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## Bill calling for prayer, fasting, reconciliation fails in House

By Kenny Byrd

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- A U.S. House of Representatives measure urging Americans to pray, fast and humble themselves before God failed June 29 to garner the two-thirds vote necessary for passage.

The measure, sponsored by Rep. Helen Chenoweth, R-Idaho, was supported by 275 House lawmakers and opposed by 140. The resolution was brought to the House floor under suspension of the rules, requiring a two-thirds vote for passage. It is expected to come up later under a rule requiring only a simple majority.

The resolution would put Congress on record urging Americans "to unite in seeking the face of God through humble prayer and fasting, persistently asking God to send spiritual strength and a renewed sense of humility to the nation."

It also calls on national, state and local leaders as well as business leaders and clergy to urge the people they serve "to observe a day of solemn prayer, fasting and humiliation before God."

A Chenoweth spokesman said while the measure failed, "we made a statement." He said it puts lawmakers "on the record" for or against the measure. "It shows constituents where their members are on this matter. They are going to have to justify their vote," he added.

Chenoweth told colleagues the bill is "patterned after what was once common practice by national and state elected leaders, from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War, ending with President Abraham Lincoln's great proclamation of March, 1863, calling for a national day of humiliation, fasting and prayer."

But other lawmakers criticized the measure as a threat to religious liberty.

"Prayer should not be a government-imposed duty," said Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Texas. "It is a God-given right. To even suggest prayer should be a government-dictated duty demeans the very sanctity of prayer."

"Perhaps it is time for us in Congress to preach a little less and practice a little more," Edwards said. "God does not need Congress' help, but may God help us if we ever use religion as a means to our own political ends."

Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., said: "I do not challenge the importance of religious guidance as a source of healing. ... But I do question whether it is the role of Congress to initiate, mandate or manipulate personal religious expression."

Religious and civil-liberties groups also weighed in on the resolution.

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said he is not surprised the House is considering calling for a national day of prayer and "humiliation." "Many Americans are already humiliated by the nonsense coming from the House and are praying that members of Congress move on to real issues," he said.

Kristin Hansen, spokeswoman for the Family Research Council, pointed out the resolution is not binding. "But it's good for our Congress to recognize the need for our country to look to God for help in our time of spiritual decay." She said it is good for leaders to urge "spiritual development" of Americans.

"It merely recognizes the fact that we are a nation that trusts in God and prayer is a part of that," Hansen added.

But Melissa Rogers, associate general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee, said: "Let's let churches call us to prayer rather than Congress."

"There is no question that in the wake of Littleton some serious soul-searching is needed to address the problems our nation has, but we don't need government-sponsored religion, which just undermines and politicizes religion," Rogers said.

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## **Supreme Court won't review ban use of school facilities for worship**

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review a New York school district's policy that bars the after-hours use of public school facilities for religious worship and instruction.

The policy was challenged by Full Gospel Tabernacle and Jorge Vega, pastor of the Far Rockaway, N.Y., congregation, after the church was denied after-hours use of a Queens elementary school.

Officials of Community School District 27 based the refusal on a state law governing use of school facilities and the district's policy implementing the law.

The policy bars use of school facilities for religious services or instruction during nonschool hours. But to comply with a 1993 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in another New York case, the district permits use of facilities to discuss or distribute religious material or material that contains a religious viewpoint.

In a ruling upheld by the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, U.S. District Judge Charles Haight Jr. rejected the church's claim that the policy violates its First Amendment rights.

The court concluded that under New York law and the district's policy, the school facilities were not open public forums but "limited public forums."

Limited public forums are open only for specified uses, Haight said. Excluded uses, he added, can be justified by merely showing they are "reasonable" and do not discriminate on the basis of the speaker's viewpoint.

Haight relied on a 1997 ruling by the 2nd Circuit that upheld the ban on use of facilities for religious worship and instruction. In that case -- Bronx Household of Faith vs. Community School District No. 10 -- the appeals court said it was reasonable for the district "to avoid identification of a school with a particular church."

In Full Gospel Tabernacle and Jorge Vega vs. Community School District 27, Haight rejected arguments that the school had become an open forum for religious worship because two congregations had been permitted to use the facility for worship in 1993-94.

He noted that those permits were granted by a school employee who "failed to properly implement the district's clear policy against such use, and the district promptly corrected these errors and took effective steps to prevent such a mistake in the future."

In asking justices to review the case, attorneys for Full Gospel Tabernacle argued that the lower-court rulings are at odds with decisions by other federal courts, including the Supreme Court.

The school's policy makes room for "all the secular components of worship," such as singing, dancing, learning, celebrating, but bars such uses as part of religious worship.

School facilities may be used, the church's attorneys argued, "to study the Scriptures, but not if they do so from the perspective of believers. They may sing religious hymns for musical entertainment but not for worship of God."

Attorneys for the school district urged the court to reject the church's request for review, arguing that rulings by the lower courts were consistent with past decisions both by the Supreme Court and other federal courts.

A dozen religious groups sided with Full Gospel Tabernacle in a friend-of-the-court brief filed by the Christian Legal Society.

The religious groups argued that the lower-court rulings against the church conflict with a 1981 Supreme Court ruling that struck down a Missouri university's policy prohibiting a student group from meeting for religious worship and instruction.

In *Widmar vs. Vincent*, the religious groups argued, the Supreme Court "rejected the argument that religious worship can be distinguished from other religious speech and discriminatorily excluded from public facilities."

The religious groups also argued that lower-court decisions are contrary to Supreme Court rulings that require government officials to treat religion neutrally.

"A government policy that discriminates against conduct done for religious reasons while allowing the same conduct done for secular reasons violates the Free Exercise Clause," the religious groups argued.

They also argued that requiring government officials to distinguish between religious worship and other religious speech would result in excessive entanglement between church and state and foster government discrimination among religions.

Groups joining the CLS brief were Queens Federation of Churches, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, Clifton Kirkpatrick as stated clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Baptist Joint Committee, National Association of Evangelicals, Family Research Council, Focus on the Family, Liberty Counsel, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and North American Mission Board of SBC.

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## **High court temporarily stays ruling that invalidated special school district**

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- A public school district created to provide special education for disabled Hasidic Jewish children in New York can continue to operate while the U.S. Supreme Court decides whether to review a ruling that declared the district unconstitutional.

In a June 21 order, the high court stayed a judgment by New York's highest court that the special school district created in the village of Kiryas Joel impermissibly advances religion.

All residents of Kiryas Joel are members of the Satmar Hasidic religious community, which practices a strict form of Judaism. Most Satmar children attend private religious schools, but disabled Satmar children are entitled to receive special education services provided by the public school system.

The state legislature created the Kiryas Joel district within the Monroe-Woodbury Central Public School District to serve disabled Satmar students in 1989. Lawmakers took that step after efforts to furnish special education for Satmar children in Monroe-Woodbury schools proved unsatisfactory. At that time, a 1985 Supreme Court decision barred public school officials from providing special-education services on site at religious schools.

A legal challenge by two New York taxpayers led to a 1994 Supreme Court ruling that the Kiryas Joel district was unconstitutional because it singled out the Satmar religious community for special treatment.

The legislature then attempted to reauthorize the district through legislation designed to comply with guidance in the Supreme Court's 1994 ruling.

New York's top court said in 1997 the legislature's second effort appeared on its face to be neutral but concluded it had "a non-neutral effect of allowing Kiryas Joel to create its own school district without providing the same opportunity to other groups."

Three months later the legislature tried again to enact "neutral" law. Making the point that the new legislation was not designed solely to apply to Kiryas Joel, Gov. George Pataki asserted that 10 municipalities would be immediately eligible to form school districts under the new law.

But the state's highest court again invalidated the law, saying the state's claim that the statute is "a religion-neutral law of general applicability is belied by its actual effect."

The Court of Appeals of New York said the new law potentially benefits only Kiryas Joel and one other New York municipality.

"The non-neutral effect of the statute is to secure for one religious community a unique and significant benefit -- a 'public school' where all the students adhere to the tenets of a particular religion -- unavailable to other similarly situated communities," the New York court said.

The New York court also noted that the Supreme Court in 1997 reversed its earlier decision barring on-campus provision of remedial services at religious schools. The high court's reversal eliminated the need

for the special district because it would permit public schools to provide special education in Satmar schools, the court said.

In asking the high court to accept the case, attorneys for Pataki and New York education officials argue that the New York court's ruling is in conflict with Supreme Court rulings.

New York officials also argue that the Supreme Court's 1997 decision in *Agostini vs. Felton* allows, but does not require, public school employees to deliver special education services at religious schools.

"There is no assurance that the Monroe-Woodbury Central School District would be willing to provide at Kiryas Joel's religious schools the accommodation *Agostini* now permits," New York officials told the high court.

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## **Nation's high court refuses to revive anti-handbill laws**

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The U.S. Supreme Court refused June 24 to revive municipal ordinances in four Arkansas cities that barred the placement of handbills on unattended parked cars.

The ordinances were challenged by three members of the Twentieth Century Holiness Tabernacle Church who argued the ordinances were unconstitutional because they kept them from placing religious literature under the windshield wipers of parked vehicles.

A federal district court sided with the four northwest Arkansas cities that had enacted the ordinances -- Alma, Dyer, Fort Smith and Van Buren. The district court said the ordinances were justified by the cities' interest in preventing litter.

But the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals disagreed, saying the ordinances suppressed more speech than necessary to serve the cities' purpose of preventing litter.

"The ordinances prohibit the placement of any handbill on any unattended vehicle, regardless of whether the driver, owner, or an occupant might wish to receive the handbill and notwithstanding the fact that some, if not most, people would not throw on the ground papers left on their cars," the appeals court said.

The court reasoned motorists who don't want handbills left on their cars can easily notify distributors of that fact. The court also said the cities' goal of preventing litter could "be accomplished by punishing distributors who defy such notices, as well as the 'litterbugs' who choose to throw papers on the ground."

The high court gave no explanation for refusing to review the case.

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## **Supreme Court to decide validity of adult programming restrictions**

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The U.S. Supreme Court announced June 21 it will decide whether to revive a 1996 law requiring cable operators either to "fully scramble" adult programming or to confine it to late-night hours.

Congress enacted the requirements as part of the 1996 Communications Decency Act to deal with the

problem of "signal bleed" from premium and pay-per-view cable channels offering sexually explicit programming.

To prevent access by nonsubscribers, cable operators scramble signals for premium and pay-per-view programming. But because of signal bleed from a partially scrambled signal, adult programming occasionally is received on television sets of nonsubscribers.

A federal district court in Delaware ruled last December that the restrictions enacted by Congress violated the free-speech rights of Playboy Television and other providers of sexually explicit adult programming.

Because of the economic costs of implementing a fully scrambled signal, the district court noted that cable operators have uniformly opted to comply with the law by restricting adult viewing to late-night hours.

Congress has a compelling interest in protecting children from indecent programming, the district court said, but limiting such programming to the hours between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. was not the least restrictive means of addressing problems caused by signal bleed.

The court said the law effectively removes sexually explicit programming during two-thirds of the broadcast day for all households on a cable system. It also noted that the law requires cable operators to prevent signal bleed in households without children, which account for two-thirds of U.S. households.

A less restrictive alternative, the court said, is available in another section of the communications law. That provision requires cable operators to install -- free of charge -- a channel-blocking device when requested by a customer.

The court said that voluntary blocking requested by customers could be a less restrictive, viable alternative if cable operators and adult broadcasters provide "adequate notice" of its availability.

In the government's appeal to the Supreme Court, U.S. Solicitor General Seth Waxman argued that the district court's "analysis was deeply flawed."

Waxman said the district court gave more protection to indecent programming distributed by cable than has been given to adult programming broadcast on the airwaves.

Attorneys for Playboy Entertainment Group urged the high court to affirm the district court, arguing that it correctly ruled that the requirements enacted by Congress were more restrictive than necessary to meet the government's interest in protecting the children of cable customers.

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## **House committee passes RLPA, Senate panel holds hearing**

By Kenny Byrd

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The Religious Liberty Protection Act, a bill aimed at increasing religious freedom, received approval by the U.S. House Judiciary Committee June 23.

The committee approved the bill on a voice vote after two amendments offered by Democrats failed.

The bill would use spending and commerce powers of Congress to restore protections for religious liberty that were previously in the partially invalidated Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993. The Supreme Court ruled in 1997 that Congress lacked the authority to impose RFRA on the states, although lower courts have ruled that RFRA is applicable on the federal level.

RLPA is Congress' second attempt to remedy a 1990 Supreme Court decision that made it easier for government to interfere with religious practices.

RLPA would prohibit state and local governments from placing a substantial burden on the free exercise of religion unless they employ the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling state interest such as health or safety. It includes a separate provision to protect churches and other religious organizations from restrictive zoning laws.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., failed on a voice vote in the committee. It addressed concerns by gay and lesbian groups that RLPA could be used to deny housing or employment to homosexuals because of religious beliefs.

Another amendment, offered by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., also failed. It would have narrowed the definition of religious organizations and clarified that RLPA does not establish or eliminate a defense under a federal or civil-rights law.

While supporters expect the bill to move quickly to the House floor, a spokeswoman for Rep. Charles Canady, R-Fla., said a hearing would not be scheduled until after lawmakers return from the Fourth of July recess.

Canady, primary sponsor of the bill, said in a statement the House committee "took an important step in the protection of religious freedom" in passing the measure.

Meanwhile, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing June 23 on the need for federal action to protect religious liberty.

Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said while it would be "preferable for the court to return to its previous solicitude for religious liberty claims, until it does, this Congress must do what it can to protect religious freedom in cooperation with the court."

Witnesses at the Senate hearing discussed hurdles they face in attempting to pass measures to protect religious liberty similar to RFRA and the bill now moving through the House.

Texas State Representative Scott Hochburg told lawmakers about the recent successful effort to pass such a law in Texas. Hochburg said that a coalition of religious and civil-liberties groups helped craft civil-rights language in the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act to "apply RFRA to the special circumstances of religious organizations, while continuing to leave the task of balancing religious and equal protection rights to the courts."

"I urge you to adopt a strong law to reinforce what we have done in Texas," Hochburg said. "But in doing so, I would also ask that you follow the wisdom of our governor and our legislature and include language to protect state civil rights laws."

But Steven McFarland, director of Christian Legal Society's Center For Law and Religious Freedom, criticized the civil-rights provision in the Texas bill.

McFarland said Congress should protect religious liberty for all, without exception. "One carve-out beget another," he said. "And thus shall it be if Congress opens the Pandora's Box of stripping RLPA's protections from disfavored religious practices and believers."

University of Texas Law School professor Douglas Laycock said in an interview that the Texas civil-rights provision was crafted for that state and would not work on the federal level.

"It is completely misleading for people to offer it at the federal level and say the coalition accepted this," said Laycock. "Texas doesn't have the same categories of discrimination law ... and doesn't have to deal with marital status and sexual orientation. There are hardly any cases that will fall into that carve-out in Texas."

Phil Strickland, executive director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, said the state coalition worked hard to "create language regarding civil rights that all members of the Texas coalition could live with. We succeeded in doing that though the language did not totally satisfy many of the coalition members."

## Veterans of post-World War revivals gather at Samford symposium to reminisce

By Marv Knox

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- A platoon of "old men for God" reminisced about a great post-World War II revival and prayed for a spiritual awakening yet to come during Revival Revisited, a symposium at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., June 18-20.

More than a dozen veterans of the Southern Baptist youth-revival movement of the 1940s and '50s attended the symposium, sponsored by Samford and its Beeson Divinity School.

"We were all together during the days of Youth for Christ. Now we're back -- 50 years later -- as 'old men for God,'" quipped Jess Moody, founder of Palm Beach Atlantic College and retired pastor from Mansfield, Texas, who was one of the key preachers in the movement.

Symposium participants attended Texas Baptist universities -- primarily Baylor and Hardin-Simmons -- when the youth-revival movement spread like wildfire across the Southern Baptist Convention. It paralleled a national movement among teens and young adults, most noted for the rise of evangelist Billy Graham and the Youth for Christ organization he founded.

The Baptist movement began in a student-led tent revival near the Baylor campus in Waco in April 1945.

Graham's Youth for Christ crusades inspired Baylor students who had been meeting to pray for revival, recalled Bruce McIver, retired longtime pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas.

While many young Americans still fought World War II overseas, many stateside began to look beyond the war with a burden for spiritual battles closer to home. "We had marched overseas," McIver said. "Now, we needed to march in the cities of America."

Ironically, a former Buddhist, Japanese-American student at Baylor, Reiji Hoshizaki, launched the World War II-era revival, Moody reported. Hoshizaki attended Youth for Christ crusades while visiting his parents in Chicago, and he returned to Texas impassioned.

"Rei laid on our hearts his dream of revival," Moody said. "God has a sense of humor: Revival in America, sparked by a Japanese American, during a war with Japan."

God honored that passion, symposium participants remembered. The '45 Baylor revival succeeded. By the spring of '46, almost 1,200 returning servicemen flooded the Baylor campus, and 500 students made spiritual commitments at that year's revival.

Word of the Baylor revivals spread, and the student organizers received requests to lead revivals elsewhere. Soon they conducted citywide youth revivals in places such as Dallas, Fort Worth and Houston. Some of them told their stories at the Baptist conference center in Ridgecrest, N.C., and that spawned waves of youth revivals well into the '50s.

The students led youth crusades across the South, in Chattanooga, Memphis, Birmingham and Atlanta, as well as Honolulu. Guided by W.F. Howard, the Baptist General Convention of Texas' student ministries director, they formed scores of teams to take revivals to hundreds of smaller communities as well.

The Honolulu crusade prompted the start of student summer missions, a staple among state Baptist conventions for the last half of the century, participants noted. The ministries also gave birth to the Journeymen and US-2 two-year missions programs for young adults sponsored by the Southern Baptist mission boards.

Through the Baptist and other revival movements, hundreds of thousands of youth accepted Christ. Church historians estimated 30,000 young people nationwide made commitments to full-time Christian service from 1945 through 1951, Moody said.

"The influence of this movement continues to stun us," Samford President Tom Corts told youth-revival veterans, many of their wives and several dozen senior adults who were influenced by the revivals and attended the symposium. "The pebble was dropped in the pond, and the ripples continue to this day."

Nobody knows exactly "why or how" revival happens, Corts acknowledged. But symposium participants spent the weekend speculating about the past and hoping for the future.

"It was of God," confessed a retired missionary to Japan. "He is the one who did it. The Lord did the work."

God "breathed" upon the movement, added Howard Butt, the layman in the group and general chairman of the Baylor revivals, who is president of Laity Lodge Foundation in Kerrville and vice chairman of the H.E. Butt Grocery Co.

"We had been breathed upon by the Spirit of God," Butt explained. "We were carried by the tide of the Holy Spirit. We expected God to use us wherever we went, and he did."

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## **Leaders of youth movement reflect on ingredients of revival**

By Marv Knox

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- Looking back more than 50 years, leaders of a youth-revival movement among Southern Baptists listed elements that fuel revival -- both then and now. Participants at Samford University's Revival Revisited symposium included in their list:

-- Dependence on God. "We were blessed -- not because of anything we did, not because of any virtue," said Charles Wellborn, retired religion professor at Florida State University. "It is the mystery of God, the grace of God that he reached down and touched us to say, 'I want you here and now.'"

"We were amateurs," admitted Bruce McIver, retired longtime pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas. "We didn't have one good sermon between us. That's why we all had to preach -- none of us had enough sermons to last a week" of revival services.

"Jesus was this big," said Palm Beach Atlantic College founder Jess Moody, spreading his arms wide. "And our doctrine, while important, was smaller than Christ."

"We discovered we had witnessed the work of God," said BO Baker, retired longtime pastor of Plymouth Park Baptist Church in Irving, Texas. "This was a work far greater than we had anticipated, a work empowered by the Holy Spirit -- and all the glory must go to God."

-- Availability to Christ. Those young students turned themselves over to Jesus, stressed Warren Hultgren, pastor of First Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., for many years before he retired. "They were men who were predisposed to be used by God. They feared nothing or no one, but were filled with the love of God."

"We learned you didn't have to be experienced or a Bible scholar," explained Ralph Langley, retired pastor of First Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala. "God took a group of green, green kids and did something wonderful with them. ... We learned kids can win kids to Christ. The whole youth revival movement was peer pressure par excellence. The peer pressure was God-sent and a powerful, positive catalyst."

"God was at work because in the fullness of time we were ready to receive his blessings," added Foy Valentine, retired director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

-- Trust in the Holy Spirit. "This was when Baptists were not afraid of the Holy Spirit," Moody stressed. "This is the era of the Holy Spirit. You either deal with him, or you don't have a God to go to."

-- Prayer. "It preceded, guided and saturated all that we did," noted Howard Butt, president of Laity Lodge Foundation in Kerrville, Texas, and vice chairman of the H.E. Butt Grocery Co.

"The power of prayer literally undergirded the whole movement," Langley added.

"Guys cancelled dates (with girls) so they could go to prayer meetings for revival," McIver said.

"A young man must be insane or intoxicated by God to take a gorgeous girl home from a date to go to a prayer meeting," Moody observed. "But it happened."

-- Passion for souls. "We had passion for Christ and for other youth to commit themselves to him," Butt recalled.

"I'd never heard young men that age pray for lost people," added Bob Harris, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Bermuda. "Jack Robinson (an All-American point guard at Baylor) wept for his basketball teammates. ... Each person was pouring himself out to God -- praying, weeping, confessing sin."

Sharing their Christian faith was part of the young peoples' lifestyle, Moody said. "Witnessing was intensely spiritual, but perfectly normal.

-- Boldness. "The sheer boldness of a bunch of kids was like a magnet in the hands of the Holy Spirit," Langley said. "We found that people with less experience have more boldness, and God can use it."

-- Fun. "Holy hilarity filled it all," Butt declared. "We enjoyed each other, and that joy bubbled around us and caught others in that undertow."

Buckner Fanning, longtime pastor at Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio, who recommitted his life to Christ during a crusade in Dallas, affirmed that notion. The crusade leaders won him over "by their spirit, attitude and inclusion of me," not just during the revival itself, but at a mealtime in his parents' home after evening services.

-- Trust. "It was amazing that so many pastors let 19-year-olds preach in their pulpits," McIver marveled. Many of the participants reported they made lifelong friends with pastors in whose churches they preached during those years.

-- Music. "Every great awakening was characterized by a change in worship form," Moody said, noting the songs of those revivals ushered in a new era of revival music. He and others lauded BO Baker and his brother, Dick, retired longtime minister of music at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, for writing and leading a host of hymns and choruses that shaped the revival meetings and reached a generation with the gospel.

Music was "the frontrunner -- to prepare the way for revival," Dick Baker said.

"Wherever there is spiritual vitality, there is song," Butt added.

-- World events. World War II and its aftermath profoundly shaped the country and deeply impacted the youth-revival movement, participants agreed.

"We had seen too much death, too much carnage, too much cruelty," Wellborn remembered. "And we tried to preach in that kind of world."

"I have no doubt God did this at that time for servicemen returning from the military," said Jack Robinson, retired pastor of churches in the Southeast and East. "Hundreds of them made promises to God in foxholes." And the revival movement helped them keep those promises, he added.

"We were just a part of the moving wheel of God that made a difference," BO Baker said.

Although the revival veterans looked longingly to the past, they also looked fervently to the future. They kept asking themselves if America can or will experience such revival again.

Don't expect a replica of the postwar youth revivals, Butt advised.

"I don't think I'm able to pray, 'Lord, do it again.' God doesn't use carbon paper," he explained. "We are to expectantly wait for God to do a new thing. God is here and now, doing a new thing."

"I do not know what the future holds," Hultgren conceded. "But intuitively, I believe God is going to do something. Probably, it will be outside organized denominations, probably by laymen."

"Of course, it's something we wish we could see happen," noted BO Baker. "But it's none of our business. Our business is availability to God."

"Let us pray God will show his power across this land," urged Reiji Hoshizaki, the Japanese-American Baylor student who launched the World War II-era revival. "If we will persevere in prayer, God will show his mighty work."

"I believe the best days are just ahead," Dick Baker exhorted. "I believe we'll see revival."

"It will come again; God is there," Valentine pledged. "He is not dead. He still moves."

"When you and I and enough others bow our heads and hearts and lives before God, spiritual awakening will come," Wellborn predicted.

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-- EDITOR'S NOTE: The spelling of BO Baker, which appears several times in the above story, is correct.

## **90-year-old former student leader reflects on lessons of revivals**

By Marv Knox

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- Lessons abounded during the postwar Southern Baptist youth-revival movement, observed W.F. Howard, who shepherded a generation of young preachers through those years.

As director of student ministries for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Howard guided the student teams that spread the revivals to communities across the state and throughout the South.

Howard, 90, reflected on the lessons the student revivalists -- many of whom went on to prominent ministries across the Southern Baptist Convention -- learned. He shared those observations at Revival Revisited, a symposium at Samford University that focused on the movement.

The students learned:

-- "God's correct address." God is not "way up yonder," but ever present and available to Christians, Howard said.

-- "To tell God the whole truth about themselves." Since God sees and knows all, Christians ought not to not try to hide anything from God, he reasoned.

-- "God is on their side." Instead of judging and condemning them, the students learned, God is "their friend," urging them onward and helping them achieve great things for God, he said.

-- "To use their own vocabularies." A key to the success of the revivals was the student preachers' abilities to speak about God in ways that other students could understand.

-- "To omit some 'amens.'" Students learned they could pray throughout the day, voicing prayers to God no more than a sentence long, not formal prayers.

-- "To be quiet and listen while God speaks." Often, Christians are tempted to drown out God's voice with their own words, Howard said, adding, "Part of prayer is God speaking."

-- "To pray by the alarm clock." Discipline is a part of spiritual growth, he explained, noting blessings flow from God as Christians discipline themselves to pray daily and consistently.

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## Religious Liberty Council elects officers, honors Baptist leaders

By Kenny Byrd

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- The Religious Liberty Council elected two new members to serve on the Baptist Joint Committee and paid tribute to three Baptist leaders who are retiring -- James Dunn, Keith Parks and Dellana O'Brien.

The RLC, the individual membership arm of the BJC, met June 25 during the annual gathering of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Birmingham, Ala.

The RLC elected Toby Druin and Todd Heifner as members of the BJC, a 63-year-old religious-liberty agency in Washington. Druin is retired editor of the Texas Baptist Standard. Heifner is director of Endowment and Capital Funds at Samford University in Birmingham. Both will serve three-year terms.

CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal and Suzii Paynter, an educational-development consultant in Austin, Texas, were re-elected to three-year terms on the BJC.

RLC members re-elected tri-chairs Patsy Ayres, an activist from Austin, Texas; Hardy Clemons, pastor of First Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C.; and Gardner Taylor, pastor emeritus of Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, N.Y. Jerry Martin, a Kensington, Md., pastor, was re-elected secretary of the RLC.

Dunn, executive director of the BJC, will be stepping down from the head post in September. He will continue to work with the agency as president of the BJC Foundation and will become visiting professor of Christianity and public policy at the Wake Forest Divinity School in Winston Salem, N.C.

Parks retired June 30 as the CBF's first global-missions coordinator. Parks took the job in 1993, after serving 12 years as president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board before taking early retirement.

O'Brien recently announced that she would retire as head of the Woman's Missionary Union. She touted the cooperation between WMU and the BJC in a welfare-to-work initiative. The WMU's Christian Women's Job Corps is an organization that helps unemployed women get and keep jobs.

Brent Walker, general counsel of the BJC, also touted a book on Dunn that will be published by Smyth and Helwys. Among those contributing chapters to "James Dunn: Champion for Religious Liberty," will be Baptist leader Foy Valentine, preacher Tony Campolo, historian Walter Shurden, former BJC general counsel Oliver "Buzz" Thomas, and others. Bill Moyers is author of the book's foreword.

Dunn told the crowd that for 19 years it has been "my good fortune to be a steward of the Baptist gift to the science of government, full-throated religious liberty and its essential corollary the separation of church and state."

Baptists have an antidote to the "poison" of cynicism and apathy that the political process can breed, Dunn said. "Soul freedom, religious liberty, is the birthmark of Baptists," he said. "Alas, we must pay attention lest our witness be devalued. Soul freedom has internal as well as external implications."

The crowd of more than 300 gave a standing ovation to Dunn and during a question-and-answer session many honored Dunn with words of thanks and admiration.

Ending his remarks, an emotional Dunn quoted passages from a poem written by the father of his wife, Marilyn. "And since I have no gold to give, And love alone must make amends, My prayer is that while I live, God, make me worthy of my friends."

## **Richmond seminary names distance-learning director**

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- A Virginia college administrator has been named first director of a new distance-learning program at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

James Peak is resigning as a Bluefield College professor and director of the Baptist school's Christian ministry adult-education program in Richmond to head BTSR's new distance-learning program. The pioneer distance-learning program, funded by an \$800,000 Lilly Endowment grant, will offer theological education to persons who cannot attend classes on campus by using the Internet and other technology, seminary officials say.

Seminary President Thomas Graves said Peak brings "a rare combination of educational administration ability, technological understanding and ministerial experience that make him a unique fit for this position."

Peak is a master-of-church-music graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and has a Ph.D. in education from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has worked as a minister of music and administration at churches in Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky.

Peak was scheduled to begin work July 1. The first courses in the new program are expected in the 2000-2001 school year.

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-- By ABP staff

## **Missouri layman contributes software for churches worldwide**

By Jeff Huett

GRANDVIEW, Mo. (ABP) -- When John Ware agreed to serve on the finance committee at First Baptist Church in Grandview, Mo., the line "computer programmer" was not in the job description.

But using his God-given talents to fulfill a need, he has now provided at least one of his three church database software programs to churches in 38 states, five Canadian provinces and 13 other nations.

When Ware, a manufacturer's representative in the electronics industry, and the other committee members began reconciling old bank statements at the church in 1983, they found the finances were in shambles. In his words, "You can't manage a \$250,000-budget with a pen and pencil."

This realization, along with his brand-new IBM computer and a will to learn the D-BASE computer language, prompted Ware to begin writing database software programs that would hold church membership, member contributions and member-prospect information.

His Church Database (CHDB) system allows users to divide and code members by Sunday-school class, address and more than 60 other ministry and committee groupings. The program will also automatically generate some of the reports that Baptist churches often use, Ware said.

"Baptists like (reports) the way they've always seen them," Ware said. "If you change things, they don't like it."

Ware said the program even compiles profiles of the ages of the church's membership. "There probably aren't many commercial programs that will do that," he said.

Ware also developed CONCORD, a program that allows users to enter member contributions each week and generate quarterly, semi-annual and annual statements and OUTREACH, a computerized prospect file. OUTREACH has built-in visitation forms the users may print and return after making a visit to the prospect. When a prospect joins the church, the information can be automatically transferred to CHDB.

He offers the set of three programs free of charge to churches that can use them -- free because he views this as his calling.

"I have God-given talent to write these programs, and I felt like I needed to share it with others just like those who share their talents in the church choir," the 72-year-old Ware said. "I can look back and see that my life has been a pattern that God has planned for me."

Ware updates the programs each year by following suggestions of some of the churches using the software. In November 1997, Loren Hutchinson, the associate director of missions at the Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association in Kansas City, Mo., added Ware's programs to the association's Web page.

Since then, CHDB has been downloaded more than 2,100 times. That mark is an average of about four downloads per day. CONCORD and OUTREACH have been downloaded approximately 1,300 times each.

"I had no idea what to expect when we put the programs on the Web page," Hutchinson said. "What has surprised me has been the worldwide usage. We've had usage from countries I have never even heard of. I don't know how they even found our page."

Hutchinson said churches from Hong Kong and other countries in Asia, Europe and Africa have downloaded the programs.

Antioch Southern Baptist Church in Harrisonville, Mo., has used the CHDB and CONCORD software for about five years. Vicky Hawkins, who has been the church's secretary for the past eight years, said she works in the membership database about half of her day.

"The programs are very user-friendly because all you have to do is read the screen," Hawkins said. "It's helpful because I don't have to constantly keep up with paperwork on our members."

She said the membership database is a timesaver because it keeps up with members' address changes, birthdays and anniversaries, but what she uses the most is the component of the program that allows her to keep up with the church deacons.

Deacons in the church are assigned families to minister to and when the families move or there is any other change, Hawkins said, all the program user has to do is key the change into the database and print a copy for the deacon. "It saves a phone call," Hawkins said.

She said she also regularly attends Ware's annual training sessions for use of the programs. "I go away every time having learned something I never knew before," Hawkins said.

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-- EDITOR'S NOTE: Ware's programs, which are Y2K compliant, can be downloaded free of charge from the Southern Baptist Churches of Kansas City Web site at <http://www.sky.net/~baptist>. Then follow the link to "free software" to get more information.

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-- EDITOR'S NOTE: After the following story, which appeared in Associated Baptist Press June 10, was posted on the Internet, Tom Rakow pointed out several details that he said were in error. The version below contains the corrections and clarifications he requested.

## **Former deer poacher spreads gospel through hunter devotionals (revised)**

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 independent 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 -- legally, with a rifle.

"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 community 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 weeks before the event, booth space was full.

Just a couple of hours before Rakow's group inquired, however, there was a cancellation. 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 14:5, 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."

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-- Jeff Huett is a student at Baylor University and a summer intern at Associated Baptist Press.

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