not aware of at this time and, with the leadership team at Union having displayed its ability to respond to this crisis in a responsible and Christ-honoring fashion, I believe we can expect them to handle the funds provided through this offering in the same manner. We have entrusted our greatest treasure, our students, to them.



GROOVER

We can entrust them to be accountable in the use of these funds as well.

(Q) As a pastor, what would you say to other pastors about participating in this "Day of Prayer and Giving for Union University?"

(A) As a pastor I am always searching for tangible ways to express God's immeasurable love. God's love required the greatest sacrifice ever known, as God gave His only begotten Son for His creation. This Day of Prayer and Giving for Union University will require a sacrifice on the part of our churches, but it is a wonderful opportunity to show God's people how sacrificial giving is evidence of our love for and our faith in the Living God. I believe God will bless those who will trust Him and give cheerfully to this offering. My prayer is for each Tennessee Baptist pastor to use their participation in this offering for Union as an opportunity to teach their fellowship the joy of giving and supporting the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. I believe supporting Union University through this offering is the right thing to do and it is my hope that every Ten-

nessee Baptist pastor will join me and Victory Baptist Church in giving to that end.

(Q) Where should funds collected through this offering be sent?

(A) In an attempt to assist Union University in processing the funds that will come through this offering, the Executive Board Ministries leadership team has made available their resources at the Brentwood offices. In order to make the accounting of the funds from Tennessee Baptist churches manageable for Union, we are asking that funds be sent to the Brentwood office with checks made out to the TBC and earmarked for Union. Rather than Union having to process hundreds or thousands of checks from churches and needing to account for them, the Executive Board staff will use the process already in place to account for funds from churches and then forward the money and a list of contributions on to Union.

Mail checks to: Tennessee Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, TN 37024. □

Works with George Beverly Shea**Ernie Couch & Revival ministers through music**

By Connie Davis Bushey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — For about 15 years Ernie Couch & Revival have been performing around the United States, recording CDs, and doing other musical ministry projects.

The group, both vocalists and instrumentalists, is made up of Ernie Couch; Jason Couch, his son; Matt Chaffin; and Joe Cox; and is based in Nashville. Ernie is a member of Tusculum Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, and the other three members are members of area churches.

The group just returned from an 11-day tour to the West associated with the release of the CD, "Pioneer Hymns," featuring guest performer George Beverly Shea. Shea is a long-time staff member of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and soloist for it. "Pioneer Hymns" was released on Feb. 3, Shea's 99th birthday, explained Couch. The hymns featured were written in the 1800s.

"Pioneer Hymns" is being distributed in most English-speaking countries in the world, Couch added.

Another project Couch is proud of is the production of the CD, "Letter From Home," for military troops, especially those in Afghanistan and Iraq. Ernie Couch & Revival, with help from donations, produced 10,000 CDs which are being distributed by Operation Shoebox, a ministry based in Florida, which also works with military chaplains. The project was coordinated through the Pentagon. Couch said members of Tusculum Hills Baptist gave much of the funds for the project.

"Letter From Home" features Shea; members of the Christian group, Petra; the late Boots Randolph; George Jones; the late Jake Hess; and an instrumental number. Soldiers also are directed on the CD to view music videos of Ernie Couch & Revival on YouTube.com and for information to www.myspace.com/ecandr. The CD is not available to the general public.

Life of a musician

"The saddest thing is a song unsung," said Ernie Couch to explain some of his journey into the music industry. He was singing in churches in Kansas where he grew up by the age of 9 and singing and playing the piano for himself on TV at the age of 12.

Couch composes about two-thirds of the music he and his group performs. He arranges the rest with help from members of the group.

Partly to be able to perform songs he wrote, he formed Ernie Couch & Revival.

Though touring "is not easy at times," said Couch, the group travels about 60,000 miles a year. It performs music live, only using tracks to introduce them because the group produces and sells music tracks.

"There's nothing like the spontaneity of live music," said Couch. He used to tell choir members when he was a minister of music, "Sing out, make a mistake and let people know it, and move on." Couch served at one time as minister of music and youth at Antioch Baptist Church, Nashville. He also served several other churches as a minister.

He does all this, said Couch, because God called him to.

"If it weren't for that calling I'd stay here and play and sing in the studio."

The group performs at churches, but also at retreats, county fairs, city-wide concerts, crusades, and corporate events. They have performed at many annual board meetings of Electric Co-ops, he explained. This coming July 11-12 Ernie Couch & Revival will perform at Branson, Mo., at the Tri-Lake Center.

Views on music

Couch said his group sings four-part harmony and may be considered by some a Southern Gospel quartet, but the group performs a variety of music and most other groups do too.

He especially encouraged Christians to be open to various kinds of music.

Most people are "much more multifaceted than people give them credit for being," said Couch.

Many people like and enjoy a variety of music including contemporary Christian, contemporary Southern Gospel, bluegrass, Christian country, and family groups with Appalachian roots, he explained.

The main thing which ought to concern Christians is if it "lifts up and projects the Good News." Also, not being "so quick to pre-judge," he observed, "would help us in many ways."

"The thing that sets Christian music apart isn't the style of the music, it's the message," said Couch.

Unless the performer is doing something "shameful to the Gospel," the important thing is "not how you present the music, but what you present."

Churches should adopt the approach of a music appreciation class, introducing a variety of music for praise and worship.

God made people creative beings, he explained.

"To create is to emulate God," said Couch, who added he knows this statement "sounds a little pompous" though he believes it because people are created in God's image.

As people express themselves in different kinds of worship and praise they "appreciate the message more and stay open and change."

Meeting George Beverly Shea

Couch has enjoyed associations with several well-known musicians. On several of the CDs the group has recorded, they have featured a well-known musician.

The group especially enjoyed working with Shea, whom Couch watched on TV 50 years ago.

Shea donated his time for the recording, hosting Ernie Couch & Revival in his home in Montreat, N.C., said Couch. In fact, Shea's wife, Karlene, had made brownies for the group when they arrived last year.



ERNIE COUCH & REVIVAL, a music group of Nashville, sits with George Beverly Shea, center, in his home in Montreat, N.C., last year following a recording session with Shea for the group's newest release, "Pioneer Hymns." Members of the group are, from left, Jason Couch, Matt Chaffin, Joe Cox, and Ernie Couch.

The group recorded Shea, who had chosen to sing, "The Haven of Rest." Couch explained recording can be done from almost anywhere today with current equipment including computers and recording software. Shea sang the hymn from an easy chair, said Couch, while listening to a track recorded by the group through a headset.

The group visited for the rest of the day with the Sheas, said Couch, who said it was just like spending time with old friends.

Shea, at that time 98 years old, also took the group out to supper at a local restaurant.

They enjoyed their time with him immensely, said Couch. Shea showed them his house, especially the grand piano and two organs he has. One of the organs is a pipe organ. The pipes extend into the house's basement.

One of the members of the group asked Shea about writing, "I'd Rather Have Jesus." He said the song had been written by a lady to another melody. Shea composed the new melody in 1939.

He said one of his earliest musical memories was when he was about four years old growing up in Canada. His father was a minister of the Wesleyan church. The church hosted some music evangelists who introduced the "new" song, "The Old Rugged Cross," to the congregation.

Shea also said he was so thankful for the man who "gently shared" the Gospel with his father which led to his and his family's Christian faith.

From his work with Billy Graham, Shea recalled a meeting in Seoul, Korea, which drew 1.1 million people. He also recalled a 1957 meeting in Times



MEMBERS OF Ernie Couch & Revival are, from left, Matt Chaffin (standing), Ernie Couch, Jason Couch, and Joe Cox.

Square of New York City in which people filled the streets to participate in the meeting. Shea also told of visiting with Germans near the Berlin Wall during the rule of Communism in the area.

Another blessing from the visit is that Shea occasionally calls Couch on the phone to visit.

Other parts of journey

Couch also was a freelance graphic artist for the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources), Nashville. He designed historical maps, kits, and worked on a Bible dictionary.

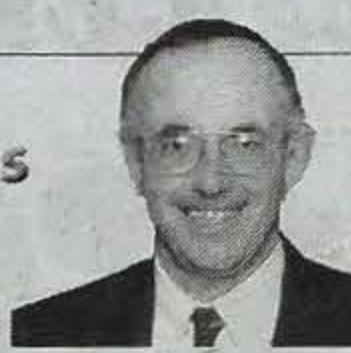
He also wrote books on trivia about Tennessee, Georgia, and several other states for Rutledge Hill Press of Nashville.

Contact information

To learn more about Ernie Couch & Revival, visit www.erniecouchandrevival.com or www.myspace.com/ecandr. The e-mail address is revival@erniecouchandrevival.com. □

Deacons are examples — whether we want to be or not

reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

This issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* contains several articles and columns on the ministry and role of deacons.

Most of the perspective in these articles comes from men who have been pastors. Jim Henry, Steve Holt, and Johnnie Godwin provide solid insights, based on Scripture, as to who deacons are and what their role should be. These men have years of experience in working with deacons and their observations are excellent.

I am not a pastor, but, I have been a deacon for 20-plus

years. Let me share a few thoughts on deacon ministry from what I have discovered "on the job."

First, a deacon is a servant. The Bible is very clear about that. You can argue about some of the other attributes of a deacon, but servant ministry is a given. During all of my tenure as a deacon my pastor Ken Clayton (now retired) advocated that deacons must be servants. More importantly, however, he modeled servanthood. Before he encountered major health problems, when there was a work day, he would be there with paintbrush in hand. He helped paint a good portion of our sanctuary when it was first built. He made the phone calls to families when he learned of a death. He ministered to the needs of the church's families and he taught

us to do the same.

Now, it is true that in some churches, deacons are a governing body. If that is needed, I see no problem with that — as long as they do not neglect the servant ministry aspect of their role. I saw that model in the small rural church in which I was reared. The deacons did oversee the business, but most, if not all, were truly servant models as well.

Second, deacons set an example, good or bad. Our church is currently has a transitional pastor as we seek to find someone to succeed Bro. Ken. A friend gently reminded me that it would be a good thing if the deacons supported our transitional pastor with our attendance on Sunday night. I don't know about the other deacons at our church, but apparently he noticed my Sunday night attendance had been

lacking for a while (for the record, I have now attended on Sunday nights the last three out of four weeks). There was no malice on his part, but it made me aware that people are watching the deacons and we do have a responsibility to do what is expected. It also goes beyond just attendance. Deacons should be involved in other facets of church life. We need to serve on committees, usher, whatever it takes. Deacons, while set aside to serve in the church, are not to be placed on a pedestal. We should be active, serving members and remember that people are watching the example we set.

Third, a person should not become a deacon for the glory or for the status. I have seen that too often. A person who only wants the "status" or prestige that is associated with the position will not be

a good deacon.

There are many other things I have learned about being a deacon, but space is limited.

As I reflect on my own deacon ministry, I admit there have been times I have failed miserably in my role, but God and my church have given me numerous opportunities to "get it right." Hopefully, under God's guiding hand, that day will come.

Ministering and serving others in our congregations is an ongoing challenge all deacons must face. While we are accountable to our individual congregations, we are ultimately accountable to God.

If we take seriously the biblical model of the deacon, perhaps one day we will hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servants." □

Serving others describes what 'real deacons' are all about

words from the Word



By Johnnie C. Godwin

Bruce Feirstein's 1982 best-selling *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche* sold 1.6 million copies and was on *The New York Times* Best Seller list for 53 weeks. It was a satire but gave us the term "quiche-eater" for men who lack stereotypes we typically apply to real men. Bruce followed that up with another satire titled *Real Men Don't Bond*. Since I tend to think in reverse, I got to wondering, What do real men do? What do real Christian men do? What do real deacons do?

Recently, in a fine Kentucky church on Baptist Men's Day, I preached on "What Do Real Men Do?" The deacons had to hold a meeting that afternoon to see whether they were going to let me come back that night. [Smile.] Just last week I spoke to a fine group of deacons and wives nearby on "The Challenge to 'Deacon' with Gumption." I don't think those deacons will invite me back.

However, my views are quite biblical — especially on deacons. So I invite you to join me in taking a look at what real deacons do. Once more, I don't have an argument to make but Bible truths and personal experiences to share.

What is a deacon?

The word "deacon" is only used five times in the KJV of the Bible (Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:8,10,12,13 — three times as a noun and twice as a verb: that means, "deacon-

ing"). English didn't exist when the New Testament was written, so the New Testament had to be translated from Greek. In the Greek New Testament, minister/servant words that are essentially the same as "deacon" appear about 100 times. Serving others is at the heart of the meaning for all these uses in the New Testament. In the broadest sense of the word, a deacon is a ministering servant. Though Acts 6 doesn't use the word "deacon," scholars agree it describes their basic function: namely, to serve.

Who is a deacon?

Using the most generic meaning of the Greek New Testament word for deacon, a deacon is one who serves or ministers to others. In that widest sense, all Christians are to be deacons. Paul wrote in II Corinthians 5:18 that we Christians have this ministry [deaconship] of reconciliation. Jesus came as the perfect deacon model. He came to "deacon," not to be "deaconed" to (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; see also Romans 15:8). On a target, Jesus is the 10 — perfect; and we'll never match it. Still, His model is our goal in service and ministry.

Lots of other disciples are referred to as deacons in the Greek New Testament. One of those is Phebe, who is referred to as "a servant of the church" (Romans 16:1, KJV). Some folks pick over the nit of whether she was an ordained deacon — since the Greek word there is "deacon." Well,

let's leave the nitpicking to nitwits — which don't include you and me, of course — and just know that the Bible says she was a servant (which is at the heart of deaconship).

Not to quibble or get involved in sidetracks, my saintly mother lived a life of servanthood. One woman told another one that she wondered why Mother wasn't elected a deacon in the church. The second replied, "Dimple was always too busy serving to ever go to a deacons' meeting."

Real deacons ... serve our Lord for His glory and do it in a way that helps the church work in unity to God's glory.

Well, let's move on a notch.

Elected deacons?

Deacon was a function before it was an office. But the New Testament clearly identifies qualifications for the office of deacon. So besides service in general for all Christians, there evolved an office of deacons with qualifications given. See Acts 6 for the need, type, and service for deacons. See I Timothy 3:8-13 for qualifications. I don't need to identify qualifications. You know them well.

However, as a former pastor, I would comment that deacons have been some of my finest mentors and helpers — as well as some of my worst thorns in the flesh. It was 75-year-old deacon chairman Mr. Richard who taught me how to fish with a purple worm: let

the worm sink to the bottom; be patient when a fish tugs but hasn't gotten hooked; then reel the fish in when the hook is set. That lesson transferred well to my pastoral need for patience when I was 25.

In another pastorate, young deacon Charlie helped me when I needed it. A woman church member was clamoring, which means quarreling or mouthing (Ephesians 4:31). In this case, it was badmouthing the pastor in a way that was contentious and hurt

the church and my ministry. My personal visit for reconciliation hadn't helped. Charlie said to me: "Preacher, don't worry about it. She was that way with the preacher before you and the one before him. I'll

take care of it." Now, I don't know what Charlie did; but the clamoring stopped. The woman kept coming to church and got nicer. Deacon Charlie did something that served all of us. Years later I went back to that church for a revival, and that same woman treated me as if I had been her all-time favorite pastor.

Thank the Lord for mentoring, ministering deacons.

How about deacons serving with 'gumption'

Well, I think this question is what got me in trouble — with a smile — when I spoke on Men's Day in Kentucky and later at a deacons-and-wives dinner in Tennessee. In both places, I happened to mention how the division of labor had evolved in my house since I had retired — all voluntary on

my part, mind you. I told how I had decided to take over the vacuuming — as a real man using a motorized thing. Then I gradually took over gathering and taking out the trash and then making up the beds. Finally, last year, I decided to start cleaning the commodes too. I think it was sharing this last item that did me in.

I did tell the deacons they weren't too good to do anything — not even too good to clean the commodes. Then I told them that the authority of deacons is real; however, that authority is acquired by service rather than by election.

Well, you can see why I'm not in strong demand as a speaker for Men's Day and deacon-and-wife dinners. (Sometimes the women do want me to do an encore.)

Oh, about gumption? Phyllis came from Oklahoma; and I came from Texas. One time I came in from work and seminary in early marriage and told Phyllis I was worn out. She said, "You mean you don't have any gumption." That shocked me because in West Texas that was saying I didn't have any common sense. When I complained, she told me gumption meant get-up-and-go or energy. We got the dictionary out: My meaning was first; hers was second — but equal.

My point is that deacons are called to serve both with common sense and energy. That's what real deacons do. They serve our Lord for His glory and do it in a way that helps the church work in unity to God's glory. □ — Copyright 2008 by Johnnie C. Godwin. E-mail: johnniegodwin@comcast.net.

Evangelism
Discipleship
Ministry
Worship
Fellowship
Prayer

Church Health Matters

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



Evangelism Matters

Lostness ... the world of lostness and the world of spiritual life will never fit together. However, those with spiritual life are called to live with humility, spiritual wisdom, courage, compassion, and intentionality.

We are called upon to be "light" in the world of darkness illuminating pathways and drawing attention to the One who dispels darkness. Therefore, we must constantly look for ways to become more efficient and fruitful in the fulfillment of our work, (i.e., having well thought-out strategies and plans to work strategically with others in reducing lostness.)

Your state missionary staff is ready to assist with specific questions that churches may have about evangelism lostness.

The following TBC personnel are available:

Church Evangelism Strategies

Larry Gilmore(615) 371-7915
State Evangelism director

Steve Pearson(615) 371-2012
Evangelism specialist

Kent Shingleton(615) 371-2077
Youth Evangelism specialist

Church Planting

Wayne Terry(615) 355-7905
Church Planting, Middle Tennessee

Fred Davis(865) 988-7783
Church Planting, East Tennessee

Tim Hill(615) 371-2032
Ethnic Church Planting

Chuy Avila(615) 371-7913
Hispanic Church Planting

What Is Lostness Among Ethnic People?

By Tim Hill

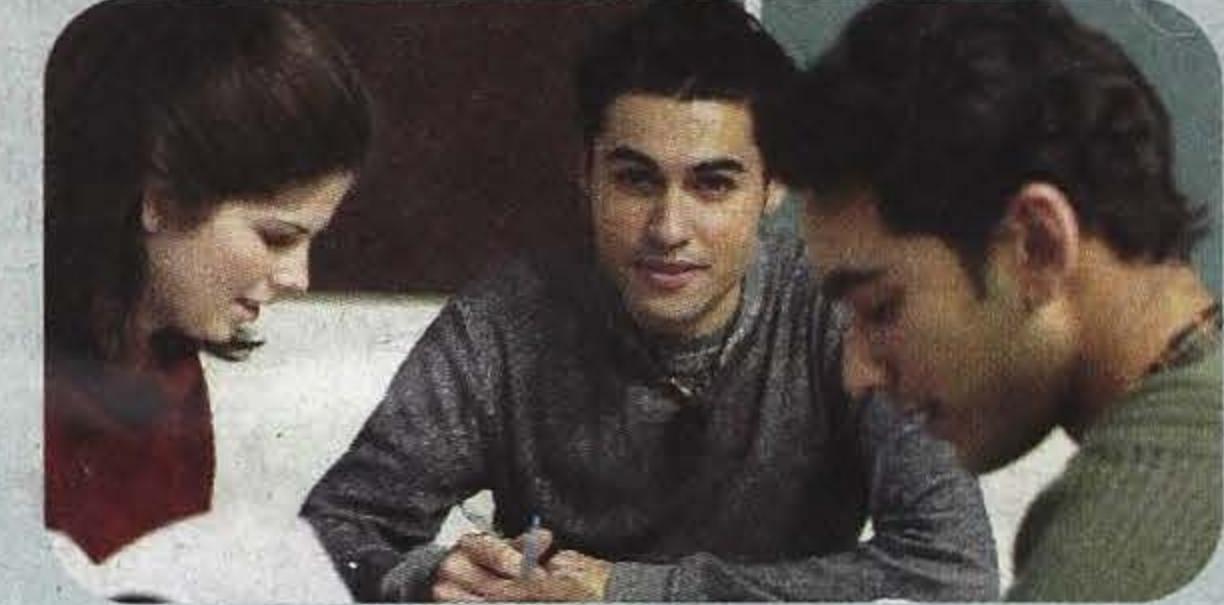
In the 2000 Census, 45 million (18 percent) people said they spoke a language other than English at home. The U.S. ranks fifth in the number of languages spoken in an individual country.

At least 311 languages are spoken throughout the U.S., which comprises 4.5 percent of the world's languages. As more and more international people move to Tennessee, there is a growing need for cross-cultural ministry, missions, and evangelism. Many of these internationals that have moved here or will move here have had little or no contact with someone who has presented them with a Christian witness.

According to the 2000 Census, Tennessee is home to 124,000 Hispanics, 56,000 Asians, 15,000 Native Americans, 56,000 other Ethnic groups, and 25,000 Deaf people who speak American Sign Language. These people come from different countries, language, cultural, and religious backgrounds.

It is not unusual to go to a local Wal-Mart and hear sometimes as many as 10 different languages spoken. Our Tennessee Baptist Churches now use as many as 30 different languages among more than 25 different major Ethnic groups in some 125 Ethnic congregations.

There are some 300,000 Ethnic and Language Culture people in our state, less than 3,000 total are members of our local Ethnic congregations. We are only reaching 1-2 percent of our Ethnic people that live in our state for Christ. That leaves 98 percent of



our Ethnic population in our state that is lost. People may speak other languages and have different cultures and religions, but if they don't know Jesus, they are lost.

For many years churches in Tennessee have sought to evangelize, minister, and start new churches with the different language culture groups in our state. In the last 10 years, there has been a very dramatic increase in language people groups that live and work in Tennessee. We are falling behind in our attempts to reach the international mission field of the lost here in our own community.

Many of these people have never had in their own country or even here in the U.S. an opportunity to hear the gospel openly preached and taught in their language. There exists a gospel communication vacuum.

We as Tennessee Baptists can fill that vacuum. But we have to be willing to: 1) Be aware of Ethnic people in our community; 2) Take the initiative to make contact and friendship with them; 3) Learn as much as you can about their country, language, culture, and religion; 4) Pray that God will lead you to the appropriate time, place, and situation to share Jesus with them; and 5) Be patient in your witness to them and let God work in His own time and way. If we are sensitive to the needs of Ethnic people and guidance of the Holy Spirit, God will use us in reaching Ethnic people with the gospel.

What Is the A.L.O.N.E. Track of Intentional Evangelism?

Lostness will be reduced only when we address it intentionally. But how does the pastor of the single-staff church get all the essentials done week after week, all by himself, A.L.O.N.E.?

The difficulty of the challenge is reduced when there is a well thought out plan to involve every church member in a personal, passion-driven ministry that is intentionally directed toward building bridges to non-believers.

The A.L.O.N.E. Track of Intentional Evangelism has been developed over the past few years by Sammy Gilbreath, director of evangelism in Alabama. It is a tool that enables a pastor to maximize his church calendar by having a specific church customized plan to build relationships with non-believers and develop leadership to close the back door of the church. It is designed to multiply the ministry of the local pastor without multiplying his work load. It is led and modeled by pastor and leadership and implemented through the Sunday School.

While the initial focus of the A.L.O.N.E. strategy was directed toward the single-staff church, the principles included can be utilized for the multi-staff church to maximize their potential for fruitfulness.

The result of the seminar will be an Intentional Evangelism direction designed specifically for your church.

The locations for upcoming seminars are:

Monday, April 7 10:00 a.m. – noon.

First Baptist Church, Huntingdon
108 Church Street

Contact: Jimmy Furr, Carroll Benton Association
director of missions - (866) 546-4581

Monday, April 7 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Immanuel Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg
709 Gaines Street (Hwy. 64)

Contact: Ray Maynard, Lawrence County Association
director of missions - (931) 852-4700

Tuesday, April 8 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

First Baptist Church, Springfield
400 North Main Street

Contact: Robert Tyson, Robertson County Association
director of missions - (615) 384-8197

Tuesday, April 8 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Immanuel Baptist Church, Lebanon
214 Castle Heights Avenue

Contact: Dave Shelley, Wilson County Association
director of missions - (615) 444-8820

The seminar is being sponsored by the Evangelism Team of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Larry Gilmore, state evangelism director. Your Cooperative Program gifts make this ministry possible.

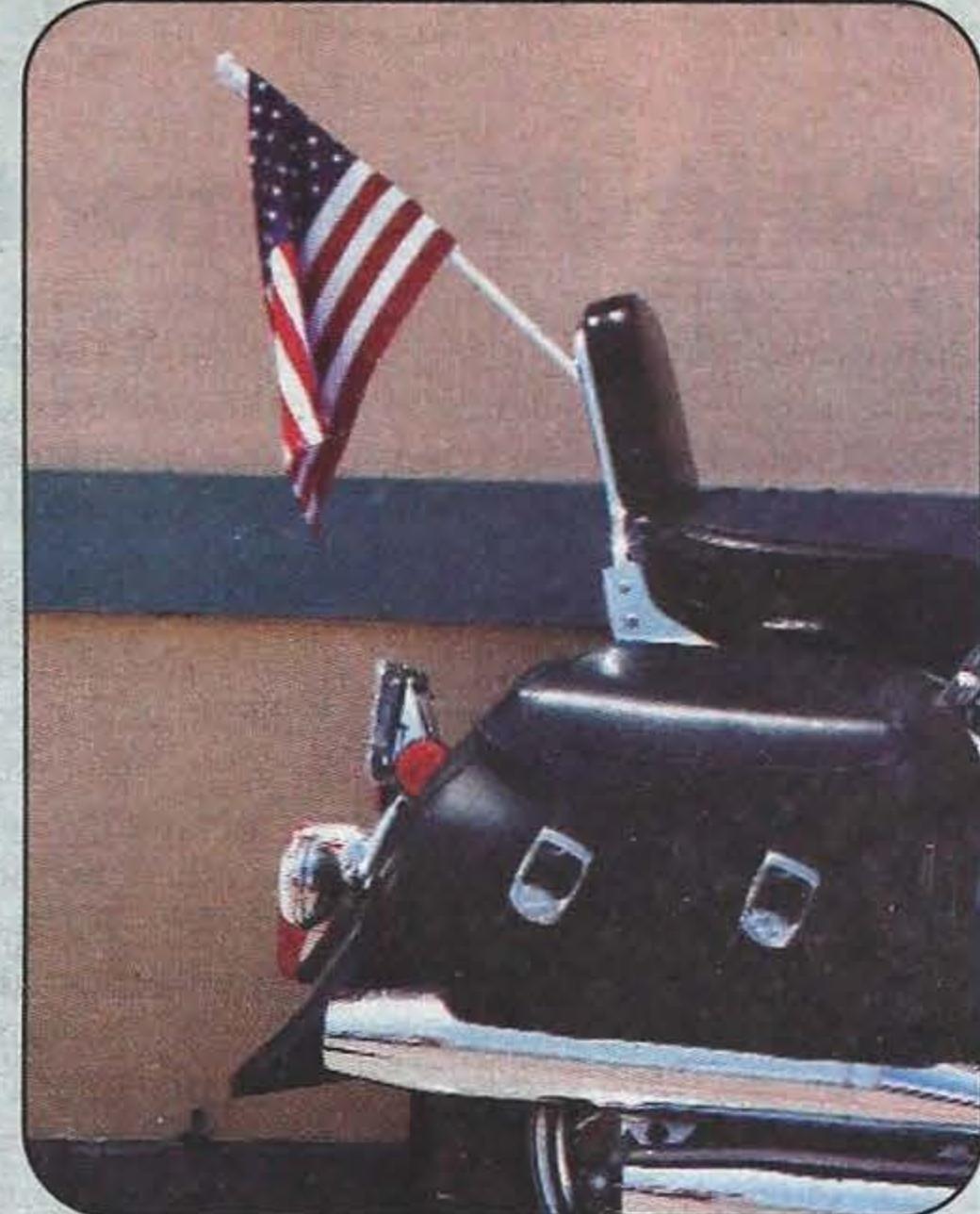
R 2 R Equals Rally to Ridgecrest

Motorcycle enthusiasts are capturing the idea of using their interest to not only have fun, but to be kingdom minded followers of Jesus Christ who use their bike interest to reach other bikers for Christ.

"No one left behind" is the motto of FAITH Riders. Men and women in FAITH Rider chapters and other motorcycle groups will be gathering at Ridgecrest, N.C., May 23-26, Memorial Day weekend, for the 2008 R 2 R.

An anticipated 500 bikers from all over the country will enjoy riding through the majestic mountains of North Carolina. One of the highlights of the weekend will be the ride to the National Cemetery in Black Mountain to pray for our nation, military men and women, and to remember those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. This has been an awesome experience in the past.

What an opportunity to explore how to use motorcycling to reach others for Christ and to build up believers in the faith. Seminars on ministry ideas and biker safety will be offered along with electrifying worship led by Second Chance and dynamic speakers.



Presently, there are 28 Church FAITH Rider chapters, four in Tennessee with two more being formed on March 30 in the Nashville area. Interest is growing, and inquiries are coming in about the group.

For information about this Tennessee motorcycle ministry, contact Larry Gilmore, lgilmore@tnbaptist.org or call him at (615) 371-7915.

For registration for the Rally, visit www.lifeway.com/motorcyclerally. Or contact Ron Pratt, national event planner at (615) 251-2065 or e-mail him at ronpratt@lifeway.com. For information about the national FAITH Rider ministry, visit www.faithriders.com.



Bonnaroo Volunteers Needed

The Mission Field is coming to Middle Tennessee. Are you available?
Plan now to be a missionary on the field June 12-15 at Bonnaroo.

For information and volunteer training events, contact Trinity Baptist Church, Manchester, pastor Kerry Walker at (931) 728-4588 or trinitybcpastor@bellsouth.net; TBC Evangelism office at (615) 371-7925; or Larry Gilmore, state evangelism director, at (615) 371-7915 or lgilmore@tnbaptist.org.

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

March 17-18	Developing and Managing People Supervision Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood
March 18	The Associational Church Planting Back Pack, Nashville Baptist Association Office, Nashville
March 19	The Associational Church Planting Back Pack, Madison-Chester Association Office, Jackson
March 28-30	Collegiate Spring Leadership Conference, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden
March 28-29	Journey Camp for Kids Weekend, Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center, Newport
March 29	Bible Fun Field Day (w/optional Journey Camp), Carson Springs Baptist Conference Center, Newport
March 29	Regional Disaster Relief Training (West Tennessee), First Baptist Church, Jackson
March 31	Power Up Your Sunday School Conference, First Baptist Church, Oneida

For more information, please visit www.tnbaptist.org.

One-in-16 elementary age kids in America enrolled in VBS

By Polly House
LifeWay news office

NASHVILLE — Vacation Bible School is huge. How huge? Almost one-in-16 children ages 5-12 in America was enrolled in a Southern Baptist VBS, according to figures from 2006.

"The evangelism potential for VBS is unbelievable," said Ken Marler, network partnership specialist with LifeWay Christian Resources, who led a session on the importance of VBS follow up during the VBS Preview event held here Jan. 31-Feb. 2 at LifeWay.

Vacation Bible School is a ministry of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We enrolled more than 2.9 million people in VBS [in 2006] and about 2 million of those were ages 5-12," said Marler, a former ministry specialist with the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

"When you realize that there are 32 million children in America who are between ages 5-12, it's staggering to think about 1-in-16 children in that age group was enrolled in a LifeWay VBS in a Southern Baptist church."

Looking at those numbers requires VBS leaders to take the responsibility to keep up with the children following the week's event.

Marler offered the following suggestions:

(1) Set goals. Plan to follow up. First, decide quickly to make follow up visits and then determine how many leaders should be involved. Second, set up teams. Finally, at each visit, have information about the church and Sunday School ready to give to each family.

(2) Include adult class leaders and children's department leaders. Before VBS even begins, enlist leaders to visit each child's home after VBS. Not only should there be a plan for the children, but bring along adults from an appropriate class to visit with the parents.

(3) Registration must be correct. Fill out an information card on every child who comes to VBS. Even the children who are regular church attendees need to have their information in writing. LifeWay offers VBS Tools Online as a simple way to keep all the information organized.

(4) Consider a VBS follow up director. The follow up director should be someone who is not heavily involved in the VBS week activities so he or she will

be fresh when the week is over. He or she needs to select and enlist team members. Their job is to coordinate VBS family visits.

(5) Report VBS follow up efforts to the congregation. From the pulpit, enthusiastically remind the congregation that VBS was a big success. Tell them how many children participated and how many families benefited from the follow up. Remember too, that some "follow up" goes on all year long.

(6) Establish a VBS prayer ministry. This is a ministry that can be active all year long, not just for the month leading

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MARLER

up to VBS. Make a VBS prayer calendar and distribute it to the entire church.

(7) VBS Never Ends emphasis. Throughout the year, remind people of the upcoming theme. For example, in January play a VBS music video. When the director is selected, introduce him or her to the congregation and let him or her remind church members of the VBS date.

(8) Testimonies and interviews. Throughout the year, let people who have been touched

by VBS give brief testimonies of how they were changed. When those who received Christ because of the influence of VBS are baptized, tell the congregation.

(9) VBS Day in Sunday School. Put flyers in the information boxes that remind classes of the theme. Have theme-appropriate decorations in the hallways. Begin VBS enrollment in the Sunday School classes where parents can sign up their children. □

Help Preserve the Future of the B&R

An endowment fund for the *Baptist and Reflector* has been established at the Tennessee Baptist Foundation. TBF staff can help you in securing the future of the official newsmagazine of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. For more information about leaving the *B&R* in your will or making a contribution to the endowment fund, contact William L. "Bo" Childs or Gary Coltharp at the TBF at (615) 371-2029.

For the Glory of God

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www.sbts.edu/campusvisit



Louisville. Kentucky

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Don't let Vacation Bible School end on Friday

LifeWay news office

NASHVILLE — If you don't plan to follow up with Vacation Bible School, you might as well not have it.

"The whole point of Vacation Bible School is to lead the children, youth, and adults who attend to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Bottom line. That's it," said Jerry Wooley, VBS specialist at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The fun, the games, and the music are the means to getting the opportunity to talk with the children and their families and share the gospel with them," he added.

At this year's four VBS Preview events held at LifeWay Ridgecrest and LifeWay Glorieta Conference Centers and at LifeWay in Nashville, the 2,500 men and women who came from local churches across the country heard the importance of having their VBS experience extend beyond the week of fun.

"Last year 90 percent of the people who turned in evaluation forms from the VBS Preview events indicated they needed help with follow up," Wooley said. "We honestly had no idea the need was that great."

In 2006, the most recent year's figures, almost 3 million people were enrolled in VBS. There were 212,000 prospects discovered for Sunday School. Almost 40,000 people were enrolled in Sunday School because of VBS, Wooley said.

"It is startling to realize that in Vacation

Bible School in 2006, we documented 94,980 decisions to accept Christ," he said. "That is 1.1 decision for every one person trained as a VBS worker by our state conventions. That is phenomenal when you consider that statistically, SBC wide, it takes 44 people to win one person to Christ."

Vacation Bible School is the single most effective evangelism strategy in the Southern Baptist Convention. In 2006, 26 percent of the 364,826 baptisms in SBC churches were a direct result of VBS.

"These numbers are just the ones we know about, that we have documentation about," Wooley said. "I can only imagine how many more people are reached when you think about the parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and friends of these children."

Wooley said that he found it heartbreaking that some churches finish their week of VBS, take their enrollment cards, bundle them in a rubber band, and stick them on a shelf to gather dust. "I actually have had churches that proudly showed me stacks of bundled VBS cards from several years," he said. "They don't even seem to realize they are just bundles of missed opportunities."

During this year's VBS Preview, several breakout sessions specifically addressed ideas for following up with the children after VBS is over.

Other sessions highlighted included volunteer appreciation, crafts/snacks, and family night ideas. □

Bledsoe reaps rewards from helping Gulf Coast Association

By Marcia Knox
Baptist and Reflector

GALLATIN — If the Golden Rule says, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," then the Bledsoe Baptist Association, located here, is currently reaping its rewards from the Gulf Coast Baptist Association, Gulfport, Miss.

Bledsoe Association received a check for more than \$21,500 Feb. 26 from Gulf Coast Association for tornado recovery efforts and will soon host three Mississippi rebuild teams, according to Mike Pennington, director of missions for Bledsoe Association.

Bledsoe Association, which encompasses three counties, is continuing its recovery efforts following the Feb. 5 F-4 tornado that claimed 13 lives and injured 44 in Macon County, claimed eight lives and injured 13 in Sumner County, and claimed two lives and injured five in Trousdale County along

with the destruction of numerous homes, schools, churches, and businesses.

Gulf Coast Association is now ministering to Bledsoe Association because almost two years ago following Hurricane Katrina a partnership was formed between Big Ridge Baptist Church, D'Iberville, Miss., and Bledsoe Association. In addition to the donation, Big Ridge Baptist has scheduled three rebuild teams to serve in Bledsoe Association for weeks in May, June, and July.

The partnership led Bledsoe to send seven teams to Mississippi to assist Hurricane Katrina victims, reported Pennington.

On Feb. 11 Joy Wilcox, rebuild coordinator for Big Ridge Baptist "called to say that their church had taken a \$1,700 offering to help us rebuild after the tornado," he added.

"She called again Feb. 20 to say that their association, the Gulf Coast Association, the asso-

ciation hardest hit by Katrina which still has lots of rebuild work to be done, had raised an offering of over \$20,000 to send to Bledsoe.

"I was blown away when she told me the check was over \$21,500. This is a God thing, and God prepared this. It is beautiful how Baptists can work together," said Pennington.

"That's why I love being a Southern Baptist; we can accomplish way more together than we can separately. That money will help us so much," he continued.

Bledsoe Association churches needing financial help are Cragfont Baptist Church, Castalian Springs, and First Baptist Church, Lafayette, which were open almost 24/7 during the initial tornado

response, according to Pennington. In addition to these churches, Jubilee Worship Center, Westmoreland, and New Life Baptist Church, Lafayette, also housed volunteers.

"Huge utility bills are on the way for the churches that were open 24 hours a day. Several association churches have already taken special offerings. All four churches remain open to house rebuild and cleanup teams," Pennington added.

"People are being touched with the love of God, and God is being glorified as our churches serve in the relief effort."

"Big Ridge Baptist has been so impacted by our teams going there that when we were hurting they had to respond, because we're a part of the body of Christ." Baptists in Bledsoe have also become close personal friends with Wilcox and Steve Mooneyham, director of missions, Gulf Coast Association, he explained.

"Our folks understand the

recovery need and are anxious to respond to Tennessee," said Mooneyham. "We got a call over the weekend following the tornado from Wilcox, whose husband Robert is working with our associational Katrina rebuild coordinator."

According to Mooneyham, she told him that there was need for tornado recovery efforts in Bledsoe Association. She said that their church was going to take an offering because of the relationships built as Bledsoe Association had sent teams that stayed at Big Ridge Baptist.

"We also decided to mention the recovery need to the Mississippi churches where the association staff was preaching that weekend. We then made other phone calls to churches in the Gulf Coast Association to meet the need."

"We sent a check for more than \$21,500 to Bledsoe Association, and there is more money coming," said Mooneyham. □

FBC, Seymour, tests out new disaster response unit in Lafayette

By Marcia Knox
Baptist and Reflector

LAFAYETTE — A rebuild team from First Baptist Church, Seymour, took their disaster response unit on its first "shake down run" March 5-8 to Macon County where it was used to help nine volunteers reroof a home that was damaged by Feb. 5's tornado.

"The weather's been raining, spitting snow, and windy all morning on the roof," said Robert Lusk, a First Baptist rebuild volunteer.

"We went back this morning (March 7) to the house to redo some stuff and to cover up the roof with white plastic. I doubt if we will be back up here on the roof this afternoon. When the tornado came, it blew shingles off the roof, and some of the sheetrock had water damage."

On March 4 a First Baptist team of five rebuild volunteers began reroofing the home of Jeff and Phyllis Key, located on Washington Drive, Lafayette, according to Lusk. The team was joined by two more volunteers from First Baptist church and the response unit on March 5. Later on March 6, two other volunteers from the church arrived. The First Baptist team was also assisted on the roof by a rebuild team from The River Community Church, Cookeville.

"We are planning on helping rebuild a Baptist church and homes that were wiped out by the tornado," said First Baptist missions council chairman, Frank Enter, back home in Seymour. "We want to help people who need help, especially homeowners who have no insurance or not enough insurance to rebuild."

The initial response began when a four-person assessment team from First Baptist traveled to New Life Baptist Feb. 23 to do a site visit, talk to New Life pastor Ralph Wheaton, and survey the area.

The assessment team was made up of First Baptist members, David Hurst, Lloyd Solomon, Lusk, and Matt Miller.



THE NEW disaster response unit of First Baptist Church, Seymour, made its first official run March 5-8 to Macon County. Nine volunteers from the church reroofed a home in the area that was damaged by a tornado on Feb. 5.

Most of the assessment team, with encouragement from First Baptist pastor Bruce Yates, built and installed equipment on the response unit.

Enter, who came up with the vision for a recreational vehicle response bus, says the church has partnered with New Life Baptist to send rebuild teams to Macon County.

The church's rebuild construction team recently returned from its 14th mission response, Jan. 27 - Feb. 2, to the Gulf Coast of Mississippi where they have a partnership with Grace Chapel Baptist Church, Pass Christian, Miss.

"The vision for the disaster response bus came along because of the mission trips to Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina," Enter noted. "We actually began to build the bus in August 2006 after traveling several times to the area."

First Baptist partnered with Grace Chapel Baptist when Enter got out a book of Baptist churches and looked at the map. After much prayer and calling several churches, Enter said the Lord decided on Grace Chapel Baptist after its pastor responded favorably. "The Lord says where we go; we will go."

This also was the process for the response to Macon County where Enter's phone call was well received by

Wheaton.

The inspiration for the bus came from putting 13 people in a 15-passenger church van on the mission trips and pulling two small trailers. In addition, to the strained closeness of the people on the van due to cramped quarters, it was the facilities where the mission teams were housed which lacked showers and other conveniences that added to their inspiration.

As to roughing it on disaster relief responses, Enter added, "We've been there. But the workers are not on vacation; people work all day. They need a little bit of comfort."

"God has blessed us with a vision and the knowledge and equipment to build the response unit."

The school bus was donated by Mabry Bus Lines, Knoxville, because Enter had shared his vision with the community.

The church decided on a disaster response unit instead of a disaster relief unit in order to respond to disasters "within our ability to get there and help somebody."

In addition to working disasters, the church has offered the response unit to the Seymour Volunteer Fire Department for a place to shelter burn out victims and for a fireman's harbor when a fire response lasts more than a few hours.

Enter, who is a retired owner of a diesel truck dealership and a RV repair company, had connections in the business and knew about outfitting buses.

He talked to Yates about the cramped people in the mission van, and they agreed that a bus would be better for 15 people.

"I was joking about how nice it would be to have a bus, and we took the joke and turned it into a vision," Enter said. "And we kept on telling people about the bus. A bunch of people in the church worked for days on the bus including women. We kept adding nicer things to the bus."

The bus did not have a design plan, but it evolved as the result of equipment being added as it was received, Enter noted. Besides the usual RV amenities inside, which were gleamed from two other RVs, other items were added such as two shower heads on the outside of the bus, a portable range which can be operated outside, and beds which are also couches, a dining table, a hanging clothes cabinet, or can be placed on the floor to accommodate 11 individuals or husband and wife teams. The bus also has 15 pairs of seatbelts.

"We have been amazed especially how it came to together; there is no space unused on the bus," Enter said.

"What fascinates me is that the unit has several back up systems for operating without electrical power such as generators and propane tanks," said Yates. "It's an incredible vision that just came together for us. The community donations outweighed the actual costs of building the unit, and the people really responded who worked on it."

"When we first saw the school bus and two old RVs that were to be salvaged, I never thought what it would look like. It became a professional looking response unit from a Frankenstein unit."

"God has given Frank a gift of how some things can work. Frank knows what we need to do, then he says let's do it, and it works. On any mission trip, he can assess the need, and it works." □

C-N provost to lead IABCU

Carson-Newman news office

NASHVILLE — Board members of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU) have elected Michael Arrington, provost of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., as executive director of the Association effective March 1.



ARRINGTON

IABCU with offices in Nashville is owned and operated by its 51-member Baptist-related higher education institutions.

Arrington, 62, succeeds Thomas Corts, who in September was named by President George Bush to coordinate all education initiatives for USAID (United States Agency for Intern-

national Development).

He will retire as provost at Carson-Newman effective at the close of the academic year.

"The IABCU Board of Directors is delighted to have found someone as capable and as passionate about Christian higher education as Mike Arrington," said Evans Whitaker, president of Anderson University (S.C.) and chairman of the IABCU board of directors.

"Dr. Arrington brings to his new role a wealth of teaching and administrative experience in Baptist institutions that will serve our association well as we cooperate together to share best practices and advance the distinctives of our institutions," Whitaker added.

The IABCU corporate office remains in Nashville, Tenn., and Arrington will continue to make his home in East Tennessee with his wife, Pam, a C-N associate professor of education. They have a married daughter and one grandchild. □

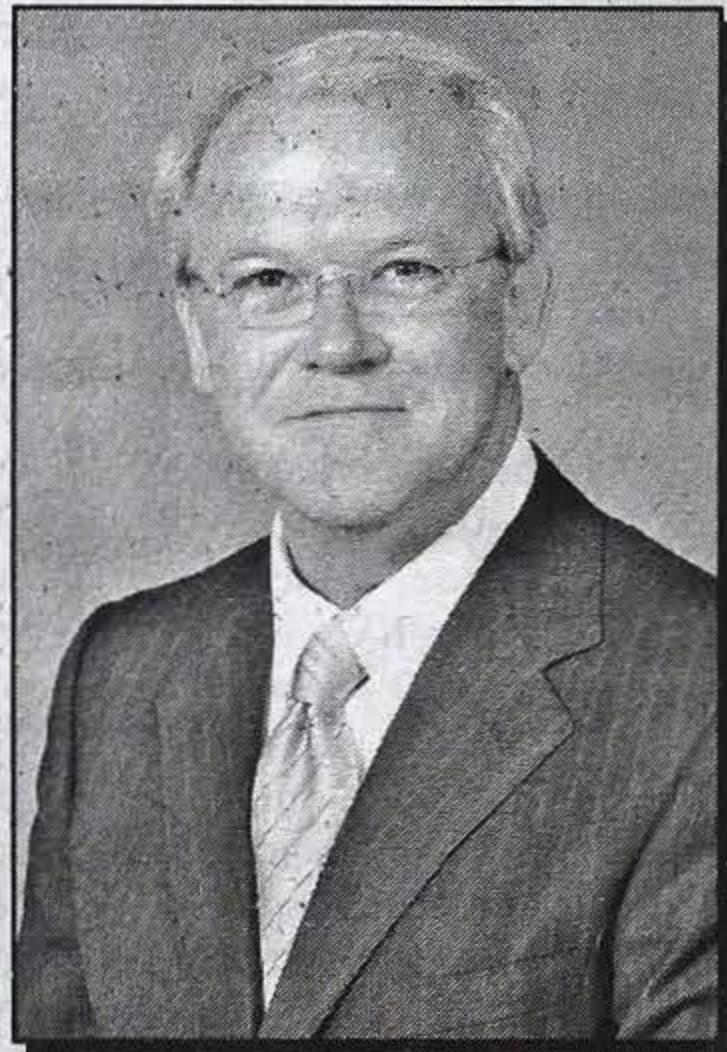
The Norton Institute for Congregational Health

presents

Spring 2008 Minister and Staff Conference

Dr. Frank Page

President of the Southern Baptist Convention



March 25, 2008

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

9:30 Chapel - FBC, Jefferson City

10:30 "An Encouraging Word for Pastors" Tarr Music Center

The event includes lunch and a Q&A session with Dr. Page

To register or for more info, contact C-N's Church Relations Office at 865-471-3218 or kawson@cn.edu



**CARSON
NEWMAN
COLLEGE**

Union to use text messaging as alert system

Union University news office

JACKSON — Union University launched a text-messaging alert system March 3 to inform students, parents, and employees about emergencies on campus. Called UUAlerts, the system will allow the university to send text messages to subscribers' mobile phones in case of an emergency.

"Our campus has recently witnessed the quick and effective response of university and emergency personnel in the wake of the Feb. 5 tornado," said Kimberly Thornbury, Union's dean of students.

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — EDUCATION

First Baptist Church Thomson, Ga., is seeking a full-time minister of education/family ministries. For job description, see www.firstbaptistthomson.org/meducation.html. Send resume to Personnel Committee, C/O Dr. Jim Ramsey, Pastor, P. O. Box 1205, Thomson, GA 30824.

MINISTRY — MUSIC

The McLemoresville Baptist Church is currently seeking a God-called minister of music, for both Sunday morning and Sunday evening worship services. We are seeking someone bi-vocational or a student. If interested, please send resumes to Search Committee or Pastor c/o McLemoresville Baptist Church P. O. Box 208, McLemoresville, TN 38235.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

Scenic Drive Baptist at 6516 Scenic Drive Murfreesboro is seeking a part-time music leader. If interested, please call (615) 459-0025 and leave a call back number.

MINISTRY — STUDENT

FBC Joelton seeks youth minister. For full job description and qualifications visit www.fbcjoelton.org. Send resume to Youth Search, FBC Joelton, 7106 Whites Creek Pike, Joelton, TN 37080 or e-mail danny@fbcjoelton.org.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

Faith Baptist Church is seeking a bi-vocational youth director/assistant evangelism. Individual must be outgoing and enthusiastic. Please mail resume to Search Committee, P. O. Box 97, Loretto, TN 38469.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

West Tenn. SBC seeking bi-vocational youth minister. Rural area with great growth potential. Currently at 188 membership. www.mfrbc.org. Please send resume to Middlefork Road Baptist Church, 3955 Middlefork Road, Luray, TN 38352, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

"However, it is of vital importance to further implement tools to keep our campus secure in times of emergency."

Union has been developing UUAlerts for several weeks, and was originally prepared to launch it Feb. 6. The Feb. 5 tornado that caused an estimated \$40 million in damages to the campus delayed that launch.

UUAlerts is available to all

students, faculty, staff, and parents on Union's Jackson, Germantown, and Olford Center campuses. The system is voluntary, but Union is encouraging all students, faculty, staff, and parents to register to receive text messages in the event of a campuswide emergency or a security or severe weather threat. □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

Wildwood Baptist Church, a small community church near Maryville, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resume with a current tape or disc to Pastor Search Committee, Wildwood Baptist Church, 4705 Porter Circle, Maryville, TN 37804.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

Gap Creek Baptist Church, a conservative member of the Cumberland Gap Baptist Association in Claiborne County Tenn., is accepting applications for a full-time pastor. Experience is preferred. Gap Creek has an active membership of over 300 and is growing. Send resume to Gap Creek Baptist Church, Attn: Troy Poore, P. O. Box 177, Arthur, TN 37707. You may send your resume by e-mail to trpoore@hotmail.com or fax to (423) 869-8777.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

Union Baptist Church in Wartburg, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for full-time pastor through the month of March. Average Sunday School attendance is 100-125 and church services 125-150. Submit resume to Search Committee P. O. Box 139, Oliver Springs, TN 37840.

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

First Baptist Church of Lake City, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking God's leadership in finding a man to lead its congregation of approximately 125 in a full-time pastorate position. The church is located 30 miles north of Knoxville just off I-75. Please send resume with picture as well as a DVD or tape of a recent sermon to the Pastor Search Committee, c/o Richard Enix, P.O. Box 126, Lake City, TN 37769.

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West Tenn. SBC seeking bi-vocational youth minister. Rural area with great growth potential. Currently at 188 membership. www.mfrbc.org. Please send resume to Middlefork Road Baptist Church, 3955 Middlefork Road, Luray, TN 38352, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

MINISTRY — CHILDREN

A healthy, growing church looking for a full-time children's director to work with 200 kids. Send resume to Vicki Brantly at vnbrantly@hotmail.com, or East Side Baptist Church, 718 E. Ninth St., Mountain Home, AR 72653.

guest column

Hearing God's voice

By Matt Cannon

I never was much of a baseball player, but that didn't stop me from trying. Between the ages of 6 and 11, I gave it my best shot.

The memory that stands out the most comes from when I was a nine-year-old kid and was as wide as I was tall. I didn't make it on base with great regularity, but on this night I managed to get on first base.

I desperately desired to get all the way to home plate since I had rarely scored a run that year, but there were already two outs so I figured my journey would end at first. The next batter, though, changed that.

The ball came off of his bat and sailed over my head as I headed toward second base. I looked over at my dad, who was serving as the third base coach, and he was motioning for me to keep running. My heart pounded as I pumped my legs as fast as I could, hoping that I just might have a chance to make it all the way home. As I neared third, with the crowd yelling wildly, I heard my dad yell, "Go! Go! Go!", so I touched the base and headed for home.

Home plate was in sight, which excited me all the more. I began thinking about whether I should slide head-first or feet-first (like most boys, I loved to slide). That is when it happened. Halfway between third base and my hoped-for destination, I was tagged out. The inning was over and my dream had turned in to a disappointment.

I felt like such an idiot.

With tears beginning to well up in my eyes I went to my dad, knowing it was really his fault since he was the third-base coach, and asked him why he had told me to go. He said that instead of yelling, "Go! Go! Go!", he was really yelling "Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!" With all the noise of the crowd and with my own ambitions driving me on, I had failed to fully hear my father's voice.

While not hearing my father's direction that night was bad, not hearing the voice of my Heavenly Father as He speaks to me is even worse. I know that I have that problem at times and I suspect that you do, too.

Noise comes at us from all kinds of directions. It blares out to us from television shows and radio programs and whispers to us through newspapers, magazines, and the internet. Noise is all around us to the point that almost every waking moment is filled with sound.

In addition, we have our own thoughts of what we want to do. Ambition sometimes blinds us to the fact that there may be other things out there more important than what we want.

It's no wonder that we often have difficulty hearing God's voice. There is no doubt that He is able to speak in a variety of ways. From Scripture to prayer to nature to anything else He chooses to use, He wants us to hear from Him.

We must learn to tune out the noise and rein in our thoughts so that we can clearly hear the voice of God. You never know, it may just make the difference between reaching your dream and being disappointed. □ — Cannon is bivocational pastor of Stoney Point Baptist Church, Knoxville.

a way with words**The hymnal**

By Hugh X. Lewis

Lord, how I miss those messages — songs
The hymnals still contain.
Their words to history now belong,
Though memories remain.

They brought assurance to the saved,
Conviction to the lost.
And from a life of sin enslaved,
They warned of dreadful cost.

The hymnals of our younger days,
Much-used with wear and tear,
Well-worn from singing out God's praise,
Was that a tear stain there?

The hymnal in this age still tries
Its message to release,
For here, upon each page there lies
An unsung masterpiece. □

Copyright by Hugh X. Lewis. Lewis, poet laureate of Christian Country Music in Tennessee, is available to speak to church and senior adult groups. For more information, call (615) 883-0086.

Living 3:16 — It's all about love

By Bill Oakley

**Focal Passage: John 3:16,
I John 3:16-20; 4:15-18; 5:2-5**

That old song of yesteryear rings in my ear as I carefully consider these focal passages. The song says, "What the world needs now is love, sweet love —." As true as that statement may be, to me the following revision of the words is much more applicable for today — "What the world needs now is love, God's love." God's love penetrating the hearts of mankind and then mankind expressing that love to his/her fellow human beings, in my opinion, is the only remaining answer to this splintered, sad, sin-sick world. Let's briefly examine these four focal passages through the following outline:

(1) **The pre-eminent expression of God's love (John 3:16).** For one to think about this "golden text" of the Bible makes one almost feel like Moses standing before the burning bush and taking off his sandals because he was "standing on holy ground." If anyone ever understood that God's love for the world was so vast and complete that He gave His only begotten Son to die on a cross that mankind might have eternal life, it was John. The verb form for love (agape) occurs some 36 times in the gospel and 32 times in John's three Epistles — nearly half of the total occurrences in the New Testament. This is the awesome truth of the new birth wrapped up in one verse. We must never allow our familiarity with this verse to lessen in our hearts

the profoundness of its truth.

(2) **The personal experience of God's love (I John 3:16-20).** In verse 16 of this passage, John makes it clear that the saints have experienced the love of God in that He laid down His life for them, and in that they have been recipients of salvation. This knowledge is a permanent possession.

Then John makes a powerful proclamation. Whoever possesses the necessities of life, and deliberately contemplates his brother's need and "snaps shut" his heart toward him, how is it possible that the love of God is abiding in him? What a sobering thought! Then he reminds us that "actions speak more loudly than words." (v. 18)

Realizing that the foregoing exhortation may have awakened some misgiving in our minds — "Am I as loving as I sought to be?" — our hearts may then condemn us. Verses 19 and 20 simply say; 1) The worst that is in us is known to God, and He still loves us and desires us. Our hearts have never been secret to Him. 2) He reads everything and sees the deepest things and these are the "real things."

(3) **The powerful enlightenment of God's love (I John 4:15-18).** Herein John makes clear that the message of truth and love are mutually inclusive. This confession is further evidence that there is communion between God and the person making the confession.

In the last three verses of the passage (vv. 16-18), John gathers together several of his previous

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Bible Studies for Life
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thoughts. The "we" and "our" are very emphatic in the passage. The clear message is that the love one has for God has an effect on the future. On that future day of judgment when all believers stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, the believer need not fear because Christ has atoned for his sins. The reason that the believer need not fear is that the relationship between him and God through Christ is based on love, and in love, there is no fear.

(4) **The purposeful enlistment of God's love (I John 5:2-5).** Having already made it clear in the previous verse, (v. 1), that everyone who is born of God loves God's children, John now shares how we can know if we are really loving God's children. He declares that love is directed toward God, and obeying His commands serve as the basis for our knowledge that we love the children of God.

The last three verses of this passage (vv. 3-5), emphasize the fact that the true believer in Jesus Christ is the one who continually strives to obey God's directives toward us and overcomes the "pull of the world" through our faith in Jesus Christ. I say again: "What the world needs now is love, God's love." — Oakley is pastor of First Baptist Church, Trimble.

Growing spiritually through crises

By Gene Fant Sr.

Focal Passage: Genesis 32:1-33:20

Some have called this event a high point in Jacob's spiritual life as he came to a point of desperation before his confrontation with Esau. Jacob had cheated his brother twice and Esau pledged to kill him when their father died. It was years later, Isaac was still alive, but Esau was coming with 400 men.

Jacob's attitude in this crisis was one of humility, which should be our attitude at all times. He reminded God he was acting upon His instruction to return home. In tough times I, too, have reminded the Lord that He called me to preach.

Jacob was honest when he acknowledged his own unworthiness. He also stated he was alone and possessed only a staff when he first left home. Now he is wealthy and no longer alone.

That night Jacob was alone on the other side of the brook. Sometimes we need to get alone with the Lord in silence. This is crucial to our growth as believers.

The encounter loomed the next day and Jacob admits to God he is afraid of Esau.

Suddenly he was attacked in the darkness and may have thought his twin brother, Esau, had ambushed him. They had wrestled since birth. I believe the "man" who wrestled with him was the angel of

the Lord, that is, the Lord in human form.

Have you ever wrestled in prayer with the Lord over something? This reminds me of my struggle when the Lord called me to preach. I know others yield without a struggle but for me it was a battle that lasted for months. I also remember the relief when I yielded to His lordship of my life.

His opponent dislocated Jacob's hip. Strong thighs are needed when wrestling, thus Jacob was weakened but that was when Jacob won. Our problem is not weakness but the strong sinful self, which has to be deflated. When we are weak then we are strong. The rest of his life he would be crippled and many useful Christians have physical and spiritual reminders of such encounters with the Lord.

His opponent asked Jacob to let him go since it was daybreak but Jacob would not stop clinging until his assailant blessed him. Have you ever been so inclined to cling to God in prayer? Do you rush through your prayer time? Hang on to God in faith and you need nothing else!

We read in Hosea 12:2-5 Jacob wept and made supplication. I witness very little weeping in corporate worship. I refer to conviction of sin. We seem to have lost the ability to weep over our sin, and those who are perishing.

God asked Jacob's name but God wanted confession, not information. His name was "trickster"

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but was changed to Israel for he had struggled with God and with men and prevailed! The name change signified a change of character. He was blessed there and Jacob named the place Peniel.

It was significant the sun was shining and he was limping as he confronted Esau and his 400 men. Previously Jacob had positioned himself behind others as they approached Esau but now he leads the procession to meet him.

God intervened and the reconciliation of the brothers was quite moving because Jacob was humble, courteous, and conciliatory in his greetings to Esau in his new servant attitude.

Jacob declined to travel on with Esau but promised to meet him in Seir. Instead he went the opposite direction to Succoth and pitched his tent toward Shechem. He seemed to have been uncomfortable around Esau and wanted to get away.

God had heard Jacob's prayer and brought him through another crisis.

We are better able to serve the Lord Jesus Christ after our faith has been strengthened through our crises. — Fant is retired and lives in Nashville and is available for interim pastorates.

Deaths

◆ **Andrea Hawkins Byler**, 66, wife of Cameron Byler, died March 9 in San Antonio, Texas, where they lived. Byler was the Brotherhood director (which included disaster relief) of the Tennessee Baptist Convention from 1989 until his retirement in 1995. They met at the Brotherhood Commission, Memphis, where Andrea worked from 1961-92. Cameron was the director of Baptist Men and national coordinator of disaster relief there from 1985-89.

Leaders

◆ New Salem Baptist Church, Soddy Daisy, will host a retirement reception for its pastor of 38 years, **Ted Painter** and his wife, Sue, on the afternoon of March 30. For information, contact the church at (423) 842-3078.

◆ Calvary Baptist Church, Kingsport, has called **T. Richard Harris** as interim pastor.

◆ Ararat Baptist Church, Jackson, recently ordained two staff members to the ministry. **Kyle Hopper**, minister of students and activities; and **Jamie Forester**, minister of worship, were ordained on Feb. 17.

◆ Sevier County Baptist Association, Sevierville, called **Paul Shook** as Camp Smoky director effective Jan. 28. Formerly he was pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Sevierville, and he and his wife, Ashley, have served for the past three years as associational youth directors. Shook is a graduate of Southeastern

Bible College, Birmingham, Ala. He also has served as a minister, pastor, and interim pastor of several other Sevier County Association churches.

◆ Lavinia Baptist Church, Lavinia, has called **Steve Osborne** as pastor.

◆ Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Kingsport, has called **Hobert "Hobbie" McCreary** as pastor. He previously served as pastor of Summersville Baptist Church and interim worship leader at Sullivan Baptist Church, both in Kingsport. He is a graduate of East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, and Andersonville Baptist Theological Seminary, Camilla, Ga.

◆ Oak Hill Baptist Church, Friendsville, has called **Alex Smith** as pastor.

◆ First Baptist Church, Bradford, has called **Charlton McDade** as minister of youth.

◆ China Grove Baptist Church, Rutherford, has called **Randy Potts** as pastor.

◆ First Baptist Church, Dyer, has called **Kelly Sorrell** as minister of music.

Churches

◆ **Hickory Hills Baptist Church, Mt. Juliet**, will host an "Easter Celebration" the afternoon of March 22. An egg hunt will be held for children ages 12 and under. A fellowship picnic will follow the egg hunt. A sunrise Easter worship service will be held on March 23. For information, call the church office at (615) 754-2575.

◆ **Una Baptist Church, Nashville**, will present a "Living Cross" Easter musical on March 21-23. In addition, the

church will host its Community Easter Egg Hunt, March 15. The free event will feature prizes, lunch, and story. For information, call the church at (615) 361-8775.

Events

◆ Royal Ambassador Fam-

ily Night with the Memphis Redbirds will be held April 11 at the Auto Zone Park, Memphis. Sponsored by the **Mid-South Royal Ambassadors**, which is based in Memphis, RAs will receive a pre-game tour, participate in a pre-game RA parade around the field, present the color guard for the

National Anthem, and enjoy pavilion box seating with a meal. A special RA Redbirds patch is also available to purchase. Deadline to purchase tickets is April 5. For reservations, contact Mike Freeman, Mid-South RA director, at m_freeman1@comcast.net or call (901) 849-0867.

TBC staff meets with NOBTS students

For Baptist and Reflector

NEW ORLEANS, La. — Richard Skidmore, Wayne Terry, and Bill Northcott of the Tennessee Convention staff joined other state convention workers on the campus of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary recently to participate in Life Beyond Seminary! This three-day event was planned by the seminary to give state conventions the opportunity to network with students, particularly those close to graduation.

Wayne Terry, TBC church start strategist, spoke in a class on church planting. In addition, Terry visited and

shared with multiple students about church starts in Tennessee.

Richard Skidmore, TBC financial support specialist, provided information to students about insurance and retirement options. Additionally, Skidmore related important guidance on how to structure the minister's financial package in order to take advantage of tax breaks and to maximize compensation.

Bill Northcott, TBC church minister relations specialist, provided guidance to students about how to use TBC's online resume system. Northcott also gave students suggestions on important areas to explore

with search committees.

One of the highlights of the experience, according to Northcott, was a fellowship dinner provided by the TBC for seminary students from Tennessee. Students who participated were from many cities and towns including Cookeville, Memphis, Nashville, Hendersonville, and Lexington.

"Overall, the event was a good time to share with students at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary the good things God is doing among Baptists in Tennessee and the opportunities for future impact on the kingdom of God in the volunteer state," Northcott said. □



SOME OF THE STUDENTS of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary and the TBC staff who met together recently were, from left, Lillian and Jay Schroder of Memphis, Wayne Terry of the TBC staff, Bill Halladay of Cookeville, Philip Smith of Cookeville, Richard Skidmore of TBC staff, Crystal Taylor of Cookeville, Jason Reed of Hendersonville, Amanda Foley of Lexington, Angela Scruggs of Nashville, and Bill Northcott of TBC staff.

Tennessee Campers on Mission serve in Arizona during January/February

By Jan Bible
For Baptist and Reflector

ROOSEVELT, Ariz. — About 11 Tennessee Campers on Mission headed to Arizona to help build a new sanctuary for Roosevelt Baptist Church here during the months of January and February.

The church at Roosevelt is one of 12 churches in the San Carlos Southern Baptist Association and is located about 110 miles northeast of Phoenix in an isolated community of about 250 permanent weekend residents.

Snowbirds or people who travel in recreational vehicles to the area to escape winter call this area home during the winter months, which gave the volunteers additional opportunities in the community to witness for Jesus Christ.

Baptist Church Builders for Christ from Texas will follow

the Tennesseans to help with the finishing work on the new building.

Tennessee COMers Rick and Lucy Mott of First Baptist Church, Decherd; and Sam and Linda Wynn of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Indian Mound; will extend their stay through March to oversee the project. Ray Burton of Gateway Baptist Church, Atoka; also from Tennessee, will join them.

Working on the first part of the project were Kyle and Jan Bible of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Maryville; K. B. and Sarah Hensley of Central Heights Baptist Church, Danville; and Jack and Karen Hackworth of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Maryville.

Additional construction work was done by the campers and Gil and June Chard of Kingsport on a non-denominational church at Tonto Basin, 25 miles from Roosevelt,



TENNESSEE CAMPERS ON Mission stand in front of the church building they worked on recently. They are, from left, Rick and Lucy Mott of Winchester, Kyle and Jan Bible of Walland, Sam and Linda Wynn of Indian Mound, K. B. and Sarah Hensley of New Market, and Jack and Karen Hackworth of Maryville. Not pictured is Ray Burton of Memphis.

sparked positive interest and curiosity in that small community as well.

Other COMers based at that location came from Iowa, Missouri, and North Carolina.

According to Bruce Adkins, pastor at Roosevelt Baptist Church, the greatest need in

this area is to minister to a people where drug and alcohol abuse runs rampant.

Also, in the area is the Theodore Roosevelt Dam and Roosevelt Lake and Resort.

Campers on Mission, sponsored by the North American Mission Board, are Christian,

often retired, volunteers, who work short-term and long-term providing various types of aid nationwide. This allows them to combine their love of camping with their love of ministry and makes their motto, "Sharing Christ as We Go," a reality. □