



**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES**
Historical Commission, SBC
BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Fax (615) 742-8919
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,250
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,115
NASHVILLE Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,57
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,72
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

November 9, 1995

95-179

- GEORGIA--Home missions offering passes \$38 million record.
- ISRAEL--Israel asks: Where is peace? photo.
- ARKANSAS--Baptist couple in shock, mourning over Rabin death; photo.
- FLORIDA--Jim Henry attends Rabin funeral; says world 'galvanized' for peace.
- WASHINGTON--Partial-birth abortion ban suffers setback in Senate.
- DALLAS--Texas Baptist committee says 'no' to funding cut alternative.
- NORTH CAROLINA--Southeastern professor wins town council seat.
- MIAMI--U.S. legal system called a 'litigation apocalypse.'
- SOUTH DAKOTA--Dakota Baptists target 'Thousand More ...'
- DALLAS--Blood to be drawn from Texas Baptists.
- DALLAS--Texas Baptist group includes prayer in strategy planning.
- ALABAMA--Parents of autistic children say support group is 'lifesaver.'
- GEORGIA--Georgia Baptist bus to tackle migrant workers' health needs.
- TENNESSEE--Correction; Editors' Note.

Israel asks:
Where is peace?

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
11/9/95

TEL AVIV, Israel (BP)--As Israelis grapple with the question, "Where is peace?" following the Nov. 4 shooting death of their folk hero and prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, evangelical leaders there are posing the question, "What is peace?"

Consider this: A group of Jewish soldiers is patrolling streets on foot when one spots a sign for an Arab Baptist congregation. He orders a boy on the front steps to get him the leader of the group. Nervous Arabs file outside, and the soldier looks them over.

The soldier walks over to an older man. He reaches out his arms and embraces the man, weeping.

"I am a believer in Jesus, too," he says.

Scenarios like this one -- which occurred recently -- are growing more common, according to Jim Sibley, a Southern Baptist Convention worker from Dallas. Sibley helps Jewish believers in Jesus, or Messianic Jews, in Tel Aviv, Israel.

"When you have a former Muslim terrorist weeping together with an Israeli soldier, that's peace," he said.

The day before Sibley spoke to Baptist Press, Israel had laid to rest the body of Rabin after a ceremony in which world leaders eulogized him as a courageous martyr. Rabin was a war hero who used military strategy to enlarge his nation, but during his term as prime minister had started trading land for peace with Arabs.

To many, he embodied the hope that Israel would emerge from isolation, persecution and bloodshed to attain the material plenty resulting from long-sought acceptance in the world community. To others, he represented a threat that Israelis would negotiate away the national identity they had gained by conquest, United Nations charter and divine right.

For several years, attacks on Messianic Jews have resulted from the same fiery rhetoric that has given birth to debates over the pros and cons of killing Rabin. In 1982 Jewish radicals burned down Narkis Street Baptist Congregation's building in Jerusalem.

The angry Jewish extremist who fired the three bullets that killed Rabin said he did so to stop the peace negotiations. The assassin, Yigal Amir, a 25-year-old law student, told police God willed it.

Amir's concerns are more widespread than might be suggested by the crowd of supporters who showed up to honor Rabin -- and who disdain the idea that one Jew would kill another, Sibley said.

"Israelis loved Rabin -- the man, the soldier, the statesman," he said. "But there was growing sentiment against the peace process. There was grave reservation, if not outright opposition, that increasing numbers of them were beginning to express."

Evangelicals should not take lightly the biblical inference that peace in Israel, as in the rest of the world, will be out of reach as long as Jews remain separated from the knowledge of Jesus the Messiah, Sibley argued. "In essence, the 'peace of Jerusalem' has nothing to do with political peace," Sibley said. "We should be praying for the salvation of Jewish people, and through them that they might be a light to the nations."

Where hatred between Arab and Jew has torn daily life apart for generations, political peace is only a string of settlements that come and go.

"The real story of peace in the Middle East is not one of politics but of evangelism -- it's Muslims and Jews coming to know Jesus as Savior and embracing each other as brothers and sisters," said Sibley. "Only someone who has been forgiven at the deepest level is capable of that kind of relationship."

Such peace has been elusive to Israel, where less than one-tenth of a percent of the population are evangelical Christians.

"Very many people are expecting so much from this peace process," said Gershon Nerel, a Jewish believer in Jesus. "It's as if this political agreement with the Palestinians and neighboring Arab states will solve all the problems of Zionism and the Jewish state."

Nerel is Israel secretary of the International Messianic Jewish Alliance and a member of a Messianic congregation. He also belongs to a cooperative Messianic community in the Judean hills about nine miles west of Jerusalem.

"Our message, and we must focus on it, is that real peace can be achieved only through the peace made by the Prince of Peace, Yeshua (Messianic believers' name for Christ). Unfortunately, most of our people (in Israel) are not believers in the New Testament, hardly believing in the Old Testament."

Jewish reluctance to accept evangelical advances is rooted in their history with Christianity, said Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a Messianic Jew whose Tustin, Calif.,-based Ariel Ministries promotes evangelism to Jews.

Like most Christians who make no distinction between types of Muslims -- and see them all as fanatical terrorists -- most Jews draw no lines between Christians, he said. They see no difference between evangelical Christians who envision Israel as a vital part of the body of Christ and those who believe the Jewish experience is passe and has no place in modern times.

Because of this, while many Jews appreciate the evangelical interest in Israel, they view it skeptically, Fruchtenbaum said. It appears to be a new version of other attempts to overcome their culture. Instead of "replacement theology" (the doctrine that God's grand design passed the Jews by when their leaders rejected Jesus), or the Holocaust, "they see this as annihilation by conversion," he explained.

"The church itself has to wrestle with its theology of Israel," he added. "In the (near) future there will be a measure of appreciation of evangelical support (by Jews), but there will also be a measure of distrust."

--30--

Mike Creswell contributed to this article. (BP) photo (horizontal) mailed to state Baptist newspapers Nov. 8 by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. (A package of articles highlighting the growth of Messianic Judaism in Israel is featured in the September-October 1995 issue of The Commission, magazine of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.)

**Baptist couple in shock,
mourning over Rabin death**

By Erich Bridges

MURFREESBORO, Ark. (BP)--They cried. They prayed. They mourned. But mostly they sat in numb silence.

Southern Baptist workers John and Connie Anthony watched on television as slain Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin was buried Nov. 6 within walking distance of their apartment in Jerusalem.

"We got up about 5:30 in the morning and turned it on," said Anthony during a telephone interview from their temporary furlough home in Arkansas. "We watched the whole thing. We're still stunned."

The shock that hit them two days before when they learned of Rabin's assassination -- Mrs. Anthony fainted and dropped to the ground after she was told -- had only deepened. Even deeper, perhaps, was the wish they could have been in Jerusalem that day to grieve with the Israelis they have long served.

"It's like the leader of our own nation has been shot," Anthony said. "We've been in Israel 22 years."

The Anthonys, who minister to young people, married couples, Russian immigrants and others through the Baptist House in Jerusalem, sometimes relate to Israeli government officials on behalf of Baptists in Israel. They had met Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, Rabin's partner in peace efforts and now acting prime minister. Anthony also knows Bill Clinton, a childhood friend from their mutual hometown of Hope, Ark. (Mrs. Anthony is from Mount Ida, Ark.)

Anthony attended last year's ceremony recognizing peace between Israel and Jordan. He was invited to the ceremony by Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein.

Rabin's death marks "the end of an era for Israel," Anthony said. "I believe Rabin will go down in history as a great leader, someone like Abraham Lincoln was to American society." Like Lincoln, "Rabin gave his life and his blood for peace in his country" after leading it through years of war.

But also like Lincoln, Rabin died at the hands of one of his own countrymen -- a fratricidal murder carried out by someone convinced he was acting in righteous vengeance. A more relevant Middle East analogy: the Muslim militants who killed Egypt's Anwar Sadat in 1981, and who vow to eliminate other Muslim leaders who reject Iran-style Islam.

"Never before has a Jew killed a Jew like this" in modern times, Anthony said. "You can scream and holler and shake your fist (in Israeli politics), but you don't kill another Jew over a political position. This has moved Israel into an era of this guy saying, 'God told me to kill him' ... Israel has lost its innocence in the sense that now it must start looking at the (Jewish) terrorist groups."

Christians in Israel have been looking at such groups for many years. And they have suffered from the radicals' violent intolerance of any perceived threat to the integrity of the Jewish state -- whether it be peace-seeking political leaders like Rabin or the small but growing number of Jews who declare their belief in Jesus as the Messiah.

"It was Jewish radicals who burned our church down in 1982," Anthony recalled, referring to the arson destruction of Narkis Street Baptist Church in Jerusalem.

"That group has now been labeled as a Jewish terrorist group and outlawed. The people who have knocked our windows out 10 or 12 times were the radical Jews. The ones who firebombed us and then nail-bombed us were the radical Jews. So we've been aware of the violence from the radical right since we've been there. We have personally received the verbal attacks and the threats on our property" -- including various threats against Anthony himself.

The agonizing soul-searching now under way among Israelis will result in both a political backlash and a legal crackdown on the violent radicals, Anthony predicted. That already seems to be happening.

--more--

"No longer is Israel going to ignore the local threats that are there," he said. "Maybe our pleas for help when we're threatened will not go ignored in the future, and there will be a greater respect for who the Messianic Jews are."

An even deeper soul-searching appeared in the hollow eyes of the hundreds of thousands of young Israelis who shuffled past Yitzhak Rabin's coffin. Christian workers in Israel have compared the youth generation there with American youths of the 1960s who questioned their nation's values but weren't sure how to replace them.

"All the old leaders are dying out, like Moshe Dayan and Golda Meir and Yitzhak Rabin," said Anthony. "They will all be gone within 20 years. And these young people are saying, 'Well, I'm gonna be here, and what kind of a state is it going to be?' Many of them are opening themselves up to negative things like Satanism; the New Age thing is really booming. But it also means they're more open to viewing Jesus and asking, 'Who is this Messiah?'"

--30--

(BP) photo (vertical) mailed to state Baptist newspapers Nov. 8 by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline posted in SBCNet News Room.

Jim Henry attends Rabin funeral;
says world 'galvanized' for peace

By Michael Chute

Baptist Press
11/9/95

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--Returning from the funeral of Yitzhak Rabin in Israel, Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry said the Israeli prime minister's assassination has "galvanized" the world community to press toward peace in the Middle East.

But the pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., said he fears "a narrow window of opportunity" could rapidly close.

"This (assassination) will galvanize (world leaders) for the immediate future to press on with it," Henry said Nov. 7 after returning from his two-day trip to Israel. "(Rabin's) death made people realize, in a sense, what peace costs. And they want to move on with it; they want to get something done. He was the cement, the glue in the process and how that plays out in the long run will be interesting.

"The far right (Jewish) radicals are having to be quiet. They're on the defensive. They're not all like the guy who shot him. But the opposition party will need to be quiet in the immediate future. There is a narrow window of opportunity" for peace. "It's yet to be seen."

Henry was one of three evangelical Christian leaders invited by President Clinton to accompany the 40-member U.S. delegation to Israel as special guests for Rabin's funeral. Henry was joined by Henry Lyons, president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, the largest African American denomination, and Robert Schuller, pastor of Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, Calif. Several Jewish leaders from New York City and Washington, were included in the delegation.

In addition to the religious leaders and President Clinton, the U.S. delegation included former Presidents George Bush and Jimmy Carter, as well as a number of cabinet officials and six congressional leaders, including Sen. Bob Dole, R-Kan., Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., and Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Fla.

Henry called the ceremony "very somber" and said he was reminded how "ironic it was that several of us had been there a year ago celebrating the signing of the peace treaty" between Israel and Jordan.

"In that same room (where the body was laid in state in the Knesset), I had met Mr. Rabin personally," Henry said. "A year ago we were shouting and rejoicing and thanking God for the peace treaty that meant so much to the world. A year later we were standing there grieving -- in the same building -- for the man who had worked so hard for (peace). I never dreamed I'd come back a year later in that context."

--more--

A siren, sounded to commemorate each year of the Holocaust, was used for this occasion to mark the beginning of the two-hour funeral attended by approximately 4,500 people. Rabin's son, Yuval, said "kaddish" -- the Jewish prayer for the dead -- over his father's coffin, draped in the blue and white Israeli flag. Rabin's wife, Leah, dressed in black, sat weeping in the front row.

Henry called tributes voiced by world leaders -- including Clinton, King Hussein of Jordan and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak -- a "very moving, emotional, powerful experience." Rabin previously had invited Hussein and Mubarak to visit Israel, and Henry said both leaders noted in their tributes that "while (Rabin) had invited them while he was living, it took his death to actually bring them there."

The funeral marked Mubarak's first visit to Israel, but Hussein recalled how the last time he was in Jerusalem, as a young boy in 1951, his grandfather had been assassinated.

"It was touching," Henry said, "and impressed upon me how all of them live very dangerous lives, as you can imagine."

But Henry called the tributes from Rabin's granddaughter, Noa Ben-artzi Philosof, and Eitan Haber, his speechwriter, the most emotional moments of the funeral. Speaking of her family's anguish at the brutal slaying of her grandfather, Noa Ben-Artzi asked: "How can you console a whole nation when Grandma cannot stop weeping? You were and still are our own private hero."

Henry said during Haber's remarks, the longtime Rabin aide pulled a folded piece of paper from his pocket. Moments before Rabin was slain during a peace rally Nov. 4, he led participants in singing the "Song of Peace." Haber said Rabin had written the words on that paper and after singing them had folded it and put it in his breast pocket.

"When he was assassinated, blood ran onto that sheet," Henry said. "When (Haber) opened it up, I could still see the blood on the sheet from where I was sitting. That was a very powerful picture -- it cost his life to get (peace). It was what he was working toward."

The SBC president was among approximately 300 mourners invited to the cemetery for the burial service. Henry said he had wanted to tell Leah Rabin that he "brought the prayers and thoughts of Southern Baptists; that he represented Southern Baptists and the Christian community in America. My prayers and sympathy were with her."

But Henry wasn't able to talk to her. He got within three feet of Mrs. Rabin before security officials whisked her away. "I wanted to tell her so badly but I understood," Henry said. "It was so packed (with people) around the casket and at the grave site. I was glad to get that close."

At the grave site Henry knelt down to take a picture when he saw someone's hands putting dirt on the grave. He looked up and saw Sen. Edward Kennedy. "He had taken dirt from Arlington (National Cemetery) where his brother (President John F. Kennedy) is buried," Henry said. "He told (Mrs. Rabin) that this was one act he could do to identify with her pain and suffering."

After the ceremonies, the U.S. delegation went to Jerusalem's King David Hotel for dinner before returning to the United States. During that meeting, Henry had an opportunity to speak to President Clinton and to thank him for the invitation to accompany the U.S. delegation.

"He was smiling but I could see he was still very moved, hurt and empathetically involved in what was taking place," Henry said. "I told him I thought he had done an excellent job with his tribute and he said, 'I thank you, but it's been one of the hardest, most difficult days of my life.' I thanked him for including me and he said, 'I wanted our representative to be here.' He thanked me twice.

"As he was leaving, he turned and said, 'By the way, did you hear Rex was elected in Arkansas?'" Rex Horn, Clinton's pastor at Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, was recently elected president of the Arkansas Baptist Convention. "It was amazing to me that with everything else that (Clinton) had on his mind he knew that."

Henry said he was "surprised the president asked me to go with all the people he could have invited. I was grateful he asked me to represent (Southern Baptists). It ties back to that trip I took earlier for the signing (of the peace treaty). I hope it will open up doors for all of us to work for peace in the world. I know peace won't come ultimately until Christ comes again but if we can cause the cessation of killing in the world, we ought to all work toward that.

"As Southern Baptists, we can't think somebody else has to deal with this. We have to deal in our own hearts and minds, to talk, and not hurt each other. King Hussein said it well in his tribute: 'If we do not quit hating our enemies, we are producing the seed that eventually will cause us to hate our friends.' That was a profound statement and it's true. We can't hate -- God's love has got to win the day."

--30--

Partial-birth abortion ban
suffers setback in Senate

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
11/9/95

WASHINGTON (BP)--The attempt to prohibit a gruesome, late-term abortion procedure suffered a setback when the U.S. Senate agreed to refer the bill to the Judiciary Committee Nov. 8.

The Senate vote called for the committee to hold a public hearing and to return the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act (H.R. 1833) to the floor Dec. 7. Supporters of the bill had hoped to keep the bill out of committee but relented when it appeared they might not have enough votes to pass it without a hearing. The vote on referral was 90-7.

The National Right to Life Committee supported the referral because of the "significant number of undecided senators who wanted a hearing -- senators whose votes we need to pass the House bill," said Douglas Johnson, NRLC's legislative director. "The upcoming Judiciary Committee hearing will reveal the brutal realities of partial-birth abortions to millions of additional Americans."

The House of Representatives' voted 288-139 in favor of the bill Nov. 1. It was the first time a house of Congress had voted to ban an abortion procedure since the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision.

Commenting on the Senate action, Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said, "It is a very dark day in America's moral life when our elected officials cannot see the unquestionable immorality of D and X abortion. Moral sensitivities have been eclipsed by partisan politics."

A day after the House vote, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R.-Kan., announced he would bring the House bill directly to the floor. Abortion rights advocates in the Senate complained about the lack of a hearing. Pro-lifers hoped to gain quick passage on the floor for fear the Judiciary Committee, which has a pro-choice majority, would adopt at least one amendment weakening the bill. An amendment which might be offered would allow for the procedure to be performed to protect the mother's health, which the Supreme Court has defined as even emotional and familial health. Such an amendment, pro-lifers contend, would gut the bill.

"The fact that the Senate was not ready to ban this grisly procedure underscores the absolute necessity of pro-life Christians contacting their senators," Mitchell said. "Christians should pray that during the hearings the scales of moral blindness will be removed and the Senate will overwhelmingly pass the ban on this murderous procedure."

A hearing is scheduled Nov. 17, a Judiciary Committee spokesperson said. Sen. Orrin Hatch, R.-Utah, committee chairman, said Nov. 9 it is possible the committee might not have time to vote on the bill before returning it to the full Senate, the spokesperson said.

--more--

The procedure, named partial-birth by the bill's sponsors but commonly known as dilation and extraction (D and X), occurs in the second half of pregnancy. With ultrasound for guidance, an abortion doctor uses forceps and his hands to deliver a living, intact baby feet first until only the head is left in the birth canal. The doctor thrusts surgical scissors into the base of the baby's skull. The doctor inserts a catheter into the opening and suctions out the brain. Because the skull collapses, this provides easier removal of the dead child.

Opponents of the bill have charged it is part of a strategy to reverse abortion rights. They have said the procedure is used only in cases of severely defective children or a threat to the mother's life.

Martin Haskell, one of the leading practitioners of the procedure, has said, however, about 80 percent of his D and X abortions are "purely elective," according to a 1993 interview with American Medical News, a journal of the American Medical Association. In a 1992 speech, Haskell said he had performed about 700 D and X abortions.

Haskell, from Ohio, said he performs the procedure until about 26 weeks of gestation. Another physician identified with the procedure, James McMahon of Los Angeles, said he did abortions through all 40 weeks. Both said the majority of babies are alive until near the conclusion of the procedure. McMahon died Oct. 28.

Comments requested from the National Abortion Federation and the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League were not provided in time for Baptist Press' Nov. 9 deadline.

--30--

Texas Baptist committee says
'no' to funding cut alternative

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
11/9/95

DALLAS (BP)--Ken Hemphill's alternative is out, as far as the administrative committee of the Baptist General Convention of Texas is concerned. Hemphill, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, had proposed challenging Texas Baptists to give one-half percent more through the Cooperative Program to fund a proposed effort to start 1,400 new churches in Texas.

Hemphill suggested the alternative several days after the mid-August announcement by the BGCT administrative committee recommending a reduction of approximately \$1.5 million in funding for Southern Baptist national and international causes in order to fund the proposed church-starting initiative. Hemphill's suggestion was endorsed by the Fort Worth seminary's trustees Oct. 17.

However, a nine-paragraph "reply" by the BGCT administrative committee, adopted during its Nov. 2-3 meeting, made no mention of the alternative.

Instead, the BGCT committee countered concerns Hemphill and trustees had expressed over the potential hardship of the proposed funding cut on the seminary and other Southern Baptist Convention causes. The Texas proposal will cut funding for the seminary by approximately \$51,000 during the current fiscal year and \$87,900 during the 1996-97 fiscal year.

"No 'financial hardships' should come to students of Southwestern Seminary ...," the committee maintained. It voiced appreciation for "the interest expressed by the Southwestern Seminary trustees and administration but disagrees with the statements from the Seminary on this issue for several reasons."

The SBC funding cut, which is part of the proposed BGCT 1996 budget, will be a key vote during the BGCT annual meeting Nov. 13-14 in San Antonio. In terms of percentage of budget, the proposal calls for the BGCT to reduce its SBC Cooperative Program allocation from 35.3 percent to 33 percent.

BGCT administrative committee chairman Jack Smith, a layman from Orange, could not be reached for comment Nov. 9 on the committee's reasons for not reacting to Hemphill's alternative.

Among the administrative committee's contentions:

--more--

-- Texas Baptist churches "send more money to Southwestern Seminary than any other state convention. This is true of the Proposed 1996 Cooperative Program Budget."

-- Financial projections by the committee "are that Southwestern will receive no fewer dollars next year in this budget, as churches continue to increase their Cooperative Program giving in the way they have in the past several months. So far this year SBC entities, such as Southwestern, have received an increase of over 8 percent from the BGCT." The committee added: "... even a smaller percentage of a larger total can result in more dollars for each entity funded."

-- "Even if giving from the churches in Texas remains at the current level, the shift in funding for new churches in Texas would amount to only about 4/10 of 1 percent of the Seminary's budget or about 5 cents per day per student. This is hardly a hardship level."

-- The seminary itself "reports a significant excess of income over expenses. Seminary officials state that for the fiscal year just ended that 'excess revenues over expenditures and transfers totaled \$1,335,985.' This is approximately the same amount proposed for increased funds for the new church effort in Texas."

-- The seminary also has reported that the value of endowment and similar funds handled by the Baptist Foundation of Texas increased \$13.2 million -- more than 23 percent -- from July 31, 1994, to July 31 of this year. "It would seem this should translate into significant added revenue for the Seminary in the future," the committee said. "The BGCT has no comparable amount in a fund for mission efforts, such as beginning the needed new churches."

-- "... the new churches provided for in the budget will make available places for the Seminary graduates to serve -- an obvious plus."

-- "Also, please remember that our BGCT educational institutions received a reduced percentage of Cooperative Program funds in the 1995 budget in order to enhance the new church and other direct missions activities," the committee stated. "No official protest came from them as this from Southwestern. They were willing to cooperate in reaching the Texas mission field in order to enhance the Texas mission force. We pray that the Seminary will be equally a team player, and we believe that they will when the facts are understood."

The committee concluded: "We do not believe the Proposed 1996 Cooperative Program Budget will cause any hardship for Southwestern Seminary students. We do believe, however, that a defeat of the Budget will result in future hardships -- fewer churches in which graduates can serve and fewer churches for support of the Seminary and of all SBC missions efforts -- because the finances won't be available to start the needed churches in Texas. New churches increase Cooperative Program giving, a benefit to the Seminary and all Baptist ministries."

Hemphill, contacted Nov. 8, voiced his reaction to the administrative committee stance. Among his comments:

-- "First, it should be noted that the resolution of our trustees was a strong endorsement of the Texas plan to plant 1,400 new churches. We are enthused by the vision for church planting throughout the SBC. We believe this strategy will provide opportunities of service for our graduates."

-- "Our exception to the Texas plan was the method of funding which proposed a reduction in the percentage of the money that would be forwarded to convention-wide causes." Concerning funding for the six SBC seminaries in particular, Hemphill reminded "seminary preparation is foundational to the entire scope of Southern Baptist work."

-- Concerning the seminary's budget surplus, Hemphill noted the seminary itself cut \$1.2 million from administrative costs during the budget year to exercise good stewardship in a time of financial uncertainties. Said Hemphill, "According to Southwestern's chief financial officer, Hubert Martin, it is important to note that revenues exceeded expenditures because expenses were reduced, not because revenues increased." He added, "This overage, will allow us to fund much-needed building repairs and to provide for equipment which has not been in our budget for several years."

-- Concerning the seminary's endowment: "... we believe it is essential to further increase the size of endowments at our six seminaries in order to keep the cost to our students as reasonable as possible. For example, just five years ago, the Cooperative Program accounted for 42.26 percent of our education and general budget, whereas this year it will account for only 39.98 percent of our education and general budget. The cost of graduate level education is increasing more rapidly than the level of funding for theological education through the Cooperative Program. The best place to deal with this funding difference is through an increased level of endowment rather than passing on the cost to the student."

Southwestern's trustee chairman, Ralph Pulley Jr., a Dallas attorney, also released a reaction to the BGCT administrative committee stance.

"To isolate a single year misses the point," Pulley said. "The bottom line is this, if the BGCT takes this action, the erosion of the Cooperative Program funding begins and will accelerate as the years unfold. Southwestern receives over \$8,100,000 per year from the Cooperative Program for its operating budget. To produce this kind of income from endowment funds would require such funds be in excess of \$160,000,000. There is no entity which supports church growth more than Southwestern. There are much more acceptable alternatives to fund these efforts than encroaching on the present funding formula of the SBC, and the negatives any such action holds for the future."

--30--

Jan Johnsonius contributed to this story. The full text of the BGCT administrative committee reply to Hemphill and Southwestern Seminary's trustees, along with comments from Hemphill and Southwestern trustee chairman Ralph Pulley Jr., are posted in the SBCNet News Room.

Southeastern professor
wins town council seat

By Victor Lee

Baptist Press
11/9/95

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--A brisk political wind swept two newcomers onto the Wake Forest, N.C., town council -- one of them a Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary professor.

Daniel Heimbach, professor of Christian ethics at the Wake Forest seminary, captured 16 percent of the votes cast in the Nov. 7 election, placing him third in the 12-person race. Town residents were choosing three candidates to sit on the five-member council.

Heimbach, who served in the Bush White House prior to coming to Southeastern, said his election is "an opportunity to provide professional leadership in the town."

"I hope my candidacy will set an example for others that they need to be involved in community affairs, Heimbach said. "I see the opportunity to be salt and light to the community.

"We must contribute and not just criticize," said Heimbach, who said his election portends a stronger relationship between the seminary and the surrounding community.

A strong voter registration drive netted several hundred new voters from students at the seminary, prompting some in the area to look askew at state laws which encourage civic participation by students.

Heimbach reiterated a theme from his campaign, affirming a commitment to serve the overall good. "I'm not going to do anything in the interest of the seminary that's bad for the town," he said.

Southeastern President Paige Patterson said Heimbach's victory was a win-win scenario for the community.

"I think that it's good for the town anytime you put in a position of leadership an experienced public servant and a committed Christian who has a tremendous mind and a compassionate heart," Patterson said. "Everybody wins."

--30--

U.S. legal system called
a 'litigation apocalypse'

By Ken Walker

MIAMI (BP)--Attorney Warren Kniskern says he believes America's legal system is on the verge of a "litigation apocalypse" that will only be reversed by changed hearts.

To illustrate his contention, Kniskern cites some frightening statistics in his recently released book, "Courting Disaster," published by Broadman & Holman Publishers of the Baptist Sunday School Board. A former partner in a New York law firm, Kniskern now has his own law practice in Coral Gables, Fla., outside Miami. He is a member of the American Bar Association, Florida Bar and Christian Legal Society.

-- At the beginning of this decade, the National Center For State Courts (NCSC) reported new cases filed in state courts exceeded 100 million -- the equivalent of one case for every three persons in the United States.

-- The average lawsuit takes 19 months to work its way through court. During 1991 plaintiffs and defendants paid out \$22 billion in attorneys' fees.

-- Between 1984 and 1991, civil caseloads rose by 33 percent, criminal caseloads by 24 percent and juvenile caseloads by 34 percent. Meanwhile, the national population grew by just 7 percent.

-- The overloaded U.S. legal system means that (via taxes and fees) the average American pays more in court costs per year than for groceries, according to Kniskern.

But even more frightening for Christians are the ways the lawsuit-crazy public is going after churches, Kniskern said in an interview. Reviewing a number of such cases in his book, he compared this ever-mounting legal challenge to a gradual chipping away at the nation's religious freedom.

Today's unchurched population is actively working to put Christians on society's sidelines, he charged. Such unbelievers are increasingly hostile to being told what to do or what Christians consider "sinful."

"We're getting away from the intent of the founding fathers," Kniskern said. "There's enormous pressure in society to tolerate what the Bible says is sinful behavior. And we have a judiciary that is less literate in biblical teachings."

Even when lawsuits fail, they open the door to similar action, Kniskern said. "Courting Disaster" looks at the first clergy malpractice case in 1980 involving a couple whose son committed suicide. They filed a million-dollar wrongful death suit against popular pastor and radio preacher John MacArthur, whose church previously had counseled the man.

Although the courts absolved MacArthur and Grace Community Church in suburban Los Angeles from any blame, it took numerous appeals and nine years to settle the case. That in turn spawned many lawsuits by church members against their leaders, Kniskern noted.

He pointed out such lawsuits contradict remedies Jesus outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 -- telling those who are offended to first go and talk to the other person privately -- and Paul's admonition to believers in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 to judge disputes within the confines of the church.

"I think this has happened because people are becoming biblically less literate," Kniskern said. "And a lot of churches are not set up to resolve disputes. Most church leaders are so busy people think they can't get help, or the church isn't equipped to solve the problem. (They reason) it's better for them to go get an attorney and figure it out in court."

This poses both a lesson and a challenge for churches -- namely, to develop ways of resolving disputes so that the problems within the body of Christ remain private, Kniskern said. The saddest aspect of the legal assault on Christianity is it originated with believers who willingly opened the door to the courts, said the born-again lawyer.

Because Christians aren't taking care of matters inside the church, he said, when conflicts arise members are inclined to run to the world. This creates two problems:

1) Non-believers are "turned off" because their perception of Christians is "they're not any better than anyone else, and they may be worse. So why would I want to join them?"

2) When Christians start airing their disputes publicly and giving the world a foothold in the sanctuary, it can raise thorny constitutional issues that lead to rulings negatively affecting the church.

Some cases do demand the intervention of legal authorities, Kniskern acknowledged, such as incidents of sexual abuse by pastors.

However, had church leaders confronted problems when they arose, he said, there wouldn't be so many people airing grievances decades later.

One answer to society's problems will come from Christians acting differently than the world, he said, and talking to each other, getting involved in each others' lives and resolving conflicts peacefully. Such an approach will lead to reconciliation instead of bruised emotions and the exorbitant costs of extensive court battles, he said.

This kind of witness is more important than becoming politically active, according to Kniskern. While electing Christians to public office may help stem the tide of anti-Christian governmental actions, he said the answer lies in changing people's hearts, "to get our hearts right and persuade people to believe in Christ and save themselves from this corrupt generation."

Kniskern also is the author of a 1994 Broadman & Holman book, "When the Vow Breaks," dealing with the issue of divorce among Christians.

--30--

Dakota Baptists target
'Thousand More ...'

By Allen Spencer

Baptist Press
11/9/95

MITCHELL, S.D. (BP)--"A Thousand More Than Ever Before" was the challenge given to Southern Baptists in North and South Dakota at their annual meeting Oct. 25-26 Calvary Baptist Church, Mitchell, S.D.

The 139 messengers to the 12th annual session of the Dakota Southern Baptist Fellowship (DSBF) were met with a challenge from Executive Director Dewey Hickey to an unprecedented simultaneous High Attendance Sunday in churches across the Dakotas.

"We sense the Spirit of God moving among Dakota Southern Baptists," Hickey said. "We urge the pastors and churches of the DSBF to accept the challenge of 'A Thousand More Than Ever Before.'"

The goal involves every church and mission taking the largest attendance figure in November 1995 and setting as a goal for the last Sunday in October 1996 that figure plus 1,000 more than ever before.

A 1996 budget of \$926,095 was adopted at the meeting, including anticipated Cooperative Program gifts of \$209,285 from the 95 churches and missions in the fellowship. Of the CP gifts, 16 percent will be forwarded to Southern Baptist Convention national and international missions and ministries, an increase of one-half percent of the CP budget.

Phillip Fike, pastor of Westside Baptist Church, Rapid City, S.D., was re-elected president for a second term. Also elected were Ray Self, pastor of Capitol Heights Baptist Church, Bismark, N.D., vice president; Kent Atkinson, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Blunt, S.D., recording secretary; and Ron Rich, pastor of Riverwood Baptist Church, Bismark, N.D., assistant recording secretary.

Among resolutions adopted at the meeting was one recognizing two couples with longtime service in the Dakotas. William "Dub" and Imogene Bryant were recognized for 13 years as evangelism director for the DSBF. After serving in the same position for both the Dakotas and the Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship, Bryant recently resigned in the Dakotas to work full time in Montana. Ballard and Bonita White were recognized for 29 years as pastor of First Baptist Church, Eagle Butte, S.D., and its missions, all on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation of South Dakota. White recently retired.

--more--

The 13th annual DSBF session will be at Calvary Baptist Church, Emerado, N.D., Oct. 23-24, 1996.

--30--

Spencer is a Missions Service Corps volunteer in Bismark, N.D.

Blood to be drawn
from Texas Baptists

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
11/9/95

DALLAS (BP)--Blood will be drawn at Texas Baptists' annual state convention in San Antonio. And it won't be over any controversial issue.

Baptists from around the state will take part in a blood drive for the South Texas Blood and Tissue Center in conjunction with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Nov. 13-14 in San Antonio. The blood drive, which will benefit a 43-county area, is part of San Antonio Baptist Association's three-year emphasis, "Love in Action: Making a Difference."

The blood drive offers Texas Baptists the opportunity to leave behind a gift of life in San Antonio, according to Ken Coffee, associate director of the Texas Baptist state missions commission.

The blood bank will be set up in the San Antonio Convention Center 3-5 p.m. on Nov. 12, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Nov. 13 and 12:30-4:30 p.m. Nov. 14.

Potential donors must be 17 to 72 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds and be in good health. They must not have donated blood within the previous eight weeks.

The blood bank will operate 16 stations. The entire process of blood donation takes about 30 minutes. Organizers remind donors that they cannot contract AIDS from giving blood.

Coffee and Lewis E. Lee, director of missions for San Antonio association, wrote all of the directors of missions in Texas asking them to enlist at least four donors from their associations.

"The South Texas Blood and Tissue Center reports an urgent need for all blood types," the letter states. "What better way for Texas Baptists to show love in action and to truly make a difference -- perhaps a life-saving difference -- in the life of some person(s)?"

Similar letters were sent to all convention exhibitors and BGCT executive board staff from Thomas J. Brannon, director, Texas Baptist Communications.

The South Texas Blood and Tissue Center serves 75 hospitals and clinics in the 43-county area surrounding San Antonio.

"It requires 300 pints of blood per day to meet its demands. We have the potential of giving several days' supply during the convention," Brannon said. "What a positive statement for Texas Baptists to make!"

Prospective donors have been asked to call toll-free 1-800-292-5534, ext. 388. After listening to a recorded message, each caller will be asked to leave his or her name, address, telephone number and preferred day and time for donating blood.

--30--

Texas Baptist group includes
prayer in strategy planning

By Ken Camp & Laura Horne

Baptist Press
11/9/95

DALLAS (BP)--When the Baptist General Convention of Texas meets Nov. 13-14 in San Antonio, it will be after a statewide season of prayer for Texas Baptists and their "Texas 2000" vision.

"We want to bathe the meeting in prayer so that God's people will find and follow only God's will, thwarting Satan's efforts to distract us from carrying out the vision God has given us," said William M. Pinson Jr., BGCT executive director.

--more--

The San Antonio Convention Center -- site for the state convention -- will be open for a "come and go" time of prayer from 3-6 p.m. Nov. 12 and for an organized "concert of prayer" beginning at 9 a.m. Nov. 13. Both prayer meetings will be held in the convention center's south banquet hall.

And on the evening prior to the statewide Texas Baptist meeting, churches around the state have been asked to devote their worship services to a time of prayer for spiritual awakening and the priorities of Texas 2000.

The BGCT strategy council -- 74 men and women from all walks of life around the state -- developed statements of purpose, priorities, values and vision for Texas 2000 to guide Texas Baptists for the next five years.

The council determined the purpose of the BGCT is "to encourage and assist churches, associations of churches, institutions and other Baptist entities in fulfilling the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ."

And that "Great Commission" -- the biblical command of Jesus to go into all the world to make disciples -- is the driving force behind the Texas 2000 vision: "To the glory of God -- Share Jesus with every person in Texas by the year 2000; be a family of loving, joyful, obedient servants of Jesus Christ; seek fresh new direction and power from the Holy Spirit through scripture and prayer; and develop Great Commission churches for all persons."

Seeking direction and power from God is an essential element of the overall vision, according to D.L. Lowrie, pastor of First Baptist Church, Lubbock, and chairman of the BGCT strategy council.

"We need a great commitment on the part of Texas Baptists -- pastors and lay leaders -- to join together and seek the Lord in prayer until he is pleased to visit us with spiritual awakening," Lowrie said.

To undergird the Texas 2000 emphasis, prayer retreats and convocations on spiritual renewal were held in several regions in recent months, and associational prayer coordinators were trained at a session in Dallas, Sept. 11-12.

In Union Baptist Association, 48 pastors representing seven cultural groups met Aug. 25 to pray for spiritual awakening in the Houston area, and they made plans for a similar gathering Nov. 3.

Charles Wisdom, pastor of First Baptist Church, Katy, said God is not obligated to translate Christians' prayers into revival, but he never has sent spiritual awakening apart from prayer.

"God always moves on the hearts of his people to pray when he is about to bring spiritual awakening. God is the one whose Spirit blows across the people. It is our responsibility to hoist the sails and catch the wind," he said. "When God does act, if his people are praying, they will receive revival."

In late August, Texas Baptist pastors, evangelists and denominational workers received copies of the devotional guide, "The Secret of Intercession" by Andrew Murray. Beginning Oct. 1, they were asked to begin three months of intercession specifically for spiritual awakening.

That same day, churches also were asked to begin using a prayer guide that highlighted the Texas 2000 priorities of sharing the gospel, ministering to human needs, equipping God's people for ministry, developing Christian families, strengthening existing churches and starting new congregations.

Ted Elmore, whose responsibilities in the BGCT evangelism division include leading in prayer for spiritual awakening, said he sees evidence of a genuine hunger among Texas Baptists for a "fresh new direction" from God.

"Prayer is not designed to move God to my agenda. Prayer is relational," Elmore said. "In prayer, I recognize God's sovereignty, and my response of worship is to adjust my ways to his purpose."

In helping to coordinate the "call to prayer" for Texas 2000 and the BGCT annual meeting, Elmore said the primary goal has been to lift up the name of Jesus Christ.

"Our focus has to be on Jesus," he said. "All of our methods, prayers, seminars and conferences -- these things are not an end in and of themselves. They are a means to give people enough tracks so all of us can run the race.

"Genuine revival will be the by-product when people focus on Jesus."

Parents of autistic children
say support group is 'lifesaver' By Laurie A. Lattimore

GADSDEN, Ala. (BP)--Cindy King and her 9-year-old son, Jarrod, arrived at church one night a few minutes late and could not take their usual seat in the back row. Jarrod could not understand that someone would take their seat at Rainbow City Church of Christ, so he turned around in his pew and put his mother's purse in the usual place.

King retrieved the purse and apologized to those in the back pew. Jarrod did it again and again until his mother took away the purse.

He repeatedly clapped his hands fast and loud in frustration and anger. King explained to the family in the back row it was imperative that Jarrod get to sit in his usual place. "Nobody sits in our place anymore," she laughed.

Jarrod is autistic, and routines are the cornerstone of his contentment. For Jarrod and his family, an understanding church family is a "lifesaver" when it comes to accepting such ritualistic behaviors, King said. But even more important for King and other parents of autistic children is an opportunity for the parents to share their joys, frustrations and questions.

Because of a support group sponsored by Goodyear Heights Baptist Church in Gadsden, Ala., King and several other parents are better able to cope with the challenges of raising an autistic child.

Dixon and Janice Hayes, members of North Glencoe Baptist Church, draw strength from the familiar trials and accomplishments of others in the support group. "When we talk to other people about Wesley's behavior, we are always explaining it," Hayes said. "But here we are simply sharing."

The support group has been meeting once a month since the beginning of the year. Martha Bryan, a member of Goodyear Heights and the parent of an autistic child in his mid-20s, started the support group when she realized how many could benefit from such peer support.

"We try to be positive and laugh a lot," she said. "We didn't want it to be a pity party where we were whining and griping all the time. We cry every now and then, but we didn't want to live there."

Autism is a mental disorder that becomes evident in the first two years of a child's life. Autistic children are well-developed physically, but they are severely impaired in their ability to comprehend and communicate. Autistic children seem to live in an isolated world of their own. They may stare into space for hours, throw uncontrollable tantrums or pursue repetitive activities with no obvious purpose. About 80 percent of autistic children are also mentally retarded. Only a few decades ago, autism was attributed to poor parenting, but it is now diagnosed as a neurological birth defect. The main treatment for autistic children is stringent behavior modification programs to teach children appropriate actions.

Living with an autistic child is challenging no doubt, but all the parents at the Goodyear Heights support group are grateful for the opportunities the disability has opened up for their families.

"I always called Wesley our 'future linebacker.' He was going to be our star football player," Hayes said. "Those dreams went up in smoke, and now we hope that he can one day dress himself and drive a car." His wife added, "It is a blessing in a lot of ways. We can see the Lord working his plans through our child, even if they were not our plans."

Alan Bryan, Martha's husband, said being with an autistic child 24 hours a day, seven days a week, means expecting the unexpected. "It is very strange and challenging absolutely, but it is not all bad," he said. "Without the Lord, I don't know if I could do it."

King said it is important to laugh with her son when he makes the funny faces or blurts out funny phrases. "If we didn't laugh at Jarrod, we would probably kill him," she said. "Our whole family is autistic now. We do what he does, and we think it is normal."

Because autistic children often operate in their own world, anytime a connection is made with them, it is cause for celebration, Janice Hayes said. "Without an autistic child, we could not feel such overwhelming joy," she said, noting she does not have such strong emotions when a normal child accomplishes something because it is expected. "When Wesley calls a ball a 'ball,' I want to scream, 'Praise the Lord!'"

The members of the Goodyear Heights support group all belong to understanding churches, and they recognize the importance of this.

Pam Alexander said when her son is playing in church and may distract the congregation, the pastor says, "This is my special friend, Adam. We all love Adam here."

The Bryans are grateful for the way their church has accepted Jake and for the genuine support they offer when the Bryans need a break.

At North Glencoe, someone volunteered to teach Wesley Hayes by himself, so his parents could attend their own Sunday school class and go to the worship service without any interruptions. "It means the whole world to us," Hayes said. "Nobody in church made a big deal about it. They just did it; they saw a need and were there."

But despite the spiritual and psychological support, the parents noted how churches could do more to reach out to individuals in their congregations with disabilities and their families.

"Sometimes we need a break," King said, suggesting volunteers take the children for an hour or two so the parents have some time away. "When we have been with a child all the time, we can go crazy."

Janice Hayes said churches should try to reach any person in the congregation with a special need, not just autistic children. "I wish every church with a special needs person would have a ministry for them," she said. "I doubt if many churches don't have one person with a disability."

Deborah Smith, who works with mentally retarded adults in Gadsden, said it is important for churches to do something for the families. "Churches should seek out leaders in the congregation who can work with people who have a disability," she said.

"A disability is something that could bring people closer to God or could push them in the other direction. These people need a church to reach out to them."

Martha Bryan relayed a concern from a regular attender to the support group who could not be at the October meeting. "He said that when he looks at all the big building programs of the churches around town, he wonders if some of the money for those buildings could be used to pay a trained specialist just \$50 a week to do Sunday school and church for autistic children so parents could have their own time."

Tommy Ferguson, Goodyear Heights' pastor, takes no credit for offering the meeting place for the support group. But he is quick to offer the church's support in whatever capacity necessary.

"This is what we should be doing. We should be serving," he said. "This is a community effort. It is not for us to draw membership. It is to make the body of Christ visible to others."

Bryan noted being a parent of an autistic child has good days and bad days. Spiritual and mental support often comes from an understanding church. "If you can't depend on the church, who can you depend on?"

--30--

Georgia Baptist bus to tackle
migrant workers' health needs

By James Dotson

Baptist Press
11/9/95

WARNER ROBINS, Ga. (BP)--One problem has persisted during the six years two churches have worked together in a health fair for migrant workers: Volunteers can do health screening and find problems, but they cannot actually do the medical and dental procedures required.

Soon they will have that capability.

--more--

The Baptist Medical and Dental Fellowship -- an organization of medical professionals interested in missions involvement -- has purchased a used bus that will be modified to allow on-site medical and dental treatment on a routine basis in migrant camps and other areas with strong needs, enhancing the ministry sponsored by Central Baptist Church, Warner Robins, Ga., and held at nearby Centerville First Baptist Church.

The Georgia Baptist Convention also has joined the project -- named the Baptist Mobile Health Ministry -- through an initial contribution of \$20,000 for operating expenses. The money will come from Bold Mission Thrust funds made available through the GBC's challenge budget.

The bus will need to be refitted for its new use, mostly with volunteer labor, but a target date for operation of the ministry has been set for April 1996.

Yesmin Wilson, a registered nurse and a member of Central Baptist, said the bus ministry is an answer to prayer for many involved in ministry to migrants.

The average lifespan of migrant workers is about 48 years, Wilson said, and about one in 10 children die before their first birthday. With the transient lifestyle -- moving across the United States throughout the growing season -- they are unable to get consistent medical and dental care.

The Woman's Missionary Union of Central Baptist began the health fair ministry largely as a result of the encouragement of GBC catalytic missionary Ada Fernandez, Wilson said. But to truly make a difference they needed to do actual medical treatment. Buses have been successful in other areas, and those involved in the ministry believed one would be valuable in Georgia.

Wilson said she sought a suitable bus for several years. She found the used 1971 bus in Macon that was owned by Project Smile, but had been unused for several years. It already has a dental unit, and modifications would be relatively simple. The Baptist Medical and Dental Fellowship, which had been looking into forming such a ministry, agreed to buy the bus.

"I persisted because I just felt that this was something we really need," Wilson said. "We couldn't keep screening patients without doing something about their actual problems."

Jerry Baker, director of the GBC language missions department, said a medical/dental bus of this type has been a goal of Moses Valdez, the GBC catalytic missionary serving north Georgia, since he came to the convention 11 years ago. In Valdez's former pastorate in Florida, he was able to schedule use of the Florida Baptist Convention's medical bus ministry in migrant camps and missed that ministry in Georgia.

"We've been looking and talking about this for a number of years and the Lord's finally bringing it together," Baker said.

Evangelism also will be a major emphasis of the ministry, Wilson said. She hopes that at each ministry site there will be some sort of evangelistic emphasis, either through personal evangelism or through meetings with larger groups.

"Although we want to provide medical and dental care, I think evangelism is of the utmost importance. If we don't do that, I think we have failed," she said.

The bus will be based initially in Houston County, Wilson said, and will be operated by the Baptist Medical/Dental Fellowship. Project directors throughout the state will be responsible for scheduling and staffing the bus, which could be used as often as several days a week or more during the summer months. Volunteers will provide all medical staffing, and other volunteers have been enlisted as drivers and coordinators.

The Medical and Dental Fellowship relates to the state convention through the GBC Brotherhood department. The Macedonian Call Foundation -- which provides cars for missionaries on furlough and also relates to the GBC through the Brotherhood department -- will have responsibilities for maintenance and insurance. The vehicle also will be available through Brotherhood's disaster relief ministry for on-site care during disasters.

CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "Graham to remain BGEA leader; son Franklin to be successor," dated 11/8/95, please correct one of the names listed in the last paragraph to Ruth "Bunny" Graham Dienert.

Also, the following paragraph could be added to the story:

Franklin Graham's autobiography, "Rebel With a Cause," recently was released by Thomas Nelson publishers.

EDITORS' NOTE: In (BP) story titled, "Va. conservatives opt against creating 2nd state convention," dated 11/8/95, please insert the following paragraphs as the new paragraph five:

If the group had voted to split from the BGAV, it would have been an unprecedented and historic step within the Southern Baptist Convention. Southern Baptists in Texas, an organization of conservatives in Texas, continue to explore the possibility of breaking off from the Baptist General Convention of Texas to form their own statewide organization.

If the above paragraph is incorporated into the story, replace the next paragraph with the following:

Given the tenor of the discussion preceding the SBCV vote in Norfolk, the general consensus appeared to be that formation of a new state convention was inevitable in the state of Virginia, where a widening breach exists between those favoring and those opposing the current leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

HOUSE MAIL

(BP)

BAPTIST PRESS
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, TN 37234

F
I
R
S
T

C
L
A
S
S

Southern Baptist Library
and Archives