


PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Most sinful
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Lasting legacy in Russia sought via medical facility

By Joyce Sweeney Martin
 Staff Writer

MT. VERNON—A Kentucky dentist is asking Baptists statewide to help leave a lasting legacy for meeting physical needs in St. Petersburg, Russia.

During the first three years of the five-year partnership with Russian Baptists, Kentucky Baptists have helped build 35 churches and sponsored 12 short-term medical teams to Russia.

But Orson Arvin said a permanent facility for medical and dental work would, like the church buildings, leave a base that would help Russian Baptists continue ministering long after the partnership ends in 1998.

KBC Partnership Director Calvin Wilkins agreed. Kentucky teams have

provided temporary medical care, but the needs of the Russian people are more long term, he said.

"When we send a medical team for a week and dispense medicine, there is no one there to follow up, so we really don't know if we are doing them a favor or not," Wilkins said.

A permanent facility will "be an ongoing ministry for the local church and for that whole area," Wilkins said.

The dream for a permanent clinic originated with Pastor Yuri Vasilovitch of the 3,000-member Central Baptist Church in St. Petersburg, Wilkins said.

Since Central Baptist is the hub of most Baptist activities in the St. Petersburg area, Vasilovitch sees a clinic as another way to minister to area Baptists as well as to the more than 5 million people who live in the im-

mediate St. Petersburg area, Wilkins said.

Pastor Vasilovitch told Wilkins he envisions the facility as a multi-use building with a medical-dental clinic, classrooms, housing for seminary students, a kitchen and a dining room. Currently, Central Baptist's building is primarily a worship facility seating 1,200, Wilkins said.

A clinic also would give Russian Baptists more credibility in the community, Wilkins said. The financially-strapped government is open to "things that help people," Wilkins said.

Central Baptist has acquired and paid for land adjacent to church property on which to build the clinic and has secured the necessary government permits, Arvin said.

However, in order to insure the permanence of such projects, the gov-

ernment has required the church to have \$250,000 in hand before construction begins. Equipping the clinic will cost another \$200,000, Arvin said.

Two Russian Baptist doctors already have been enlisted to staff the clinic full-time. Four other Russian doctors, four nurses and one dentist have agreed to assist, Arvin said.

Arvin said he hopes Kentucky Baptists will raise \$250,000 by October when he and a Kentucky medical team go to St. Petersburg.

All funds for the project should be sent to the Kentucky Baptist Convention partnership missions office, designated "St. Petersburg Medical and Dental Clinic Building."

For more information, contact Calvin Wilkins at (502) 245-4101 or Orson Arvin at (606) 256-5222.



MAKING ROUNDS Prison chaplain Michael Cook visits an inmate at the federal penitentiary at Lompoc, Calif. The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has endorsed more than 300 chaplains for service in correctional institutes. (HMB photo Paul Obregon)

Dying tough for Christians too, say counselors

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP)—While many people facing a catastrophic illness draw strength from their faith, facing one's death often raises doubts, say chaplains and counselors familiar with issues surrounding death and dying.

But that "testing" of faith is natural and can even be healthy, they add.

The initial trauma of discovering a catastrophic illness that will lead to early death often results in questioning, blaming or bargaining with God. Such sincere confrontation with God can help Christians

come to terms with their faith, their future and their purpose, experts say.

"When people ask, 'Why, God?' they are asking an emotional question, not a cognitive one," said Doug Dick-

ens, professor of clinical pastoral education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "I try not to give them an answer. If they want to rage, I let them rage."

By working through their anger, Dickens said, Christians can come to realize God did not cause the pain but is available to provide strength.

The key, chaplains and counselors contend, is being able to reach the point where patients and their families can use their faith for strength and not blame God for the difficulty of

coping with a terminal illness.

Another issue related to death and dying is grief. During an illness or following a death, members of a family can be at different stages of grief,

counselors say.

Some Christians wrongly believe grieving shows a lack of faith, said Granger Westberg in his book "Good Grief."

Westberg stated Christian faith never said a truly religious person does not grieve, but there are "good ways and bad ways to grieve."

Churches offer too few resources to people dealing with grief, said Jim Hightower, minister of pastoral care at First Baptist Church in Huntsville, Ala.

"In my opinion, I think we have confused the right to the pursuit of happiness to everyone has the right to be happy all the time," he said. "When grief does come, we are absolutely shocked and think it must be a mistake. It's a cultural thing. But suffering is an equal employment opportunity."

□ See Dying tough ..., page 9

Teens: Service projects are most attractive church option

By Marv Knox
 Texas Baptist Standard

PRINCETON, N.J. (ABP)—The way to a teen's soul is through her heart.

The key to attracting the largest majority of American young people to church is to ask them to help less-fortunate people, the Gallup Youth Survey discovered.

Serving the needs of others appeals to 80 percent of teens polled by the Gallup organization's Princeton Religion Research Center and reported in the latest issue of its "Emerging Trends" newsletter.

Twenty percent of teens said they currently are involved in "church-sponsored activities to help less-fortunate people." Sixty percent claimed they would like to be involved in that kind of religious activity. And 68 percent of teens who "have not been attracted to attend church recently" said they would like to participate.

The 80 percent favorable rating for service to others far outpaced other church activities aimed at teens.

■ A church youth group other than Sunday school is the next-biggest draw, teens said. Sixty-two percent indicated they either are involved now (36 percent) or would like to be involved (26 percent) in such a ministry.

■ Sunday school or a Bible study group is attractive to slightly more than half of American teens, they told the pollsters. Fifty-four percent said they either are involved now (33 percent) or would like to be involved (21 percent) in weekly study of Scripture.

□ See Teen poll ..., page 13

Moving? See page 4 (0121)

BAPTISTS

Most attend large churches, but most churches small

Median profile of a typical SBC church

- Total members: 233
- Resident members: 168
- Worship attendance: 70
- Annual baptisms: 5
- Sunday school enrollment: 98
- Sunday school attendance: 55
- Discipleship training enrollment: 15
- WMU enrollment: 13
- Brotherhood enrollment: 2
- Music enrollment: 26
- Total receipts: \$61,646
- Undesignated gifts: \$50,787
- Designated gifts: \$6,171
- Cooperative Program: \$2,935
- Associational missions: \$1,200
- Annie Armstrong Offering: \$350
- Lottie Moon Offering: \$561

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

ATLANTA—The Southern Baptist Convention is made up mainly of smaller churches, yet the majority of Southern Baptists attend large churches.

How is this possible? New research by Phil Jones of the SBC Home Mission Board explains the paradox.

Of the more than 40,000 congregations affiliated with the SBC, half have less than 233 members and 70 percent have 400 or fewer members. On any given Sunday, 90 percent of SBC churches will have 250 or fewer people attending worship.

At the same time, the smallest 40 percent of SBC churches comprise only 10 percent of the SBC's total membership; 70 percent of all South-

ern Baptists belong to churches with 400 or more members.

This distinction shows up clearly in a comparison of the median size of an SBC church against the "average" or mean size of an SBC church.

A statistical median is determined by listing all churches in progressive order by size and then drawing a line with half the churches on one side and half on the other. That halfway mark falls at the level of 233 total members.

But the "average" SBC church—a measure taken by dividing the total number of members of SBC churches by the total number of churches—has 413 total members. Jones argues that the average or mean measure of a typical church size is skewed upward by the disproportionate weight of a few extremely large churches. Thus, the median measure is more realistic.

To further illustrate the point: Only

10 percent of SBC churches have 623 resident members and only 4.2 percent (1,535) have 1,000 or more resident members.

Jones draws several implications from this paradox of a convention made up mainly of small churches yet mainly populated by individuals who attend large churches:

■ "While large, growing churches receive most of the attention and are viewed as models of success, most churches find themselves in circumstances not conducive to that type of growth."

■ "Convention totals are, to a large degree, dependent upon the contribution of large churches. They are home to the majority of members, they provide a disproportionate share of financial resources. Nonetheless, despite their size and contribution, they are still atypical."

■ Annual totals for SBC baptisms are dependent on what happens in the largest of the convention's churches. In 1995, the top 10 percent of all churches that reported 23 or more baptisms accounted for nearly half the total reported by all SBC churches. The median size of these churches is 902 total members.

■ On the other hand, new congregations, which tend to be smaller, have the highest baptism-to-member ratios in the SBC. The SBC's overall baptism rate would be declining more significantly without the emergence of new congregations, Jones reports.

The study from which these figures were derived was conducted using data from the 1995 Annual Church Profile. The complete study, "A Large Convention of Small Churches," is available from the HMB research department.

Typical SBC church appears growing but is declining

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

ATLANTA—The typical Southern Baptist Convention church appears to be growing but in fact is in decline, according to a new comprehensive study by the SBC Home Mission Board.

The study, "A Large Convention of Small Churches," was conducted by HMB researcher Phil Jones, using data from annual statistical reports filed by most of the SBC's 40,000 churches.

The typical SBC church has 233 total members, of which 168 are resident members. It is barely growing in total membership, having increased by one member from 1994 to 1995. It has 70 people in a Sunday morning worship service, reported five baptisms and five other additions during the 1994-95 church year and has an average Sunday school attendance of 55.

The typical church is 67 years old, predominantly white and located in a rural area of the South. It receives

slightly more than \$50,000 in undesignated gifts each year, of which it gives 7 percent to the Cooperative Program and 2.4 percent to the local association.

This portrait of a typical SBC church is drawn from analysis of median statistics. The median is the point which divides the ordered distribution of churches into two equal parts.

While giving surface indications of slight growth, the typical SBC church actually is declining in statistical terms, Jones explained. "There have been considerable declines in some of the major programs and emphases of Southern Baptist churches. Even financial data, which are generally increasing, show signs of decrease when controlled for inflation over the past decade."

For example, the median income of a typical SBC church has increased greatly (about 315 percent) since 1972. But most of that increase can be attributed to inflation. "Since 1986, there has been an overall decrease in the adjusted median tithes and offerings," Jones reported. "In purchasing

power, the typical church received 5 percent less in tithes and offerings in 1995 as compared with 1986.

At the same time, the typical SBC church has decreased the percentage of gifts it forwards to state and national conventions through the Cooperative Program unified budget. Since 1987, the median percentage given by churches has declined from 7.8 percent to 7 percent.

"This helps explain why the median Cooperative Program gifts, adjusted for inflation, has declined more since 1986 than median tithes and offerings or median undesignated receipts," he said.

The overall trend of declining resident membership in SBC churches is not as bad as it appears, however, because it is mainly due to an influx of new, smaller congregations into the convention. "However, the typical older church, those in existence in 1986, has grown only slightly over the past decade," Jones explained. "Given the propensity of Southern Baptist churches not to remove members from their rolls, it is likely that most

churches are declining in active membership."

Jones pinpoints 1986 as a pivotal year for SBC churches. "This year began the decline in a number of median statistics, especially financial statistics," he noted. "There is no definitive explanation for this phenomenon. It is not clear whether this trend will eventually be lagged by decline at the convention level or whether growth in a small segment of churches will offset decline for a majority of churches."

Declines noted in the typical church affect Sunday school, discipleship training, baptism rates and Woman's Missionary Union enrollments.

"These declines for the past decade are mostly attributable to the declines in the medians of older, established churches in the convention (those more than 10 years old) as opposed to being caused by the addition of new churches to the convention," Jones explained. "In particular, the baptism rate would have declined even further if not for the starting of new churches."



BAPTIST BITS

■ **Arson fund tops \$700,000.** Gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention's "Arson Fund" slowed in December but the total distributed passed the \$700,000 mark. Over a six-month period, \$715,451 has been received and distributed through the fund for burned African-American churches.

■ **Registration open for senior event.** Registration remains open for the 1997 National Senior Adult Convention sponsored by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board April 28-30. The event will be held in Nashville's new downtown arena and will feature such speakers as Joni Eareckson Tada, artist and author; Anne Graham Lotz, international speaker for AnGeL Ministries and daughter of Billy Graham; George "Goober" Lindsey, actor; and Paul Box, evangelist and former foreign missionary. Country Music

entertainer Ricky Skaggs and the Whites and The Ware Triplets will perform.

The Senior Adult Convention will be the first held in the Nashville Arena, which is connected by a tunnel to a convention center that will house more than 100 exhibitors representing a variety of products and services of interest to senior adults. For information, call (800) 254-2022.

■ **Pattillo to Richmond.** Pat Pattillo, former vice president for development at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been tapped to assist Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Va.) with a \$10 million capital campaign. Pattillo, president of the National Foundation for Youth, will work for the seminary from Birmingham, Ala., where he lives.

■ **Religious educators to meet.** The 1997 meeting of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association will be Feb. 13-15 in San Antonio, Texas. Sessions will focus on turning ministry challenges into victories. Speakers include Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; Howard Hendricks, distinguished professor at Dallas Theological Seminary; Larry McSwain, president of Shorter College; and Bill Treadwell, minister of education from Waco, Texas. For information, call (817) 292-7371.

■ **Gannon to Mercer.** Longtime Georgia pastor Truett Gannon will head the mentoring program for Mercer University's new theology school in Atlanta. Gannon has been pastor of Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Atlanta for nearly 20 years.

Lexington churches consider ministries' role in welfare

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LEXINGTON—A significant number of Kentucky Baptist churches are among nearly 170 congregations responding to a call from local government for help in designing welfare reform.

In the past two months various proposals have emerged from 11 church and community forums on ways churches can assist the poor. A wrap-up session was held Jan. 14 at the Cathedral of Christ the King.

Attracting more than 350 people, the "town halls" reviewed options for providing a variety of services including child care, job banks and low-income housing.

The possibility of churches networking to supply these outreaches has many in the Christian community looking for a greater collective witness.

"The church has not been on the cutting edge (of social ministry) because we've had the welfare state," said Craig Loscalzo, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. "This may be the greatest time in history for the church to preach the whole gospel. As a progressive evangelical, that excites me."

"I hope we can work with the community of faith," added Sandra Williams, director of church and community ministries for Elkhorn Baptist Association. "I hope our churches feel the need to unite so we can do a much bigger work than if we did it by ourselves."

Loscalzo and Williams are two of the 28 members of a "Faith and Community Connections" task force organized to help implement the proposals. A third Kentucky Baptist in the group is J.R. Lawson, pastor of Chevy Chase Baptist Church.

Ginny Ramsey, a member of Christ the King who helped organize the town halls, said people set aside theologies and biases to participate in this effort.

Participants in the meetings showed an amazing spirit of coopera-



tion, she told the crowd at last week's review session.

"They said, 'We're going to be responsible and make it work. We're part of this community.' People want families to be families. They don't want children going hungry," she said.

"I think some other things happen when we come together on this kind of collaborative effort."

Although the county has to submit its welfare-reform proposal to the state by Jan. 31, social services commissioner Barbara Curry called the effort a "work in progress" that will require many months to organize.

Saying she was overwhelmed by the cooperation and commitment churches have shown, Curry said she sought the religious community's involvement because they can offer a variety of resources.

"This can be the issue that makes us realize we can't separate ourselves out from each other (on the basis of) public and private, faith and not, rich and poor," Curry said.

Viola Miller, director of the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children, also applauded the faith community's efforts.

"I'm delighted with the material you've generated with the task force," she said, noting the complexity of

changing the system. "Nobody has done this before. This system has been in place for 60 years."

The three Kentucky Baptists on the panel said they look for the multi-denominational effort to expand individual church ministries by linking them with additional resources.

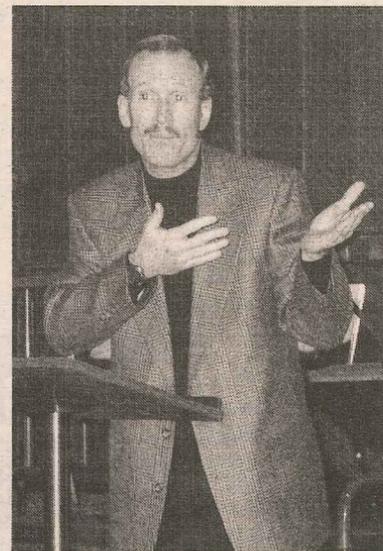
Loscalzo said he left one meeting with a "sense of vitality" for what can be accomplished. He said he hopes churches become centers of activity throughout the week instead of just on Sundays and Wednesdays.

"A church building lends itself to having space for job networks and other things," he said. "It's a centralized place where people can gather because we have the space. Small churches can be utilized too."

Immanuel's pastor said he foresees benefits from a congregation plugging into a wider network. The "Step by Step" program for young mothers, which meets bi-weekly, could attract additional support and participation, he explained.

Lawson said Chevy Chase can assist current welfare recipients in many ways, such as helping sponsor child care clinics, blood drives, tutoring children and developing mentoring relationships.

He said the current situation is one



TOWN HALL Greg Schuler (right), rector of Cathedral of Christ the King, addresses last week's meeting of Lexington church leaders. Among those participating were Craig Loscalzo, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington (seated, in suit).

Proposed projects

Among the programs suggested for the faith community during Lexington's town hall meetings:

- Child care for the working poor.
- Purchasing cooperatives to help welfare recipients with food, clothing, household goods, auto repair and banking.
- Job banks for placement and apprenticeships.
- Learning centers teaching life skill workshops.
- Low-income housing.
- Mentoring programs to help families with parenting skills and other social needs.
- Transportation, possibly using church vans not in use during the week.
- Volunteer needs lists for weekend projects.

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Haworth Conference cancelled.** The Haworth Conference on empowered parenting, Jan. 24-25 in Louisville, has been cancelled due to low registration. For more information, contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department, (502) 245-4101.

■ **Center inauguration in 3 cities.** The Marshall Center for Christian Ministry at Georgetown will hold a three-city inauguration Jan. 21-23. The event will be Jan. 21 at 7:30 p.m. at Georgetown College; Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. at Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville; and Jan. 23 at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Paducah. The center will be established as a catalyst for ministry activity for the college community and its constituents.

■ **Campbellsville receives gifts.**

Two gifts totaling \$125,000 recently were received by Campbellsville University. The James Graham Brown Foundation of Louisville awarded \$100,000 to the school to assist in funding the school's campus communications network. Also, the George I. Alden Trust of Worcester, Mass., awarded Campbellsville \$25,000 for restoration of Carter Hall.

■ **Georgetown hosts open house Feb. 1.** High school juniors and seniors interested in attending Georgetown College can visit the school Feb. 1. For more information, call (800) 788-9985.

■ **Georgetown votes to stay dry.** Scott County residents voted 2,479-to-1,527 last week rejecting the proposal to allow alcoholic beverage sales in Georgetown.

Hardin Co. churches fill children's home food pantry

NORTONVILLE—Every year Baptists across the state participate in the September Food Roundup, helping Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children stock the pantries of its eight facilities for abused and neglected children.

In at least one area, however, food help now comes year-round.

For the last three years, Baptist churches in and around Hopkins County have teamed up to help the agency's largest campus, in Glendale, fill in the "food gap" of perishable items by ordering food through a restaurant warehouse service.

The idea came from James Gilkey Jr., owner of Best Buy Supermarket in Nortonville. In addition to collecting nonperishable food at the Little Bethel Baptist Association office, churches now also send money for the warehouse order.

Cheryl Masden, who coordinates meals for 78 young people and staff at Glen Dale Children's Home in rural Hardin County, said the help of

Little Bethel Association churches makes a significant impact in reducing the children's home's expense for high-cost items, such as cheese, ground beef and orange juice.

"Who knows better than the children's home what they need?" Gilkey asked. "Five years ago I saw what we were doing, and I thought we could be better stewards of the Lord's money."

The food ordered for Glen Dale is priced at its cost and is in bulk quantities. "We can get more food for our money," Gilkey said.

"I'm just the go-between," he added. "I place the order, and the association sends the check."

In three years, the Little Bethel Association's 47 churches have increased their food roundup giving from \$4,000 to more than \$6,500.

Gilkey said the association will not abandon the traditional collecting of canned goods.

"We do not want to take away the personal touch," he said. "What I'd like to see is people bring in a few canned goods but still put \$5 in the plate" for the warehouse order.

OPINION

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Revival still works

As pastor of Lone Oak First Baptist Church for the past 25 years, it has been my privilege to experience wonderful, high moments with God. Among those have been the revivals that have taken place year after year. I am a firm believer that there is still a place for church revivals because I find them still to be effective.

It has been the privilege of Lone Oak First Baptist Church to have Henry Linginfelter and Dick Barrett in our church on three occasions. Each time the revival has taken a little different tone. The first revival was a tremendous evangelistic undertaking. More than 300 people made decisions for Christ. Three years later, this revival led us in a revival that was more church-strengthening.

Just recently, they were with us again and on this occasion, it was a combination of church growth and evangelistic outreach. Following the revival days, we continued to have unusually large numbers of people make public decisions in our service. The month of revival and the month following have been two of the best months of outreach in my 25 years as pastor of the church.

During the most recent revival, we also enjoyed the music of Carolyn Reed, who has joined the Linginfelter team and does an excellent job in evangelistic music. She especially is sharing the gospel through music and touching the lives of the women of the church.

I say all this to support my point that revival is still an effective tool in America. Sure, it must be done in a

more up-to-date way, but it probably is still the best tool for reaching the lost and unchurched.

*Willis Henson
Paducah*

Act in love

I am writing in response to the apparent vindictive persecution of our brother and sister in Christ, as well as one of our Lord's churches.

First, practice what you preach. Love is the greatest commandment (Mark 12). Do not judge or put obstacles in the way of those doing Christ's work. Leave them in peace (Romans 14). How much love do you have in this matter? What peace are you working for?

"Ordained" in the Bible means "the appointing, consecrating or commissioning of a person for special service to the Lord and his people." Do you not think Annie Armstrong or Lottie Moon were appointed ("ordained") by God? Each person in Christ is in his royal priesthood. Are we telling God who he can choose? How many times have we Baptists made our "traditions" doctrines of God.

Second, we must watch judging who is of God. The Pharisees questioned whether Jesus' work was of God or Satan. Are Angie Flack, her husband and Drakesboro Baptist Church doing works in the name of Jesus?

Third, we as Baptists will not allow women to serve as messengers or representatives, but we "allow" women to be teachers, music directors and head committees. Jesus used Mary as his messenger to pro-

claim his resurrection. God calls who he wants into his service— young, old, man or woman. Remember not long ago we Baptists used the pulpit, Bible and Scripture to justify owning slaves. Are we letting our prejudice show again?

*Donald Duncan
Dixon*

Bashing the gospel

Recently, traveling across Southern Louisiana and Mississippi, I listened to a number of Christian radio stations. What was being broadcast could best be described as a hearty dose of the "gospel" of Jesus Christ, or what you referred to in your Dec. 10 editorial as "Clinton bashing."

You expressed the opinion that the bashing was not biblically sound. It must be sound if the Bible speaks to this kind of activity. It is right up front in Exodus. First, using or misusing God's name to cover one's own personal, political and religious agenda is covered by the third commandment. Then, the ninth commandment speaks to bearing "false witness," which also includes half-truths and allegations. We may have become so used to hearing "preachers" claiming to speak for God that we no longer recognize much of what is being said for what it is. You did. Thank you.

To put "bashing" in plain English, it is good "Christian" scandal, slander and bigotry. The "Good News?"

Your choice of 1 Peter 2:12-17 and 18 is problematic. For those who have actually lived and experienced genocide, Nazism, apartheid or the "divine right" of religious sexism and fundamentalism, some spirited discussion is possible.

*Brian Gurney
Land, Texas*

Here's to you, kid!

She had just turned 22; I would soon be 26. Within 72 hours of Dr. George Redding's pronouncement of our marriage, Alice and I would set sail with Max and Velma Stitts from New York harbor on the Italian liner Christophoro Colombo, destined ultimately for Nazareth, Israel.

Georgetown College President Leo Eddleman had arranged with Israel missionary Bob Lindsey to initiate an opportunity for graduating students, self-supported, to work with missionaries in Nazareth, Petach Tikvah (Baptist Village) and Jerusalem. At least six couples participated from 1957 through 1962, four of which later would serve as career missionaries.

Those were the pioneer years of Israel's statehood, having been established only nine years before we arrived. The nation was vigorous, ambitious and willing to sacrifice. Arab friends with whom we taught in Nazareth Baptist School helped us understand their own trauma of being uprooted by Israelis from their family homes, the anguish of which still plays itself out in today's Israel, now almost 40 years later. Living and working on an Israeli kibbutz the following summer put us in touch

with Jewish people who had escaped the Holocaust, some with the infamous numbers still on their forearms. We left Israel with some understanding of both perspectives.

From the beginning, Alice has been a good trooper; willing to make do with what we had; seldom complaining about hardships.

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall

An "inventor-magician" who could take minimal resources and stretch them beyond the apparent potential; make clothes for our children, herself and a bathrobe for me I have kept for years.

Frequently having to say "good-bye" to friends and places because her husband was "called" elsewhere; traveling with our children through places and circumstances we would not risk taking our grandchildren today.

Managing by herself with three children on a Mediterranean island while her husband made extended journeys throughout the Middle East; discovering after furlough that all our belongings had been napalmed in the Turkish attack on Cyprus; starting over again in a new country that would a few months later erupt into a civil war that would last more than 15 years.

One of my unforgettable, indelible memories of Alice will be of her standing outside the airport terminal with all three children, welcoming me home from one of my many journeys.

It was no easy thing for her to "uproot" again when I was "called" back to Kentucky in 1983 to take this job. Her roots had grown down into Virginia soil; two years in Roanoke, 11 in Richmond.

It would be she who, in the move, would have to stop teaching school because her Virginia certification was not valid in Kentucky and her Kentucky certification had expired! (I will always look upon this as bureaucratic stupidity.)

Still, she came on the basis of "my" call and started again, making a home for a high school freshman and a holiday and summer place for two college students.

So much of whatever good I have been enabled to do and be these past 39 years of our marriage rests solidly in her enabling friendship and love for me, her children and for the countless others who have experienced the serenity of her life.

Here's to Alice, my partner and wife. Here's to all the spouses without whose partnership most of us would have found the journey far more difficult, if not impossible.

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

CHILDREN

Make memories with books

By Jewell Nelson

With the technology that abounds today, one may wonder who has time to read. A recent report gave an account of an increase in book sales. It seems people are reaching a point of frustration and "overwhelmness"

with the bombardment of increasing demands of computers (to keep up), and the proliferation of television channels.



FAMILY FORUM

Reduce such frenzy. Seek out a good book. Gather the children and teach by example the importance and pleasure of reading.

Book stores cleverly are including tea rooms or cafes near the book stacks. Treat your family to lunch in a fancy book store. Browse the children's area of the book store, and begin a collection of a book series or classics. Money spent on good books is a smart and lasting investment.

If you find a good book and the price is too pricey, check with a library for the same book for loan.

Public libraries often have extras such as musical events, storytellers, "dress up in story character days" and even tea time.

Your church should have a children's section in its media library. If not, help it happen. Also, take advantage of your school's library.

If you are away from a good book source, begin a book network of family and/or friends. Each family lists available children's books they own. The list is compiled and shared with the network. As available, the books are then signed out with a time limit to book network members.

A child who learns to listen to the reading of good books is more likely to become a better reader. You never can begin too early to read to your child.

If you would like age-appropriate book selection lists, call the Sunday school department at (502) 245-4101, extension 305.

Plan reading time to take the place of some television time. Reading as a family can help prevent television or computer addicts and enhance family bonding.

Winter weather, hot chocolate and the family sharing a good book—ah, what memories you can make for your children.

Jewell Nelson is associate director of the KBC's Sunday school department.

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

HE SAID/SHE SAID

Now we remember why moving really is for the birds

SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

I don't know how the birds do it. Starting over two or three times a year, building their nests again and again. At least they know how to travel light.

We recently moved less than five miles from where we lived, and we did not travel light. It took three loads in a 24-foot U-Haul and many friends' backs to haul our stuff that short distance.

Moving is a lot like having babies. After a certain amount of time elapses, you forget the pain and hassle, and do it again.

The good thing about moving is that you have a chance to get rid of a lot of things you haven't used in years. As we uncovered layer upon layer of items accumulating dust in the back of closets, even I, the queen of packrats, realized it was time to part with some of these treasures I had forgotten existed. Between the "save for yard sale" and giveaway boxes, we came up with quite a collection, including some things we never unpacked from our move to Kentucky from Atlanta nearly six years ago.

I also found some treasures in the back of our refrigerator. Those went in the "take out immediately" trash bag.

Cleaning, never a favorite pastime of mine, also has taken its toll. Between preparing the new house, which happens to be an old house, and cleaning up the mess left from our other house (all that stuff under the beds and behind the furniture that was too heavy to move), my hands and body are screaming for Calgon to take me away.

Moving also has brought a new joy. With a new house, Mark now has a plethora of home improvement projects to work on. Lowes, Levys and Home Quarters have been blessed with his presence many times in the past month. Just when I thought I was safe.

HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

Let's just say this has not been the best-planned move of our lives. When you're moving such a short distance, it doesn't sound like such a big deal. But take it from me, a move is a move, whether it takes you five miles or 500.

Or maybe it's that moving was easier before we had children. This was the first time we've moved since Luke and Garrett were born—meaning the first time we've moved since quadrupling the amount of stuff

stuffed into our house.

To top it all off, we picked the coldest day of the year to move. When the alarm on our bedside clock-radio went off on moving day, we were greeted with this weather report: "It's 5 degrees, with a windchill of 21 below."

Our friends who helped us move discovered one benefit of the weather: They were so cold that they couldn't feel the pain when whacked by a piece of slipping furniture.

We also had the unfortunate luxury of having not sold our old house before we moved into our new house, which meant we didn't have an absolute deadline for making the transition.

Which leads me to another profound truth of moving I think I'll coin as Mark's Law of Real Estate: "The real estate world is no place for optimists." As Alison has not-so-cheerfully reminded me several times, every projection we've made has been calculated on a best-case scenario and every reality has brought us a worst-case scenario.

I think Jesus must have known that moving is for the birds. Perhaps that's why he told his followers to look to the birds as a reminder of God's love. If God's eye is on the sparrow, I know he watches me. I just hope he can see through all the boxes we've got stacked up.

Answers for a bumper sticker moralist

"If you can't trust me with a choice, how can you trust me with a child?"

That's one of the latest bumper-sticker salvos in the national battle over abortion. The slogan is intended to imply that if a woman is responsible enough to care for a child, she also is responsible enough to make a "choice" about whether her child should be born.

The real answer to the bumper sticker bearer's question, however, is that society can't trust you with a child. But the reason is not the judgmental one you might assume.

In truth, society has no reason to trust anyone with a child. There is no surefire way of predicting who will be a good parent and who will be a bad one; who will abuse a child and who will nurture one. Even the person who loves children so much she wants to have a house full of them may not be a good or trustworthy parent.

Only God knows who will be a good parent. And yet, having that knowledge, God chooses to allow children to be born into the homes of less-than-ideal parents. Why? We don't know because we're not God.

That's a truth that slices both ways.

The fundamental flaw in declaring abortion as a right is that such a view requires mere mortals to assume the role of God. Despite the whitewashed image the abortion-rights lobby presents, the choice to abort a pregnancy or not abort a pregnancy is a choice to kill or not to kill. It really is that simple.

With a few rare exceptions when the life of the mother truly is at risk and potentially in some cases of rape or incest, we have no valid moral reason

to terminate a developing life given by God. It is not our place to determine whether an unborn child should be born or not born.

Those rare and painful exceptions are the only cases the abortion-rights lobby likes to talk about. They're the stories shamefully used to tug at the public's heartstrings, even though they represent a slim majority of abortions performed in this country.

EDITORIAL

What America now has, and what the abortion industry is fighting to keep, is abortion on demand at any time for any reason. Most of those reasons have little to do with the mother's health.

Abortions are performed for the convenience of the mother (or father or the young mother's embarrassed parents). They are performed to protect the mother's or father's financial condition. They are performed as a means of after-the-fact birth control when a couple fails to exercise sexual control.

In these cases, there is indeed a choice to be made, but it must be made before egg and sperm meet to begin forming an embryo. Often, it requires a choice of self-control, something not much in vogue these days.

This week marks the 24th anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe vs. Wade* decision that legalized abortion on demand. Much will be said by advocates on both sides of the battle lines.

A good starting point for the discussion would be to acknowledge that we are not God. That's the lie that first tripped up Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and it's the lie that still haunts us today.

—Mark Wingfield

Rotten apple(s)

By Carey Newman

My friend looked tormented. Due to a large project, he had been spending a lot of time with a manager from another part of the company. She was bright, competent, attractive and quite the conversationalist. They both liked the collegiality which came from hard work. They also both enjoyed getting to know each other. Although he was happily married, he confessed that for the first time thoughts of marital indiscretion had briefly flashed across his mind. He looked at me and posed that theoretical question which so many others before him have asked: "If no one was ever to find out, what is so wrong with sinning just once?"

Sin is indeed seductive. It dupes us into believing that it is (or can be) an isolated event in our lives. To be sure, sin is something we do—a deed, an act, a specific behavior. In that sense, it is an isolated event.

But sin is so much more. It has the capacity to tarnish and stain, as our guilt reminds us. Sin also can become a character quality or an attribute.

Through the practice of individual sins a certain disposition can be formed inside us. Just like a person becomes kind or compassionate through individual acts of kindness, so too someone can become sinful through individual sins.

However, it is only when we recognize sin as a power that we appreciate its cruel and despotic character.

When we engage in sinful behavior—even just once—we not only run the risk of developing a certain predisposition to future sin, but we invite a brutal, unrelenting and callous tyrant into our lives. Sin will take us places we never intended to go and lead us to do things we never intended to do. Through our individual and isolated acts, we wind up living in the grip of sin's power.

Like everyone else, I celebrate the advent of the computer. It has made my life far easier and more efficient. However, I have also found computers to be troublesome.

In the process of transferring files from an old computer to a new one, a "virus" somehow made its way onto my disk. The virus first infected only

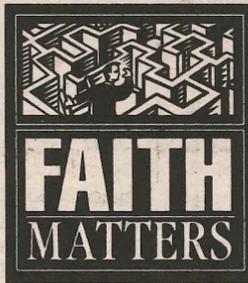
one isolated file, an inconsequential loss since the file was small and its data irrelevant.

However, what started with one file began to spread quickly—like some sort of electronic cancer. My anxiety level rose when other files, which contained far more important information, became corrupted. Frantic desperation set in when the computer failed and crashed.

Only by completely rebuilding the computer was I able to eradicate the virus, but not before I had paid a dear price in lost time and, worse still, lost memory.

We should be wary of sin. There is no such thing as a "little" or a "minor" sin, even if some sins have more overt and public consequences. Because sin introduces a power into our life that seeks to corrupt and destroy everything it can touch, there also is no such thing as an isolated sin.

We can be thankful that God, in his infinite mercy and love, can wipe us clean and remake us through the Spirit of the risen Jesus. I told my friend to stay awake and watch, because sin, any sin, seeks to make the practitioner its servant. Sin should be avoided at all costs. *Sin is the power which, through our individual acts of complicity, seeks to deform, control and ultimately destroy our lives.*



Muslims converted through love, prayer, tears, blood

Thousands of North African Muslims wrote to a Christian radio service asking for information. Many reported a similar dream: Jesus appears and tells them, "I am the way."

By Erich Bridges
SBC Foreign Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—God descended on a Muslim village in Algeria one night.

On that evening in 1983, villagers later testified, the Holy Spirit moved from house to house, revealing himself through dreams, visions and angelic visitations. About 450 Muslims in the village eventually became believers in Christ as their Savior.

Christians had nothing to do with the incident—or so they thought. But when mission workers began asking how such a miracle could have occurred, they discovered this: More than six centuries ago, Spanish missionary Raymond Lull was stoned to death by Muslims for preaching where the village now stands.

Lull wrote before his death that Islamic strongholds would be conquered not by force, but only "by love and prayers, and the pouring out of tears and blood."

Today, the gospel continues to spread among Muslims across rural Algeria, despite the deadly conflict raging between Muslim militants and government forces, and documented persecution of Christian converts. Elsewhere in the Muslim world, Christian workers report an increasing openness and turning to Christ—often preceded by dreams or visions of him among potential converts.

Several examples of such phenomena were detailed last year by National & International Religion Report:

■ Thousands of North African Muslims wrote to a Christian radio service asking for information. Many reported a similar dream: Jesus appears and tells them, "I am the way."

■ A young Muslim angrily took a Bible tract from a Christian worker, tore it up and threatened the worker's life. The next day the same young man appeared at the worker's door, not with a weapon but with a plea: "I must have another booklet."

The previous night, he recounted, he had felt two hands shake him awake and heard a voice say, "You have torn up the truth." He read the tract and became a believer in Christ.

■ In Nigeria, Muslims savagely beat a Christian convert from their tribe. As he lay dying, they heard him asking God to forgive them. That night two Muslim mullahs who participated in the attack saw visions of Christ. Both repented and took 80 followers to a Christian church to hear the gospel.

Some reasons for the gospel's current spread among Muslims can be readily explained. One is the much higher priority Christian groups—including Southern Baptists—now place on reaching major Muslim peoples, no matter how high the barriers.

Evangelical scholar Dudley

Woodberry, an expert on Islam, cites these factors: secularization of the Middle East and reaction by rank-and-file Muslims against Islamic radicals; Christian relief ministries to Muslims; Muslim migration to more open areas; a "desire for evidence of God's power" among Muslims; and efforts to culturally adapt the gospel to Muslims.

But the most important reasons cannot be explained apart from the initiative of God alone, and the proper response of his people called for by Raymond Lull before his martyrdom: love, prayer, tears and blood.

"Every one of those things is happening," contends Randy Sprinkle, director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's international prayer strategy office. "There is a love for Muslims that cannot be explained apart from its supernatural origin. There is a movement of prayer such as I've never seen in history. And there is the pouring out of tears and blood so that Muslims might be set free."

Christians are praying as never before for Muslims, individually and in groups, daily and through such annual efforts as the 30-day prayer focus during the Muslim observance of Ramadan—when millions of Christians lift up Muslims before God. This year Ramadan began Jan. 10.

When Christians pray during Ra-

madan, "we're not praying to Allah," Sprinkle says. "We're joining Muslims during that period as they seek God. Christians are praying, 'Oh God, do that very thing. Reveal yourself in Christ to the Muslims of the world.'"

How he chooses to reveal himself is up to God.

"We can't tell him how he can and can't do things," Sprinkle stresses. "If he chooses to do it in what to our Western minds is an unusual or mysterious way such as dreams or visions or angels, the Scriptures are full of examples of those."

In fact, missionaries increasingly are being asked to "interpret" such dreams—a role for which they've had little experience or training, observes Lewis Myers, FMB vice president for strategies in World A, the least-evangelized world regions.

"People working among Muslims are very aware that the battles that go on in the hearts and minds of people (about Christ) are spiritual battles," Myers explains. "It's warfare. And the tools of this kind of warfare come through spiritual means, the chief of which is prayer."

That means your prayer. Without it, Myers says, "we just can't be there."

■ For free copies of "30 Days of Prayer for Muslims," a daily prayer guide for use during Ramadan or any other time, call the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board toll-free at (800) 866-FMB1.

ANALYSIS

Model athlete

It was uplifting to read in the Jan. 7, USA TODAY sports section about the generosity of the Atlanta Hawks' Steve Smith. We live in a time when the media bombard us daily with news of the outrageous salaries of celebrities, CEOs and professional athletes.

I wish every young boy and girl in America could know about Smith's \$2.5 million dollar donation to Michigan State University. Most of the money will be used for the Clara Bell Smith Student-Athlete Academic Center. It is named for his deceased mother, the person who had the greatest influence on his life. His philanthropic gift also funds a scholarship for a graduate of Detroit's Pershing High School, his alma mater.

In a wonderful way, Steve Smith has modeled for all members of our society a giving spirit and grateful heart. His good sense of values is inspiring, refreshing and hopeful. He reminds us of the important roles family and community play in shaping young lives. To some degree, every person can emulate his generosity and thankfulness.

Paul Whiteley Sr.
Louisville

SBC and Falwell

There appears to be confusion about whether or not Jerry Falwell has joined the Southern Baptist Convention (Nov. 5, page 2). However, it is clear the SBC leadership has joined Falwell and has embraced his political and social agenda.

Falwell refers to himself as "a Baptist in the South." We are not sure

what that statement means, but we knew what it meant when he visited South Africa in the 1980s. He went to give support to the Apartheid regime, which had a government policy of keeping people apart rather than trying to help people live together. He supported a government which enforced a policy of separate facilities for blacks and whites—separate schools, separate hospitals, separate trains, separate sports facilities.

When most of the international community was withdrawing support and investment from South Africa over its racial policies, Falwell was speaking for more investment in South Africa.

We were living in Lusaka, Zambia, at the time of Falwell's visit to South Africa. How did the local people interpret his visit? A Zambian lady who had read in the local press about Falwell's visit and support of the Apartheid regime in South Africa said to us: "Oh, you are those Baptists who support racism in South Africa."

The SBC leadership is now married with Falwell. In 1994, Lottie Moon mission funds were being used to purchase and distribute Falwell's tapes. One would gather that the SBC leadership also supports his political and social views.

There is no doubt that Falwell and the present SBC leadership will remain a strong political force for some time. With their power and money, their threat to freedom is serious indeed. Those of us who cherish civil liberties and meaningful democracy must ever be on our guard.

Lonnie and Fran Turner
Brussels, Belgium

Plan ahead for a simpler Christmas

Now that Christmas is over, it isn't too early to start thinking about Christmas 1997. Next fall is a bit late to consider changing the way you observe Christ's birthday.

Thanks to unforeseen expenses that eliminated our gift buying last month, we enjoyed a modest holiday celebration. But we still received a wonderful gift: a lowered stress level.

FIRST PERSON

Interestingly, at the time of our budget crunch we began considering simplifying the holiday. The first spark came from an article in the Dec. 9 issue of Christianity Today, "Christmas Unplugged."

Author Bill McKibben told of launching a "Hundred Dollar Holidays" campaign in his church a few years ago. Besides advocating that families limit Christmas spending to \$100, he urged giving more attention to simpler gifts, relationships and doing things for others. He also emphasized turning off the TV during the season to allow time for stillness and reflection.

His inclusion of environmental issues in the story led me to believe McKibben comes from a moderate perspective. Yet, on Christmas Eve, conservative columnist Cal Thomas weighed in with a similar message in his syndicated column.

Both prompted long discussions in our home. We discerned that God was using our constraints as a way to show us we too need to change

our celebration.

In our large, extended family we used to do a gift exchange. That faded away a few years ago, but we hope to reinstate it. While we're working out the details, we will suggest the only acceptable gifts will be:

■ Those made or created by the giver, with a minimum spent on materials.

■ Something the giver dearly treasures.

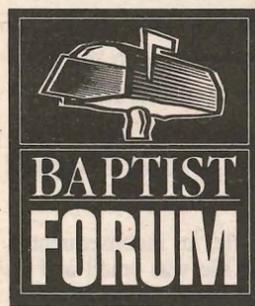
Then, the difference between these homemade gifts and what a store-bought present would have cost will go into a fund. The money will be used for gifts to the needy, such as Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree.

This can be extended to other venues. For Sunday school gift exchanges, instead of giving each other a lot of \$3 to \$5 trinkets, members could donate money to Lottie Moon or other Christian missions—and wherever you live, there is one with a pinched treasury.

Every time we have brought up this subject, listeners agree with the idea. From our "Experiencing God" lessons, we think the Lord may be at work here. I hope the church is willing to listen.

Promoting simpler, more-giving Christmases is the church's chance to lead the way throughout the year. In these days of welfare reform, we can show the world we are serious about helping the "least of these," as Christ advocates in Matthew 25.

Ken Walker
Louisville



Congress closely mirrors country's religious affiliation

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Members of the 105th Congress are fairly representative of the nation when it comes to religious affiliation, according to a new survey.

While religious affiliation is not an absolute indicator of political ideology, analysts say the survey confirms that the generally conservative political tone of the new Congress corresponds to a continuing growth in the number of theologically conservative representatives and a decline in the number of mainline Protestants, who tend to be more theologically liberal.

"Religion is only one factor of many, but it's important not to lose sight of the fact that in the American context, religion always has translated into political action and political conviction," said Albert Menendez, the demographer who conducted the study and is associate director of the Silver Spring, Md.-based Americans for Religious Liberty.

Roman Catholics, the country's largest religious group, remain the largest single religious group in Congress, with 151 of the total 535 members.

Southern Baptists, the nation's second largest religious group, have the second largest congressional presence as well, with 67 members.

Rounding out the top religious groups in the 105th Congress are United Methodists (59), Presbyterians (55), Episcopalians (42), Jews (35), unspecified Protestants (28), Lutherans (22), Mormons (14), and United Church of Christ (10) and "Christians" (10).

In addition, Menendez found six Eastern Orthodox Christians, 30 members who belong to a variety of smaller religious organizations and seven who claim no religious affiliation.

This year, for the first time ever, there is one representative from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a Missouri-based group that is completely separate from the Utah-based Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are no Muslims, Hindus or Buddhists listed in Menendez's survey.

Overall, Menendez said, the numbers track relatively closely to trends in American religious life—with some notable exceptions, such as the Jewish community, whose congressional presence is significantly higher than its roughly 2 percent proportion of the population.

Menendez, who has been conducting this study for 25 years, said one of the most interesting trends is a "com-

plete nose dive" in the number of mainline or "establishment" denominations in Congress.

James Guth, professor of political science at Furman University in Greenville, S.C., said this represents the overall decline in membership of mainline denominations in America.

According to Guth, the increase of evangelicals and theological conservatives in Congress "is an offshoot of the growth of the movement we call the religious right. They are part of that same branch."

Party affiliation within religious groups remain at about the same levels as in 1994, but sharply different—among Protestants, at least—from two decades ago, said Menendez.

"Twenty years ago, Protestants in Congress tended to be Democrats. Now they tend to be conservative Republicans," said Menendez. Additionally, he said, today Jews and the religiously unaffiliated are largely Democrats.

Both Guth and Menendez highlight the fact that more Catholic Democrats than Catholic Republicans were elected this term. There now are 60 Catholic Republicans and 91 Catholic Democrats. In 1994, with the Republican landslide, the margin appeared to be narrowing.

Gingrich urges divine guidance

WASHINGTON (ABP)—After being re-elected speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich told House members that until the country seeks "divine guidance" in a "nonsectarian way," its problems will not be solved.

Gingrich, a Southern Baptist, said faith must be a part of the nation's solution to problems such as drug addiction.

"I would just suggest to all of you that until we learn in a nonsectarian way ... to re-establish the authority that we are endowed by our Creator, that we owe it to our Creator and that we need to seek divine guidance in what we are doing, we are not going to solve this country's problems," Gingrich said.

In his speech, Gingrich challenged leaders "to reach out beyond party and beyond ideology and as Americans to say one of the highest values we're going to spend the next two years on is openly dealing with the challenge of meaning."

The speech was criticized by Americans United for Separation of Church and State. In a letter to Gingrich, the group's executive director Barry Lynn wrote, "You are speaker of the House, not our national pastor."

Meanwhile, historians noted that most presidents use their inauguration speeches as civil-religion sermons, invoking broad religious terms and ideas.

"Civil religion is still one of the few things that keeps the country together," said Robert Linder, a history professor at Kansas State University. "The one thing that Americans agree on more than anything else is that there is a God."

Grammy nominees include gospel singers

NEW YORK (RNS)—Some artists well known in Christian music circles have been nominated for Grammy Awards in categories other than gospel.

Among the nominees are contemporary gospel singer CeCe Winans and pop soloist Whitney Houston for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals for "Count on Me," a track from the "Waiting to Exhale" movie soundtrack.

In addition, the a cappella group Take 6 has been nominated for Best Pop Performance By A Duo or Group for "When You Wish Upon a Star," a track from "Music from the Park."

The 39th Grammy Awards ceremony will be Feb. 26 at New York's Madison Square Garden. Among the gospel music nominees:

- **Best Rock Gospel Album:**
 - "Bloom," Audio Adrenaline.
 - "Open All Nite," Big Tent Revival.
 - "Jesus Freak," dc Talk.
 - "Take Me to Your Leader," Newsboys.
 - "God," Rebecca St. James.

■ Best Pop/Contemporary Gospel Album:

- "Shelter," Gary Chapman.
- "Signs of Life," Steven Curtis Chapman.
- "The Message," 4 Him.
- "Life, Love & Other Mysteries," Point of Grace.
- "Tribute: The Songs of Andrae Crouch," various artists.

■ Best Southern Gospel, Country Gospel or Bluegrass Gospel Album:

- "Steel Witness," Charlie Daniels.
- "I Love to Tell the Story: 25 Timeless Hymns," Andy Griffith.
- "There's a Light Guiding Me," Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver.
- "How Great Thou Art," Willie Nelson and Bobbie Nelson.
- "Don't Overlook Salvation," Ricky Van Shelton.

■ Best Traditional Soul Gospel Album:

- "New Dawning," Walter Hawkins and The Hawkins Family.
- "Face to Face," Cissy Houston.
- "Shake the Devil Off," Dorothy Norwood.

■ "Together as One: A Tribute to the Heritage of Quartet Music," Various Artists.

- "Let's Go Back: Live in Chicago," Albertina Walker.

■ Best Contemporary Soul Gospel Album:

- "Live in Washington," Yolanda Adams.
- "Love Brought Me Back," Helen Baylor.
- "Whatcha Lookin' 4," Kirk Franklin and the Family.
- "Shakin' the House ... Live in L.A.," Hezekiah Walker, Yolanda Adams and Fred Hammond.

■ Best Gospel Album by a Choir or Chorus:

- "All Things Are Possible," Edwin Hawkins Music & Arts Seminar.
- "Gotta Feelin'," The Associates.
- "I'll See You in the Rapture," Mississippi Mass Choir.
- "Just a Word," Shirley Caesar's Outreach Convention Choir.
- "A New Thing ... Experience the Fullness," Full Gospel Baptist Fellowship Mass Choir.

School board survey finds conservative majority

BLACKSBURG, Va. (RNS)—A recent survey of U.S. school board members shows more than half describe themselves as religiously and politically conservative, but less than one-third favor a constitutional amendment permitting prayer in public schools.

Likewise, 31 percent support tax voucher plans allowing parents to select religious and private schools in addition to public schools.

The survey results were reported in the January 1997 issue of the American School Board Journal. It was con-

ducted by the Journal and Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va.

"Our survey results clearly show that a traditionally conservative education agenda finds its strongest support among those school board members who describe themselves as religiously or politically conservative," said the Journal.

"But our results also strongly suggest that, overall, board members' public actions are not automatically tied to their personal philosophies and beliefs."

Of the 1,247 respondents, 54 per-

cent described themselves as religious conservatives, while 36 percent said they were religious liberals.

Sixty-five percent consider themselves to be political conservatives, more than double those who view themselves as political liberals.

The survey found that school board members' views on church-state issues did not always mirror traditional conservative attitudes. It found, for example, that just 31.2 percent thought the United States should have a constitutional amendment permitting prayer in public schools.

Religious Freedom Restoration Act supported by diverse group

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A broad coalition of more than 70 religious groups has filed a friend-of-the-court brief urging the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold the constitutionality of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which is scheduled to be argued before the High Court next month.

The act, signed into law in 1993, requires government to show a compelling interest before it can restrict religious practice. Congress passed the law with the intent of overturning a 1990 Supreme Court decision that allowed the government to overlook the compelling interest criteria.

The brief was filed on behalf of the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion, which includes Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Unitarian, Buddhist, Native American and other groups.

Among those signing the brief are the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, the National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, the American Muslim Council, the Anti-Defamation League, the Church of Scientology International, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

"This is one issue that the entire religious community agrees on," said Marc Stern, co-director of the American Jewish Congress' law and social action commission. "There aren't many issues that can unite this varied a group."

In its brief, the coalition defends the constitutionality of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act by emphasizing the right of Congress to pass legislation that enforces the 14th Amendment's guarantee of freedom of religion.

It also maintains that the act does not unconstitutionally favor religious over non-religious positions or one religion over another. Because the act requires religious accommodation on a wide scale, the brief says, "it allows any faith, no matter how small, unpopular or politically ineffectual, to press its claim before a neutral arbiter under an objective and ... neutral standard."

The Supreme Court is due to hear oral arguments on the act's constitutionality Feb. 19 in connection with a Texas case in which a Catholic church invoked the act to demolish part of its existing structure.

Theologians & counselors still grapple with 'Why?'

"If we say God is in control and then an accident happens, we feel God was either negligent or wanted that person killed. At the moment when we need God the most he is our adversary."

Eric Hayward, director of pastoral care at Baptist Montclair Hospital in Birmingham, Ala.

By Jennifer Davis
Alabama Baptist

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP)—Catastrophic illnesses often raise tough "why" questions of faith, say religion professors and experts in pastoral care who attempt to explain grief from a biblical and theological point of view.

Eric Hayward, director of pastoral care at Baptist Montclair Hospital in Birmingham, Ala., said terminally ill patients initially go through a grieving process that involves questioning, anger, doubt and sometimes blame.

The "why" question almost always surfaces, Hayward said.

"It is an expression of some kind of frustration. People usually ask it because they feel there has been an injustice," he said. "They are angry because this is wrong."

While this questioning stems from anger, patients often feel depressed and discouraged when they find no answer, Hayward said. Even Jesus did not get an answer when he asked "Why?" on the cross, he noted.

But "Why?" is not necessarily the right question, Hayward said.

"It doesn't make any difference why. The real question is 'How am I going to cope?'"

Fisher Humphreys, theology professor at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School, said it is OK to

question God, and sometimes even healthy.

"When people are really suffering they may need to ask God why," Humphreys said. "Otherwise it would be somewhat insincere."

Humphreys said everyone, even good Christians, go through hard times.

"It is no help to say that the pain is a blessing in disguise. It does help to believe that God really knows what we are going through," he said. "After all, his son died also."

William Blair, a religion professor at Samford University and an ordained minister, knows firsthand how God stays through the pain. Blair has multiple sclerosis and is confined to a wheelchair.

"My disability brought me from being a religious person to a more spiritual person," he said.

Blair admitted he did not handle his disability well at first.

"Even though I was not aware of it at the time, God was with me during the whole crisis," he said.

Blair said that he could not see God in the situation at first because he was

going through denial, anger, guilt, bargaining and acceptance.

"It is just a process we have to go through and everybody has a different time schedule," he said.

It is the anger people tend to hold on to, Blair noted.

"We are angry at God. And when we find ourselves in a crisis and angry with God the last place we want to look is the Bible."

One problem is that some people believe illness is God's punishment for something, he said.

"God is not doing this. It is not his intent." Disease and illness are just part of this world, Blair said. "No one is to blame."

Other scholars also rejected theology that claims tragedy occurs

as a result of sin.

"Some people tend to get caught up in the health, wealth and prosperity theology that once you become a Christian all of life is great and everything works out perfectly," said Langston Haygood, a Christian counselor and professor at Beeson Divinity School.

"That is cruel theology because it

leads people to think wrongly," he said.

Christians also face suffering and hard times, Haygood said.

"To immediately look for an area of sin in a person's life who is suffering is wrong. It is not biblical," he said.

Blair said that when he became disabled a fellow church member asked him what sin he had committed.

"When people are put in this position they feel unloved, unclear, alone in the world and that no one understands," he said.

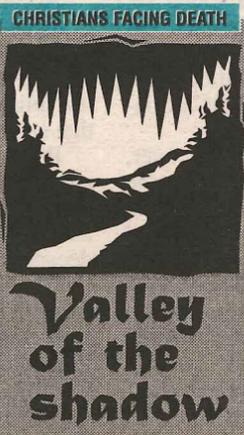
Eric Hayward, director of pastoral care at Baptist Montclair Hospital in Birmingham, said that when people have an inadequate theology it puts them in a bind.

"If we say God is in control and then an accident happens, we feel God was either negligent or wanted that person killed," Hayward said. "At the moment when we need God the most he is our adversary."

People tend to have a theology of cause and effect—that God controls every little thing—which is inadequate, Hayward said.

God voluntarily limited his own power when he gave man freedom of choice, Hayward said.

"We experience the consequences of our choices, and bad choices are tough," he said. "We live in an element of chaos, an imperfect world, and bad things are going to happen."



Cancer patient says past 2 years have been 'gift from God'

By Jennifer Davis
Alabama Baptist

RUSSELLVILLE, Ala. (ABP)—Leaten Smith can recall the day the doctor re-entered his office more than two years ago.

"The doctor did not have to tell me—I knew when I saw his face that I had cancer," she said.

Since that first sign of cancer appeared, Smith has undergone a seemingly miraculous recovery, then a re-

currence of the cancer and now terminal illness.

In July 1994 Smith had surgery for colon cancer. To the doctor's amazement, she survived the surgery and seemed to have a chance at recovery.

A year and several chemotherapy treatments later, however, another mass was found in her colon. In August 1996, cancer was diagnosed once again.

"The second time around was harder," she said, "because we knew

it was final."

Even though her first reaction was to cry hysterically, Smith said she never felt angry or denied the prognosis that nothing could be done.

"I accepted it from the first," she said. "God gave me the reassurance that no matter what I had to face, he wouldn't leave me. The Holy Spirit was there and I felt it."

Smith said she believes the total peace and calmness she has about her cancer comes from God.

"I believe it is so I can help my family deal with this and to cope," she said.

Smith noted that she talks with her family, letting them know where she is hurting and listening to them tell her where they are hurting.

"We cry, laugh, hurt, talk and make plans," she said. "It is so hard on the family members, much harder than it is on the patient. They have to see you suffer and not be able to do things you once could."

Although her husband and her children had a hard time at first, they are much more comfortable talking about the cancer now, she said.

"We are all Christians, and we spend lots of time praying and talking about God. It's hard not to put myself first in prayer, but I try," she said.

Over and over Smith prays, "God, your will not mine be done."

She continually goes to John 14:1 and Psalm 55:22 for strength.

Smith said she views the last two years since the first diagnosis of cancer as a gift from God.

"The doctors were amazed that I survived the first surgery," she said, noting that the chemotherapy con-

tained her cancer to one area. Colon cancer normally spreads.

"God knows how long he wants me to live, so I'm just going to enjoy my family for now."

She said she believes the extension on her life has given her the chance to know her new daughter-in-law and to tell others about her faith in Jesus.

"I couldn't understand why God let me live," she said. "I figured out it was to be a witness to my brothers and sisters."

Since that day, Smith has done just that. "I witness to everyone I come into contact with," she said.

Smith has also spent time volunteering with cancer patients in a local hospital and working with hospice.

Her eyes light up as she recalls the many patients she has visited and been able to share how God has taken care of her.

"They always listen and never get mad when I share with them," she said.

Next to God and her family, Smith credits her church with helping her through this difficult time.

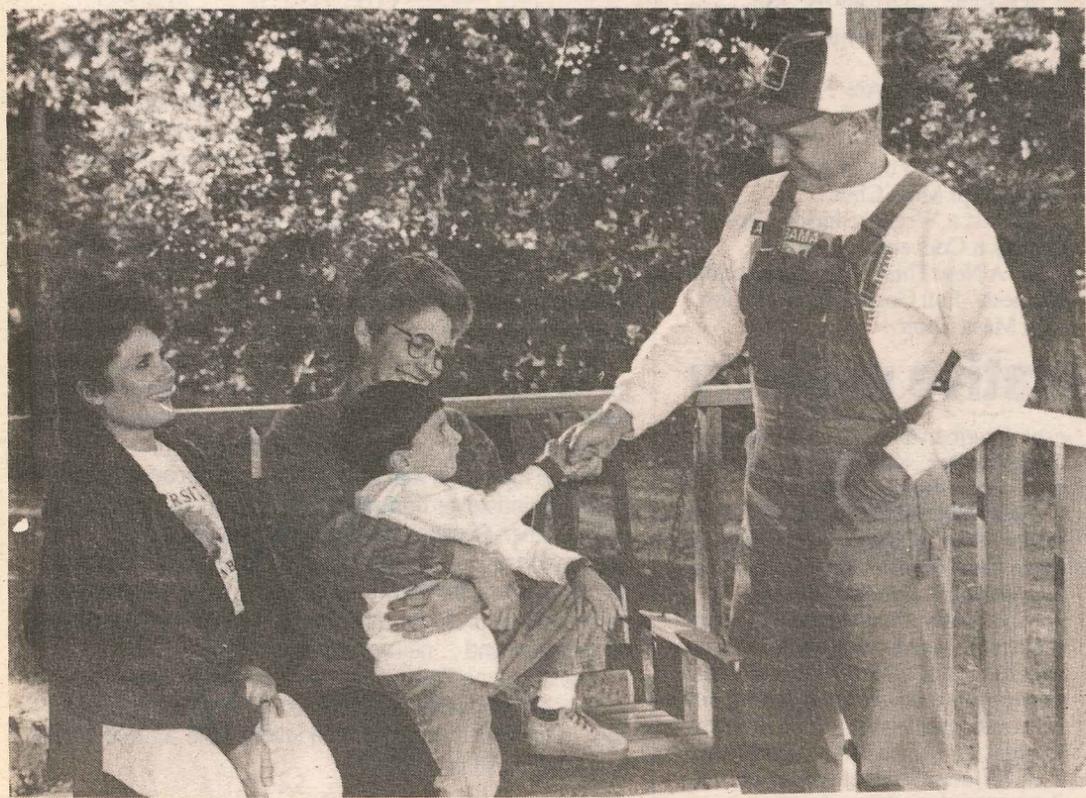
"They have all been so good to pray for me," she said. "God has blessed me so much through their prayers."

People in the community also have called to check on her, visited her and taken on certain chores, she said. "Even the little things are a great help."

Smith said she continues to draw strength from God.

"All we can do is turn it all over to God. It's in his hands."

FAMILY FIRST Leaten Smith (center) says life with incurable colon cancer has brought new meaning to family time. Surrounding her are daughter, Jane Wade, son, Sean Brown, and grandson, Seth.



Family keeping faith first during fight with leukemia

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (ABP)—Scott Whiteaker remembers vividly the plane ride from Alabama to Tennessee. A thunderstorm was thrashing below, but the plane flew above the storm clouds, where the sun was shining bright. Four-year-old Zachary Whiteaker noticed the plane's shadow was protected by a rainbow.

"I told him right then, 'See, Zach, that means God is going to take care of you,'" Scott recalled. The two were flying from Birmingham to Memphis to talk to doctors at St. Jude's Children's Medical Center about Zach's diagnosis with leukemia.

One year and several medical procedures later, Zach and his family still are battling his illness, but they know they are not doing it alone. Relying on their faith in God, the Whiteakers are taking it one day at a time.

Baldness from Zach's chemotherapy accentuates his gigantic smile and happy eyes. Scott shaved his head to look more like his son.

Scott said he repeatedly has drawn strength from a verse in the third chapter of Proverbs, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."

"I don't understand cancer, but

God says: 'Don't worry about what you don't understand. Trust in me, and I'll help you get through it,'" he said.

Both Scott and Eva know they have a long and uncertain road ahead, but they also know their strength to handle the future will come from their reliance on God.

"I don't know how people do it without Christ," Scott said, adding that a St. Jude chaplain said about two-thirds of the families who come to the hospital do not believe in God.

Scott and Eva consider part of their purpose to be their witness to other hurting families. "What we pray for is that others will see Jesus through us,

that they will see something in us that will make them want the same comfort we have," Scott said.

Although the Whiteakers do not understand why Zach had to have leukemia, they say they have never been angry at God. Rather, they acknowledge that their own relationships with God have become stronger.

"I don't think it is fair to blame bad things on God. I don't believe God makes children sick," Scott said. "Satan does this and God makes us strong enough to hold Satan off," Scott said. "We never said, 'Why us?' Why not us? Christians are not exempt."

CHRISTIANS FACING DEATH



Valley of the shadow

Dying tough for Christians too, say counselors & chaplains

Continued from page 1

"Grief is our physical and psychological reaction to any significant loss," Hightower continued. "The purpose of grief is to help us recognize that this significant loss has occurred in our lives; to help us adapt to this new reality, and to help us live healthy in this world without this significant person, object or dream."

Everyone has his or her own journey to recovery, but the only way to cope with the death of a spouse or loved one is to "face it, front and center. There's no other way," said Trudy Tharpe, director of a grief-support program in Alabama.

Theologians offer belief in eternal life as the Christian's strongest resource for facing death.

"The great theological truth is that Christ overcame death. Therefore we can have hope in the face of death," said Eric Hayward, director of pastoral care at Baptist Medical Center in Montclair, Ala.

Carroll Freeman, a retired professor of psychology and counseling at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said that in order to reach the fullest extent of eternal life, one must experience death.

"When a person accepts Christ, his eternal life begins at that point. Death is merely a stage in the process," he said. "Death is an exit and an entrance."

John Claypool, former pastor of

Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, who now is an Episcopal priest, agreed. "I think God's love for us is everlasting," he said. "Whatever God creates, God loves and loves everlastingly."

Still, the idea of death is hard to grasp, said Claypool, who lost his 10-year-old daughter to leukemia in 1970.

One analogy, Claypool said, is to compare death—the end of life—to birth. After developing in the womb, a baby is born into a more appropriate place for growth, he said.

"We die to the smaller and are born to the larger," Claypool said. "God gives us our lives in stages, not all at one time."

"When my little girl died there seemed to be nothing worth living for," he said. "But it gradually dawned on me that there are others to love and more truth to learn."

Claypool said he chose to be grateful that he had the opportunity to have his daughter for the time he did rather than be angry that she died. In so doing, he said he learned that he does not own anything. "I take each day that comes as a gift and don't presume that I can control what happens," he said.

"Life is a gift, not an entitlement," Claypool said. "The Bible is clear that God gives us our life out of nothing. There is nothing in me that guarantees that we live on and on."

Youth Fest 1997

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

The hotels below with listed rates represent those with blocked rooms and confirmed rates. When making reservations, please tell the reservations clerk you are attending Kentucky Baptist Convention's YouthFest to obtain these rates. If making reservations at one of the other facilities, you will wish to verify rates. Also note the reservation deadlines of some facilities; those who make reservations early will be the most likely to get the hotel of their choice. We do not necessarily recommend any of these hotels, but make the information available for your convenience.

Louisville

Club Hotel by Doubletree
9700 Bluegrass Parkway
(502) 491-4830
(888) 444-2582
Double \$60 + tax

Courtyard by Marriott **June 7
9608 Blairwood Rd.
(502) 499-6220
Single \$59 2-4 \$64 + tax

Days Inn/Downtown*
101 East Jefferson St.
(502) 585-2200

Days Inn/East **May 28
4621 Shelbyville Rd.
(502) 896-8871
Single \$52 Double \$56 + tax
Triple \$60 Quad. \$64 + tax

Executive Inn **June 12
978 Phillips Lane
Watterson at the Fairgrounds
(502) 367-6161
(800) 626-2706
\$65 Flat + tax
Rollaways \$10 each if requested

Executive West Hotel **June 12
830 Phillips Lane
(502) 367-2251
(800) 633-8723
Single/Double \$65 Flat + tax
Rollaways \$10 each if requested

Fairfield Inn*
9400 Blairwood Rd.
(502) 339-1900

Hampton Inn*
1902 Embassy Square Blvd.
(502) 491-2577

Hampton Inn **June 6
800 Phillips Lane
(502) 366-8100
\$74 Flat + tax

Holiday Inn/Downtown
120 West Broadway
(502) 582-2241
(800) 626-1558
Single \$69 Double \$79 + tax
Triple \$89 Quad. \$99 + tax

Holiday Inn/East*
1325 S. Hurstbourne Ln.
(502) 426-2600

Holiday Inn **June 7
Rivermont Centre
I-71 & Zorn
(502) 897-5101
\$70 Flat + tax

Holiday Inn/South
3317 Fern Valley Rd.
(502) 964-3311
\$66 Flat + tax

Hyatt Regency*
320 W. Jefferson St.
(502) 587-3434

Marriott Hotel East
1903 Embassy Square Blvd.
(502) 499-6220
\$69 Flat + tax

Microtel
1221 Ky. Mills Ln.
(502) 266-6590
Single \$35.95 Double \$45.95 + tax

Quality Inn*
3315 Bardstown Rd.
(502) 452-1501

Ramada Plaza Hotel ** June 12
1921 Bishop Lane
(502) 456-4411
\$59 Flat + tax

Red Roof/East*
9330 Blairwood Rd.
(502) 426-7621

Red Roof/Southeast
I-264 at Newburg Rd.
(800) 874-9000
Single \$49.99 Double \$56.99
Triple \$64.99 Quad \$72.99
Refer to Block Code B134-Youth
when registering

Sleep Inn*
3330 Preston Hwy.
(502) 368-9597

Travelodge/Hurstbourne
I-64 & Hurstbourne Ln.
(502) 425-8010
\$48 Flat + tax

Travelodge Louisville*
Convention Center
401 S. 2nd St.
(502) 583-2841
(800) 578-7878

Wilson Inn Airport*
3209 Kemmons Dr.
(502) 473-0000

LaGrange, KY

Days Inn*
809 South Hwy. 53
(502) 222-7192
(800) 677-7578

Clarksville, IN

River's Edge*
342 Eastern Blvd.
(812) 282-7511
(800) 867-8638

New Albany, IN

Holiday Inn/Louisville NW*
411 West Spring St.
(812) 945-2771

Sellersburg, IN

Days Inn* (7 mi. No. of Lou.)
7618 Old State Rd. 60
(502) 246-4451

*No special rate given
**Reservation deadline



MISSIONS

Baptist feeding teams supply 100,000 meals in flooded area

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptist disaster relief teams have provided more than 100,000 meals to residents in three western states recovering from severe flooding.

Volunteers could be needed in California for another week, although workers in Oregon, Idaho and Nevada already have shut down, said Mickey Caison, on-site relief coordinator for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

Response to the disaster began Jan. 2 after severe flooding caused by torrential rains and heavy snows in five western states.

"It's going to be a long-term recovery process here in California, with water still covering some communities," said Caison. "Cleanup has begun in some of the higher elevation areas, but it will take from 10 days to two weeks in the delta areas before the work can begin there."

The three feeding units in California had served 83,000 meals as of Jan. 15. Units in Nevada closed after providing 10,525 meals, and the feeding team in Medford served 6,985 meals. A report from Idaho was not yet available.

Caison asked Southern Baptists to pray for the flooding victims, volunteers, associations and local churches who continue to minister.

Caison also requested prayer that "the Lord will provide opportunities for spiritual growth" and witnessing throughout affected areas.

Contributions for the disaster relief effort may be made to the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104.

Baptists & beans help Rwandans resettle

By Wendy Ryan
Baptist World Alliance

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Refugees returning to Rwanda are getting help in making a new start in their country in the form of beans for food and seed offered through a Baptist relief agency.

More than 3,500 people have received beans purchased with a \$50,000 grant from Baptist World Aid, the relief arm of the Baptist World Alliance. Another \$50,000 has been pledged but not yet raised, officials of the Washington-based alliance announced.

"Those who have been served are very busy preparing the ground for the new seeds," said Buzizi Claver, development manager for the Union of

Baptist Churches in Rwanda. "You can hardly imagine how the refugees are so pleased to receive a good quality of seeds to plant their lands."

Claver said Baptist leaders in Rwanda bought both higher-quality seeds for planting and cheaper beans for eating immediately.

Emphasis on the relief operation is to help with rebuilding the country that has been torn apart by ethnic conflict, he said.

Claver also said the union is working with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, which is supplying such things as hoes, soap and seeds to almost 11,000 returning refugees.

FMB workers, who have labored with Rwandans since before the refugees left the country, are spending \$150,000 to help refugees rebuild.

In addition to relief items, workers plan to meet more specific needs as they are determined by local teams surveying areas around the 56 churches of the Union of Baptist Churches in Rwanda.

In addition to beans for seeds and for eating, Baptist World Aid is supplying blankets and rice for returnees.

Funds from Baptist World Aid also are being used to transport and store supplies. Most of the aid is going to Baptists, Claver said, but is not limited to them.

Support for Rwanda resettlement can be sent to Baptist World Aid, 6733 Curran Street, McLean VA, 22101-6005.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press.

Church of God in Christ looks at indigenous missions

HOUSTON (RNS)—The presiding bishop of the Church of God in Christ plans to encourage training Christian converts from other nations at institutions in the United States to foster indigenous missionary activities in their home countries.

Presiding Bishop Chandler Owens said he hopes the plans will lead to improved relations with Church of God in Christ congrega-

tions outside the United States.

"People somehow gradually began to resent Americans in particular lording over them," he said. "It's better to bring them over and train them and send them back."

Church leaders, meeting at the annual Presiding Bishops Leadership Conference in Houston this month, decided bringing some converts to Church of God in Christ institutions in the United States to

teach them denominational doctrine might enhance the work of the church in foreign countries.

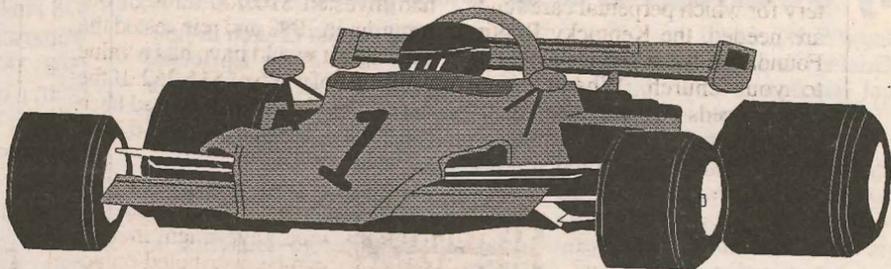
The Church of God in Christ, the world's largest predominantly African-American Pentecostal denomination, has churches in 56 countries.

At the meeting, church leaders also decided to change the name of the church's Home and Foreign Mission department to Home and World Mission.

ROYAL AMBASSADORS/CHALLENGERS 1997 REGIONAL MISSION CONGRESSES

DATES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Feb. 1 South Central Region
Beacon Hill Baptist Church
274 Old Monticello Road
Somerset, KY 42501-6140
606/678-4159</p> | <p>Feb. 8 Southeastern Region
Manchester Baptist Church
308 Main Street
Manchester, KY 40962-1237
606/598-5285</p> |
| <p>Feb. 1 North Central Region
Immanuel Baptist Church
1075 Collins Lane
Frankfort, KY 40601-4392
502/223-7601</p> | <p>Feb. 8 Southwestern Region
Southside Baptist Church
205 Nichols Street
Princeton, KY 42445-06847
502/365-5510</p> |



Congress Events

- ✓ RA Racer Competition (Participation in associational competition is not required)
- ✓ Speak Out Competition — for Challengers I and II
- ✓ Knot Tying Competition
- ✓ RA Camp Information
- ✓ Missions Round the World Basketball Shoot-Out (one team per church)
- ✓ Regional Challenger President election
- ✓ Sloppy Joe lunch (\$1.50 per person)
- ✓ FUN! !

A MISSIONS FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS

The Congresses begins at 10:00 a.m. local time and concludes at 3:45 p.m. Please arrive early to register your church. Contact the host church for directions.

DATES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Feb. 15 Central Region
Pleasant Grove Baptist Church
5285 Highway 44 E
Shepherdsville, KY 40165-6325
502/543-7336</p> | <p>Feb. 22 Southern Region
*South Fork Baptist Church
4915 New Jackson Highway
Hodgenville, KY 42748-9715
502/325-3626</p> |
| <p>Feb. 15 Northeastern Region
Rose Hill Baptist Church
1001 Winslow Road
Ashland, KY 41102-5300
606/329-2821</p> | <p>Feb. 22 Western Region
Madisonville Baptist Church
246 North Main Street
Madisonville, KY 42431-0607
502/821-3611</p> |

*This is a change in location from previously printed material.

Russian church linked to tobacco & alcohol sales

MOSCOW (RNS)—The image of the Russian Orthodox Church has been tarnished by charges in the Moscow press that the church imported alcohol and tobacco as tax-free humanitarian aid and then re-sold the products in Russia's newly emerging free market.

Since the fall of communism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Orthodox Church has grown rapidly and has become involved in a number of business efforts to meet the cost of the denomination's reconstruction and development, including a Moscow hotel and a factory that produces candles, icons, vestments and jewelry.

But Ecumenical News International, the Geneva-based religious news agency, reported other business interests of the church have become the subject of media criticism. It cited the weekly newspaper *Moskovskiye Novosti* as reporting that the church's department of external relations, led by one of Orthodoxy's most prominent officials, Metropolitan Kirill, has been importing tobacco on a massive scale.

According to the newspaper, the church has imported, duty free, 10,000 tons of tobacco as humanitarian aid—about 8 billion cigarettes or 10 percent of Russia's total tobacco imports.

Because the tobacco was imported

as humanitarian aid, the Russian government lost an estimated \$40 million in taxes, according to the paper.

Another newspaper, *Novaya Gazeta*, claimed the church's religious-goods factory imported millions of bottles of wine, also duty-free.

The tax breaks were a means for the new post-Soviet government to subsidize indirectly the restoration of churches destroyed by the Soviet state without digging directly into the Russian budget.

The church's department of external relations issued a statement denying it ever was involved in "commercial activities involving alcohol or to-

bacco products or any excise goods." But it acknowledged some humanitarian aid was not intended for direct use by church organizations but to be sold for profit.

"Part of the revenues received have gone into the general church budget, and part into special programs for restoring churches and monasteries, restoration of church life as a whole and for charitable activities," the statement said.

Alexander Boulekov, a spokesman for the external relations department, told Ecumenical News International the scandal has raised questions as to whether "all means are good for raising funds."

Because the tobacco was imported as humanitarian aid, the Russian government lost an estimated \$40 million in taxes.

Genetic research links Jewish priests' DNA

HAIFA, Israel (RNS)—Israeli researchers have found genetic links among contemporary members of Judaism's priestly class living on three continents, providing the first scientific evidence supporting the traditional belief that all such men are descended from the biblical high priest Aaron.

The findings are based on the analysis of genetic markers in the DNA of Y chromosomes found in Jewish men who belong to the priestly class and who live in Israel, the United States and Great Britain. The study was conducted by scientists at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa.

Within Judaism, the priesthood is hereditary and is passed from father to son, as is the Y chromosome. Jew-

ish tradition holds that all members of the priestly class—known in Hebrew as kohanim—descended from Aaron, the brother of Moses.

The findings support the belief "that modern-day Jewish priests appear to be descendants of a single common male ancestor—presumably the biblical high priest, Aaron," a Technion-IIT statement said.

The study found that even though kohanim were dispersed across the world beginning nearly 2,000 years ago and have developed other genetic attributes that differ according to geographical origin, they still tend to share some common genetic markers that non-kohanim do not have.

Kohanim of Ashkenazi (Eastern European), Sephardic (Middle East-

ern) and Yemenite (from Yemen on the Arabian peninsula) Jewish origins were included in the study. The researchers found that the level of religious observance was not a factor in sharing genetic factors among men who identified themselves as kohanim.

In biblical times, priests performed the sacrifices and presided over other rituals that took place at the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem. Today, the Jewish priesthood is largely ceremonial, although kohanim continue to perform some religious functions and are supposed to adhere to specific injunctions—such as not marrying a divorced woman—not required of other Jewish men. About 5 percent of the 7 million Jewish men around the globe belong to the priestly class, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Spain tops list of 'most sinful'

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Spain is the most sinful nation in the industrialized world, according to a new survey by a Swedish business journal.

The journal, *Svensk Export Strategi*, ranked 19 leading industrialized countries according to seven "modern deadly sins": smoking, drinking, drugs, gambling, overeating, night life and prostitution. Spain topped the list particularly because of its night life and prostitution.

"Previously, Spaniards had a siesta to avoid the midday heat. These days they sleep late into the morning in order to recover from their nocturnal exploits," *Svensk Export Strategi* stated.

France ranked the second most sinful nation because of its high consumption of alcohol. The United States was third because of the rate of drug abuse.

Rounding out the top five were Great Britain and the Netherlands. The Nordic countries of Sweden, Finland and Norway were at the bottom of the list, as were Portugal and Japan.

Cemeteries: Perpetual care ... perpetual funds

If your church operates a cemetery for which perpetual care funds are needed, the Kentucky Baptist Foundation has a service available to your church. Whether your church needs a trustee or just an investment manager, the Kentucky Baptist Foundation would appreciate the opportunity to extend its services to your church.

Just as a cemetery organization is in the business of the perpetual care and maintenance of the cemetery, the Kentucky Baptist Foundation is in the business of the perpetual care and management of funds. What a perfect combination. To the extent your cemetery organization will use the Kentucky Baptist Foundation to focus on its mission in your behalf (perpetual funds management) it will allow the cemetery organization to focus on its mission (perpetual cemetery care).

Let us show you how our service strives to preserve and enhance real (inflation-adjusted) value of the principal of your funds while providing a stable yet growing stream of earnings. Our investment performance results have been excellent. Our balanced fund's 1996 total return was 12.7 percent. The average annual return for the past five years was 11.4 percent, and 1995 was our

highest year at 28.3 percent. If one had invested \$10,000 through our program in 1992 and reinvested the earnings, it would have had a value at the end of 1996 of \$16,252. If the net dividends and interest had been distributed, the balance would have been \$13,606.

There is no minimum balance required to use our service. Investment income can be distributed on accounts of \$5,000 or more; if the account balance is under \$5,000, the income is reinvested into principal until the account attains a balance of \$5,000. Income is then distributed on a quarterly or annual basis.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation exists to serve our Kentucky Baptist family of churches and church-related organizations of which church cemeteries are a part. Please give us the opportunity to serve your church and cemetery organization in this way. I would be happy to present our program to the appropriate committee or group and answer any questions about our program. There is no cost or obligation for the presentation.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223; (502) 244-6466.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

Magnum Transportation



"Bus Sales, Service, & Refurbishments"

1228 Lakeview Dr.
Franklin, TN 37067
(615) 790-8990 FAX (615) 790-8989
"Your Transportation Solution"



"Is Cupid Stupid?"

The 1997 Central Kentucky Single Adult Valentine's Conference
February 14 Weekend

Featuring Dr. Harold Ivan Smith, author of over thirty books on single adult issues including *A Time for Healing*, *Singles Ask*, and *51 Things to Do While You're Waiting for the Right One to Come Along*.

Events will be held at three Lexington area churches:
Immanuel Baptist Church,
Calvary Baptist Church,
and Centenary United Methodist Church

Please call Michelle Oisten at (606) 266-3174 for more information.
Childcare reservations must be made by February 10.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Churches seek to keep soccer moms

NEW YORK (RNS)—Religious leaders in the New York City suburb of Larchmont, N.Y., are striving to get soccer moms and their families back to weekend services at local houses of worship. More than 500 members from five churches and synagogues have asked the Larchmont Junior Soccer League to avoid holding games between 9 a.m. and noon on weekends to prevent conflicts with religious services. "We believe that soccer is an important part of our children's lives, as is faith (and) religion," said Michael Nelms, associate pastor of Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian Church. "We realize it is not possible to totally block off those times. We're respectfully asking that those times be respected so that children who are involved in both can do both."

Soccer league director Tom Munno said most games are planned for Saturdays. But Saturday games postponed due to inclement weather often are played on Sunday. Munno said he would do all he could "to minimize the number of Sunday morning games." There are 1,700 children in the soccer league. Soccer association officials said they heard few complaints about scheduling conflicts. Charlene D'Antonio of the Eastern New York Youth Soccer Association suggested most children could attend a service that didn't conflict with their game. But many churches have only one service. Churches with multiple services usually have one that is specifically designed with children in mind.

SEEKING: Minister of music/youth. Salary negotiable. Send resumé to: New Bethel Baptist Church, P.O. Box 100, Verona, KY 41092.

SEEKING: A full-time minister of youth and music. Send resumé to: Watson Lane Baptist Church, 233 Watson Lane, Henderson, KY 42420.

WANTED: Part-time youth minister. Mail resumé to: Cecilia Baptist Church, 416 East Main St., Cecilia, KY 42724.

SEEKING: Minister of music. Ridgewood Baptist Church, Louisville (CBF-affiliated), is seeking a part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: Ridgewood Baptist Church, 6209 Greenwood Road, Louisville, KY 40258.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music and youth. Young, growing, progressive church is seeking a part-time minister of music and youth. Send resumé to: Rev. Keith Tingle, Brookside Baptist Church, 1351 Wilmore Road, Nicholasville, KY 40356.

FOR SALE: Yamaha keyboard (PSR70), midi compatible, rhythm presets, \$800. Conn organ (model 430), \$400. Antique dishes. Prices negotiable. (502) 233-4376.

SEEKING: Resumés. Tates Creek Baptist Association is accepting resumés for the position of director of missions—Richmond/Berea area, 44 churches. Deadline: Feb. 28, 1997. Send to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 130, Waco, KY 40483, Attn: Fred Livingood.

SEEKING: Minister of youth. Ridgewood Baptist Church, Louisville (CBF-affiliated), is seeking a part-time minister of youth. Send resumé to: Ridgewood Baptist Church, 6209 Greenwood Road, Louisville, KY 40258.

FOR SALE: Burton Memorial Baptist Church in Bowling Green has four pews varying in size from 6 feet to 10 feet with walnut finish and green cushions for sale. If interested, contact Tim Miles, pastor, at (502) 842-1931.

SEEKING: Centerfield Church in Oldham County is seeking a volunteer praise and worship band. Auditions will be held through the month of February. For more information, call (502) 241-9345.

FOR SALE: Four lots in section 11, Resthaven Cemetery, \$1,600. Call S. Harold Smith, (502) 845-4010.

SEEKING: Cynthiana Baptist Church is seeking applicants for a full-time minister of youth and a part-time minister of music. Resumés may be sent to Cynthiana Baptist Church, P.O. Box 355, Cynthiana, KY 41031, Attn: Personnel Committee Chairman, or contact the church office at (606) 234-1575.

SEEKING: Metro Peoria Baptist Association in Peoria, Ill., is seeking a director of missions who meets Home Mission Board guidelines. If interested, send resumé to: Charles Hargrave, 907 N. Maplewood, Peoria, IL 61606. Deadline for resumés is March 1, 1997.

NEEDED: Pianist for Sunday morning and evening services and Sunday night choir rehearsal. Contact Amy Waggener, minister of music, Yorktown Baptist Church, 7300 National Turnpike, Louisville, KY 40214, or call (502) 361-2911. Salary negotiable.

FOR SALE: Navy blue choir robes, clean, excellent condition. (606) 623-1771.

SEEKING: Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, Ky., is receiving applications for the position of church administrator. The church seeks a person with experience in financial operations, computer knowledge, strong organizational and leadership skills. The position will require the ability to assist the pastor in a variety of administrative responsibilities including supervision of support staff and administrative support for all program ministries. Applicants should possess excellent interpersonal skills, self-motivation qualities and a team player attitude. Seminary and experience preferred. Send complete resumé to: Severns Valley Baptist Church, P.O. Box 130, Elizabethtown, KY 42702-0130, Attn: Linda Polley.

SEEKING: Central Baptist Church of Eureka, Mo., is prayerfully accepting resumés (until March 15, 1997) for a dynamic, full-time youth/music minister to serve in a rapidly growing community. Send resumé to: Central Baptist Church, P.O. Box 66, Eureka, MO 63025, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: A multiple-staff, seeker-sensitive, purpose-driven church is looking for a full-time youth and children's minister to provide vision, direction, training and leadership to a team of volunteers. Individual must be gifted in teaching and must have management skills, a high energy level, fresh ideas and the ability to function in a team approach to ministry. Interested? Experienced? Challenged? Send resumé to: Search Committee, Springfield Baptist Church, P.O. Box 286, Springfield, KY 40069. Phone: (606) 336-3544.

WANTED: Youth to audition for 1997 Kentucky Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra. Must be in grades 9-12, active in music ministry of a Kentucky Baptist church. Information, call Church Music Department (502) 245-4101.

NEEDED: Full-time secretary. Computer experience required. Salary and benefits. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Beechmont Baptist Church, 4574 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40214.

NEEDED: Youth groups for summer missions. For information, cities, dates, costs call (800) 299-0385. Youth on Mission, Box 2095, Rocky Mount, NC 27802.

SEEKING: Meta Baptist Church is presently in the process of searching for a full-time minister of youth and music. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Meta Baptist Church, 8807 Meta Highway, Pikeville, KY 41501.

The sure foundation

By Robert Dunston

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" 1 Corinthians 3:11.

Entering the Gatliff Chapel on the campus of Cumberland College is an awe-inspiring experience. Sunlight pours in through the stained glass windows and illuminates the chapel with vibrant colors.

Ten smaller stained glass windows surround the ground floor of the chapel. These windows depict scenes which help us remember those who have worked so hard to make Cumberland College a reality. The windows picture people, campus buildings, classroom activities and opportunities for ministry to our community and beyond. One can learn a lot about the history and goals of Cumberland College by reflecting on the images portrayed.

On the balcony level in the Gatliff Chapel, 10 more windows tell another story—that of the life of Jesus Christ. These windows are larger and portray scenes familiar to all of us. The story begins with Gabriel's announcement to Mary of God's wonderful work that will occur through her. The next three windows depict Jesus' birth, bap-

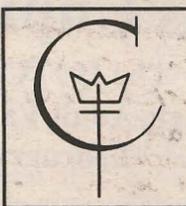
tism and transfiguration. The scenes which follow focus on Jesus' last few hours with his disciples in Jerusalem: the Last Supper, Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, his death on the cross and his being removed from the cross to be buried. But the story ends with two windows that capture the triumph of Jesus' resurrection and ascension. The story of Jesus, which begins with wonder, ends with glory.

The windows of the Gatliff Chapel call all of us at Cumberland College to remember the true story of our founding. Cumberland College came into existence because people whose lives had been changed by Jesus Christ recognized the need to create a school in southeastern Kentucky. The school they had in mind was one where education would be coupled with faith in Christ and students would be challenged to physical, mental and spiritual growth.

Built on the sure foundation of Christ, Cumberland College continues to offer the highest quality education in a context in which Christ is honored. That is our mission.

Robert Dunston is chairman of the religion department at Cumberland College, 6000 College Station Dr., Williamsburg, Ky. 40769

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Challenges and rewards

This past year has been both challenging and rewarding for all of us at Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. I want to thank all Kentucky Baptists for your faithful prayers and support.

1996 was challenging for several reasons. While we were able to serve more than 3,200 children and families, more than 4,000 were referred to us for help this past year. This meant we had to maintain a waiting list for our residential services and that some people seeking counseling had to wait several weeks for an appointment.

The year also saw our staff reaching out to help children with increasingly-severe problems. Youth from abusive and neglectful backgrounds often have much healing and growing to do to overcome their terrible pasts. Many of these children are at high risk for running away, acting out sexually or behaving violently. They also are at high risk for having emotional problems or problems with substance abuse. These children desperately need to feel the compassion of Christ, and our staff does a wonderful job of hanging with these young people through many tough times. Please

pray for our child care staff each day because they are on the front line of the battle for the hearts and souls of these young people.

The year was a tremendously rewarding one as well. We were blessed with an outpouring of support for our "Building a Better Future" campaign in the Lake Cumberland area, and as a result our new shelter near Somerset is almost complete. Efforts to recruit foster parents statewide also have been successful. In addition, a much-needed school program has been added at our Glen Dale Children's Home. And we've rejoiced with the angels over public decisions for Christ by more than 125 of the young people in our care.

We are sure this new year will bring many challenges and rewards as well. We are privileged to serve a loving God, and we look forward to seeing the miracles he'll do in the lives of families and children this year.

Audrey Puryear is interim president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243. Call (800) 456-1386. The World Wide Web address for KBHC is: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>

HOMES FOR CHILDREN

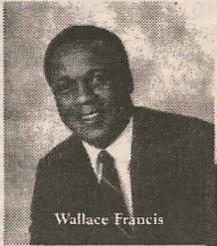


Audrey Puryear

LEADERSHIP

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SuperSummer '97 10th Annual Youth Conference Featuring



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Jimmy Gallant



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Teen poll: Service projects are most attractive church option

Continued from page 1

Sunday school attendance declines as teens age, the survey found. Thirty-seven percent of youth age 13 to 15 said they attend Sunday school, compared to 27 percent of teens 16 and older.

Choirs and music groups are attractive to less than four in 10 teens surveyed. Thirty-eight percent said they either currently participate (13 percent) or would like to participate (25 percent) in a church music group.

Youth participation in church activities appears to be a key for maintaining their involvement in church later in life, the pollsters theorized.

Noting Roman Catholics "have been losing followers as they grow older," the newsletter states: "In the formative teen-age years, Protestants are far more likely to participate in church-centered activities. They are three times as likely as Catholics to be attending Sunday school, and twice as likely to participate in youth groups, choirs or church-sponsored charitable activities."

In a companion study, the survey found that going to church is a good way for adults to impress teens.

Eighty-one percent of teens said going to church makes adults more attractive to them, while only 13 percent said church-going causes adults to be less attractive.

Conversely, the survey revealed radio and television are not particularly effective ways to reach teens.

Only 38 percent of teens said they had watched or listened to any religious programs on TV or radio.

Greater
friends

Youth
Fest
1997

Youth
Evangelism
Conference
June 27-28

Freedom Hall
Louisville, Kentucky

A SPECIAL YouthFest Offer:

Stay over for JoyJan '97 featuring Michael W. Smith!!

Kentucky Baptist youth groups who pre-register for YouthFest '97 can purchase for an additional \$10 per person tickets to JoyJan '97, Kentucky's premier contemporary Christian music festival sponsored by the Louisville Redbirds!

JoyJan '97 and YouthFest '97 are separate events. The Kentucky Baptist Convention's Office for Evangelism is responsible for and sponsors YouthFest '97. The Kentucky Baptist Convention is not responsible for JoyJan '97, or any of its sponsors, promoters and/or agents.

Registration and hotel information is coming to a mailbox near you soon. For additional information, call the Office for Evangelism at (502) 245-4101.

Beat the rush and make your conference and hotel reservations today!



Phillips, Craig & Dean



CHOSEN



FACE to FACE



Buster Soaries

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist partnerships with New England and Russia:

■ Church planter Michael Berendsen, as he begins a church in Sandwich, Mass.

■ Kentucky volunteers needed to join New England Baptists in a construction/preaching mission March 17-27 in Haiti. Estimated cost, including airfare, meals and lodging: \$1,000 per person.

■ Two dentists, two dental assistants and a pastor/evangelist urgently needed for dental mission to St. Petersburg, Russia. A dental project was scheduled for March, but no Kentuckians have volunteered. It will be rescheduled.

Contact the KBC partnership missions office for project information. (502) 245-4101.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ BOWLING GREEN—Living Hope Church ordained **Ken Black, John Ingram, Brian Mounts, Tom Propst** and **Tony Walker** as deacons Jan. 12. Also, **Larry Bolton** was ordained to the gospel ministry Jan. 19.

■ CAMPBELLSVILLE—Campbellsville University recently appointed the following to serve on its board of advisers: **Bobby Eastridge**, Campbellsville; **Richard Gwynn**, Campbellsville; **Earl Hedgespeth**, LaGrange; **Edward Jett**, Colorado Springs, Colo.; **Otis Reed**, Elizabethtown; **Craig Shoulders**, Blacksburg, Va.; **Mauri Smith**, Louisville and **Willie Watkins**, Frankfort.

■ CORBIN—First Church ordained **Bobby McBurney** and **Jim Pace** as deacons Jan. 19.

■ EDDYVILLE—First Church ordained **Jody Duncan** to the gospel ministry Dec. 29.

■ FINLEY—**Dave Walters** resigned as pastor at Mount Gilboa Church.

■ GLASGOW—Immanuel Church called **David Barnett** as pastor. He began his new ministry Nov. 24.

■ GREENSBURG—Cane Valley Church called **Hermon Wilkins** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Robinson Creek Church in Campbellsville.

■ HENDERSON—Calvary Church

29 Kentuckians graduate from Southern Seminary

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary awarded degrees to 29 students from Kentucky during commencement exercises Dec. 15. In all, 114 students received degrees from the seminary in December.

Those from Kentucky were:

■ Mike Hatfield, doctor of ministry, Danville.

■ Michael O'Neal, doctor of philosophy, Louisville.

■ Mi Sun Moon, master of theology, Louisville.

■ Harold Garrison, diploma in Christian ministry, Lexington.

■ Janet Carden, diploma in theology, Irvington.

Kentuckians receiving an associate of arts degree were:

■ Jerry Shacklet, Garrett.
■ Brenda Burney, Louisville.
■ Robin Roberts, Smithfield.

Kentuckians receiving a master of arts degree in Christian education were:

■ Harold Whittle, Bowling Green.

■ Troy Shelton, Lawrenceburg.

■ James Anderson, Louisville.

Those receiving a master of divinity degree were:

■ Richard Gray, Bowling Green.

■ Terry Tipton, Hardinsburg.

■ Stephen Bruce, Lexington.

■ Ronald Mercer, Lexington.

■ Yin Xu, Louisville.

■ Kevin Roach, London.

■ David Menser, Russellville.

called **Tim Hooper** as minister of music and youth. Hooper began his new ministry Jan. 1.

■ LOUISVILLE—Carlisle Avenue Church called **Thom Rainer**, associate professor of evangelism and church growth and dean of the Billy Graham school of evangelism at Southern Seminary, as interim pastor, effective Jan. 8.

Crescent Hill Church ordained **Phyllis Skonicki, Kathy Springs, Joy Henry, Sharleen Birkimer** and **Sara Jo Hooper** as deacons Jan. 12.

Steve McSwain resigned as pastor of Shively Church, effective Jan. 15, to become a consultant for Cargill Associates, a stewardship company based in Fort Worth, Texas. He will continue to reside in Louisville.

Stanley Warren, minister of mu-

sic at Woodland Church, will hold a free concert at Heeren Hall, Southern Seminary Jan. 28, 8 p.m.

■ MAGNOLIA—Magnolia Church ordained **Grover Close** and **Otis Skaggs** as deacons Jan. 5.

■ MIDDLESBORO—**W.B. Bingham II** celebrated his 47th anniversary as pastor at Binghamtown Church Jan. 5.

■ MOUNT VERNON—First Church ordained **John McQueary, Dale Winstead** and **Tracy Gabbard** as deacons Nov. 24.

■ OLATON—Olaton Church called **Orval Jamison** as pastor. Jamison was recently ordained to the gospel ministry at Fairview Church in Horse Branch.

■ PRINCETON—First Church ordained **Barry Newby** and **Danny Patterson** as deacons Jan. 12.

Helen Prickett, 64, dies in fire

Helen Prickett, 64, a retired schoolteacher and wife of Owensboro pastor T.A. Prickett, died Jan. 16 in a fire at her parents' home in Alabama.

Prickett had been staying with her parents who were ill, said Jerry Burke, music minister of Seven Hills Baptist Church, where T.A. Prickett has served 31 years. Mrs. Prickett's father also died in the fire. Expressions of sympathy can be made in the form of donations to the Helen Prickett Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 1401, Owensboro, Ky. 42302-1401.

One year and one week later

When our students tried to return from the Christmas break last year, they were met by the winter's worst storm. It took more than a week for all the students to return to campus. Several airports were closed, and most of the buses pulled off the road. Three students somehow made it to London, but we could not get to them. They had to spend the night in the National Guard armory.

When our students returned this year, the weather was quite different. Just two days before they came back, we had temperatures in the upper 60s. The weather did turn cooler the day they returned, but it was not too bad.

The students have been back for a week now, and it is very cold. When I got up this morning, the thermometer on my porch read 10 degrees. Another read zero. I went on to the office as I do every Saturday morning. About eight o'clock I saw the students who are on the farm crew making their way through the snow to do their Saturday morning chores.

The boys appeared to be dressed warm enough, but the girls had me a little worried. The group decided the snow covered-hill would provide a great shortcut down to the farm. I could see them out my office window as they were sizing up the hill. Should they or shouldn't they? I could tell what they were thinking. I watched them for a few minutes and then decided I had to speak to the girls about their clothes. By the time I reached the hill, all the boys and one girl already had slid down the hillside. Fortunately the two girls I was concerned about were still standing at the top of the hill.

I asked them where their boots, gloves, hats

and winter clothes were. They smiled and told me they were warm. The girls said they had on several layers of shirts and were not cold. "What about your feet?" I asked, "You have on tennis shoes." Like many youth, they did not share my concerns. I instructed the girls to go back to my office while I checked to see if we had some boots, gloves, hats and maybe a coat. I looked in the storage building and did find several pairs of boots, but they were all too large for the girls. I had been

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

told about a barrel of rubber boots with some smaller sizes. After nearly emptying the barrel, I found one pair of boots, size 7, and another pair, size 8.

I returned to my office with the boots and asked the girls to try them on. I was advised by one of my staff that in another room there was a bag of hats and gloves, which had been donated by a church in western Kentucky. With their boots, hats and gloves on, I sent the girls back to the dormitory to get an extra pair or two of socks.

A little later I saw the yard crew making their way to work. Just like the

farm boys, they appeared to be pretty well prepared for the frigid weather. These boys spent the next three hours cleaning the sidewalks and steps across the campus. This was the first weekend for some of these boys to be at Oneida. They had just enrolled the week before, the start of the second semester. Most students who come to Oneida have never had a job before, especially on a cold Saturday morning. After a lot of scraping and shoveling, they had most of the walkways cleared by quitting time.

W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, Ky. 40972

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College BEYOND 2001 CAMPAIGN

\$3,540,000 Goal

In 11 Months \$1,871,450.97 Committed

Trustees Surpass Goal by 10%

College Community Exceeds Goal by 50%

To God be the Glory!

Baptist goes from deputy sheriff to prison chaplain

LOMPOC, Calif. (BP)—Strains from the chorus of "Low in the Grave He Lay" swell from the packed pews in the chapel and pass through the stained glass windows to the prison courtyard outside.

It is Easter morning at the federal penitentiary in Lompoc, Calif. As the singing ends, Michael Cook steps to the platform and begins his sermon.

"Without the resurrection," he says, "the gospel is just a fable. Without the resurrection, Jesus is still dead and we are without a Savior and without forgiveness.

"Without the resurrection, life is a dead end."

An occasional "amen" or "that's right" punctuates his delivery as Cook drives each point home, searching for the words that will lead inmates to trust Christ a little more today than yesterday.

"This is a macho, highly defensive environment," Cook later explains. "You can show anger, but not sorrow or sadness... and you have to be careful how you show kindness. People with predatory personalities will prey on those who show any perceived weakness."

That's why chapel is a true sanctuary within the prison system. "This is perhaps the only place where men can be openly kind and generous without fear of reprisal."

Cook understands the system. For 14 of his 22 years in law enforcement he was a deputy sheriff patrolman.

Later, as pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Oskaloosa, Kan., a student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and correctional officer at another federal penitentiary, he sensed a call to chaplaincy. After receiving his endorsement from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's chaplain's commission, he became one of the first federal correctional officers to cross-train into federal prison chaplaincy—from incarcerating prisoners to being their spiritual adviser.

Rick Pinion is typical of some inmates who have spent more time inside prison walls than outside them.

Now serving his third term at Lompoc, he has been on the streets just four and a half months since his first arrest in 1976. But this time, other inmates began witnessing to him. At first he rejected their overtures and saw no need to make a change.

"Then there came a point in my life when I was in tremendous emotional pain because I had lost all hope for any kind of happiness," he says. "One morning during this time I awoke with an extreme headache. I sat up in bed and did what I had been avoiding—I asked God to come into my life. The headache left and I started looking for Chaplain Cook."

That Sunday morning, Pinion made a public commitment to Christ. Soon afterward, Cook baptized him into the membership of First Southern Baptist Church of Lompoc.

Larry Smith, another inmate, attended Methodist and Pentecostal churches as a young boy, "just to keep mom happy."

Like Pinion, he wasn't looking for Christ at Lompoc until inmates who were involved in Bible studies and worship services conducted through the chaplain's office began witnessing to him.

Cook now teaches Smith and other new Christian inmates how to share their faith in the prison community.

Cook's ministry is enhanced because he has the support of his wife, Cindy, and his church, First Southern in Lompoc.

J.T. Reed, pastor of the church, supports the way Cook has involved the congregation in his ministry.

"This outreach gives our members an opportunity to see the gospel at work in the hardest of situations," he says.

"Michael baptized eight men last Sunday at the prison, and we accepted all of them into our membership. That brings our total prison membership to about 30."

Reed believes having inmates on the church roll will give them a sense of belonging that usually is denied them while incarcerated. Having regular visits from church members gives them role models as they rebuild their lives.

"When these men complete their time, they will be able to move anywhere in the nation and have their

Interested in chaplaincy?

God can use more Southern Baptist pastors and laypeople in prisons and jails, chaplain Michael Cook says. Among his recommended requirements for working in a prison or jail setting:

■ Have a non-judgmental attitude. If you want to judge, become a judge—not a prison minister. Jesus said he came not to judge, but to seek and save those who are lost.

■ Be a proficient listener. Inmates have hurt people because they first were hurt by someone else. Listen to them and love them in their pain.

■ Have a desire to see people saved. Be true to the gospel and love and respect your inmate congregation. Then you'll be amazed at how receptive they are to Jesus and to you.

■ Be an emotionally healthy and stable person. Working in an institutional setting is an emotionally draining experience.

■ Have an appreciation for the criminal justice system. Prisons and jails provide for the security of society and the rehabilitation of its offenders. To disrespect the role of the system is to be at odds with your calling.

■ Be able to function in a potentially dangerous environment. Taking calculated risks is part of working in any law enforcement setting. God-given courage to face your fears is one indication God has called you to minister to inmates.

church membership transferred with them," he says. "I pray this will be part of their rehabilitation as a Southern Baptist church somewhere helps assimilate them back into society."

Reprinted from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's magazine, *MissionsUSA*.

Book advocates outreach via sports ministry

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (BP)—If ministry requires meeting people where they are, then it may mean going to a football game, according to two authors advocating sports ministry.

"If Jesus were walking the earth today, I believe he would be involved where people are involved," said Bobby Shows, co-writer of "Reaching Out Through School Sports."

"He would attend the athletic functions of your school. He was a people person," said Shows, of the Missouri Baptist convention's missions education and ministry development team.

Co-author Sharon Baach, associate professor of recreation at Southwest Missouri State University, called sports ministry a natural avenue for ministry today.

"The bottom line is churches today need new avenues to reach people," she said.

The book offers simple, practical ways to build relationships with coaches and athletes in a school system, opening doors of ministry with them.

Suggestions in the book fall into three categories: ministering to the coach, ministering to the athlete and ministering to parents, spectators or students.

Short-term shelter focuses on long-term help

By Laurie Lattimore
Alabama Baptist

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP)—When the town's "worst drunk" of 1930s Birmingham became a Christian, members at the city's Gospel Tabernacle were skeptical. They suspected Jimmie Hale would be taking a shot of whiskey soon after the service.

Hale, a drunk for 17 years, had walked down the church aisle many times before, always promising but never changing. He had not been sober for four years and had tried suicide more than once.

But that night, Hale's walk down the aisle was for real. He became one of the most zealous missionaries in downtown Birmingham. Most nights he could be found preaching at his once-favorite downtown pub.

In 1944, Hale opened a mission for the city's homeless in the building where he sold his last drop of whiskey as a bartender. Later that year, at age 39, he died. But his work continues.

Today, more than 50 years after its start, the Jimmie Hale Mission is not just a shelter, but a place for recovery.

Tony Cooper, executive director of the mission, said the mission's purpose is to make a difference in the lives of those who come in.

"Making a difference is what Christ was all about and what a Christian conversion is all about," said Cooper. "It's about a life changed because of Jesus Christ."

Although the Jimmie Hale Mission

has a soup kitchen and shelter for men—plus a new women's center opening this spring—the mission's focus is on long-term help, not just short-term needs. The center also has a year-old alcohol and drug addiction recovery residential center north of Birmingham.

Cooper said Jimmie Hale Mission is changing its philosophy from that of a shelter which also offers a recovery program to a place focused primarily on long-term restoration that also provides for some basic needs.

Men cannot stay more than seven days a month in the shelter and must attend the chapel service every night.

"We want to give them meals, clothes and a bed for a night. That is good, but what about tomorrow? We want to be a stepping stone, not a doormat."

If the mission does too much for someone, he said, it contributes to the problem and not the solution.

At the mission's kitchen and shelter, men are encouraged to participate in a discipleship program that teaches the Bible plus some practical skills to help them adjust to the world again.

Solving homelessness requires more than just telling people to find a job, Cooper said. Nearly 30 percent of the men who come into the mission for food and a bed have a minimum-wage job and work at least 25 hours a week, he said.

"People struggle with values, self esteem, work ethic," Cooper said. "We want to give hope so that they can see a brighter future."

The mission works with a learning

center to help men get their high-school-equivalency degrees and with the health department to teach men cooking and meal planning.

Bob Scheid, superintendent of the men's center downtown, emphasized that the gospel focus of the Jimmie Hale Mission is the key. "The bottom line is that they hear the gospel," Scheid said. "The gospel is what saves and transforms one's life."

Since changing the priority of the mission from short-term street rescue to long-term recovery, Scheid said, the number of men in the shelter has decreased from up to 80 men each night to about 40. But the residential, Bible-based education program has grown rapidly—from 20 to about 45.

Greg Shrewsbury, once an attorney who now serves as the mission's program director, said the accountability built into the 12-week program helps men take responsibility for their lives but does not force them to accept the gospel. "We just leave it up to God."

The mission also has left its finances up to God, relying upon financial donations from churches and others. "We've been around 53 years, and God has provided," Shrewsbury said.

The Christian focus of the mission is a dimension most social organizations do not provide, Tony Cooper noted.

"As Christians we know the real help comes from beginning a new life and a heart changed from the inside out," he said. "We address the soul. Other agencies leave out the most necessary part of helping someone truly recover."

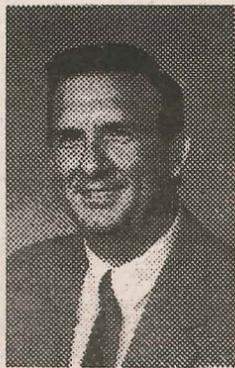
"We want to give them meals, clothes and a bed for a night. That is good, but what about tomorrow? We want to be a stepping stone, not a doormat."

Tony Cooper, executive director of the Jimmie Hale Mission

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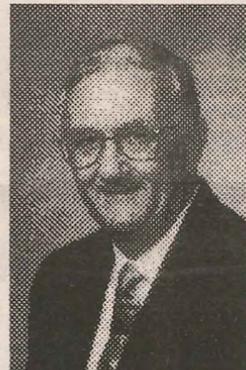
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