

**FOR THE RECORD**

**Student dialogue**  
Students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville met the school's president-elect last week and shot sometimes bitter questions at him about the role of women in ministry. *See page 2.*

**WMU support**  
A group of Baptists held a news conference last week to announce their effort to support the work of Woman's Missionary Union, which they said is "under attack" by Southern Baptist Convention leadership. *See page 2.*

**Glimpse of Russia**  
Judy Studie of West Kentucky made a trip to Russia recently and was impressed with Baptist work there and the potential for the upcoming partnership between Kentucky Baptists and Russian Baptists. *See page 3.*

**Editorial**  
Will Baptists succumb to "presbygationalism"? *See page 5.*

**Colson on crime**  
Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship, says America needs to rebuild a "moral consensus" to deal with the breakdown of the criminal justice system. *See page 6.*

## Acteens shown a 'World of Difference'

By Pauline Stegall  
State Correspondent

PADUCAH—Packed with everything from rap to missions and drama to ministry, the annual State Acteens Convention drew 1,100 teen-age girls and adult counselors to Paducah's Lone Oak First Baptist Church April 2-3.

The program, developed around the theme "A World of Difference," exposed Acteens to a myriad of ways Jesus Christ makes a difference in the world.

Dana Bullington, former missionary to Burkina Faso, West Africa, was the featured speaker.

In one session, Bullington recalled the story of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples—an act she said was unpleasant but necessary because of the hot, desert climate. Applying this to her own work as a missionary, she told of many times she had ministered to people with sore, dirty, infected feet because that was the primary need.

"God has called us to be foot-washers—to do jobs nobody else in this world will do," Bullington said. "Ask God to give you some feet to wash."

As her watchword, Bullington quoted Colossians 3:23: "And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, not unto men."

Bullington and her husband served as career missionaries with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board for one year, until he died in a local epi-



■ **TOP:** State WMU Director Dee Gilliland leads a conference for Acteens leaders, in which she and WMU President Delores Spears hosted a dialogue. ■ **RIGHT:** State Acteen Panelists serving at the conference were Julia Evans, Mairinda Ross, Jennifer Kirkpatrick, Chery Upchurch, Andrea Chinn and Kelli Stinnett.



demic. She and her three children returned to the U.S.

Bullington later remarried, and this summer will be reappointed by the FMB, along with her husband, to serve in Namibia, South Africa.

Among other events at the conference, Acteen Activators from Hartford told about raising their own money for a mission trip to Panama City Beach, where they distributed frisbees

and bracelets. The bracelets, multi-colored with each color representing a step in salvation, opened the door to witnessing, they said.

Kim Haun, Baptist Student Union member from Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, described a summer of witnessing at Olympic □ *See Acteens shown ..., page 3*

## AIDS needs great; Baptist volunteers few

By Mark Wingfield  
News Director

They are as rare as the drops of tainted blood that cause AIDS, but across Kentucky a few Baptist men and women have felt the prick of God's call to minister among people with AIDS.

Many of these volunteers have been touched by the AIDS crisis in their own families; others have come face-to-face with the issue through their work responsibilities; a select few have taken the initiative on their own, not ever knowing a person with AIDS until they began their volunteer service.

Leaders of AIDS-support programs in different regions of Kentucky report churches and Christian people have been slow to respond to the physical, social and spiritual needs of people with AIDS.

Perhaps this is the result of fear, the leaders suggest, or perhaps it is because many Christians associate AIDS exclusively with homosexuality.

Even those who attempt to initiate ministries from a clearly Christian perspective say they face an uphill battle enlisting support from fellow believers.

Consider the example of Lynn Lee, director of Christians About AIDS, Prevention, which targets the African-American community in Louisville. On two occasions, Lee has sent invitations to more than 200 church leaders to attend a workshop on AIDS ministries. The most recent attempt yielded 82 commitments to attend, but only 15 people showed up.

Dorothy Southall, a retired schoolteacher who leads the Pennyroal AIDS support service in Hopkinsville, has experienced a similar response. Even after churches and individual Christians inquire about needs, most never are heard from again, she noted.

Yet the opportunities for ministry among people with AIDS are present every day in Kentucky. As of March 31, 290 living Kentuckians were known to be infected with AIDS,

while at least 1,400 others were known to be infected with HIV, the virus thought to cause AIDS.

Another 652 Kentuckians already have died from AIDS.

AIDS cases have been diagnosed in residents of 85 counties in all regions of the state.

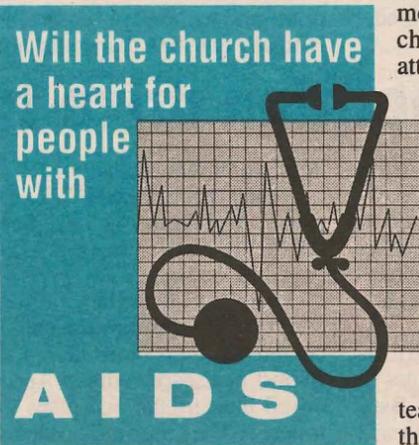
The waiting needs of these people and their families are varied, but often simple. Here's a sample of what a few Kentucky Baptists are doing to meet these needs:

■ **Bob Cunningham**, chaplain at Baptist Hospital East in Louisville, visits people with AIDS in their hospital rooms and offers a listening ear and a friendly touch.

Both are important for people who often feel shunned and cut off from society, he said.

"One of the things I do most is to physically touch people who have AIDS," Cunningham explained. "I don't wear a mask; I don't wear gloves. ... I make sure at least to hold hands or to put a hand on their shoulder."

Another aspect of Cunningham's work is to build bridges between the person with AIDS and their families when relationships are strained. "So many times the person who has AIDS wants to talk with family but fears they may have anger, and the family members want to talk, too, but are afraid. It's kind of like having people on the opposite side of a gulf who are saying, 'How do we get to each other.' □ *See Baptist AIDS ..., page 3*



## Night spent in 'refugee camp' teaches teens

AUGUSTA, Ga. (ABP)—Why would 115 teen-agers and young adults spend the night in cardboard boxes in 30-degree weather, surrounded by soldiers and eating rice out of tin cans?

For most of the people at First Baptist Church of Augusta, Ga., the one-day experience was as close as they will get to life in a Third World country. And that was the point.

The church set up a mock refugee camp patterned after those in Somalia, where military protection and international relief efforts are being used to fight famine and civil war.

"Most of us live our lives as if this whole world goes around and nobody feels any pain," explained Randall Germann, minister to single adults at the Augusta church. "I'm hopeful this will draw some kind of attention to the fact that people go hungry every day."

Germann organized "Operation Third World: Simulate Somalia" to allow the church's youth and single adults to see life through the eyes of a refugee.

Soldiers from the 382nd Army Reserve Unit in Augusta, who recently returned from duty in Saudi Arabia, set up the mock camp on the church grounds. The 20 soldiers also processed the "refugees" as they arrived at the camp and provided security from imaginary Somali warlords.

Germann said care was taken to simulate accurately the conditions in the Somali camps, from the presence of military vehicles to the chickens and goats that wandered around.

For participants, Germann said, the experiment brought the plight of refugees to life.

"It's one thing to see it on CNN or read about in Newsweek," he said. "It's another, the participants found out, to have to live that way—even for one night."

Did the experiment work? "We had some people who seemed very much touched," Germann said. "It makes you appreciate what we have ... a warm bed, a home, security, citizenship."

Germann said it is particularly hard for Americans to comprehend Third World conditions because of the disparities between cultures.

While the annual income for a family of four in some underdeveloped countries is \$120, he said, some American youth spend that much on tennis shoes.

"We've got kids who get this notion that they are poor," he said. "But poor today means you wear \$50 tennis shoes instead of \$100 ones. ... They feel poor when the cable TV goes out and they only have five channels."

## BAPTIST BITS

■ **Masonic leaders**, concerned about a report and recommendations approved by trustees of the Home Mission Board, still are encouraging Masons who belong to Baptist churches to attend the upcoming Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Houston. Lee Porter, longtime SBC registration secretary, said he has received hundreds of phone calls from Baptists who are Masons inquiring about how to become messengers to the meeting. Several Masonic leaders have issued statements recently asking Masons to attend the Houston meeting to preclude any attempt by an "extremist anti-Mason faction" to change the HMB report.

■ **Dwight "Ike" Reighard**, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Ga., will be nominated by Florida pastor Jerry Vines to become president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, Vines said. This is the first public announcement of a candidate for office for either the Pastors' Conference or the SBC, which will meet in June in Houston.

■ **A statement on abortion** developed by the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission remains intact after one commissioner asked to bring it "into agreement with the position of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission," which is more restrictive. Roger Deerinwater of Archer City, Texas, wanted to remove from the statement three possible exceptions when abortion might be allowable: in cases of rape, incest or severe fetal deformity.

## Students confront Mohler in forum

By **Melanie Childers**  
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—In a tense first meeting with their school's next president, students of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary greeted Al Mohler with sometimes bitter questions, scriptural challenges and pleas for reconciliation.

Students lined up behind microphones at Alumni Chapel April 8 to ask questions, vent anger, confront controversial issues and request appointments with Mohler, who is to become president of the seminary Aug. 1.

President Roy Honeycutt, who holds student forums in the chapel about twice each semester, invited all students to the 10 a.m. meeting, where Mohler officially was introduced to students for the first time.

About 325 students accepted the invitation.

Inquiries directed toward Mohler at times escalated into dialogue and even lectures. However, the president-elect maintained a calm demeanor throughout the session.

Such issues as his vision for the school, his age and his involvement in a secret society on campus while a doctoral student were broached, but the conversation continually returned to the ordination and ministry of women.

Of 14 questions asked, five directly related to women in ministry, and others touched on the subject.

Mohler responded by saying the seminary deserves to know both his stance and the denomination's trends. He emphasized that the seminary's guiding document, the Abstract of Principles, does not address the issue, and that the school's focus is to train ministers, not call them.

"I believe in women in ministry," he said. "It's a question of what kind of ministry."

"It is impossible for me to square the ordination of women to the pastoral ministry with what I see in the New Testament."

However, some students used Scripture and other arguments to challenge Mohler's views.

"Either you have picked some Scripture to give more credence than others, or you are allowing your po-

litical stance to give more credence to your answer than Scripture," said Dwayne Merritt, a student from Ripley, W. Va.

"I don't believe that for a minute," Mohler replied. "I reject the notion that the position on women I articulate is wanting in Scriptural support."

Several women concerned about administrative support for their education and ministries also questioned Mohler.

Cathy Anderson, a student from Charlotte, N.C., indicated that before coming to Southern, she was told the seminary would affirm her as a woman in ministry.

"If I believe God is calling me to the pastorate, can I count on you as the president of this institution to support me the same as you would a man?" Anderson asked.

Again, Mohler reminded the students that he owed them his honesty about the matter.

"In terms of supporting a call in ministry, you should not look to a seminary president for support," he said. "The main way we support students is by training them well."

Terri Farless of Fort Valley, Ga., introduced herself as a woman who has heard God's call to be a pastor.

"We don't need anything else from a denomination that has wounded and hurt us, but especially from an institution which has not affirmed us in a lot of ways," she insisted. "By God, we're called, too."

Women were not alone in expressing their anger and frustration.

Speaking from a prepared statement, David Allred, a student from Oliver Springs, Tenn., said he could not yet accept Mohler as an "ambassador of God" and indicated he and other students were "hurt and angry" about the direction of the SBC and the seminary. Still, he said, his desire is for reconciliation.

"Will you take the time, and have the tolerance that is required to heal battered hopes and diminished spirits of myself and all on campus?" he asked.

Mohler's response, which he indicated was not out of hurt or anger, was affirmative.

"I am committed to reconciliation ... and am open to hear and respond," he said.

Speaking in what he called "broad brushstrokes," Mohler vaguely outlined his vision for the seminary.

"I want a Southern Seminary that is the faithful continuation of the grandeur and heritage of its past," and that trains God-called ministers in effective ways, he said. "I want a Southern Seminary that is not just a part of the Southern Baptist Convention, but that leads the Southern Baptist Convention."

But Greg Pope of Douglasville, Ga., countered that if the seminary should lead the SBC, then it shouldn't wait for the convention to make decisions about the ordination of women.

Mohler suggested in reply that Southern Seminary, while holding an important leadership role, must also continue to "serve" the convention and its churches.

Concerning Dodeka, a secret organization of graduate students that he said has existed on campus since the early 1900s, Mohler said the group should not operate in secrecy.

He described the organization as a "dinner society" made up of 12 couples, and admitted having been a member while a doctoral student in the 1980s.

While praising the fellowship and social elements of the group, Mohler said, "I do not believe there is any role for a secret society in a Christian communion."

Responding to questions related to current and future faculty members, Mohler emphasized the importance of the Abstract of Principles.

"When it comes right down to it, the president's responsibility is to interpret the document, and to do so as forthrightly as possible, and to take whatever actions and recommendations are appropriate," he said.

In reply to other questions, Mohler said the decision to hold his election away from campus had many precedents and "reflects in no way ... any distance from the institution," and that his age was neither something he could help nor a factor for him.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mohler said he expected "openness," "candor" and "respect for the institution" from students, and students could expect him to "always tell the truth" and to "always respond directly to any question that comes up."

## Remaining FMB staffers cite their integrity

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Staff members at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board who choose to remain at their work there have as much integrity as those who have resigned citing reasons of integrity, two staff members said.

Alan Compton, vice president for communications, and Thurmon Bryant, associate vice president for mission personnel, have issued statements saying they have integrity and they plan to stick with the FMB.

Their comments come on the heels of news that the FMB's third of eight vice presidents is resigning due to differences with FMB trustees. Harlan Spurgeon, vice president for mission personnel, announced March 31 that he no longer can work with the FMB and maintain his integrity.

Compton issued a statement April 2 in which he said his own daily decision to continue serving the FMB is a "matter of integrity" based on "my call and commitment to Christ and his mission in the world," family members and almost 3,900 missionaries.

The same day, Bryant wrote a statement saying he felt "the vast majority of our administrative staff remains firm" in commitment to missions and the FMB.

Compton said he remains committed not only to missions but to "those sincere brothers in Christ in the local churches of this convention and the trustees they have elected to represent them. They are challenged by the same Scriptures and the Holy Spirit's work in the body of Christ as I. Many are committed to missions. They are our convention."

While respecting others' right to leave or make statements as an expression of their integrity, "I just felt like there are others of us around here who are also making our decisions daily based on integrity," Compton said.

## Vestal & others leading petition drive to support WMU

HOUSTON (ABP)—Five Baptist leaders, led by Houston pastor Daniel Vestal, have launched a petition campaign calling for "an outpouring of support" from individual Baptists for Woman's Missionary Union.

Leaders of the campaign say WMU has been the target of "abusive remarks" and "alarming pressure" recently.

The Southern Baptist Convention's mission-support auxiliary, WMU has been criticized by the SBC's conservative leaders since Jan. 10, when it adopted a plan to offer non-financial support to non-SBC groups that do mission work, including the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

In its 105-year existence, WMU

has supported the SBC's two mission boards almost exclusively. The powerful SBC Executive Committee in February passed a resolution asking WMU to return to its "exclusive relationship" with the SBC home and foreign mission boards.

Vestal and the others are distributing copies of a one-page "Tributes to WMU" and asking individual Baptists to sign the statements, which will be presented to WMU June 12 during the organization's annual meeting in Houston.

Vestal, pastor of Tallowood Baptist Church in Houston, said his group's objective is not to get the SBC to take any action or to pre-empt any SBC action. But he said the organizers are concerned about the Exec-

utive Committee resolution.

Vestal commended WMU's track record of supporting missions and added, "We don't want that to be impaired in the future."

Vestal and the other four leaders conducted a conference-call news conference with more than a dozen Baptist newspaper editors April 8 to unveil their tribute and plans to distribute it. The group has opened a toll-free telephone line to coordinate distribution of the petitions.

Joining Vestal in sponsoring the tribute are James Flamming, pastor of First Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.; Dick Maples, president of Texas Baptists and pastor of First Baptist Church of Bryan, Texas; Quinn Pugh, executive director of the New York

Baptist Convention; and Ellen Teague, president of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention and a member of the task force that drafted the changes approved by WMU in January.

David Hankins, chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, discounted the efforts of Vestal's group.

"The Executive Committee passed a strong resolution of affirmation for Woman's Missionary Union's historic witness and work among Southern Baptists," said Hankins, a pastor in Lake Charles, La. "If they are affirming the WMU, we've already done that."

The toll-free phone number for the "Tributes to the WMU" project is (800) 580-7729.

# KENTUCKY

## West Kentucky woman finds vibrant faith in Russia

By Pauline Stegall  
State Correspondent

MAYFIELD—As spring breaks out across Kentucky, Judy Studie still has the chill of a Russian winter on her mind.

Studie, a member of Sharon Baptist Church in Mayfield, participated in a January mission trip to Russia with nine Texans, one Louisianian and one Canadian. The group's primary work was to lay foundations for future crusades through making contacts and distributing Bibles, tracts, food and clothing.

As a result of what she saw, Studie said, she is an enthusiastic supporter of the proposed partnership between Kentucky Baptists and Russian Baptists. An advance team of Kentuckians is in Moscow this week laying the groundwork for that partnership.

Studie still remembers the sights and feel of her visit: deep snow and temperatures three below zero; throngs of people on the streets despite the weather; prostitution much in evidence on the streets; beggars and long lines for food; old women shoveling snow even during the night.

Studie regretted not getting to attend worship at Moscow's Central Baptist Church, which has 5,000 members and six weekly services.

However, she did get to hear two of the church's choirs, which she said sang well under the leadership of a well-trained director.

While the slow, dignified rhythm of the music sometimes leads Westerners to think the songs aren't evangelistic, that is not the case, she noted. The songs are full of profound words and feelings about the Christian faith, Studie said.

The Kentuckian also said she was impressed by the strong, evangelistic sermons and zeal for evangelism she noted in Russia.

Studie's group traveled to St. Petersburg, where they attended services at Temple of the Gospel, one of two Baptist churches.

Temple of the Gospel's pastor, Sergie Nikolaev, formerly was pastor at the other church, First Baptist. However, two years ago he started the new church with 20 members. The congregation now numbers 1,500.

Temple of the Gospel meets in an old but ornate building that once was a Russian Orthodox church but had been converted into a factory during communist rule.

The church has four Sunday services, lasting from 10 a.m. until well into the afternoon, Studie reported. She noted that some people stay the entire time for the sermons, testimonies and songs.

Because of lack of space, Sunday school is limited to 400 children, and those children are allowed to attend only one semester before giving their places to others, she said. There is no room for adult Sunday school classes.

A cafeteria is provided for staff and deacons who spend most of the day in church. The evening service begins about 4 p.m.

Many younger adults cannot attend church because of Sunday work schedules, Studie said, and some still experience persecution in the workplace because of their faith.

Studie's team spent time on the streets giving out tracts. They gave Bibles to people in the churches, as well as bags of food and clothing. They also took money to repair some of the church buildings.

The group's interpreter was a school teacher who said she believes Jesus is a "fad."

Studie gave the interpreter her own winter coat before she left. The woman told her, "If I were to become a Christian, I would be a Baptist because you have been so good to me."

Another relationship developed on the trip already has touched closer to home. Studie met a man at Temple of the Gospel who told her he had a brother living in Kentucky and attending Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

When she returned home, Studie contacted the seminary and met the man's brother, Igor Khlinov. Khlinov, 34, has a wife and two children

in Russia, where he was an agricultural engineer before becoming a Christian and beginning mission work.

Khlinov plans to return to Russia and work through Temple of the Gospel to start new churches.

Studie already has arranged for Khlinov to preach both at her church and at High Point Baptist Church in Mayfield.

The Kentuckian says she got to go on the trip by accident, but really believes it was "the grace of God." She said she was proud to be a Southern Baptist when she saw the work being done in Russia by Southern Baptist missionaries working with the local Baptist churches.



STREET WARES A 17-year-old street vendor sells Judy Studie a matryoushka doll.

### BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **A Church-Law Seminar** for clergy and laity will be held Saturday, April 17, from 9 a.m. until noon at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's WMU Hall. The free seminar will deal with contemporary legal issues facing the church, such as confidential communications, government regulations and compliance, church organization and administration, and alternatives to the court. For information and registration, call (502) 637-3510 or (502) 456-2257.

■ **An informational meeting** about Freemasonry and Christianity will be held at Jeffersontown Baptist Church on Tuesday, April 27, at 7:30 p.m.

■ **Former Kentuckian Gary Bauer**, who now heads the Family Research Council in Washington, will speak at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 27, at Southland Christian Church in Louisville.

■ **Correction:** A caption on the front page of last week's Recorder misspelled the names of two new state BSU officers, Chad Caddell and Shannong Houpt.

### Acteens shown different world

Continued from page 1

Village in Barcelona, Spain. Through sharing living quarters with 120 people in a church, Haun said she learned servant-hood and putting the needs of others above her own needs.

Lending a lighter touch to the conference were Chad Caddell and Chris Hedges, students at Morehead State University. The two led the Acteens in nonsensical songs and in upbeat arrangements of songs with a message, such as "My Jesus Is A River of Love." They entertained with lip sync, trumpet playing and singing, and even taught the girls to rap.

For many, the state convention is an annual pilgrimage.

"The best thing about the convention was that it was upbeat. It shows girls they can be upbeat and still be cool," said Donna Hurt, Acteen leader from Louisville.

And Johnna East, an Acteen from Salem, said she was moved by Bullington's testimony: "Because of her experience, she really inspired me."

## Baptist AIDS volunteers few; needs great

Continued from page 1

■ **Gary Conner**, pastor of Valley View Baptist Church in Irvine, works as a volunteer through AIDS Volunteers of Lexington. He visits people with AIDS, develops friendships, transports people to doctor's appointments, brings food into homes and offers a listening ear.

And in some cases he conducts funerals.

Before volunteering, Conner did not know anyone with AIDS, he said. "I never had really thought much about it until I started listening to some public service announcements on television."

But now "something within" prompts him to keep doing this ministry, he explained. "I realize there aren't a lot of ministers involved in ministry to people with AIDS. The most rewarding aspect of it and the reason I keep going back is realizing that people really do need someone to care for them and to sit down and talk with them."

■ **Lynn Lee**, director of Christians About AIDS Prevention in Louisville, began her ministry after losing a son to AIDS six years ago. Although she has little support and is "dead broke" as a result of her work, she won't quit. "This is my calling," she said. "If

it was a job I'd quit today. I tried to quit, and the Lord won't let me."

■ **Carolyn Self**, a member of First Baptist Church in Hopkinsville and associate executive director of the Pennyroyal Regional Mental Health Center, helped form a support group in Hopkinsville.

Through her role as public social worker, Self has started dozens of support groups for various needs in an eight-county region. When confronted with the AIDS issue for the first time, she determined that was one more area where people could gain strength from each other.

Currently, six to eight people attend the group every other week. The group is open to people with AIDS and their families. Some members already have died, but new members have joined as well.

■ **Beverly Neff**, a nurse manager in adult psychiatry at Baptist Hospital East in Louisville, doesn't often see people with AIDS through her job. But on her own time, she volunteers with the Community Health Trust's Buddy Program for people with AIDS.

As a buddy, she has one goal: to bring some life into the lives of people with AIDS. She may take her buddy shopping, to a ballgame or movie, or she may just offer a listening ear.

Neff and her husband, David, have taken on additional responsibilities as co-directors of the Buddy Program.

She sees her volunteer work as part of her spiritual responsibility and as an integral part of the mission statement of Baptist Healthcare System, which notes the need to care for the whole person—body, soul and spirit.

### Kentucky CP & budget update

This is the report of contributions to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Cooperative Program unified budget as of March 31, 1993:

March 1993 CP receipts	\$ 1,598,776
Compared to March last year	\$ 1,279,497
Percentage increase	25%
1992-93 year-to-date CP receipts	\$10,225,102
Year-to-date CP budget requirement	\$10,113,780
Percent over CP budget to date	1.1%
Year-to-date CP staying in Kentucky	\$6,410,730
Year-to-date "Kentucky Only"	\$192,046
Combined total available for KBC use	\$6,602,776
KBC funds required to date	\$6,494,958
Percent over budget to date	1.7%

\* Funds designated for use in Kentucky only that bypass the traditional Cooperative Program split between the KBC and Southern Baptist Convention.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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*Earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.—Jude 3*

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## Cooperative Program Day focuses on lifeline

It is a joyous privilege to be part of the mission-support system called the Cooperative Program and to help Southern Baptists do what they always have wanted to do—share the gospel of Jesus Christ with everyone, everywhere.

An informed people tend to become an involved people. A part of equipping Southern Baptists for global ministries is sharing information about the Cooperative Program.

Cooperative Program Day, April 18, is designed to help accomplish this objective.

Cooperative Program Day concentrates the efforts of a church toward informing members of how Southern

Baptists faithfully proclaim God's Word and win the lost through the missionaries they support.

Cooperative Program Day inspired God's people to be involved in his redemptive work by becoming more aware of the nature and purpose of Cooperative Program-supported ministries.

Cooperative Program Day provides opportunity for the church to demonstrate an example for giving.

Modeling is important. If churches are generous in mission support, members become more generous in giving. Churches that are miserly in mission support generally have less money for local interests.

The Cooperative Program has been described as a channel, a rope of sand strengthened with steel, the glue that holds Southern Baptists together, the extended ministry of the local church and a partnership in everything Southern Baptists are doing worldwide.

"Physically speaking, all of us are not able to go to all the world," said Jimmie E. Harley, former commissioner of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission. "But financially and spiritually, all of us can go."

The way, through the Cooperative Program.

*James Austin, vice president  
SBC Stewardship Commission  
Nashville*

## VIEWPOINT

## National sin

A sin becomes a national sin when it receives government approval. The killing of innocent unborn babies by abortion is America's national sin.

The Freedom of Choice Act could be rightly labeled the Freedom to Kill Act. It is the brainchild of humanists and liberals who want to kill more unborn babies as a population-control measure. If passed by Congress, it will codify the evil Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in 1973.

Under Roe vs. Wade, more than 30 million unborn babies have been killed in 20 years. If the Freedom of Choice Act passes, the number of unborn babies killed is likely to more than double.

Some national sins are so awful that a nation committing them goes beyond the point of no return. The Bible says, "Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight,

for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; and also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the Lord would not pardon" (II Kings 24:3-4).

Has America gone beyond the point of no return? Only God knows. As for us, we should pray sincerely for our country, and we should ask our representatives and senators to vote against the Freedom of Choice Act.

*William R. Hagan  
Taylorsville*

## BAPTIST FORUM

## Bankrupt

The writer of "It's time to respect all of God's children" (WR, March 9) was attempting to prove that homosexuality is not a sin. He used shallow exegesis, lacking real content.

The writer contends the "real" sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was inhospitality. He substitutes what is clearly pointed out in Scripture to be sin with one of his own manufacture.

*Chuck Estridge  
Williamstown*

## The summer of '93

My first preaching opportunities came in the summer of 1956, as part of a "summer BSU team" from Georgetown College.

My wife, Alice, served twice as a Baptist Student Union summer missionary, once in San Antonio, Texas, conducting Bible schools among Hispanics; the other at a social ministries center in downtown New-

These BSU summer experiences helped to shape our lives and "lean" us toward a life in missions.

Those early years swept over me again on Saturday evening, April 3, at First Baptist Church of Madisonville, where 78 BSU summer missionaries were commissioned for summer service in places ranging from Long Run Baptist Association to Kenya; from Camp Crestridge at Cedarmore to Russia.

Excited, attractive, energetic youth volunteering a summer bear strong testimony to committed campus leadership. No small investment has been

made in these young missionaries. Kentucky Baptist churches entrusted through cooperative giving over \$1 million last year to the student department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention for salaries and programs of student ministries on 45 campuses across the state.

The personal and spiritual investment Baptist campus ministers make in behalf of our college students deserves far more affirmation than is given. But all of them would agree that the annual commissioning service is an affirmation of how the Lord continues to use the ministry of BSU as a fertile seedbed for future mis-

sionaries. And that, for many of them, is all the affirmation they need.

Knowing that Kentucky has the largest and most comprehensive summer missionary program in the Southern Baptist Convention probably brings a smile to Ralph Hopkins, the KBC person assigned to this program.

But happiest of all, on April 3, was Don Blaylock, director of our state student department. It was a very special night for him—his 20th commis-

sioning service. Few state student directors achieve that record, and probably none now serving can count as many "summer missionaries" having gone out under their ministries.

Sprinkled throughout the 700-plus congregation which witnessed the occasion were parents, grandparents, siblings, friends and "sweethearts."

There were other faces, which year after year experience this event with a noticeable glow on their faces. They are the campus ministers, who faithfully and consistently give spiritual guidance and loving care to a host of students, many of whom are struggling to discern the Lord's leadership for their lives.

As I turned from the congregation to address the 78 summer missionaries seated in the choir loft, I could "feel" the love and support of those who helped bring these precious young folks to this point.

And in my own heart, I knew that the Kingdom of God would be enlarged and strengthened by what these young missionaries would be and do in the summer of '93.

*William W. Marshall is executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.*



## FAMILY FORUM: TEEN-AGERS

## Teen violence

By Wade Rowatt

**Q.** Is violence among teen-agers getting worse? What can be done?

**A.** Teen suicide packs, youths shooting each other and random attacks on innocent people leap out of the headlines.

Several factors contribute to the increase. Children who are victims of physical or sexual abuse become more violent. Alcohol and drugs limit youths' ability to think clearly. A steady stream of brutality against people dances across the big screen and lunges from the TV.

As parents, we need to examine carefully the whole issue of physical punishment. Spank children today, and when they grow up, they will whip someone. Ephesians 6:4 indicates that parents are to discipline children without making them angry. Certainly that calls for creative discipline, not beatings.

Teen alcohol and drug usage increases each decade. We need hard-hitting alcohol and drug education programs.

If parents even suspect their child is using alcohol or taking drugs, they should take action. Confront the youth. Shut off the supply. Turn in adults who make it available. Make facts available about alcohol and drugs.

Combat the glamorized media image of alcohol.

The ability to think straight disappears when the mind is altered by drugs. Fight to keep your teens drug-free.

Movies become the image for the future. Don't watch movies and TV shows that build on abuse and violence!

The time to affect our youths' appetite for such shows is while they are young. Pay closer attention to what 10-13 year olds are watching. Get involved in their lives and give them more fun options than watching violence.

Put a lock on every gun. Don't allow youth to keep a gun. Provide safety instructions on their proper use.

One final note: Teens are out there looking for fun and excitement. Why aren't more churches offering activities that are fun and exciting? Keep youth active and involved, and they don't get into as much difficulty.

*Wade Rowatt is professor of psychology of religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.*

Send your questions about children, teens, marriage, singles or aging to "Family Forum," Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253.

## Will Baptists succumb to 'presbygationalism'?

Are Baptists on the verge of becoming presbyterians?

Some Baptists seem to be content with making the switch, exchanging our democratic form of self-government for a presbyterian structure.

Historically, Baptists have utilized congregational principles of governance. At its most basic level, that means a local Baptist congregation is governed by its members, who meet in business sessions to vote on issues facing the church. Baptists have expanded that principle to accommodate the other spheres of denominational life, sending messengers from the local churches to the annual meetings of associations, state conventions and the national Southern Baptist Convention. There, the messengers function similarly to local-church members at business meetings, deliberating and voting on matters of concern.

Baptists have been comfortable with congregational polity because it reflects their doctrine of the priesthood of every believer. In essence, that means each Christian believer is an individual priest before God, capable of and responsible for praying and relating directly to God and not in need of an outside priest to mediate between oneself and God. A corollary to this doctrine is the concept of the autonomy of the local church. This means each church is comprised of believers who collectively are empowered and responsible for making the decisions of that congregation. This concept correctly has been expanded to provide autonomy to associations and state conventions within the Southern Baptist Convention. Each has been responsible for governing its own affairs, even as it cooperates with and relates to the other spheres.

This concept was the focus of a significant book on Baptist polity, "Rope of Sand with Strength of Steel," written by denominational leader James Sullivan in 1974, a half-decade before the current SBC controversy began.

"There are no inferior or superior bodies in Baptist life," Sullivan wrote. "The associations, state conventions and Southern Baptist Convention are all on the same level. The major differences are in geographical location, size of annual meetings and nature of the work undertaken. ... Each is an entity within itself. Each is an autonomous body, making its own decisions and living with them responsibly."

However, some Baptists lately have shown a willingness, perhaps even a desire, to trade that historic doctrine-centered principle. They have expressed an inclination toward a more presbyterian form of governance, where decisions made at "higher" levels of denominational life are handed down as mandates. Baptist historian Bill Leonard describes this trend as "a growing 'presbygational' polity within the once-obsessively congregational denomination."

Examples abound:

■ Opponents of a Kentucky Baptist Convention fund for the Baptist Joint Committee argued the issue already had been settled by the SBC and therefore should be moot for Kentucky Baptists.

This argument ignores the longstanding autonomous relationship between state conventions and the SBC. It overlooks the KBC's prerog-

ative of funding and relating to the organizations of its choosing.

■ Associations that are considering disfellowshipping congregations often hear arguments that the offending churches' practices are not in keeping with the SBC's stand on specific issues.

Individual associations appropriately determine membership based upon local interpretations of doctrine and practice. But arguments based on the actions of a "higher" body get tricky, especially since two "higher" organizations could contradict each other.

■ The writer of a recent letter to the editor claimed KBC personnel who do not fully support the SBC's national budget are disloyal to the KBC.

Baptist history is crowded with examples of churches and even a state convention that have been dually aligned with two or more national organizations, such as the SBC, the American Baptist Churches and the several National Baptist conventions. "Loyalty" is based on faithfulness to the state convention, not relationships to other conventions.

■ Some critics of the new Cooperative Baptist Fellowship have insisted Kentucky Baptists should not be presented news accounts of the Fellowship's activities since "they are not part of us."

Whether they are "part of us" or not, Fellowship news is important to all Kentucky Baptists for two reasons: Fellowship actions impact the SBC, and numerous fellow Kentucky Baptists are participants in the Fellowship. Failure to report these developments would be a breach of trust. A Baptist newspaper has a responsibility to report news which impacts the denomination, even if many readers would rather not know.

Change is inevitable—for a Baptist denomination or any other organization. And change is not all bad. In fact, change often is good, for it breaks people and groups out of stale patterns and forces them to respond appropriately to the world around them.

But a shift in denominational polity, from congregationalism to presbyterianism, is more than mere change. The way denominations organize and govern themselves is based upon doctrine—their beliefs about God, creation and church. Church organizational models are not chosen arbitrarily, but rather because of the way they reflect the people's perceptions of how they should relate to one another as children of God.

Nothing is wrong with a presbyterian structure for Presbyterians. It reflects the theology and doctrine that has guided them for hundreds of years. It has served them well. But a shift toward presbyterian polity among Baptists indicates not only a change in the understanding of hierarchy. It reflects a change in one of Baptists' distinctive doctrines—a pulling away from the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church.

Jim Brown, the top executive of the Presbyterian Church (USA) recently told a Louisville audience how his denomination is becoming increasingly concerned about listening to and meeting the needs of local congregations. Wouldn't it be ironic if Presbyterians became more baptist while Baptists become more presbyterian?

Marv Knox

**A shift toward presbyterian polity among Baptists indicates more than a change in the understanding of church hierarchy. It reflects a change in one of Baptists' distinctive doctrines—a pulling away from the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local church.**

## Betsy & her bell: I wonder who's really in charge around here

You'd think teaching your dog a new trick would be a liberating experience.

Not so.

Betsy rings a bell on the wall by the back door when she wants to go out.

This is not to say we're great dog trainers. Our friends Kim and Jay have a beautiful dog, Baby, who learned to ring a bell to say she needs to take care of her business. When we heard about Baby's trick, we decided bell-ringing would relieve Betsy of a certain urgency and save us from untold hours of clean-up duty.

I tried teaching Betsy how to use the bell. Take her paw; slap the bell; open the door; push her out; chirp, "good girl!" about a dozen times; give her a treat; repeat a zillion times.

Well, it didn't work. Betsy wouldn't

ring the bell, and I couldn't make her. If I'd been Lassie's trainer, little Timmy would have had to catch the bank robbers all by his lonesome.

Months later, a miracle happened.

Betsy whacked the bell with her nose, and somebody walked over and opened the door. A light somehow went on inside her tiny canine brain, and she became a committed bell-ringer.

The bell deal worked wonderfully the first hundred or so times. If Betsy had to go out, she rang the

bell, and we opened the door. I was thinking of having a dog doorbell mounted about nine inches high so she could tell us when she wanted to come in.

Then Betsy changed the rules. We were eating supper, not paying her any mind, when she decided to ring the bell. But when Joanna opened the door, Betsy pranced around the living room.

She wanted to play, and she figured ringing that silly bell would get someone over onto

her turf.

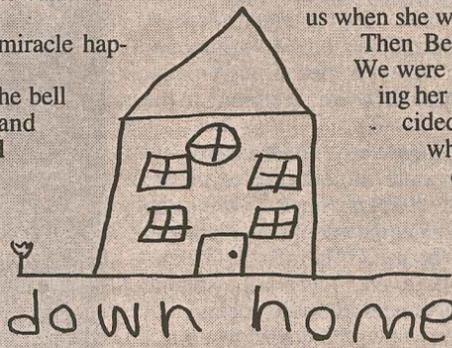
We thought we were brilliant, condi-

tioning Betsy to ring her bell when she had to go out. But that's not how it was. She had turned the dog tables, conditioning us to respond to her when she rang the bell. Now, when she rings, we're obligated to answer.

And don't think she can't enforce her rules. The other day, when we refused to leave the breakfast table to answer her summons, she wet the carpet right by the door. Just to show us how this little game is supposed to work.

Betsy's bell reminds me of habits. We pick them up because they seem useful. In time, they take lives of their own, and we're left wondering, "Who's in charge here, anyway?" Fortunately, God's grace rings bells of liberation—even from ourselves.

Marv Knox



## BRIEFS

■ **Habitat for Humanity** International built its 20,000th home the last week of March. The milestone was achieved as part of a 20-house project underway in Americus, Ga., where the ecumenical organization is headquartered. Internationally, Habitat builds an average of 23 homes per day in more than 900 cities in 40 countries. The organization hopes to build as many as 8,000 houses this year.

■ **Operation Rescue**, the abortion clinic-blockading group, has been urged to stay away from the Minneapolis-St. Paul area this summer by Roman Catholic Archbishop John Roach, who himself "staunchly opposes abortion." Operation Rescue has announced plans to target the Twin Cities from June through September. "I don't find Operation Rescue to be a positive element in the pro-life movement, and I just wish they'd stay wherever they are," Roach said.

■ **"Heal Our Land,"** written and recorded by musician Michael Card, has been designated the official theme song for the National Day of Prayer, to be observed May 6.

■ **After 12 years** of political exile, leaders of the nation's mainline Protestant and Orthodox churches held a 45-minute, closed-door session March 24 with President Bill Clinton at the White House. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, said Clinton told the group, "I've been so criticized by the Religious Right community, it's good to have religious people who understand what I'm trying to do." The group avoided talking about subjects they disagree on among themselves, such as abortion and gays in the military.

## Graduation prayer issues disputed

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice is conducting a national campaign to encourage prayers at public-school graduation services, but some church-state specialists say school officials and students should be wary of the effort.

At an April 5 news conference in Washington, D.C., Robertson's legal group urged school officials to permit students to vote on the graduation-prayer issue. The group distributed a three-page bulletin that gave its interpretation of the 1992 Supreme Court decision that ruled such prayers unconstitutional.

The center mailed the bulletin to 14,658 public-school superintendents across the country and to more than 300,000 "concerned citizens." The bulletin asserts the high court ruled that school officials could not invite clergy to pray at commencement but that students could vote to pray.

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel for Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice, said: "Prayer and religious speech can be included at public high school graduation ceremonies as long as it is student-led and student-initiated. A student's First Amendment right to free speech does not end when he or she stands up to get a diploma."

Brent Walker, associate general counsel with the Baptist Joint Committee, said the group's message is "too pinched an interpretation" of Lee vs. Weisman, the graduation-prayer ruling.

"Running a student in to do the praying instead of a rabbi doesn't solve the problem. As long as the ceremony remains a school-sponsored event, there is still a problem."

## Colson: Fight crime with better morals

By Mark Wingfield  
News Director

WASHINGTON—America's criminal justice system is in shambles because the nation has lost its moral consensus, Charles Colson said in a speech to the National Press Club March 11.

Colson, who gained notoriety for his role in the Nixon administration and Watergate scandal, is the founder of Prison Fellowship. He began the ministry organization in 1976, after becoming a Christian while in prison for his role in Watergate.

Today, Prison Fellowship has a staff of 300 people working with 50,000 volunteers in 54 nations. For his work with this openly Christian program, Colson recently received the prestigious Templeton Prize for progress in religion.

Colson called America's criminal justice system the one case where he believes euthanasia is necessary. The system is terminally ill, doesn't work and needs to be killed, he said.

He cited statistics to show that the U.S. prison population has exploded in the past 20 years, making America the nation with the highest ratio of inmates to citizens in the world.

During the same period when Americans have spent \$37 billion to build new prisons, violent crime has increased 75 percent, he said.

Prisoners put in the care of America's criminal justice system are left to waste away both in body and spirit, Colson reported.

"I've seen the failure and the bankruptcy of the American justice system in the faces of the people I lived with when I was a prisoner and in the thousands of faces of people I've seen in prison since then," he said.

Responsibility for this failure "rests squarely with Republicans and Democrats alike," Colson said.

He charged that neither the liberals' push for "rehabilitation" nor the conservatives' push to "lock them up and throw away the key" has been correct.

"Rehabilitation has turned out to be the most costly myth ever foisted on the American public," he said.

Likewise, he added, "the deterrent theory doesn't work because fear does not stop people from doing things. If it did, there wouldn't be anybody in America who would smoke."

Both approaches have failed because they ignored moral behavior, Colson said. "They've passed over our character. They've neglected our soul. And that's where crime is rooted."

He cited several scholarly studies about the cause of crime, including one which found crime is caused by people making wrong moral decisions.

"What the crime problem boils down to is concepts that are foreign to our lips and discourse in America today, like morality, character—terms that almost sound quaint," Colson said. "The root of the problem of crime in America today is the breakdown of character in the individual and the resulting breakdown of character in society at large."

Colson offered three suggestions for correcting the criminal justice problem:

### ■ Treat people as individuals.

Prison Fellowship's programs, for example, focus on transforming individual lives through the power of Jesus Christ, he said.

### ■ Chart a new course.

"We need a balanced criminal justice system," he said, "one that charts a third way between the liberals and the conservatives, one that offers real punishment but also real redemption."

For example, people convicted of non-violent crimes should be channeled into community service and work programs that allow them to do something useful for themselves and for society, he said.

He cited Minnesota as an example of a state with such a program since 1973.

As a result, Colson said, Minneso-

ta now has the second-lowest crime rate in the nation and spends only \$21 per citizen per year on corrections, compared to \$77 per citizen per year in California.

### ■ Restore a moral consensus.

"If we're going to solve crime, we need a moral response that deals with our nation's crumbling moral consensus," he said. "We've got to teach the difference between right and wrong."

No society can survive without a moral consensus or common standard of truth, he suggested. "It's the agreement that a society is governed more by transcendent truths than by the sum of individual choices."

This moral consensus must come from deep within people rather than from the law, Colson said. "The goal needs to be not just reform but reformation."

Authentic religion provides the motivation and power for people to make moral choices, he explained.

Yet at the very time when the influence of religion is needed most, forces are "endeavoring to scrub our lives of any religious reference," he said. "We are jettisoning the life rafts as we are setting sail on a very stormy sea."

Speaking directly to the reporters at the National Press Club luncheon, Colson called for a truce between the "media elite" and the "religious right."

"We basically need each other for the greater good of society," he said.

Colson suggested Christians need to do a better job of explaining why religious influence is important for moral living and that the press needs to take a more serious look at the positive contributions religious life makes.

Religious aberrations, like cult leader David Koresh, should not be the only religious news told, he said.

"Do you judge all Christians by that?" he asked.

"No, not any more than you judge all journalists by what NBC does to blow up a truck to make a good television show."

## Public housing a 'mission field'

ATLANTA (BP)—Inner-city public housing is a "wide open mission field," according to the director of a Baptist ministry planting churches in the projects of New Orleans.

Public housing communities are hungry for the gospel, and churches cannot afford to neglect these areas, said Marshall Truehill, director of Faith in Action Ministries.

"In leaving them to Satan, we are dooming these people to a life of destruction and eventually to eternal damnation," Truehill told pastors, missionaries and associational workers at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's "Starting Churches Through Ministry" conference.

Faith in Action offers kids' camps, tutoring, food, counseling and other services to the residents of New Orleans' 10 public housing communities, Truehill said.

In the process, the ministry seeks to plant mission congregations. They currently have missions in more than

half the communities, he said.

"In everything we do, evangelism is the bottom line," said Truehill, who is also pastor of Faith in Action Baptist Mission. "If evangelism is not the bottom line, we're just another social ministry."

About 65 of the 78 Southern Baptist community centers in the United States have congregational expressions. More than 11,900 professions of faith were recorded through ministry projects last year, according to the HMB.

Not only caring for the body and soul, people ministering to public housing residents hope to bring the transforming power of Christianity to those who need help most, said Truehill, who lived 17 years in a public housing neighborhood as a child.

"You know, the gospel just has a way of helping people be upwardly mobile," he said. "After Jesus Christ came into my heart, then the teacher had a better student to work with."

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## Crisis forced church to develop childcare policies

By Ken Camp  
Texas Baptist Convention

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—When AIDS comes to church through nursery doors, how does a congregation respond?

When the question first arose in the mid-1980s, it caught most churches off-guard. But increasingly, some Baptist churches are adopting thoughtful policies regarding ministry to HIV-positive infants and children.

The issue captured national attention last year when Scott Allen, formerly a consultant with the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, revealed his family's story.

Allen, son of former Southern Baptist Convention President Jimmy Allen, learned in 1985 that his wife, Lydia, had contracted the AIDS virus from a blood transfusion during her first pregnancy and had passed it along to their two young sons, Bryan and Matt.

When he learned about the tainted transfusion, Allen told the pastor of the Disciples of Christ church in Colorado where he served on staff. Allen

said he promptly was asked to leave his job. The family then returned home to Fort Worth, Texas, where 7-month-old Bryan died.

In the months that followed, Allen approached several churches to ask if Matt and the rest of the family could attend Sunday school and worship services, but they were rebuffed.

Lydia died in February 1992 at age 38. Matt is 10 years old, attends school in Dallas and is responding to AZT treatments. Allen works as consultant on an AIDS-related project at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. He has left the ministry and the institutional church.

Among the congregations the Allens approached in the mid-1980s was Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. The church's inadequate response to the family deeply troubled Jan Hill, Broadway's minister of childhood education, and led to the adoption last August of a new infectious-disease policy for the preschool and children's divisions.

"The new policy really was more than three years in the making," Hill said. "It grew in part out of personal

struggles with the Allen situation. It led us to relook at how we were approaching the whole issue."

After nearly two years of on-again, off-again discussions, an ad hoc committee consisting of six church members—all parents—began meeting last February.

Although the committee originally was assigned to develop policies and procedures specifically for AIDS-related cases, members chose to broaden the focus to include other issues concerning hygiene and infectious disease control.

The finished document includes detailed policy statements on infectious diseases, hygiene and diaper changing, as well as specific procedures regarding room cleaning, blood spills and diaper changing.

"Under the new policy, we will accept all children," Hill said, adding that parents are asked to disclose whether any child is HIV-positive.

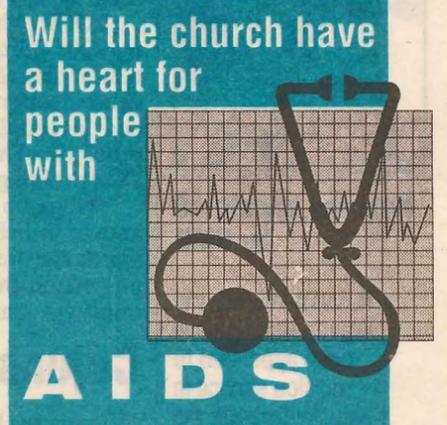
"We will deal with each situation on a case-by-case basis, permitting access to confidential information only on a need-to-know basis."

The new policy provides for the

creation of a committee to review individual cases of infectious disease in a highly confidential manner, to make recommendations to the minister of childhood education concerning additional precautions or staff requirements, and to conduct periodic reviews of the child's status and of involved classrooms.

The policy also stipulates that workers be instructed in universal precautions and procedures for general hygiene and that they are expected to follow them.

Under universal precautions—common in health-care facilities—all blood is assumed to be potentially infected, and protective barriers such as latex gloves are used. Blood spills are to be cleaned up immediately with a solution of one part bleach to 10 parts water.



### Teens vulnerable to AIDS threat, evangelist notes

NASHVILLE (BP)—Every 13 minutes, someone, somewhere contracts HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

So, how can teen-agers—armed with these types of statistics and the knowledge that AIDS is transmitted primarily through sexual contact—surrender time after time to involvement in premarital sex?

"They are really just blinded," explained Southern Baptist evangelist Rodney Gage. "Many have a void in their lives because their desire for intimacy has not been met. And Satan has lied to them and told them (sexually promiscuous behavior) is the way to find love and fill that void."

Gage has spoken to more than 1 million students in public and private schools across the country. Although his "Wise Up" school assembly program mainly focuses on the hazards of drinking and driving, he also takes time to talk with teens one-on-one about a number of contemporary issues.

"I became overwhelmed by the number of students who came up to talk with me about their problems," Gage said. The guilt and shame they expressed often resulted from sexual sin, he added.

After finding there was little written about sexuality and AIDS from a Christian perspective, Gage decided to research the subject for several months and put his findings in book form. The result is "Let's Talk About AIDS and Sex," released last fall by Broadman Press.

## One person's story: 'That woman has AIDS!'

*EDITORS' NOTE: This is the first-person account of an active Baptist woman, who tells about a Baptist church's reaction when it learned she had tested positive for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Her name and the name of the church, which is in another state, have been withheld.*

"That woman has AIDS."

The words cut through me like a knife. I looked up with horror and saw a man I had never seen before pointing at me from the end of the pew. It was as though

I was completely paralyzed. I wanted to run out of the church before anyone realized who he was talking about, but I couldn't move.

My worst fears seemed to be coming true. The rejection and judgment I had dreaded was now a reality. But worse was realizing that someone I had trusted with my deepest secret had betrayed me. That hurt.

It had been a little over six months since I had tested positive for HIV—the virus that causes AIDS. I had told very few people of my infection.

Finally I had found the courage to tell my Sunday school class. I remember that morning as though it were only yesterday. I was so scared, but the director sat right next to me. I could feel her arm around me for emotional support.

I began by saying that what I wanted to tell them was confidential and that it was very important to me and my future that it not leave the room.

Everyone in the room agreed to honor my request for confidentiality, so I felt safe in telling them of my infection. As I talked, I watched their faces. I could tell I had caught them completely off guard and that they were full of questions. I gave them plenty of opportunity to ask whatever they wanted to, and I answered their questions as well as I could.

As we left Sunday school that morning, I felt good about what had just happened. It was such a relief to know I wasn't alone and that those I had just confided in supported me.

That's why the next Sunday was such a shock. I sat in my usual seat in church and a few minutes later a family started to come into the pew. Suddenly, without warning, the man pulled his wife back and said in rather a loud, nervous voice, "We can't sit here!"

When his wife asked why, I heard the man say in an even

louder voice, "That woman has AIDS," and pointed directly at me. I could feel eyes looking at me with fear and contempt. As soon as I could move, I ran from the church in tears. My secret was out, and I was terrified.

When I went to the church staff with what had happened, it seemed the minister of education was supportive. He agreed AIDS education was a good idea and planned to schedule an AIDS workshop.

But nothing was done, so I once again paid the minister of education a visit. He admitted that AIDS education had dropped way down on his list of priorities.

I was speechless, but not for long. I made an appointment with the pastor, but it took a long time before I even got an appointment.

I went to the meeting prepared to meet almost any argument and took a thick file folder full of information on AIDS. He took the folder and threw it on his desk. Deep in my heart I knew it would end up in the trash once I was out the door. But I wasn't ready to give up.

I told him what had happened with the family in church and how the minister of education had responded. The pastor told me I should have expected such a response when a difficult issue such as AIDS is brought up—even

with Christians. He also said he'd have to go along with the minister of education's view that AIDS education was not a priority.

While he never had the courage to come out and say it, I knew he was hoping I would find another church.

At that time I didn't feel I had any other choice. I had gone to the one place where I should have felt safe enough to share anything without fear of rejection or judgment, and I found it to be a place of people who didn't care. I posed a new problem for them—a very uncomfortable problem, one that they didn't want to have to deal with.

So I found another church. Only this time I am once again carrying my secret inside of me. My new pastor knows of my infection. I told him before I even joined his church.

His reaction was so different—he put his arms around me and hugged me like I hadn't been hugged in a very long time. I could feel his tears and I felt safe enough to let him see mine. That's the kind of pastor I had needed. That's the kind we all need.

Why am I sharing all of this with you? Because AIDS is a Baptist issue and Baptists do get AIDS. I know I am not the only Baptist battling this disease. I feel a responsibility to do whatever I can to make sure no one else has to go through what I went through.

How can we minister to those affected by AIDS? Most importantly, we need to be educated about this disease. I believe the main reason I felt forced to leave my church was because of ignorance. That I can't understand or accept.

Educate yourselves and your churches. Make the church a safe haven once again where people can feel the compassion that Christ calls us to share. If we can't turn to our brothers and sisters in Christ, who can we turn to? (BP)

"I believe the main reason I felt forced to leave my church was because of ignorance. That I can't understand or accept."

### FIRST PERSON

# PEOPLE

## Christian group wants to 'rock' Paducah free of drugs

By Pauline Stegall  
State Correspondent

PADUCAH—Christians in Paducah have taken a "rock"-solid stand against drugs.

ROCK, which stands for Reclaiming Our Community and Kids, is a new organization formed by an interdenominational group of ministers and laypeople to combat the drug problem. The group's slogan is "We're Going to ROCK Paducah!"

The group first made its presence known in February with a peaceful march that drew 400 participants. In a procession that traveled 18 blocks, ministers marched arm-in-arm and

mothers carried babies. Participants included teen-agers, senior adults and children.

The purpose of the march was explained through the singing of Christian hymns and a chant, "Down with dope, up with hope."

Organizers said they believe the event was well received, as evidenced by media coverage and personal comments made to them. A police officer told one organizer, "It would be great if you could do this every month."

ROCK came about when local ministers decided they must do something about increased drug use and drug trafficking, especially in the schools.

Renaldo Henderson, pastor of Washington Street Baptist Church and chairman of the Baptist Ministers and Deacons Alliance, was contacted by Frank Queen, pastor of Baptist Tabernacle. When the two pastors met for prayer, they discovered a mutual desire to do something positive.

They instigated a six-point plan under the ROCK banner and invited participation from churches of all denominations and other organizations.

The six-point plan calls for a substance abuse workshop, prayer breakfast, community marches, surveys and door-to-door witnessing, an essay contest and a summer jobs program.

The prayer breakfast was held in

February. All school administrators in Paducah and McCracken County were invited. A pastor was assigned to each administrator to pray for the school group that person represented.

The march was held the next week, and the survey was to be the week after that. However, bad weather delayed the survey.

Goals for the door-to-door campaign include gaining information through a survey form, distributing New Testaments and sharing a verbal witness.

So far, more than 20 churches and organizations have joined forces with ROCK. Four more marches are planned for different parts of the city.



Hamrics appointed by HMB

ATLANTA—Scott and Wanda Hamric have been appointed to mission service in Kentucky through the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The Hamrics will serve in Centerfield, where he will be pastor at Centerfield Baptist Church, a recent church start. Since 1989, he has been pastor of Franklinton Baptist Church in Pleasureville. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. She is a former student at Mississippi College and Georgetown College, and has done volunteer work as a Sunday school leader, youth leader and vacation Bible school teacher.

The Hamrics have two children, Gregory and Jeremy.

## Cajuns say thanks for hurricane help

Louisiana Baptists have sent a special thank-you to Kentucky Baptists for their help with ministry to the victims of Hurricane Andrew.

"After seeing all the destruction and hearing the heart-tugging accounts of the brave people in South Louisiana, it is really a treat to know that so many people have a caring heart and a strong desire to help others in their time of need," said Cal Jones, director of the Louisiana Bap-

tist Brotherhood department.

Kentucky Baptist individuals and churches provided \$6,916 in designated funds to help with the relief work.

"Your contribution has helped ... by giving the message to those hurricane victims that someone cares," Jones said. "This is a very positive statement and means a lot to the person who lost much, if not all, of their possessions."

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Registration fee: \$10.00. Send fee and information as soon as possible.

## The ability to forget

As I drove to church Sunday, I saw the following on a church sign, "Happiness is good health and the ability to forget."

As I thought about it, I realized how true that is. So many of us carry around grudges and unresolved anger at others.

Unfortunately, the one most hurt by the anger is the person harboring it. Some of us remember wrongs done to us many years ago and continue to let them stand in the way of on-going relationships.

This seems to be the most pronounced in families and churches.

The closer we are to people, the more we expect them to understand our needs and desires without our communicating them.

We are hurt and offended because we did not take time to truly understand each other.

We lash out in anger at being hurt and that causes a chain reaction where both parties say far more than we ever intended.

Those things happen to us all. The happiest among us are able to forget the hurt. They realize that the relationship is far more important than the pain. They also know that

unless they can forget the hurt, they will spend their lives reliving it.

God has given all of us the ability to forget the pain of the past. When our children come into care they have often been badly hurt by those to whom they are closest.

However, even children who have been terribly abused will in a few weeks be talking about going back home to be with their parents. They are unrealistic in their thinking, but they are remembering the good times and forgetting the bad.

Is there something you need to forget and forgive? Take a few minutes and talk with God about it.

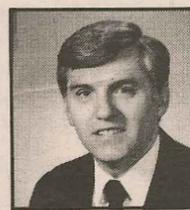
Ask him to help you forgive the action and put it behind you.

If it involves someone else, make a point of sitting down with that person and apologizing for the situation.

Even if it wasn't your fault, an 'I'm sorry for the way we feel' goes a long way toward healing a relationship.

Curtis Mooney is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243.

### HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

Paid Column

# ISSUES

## Biblical interpretation issue circled Galileo, scholar says

ST. PAUL, Minn. (RNS)—Galileo, the 17th-century Italian scientist astronomer who insisted the earth moved around the sun, may have been branded a heretic by Vatican authorities because his scientific findings smacked of Protestant influence to a suspicious counter-Reformation Catholic Church.

That is the conclusion of a University of Notre Dame priest-scholar who served on the papal commission that helped exonerate Galileo last year.

How Scripture is rightly interpreted was a foundational issue of the Protestant Reformation, according to the Rev. Ernan McMullin, who directs the program in history and philosophy of science at Notre Dame. It also was a key concern of papal theologians who examined Galileo's teaching, he said.

Martin Luther and John Calvin, the main Protestant reformers, said scriptural interpretation was a matter for the individual believer. The Cath-

olic Church, however, insisted that it was authoritative interpreter of the Bible.

And that argument helped shape the Galileo trial, said McMullin, in a recent lecture at the University of St. Thomas as part of a series on "The Catholic University in the 21st century."

Galileo's suggestions that some of the Bible passages were to be taken metaphorically and not literally understandably alarmed church authorities in Rome, he said. There was fear that Galileo was "dangerously aligning himself with the Protestant defense of private interpretation."

In 1610 Galileo published his observations confirming Copernicus' theory in a scientific best-seller, "The Starry Messenger," which caught the imagination of 17th century poets and catapulted Galileo into prominence.

Some theologians immediately challenged the new Copernican way of looking at the universe, said Mc-

Mullin. It contradicted the literal interpretation of the Old Testament, they argued, citing passages such as "the Lord fixed the earth on its foundations, never to be moved forever." A few years later Galileo wrote a full-scale tract on biblical interpretation. He suggested that when there is a conflict between the book of nature and the book of revelation that Scripture must receive a different interpretation.

Then Pope Paul V became extremely perturbed about Galileo's claims about Scripture, an expertise he felt belonged to the theologians—Catholic theologians—and named a committee to examine Galileo's views.

When a cardinal friend became Pope Urban VIII in 1623, Galileo rushed to Rome to congratulate him and to get his approval of another book he wanted to write in support of the Copernican system.

But the book Galileo wrote, said McMullin, "A Dialogue on the Two

Principal Systems of the World," was not what the new pope had in mind. As soon as it appeared, Urban attacked it as a threat to the theological tradition of Scripture, McMullin said.

The Holy Office, the Inquisition, called Galileo to Rome where, after a long trial, he was forced to recant his belief in the Copernican theory. He served an indefinite sentence in his villa in Florence.

In what McMullin called "an ironic twist," Pope Leo XIII used many of the arguments which Galileo had advanced in his 1894 encyclical on interpretation of Scripture.

And Pope John Paul II, who reopened the Galileo case in 1979 at the request of Catholic scientists in Italy and France, admitted last year that the church may have been wrong to condemn Galileo.

## It's not 'trust or obey,' peace activist says

ELKHART, Ind. (ABP)—Christians worldwide are divided between trusting Jesus and obeying Jesus, but a solution could be found in an old hymn, according to a Southern Baptist peace activist.

"There probably is no clearer dividing line within the Christian community than the one between pietists and activists, also framed as the line between conservatives and liberals," said Ken Sehested, executive director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

While conservatives emphasize a pietistic approach—"Trust Jesus!"—liberals focus on the need for faith in action—"Obey Jesus!" Sehested said.

In the annual "Spirituality and Justice" lectures March 18-19 at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind., Sehested literally had the audience singing the solution—the chorus of John Sammis' hymn, "When We Walk With the Lord": "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey."

"That old hymn may contain the clue we need for a complete reformulation of the way we understand Christian identity, one that leads beyond the familiar polarization between concern for heaven and concern for earth, between personal religion and public faith, between the quest for spirituality and the longing for justice," he said. Biblical faith must get beyond such a dualism and find the "organic connection" between trust and obedience, Sehested said.

## The "Freedom of Choice Act" Will Congress Go To Extremes?

Will Congress pass a national abortion law, supported by pro-abortion groups, that is far more liberal than that favored by an overwhelming majority of Americans? The so-called "Freedom of Choice Act" (FOCA) would prohibit virtually any state limitations on abortion, even during the later months of pregnancy. Yet, poll after poll shows that most Americans favor substantial limits on abortion.

### What America Believes:

- 73 percent say abortion should not be legal (except to save the mother's life) after the first three months of pregnancy (January 1991 Gallup poll).
- 80 percent favor requiring parental notification (March 1992 *Washington Post* poll).
- 77 percent favor a mandatory 24-hour waiting period (November 1992 *Wirthlin* Poll).
- 55 percent think abortion should be legal, at most, only in cases of rape, incest and life endangerment (November 1992 *Wirthlin* poll). 32 percent think abortion should be legal "if the parents don't want another child" (March 1992 *Washington Post* poll).

### What the FOCA Does:

- Allows abortion for any reason during the fourth, fifth and sixth months, and allows no limits on abortion for emotional "health" — even during the final three months of pregnancy.
- Nullifies state parental notification laws unless they give every minor the option of consulting with some "other responsible adult" of her choosing.
- Requires that states permit abortion with no wait — on demand.
- Requires that states allow abortion for any reason, even as a method of birth control or sex selection.

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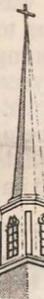
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# PEOPLE

## KENTUCKY KERNELS

Kentucky had 21,144 divorces in 1991, for a rate of six divorces per 1,000 people. The national rate during that year was five divorces per 1,000 people. Logan County had the highest divorce rate, 17 per 1,000 residents; while Magoffin County had the lowest, 1.1 per 1,000 residents.

Source: Cabinet for Human Resources

## Mountains to the Mississippi

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Harrod Creek Church called **Ron Williams**, pastor of Lewisport Church in Lewisport, as pastor. Williams will begin his new ministry in June.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church recognized Pastor Emeritus **Chester Badgett** for 60 years of preaching.

■ **FORDSVILLE**—**James Jackson** is interim pastor at Friendship Church.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—Nolynn Church celebrates its 190th anniversary April 25. Former Pastor **Cecil Etheredge** will speak; a potluck lunch will be held after the service.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Davis Memorial

Church ordained **Wes Brockway** to the ministry March 6. Brockway is minister of music and education at the church.

Fern Creek Church called Interim Pastor **Linda Barnes** as pastor.

Hunsinger Lane Church will ordain **Bill Jackson** to the ministry May 2.

■ **PADUCAH**—Immanuel Church called **James Broome** as pastor. Broome currently serves as pastor of Midway Church in Midway.

**Gail Hayes** is children's minister at Trinity Church.

■ **SALEM**—**Robert Thompson**, former pastor in Ohio River Baptist Association, died March 10 after an

extended illness. Among churches he served are Lola Church in Lola and Good Hope Church in Smithland.

■ **TAYLORSVILLE**—Little Mount Church called **Richard Edmonds** as pastor. A student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Edmonds begins his ministry at the church April 18.

■ **UNION**—Big Bone Church plans its 150th anniversary for May 23. Features will include a presentation by the Big Bone Quartet, a "remembering time" with former pastors and a video depicting the church's history.

### MISSIONARY UPDATE

■ **Mac and Betty McElrath**, missionaries to Indonesia, are on the field at Jalan Jamuju 17, Bandung 40114, Indonesia. He is a native of Murray.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**WANTED:** Full-time minister of music/youth. Contact: Leon Greer, Meta Baptist Church, 351 Lower Johns Creek Road, Meta, KY 41501, or call (606) 631-1194.

**WANTED:** Minister of music; salary negotiable. Send resumé to Personnel Chairman, First Baptist Church, Magnolia Street, Tompkinsville, KY 42167.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Send resumé. Youngers Creek Baptist Church, 251 Youngers Creek Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

**EXPRESS:** SBC-Houston; includes airfare, Holiday Inn rooms, shuttles. From Louisville June 13-17; \$480 per person. Call (502) 477-2379.

**RETREATS:** Bud's Lake, I-65, exit 81, Sonora, Ky. (502) 324-3036. Dormitories, kitchen, gym, swimming and campground. Year-round Christian fun.

**BOOKS FOR SALE:** *James Speaks Today: Practical Words for Timeless Problems* by Dr. Terry Williams, pastor, Central Baptist Church, 201 4th St., Corbin, KY 40701. \$6 postpaid.

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## Two convicted of burning Warren County church

**BOWLING GREEN**—Two men have been convicted of conspiring to burn down Barren River Baptist Church in Morgantown in retaliation for a pastor's comments against the Ku Klux Klan.

However, after the convictions were announced, another man associated with the Klan came forward to say he was responsible for the fire.

Ernest Glenn Pierce Sr., 54, was convicted of soliciting someone to burn down the church and conspiring to have it burned. Brian Grayson Tackett, 22, was convicted of actually burning it and several other charges. Both men have ties to the Klan, with Pierce being a self-described im-

perial wizard.

Tackett's mother, Linda Tackett, was acquitted of conspiracy to help burn the church. She had been accused of providing the fuel to start the fire.

The prosecution charged that Pierce got Tackett to set the blaze after Larry Craig, who was then Barren River's pastor, called the Klan a "putrid cancer."

Although a sentencing date has not been set, Pierce faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of \$375,000. Tackett could get up to 25 years in prison and a \$750,000 fine.

Soon after the jury announced its

verdicts, Chris Conner, another local Klan leader, told a television station that he, not Pierce, ordered the church burned. Conner had testified on Pierce's behalf during the trial.

As of April 7, Conner's statement had not brought about any new legal notice, although it is not clear what his confession might mean for the future of the case.

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## 'Your OBI environment makes a difference'

One of our finest programs is the work of our academic teams. Over the years we have done quite well in "mock trial" competitions. Sometimes our students have to act as lawyers for the defense, and other times for the prosecution. Some of the students must act as witnesses. At one mock trial they will be in favor of the defendant, and another time testifying against him or her. Such mock trials are done before actual judges. The finals are in the Supreme Court chambers at Frankfort with actual justices presiding.

I was pleased to get the following letter recently from Judge Jerry D. Winchester of the 34th Judicial Circuit consisting of McCreary and Whitley circuit courts:

"My admiration for the sponsors and students who participated in the mock trial is overwhelming. I would like to commend the students for the time and effort they put forth in their preparation for the mock trial. The attorneys and I were impressed with the enthusiasm of the students, the correctness of their language and their presentation of the law."

One of our former teachers recently wrote: "I have been working with potential dropouts at our (county) high school. Seven percent are now in college, and 70 percent stayed in school and graduated. A lot of the techniques I use with these students, I learned at Oneida. Lack of self-esteem is a large reason for their past failures."

This former OBI teacher goes on to tell of some former students and what they are doing: Phillip is a diesel mechanic and is doing fine; Kevin is a military policeman in the Army at Ft. Leavenworth; Tracy works in a bank; Willie owns a drywall finishing company, has two kids, and his wife works at a bank; Jimmy and Sammy

work at landscaping and plumbing. It seems only yesterday these young adults were children in our school. Now it is time for some of them to come back for their 10th anniversary reunions.

A grandmother writes from Cincinnati: "I've been wanting to write to let you know how well my grandson is doing since he graduated from Oneida. I give credit to you and your faculty for what I've seen. He is a church-going person, for which I am so proud. He drives now and picks up some of his friends he met at Oneida and goes to youth services in the evening as well.

"He is attending college. His last report was three Bs and one A, which says a lot for Oneida and David. He also works at UPS, getting up nearly every morning at 2:30 a.m. to call in.

"What all this says to me is that somewhere he received some excellent training outside his home. I'm also proud of his parents.

"His character is above reproach. He is very energetic but places his values in the right things. My grandson has had a difficult time in his life but he's overcoming all of his obstacles. I

would love him even if he did not achieve, but in this day and age, he is a marvel. Convey this message to all of your teachers lest they think their efforts go unrewarded. I commend them all and wish my friends would send their children to you. Your environment makes a difference."

Owners of a 400-acre Illinois farm sent their son and daughter here for five years, and now both are in college. These grateful parents send us several thousand dollars each year to help other children attend OBI and recently wrote: "Thanks for your love, care and education."

*Barkley Moore is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972*

Paid Column

### ONEIDA JOURNAL



Barkley Moore

## Foreign missionary Edith Weller recognized

A room in our new child development center will be dedicated to the life and ministry of Kentuckian Edith Rose Weller. She was appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1945 and served in Brazil for 21 years before her retirement for health reasons.

One of six children born in a Southern Baptist pastor's home, Miss Weller felt the call to missions as a Sunbeam. Her father was killed in an automobile accident and she often felt his work continued through her missions involvement. A sister described her as "serious, dedicated, hard-working. She really loved the Brazilians. She was always excited to be home on furlough, but would soon miss Brazil and long to return."

Miss Weller's cousin, Mrs. Nancy Baker of Louisville, is providing leadership to secure \$10,000 in honor gifts from family and friends.

For 10 years prior to retirement, Edith was treasurer's assistant for the three Southern Baptist missions in Brazil, which handle their finances through a central office in Rio de Janeiro. Previously she was executive secretary-treasurer of the Baptist women's organization in the state of Para, with headquarters in Belem, the state capital, and

teacher in a Baptist primary school in Manaus, Amazonas, and a Baptist training school for women in Recife. She also assisted with religious education in local churches.

A native of Bethlehem, Ky., Miss Weller received a BA from Georgetown College and an MRE from the Southern Seminary WMU Training School. Prior to her appointment, she taught school in Kentucky, Alabama and Tennessee. After returning from Brazil, she cared for her mother until she died at age 93. Miss Weller now resides in California.

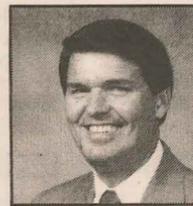
The children and parents who use our child development center will be challenged by the missionary service of Edith Rose Weller. Since our program is guided by the Bible, we have the opportunity to lay the foundation for some of them to experience a future calling to missions.

Through friends like the Weller family we have almost completed a \$120,000-facility. The state-licensed program will provide room for 50 children ages six months to kindergarten. The playground area and landscaping will be completed before the grand opening.

*Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky. 40977*

Paid Column

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# RACE RELATIONS

## Multiculturalism a positive & negative for churches

By Yvonne Samuel  
Religious News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—In a year when cultural diversity has become a guiding principle—evidence ranging from President Bill Clinton's cabinet appointments to new emphasis on multi-ethnic programs in public schools—Protestant church leaders are finding that efforts to reach out to minorities sometimes promote ill will as much as understanding.

Well-intended though they are, efforts by the predominantly white churches to attract minority members are backfiring in some circles, causing new tensions rather than soothing lingering ones.

Black church leaders have been especially critical of the attempts by white mainline Protestant denominations to attract minorities, sometimes viewing them as yet another stage of historical domination by whites. In the most skeptical interpretation, some black leaders see the "multicultural" programs as opportunistic ventures by mainline churches to gain new, non-white members in an era of decline.

Calvin Butts, pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City, put it bluntly: "White denominations are dying, except for right-wing evangelical groups. It is not surprising that they now desire minorities to become a part of their congregations."

But the programs by white churches raise more than cynicism.

Some question whether such attempts will work, even if they are a good thing. Others question the very meaning of "multiculturalism," the term most often used to describe efforts to mix cultures, ethnic back-

grounds and races. And some believe that the racism at the heart of separate churches is so entrenched that any meaningful multiculturalism is many years off.

"Multiculturalism will not work in the white church nor in the black church" said Wyatt Walker, pastor of Canaan Baptist Church of Harlem. "Racism is so deep that the effort will fail. The white church in America is sterile."

"I am committed to worship that is Afrocentric and music that is Afrocentric," he added. "I don't want to recruit white folks to my church. I don't want to be absorbed by the dominant society."

Despite such resistance, predominantly white churches have been giving more attention to reaching out to minority groups. For example:

■ Last summer, Episcopal Bishop Edmond Browning took a four-state tour of inner-city churches and social agencies to demonstrate the denomination's commitment to fight racism as a first step toward getting the church to embrace new minority members.

■ Last June, about 250 Roman Catholic bishops from across the country traveled to New Orleans to join in a National Black Catholic Congress, only the second such gathering this century, to endorse the work of the congress and to hear the concerns of black Catholics. In recent years, the bishops also approved a pastoral plan calling for aggressive outreach to blacks and the development of two national offices devoted to blacks in the church.

■ The Southern Baptist Convention formed a multi-ethnic advisory committee last summer to develop a strategy to "significantly" increase its

minority leadership by the year 2000.

Southern Baptists give themselves high marks on the issue of racial diversity, but they say they have not scored so well on the issue of minority leadership. Of the convention's 12.5-million-members, about a half million, just over 4 percent, represent minorities. That includes 275,000 blacks, 110,000 Hispanics, 70,000 Asians and 40,000 Native Americans.

Convention President Ed Young said: "Now we need to identify ways to include people of all colors in positions of leadership throughout the denomination."

■ The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America appointed a Task Force on Race, Ethnicity and Culture last year to prepare a social statement to encourage congregations to study and reflect on racism. Two years ago, the denomination also established the Multi-Cultural Mission Strategy Group to persuade more minorities to join. The goal is to increase minority membership to 10 percent by 1997 from its present 4 percent.

In the end, though, the term multicultural is up for grabs. The definitions offered by professional church workers are soft enough to be as inclusive as the concept itself.

"A multicultural church is not a church that is dominated by one culture," said Joe Agne, director of the Prophetic Justice Unit of the National Council of Churches. "It would be a church where people were thrilled to own their cultural diversity."

Dale Irvin, a professor at New York Theological Seminary, said, "To try to be multicultural is to take a risk. To risk your beliefs, treasured practices, style of music and style of preaching."

He said, "Many churches are will-



ing to invite black members in as long as they are willing to convert to the cultural ethos of the white church." But in order for churches to become culturally diverse, different groups "need to eat together, they need to hear each other's stories of struggle."

Such bold initiatives happen in isolated cases. But given their limited success, the affinity of church-goers for tradition, and the deep social rifts that trouble U.S. society, the national programs of mainline churches may have to settle, at least at the start, for educational efforts that slowly raise awareness of racism.

PLAY TIME A black girl and white boy play together on a church playground. (RNS photo)

## Native American's election to office surprised him most

SEMINOLE, Okla. (BP)—When Bill Barnett was elected first vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma last fall, many people were surprised.

The most surprised was Barnett.

A full-blooded Muscogee (Creek) Indian, Barnett became the first Native American ever elected to a statewide office in the Oklahoma convention. Although aware of his unique status, he rejected the idea of being a spokesman for Indians.

"I believe that God's people elect their people to serve. I want to be able to serve all our Baptist people in our state."

But he added, "This year being 'The Year of the Indian,' it's in season to be Indian."

Barnett said he was very surprised at the outcome, because "there are a lot of capable people out there. I don't think we were trying to make a statement—we just wanted Indians to be visible in whatever way we can, to show people we are here and have been here since before statehood."

"Over the years we have had a lot of capable Indian people but for whatever reason no one was ever elected."

This year, a group of Indian leaders met and decided to nominate someone for statewide office. Barnett

planned to nominate another man, but Jimmy Anderson, Indian church planter for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said he wanted to nominate Barnett.

Barnett is pastor of the church he founded in 1975, Indian Nations Baptist Church near Seminole, Okla. The church has 169 resident members, averages 41 in attendance and its total tithes and offerings in 1991 were \$25,645.

He was elected over Bobby Boyles, pastor of First Baptist Church in Moore, Okla., which has 4,397 resident members, averages 2,017 in attendance and had \$2.69 million in

tithes and offerings for 1991.

Faced with such a worthy opponent, the Indian men planned to nominate Barnett for second vice president after he lost the first race.

"We thought we would come back in the second round and get double exposure that way," Barnett recounted. "Plus, we thought we had an outside chance at second vice president."

That became a moot point when he was elected.

"We are not clamoring for change," Barnett said. "There are a lot of good people who have known that good Native American people are here."

## Prejudice prevents Christians reaching Muslims, minister says

DETROIT (BP)—Prejudices against Muslims and Middle Easterners prevent Christians from sharing the gospel with those segments of society, says the director of a ministry to Middle Easterners in Detroit.

"We're not going to witness to people we don't like," says Archie Hensley, director of MANNA Project. "The way we are going to reach Muslims for Christ, as we are going to reach anybody for Christ, is to love them the same way that Christ loves them."

Hensley, a former missionary to Africa, recently addressed Southern Baptist ethnic church starting leaders. He has spent two and a half years working among Detroit's Middle Eastern population of about 300,000.

Detroit has the highest Middle Eastern population in the nation, Hensley says, dating back to World War I when Henry Ford encouraged immigration to keep assembly lines rolling.

MANNA stands for Mission Agencies Network of North America. Hensley coordinates about 20 volun-

teers who tutor and teach English at an Arab community center.

"Our goal here is to be able to share the love of Christ as he would were he in the community," Hensley says. "Our care and concern compels us to try to meet needs in the Arab-American community."

The ministry opens doors of communication that often lead to witnessing, he says.

While the work is among Middle Easterners in general, Hensley is specifically interested in reaching Mus-

lims. "Much of our activity is to help them unlearn what they traditionally have been taught about Christianity."

For example, Muslims believe the term "Son of God" implies a sexual relationship between God and Mary before Jesus was born, Hensley says. "In the process of clarifying misconceptions, we're witnessing to them."

It has taken more than two years to build trust among the Middle Eastern community, he says, adding that Christian work among Arabs typically is a slow process.

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