

WESTERN RECORDER

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

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FOR THE RECORD

Faculty departures
Ten faculty members are leaving Southern Baptist Theological Seminary this spring, bringing to 42 the total number of faculty members who have left since Roy Honeycutt announced his retirement as president in the fall of 1992. See page 2.

Garland hired
Diana Garland, former dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work, has been named to a two-year research position with Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. She also has been honored by a national social work group as a "whistle blower." See page 2.

New concept
Warren Baptist Association broke ground recently for a new complex that will move beyond mere office space to feature recreation facilities for the association's churches to share. See page 3.

Editorial
Moral fitness is a sometimes overlooked requirement for ministry. See page 5.

Gay-rights case
The U.S. Supreme Court has overturned Colorado's Amendment 2, which would have barred enactment of special classes of protection for homosexuals. See page 6.

Paducah church's teddy bears meet special need

PADUCAH—Members of Reidland Baptist Church in Paducah recently learned an unusual lesson about spiritual supply and demand, according to Pastor Paul Blizard.

As a result, more than 1,400 teddy bears donated by Kentuckians will make their way to Russian orphans, and a Texas-based ministry will retain an open door for its work in Russia.

Earlier this year, Blizard and other members at Reidland developed a burden for children in Russian orphanages. Several church members had participated in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership with Russian Baptists.

So they set a goal of collecting 1,000 new or slightly used teddy bears to send to Russia. The appeal was publicized in the Western Recorder and other media.

"Baptist churches from all over Kentucky and local residents responded with over 1,400 teddy bears," Blizard said.

The church's Woman's Missionary Union, led by Doris Grimes, began the task of sorting the bears by size and preparing them for shipping. Each bear was fitted with a ribbon and tag with

Russian words saying "Jesus Loves Me."

But how to get the bears to Russia?

"The Russian mail system is atrocious, and theft is rampant," Blizard noted. "We checked with many different shipping agencies, and the prices were astronomical."

"We believed God gave us the idea, and we knew he had a plan to get the bears into the hands of the Russian orphans. We began to pray."

Calvin Wilkins, director of KBC partnership missions, suggested the church contact Josh McDowell Ministries in Texas, a group that has been doing humanitarian relief work in Moscow.

The contact person there, Stacey LaPrelle, "could hardly contain herself" when told about the Kentucky church's predicament, Blizard said.

LaPrelle explained that the Texas ministry was working with 24 orphanages in Russia. However, the Russian government would only allow them to continue their ministry with the children if they filled the requests for supplies needed by the orphanages.

The Josh McDowell team secured needed items such as medicine, clothing and food. But they had been stumped by a specific request for teddy bears. So they, too, began to pray.

Shortly thereafter, the call came from Reidland Baptist Church with the unusual request to help place teddy bears in Russian orphanages.

"We both rejoiced that God brought us together," Blizard said. "The bears are being shipped by UPS to Indiana, where McDowell's 300 volunteer missionaries will carry them to Russia. The rest will be shipped on a container."

Also, Reidland's own mission team will carry 300 bears with them on an Oct. 9-22 trip to Lebedevka, Russia. Those bears will be given to orphan children who have tuberculosis.

"Thanks to everyone who gave bears and money to see this project to completion," Blizard said.

"Through your generosity, Russian orphans will have a teddy bear to cuddle and love. It will be a little ray of sunshine in the lives of so many who live hopeless lives. They also will learn a little bit about the love of Christ."

Craving for clarity can be 'heresy'

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (ABP)—A lack of civility in American culture is merely a symptom of a deeper problem, a "yearning for certitude," Baptist educator Walter Shurden told an ethics gathering in Tallahassee, Fla.

"The real disease in our culture and in our world is a craving for clarity. It is a hunger for exactness. It is the yearning for certitude," Shurden said in a sermon at the May 20-21 "Leadership Through the Culture Wars" conference sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics.

"This craving for certainty is the very opposite of what the Bible means by faith," said Shurden, chair of the Christianity department at Mercer University in Macon, Ga.

Rather than dealing honestly with life's ambiguities, religious leaders often "offer misleading reductions about biblical faith," Shurden said.

Truth "gets trivialized when we reduce it to snappy sayings and sound bites," Shurden said.

Preaching from the story in the Gospel of John about a discussion between Jesus and adversaries over a man blind from birth, Shurden proclaimed: "Here is one of the most prevalent heresies in American life. It is what I would call the heresy of exactness."

In the Bible story, the opponents of Jesus sought to trap him by demanding to know "who sinned, this man or his parents?" for him to be born blind.

"This ravenous thirst takes the Bible and transforms it into an almanac," he said. "It takes ministers of the gospel and it forces them to become answer people—which they are not—with an inexhaustible list of answers to all the tragedies of life."

It is an impulse "to know the things of faith with scientific certitude," Shurden said. "Every preacher knows it's true. The more precise you can be today, the more popular. The more demons you identify, the more support that seems to come your way."

"We have elevated ... dogmatism to celebrity status," he said. "And most of us here, if we were ruthlessly honest with ourselves, have an affinity for this heresy of exactness."

That urge runs counter to the witness of Scripture, Shurden said, from the story of Abraham, who struck out on faith to an unknown country, to the Apostle Paul, who wrote he could see only "through a glass darkly" into the mysteries of God.

"This human penchant for preciseness is wrong-headed," Shurden said, and "a distortion of what the Bible means by faith."

There is another heresy—"vagueness"—on the other extreme, Shurden said. But "the opposite of absolutism for the Christian is not relativism," he said. "The opposite of absolutism is faith."

Fatherhood summit cites importance of presence

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

HERNDON, Va. (RNS)—In 1960, about 7 million U.S. children lived in homes without a father.

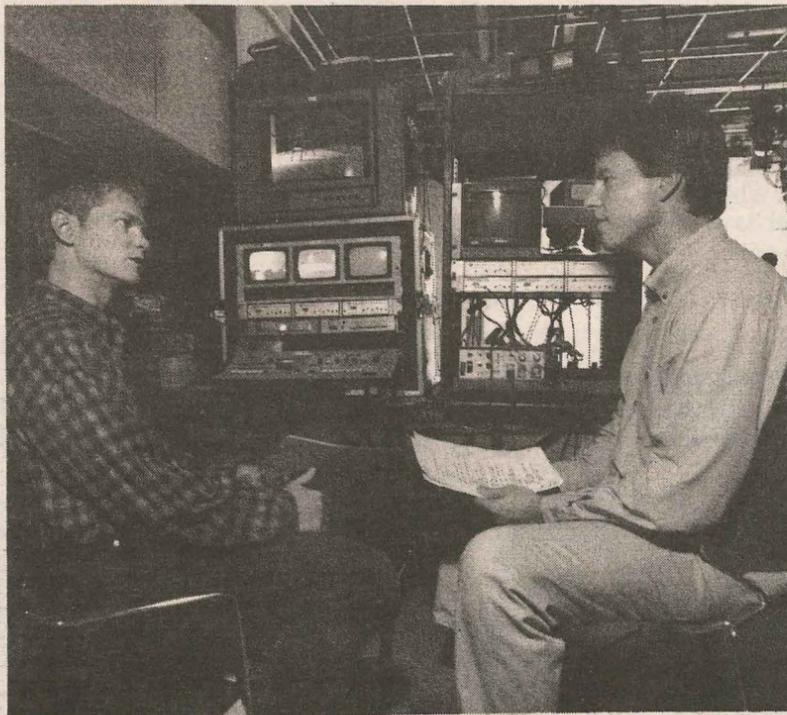
That figure now stands at nearly 23 million.

At an "Interfaith Summit on Fatherhood" convened by the National Fatherhood Initiative, a 3-year-old advocacy group, Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders and others drew attention May 17 to the issue of father absence and examined how religious institutions can ameliorate the problem.

"We believe that this is the most socially consequential problem of our time," said Wade Horn, director of the National Fatherhood Initiative. The non-profit organization, based in Lancaster, Pa., aims to strengthen the institution of fatherhood in America.

The absence of a father often leads children to become more violent and more sexually promiscuous than children in two-parent families, Horn said in his opening address. Children living apart from their fathers also are more likely to drop out of school, suffer emotional problems or commit suicide as adolescents, he said.

"Father absence may not be the sole cause of each of these social ills, but it certainly makes each one



NEW YOUTH VIDEO Kentucky native Steven Curtis Chapman (left) talks with Rick Simms, a video producer for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, during videotaping of a new training video for youth Bible study teachers released this month. Chapman, a contemporary Christian recording artist, appears in the video, "Connected, Committed and a Little Bit Crazy: Teaching Youth Today." The video is part of a new series of training resources for Bible study teachers and leaders produced by the Sunday School Board. The "Teaching Today Leader Training Series" includes five new books and interactive training packs with teaching aids, audio cassettes, videos and a computer disk that allows people to sign on to SBCNet, Southern Baptists' private forum on the CompuServe computer network. Doug Merritt, team leader for age-group resources in the Bible teaching-reaching division, said the new videos are not "talking heads," but are designed to enhance training sessions through the use of mini-documentaries, interviews, demonstrations and dramatic vignettes that reinforce learning. "They are kind of like mini-movies," he said. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

Moving? See page 4 (0528)

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Daniel Hill**, a Southern Baptist missionary to Thailand, died May 22 in an automobile accident near Cadiz. Hill, 54, was driving to Indianapolis to attend a son's graduation from military boot camp when he apparently fell asleep at the wheel, according to state police. An Atlanta native, Hill served as a church planter and evangelist in Bangkok, Thailand. His wife, Delores, was in Thailand at the time of the accident.

■ **Bill Leonard**, former professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been named the first dean for Wake Forest University's new divinity school. Leonard, chairman of the religion department at Samford University since 1992, will assume the post July 1.

■ **The 1996 SBC Book of Reports** is available electronically on SBCNet, the Southern Baptist Convention's forum on CompuServe. The book is posted in the library section of the general ministry B forum under SBC 96.

Seminary has lost 59 percent of faculty since 1992

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—The end of the spring semester at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary brought to a close the employment of at least 10 full-time faculty members.

The 10 are among 42 full-time faculty members who have taken other positions, been forced to leave or retired since the fall of 1992, when Roy Honeycutt announced his intentions to retire as seminary president. Three of the 42 departed faculty had been employed by the seminary after Honeycutt's retirement announcement.

The count of 42 includes only full-time professors and does not account for adjunct professors, senior professors, instructors and other part-time faculty.

For a measure of comparative impact, in the fall of 1992 Southern Seminary employed 66 full-time faculty members, according to an analysis of the seminary's 1992-93 Student Directory. That means the seminary has experienced a 59 percent turnover in full-time faculty over a four-year period, not including professors who came after 1992 and now have left.

A few of those who have resigned

or retired from their full-time posts have continued to teach in adjunct or contract capacities, or as senior professors, a designation given some retirees.

While a few of the 42 left their posts at normal retirement age or because of normal career advancement patterns, most of the departures have been tied to campus turmoil since Honeycutt's retirement and the subsequent hiring of Al Mohler as seminary President. Mohler and the seminary trustee board have steered the Southern Baptist Convention's oldest seminary in a markedly more conservative direction.

The 10 leaving this spring include:

■ **Gerald Keown**, professor of Old Testament interpretation, who has been named professor of Old Testament interpretation at the new theology school of Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, N.C.

■ **Walter Jackson**, director of supervised ministry and associate dean of the theology school, who is retiring. Jackson will work part-time in retirement as associate director of the pastoral counseling center at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

■ **Hal Poe**, associate professor of evangelism and associate vice presi-

dent for academic programs, who is moving to Union University in Jackson, Tenn., as associate professor of Christian studies and dean of information services.

■ **Glenn Stassen**, professor of Christian ethics, who anticipates final confirmation in July of an appointment to the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

■ **David Dockery**, vice president for academic administration and dean of the theology school, who has been named president of Union University in Jackson, Tenn.

■ **Craig Loscalzo**, associate professor of preaching, who is now pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

■ **David Stancil**, assistant professor of psychology of religion and pastoral care, who has become associate pastor of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

■ **Diana Garland**, professor of Christian family ministry and former dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work, who has been named to a research position with Louisville Presbyterian Seminary.

■ **Janet Spessart**, acting dean of the Carver School, who has taken a social work professorship at Roberts

Wesleyan College in Rochester, N.Y.

■ **David Gushee**, assistant professor of Christian ethics, who has been named to the faculty at Union University.

Over the last four years, three academic departments and one school at Southern Seminary have experienced a complete turnover or loss of faculty: church history, Christian ethics, Christian preaching and the Carver School of Church Social Work.

"The number of persons who have left Southern Seminary in the last four years is abnormally high," said David Dockery, the academic vice president who is leaving Southern at the end of May. "As a matter of fact, most seminaries don't even have this many faculty members to gain or lose."

"However, given the transition in the Southern Baptist Convention and the intentional shift in direction at the seminary, I don't think anyone is surprised."

It is also important to note that many of the persons who left have moved to something rather than from something and have gone on to significant churches, denominational or institutional positions," Dockery added. "That is certainly true for me."

Garland to Presbyterian Seminary; named 'whistle blower'

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Diana Garland, former dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been named to a two-year research position with Louisville Presbyterian Seminary.

Also, Garland, whom Southern Seminary President Al Mohler fired as Carver School dean in March 1995, has been named recipient of the 1996 Jack Otis Whistleblower Award by the National Association of Social Workers Inc.

The award carries a \$5,000 cash gift, which Garland said she intends

to invest in a fund to aid remaining Carver School students who desire to transfer to other schools.

Garland was notified of the award May 21. It will be presented to her later this summer.

The award's namesake is professor emeritus at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work. Literature produced by the National Association of Social Workers describes the award as "a means ... to honor social workers who demonstrate ethical and moral responsibility in their places of employment."

Further, the statement says, the award "offers public recognition to demonstrate the significant impact a single professional social worker can

have upon organizational change by confronting unethical and/or illegal practices taking place in an employing agency or organization."

Garland was fired as Carver School dean after she told a group of social work students that Mohler's restrictive hiring policies were endangering the Carver School's accreditation. That information, along with Garland's firing, created upheaval on the seminary campus for several months and eventually led to a decision to close the Carver School.

Although removed as dean, Garland remained on the faculty another year. She announced her resignation from the faculty earlier this spring.

Her new appointment at Louisville

Presbyterian Seminary was announced May 19 during that school's spring commencement ceremony.

The position is funded through a \$285,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. Garland will work with Carol Eichling Lytch, a doctor of philosophy candidate at Atlanta's Emory University. The two-year study will focus on how congregations and families transmit the Christian faith across generations.

Garland's part of the project will examine congregations in four denominations: the Southern Baptist Convention, the National Baptist Convention, the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Methodist Church.

Hogue to chair new mission board's 'incorporators'

NASHVILLE (BP)—C.B. Hogue, retired executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention, will chair the group of 13 "incorporators" who will nominate a president for the new North American Mission Board.

Hogue was named to the post by the implementation task force, which has been assigned by the SBC Executive Committee to oversee details of the denomination's massive restructuring. Hogue introduced a motion at the 1993 SBC annual meeting which led to the restructuring study.

The implementation task force also nominated half the remaining members of the incorporators group: Carlisle Driggers, executive director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention; Fred Lowery, pastor of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, La.; Alice Sanders, a homemaker and member of First Baptist Church in Wales, Fla.; John O. Yarbrough, pastor of First Baptist Church in Perry, Ga., and president of the Georgia Baptist Convention; Michael Hamlet, pastor of First Baptist Church of

North Spartanburg, S.C., and former chairman of the Radio & Television Commission; and Robert Sorrell, associate pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.

Yarbrough and Sorrell are members of the SBC Executive Committee. Sorrell also served on the Program and Structure Study Committee, which drafted the reorganization plan.

The North American Mission Board is to be created by merging the current Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio & Television Commission.

The primary task of the incorporators is to nominate an agency president. Their nominee must be presented to the North American Mission Board trustees for election.

Two trustees from each of three merged agencies round out the 13-member incorporators group. Those six, announced earlier, are Donley Brown, Keith Corrick, John Avant Jr., Charles Fuller, Omer Ray Finch Jr. and William Underwood.

2 leave resolutions committee

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (ABP)—A prominent Arkansas layman and friend of Bill Clinton has resigned from the Southern Baptist Convention's resolutions committee after charges that he has ties to legalized gambling interests.

Buddy Sutton, a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and an active lay leader of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, withdrew from the resolutions committee May 23, a month after his appointment by SBC President Jim Henry was announced.

Sutton's appointment drew opposition from the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas, at odds with Sutton because his law firm filed papers for a client seeking a constitutional amendment that would legalize pari-mutuel gambling in Arkansas. His appointment also was criticized in a widely distributed letter to Henry from Larry Holly, a Baptist physician in Beaumont, Texas.

Henry issued a short statement announcing Sutton's resignation but ignoring the charges of a potential conflict of interest.

Henry's statement said it was brought to his attention that in his "desire to widen our participation in our SBC life," he had enlisted too many members for the resolutions committee. As a result, he said, he asked one member, Ferris Jordan of Louisiana, to withdraw, and noted that "Buddy Sutton of Arkansas has resigned from the committee."

Sutton is managing partner at Friday, Eldredge and Clark, one of the largest law firms in Arkansas. He is the lead attorney defending Gov. Jim Guy Tucker in the Whitewater trial.

Sutton could not be reached for comment. His pastor, Rex Home, said Sutton's "personal example and conduct and conviction" against gambling are well known and his church "has consistently supported efforts to oppose gambling."

Campbellsville now has forest

CAMPELLSVILLE—Campbellsville University has established a 135-acre nature preserve and management woodland seven miles northeast of the campus.

Clay Hill Memorial Forest, consisting of the Joan White Howell Nature Preserve and Environmental Education Center and the James Sanders White Forest Management Woodland, was dedicated by university officials May 7.

The forest will be used for multiple purposes, including preservation of a core forest, establishment of demonstration forests, environmental education, public outreach and research, said Gordon Weddle, a Campbellsville University biology professor who spearheaded the project.

The forest is a gift from George Howell of Pascagoula, Miss., and Edwin White Jr. of Atlanta.

"Our plans for the Clay Hill Memorial Forest involve construction of a visitors center with fully equipped teaching and research laboratories and housing for visiting scientists," Weddle said.

The Laird Norton Endowment Foundation of Seattle has awarded Campbellsville a research grant of \$7,500 to establish a Geographic Information Systems Database for the forest.

Meanwhile, 10 people have been named to the Clay Hill Memorial Forest board of advisors. They are Weddle; Richard Kessler of Campbellsville; Edwin White Jr. of Atlanta; Bill Bryant of Thomas More College; Joe Winstead of Morehead State University; Steve Dalton of the Kentucky Division of Forestry; Jane Wilson of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council; Tom Forsythe of the Tennessee Valley Authority; James Angel of Campbellsville; and Lloyd Curry of Greensburg.

Warren complex to mix work and play

By Joyce Sweeney Martin
Staff Writer

BOWLING GREEN—In the future, when members of Warren Baptist Association congregations visit the associational office, they may be as apt to play softball, pitch horseshoes or have a picnic as to conduct business or attend a Bible study.

That blending of activities for body, mind and spirit will make for a more effective association which will "truly become the hub for fellowship and cooperative ministry it should be," according to Director of Missions Jerry Oakley.

In fact, he believes that so much that when the association's new facilities are completed on a 25-acre site in Bowling Green, recreational facilities will take their place alongside more traditional offices.

His rationale is simple. "People need to get to know each other" in order to work together effectively, he said. They need "to form bonds which will carry over into other cooperative ministries."

Plus, since most of the 44 congregations in the association are small, an inclusive recreational program with shared costs "will enable us together to do what we cannot do alone," he said.

The new site—one mile south of



I-65 on Scottsville Road—is within a 20-minute drive of all the association's churches, he said.

When plans now underway become reality, the Warren Association of Baptists Complex will include a top-of-the-line recreational facility, complete with an on-site recreation director, as well as office and meeting space.

The first phase of the three-phase, \$1.5 million project got underway April 28 with a ground-breaking ceremony. Phase one includes the land purchase, engineering and architectural plans, site grading, two softball

fields, a parking lot, a road and a storage/concession building at a cost of \$250,000. That money already is in hand.

Phase two will include construction of a \$520,000 office facility and an additional softball field.

Phase three will include volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, picnic areas with pavilions, walking trails, a frisbee golf course, an amphitheater, playgrounds, recreation building and storage facilities.

Phases two and three will be completed when money is available, Oakley said.

ALL HANDS ON BOARD
Representatives from the churches of Warren Baptist Association all got a hand in the action during a groundbreaking service for the association's new office/recreation complex.

McFarland hears call to Russian deaf work

PRESTONSBURG—A longtime Kentucky Baptist worker with the deaf is headed for a year's work among the deaf in the former Soviet Union.

Tina McFarland, a Prestonsburg resident who has done extensive work with the deaf community in Eastern Kentucky, expects to work with a team of 10 to 12 people in St. Petersburg, Russia. Six schools for the deaf are located in that city.

McFarland will work with teachers in those schools, providing learning resources and techniques for the teaching of Bible-based ethics.

She is going to Russia under the umbrella of The CoMission, a network of 80 evangelical organizations. A private foundation in the United

States has committed major funding for Christian professionals working in the deaf community who are willing to volunteer at least one year of service in Russia.

In Russia, 10 percent of the population is deaf, McFarland noted. "I could spend several lifetimes attempting to reach all the deaf children in that vast country, provided the opportunity was always there. However, I believe we utilize God's resources more effectively by equipping the teachers who will then spread the word, which will influence many more lives in an accelerated way."

A private donor has funded production of specially designed materials for deaf students in Russia. In addition, some Christian videotapes, in-

cluding the "Jesus" film, have been interpreted into Russian Sign Language. Russian Sign Language differs significantly from American Sign Language, McFarland said.

"In many ways, my experience (in Eastern Kentucky) has equipped me for the work in Russia," she said. "The deaf community here in the mountains tends to be a culturally closed one, while Russia's deaf community has been a politically closed one for 75 years. Consequently, there are several similarities, among them the concept of 'home signs' indigenous to specific areas and a high rate of congenital deafness."

McFarland will meet her team in Chicago July 6 and then will travel to Russia July 23.

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **Campbellsville house named.** Trustees of Campbellsville University have accepted the gift of a house near the campus and have named it in honor of the donors' 5-year-old son who was killed in an automobile accident two years ago. The three-story house, donated by Joseph and Susan Walters, will be known as the Ralph Joseph Walters House.

■ **Dinner theater planned.** Glen Dale Children's Home will present a dinner theater at 7 p.m. June 28 featuring the Kentucky student missions teams Son Celebration and Son Share. The same two groups will be featured the next night at a pizza party for church youth groups. For information or reservations, call (502) 369-7380.

■ **Free books available.** Thousands of copies of a popular Dr. Seuss children's book and another Bible story book returned in a promotional mailing are headed for the Post Office dumpster, unless they are retrieved by non-profit organizations, churches or church schools. To receive free copies of "The Foot Book" and "Jonah and the Whale," send a request on church or school letterhead to Paul Sowders, 226-A Lancaster Ave., Richmond, Ky. 40475.

■ **Lemons to carry torch.** Russ Lemons, a former resident of Glen Dale Baptist Children's Home and graduate of Georgetown College, will carry the Olympic torch June 6. Lemons is director of development for a children's home in Fort Mitchell.

■ **Campers keep busy.** Kentucky's chapter of Campers on Mission has left tire tracks and goodwill across the state in recent months. The group's annual spring rally was held April 22-25 in Campbellsville, with repairs made to two churches. In March, the group traveled to Russell Creek Baptist Association, where they did extensive repairs on an old one-room schoolhouse that had been donated to two churches. For information on joining Campers on Mission, call Guy King at (606) 341-7622.

■ **Private abortions questioned.** Jefferson Circuit Judge Kenneth Corey ruled May 17 that if the state Cabinet for Health Services wants to regulate private doctors' offices where abortions are performed, the state

legislature will have to create a law that addresses them specifically. The judge dismissed a suit against Women's Health Services in Louisville, which performs second-trimester abortions, saying there currently is no law that addresses abortion clinics not licensed as ambulatory surgical centers.

■ **Grant received.** Campbellsville University has received a \$100,000 grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations of Jacksonville, Fla., to help fund the \$2.5 million renovation of Carter Hall. The renovated facility will reopen next fall as home to the university's departments of math, physics and computer science, as well as the division of humanities and education.

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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

Male domination

It has long been apparent that what has fueled the fundamentalist takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention is not so much belief in biblical inerrancy as the fear and hatred of women and what they represent to insecure men dedicated to preserving a fossilized dominator culture.

The motivation has been the lust for power, of course, but power over whom or what? Mark Coppenger (May 7, page 2) makes the answer clear: power over women, and the license to ridicule and condemn all who threaten the male dominator's shaky masculinity, i.e. strong and capable women, gay men and believers who hold that the liberating message of Jesus is about the inclusion and equality of persons.

While there are sincere inerrantists among the ranks of Baptists, our institutions are being led by men whose position on inerrancy is merely a cynical mask for the suppression of women. Terrified by feminism, and in denial of the ways the liberation of women is consonant with the message of Jesus, these men zealously serve the values of a dominator culture. It is a sad coincidence that in the same week Coppenger spewed out his doctrine of the subjugation of women, an Alabama legislator justified the enslavement of black persons by white persons, also on the basis of Scripture.

Coppenger's obvious delight in putting women in their place occasions in me both a sadness for the current state of the church and a profound gratitude for the ordained Baptist women ministers who have aided my growth in Christian faith. His dis-

picable ridiculing of gay men is beyond the pale. My heart goes out to the many gay and lesbian Baptists out there, faithfully serving churches with quiet devotion, hiding their secret selves for fear of the kind of censure and ridicule the Coppengers of the church are ready to sanctimoniously dish out.

John P. Reed
Louisville

Carnal Christians

There have always been carnal Christians who have sought to conform Scripture to the present worldly culture. A letter to the editor in the May 7 issue attempts to do the same with the sin of homosexuality.

The chosen method here was to dismiss all pertinent Scriptures and insert Christ's "Judge not, lest ye be judged." With this convenient logic, we could easily discard all other Scripture, especially if it went against our own cultural bias.

Dangerous business this trivializing a hideous sin—and for both parties. Paul said to "be not condemned by what you approve." If one has been persuaded that their sin is not sin, then how can they repent of it? If they do not repent, then how can they be saved? The Apostle John said, "If anyone continues to sin, they have neither seen him or known him."

Our writer and recent others tell us that the words of Paul are not God-breathed Scripture and may be ignored as they only reflect his own cultural bias and bigotry. I contend that these who so charge are the ones guilty of cultural bias and bigotry—and that against the word of God. Paul saw Christ and was taught by him personally in the Spirit for two years. What credentials have the detractors?

The Apostle Peter refers to Paul's words as Scripture when he says of Paul, "His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their

own destruction."

Chuck Estridge
Williamstown

God has answers

Regarding Mark Coppenger's remarks at Midwestern Seminary (May 7, page 2) about women pastors being dangerous: After reading the article, my feathers were ruffled.

I am a woman, and I make no justification for my creation. Yet my purpose on this earth goes much further than womanhood. I am a Christian; a follower of Jesus Christ. My life is given to God for whatever capacity he calls me to. I have been asked to fill the pulpit in churches. I have led music, sung, given my testimony, and I have even given a few messages.

After this article, I decided to take it to the Lord in prayer. I asked God: "Am I doing something wrong? Could these people be justified for believing a woman should not be in a pulpit? Could it be I am blindly going the wrong direction?"

Of course, God had all the answers. He first reminded me not to look to man for answers, but to Jesus as the prime example for living. Then I remembered some of the unmistakable truths my Master stands for. He is a God of love, hope and equality. Most importantly, he reminded me there is a whole world of lost people who need him. I then realized my call is unmistakable.

Whomever God uses for his work is his choice. We are quick to point to others and say, "God can't use you to bring his message because of your race or gender." Is it possible for us to interpret whom God calls? The only concept dangerous while looking at women pastors is the time and energy spent debating over it. We are missing the point: men and women ministers are on the same side. We together are trying to give the world a hope and a truth—Jesus Christ.

Dawn M. Richardson
Campbellsville

Preservationists

Next Sunday, I will have the privilege of celebrating with Pastor Al Hardy and folks the bicentennial anniversary of Good Hope Baptist Church in Taylor County.

Founded in 1796, it joins fewer than 40 Kentucky Baptist churches which have achieved that mark. Our oldest existing Kentucky Baptist church, Sevens Valley, pre-dates Good Hope by only 15 years.

Good Hope was there 56 years before the General Association (KBC) and 64 years before the Southern Baptist Convention.

One of the church's organizers, Joshua Short, born in Virginia (where so many early Kentucky Baptists originated), is credited with giving the church its name, having come there from Good Hope Church, Virginia.

As I reviewed the excellent history prepared for the occasion by the bicentennial committee, I realized anew the priceless gift that others leave to those of us who live in future generations; those who lovingly la-

bored "back when" so we could know a little of our past. Good Hope was printed a bicentennial history.

A church's history is not considered a "hot" item on an every-day basis. Yet when a big anniversary rolls around, churches have come to realize the importance of record-keeping, especially the minutes from business meetings or previous histories written for earlier anniversaries.

One of the ministries developed in recent years by the Executive Board of the Kentucky Baptist Convention is to assist Kentucky Baptist churches and associations in researching, writing and celebrating their histories. An annual workshop is conducted for churches anticipating a major anniversary. Working in partnership with the KBC Historical Commission, the archives staff has helped numerous churches enhance their historical celebrations.

Among the more than 200 who participated in the dedication of the new building in which now reside Western Recorder, Baptist Foundation and Woman's Missionary Union

were those who had come to experience the dedication of the Doris B. Yeiser Center for Kentucky Baptist Archives, housed in the renovated area previously occupied by Western Recorder.

The expanded space for research and housing historical data is a valuable asset to present and future generations of Kentucky Baptists.

It is fitting that it be named for Doris Yeiser, who served four Kentucky Baptist executive secretaries and whose historical awareness of convention history is without peer. That most of her family could be here for the dedication added to the joy of this day.

Two endowments have been established with the Foundation to encourage self-support, including some funds set aside through the years by the Executive Board. I should not have been surprised shortly after the dedication, that one who has loved and nurtured this useful ministry gave me a sizable check to be added to one of those endowments.

Blessed are they who help us remember our past.

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



FAMILY FORUM

Considerations for remarriage

By Harry Rowland

Morton Hunt estimates that of those divorced, 85 percent of the men and 76 percent of the women remarry. Remarriage is not some abstract concept, but a reality with which Christians must deal.

Two possible views are predominant. One is based upon the fact that Jesus is hard on divorce, coupled with the belief that no remarriage for anyone, for any reason will turn the tide on a rising divorce rate. The other is based upon the words "caring" and "loving," which then are misused to make divorce too easy. Both are extremes and when yoked to Christians rob them of God's abundant life.

It is clear that divorce is not Jesus' plan. But Scripture reveals that Jesus permitted divorce (Matthew 19) and that remarriage is allowed (1 Corinthians 7). These passages are said to speak to "biblical grounds." But many singles want to know if it is right to remarry. The answer is not always an easy one. A good understanding of the above-mentioned passages and 1 John 1:9 will help.

When I seek to understand the overall teachings of Christ, I am convinced that remarriage—in most cases—is permissible. The primary conditions are: (1) that the couple be willing to undergo serious, in-depth Christian counseling, and (2) that they are convinced the decision to remarry represents God's will for their lives.

In counseling, five criteria are addressed: (1) Have I forgiven myself? (2) Have I forgiven my former spouse? (3) Has enough time elapsed to exhaust reasonable possibilities for reconciliation? (4) Have I resolved all unfinished business from my first marriage? (5) Do both I and my partner believe it is God's will and for his glory that we marry?

We cannot allow the world of single-again to become an asylum for the "marital incompetent" but rather a "school for the remarriageable." Good second marriages make contributions to our society and churches. With God at work, remarriage can be a great opportunity.

Harry Rowland is pastor of Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

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

HE SAID/SHE SAID

Sometimes the little things matter most in communication

HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

Sometimes even families that normally communicate fairly well just don't find the time to discuss everything they ought to discuss. Life moves too fast.

This reality hit me like a crowbar over the head last Wednesday night, when the boys and I left church well before Alison, since she was staying for choir rehearsal.

When we walked in the front door, I thought I heard voices and assumed someone was leaving a message on the answering machine. But I soon discovered there were no messages.

Then I found a rarely used cabinet door wide open in the downstairs bathroom. Odd, I thought, but since I had barely breezed through the house between work and church, I didn't know what Alison and the boys had been doing.

The boys and I played together in the living room for a few minutes, and then I went to get something in the kitchen. First I spotted another cabinet door open, and then the real alarm sounded: Lying on the kitchen counter was a large pair of heavy-duty snippers I had never seen before.

I quickly added two and two together and got five. Someone was in the house, I told myself in a flash. So, being a coward, I rushed back to the living room, hurried the bewildered boys outside and into the car and drove the few blocks from our house to the church. It was about time for choir to be letting out, so I intended to ask Alison about the misplaced items before I called the police. And our hasty exit might have given the intruders a chance to exit unnoticed, I thought in the back of my troubled mind.

Unfortunately, this was the night the choir was throwing a birthday party for our music minister, and Alison was inside eating cake and drinking punch while the boys and I fretted in the parking lot. I would have taken the boys inside to find her, but the church doors were locked, and besides, Garrett left the house in such a hurry that he was barefooted.

SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

When I came out of church and saw Mark and the boys waiting, I nearly panicked. I just knew it was bad news.

Then Mark told me he thought someone might be in the house and started his interrogation.

Luckily I had an answer for all his questions.

I was the culprit who had left the doors open in my haste. And I imagine the voices he heard were our neighbors who were eating outside.

The snippers are a special case. The cable company had been working in our neighborhood that day and left them in our backyard. I carried them inside and left them on the kitchen counter, meaning to tell Mark about them later.

Mark did the right thing. With two small children in your care, you don't stick around if something isn't right.

I can relate to how he jumped to the wrong conclusion. Whenever Mark is out of town, my imagination goes into overdrive.

I am aware of every noise this old house produces. Things that go bump in the night often wake me just as I am finally drifting off to sleep. I even miss Mark's snoring.

It doesn't hurt to err on the side of caution. But sometimes we let our fears get the best of us, and forget that no matter what, God is with us.

Anyone need a pair of snippers?

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

Moral fitness a requirement for ministry

In recent years, the Christian church has been so caught up in debates over highly controversial aspects of a person's fitness for ministry—marital status, gender, political views—that even more basic qualifications have been overlooked at times.

Few people stop to inquire about a person's moral fitness for ministry—until it's too late.

Sexual impropriety is the one moral blight among ministers that continually makes the headlines. But it's not the only moral failure that can bring shame to the church and the gospel.

What place is there in ministry for the person who does not tell the truth, who cannot keep a confidence, who puts people down rather than building them up, who cannot tell right from wrong, who agitates divisions rather than promoting understanding or who mishandles God's money?

Could such a person ever be drawn to ministry as a vocation? Absolutely. Just as some students in need of counseling are drawn to become psychology majors, so some who are in need of moral guidance are drawn into ministerial training.

Certainly ministers are imperfect humans just like everyone else. And God can bring healing, reconciliation and redirection to any life. But the church and society rightly hold ministers to a higher moral standard.

While the church is quick to shoot down those who experience "big" moral failures—and sadly never acknowledge the possibility of God's redemptive work

in their lives—the church often neglects to require accountability for "lesser" moral failures that in reality are equally damaging to the church's witness.

Given the condition of our society, the pool of morally and mentally healthy individuals from which ministers may be drawn is shrinking. This makes it all the more urgent for churches to be salt and light in their communities, to create seedbeds of nurture for both moral and religious training and to hold all church leaders accountable as moral examples.

While the New Testament doesn't tell us everything we might want to know about church structure, it does offer insight into qualities of church leaders. One sound bite from 1 Timothy 3 has been quoted ad nauseum to speak against women being pastors, but much less attention has been paid to the rest of the chapter.

Speaking of qualifications for "overseers," which we can translate as guidance for church leadership in general, this passage calls for those who would be leaders to be "above reproach," "not violent but gentle" and "not quarrelsome," among other attributes.

With all the demands placed on church staff members today, there never has been a more difficult time to be a minister. But never has there been a time when the church more desperately needed ministers to walk the moral high road, and help their congregations and communities do the same.

—Mark Wingfield



Inerrancy first?

Regarding comments by Morris Chapman (May 14, page 2) when another denomination's top executive asked him to state an "irreducible minimum for an evangelical theology," Chapman is reported as saying, "I would have to say the word of God is absolute truth and ... Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Savior of the world."

This is a "tell-tale" comment. Chapman lists commitment to inerrancy before belief in Jesus Christ. If Chapman had been in the prison at Philippi with Paul when the jailer cried, "What must I do to be saved?" would he have responded, "Affirm inerrancy, and believe in the Lord Jesus?"

It is frequently argued that we must hold on to inerrancy because if we permit anyone to question any part of the Bible, the whole thing is lost. It is argued that unless we have an indisputable source of truth to return to, Christianity will be reduced to a matter of opinion. But I always thought Christians came to an understanding of the truth through much prayer, study and by being informed of the Spirit.

Of course the Bible is true. Of course it is the inspired word of God. But inerrancy is a red herring. Even if one grants inerrancy, it solves nothing. We still must rely on study and prayer, informed by the Spirit, to know the truth. Who's interpretation of the inerrant word should we accept?

If holding to inerrancy doesn't give us firm answers to hard questions, why do denominational leaders put such importance on it? The inerrancy message is a thinly disguised version of "you may not disagree with me." The issue is power, control and the right to dictate who may do what and when. This is so foreign to the message of Christ that it should shock all true Christians.

Steven D. Falkenberg
Richmond

Different roles

Woman is the most beautiful, wonderful, mysterious part of our God's creation. Given the most marvelous ability to conceive and bring forth life. We're obviously not created equal.

Where is the shame in being wives and mothers? Not in God's word. Where is the idea we're to have the same roles in life—ministerial or otherwise? Not in God's word, unless you isolate and take Scripture out of context.

Godless feminism put the shame in being wives and mothers. Feminism has accused the Bible of making women second-class citizens. Also some very ignorant so-called "men of God" have wrongly quoted and misused God's word to abuse women. This ignorance fuels feminism's unholy fire.

The idea of women being second-class is foreign to the word of God. Women having different roles in life is very evident in holy Scripture. And the reasons why are very plain. If you're going to pick and choose what you like and don't like in the Bible, and you decide it's not holy Scripture what the word says about men's and women's roles in life being different, then how do you know Jesus really

rose from the grave and has the power to save? Maybe that's not Scripture either.

The eternal destiny of all mankind rests on it all being the infallible word of God. As to Brother Coppenger's message (May 7, page 2) my wife and I both say "Amen and Amen."

But if he was quoted properly, I'm praying he prays for a more tactful way to present it. The message was straight up. But the delivery was a bit rough.

A. Todd Jones
Morganfield

Missions undone

I have read the Great Commission several times. I have been taught by Spring Meadows Children's Home that all Christians are to share Christ to a lost world. Why is it that the pride of one group has to hold control over anyone who wants to spread the gospel?

Mrs. Matthews taught me when someone asks for help, you help them.

Churches are struggling to meet the needs of people in the communities where they are. Money is tight today, and mission work goes undone because of the lack of money. Churches have banded together to do mission work and share resources. Because the upper leadership of one denomination withholds or calls back money they feel might be mixed with 'tainted' money, mission work is cut back.

If the concern is who gets the credit for the baptisms that occur, the answer is the Southern Baptist Convention can. I do believe that God is concerned more about the heart of mankind.

Mike Huff
Pleasureville

Supreme Court overturns Colorado's Amendment 2

"We find nothing special in the protections Amendment 2 withholds. These protections are taken for granted by most people either because they already have them or do not need them."

From majority opinion of U.S. Supreme Court

WASHINGTON—Colorado cannot ban laws that protect homosexuals from discrimination, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled May 20.

In a 6-3 decision written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, the high court said the state constitutional amendment approved by Colorado voters in 1992 violates the federal Constitution's guarantee of equal protection.

"A state cannot deem a class of persons a stranger to its laws," Kennedy wrote for the majority. He was joined by Justices John Paul Stevens, Sandra Day O'Connor, David Souter, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer.

In a spirited dissent joined by Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Clarence Thomas, Justice Antonin Scalia said the court majority's invalidation of the Colorado amendment is "an act, not of judicial judgment, but of political will."

Colorado voters approved Amendment 2 after Aspen, Boulder and Denver had enacted ordinances that banned discrimination against homosexuals in such areas as housing, employment, education, public accommodations and health and welfare services.

Amendment 2, approved with a 53 percent vote, barred state or local measures that prohibit discrimination on the basis of "homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices or relationships."

After lower courts sided with those

challenging the amendment, the Colorado attorney general took the case to the Supreme Court. There the state argued that the measure did no more than deny homosexuals "special rights." That position divided the Supreme Court justices.

Kennedy called the state's argument "implausible."

"We find nothing special in the protections Amendment 2 withholds," Kennedy wrote. "These protections are taken for granted by most people either because they already have them or do not need them."

Instead, the court majority said, Colorado's amendment put homosexuals in a solitary class, singled out for adverse treatment.

The amendment "imposes a special disability on those persons alone," Kennedy wrote. "Homosexuals are forbidden from the safeguards that others enjoy and may seek without constraint."

Scalia, however, chided Kennedy and the majority.

"Today's opinion has no foundation in American constitutional law, and barely pretends to," he wrote. "The people of Colorado have adopted an entirely reasonable provision which does not even disfavor homosexuals in any substantive sense but merely denies them preferential treatment."

The court's decision also held that the Colorado measure was not rationally related to a "legitimate govern-

mental purpose." Laws such as the Colorado amendment, Kennedy wrote, "raise the inevitable inference that the disadvantage imposed is born of animosity toward the class of persons affected."

The Colorado amendment, Kennedy concluded, "classifies homosexuals not to further a proper legislative end but to make them unequal to everyone else. This Colorado cannot do."

Scalia, however, criticized the court majority for placing "the prestige of this institution behind the proposition that opposition to homosexuality is as reprehensible as racial or religious bias."

Scalia cited a 1986 Supreme Court decision that upheld state laws criminalizing homosexual conduct.

"If it is constitutionally permissible for a state to make homosexual conduct criminal, surely it is constitutionally permissible for a state to enact other laws merely disfavoring homosexual conduct," he said.

Scalia accused the majority of taking sides in the "culture war" over homosexual rights by "inventing a novel and extravagant constitutional doctrine to take the victory away from traditional forces," and by "verbally disparaging as bigotry adherence to traditional attitudes."

Reaction to the ruling was swift on both sides.

Will Dodson, director of government relations and legal counsel for

the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, called the decision "yet another victory for those in our nation who are bent on destroying any remaining moral foundation upon which this nation very shakily stands."

Will Perkins, chairman of Colorado For Family Values, the group that authored the amendment, told reporters in Colorado Springs that the high court's ruling had resulted in a "truly chilling day for people of conscience across America."

Perkins called the court's decision "extremist" because it gave "preferred status" to "a conduct that is considered reprehensible by a majority of the people."

White House spokesman Mike McCurry said President Clinton believes the decision was "appropriate" because Amendment 2, as the Colorado provision was named, was "bad policy" and "inconsistent with our common values."

Although pleased with the ruling, Frank Whitworth, executive director of Ground Zero, a coalition of Colorado homosexual groups formed to fight the amendment, said it "does nothing to erase the extreme campaign of vilification, hatred and stereotypes" that the "fundamentalist evangelical community" had directed at gays and lesbians.

Compiled from Associated Baptist Press, Baptist Press and Religion News Service reports

Administration criticized for lack of action on church fires

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Clinton administration May 21 defended its handling of a string of suspicious arsons at African-American churches, saying it had more than 200 federal agents investigating the incidents.

Federal officials who testified at a one-day House Judiciary Committee hearing also said that while they were "actively" investigating whether the church fires resulted from a national or regional conspiracy, no such evidence had been uncovered.

Religious groups as disparate as the Christian Coalition and the National Council of Churches, along with civil-rights groups and some members of Congress, however, criticized the government efforts and urged law enforcement agencies to

commit more resources to solving the crimes.

"We have been outraged at these continuing attacks on places of worship—and sorely disappointed that until recently law enforcement in particular, as well as government and media in general—have seemed only mildly interested in focusing on these acts of terrorism," said Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Lowery, however, said he was "not surprised at this feeble response" to the church burnings because the nation has denied and downplayed racism throughout its history.

There have been at least 50 suspicious burnings of African-American or predominantly black churches since 1990, primarily in the South-

eastern United States but also in Washington state, Arizona and New Jersey.

Deval Patrick, assistant attorney general and head of the Justice Department's civil rights division, told the committee the Clinton administration is "determined to address this problem using all the law enforcement and investigative tools available."

The church fires, he said, are "among our most important investigative and prosecutorial priorities."

Similarly, John Magaw, director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, said his bureau is currently investigating 25 church arsons at predominantly African-American churches in the Southeast.

"We have committed virtually ev-

ery arson investigative resource at our disposal to the investigation of the African-American church fires," Magaw said.

Patrick told the committee that "it is clear ... from some of the cases that have been solved, that some of the people who have set fires at houses of worship are motivated by hate."

But he said "it is premature to draw conclusions one way or the other as to whether the fires we are seeing are part of an organized hate movement."

Of the 30 people so far arrested and/or convicted in connection with the church fires, all are white males between 15 and 45 and several have admitted membership in racist groups, according to the National Council of Churches testimony.

Fatherhood summit focuses on importance of dads' presence

Continued from page 1
worse," he said. "The available evidence suggests that improving the well-being of our children—and ultimately our nation—depends upon us finding ways to bring fathers back into the home."

Religious leaders cited instances of faith communities addressing the importance of fatherhood. Among the examples: the mostly evangelical Promise Keepers movement, which seeks to strengthen the commitment of men to family life; books and curricula that encourage strong marriages; and rituals in African-American churches and Jewish synagogues that affirm a father's place in the family

and the house of worship.

But speakers also acknowledged there is much work to be done.

Don Browning, a professor of ethics and social sciences at the University of Chicago Divinity School, said the absence of fathers is not discussed much in the academic or denominational circles in which he travels. Denominational grappling with abortion and homosexuality have "pushed everything else off the map," he said.

But Browning warned that the language used in conversations about fathers should be carefully crafted.

"There are great suspicions in our society that the fatherhood discussion is a subtle way to introduce patriar-

chy," he said.

Bishop Anthony Pilla, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, suggested that a good job, as well as a good marriage, is important in strengthening the bond between fathers and their families.

"We should not discount the critical difference that having a decent job ... makes for a man's self-esteem," Pilla said, voicing support for a higher minimum wage, flextime and other "family friendly" employment practices. "The church has a vital role ... in ensuring that the world of work is supportive of fatherhood," he said.

Diane Knippers, president of the Institute on Religion and Democracy,

a conservative advocacy group, called for men to volunteer for positions in which they can be positive role models, such as mentors and Sunday school teachers.

"We don't need men on the budget committee nearly as much as we need them in the church school," she said.

She cautioned that "radical feminism" is a hurdle that must be overcome to promote a "pro-marriage, pro-family, pro-father agenda."

"We understand that in a family ... a view of equality that is essentially androgynous does not work," she said. "Fathers are more than sperm banks and automatic teller machines."

Conference highlights family-friendly employers

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Corporate profits and family-friendly workplaces are not mutually exclusive, several U.S. business leaders said during a daylong corporate citizenship conference sponsored by the Clinton administration May 16 at Georgetown University.

Secretary of Labor Robert Reich told a group of religion writers afterward that the conference was intended to spotlight "companies that are treating their workers as assets to be developed rather than as costs to be cut, and which are making money by doing so."

Reich said he has been struck during travels across the country by the number of workers "who feel that although their companies are doing well, they aren't."

The issue is not just business profits, he said. "It's also a question of

values. We have to restore the basic values of loyalty, respect and responsibility to the workplace, so companies that do well share their success with employees and don't abandon those whose hard work helped the company succeed."

At Georgetown, President Clinton cited two reasons for calling the conference.

"One is I wanted to change the perception that there were no companies in America that cared about the employees and that were sticking up for them and trying to do right by them," he said. "And the second is, I wanted to change the reality, where we could, by using the good examples here to influence people in the rest of the economy."

Beyond using the bully pulpit of his office to showcase companies that profit by treating their workers well,

Clinton announced he would seek legislation to provide tax incentives for companies that provide educational assistance for employees, to expand pension and health-care access and portability, and to provide families a \$10,000-per-year tax break for education and training expenses.

Reich told religion writers that "government is not in a position to give CEOs a conscience if they don't have one," but it can help through the steps Clinton outlined.

Among business leaders who described how family-friendly workplaces have benefitted their firms was Kenneth Lehman, co-chief executive officer of Fel-Pro Inc., a family-owned automotive supply manufacturer in Skokie, Ill.

Fel-Pro provides an extensive list of family benefits, including a 220-acre employee recreation area, summer camps for dependent children,

on-site day care and legal counseling, and an on-site wellness center.

Lehman said these benefits cost the firm about 70 cents per hour per employee, a small percentage of the total benefit package.

"If we can help those employees come to work less preoccupied, then they are better able to focus on serving customers, battling competitors and improving our products," Lehman said, noting that the firm regularly exceeds industry profitability averages.

"Conventional thinking places extensive family-friendly benefits and corporate profits at the opposite ends of the spectrum," he said. "However, we feel that our benefits enhance our profits, and as long as our bottom line continues to confirm this, we'll keep doing it."

"We have to restore the basic values of loyalty, respect and responsibility to the workplace, so companies that do well share their success with employees and don't abandon those whose hard work helped the company succeed."

Labor Secretary Robert Reich

Legislation would severely restrict alcohol advertising

WASHINGTON (BP)—Expansive legislation to restrict alcoholic beverage advertising and promotion, especially when directed toward young people, has been introduced in Congress.

Rep. Joseph Kennedy, D.-Mass., announced May 16 his introduction of the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse Prevention Act. The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and a variety of religious, consumer and health organizations have endorsed the legislation.

The legislation actually is a package of six bills which goes beyond measures introduced in previous sessions by Kennedy and Sen. Strom Thurmond, R.-S.C. Those measures required health-and-safety warnings in alcohol advertisements but never

reached the floor of the Senate or House of Representatives for a vote.

Among its proposals, Kennedy's new legislation would:

- Restrict alcohol advertising on television between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. to only a picture of the product with a voice-over.

- Prohibit alcohol promotion on audio and video tapes, compact discs, computer games and movies.

- Limit alcohol advertising in publications read by young people, at the rate of 15 percent of readership or more than 2 million, to text only in black-and-white print.

- Ban outdoor alcohol advertising within 1,000 feet of schools, playgrounds or other facilities where people under 21 years of age congregate.

- Require health-and-safety warn-

ings in print, radio and television advertisements.

- Prohibit alcohol promotion campaigns on college campuses.

- Eliminate tax deductions for alcohol promotion.

- End federal subsidies for alcohol promotion in other countries.

- Require labels on alcohol containers to reveal the alcohol content by volume and the number of drinks in the container.

Passage of the legislation will not be easily attainable, Kennedy admitted.

Kennedy cited a recent study which showed 73 percent of children ages 9 to 11 recalled the slogan of the frogs in Budweiser beer ads, surpassing the slogans identified with Tony the Tiger for Frosted Flakes cereal (57

percent) and Smokey Bear (43 percent).

Alcohol is the No. 1 killer in the United States of people under 24, Kennedy said. It kills five times as many people as all illegal drugs combined, he said. Eighteen million people, including 4 million children, are addicted to alcohol, he said.

In a written statement, National Beer Wholesalers Association President Ron Sarasin called Kennedy's proposal the "most oppressive piece of legislation since Prohibition."

"Blaming beer advertising for complex and serious societal problems is both misdirected and simplistic," said Beer Institute President Raymond McGrath. Research shows "no direct correlation between advertising and alcohol abuse," he said.

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Liberal Catholics seek change

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A coalition of more than 20 liberal Roman Catholic organizations, taking a cue from church members in Germany and Austria, launched a drive May 22 to gather 1 million signatures over the next year in support of changes in church law, including a married priesthood, female ordination and the popular election of bishops.

But Cleveland Bishop Anthony Pilla, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, warned Catholics the campaign could create division in the church and said some of the "reforms" are "challenging church teaching."

Sister Maureen Fiedler, national coordinator of the "We Are Church" coalition sponsoring the campaign, said the "Referendum," as it is called, "is the rough draft of an agenda for a Third Vatican Council."

Many liberal Catholics believe that the Second Vatican Council, which ended in 1965, began a process of fundamental reform of the church that has been halted and in some instances rolled back during the papacy of John Paul II. They hope the next pope will call a new, or third, council that will include priests and laity as well as bishops to renew the reform movement.

The petition campaign—and its demands—mirror similar drives in Europe. In three weeks last June, more than 500,000 Austrians signed a call for fundamental change in the church. In Germany, 1.8 million signatures were collected last fall. Drives also are under way in Italy, France, Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada.

PEOPLE

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SEEKING: Part-time minister to children. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Rd., Louisville, KY 40222.

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: Meta Baptist Church is searching for a minister of music and youth. If interested, send resumé to: Meta Baptist Church, 8807 Meta Hwy., Pikeville, KY 41501. Pastor Ron Spurgeon.

SEEKING: Pastor. Send resumé to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 76, Dayton, KY 41074.

WANTED: Minister to students. A dually aligned (SBC and CBF) church seeks a half-time minister to students. Twenty miles south of Louisville. Immediate opening; will consider bivocational and/or college or seminary applicants. Send resumé and other information to: Student Minister Search Committee, First Baptist Church Shepherdsville, P.O. Box 26, Shepherdsville, KY 40165.

FOR SALE: Roller skates; 100 pair of adults' and children's sizes. (606) 878-2252.

NEEDED: Pastor for New Life Baptist, Elyria, Ohio. Our former pastor of 11 years has been appointed a DOM. Please send resumé c/o Doug Feller, NLBC, 112-A Eastern Heights, Elyria, OH 44035.

SOUND: System problems? Need consultation, training? Call Jim Cottrell, professional church sound engineer. Serving as sound/media engineer for KBC annual meetings, technical director, Severns Valley Baptist. (502) 862-9586.

NEEDED: A well-established and growing church needs a pastor. The church has a large Family Life Center and gymnasium. Please send resumé to: Corydon Missionary Baptist Church, P.O. Box 205, Corydon, KY 42406, or call: (502) 533-6972 evenings.

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SEEKING: Financial secretary. Part-time, bookkeeping/computer experience. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Rockford Lane Baptist Church, 2006 Rockford Lane, Louisville, KY 40216.

SEEKING: Church secretary. Part-time position of 30 hours per week. Secretarial experience and computer literacy required. Wonderful working environment in rapidly growing church. Start at once. Please send resumé to: Cedar Creek Baptist Church, 7709 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40291.

CARE: Helping Hands Companion Home Care provides transportation, companionship and personal care from quality, Christian caregivers. Linda Hyers, (502) 426-9783.

SEEKING: Minister of music/outreach for northern Kentucky SBC church. Call (606) 635-2444. Grant's Lick Baptist Church, 175 W. Clay Rd., Alexandria, KY 41001. Dr. Paul E. Broyles, pastor/teacher.

FOR RENT: Sanibel Island, Florida: 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$575. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752 (home) or (502) 897-5079 (office).

SEEKING: Youth minister. Part-time position in rapidly growing suburban Louisville church. Exciting youth ministry opportunity which already includes a dynamic Wednesday night contemporary youth worship service, with teaching, music videos and worship and praise music. Church activities center and facilities in rapidly growing suburban area present outstanding growth opportunity. Please send resumé to: Cedar Creek Baptist Church, 7709 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40291.

SEEKING: DeHaven Memorial Baptist Church accepting resumés for a full-time minister of administration/education. Address inquiries: Personnel Committee, 307 W. Jefferson St., LaGrange, KY 40031.

SEEKING: Resumés are being accepted for the position of Director/Teacher for the Shively Baptist Church Kindergarten. Individual should have Kentucky certification in early childhood education. Interested individuals should send resumé to the attention of Pam Orr, pastor's secretary, Shively Baptist Church, 1599 Sadie Lane, Louisville, KY 40216, or call Pam Orr in the church office at (502) 367-9155 for more information. Deadline for accepting resumés is May 31, 1996.

SEEKING: Front desk attendant—evening and night shifts. Seminary or college student preferred. Allows plenty of time to study. Contact: Ginger Niner at Parr's Rest in Louisville. Phone: (502) 451-5440.

SEEKING: Nursing assistant. Flexible shifts. Diploma or GED; certified preferred. Contact: Gayle Mink, nurse manager at Parr's Rest in Louisville. Phone: (502) 451-5440.

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Here comes summer!

Although school is going a little longer because of this past winter's heavy snows, it will not be long before summer vacation time arrives for the young people of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. There are more than 265 children and youth in your care who are dreaming about the end of school. They are thinking about a time when the pressure comes off and they get to do some special things.

Some of the children will have a full summer off from school. Others will be attending summer school part of the time to help them catch up in areas where they are lagging.

A number of others will have the opportunity to work summer jobs. They are excited about the chance to gain some independence as they earn that first paycheck.

There is lots of fun in the summer schedule as well. Shortly after school is out, the whole campus at Glen Dale Children's Home is transformed for one week into a summer camp with special activities ranging from camping and canoeing to art projects.

Glen Dale young people will also be participating in several

county and state fairs through the 4-H program. A group of Spring Meadows Children's Home youth will be participating in Kentucky Changers in which they'll be helping people in need.

In addition, young people throughout the KBHC system will be participating in vacation Bible school and attending church camps, including Centrifuge at Ridgecrest. There will also be opportunities this summer for young people to attend Christian music concerts and participate in local recreation programs.

I could go on with this list but I want to also use this space to say "thank you" for making these summer activities possible. They are paid for by your gifts—both those through your church and those you make directly.

It is costing about \$75 per child for camp fees now and we continue to need your help. Call us for more information.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

Curtis Mooney is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243. Call (800) 456-1386. WWW address: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>

MONEY



FINANCIAL FORUM

If tithing is too big a step, start small and grow

By Doug Strader

If starting to tithe (giving a tenth of your income to God) seems like a huge step to take at one time, consider starting with a lesser percentage and moving toward tithing as a goal.

The first biblical reference to tithing is found in Genesis 14:20, when Abraham came to Melchizedek, king of Salem, and gave him a tithe of all he had gained from his battles. The Old Testament has many other references to the practice of tithing.

The New Testament has references to tithing, but it has more references to grace-giving and proportionate giving.

In Matthew 23, Jesus commended the Pharisees for tithing on the small things, but he reminded them that they needed to practice the weightier matters of justice, mercy and faithfulness.

How does a person or family begin to tithe their income? For most families who have not practiced tithing, that can be a difficult step. When people say they cannot afford to tithe, they are being honest from a practical point of view. They are making a mortgage or rent payment, one or two car payments, along with paying for utilities, food, medical/dental expenses, insurance, clothes, saving for their children's college education, ad infinitum. What to do?

First, pray and seek God's help.

Second, plan a budget and adjust your spending habits.

Third, try to eliminate some expenses.

Fourth, begin to give regularly to your church. Begin by giving 2 percent, 3 percent, 5 percent, or whatever you can.

Fifth, make a commitment that each year you will increase the percentage until you are giving at least 10 percent of your income to God. The Bible does not teach that the tithe is the ultimate in giving, just that it is the benchmark.

Finally, follow Paul's instructions to the Corinthians: Give as the Lord has blessed and give joyfully.

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

Charitable giving in U.S. increased last year

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Overall giving to U.S. charities surged more than 10 percent in 1995, with Americans giving a total of \$144 billion to non-profit groups.

The report, by the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel's Trust for Philanthropy, cited the stock market rally and higher personal income as primary reasons for the sharp

increase, the Associated Press reported.

Religious contributions grew by only 5 percent, the report said, but nevertheless continued to take the largest share of contributions—\$63.4 billion of the \$144 billion given to charities.

Giving by individuals grew 11 percent, and corporate contributions

were up 7 percent for the year, the report said.

In broad categories other than religion, the report said donors gave 17 percent more to charities helping society and the public; 12.5 percent more to environment and wildlife groups; 9 percent more to health groups; and 8 percent more to educational institutions.



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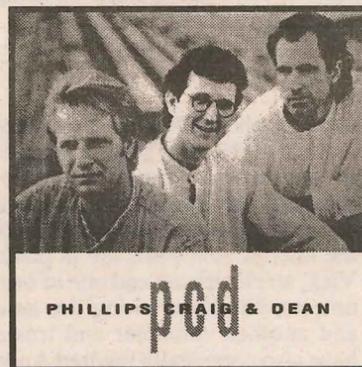
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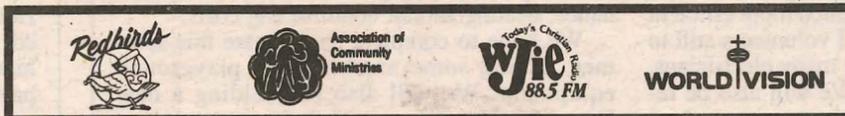


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PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist partnerships with Russia, Boston and Utah-Idaho and needs in Eastern Kentucky:

- Volunteers needed for construction project in Bryansk, Russia, Aug. 14-17.
- Volunteers needed for evangelism project in Tula, Russia, Sept. 18-Oct. 1.
- Volunteers to do electrical, carpentry and plumbing renovation on Craft House for volunteers in Waltham, Mass.
- Vacation Bible school workers needed for Alta Canyon Baptist Church in Utah. Dates open.
- The 70 percent of the population who are unchurched in the three counties which form Booneville/Irvine Baptist Associations in Eastern Kentucky.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **ANNVILLE**—Annville Church dedicated its new Family Life Center. The facility includes a full-size gym, kitchen, stage, office space, preschool rooms, recreation room and Sunday school rooms. The expansion has allowed the church to start several new ministries and a new young marrieds Sunday school class. **Monty Carney** is pastor.

■ **ASHLAND**—April 28 was "Bailey and Hazel Sadler Day" at Fairview Church. He was named pastor emeritus. Also, the church will ordain to the ministry **Ben Clark**, minister of music, June 2 at Unity Church in Ashland.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Cardinal Creek Church ordained **Jack Dilbeck** to the gospel ministry May 19. He will serve the church as associate pastor and coordinator for children and youth.

■ **LEITCHFIELD**—First Church ordained **Ed Carter** as deacon May 19.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Beechmont Church will present a concert May 31 at 7 p.m. to benefit Salt & Light Ministries, a non-profit mission organization to Ghana, West Africa. The concert will feature **Marshall Kellam**, **Blanche Luter** and **Julia Yuen**. A love offering will be taken.

Baptist Tabernacle ordained **Doug Campbell** to the gospel ministry May 19. Campbell has served on the church staff while attending seminary. He has been called as associate pastor and minister of music at New Visions Church in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

■ **MAYFIELD**—Input is sought from single adults and single adult ministry leaders in the Purchase area to develop a regional ministry to single adults. **David Fletcher** of Trace Creek Church in Graves County has issued a call for all interested individuals to contact him at 4881 State Route 121 North, Mayfield, Ky. 42066. Purchase Area Baptist Singles envisions developing networks among Sunday school programs and study groups and hopes to develop an annual seminar.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—**Rick Shannon** has resigned as pastor of First Church.

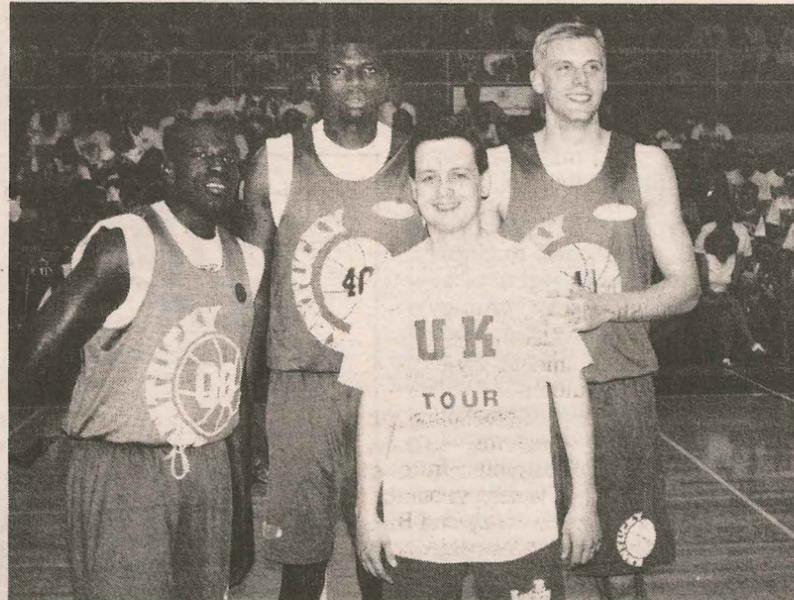
■ **PINEVILLE**—**Jack Robertson** of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College is scheduling summer engagements for his "Nostalgic Memories" music program, either on campus or away. For

information, call Robertson at (606) 337-9007.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Pleasant Grove Church will present **David Pitt** and **Jennifer Lauletta** in concert June 2 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 543-7336.

Missionary update

■ **Lonnie and Fran Turner**, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries to the diplomatic community, are on the field at Avenue de l' Uruguay 22-24, 1000 Brussels Belgium. They are Kentucky natives.



GOOD SPORTS Kevin Ezell (center), the new pastor at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, joined the Highview All-Stars in a match against the University of Kentucky seniors May 16. The game, billed as a fund-raiser for Highview Baptist School, was played at Bellarmine College in Louisville. About 2,400 people attended. The seniors from the NCAA championship Wildcats team naturally won, by a score of 120-74. "They could have beat us another 100 points," said Bill Williams, Highview's media director. Members of the Highview All-Stars team included church staff, church members and seniors from Highview Baptist School. Lt. Gov. Steve Henry even showed up to help out the Highview team. The Highview team was coached by Jeff Morrow, athletic director for the church school. Shown with Ezell at center court are Wildcats Tony Delk, Walter McCarty and Mark Pope.

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The rush is on!

School is out and most of the students have gone home for a few weeks or for the summer. So things can now slow down, right? WRONG! As soon as our students leave, the big rush is on.

We have already had five different groups, more than 60 people, who have volunteered this spring, plus others who helped box the Barkley Moore Offering materials.

School was out Tuesday, and Thursday our first big group came to work. They came from Southeast Christian Church in Louisville. They came last year for the first time and were impressed to come again this year.

They had a busy three days. They planted dozens of flowers, along with shrubs and several trees. They pulled weeds from our flower beds and pruned scores of trees. Some did a lot of work marking parking spaces, crosswalks, handicap parking and no-parking areas.

Several in the group painted a classroom and an apartment. The men helped to remodel the typing room, including new floor tile and new work stations for the students. Others started the remodeling of our chemistry department. We have ordered new lab stations and a lot of other much-needed equipment. We will be replacing the old lighting in the main school building with newer, much more efficient lighting this summer. Several volunteers still to come this summer, including many electricians, will help with this project. We will also be replacing ceiling tile in many classrooms, and repairing or painting the tile in many other rooms.

Some in this group helped to clean and paint Anderson Hall, our guest house. They did spring cleaning, washing windows and blinds.

Two ladies helped to clean, paint and reorganize a storage room. They also shampooed the

carpet in the hallway and in one office.

One of the men helped with the construction of our new daycare. We have made much progress with the daycare this spring, in spite of the cold weather and rain. It is under roof and the interior stud walls are in place. Mr. Charles Vick, an electrician and one of our full-time volunteers, has been wiring the new daycare. He and another volunteer and trustee, Bill Cole, have also completely rewired Anderson Hall this past winter and spring. Most of the guest rooms in Anderson Hall have not previously been air conditioned, but by the time you read this article, air conditioning should be in nearly every room.

One of the ladies this week helped with some clerical work in the main office and another painted some equipment used by our drama department.

It has been a busy week. We have many projects to be completed yet this summer. There will be a new room addition for one of our apartments. Two mobile homes are being relocated out of the flood plain. They will be completely remodeled, including new exterior walls, a new roof, new windows and doors, added insulation, two new rooms and a deck. This is being done to reduce the maintenance, heating and air conditioning costs.

We hope to complete the daycare this summer, adding some much-needed playground equipment. We will also be building a new Friendship House (our used clothing store,) three apartments and a senior citizens' center later this summer.

There is a lot more, but I am out of space!

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

More senior memories

Robert Futrell, from Russellville and Cadiz, received his Bachelor of Arts degree at the May 3 commencement. After four years as pastor of Dewitt church, he now works at Oneida Baptist Institute. He treasures "Dr. Ditty's Old Testament classes, Dr. Brotherton's New Testament classes, Dr. Clark's Greek classes, plus others of great interest. These created a glorious journey for me as a student."

Cheryl and Darrell Hammons came to us from Ohio. Both received a Bachelor of Arts degree and remain in Pineville where Darrell is minister of youth/education at First Baptist Church. Cheryl remembers "the times we were snowed in. During the snow of '93 we had an unscheduled lock-in at the Family Life Center with the campus

Young Disciples. At 6 a.m. Darrell, the kids and I walked home feeling like we were on an episode of Little House on the Prairie." Darrell noted, "Although we left family behind to come to Clear Creek, we have found many who care about our family here." He received the Trustee's Award for outstanding leadership in church ministry.

"During these four years I've seen my sons grow and mature and grown closer to my wife. The love and support of other family mem-

bers has helped meet our needs. The love, support and encouragement of Old Yellow Creek Church (Middlesboro) will never be forgotten," says Jeffrey Harris, called as pastor of First Baptist Church, Evans, Ga. Jeff was student body president and received the President's Award for outstanding leadership. He also earned the highest academic standing.

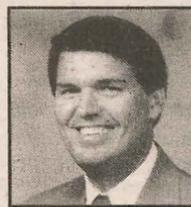
The faculty presented Mark Helton, single student from Tennessee, with the Walter and Betty Young Award for unusual promise and ability in ministry demonstrated by Christian living.

Chris Hortin, a native of Illinois, knew two alumni who spoke well of the school. "The Lord called me to the mission field at the Campus MissionFest. I met and married my wife, Sue, after the Lord taught me some things at Clear Creek." Chris and Sue will transfer to Southern for study in the Billy Graham School of Missions.

Melvin Price fondly remembers working with the construction crew. Melvin, Sharon and two children have already moved to Kings Mountain where he is pastor of Pond Baptist Church.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

CHURCHES

Canary Class serves Houston's environmentally ill

By Marv Knox
Texas Baptist Standard

HOUSTON (BP)—Going to church used to make Shirley Wassom sick. Joye and Ed Mace, too. And Norma Mintz.

But that was before they started attending the Canary Bible Fellowship Class—a ministry for victims of environmental illness—at First Baptist Church in Houston.

People with environmental illness suffer strong allergic reactions to a wide array of particles in the air, said Mintz, who led in the formation of the ministry. She cited carpet fibers, fresh paint, perfumes, deodorizers, pesticides, tobacco smoke, dry-cleaning solvents and automobile exhaust as just a few of the chemicals that provoke traumatic symptoms.

Churches aren't immune from airborne toxins, and that keeps countless people away from worship and Bible study, Mintz said. "We discovered many, many people wanting to go to church, but they were unable to tolerate things," she explained.

That's why the Houston church launched the Canary class last fall.

And for Shirley Wassom, the new ministry was a godsend.

"I don't know if I can put into words what it's meant to me," she

said, her voice choking with emotion. "I had felt like my church and fellow Christians had deserted me. This class has more or less given me new life."

Before the onset of her illness, church had been at the center of Wassom's life. She became a Christian as a child. She was a church secretary, taught children's choir and youth Sunday school. Her husband, Bob, also taught. "When our children were little and we would put them in the car, they would start saying, 'nursery!' They just knew we were taking them to church," she said.

More than 20 years ago, she began showing symptoms of environmental illness.

"In order to get to church, I would have to walk through the smokers, and I was already feeling sick," she recalled. "And then if someone came in with tobacco smoke on their clothes or wearing perfume, I would have to get up and move, or I would be coughing and couldn't breathe."

Wassom's environmental illness grew so severe even an industrial respirator couldn't protect her from fumes that made her sick at church. So, from the 1970s until last fall, she couldn't attend church.

Joye and Ed Mace's story is much the same. He's suffered from environmental illness for more than two de-

cadecades, and she's had difficulty for about five years.

"Prior to that, we were always in church," she said. "We raised our children in church. I always taught Sunday school; Ed served on committees. ... Church was the center of our lives."

But environmental illness "separates you from everything that's normal," and that includes church, she added. "It was hard not to have Christian friends and the fellowship of church."

Mintz has experienced the same frustrations.

"For 23 years, I was the average allergic person," she said. But just a few years ago, a violent reaction to a flea fogger put her to bed for six weeks. She also suffered strong reactions to dry-cleaning solvent, and building materials used in a remodeling project in their home also made her sick.

"It's a lonely struggle for anyone affected by their environment," she remembered. And like Wassom and the Maces, her loneliness was compounded by not being able to go to church.

"I prayed God would heal me to help others," she said. Her prayer was answered in phases: After a two-year search, she found help for her illness. And through extensive research and networking, she gathered information to help First Baptist launch its ministry to victims of environmental illness.

The Canary class began last November, meeting in "the Harbor," an environmentally protected area. It has predominantly brick and glass walls, with one panel wall, a separate outside entrance, separate air- and water-filtration systems and portable oxygen units and ceramic masks.

The class meets for Bible study each Sunday morning at 11:30 and has worship once a month.

"We're reaching out to Persian Gulf War victims and to people with chronic fatigue, complex allergies, implant syndrome and sick-building symptoms," Mintz said. "We are attracting people of all denominations. ... They are so starved for the ministry

Tips for making changes

HOUSTON (BP)—First Baptist Church in Houston spent quite a bit of money preparing for its Canary Bible Fellowship Class. But churches don't necessarily need big bucks to create a safe place for environmentally ill worshippers, Norma Mintz insisted.

"The Harbor," First Baptist's environmentally safe space that houses the class, is ideal, "but you don't have to have the ideal to minister," she said.

She suggested a variety of steps—some with large price tags and some inexpensive—that can enable churches to minister to victims of environmental illness:

- Provide a class in a room with open windows, so fresh air can filter through.
 - Install an enhanced air-filtering system and water filter.
 - Set aside a special area of the church auditorium, such as a balcony or "cry room" in the back for environmentally ill people.
 - Start a "fragrance-free" service.
 - Switch to non-toxic cleaning materials and remove deodorizers.
 - Provide a separate entrance to the building.
- For more information about ministry to environmentally ill people, call Mintz at (713) 957-8821.

of a church."

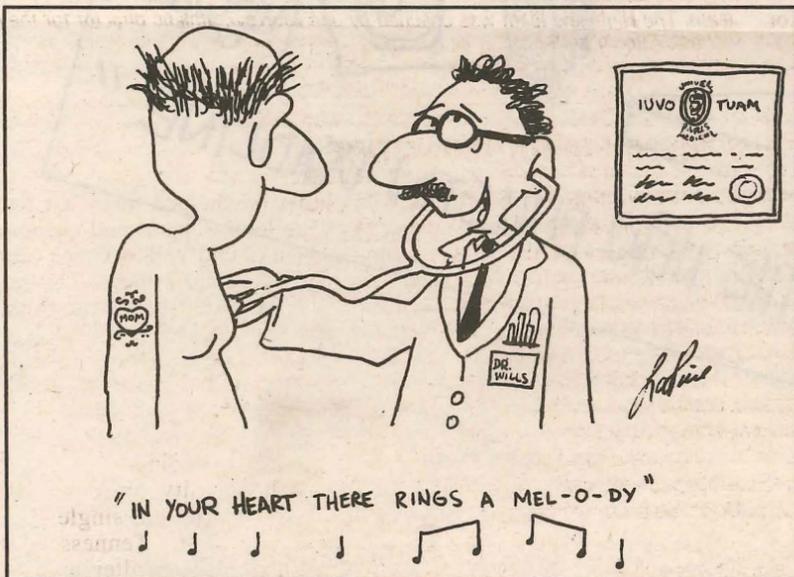
The class has 17 members and averages 10 to 14 in attendance. Mintz is trying to figure out how to be able to conduct a chlorine-free baptism and "how to have the Lord's Supper and not feel set apart and different."

The Canary class gets its name from the old coal-mining practice of taking canaries down into mine shafts. If dangerous gases were present, the birds—more sensitive than the miners—would fall silent, warning the miners to escape.

A class named after a songbird has added significance, at least for one member.

Shirley Wassom sang solos in church before she became ill, and when she couldn't go to church, she didn't feel like singing. But now that she's been able to attend church for several months, her outlook on life and her spiritual condition have improved, she said.

"Other members of the class see this too," she reported. "They tell me, 'You've got your song back.'"



Illinois church enhances worship with computer technology

By Ferrell Foster
Illinois Baptist

BETHALTO, Ill. (BP)—First Baptist Church here has given its worship services a technological boost, and young teenagers are providing much of the brain power.

The church has installed a \$10,000 computer-driven audio-visual system to display videos, sermon outlines, music lyrics, announcements and other graphics on a screen above the baptistry.

Associate Pastor Ron Woods coordinates the effort, but he has a cadre of computer-savvy teens at his side. On a recent Sunday morning, 14-year-old Adam Edelen was at the helm, pressing buttons to display the array of worship aids at the appropriate times—including sermon notes while Pastor Charles West preached.

System hardware includes a video projector suspended from the ceiling, a screen which can be automatically raised and lowered, a computer using Microsoft's PowerPoint software and a video player.

It's a rather sophisticated system, but Edelen, an eighth-grader, said it's "very simple" to use. "Just a click of a button" creates all kinds of interesting visual aids. It also provides the teenager, and others in the church, a way for God to "put my talents to use."

The first few worship services were "pretty rough," Edelen said. But "it just kind of clicks now."

During the week, Edelen programs the sermon notes and Woods inputs the announcements.

On Sunday prior to the service, the announcements appear on the screen. Then while Associate Pastor Larry

Rhodes leads the congregation in singing choruses, the words are displayed, "so people aren't buried in a hymnbook," the pastor said.

Videos are another common feature of services now. On a recent Sunday, the congregation learned about home missions by watching a video, which was about five minutes long.

And when West begins to preach, his sermon title and Scripture reference are displayed for everyone to see. As he works his way through the message, appropriate outline topics appear behind him.

All that visual activity is controlled by Woods, Edelen or others sitting at a computer in the back of the balcony.

The sermon time demands the most concentration by those operating the system. The one in charge "really has to keep his mind on what's going

on," Woods said.

With a copy of West's sermon manuscript in hand, Edelen moves through the various slides at the appropriate times.

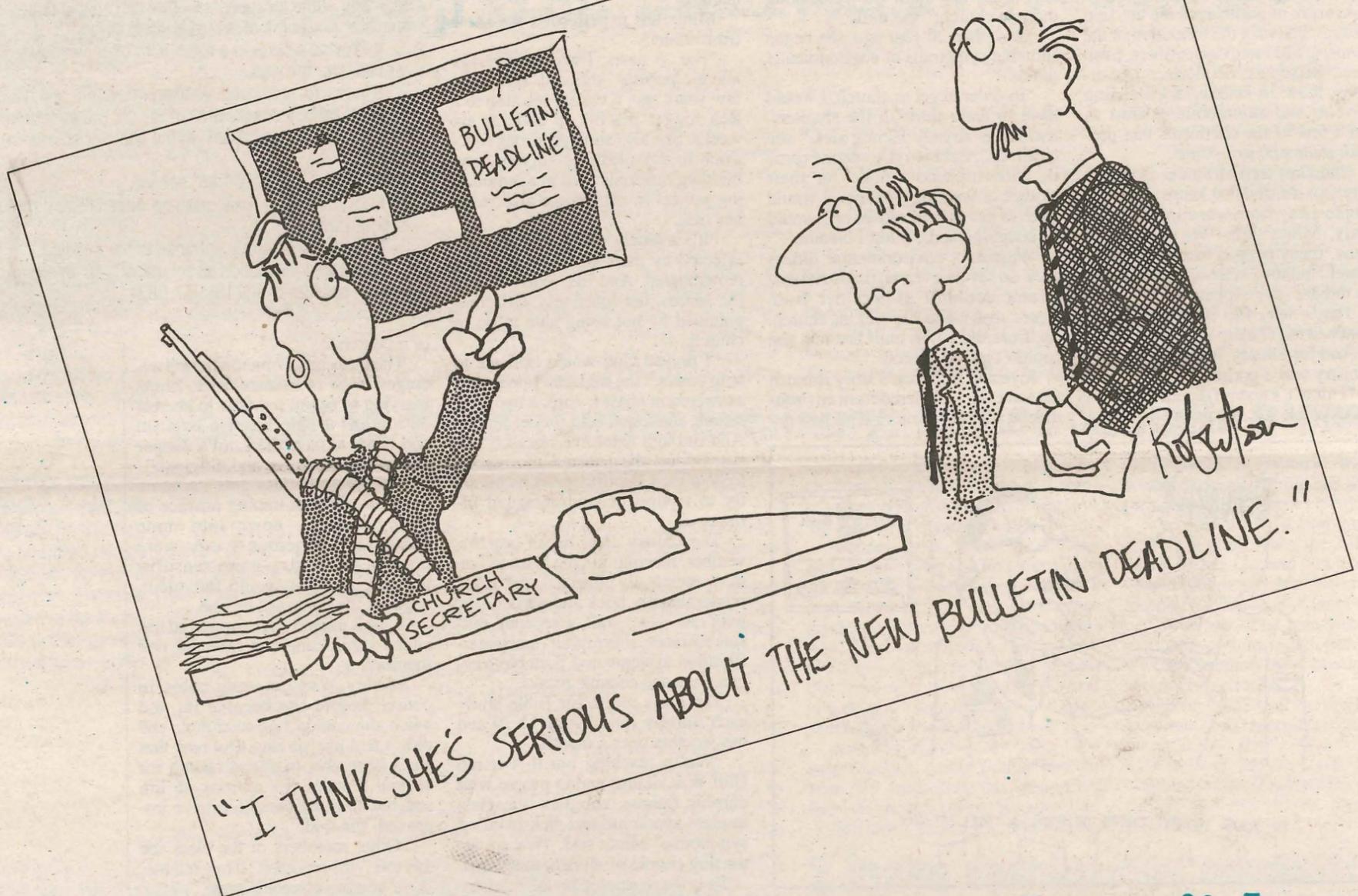
He said the pastor doesn't preach the manuscript "word for word," but "he follows the general outline pretty close."

As for those in the congregation, West said, "They not only hear (the sermon) from me, they see it on the screen and take notes." And studies indicate memory is improved when material is seen as well as heard, he said.

The process does require some trust. The screen is above and behind the pastor while he's speaking, so he doesn't see what is displayed there.

"I have to forget what's going on behind me and just preach," West stated.

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