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**11 o'clock news of TWA crash
prompted pastor into action**

By Karen L. Willoughby

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

LONG ISLAND, N.Y. (BP)--"As I was watching the 11 o'clock news, I heard the report," recounted Bob Pohlman, bivocational pastor on Long Island, N.Y.

TWA Flight 800 had crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off Long Island shortly after takeoff from JFK International Airport the evening of July 17.

Pohlman, who lives about eight miles as the crow flies from Moriches Inlet, the crash site, continued, "I raced over there and just stayed around, offering my services. Seeing things wasn't as important as dealing with the people who had seen the wreckage."

The jetliner crash, which killed 230 people, is the nation's worst air tragedy since 279 people were killed in a May 1979 crash of an American Airlines jet in Chicago.

Soon after the TWA crash July 17, the water was full of recreation and fishing boats trying to help with the search and rescue, said Pohlman, pastor of Long Island's Emmanuel Baptist Church, Riverhead. "One Vietnam vet said the only other time he had seen anything like what they were finding was in Vietnam. He called it the carnage of war." A combat veteran himself, Pohlman went on to explain: "When shrapnel blows a person apart, you don't get much of the person left."

Pohlman is president of the local ministerial association. He met the morning of July 18 with three area Christian counseling centers to help arrange for a coordinated effort to provide grief counseling to those dealing with the search and recovery effort.

He also met with pastors of other area churches to plan an ecumenical service for the evening of July 19, and he arranged with the Baptist Convention of New York to promote ecumenical prayer services at the associational level across the state.

"Our prayers will be for the living," Pohlman said. "Regardless of the cause of the explosion, this was a tragedy."

Along with his work related to the downed jetliner, the bivocational minister and industrial truck mechanic also was directing two summer missionaries and Vacation Bible School during the week.

"God provides the strength to do what he needs done," Pohlman said. "And he gives the blessings that encourage you to go on."

Two particular blessings came his way July 18. A 30-year-old crack addict called to say she had finally heard what he had been telling her for three years and had entered the rehab center he had recommended. Another woman -- one who has been living on the streets for four years -- stopped by to show off her new G.E.D. and to ask for help getting registered at a local community college.

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"God gives us blessings like this in the midst of tragedy to show us he's still the hope of the world," Pohlman said. "With him, we have life victorious and everlasting."

The evening of the crash, a Southern Baptist layman was among eyewitnesses to the jetliner's explosion and among those interviewed on CNN and by the FBI.

Telephone cable splicer Victor "Vic" Fehner was fishing for bass from his 17-foot runabout after work at NYNEX when he looked up and saw what at first he reckoned to be a flare.

"It was a nice, calm night, almost dusk. You could see across the bay," Fehner said in a telephone interview after work July 18. "I was packing up, getting ready to go and looked around -- you know how you do when you're getting into your car or whatever. That's when I saw this -- what looked like a parachute flare.

"I watched it. It was coming down real slow and all of a sudden it just poofed into two fireballs," Fehner continued. "Now I can say maybe the wing came off one side and that was why there were two fireballs. I'm assuming the main body of the plane started going around in circles. My impression was that it was a real small two-seater plane."

Fehner angled his boat toward the fireballs, but stopped when he realized the plane went down on the ocean side of the barrier reef off Moriches Inlet.

Only later did he learn that the plane held 230 people.

"You think about all those people," Fehner said. "If you dwell on it too much, you might need some help. Even when I thought it was a small plane, I knew in my heart they were going down. And when I found out it was a 747 -- boy."

He went to work July 19 as much to keep from thinking about it as to earn a living, Fehner said.

Phyllis Adams, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board-appointed church and community ministries director, is the only paid staff person in Long Island Southern Baptist Association. The executive director resigned in 1995 to take a position in North Carolina.

"We have 14 churches scattered from the Nassau-Queens County line out to the end of the island," Adams said. "Of these 14 works, seven are language; there are about 800 to 900 members in all. Churches average about 75 in worship, and all but two of the pastors are bivocational."

Long Island itself is about 120 miles long and no more than 30 miles wide at its widest point. It is a summer haven from the hustle and stress of city life for New Yorkers and a rural community environment for those who live year-round on the island.

But two major tragedies in less than a year have shaken the serenity.

Last August, a raging wildfire so strong it leaped across a four-lane highway burned more than 10,000 acres of protected pine barrens on eastern Long Island, Adams said. That was a major tragedy for the area's environmentally aware residents who had worked hard to keep the land safe from developers. For many of these same people less than a year later who were out in their boats, searching for bodies and body parts, the two fire-related tragedies fused in their minds.

"We need a coordinated effort to deal with tragedies," Adams said. "That's one of the things I'm trying to do."

David Dean, executive director of Metropolitan Baptist Association in New York City, said he was not aware of a Southern Baptist presence at JFK International Airport. There is no chaplain on site, he said in a telephone interview. The churches closest to the airport are pastored by men who support themselves bivocationally, so they probably would not have had the freedom to go to the airport, he said.

North Carolina Baptists are in partnership with New York Baptists, but because southern volunteers still are involved with the cleanup in the wake of Hurricane Bertha, there are no concerted plans to go to Long Island, a spokesman from North Carolina's Baptist disaster relief office said.

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**Her mother's first prayer
may have saved her life**

By Karen L. Willoughby

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. (BP)--All her life Faye Thompson has wanted to travel to Europe, but inexplicably, the Souther Baptist teenager decided to not go to Paris with the other members of her high school French club.

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After the TWA jetliner carrying 16 students and five sponsors among 230 passengers exploded while soaring away from JFK International Airport in New York July 17, Thompson talked about the reason her life may have been spared.

"I think possibly because he might have something for me to do," the high school sophomore said. "When I was born, my mom was 39. When she first saw me, she said a little prayer to God and she gave me to him for whatever he willed."

That probably will involve service as a missionary, said Thompson, a member at First Southern Baptist Church, Williamsport, Pa.

"I'm really interested in missions," she said. "That's what I most want to do, most definitely. When I was little, on TV they have specials, to send money to these people for food and clothing items. I used to watch those things and I used to feel so bad. I guess I've always been real compassionate toward others."

Her older siblings traveled all over Europe because their father was in the military, Thompson said. But by the time she was old enough to know about it, he had retired, and all she had were the travel tales the family shared around the kitchen table.

"At first when I heard about it -- the French club going to Paris and to Switzerland -- I thought this would be really neat. I had never gone anywhere and had always heard about it. But when I thought about it, I said I don't know if I really want to go," Thompson recounted. "I just decided -- I don't know why, but I just want to wait."

"I'm attributing that to God," the teen continued. "There's no other reason for it. I don't know why I didn't want to go."

Her concern now is for the families and friends of the students who were killed, Thompson said.

"Of course I'm upset that it had to happen," she said. "I just put my faith in God that he will bring everybody through it. I'm not afraid of it -- death isn't bad if you have God, because you're not really dead."

Another First Southern member, Pat Bennett, is the aunt of one of the teens who died -- Jodie Laudenslater who attended a Methodist church.

"This is pretty much an 'everybody knows everybody' kind of a place," associate pastor Kenton Hunt said. The church is without a senior pastor. "Our church has a lot of people in it from Montoursville (Pa.)," the town in which the school is located that sent its young people on the trip that turned into a tragedy.

"Everybody is in shock," the associate pastor continued. "The families in our church were hit hard by a flood in January. One member said it seems like it's not going to stop."

Hunt said he could not sleep Wednesday night (July 17). When he got up at 4 a.m. and turned on the television he understood why.

"I started praying," he said. "Faye Thompson was going to go, but then she decided not to. I was pretty sure she had not, but I was wondering."

Phone calls started coming to the minister's home about 8 a.m. Thursday, July 18, Hunt said, from people requesting prayer.

"Faye is a great kid," Hunt said. "The only thing I could say to her is that I was glad she wasn't on the plane."

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**Church enhances festival
along Olympic flame route**

By Sarah Zimmerman

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

JONESBORO, Ga. (BP)--The first time Jonesboro, Ga., was torched, residents fled for safety. This time they celebrated on Main Street.

Jonesboro was on Gen. William Sherman's hit list as he marched through Georgia in 1864, burning entire communities to gain victory for the Union Army in the Civil War. According to local lore, fewer than 10 Jonesboro homes were left standing after his attack.

The town has since become a thriving Atlanta suburb, and July 17 it was on the route for the Olympic flame relay. Rather than leaving a path of destruction, this year's torch created evangelistic opportunities for First Baptist Church.

The Jonesboro Torch Relay Festival had the atmosphere of a county fair with water slides and pony rides and civic groups selling desserts to raise money. People could get their picture taken with actors dressed as "Gone With The Wind" characters for \$2.

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Four booths staffed by members of First Baptist Church were among the most popular spots because they offered free frozen orange juice and apple juice. By the time festival-goers received the four-ounce cartons, the juice had thawed to a refreshing slush. Volunteers gave away 15,200 ounces of juice.

While other groups charged \$1 for face painting, First Baptist volunteers painted Olympic rings and torches on faces for free. They also distributed 6,400 "More Than Gold" Olympic guides that include the plan of salvation, 2,500 copies of the church's summer schedule and 1,000 New Testaments with inserts of Christian athletes' testimonies. The only emergency came when volunteers sent a radio message back to the church: "We need more Bibles at tent four."

In addition to the booths, teams from First Baptist and out-of-town volunteers working with Atlanta International Ministries '96 mingled with the crowd, giving away pins with the More Than Gold logo and talking about the gospel.

"It's a great time for us to provide hospitality, and we hope that some will respond to the gospel," said Jim Millirons, minister of evangelism and missions. At least four people made professions of faith during the torch festival, and church members said they hope more people will respond to the gospel as they read the free literature.

The church's participation also helped establish a community presence for the church and showed the church cares for people, Millirons said.

Although the torch was scheduled to pass through Jonesboro around 5 p.m. and didn't arrive until after 6 p.m., the festival started before 3 p.m. Several church members took the day off work to assist in the booths.

"We find that laypeople are ready to serve," Millirons said. "We have to invite them and train them to do ministry. They're waiting to be asked."

First Baptist is part of the Home Mission Board's key church strategy which encourages churches to enlarge the scope of their ministry. The mission action ministry team of the church's missions development council organized the congregation's participation in the festival. One organizer said she didn't have to recruit people to work in the booths; church members called her offering to help.

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(BP) photos of Olympic related ministries, including one to accompany this story, are scheduled to be posted on SBCNet July 24. Editors wanting photos mailed to them should call Sarah Zimmerman in the Home Mission Board news office, (770) 410-6533.

Senate OKs bill to form gambling study panel

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
7/19/96

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Senate has approved legislation establishing a commission to study the impact of gambling.

The Senate voted July 17 to approve a slightly different version of a bill passed in March by the House of Representatives. The House is expected to OK the Senate version July 22, a House staff member said. President Clinton has expressed support for the legislation.

The Senate adopted the measure by a voice vote, but the senators from Nevada, the country's leading gambling state, asked they be recorded as voting against it. Nevada's senators are Democrats Richard Bryan and Harry Reid.

The bill calls for the commission to have nine members assigned to study the social and economic effects of gambling on government, communities, families, businesses and individuals. The commission would be appointed within 60 days after the enactment of the legislation and would make its report no more than two years after its first meeting.

The panel would have three members appointed by the president, three by the Senate majority leader and three by the speaker of the House. The cost of the commission would be about \$5 million, according to a Congressional Budget Office study.

The House version of the legislation grants the commission power to subpoena individuals as well as documents. The Senate version allows subpoena power only for documents, unless a person is needed to provide an explanation. The Senate bill also includes disclosure restrictions to protect privacy which the House version does not.

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"We are very pleased that the Senate has passed this bill," said Will Dodson, legal counsel and director of government relations for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "Gambling in this country is spiraling out of control. Therefore, it is important that we take swift action to study the impact of this dramatic increase and to consider appropriate ways of dealing with it. It is important that we proceed full speed ahead."

In a letter last September to the 35 members of the House Judiciary Committee, then-Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry and CLC President Richard Land urged approval of the bill, which the committee did in November.

"No one suggests that we are going to close down Las Vegas or Atlantic City," said Sen. Paul Simon, D.-Ill., chief Senate sponsor of the bill. "But I think we ought to look at this problem and see what the dimensions of that problem are and what we ought to do."

Reid criticized the bill as "unwarranted, invasive and potentially capable of doing more harm than good."

The chief sponsor of the House bill is Rep. Frank Wolf, R.-Va.

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**Anybody can get along
with everybody, almost**

By Charles Willis

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Bob Sheffield advocates getting along with almost everybody. Almost everybody, that is, because nobody can change someone who is determined to be a difficult person.

"Everybody has a difficult person," said Sheffield, a deacon ministry consultant for the Baptist Sunday School Board. "And everybody becomes a difficult person to somebody," he told participants in a National Conference for Church Leadership at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. "We can't change our difficult person," he warned, "but we can learn to relate to that person."

Not everyone will get along equally with everyone else, Sheffield said.

"Some people may not like us," he said. "They are everywhere. Not only that, sometimes they look alike!"

Reasonably, no one should expect everyone to agree with us, like us or love us all the time. But with Sheffield's guide to the types of difficult people, church members, deacons and even church staff people may be able to relate to those who persist in being difficult:

-- The Bull Headed -- takes the approach, "Don't bother me with the facts; my mind is made up."

Confrontation is not recommended, but questions and alternatives may help.

-- The Bush Whacker -- always works behind the scenes as a sniper. Do not compete with this person.

Seek group confirmation of this person by asking, "Does anyone else see it that way?"

-- The Bulldozer -- sometimes known as the Sherman Tank. Do not go head-to-head with this person, because you will lose. Let him run down.

-- The Ticking Bomb -- This person will "go off." The question is not if, but when. Do not get defensive with this person. You are not the problem.

-- The Lone Ranger -- has been hurt and is withdrawing. Be a friend at their pace. Do not make this person chairman of a committee.

-- The War Lord -- works behind the scenes. This is the opinion-maker who plots the strategy. Your task is to determine who is behind what is going on.

-- Mr. Wonderful -- is thought to be "neat" by everybody, except you. This person has to keep up a facade and will never be wrong. Those around Mr. Wonderful will be wrong. Pray for him, and try to work with him individually.

-- The Superior -- also known as the encyclopedia. This person knows everything about everything that ever was or will be -- the University of Final Knowledge. Use him to your advantage. A lot of positive things can come from this person. Be sure you have done your homework before you challenge him.

-- The Perfect -- not a perfectionist, but the person who will shift blame. These are the legalists of the world who will dump a lot of rules on you.

-- The Entitled -- stands on his rights and screams about it if he doesn't get what he wants. He really feels put upon.

-- The Different -- one who is different from me for any reason.

-- The Pioneer -- the first one, and he continually tells you he was the first one. We need his stories. He can be a rich source, but sometimes can be the historical preservationist. He is still very a progressive person.

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-- The Thunderstorm -- a lot of clouds, thunder and lightning, but very little rain. Let him go until he is worn out. Do not placate him.

-- Lukewarm -- not excited about anything, and may have been trained to be that way.

-- Handwinger -- the Chicken Little of the world. A person who went through the Great Depression tends to respond this way because he has been conditioned by experience. Unfortunately, "the worst" happens just often enough to reinforce his behavior.

What makes one's difficult person difficult? Sheffield said a variety of factors cause difficulty, including temperament differences, decision-making differences, unseen histories, stress levels in either person, the situation in which people find themselves, differences in spiritual gifts, behavior and communication habits.

Sheffield said in order to improve relationships, Christians must "manage our expectations of others and ourselves. We give up too soon on some relationships," he added. "And we get along best when we mature spiritually and emotionally."

National Conference for Church Leadership, July 12-15 and July 15-19, focused training on leadership, ministry and worship and were sponsored by the BSSB's church leadership services division.

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'Can do' attitude needed in ministering to families

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
7/19/96

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Changes in meeting the needs of today's American family requires a "can do" attitude on the part of deacons, church staff and laypeople attempting to provide family ministries, according to a state Baptist convention leader.

Gary Bearce, director of church development for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, told participants in a National Conference for Church Leadership he believes deacons and key leaders "can be effective partners with God in caring for families."

Changes among families, he said, include smaller family units with fewer children; more children living with only one parent; many children lacking consistent involvement of a father; parents and children spending less time together. Others include many single adults living with parents; older Americans living longer; more mothers of children under age 6 working; a decline in the birth rate outside of marriage in part because of abortions; and an increase in poverty among children.

Today's diverse families include fewer traditional families, Bearce said. Other family types which deserve consideration by churches include dual-career, single-parent, step- or blended families, childless families, never married or divorced singles and widowed.

In offering ministry opportunities to deacons and others in the church, he said, consideration should be given to special ministry needs of hospitalized people and their families, the bereaved, the lonely, the needy, church members in conflict, couples in marital conflict, child-parent conflicts, the uprooted, the unemployed, alcoholics and those with other addictions and people who suffer depression or despair. Other special needs include people suffering abuse, families having an unusual death, premarital pregnancy, divorce, terminal illness, handicaps, financial stress and families of homosexuals.

"The Bible uses family images and relationships to convey some of its most profound spiritual revelations," Bearce said. "Family ministry requires skills to encourage growth in the most intricate human relationship God created. If you have encountered God in times of trouble, that equips you to minister to others in times of trouble."

Relating the seven realities of the "Experiencing God" study to family ministry needs and opportunities, Bearce said what people believe about God will affect what they believe about ministry to families and how effectively they discover needs and minister. Experiencing God is the popular discipleship course produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division. The seven realities include:

-- Acknowledge God is always at work around you -- in your family, your church, your community and your world.

-- God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal. If you do not accept the love he offers you, you cannot serve as an instrument of God's love in ministry to families.

-- God invites you to become involved with him in his work.

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-- God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances and the church to reveal himself, his purposes and his ways.

-- God's invitation for you to work with him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action. What you do in response to God's invitation determines what you really believe about God.

-- You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what he is doing in ministering to families.

-- You come to know God by experience as you obey him and he accomplishes his work through you.

Bearce said many churches have to overcome hurdles of skills, attitudes, differing views of ministry and application, lack of priority and fear of needed adjustments to minister effectively to families.

"Family ministry never arrives," he said. "You have to be continually looking for what God is up to and continually preparing yourself."

For those who want to be effective ministers to families, Bearce recommended being yourself, listening, withholding judgment, declining to make decisions for others, using referrals for situations beyond your abilities and praying with the person or family.

National Conferences for Church Leadership, July 12-15 and July 15-19 at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, focused training on leadership, ministry and worship and were sponsored by the BSSB's church leadership services division.

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Businessman tailors ministry to preachers, missionaries

By Lee Weeks

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)--Jim Tatum has been sizing up preachers for 35 years.

"I wanted to be a preacher really, but God didn't call me to preach," said the 69-year-old Florida businessman.

Instead, Tatum said, God had other plans for his life.

Tatum said that while attending a Bible conference as a 34-year-old insurance salesman, God told him to go into the clothing business.

His mission: to help provide ministers of the gospel with suits and clothes they otherwise could not afford.

Since 1960, Tatum's mission has grown from a hobby operating out of his garage to a 28,000-square-foot store in Jacksonville, Fla., called Jim Tatum's Men's Shops, Inc.

Over the years, Tatum's store has garnered the loyal business of several prominent preachers and theological notables such as Paige Patterson, Adrian Rogers, Jerry Vines, Steven Alford and Bailey Smith.

But despite the commercial success and notoriety Tatum's business has earned, he said he has worked hard to remain faithful to the reason God called him into the clothing business.

"We see some people that really can't afford anything," Tatum said.

Several years ago, Tatum closed two stores in New Orleans and two more in Jacksonville to focus more of his energy and resources to his clothing ministry.

For years, Tatum and his associates have provided suits and other clothes for about a third of their actual retail cost to missionaries as well as college and seminary students training for the ministry.

"You need to dress well because people expect a pastor to look good," Tatum said. "They don't pay them well, but they expect them to look good."

Tatum takes his store onto the campuses of nearly 15 Christian colleges and seminaries each year, packing about 2,000 suits, sport coats and blazers, 3,000 shirts and 200 dozen ties into a 26-foot-long truck.

But before the truck is parked on a campus, Tatum said, he makes sure the school stands on the Bible.

"We strictly work with Christians," he said. "And we're particular that they're straight doctrinally. We believe in the inerrancy of the Word. We believe in it from the front (cover) to the back."

Tatum said he travels the country looking for bargains from clothing manufacturers and then passes the savings to those in the ministry.

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"We don't buy anything that's cheap," he said. "We search out merchandise because they don't come to your door with bargains."

Ed Davis, a second-year student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., was one of many seminarians blessed by Tatum's ministry to the campus last fall.

Davis, of South Hampton, Va., said sales manager Sammy Norman gave him a \$300 suit and a pair of pants valued at \$45.

"They were a tremendous blessing in many ways," Davis said. "It was just an answer to prayer because we couldn't afford it."

Davis, his wife, Shelley, and their three sons moved to Wake Forest last summer after transferring to Southeastern from Liberty Baptist Seminary.

Davis said Tatum's generosity reaffirmed God's calling on his life and promise to meet his needs. Davis said he needed a suit because his teaching and preaching opportunities continue to increase.

"It's a reminder of Jehovah Jireh," Davis said. "That God is and he will provide."

Tatum, a deacon and Sunday school teacher at First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., cites Romans 11:36 as the basis for his ministry.

"God will send things through you that he doesn't give to you," he said. "Everything is of him, through him and to him."

Tatum is not only interested in clothing seminary students. As part of his ministry, "Suits for Servants," he provides new suits to missionaries and clothes for their families home on furlough.

His ministry reaches around the globe, providing clothing and shoes for orphans in Haiti, the Philippines, Mexico and countries in South America.

The Waycross, Ga., native travels around the country speaking about his ministry and testifying how God has blessed him since he accepted Christ as his Savior as a 22-year-old meat cutter.

"When I got saved, I didn't know anything about the Bible," Tatum said. After accepting Christ, he led his mother, stepfather, brother and half-sister to the Lord. "They saw such a change in me and they wanted what I had."

But while his burden for the lost still burns within him, Tatum said, his ministry doesn't stop with reaching lost souls.

"The Lord has addicted me to the ministry of the saints," Tatum said, referring to 1 Corinthians 16:15.

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Whitney now counts on Jesus to see little sister again

By Stella Anderson

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

BONIFAY, Fla. (BP)--The death of a preschool-age sister would be difficult for any child to bear -- bringing long-lasting sadness, pain and grief to siblings and families.

Whitney Day, 8, recently has experienced such a tragedy, yet a constant brightness and radiance still surrounds the blond-hair, blue-eyed youngster. At second glance, this glow is perhaps a result of Day's newfound faith in Jesus Christ, a commitment she pledged while attending Vacation Bible School at First Baptist Church, Bonifay, Fla.

Day said her sister's unexpected death "was a hard thing. But I believe Jesus helps me through it."

Day was among 16 children who made professions of faith in Christ during VBS June 17-21 at the Florida Panhandle church. Many others rededicated their lives to Christ. After a counseling time with church leadership, Day and two other children were baptized in July.

The Holy Spirit has been "speaking to her heart" for some time, Day said, describing the week of Bible study and Christian fellowship at VBS as the deciding point for her to profess her faith in Christ.

"Vacation Bible school was a lot of fun," Day said. "We learned more about Jesus." Still, her favorite event was "craft time," she recalled.

But her decision to "accept Christ is a very important promise," she said, so that she will "go to heaven one day" with her sister.

This year, more than 360 children and workers registered for the church's VBS, a considerable enrollment for the congregation which averages 450 worshippers at Sunday morning services.

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"In this day and time of moral decay and family breakdown, it is imperative that we reach children with the gospel message at an early age," said Stephanie Pippin, a children and family counselor with Florida's Health and Rehabilitative Services who spent her annual vacation teaching at VBS. "Many children just want to know they are loved and cared about."

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**'Too old' doesn't apply
to 55-year-old 'Pappa'**

By Shawn Hendricks

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

UPLAND, Ind. (BP)--The words "too old" don't mean much to Bruce Montgomery.

After being turned away from the first two years of Indiana Baptists' "Super Summer" youth camp because he didn't meet the 45-and-under age requirement, 55-year-old Montgomery -- who became "Pappa" to campers -- was invited to participate as a group leader.

According to Super Summer guidelines, a person must be under the age of 45 to participate at the camp. Loren Robinson, camp coordinator, said the rule has been altered, however, because of the increase in youth enrollment and a shortage of volunteer help.

"We needed all the help we could find," Robinson said.

Super Summer drew 240 youth July 8-12 to Taylor University, Upland, Ind.

Richard Walton, camp director, said from now on there will be less focus on the age of a person like Montgomery and more focus on their ability.

"We've seen the problems (with a lack of volunteers) over the years, so we've been able to get it straight," he said. "Hey, if they love kids, they are here and that's it."

This was good news for Lynn Neal, a camper from Calvary Baptist in Seymour, Ind., who has been close friends with Montgomery for several years. "He's just the type that people are drawn to," Neal said.

Montgomery, a member at Calvary Baptist for nine years, said, "I promised the Lord that I would give him more of my time once I was retired. I didn't plan to go out and get involved with the youth, it just kind of happened."

With more than 30 kids coming from Calvary Baptist, Mike Hornbeck, a full-time youth pastor at Calvary Baptist and an assistant team leader at Super Summer, said he needed Montgomery no matter how old he was.

"He is the exception," Hornbeck said. "Bruce has a heart for what kids are going through."

Hornbeck said he was worried at the beginning of the year that camp requirements would keep Montgomery from attending the camp. "At first I wasn't sure how old Bruce was."

Hornbeck said he believes there is a need for some type of age requirement because of the high level of activity involved with the youth; however, it was too low. "I'm not sure I would set it at 45."

Montgomery said he plans to continue working with the youth as long as he can. "I'll be back if the Lord and they (Super Summer staff) let me."

Robinson, evangelism assistant at the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, said the Super Summer camp is designed to take good kids and make them better.

"The need to develop youth who are becoming soul-winners and Christian leaders is great," Robinson said. "Anyone can be a leader."

Walton, camp director, said the camp is planning to double in enrollment next year, after starting with 80 in 1994. "We are preparing to fill 600 beds next year."

During the week, students divide by age into four different schools characterized by their own color. The four schools are red, blue, yellow and green.

Each school is then divided into "family groups." The groups are usually lead by a male and a female, who are called "mom" and "pop." Family time is designed to give the campers an opportunity to share and discuss the sessions they attend with each other. "You just let loose and they know you better than anybody around," John Marcum, a camper from Liberty, Ind., said.

According to the Super Summer handbook, students spend nearly 24 hours during the week in evangelism and discipleship training sessions. The sessions are led by pastors and evangelists selected throughout the state. In the afternoon, campers also get two hours of recreation time.

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In the evening, all of the schools attended a worship service called the "Rainbow Session." This year's speaker, Kyle Goen, from Dade City, Fla., said he uses the service as a time to reach out to kids who are searching for answers to the world's problems. "They are striving for something outside themselves and Christ will fill it," he said.

Teddy Grover, a singer in the Christian duo Reggie and Teddy, which performed and led the music for the evening services, said the kids are the reason he enjoys performing at the camp. "Super Summer just gets in your blood."

Grover, who has performed with his partner at different Super Summer camps for 10 years, said he doesn't plan to stop. "They will have to wheel me in on a wheelchair," he said.

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Hendricks is a summer intern at the Indiana Baptist newsjournal. He is a student at Union University, Jackson, Tenn.

**BSSB editor Fernando Garcia
dies boarding plane in Cuba**

**Baptist Press
7/19/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Fernando Garcia, editor of children's materials in Spanish in the Baptist Sunday School Board's multicultural leadership department, died July 18 of an apparent heart attack as he boarded a plane in Havana, Cuba.

Garcia, 59, had been visiting family in his native Cuba and was returning to Nashville when he collapsed and died.

Garcia joined the board in 1982 as a manuscript assistant in the language unit and held several editorial positions. Earlier, he was pastor of Calvaria Iglesia Bautista, 1966-81, and Primera Iglesia Bautista, 1963-66, both in Bryan, Texas. He also served as pastor of churches in Florida and Puerto Rico. He left Cuba in the 1960s and became a Christian after arriving in the United States.

Omar Hernandez, manager of the resources development section in the multicultural leadership department, said Garcia "was the first person I worked with at the board. We developed a friendship that was much deeper than supervisor and employee."

Garcia was a graduate of the Instituto de Matanzas in Matanzas, Cuba, and the Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary, San Antonio, Texas.

He is survived by his wife, Marta, three sons and one daughter.

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