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April 12, 1996

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CALENDAR

TEXAS--Radio and Television Commission trustee meeting, April 15-16, Fort Worth.
GEORGIA--Home Mission Board trustee meeting, April 15-17, Alpharetta.
KENTUCKY--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustee meeting, April 15-17, Louisville.
CALIFORNIA--Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary trustee meeting, April 15-17, Mill Valley.
MISSOURI--Foreign Mission Board trustee meeting, April 18-20, Cape Girardeau.

1995 SBC statistics include
mixture of gains, losses

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
4/12/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Increases in Southern Baptist church membership, baptisms and number of churches led 1995 statistical gains for the denomination in a year that included a mixture of gains and losses in reporting areas.

The 1994-95 church year marked the second year of a new reporting process for the Annual Church Profile completed by individual churches. The 1995 totals are statistically comparable to 1994, except in two categories, but not to earlier years, said Cliff Tharp, supervisor of the Baptist Sunday School Board's strategic information unit.

Church membership climbed to 15,668,077 in 1995, a gain of 48,165 or 0.3 percent over 1994. Baptisms for the year totalled 393,811, an increase of 15,348 or 4.1 percent over the previous year. The ratio of baptisms to total church membership was 1:40, a slight improvement over the 1994 ratio of 1:41. Other church membership additions -- transfer of church letter, joining by statement -- totalled 468,737 in 1995, a decrease of 582 or 0.1 percent from the 1994 total of 469,319.

The number of churches topped 40,000, increasing from the 1994 total of 39,910 to 40,120, a gain of 210. Church-type missions operated by churches decreased by 195 or 4.6 percent to a 1995 total of 4,026.

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In church program areas, music ministry enrollment/participation registered a 2.2 percent increase of 40,171 to a new total enrollment of 1,881,754.

Small decreases were reported in Woman's Missionary Union and Sunday school enrollments. WMU enrollment dropped by 43,427 or 3.9 percent to a new total of 1,061,279 while Sunday school enrollment declined by 55,698 or 0.7 percent to a new total of 8,207,860.

Significant changes in collection processes for discipleship training and Brotherhood enrollment/participation make the 1995 totals statistically noncomparable with 1994, according to Tharp.

The discipleship training enrollment/participation total was 2,171,993. Changes in reporting for 1995 were implemented to get more accurate totals, he said. The 1994 total was 2,223,955.

In Brotherhood enrollment/participation, the 1995 total was 749,310. For the first time, both men and women who participated in certain mission projects or mission action groups were included in the total. Also, enrollment in EZRA was included for the first time. EZRA is a coeducational approach to missions activities for children. And World Changers was a separate item for the first time. These were major factors in the total representing a 15.9 percent increase.

Sunday morning worship attendance totaled 4,562,639 for 1995, an increase of 131,180 or 3 percent over the 1994 total of 4,431,459. Tharp emphasized this figure represents the attendance in churches on the last Sunday of the associational year and is not necessarily an average for the year.

In financial areas, total tithes, offerings and special gifts for the year were \$5,635,014,266, an increase of \$62,562,438 or 1.1 percent over 1994. Total receipts were \$6,069,724,030, a decrease of \$10,708,294 or 0.2 percent. Total mission expenditures registered a gain of 5.3 percent or \$43,138,681 to a 1995 total of \$858,779,214.

The value of church property escalated to \$29,103,227,053, an increase of 12.7 percent or \$3,271,186,508.

While annual statistics have traditionally been reported in February, Tharp said delays in distribution of the 1995 Annual Church Profile software and continuing adjustments to process changes at associational, state and SBC levels resulted in a later release.

"In most cases, the primary responsibility for checking and verifying church statistics is now done by associations and state conventions because they are more knowledgeable about individual churches in their areas," Tharp said. "As a result of this partnership, we use the totals states provide to obtain denomination-wide totals, a more valid measure of growth or decreases. We are in a learning process that will see continuing improvements."

For 1995, the Sunday School Board received approximately 95 percent of ACP data electronically. Software for 1996 is being distributed to state conventions on schedule in April.

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A statistical summary chart is posted in the SBCNet News Room.

**Baptism increase attributed
to witnessing, awakening**

By Sarah Zimmerman

**Baptist Press
4/12/96**

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)--The 4.1 percent increase in 1995 baptisms is no surprise to evangelism leaders, who credit an emphasis on personal witnessing and spiritual awakening.

Southern Baptists set a record in 1972 with 445,725 baptisms. Since then, the number has gone up and down, reaching as low as 336,050 in 1978. In the 1994 church year, Southern Baptist churches reported 378,463 baptisms.

Last year Southern Baptists participated in their first simultaneous witnessing effort. Church members were challenged to share Jesus 60 times in 60 days, and churches were encouraged to host revival services following the personal witnessing thrust. The effort was known as "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now."

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The campaign called attention to every Christian's responsibility to share Jesus, said Darrell Robinson, Home Mission Board vice president for evangelism. "God is at work all the time, but when we have an intentional emphasis (on evangelism), we reach more people. I commend local churches for getting back to the basics."

While all churches did not participate in "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now," those that did reported success, said Bill Jagers, evangelism director for Kentucky Baptists. He recalled a Kentucky woman who committed to share the gospel 60 times in 60 days. When she was sick and had to stay home, she ordered pizza so she could witness to the delivery person.

Winston Baptist Association in Louisville, Miss., reported 206 baptisms last year, the first time it had more than 200 baptisms in at least 10 years, said director of missions Paul Blanchard.

In that association, Good Hope Baptist Church increased baptisms from zero in 1994 to 56 in 1995. One key to the church's turnaround is a new pastor committed to frequent personal witnessing, Blanchard said. Sunday school classes were reorganized to be more outreach-oriented, church members were trained in soul-winning and the church began a regular outreach visitation program. Average Sunday school attendance at the rural church went from 40 to 120, Blanchard said.

The current emphasis on prayer and spiritual awakening results in people being sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leadership and to the needs of lost people, Robinson said.

"Celebrate Jesus 2000," a five-year strategy to share the gospel in every household in America, seeks to build on that movement, Robinson said. "Celebrate Jesus 2000 is not top-down planning. It's a grassroots movement. We simply acknowledge it and fan the flame."

The strategy involves training, prayer, personal witnessing, evangelistic crusades and publicity.

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Southern Baptists added
1,458 congregations in '95

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press
4/12/96

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)--Southern Baptists added 1,458 congregations last year, according to reports by state church-starting leaders.

Of the additions, 1,314 were new missions and 144 were existing congregations affiliating for the first time with the Southern Baptist Convention, said Joe Hernandez, assistant vice president of the Home Mission Board's extension section.

That is the second-highest number of new congregations recorded in recent history. In 1993 Southern Baptists added 1,500 congregations. The total is just shy of the board's goal of 1,500 starts annually.

It brings the total number of SBC congregations to 46,469, including 40,753 churches and 5,716 church-type missions. The numbers were reported by state convention offices responsible for church starting and will likely differ from Annual Church Profile numbers, Hernandez noted.

A reason for the difference is that not all churches respond to the annual survey, which is conducted by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Of the church-type missions started in 1995, 625 were predominately Anglo, 195 were predominately African American and 494 were started by other ethnic groups.

Texas led all state conventions with 191 new congregations. California ranked second with 137 and Louisiana ranked third with 110.

Texas also led state conventions in all three categories of mission starts: Anglo, 79; ethnic, 79; and African American, 33.

HMB President Larry Lewis said he was elated by the second-highest number of church starts in recent history. "Even so," he noted, "there are yet over 20,000 places we have targeted for new churches. The work is far from finished."

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EDITORS' NOTE: Please substitute the following story for one in (BP) 4/11/96 titled, "6 missionaries to Liberia plan military evacuation."

**Missionaries flee compound,
plan to evacuate Liberia**

By Marty Croll

MONROVIA, Liberia (BP)--Eight of 10 Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries who had been holed up in a compound on the outskirts of Monrovia joined a high-speed U.S. Embassy convoy to a secured airfield April 11.

They spent the night safely at the airfield, planning to evacuate by U.S. military helicopter. Their evacuation was to route them through Freetown, Sierra Leone, a 90-minute flight, and then to Dakar, Senegal. Mission officials have reserved tickets for them from Dakar to Lome, Togo, where they will stay in a Baptist conference center.

Missionaries loaded their own cars with luggage, food and water, then followed embassy security officers along the bypass, dodging sniper fire, "sometimes going 90 miles per hour," a U.S. Embassy official said.

Edward and Fran Laughridge of Rock Hill, S.C., chose to stay at the compound. The others agreed Laughridge would handle administrative affairs of mission work in their absence.

The missionaries had remained on their compound during intense street battles that broke out April 6 between groups fighting for control of a coalition government. Armed men tried to break into the compound at least once. Missionaries have been in touch with Abidjan by phone and with the embassy by two-way radio.

Mission leaders at the office for western Africa in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, dispatched an urgent message April 11 to the United States, asking Southern Baptists for "earnest prayer" for the missionaries and the people of Liberia.

In a phone call to Abidjan, mission administrator Bradley Brown of Marietta, Ga., said he and his wife, Carolyn, of East Point, Ga., were "more than ready to go." The Browns are longtime missionaries to Liberia and have stayed through some of the most frightening times there, but said they could make no impact under these conditions.

Activity by splinter groups of armed hooligans has grown more intense in the streets around the missionaries' concrete-walled compound. After relative calm between opposing factions April 10, chaos evolved into dangerous anarchy. Food, water and medicine were scarce. The embassy official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said even she might be forced to evacuate.

Awaiting airlift with the missionaries were more than 130 other people. The helicopters carry 30 to 35 people per load, the official said.

Board policy leaves the decision of whether to go or stay to the discretion of each missionary. Often Foreign Mission Board missionaries are among the last to leave besieged areas because of ties with friends who live there and the openness to Jesus Christ they sense among people in the midst of uncertainty and conflict.

The six-year civil war in Liberia has forced missionaries to move into the capital city, more stable in recent years than outlying areas. At one point an attempt by a missionary couple to move back outside the city failed when it proved unsafe. In Monrovia, missionaries have worked to meet human needs, and fought to keep a seminary going. Until recent weeks, the seminary had been meeting for some time in a rented building, after successive groups of peacekeeping troops commandeered the Baptist seminary compound.

Besides the Browns, those deciding to leave were Rachel DuBard of Carrollton, Miss.; Felix Jr. and Dene Greer, both of Jackson, Miss.; John T. McPherson of Knoxville, Tenn.; and James and Jane Park, both of Paducah, Ky.

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(BP) mug shots mailed to state Baptist newspapers in missionaries' home states by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

**BWA evangelism effort
postponed in Liberia**

WASHINGTON (BP)--The fighting by rival militias in Liberia has caused the Baptist World Alliance to postpone a planned trip there to hold an evangelism conference, April 22-24.

The BWA trip was changed after Emile D.E. Sam-Peal, general secretary of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Education Convention Inc., confirmed the news that it was too dangerous to come to his country.

Sam-Peal, who lives in Monrovia, risked his life and walked two miles to a phone at the compound of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and spoke to BWA leaders April 10.

"Please ask the world to pray for us," Sam-Peal said tearfully as he described what was happening in his country. While he and his family are safe so far, they do not know what will happen.

"We prayed with him and told him we will come to Liberia as soon as possible," said Tony Cupit, BWA director of evangelism and education who planned to take a 14-member group to Liberia. The group included BWA President Nilson do Amaral Fanini, BWA staff, Baptist pastors and businessmen.

"While we are deeply disappointed, we will not give up hope of one day soon going to Liberia to support Baptists there," Cupit said.

The BWA has maintained its support of Liberian Baptists with visits and aid since the civil war broke out in 1989.

In April 1995, Denton Lotz, BWA general secretary, visited Liberia to support and encourage Liberian Baptists on behalf of their world family. In spite of the destruction of their country which he saw everywhere, Lotz brought a message from Liberian Baptists who said, "We are helpless but not hopeless."

In August of last year, a shipment of drugs, medicine and other supplies sent by Baptist World Aid arrived in Liberia and was distributed to 15 orphanages in and around Monrovia, five hospitals and countless church members.

"We will continue to support Liberian Baptists with aid as soon as it is possible to do so," said Paul Montacute, BWAid director.

Liberian Baptists have strong ties to the BWA as William Tolbert, assassinated president of Liberia, served as BWA president from 1965-1970.

Currently, the BWA's youth department is headed by Emmett Dunn, a Liberian who still has family in the country.

"We are saddened by this recent outbreak of violence," Lotz said. "We long for the day when this will end. The BWA calls on the warring leaders to pursue peace in the name of Jesus Christ.

"There is a responsibility for the United Nations and the world powers to become more involved in the negotiations and peace process, just as they are in Bosnia and other areas of conflict," Lotz said.

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**SBC restructuring panel
to hear state executives**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Nine state Baptist convention leaders have been asked to meet May 2 with a Southern Baptist Convention task force as an "information resource" for the denomination's restructuring.

Robert Reccord, chairman of the Implementation Task Force guiding the restructuring process of the SBC, said the groups will meet in Dallas. The state executives' group is chaired by William M. Pinson Jr., executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

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One of the purposes for the meeting, according to ITF officials, is for the state executives to advise the ITF as its work relates to state conventions. The ITF is a 10-member task force appointed by the SBC Executive Committee to guide the restructuring process approved by the SBC last year. Among other things, the restructuring will reduce the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12.

The other eight state executives appointed by Pinson are Fermin Whittaker, California; William Causey, Mississippi; Carlisle Driggers, South Carolina; Wyndell Jones, Iowa; R. Rex "Peck" Lindsay, Kansas-Nebraska; Ken Lyle, New England; John Sullivan, Florida; and William Tinsley, Minnesota-Wisconsin.

In a February meeting with Baptist state executive directors, Reccord asked that they become a "resource pool" as the SBC transitions into the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring aimed at strengthening the SBC's service to churches toward fulfilling the Great Commission during the coming century.

Reccord said he told the state leaders the ITF needs their insight into how the restructuring impacts issues on a state level.

"They will help us see these issues more clearly from a state convention perspective," said Reccord, pastor of First Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va., and a member of the SBC Executive Committee.

Reccord noted, "One of the key concerns in state conventions is how cooperative agreements between the Home Mission Board and the states will be affected. The Covenant announced the firm intention of continuing and enhancing the practice of cooperative agreements."

A part of the ITF assignment Reccord described as "challenging" relates to three agencies slated to be replaced by a new one -- the HMB, Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission merging into the North American Mission Board, the agency charged with leading in the evangelization of North America.

The Home Mission Board and the Brotherhood Commission, whose ministries under the covenant will become part of the North American Mission Board, work in close concert with state conventions. Said Reccord, "This process (with the state leaders) provides an outstanding opportunity for evaluation and development of even better ways of working together."

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Compiled from reports by Mark Wyatt, Herb Hollinger and Bill Merrell.

SBC New Orleans hotels have additional rooms

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Previously reserved rooms in some New Orleans hotels for the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 11-13 have become available, according to SBC officials.

Jack Wilkerson, convention manager and vice president for business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee, said New Orleans officials have notified him the previously reserved rooms in the SBC housing block have been turned back in to the housing bureau. The rooms include some reserved by individuals and some by groups whose plans have changed or their numbers are less than originally thought.

"This translates to some room availability at hotels previously requested but which were not available at the time of the request," Wilkerson said. "Also, if convention-goers have already reserved rooms but desire to move to another hotel, they should call the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau Housing number, 1-800-345-1187, before May 8."

After May 8, all reservations and change requests must be handled directly with the individual hotels, Wilkerson said.

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11-year-old is living proof:**'... a child shall lead them' By Amanda Phifer**

GOWENSVILLE, S.C. (BP)--Eleven-year-old Stephen Gosnell recently completed the evangelism training course, Continuing Witness Training, becoming the youngest person in South Carolina -- and perhaps the Southern Baptist Convention -- to have completed the course.

But Stephen, a quiet, well-mannered boy, didn't take CWT to impress anyone.

"I wanted to learn how to be a bolder witness," said the fifth-grader, who made a profession of faith and was baptized when he was 7. "I'm kind of shy, so when I heard about CWT, I thought it would be a good way to learn how to share my faith."

CWT is a memory-intensive evangelism course. Students, called "apprentices," are required to memorize a five-page gospel presentation -- word for word. Each apprentice is paired with another apprentice and an equipper, someone who has completed the course previously. The 13-week course involves daily homework on various aspects of witnessing, including the role of the Holy Spirit, visitation procedures, presenting the gospel and answering questions about the gospel -- along with church visitation one hour each week.

CWT is designed for adults 18 years and older, said Mary Ellen Anderson, who works in the evangelism division of the Home Mission Board. "While we don't keep records of the ages of people who complete the course, I've never heard of anyone younger than 14 or 15 taking it," she said.

Stephen's pastor, David Hayes, didn't see any problem with a pre-teen like Stephen taking the adult version of Continuing Witness Training.

"I knew Stephen, and I knew he could do it," Hayes said. "In fact, a lot of times it was helpful to have a young person with us, especially when we visited families with children."

The pastor and Stephen were the only two students in the CWT class, the first to be offered at Gowensville (S.C.) Baptist Church. They were taught by minister of music Jennifer Pollard.

Stephen said he doesn't feel intimidated talking to adults about his faith, because "the Holy Spirit precedes you. You're never by yourself when you're witnessing; you always have someone right there with you. And really, we can't do anything apart from Christ anyway."

In a second CWT course at the Gowensville church, Stephen is leading two college boys, and Hayes, Pollard and equippers from the Gowensville church and another local church are leading others.

When Pollard stood to present CWT certificates to Stephen and Hayes earlier this year, she couldn't resist the opportunity to challenge church members. "I might not be popular for saying this, but we should be ashamed of ourselves," she said. "Every single one of us should be learning how to be better witnesses, but we aren't. And here is this 11-year-old showing us a great example."

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**Church's technology & teens
give Sunday worship a boost****By Ferrell Foster**

BETHALTO, Ill. (BP)--First Baptist Church here has given its worship services a technological boost, and young teenagers are providing much of the brain power.

The Bethalto, Ill., church has installed a \$10,000 computer-driven audio-visual system to display videos, sermon outlines, music lyrics, announcements and other graphics on a screen above the baptistry.

Associate pastor Ron Woods coordinates the effort, but he has a cadre of computer-savvy teens at his side. On a recent Sunday morning, 14-year-old Adam Edelen was at the helm, pressing buttons to display the array of worship aids at the appropriate times -- including sermon notes while pastor Charles West preached.

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System hardware includes a video projector suspended from the ceiling, a screen which can be automatically raised and lowered, a computer using Microsoft's PowerPoint software and a video player.

It's a rather sophisticated system, but Edelen, an eighth-grader, said it's "very simple" to use. "Just a click of a button" creates all kinds of interesting visual aids. It also provides the teenager, and others in the church, a way for God to "put my talents to use."

The first few worship services were "pretty rough," Edelen said. But "it just kind of clicks now."

During the week, Edelen programs the sermon notes and Woods inputs the announcements.

On Sunday prior to the service, the announcements appear on the screen.

Then while associate pastor Larry Rhodes leads the congregation in singing choruses, the words are displayed, "so people aren't buried in a hymnbook," the pastor said.

Videos are another common feature of services now. On a recent Sunday, the congregation learned about home missions by watching a video, which was about five minutes long.

And when West begins to preach, his sermon title and Scripture reference is displayed for everyone to see. As he works his way through the message, appropriate outline topics appear behind him.

All that visual activity is controlled by Woods, Edelen or others sitting at a computer in the back of the balcony.

"We've gotten many compliments ... from people who really like the system," Edelen said.

And from pastor West's perspective: "It's streamlined the worship service."

The sermon time demands the most concentration by those operating the system. The one in charge "really has to keep his mind on what's going on," Woods said.

With a copy of West's sermon manuscript in hand, Edelen moves through the various slides at the appropriate times. He said the pastor doesn't preach the manuscript "word for word," but "he follows the general outline pretty close."

As for those in the congregation, West said, "They not only hear (the sermon) from me, they see it on the screen and take notes." And studies indicate memory is improved when material is seen, as well as heard, he said.

The process does require some trust. The screen is above and behind the pastor while he's speaking, so he doesn't see what is displayed there. "I have to forget what's going on behind me and just preach," West stated.

No problem, said 13-year-old Scott Woods, who, like other members of the computer crew, is committed to helping "get the point across."

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(BP) color photo available in the SBCNet News Room.

When his football dream died,
19-year-old found another path By Julie Jenkins

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Many university sports recruiters agree Fork Union (Va.) Military Academy graduates winning athletes, including Heisman Trophy winners Eddie George last season and Vinnie Testaverde in 1986.

But Cadet Chip Newman learned the hard way that front-page sports success isn't the ultimate goal in life.

"One Sunday afternoon I turned on the TV to watch Clemson University football. After 15 minutes I cut it off and started crying."

Newman, 19, thought he would go all the way to the top in football. He tackled Clemson sports camp three years straight, rising to 6'4" with a weigh-in at 289 pounds. His coaches knew he was just the kind of talent professional teams wanted. But in the final cut, God had another plan.

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In November 1994 Newman endured delicate surgery to replace a missing artery in his neck. Afterward, doctors strictly warned, "No more football," explaining one wrong blow to his neck could take his life.

Devastated, Newman could not imagine life without his sports dream. "I would have done anything for football," he said. "I didn't understand why God would take this away from me. It felt like having my heart ripped out."

Before surgery, Newman believed he lived "100 percent for Jesus." But afterward, he got stuck in depression, reclusiveness and a reckless attitude, not at all like his usual humor. His parents worried and his grades suffered as he struggled through his junior year in Charleston, S.C.

"In my mind at that time I thought I had nothing else to live for," he said. "But I did have much to accomplish with my life. I just had to open my eyes to find it."

For some men, that eye-opener means waking at the crack of dawn every morning to wax and buff the barrack floors, tighten the bed, shine shoes and hang shirts neatly two inches apart in the closet -- an environment that encourages self-discipline and strength to succeed.

"I came to Fork Union Military Academy to get my life straightened out," Newman acknowledged. The Virginia Baptist-affiliated academy offered the discipline and rigor he needed to build academic skills and renew his confidence.

Moreover, he found a mentor. Fork Union chaplain Lowell Vaught inspired Newman to pursue new goals. Vaught, after all, understood firsthand the young cadet's disappointment.

Vaught, who grew up a Virginia Baptist, sweated his way through Fork Union football, then later quit college to play the professional circuit with the Kansas City Chiefs and the Edmonton Eskimos in Canada. The rush of the game, the media hype and professional status thrilled him.

Beginning with his years as a Fork Union cadet, Vaught developed keen athletic skills and a passion for the game. But he also felt a persistent awareness that he should be involved in ministry. He tried to ignore the call. "Like Chip, I wanted to be a rich and famous athlete."

Then, tragedy. Knee injuries cut short his career, and when his medical condition pushed him out of the winners' circle, Vaught limped aimlessly without a passionate life goal. At times even today, the chaplain gets a little melancholy while watching the pros on television, remembering a dream that turned out a disappointment. But once he returned to college in 1972 and continued through seminary at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, Vaught realized a passion for ministry.

Newman's wounds of disappointment are still fresh, the chaplain said. "He's a young man who is growing up awfully fast because he is learning a lesson that will make him strong," Vaught said.

The cadet's special bond with the chaplain lessens the pain of defeat. "We both had sports taken away from us," the 19-year-old said. But, he acknowledged, the chaplain stands tall as living proof to the young man that everything the Lord does has a purpose; pain has a higher reason, so just giving up would mean cowardice.

"The academy has helped so many men like me who struggled to build confidence and define life goals," Vaught said. "I didn't have a mentor in my life until Fork Union," where one-on-one instruction, mentoring and accountability are emphasized.

"Chip now has a large vision for what he can accomplish," Vaught said. "He doesn't do sports. Instead, he is a minister on campus. He is an encourager to the other cadets and a strong influence." Newman often has prayed and shared his testimony during weekly chapel. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Cadets, he provides peer support to friends. Most importantly, he prays and he tells others to pray.

"The ministry at Fork Union is a ministry of evangelism to many unchurched young men, as well as to our Virginia Baptist students," Vaught said. An average of 50 percent of the student body makes some type of faith decision every year in chapel.

"It's inspiring to see the depth of commitment and the quality of young people Virginia Baptists so ably support," said Fork Union's president, Lt. Gen. John Jackson. "Chip Newman moved our board of trustees to tears when he shared his testimony one evening."

Newman has his sights set on the Citadel for college, and he is thinking about coaching football or joining his family's construction business.

"But I know any plan is subject to change, just like it did the first time," he said, voicing confidence God will level for him a new playing field, a new goal in time.

"Without faith, you never find anything fulfilling to replace a lost dream. You keep grieving over it," Vaught said. "For years, I thought my niche was athletics. But it wasn't -- it was the ministry. When you align yourself with God, God satisfies."

Newman, who doesn't watch pro football on TV anymore, said, "I know now it's not God's fault that I can't play. It's God's plan. So I'm living my life to the fullest while staying in the Lord's boundaries."

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Jenkins is a free-lance writer in Richmond, Va.

**Bivocational minister named
Kentucky teacher of the year By Melanie Childers**

SHELBYVILLE, Ky. (BP)--School teaching plus ministry equals a demanding but meaningful career for Kentucky's teacher of the year, Beth Dunn.

Dunn's two-fold formula for fulfillment brings together a 16-year teaching career and nearly 20 years of ministry.

"I see my ministry and my teaching connected," said Dunn, an eighth-grade math teacher at East Middle School in Shelby County. "My calling includes being honest and fair with kids. I want them to know I love them, I care about them, and I'm going to let them know if something they do is not good."

Dunn's bivocational calling also includes serving as minister of music at Finchville (Ky.) Baptist Church.

"The folks in the music program love her dearly," Finchville pastor Ken Murphy said of Dunn. He called her a multi-talented person -- one who plays solo handbells, teaches math with baseball game scores and knows how to encourage choir members to produce their best sound.

"Her greatest attribute would be her love for the children," added Chrissy Jones, East Middle School's principal.

"She gives of her time constantly. She comes in early and stays late. She still works with students she had two years ago," tutoring them through high school, Jones said.

Jones said she believes Dunn received the Kentucky teacher of the year honor last fall in part because of "the lengths she goes to to help children succeed."

Dunn grew up at First Baptist Church, Franklin, Ky., and was baptized at age 9. She remembers being the "only girl member" of Royal Ambassadors, a mission organization for boys, since her church did not have an organized program for girls.

From that foundation, Dunn developed a strong commitment to her faith and to the church.

After graduating from Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in music education and mathematics, Dunn questioned how she could incorporate a growing sense of God's call on her life with her natural abilities in teaching.

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From 1977-79, Dunn served as a US-2 missionary appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to direct apartment ministries in and around Birmingham, Ala.

In 1979 she moved to Louisville and taught high school for two years, "but I was fighting with God about seminary," Dunn said. So she took a professional leave and enrolled at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where she received the master of religious education degree with a major in social work.

Dunn returned to the classroom in 1983. Caring about teenagers and being available to them at school was a ministry in itself, she said.

But Dunn sought other avenues of ministry as well. She served as minister of music at East Baptist Church in Louisville; spent 10 summers helping direct Cedarcrest camp, a summer Girls in Action and Acteen camp sponsored by Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union; and then joined the Finchville church's staff.

Colleagues are quick to note Dunn's fun-loving and affable personality as well as her gifts in teaching and music.

"She gives all -- her whole self," said Brenda Price, a friend of Dunn's at Kentucky WMU.

"She can be goofy and yet have people maintain a great respect for her," Price said, alluding to the years Dunn directed Cedarcrest.

At camp, Dunn might have been seen serving meals to campers while dressed in a chef's hat and speaking with an Italian accent, Price said. And campers awoke each morning to Dunn's chipper voice as she posed as a DJ for the camp's "radio station," broadcast over the public address system.

But Dunn also prepared for the camp worship with great detail and care, Price said. "The spiritual growth of the campers was an important part of her ministry."

Dunn's dual career has not been without difficulty, she acknowledged. Besides the obvious physical and emotional drain on her energy, she struggled with working under teaching philosophies that clashed with her own.

"I was working in a system that pitied kids, but didn't care about them. There were no standards, no discipline," she explained. "I needed a philosophy of education that cared about kids."

Before she accepted the position at East Middle School in Shelby County four years ago, Dunn nearly left the classroom altogether, she said. But in her new school she found a more compatible philosophy of education.

Last fall, she was named teacher of the year at East Middle School, which began the process toward the statewide honor, given last November.

"I had been so frustrated. I had been a teacher who was going to give education one more year," she said. "I felt like God had given an answer to my prayer. He renewed my spirit.

"Everything has been very affirming," she continued. "I wish every teacher would have the opportunity to be affirmed like I have been in the last year and a half."