

STATE SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR'S
ASSOCIATION

MAY MEETING

May 17-19, 2000, Embassy Suites Hotel

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Wednesday, May 17, 2000

Those in attendance: Mark Baldwin, Bernie Spooner, Sonny Tucker, David Cunningham, Frank Foutch, Roger Hatfield, Richard Nations, Rob Lee, Sam Cotter, Scott Williams, John Miller, Marie Clark, Aubrey Stewart, David Wyman, Randy Tompkins, John Adams, Tommy Echols, Neal Davidson, Tim Holcomb, Jim Gifford, Terry Arnold, Dayton King, Ben Early, Gary Bearce, Robert Stewart, Bob Hylton, Ted Johnston, Bill Taylor, Ken Tan, and Robert Grant.

Robert Grant opened the meeting with welcome from the officers and led in listing prayer requests. Roger Hatfield led in the prayer for the requests that had

Robert outlined the agenda and schedule for the rest of the meeting. Robert introduced Kenneth Tan, NAMB. Kenneth works with the Church Planting Group and is the lead person coordinating with Bill Taylor in starting new units.

Robert recognized Sam Cotter and expressed thanks for the work Sam has done in preparation for the meeting. Sam gave details of the various events taking place over the three days of meetings.

Randy Tompkins recognized the new members of the group and Aubrey Stewart's coming retirement.

Bill Taylor:

Bill shared the outline for LifeWay three basic groups. He then shared Strategy Issues for the 21st Century for LifeWay Church Resources:

1. Sunday School as the essential strategy for evangelism, assimilation, and Bible teaching in the 21st century.
2. Spiritual transformation which results in bringing believers into Christ likeness.

3. Developing Kingdom Leaders. The Wesleyan Church has contacted LifeWay to see if they could get in on FAITH.
4. Congregational intimacy as a value discipline for LifeWay.

Thom Ranier is coming out with a new book: "Everything We Have Been Taught About Church Growth is a Myth".

STRATEGIC TRANSITION (Bill referred to a book "Champions of Change" by David Nadler)

- Pastors became MIA's (missing in action in relation to Sunday School)
- Classes closed down
- Leaders became content to lead conferences, regardless of results. More have moved into a consultative style of work.
- Ministers of Education decreased in value.
- Accountability has been non-existent.

STRATEGY ISSUES FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP

1. FAITH. The full name of the program should be stated at all times: FAITH Sunday School Strategy. Sunday School seems to be continued to be devalued especially by GenXers. Bill handed out a packet of material relating to FAITH. The next step for training is the association cluster model. Bill fielded questions and suggestions concerning FAITH training clinics and churches.

Need to have more verbal emphasis at the FAITH clinics about Sunday School work.

Need to have more state staff presence at the FAITH clinics. This will help with follow-up work with the churches.

2. Sunday School for a New Century is all about change. This is not about curriculum but about the program of Sunday School. The definition found in the New Century Book is something that should not be ignored.

Best Practices:

Identifying the Strategy

Organize with Purpose

Build the Leadership

Train Effective Leaders

Provide Space and Equipment

Value Record Keeping

Develop Soul Winners

Teach to Transform

Conduct Special Events

Choose Sound Curriculum

The teaching book: the directors will receive all books. Associates will receive a copy of their area

Sunday School Launch Event: Beyond The Wall – will be available at December Meeting

Preview Paks – contact Linda Smith

3. VBS – a new curriculum will be coming out in the area of Backyard Bible Club, etc. Materials will be available in December.
4. Field Service budgets are being rapped up. It appears that the requests for next year will be honored.

Need to have more flexibility in events with LifeWay schedule.

5. New Starts:

A. New Classes

B. New Sunday Schools: Bill has asked the Division Directors to make sure the concept of starting new units for their age groups through the curriculum.

C. New Churches: Only 5% of SBC churches start a new church. 1747 new plants. Highest: Texas, California 184, Florida 142, Louisiana 79, Indiana 72; Missouri, Louisiana,

1593 new starts. 154 newly affiliated with SBC

Sunday School workers can start more new units through VBS follow-up.

A strategy that has begun to be developed from the Sunday School side is that for every 10 classes one new unit would be started.

Ken Tan, NAMB – Director for the Recruitment Team, Church Planting Group – Ken shared information in the Church Planting Group brochure: Team Services – Readiness led by Dewey Hickey; Recruitment led by Ken Tan; Mentoring led by Joe Hernandez; and Multiplication led by Dennis Mitchell.

Dialogue:

- Touch Points have not been selling and were about to be shredded. NAMB will pick up these materials to be used by church planters.
- Possibility of extending the free literature to a broader scope than just one quarter.
- Need to bring into the planning process on the state level Sunday School leaders to work with church planters.
- Is LifeWay going to produce materials for State Sunday School Directors to give guidance as to how interact with Church Planters?
- Nehemiah professors need some instruction as to the workings of Sunday School.
- Sunday School Directors need to be more involved with the Basic Training process the NAMB uses.
- Educational principles need to be built into the DNA of the church planters.
- LifeWay may not have much input into the new starts process at NAMB until there is a Sunday School person at NAMB.
- A set of criteria should be developed that will drive the models.
- There is no valid research showing what is working and what is dying.

- Need more than a vision. Age group workers need to do more than to just address it but also to project it, as in the 8.5 by 85 campaign. Start Something New is a good example. NAMB started it but LifeWay never projected it.
- Can LifeWay give us some help in showing Church Planting how to use the material in small group settings.
- The New Curriculum for a New Century probably would be a better resource for the new Bible Study groups than Touch Points due to the common scripture, etc.

Thursday Morning:

Dayton King opened the meeting with a devotional. He mentioned the response from Glorieta to the Los Alamos fire.

A telephone call was placed to Andrew Smith to allow the group to express sympathy to Andrew and to allow Andrew to speak to the group. Frank Foutch led in a special prayer for Andrew and his family.

A telephone call was placed to David Wills to allow the group to express their support to David and Kathy and to allow David to speak to the group. Jim Gifford led in prayer for David.

Robert Stewart, David Cunningham, and Frank Foutch presented material developed by the Issues and Discovery Task Force from the 1999 May Meeting. There were 10 summary statements:

- FAITH
- One Way to do things
- Multiple groupings
- Volunteerism
- Graying and Aging of population
- Unique generational needs

- Former networks
- Multi-racial
- Functions and tasks of Sunday School
- Leadership

Tim Holcomb the material the Field Service Task Force has been working on since the last May meeting. There were three general areas: LifeWay, Partnerships, and Fellowship.

Jim Harvey requested a web-site catalogue of resources available from each state.

Frank Foutch requested that the Field Service group represent the State Sunday School Director's Association to LifeWay to assist LifeWay in seeing what the state's needs are in the area of field service.

Gary Bearce requested more field service in the area of leadership that is Sunday School oriented.

Terry Arnold requested information from states about Associational training.

Bernie Spooner suggested using the web site to post material that has been developed and could be used by other states.

Robert Grant established a third workgroup for today's meeting to deal with web site issues. Bernie Spooner was asked to chair the group today.

The three groups - Issues and Discovery; Field Service; Web Site – were assigned locations within the meeting room. Those in attendance were asked to select a group for the remainder of the morning and enter into a discussion time. Each group would give a formal report on Friday morning.

The entire assembly was reconvened to outline the agenda for the Friday morning presentations. Following this announcement the meeting was adjourned for an afternoon of fellowship. Activities that had been planned were golf, a tour of the Air Force Academy, traveling to the top of Pike's Peak, and shopping.

Thursday Evening

Robert Grant opened the meeting with announcement of the agenda for the evening.

Randy Tompkins gave a financial report. As of noon May 18, 2000 the bank balance was \$5,327.45. After expenses for the meeting it appears the balance will

be in the neighborhood of \$4,500. LifeWay has committed \$5,000 per year to the meeting. The first expenditure of these funds was to be for the travel expense for Pioneer State Directors.

Marie Clark announced the Nominating Committee for 2000:

Ben Early

John Adams

Roger Hatfield

Robert announced that an additional person needs to be selected for the Field Service Committee and Issues Committee. Robert took recommendations from the floor.

Issues Group: Terry Arnold

Field Service: Rob Lee

These two were elected.

Robert placed before the group a change in the constitution in relationship to the setting of the location of the May meeting. Instead of the president-elect the change would move that assignment to the out going president. If the out going president did not want to accept the assignment the responsibility would be given to an individual by the president. Motion passed.

The group expressed appreciation to Sam Cotter for the arrangements for this year's meeting.

Robert Grant announced the location for 2001. Charleston, South Carolina is the site. The dates are May 16-18,2001. Robert Grant will host a fishing time during the free time as well as the golf, shopping, etc.

November 29 – 30 are the dates for December Meeting.

The dates for 2002 of May 15 – 17 were approved.

New Business:

Bernie recommended an additional standing committee as a constitutional change. It would be titled The Technology and Resources Committee. The Committee shall consist of a chairman, a chairman elect, and at least one other person. The duties of the committee are to survey and/or identify and recommend

as necessary the development of needed print and media resources. Motion passed.

The chairman is Bernie Spooner. The chairman elect is Robert Hylton. The at large member is Randy Tompkins.

David Cunningham asked if we need to revisit the process of having a skill development time in connection with the May meeting.

Tim Holcomb moved that we do personal development time every other year and those sessions be conducted either prior to or following the May meeting. The development time could be either internal or external. Seconded by Roger Hatfield. Motion passed. The president elect will begin the every other year process.

Question was raised about the extension of the May meeting time, either earlier or later. Additional time would be additional expense. Are we willing to absorb that expense or are we willing to give up the free time during the meeting for personal development.

Bernie suggested that if we go back to the skill development process the topic of strategy planning would be a good topic to start with. Jim Harvey suggested a leadership development process for new state directors.

Motion made by David Cunningham to close the business session. Motion passed.

Swap Shop:

Bernie Spooner – Pavestones 2 videotape series.

Bible Study for Texas curriculum

State-Wide Youth Ministers Conclave

Robert Stewart - State-wide training event catalogue

Southern Baptist Curriculum Grid for VBS

Daryl Wilson - Start-a-Class Tour

A PowerPoint presentation has been sent to directors

Robert Grant - Sunday School: The Foundational Strategy

Training Times

Randy Tompkins - Teaching Ten Times Better Book
Mentoring Leaders Through the Sunday School Book
Demographic Information

Friday, May 19, 2000

Roger Hatfield opened the meeting.

Jim Gifford gave a devotion about standing for Christian values.

Randy Tompkins requested signatures from the directors to be used for plaques for retiring directors.

Roger Hatfield introduced the program of reports from the work groups that meet yesterday.

Tim Holcomb led the presentation from the Field Service Workgroup.

Introduction: The Field Service Task Force agreed that three major areas would capture our attention. The three are (1) LifeWay's current field service policy and individual states needs. (2) Partnerships. (3) Relating to issues completely dropped by LifeWay: i.e. growth campaigns, Sunday School Directors, and others.

1. LifeWay's current field service:

Standard field service includes: FAITH, VBS, SS4NC, and New Starts. Consensus was in workgroup that requests in these areas were met with positive response. EMERGENCY AND ANNUAL: Our concern now is how to manage emergency field service needs due to LifeWay's performance (future), illness of presenter, and calendar changes. Annual focus concerns developing procedure/protocol, use of regional consultants (individual states), personnel offers, state S.S. Director swapping help.

2. Partnerships:

Every partnership is unique. We have determined that four classes of partnership exist. (1) State-to-State, (2) association-to-association, (3) church-to-church, (4) ethnic/language.

3. Field service events no longer considered by LifeWay: The following list is not exhaustive but included growth campaigns, Sunday School leadership development, S. S. directors, class group leadership, associational leadership, and new starts (new units)

Continuous involvement by task force members is required to provide leadership for SSDA.

Frank Foutch asked if this group could represent SSDF to LifeWay to discuss and enlarge LifeWay's field service plan. Bernie Spooner asked if the workgroup has identified where the gaps between what is needed and what LifeWay does. The two he mentioned were growth campaigns and association work. David Wyman requested the workgroup to develop a simple form that the directors could tape into the SSDA system. Tim responded by stating this is what the group meant by establishing systems and protocol. Robert Grant expressed disappointment that LifeWay had no one at this meeting to discuss and validate field service for 2001 and to clarify LifeWay's position on field service. It appears that a lot of networking has been going on one on one. Aubrey Stewart suggested placing a form on the web site. Neal Davidson suggested that if one to one networking did not produce the desired results then contact Randy Tompkins and ask that a request be broadcast to SSDA. Bernie mentioned that whatever we do a definitive system needs to be established. Roger suggested first work the informal system. If there is a need that is not filled to contact Sonny Tucker, the new Field Service Task Force Chairman.

Robert presented the material from the Issues Workgroup.

General Observations and Emerging Issues for Sunday School

1. Wide and strong differences of opinions and approaches about FAITH, worship, and personal religious expressions.
2. Advocating "One Way" in the midst of a pluralistic and secular society.
3. Multiple groupings and organizational choices with resulting complications of planning, implementation, and supervision.
4. Lay-driven vs Clergy-focused approaches to leadership.
5. The graying and aging of large segments of U. S. population.
6. Targeting and meeting unique needs of generational and inter-generational groups.
7. Erosion and weakening of former networks of cooperation and the emergence of new, different and more loosely connected networks.
8. Effectively reaching and teaching an increasingly multi-racial and ethnic American society. Developing and providing teaching-learning resources for multi-ethnic and multi-interest populations of unreached people.

9. Accomplishing the functions and tasks of Sunday School without traditional organizations, structures or buildings and facilities.
10. Taking advantage of newer technologies for delivering individual and group Bible studies and resources and for training and developing leadership.
11. Associational work. Determining effective and appropriate networks and organizational structures for various sizes and types of associations. Determining appropriate roles and implementing effective strategies for state, regional and associational consultants and special workers. Developing resources for state consultants and resources for associational (ACTeams)

A compilation of Suggested Issues Facing Sunday School

- Enlisting, developing and maintaining an adequate cadre of Trained Leadership.
- Become more leadership development focused; develop products for leadership development.
- Sunday School and Bible studies meeting at times other than Sunday and places other than the church buildings.
- Intergenerational studies.
- Class organization to enhance a “Systems” approach to influencing the whole church.
- Teaching styles that move Sunday School to reach post-modern culture.
- Use Sunday School as an atmosphere and strategy for mentoring new believers and developing disciples.
- Promotion that allow “Small Churches” to catch the vision.
- Use mentoring examples of single staff churches rather than mega, multi-staffed churches; Intentional focus on the smaller congregations. Most are still in the 1950 and 1960 models.
- Planning smaller and average church buildings suitable for multi-session and ministry use.

- Language and ethnic issues.
- High cost of building and maintaining traditional church facilities.
- Dealing with increasing erratic and spasmodic attendance patterns.
- Reaching African Americans when most of our churches are white Anglos.
- Taking advantage of the Internet and web pages for personal Bible study.
- A web site with down-loadable training content, lessons, resources.
- Sunday School as an authentic part of the Purpose Driven church.
- Equipping time-poor teachers to teach and lead creatively and to communicate interestingly.
- Developing an intentional and constructive strategy for dealing with shared teaching, every-other-week or month or other “non-52 Sundays commitments”.
- Small groups, cell groups and other alternate structures to the traditional Sunday School. How to keep small groups from becoming too nebulous and abstract that authentic Bible study does not occur.
- Reaching and ministering to children who are with mother this week and father the next, or in other non-traditional family setting.
- How to keep the Sunday School from becoming a self-maintaining structure without a purpose.
- Leading Pastors and staff ministers to understand value of Sunday School and to help them develop skills in building and leading effective Bible teaching-reaching ministries.
- How to take advantage of any emerging “cyber-church” forms for Christian Bible studies and Sunday Schools.
- Capitalizing on the computer game craze to develop and provide Bible learning and Christian development inter-active games (non-violent).
- Avoiding teaching preschoolers and children using meaningless glitz instead of appropriate content and methods.

- Time issues and priorities for families. Where are the priorities? How can Bible study for and in families be nurtured in families that are already “time-poor?”
- Sunday School emphasis with Directors of Missions. Sunday School often is not a priority with Directors of Missions and Associational leadership.
- Training Needs for Hispanic leaders.
- Development of Hispanic Resources (Resources that are originally written in Spanish not translated).
- Need for Bilingual Classes.
- Need attention at reaching the 30 to 40% of non-readers and marginal readers, thousands unsaved and unchurched, who likely do not attend Sunday School for fear of being embarrassed. Can Sunday School and LifeWay link for aggressively with NAMB in developing strategies and curriculum materials?
- Diversity of those attending.
- Cost of developing and providing quality materials for special language and ethnic peoples.
- Time demands placed upon our folks.
- The exploding Hispanic and multi-cultural populations with related needs.
- Varied and growing sources of curriculum and Bible study materials and how to assist churches with whatever choice they make.
- Alternate approaches to grouping and grading, small groups, inter-generational, topical, etc.
- Leadership enlistment and training challenges with both parents working and more time given to work and leisure rather than church.
- With 65-70% of our churches basically plateaued, assisting, encouraging and revitalizing the majority of our churches.
- Strengthening of networks and sharing ideas and materials among and with the state Sunday School Departments/teams.

Summary of Several States’ Approaches to Associational Work as time permitted:

(Participants in the discussion group: John Adams, David Cunningham, Ted Johnson, Frank Foutch, John Miller, Roger Hatfield, Daryl Wilson, Ben Early, Neal Davidson, Aubrey Stewart, Robert Stewart, Scott Williamson, Marie Clark.

California: Once a year a Church Growth University. DOM's select and send persons to be trained. An ASSIST model. Since all DOM's do not send associational leaders for training, the state staff enlists and invites selected people.

Maryland: Most associations have ASSISTeams. State provides training for ASSISTeams. Associations have Launch Nights each fall. State staff often provides staff and leaders for these launch events.

New England: ASSIST model, but a state strategy in addition. Work in five of the seven associations is usually planned by the state. 15-20 state special workers are trained and available, 3-4 in each age group. Some associations go together and plan events. Have done some regional training of ACTeams.

Illinois: Use ASSISTeams and Associational Growth Teams. Training is provided at state level for associational leaders who do consultations and work back in the associations. Scholarships are provided to attend training at Green Lake.

Kentucky: State pays \$100 to associations to offset expenses of associational training events. ACTeam scholarship is given for "Ridgecrest". Have been focusing on training in consulting last few years, but in 2001 plan to train leaders in how to lead training events. Super Saturdays in late summer and fall in several sites cross program organizational lines, and therefore provide a lot of Sunday School leadership training.

Missouri: In the midst of reorganization. 8 regional teams built around 5 Great Commission Principles: Congregational Health; Congregational Vitality and Initiatives; Church Planting; Emerging Generations; Mission Mobilization. Some state staff is deployed regionally. Some staff is "home-officed". Usually do not do conferencing unless called on by churches or associations. Did provide two state training events in areas that all churches and associations would have concern - SS for New Century and VBS. New term for special workers is "Team Consultants". Have 100 - 150 of these for whom special training is provided to raise their level of leadership.

Dakotas: Some associations are very weak, so focus is on developing state specialists. Four associations preferred associational special workers. Associations are asking for a new model, and state is working on this.

Arizona: State works hard on developing relationships with DOM's. Every year associational teams are brought together for training for which the state pays travel and lodging. Training provided in conference leading skills and in content

of books and resources. There is an excellent response for VBSI. A state training team goes to every association each two years. Content is built on needs and requests of the association.

Penn/South Jersey: Changed name to “Church Strengthening Division”. Have ASSISTeams who are trained to go back to associations and provide local training. Spending much time and effort relative to “Natural Church Growth” process. Identified 12-15 churches being trained and developed as coaches.

Florida: Three one-day annual training for associational SS leaders in three different locations. Of the 49 associations, 35 were represented. Four regional VBS training for associational teams. Call Special Workers, “Innovators”. Have had growth consultants for several years for growth campaigns and projects. Beginning to retrain these as FAITH-Growth Consultants. Have two deployed staff in regions of the state. Struggling to know how to work effectively with Metro associations.

North Carolina: Using the ACTeam approach. They are also organizing into 13 regions with a regional director for a greater number of training events to ACTeam members. Each third year they will pull everyone together for training. They are conducting an Associational FAITH clinic.

West Virginia: Everything for associational work is passed before the Director of Missions prior to being calendared and budgeted. There are 10 associations in West Virginia. Associations represent culture areas. Associational Sunday School Director training is conducted in the Spring. Associational Sunday School Directors, for the most part, are also Associational VBS Directors. Maintain a team of 12 to 20 conference leaders that travel in the Fall for church training in each association.

Summary of a report from the NC Emerging Trend Study Group

“By 2010, the oldest of the large baby boom generation will prepare to celebrate their 65th birthday. These boomers will be the first in a wave of more than 2 million North Carolinians born between 1946 and 1964, who today represent nearly a third of our state’s population.”

This is the opening sentence from “Baby Boomers at Mid-Life: The Future of Aging in North Carolina”, a statistical/social profile of boomers prepared by the NC Division of Aging and the Center for Aging Research and Educational Services, UNC-CH. North Carolina and Hawaii are the only two states to attempt to profile boomers, their future, and how this age group will impact the states in coming years. Every program area in our building – yours, mine, ours, will be affected by this group. Our study group has identified the impact of aging

boomers on society in general and churches in particular as a major issue in the fast-approaching future.

(Emerging Issues Team, Baptist State Convention of NC, Doug Cole, Chairman)

We have asked George Bullard and Cass Dale to give us their observations and suggestions as to issues that Sunday Schools will be facing. These reports will be mailed to all state directors when we get them.

Louisiana is negotiating with Jay Johnston to formulate a FAITH clinic on the college campus.

Roger Hatfield will send Randy Tompkins a hard copy of material George Bullard gave to associational leaders in Missouri to be posted on the web1.

Bernie Spooner presented the material from the Technology and resources Committee. Members of the workgroup were Mark Baldwin, Gary Bearce, Jim Harvey, Robert Hylton, Rob Lee, David Wyman, Randy Tompkins, and Bernie Spooner.

PURPOSE:

To determine resources needed by state directors, to inventory resources currently available from members of the Association, and to develop/provide as ministry, other needed resources, and to maximize the use of the internet and other technological means in making them available.

APPROACH:

1. Inventory resources currently available over the next month by surveying State Directors.
2. Determine what needs currently exist through a survey of association members.
3. Use the Association web site to provide links to state web sites where resources are already available and to provide additional develop by the Association.
4. Needs discussed: New start materials (Tenn.); association work (Texas); growth campaigns (La.); Natural Church Development (Penn/So. Jersey, Ms., La.) – who is using it and what are you doing past the assessment; one day consultations (TX.); Language groups “how to” items, etc.

David Wyman suggests the small area may need assistance in development the development of material. Robert Stewart asked if anyone is doing anything with

on-line courses. Mark Baldwin is having a meeting in June with a person from a .com company to discuss on line courses. Jim Gifford is to prepare some information in relationship to certification of laymen through New Orleans Seminary. John Adams reminded the group of the Seminary Extension programs. John will send to all directors a copy of West Virginia BBI. Boy Hylton mentioned the Learn Link process done by Virginia Convention. Florida Baptist Theological College has courses on line. Penn/S. Jersey has launched a music school with five courses being offered.

Robert Grant opened the final session. He checked to make sure everyone had a ride to the airport.

Tim Holcomb gave a report about Harry Piland. He is in Williamson County Hospital. Flowers were sent on behalf of the Association.

Marie Clark asked the newly elected officers to meet for a few minutes following the close of this final session.

Bernie Spooner thanked those of the Association who have supported the BACE (SBREA).

David Cunningham asked that we reimburse Sam Cotter for all expenses for this meeting.

Robert recognized current officers and asked the group to show appreciation. He also expressed appreciation for being allowed to be the President during this transition year.

Robert brought two items of new business.

- 1) An observation: There needs to be some educate for folks coming into a state to conduct field service. How do they travel in your state? Could rent a van and LifeWay will re-imburse mileage. Fellowshiping with them. Simple needs such as an ice chest with snacks, bottle water, etc.
- 2) Robert presented some concerns he has with the material Sandcastles to Building Blocks: How to Build a Children's Evangelistic Ministry produced by NAMB and published by LifeWay.

Sandcastles to Building Blocks, How to Build an Evangelistic

Children's Ministry

South Carolina Concerns

- First, It was thought the overall structure of the book using the "building" theme was good. The scripture references were appropriate to introduce each section; whether intended for laity or professional minister, the identity with a sequential building process was good.
- Second, It was felt a major omission of emphasis to current church activities (i.e. Sunday School, Mission Organizations, and Music Organizations) was most obvious. Why would you not want to tie any opportunity of developmental steps with evangelism back to the other activities where the children would/could develop their salvation pilgrimage and seek support from other leadership?
- Third, the most blatant and obviously outdated language appeared with the use of "nursery" throughout the book. Nowhere has this term been used in the Southern Baptist Convention materials since the curriculum design changes in the 70's. The correct location implied should have been "Early Preschoolers" or "Bed Babies." A nursery is a home-used word and not an institutional location for preschoolers.
- Fourth, there were found to be a danger in non-specific aging levels of children and their accountability in the beginning of the text, especially in the administrative instruction. The danger is that leadership could rationalize accountability at any age from early preschool though the 6~ grade without any specific developmental aspects, characteristics or learning developments to recognize. Not until pages 42-44 is this addressed. These characteristics and learning aspects (page 42-44) could have been best used if integrated with earlier administrative and procedural concerns.
- Fifth, the book is highly structured and assertive for professional Staff as a guide to a better ministerial approach to children's evangelism. This book could be taken by hard, assertive laity as the gospel approach for children, (which it is not) and carried out as a catechistical activity with disastrous results long term.
- Sixth, If this book was intended to be a holistic children's ministry text it would have served better to be divided into "evangelistic learning groupings" of preschool and children developmental cycles with more age specific application of the gospel. It needs to be more closely in line with the actual expectations and learning styles of preschoolers and children as they develop and mature towards a spiritual understanding. Church leaders need help recognizing these developments as real spiritual maturity rather than stereotype the accountability by age.

- Seventh, the sermon outlines included are totally out of line for this type of workbook. Child-appropriate "sermons" without the abstract concepts contained in this book's sermons would better be placed as a pullout section or printed as a

separate product. Suggestions for age appropriate Bible stories would have been a more usable contribution to the entire text.

Eighth, evangelism is a part of Sunday School. Why does this text avoid the crossover identification of Sunday School and evangelism? Why not help leadership of Sunday School and Children's Ministry (which in most cases would be the same leadership) see its cooperative potential. Children's evangelism without Sunday School is dead in the water anyway.

- Ninth, the most blatant, inexcusable aspect of this book is its lack of credibility. Location, service or professional qualifications have not been recognized for any contributors. Also, there is only one endnote (page 67), addressing two references in chapter one. Does this indicate that all other materials' qualifications (For example, information on characteristics), and professional opinion is original material? It seems strange to me that so many of the details included could not be documented or credit given to original sources. Baptists do not operate this way in our other publications, why should we have to tolerate it in this particular release?

April 19, 2000

10A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

Attendees: Skip Amhart, Robert Grant, Sue Harmon, Cindy Morris, Ronald Palmer, Bret Tolbert, Tommy Ferrell, Cindy Skelton, Cliff Satterwhite

Re: Critique of Sandcastles to Building Blocks

[In regard to age groupings, younger children refers to children birth to 2nd grade, sometimes 3rd grade. Older children refer to children in grades 3 or 4 through 6th.]

After introductions of those attending the meeting, Mr. Amhart prefaced the meeting by reading The North American Mission Board's Philosophy of Children's Evangelism (attached).

Skip Amhart: Everything NAMB does is based on their evangelism statement via their strategy.

Cliff Satterwhite: Our state workers have a program responsibility (Sunday School, music, RAs, GAs, etc.). How does this coordinate with those existing programs?

Skip Amhart: This is neither a program nor a strategy. The book is not for children but for children's workers. The target audience is for state training: state leaders who are chosen by their convention. The products, *Show and Tell*, *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children* and *Sandcastles to Building Blocks*, were piloted in California, Ohio, and Florida and well received.

Skip Amhart: The product is intended to go to each church, family, then child. It is not *a* new program but a tool to create a climate of children's evangelism.

SC BC: This manual is being/will be seen as a new program. To prevent that perception, SCBC is looking for a better design.

Cindy Morris: How do you define children's evangelism?

Skip Amhart: The ultimate goal of evangelism is to point children to Jesus.

Cliff Satterwhite: NAMB has children's mission education emphasis whose first platform is evangelism; however, children who have no understanding of salvation make salvation decisions. Therefore, childhood educators/ministers have chosen not to have decision services at Lad/GA camps for younger (1st through 2nd or 3rd grades) children.

SCBC: The evangelism strategies for young children are not age-appropriate. The methods described are manipulative and coercive in young children. Children want to please their counselors, be like their friends, "do" what others are doing.

Skip Amhart: Page 13 of *Sandcastles to Building Blocks* describes the process of evangelism to the event of salvation. I do not favor limiting intentional evangelism to a specific age group.

SCBC: The terminology is antiquated. It should be consistent with other teaching materials used in the church setting (Sunday School, music, RAs, GAs, etc.). Perceptions of terms and language used in this product can be confusing and or misleading when used in conjunction with the teaching materials currently being used in church ministry.

SCBC: This product needs guidelines for appropriately leading children to Jesus.

SCBC: What are the credentials of the author; the names of those listed in the book? Where are the endnotes? Where is a list of resources/references? To validate the integrity of the piece, the product needs to cite the qualifications of the contributors, the resources used, and the nomenclature should be consistent with other SBC age-based literature

Skip Amhart: I do not feel that citing credentials is important to the value of the piece. Age-based characteristics, etc. are common knowledge so sources do not need to be referenced. As an evangelistic tool, what are the problems?

SCBC: It is a weak piece. It is too abstract. Children cannot process symbolism realistically. It is not structured in a "logical" sequence. Sermon outlines are not age-appropriate. Pastors/counselors will have difficulty' addressing issues of prostitution and bleeding disorders with children, especially young children. Where is the connection between the leaders and children? How do the children's leaders work together in a cohesive environment of evangelism?

Skip Amhart: Refer to the top of page 31. Churches can or cannot use sermon outlines. These outlines are for the pastors to use as guidelines.

Tommy Ferrell: Chapter 3, pages 16 & 17, addresses developing leaders to make individual ministries evangelistic.

Skip Amhart: This is a workbook, not a training manual. One will not be framed by reading this workbook.

SCBC: Since this is not a training manual, is it an assessment tool-Thy Kingdom Come for children's evangelism?

Skip Amhart: Yes.

SCBC: How will it be marketed?

Skip Amhart: In three pieces: *Show and Tell*, *Sharing God's Special Plan with Children*, and *Sandcastles to Building Blocks*, through leadership training to children's leaders. Those leaders will go to churches to train them in this strategy.

Skip Amhart: This piece is not to help build an evangelism program but to see where one exists or could exist. It does not set evangelistic goals nor is specific to which goals a church should set. That is up to the individual church.

2

SCBC: The *Sandcastles* product referred to an age of accountability/salvation (older children), which falls in line with the psychological development of children. However, the testimonies of children in the video do not conform to the ideas being presented in the workbook. It uses younger children. Not only is it inconsistent with the workbook, it gives the impression of an intentional salvation-event strategy toward younger children. It is our opinion that children's workers should be involved in the process of creating children's evangelism products so that they will be age-appropriate.

Skip Amhart: What can be done to make this a better piece?

SCBC: The age characteristics listed on pages 42-44 are too far back in the material. They should be combined in an assessment process. The layout of the book should start with the child, addressing his development and stages of growth-spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

SCBC: The sermon notes should be a separate piece with additional instruction (counseling/ ministering) and age-appropriate.

SCBC: The object lessons are weak. Children can't think two things at once. There is too much dependence on abstract thinking/reasoning. Children are concrete thinkers.

SCBC: No reference was made as to the parents part in their child's evangelism-the parents sharing their personal testimony with their child. The product should include a section on preparing parents to teach their children about Jesus and leading their child to a salvation experience (event

SCBC: The plan of salvation should be presented simply.

SCBC: Directors of Mission perceive that NAMB is promoting a "Calvinistic" program on childhood evangelism.

SCBC: We propose a revision of this workbook utilizing our group (SCBC) and other children's educators throughout the SBC to retool this piece by making it clearer, less ambiguous. Incorporating accountability characteristics as well as age characteristics so that evangelism assessments can be measured more accurately. Identify materials by age-appropriate levels.

Skip Amhart: I will not set age groupings on my products.

SCBC: We recommend that you utilize our existing resources-childhood education programs at SBC seminaries, childhood education ministers, writers of children's curriculum, etc. Create a piece that will tie in with family leadership evangelism-a tool to be used with already existing products. Focus on the child's leaders, have a passion for their work and guidance of children.

3

The North American Mission Board's Philosophy of Children's Evangelism

Evangelism to children is a process that involves building a biblical foundation, beginning early in life, informing them of God and His redemptive work through Jesus *as* recorded in the Bible. This process allows the Holy Spirit to spiritually mature the children and draw them toward God. Then based upon their ability to understand the gospel and the conviction of the Holy Spirit (both determined by God's timing), God gives them a choice of accepting or rejecting His gift of eternal life. The North American Mission Board is committed to providing materials and training to assist churches in this evangelism process for all children. These materials and training will help churches recognize when God has matured children to a true understanding of the gospel and then biblically lead those children to a saving relationship with God through Jesus.

Strategy

NAMB will provide for churches material and training that create an environment of evangelism to children in four areas: Teachers, Parents, Children, and Media

NAMB has an implementation strategy that involves training leaders within a state, informing churches of the material and training available in children's evangelism, and then working with the state office to provide training in the associations and churches.

Sandcastles to Building Blocks

An instructional workbook that assists churches in organizing and structuring an effective, evangelistic children's ministry. This workbook falls under the category of "Teachers" in our NAMB strategy

There were a few questions concerning the distribution of the book. It was Robert's understanding that 3000 had been printed and 1000 had been distributed. A question was asked if the SSDA had any impact toward NAMB. If a concerned were raised from the

group would NAMB be attentive? After a few minutes of discussion it was determined that our effectiveness with NAMB would be stronger in years to come rather than at the present time.

Several said they had never heard of or seen the book. All expressed appreciation to Robert for bringing this to our attention.

Robert Closed with scripture and prayer.