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(99-48)

- University survey finds clergy families need more support
- Falwell newspaper turns sights on 'secrets' of the Lilith Fair
- 'Purified' Bible says Jesus turned water to 'grape juice'
- Former deer poacher spreads gospel through hunter devotionals
- Internal Revenue Service denies tax-exempt status of Christian Coalition
- School prayer, Ten Commandments measures touted by House lawmakers
- Rulings spotlight struggle to define permissible aid to religious schools
- Key Supreme Court cases on aid to religious schools
- Samford sponsoring symposium to remember youth-led revivals

University survey finds clergy families need more support

By Mark Wingfield

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (ABP) -- American clergy strongly wish their denominations provided more support for their families -- support they cannot find in their own communities and churches, according to research by two University of Tennessee professors.

Most denominations lack any kind of clergy-support services that are family oriented, said Priscilla Blanton, a professor of child-and-family studies at the Knoxville, Tenn., university.

In recent years, she and a colleague, Lane Morris, have conducted a series of studies of American clergy families, the unique stresses they face and how denominations address those needs. One of these studies is published in the June issue of the Review of Religious Research.

Blanton said her interest in the subject was sparked when a local Episcopal diocese invited her to speak to a clergy retreat on family care in clergy families.

When she began her research in preparation for the assignment, she found little work had been reported in the area. As the daughter and niece of Baptist ministers, she knew first-hand some of the unique challenges faced by clergy families herself. Her father was a pastor in Virginia, and her uncle, Owen White, was pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston and at one time president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

While clergy families experience many rewards, they also face special challenges, especially related to socialization, she said. In one of Blanton and Morris' studies, they asked clergy to describe their greatest needs for support and denominations to describe what kinds of clergy support they offer. The biggest gap they found was in meeting the needs of clergy families.

"Clergy and their spouses appear to be lonely people," Blanton said. "They don't feel they have enough social support in their lives. That seems to be very influential in terms of their emotional well-being and their physiological well-being.

"They are part of a church community, but there is a distance built in. You're a part of it in a different kind of way."

The recently published study, which sampled the opinions of male clergy and their spouses in six denominations, found this issue to weigh most heavily on clergy spouses.

Their frequent responses included phrases such as:

-- "There are not enough relationships in our lives where we feel we can be ourselves."

-- "I have very few people I can confide in about the really important matters in my life."

-- "There are too few relationships in my life that make me feel emotionally connected."

The message denominations need to hear, Blanton said, is that clergy families need support services geared specifically for spouses and children. They suggest that these could include spouse relocation employment services, programs to help children adjust to relocation and to being part of a clergy family, and opportunities for clergy families to build relationships outside the church context.

Mixed in with the lack of social support, the researchers found, are ever-increasing expectations and time-demands placed on clergy families. "Living with loneliness and a sense of being 'stretched too thin' may create a situation in which women in general are likely to experience feelings of resentment and frustration," they write.

Another major cause of stress on clergy families is the level of financial compensation ministers receive, Blanton and Morris report. This weighs most heavily on the male ministers, who feel a burden to provide for the needs of their families.

"Pretax personal income predicted positive affect for clergy, and their perception of how their financial situation compared to other ministers in their denomination" made positive feelings more positive and negative feelings more negative, the report says.

"Even though the provider role has become more of a shared role in contemporary marriages, the salience of this role for men's sense of identity as husbands and fathers is still primary."

-30-

Falwell newspaper turns sights on 'secrets' of the Lilith Fair

By Bob Allen

LYNCHBURG, Va. (ABP) -- Jerry Falwell's newspaper that was widely credited with "outing" the Teletubby Tinky Winky has now turned its sights on the Lilith Fair, a popular annual music event featuring women performers.

The Lynchburg, Va., pastor became a target for publicity and ridicule after his National Liberty Journal alerted parents in February that the children's television character was being used as a symbol by the gay-rights community. Falwell denied he intended to "out" Tinky Winky and said facts in the article had previously appeared in other news publications.

In its June issue, Falwell's paper issues another "Parents Alert" titled "Secrets of the Lilith Fair." The article examines the legend of Lilith, the mythical first wife of Adam celebrated by some as the first feminist.

According to the Alphabet of Ben Sira, a Jewish folklore document dated between the 8th and 10th centuries, God created the first woman out of earth in the same way he created the first man. The couple immediately began to quarrel, because Lilith refused to submit to her husband.

She fled, and God sent three angels to retrieve her. They told her that if she did not return to Adam, one hundred of her demon children would die each day. Lilith refused and vowed to seek revenge by harming newborn infants.

Dozens of conflicting Lilith traditions exist, reports National Liberty Journal Senior Editor J.M. Smith. One legend has her returning to the Garden of Eden in the form of a serpent, where she, and not Satan, offered Eve the forbidden fruit.

She also turns up in astrology and in an ancient Christian heresy called "Gnosticism," Smith says, and is frequently associated with sexual and lesbian imagery.

Performer Sarah McLachlan founded the Lilith Fair concerts in 1997 to celebrate the expanding role of women in popular music. The Lilith Fair has featured performances by more than 100 of the world's most popular female musicians at concert events across the United States and Canada.

"Many young people no doubt attend the Lilith Fair concerts not knowing the demonic legend of the mystical women whose name the series manifests," the article says. "Christian parents are advised to consider the Lilith legend should their children become interested in the concerts."

Smith's article says the Lilith legend attempts to alter the content of the Bible, wrongly contends that God make a mistake in creating the "first woman" and "mixes the truth of the Bible with dark occultic teachings." The article disputes a claim that Lilith is mentioned in Isaiah 34:14 and says her proponents "mix images of sex into the sacred spiritual relationship that God cultivated for man."

The article notes that the Lilith Fair donates a portion of earnings to the Breast Cancer Fund but also supports Planned Parenthood and dispenses condoms at concerts.

"National Liberty Journal has been heavily criticized for past 'Parents Alerts,' specifically the one which warned of the homosexual connection to the Teletubbies TV series," the article says.

"This Lilith Fair alert is certain to draw more fire, but we are willing to take the heat in order to document the truth behind the benign appearance of this music festival."

Representatives of the Lilith Fair did not reply to a request for a comment e-mailed to their Web site in time for a response to be included in this story.

-30-

'Purified' Bible says Jesus turned water to 'grape juice'

By Steve DeVane

GLENSIDE, Pa. (ABP) -- Jesus' first miracle was turning water into grape juice -- not wine -- according to a new translation of the Gospel of John that assumes Christ was a teetotaler.

Most translations of the second chapter of John report that Jesus miraculously turned water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana. But "The Holy Bible, A Purified Translation, The Gospel According to John" says in John 2:9 that the master of the wedding feast "tasted the water that had become grape juice."

About 40,000 copies of the book were mailed May 17-18, according to the Lorine L. Reynolds Foundation in Glenside, Pa., which is in the process of translating the entire New Testament. About 36,000 went to Southern Baptist pastors, because they are traditionally opposed to alcohol.

Footnotes to the translation say the Greek word usually translated "wine" in John 2 is "neutral as to alcoholic content." They also state that Proverbs 23:31 forbids the consumption of alcohol, and Jesus therefore could not have created alcoholic wine.

"Jesus would not have broken the law," said Stephen Reynolds, the book's main translator. "It was a law of God as recorded in Proverbs."

Reynolds has a doctor of philosophy in Old Testament languages from Princeton University and has taught at several seminaries. He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and is now a member of the American Presbyterian Church. He was baptized by immersion in a conservative Baptist church and still believes in believer's baptism.

Reynolds, 90, formed the foundation in honor of his deceased wife.

He said that until a few years ago he believed drinking alcohol was a "Christian liberty." But further study changed his mind. "I'm sorry I didn't delve deeper into the scriptures," he now says.

Several years ago a fellow minister who taught that drinking is a Christian liberty became an alcoholic. About that same time, Reynolds was studying Proverbs in Hebrew. He came to believe that Proverbs 23:31-35 is an absolute prohibition against alcohol.

Reynolds now believes in total abstinence from alcohol. "To those who disagree with me on my interpretation of Scripture passages dealing with alcohol, I say, 'I believe the Bible is consistent in all its parts,'" he said.

The introduction to Reynolds' version of John contends earlier translations have hurt Christians by falsely suggesting that the Bible sanctions the use of alcoholic beverages.

"The entire New Testament has now been newly translated by Greek scholars and theologians who felt a call from God to provide a version of God's word that clearly shows it does not sanction the use of alcoholic drinks or other barriers to the work of the Holy Spirit," the introduction says.

Baptists have long opposed alcoholic drinks, and most Baptist churches use only non-alcoholic grape juice during the Lord's Supper. But at least one Baptist scholar said he believes it is a stretch to deny Jesus turned water into wine.

Andrew Wakefield, professor of New Testament at Campbell University Divinity School, examined the translation's introduction and its rendering of John 2. He said it is, overall, not a bad translation, but he took issue with a few parts.

Wakefield said he is uncomfortable with translating Scripture after deciding what it means, as the Reynolds translation seems to do with its stance on alcohol. "It seems like they have set out ahead of time to translate in accordance with an already-set decision," he said.

Wakefield said he is not against promoting the abstinence of alcohol, but he believes there are more responsible ways to present that message. "Good agenda," he said. "I just disagree with the methodology."

Wakefield disagreed that the Greek word translated as "wine" in John 2 is neutral. He said the word usually -- but not always -- means fermented wine. A different word in Greek, meanwhile, specifically denotes unfermented wine, he said.

Wakefield also disagreed with the translation's interpretation of Proverbs 23. He said the focus of the passage starting in verse 29 is overindulgence, not abstinence.

Noting that many non-drinkers cite Paul's admonition not to cause a brother to stumble as a reason to abstain, Wakefield said other Bible passages seem to indicate that even Jesus might have drunk wine in moderation.

In Matthew 11:18-19 and its parallel passage in Luke 7:33-34, Jesus contrasts himself to John the Baptist. While John came neither eating nor drinking, the Son of Man came eating and drinking, according to the passages.

"I'm hesitant to preach a sermon to try to prove that Jesus drank wine, but if you ask me what the New Testament seems to suggest, I'd have to say we'd have to work at it to keep Jesus from at least drinking once in a while or at least changing the water into wine," Wakefield said.

Wakefield also pointed to the passage in 1 Timothy 5:23 where Paul tells Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach. He said it would be questionable to translate that word as "grape juice," because Middle Eastern culture holds that wine has medicinal benefits.

-30-

Former deer poacher spreads gospel through hunter devotionals

By Jeff Huett

SILVER LAKE, Minn. (ABP) -- As an 11-year-old growing up in a hunting family in Wisconsin, it was natural for Tom Rakow to feel pressure to kill his first deer -- whatever the means.

After unsuccessful attempts at bagging a deer legally, he finally made a kill using a .22-caliber rifle during a part of the season when only bow hunting was allowed. He says he became a poacher not for money but to fit into a hunting culture that pervaded his family, friends and even his teachers at school.

When he became a Christian, Rakow felt led to change the way he dealt with wildlife. Motivated by greediness and selfishness, his life was "out of balance."

"Deer hunting was my god," said Raykow, who is now pastor of a rural interdenominational church in Silver Lake, Minn.

To follow God's direction, Rakow stopped hunting altogether for two years. "I just gave my hunting to the Lord," he said.

Later, however, he felt called to turn his love of hunting into a tool for spreading Christianity.

One thing was certain, however. His friends would not accept his message if they felt they had to give up hunting to become a Christian.

So he hit the woods again. This time, he killed the biggest deer of his life -- using a bow.

"An unsaved family member of mine looked at the deer and said, 'Tom, you gave your hunting to God and look what he gave to you,'" Rakow said.

Seeing a ministerial opportunity, Rakow entered a doctor-of-ministry program at Bethel Theological Seminary. It was during a professional-development class that he began to develop his creativity and writing skills that would prove to be an effective evangelism tool a few years later.

"I knew right off that I wanted to write devotionals for deer hunters, and that's exactly what I did," Rakow said. "I wrote about 15 to start with, and my wife typed them."

He then placed the bound devotional booklets around his hunting lodge and other places that hunters frequented. The response far exceeded his expectations.

"We put a feedback sheet in the booklets giving readers the opportunity to tell us what they thought about the devotionals," Rakow said. "What we found was that people who would never have read a tract would read the devotionals. Even the guy running the local bar was reading them."

Seeing their increasing popularity, Rakow sought a publisher for the devotional books. After contacting 27 publishers and receiving no initial response, he continued his ministry.

In 1994 with two of his friends, Rakow organized the inaugural meeting of the Christian Deer Hunters Association (CDHA). Eight attended the initial meeting in the local public library. Twenty-five showed up at the second meeting.

"At one point someone spoke up and suggested that we set up a booth at the Minnesota Deer Classic," Rakow said. The event would last two-and-a half days and draw more than 20,000 hunters, but because they decided to attend the show just days before the event, there was no booth space left.

There was a cancellation just hours before the event, however. Though assigned to the smallest booth in the exhibit hall, Rakow's group was in.

Doug Anderson, current treasurer of the CDHA, remembers feeling apprehensive going into the area's premier deer-hunting event.

"A lot of us had not been exposed to direct evangelism," Anderson said. "The Classic is a big event, and we didn't know how our message would be received. But after being there a while, we all got comfortable and it got easier."

Group members manned the booth at the convention with 5,000 devotional books bound inside a blaze-orange cover. Ironically the paper, which resembles the orange color hunters wear, was the cheapest paper they could find. It was that colored paper that Rakow attributes to the booklet's initial appeal to hunters at the convention.

"Hunters would grab the booklets at our booth and let them hang out of their pockets," he said. "Not knowing what they were, other hunters would come to our booth and ask for the 'little orange books.'"

Now with more than 260 members scattered across 20 states, the association is ready to release its sixth volume of deer-hunter devotionals. To fund the effort, the association has become a non-profit corporation and seeks members who agree to sign a basic statement of faith and a membership application. Members are also encouraged to give what they can to the organization to pay for booth rentals and printing costs.

Although aware that some Christians view hunting as unethical, Rakow disagrees.

"Some people who are against deer hunting are the same ones who eat hamburgers at McDonald's," Rakow said. "But in Deuteronomy 13:5, Mosaic law lists deer as an animal that is permissible to eat.

Rakow said a deer in the wild has a far better chance for survival than livestock that is raised for meat. "Deer were intended to be harvested, because if they aren't they'll either die along side of a road or die of disease," he said.

Rakow said he realized early on that removing hunting from his life completely would send the wrong message to non-Christians.

"It would be like I was saying it was evil to hunt, when I know that's not what the Lord would want," he said. "God is the one who opened up the provision (for hunting), and he has not taken it away."

Looking back over the last few years, "God's ways were a lot bigger than mine," Rakow said. "Who knows, if a publisher had printed the books when I asked them to, there would have probably been about 5,000 of them printed and that would have been the end of it. The Lord just keeps developing the vision."

Internal Revenue Service denies tax-exempt status of Christian Coalition

By Kenny Byrd

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The Christian Coalition's long-pending request for federal tax-exempt status has been denied by the Internal Revenue Service, according to a Florida newspaper.

The St. Petersburg Times reported June 10 that two former senior officials at the coalition had seen the letter of denial from the IRS and confirmed that the confidential ruling was delivered earlier this spring.

The organization, founded by Pat Robertson, has been accused of opposing and supporting candidates for office through its voter guides delivered just days before federal elections. The Internal Revenue Code forbids tax-exempt groups from supporting or opposing candidates for public office.

The coalition has acted as a social-welfare organization under section 501(c)(4) of the IRC, while its application for the status was under review for roughly 10 years.

But the Christian Coalition quickly distributed a press release June 10 claiming that it has "withdrawn" its application for tax-exempt status with the IRS and will henceforth be known as "Christian Coalition International."

The press release said a "sweeping reorganization" will also rename the Christian Coalition of Texas, which currently enjoys tax-exempt status, the Christian Coalition of America. The new organization, with a restructured board, will become the "principal vehicle for the operation of Christian Coalition in the United States."

Robertson said, "Christian Coalition of America will continue to be a force in American politics and it will remain a prominent fixture on the political landscape as the nation's number-one pro-family, pro-life organization."

The press release said Christian Coalition International would operate in the same fashion as any business corporation. "It will have the freedom to endorse political candidates on a state and local level, make financial contributions to candidates or engage in such other activities as are permissible to all businesses."

But Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said it is unlawful for a business to give money to candidates, unless it forms a political-action committee.

And in a press release, the long-time critic of the coalition said "it's about time" for the IRS decision regarding the Christian Coalition. The organization is a "hardball political machine that has been masquerading as a tax-exempt group," Lynn said. He said Robertson's "crusade to politicize America's churches is now almost certain to fail" and "I, for one, say 'Amen.'"

"In light of the IRS action, pastors would have to be out of their minds to distribute these [voter] guides now," Lynn said. "The Christian Coalition's credibility is shot."

School prayer, Ten Commandments measures touted by House lawmakers

By Kenny Byrd

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- House Republicans are seeking support for a school-prayer amendment to the Constitution and a measure to grant states authority to hang the Ten Commandments in government buildings.

In the aftermath of recent school shootings, several GOP lawmakers have circulated open letters soliciting co-sponsors for the measures.

The Ten Commandment Defense Act, sponsored by Rep. Robert Aderholt, R-Ala., would seek to strip federal courts of jurisdiction in cases that challenge the hanging of the Ten Commandments in government buildings, allowing state courts the final say.

The Religious Freedom Amendment, sponsored in the last Congress by Rep. Ernest Istook, R-Okla., would alter the Constitution's religious-liberty provisions. The measure would allow some forms of government-sponsored prayer and tax-financed religious education and activities.

It fell 61 votes shy of the two-thirds required to pass the House in the last Congress.

Rep. Charlie Norwood, R-Ga., said Congress "should immediately schedule an emergency vote on restoring prayer to the nation's schools" in response to the latest school-shooting incident, which occurred in Conyers, Ga.

"We took God out of our schools in 1962; now we're seeing that something else has moved in," Norwood said. "If we want these shootings to stop, we have to take on the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that banned our children and teachers from praying in the classroom."

The measures are also receiving the backing of key GOP leaders.

House Majority Leader Richard Armey, R-Texas sent a letter to colleagues, saying that the measures "and the debate on them -- will help restore the Founders' understanding of the role and rights of religion in our public life."

He also touted "charitable choice," a measure recently backed by Vice President Al Gore, to make faith-based social ministries eligible for government funds. Armey said faith-based programs "are often markedly more successful than traditional government programs" and "should be encouraged."

Critics of the charitable-choice initiative, originally sponsored by Sen. John Ashcroft, R-Mo., say it violates the Constitution's Establishment Clause. Under the plan, pervasively sectarian organizations, such as churches, could use tax money to deliver social services without having to set up a separate nonprofit entity.

Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Texas, who led the opposition to the Istook amendment last year, said he intends to play an active role in opposing all three of the new religion measures.

"My fear is that crucial church-state issues will be hidden in the shadows of the debate over gun control and juvenile violence after Columbine," Edwards said in an interview with Associated Baptist Press.

He said backers of the school-prayer initiative "must have a very limited view of God."

"No one has the power to take God out of the schools," he said, adding, "What they want, in effect, is government-sanctioned school prayer."

Edwards said he doesn't understand "how so-called conservatives, who don't even trust the government to deliver the mail, could advocate the government getting more involved in religion."

Edwards pointed to recent news reports discussing the Army's accommodation of the Wiccan religion at Fort Hood in Texas to illustrate how messy it can become when government officials meddle in religion.

Rep. Bob Barr, R-Ga., who voted for the Istook amendment last year, sent a letter to Fort Hood's commanding officer arguing that the base is promoting, sanctioning and supporting "the practice of

witchcraft." Barr complained the policy "could easily result in the practice of all sorts of bizarre practices being supported by the military under the rubric of 'religion.' What's next? ... Will Rastafarians demand the inclusion of ritualistic marijuana cigarettes in their rations?"

Edwards wondered whether members of Congress under new laws would become "religion czars" that decide which prayers are acceptable and which are not.

He said he agrees with "many people of good faith" who believe answers to tragedies such as the shootings at Columbine include a spiritual element. "But I strongly disagree with them on breaking down the wall of separation between church and state."

Edwards also said charitable choice could leave churches and synagogues "competing for tens of billions of dollars," and create "religious wars." He said, "If I wanted to create religious dissension in America, the way I would do it would be to put money on the table and have churches compete for it."

He said it is unclear what the strategy of backers of the religion proposals will be.

Some GOP officials have indicated they would be willing to attach versions of the proposals to the juvenile-justice bill, which is expected to be considered by the House the week of June 14-18. The juvenile-justice bill was recently approved by the Senate and includes several gun control measures.

Edwards predicted a constitutional amendment on school prayer could again be defeated, "but I want to assure that our margin of victory is so strong that we don't have to have this sort of divisive effort every year."

And, he said several lawmakers are unaware of negative implications of the charitable-choice initiative. "We're trying to get charitable choice on people's radar screens," he said.

-30-

Rulings spotlight struggle to define permissible aid to religious schools

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- How much aid government can give to religious schools without violating the separation of church and state is more than a controversy among politicians debating voucher proposals.

It also presents a prickly challenge for the nation's courts, which more and more are being asked to decide the constitutionality of various forms of taxpayer assistance for parochial schools being enacted by lawmakers.

Two recent voucher decisions -- by the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the Ohio Supreme Court -- highlight the difficulty judges face.

In a May 27 ruling, the 1st Circuit panel said the state of Maine was right in refusing to pay tuition at parochial schools for students who live in rural areas lacking a public school. The First Amendment bans direct payments or support to sectarian schools, the appeals court concluded.

That same day, however, Ohio's top court said in a 5-2 ruling that a pilot voucher project in Cleveland does not violate the separation of church and state. But the court nonetheless struck down the program because of the way state lawmakers enacted it -- as a rider to a large appropriations bill rather than as a separate act.

While the U.S. Supreme Court has yet to address specifically whether school vouchers are constitutional, it has ruled on other forms of aid to parochial schools.

Acknowledging that the high court's guidance in this area is "less than crystalline," the appeals court in Maine said that "approving direct payments of tuition by the state to sectarian schools represents a quantum leap that we are unwilling to take."

Creating such a breach in the wall separating church and state is "best left for the Supreme Court to undertake," the panel added.

The Ohio court, meanwhile, concluded that the primary beneficiaries of the Cleveland voucher plan are students, not sectarian schools.

Under that plan, students receive scholarships of up to \$2,500. Scholarship checks are payable to the student's parents but are mailed to the school, where the parents are required to endorse them to the school.

The Ohio Supreme Court said the plan creates no unconstitutional link between government and religion "primarily because funds cannot reach a sectarian school unless the parents of a student decide, independently of the government, to send their child to that sectarian school."

As the Maine and Ohio cases illustrate, the high court's pronouncements on parochial-school aid offer ammunition for both sides of the voucher debate and leave lower courts wrestling with where to draw the line between valid and invalid support of religious schools.

In the past three decades, the Supreme Court has said it is permissible for government to provide secular textbooks, student transportation and a sign-language interpreter for deaf students at sectarian schools.

But during that same time, the justices have said government cannot supply religious schools with equipment such as projectors, tape recorders and maps, or reimburse parents for tuition to such schools.

And on some issues, the Supreme Court -- with a few new members -- has simply changed its mind. In 1985, justices said government could not provide on-site remedial education at parochial schools, but 12 years later, they reversed that finding.

The results have left some lower courts critical of the Supreme Court's guidance in this area.

Last summer, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals lamented the task of finding its way "in the vast, perplexing desert of Establishment Clause jurisprudence" as it decided the constitutionality of federally financed educational enhancement programs in New Orleans.

"When we view the deceptively simple words of the Establishment Clause through the prism of the Supreme Court cases interpreting them, the view is not crystal clear," the appeals-court panel said in an opinion written by Judge John Duhe Jr.

"Indeed, when the Supreme Court itself admits that it 'can only dimly perceive the lines of demarcation in this extraordinarily sensitive area of constitutional law,' as a Circuit Court bound by the High Court's commandments we must proceed in fear and trembling."

The 5th Circuit panel ruled that the programs, as implemented in New Orleans-area sectarian schools, violate the Constitution. Under the programs, block grants are used to provide schools use of instructional and educational materials, including library services, reference materials, computer hardware and software and other materials tied to improving student achievement.

Parents of parochial-school students have asked the Supreme Court to reverse 5th Circuit's decision, arguing it conflicts with a ruling by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that upholds virtually identical programs, as well as with the high court's most recent Establishment Clause rulings.

The parents' appeal has drawn support from the Clinton administration. The Department of Education argues in a brief filed by Solicitor General Seth Waxman that the high court should review the 5th Circuit's decision.

Waxman told the court that its past rulings do not "necessarily" require a prohibition against the loan of instructional materials and equipment to religious schools when "the aid is accompanied by safeguards to prevent its diversion to religious purposes" and when it "is supplementary rather than a direct subsidy of the religious school's core educational program."

Lee Boothby, attorney for a group of New Orleans area taxpayers who originally challenged the programs, urged the high court to leave the 5th Circuit ruling in place, arguing that it is consistent with existing Supreme Court decisions on aid to religious schools.

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Key Supreme Court cases on aid to religious schools

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Following is a rundown of key Supreme Court cases on government aid to religious schools.

Aid plans upheld by the high court:

-- Agostini vs. Felton (1997) upheld on-campus remedial instruction by government employees at sectarian schools, partially reversing Aguilar vs. Felton (1985) and Grand Rapids vs. Ball (1985).

-- Zobrest vs. Catalina Foothills Sch. Dist. (1993) upheld a state-paid interpreter for a deaf student attending a sectarian school.

-- Witters vs. Washington Dept. of Services for the Blind (1986) upheld state vocational assistance to a blind student attending a sectarian college.

-- Mueller vs. Allen (1983) upheld state tax deductions for parents of children attending sectarian schools for costs associated with tuition, textbooks and transportation.

-- Wolman vs. Walter (1977) upheld the provision of textbooks; standardized tests; speech, hearing and psychological diagnostic services; and therapeutic, guidance and remedial services at sectarian schools.

-- Tilton vs. Richardson (1972) upheld federal construction grants to religiously affiliated colleges and universities for buildings used exclusively for secular educational purposes.

-- Board of Education vs. Allen (1968) upheld the lending of secular textbooks to parochial schools.

-- Everson vs. Board of Education (1947) upheld transportation of sectarian school students as part of a general busing program that includes nonsectarian students.

Aid plans rejected:

-- Board of Educ. of Kiryas Joel Sch. Dist. vs. Grumet (1994) invalidated the creation of a special public-school district formed to meet the special-education needs of a Hasidic Jewish community.

-- School Dist. of Grand Rapids vs. Ball (1985) invalidated state-provided remedial services in parochial schools as well as broad-based community programs in public schools.

-- Aguilar vs. Felton (1985) invalidated federally sponsored remedial services in parochial schools.

-- Wolman vs. Walter (1977) invalidated the provision of tax-funded equipment such as protectors, tape recorders, maps and globes and science kits as well as field trip transportation for religious schools.

-- Meek vs. Pittenger (1975) invalidated the state loan of instructional material and educational equipment to sectarian schools.

-- Committee for Pub. Educ. and Religious Liberty vs. Nyquist (1973) invalidated state payment of maintenance and repair costs at sectarian schools as well as tuition reimbursement.

-- Lemon vs. Kurtzman (1971) invalidated state reimbursement to sectarian schools of the cost of teachers' salaries, textbooks and other instructional material.

-30-

-- By Larry Chesser

Samford sponsoring symposium to remember youth-led revivals

By Jack Brymer

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- In 1945, a group of Baylor University students met for prayer in the dormitory room of a young Japanese-American student, Reiji Hoshizaki.

Convinced of the need for a revival, Hoshizaki then approached Bob Denny, his Baptist Student Union director, to get a "big name" evangelist to lead the event.

Denny instead, according to Samford University official Bill O'Brien, told young Hoshizaki, "Do the revival yourself."

What followed was a student-led revival that April, which was repeated the next year. It quickly spread through Texas and then across the South, spawning a youth-revival movement that became a major impact on a generation of Southern Baptists.

A half-century later, Samford University is commemorating the movement with a public symposium titled "Revival Revisited," June 18-20 on the university's campus in Birmingham, Ala.

Convened jointly by the Baptist-affiliated university and its Beeson Divinity School, the public symposium will feature recollections and dialogue with 15 members of the earliest youth-led revival teams, who are now in their 70s.

The first revival met in April 1945 under a tent near Baylor's campus in Waco. The event was so successful it was repeated the next year and then in other cities. An estimated 15,000 attended a revival in Dallas. Leaders including Buckner Fanning, Ralph Langley, Jess Moody, Foy Valentine and Bruce McIver became household names among Southern Baptists as the movement spread across the South.

Arthur Walker, now the retired executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention Education Commission, recalled chairing a committee for a June 1949 revival in Birmingham, Ala., while he was a student at Samford. An estimated 5,000 people packed Birmingham's municipal auditorium for the closing night of a weeklong, citywide series of meetings.

Many students had returned from the military in World War II seeking answers to the meaning of life, Walker said, and for many the revivals provided those answers. "During the war, many lost all sight of what it was to be sober, sincere and moral," Walker said. "So, these revivals were very meaningful for people who were trying to get back into the proper attitude and approach to life."

Retired Samford Provost William Hull, another young student at the time, said the revivals were "a profound influence" on him. Hull entered the ministry in 1949 and did several youth revivals. He said the movement gave legitimacy to young preachers and elevated student work to a high-water mark.

The movement carried into the mid-1950s, as a second wave of people touched by the revivals went to college. By the mid-1960s, Baptist state conventions were beginning summer missions programs, which O'Brien said were a direct outgrowth of the youth-led revival movement.

O'Brien, a former missionary who now directs the Global Center at Samford, became caught up in the movement in 1952 while a student at Hardin-Simmons University. He applied as a team member but was rejected because he was married. His wife, Dellanna, today is executive director of Woman's Missionary Union.

"I had heard these guys preach, and they were 'with it,'" Bill O'Brien said. "I really identified with them. They had a great sense of humor, were articulate and hit us right where we were at the time -- an age when we had heroes. They were our heroes, and we wanted to be like them."

Though O'Brien was rejected as a team member, he was permitted to help out by training music directors for the meetings from 1958 till 1961.

Like O'Brien, who was a missionary in Indonesia from 1962 to 1974 and then on the staff of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, most of the original team members went on to distinguished careers as pastors and missionaries.

M.D. Oates, a student who teamed with Hoshizaki to organize the first revival, served 35 years as a missionary in Japan before retiring. He is now deceased. His son serves as a missionary to Japan.

The revival movement ran concurrent to other Christian youth emphases during the 1940s, including the rise of evangelist Billy Graham and the Youth for Christ parachurch movement.

"The youth-revival movement worked in the South and Southwest much the same way various youth emphases functioned in the rest of the country, filling the same vacuum," said Samford President Thomas Corts, who remembers being influenced by the movement.

Unlike other Christian youth organizations, which became highly structured, the Southern Baptist movement did not become institutionalized. Southern Baptists' suspicion of parachurch activity and working with other evangelicals probably prevented it from being structured into an ongoing youth emphasis, Corts said.

Some pastors and at least one Baptist state paper editor criticized the movement. South Carolina editor S.H. Jones supported efforts to evangelize young people but said adults should lead them. "Young people are naturally unstable, emotional and inclined to violent reactions," he wrote. "They are, therefore, susceptible to spectacular stunts and highly emotional appeals such as some youth revivalists employ."

Jones also warned that labeling the revivals a youth emphasis could contribute to a "hurtful cleavage" between young and older church members.

Despite such criticism, O'Brien said he believes the movement was from God. "I believe the Holy Spirit fanned the spark of a small beginning into a flame that spread across the country."

"It was a 'kairos' moment," he said. "No one could ultimately take credit for what God was doing."

The symposium is free and open to the public. It will convene from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday in Harrison Theater. A Friday night banquet, however, requires payment and reservations. Most symposium participants will stay over and preach or sing in area churches Sunday morning. The symposium will end with a 7 p.m. Sunday service in the Beeson Divinity School chapel.

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