

This edition of the *Mid-South Baptist* is my opportunity to officially welcome Reverend Dale Gravatt and Mrs. Marsha Gravatt to the staff of the Mid-South Baptist Association. On April 1, 2007, Dale will assume his new duties as Operations Manager of the Mid-South Baptist Conference Center. Marsha will begin her service as Retreat Center Office Manager on May 1, 2007. The Gravatts will be moving into the on-site home that the Association provides for the Operations Manager at a later date.

I am delighted to welcome both Dale and Marsha to our staff. I believe Dale is the right man for the right time in the life of the Mid-South Baptist Conference Center for several reasons. **First**, he is known and respected as a servant-leader in our Association by virtue of 15 years of service as Pastor at Wells Station Baptist Church, as a former Moderator in the Association, and a member/leader of more committees, workgroups and task forces than we have space to mention here. Dale and Marsha will lead the way in establishing the Mid-South Conference Center as a service-oriented, user-friendly setting for camps, retreats, conferences, banquets, and other types of activities. **Second**, he knows the MSBCC property and operation by virtue of several years of service on our “Camp Committee” and through many years of personal investment in the ministry of the Camp. He has the “heart” for the Conference Center and the “head” for managing the varied aspects of this ministry resource. **Third**, Dale knows our Association and supports the current priorities and future direction of MSBA as demonstrated by his involvement in the Blue Ribbon Task Force, the Constitution and Bylaws Task Force, the Administrative Manual Task Force, and the Administrative Leadership Council. I am impressed by his commitment to help churches start new churches, develop their leaders, and involve their members in God’s mission in the world. **Fourth**, he knows the issues to be faced and resolved in regard to the Conference Center and is committed to assisting the Association in determining the very best ways to manage and utilize the Conference Center as a resource for the churches of the Association. Dale will be a valuable helper to the *Resource Development Team* as they assess the work and ministry of the conference center and make recommendations concerning future usage of the facility. **Finally**, (this one may sound a bit selfish), I believe we are gaining a colleague in ministry who will focus on his primary task, but do all that he can to support the larger work and ministry of the Association and the churches. I am convinced through conversations that John Allen, Team Leader for the *Resource Development Team*, and I have had with Dale, that he will shoulder his part of the load and more. I believe his presence will be a blessing to the Association staff and to our member churches.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE GRAVATTS TODAY!

Bro. Mike