



WESTERN RECORDER

March 12, 1996
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Restructuring costs
Officials charged with implementing the massive restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention's agencies have released their first estimates of costs and cost savings.
See page 2.

Family Forum
My 14-year-old son doesn't want to attend youth activities at church. What should I do? See page 4.

Editorial
Is it really true when someone says of a church project, "It will be worth it all if just one soul is saved"?
See page 5.

Rating TV shows
Network plans to rate TV programs won't solve the main problem, a group of religious leaders said. See page 6.

Camp competition
The marketplace for church camps is highly competitive and experiencing changes, an expert on the subject told Baptist camp directors. See page 8.



BRAZILIANS AT CAMPBELLSVILLE Campbellsville College has developed a small community of Brazilian students, due largely to relations established through the Kentucky Baptist Convention's five-year partnership with Baptists in Espirito Santo, Brazil. Brazilian students currently studying at Campbellsville are Heidy Ximenes, Vanedson Ximenes, Eliane da Silva, Mauro Augusto Cavassana, Jane Santos and Eduardo Bocatto. (Photo by Bethney Jo Foster) See story on page 3.

UK groups cooperating for revival

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LEXINGTON—While its top-ranked basketball team has many University of Kentucky fans excited about the NCAA men's championship April 1, for some on campus the anticipation doesn't revolve around basketball.

That night kicks off a campus-wide spring revival coordinated by seven Christian student organizations—Baptist Student Union, Campus Crusade for Christ, the Wesley Foundation, Newman Center (Catholic), Unified Christian Fellowship, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Christian Student Fellowship.

The reason this revival's organizers are so thrilled is the spirit of interdenominational unity that has marked the preparations.

"People are really taking an interest in it," said Paula Howard, a BSU member. "This isn't the first time it's been tried, but it's the first time it's been so unified."

The junior from Salyersville said God led her to send out letters to the various groups last summer while she was on a summer mission project in Oklahoma. Though initially she questioned the reason, she responded.

That led to a cooperative "See You at the Pole" prayer rally in September and sparked additional meetings.

"We kept praying, and God laid it on our hearts to have a seeker week," said Howard, a member of First Baptist Church in Salyersville who attends First Baptist Church in Lexington.

Even when the core group began meeting in December, it didn't map out a master plan, she said, but kept praying and watching where God was at work.

The group ultimately determined a joint effort toward a revival meeting was the next step.

Although plans for the revival still See UK groups ..., page 3

Christianity viewed as positive influence

GLENDALE, Calif.—Americans view Christianity as having a more positive impact on society than other religious traditions, according to a new poll by the Barna Research Group.

Among those surveyed, 85 percent said they perceive Christianity as exerting a positive influence on society, while only 4 percent said they think Christianity creates a negative influence. Another 6 percent said they didn't know.

The next-highest rating was given to Judaism, with 58 percent saying Jews have a positive influence on American society. Another 15 percent said Jews create a negative influence; 23 percent said they didn't know.

Mormonism ranked third, with 43 percent citing a positive influence by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints. Another 27 percent said Mormons create a negative influence; 26 percent said they didn't know.

Among groups for which Americans are more likely to express a negative opinion than a positive opinion: Muslims, Scientologists, Buddhists and atheists.

Muslims are perceived by 33 percent of the general population as having a negative influence on society, while only 28 percent view Muslims positively. Another 35 percent said they didn't know what to think about Muslim influence.

Scientologists are perceived negatively by 39 percent of those surveyed, with only 21 percent expressing a positive image of the group founded by L. Ron Hubbard. Another 38 percent said they didn't know how to assess

the influence of Scientologists.

Buddhists got a 33 percent negative rating, compared to a 29 percent positive rating. Another 35 percent said they didn't have an opinion.

The American public reserves its most negative assessment for atheists, however. Of those surveyed, 61 percent said atheists exert a negative influence on society while only 14 percent rated atheism positively. Another 22 percent said they were undecided.

On a related note, the survey also asked American adults what they thought should be the relationship between Catholics and Protestants. Nearly 80 percent said they believe Catholics and Protestants should put aside doctrinal differences and work together to address the social, economic and spiritual needs of the culture.

All Baptists must be concerned with African-American issues, leader says

By David Winfrey
SBC Home Mission Board

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—The Nation of Islam, racism and other challenges must become the concern of all Southern Baptists, said the Home Mission Board's director of black church extension.

"Otherwise, we cannot say we are inclusive," said Willie McPherson, who addressed state church-starting leaders on issues important to black communities during a Feb. 25 meeting in Birmingham, Ala.

"The challenge of the Nation of Islam must become the problem of all Southern Baptists, not just African-Americans," he said. "When we deal

with the issue of racism, we will solve the Islamic problem, because their tool of recruitment will no longer exist."

McPherson noted the O.J. Simpson trial and Million Man March last year signified the races are a long way from coming together and that "racism is a two-way street."

He called the Southern Baptist Convention's resolution last year on racial reconciliation "a giant step" that will affect other issues.

"Moving forward in this area will make facing the other challenges much easier," he said, but true reconciliation will mean "opening up some areas of leadership that were off-limits to African-Americans

heretofore."

Racism and the Nation of Islam were two issues black church leaders said will affect African-American communities entering the 21st century, McPherson said. The HMB black church extension division sponsored several listening sessions last year in metropolitan areas in order to help serve the churches, he said. Other issues cited include:

■ **Cultural diversity.** McPherson noted America is predicted to have no clear ethnic majority by the year 2050. "This trend is and will continue to create a need for building cross-cultural relationships," he said.

■ **Unemployment and underemployment.** "The African-American

population has progressed significantly since the 1960s," McPherson said. "But in the past decade, economic and political factors have helped derail the progress of many American blacks."

■ **Leaving the inner cities.** African-American churches are beginning to join Anglo congregations in moving to the suburbs, leaving the cities with fewer Christian ministry and witnessing points, he noted.

■ **Family life.** McPherson stated 51 percent of African-American families are headed by a single parent. "We must challenge every law that will cause a man to leave his family in order for them to live decently—i.e., welfare."

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Registration** is being accepted for on-site care of preschool children of messengers to the June 11-13 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans. Registration forms may be obtained by writing to Kim Craig, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, La. 70126. Parents are advised to register promptly; registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

■ **Pamela May** of Gladstone, Mo., has been named center administrator for Baptist Women in Ministry. She succeeds Malinda Fillingim of Louisville, who has been center administrator one year. Baptist Women in Ministry is preparing to move its headquarters from Louisville to Kansas City, Mo.

■ **The Baptist Peace Fellowship** of North America is urging its 1,400 members to support the work of African-American-led organizations by becoming involved in one of the nation's major civil-rights groups. The Peace Fellowship's board recently voted to renew membership for one year free of charge for any member who seeks membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People or similar civil-rights organizations.

■ **David Gushee**, assistant professor of Christian ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, will join the Christian studies faculty at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., next fall. At Union, Gushee will work alongside one of his Southern Seminary colleagues, David Dockery, Southern's vice president for academic administration who has been named president of the Tennessee school.

Task force gives first cost estimates on restructuring

NASHVILLE—The major costs of restructuring the Southern Baptist Convention's agencies and institutions should be recouped in the first full fiscal year of the new structure, an SBC official said March 6.

More than one year after plans for the massive restructuring were unveiled, denominational officials released the first estimates of cost savings that will result from the changes. The restructuring will reduce the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12.

The first full fiscal year under the plan (1997-98) should produce savings of \$1.1 million, said Ted Warren, an implementation task force spokesman and chief operating officer of the SBC Sunday School Board. That will exceed the \$495,000 cost of hiring a management consultant, as well as undisclosed expenses for legal fees and the work of an implementation task force, Warren said.

Warren's estimates apparently did not include projections for major capital expenses and earnings related to the merger of the Home Mission Board, Radio & Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission into a new North American Mission Board. One major capital expense could be relocation of the RTVC's high-tech studios from Fort Worth, Texas, to Atlanta. Major capital income could result from the sale

of the RTVC's property in Fort Worth and the Brotherhood Commission's property in Memphis, Tenn.

Warren also announced March 6 that the SBC Executive Committee has signed a contract with Coopers and Lybrand, an Atlanta consulting firm, to help direct the merger of the three agencies into the North American Mission Board.

The Executive Committee in February approved an expenditure of \$495,000 to retain the services of such a consulting firm, although the name of the firm was not released at that time.

"We are not employing Coopers and Lybrand for them to tell us what to do, but to assist us in achieving all the effectiveness we envision," Warren said last week.

Warren said the implementation task force estimates total savings due to restructuring of \$289,000 during the 1996-97 fiscal year. The restructuring will be in effect for only about three months of that fiscal year.

But in the next full fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, 1997, savings should total \$1.1 million, he said.

"While significant savings are expected, that is not our primary objective," Warren said. "It is to increase effectiveness in how we assist churches accomplish their mission here and abroad."

The implementation task force plans to report to the SBC at the June annual meeting in New Orleans, Warren said.

At that time, the task force hopes to be able to lay out a transition plan

that will outline what needs to be done, who will be responsible and by what date each task should be completed.

Based on a Baptist Press report

Official clarifies severance issue

NASHVILLE—The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee will not mandate to SBC agencies how to handle severance benefits to employees displaced by denominational restructuring, according to the Executive Committee vice president responsible for details of reorganization.

Executive Committee Vice President David Hankins said March 5 he was misquoted in an Associated Baptist Press article carried in the Western Recorder's Feb. 27 issue. That story quoted Hankins as saying severance pay will be handled by the SBC, not the agencies.

Hankins had told ABP the implementation task force appointed by the Executive Committee will "take a comprehensive look" at severance issues at the agencies. That should not have implied the Executive Committee or task force

will make decisions about severance benefits, Hankins said in his clarification.

The implementation task force sent a memo Feb. 7 to all SBC agencies impacted by restructuring which asked, in part, "that each entity disclose to the implementation task force any planned usage of reserve funds."

The memo also spoke directly to the issue of severance pay and said, "Where it is possible, the implementation task force would like to assist you" in making severance arrangements.

Hankins issued his clarification in a March 5 letter sent to James Williams, president of the SBC Brotherhood Commission and copied to state Baptist paper editors. Hankins told Williams the alleged dispute over severance benefits is a case of "the press creating controversies where none exist."

All Baptist churches asked to 'Start Something New'

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Seeking to launch a new wave of growth through churches large and small, Southern Baptist agencies unveiled the "Start Something New" campaign in Birmingham, Ala., Feb. 22-24.

The two-year emphasis is designed to encourage Southern Baptist churches to start new churches and new initiatives in their own churches.

From a lunchtime Bible study in Springdale, Ark., to a mobile home worship service in Colorado, a variety of models were showcased to more than 700 church and state convention leaders from across America.

"There are thousands of different ways you could start something new," said Charles Chaney, Home Mission Board vice president for extension, which includes church start-

ing. In addition to starting churches, other possibilities include adding another worship service, birthing a language outreach or creating a new Bible study, he said.

HMB President Larry Lewis noted size does not determine whether a congregation will start a new effort.

"I don't believe there's any church too small to start something new," he said, explaining it could be

"as simple as starting a Sunday school class or department, or it could be a new bus route or ministry of some kind."

Lewis, a former church planter, said he hopes thousands of church-type missions will be started through the initiative. Recalling his church-planting work in Columbus, Ohio, he said, "We started our first mission while we were still a mission ourselves."

Command to reach the whole world applies to all, Rankin says at Southern

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Jesus' command to preach the gospel to the entire world applies to every Christian believer, Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin told a seminary chapel audience.

"To whom do you think the Great Commission was given?" asked Rankin Feb. 27 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Just a handful of disciples on a hillside in Galilee? Just a few among us who happen to respond to that call to go as foreign missionaries?"

Rankin spoke during the seminary's global missions week. The week's activities included a series of special chapel services, lectures by missionaries to seminary classes and informational sessions for seminarians considering foreign missions service.

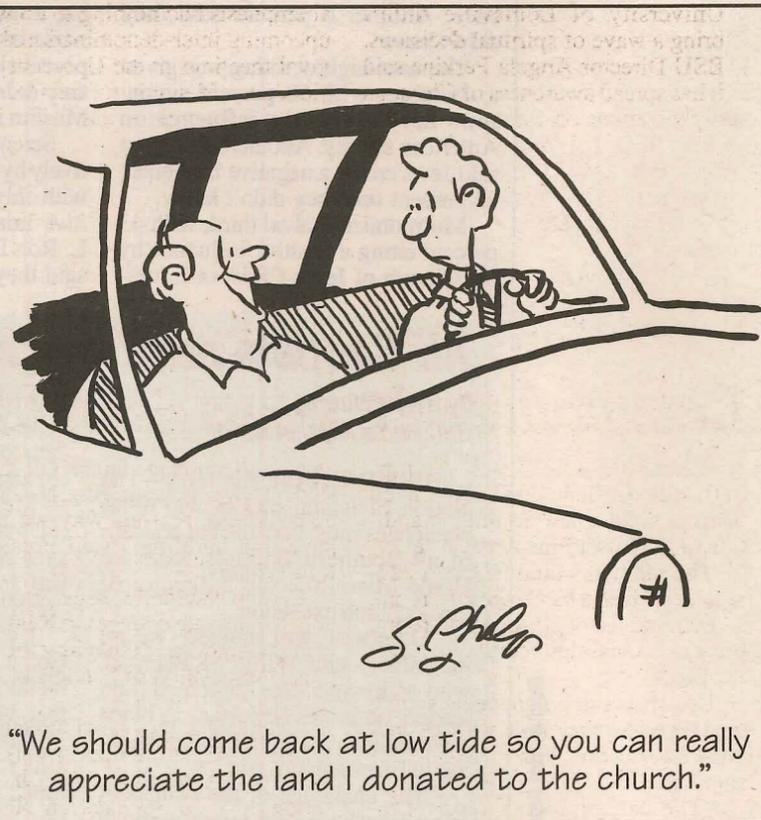
"If we had just one Southern Baptist out of a thousand—just

one-tenth of 1 percent—who would take seriously that mandate to share the gospel and disciple the nations, we would not be talking about 5,000 (FMB) missionaries, but 15,000 missionaries," Rankin said.

Rankin said 100,000 people are serving as Southern Baptist pastors, church staff members and denominational workers. However, Southern Baptists are sending only one missionary for every 2.8 million people who have not yet heard the gospel, he noted.

This seeming indifference toward those who have never heard the gospel stems from Christians who believe salvation is for their benefit alone, Rankin suggested.

God desires that "all the nations might know him and declare the excellencies of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," he said.



"We should come back at low tide so you can really appreciate the land I donated to the church."

Brazilians find home at Campbellsville

By Bethney Jo Foster
Campbellsville College

CAMPBELLSVILLE—Eduardo Bocatto, a Brazilian senior at Campbellsville College, spent two-and-a-half years "alone" at the central Kentucky college.

Bocatto no longer is alone.

Five other Brazilian students now are enrolled at Campbellsville, mainly as a result of the 1988-1993 partnership between the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Baptists in Espírito Santo, Brazil.

Bocatto, who is from Sao Paulo, Brazil, said he had a rough time at Campbellsville in the beginning, especially since he was far away from family.

"It is amazing how many people around me helped me," he said. "They tried to make me feel a part of something here. Everyone around me helped me out. I felt like I was a

part of something, and that's how I feel right now."

Now Bocatto also is part of a Brazilian community at Campbellsville. "We get together and enjoy ourselves," he said.

Mauro Augusto Cavassana came to Campbellsville two weeks before the fall semester began in 1995 in order to attend soccer camp before classes began.

Cavassana had planned to attend a state university in Kentucky but chose Campbellsville because he wanted a smaller school, he said.

He heard about Campbellsville from a neighbor whose sister had been a student there. Cavassana's academic studies are sponsored by a Baptist church in LaRue County.

Contacts made through the KBC partnership with Brazilian Baptists led several other Brazilian students to join Cavassana and Bocatto at Campbellsville. Among them are Jane San-

tos, Heidy Ximenes, Vanedson Ximenes and Eliane da Silva.

Heidy and Vanedson Ximenes, a married couple from Vitoria, Brazil, met James Jones, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church, during the partnership. Jones preached a revival in the Brazilian church where Vanedson Ximenes was pastor.

"God opened the door for us at Campbellsville College," Ximenes said.

Ximenes said his pastoral ministry in Brazil was successful but he came to Campbellsville College because he wanted to grow in knowledge.

Ximenes plans to attend Southern Baptist Theological Seminary after graduating from Campbellsville with a degree in psychology.

Mrs. Ximenes is a church music major. The couple plans to return to Brazil for ministry after completing their education in Kentucky.

UK groups cooperate for campus revival

Continued from page 1

are being finalized, the first night will feature a talk by baseball coach Keith Madison before the championship game tipoff.

The revival service had been planned for the Memorial Hall auditorium, but organizers may move it to the student center to reach the crowds who will be coming there to see the game on big-screen TV.

Tentative plans for the rest of the week include:

■ On April 2 Walter Bradley, a chancellor from Texas A&M University, will discuss scientific evidence of God, concluding with a question-and-answer session.

■ April 3 will be a musical night featuring singing groups, bands and dramatic presentations about Christ's crucifixion.

■ April 4 will focus on a discussion of racism, led by an African-American graduate student from Asbury College, and possibly singing by a gospel choir.

■ On Good Friday students will join the Newman Center's prayer walk around campus at noon.

This cooperative effort among Christian student groups must be of God, Howard said. "I don't know how else to explain it."

Mark Jacobs of Christian Leadership Ministries, who has helped co-

ordinate planning meetings, said various faculty members had prayed for two years for this kind of effort. So he was surprised when he learned in November that students already had set the wheels in motion.

"I know the campus is not going to be reached by campus ministers, but by students and faculty—especially students—leading the charge," Jacobs said.

"The exciting thing is this has come from students," agreed BSU Director H.K. Kingcade. "It's hard to tell if it has changed the atmosphere much on campus. I think there is a spirit of anticipation among the Christian organizations."

University of Louisville also cooperated for revival

LOUISVILLE—While a recent inter-denominational revival at the University of Louisville didn't bring a wave of spiritual decisions, BSU Director Angela Perkins said it has spread awareness of Christian organizations on campus.

"I think it has been one of the best meetings we've had," Perkins said, explaining that past efforts to co-sponsor events weren't that successful.

"The publicity committee's goal was that at least everyone in the university would know it was go-

ing on," she said.

The event's inter-denominational emphasis had nothing to do with upcoming inter-denominational revival meetings at the University of Kentucky. Planning for the University of Louisville event began last May.

Representatives of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, InterVarsity Fellowship and the Wesley Foundation joined the Baptist Student Union in sponsoring the three nights of meetings in late February.

While total attendance was only

300, Perkins said that was an excellent turnout since 95 percent of the university's students are commuters and crowds are traditionally low for most evening events.

Perkins also believes it is significant that the revival was held at the Red Barn, an activity building that has had a reputation as a campus party center.

"As we worked together it was good to see Christians who didn't know each other realize there is a strong support base here," Perkins said.

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **Campbellsville appoints five.** Five individuals have been named to the Board of Advisors at Campbellsville College: William Bennett of Baltimore; Jana Martin of Georgetown; Patricia Patton of Paintsville; Linda Waller of Shepherdsville; and Leo Weddle of Somerset. The Board of Advisors is a development-related support group separated from the college's board of trustees.

■ **Georgetown student wins contest.** Dean Davenport, a senior at Georgetown College, won second place in the sixth annual Lord Acton Essay Contest, headquartered in Grand Rapids, Mich. Davenport received a \$500 cash prize for his essay on "A Theological Perspective on the Rise of Poverty in America."

■ **Marketing efforts noted.** Marketing Higher Education, a monthly newsletter serving the academic community, has named the marketing program of Campbellsville College the best in the nation for 1995-96. The newsletter selects one institution nationwide for its four-star award each year. "Here is a church-related institution applying contemporary marketing and PR activities that is achieving success and powerful marketing results," said Bob Topor, the newsletter's editor.

■ **Clear Creek gets grant.** Clear Creek Baptist Bible College has received a \$25,000 gift from the Chatlos Foundation of Orlando, Fla., to purchase materials for renovation of student housing. The work will be done this summer by volunteer teams.

■ **Baptist Healthcare at Oneida.** Medical and support personnel from Baptist Healthcare System will offer free health screenings and general medical checkups at Oneida Baptist Institute this week. Dentists, doctors, registered nurses, a physical therapist, pharmacist and social workers will be on hand March 14-16 to serve the Oneida community and surrounding areas of Booneville and Irvine Baptist associations.

■ **International festival set.** "A Family of Nations" festival will be held at Campbellsville College March 28 from 5-8:30 p.m. in the Powell Athletic Center. The festival will feature foods and entertainment from around the world, as well as exhibits that explain the cultures of various nations. Funds raised at the event will be used for international student scholarships.

■ **Russia volunteers needed immediately.** As many as eight more Kentucky Baptists are needed to volunteer to join a construction-evangelism team in Sosnovi Bor, Russia, May 8-21, according to Calvin Wilkins in the Kentucky Baptist partnership missions office. Only three people so far are committed to the project, which leaves the need for more volunteers especially urgent, Wilkins explained. For more information or to volunteer, call the KBC partnership missions office at (502) 244-6462.

Campbellsville plans \$3 million addition to Fine Arts Center

CAMPBELLSVILLE—Campbellsville College has announced plans to build a new \$3 million addition to its Gosser Fine Arts Center.

The addition would feature a 227-seat recital hall, a band rehearsal room, a choir and handbell rehearsal room, practice rooms, classrooms and faculty offices.

Donors currently are being sought to underwrite the project, with groundbreaking scheduled for sometime this summer.

"The caliber of our music program, the quality of our music faculty

and the phenomenal number of music students we are enrolling at Campbellsville are reasons why we must have this building," said President Ken Winters.

Campbellsville College is one of only two private colleges in Kentucky with programs accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music.

Campbellsville, one of three liberal arts colleges affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has experienced a 106 percent enrollment increase in the last eight years.



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

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Faulty logic

Rachel McCubbin's opinion that Kentucky's health-care reform should be repealed (Feb. 27) is a disturbing study in faulty logic leading to misguided conclusions. Comparing cars to health care has several problems.

First, access to health care is a necessity; owning a car is not. Second, public transportation is provided by tax dollars. Does she also resent buses and trains? Is McCubbin also willing for Social Security to be dismantled? Her logic would lead to that conclusion.

Third, she implies the poor will feel entitled to a new and expensive car, which no one has proposed.

There are two views of entitlement: (1) government should protect the least well-off; and (2) government should benefit the wealthy by huge tax breaks and tax incentives, so the rich may create jobs for others.

But do they? Columbia HCA does not create more jobs; it fires a lot of people in the name of "efficiency." The bottom line is massive profits for those at the top, and fewer jobs and lower wages for those at the bottom.

Many of the very rich have an even stronger sense of entitlement than the poor. They tend to believe they are entitled to it all—even to exemption from taxation for social programs.

The final irony, however, is that McCubbin works for The Family Foundation. Her views are hardly pro-family. Those who care about families in trouble work to provide public safety nets as a minimal re-

March Madness

Whatever March may mean other places, in Kentucky it means basketball; so much so that it is fondly labeled "March Madness."

For the seniors, it is "show time, baby!" Some high schoolers hoping to increase their potential value to a favorite college; many college seniors hoping to impress the pro-scouts if they haven't already. March basketball may be the "pill" which helps a bunch of Kentuckians make it through the end of winter. I must admit, I'll be watching as much as I can, especially the Cats and the Cards.

I wasn't good enough even for small college basketball. But I loved it in high school and played every game as a senior. Mine was another sport, however. In fact, in those years, a lot of us played all the sports our high school offered.

Frankfort was the only school in the county with football, basketball and baseball but all had a basketball team. Frankfortonians my age will remember them: Bridgeport, Bald

quirement of justice and Christian love.

Kentucky's reforms should stay in place. They are not perfect, ... but they are a step in the right direction.

*Paul D. Simmons
Louisville*

Moral teachers

I have noticed your editorial in the Feb. 13 issue of the Western Recorder, and was pleased to hear your comments on "Mr. Holland's Opus."

Despite the comments by the Christian Right, thousands of public schools in this country are still excellent places of learning, including many of the schools in Jefferson County.

The comments which bothers me the most was the one about "many a dedicated Christian teacher" who has continued in the public school systems, and who are making a difference, presumably by setting a good example for the children entrusted to them. Would it surprise you to find that there are some exceptionally good teachers in the public school system who are not Christian? To infer that to be a good teacher one must be a Christian is ludicrous.

Although I was raised with a very explicit Baptist background, one of the things I learned very quickly is that Christians do not have a stranglehold on morals and ethics. Several years in Turkey taught me that Muslims are as ethical and moral in their daily lives as Christians are, and those years of attending public schools in Louisville taught me that the Jewish community has standards which should be emulated by everyone.

So even though the Western Recorder is a Baptist paper, is it wise to infer that Christians are the only ones who set the better standards in our public schools? Please give credit where credit is due, and include all

Knob, Elkhorn, Peaks Mill and Good Shepherd.

Frankfort High is still there but the others have been closed and/or merged into two much larger schools—Franklin County and Western Hills, the former a serious contender for the 1996 state high school basketball championship.

Those were fun years! With so many small schools, most every boy had a shot at some sport. As I reviewed my senior yearbook, I noted that only a few were not involved in some sport. In those days, there were "B" teams and "junior varsity."

Now I'm not one to exalt sports. In fact, the lingering pain I carry from a college football injury, and the limps I notice in so many men my age, suggest that there was a price for all that "fun." Still, those were good days when the schools were small and one really did know every student in school by name and, often, where each lived.

Not more than five or six students drove a car to school; most of

dedicated teachers in our public school systems.

*Fred W. Crismon
Irvington*

Judge not on politics

I'm glad to see I'm not the only one who disagrees with the Religious Right. They do not speak for me. I agree with the article "Alternative to Religious Right" (Feb. 13).

A friend of mine had a guest speaker in his church who said he doubted the salvation of anyone who voted for a Democrat. My problem with this is I didn't know God had appointed judges here on earth to decide who has salvation. Everything I could find in the Bible told me not to judge, so I will go by the written word until something is proved different.

I don't believe any political party should be lifted up as the only party from the pulpit. It's right that we be taught moral issues that are backed up by the Holy Bible. Then the listeners can make up their own minds how to vote. I don't think the congregation should be made feel less Christian if they don't vote the same as the man standing at the front of the church or on your television screen.

A man who wants to make a political speech should speak from a political podium and declare it a political speech. Then we can judge his talk for what it is worth, just another political speech.

*Samuel E. Cooley
Louisville*

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us walked. An hour a week was given to religious education, permitting the students to walk to their church for the session, or stay in study hall. No big deal walking across the "singing bridge" to my home church, First Baptist.

For some reason my parents started me early in school (I suppose I could guess "why" but I never asked and if my guess had been right, they probably would have denied it!) and I graduated youngest in the class.

Growing a half-inch and 30 pounds that summer, I speculated later about how much more "fun" football and basketball would have been with that added year.

I suppose I was one of the few players who cried on graduation night, sensing what I was leaving behind.

As thousands of seniors take the court for their last time, they represent a long stream of those of us who went before—loving life, energetic and hopeful.

And I, from the class of '49, still love life and have even a greater hope. Never mind the "energetic!"

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



Teens & church attendance

By Wade Rowatt

Q. Should I make my 14-year-old go to youth activities at our church? He says that none of his best friends from school go and that it is boring anyway.

A. Your son is at a difficult age to "make him" do much of anything, but do not give up on his attending the youth activities. Make it worth his while to go and make it unpleasant for him not to go and then let him choose. Offer some bonus for regular involvement in programs that are important. Let him know in advance the discipline for not attending. Let him decide if the cost of missing is worth it in the long run. Make the choices clearly in the favor of attending.

For example, find ways to reward him for attendance at youth group. Consider what he would like to do after each meeting and do it. Try going for pizza after each meeting or going for an ice cream. Do not be real obnoxious about this, just do it. He will get the picture. When he gets old enough, let him drive to church whenever possible.

At the same time, make not going difficult. Consider some penalty for missing, like being grounded for the next week. If he wishes to miss, then he must miss other activities. It is his choice to be grounded or to go.

Listen to why he doesn't want to attend. Do take his complaints to heart. Check to see if they are valid. He may have good reasons to be discouraged.

If his friends do not go, suggest that he invite them and also invite them to join you for the fun follow-up activity. If possible, have those who do attend the youth activities over to your place. If he spends more time with them, they are more likely to become pals.

If the meetings are not fun, find out why and work with the leaders to improve the operations of the meetings. Be certain that you and other adults support the youth programs. Guide your church to make teenagers a priority.

One last thing: talk with him about why youth activities are important in the first place. Model such priorities in your own life. Teens who observe their parents making church a priority are more likely to do likewise.

Do not so much make him go. Make it so attractive that he will choose to go.

Wade Rowatt is director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville.

HE SAID/SHE SAID

Honk if you love Jesus, but get out of my lane, buddy

SHE SAID



Alison Wingfield

What is it with men and their machines? I enjoy getting behind the wheel of a car with a little zip, but the thrill of a fast car doesn't drive my life.

Even though it is a generalization, men usually do put the pedal to the metal more often than women. And the more powerful the engine, the better. (Picture Tim Allen from "Home Improvement" doing his famous macho grunt.)

Most of us probably fit into numerous styles of driving, depending on the day, our destination and the passengers we're carrying.

I cruise the middle of the road on this issue—not too fast and not too slow. But when I have an appointment to make and have cut it a little too close—a normal state of affairs—I become an impatient, get-out-of-my-way driver who talks to other drivers. OK, so maybe they can't hear me, but it sure does make me feel better to vent.

Fast drivers who zip in and out of traffic are annoying, but what really irritates me is slow drivers. And since we live in St. Matthews, a popular haven for rather mature retirees in Louisville, I often am irritated by the time I reach my destination. Attaining a whopping 5 miles per hour on a residential street never has been a goal of mine.

And then there are those helpful side and backseat drivers. I have been reprimanded on many occasions for offering what I thought was simple, helpful advice. How could anyone take offense to: "Watch OUT!" or "Honey, do you see that car???"

HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

If automobiles had been invented during the time Jesus walked on earth, surely he would have told a parable of two drivers—one in the fast lane and one in the slow lane.

I don't know what the point of the parable might have been, but this image would have been too good a vehicle of communication to pass by.

How one drives tells volumes about the inner self. In fact, we could save psychologists a lot of money by

ditching all those personality tests and just putting the analysts in the car with the patients.

In my way of seeing the highway, there are two basic models of drivers: fast and slow. And putting the two together is like mixing oil and water. This distinction isn't always a male-female thing, but opposites do attract in marriages. Which is why it's so much fun to take a family trip in the car.

Have you ever noticed how no one seems bothered by his or her own driving habits, but everyone can generate plenty of concern for another driver's methods?

Even the most fearless drivers find reason to get squeamish when thrown in the passenger seat. There's a reason they've started installing those handle bars above the front-seat passenger windows. Now if they would just reinforce the carpet on the passenger-side floorboard, to account for all that make-believe braking.

This must have something to do with leadership, trust or the desire to control our own fate. Reminds me of some bad theology put on a bumper sticker years ago and plastered on cars nationwide: "God is my co-pilot."

For us hard-driving people, it's difficult to get out of the driver's seat and trust someone else with our destiny. Yet that is the demand of the Christian faith: Putting self aside and letting God safely pilot us to our destination.

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

Debunking a church budgeting myth

It's time to rethink one of the most often-used justifications for budget decisions in Baptist churches everywhere.

Surely you've heard it before, usually hauled out to explain why it's OK to spend a large sum of money on some exotic project: "Yes, it's a lot of money. But it will be worth every penny if just one soul is saved."

It sounds good, but is it true?

Probably not. If you're spending a large sum of money and energy on some allegedly evangelistic project that only draws in one convert, something is wrong. It's not a lack of faith that's the problem, nor is it a failure on the part of the Holy Spirit to convict people of sin. The problem may be the church's strategy and stewardship.

This is not to say that the conversion of one lost soul isn't worth whatever price must be paid. Nor is it to deny the fact that certain types of ministries require years of cultivation before any professions of faith are made.

If given the choice between funding a project that brought 20 people to faith in Christ or a project that brought one person to Christ, which would you choose? The one that brought 20 to Christ, of course.

So why do we settle for so many ventures justified by the frail hope that just one person might find Christ?

The church has access to more research and practical information about what works to reach our communities for Christ than ever before in history. For every project a church might launch in hopes of reaching one person for Christ, perhaps a dozen better projects could be found that likely would reach

10 or more people for Christ.

Proper stewardship of God's resources demands that we pull our heads out of the sand and take advantage of the strategic information available to us. There are many good things the church can do, but we must strive to find the best things.

What causes us to choose the lesser over the greater? Here are a few common hurdles:

■ **Ignorance.** Too many churches remain islands unto themselves, never stopping to glean insights from the successes of other members of the Christian community. If a sister church finds something that works for the cause of Christ, we ought to start taking notes rather than looking for reasons to be critical.

■ **Laziness.** Making good investments requires good research and preparation. It's much easier to sit back and make grand pronouncements about the expense being worth every penny if one soul is saved than it is to get outside the church walls and discover the needs of those unsaved souls.

■ **Selfishness.** Despite all our talk about missions and evangelism, most Baptist churches are inwardly focused. We spend our money and time on ourselves. It has been said a person's true priorities can be found by examining his or her checkbook. The same is true of churches.

■ **Fear.** Choosing the options that will expand the church's witness the most often requires taking risks. That means we have to get beyond attitudes such as "We never did it that way before." Maybe that's the very reason the non-Christians of your community never came to your church before.

— Mark Wingfield

EDITORIAL

What are you attempting that only God can do?

On Sunday mornings, I am the facilitator for a group involved in a study course written by Henry Blackaby and Claude V. King titled "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God."

I have been wrestling with a question posed in our first week of study. This is the question I have found very disturbing: "What are you doing in your life personally and in your church that you know cannot be accomplished unless God intervenes? Could much of what we are doing in our lives and in our churches be done without reference to God at all?"

How would you answer that question? I think many of us might say that everything we do is dependent upon God. Yet, as I have soberly reflected upon my life, I have made the confession that most often I have attempted only those things I believed I could achieve. I might have had to determine to work harder or longer hours or make certain sacrifices, but in the end, I believed I could achieve my goals.

The churches I have served usually set goals they believed they could achieve. We sought God's blessings upon our plans, but seldom was the necessity of God's intervention contemplated.

Jesus possessed a very different perspective, and he assumed that his followers and his church would share his perspective. Jesus understood that everything he did flowed from

the Father. Jesus said, "The son can do nothing by himself." (John 5:19) He did not consider what he could do, but he sought to do what the Father would have him do. In the parable of the vine and the branches, Jesus speaks to his followers and the early church, "Apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5) Yet, so very often, we plan, propose and initiate only visions and dreams we believe we can accomplish on our own. We attempt to do our thing apart from Jesus Christ.

In our day-to-day living, we often decry what we cannot do. We say, "I cannot love that person," or "I will never be able to forgive that person," or "I can't turn the other cheek." There is a certain truth to what we say. Alone we will not be able to do these things, but our inability to do these things is not the final word.

God himself must help us do these things. He must teach us to love and forgive. He must intervene! When God intervenes and we allow ourselves to be molded in his hands, we will find the courage to love, forgive or turn the other cheek.

God himself, through the Holy Spirit, will teach us this way of the heart. Christians who do only what they believe they can accomplish seldom experience the great movements of God.

Churches suffer from this same syndrome. Usually we speak first what we cannot do. Seldom do we ask, "What does God want us to do as his people?" and so we do only what we believe we can achieve.

This determination of what we can or cannot do is usually associated very closely with money. I have

MINISTERIALLY SPEAKING

never proposed a new dimension of ministry

that was not greeted with, "How are we going to pay for it?" Often God calls us to certain tasks and our main concern is not obedience to God, but how will we pay for it. Churches concerned only with what they can pay for seldom take great risks to participate with God in his work of reconciliation.

Sometimes we have difficulty believing God can work through us in significant ways. We are reluctant to trust him for the things we will need to accomplish his purposes in the world. Jesus was often exasperated by his followers, admonishing them, "You of little faith."

Isn't this the heart of the matter? We attempt only what we think we can achieve because our faith is small! Let's pray for faith the size of a mustard seed, for faith that small is able to cast mountains into the sea.

Jamie Broome, Pastor
Immanuel Baptist Church
Paducah

Religious leaders say TV ratings won't fix problem

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A broad spectrum of religious leaders joined with two Democratic senators Feb. 28 to urge television executives to go beyond voluntarily rating their programs and instead commit to reducing violence and sex in their shows.

"The sad fact is if you rate garbage it's still garbage," Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., said one day before top television met with President Clinton and announced a preliminary agreement on a TV ratings system.

Even the so-called V chip—a computerized chip that would alert parents to violence in shows—will be insufficient if the content of the programming does not change, Lieberman said.

Proposed telecommunications legislation would require the chip in new TV sets.

Lieberman noted that TV programming is a religious issue because "God requires us to do all we can to have God's creatures treated with respect ... and far too much current TV programming degrades peo-

ple." Lieberman was joined by Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., conservative Catholic political activist William Bennett and nearly a dozen representatives of both liberal and conservative religious groups.

Among the groups represented were the Christian Coalition, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the American Muslim Council, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the National Council of Churches, the United Church of Christ and the Na-

tional Association of Evangelicals.

Rabbi David Saperstein, a Reform Jew, said the diversity of theological opinion represented at the Capitol Hill news conference underscored the widespread the "national disgust" with gratuitous sex and violence on television.

Nunn said the effort to alter the content of TV programming was a "battle for the hearts and minds of our children, and therefore a battle for the future of America" because of television's power to influence thoughts and behavior.

Gospel Grammys awarded

LOS ANGELES (RNS)—Familiar faces took home this year's Grammy awards for gospel music categories.

The Feb. 28 ceremony sponsored by the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences honored these gospel artists:

- CeCe Winans, best soul gospel album for "Alone in His Presence."
- Michael W. Smith, best pop gospel album for "I'll Lead You Home."
- Ashley Cleveland, best rock gospel album for "Lesson of Love."
- "Amazing Grace—A Country Salute to Gospel," a compilation album by various artists, best Southern, country or bluegrass Gospel album.
- "Shirley Caesar Live ... He Will Come," best traditional soul gospel album.
- "Praise Him ... Live!" by the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, led by director Carol Cymbala, best gospel album by a choir or chorus.

Bill would clarify limits on lobbying by religious groups

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A bill proposed in Congress would give churches and other religious groups a "bright-line test" for how involved they can become in political activity without jeopardizing their tax-exempt status.

Churches and certain other religious groups could spend up to 20 percent of their total annual income on lobbying, including as much as 5 percent on political campaigns, under the bill introduced Jan. 31 in the U.S. House of Representatives. The bill would not apply to secular non-profit groups.

"In an effort to give churches a bet-

ter idea of just exactly how much in the way of resources they can devote to grass-roots lobbying, we have drafted a proposal which would give churches and the IRS a bright line test," said Rep. Philip Crane, R-Ill., sponsor of the bill.

Current tax law bars charities, including churches and most religious organizations, from spending more than a "substantial part" of their revenue for lobbying. It also prohibits those organizations from supporting or opposing political candidates.

Crane said churches have been "shy" about engaging in lobbying for fear of losing tax-exempt status.

The proposal is drawing mixed initial reviews from religious groups.

"We would have reservations about the seeming invitation for churches to get involved in politics on a partisan basis," said Forest Montgomery, counsel for the National Association of Evangelicals.

Montgomery said NAE is looking at the legislation with "cautious reflection."

Brent Walker, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee, said he was "attracted" to the bright line on lobbying activity, but is "dubious about the 5 percent electioneering part."

Will Dodson, director of government relations for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said his agency has not yet taken a position on the bill.

Crane said he does not think the nation's founders would have frowned on church involvement in the political process.

"There is no question in my mind that the so-called wall erected to separate church and state was erected to prevent the state from interfering with the activities of the church—not to prevent the church from being involved in the activities of the state," he said.

Whitehead debates school-prayer case on Oprah Winfrey show

CHICAGO (BP)—Southern Baptist attorney Michael Whitehead will appear on an upcoming segment of the Oprah Winfrey show in a debate over a school-prayer lawsuit.

Whitehead, former general counsel for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and current vice president for business affairs at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, faced off against People for the American Way attorney Elliott Minberg in a Feb. 28 taping of the program. The program is scheduled to air March 19.

They debated the merits of a

much-publicized school-prayer conflict in Pontotoc County, Miss. The trial to determine whether the school district's practice of allowing students to read the Bible and pray over the school intercom violates the U.S. Constitution began March 4 in Oxford, Miss.

"This is a classic case in which strict separationists are pushing 'the separation of church and state' too far," Whitehead said on the program.

Whitehead is trial counsel for the public school district in Pontotoc, Miss., which has been sued by People for the American Way and the

American Civil Liberties Union.

Another guest on the program was Lisa Herdahl, the parent who contacted the ACLU about bringing the lawsuit.

"Oprah Winfrey opened the program with the theme, 'People who have been made outcasts in their community,'" Whitehead said after the taping. "Video clips showed the Pontotoc school children and other citizens rallying in support of religious liberty and praying around the flag pole. But the voice-over commentary referred to the harassment and death threats which Mrs.

Herdahl has alleged, and implied that she was frightened for her life, thinking every trip to the grocery store might be her last."

Winfrey suggested the community was engaged in a campaign of harassment against Herdahl and her son, Kevin, who also was a guest on the show.

"It is outrageous to imply that my clients were promoting a climate of threatening to kill Mrs. Herdahl or hurt her children," Whitehead said on the program. "Kooks are responsible for their own kooky behavior, not my client."

CLASSIFIED ADS

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

FOR SALE: 30 choir robes—peach color. Reversible collars; good condition. Make offer. (606) 299-4611.

SEEKING: Seminary graduate for full-time music/senior adults or music/education. Send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 106 West Oak, West Frankfort, IL 62896.

SEEKING: Interim music minister. Send resumé to: Second Baptist Church, P.O. Box 390, Greenville, KY 42345.

SEEKING: Part-time custodian. Building security/light cleaning; Sunday, Monday, Wednesday. Hurstbourne Baptist Church, Louisville, (502) 426-2444.

WANTED: We are looking for puppets in good condition. If you have some you wish to sell or donate, please contact Chris at (502) 866-2580.

SEEKING: Part-time minister to youth and children. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Scottsville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 392, Scottsville, KY 42164.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church of Amelia. Send resumé to: FBC of Amelia, P.O. Box 161, Amelia, OH 45102.

SEEKING: Minister of education/youth/activities. Send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 106 East Walnut St., Leitchfield, KY 42754, or call (502) 259-4076.

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.

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SEEKING: Downtown church in Newport, Ky., with diverse membership seeks full-time pastor with excellent pulpit and pastoral skills. Seminary training required. Send resumé to: Jim Ogden, chairperson, 123 Highview Dr., Fort Thomas, KY 41075.

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SEEKING: Highview Baptist Church is currently receiving applications for principal of Highview Baptist School (K-12). Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest and a current resumé to: John Boone, Highview Baptist Church, 7711 Fegenbush Ln., Louisville, KY 40228. Application deadline: May 3, 1996.

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.



FINANCIAL FORUM

Are concerns about money scriptural?

By Doug Strader

One does not read very far in the book of Genesis until the account of Abraham paying a tithe to Melchizedek is recorded. The Old Testament has many references to the people of God bringing tithes and offerings to him.

In the New Testament book of Mark there is a very interesting scene of Jesus and his disciples worshipping in the Temple. Evidently Jesus was observing the people as they were giving their money to the Temple treasury. When a widow woman gave all she had, he said that she had given more than all the others, because she gave all she had.

The Apostle Paul had much to say about money in his letters found in the New Testament. In his first letter to the church at Corinth, he had a reference to money right in the middle of his presentation of the gospel (1 Corinthians 16:1). Notice that the reference to money was not an afterthought, or a postscript to his letter, but right in the middle of the gospel. Paul believed that money was important enough to be included in his presentation of the gospel.

These three scriptural references are by no means the only ones. In fact, there are many others that could be used. However, these three are sufficient to show us that concerns about giving are scriptural.

The writer of the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy reminds all that it is the Lord who gives us the strength to be able to make money (Deuteronomy 8:18). That is an important word for us, because in order to live in today's world we need money to buy food, provide a place to live and provide other necessities of life. Having money also enables us to give to the work of the Lord through his Church.

One way we worship God is by giving our money to him. That is why some churches receive their offering at the conclusion of their worship service. After we worship by praising God, by dedicating ourselves to God and by the proclamation of the gospel, then we worship by giving money that represents our time, skills and energies used to earn our income. Yes, giving is scriptural and spiritual.

Doug Strader is director of the Stewardship department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Religion impacts attitudes on suicide most

WASHINGTON—Marriage and religious involvement lower the acceptance of suicide, with religion exerting the greatest influence, according to a recent study by criminal justice researchers in Michigan.

During the last three decades, the number of suicides committed by white Americans has increased significantly while the suicide rate for black Americans has increased more slowly. Researchers with the U.S. General

Survey determined to find out why.

They conducted interviews with nearly 10,000 African-Americans and Anglos from 1977 to 1990. Participants were asked: "Do you think it is right for a person to end his or her life if this person (a) has an incurable disease, (b) has gone bankrupt, (c) has dishonored his or her family, (d) is tired of living and ready to die?"

Being married created a somewhat lower acceptance of suicide for both

blacks and whites. However, church attendance exerted the greatest influence to lower acceptance of suicide. And the more frequently one attended church, the less likely he or she was to endorse suicide.

The survey by Steven Stack and Ira Wasserman is reported in the Journal of Marriage and Family under the title "The Effect of Marriage, Family and Religious Ties on African-American Suicide Ideology."

EASTER PAGEANT



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Youth and college students asked to witness over 48 hours

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Forty-eight hours in April have been set aside for a nationwide simultaneous effort for students to share the Christian gospel.

From noon Friday, April 12, to noon Sunday, April 14, youth and college students are challenged to find their non-believing friends, share the gospel with them and give them an opportunity to respond, said Dean Finley, Home Mission Board youth evangelism specialist.

Known simply as "48 Hours," the effort is multi-denominational, with supporters including Campus Crusade, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and various Southern Baptist organizations.

One purpose of 48 Hours is to make students aware of the urgency of sharing Christ, Finley said. "We're saying to students, 'If you haven't done it before now, then now is a good time. If not now, then when?'"

The emphasis does not include events such as youth rallies. Consequently students cannot use not being able to attend as an excuse not to participate, Finley said.

Afterward, participants are asked to call (800) 868-4800 to report how God worked during 48 Hours, but Finley said organizers are not going to keep track of how many people make professions of faith. The emphasis, he said, is on students being obedient to the command to witness.

Because students are asked to witness to people they know, follow-up with people who make decisions will occur as they continue in relationships with their Christian friends, he said.

Camp marketplace called competitive

WINDERMERE, Mo.—The marketplace for church camps is highly competitive today, and few churches hold allegiances to any one camp, according to a national expert in the field.

Bob Kobielush, executive director of Christian Camping International/USA, made that observation while outlining trends that impact Christian camps and conference centers. Kobielush spoke at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Assembly and Camp Managers Conference Feb. 19-22 at Windermere Baptist Assembly in Missouri.

Here are the major trends outlined by Kobielush, along with observations by others attending the conference:

■ Allegiance to a particular church, camp program or leader is earned and is up for continual review by campers, Kobielush said. The marketplace is competitive, and there is no captive audience.

This means "you've got to offer quality programs and do it right," explained Frank Shock, director at Missouri's Windermere, one of the most successful state Baptist campgrounds. "A lot of young people don't attend church or camp because it's Baptist; they go where they believe their needs are being met."

■ Big camps of 300 or more beds that are surviving are getting bigger, more sophisticated and diversified, Kobielush reported.

■ Adult and family camps are growing disproportionately to youth and children's camps, Kobielush said. About 50 percent of campers today are adults, although just a few years ago about 70 percent were children.

■ Year-round and during-the-week facility usage is a must for the medium-sized or larger camp to survive, Kobielush said.

■ Successful camps are being supported by good business and management principles, Kobielush said.

Shock of Windermere illustrated by noting that some people say spending \$10,000 on a program that draws five people is acceptable in the name of ministry. But effective business principles boil down to common sense, he said, with emphasis on evaluation, training and reorganizing ideas for optimum success.

■ Volunteers are being used suc-

cessfully only when they perceive their task as important and specific to their interests and skills, Kobielush said.

"We see among senior adults a growing trend," said Herb Shaw of Camp Hudgens, a Royal Ambassador camp in Oklahoma. "They are selling their homes, living in RVs and volunteering."

Reported by Julie Nall of Missouri's Word & Way

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Matthew 25:35

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ISSUES

Baptists can shape postmodern world, Ammerman says

By Mark Wingfield
Interim Editor

LEXINGTON—As the world moves from a modern to postmodern framework, Baptists have much to offer from their traditions and experience, sociologist Nancy Ammerman said Feb. 23.

Ammerman, a Baptist who teaches at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, spoke at Lexington Theological Seminary as part of a lecture series funded by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The Lexington seminary, owned by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), operates a Baptist studies program.

"Modernity is not the last word," Ammerman said. "There may be a new era in fact that is characterized by moving beyond modernity."

While a modern faith sought to accommodate, to adapt to the realities of a modern world, a postmodern faith "opens up new possibilities for keeping the faith and for building faithful communities," she explained.

She cited three primary challenges of the modern world that are being redefined in a postmodern world: mystery, specialization and pluralism.

Since the Enlightenment, modernity has displaced mystery with an insistence on the rational and scientific, she said. But the pendulum may be swinging back slightly in the post-modern era.

"We've been seeing the limits of reasoned solutions to human problems," Ammerman said. "We've seen what science can do, and it may only deepen our difficulties. We're also recognizing we've always depended on other ways of knowing. ... Some of our knowledge comes to us in ways we find hard to explain ... but we still know in some way that it is true."

Baptists and others who affirm the mystery of faith "dare not be silent" at this critical time, Ammerman said. "Now is the time to speak forthrightly of the ways of the Spirit and of knowledge that comes by faith."

Religion also has been challenged by a trend toward specialization in the modern era, Ammerman said. "We have seen religion as somehow separate from the rest of our lives."

But postmodernity has exposed the limits of specialization, she asserted. "We're beginning to see people put their lives back together again ... to find some wholeness that makes room for faith."

More people are breaking down the boundaries between the private and public compartments of life, she said. "It is far more important at this stage for us to realize that faith has a public role in informing our understanding of issues surrounding the common good."

Modernity also has brought the challenge of pluralism, Ammerman continued.

"Throughout much of history, what it meant to be a person was bound up with what it meant to be a religious person," she explained. "Today there are fewer and fewer places where that kind of consensus exists. Most of us live in the midst of very real differences," with people believing in a variety of gods or no god at all.

"A fear of fundamentalism has hampered our ability to deal with the modern problem of pluralism," Ammerman suggested. "We've acted as if the only options we had were either a kind of narrow sectarianism that was so narrow it was virtually useless to anyone else, or a kind of wishy-washy liberalism that claimed a truth so broad as to be virtually meaningless."

Postmodernism recognizes the need for both local communities of

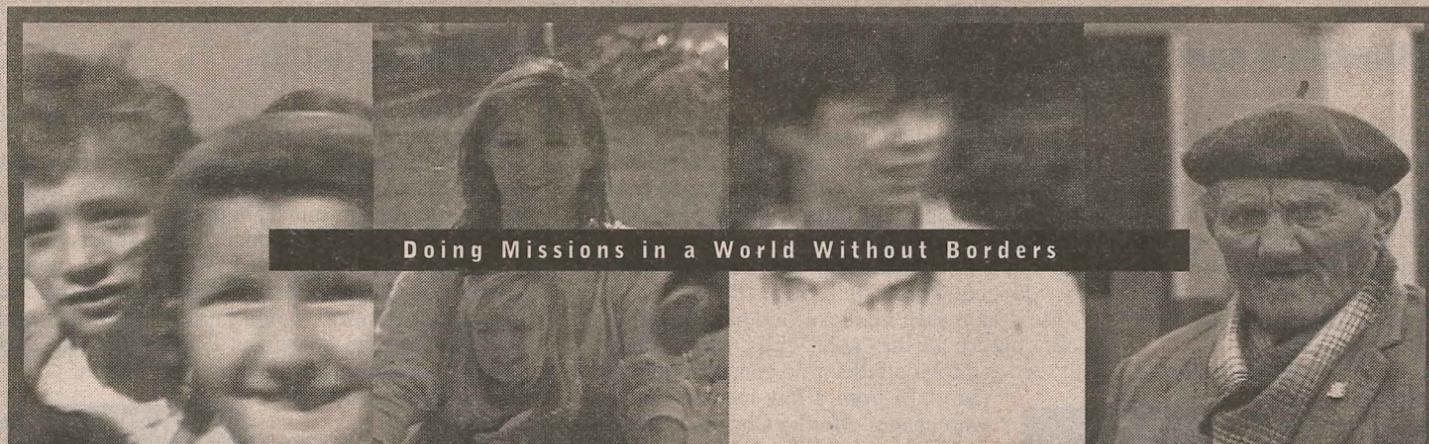
security and mutual understanding and global communities that are diverse, she said.

"The dangers of tribalism are real indeed. But to live only in a global community is not really to have a home," Ammerman said. "We can say to conservatives, come on out of your enclaves occasionally; the world's not nearly as fearsome as you think it is. But we can say to liberals, go home, listen to the stories, relearn the language, find out who you are."

Baptist distinctives that are vital for shaping the postmodern world include belief in the authority of the Bible, advocating for religious liberty and affirming the priesthood of the believer while at the same time realizing faith is developed in communities, Ammerman said.

The future requires Baptist churches to realize they are neither the "independently owned local franchise of the Southern Baptist Convention" nor a "radically independent tub on its own bottom," she said. "We're rediscovering at this time that we have to be autonomous in the sense of developing our own sense of missions, our own sense of place in God's world, but that we can't do that alone. We have to develop networks of cooperation."

"Now is the time to speak forthrightly of the ways of the Spirit and of knowledge that comes by faith."
Nancy Ammerman



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- A construction team going to Penza April 17-30.
- Marti Williams, member of Zion Baptist Church in Henderson, who is teaching English as a second language in Dubna, Russia.
- Boston churches planning summer camping programs for children and youth.
- Kentucky teams as they make plans to conduct vacation Bible school and backyard Bible clubs in Boston this summer.
- Utah-Idaho churches that are without pastors.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **COVINGTON**—Immanuel Church will celebrate its 105th homecoming March 17, with worship service at 10:45 a.m., and brunch to follow.

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Ballardsville Church called **Tommy Purvis** as pastor. Purvis previously was pastor at Calvary Church in Belmont, Miss. He will begin his new ministry in early April. Also, **Victor Angulo** was called as minister of youth and children.

■ **CROMWELL**—Mount Zion called **Conard Barnes** of Rockport as pastor.

■ **HARTFORD**—**Wesley Hanson** resigned as pastor at Clear Run Church.

■ **HIGHLAND HEIGHTS**—First Church called **Jeffrey Perkins** as pastor. Perkins is a native of Petersburg and previously was pastor of North Canton Church in Canton, N.C. He began his new ministry March 10.

■ **INDEPENDENCE**—Hickory Grove Church called **Todd Toole** as pastor. Toole will begin his new ministry March 17. He previously was pastor at Stanford Church in Lincoln County.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—"Dead Serious ... about life," a musical for teenagers, will be performed by Mishpachah Inc., March 23-24 at Iroquois High School. Mishpachah is an auditioned group of Christian

high school student performers. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$6 at the door. For more information call (800) 459-7268.

Farmdale Church will host an evening of drama and music presented by The Jeremiah People March 27 at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free. A love offering will be taken. For more information call (502) 366-1434.

Sam Roberts resigned as pastor of Baptist Tabernacle Church March 8, to become pastor of First Church at Walnut Ridge, Ark. **Jim Butcher** will preach until an interim is called. Also, **Art** and **Shannon Sauer** were called as ministers of music and outreach, and **Kevin** and **Kay Faulkenberry** were called as ministers of youth and children.

■ **McHENRY**—McHenry Church called **Scott Fleener** as pastor. He recently was ordained to the gospel ministry at Hartford Church.

■ **PADUCAH**—Bellview Church called **Chad Davidson** as minister of music and youth. He previously served at New Bethel Church in Benton.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Pleasant Grove Church will host Campbellsville College choir and handbell choir in concert March 13 at 7 p.m. The choir, consisting of 50 voices, is preparing for a summer tour of Europe. For more information call (502) 543-7336.

Mercer Association records 40 years of radio ministry

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

HARRODSBURG—Pastors of the 18 churches in Mercer Baptist Association have been preaching on the same frequency for 40 years—99.3 FM.

Since February 1956, these pastors and their predecessors have shared a 15-minute, five-day-a-week preaching broadcast on WHBN, a local AM-FM country music radio station.

The association celebrated 40 years of its broadcast ministry with a luncheon at Harrodsburg Baptist Church March 4. Station owner and manager Bob Martin received a plaque in appreciation for the air time his station has contributed to the Mercer Association program.

James Harley, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Harrodsburg and associational radio chairman, said the station and its format have been conducive to the ministry.

"From 11 to noon each day, they play gospel music," Harley explained. "Then from 12 to 12:30, they have preaching," which includes Mercer Association's spot and another preacher's program.

"They also give us free advertisement for revivals and special events in the church," Harley said.

He described the radio ministry's

purpose as reaching those who do not know Christ in the community and bringing comfort and strength to Christian people. And more people tune into the show every weekday at noon than many might imagine, the pastor added.

"We've had a great response through the years, especially from hospitals and shut-ins," he said. "We receive all kinds of complementary remarks from people in the community saying they listen to us."

Harley told of one man who appreciated the program because it gave him hope in the midst of extremely difficult times. The man told Harley after Christmas he didn't think he would have survived the season if he hadn't listened to the program.

Other listeners have joined churches in the association and even professed their faith in Jesus Christ as a direct or indirect result of the radio ministry through the years, Harley said.

Despite the unusual pulpit, almost all the pastors in the association participate, taking a week's turn at a time, Harley explained. Most of the 15 minutes is given to preaching, except for theme music and a word of prayer.

"I really enjoy it myself," he concluded. "It's really a great influence in the community."

What makes Oneida a special place: Part II

(Eighth in a series)

A third reason I believe God has blessed Oneida is that we have not turned away "older" students. How many young people over the years have dropped out of school because of an "I-know-it-all attitude?" Many Christian schools will not accept a young person who is now older, let's say 19, 20, 21 years of age or more. They will usually have a vague policy that excludes many who have been "drop-outs."

In Luke the 15th chapter, Jesus tells about a young man who thought he knew everything. One day he took his inheritance and left home. Some time later, the young man "came to his senses" and wanted to go home. What a sad ending to this story if the father had turned him away. When a person comes to his senses we are to receive him, not close our bowels of compassion.

Another reason I believe God has blessed us is that we will take a student who is "academically weak." It is hard to understand why a Christian school would not accept a student who does not make good grades. While I believe we should be a "cut above the rest," we cannot be so at the expense of others.

This past summer, a student enrolled in Oneida who came from a large Christian school here in Kentucky. The parents had received a letter from the school stating the child was "not a proper Christian role model" because his grades had fallen below a 2.0 grade point average. These parents knew their son was capable of doing better, but did not appreciate the way the school was dealing with the problem. While this young man was capable of doing better and has, his GPA last quarter was 3.1. Not all young people are equally

strong academically.

Our "Special Help" program is well known for helping students who are struggling academically. It is not easy to work with students who have learning difficulties and other learning problems. It can be a long, uphill struggle. Most of the young people in our "Special Help" program work hard every day, but will rarely have a 2.0 GPA.

The final reason I believe God has blessed us is our concern for the "poor" child. Many Christian schools provide little or no consideration for the child from a low income family who cannot afford a Christian education in a private school. We have students today who could not afford to pay what their Christian day school was charging. Families needing financial help were refused. The fees we charge are among the lowest in the United States for private Christian and non-Christian schools. Even our sister Southern Baptist schools across the U.S. charge fees three to six times higher than ours.

To my knowledge, Oneida has never turned a child away with legitimate financial needs. There have been some parents who wanted to enroll their child, but felt they could not pay the modest fees we charge. Upon investigation of their incomes, it was not a question of not being able to pay, but simply not being willing to make a sacrifice of material things.

Virtually every child who attends Oneida receives a minimum of a 50 percent scholarship. About 40 percent of our students pay nothing. Thirty percent pay less than half the fees we ask. About 30 percent pay the full amount, which is still less than half the actual cost.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Called to teach

"Always be a friend of the church janitor," Mike Thomas told students during his senior chapel testimony. "As minister of maintenance, I learned as much about the church as anything I've done."

At age 11, Mike heard Billy Graham on television describe two choices for eternity. "I didn't grow up in a Christian home, but I felt God's conviction. Still, none of my friends told me about Jesus."

Eighteen years old, Linda caught his eye and his heart. "It was pathetic; I was heartsick and knew, at age 15, I was too young for her to notice me." Three years later, she noticed and they were married. "Somebody finally let me know what it meant to be a Christian. Linda's witness and the influence of her family brought me to Christ at age 19."

A preschool teacher at First Baptist at Hickory, N.C., saw potential in him, and Mike went on to work nine years in the Sunday school department. That led to a "Potential Workers Class" where he studied Baptist doctrine and teaching methods. Work in the youth department, an assignment as youth retreat leader and a mission trip to Philadelphia culminated in the awareness "God had

called me into a teaching ministry."

The response sounded familiar to the Clear Creek student, "I'm too old. My boss just offered me a supervisor's job." But Mike and Linda, with priority on family, felt his career was pulling Mike away from the family. He took a cut in pay and accepted the janitorial position.

A mission trip to Mexico left Mike deeply affected by the village's commitment. He acted on Proverbs 3:5-6 and enrolled at a community college in Florida. "When we left the Florida campus, we knew God wanted us at Clear Creek."

Linda has operated the campus secretarial pool for three years. Mike worked in the Child Development Center until called as youth minister at First Baptist, New Tazewell, Tenn.

"The weakness in many churches is religious education. God calls each minister to equip his people to do the work of ministry. My home church taught me; I'm excited about doing that ministry wherever God sends us."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

South Carolina Baptists warming up for Olympics

By David Winfrey
SBC Home Mission Board

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)—Call it a practice run for the Olympics.

Southern Baptists had a literal marathon of ministry opportunities in Columbia, S.C., during the U.S. Olympic Trials Women's Marathon Feb. 10.

South Carolina Baptist Convention leaders were given responsibility for organizing activities along the race course for the Olympic Trials and, later that morning, the Columbia Marathon. The committee organized nearly 80 groups that lined the route with cheers for racers and entertainment for fans.

Among those groups were 20 Southern Baptist churches, half of which will work in Atlanta this summer with Atlanta International Ministries '96, the Southern Baptist ministry to the Olympic games.

The event provided numerous witnessing and ministry opportunities for churches and South Carolina Baptist Convention staff, said home missionary Bo Simms.

"We said to the community that Christians can be involved in events like this and provide the opportunity for family centered entertainment," said Simms, who serves as state di-

rector for missions ministries. "And in the midst of that, we earn the opportunity to tell them about Christ and the difference that he makes in our lives."

Rick Noble, vice president of the Columbia Marathon Association, said Baptists were invited to work because planners wanted an organization that could pull the community together. "I have been most impressed with the quiet assertiveness that they've used," he explained.

Baptists used the opportunity to introduce themselves to the community, he added. "It is evangelism that is appropriate to the circumstance."

Kilbourne Park Baptist Church's property sits on the 26.2-mile course. On the day of the marathon, church members mingled with neighbors and handed out Olympic ministry materials. Among them was a pocket guide to the Olympics that lists the events, world records and a four-page explanation of the gospel.

"Mainly we just hope to make an impact for Christ on those who come," said Pastor Bob Cline. The race offered members a chance to meet residents, he said, "and use the interactive guide as a way to open doors to talk about the Lord."

North Trenholm Baptist Church

members rolled out their marionette wagon, complete with a two-person horse suit and host "Ricky the Ringmaster." The team, which will be in Atlanta this summer, produces secular and Christian marionette plays for children, said Associate Pastor Roger Orman, who plays Ricky.

Meetings for the "course environment committee" were held at the state convention building and started

with prayer, Simms said. Committee members from the community were impressed that Baptists prayed for a successful race, for fans and organizers as well as for ministry opportunities, he said.

Organizers even joked Baptists were in charge of the weather for the event, prompting Simms to remind them, "We're in sales, not management."



Baptist chaplain offers calm voice at Atlanta's airport

ATLANTA (BP)—Because Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport serves as a hub for several major airlines, travelers often joke that they'll have to pass through Atlanta to get to heaven when they die.

But you don't have to die to hear about heaven while passing through the Atlanta airport, thanks to Baptist participation in an interfaith chaplaincy service there.

Amid the often harsh sounds of the airport—like the inter-terminal trams which bellow in a mechanical voice, "Stop! Do Not Enter! The doors are ready to close."—another voice injects a dose of warm humanity.

It is the voice of Denny Spear, airport chaplain, and those of other volunteers who work out of the airport's Interfaith Chapel.

"Would it be all right if I came in here not to complain about lost baggage, but just to tell you that I hope you have a great day," Spear says to

a woman working at the lost baggage desk.

As he walks by the drop-off point at the terminal, he asks a skycap—in an apparent daze with head resting in hands—what he would rather be doing. He would much rather be in a recording studio, the young man says, producing music. A connection is made, pleasantries are exchanged and Spear moves on.

It has been called "sidewalk counseling," Spear says, initiating brief exchanges of encouragement that also can make people more comfortable to talk about deeper issues.

Spear, a former pastor of Atlanta's Dunwoody Baptist Church and longtime chaplaincy director for Days Inns of America, has held the airport chaplaincy post since 1992. He said airport chaplaincy does involve the emergencies that many would expect of such a role—assisting in informing travelers of deaths of family members, counseling dis-

traught people seeking comfort in the chapel. But more routinely he sees it as a ministry of encouragement to lay ministry—helping employees as they seek to be the church among the many people they have contact with each day.

"We are trying to say what goes on in the world is important," he explains. "This is the church out here, these people ... and we try to facilitate them in their ministry."

God too often is relegated to a Sunday existence in the lives of many Christians, he believes, and he sees himself as an emissary of the institutional church to people of faith in the workplace, to "encourage them at work to feel the presence of God."

The Atlanta airport chapel ministry in its present form began about 1980, when a Presbyterian layman began working to make it reality. Eventually it became a project of the Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta, which helped organize a

separate board for the chapel. Charles Shirley, a former Southern Baptist missionary, was the chaplain until he retired in 1992.

As a condition of the city-owned airport, which provides the space, the chapel must serve all religions. That means, for instance, the small chapel is sparsely decorated because no particular religion can be favored. There are rows of chairs separated by a center aisle, with a small table at the front.

The chapel's logo is a simple kneeling figure, a symbol since adopted by other airport chapels and some hospitals around the world.

Spear acknowledges the dilemmas created with an interfaith chaplaincy effort directed by a chaplain who comes from a faith that is exclusive in its claims. Despite those tensions, there is a place for the type of low-key spiritual presence he provides, he says. "Christians have to cooperate for some common good."

OLYMPIC TRAINING
Southern Baptists cheer and assist during the 1996 U.S. Olympic Trials Women's Marathon in Columbia, S.C., Feb. 10. South Carolina Baptist Convention leaders organized 80 groups to encourage racers and entertain fans during a marathon of ministry opportunities along the race course for the Olympic Trials and later, the Columbia Marathon.

Baptist laymen open doors for transferred inmates' families

DENTON, Texas (BP)—An inmate saw his 5-month-old daughter for the first time. A woman with inoperable cancer saw her imprisoned son for what was probably the last time. And a Korean couple who came to visit their son met Jesus.

They were among more than two dozen relatives of prisoners from Oregon who recently visited family members in the county jail in Denton, Texas. Their four-day visit was made possible by the Criminal Justice Ministries Network of North Texas, an organization founded by two Texas Baptist laymen.

Last fall, the Oregon Department of Corrections transferred 230 in-

mates to the Denton County Jail due to overcrowding in Oregon's prison system. Of course, the 1,500-mile transfer stopped most family visitation.

The Criminal Justice Ministries Network coordinated Operation HELP, an acronym for Helping, Encouraging and Loving Prisoners. The project was designed to enable families from outside Texas to visit prisoners held in north Texas prisons and jails.

The network secured low-cost air fare for the families, helped to subsidize their lodging and enlisted local churches—including First Baptist Church and University Baptist

Church in Denton—to provide them with ground transportation, meals, counseling and hospitality.

"The churches just loved all over them," said Gene Grounds, executive director of the regional ministries network.

University Baptist held a prayer service for the families following an evening meal at the church.

"It was a special time of prayer," said Pastor Richard New. "They prayed individually for their family situations, and they expressed gratitude for the people in Texas who had helped them."

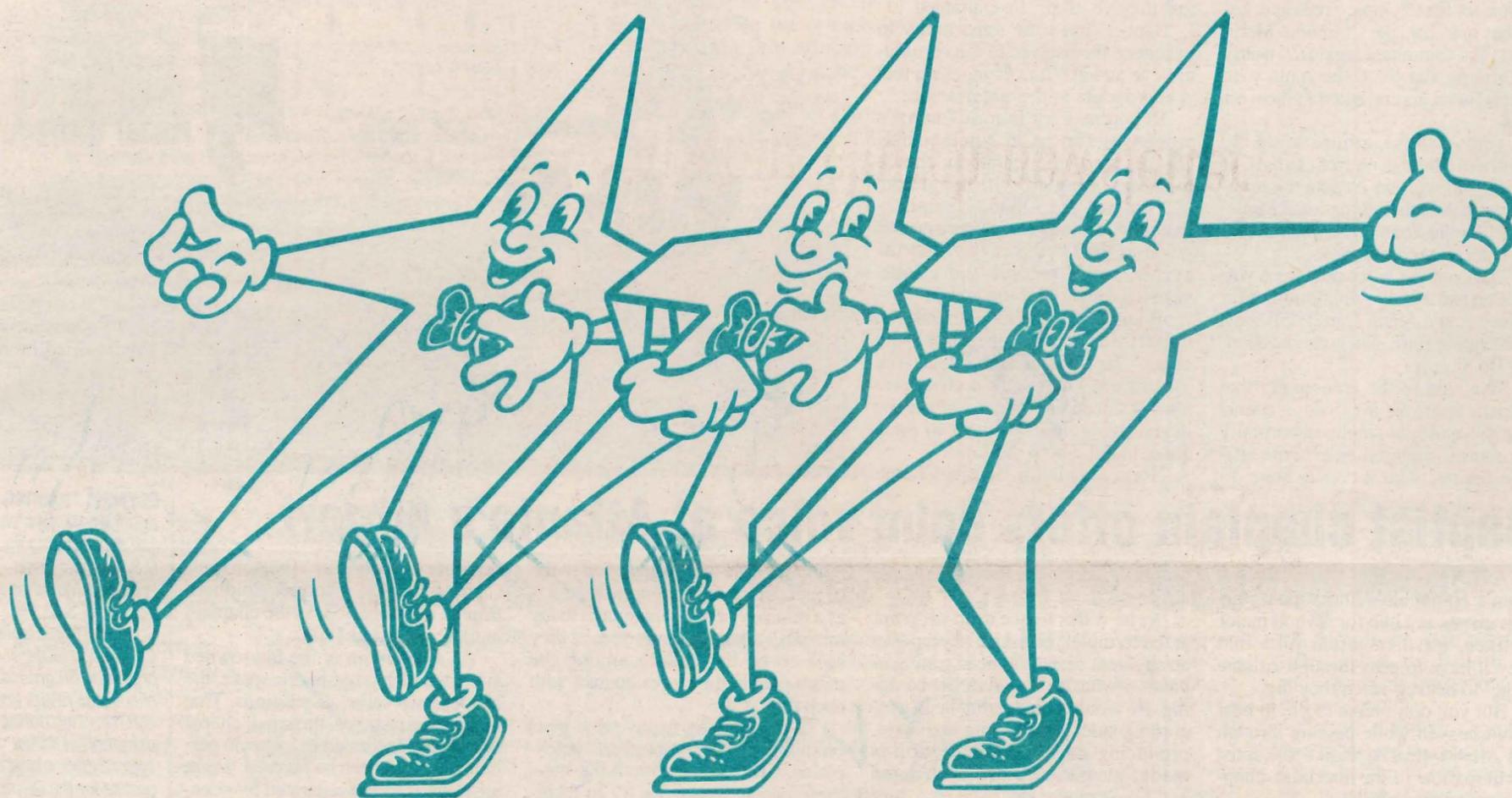
When the visitors first arrived in Denton, they had a high level of anx-

ety and a low level of trust, according to Grounds, a deacon at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas. But within a day or two, they became open to hospitality and to each other.

"When the families came in, nobody knew anyone else," he said. "But as they stayed together for four days, they bonded. They wept together, had fun together, did all the things that new friends do together."

As the barriers came down, the guests also became more receptive to the gospel. Grounds led one Asian-American couple to faith in Jesus Christ. They were visiting a 20-year-old son serving a 10-year sentence for murder.

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