



# WESTERN RECORDER

February 6, 1996  
Vol. 170, No. 6**FOR THE RECORD****Divorce care**

The extended families of divorcing couples also feel the pain of separation, speakers said at a recent divorce recovery workshop. See pages 1 & 7.

**Church life**

One in five new church starts dies within 14 years, a new study reveals. See page 2.

**Not the norm**

Although mega-churches gain more attention than other churches, they are not the statistical norm for Southern Baptists. See page 2.

**Family Forum**

Marriage and the 2nd law of thermodynamics. See page 4.

**Editorial**

What if your neither a round peg or a square hole? Where do you fit in? See page 5.

**RFRA upheld**

A federal appeals court has upheld the constitutionality of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. See page 6.

## Parents feel hurt when children divorce

By Joyce Sweeney Martin  
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—Parents are the “neglected grievors” when an adult child divorces, according to a Kentucky Baptist minister.

Pastors and fellow church members often focus on asking about the divorcing parties, without realizing the parents of the divorcing couple are hurting too, said Guy Futral, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention’s minister/church support division.

This is a pain Futral knows firsthand. He and his wife, Nancy, have seen three of their four daughters’ marriages end in divorce.

Futral shared his family’s story at a “Ministry Beyond Divorce” leadership workshop sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention Jan. 26-27 in Louisville.

Like most parents, Futral said he and his wife dreamed of their daughters “living happily ever after” when each married. While the Futrals knew statistics show half of all marriages end in divorce, “we didn’t think that applied to us,” he said.

And so it was a shock when the first daughter called “almost without warning” to say her two-year mar-

riage was over. Her husband was unhappy with his job, the place to which they had moved and with her.

“We were several states away. We felt helpless,” Futral said. “I was angry with my son-in-law.”

An even greater shock came when their eldest daughter divorced after a 10-year marriage. “Again, we were disappointed, sad and embarrassed,” Futral said.

### Do Extended families of Divorce

More on page 7

Two more divorces (one daughter divorced twice) brought the questions even closer to home. “We struggled with what we had done wrong as parents,” he confessed.

In the ensuing years, Futral said he has come to understand that just as their daughters faced grief after divorce, so he and his wife faced their own grief and loss.

In the workshop, Futral and other participants listed losses common to parents of children who divorce:

■ Loss of self esteem. “Where did we go wrong?” is an oft-asked question.

Futral said he had to come to understand that at some point each child becomes an adult and is responsible for his or her own decisions. “To release them relieves me of some of my feelings of guilt,” he said.

■ Relationship with the in-law. “We were family,” he said.

■ Relationships with grandchildren may be in jeopardy.

■ Loss of joy. One participant said the divorce of her adult child “stripped the joy right out of our family for a long time.”

■ The divorced child. One participant reminded the group that “sometimes we can be the parents of the bum who left.”

■ Loss of innocence. Futral said it took him a long time to consider that his daughters might have contributed to the breakup of their marriages.

■ Loss of faith and relationship to God.

Futral said churches must recognize that parents are grieving and need healing too. He suggested pastors and church members should be good listeners.

Also, churches must help parents learn to forgive, he said.

## Small church gives big again to Lottie Moon

RUSSELL SPRINGS—They’ve done it again.

For the second year in a row, First Baptist Church of Russell Springs has pulled out all the stops in its gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

During December, the church, which averages 230 in Sunday morning worship attendance, raised \$11,384 for foreign missions—more than double the \$5,500 goal and more than \$2,000 above the record 1994 offering of \$9,001.

Prior to 1994, the church’s most ambitious goal had been \$2,500, according to church secretary Brenda Aaron.

While the 100-year-old church has a long tradition of missions concern, that interest has been raised to new levels in the last two years, according to Aaron. Both she and Pastor Bill Ramage attribute the current enthusiasm for missions to the

See Russell Springs ..., page 9

## Former border guard now leads migrants to freedom

By Joyce Sweeney Martin  
Staff Writer

CERULEAN—When Stan Smith speaks Spanish these days, it’s not to detain Mexican illegals at the border; it’s to tell Mexican migrant workers about freedom in Jesus.

As a border guard with the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, Smith spent 30 years apprehending and prosecuting Mexicans trying to cross illegally into Texas. He often took illegal border-crossers before a judge and then to jail. During the latter part of his career, he piloted a surveillance plane which patrolled the Texas-Mexico border.

“It was my job, just like that of any lawman” to uphold and enforce the

law, he said.

During those years, Smith was aware of the material poverty which gripped many Mexicans, but he was unaware of their spiritual poverty because they all seemed to know “who (the historical) Jesus is,” he explained.

Besides, Smith was not a Christian himself. Although his wife was a believer and often shared her faith with him, he was “not interested.”

But after the couple retired and moved to northeastern Tennessee, that changed. One afternoon while reading Proverbs 3:5-6, he saw his need for Christ in the passage which says, “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

The next Sunday, Smith made his

See Former border guard ..., page 8

## Rally will focus on children

By David Anderson  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Children’s Defense Fund, backed by 350 national, state and local groups, called Feb. 1 for a mass demonstration in Washington June 1 to highlight children’s issues in the coming election campaign.

“The moral litmus test of our country is whether our children get a fair start in life,” Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Washington-based advocacy group, told a news conference announcing the “Stand for Children”

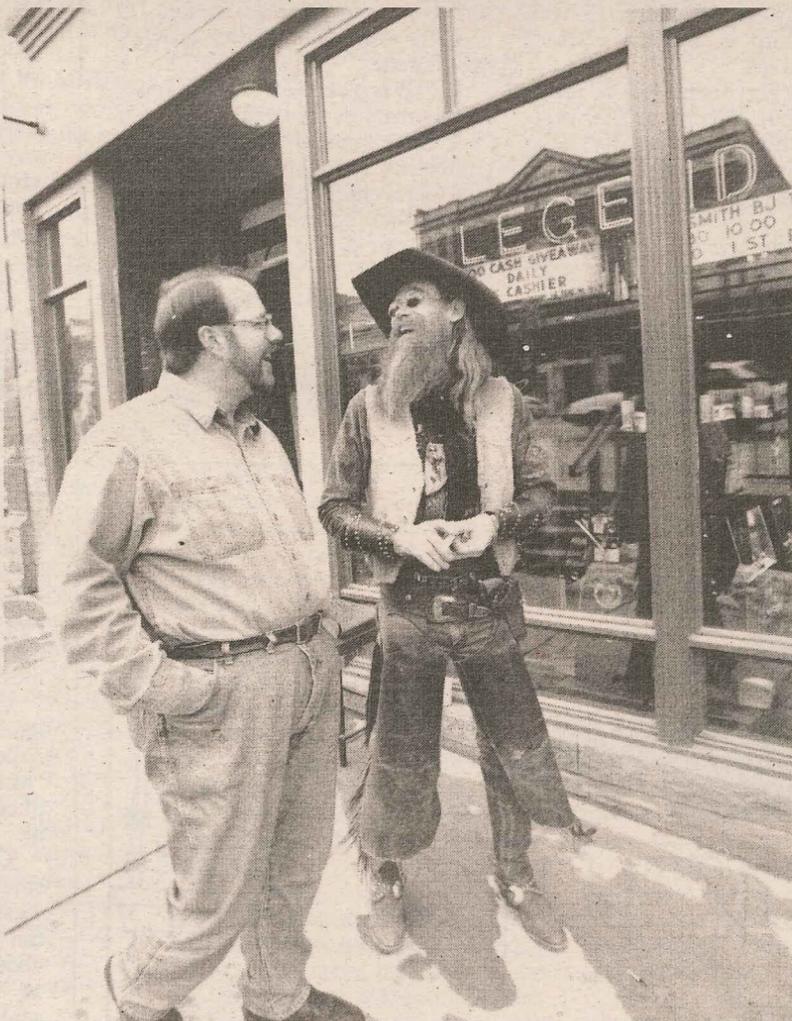
rally to be held at the Lincoln Memorial.

“We don’t think our national leaders—Republican and Democrat, liberal and conservative—are hearing our children’s call for help,” Edelman said.

The demonstration, she said, is intended “to send a strong message to all our political leaders at all levels that they should do no harm to children.”

The Children’s Defense Fund also released the 1996 edition of its annual “The State of America’s Children Yearbook.”

See Rally to focus ..., page 8



**HOME MISSIONS EMPHASIS** The annual Season of Home Missions currently is underway in Southern Baptist churches nationwide. The Season will culminate with the annual week of prayer for home missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. This annual emphasis reminds Baptists of the variety of traditional and non-traditional missionaries who serve all across the United States. Here, bivocational pastor Dennis Peck (left) talks with William “Wild Bill” Lafever, a resident of Cripple Creek, Colo. Peck, pastor of Cripple Creek Baptist Church, works as a city handyman, a job which keeps him on the street where he ministers to tourists and locals alike. (BP photo by Paul Obrègon)

Moving? See page 4 (206)



# BAPTISTS

## BAPTIST BITS

■ **Baylor University**, the nation's largest Baptist-related school, has dropped its century-old ban on dancing on campus. Robert Sloan, the university's new president, announced the change Jan. 26. The university still will not allow alcohol on campus and also will prohibit "provocative" dancing, Sloan said.

■ **Missionary Bill Harrington** has been falsely accused of fleeing Tanzania with money embezzled from a government hospital, according to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Tanzanian authorities do not appear to take seriously the accusations, which have been broadcast across the African nation. Harrington's wife and 10-year-old daughter were among a small group of missionaries kidnapped, robbed and drugged last August.

■ **Pen pals are sought** for Chinese students who are studying English as part of an ongoing project of the National Fellowship of Baptist Educators. The fellowship seeks 5,000 Christian young people in grades seven through 12 and 2,000 college students to become pen pals. For information, write to John Carter, Samford University, Box 2305, Birmingham, Ala. 35229.

■ **Andy Stanley**, son of Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, has begun a new church in suburban Atlanta. About 2,100 people attended the first service Jan. 28. The younger Stanley resigned as associate pastor of First Baptist Church last August due to concerns about his father's pending divorce from his mother.

## 1 in 5 church starts gone by 14th year

By David Winfrey  
SBC Home Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—One-fifth of all Southern Baptist church starts are gone from the convention's records before their 14th birthday, according to a study by the Home Mission Board's research division.

The study, designed to learn more about the early stages of church life cycles, discovered the first seven years are the most critical period for losing churches through disbanding, reverting to mission status, merging with another congregation or breaking away from the convention.

Improved selecting and training of church planters will help lower that figure, predicted Charles

Chaney, HMB vice president for church extension.

Researchers analyzed the records of 7,625 churches constituted between 1972 and 1990. An average 359 churches were constituted annually, reported Richie Stanley, director of HMB planning and services research department.

Of those studied, 16 percent were gone from the SBC's rolls by 1993. Of churches 14 years and older in that group, 20 percent were gone, Stanley wrote in the study.

Chaney noted Southern Baptists are not very different from most Christian denominations, which lose 0.8 percent of existing churches annually.

"Our record is better than the average," he said. "I'm not happy with

it, but it's better than what the whole body of Christ is doing as far as lost churches."

Chaney, however, lamented the "infant death rate" for new churches and missions. Southern Baptists start an average 1,200 congregations annually, but only about 360 are constituted as churches each year.

Meanwhile, the number of missions has stayed relatively flat, meaning mission congregations are dying rather than becoming self-supporting churches.

"We have to start three mission congregations in order to get one constituted church," Chaney said. "I think that is unacceptable, and one of the major things that I'm going to be giving my life to is developing a system that will cut that rate down."

## Preaching hurt by right & left, Mohler warns seminarians

LOUISVILLE—Biblical preaching is under attack from both the right and the left, President Al Mohler told students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during a spring convocation service Jan. 30.

A neglect of Scripture in sermons has created a "crisis in preaching" that cuts across denominational and ideological lines, Mohler warned.

"In the left wing of the churches, the Bible's authority and inspiration are often rejected and thus the Scriptures are often absent," he said. "Among evangelicals, the Bible's authority and inspiration are confessed, but the Scriptures are often soon abandoned."

Mohler cited a study by sociologist Marsha Whitten which concluded that evangelicals, including Southern Baptists, often fail to match their high affirmation of Scripture with preaching that is solidly biblical.

Too much preaching is concerned with "the self" instead of Scripture, Mohler said. He called for a return to the priority on Scripture championed by the apostles and church reformers.

The reformers, he said, emphasized Scripture in order to guard against excessive reliance on the church hierarchy and tradition. Those threats pose no imminent threat for contemporary evangelicals, Mohler maintained. "The greater danger for us is not that we listen to a magisterium above but to the inner child or whatever seems to be within."

Mohler challenged students to preach biblical truth even if their proclamation proves unpopular. "We are charged to preach a message we have received, not to invent a message that will be well received," he said. "We are to preach that which has been sent, delivered and addressed to us, not a message that has been developed or altered."

## Mega-churches still the exception

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Despite a few high-profile exceptions, Southern Baptists are not a denomination of mega-churches, according to a study of church starts by the Home Mission Board research department.

"Pastors of new churches in urban areas need to understand few churches reach mega-church status," wrote Richie Stanley, director of the HMB's planning and services research department.

Researchers analyzed the growth of 7,625 churches constituted between 1972 and 1990 in relationship to the size of their communities.

The report found that in urban areas of 10,000 to 50,000 residents, churches typically have fewer than 300 members after 22 years, but show no sign of plateauing.

In urban areas of more than 50,000 residents, churches typically have fewer than 350 members after 22 years, and demonstrate no leveling of growth, the report stated.

While HMB researchers have

no official definition for a "mega-church," Stanley said of the 39,571 Southern Baptist churches, only 504 have memberships of 2,500 and above. The median Southern Baptist church has 504 members, he added.

Among the report's other findings:

■ Southern Baptists are starting churches in rural areas in disproportionate to population trends. While 25 percent of Americans live in rural areas, 39 percent of Southern Baptist churches were started there in the years studied.

■ Most new churches are growing churches.

■ The typical new church has 65 members its first year.

■ The typical 20-year-old church has 161 members.

■ Rural churches typically have 47 members after their first year and plateau at 120 members after 17 years.

■ In small cities with populations between 2,500 and 10,000, churches typically begin with 53 members and plateau after 18 years at 170 members.

## 'Prairie fire' talk ignites feelings at Midwestern

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—President Mark Coppenger's use of "prairie fire" imagery to tout his new administration at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is leaving some alumni blazing mad.

Virginia alumni of the Kansas City, Mo., seminary, wrote an open letter to Coppenger, published in the Jan. 18 issue of Virginia's weekly Baptist newspaper, the Religious Herald, stating "concerns" about statements attributed to the president in news reports.

Coppenger, a conservative leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, assumed Midwestern's presidency last fall. He replaced long-time president Milton Ferguson, a moderate, who retired.

Upon his election as president, Coppenger described Midwestern as "a seminary waiting to happen." In an issue of the seminary's alumni journal, Coppenger linked alumni support with "spiritual decline" at the school and observed that "prairie fire," the revivalistic slogan adopted by his administration, "burns off its clutter."

The Virginia alumni took offense at those references.

"As products of the efforts of dedicated staff and faculty, we firmly believe that Midwestern has been a seminary 'happening' in a very positive way for decades," the alumni wrote. "What, or who, is the 'clutter' to which you refer?" they continued. "You seem to be ... referring to alumni like us, but not only us."

"If we are the 'clutter,' then so are the thousands of churches that have called and benefitted from the ministries of Midwestern alumni as well as seminary faculty and staff. Would you also include among the 'clutter' the hundreds of alumni who have invested their lives and ministries in answering God's call to missions all over the globe? Are you going to rejoice at the burning off of such 'clutter' as these?"

Coppenger responded in a letter to the Religious Herald editor that his comments were "misunderstood" and "misapplied" in the letter from alumni.

Coppenger said as the smallest SBC seminary, Midwestern has "untapped potential" to grow. And the phrase about burning off clutter refers to "the sin in our lives," he said.

"I certainly did not apply that to our alumni nor Southern Baptist churches," Coppenger wrote.



"We had planned to worship our ever-present, overcoming Lord, but now we can't ... Our projector bulb blew!"

## More abortion, alcohol bills introduced

By Mark Wingfield  
Interim Editor

FRANKFORT—A fourth abortion bill was introduced in the Kentucky General Assembly last week, adding to a legislative lineup already rich with moral and ethical concerns.

Senate Bill 171 would define the term "abortion facility" and require licensing of such facilities to meet certain health standards. The bill also would establish reporting requirements for abortion facilities and would require physicians who perform abortions in their offices to have written agreements for emergency transportation to hospitals in the event of a crisis.

Three other abortion-related bills already had been introduced in this year's legislative session. All are similar to abortion bills passed in 1994 by the House but never brought to the floor for debate in the Senate.

House Bill 362 and Senate Bill 153 would require "informed consent" and a 24-hour waiting period for women seeking abortions. House Bill 345 is similar to the newly introduced Senate bill and would mandate closer regulation of abortion facilities.

Both Senate bills have been sent to that chamber's Judiciary Committee, where they languished without action in 1994. Both House bills initially were assigned to that chamber's Health and Welfare Committee but since have been reassigned to the Judiciary Committee.

The Temperance League of Kentucky is promoting passage of two alcohol-related bills already in the legislative pipeline.

House Bill 166 would limit the time for circulating a petition for a wet/dry election to six months. The bill currently awaits action by the

House Licensing and Occupations Committee.

House Bill 342 involves a fight between full-scale liquor retailers and other stores that sell liquor as a sideline. However, since the effect of the legislation would be to make it more difficult to buy alcohol, the Temperance League supports the bill, said Executive Director Claude Witt.

The bill would require any business which sells package liquor, but for which package liquor sales constitute less than 60 percent of gross receipts, to sell alcoholic beverages in a separate department from other

Kentucky  
General  
Assembly



merchandise. This bill also has been assigned to the House Licensing and Occupations Committee.

On another front, the controversial bill to allow Kentuckians to carry concealed weapons received a favorable report from the House Judiciary Committee after amendments were made Jan. 31. The amendments would prohibit carrying concealed weapons at court proceedings, in court houses, in health-care facilities and clinics. The amendments also would allow owners of businesses to prohibit carrying of concealed weapons on their property.

The concealed weapons legislation, House Bill 40, passed out of committee on a 16-3 vote and now awaits action by the full House.

Another issue of interest to church-state separationists is lurking

in the 1996-98 state budget proposed by Gov. Paul Patton.

Patton's proposed budget allocates \$2 million annually to transport students enrolled in parochial and other private schools. Opponents traditionally have criticized this expenditure as government financing of religious education and as a drain on meager resources available for public education.

However, Jane Chiles, executive director of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, told the Record, a Jefferson County Catholic newspaper, that she still wants to see the bus subsidy increased to provide full funding. That would be an estimated \$7 million.

In other action:

■ House Bill 10, which would mandate that no school board, administrator or teacher may prohibit "voluntary, student-initiated prayers during non-instructional time," has been passed by the House and now awaits action in the Senate Education Committee.

■ House Bill 28, which would permit public schools to observe a moment of silence at the beginning of each school day, passed the House with no opposition Jan. 31 and has been sent to the Senate.

■ House Bill 275, which would require the Cabinet for Human Resources to implement a five-year public awareness campaign on alcohol and drug addiction in women and its relation to domestic violence, was reported favorably by the House Health and Welfare Committee Jan. 23 and has been sent to the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee for review.

To check on the status of a bill, call (800) 776-9158. To give your senator or representative an opinion about a bill, call (800) 372-7181.

## BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **College fair planned.** Ninth & O Baptist Church in Louisville plans a college fair for high school students March 31 from 2-4:30 p.m. Representatives from all Kentucky Baptist colleges, as well as from state universities, will be on hand to answer questions from prospective students and their parents.

■ **Hinson to lecture.** Glenn Hinson, professor of spirituality and church history at Baptist Theological Seminary of Richmond (Va.), will deliver the annual Staley Lectures at Cumberland College March 4-5. Hinson, who taught for more than 30 years at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, will speak three times around the theme of "Seeking a Mature Faith." The lectures are at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. March 4 and 3 p.m. March 5.

■ **Scholarship applications taken.** Georgetown College is receiving applications for its new Parks Baptist Scholars Award, named in honor of Paul and Phyllis Parks. The fund provides a four-year, full-tuition, room and board scholarship to one of the nation's top Baptist scholars preparing for lifelong Christian service. For information about specific requirements or an application, call (800) 788-9985.

■ **Change of artists announced.** JoyJam, the contemporary Christian concert in partnership with this year's Kentucky Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference, has announced a change in artists for its lineup. Michael W. Smith will not appear at JoyJam as earlier publicity indicated, because of a last-minute commitment to perform at one of Billy Graham's few 1996 crusades in the United States. However, in his place, three other artists have been booked: Geoff Moore & the Distance, Glad and Clay Crosse.

■ **Clean-up crews retreat.** Kentucky Brotherhood's disaster relief crews working in West Virginia in the aftermath of devastating floods had to scale back their efforts late last week due to extraordinarily cold temperatures. The Kentucky mud-out crew had moved to Fairlee, W.Va., Jan. 28, and was assisting the Red Cross in cleaning up 257 damaged houses. Next week's Western Recorder will carry photos and an update.

## Elmer Masden, former dean, dies

WILLIAMSBURG—Elmer C. Masden, dean emeritus of Cumberland College, died Jan. 28.

A native of Bullitt County, Masden began his career in 1931 as a pastor. In 1944, he entered academic administration, becoming head of the department of Bible, religious education and Greek at Carson-Newman College in Tennessee.

He moved to Bethel College in Kentucky in 1952 and then to Cumberland College in 1955. He began as head of Cumberland's religion department but became coordinator of the college's four-year program when it was begun in 1959. He served Cumberland as academic dean from 1961 until his retirement in 1980.

Masden was a longtime Sunday school teacher and deacon at First Baptist Church of Williamsburg.

## Clear Creek professor spins 'golden oldies'

By Melanie Childers  
Staff Writer

PINEVILLE—If you miss the days when Perry Como and Frank Sinatra crooned the most popular tunes on the radio, a Kentucky theology professor's "Nostalgic Memories" program offers plenty of moments to remember.

Jack Robertson, semi-retired professor of biblical interpretation at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville, has designed thematic hour-long programs that combine recordings of "golden oldies" with clues and trivia questions about the title, artist and lyrics of each selection.

The program has proved to be successful, especially among older audiences, Robertson said. Since last June, he has taken his show on the road to more than 300 people in seven churches across the state. And more than 100 people have visited Clear Creek's campus to hear Robertson's presentation and tour the school.

Robertson calculated he has trav-

eled more than 1,000 miles with his program so far, carrying his karaoke machine to churches and retirement centers from Hopkinsville to Ashland.

"I have a background in radio, in big band era," said Robertson, explaining that he began announcing for a Louisville radio station in 1937. He later worked for WHAS in Louisville for four years while a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Although he left that early career for a lifelong dedication to ministry and teaching, Robertson retained his music library and his love for the genre, he said.

"I'm getting on toward the twilight years now, and I thought, 'Why not have a program that senior adults would enjoy?'" said Robertson, who turns 80 this year.

Senior adults sometimes are overlooked in church programming, he noted, and this type of presentation is something many of them would be interested in, because they can remember the music.

"Nowadays what we hear in the

media is country and rock and roll. That's fine, but there's an audience for this music too," he explained.

The musical programs feature a particular theme, Robertson said. For example, the moon theme includes "Moon River" and "Blue Moon," while the rose theme features "My Wild Irish Rose" and "The Days of Wine and Roses." Other themes highlight music of hearts, the seasons, love and memories, he said.

"I don't want it to be a devotional program—that's not the purpose," he added, emphasizing his intent to offer "decent, delightful entertainment."

Robertson has received a great deal of positive feedback from his audiences, he said. "People tell me 'We just don't hear that music anymore,'" he said. "It gives people ... entertainment which is a little out of the ordinary."

The professor said he anticipates continuing to conduct his presentations this spring and summer. To schedule one of his programs, call him at (606) 337-9007.

# OPINION

## 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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## BAPTIST FORUM

### Meet human needs

Recently I was in the collectibles department in Bacons, needing a transaction completed on the second floor. Since I have a small walking problem, a young sales assistant, Tamara Robinson, asked if she could do the transaction for me. Nonetheless, she was so kind, gentle and

sweet. When she returned, I tried to thank her money-wise; three times she refused.

She did express a need for prayer about a personal concern, and asked would I join her, which I have been doing. Race, gender, religious beliefs, politics and etc. were never discussed. Tamara sensed a need and she acted upon her instinct. How many of us are so tuned in to human need?

Just recently my husband, Roy, shared a Scripture with me from the Living Bible, which seemed to express a simple explanation of our role as a Christian. Matthew 5:13-14: "You are the world's seasoning, to make it tolerable. If you lose your fla-

vor, what will happen to the world? You are the world's light, a city on a hill, glowing in the night."

I understand perfectly well "glowing in the night."

In October, my husband and I went to New England. We had been driving since early morning. It was then late evening, we were exhausted, looking for the hotel. We had called earlier for reservations, and all of a sudden we came into Waterbury, Conn. "A city on a hill, glowing in the darkness."

The light made all the difference. Thanks again, Tamara.

Phyllis Barnes  
Louisville

## Colson: On Oliver Stone's 'Nixon' & the gospel

Oliver Stone's much bally-hooped Nixon film recently opened in theaters. It may sound strange, but this rendition of the Watergate coverup reminds us that it would have been impossible for the greatest story ever told not to be true.

There always have been people who denied that Jesus even lived. But the archaeologists and historians have uncovered enough documentation in recent decades that Jesus' existence is no longer in question.

But Christians believe not only that Jesus lived and died, but that he was also raised from the dead.

Here is where Oliver Stone comes in. His film on the Nixon years reminds us once again there was a political scandal called Watergate, in which I played a major part.

A group of rogue political operatives orchestrated a break-in at Democratic National Headquarters in 1972. On March 21, 1973, White House Counsel John Dean walked into the president's office and for the first time told Nixon all that was involved in Watergate. At that moment Nixon knew all—and the White House coverup began in earnest.

By April 8, Dean fled to the prosecutor's office and the rest, as they say, is history. Why did Dean

bargain for immunity? In his memoir, "Blind Ambition," Dean acknowledged with refreshing candor that he did so not to save the Constitution but to save his own skin. When that happened, other aides scrambled to make deals. Nixon and the coverup were doomed.

So, 12 of the most powerful men in the world couldn't contain a lie for three weeks.

Compare this with the acts of the 11 apostles who professed to see Jesus resurrected. While the Nixon circle enjoyed the protection of the most powerful man in the world, these apostles were ordinary men; they had no protection whatsoever. And so, for possibly as long as 60 years, members of this group were hounded and tortured for their faith. All but one died a martyr's death.

Yet not one of them ever renounced his belief that he had seen the risen Christ.

How could this happen? After all, as Stone shows us, it takes no time at all for powerful men to crack under pressure to save their skins. But the powerless apostles didn't change their tune. The reason? They had seen God in the flesh and could not deny it.

Had they not, the Apostle Peter would have been just like John

Dean. After all, he had already turned on Jesus three times.

Non-believers may dismiss the apostles as just religious fanatics, but that misses the point: Men will die for what they believe to be true. But they will not die for something they know to be false.

There also is the evidence of how Christ changes lives today. In my many trips into the world's prisons—some of which are so horrid that Americans would be arrested if they left their dogs in similar circumstances—I have seen astonishing transformations. Scoffers tell us that these prisoners, trapped in hell-holes, have every incentive to comfort themselves with illusions. They tell us that religion blinds us to the true nature of life.

But they are wrong. It is Christianity that leads thousands of volunteers into the prisons—week after week, year after year—to confront the horror of our fallen world. Prisons are not the only destination. Christianity has led countless people far from the comfortable studies where scoffers reign, to serve those who are the least of us, always at the cost of comfort, sometimes at the cost of life.

Charles Colson  
Prison Fellowship

## Potential

My appreciation for "Dr. Seuss" has grown a little rusty from my days of fatherhood when "Green Eggs and Ham" was high on the list of our children's preference for bedtime reading by mom and/or dad.

Like all good things, "what goes around comes around," and Dr. Seuss' books are part of our new generation's (our grandchildren, of course) reading preferences. The man had a gift for communicating with children and firing their imaginations.

However, like so many persons whose giftedness is seldom if ever acknowledged, much less makes an important contribution to humanity, "Dr. Seuss" was almost overlooked. His story which follows was taken originally from the September-De-

cember 1992, issue of Illustration Digest.

"Theodor Geisel had a bad start in life. As a boy he sold war bonds for the U.S. during the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. When President Theodore Roosevelt came to present each scout a medal for selling war bonds, Theodor's name was left off the list and he did not receive a medal. His passion for sketching cartoons was discouraged by a teacher who predicted, 'You will never learn to draw.' His fraternity at

Dartmouth College elected Theodor 'least likely to succeed.' He transferred to Oxford University and soon dropped out. He married Helen Palmer, who encouraged him to develop his funny cartoon animals.

"However, on his first job, the magazine he worked for paid him in shaving cream and soft drinks. Sail-

ing home from Europe, Theodor made up rhymes to the beat of the ship's engines and wove them into a children's book titled 'And To Think I Saw It on Mulberry Street.' Twenty-seven publishers turned down his manuscript, saying it was silly.

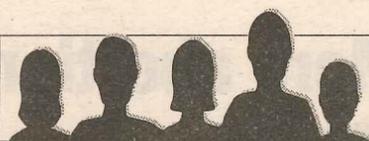
"In 1937, a publisher took a chance on one of Theodor's books. Ultimately he wrote 48 books and they have sold 200 million copies in 20 languages. He was even presented the prestigious Pulitzer Prize."

I will try to remember this when Marshall and Sarah begin to sprout their gifts and visions for the future.

I will try to remember this when someone comes "off the wall" with an idea which might sound peculiar or wild at the same time.

I will try to remember this when I am tempted to put down my own ideas and dreams.

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



## FAMILY FORUM

### Marriage and the 2nd law of thermodynamics

By Diana Garland

John Gottman, a prominent marriage researcher, has concluded that the second law of thermodynamics also applies to marriage. If you don't happen to remember that law from high school, it goes like this: In a closed system, things tend to run down and get disorderly with time.

For a marriage, that means even if nothing bad happens and neither spouse does anything terrible, things still tend over time to become stale and boring, or even miserable. What keeps marriage growing and joyful and a source of strength, even during rocky times, is consistent effort.

It is easy to be loving with your partner when you feel loving; it is not so easy to be loving when you feel bored, out of sorts or tired of the same old stuff.

Marital growth comes when we turn that around. Act loving, and the feelings of love often follow. Love and affection are not feelings beyond our control; they are actions we decide to take, regardless of how we feel.

Here are some simple ways to act lovingly:

■ **Show interest and concern.** When your partner talks to you, look like you are interested. Look at him, nod, say "uh-huh," when he is sharing something of interest to him. When he is blue or worried or feeling under the weather, express your concern. Put down what you are reading, mute the television, communicate that you care enough to stop what you are doing.

■ **Think of ways to act caring and affectionate.** Small acts of thoughtfulness are a powerful way to boost the joy of marriage. Scrape the ice off his windshield, polish her shoes. Little gifts—a flower, a pint of his favorite ice cream—anything that says, "we were apart but I was thinking of you"—can delight.

■ **Be appreciative.** Tune in to all the little and big things your partner does to make your life more enjoyable or easier, and say "Thanks" or "You are wonderful."

■ **Perhaps most important of all, find ways to laugh together.** Silliness and laughing together give special sustenance to a marriage. Recall some of your funny memories. Play table games—with others or alone—that put you in a playful mood.

Diana Garland is director of the Gheens Center for Christian Family Ministry at Southern Baptist Seminary.

## HE SAID/SHE SAID

### Childhood memories of pets create a doggone dilemma

#### SHE SAID



Alison Wingfield

"I've got a great idea for our next He Said/She Said," he said.

"What?" I asked with anticipation (well, OK, maybe with a little interest).

"Dogs," he said.

"Dogs?" I was puzzled.

"You know, our debate over whether you should get a dog," he said.

"What debate?" I replied. "Of course we're going to get a dog—when the boys get older."

It was news to me that there was any bone of contention. I guess my assumptions were ill-founded.

Actually my pet preference would be a cat, but since allergies (his) rule that out, a dog it will be.

We had a wonderful, loving, stubborn, slobbering old basset hound when I was growing up. Chief, short for Indian Chief, was his name, because of his red color (we weren't into p.c. language in the '60s). He was a great companion and let us use him as a pillow when we watched TV. He went on campouts in the mountains with us. Mother had to give him dramamine before our trips so he wouldn't get carsick in the back seat. When he tried to follow us hiking and couldn't get over an obstacle, he would howl only as bassetts can until one of us went back to get him.

After Chief passed on, we had two cats, but since this column has already gone to the dogs, I won't tell you about them.

A pet is an experience no child should be without. I know I'm crazy, because as the mother, I realize who will actually be caring for this animal: Me.

Maybe I learned to be stubborn from Chief, because I'm going to dig in my paws and howl until I get my way.

#### HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

I understand all the reasons children benefit from having pets around the house. But I also understand the unique trauma pets can thrust upon children, because every dog I ever had as a child died an untimely death.

I also know who had to bury every last one of them: Dad. Those are shoes I don't want to fill.

First there was the dog we think was named Floppy. The trauma of his fatal encounter with a moving car remains

forever lodged in the family's collective mind, even though we can't recall the poor dog's name for sure.

Then there was the beautiful stray Husky we adopted, which I promptly named Henry, only to learn later that Henry would have to be short for Henrietta. This discovery foreshadowed the beginning of the end. While spending the night at the veterinarian's office after having "female surgery," Henrietta got so worked up with anxiety that she keeled over and died. Or at least that's what the vet said. Enquiring minds still want to know.

Next came Peanuts, a feisty little pup of mixed breeding. Although we didn't keep close records, I think Peanuts lasted the longest of the pack—until he was struck by cancer of the rump, or something more technical than that. Dad carried him off to be put to sleep, rounding out our record as the Kevorkian family of the canine world.

By this point, the family was so distraught over losing another dog that we had Peanuts buried in a doggy cemetery in a nearby town.

Just a string of bad luck, perhaps? I don't think so. We're obviously carrying a family jinx on dogs, because even the neighbors' dog chose our front yard as his deathbed. So as a second-grader, I made my first death notification to the family across the street. Maybe I should have been a chaplain.

Mark Wingfield is interim editor of the Western Recorder. Alison Wingfield is a freelance writer.

## Round pegs and square holes aren't all

What if you're neither a round peg or a square hole?

Most of us have grown comfortable using that old adage to describe people who don't fit certain roles. Yet it hardly fits our world today. We are much more complex things than squares or circles.

If you increasingly feel uncomfortable in surroundings you previously wore like an old sweat-shirt, you're not alone. The times are changing, and so are the views of your friends, family and fellow church members. One size rarely fits all. Everyone is not simply left or right, liberal or conservative.

In the past, most people and things could be easily classified along well-defined party lines: Republicans or Democrats, Baptists or Methodists, high church or low church, blue collar or white collar.

Not so today. Our views and preferences are much more mix-and-match than ever before. Few people toe a straight party line, unless they're the ones defining the party. And therein lies much of our strife.

For example, who says "intellectual" preaching always has to be combined with high-church music in worship? And who says more emotional preaching also must be accompanied by contemporary or gospel music? What if you like more intellectual preaching but also like contemporary music?

Or what if you're a theological conservative but a political liberal? Such a position could lead you to strongly affirm the authority of the Bible while embracing a pro-abortion position. Where would you find a traditional church in which you would be comfortable?

The same goes for a person who is a theological liberal and political conservative. If you don't believe such a person exists, just look at the strife within the Republican Party.

These scenarios may sound far-fetched, but they

are real. They illustrate the struggle many churches face today in finding consensus. They illustrate why Southern Baptists have had trouble holding everyone together as a national denomination.

So what does all this mean in practical terms? Here are six suggestions:

■ Kentucky Baptists need more than one—probably more than two—churches in most communities. Understanding that most people join a church where they find a large measure of agreement with other members, it takes different kinds of churches to reach different people.

■ Tolerance is a two-way street. We must find new ways to get along with each other without demanding lock-step uniformity on every important but non-essential issue. Intolerance afflicts not only the right but the left. Those who want to be tolerated must learn to be tolerant as well.

■ Individuals must accept the reality that differences of opinion exist on a number of levels and attempt to keep lines of communication open for better understanding. It is naive to assume that everyone in your church or even your family will share your combination of values.

■ Most churches need to carefully assess who they are today, without depending on simplistic definitions of the past. Ignoring the changing attitudes within a congregation will not prevent conflict, but rather will increase the strength of the inevitable explosion.

■ Individuals should take stock of their own beliefs and preferences, be aware of inconsistencies and then realize they are not alone.

■ Remember that even though some of us are shaping up as triangles, rectangles, stars and ovals, it's still difficult to make a round peg fit in a square hole.

— Mark Wingfield

#### EDITORIAL

## 'A child shall lead them,' even in Greek

While working on a doctorate in theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, our oldest son, Ken, taught first-year Greek for several semesters. Since his calling and giftedness from God is teaching, these classes provided him some much-appreciated experience.

Recently, Ken took Walker, his 5-year-old son, to class with him. Walker was just getting over an illness, still too weak to join his little sister, Emma, at the seminary pre-school. Mom (and spouse) Anita was at her job in downtown Louisville.

The lesson for the day centered on the baptism of Jesus as recorded in the first chapter of Mark. Ken had the students working out of the Greek text orally translating, verse by verse, into English.

Walker was seated at a desk toward the back of the room. Ken thought he was playing quietly with a toy dinosaur or "reading" a book. He was certain that Walker was oblivious to what was going on between teach-

er and pupils.

Someone finished translating the sentence, "Coming up out of the water he saw the splitting heavens and the Spirit as a dove coming down to him" (Mark 1:10). Ken asked, "What comes next?"

Walker began to wave his hand vigorously, seeking to get his dad's attention. Thinking the lad needed to go to the bathroom, Ken inadvertently said, "What is it, Walker?"

Walker quickly answered, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Ken did a double-take while the entire class turned toward Walker, and as one voice let out a prolonged, "Whoa." It was one of those special moments when a little child leads adults.

Although verse 11 actually tells of a voice coming out of heaven saying, "You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased," Walker's answer was delightfully correct. His dad was certainly pleased with him.

Ken asked Walker how he knew

that verse. Walker reminded his dad about a favorite video on the life of Jesus which Walker had watched many times. Unbeknownst to Ken, Walker also had brought his own Bible to class that day. He had it opened to a picture of Jesus being baptized.

When I heard this wonderful testimony, I was, of course, very proud of my grandson. And I was pleased his parents, Sunday school teachers and pastor constantly had filled Walker's mind with the truths of God. Beyond question, what children learn—good or bad—not only will remain as deep foundations for life, but also will be shared with others.

It is no wonder God inspired the Apostle Paul to pen an important challenge to the Christians at Philippi and to us: "Practice thinking on what is true, what is honorable, what is right, what is pure, what is lovable, what is high-toned, yes, on everything that is excellent and praiseworthy" (Philippians 4:8).

Ken Lyle  
Executive Director  
Baptist Convention of New England

#### COMMENTARY

## NATIONAL NOTES

■ **National Public Radio** apologized on the air after the Christian Coalition complained that a pre-Christmas commentary by humorist Adrei Codrescu was anti-Christian. In a commentary on NPR's "All Things Considered,"

Codrescu spoke of Christians who believe in a rapture from the earth by saying, "The evaporation of 4 million (people) who believe this crap would leave the world a better place." In its apology days later, NPR said Codrescu's remarks "crossed a line of taste and tolerance that we should have defended with greater vigilance."

■ **Promise Keepers** is kicking off its 1996 season with its first-ever "clergy conference" for men. Organizers predict the Feb. 13-15 event in Atlanta will be the largest gathering of clergy in history, with more than 35,000 pre-registered.

■ **The Republican Party** will not reopen debate on the anti-abortion plank in its platform. During the party's national winter meeting in San Diego Jan. 18, a proposal to debate the abortion issue at the party's national convention in August was defeated on a unanimous vote. Despite the vote by the party's resolutions committee, Republicans who favor abortion rights said they still will seek a way to raise the issue on the convention floor.

## Appeals court upholds constitutionality of RFRA

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A federal appeals court has upheld the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in the most significant challenge to date on the 1993 law.

A three-judge panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of appeals ruled unanimously Jan. 23 that Congress acted within its authority when it enacted RFRA. The appeals court rejected a district court's finding that RFRA unconstitutionally intrudes on the power and role of the judicial branch.

Propelled through Congress by unprecedented support from U.S. religious bodies, RFRA restored a long-standing legal test that required government to show a "compelling" rea-

son to restrict religious practice. Religious groups asked Congress to reinstate the test after a 1990 U.S. Supreme Court ruling made it easier for government to pass laws that burden religion.

Under RFRA, if religious practice is substantially burdened, government must show it used the least-restrictive approach available to advance a compelling purpose.

This case, decided by the 5th Circuit panel in Boerne, Texas, centered on a dispute over a Roman Catholic parish's plans to raze part of a 72-year old church building the city wanted preserved. Church officials said the city's landmark preservation law vio-

lated the parish's rights under RFRA.

District Judge Lucius Bunton of San Antonio sided with the city, ruling RFRA unconstitutional because it infringed on the authority of the courts "to say what the law is."

The appeals court overturned Bunton's decision, saying RFRA does not conflict with the Supreme Court's 1990 interpretation of the First Amendment, but simply offers protection "over and above" that ruling.

"In short, the judiciary's duty is to say what the law is, but that duty is not exclusive," the appeals court said. "The district court's holding that RFRA usurps the judiciary's

power ... to interpret the Constitution is incorrect."

The appeals court also rejected arguments that accommodation of religious practice required by RFRA violates the First Amendment ban on establishment of religion and that RFRA violates the 10th Amendment by intruding on powers reserved to the states.

The appeals court decision is effective only in the 5th Circuit, which includes Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas, but "should also send a strong signal to other courts that RFRA is good law," said Melissa Rogers, associate general counsel with the Baptist Joint Committee.

## Religious Equality Amendment in Senate

WASHINGTON (BP)—A Religious Equality Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has been introduced in the Senate, while two similar measures already are under consideration in the House.

After saying in late October he did not know if he supported an amendment, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, introduced one in late December. Hatch's text is identical to that introduced in the House in mid-November by Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill.

Hatch is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, while Hyde is chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

"After long study and discussion, and a series of hearings in the Judiciary Committee which I chair, I believe a constitutional amendment is necessary to protect the rights of believing Americans," Hatch said. "These rights are now often denied as a result of a confused and often erroneous constitutional jurisprudence in the courts and discrimination against re-

ligious groups and individuals by administrative agencies."

The Hatch/Hyde text says: "Neither the United States nor any State shall deny benefits to or otherwise discriminate against any private person or group on account of religious expression, belief, or identity; nor shall the prohibition on laws respecting an establishment of religion be construed to require such discrimination."

There is a competing proposal in the House. The text introduced in late November by Rep. Ernest Istook, R.-Okla., says: "To secure the people's right to acknowledge God according to the dictates of conscience: Nothing in this Constitution shall prohibit acknowledgments of the religious heritage, beliefs or traditions of the people, or prohibit student-sponsored prayer in public schools. Neither the United States nor any State shall compose any official prayer or compel joining in prayer, or discriminate against religious expression or belief."

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has endorsed Hyde's proposal but has declined to support Istook's. The CLC has expressed concern Istook's amendment would pave the way for government funding of religion, including false religion.

Focus on the Family, the Christian Legal Society, the Family Research Council, the National Association of Evangelicals and the Traditional Values Coalition also have endorsed Hyde's proposal.

The Istook amendment's supporters include Concerned Women for America, Free Congress Foundation and Wallbuilders.

The Baptist Joint Committee and Americans United for Separation of Church and State are among the groups which have expressed opposition to both proposals.

The Hatch proposal, which was introduced Dec. 22, is Senate Joint Resolution 45. Hyde's amendment is House Joint Resolution 121, while Istook's is House Joint Resolution 127.

## Plight of world's persecuted Christians noted

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Leaders of more than 40 evangelical and Catholic organizations urged the federal government Jan. 23 to take up the cause of persecuted Christians around the world.

At the same time, the leaders, representing churches, mission agencies and political advocacy groups, conceded that the Christian community itself has not spoken out forcefully enough on the issue.

"Our consciences have been seared ... by the indifference, the lack of moral outrage (and) the absolutely scandalous silence of the Christian community toward the persecution of Christians worldwide," said former Watergate figure Charles Colson, president of Prison Fellowship International.

Human rights groups report that Christians in many places, including China, Vietnam, Cuba, the Middle East and Northern Africa, face arrest, torture, imprisonment and extrajudicial executions.

For example, 200 Catholic priests and Protestant pastors currently are imprisoned in China because of their religious activities, according to Freedom House, a New York-based hu-

man rights organization co-founded by Eleanor Roosevelt.

Conference participants heard several witnesses describe ongoing repression of Christians by Islamic, communist and nationalist regimes.

"There's a struggle of great proportions taking place around the world," said Keith Roderick, secretary general of the Coalition for the Defense of Human Rights Under Islamization, which represents Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox groups in Muslim countries.

As part of the new grassroots effort, the National Association of Evangelicals released a "Statement of Conscience" calling on the U.S. government to "adopt policies that would limit religious persecution," especially among evangelicals.

The NAE statement urged several actions, including:

- A major policy address by President Bill Clinton on the issue.
- Appointment of a special adviser to the president on religious liberty.
- Improvements in State Department research and documentation of religious liberty violations.
- Changes in what the NAE called the "indifferent and occasionally hos-

tile manner" with which the Immigration and Naturalization Service treats religious asylum cases.

■ Termination of U.S. foreign aid to countries that allow religious persecution.

The White House did not immediately respond to requests for a comment on the NAE statement. However, Clinton issued a letter to participants at the Freedom House conference emphasizing his concern about persecution of Christians.

"My administration is committed to religious rights everywhere and for all—rights that are fundamental to our goal of furthering the cause of democracy and building a cooperative international community," the president said.

Among the participants at the Jan. 23 meeting were Gary Bauer, president of the Family Research Council; U.S. Senate Chaplain Lloyd Ogilvie; religious broadcaster D. James Kennedy, pastor of Coral Ridge (Fla.) Presbyterian Church; Thomas Melady, an official with the Catholic Campaign for America; and Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission.

## Clinton, Gore at 43rd prayer breakfast

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Over coffee and croissants, thousands of elected officials, diplomats and other leaders mixed politics, prayer and patriotism Feb. 1 at the 43rd annual National Prayer Breakfast.

Nearly 4,000 invited guests filled a Washington Hilton ballroom to overflowing to hear President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John Shalikashvili, and other dignitaries talk about their faith and how it relates to the nation's political future.

The bipartisan event is sponsored by members of Congress who hold weekly private Senate and House prayer breakfasts.

Clinton drew his comments from the New Testament book of Galatians, which speaks of bearing one's own burdens as well as those of others.

"I think being personally responsible and reaching out to others are the two sides of humanity's coin," Clinton said. "And we cannot live full lives, we cannot be enlarged, unless we do both."

Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., the event's keynote speaker, called on leaders in politics to take on a servant mentality.

"May we who compete in the political arena ... remember we are commanded to pray for our enemies," Nunn said. "May we who depend on publicity as our daily bread recall that when we do a secret kindness to others and when we don't try to tell everyone, then our Father who knows all of our secrets will reward us."

Nunn called on citizens to help their representatives in Washington.

"While we need their critiques, we also desperately need their prayers," Nunn said. "May we never forget the final judgment of our tenure here on earth will not be decided by majority vote and that an election is not required to bring us home."

# ISSUES

## Divorce is a reality churches must face, Lepper says

By Joyce Sweeney Martin  
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—The church has two choices when it comes to divorce: refuse to acknowledge it exists or acknowledge life as it is and "offer a word of grace and encouragement."

That's the frank advice of John Lepper, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department.

Not only do churches face the opportunity to help divorcees begin recovery, but also to help extended family members deal with the divorce and to help blended families move beyond divorce, Lepper said.

That's why his department sponsored a "Ministry Beyond Divorce" training workshop for church and associational leaders Jan. 26-27 at Melbourne Heights Baptist Church in Louisville, he said.

The conference drew 94 people from across the state.

In 1994, more than 21,700 Kentucky marriages ended in divorce, Lepper said. In 1990, the United States recorded 509 divorces per

1,000 marriages, a significant rise from the 328 divorces per 1,000 marriages in 1970.

In this 20-year span, "we have moved from one divorce per three marriages to one per two," Lepper noted.

That trend should cause churches to consider what they can do to help people resolve issues related to divorce, Lepper and other conference leaders said.

Building on the divorce recovery workshop offered by the KBC last

year, this year's seminar focused on healing the hurt felt by children, parents, grandparents and siblings.

And it offered a walk-through of a blended family workshop which could be duplicated in a local church.

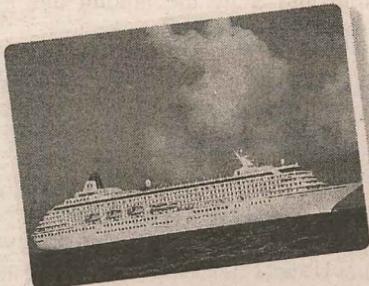
Jim England, a Louisville hospice chaplain, introduced the "Remarriage and Blended Family Workshop" by Susan Landford. In a typical workshop, one topic is addressed during each of three sessions. Sessions normally are three hours in length and include many activities to encourage family members to interact with each other.

### Do Extended families of Divorce

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### Children of divorce face common concerns

LOUISVILLE—Children of divorce face five common concerns which need to be defused, according to Frank and Diana James.

The Jameses, volunteer facilitators in Jefferson County's court-mandated "Families in Transition" program and members of Little Flock Baptist Church, work with parents and children caught in the web of divorce.

From their work, they have distilled these five common concerns, along with advice on how to help children cope:

■ **Fear of abandonment.** Parents should reassure the child of their love. Often a child will feel he or she caused a parent to move out and is afraid the remaining parent will leave too.

■ **Loyalty conflicts.** Don't manipulate or use the child as a messenger or a spy.

■ **Fantasies of responsibility and reconciliation.** Reassure the child that he or she is not responsible for the divorce, but be clear that the parents are not going to get back together.

■ **Anger.** Help the child express anger appropriately. Often a child will direct anger toward the custodial parent when he or she is really angry with the non-custodial parent for leaving.

■ **Worry about the future.** Talk about the child's fears. It is as therapeutic to let him or her talk as it is to give correct information.

### Divorce recovery successful in Bowling Green

BOWLING GREEN—Divorce recovery groups are successful because they "meet real needs of real people in the real world," according to a woman who works with a recovery group in her church.

After attending a 1995 divorce recovery leader workshop sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department, Marilyn Williams went home to Bowling Green to help organize Warren County's first divorce recovery group.

The interdenominational support group began meeting in September at First Baptist Church, where Williams is on staff. More than 35 people

attended the first 13-week group. And when a new group of 35 formed in January, 18 people from the first group came back for a second round.

"They said they couldn't make it without the support of the group," said Mattie Cobb, one of the group's seven leaders.

The group uses the non-denominational "DivorceCare" materials, which feature videotaped seminar sessions with nationally recognized experts on divorce and recovery topics. For the follow-up group, they plan to enlist local speakers to help with practical matters such as finances and budgeting, Williams said.

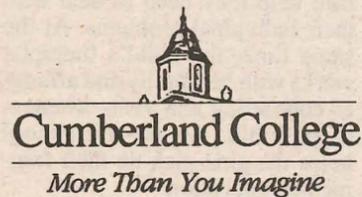
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# PEOPLE

## Former border guard now leads immigrants to freedom

**"If just one man goes back home to Mexico and wins one more to Christ, then our job up here has been done."**  
Stan Smith

*Continued from page 1*

profession of faith in Christ public in a local church.

That decision "changed my life completely," Smith said. "Christ changed how I lived, acted and talked."

And when the Smiths moved to Western Kentucky a few years later, further changes occurred.

The Smiths joined Bainbridge Grove Baptist Church in Cerulean at about the same time Kentucky farmers began bringing in Mexican migrants to work during tobacco-cutting season.

When Bainbridge Grove Pastor Harold Cayce learned Smith could speak Spanish, he enlisted him to help the church initiate a migrant ministry in summer 1993. The neighboring Christian County Baptist Association office building was used each Sunday

afternoon for Bible study, a meal and conversational English classes. The first year, Smith cooked the meal and led the Bible studies each week while volunteers from Christian County churches led English classes.

In addition, Smith and members of the Bainbridge Grove church made weekly visits to the workers to assist with such things as phone calls back home and any other needs the men might have.

"Smith could talk with the telephone operator and get the calls through," eliminating the need for the migrants to bring "buckets of quarters" for the phone calls, Cayce said.

That summer, more than 20 Mexicans came to the services each week; four made professions of faith in Christ. Each summer since, the ministry has grown.

Trigg County Spanish teacher

Cheryl Woody joined the ministry to teach English and help with translation. In 1995, a Thursday night fellowship was added at the Princeton motel where the migrants stay. And area churches helped provide meals, care packets, food and clothing.

In 1995, 80 migrants were involved, and 16 made professions of faith, Cayce reported.

The professions of faith are made when the men "learn who Jesus really is," Smith said. And that brings "joy beyond comprehension" to the former border guard.

Although the migrant workers are back home in Mexico for the winter months, they are not forgotten in Western Kentucky.

Bainbridge Grove Church is warming up for their return in 1996. In January, Smith began a Wednesday night Spanish class to help 12 fel-

low church members be able to speak directly with the migrant workers. And the church is making plans for simultaneous English and Spanish Sunday school and worship services should the farmers bring the migrants to Kentucky for the entire six-month tobacco season in future years.

The rewards touch both Kentucky and the world, Smith said. "If just one man goes back home to Mexico and wins one more to Christ, then our job up here has been done."

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## Rally to focus politicians on children's needs

*Continued from page 1*

The 105-page publication, bringing together statistical material on children and youth from federal, state and local governments, as well as academic research, concluded that 1995 "brought mixed news about the economic outlook for families with children."

Among the bright spots, according to the report, was a slight decrease in the number of children living in poverty between 1993 and 1994; a stabilization of unwed teen-pregnancy

rates; and an increase in the rate of immunization against childhood diseases.

But the report said there was a growing gap in income between rich and poor families; the number of children who are victims of violence or who commit violence continues to grow; and the number of children without health insurance of any kind has grown to 10 million children under the age of 18.

In announcing the June 1 rally, Edelman, who is usually associated

with liberal public policy stands, took pains to underscore that the event "will not be partisan or political" but will be a day of "family celebration and community renewal."

"We want it to be a massive moral witness that sends a message ... that no child should be left behind," she said.

The rally already has won the endorsement of a broad array of groups, including two dozen religious groups such as Bread for the World and the National Council of Churches.

**"The moral litmus test of our country is whether our children get a fair start in life."**  
Marian Wright Edelman

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\$20 will feed a family for one month  
**HELP THE CHILDREN**

### Caring partners

In this space last week I shared with you our great appreciation for the people of eastern Kentucky and their work to bring our ministry to the Big Sandy area. Today, I want to take you clear to the other side of the state to share with you about our Genesis Home for girls in Mayfield.

The Genesis Home is now more than two years old and has truly come into its own as a dynamic ministry to help girls who have suffered almost unbelievable trauma in their young lives. The home serves as a refuge and a place of healing for up to 15 girls who suffer emotional problems stemming from severe abuse, neglect or other family crises.

At Genesis Home, these girls have found people who care about them and are willing to hang with them through thick and thin. Professional staff provide the specialized help they need to deal with their individual problems. At the same time, the child's therapist works with her family and arranges counseling and visits whenever possible. An on-site school helps the girls pick up their fragmented education.

Just as is the case in every oth-

er area of Kentucky where KBHC now has programs, we couldn't be providing this special ministry without the help of a lot of people. We are so grateful to the many special friends of Genesis Home who have stepped forward to provide help. Some have helped financially —by raising funds through such activities as a

gospel sing or by personally making project funds available.

Others have helped with their labor to help improve the facilities. Recent painting, decorating and remodeling projects inside the building and the construction of a storage shed outside come to mind immediately. Still others help by supporting the girls and staff in

prayer and by being involved in church activities.

I wish space allowed me to name all those individuals who partner with us but I'm afraid the list would fill this entire newspaper. Instead, let me say simply: "thank you for caring and sharing with our children."

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

#### HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

### Not just a guest

**By Stuart Collier**  
Director, Pastoral Care  
Tri-County Baptist Hospital  
La Grange

It was a golden day. From the rustic motel veranda, I gazed across a roaring-boulder-strewn mountain stream to inviting Sierra mountains and a bright blue California morning sky. "If I could live here like this forever," I thought, "life would be so good—I would always be happy!"

The first line of a morning devotional prayer, "O Lord, how lovely it is to be your guest," by Gregory Petrov, took me back to that day. A guest of the Lord in this beautiful world. "What a pleasant way to describe life," I thought. Surely the Lord has made a delightful place for us to live out our lives. If I could just be a traveler of the world, taking it all in, seeing the beauty, drinking in the loveliness, being filled to completeness by all the goodness so extravagantly lavished on the world. Oh, for enough days to take it all in.

The more I thought about it, though, the more I thought I didn't just want to be a guest. A guest doesn't add anything of permanence. A guest comes, stays a little while, enjoys things and moves on. Another guest follows and nothing is very different. Being just a guest

is like a honey bee flitting from one beautiful, pollen-filled flower to the next without ever making any honey. The point of the whole thing is to make some honey.

Being a guest all through life actually would be lousy. Most of us want to contribute something to life. We want to look back and see that we made a difference, that we gave something that wasn't just for ourselves.

Recently, my family has been a consumer of medical services. I have never before so appreciated medical care. I have never been so thankful for the miracles of medicine and skilled medical personnel. All of it comes from the contributions of people around me and from generations before. I am so dependent on and blest by people I don't even know who have given of themselves to make life a little better. It makes me appreciate the Baptist Healthcare Foundation. The Foundation takes the contributions so many people give and makes a little bit of honey for a lot of people for a long time.

*Any questions or comments concerning this article, Baptist Healthcare System or Baptist Healthcare Foundation should be directed to Charles W. Cox Jr., president of Baptist Healthcare Foundation, 4007 Kresge Way, Louisville, Ky. 40207. (502) 896-5003 or (800) 224-4745.*

# MONEY



## FINANCIAL FORUM

### Tips for buying big-ticket items

By Doug Strader

How does a person or family buy a big-ticket item that they want or need to make their life more comfortable?

Many Americans live from one payday to the next, without very much discretionary money. So buying big-ticket items can be a problem.

Before our family began a budget and money management program, an unexpected trip to the doctor, having to buy a car battery, or replacing the car tires caused a minor hardship. The thought of having to buy a new kitchen range or refrigerator was so unpleasant that we dared not to think about the prospect of such a need.

Planning is one way to help alleviate some of the fears associated with needing to purchase big-ticket items. Most financial planners encourage families to save for emergency situations.

If you are living from one payday to the next, it may not be too easy to save. But one of the secrets is to save some each payday and before long it will have become a habit. It is also amazing how fast you can accumulate a few hundred dollars in your emergency fund.

If you have need of, or think you have need of some big items for which you do not have the money, check your options.

Do you really need the item?

Could you buy a used model until you can save the money necessary to buy a new one?

Can you get by without the deluxe model?

One big ticket item that usually requires planning is college. Unfortunately for us, we failed to prepare for our children's college expenses until we were near the time when they would begin their college career. At one time, all three of our children were in college at the same time.

With family sacrifice, grants and student loans, we survived. It would have been much easier had we planned for the college expenses.

The key to buying big ticket items is early planning. Timing is very important, now is the time to begin saving. Waiting until tomorrow can be disastrous. You will be ahead of the game by putting your plan into action today.

Doug Strader is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department

## Orlando church gives \$1 million to CP

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—Members of First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla., gave \$1 million through the Cooperative Program in 1995, becoming the first church to do so in Florida Baptist history.

According to Jim Powell of the Southern Baptist Convention's Stewardship Commission, only two churches in the SBC ever have given \$1 million through the Cooperative Program. In 1989, First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas, and North Phoenix Baptist Church in Arizona each reached the million-dollar mark. The Midland church gave another million in 1990.

But for the past four years, the Or-

lando church has led all Southern Baptist churches in Cooperative Program gifts, sending \$925,000 in 1991, \$931,224 in 1992, \$894,805 in 1993 and \$881,807 in 1994.

"As we began inching toward that mark a few years ago, I began to realize this was a real possibility," said Jim Henry, pastor of the Orlando church and president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

According to Henry, as the congregation planned for the 1995 budget, a "visionary layman" suggested to the church's planning team they give \$1 million to the Cooperative Program. Team members immediately and enthusiastically concurred, he

said.

John Sullivan, executive director-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, called the giving record "a miracle."

"That a mega-church with growth pressures and building needs still maintains and affirms the value of cooperation through the Cooperative Program to the nearly unprecedented level of \$1 million is nothing short of a miracle," he said.

"This level of giving also speaks volumes about the leadership consistency of Dr. Jim Henry and this wonderful congregation," Sullivan added. "They have planned to reach this level of giving from the beginning."

## Russell Springs tops goal again

Continued from page 1

work of John Wilson and his wife Marge. Wilson was interim pastor at First Baptist for one year prior to Ramage's coming as pastor in June 1995.

Because the Wilsons had spent more than five years as volunteer missionaries in South Africa and Somalia, they made missions "more personal and real," Aaron said.

The Wilsons' passion for foreign missions "has rubbed off on us," Aaron said. "You can feel their love for South Africa."

The Wilsons have helped members of the Russellville church understand specifics about where mission dollars go and what a decrease in dollars means to missionaries on the field, Ramage said. They make real what happens when the cost of living goes up and the value of the dollar goes down, he said.

## Foundation earnings above average for 1995

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation reported record earnings on its investments in 1995, according to President Barry Allen.

The Foundation's investment services on behalf of Baptist churches, agencies, institutions and the Kentucky Baptist Convention exceeded the results of comparable investment managers, Allen reported.

The equity portion of the Foundation's balanced fund earned a return of 39.1 percent for the year, while the fixed income portion of the balanced fund earned a return of 28.3 percent. That made a combined return on the balanced fund of 28.3 percent.

The Foundation's fixed income fund earned 19.5 percent for the year.

"We encourage churches to consider utilizing the investment management services of the Foundation for their investment needs," Allen said. "The quality of the Foundation's investments is high."

Allen and Laurie Valentine, the Foundation's trust counsel, are available to assist churches in establishing endowment programs and for individual planned-giving consultations. Contact the Foundation at (502) 244-6466.

## PASSPORT

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#1

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#2

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# PEOPLE

## PRAYER PARTNERS

- Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist partnerships with Russia and Boston:
- Financial resources for Russian pastors' schools.
  - In Tambov, Russia, new converts and people who are considering becoming Christians.
  - Tanya, a 20-year-old believer in Tambov, Russia, whose father is a hard-line communist and refuses to allow her to fellowship with other Christians.
  - Tanya's father, that he and his entire family may become Christians.
  - Kentucky Baptist churches preparing for 1996 Boston ministry projects.
  - Peggy Peek, campus minister at Boston University.
  - Boston Haitian Baptist churches as they reach out to Haitians in Haiti.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

- **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Acton Church called **Bill Cassidy** of Elizabethtown as pastor. He began his new ministry Jan. 21, and was ordained to the gospel ministry Jan. 28.
- **DYCUSBURG**—Dycusburg Church called **Bobby Jackson Jr.** as interim pastor.
- **FRANKLIN**—First Church ordained **Blake Russell, John Pirtle** and **Bobby Jennett** as deacons Jan. 14.
- **GEORGETOWN**—Gano Avenue Church recognized **Ronald Wilburn** for 10 years of service as minister of music and senior adults Jan. 14.
- **HARRODSBURG**—**John S. Gaines**, 81, retired Baptist minister, died Nov. 26. His 32-year ministry included Bruners Chapel Church and several others churches in Kentucky. He also served on the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Executive Board. Survivors include his



**MILE OF PENNIES** Woman's Missionary Union leaders from Youngers Creek Baptist Church in Elizabethtown show off a check for \$846.14 raised for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children through the Mile of Pennies emphasis. The church's WMU spearheaded the project, including support from Sunday school and vacation Bible school pupils. The project spanned a six month period. Shown with the check are **Laura Mobley, Becky Hillard, Norma Holcomb** and **Margie Butler**.

wife, Juanita; two daughters; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

- **LEDBETTER**—Ohio Valley Church called **Terry Sills** as interim pastor.
- **LEITCHFIELD**—First Church will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Pastor **George Smith's** ministry, with special services Feb. 25, beginning at 4 p.m. A reception will follow the service.
- **PARK CITY**—Bob Craig resigned as pastor at Park City Church.
- **SOMERSET**—Bethel Church called **Curtis Brock** as pastor. He began his new ministry Jan. 14.

## MISSIONARY UPDATE

- **Carlton and Cornelia Walker**, missionaries to Japan, are on the field at 3-11-22 Nakanosawa, Minami-ku, Sapporo-shi 005, Japan. She is from Bowling Green.
- **Dennis and Margaret McCall**, missionaries to Tanzania, are on the field at P.O. Box 5864, Tanga, Tanzania. She considers Louisville her hometown.
- **William and Dena Harrison**, Southern Baptist representatives to Israel are on the field at Block 6, House 15, Kawkab Va. Al-Shamal, Nazareth 16411, Israel. He was born in Louisville.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Childcare worker for Wednesday evenings and other times as needed. Contact Cynthia Collins at First Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, Ky, (502) 543-7721 or 955-7372.

**FOR SALE:** 1990 Dodge Ram 12-passenger van, 350, automatic transmission. PB, PS, AC/heat, \$7,500 OBO. Call: (502) 462-2992 (Paducah area).

**POSITION:** Director of missions. The West Virginia Tri-County Baptist Association, located in the eastern panhandle of the state, is accepting resumés for the position of director of missions. Please send resumé to: Chairman, DOM Search Committee, c/o South Berkeley Baptist Church, P.O. Box 291, Inwood, WV 25428.

**SEEKING:** Bivocational youth pastor. Please send inquiries or recommendations to: Anchor Church, Attn.: Search Committee, P.O. Box 18195, Erlanger, KY 41018, or call (606) 727-6400 or (606) 356-9259 and ask for Mike.

**CARE:** Kinnett Care. Services include live-in and hourly care, personal care, meals, housekeeping, companionship. Free in-home assessment; insured and bonded. Call 24 hours, (502) 499-7777.

**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.

## Students' needs have changed, our ministry has not

(Third in a series)

Those mountain children came to Oneida Baptist Institute that cold January day in 1900. They came from humble homes, but eager for an education. Many walked, or rode horse or mule from as far as five miles. Three brothers from Crane Creek shared the back of one mule for the three-mile journey.

Some of you remember arriving at school to the popping and cracking of the pot-bellied stove. Others have heard parents or grandparents tell of going to the well to draw water.

Soon after Oneida was founded, one-room schools began to be built in the county. Many who had come miles to Oneida only had to walk a mile or two to the nearest school.

This could have been the beginning of the end, but it was not. From the very start, Oneida was a "Special Place." Students came from surrounding counties to enroll. In the early years, more than a few teary-eyed students were turned away because there was no room. The school had to build dormitories to house students who did not live within walking distance. Still, there were more students than beds.

Through the 1930s most of our students came from Clay and surrounding counties. In the '40s more students came from across Kentucky. In the '50s Oneida became the school for many students from other states and even a few internationals. By the '70s we were providing Christian education for students throughout Kentucky, across the U. S. and around the world. During the last 25 years, we have had students from nearly every county in Kentucky, every state in the Union and 65 foreign countries!

Oneida is truly missions; local, state, home and foreign. Only God knows the number of students who have gone home Christians after meeting the

Master on our campus.

While our students' needs are different from those of 97 years ago, our ministry is much the same. We try to provide quality education, teach students to love and not hate, open their eyes to the world before them, and introduce them to a man named Jesus!

Meeting the needs of today's youth is more complicated than it was 100 years ago. The lack of discipline in public schools makes it difficult to teach. Students in the early days rarely came from single parent homes, unlike today's youth. While boys have always scuffled, gang fights and drive-by shootings are a twenty-first century problem. Many young people today struggle with addictions to alcohol and other drugs. Most of the world's youth are better educated than those of a century ago, while many Americans are not interested in an education. Youth are bombarded with material things, but many lack love, discipline, self-esteem, respect, compassion and the work ethic.

Many of today's youth feel that what is yours is yours only until they can take it from you. They are looking for jobs that have high pay, no responsibility, little work, no stress, plenty of time off, are easy to get to—and they do not want to be hassled by anyone!

All of this could get to a person if it were not for the miracles of changed lives. We are blessed every day to see young people slowly but surely turn to Jesus. No power on earth can compare with the transforming power of the Nazarene! God's grace is still sufficient for all of our needs! We are not successful with every student. We grieve for that soul who has turned down the offer of our love and his love.

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

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## Doing together what we can't do alone

"Churches working together to accomplish what we can't do alone, that's what an association ought to be," Director of Missions Richard Skidmore declares. For 14 years that approach has brought significant results in the Weakley County Baptist Association in East Tennessee.

Skidmore proves you don't need large churches to get the job done. Of the 42 churches he works with, the largest has a Bible study enrollment of 250 and 28 have bivocational pastors.

"Most of our churches never expect to hear a nationally known preacher or teacher, but the association schedules events that feature these leaders, and the people attend," Skidmore said.

Without significant population change the association doesn't need to start churches, but they have seen the need in pioneer areas. The association has invested \$120,000 in a building, provided an annual salary supplement for a pastor and sent summer volunteer teams to establish a church in Iowa. After five years of the cooperative venture, the new work has 59 members. "We're now looking for another place in Iowa."

The association contracts with Paducah Christian counselor Bob Swift for counseling services to the

churches. This is available two days a week.

The 1975 graduate gratefully acknowledges the strong biblical background he received at Clear Creek. "The concern and guidance shown me by Bro. Fitts, Dr. Clark, and others also gave me a real desire to help younger preachers." Seminary extension has helped fulfill this desire. Twenty-two students are now enrolled and five will receive diplomas this year.

When Richard told his wife, Sheila, about his call to preach she said, "Don't tell anyone." She is now his secretary and strongest supporter, and shares every mission trip.

"The owner of the insurance company where I worked offered me a share of the business if I would stay, but God's call was sure and my future secure in him," Richard recalls. After Clear Creek, he was pastor of Northside in Science Hill, Ky., and Temple Baptist in Paris, Tenn.

Richard Skidmore exemplifies one of our educational goals for graduates: the ability "to work competently in Christian ministry and be able to prepare others to do so."

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

## Baptist relief efforts advance gospel on St. Martin

MARIGOT, St. Martin (BP)—Baptists have gained newfound respect on the island of St. Martin due to relief efforts after the Caribbean region's bout with Hurricane Luis in September.

"I can see it in the way people look at the church," said Mike McDaniel, a Southern Baptist worker on the island, which is shared by France and the Netherlands. "This has really given us an opportunity to work. The numbers in our churches have steadily grown. We're packed out each Sunday."

McDaniel and his wife, Karen, arrived on the 33-square-mile island—known as St. Martin on the French side, St. Maarten on the Dutch—in mid-December to begin a two-year stint as International Service Corps workers. That was just before career missionaries Tom and Patti Higginbotham, who lost all their household

furnishings in the hurricane, left on a furlough to Louisiana.

McDaniel, of Roanoke, Va., is reaping the benefits of Higginbotham's work as pastor of the St. Maarten International Baptist Church. After the storm, the church was a distribution center for Baptist aid to hurricane victims.

The Foreign Mission Board provided \$214,500 in disaster aid for St. Maarten and the nearby island of Antigua, also hit hard by Luis. The FMB also sent another \$5,000 to the French West Indian island of Guadeloupe for aid after a later hurricane, Marilyn.

In the wake of Luis, about 130 Southern Baptist volunteers roofed houses and helped with water purification projects on St. Maarten and Antigua.

About 40 volunteers worked on St. Maarten, where all three Baptist churches sustained damages.



**HELPING HANDS** Southern Baptist missionary Tom Higginbotham, shown in this photo taken a few days after Hurricane Luis hit St. Maarten in the fall, walks along beached sailboats, searching for boat owners in need of help. Baptist relief efforts in the aftermath of the hurricane have resulted in increased interest in the gospel, missionaries now report. (BP photo by Ken Touchton)

## Armenian Baptists growing despite nation's troubles

GYUMRI, Armenia (BP)—Baptists in the former Soviet republic of Armenia are sharing the gospel, and their churches are growing—despite a deepening economic crisis triggered by a border dispute with Azerbaijan.

"After all the adversity in Armenia, we thought the membership of the churches would decrease, but for every three members there has been one new believer," said Uri Apatov, a Russian Baptist leader.

About 3.7 million people live in Armenia, bordered by Turkey to the west and Azerbaijan to the east between the Black and Caspian seas. Apatov, president of a federation of Baptists from nations of the former Soviet Union, recently visited two of

Armenia's strongest churches.

"The two churches have a desire to spread the gospel. They sing many hymns in the Armenian language, and people are hungry to hear the word of God," Apatov said.

Although economic turmoil resulting from the past decade's border dispute has driven half a million people out of the country, some churches have doubled their membership during recent years. About 250 of 900 Baptists who worship in Armenia's seven churches were baptized as late as 1994. Others were added in 1995, though statistics are not yet tabulated.

The Baptist church in Gyumri, established in 1914, has grown from about 100 to about 200 members

since an earthquake devastated the city in 1988. No church members were among the 10,000 people killed, but many left the city afterward. Another Baptist church, in Yerevan, has grown to about 600 members.

Armenian Baptists were encouraged late last year by ordinations of new leaders. Ordination services are significant to the Baptist community, since such events were banned until recently. Last year's were the first since 1979, when Uri Ovanecian, now Armenian Baptists' president, was ordained as pastor.

At the Gyumri church, a pastor and two deacons were ordained. "During the past 30 years, people in the church do not remember such an

encouraging occasion as this," Apatov said. Among those attending were the city mayor, a priest of the Armenian Apostolic Church, several Roman Catholic nuns and several journalists.

Armenians traditionally believed the first apostles came to their people to share the gospel. Although non-Christian practices and celebrations survive, the nation has considered itself officially Christian since the fourth century. The Armenian Apostolic Church, the leading group in Armenia, claims 1.6 million members. The church follows a doctrine called "monophysitism," which holds that Christ has a single human and divine nature.

## Report: Worldwide Jewish population plummeting

JERUSALEM (RNS)—The Jewish population is plummeting around the world—with the exception of Israel, Germany, Canada and Panama—according to a demographic "State of the Jewish World" report issued during the World Jewish Congress annual convention.

Only 13 million Jews are alive today worldwide—meaning the community has not recovered numerically from the Holocaust, before which there were 18 million Jews.

In the United States, the percentage of Jews in the population has plummeted drastically. From a post-war high of 4 percent of the U.S. population, it has plunged to 2.3 percent, or 5.8 million Jews, as a result of a relatively low birthrate and a high rate of intermarriage.

More than 50 percent of U.S. Jews who married in the 1980s married a non-Jewish partner, the study notes. Studies have shown that only about one-fourth of intermarried couples raise their children as Jews.

"This is the most up-to-date and comprehensive attempt to survey the trends in world Judaism today,

and the numbers are quite worrying," said Avi Beker, a political scientist and the director of the Israel office of the World Jewish Congress, which conducted the survey.

He said the study also identified a growing polarization between religious and non-religious Jews worldwide.

"In some places we can say there is almost no contact between these communities," Beker said, "even though there is an international network of observant Jews and more informal contacts between non-religious Jews."

The two segments of Jewry are divided both by their lifestyles and on political issues, such as the Israeli-Arab peace process, which has encountered far deeper opposition among religious Jews worldwide than among secular groups.

Israel, Canada and Germany were the three significant bright spots amidst the grim statistics, Beker added. In Israel, the rate of natural increase—births exceeding deaths—is about three times that of the United States.

Israel, with about 4.5 million Jews, "is slowly replacing the United States as the largest community

in the world, a process which we think will take place within a decade," he said. "It is the only place in the world where there is a natural growth rate in the Jewish community."

Meanwhile, Germany's 60,000-member Jewish community has doubled in size in the past two decades. Still, that figure is a fraction of Germany's pre-Holocaust Jewish population of about 500,000.

Canada's Jewish population, which totals 360,000, has risen 60 percent.

But the increases in both Germany and Canada were due largely to the immigration of Jews from other diaspora countries, such as the former Soviet Union.

"A major problem in the U.S. and Europe is the singles problem," said Mandell Ganchrow, a physician and president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America. "The fact that working women cannot have large families and people are getting married at a later age all adds to it."

"I don't want to sound like a male chauvinist, but the solution is for people to get married younger and have larger families."

## Baptists face more blocks in Bulgaria

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Months after gaining permission to build a church and orphanage, Baptists in Sofia, Bulgaria, still lack necessary paperwork to proceed with the project.

The Baptist World Alliance has written to Sofia's new mayor, Stephan Sofiansky, urging that the Union of Baptist Churches in Bulgaria be allowed to build.

"We continue to have problems with our Baptist project in Sofia," said Theodor Angelov, president of both the Bulgarian Baptist group and the European Baptist Federation. "The Sofia municipality does not want to give us the documents we need to continue the work. We went to court and they offered all kinds of objections why the Baptists should not be allowed to build an orphanage."

The project would be the first new building for Baptists in Bulgaria since the fall of communism. After being besieged by appeals from Baptists around the world, the Sofia government approved the building plans last September for a church and an orphanage.



*Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children*  
*announces the establishment of the*  
***Mary Hollingsworth Heritage Society***

Named in honor of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's first superintendent, the Mary Hollingsworth Heritage Society provides recognition for those individuals who have included Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children in their estate plans. Membership is accorded to those individuals who have at least one of these planned gifts in place:

- ✓ Bequest in Will or Living Trust
- ✓ Charitable Gift Annuity
- ✓ Charitable Trust
- ✓ Beneficiary Designation of Life Insurance,  
Pension, Retirement Fund, or Commercial Annuity

Charter membership is available to everyone notifying Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children prior to Aug. 31, 1996, that their estate plans include a planned gift for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. The first formal meeting of the Mary Hollingsworth Heritage Society is planned for the fall of 1996 at which time charter members will be inducted into the Society.

For more information about the Mary Hollingsworth Heritage Society  
or its charter membership, please contact  
**Dick Carlton or Brenda Gray**  
at 1-800-456-1386 or (502) 245-2101.

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