

**PASTOR SAYS:**

# Maturity Is Needed For Child Baptism

By LARRY JERDEN  
(Reprinted from May 29 issue of The California Southern Baptist.)  
The president of the South-

ern Baptist Convention, W. A. Criswell, told his congregation that children under eight years of age should not be baptized. "A child ought not to be bap-

tized until he is a junior — age 9, 10, 11, or 12; not at age four, five, six, seven, or eight," Criswell said.

THE PASTOR of the 15,000 member church devoted about half of his sermon to the question of the proper age for baptism. He said he knew he was doing wrong when he baptized a younger child.

A check of Southern Baptist Convention statistics disclosed that during 1968, Southern Baptist churches baptized 1,463 children under six years of age, and 36,867 children ages six through eight.

CRISWELL said he had wrestled with the problem of baptizing children for over 40 years, and had baptized underage youngsters mostly because of parental pressure.

"A parent comes to me and says his child, five or six years old, has accepted Jesus as a Saviour," Criswell said. "The Bible says a believer should be baptized. So, he says his child should be baptized."

"I know there is something wrong with that," he said. "I know that child has not reached the maturity by which he should be a member of the congregation."

"BUT I HAVE not been able to convince the parents of that. So, heretofore," he added, "I have taken the little children . . . and held them in the baptism . . . and baptized them."

"Every time I have done so I have had a self-accusation of conscience on my soul," Criswell said. "I know I am not doing right."

He said he had been pressed for the minimum age, and responded, "I am not God and I do not know."

"But," he said after listing several possibilities, "a child ought to be a junior before being baptized."

CRISWELL SAID he knew he was doing wrong in baptizing children any younger than nine because of the number who return after they are older, saying they were not truly converted the first time, or that they could not even remember the experience.

He also said the older age is inferred, though not stated, in the New Testament.

"The whole book Matthew through Revelation, is addressed to adults," he said. "It presupposes a mature mind."

Criswell pointed out that whether the child is baptized has no bearing on his salvation. He encouraged parents in his church to continue to bring the youngsters to him when the decision.



**READY FOR A RIDE . . .** Los Angeles County fireman Ed Brennan of Torrance accompanied youngsters from the Foundation for the Junior Blind on a fun-filled day at Disneyland. 300 Los Angeles County firefighters and their wives participated in the activities with 1,000 children from the Foundation. Steve Campos and Albert Contreras prepare for ride with Brennan.

## Bible School Set At Lomita Church

Lomita Missionary Church will conduct its Vacation Bible School June 23 through July 3. "Let's Go With Christ" is the theme, and all children, ages three years through the sixth grade are invited. Bible stories, crafts, singing, games, and missionary stories are planned.

The pre-kindergarten course, entitled "The Lord Loves Me," will "help the small child know that God loves him, and wants his love and obedience."

**GOD'S FRIENDS**, David and Paul" is the kindergarten course. These Bible stories tell of these two great men and relates their lives to the experiences of the children.

"New Testament People" is for first and second graders. This course "shows the child that he can show his love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and be a helper for His sake."

THIRD AND fourth grade students will study, "Great is the Lord;" the Bible lessons are based on Psalms. The purpose of this course is to "impress upon the student the greatness of God, and to help the student to learn to respond to God in praise and worship."

Finally, the fifth and sixth grades will have, "Jesus Christ, My Guide for Life." The Gospel of John is the text for these lessons, and they are "designed to confront the stu-

dents with the adventure of living lives that are dedicated to Jesus Christ."

All children of Lomita, and surrounding communities are invited. The church is located at 2043 Lomita Blvd. (between Eshelman and Narbonne Avenues) in Lomita. The school will begin at 9 a.m. and will adjourn at 11:45 a.m. each day for the two weeks.

## Mail Order Ordination Condemned

A mail order ordination mill in a California town will issue ordination papers to any person who wants to be known as an ordained minister. A cash contribution is all that's required, according to The California Southern Baptist, a weekly publication.

"It is a lucrative racket," the publication editorialized, "and a sacrilegious caricature of the Christian ministry. Ditto for a similar ordination mill operating in Florida."

## 'Objector' Is Excused From Army

A 21-year-old clerk at the Library of Congress who said he is an atheist but believes killing a man is "a sin no man can endure" was ruled eligible for re-classification as a conscientious objector by a federal judge in Baltimore. His case was the first in which a self-avowed atheist was permitted such status.

## Bible Quarrel Ends In Death

Two men in Fresno recently shot and killed each other in an argument over the Bible, according to a report in The California Southern Baptist, a weekly publication.



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ROBERT E. GRAY

## Organ Recital Slated

Robert E. Gray, young organist at Christ the King Lutheran Church, will be featured in a recital Sunday at 7:45 p.m. The church is located at 2706 W. 182nd St.

The program will include Fantasia in G Major by Bach; Sixth Sonata by Mendelssohn; Fugue in G Major (The Gigue) by Bach; and Final by Cesar Franck.

Gray will also play his own composition Chorale and Variations.

A free-will offering will be taken. Guests may greet the performer at a reception following the concert in the church's Fellowship Hall.

Robert Gray began his keyboard study at the age of six. At the age of 11, he developed an interest in church music and began studying the organ. During his high school years, Gray served as organist and choir director at Concordia Lutheran Church in Inglewood and later became minister of music at Trinity Lutheran Church in San Pedro.

Now, at the age of 20, Gray is a scholarship student at Cal State, Long Beach, where he majors in voice and organ.

## Enrichment Camp Set At School

The Summer Enrichment Program, sponsored by Gardena Christian School, opened its 1969 season Monday. Enrollment is still open for children 4½ through 12 years old.

The Summer Enrichment is a day camp program running through August. The program includes swimming, arts, crafts, remedial and academic help, films, field trips, and Bible stories.

The basic hours for the program are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Working parents may leave their child as early as 7 a.m. and as late as 6 p.m. at no extra charge. Earl Nordby, director of the program, says this is an ideal arrangement for working parents.

Gardena Christian School is located at 1473 W. 182nd St., Gardena.

## Were People Evolved Or Created By God?

"Is the Universe, Including Man, Evolved by Atomic Force?" is the subject of this week's Bible Lesson-Sermon which will be heard Sunday in all Christian Science churches.

In the Responsive Reading, taken from Job, one verse asks: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?"

A correlative passage from Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy reads: "The universe,

like man, is to be interpreted by Science from its divine Principle, God, and then it can be understood; but when explained on the basis of physical sense and represented as subject to growth, maturity, and decay, the universe, like man, is, and must continue to be, an enigma."

Services at First Church of Christ, Scientist, 218th and Manuel Avenue, begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome.

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## Summer Schedule Revealed

Worship services will be on a summer schedule at the First Presbyterian Church of Gardena, 1957 Redondo Beach Blvd., beginning at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday through August.

Nursery care will be provided for younger children The Sunday Church school classes will continue at 9:30 a.m. for nursery through junior department. The junior high and senior high classes will have a varied schedule, mostly meeting at 9 a.m. for class and then attending worship at 9:30 in the sanctuary.

The youth choirs are recessed until after school begins in fall. The youth fellowships will continue to meet on Sunday evenings during the summer and will also expand their fellowships to "coffee house" type of meetings on week day evenings this summer. Days and times will be announced soon.

## Mother-Daughter Banquet

Ascension Lutheran Church's Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is sponsoring a Mother-Daughter Banquet Sunday at 5:30 p.m. The dinner will be served in Ascension's Parish Hall, 17910 S. Prairie Ave. The men of the congregation will act as chefs and waiters.

The entertainment for the evening has been planned by Mrs. Robert Raasch, LWML First vice-president. Mrs. Raasch, a resident of Manhattan Beach, has programmed a musical presentation of "A Christian Women's Cyclorama of Life." Each role in the cyclorama will be played by a member of the LWML.

The featured singer will be Miss Ronna Boucher. Miss Boucher a member of the "Young Americans" — a nationally known youth choral group, sang for the Junior Miss America Pageant last month.

The LWML is a strong service organization. Earlier this spring Ascension's LWML made Easter baskets for Harbor General Hospital Children's Ward. A new service is the Nursery Guild which provides child care for all church functions.

## Family of Evangelists To Perform

Evangelist John Black and his family will be featured entertainers Sunday, June 29, at 3 p.m. Musical Extravaganza at Harbor City Foursquare Church, 835 W. 255th St., Harbor City.

Black's son John Jr., 14, will play the organ, and his daughter Ursula, 11, will sing.

# PRESS-HERALD CHURCH GUIDE

A-2 JUNE 20, 1969

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