



# WESTERN RECORDER

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## FOR THE RECORD

**Reighard move**  
Dwight "Ike" Reighard has been named associate pastor of First Baptist Church in Atlanta, where he will lead the prominent church's satellite congregation. *See page 2.*

**Boston bound**  
Kentucky Baptists formally launch their new partnership with Greater Boston Baptist Association this month. *See page 3.*

**Save the males**  
Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics, compares Promise Keepers and the Million Man March. *See page 4.*

**Editorial**  
Cutting legal aid for the poor is mean. *See page 5.*

**Clergy firings**  
A new study finds that 22.8 percent of Protestant clergy in the United States have been fired or forced out of a church at some time in their careers. *See page 7.*

## Godly friend helps save country singer's marriage

By Chip Alford  
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Five years ago, Bettye Shelton should have been on top of the world.

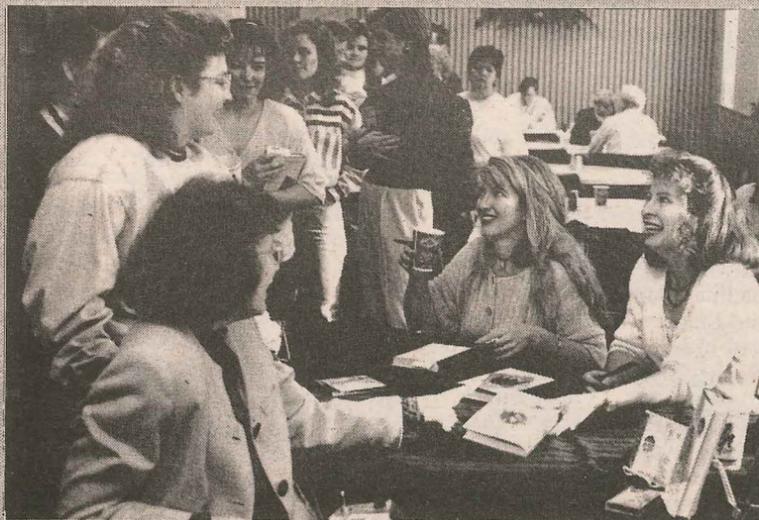
Her husband, popular recording artist Ricky Van Shelton, was at the top of the country music charts with album sales going through the roof and dozens of awards coming in at every turn.

The couple had everything money could buy: a nice home, a new car, a boat.

"But we were living a nightmare," Shelton told employees at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board during a recent chapel service. "There was no happiness in our lives, and there was no love between us."

Ricky Van Shelton was constantly on the road and had begun drinking heavily, Mrs. Shelton said. They grew increasingly distant.

Lonely and rejected, Mrs. Shelton said she found herself making a call to an old boyfriend. She dialed the number twice, hanging up before anyone answered.



**FRIENDS IN FAITH** Bettye Shelton (right), wife of country music star Ricky Van Shelton, and Andy Landis sign copies of the new book they co-authored. (BP photo by David Rogers)

"I was so desperate to feel loved, to feel like a woman again. I cried out to God: 'What's happening to me? What's wrong? Please help me!'"

At the moment she cried out, her phone rang.

On the other end was a woman she barely knew, a woman who eventually would become a lifelong friend and play a key role in saving her marriage.

"I just felt something in my spirit."  
□ *See Godly friend ... page 6*

## Glen Dale kids welcome exchange workers

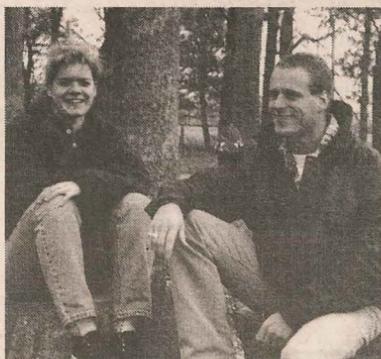
GLENDALE—"Do you drive on the opposite side of the road?"  
"Do you wear wooden shoes?"  
"Are all the women in the Netherlands as tall as you?"

These are a few of the questions Richard ter Haar and Roos van Rooy have been asked by residents of Glen Dale Children's Home since the Netherlands natives arrived at the Hardin County campus in September.

The two visiting social work professionals will work with the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children facility for one year as part of an international exchange program. Glen Dale cares for 78 youth who come from backgrounds of abuse, neglect or other family crisis.

"I'll be trying to get an idea of what it is to work in a cottage and gain wisdom from the differences," ter Haar said.

In the Netherlands, ter Haar worked on eight-hour shifts in a treatment facility for adults. Living three



Richard ter Haar and Roos van Rooy

to four days in a cottage with 10 boys is quite an adjustment, he said.

But, he said, the "positive peer culture" program Glen Dale uses to teach young people to take charge of their lives and help their fellow residents makes his job easier because he is not alone in disciplining his boys.

"They correct each other," he ex-

plained. The circumstances of children in crisis are much the same in the United States and the Netherlands, the visitors reported.

"You see kids from the same background," van Rooy said. "But there is more violence in the United States than the Netherlands."

Despite all the cultural differences, ter Haar and van Rooy said they have developed good relationships with the children.

"It's not like the differences keep you from getting close to the kids and bonding," ter Haar said. "The way of interacting with the kids is not that much different from what I'm used to."

But there is one thing that ter Haar may need some extra time getting use to.

"I tried to play basketball yesterday," he said. "I'm no good at it. I'm going to try to get my kids to play soccer."

## Researcher believes he's identified where Ark of Covenant sat

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

HARROGATE, England (RNS)—One of the great mysteries for biblical scholars and believers alike is exactly where the Ark of the Covenant stood in the temple King Solomon built in Jerusalem nearly 3,000 years ago.

The Ark of the Covenant itself—the wooden chest used to store the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are believed to have been written—has been lost in the dust of history.

But an archaeological architect in England claims the place of honor the ark once occupied is clearly visible today on Jerusalem's Temple Mount, inside the Muslim shrine known as the Dome of the Rock.

In an article published in the current edition of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Leen Ritmeyer describes how he used measurements, Bible texts and rabbinical commentary to deduce that the ark stood in a rectangular depression carved in the rocky outcropping below the dome. The niche—2 feet, 7 inches by 4 feet, 4 inches—is clearly visible to worship-

ers and tourists who visit the site, he said.

Ritmeyer, an architect known for his reconstructive drawings of numerous archaeological sites in Israel, previously had published an article in *Biblical Archaeology Review* describing the location of the original Temple Mount, the platform on which Solomon's Temple was built. His latest findings are a continuation of that research.

"I now believe that, without having gone in search of it, the research has directed us to the very spot where the Ark of the Covenant stood within

## God gaining a hearing on campus

By Chip Alford  
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Is God making a comeback on campus?

After decades of rebellion, apathy and often outright hostility toward religion, reports from media and ministers in the field indicate a renewed interest in spiritual matters at American colleges and universities.

Consider the following evidence:

■ A worship service at a Brownwood, Texas, church included testimony, confession and repentance from a Howard Payne University student which sparked a spiritual renewal that touched churches and college and seminary campuses in several parts of the country, including Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts and Minnesota.

■ The number of students reached by Southern Baptist student ministry programs last year totaled 236,344, up from 188,323 in 1994. Among state conventions reporting record years with student work was Utah-Idaho, a newer convention area, which doubled the number of students reached in one year.

■ More than 200 college students from Kentucky and surrounding states will gather Jan. 19-21 at Ken-Lake State Resort for the first-ever "Experiencing God" collegiate weekend, more than double the expectations of the event's organizers.

■ According to the Boston Globe, religious activism is on the rise at three Boston-area universities. Examples cited included a doubling of students involved in religious activities over eight years at one school, a standing-room-only Catholic mass at another and a doubling of membership in a gospel choir at the third.

■ An article in a recent issue of *Leadership Journal* quoted a graduate student in social work who said while religion used to be a "taboo" subject, now it is mentioned "in almost every class. Professors say, 'You have to know your client's spirituality.'"

Why the new focus on spirituality  
□ *See College students ... page 6*

Moving? See page 4 (07109)

# BAPTISTS

## BAPTIST BITS

■ **Ronnie Prevost**, former faculty member at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been named associate professor of church ministry at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon School of Theology. Prevost has been visiting professor of religious education at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1994.

■ **Larry McKinney**, assistant professor of biblical backgrounds at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., has been named regional director of development and institutional research at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kan. Central Seminary is an American Baptist school also supported by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

■ **Max Lennon**, former president of Clemson University, has been named president of Mars Hill College in Mars Hill, N.C. Lennon has been president and chief executive officer of Eastern Foods Inc. in Atlanta since 1994.

## Reighard to work alongside Stanley

By Greg Warner  
Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—Members of First Baptist Church of Atlanta will be asked to elect Dwight "Ike" Reighard as senior associate pastor for the 14,000-member congregation, putting the 45-year-old Reighard in line to succeed Charles Stanley as pastor of one of Southern Baptists' largest and most influential churches.

Reighard, currently pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in nearby Fayetteville, Ga., will assume pastoral duties for the downtown church's north Atlanta satellite congregation. But Reighard and Stanley, 62, will trade pulpits about once a month in an attempt to reunify the troubled congregations.

Stanley, who became pastor in 1972 after serving as associate, has been under pressure to resign because of his pending divorce from his wife of 40 years, Anna. The church voted Oct. 1 to keep Stanley as pastor, but he has said he will resign if the divorce becomes final.

As associate pastor, Reighard succeeds Andy Stanley, Charles Stanley's son, who resigned as pastor of the satellite congregation last August, saying his father's pending divorce disqualifies him as pastor.

Many conservatives—including Charles Stanley—say the Bible limits the pastorate to men with intact first marriages. The elder Stanley is contesting the divorce and says he is seeking reconciliation. But Anna Stanley says the marriage cannot be salvaged.

Reighard, pastor of the Fayetteville church for 20 years, was nominated for the associate's post at

First Baptist by a seven-man committee that has been running the church since Stanley relinquished administrative duties last August. Stanley announced Reighard's selection to the congregation Dec. 31.

A congregational vote on the issue has been scheduled for Jan. 7, but was postponed due to bad weather.

Although no vote by the congregation is required by the church's by-laws, "this was just a move we felt was necessary," explained Boyd Wages, church administrator.

Wages acknowledged Reighard likely will be the front-runner to succeed Stanley, whose "In Touch" television ministry has made him one of the country's best known preachers. "I think he would have the inside track," Wages said. "But there is no guarantee that anything like that would take place. It would be up to the church."

Reighard agreed there is "a lot of speculation" that he will succeed Stanley. But he added, "I sure hope Dr. Stanley stays and works through his marital situation. I think that's what would be the best thing for God's kingdom and the church."

"I'm coming with the intention of being a helper to Dr. Stanley," he said. "My prayer is that Dr. Stanley is going to be there for a long time to come. He casts a long shadow. I just cast a wide one. He's America's preacher, and he's going through an extraordinarily difficult time."

Reighard serves on a four-man committee named by First Baptist to recommend a church policy on divorce in the ministry. The committee has yet to bring its report, despite a long-past deadline. But Reighard said he has made up his mind.

"I see absolutely not one thing that disqualifies Charles Stanley from being pastor of that church," he said. "If I did, I wouldn't go."

Reighard said the committee's study uncovered no "surprises" about the Stanleys' marriage and "nothing that hinted of immorality." He called the split a "heartbreaking situation" caused in part by the stress of the pastorate and Stanley's devotion to his calling and church.

Reighard, a graduate of Mercer University and Luther Rice Seminary, said he first was contacted about the associate's position in early August, soon after Andy Stanley's resignation. He is expected to begin his duties Feb. 11.

Wages said Reighard's election is expected to bring stability to First Baptist, which has lost several key staff members in recent months, and to prepare the way for the downtown church to complete a long-planned move and merger with the satellite congregation in north Atlanta.

Since Andy Stanley's resignation, attendance at the satellite site has dropped from about 4,000 a week to 2,200. Weekly attendance at the downtown facility is about 3,800.

After the merger and move is complete, Reighard said, both he and Stanley will continue to preach.

Andy Stanley, meanwhile, has announced plans to begin a new church in north Atlanta.

A prominent leader in the conservative movement of the Southern Baptist Convention, Reighard served as president of the SBC Pastors' Conference in 1994. He is a trustee of the SBC Home Mission Board in Atlanta and served two terms as president of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

## Ministries see common goal in Olympics

ATLANTA (BP)—Evangelistic ministries during the 1996 Summer Olympics will have more in common than a desire to share the good news of Christ: They will share a theme and witnessing tools influenced largely by Southern Baptists' Atlanta International Ministries and Home Mission Board.

The theme of "More Than Gold" has been adopted by a consortium of denominations and para-church organizations as the basis for evangelistic ministries related to the Atlanta Olympics.

And the HMB's "Interactive Pocket Guide '96"—an evangelistic booklet that also contains Olympic records and previous gold medal winners—is destined to be the principle witnessing tool for many evangelical organizations.

"It's just really neat to see how this has snowballed," said Toby Frost, HMB associate director of mass evangelism and chairman of the AIM '96 evangelism committee.

"We believe that this 'More Than Gold' slogan and this array of products that has developed using that slogan gives Christians a kind of united front in Atlanta and other venues without sacrificing our denominational distinctives," he said.

Frost said the consortium of organizations—the Olympic Outreach Partnership—was formed out of a larger group called Sports Outreach America to seek ways to coordinate evangelistic ministry efforts. In their first meeting in 1994, Frost said, they discussed possible themes such as "Go For the Gold" or "Champions For Christ."

After the meeting, the AIM evangelism committee settled on the "More Than Gold" theme and began work on designing the Olympic lapel pin and tract with that theme. The partnership at its next meeting decided to go with the same theme.

The pin and pocket guide will be the principle evangelistic tools used by AIM '96 volunteers and others working in association with the Olympics.

The pin is important because of the enormous popularity of pin trading during the Olympics. Almost every organization, sponsor or sport associated with the Olympics now creates its own pin, and many people collect as many of the pins as possible through trading, Frost said.

The "More Than Gold" pin and the Interactive Pocket Guide also could be used by local churches, Frost said. For information about Olympics-related evangelism tools, call the HMB's customer service center at (800) 634-2462.

## Together We Build will stay

NASHVILLE—The Together We Build capital stewardship program will survive the reorganization of Southern Baptist Convention agencies, Jimmy Draper said in a Jan. 4 statement.

Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, issued the statement to clarify what he said have been misconceptions about the status of the fund-raising program for church building projects.

Currently, Together We Build is managed by the SBC Stewardship Commission. However, under the SBC's reorganization plan, the Stewardship Commission will be eliminated.

Together We Build and the general assignment for assisting churches in capital fund-raising will be transferred to the Sunday School Board's church growth group, Draper noted.

"We will work closely with the Stewardship Commission and with state convention stewardship leaders to assure a smooth transition," he said. "We see this as a vital service and ministry."



# KENTUCKY

## Rural church develops language ministry rapidly

By Joyce Sweeney Martin  
Staff Writer

WAYNESBURG—Just a few weeks ago, ministry to non-Anglos was merely something to read about in a missions magazine for most members of Pleasant View Baptist Church in rural Lincoln County.

But today, thanks to a Baptist woman who is "conscientious in ministering to people," the church has a growing, vibrant ministry with Mexicans living in the area, according to Pastor Vola Brown.

In less than two months, the church has started a Sunday school class, and they have adapted their worship services to meet the needs of the Mexicans. They have begun conversational English classes, and they have formed a Spanish mission committee. And, most importantly, they have baptized 16 new believers into the fellowship of the church, according to Brown.

It is an amazing string of events which God has put together, Woman's Missionary Union director Geneva Faw said.

It all began when Annette Story spotted some Mexicans on her way to work. She had heard they had moved into the community at the beginning of the school year to work in a local mill. Her first instinct was to find a way for her Baptist Women on Mission group to help them, she said.

Story proposed that the Baptist Women invite the Mexicans to a traditional American Thanksgiving dinner at the church the Saturday after Thanksgiving—an idea "God gave me," she said. The women agreed, and on the evening of Nov. 17, 17

Mexicans showed up. Everyone enjoyed the evening so much that the women invited their new friends to come back for Sunday school and worship the next day.

And between the time the Saturday night event ended and Sunday school the next morning, Story enlisted someone to teach the Sunday school class with the aid of Candido Lopez, a Mexican-American church member and local businessman. Twenty-seven Mexicans showed up for Sunday school and worship.

Since that time, the Mexicans have attended every church service but one, Story said.

By the first of December, Pleasant View already had developed a routine: a Sunday school class in Spanish taught by Pleasant View members with Lopez as lead teacher and translator; a joint Sunday morning worship service; a Sunday evening worship which includes the Mexicans worshipping with the Anglos until time for the sermon. Then Pastor Brown and layperson Dave Rollins rotate preaching to them, with Lopez translating.

And by the first of December, programs to meet needs already were shaping up as well. Three women of the church—Vicky Faw, Dwila Engle and Karen Hatter—had started a weekly conversational English class which drew 11 students to the first session.

The church formally voted to begin a Spanish mission team to help meet the physical and spiritual needs of the Mexicans.

For a Christmas meal, Anglos helped five of the Mexicans prepare a traditional Mexican dinner which in-

cluded refried beans and chicken tamales steamed in corn shucks. Twenty one Mexicans came to the dinner and then viewed the "Jesus" film in Spanish. Church members provided Christmas gifts as well.

At every turn, God has led in the ministry, Brown said. The need for a translator was met when Lopez came to the Thanksgiving dinner and saw the opportunity for ministry.

In addition, Elvia Hatter, a Mexican-American fluent in English and Spanish, came from California to visit her in-laws the same day as the Thanksgiving dinner. She stayed for three weeks and was "a tremendous



**NEW FRIENDS** Annette Story (above right) saw an opportunity for ministry and led her church to meet it. Here, she prepares a meal with Juan Gonzolas. At left, Irene Gonzolas, Martha Martinez and Judy Jacobs wrap tamales in corn shucks in preparation for a traditional Mexican meal.



help," Faw said.

"I don't think she just happened to arrive on that particular Saturday," Brown said. "I believe God's hand was and is in this."

And, on the night five of the Mexicans were baptized, the scheduled speaker was Wanda Dobbins, a Spanish-speaking missionary to Chile who

spoke in both English and Spanish. After the baptism, she talked with the new believers in Spanish.

For Story, the last two months have been exciting. Years ago, when she first read about churches with ministries to migrant workers, she thought, "We can't do that."

"But now we can," she said.

## Kentucky Baptists launch partnership with Boston area

Kentucky Baptists formally launch a new partnership missions effort with New England Baptists this month, although planning for the partnership has been going on for several months.

For 1996, Kentuckians will be linked with Greater Boston Baptist Association, and then the partnership will expand to encompass all of the New England Baptist Convention in 1997.

"We expect God to move in ways beyond our greatest dreams as we become true partners in God's kingdom," said Larry Martin, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions and evangelism division.

Both Martin and Ignatius Meimaris, director of missions for Greater Boston Baptist Association, empha-

sized the mutual benefits of the partnership.

"Our partnership is a two-way street," Meimaris said, emphasizing that New England Baptists are eager to find ways to help in Kentucky.

This year, Kentucky Baptists will form a variety of construction teams for urgent projects in the Boston area. In addition, Kentucky Baptists will be asked to lead vacation Bible schools and other outreach efforts, to pray for the needs of Greater Boston churches, to co-sponsor funding for 10 new campus ministries in the next five years and to provide literature aimed at Boston's large student population.

And in return, Boston-area Baptists want to pray for areas in Kentucky where new congregations are needed. They also want to help im-

plement new ministries in Kentucky, Meimaris said.

For example, Meimaris foresees the Boston association exporting its ethnic ministry strengths to aid Kentucky churches. Language congregations in Boston could link with existing ones in Kentucky or help start new ones in Kentucky.

Boston churches also have significant experience with ministry in "transitional communities" where people are constantly moving in and out, Meimaris said. He believes some Kentucky congregations could benefit from the "overriding principles" Boston association leaders have learned in such ministries.

"New England churches have much to share with Kentucky churches," said Martin, who was Meimaris'

predecessor as leader of the Boston association. "For example, the enthusiasm of new believers, the faith to attempt things which are humanly impossible, the experience of developing viable congregations without ownership of property or buildings and the perspective of a kingdom mentality of God's work."

In both regions, prayer is a vital need, Meimaris and Martin emphasized. Meimaris estimates at least 75 percent of New Englanders are unchurched, and in some population pockets the unchurched population is much larger.

For information on how to become involved in the Kentucky-Boston partnership, contact Martin or Calvin Wilkins, KBC partnership missions director, at (502) 245-4101.

## Paducah church wants to send 1,000 teddy bears to Russia

PADUCAH—Members of Reidland Baptist Church in Paducah want to give a big bear hug to orphans and poor children in Russia.

The congregation, inspired by Pastor Paul Blizard, hopes to ship 1,000 teddy bears to children in Russia's Vyborg region. Blizard visited that area several months ago and was moved by the plight of children in hospitals and orphanages.

Blizard said he visited one sanitar-

ium where more than 100 children, many with tuberculosis, had not seen any visitors in a year and had no toys.

"It really touched my heart," he said. "We were in shock. Our kids have toy boxes overflowing, and they have nothing."

After he returned to Kentucky, Blizard realized teddy bears would be the perfect toy to send those children.

"They need something they can cuddle," he explained. "I prayed

about it and thought a bear would be a perfect gift for a boy or a girl."

The church found creative ways to collect teddy bears during the Christmas season. For example, one group held a Christmas party to which the admission fee was one teddy bear per person. When the handbell choir performed at a local store, they asked for payment in teddy bears.

Once the church has collected 1,000 bears, Reidland's Woman's

Missionary Union group will prepare the gifts for shipping.

Kentucky Baptists are invited to help with the Reidland project by donating new or nearly new teddy bears. The bears should be medium in size. Send contributions to Reidland Baptist Church, 5559 Reidland Rd., Paducah, Ky. 42003.

Based on reporting by Leigh Landini of the Paducah Sun

## WESTERN RECORDER

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**MARK WINGFIELD**  
Interim Editor

**MAURI SMITH**  
Marketing & Business  
Manager

**C. R. DALEY**  
Editor Emeritus

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

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## Promise Keepers & the Million Man March

Promise Keepers and the Million Man March represent the largest and most resilient aspects of the current men's movement visible on the national scene. Both share much common ground, despite a Promise Keepers' statement distancing itself from the march.

Promise Keepers and the Million Man March agree on several points:

■ *Repentance is the beginning point for renewal.* Louis Farrakhan calls African-American males to atone for past wrongs done to African-American males and females. The foundation of Promise Keepers is the confession that men have broken promises and spoiled relationships. One cannot move toward promise keeping until one admits promise breaking.

■ *Responsibility is a goal.* Both urge males to assert their leadership as heads of the family and show that fatherhood means time with and discipline of their children. Building strong marriages and rearing good children are primary goals.

■ *Rallying men provides a much needed catharsis.* Frequent images from both groups include men holding raised hands and tears flowing down faces. These events provide men with an opportunity to express their deep emotions among their peers without fear of ridicule.

■ *Restricted membership is a defining characteristic of both.* The Million Man March says no to women and whites. Promise Keepers says no to women and attracts mostly church-going white males. Both say men only, and apparently only certain types of men. Additionally, these crusades are not for those outside the fold but for those already committed to the cause. Events purge pain and fire up the emotions of the true believers, instead of calling for new converts.

■ *Race is the premier issue.* Mil-

lion Man March leaders speak repeatedly about the prevailing racist system. Promise Keepers' leaders yearn for racial reconciliation without appreciating that severing the deep roots of covert and overt racism requires more than personal repentance. It necessitates racial justice through public policy.

Despite the plentiful common ground, both groups disagree sharply at a number of points, as well.

■ *The unifying centerpiece differs.* Million Man March is interfaith, including Christians and Muslims who

share a deep concern about the state of black America. Promise Keepers claims a Christo-centric core, even though its leaders, speakers and participants are drawn mostly from conservatives, non-denominational evangelicals and charismatics. What unifies Promise Keepers is a commitment to Christ, not a common reading of the cultural crisis. What unifies Million Man March is a shared history of discrimination, a common experience of community violence, a deep-seated sense of injustice and a large percentage of peers in prison.

■ *Skin color determines membership.* Million Man March appears as an African-American experience. Promise Keepers is overwhelmingly a Euro-American effort, although Promise Keepers tries to include other races and ethnic groups.

■ *Strategies for social change differ.* While a driving force behind both is a sense that the quality of life is deteriorating rapidly, the solutions to change operate on totally different plains. Promise Keepers says the solution is Jesus, revival, prayer and accountability groups. Million Man March hammers home the need for personal accountability and encourages voter registration to change public policy.

Promise Keepers and Million

Man March trek across dangerous ground. Both could walk away from an emphasis on individual accountability into full-blown political action groups.

A more immediate danger comes from faulty analysis and unrealistic expectations. Both blame the family crisis on the lack of male leadership.

From a theological vantage point, the family crisis results from human failure, not simply the failure of male leadership. Moreover, better male leadership does not guarantee an end to the culture's family crisis, much of which results from our culture of greed, indifference, radical individualism and immediate gratification, not simply gender issues.

Another danger concerns the statement of the obvious in order to get more amens, rather than a call to reach deeper into the caldron of complex cultural problems.

The message of male accountability is far more important than reacting negatively to the messengers. Saturating American culture with such a message is too critical for Christians to be distracted by either Farrakhan's history of race baiting and ethnic scapegoating or the Promise Keepers' incomplete marriage manuals and remedial social diagnosis and strategy.

The real hope for social change takes place away from the TV lights and on the local level where promises and problems are discussed in depth, initiatives are taken and community is formed.

Robert Parham, executive director  
Baptist Center for Ethics

■ **What do you think?** The Western Recorder welcomes reader response to news and opinion pieces. Send your signed letter to the editor, 250 words or less, to Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253. Fax us at (502) 244-6472. E-mail us on CompuServe at 102667,1300.

## No place to be

The following appeared in a newsletter to the congregation of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Shepherdsville, written by pastor Mark Ross:

"It snowed last night. The world around our home was a blanket of white. By midnight, we had all settled down to a 'long winter's nap.' I wish I could tell you that the clatter which awoke us was an elf bearing gifts on the roof, but alas it was the phone. Rather than bearing gifts, the caller was seeking them. In his own words, 'He and his wife wanted money, lodging, food and auto gas,' in that order I suppose.

"By now I know the routine. Some other minister had given him my name saying I would help. Thank goodness for the fellowship of the saints.

"There was no reason to ask

where the couple was going to or coming from. It did not matter, and the question would only be an invitation to lie. Reluctantly I prepared to meet them in the snow at an appointed time and place. My son

Travis was up by now and offered to ride shotgun.

"When Travis and I met the couple, we found they were traveling in a Winnebago. That looked like instant lodging to me, so I offered them fuel and food. The man was persistent they wanted a motel room. With Travis behind me all the way, I stuck with food and fuel.

Fifteen dollars worth of 87 octane later we were at the counter of White Castle. The WC lounge, as some call it, was about all that was open at 1:30 a.m. I could tell, however, as they reviewed the entrees available, that they preferred Ponderosa. When a person is traveling all night, they need food that will stick with them. I would say 16

White Castles would stick around a while.

"After we paid the bill and prepared to leave, Travis and I said our good-byes and final 'no's' to a motel room. For some reason, I asked the question, 'Where are you headed?' The man replied, 'We're not going anywhere particularly, just looking for work.'

"Back in the car, Travis and I talked about the couple's troubles, not having money, food or fuel. Then Travis said, 'It must be pretty bad not having any place you have to be.'

"That is probably the greatest need the couple had whether they knew it or not. They had no place to be. No one was looking for them or waiting for them. That is a hole not even 16 White Castles can fill. I wish somehow I could have.

"I hope you have a place to be. I know someone is looking for you. He has been looking your whole life."

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



## FAMILY FORUM

### The land of beginning again

By Harry Rowland

Q This new year is a time of anticipation. "I wish there were some wonderful place called the Land of Beginning Again."

A This line from Louise Tarkington's poem speaks to all. However, for singles the new year may not appear to hold much promise, especially if the previous year involved major regrets and the future appears to be the same old, same old. But even the artificial beginning again associated with the new year can be healthy if we will see it as a time for positive growth.

First, we need to live one day at a time. This means not biting off 365 days all at once. That is overwhelming.

Learn to be responsive to the simple blessing of each day—a pat on the back, a 4 lb. bass, an empty parking place, a good friend. If we think joy comes from big moments—a trip to Paris, a sweepstakes win—then there aren't going to be many joyous days in the year.

Also, give yourself to others. Happiness is like a butterfly. The more you chase it, the more it flies away from you and hides. But if you serve God and others, it will light on you. The happiest people I know are those who work at being kind, thoughtful, helpful and generous.

Learn to forgive and forget. It is good to have a good memory, but it's also good to have a good forgetter. You can choose what you remember (take with you into the new year) and what you forget (what you leave in the old year).

Keep a sense of humor. Don't take yourself too seriously. Happiness is always a choice. Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.

And put your hand of faith into God's hand of grace. We are not privy to what the future holds but we can know the One who holds the future.

Lewis Haskins wrote "I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light, that I might tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand in the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"

Harry Rowland is pastor of Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

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

## HE SAID/SHE SAID

### Are you ready to go yet? Are you really ready to go?

#### HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

Some of my earliest memories of going to church involve sitting in the car in the driveway with my father on Sunday morning, waiting for my mother. For some reason, the two males in our family always were ready to go much sooner than the one female.

Of course, I'm sure there's no connection between this observation and the fact that Mother had fixed breakfast, put the traditional Sunday roast in the oven and made sure Dad and I were

ressed before taking care of herself.

I've given up those high-cholesterol, high-fat breakfasts, and I've stopped waiting impatiently in the car, and I can get myself dressed much better now. But after all these years and millions of experiences getting ready to go to church and other places, I'm still convinced of one fundamental truth of creation: Men are wash-and-wear; women are dry clean only.

Granted, cultural forces have attempted to balance the scales on this issue. But all the hair-spraying, blow-drying, compact-lens-inserting and teeth-flossing rituals modern men endure haven't slowed them down enough to level the playing field.

In our house, this differential gets compounded by the fact that my normally carefree, easy-going wife feels compelled to pack for a simple outing as though we were going camping for a week. And she expects me to do the same.

Just last week, while planning an afternoon trip across the state, visions of blizzards and ice storms prompted her to reel off a long list of "essential" items I ought to pack in the car in case of bad weather. I never knew the West Kentucky Parkway led to Outer Siberia.

#### SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

If I was as prepared spiritually "in season and out of season" as I am when getting the boys and myself ready to go places, I'd be a spiritual giant by now.

My motto is to be prepared for anything. If the powers that be are predicting snow, then I ask Mark if he has enough gas, an extra blanket, should he take his snow boots, etc. He, on the other hand, is Mr. "I can handle it" and often walks out the door without his gloves or scarf—despite a blizzard

blowing outside.

I also like to be prepared when it comes to going to church. On Wednesday nights, I make sure we have enough food packed for my picky children to eat, as well as their water cups to supplement their milk at church, and a snack for on the way home. And since we are still struggling with that dreaded disease called potty-training (to be dealt with in a future column), I also make sure we've got enough extra diapers, pull-ups or whatever we need for whatever stage we have progressed or regressed to at that moment.

Although Mark is good about helping with these preparations, he doesn't always get the picture on the need for them.

If he is taking the boys to the mall, for example, he thinks all you have to do is announce the plan and walk out the door. And when he gets to the mall, if he fails to go over the rules (stay with Daddy, don't cry and whine when it's time to leave the toy store, no cookies until after lunch) then something inevitably falls apart, or one of the boys finally experiences what a friend has dubbed "meltdown."

I admit that sometimes I do go overboard when preparing for trips out of the house. Maybe I need to concentrate some of that energy on spiritual preparation for whatever journeys God has in store for me.

Mark Wingfield is interim editor of the Western Recorder.

Alison Wingfield is a freelance writer.

## Cutting legal aid for the poor is mean

Imagine yourself suddenly needing legal representation due to some injustice you experienced. You've been cheated by an employer, mistreated by a landlord, ripped off by a salesman. What would you do? Could you defend yourself or press your claim?

Now picture yourself in the same situation, but imagine yourself making minimum wage at most, with no savings and no assets to sell—and with a family to support. Would you stand a chance at experiencing democracy? Could you afford democracy?

The second scenario soon could become the plight of millions of poor people in our nation, courtesy of a majority in Congress bent on enforcing their own malicious understanding of "personal responsibility."

Funding for the Legal Services Corp., the federal umbrella organization that provides legal services for 39 million poor people, is about to be slashed by one-third. At the same time, entire categories of service will be abolished and new restrictions will be placed on attorneys who represent the poor.

For example, attorneys who receive funding from the corporation will be prohibited from challenging new welfare laws or lobbying on behalf of their clients before government bodies.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure the math on this one. Without federal assistance, millions of poor people will be denied their constitutional right to the legal process and to challenge laws that directly impact them. Incidentally, of course, the poor will pose less of a threat to big business, the wealthy and the Congress.

This is tyranny, not democracy.

Democracy levels the playing field so all can be heard and have equal opportunity for legal redress when they are wronged. Even the Legal Services Corp. as it is currently structured has not been able to provide everything the poor need to get a fair shake in the judicial system. Congress should be improving

this situation, not making it worse.

But the most amazing thing about this episode in American history is that such a self-serving plan has been foisted on the American people in large measure by people who claim to be fulfilling a "Christian" agenda. Despite vocal support from the Christian Coalition and other Religious Right groups, this part of the Republican revolution is all politics with little theology.

Those who claim to represent Christ should read his words and the words of God's full revelation in the Bible. The Cliff Notes version is this: God takes the side of the poor.

Isaiah 10:1-2 says: "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless."

Proverbs 14:31 declares: "He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God."

Jesus once told a Pharisee: "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed."

Congress presides over a virtual banquet of federal funding, which it is increasingly doling out to the rich while shunning the poor.

Yes, the call for welfare reform is justified. Republicans are right when they say the old Democratic-inspired system has failed. And yes, many middle-class and upper-class Americans reasonably want their tax load lightened.

But if the Christian community truly wants to make a contribution to welfare reform, it ought to be based on compassion rather than greed.

—Mark Wingfield

## Here's an idea for taking a bite out of hunger

Here's a suggestion for one simple way your church—led by your youth group—could take a bite out of the nation's hunger problem this month.

Churches of all faiths across America are invited to participate in "Souper Bowl Sunday" Jan. 28, which also happens to be Super Bowl Sunday.

The idea is for church youth groups to collect \$1 that Sunday from every person attending worship who intends to watch the Super Bowl. This special offering then will be forwarded to the hunger ministry of the youth group's choosing.

This is a national movement with local impact.

The idea came from the senior high youth group of Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C. They were inspired by Associate Pastor Brad Smith's prayer on a Super Bowl Sunday: "As we enjoy the Super Bowl game, help us to be mindful of those who don't even have a bowl of soup to eat."

The youth started their Souper Bowl collection in 1990, involving 22 churches in their community. Youth stood at church doors after services with soup kettles, asking parishioners who planned to watch the game to drop in \$1 each. The 22 churches to-

gether collected \$5,700.

The project has boiled over into a much larger affair each year since that humble beginning. Last year, 2,500 participating churches gave more than \$450,000 to hunger relief in their own communities.

This year, organizers have set a national goal of \$1 million.

Each participating church makes its own decisions about how to collect the money and how the gifts will be used. The only thing Souper Bowl organizers ask is for churches to call a toll-free number to report the results, so a national tally can be released.

Southern Baptists nationwide have been slacking off in contributions to hunger relief in recent years. Perhaps this interfaith effort could be one way to light a new spark that will fill many more soup bowls on a cold winter day.

For more ideas about the Souper Bowl, or to report on your church's efforts this year, call (800) 358-SOUP or write to Souper Bowl, 125 Sparkleberry Lane, Columbia, S.C. 29223.

—Mark Wingfield

## College students showing interest in spiritual things

**"I've been getting an overwhelming response from churches who are interested in college students. ... People are starting to realize campuses are the greatest mission field in the world."**  
 Bill Henry, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's national student ministry

*Continued from page 1*  
 among today's students?

Fear about global upheaval, a desire for stability in a rapidly changing and complex world, declining economic opportunities and wounds from growing up in broken homes are just a few of the reasons cited by media and ministers.

"Today's students are looking for something that can be counted on. They want something secure and stable," said John Moore, student ministry director for the Louisiana Baptist Convention. "They are more hungry for Bible study and discipleship than ever before. They'd rather hear someone teach the word than read a devotional. They are looking for teachers, not preachers."

Betsy Draper, Baptist student ministries director at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said she has noticed renewed spiritual interest on her campus.

"Many students here are praying for revival on campus; that's part of the reason behind what's happening across America," she explained.

Draper said she also believes col-

leges are beginning to realize they have to provide for their students' spiritual needs. MIT, for example, last year opened a religious activities center to accommodate a growing religious community.

"Our growth has been hidden somewhat in that there are so many evangelical student groups popping up to meet everyone's interest," Draper said.

Bill Henry, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's national student ministry, said he believes another key to renewed spiritual emphasis on campus is more direct church involvement in reaching students.

"I've been getting an overwhelming response from churches who are interested in college students," he said. "I've formed prayer partnerships with several of them. People are starting to realize campuses are the greatest mission field in the world."

Carl Kremer, a 23-year-old senior at Temple University in Philadelphia, said he has noticed more openness among his peers to spiritual issues.

"People are realizing materialism

isn't where it's at," he said. "There's so much hopelessness out there. They're looking for whatever works."

Sometimes "whatever works" means focusing more on friendships and relationships than God, said Kremer, a Southern Baptist.

"My generation ends up clinging to each other, and that's just going to bring more shallowness. Agape love is what we're looking for."

Many students are missing that God-centered love in a bombardment of mixed spiritual messages from the media, cults and misinformed Christians, said Joni Hannigan, Baptist Student Union director at Indiana University-Bloomington.

While she agrees there is more talk about religion on campus, she said she fears many students don't understand "what is true spiritual interest and what is a smorgasbord of ideas that appeal to them. I see a very confused and a very a la carte kind of interest in spiritual matters."

"And there is much more openness on campus to non-traditional expressions of faith than traditional ones," she said, adding Islam, the Baha'i

faith, New Age groups and Eastern mysticism are "very attractive" to many IU students.

"Faith on campus is eclectic, for sure," said Neil Walker, state student director for the California Southern Baptist Convention. He said many students become interested in New Age cults "because it allows you to have a spiritual experience without making any character changes or moral shifts in your life. They never address the issue of lordship."

Hannigan said many students she encounters have "very little regard" for absolute truth. "It's abhorrent to them because it infringes on others' right to believe like they want to. I think many students are confused."

Kremer, the Temple student, admitted the tension between being respectful of other viewpoints and standing up for your beliefs can be difficult.

"It's a cautious line to walk. Sometimes you end up offending people if you're a Christian," he explained. "That just makes developing friendships (with non-Christians) more important."

## Godly friend helped save Ricky Van Shelton's marriage

**"What (the Lord) has done for me, he can do for anybody and everybody."**  
 Bettye Shelton

*Continued from page 1*

it; I knew something was wrong (with Bettye)," singer/songwriter Andy Landis said in the same chapel service, explaining the reason for her call. She had met Mrs. Shelton only twice, introduced through her then-fiance and now-husband Steve Buckingham, a record producer who had played a pivotal role in making Ricky Van Shelton a star.

"I couldn't get my mind off her for weeks. Literally, I would wake up in the middle of the night crying for her. ... I just felt like she might need someone to talk to."

No stranger to heartache herself, Landis had survived cancer, rape and sexual molestation as a child. She knew the struggle of facing troubles alone.

Determined to reach out, she visited Mrs. Shelton the very next evening at the Sheltons' farmhouse located on a 150-acre ranch just outside Nashville. After a dinner party with friends, the two women stayed up talking until early in the morning.

"The next morning we ended up getting together for prayer on their farm," Landis recounted. The two women watched the sunrise and Landis led Mrs. Shelton in a prayer that turned her life and her marriage over to God.

"I knew that God's Son had risen in my heart," Mrs. Shelton said, "and I surrendered my problems to him. I knew that only God could save me from the mess I'd made out of my life."

Landis also made a commitment as she drove away from the Shelton farm that morning—to stick by her new friend "no matter what." That would turn out to be a serious pledge, as things got worse before they got better for the Sheltons.

"Ricky came home and my husband said to me: 'I just don't love you anymore.' I remember the pain and disappointment I felt that morning. I

felt that my Father had let me down."

Eventually, the Sheltons separated and Mrs. Shelton learned her husband had been unfaithful. Landis stood by her friend, frequently meeting together in person or over the phone to share Scripture and pray.

Through her faith in God and encouragement and support from Landis and other friends, Mrs. Shelton stood by her husband and they later reconciled. Ricky Van Shelton gave up drinking and recommitted his life both to Christ and his wife. In recent years, the couple has shared their tes-

timony with thousands of men and women across the country.

"I'm so thankful today that God has blessed me with a godly husband. And he's blessed me with an incredible friend (Landis) who has taught me how to give and how to live, no matter what," Shelton said.

With her husband's blessing, Mrs. Shelton coauthored a book with Landis that details the Sheltons' marital struggles and eventual triumph. The book, "She Stays," is subtitled, "How God Inspired a Friendship That Saved Bettye and Ricky Van Shelton's Mar-

riage."

Landis also wrote a song by the same title. She sings it as a duet with Ricky Van Shelton on the new album, "Common Ground," a compilation of religious and inspirational songs performed by some of today's top country stars.

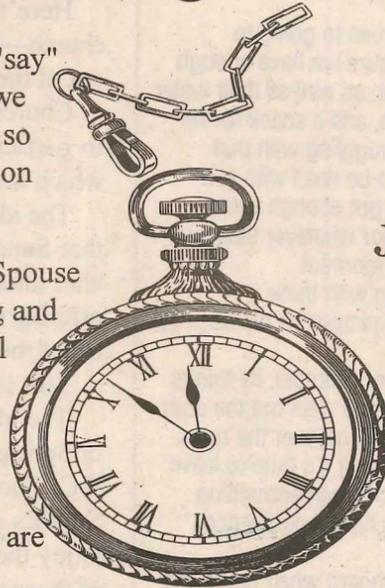
"If you think we are courageous or something special, we are not," Landis said. "We have just given our lives over to the Lord."

Shelton agreed. "What he has done for me, he can do for anybody and everybody."

### Deacon/Pastor/Spouse Retreat 1996 "Deciding & Doing"

We all have met people who "say" but do not "do." Sometimes we meet them in the mirror. It is so easy to speak, but life is built on doing.

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## 22.8 percent of clergy have been fired

CHICAGO (RNS)—A national survey of Protestant clergy has found that an unusually high number—22.8 percent—say they either have been fired or forced to resign their pastorates at some point during their career.

The survey, conducted among a random sample of clergy readers of three evangelical magazines—Christianity Today, Leadership and Your Church—also found that one in four of the dismissed or forced-out pastors said they had had the experience more than once.

The survey's return rate was 64 percent, and the margin of error was plus or minus 3.8 percent.

The survey did not indicate what, if any, percentage of the firings or forced resignations were for clergy wrong-doing.

According to the survey, report-

ed in the Winter 1996 issue of Leadership, clergy said conflicting visions for the congregation between themselves and members was the top reason given as to why they were terminated.

David Goetz, the associate editor of Leadership who conducted the study, said the survey also revealed what he called "repeat offender" congregations.

According to the survey, 62 percent of the forced-out pastors said the congregation had driven out at least one previous pastor.

Forty-one percent of forced-out pastors reported that the congregation that expelled them had forced out pastors more than twice in the past.

"The conclusion seems self-evident: churches that force out their pastors are likely to do it again," Go-

etz wrote.

Goetz said "repeat-offender" churches often are driven by a small faction within the congregation. He said 43 percent of the fired or forced-out pastors indicated that a "faction" pushed them out, and 71 percent indicated the faction numbered 10 or fewer people.

"Perhaps what's most troubling is the inability or unwillingness of denominations to identify and work with the repeat-offender church," Goetz wrote. In many instances, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, denominational leaders have little influence on congregations.

"With no real clout, denominational leaders often stand by and watch a percentage of their churches destroy pastor after pastor," Goetz wrote.

## Gospel music Grammy nominees announced

NASHVILLE (RNS)—More than two dozen gospel artists were among the Grammy award nominees announced Jan. 4 by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

The winners in 88 categories of music will be announced Feb. 28 at a ceremony in Los Angeles that will be broadcast on CBS.

Nominations include:

■ **Best rock gospel album:** "Big Tent Revival," by Big Tent Revival; "Lesson of Love," by Ashley Cleveland; "Jars of Clay," by Jars of Clay; "Home Run!" by Geoff Moore & the Distance; "No Doubt," by Petra.

■ **Best pop/contemporary gospel album:** "The Music of Christmas," by Steven Curtis Chapman; "Unbelievable Love," by Larnelle Harris; "Find It on the Wings," by Sandi Patty; "I'll

Lead You Home," by Michael W. Smith; "My Utmost for His Highest," by various artists.

■ **Best Southern gospel, country gospel or bluegrass gospel album:** "One Summer Evening Live," by Bruce Carroll; "Someday," by Crystal Gayle; "A Gospel Gathering," by Ralph Stanley & Joe Isaacs; "At the Feet of God," by Jerry & Tammy Sullivan; "Amazing Grace—A Country Salute to Gospel," by various artists.

■ **Best traditional soul gospel album:** "No Ways Tired," by Fontella Bass; "I Brought Him With Me," by the Blind Boys of Alabama; "Shirley Caesar Live ... He Will Come," by Shirley Caesar; "Power," by the Mighty Clouds of Joy; "Live at Jackson State University," by James Moore with the Mississippi Mass

Choir.

■ **Best contemporary soul gospel album:** "More Than a Melody," by Yolanda Adams; "The Call," by Anointed; "Motown Comes Home," by various artists; "Heartsongs," by Doug Williams; "Alone in His Presence," by CeCe Winans; "Not in My House," by Daniel Winans.

■ **Best gospel album by a choir or chorus:** "Bible Stories," by Donald Lawrence and the Tri-City Singers; "Live in New York By Any Means ...," by Hezekiah Walker & the Love Fellowship Crusade Choir; "Praise Him ... Live!" by the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir; "Shout," by Milton Brunson and the Thompson Community Singers; "Show Up!" by the New Life Community Choir featuring John P. Kee.

### NATIONAL NOTES

■ **University wins battle.** The U.S. Commerce Department has modified a policy that barred giving grants to organizations involved in sectarian religious activity. The policy change resolves a dispute between the department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration and Fordham University, the Jesuit school in New York city.

In 1994, NTIA denied a grant to Fordham's public radio station, WFUV-FM, because the station broadcast Catholic mass one hour each week. The agency told the station it had to drop the mass from its 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week format in order to qualify for the federal funds. Fordham challenged NTIA in the courts and the case was pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., when the policy change was announced.

■ **Cyber wedding noted.** CompuServe's first live "cyber wedding" took place Dec. 22, as Rachel Twing and Randal Terwillegar were married in the Seventh Day Adventist church's on-line forum. Officiating was Pastor Ralph Blodgett, system operator of the denomination's CompuServe forum. The couple first met each other on-line.

■ **Bishops speak on Appalachia.** Twenty-five Catholic bishops and archbishops from dioceses that cover Appalachia assailed Dec. 15 what they said was an economic assault on the natural, social and spiritual ecology of the region. In a 73-page pastoral message, "At Home in the Web of Life," the bishops said high poverty and unemployment remain as critical now as 20 years ago. In the new pastoral message the bishops charge that the region is being turned into "a social and natural dumping ground."

■ **Religion amendment introduced.** With two versions of a Religious Equality Amendment already introduced in the House of Representatives, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, introduced one in the Senate Dec. 22. Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, introduced a proposed amendment identical to one proposed by Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., in the House.

■ **Churches exempt from lobby reform.** President Clinton has signed the final version of a lobbying reform bill passed by Congress late last year. Despite earlier attempts to place greater restrictions on churches and other religious organizations, the bill's final version exempts religious organizations. Without that exemption, the law could have restricted churches from speaking out on social issues, said constitutional lawyer Brent Walker of the Baptist Joint Committee.

■ **Corts to head SACS.** Samford University President Thomas Corts has been elected president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a regional accrediting agency representing more than 12,000 public and private schools.

■ **Mission boards merge.** After 13 years of planning, the overseas mission boards of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have been merged into one agency. The new Common Global Ministries Board will act on behalf of the two denominations' separate missions agencies in designing mission strategies and in sending missionaries.

■ **Graham to set new record.** On April 14, evangelist Billy Graham will preach the gospel to more people on a single day than has been done by anyone on any single day in history. Graham's Global Television Series will be broadcast during prime time, in 42 languages on national television networks in more than 160 countries. The program also will be carried on two of the largest intercontinental satellite networks in the world, STAR-TV and BSKYB, which cover about two-thirds of the world's population. The telecast will include testimonies by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young.

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# RESEARCH

## Researcher believes he knows where Ark of Covenant sat

**"It has been there all along. I have looked at the rock so many times. It took me 21 years to know how to look at it."**

*Archaeologist Leen Ritmeyer*

*Continued from page 1*

"I don't think it's going to convert anybody. I don't think it's going to have any political significance in modern times," he said. "But I think it's extraordinarily meaningful to people who love the Bible, who love biblical history, who are passionate about exploring our common ... religious past."

Solomon's Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. A second temple, built on the ruins of the first and expanded by Herod the Great, was destroyed in 70 A.D. Many scholars agree both temples stood somewhere on the elevated ground now topped by the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of Al Aksa, but they disagree on exactly where the temples stood.

Archaeological surveys of the rock mass directly below the dome are prohibited by Muslim authorities, who have controlled the site since the seventh century, when the Christian church that occupied the site was re-

placed by a mosque.

Palestinian Muslim religious leaders who are currently in charge of the site have rejected archaeological evidence and Jewish claims that a temple ever was located on the Temple Mount.

The Temple Mount is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims, who believe it is the site where Abraham brought his son to be sacrificed. Muslims believe the prophet Mohammad ascended to heaven from the bedrock known as "es-Sakhra" on the Temple Mount site.

Using measurements made by a German scholar in 1910, photographs and his own observations, Ritmeyer detailed where he believes the walls of the Holy of Holies were within the temple—above "es-Sakhra." He declares that a spot right in the center of the Holy of Holies is where the ark rested—the same dimensions as God gave Moses for constructing the sacred container in Exodus 25:10: "They shall make an ark of acacia

wood; it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high."

A cubit is a unit of measure that equals 20.5 inches.

The ark, ancient Israel's most sacred ritual possession, accompanied the wandering tribes of Israel over the centuries, until King David brought it to Jerusalem and his son, Solomon, ultimately erected the temple. The ark was installed in an enclosure known as the Holy of Holies, which was entered only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, by the temple's high priest.

Ritmeyer said he used the Bible's measurements in 1 Kings 6:20 to locate the Holy of Holies—20 cubits by 20 cubits. "All that I've found confirms that the record in Kings about Solomon building a temple and preparing a place for the Ark of the Covenant is true," he said.

And what he has found, Ritmeyer said, can be seen by any tourist who visits the site. The rock is surrounded

by a fence, but "the depression is only about 10 feet away from the fence," he said.

"It has been there all along," he said.

"I have looked at the rock so many times. It took me 21 years to know how to look at it."

Other specialists in the field of biblical archaeology welcome Ritmeyer's analysis but say questions about the location remains.

"He's probably given us the best look, the best suggestion as to where the Ark of the Covenant and the temple itself actually stood," said Gary Byers, executive director of Associates for Biblical Research, an evangelical Christian ministry based in Ephrata, Pa.

"Without being able to get in there and do accurate measurements, he has really provided us a wealth of information and some really plausible suggestions," Byers continued. "He may have solved the problem, but we can't say definitely yes, he has."



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# PEOPLE



## FINANCIAL FORUM

### What should I put in my will?

By Laurie Valentine

You should include in your will provisions that accomplish the purposes for making a will: smooth estate administration, distribution of your assets as you wish, provision for special needs of your beneficiaries and, where necessary and desired, death tax savings and/or reduction.

Smooth estate administration is achieved by naming one or more executors who can handle the tasks of determining what you own at your death, paying your final debts and expenses, filing all necessary tax returns and distributing your assets pursuant to the terms of your will. You should name at least one alternate if you designate an individual as your first choice for executor.

A will should contain provisions which make clear your desires regarding who is to receive your assets and how they are to be received at your death. A will controls only assets titled in your individual name and assets that are payable to "my estate" or "my executor." Therefore, careful consideration needs to be given to how your assets are titled as you consider your choices for distribution under your will.

You may want to include specific bequests of particular assets or amounts to family and others, as well as general bequests of personal property and residuary estate in your will. In addition to family needs, bequests for charitable causes that you have supported during your lifetime should be considered.

Special needs of family can be met with trust provisions for young children or adult beneficiaries who will need financial management assistance. Parents with children under age 18 should also name a guardian for their children should both parents die before a child is 18 years old.

Tax evasion is illegal, but tax avoidance is good stewardship. Special trust provisions can be included in your will to defer and reduce death tax liabilities.

Making a Christian will is an important stewardship decision. It deserves careful planning.

For additional information and a helpful set of worksheets to use in planning your will, contact Laurie Valentine at the Kentucky Baptist Foundation by calling (502) 245-4101.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

## Southern Seminary December graduates from Kentucky



David Atcher  
Master of church music, Radcliff



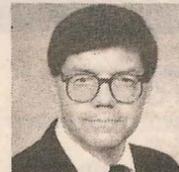
Jerry Bailey  
MA in Christian education, Stanford



Timothy Borchert  
Master of divinity Louisville



John Brooks  
Associate of arts Louisville



James Browning  
Master of divinity Louisville



Wray Bryant  
Doctor of philosophy Adamsville



Douglas Bunch  
Master of divinity Monticello



Rodney Burnette  
MA in Christian education, Louisville



Chee Keong Chan  
Master of theology Louisville



Sheila Collins  
Master of divinity Shepherdsville



Darryl Cornett  
Master of divinity Lexington



Stephen Deaver  
Master of divinity Pineville



Kenneth Felty  
Master of divinity Berea



Les Fugate  
Master of divinity Madisonville



Kevin Goins  
Doctor of philosophy Louisville



Betty Horton  
Associate of arts Louisville



Joe Johnson  
Master of divinity Benton



Sun Macupa  
Master of divinity Louisville



David Maynard  
Master of divinity Louisa



Beth Mosier  
Master of divinity Louisville



Matt Neace Jr.  
Associate of arts Newport



Jack Parrott  
Doctor of ministry Barbourville



Lilly Pegourie  
Associate of arts Louisville



Jeffrey Rafferty  
Master of divinity Whitesville



Christopher Short  
Master of arts in Christian education Elkton



Vanessa Sims  
Master of arts in Christian education Louisville



Tamara Vanover  
Master of arts in Christian education Lexington

NOTE: Graduate information provided by Southern Seminary. Only graduates who provided the seminary with a photo and information are included.

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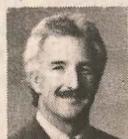
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# PEOPLE

## PRAYER PARTNERS

Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist Convention partnerships in Russia and Boston:

- As of Jan. 5, the Christmas gifts prepared by Kentucky Baptists had not been released by customs officials in Moscow. Pray that the gifts will be released. The Kentucky team in Moscow to distribute the gifts was to return to the States Jan. 9.
- Morris Norfleet from Bethlehem Baptist Church in Nancy, Ky., as he leads a Christian business project in St. Petersburg Jan. 24-Feb. 7.
- Anglo and ethnic church planting efforts in the Greater Boston Baptist Association.
- Greater Boston Baptist Association Director of Missions Ignatius Meimaris.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

- **ASHLAND**—Charles Young, director of missions in Greenup Association for 10 years, will retire March 31.
- **BOWLING GREEN**—Bill Ricketts Sr., 77, previous pastor at Shady Grove Church in Franklin, passed away recently.
- **CAMPTON**—Red River Association will hold an evangelism conference at 6 p.m. Jan. 27 at Campton Church.
- **HENDERSON**—Leslie Huff, retired director of missions for Green Valley Association, was named Kentucky Director of Missions of the Year.
- **LONDON**—Bald Rock Church will ordain Bobby Phillips to the gospel ministry Jan. 14. He is pastor at

Pine Grove Church.

- **LOUISVILLE**—Joseph Estes, pastor at Beechwood Church for 18 years, retired Dec. 31.
- Hurstbourne Church called Billy Thornton as part-time youth minister Jan. 3. Also, Chris Arnold was called as assistant youth minister. He will serve until May, when Thornton will become full-time.
- **MADISONVILLE**—James Weaver resigned as pastor at First Church effective Jan. 20, to become pastor at First Church in Springfield, Va.
- **REYNOLDS STATION**—West Point Church called Clay Lambert as pastor. Lambert previously was interim pastor at Chestnut Grove Church.

## Baptist Men praying for pastors

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Jan. 8 began a 40-day season of prayer for pastors sponsored by Baptist Men organizations in local churches. The emphasis is based on the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission's latest guided prayer booklet, "Pray for Your Pastor." Church members ought to pray for their pastors, said Jim Burton of the Brotherhood Commission staff. "American churches need strong, visionary pastoral leadership, and

it's time for us to support them," Burton said. "We know that being the pastor is a very difficult and sometimes lonely job. They face high levels of stress and burnout. A pastor needs the spiritual intercession of his congregation." For information about the Pray for Your Pastor emphasis, or to order "Pray for Your Pastor" guided prayer booklets, call the Brotherhood Commission at (800) 727-6466.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister to children. Must be able to manage day care and provide leadership in church's ministry to children. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Rd., Louisville, KY 40222.

**FOR SALE:** One burial plot—Evergreen Cemetery. Lot 65C, section A. Call Amy, (502) 634-3673; after 3 p.m., 367-7058.

**TOUR:** 10-day Holy Land pilgrimage; includes Athens and Corinth, Greece, and Amsterdam, Holland. March 18, 1996. Only \$1,795 from New York. Call Pastor Jack R. Studie for a color brochure and more information, (502) 247-8331. Experience you can trust!

**URGENT:** Teachers for two-year-olds for a two-days-a-week mothers' day out program. Call for information: Rockford Lane Baptist Church, (502) 447-2591 or 448-4817.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of family life for ministries of a new Christian life center. Third Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky. Please send replies to: Shannon Roberts Bailes, P.O. Box 8003, Owensboro, KY 42302.

**FOR SALE:** 1994 Dodge 15-passenger van—loaded, rear heat and A/C, excellent condition. \$18,400. (502) 368-2521.

**FOR SALE:** 1983 Dodge 15-passenger van—good condition. \$3,500. (502) 368-2521.

**SEEKING:** Second Baptist Church seeks youth/music minister. We offer competitive salary and housing. Send resumé to: 911 N. High St., Martinsburg, WV 25401.

**SEEKING:** Part-time music director for Sunday services and adult choir. Warm, music-loving church, N. Kentucky Association. Send resumé to: Crescent Springs Baptist Church, 627 Buttermilk Pike, Crescent Springs, KY 41017.

**SEEKING:** 25-year-old exurban Southern Baptist congregation with 150 members (25 miles from Washington D.C.) prayerfully seeks senior pastor having minimum of 5 years experience, master's degree from Southern Baptist seminary preferred. Candidate should be Bible-based, family-oriented and possess the abilities to coordinate current staff including a strong, vibrant music program. Send resumé by Feb. 14 to: P.O. Box 326, Poolesville, MD 20837.

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## What a day!

For weeks our students counted down the days to Christmas break. Christmas is one of the three times a year when all students must go home for a required break. Final exams took place on Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday was the big day! With the forecast of a "big snowstorm" on the way, many students just knew they would be stranded here for days. They did not know it, but we were just as concerned as they were! Our students think the breaks are for their benefit, but they are also much needed vacations for our faculty and staff. The adults are just as excited about the breaks as the students are. Family time is one of the sacrifices made by those who serve here. Faculty and staff families need this special time together.

The students knew that school would be out on Dec. 20. Parents had been arriving since the evening before. Vans and cars were loaded to maximum capacity. But students could not leave until after our traditional Christmas program in the chapel.

While we do not offer schooling for grades K-5 to the general public, it is provided for our faculty and staff children. This program was started in 1985, and allows our parents and children to be on the same school schedule. There are 23 boys and girls in our K-5 program.

Ms. Garland, and Mrs. Spencer led the first, second and third grade children in two songs, "Pat-A-Pan," and "Little Drummer Boy." Next Mrs. Campbell, helped by Mrs. Buckner, led the fourth and fifth grade boys and girls in singing "The Birthday of the King" and "Joy to the World," and in reciting "The Meaning of Christmas."

The Spanish class, with their teacher Mr. Malard, sang "O Sanctissimo" and "Noche Silenceo" (Silent Night) in Spanish.

The band, directed by Mr. Cochran, played

"Christmas in Germany" and "Ukrainian Bell Carol." The choir had the last spot on the program and sang "Carol of the Cradle" and "Mary Rocked the Little Baby," under the direction of Ms. Blades.

When chapel was dismissed, the students quickly went to meet their waiting families and friends. Within an hour most students were on their way home. Others were taken to the bus station or to the Lexington airport.

While we all look forward to a few days of rest, after a week without students our campus can really be depressing.

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

There is never a day that we do not struggle with the many needs of our students. Every day is a challenge, and some are nearly impossible. But we never lose sight of the fact that God has entrusted these young people to us. Meeting their spiritual, educational, emotional and social needs is very demanding.

By the time you read this article, our students will have come back to us. Since this is the beginning of the second semester, we will also get several new students. We know that most students who come to us this late in the

school year are having some problems. Some will have relatively small problems, while others will provide a greater challenge. We hope you will pray with us for the needs of all our students. We could never meet their needs with our resources alone. God will need to provide us with patience, wisdom, love, a forgiving heart and great compassion as we minister to them. We are blessed to be entrusted by God and their families with their training. We thank you for your trust also!

W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

## Clear Creek helped start literacy missions

1996 marks 50 years Clear Creek has been in the Kentucky Baptist Convention family. These years brought many "firsts" and one of the most significant was our part in the beginning of Southern Baptist literacy missions. Mrs. D.M. Aldridge recalls part of the story.

One of our students preached an evangelistic service in a mountain mission. A Mrs. Smith was converted and the pastor gave her a Bible. She said, "Preacher, I don't need a Bible 'cause I can't read."

The student had never known an adult who couldn't read so he asked President Aldridge for advice. Aldridge referred him to a former teacher and professor's wife, Lillian Isaacs.

Isaacs, Aldridge and Home Mission Board consultant Wendell Bellew planned a literacy "rally" (not knowing what else to call it) and invited Dr. Richard Cortright, literacy professor at Baylor University, to teach people how to teach adults to read.

For weeks before the event, hundreds of announcements, factual articles and human interest stories about adult literacy went to newspapers in Eastern Kentucky and the bordering states (Mrs. Aldridge was publicity director at the time). More than 200 attended the

rally in Kelly Hall, the largest building on campus, and meals were served in the campus dining hall.

Cortright announced to the group: "Kentucky has surpassed Texas!" Never before to his knowledge had so many gathered to learn to teach adults to read.

Aldridge cited the success of the 1953 meeting as need for a literacy worker in the area. The HMB appointed Ann Groves. Clear Creek provided room, board and a campus office.

Lillian Isaacs organized the Baptist women of Pineville churches to conduct a literacy conference. She led in organizing the Appalachian Literacy Council and Aldridge was elected the first president. This group set up councils in 16 counties. Inquiries came from educators in several states.

Groves relocated to Atlanta to lead this national movement through the Literacy Missions Department.

The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board asked Kay Aldridge to be editor of a new publication, "Training Union Quarterly Simplified"—a job she did for five years to be succeeded by a woman who had worked in the literacy program in the Kentucky mountains.

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# CHURCHES

## Congregation overcomes fears, commits to change

By David Winfrey  
SBC Home Mission Board

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP)—In 1991, Interim Pastor Dale Harlan told an aging and dwindling urban church it had three choices: move, die or change.

Commonwealth Baptist Church was sitting in the middle of a racially changing community when the Anglo congregation chose the toughest of its options and Harlan as its full-time pastor. Since then, members have changed the church name and expanded their ministries and outreach in a neighborhood with which they have less in common each day. Along the way, Harlan says, he's learned something about refocusing a congregation and breaking traditions to meet the mission field's needs.

"I find people are so afraid of change. It's almost a dirty word," says Harlan, a former missionary in Iowa.

In situations like Commonwealth's, inflexibility can be fatal, he says. "A church has an innate ability to hang on for years and years and years and dwindle and let the life literally drain out of it," he says. "The uniqueness of what we're doing is trying to lead a traditional church to be different and to change its traditions and see outside the fortress."

When constituted in the 1950s,

Commonwealth Baptist Church was on the fringe of metropolitan Charlotte. Today, the sanctuary sits nine miles inside the city limits.

"We are surrounded on three sides by apartments," Harlan says. "We (the community) are becoming very rapidly African-American, Southeast Asian and Hispanic."

Attendance had risen to 350 during the late 1970s, but had fallen to about 100 by 1991.

Harlan was director of church starts for Charlotte's Mecklenburg Baptist Association when he agreed to serve as interim pastor. While there, he led the congregation in a Home Mission Board study for churches in changing communities.

The program, Project Assistance for Churches in Transition, "helped the people become aware of what was happening in their community and gave them an arena to talk about it."

After Harlan became the church's full-time pastor, the next change was in name. The church had moved two blocks from Commonwealth Avenue but kept the name, confusing anyone looking for the building. "Even the fire trucks couldn't find us," he says.

In 1993, members voted overwhelmingly to become Briar Creek Road Baptist Church. Harlan calls that significant. "If they were willing to change their name, they were will-

ing to allow us to do whatever needed to be done."

Since then, other moves were made toward ministering in the area. Among them:

■ The church recreation building was refocused from inreach to outreach. As a community center, about 75 percent of those using it come from outside the church, says Mike Henley, minister of family life and youth.

■ African-American Debra Hayes was added to the staff to direct ministries for 5,000 neighboring apartment dwellers. She says her goal is to create change from inside the community, not to come in once a week with a church bus for Sunday worship.

■ Two ministries for neighborhood assistance and crime victim advocacy were brought into the church. Members also added a food bank and clothing closet.

■ Briar Creek Road linked with two suburban churches offering financial and volunteer help. Both are vital for a congregation with aging members, Harlan says. "We need those churches and they need us for a place to live out their calling."

Harlan says he often asked pastors to make changes when he worked for the association, but he never understood the difficulty until he led a congregation through it.



## South Carolina convention praised for helping churches

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)—The packed parking lot at Gaston's First Baptist Church is a sign of changing times for a South Carolina congregation that just six years ago was losing its followers.

With 250 people routinely filling its cushioned white pews—100 more than in days past—the rural church has rebounded to become a vibrant, growing community. Similar stories are being told by once-stagnant or declining Southern Baptist churches across the state.

Word of their successes has become big news outside South Carolina. Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans and others around the country are signing up for workshops to learn the secrets of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Some of the nation's leading authorities on church trends are even touting the convention as a new hope for the survival of denominations, many of which have been steadily losing members since the 1960s.

"If denominations are going to survive into the next century, they are going to have to become more like South Carolina," said Carol Childress of the Leadership Network, a church leadership resource center in Tyler, Texas.

Southern Baptists in South Carolina appear taken aback by the spotlight. Convention leaders explain with some embarrassment that their ideas aren't new or even original.

But yes, they concede, there's a new movement afoot to help churches grow. From 1990 to 1994, the number of growing churches increased by 185 congregations, a 45 percent gain. At the same time, 140

fewer congregations lost members.

"What we're doing is very simple," said Carlisle Driggers, the convention's executive director-treasurer. "We're customizing ministry to the needs of local churches."

What that means is the convention no longer assumes a program working in a burgeoning tourist hub like Myrtle Beach also will apply to a small town like Gaston, a bedroom community 15 miles south of Columbia. Instead, Bible studies, outreach ministries and other programs are being tailored to the size, context and needs of local churches.

That's a dramatic shift from the one-program-fits-all approach typically used by Baptists and other denominations. The new way allows local congregations to voice their needs rather than having the convention tell them what they should be doing.

"South Carolina is really a pioneer in this approach," said Lyle Schaller of Naperville, Ill., a church consultant and author of groundbreaking books on church growth. "They're showing there's a future for denominations that will service churches. The denominations that insist on being regulators are going to die."

The impetus for the new approach began in 1991, about the time Driggers was elected to the convention. Prior to coming here, he spent 13 years with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

In his role there, he discovered 75 percent of Southern Baptist churches either were not gaining or were losing members. The number was even higher in other denominations.

"It was alarming to me," said Driggers, 58, a South Carolina native. "If

our churches were not alive or growing, I wondered what kind of future our denomination would have."

He brought his concerns to convention staff in South Carolina and, together, they reinvented their mission. Instead of being brokers for the larger denomination's programs, they opted for a grassroots approach that made themselves servants to local churches.

"We used to schedule programs and expect churches to come to us," said Bernice Popham, 64, the convention's missions director. "Now we go to churches and ask what kind of programs they need. We're meeting people where they are."

The new model is called "Empowering Kingdom Growth." The convention has made a 10-year commitment to the process, which differs from the old plan of having a different ministry focus every year.

To implement the new strategy, the convention also underwent reorganization, including job reshuffling. Beyond that, the 125 staff members were grouped into teams, a change from working in isolation in separate divisions.

Some staff members found the change too difficult and left the convention or took early retirement. But most embraced the new plan and have been learning to do their old jobs a new way.

"It's a very stretching experience, and we're still in transition," said Bill Mackey, 54, who has been with the convention 16 years and works with leadership development and evangelism. "I don't think we can say we have arrived, but we are well on our way."

In Gaston, a town spattered with mobile homes and a lone grocery store, Baptists talk about how "helpful" the convention has become, but seem unaware of the larger changes.

Keith Spries, 45, described how the convention was there to help his church plan for its new building program. And Pastor Gary Farmer, who stood on the lawn greeting worshippers, credited the convention with equipping his church with the evangelism tools it needed to turn its situation around.

"The difference is that the convention asked us what our dreams were and then got behind us to help us reach those goals," said Farmer, 61, who's been at First Baptist for six years.

"It's remarkable that a convention with so much history is on the cutting edge and not weighed down by the inertia of its past," said Leith Anderson of Eden Prairie, Minn., a nationally recognized expert on church trends.

The turnaround has piqued the interest of other state Baptist conventions, including Texas, which is the largest in the nation. It's also garnered the interest of other denominations, some of whom are sending leaders to Columbia for a spring conference.

Despite the success, Driggers said the convention hasn't proven anything yet, but is only getting started.

"We exist to serve churches, and that principle is what's catching on," he said. "Of course, all denominations claim that as a principle. The difference is that we live it."

Reprinted by permission of The State, Columbia, S.C.

**CHANGING TIMES** Dale Harlan (left), pastor of Briar Creek Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., talks with Debra Hayes, director of the church's multi-housing ministries program. Briar Creek is a traditional Baptist church that is adapting to meet the needs of a changing community. (BP photo by David Winfrey)

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