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Kentucky Notes

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FOR THE RECORD

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"Charitable-choice"

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Study: Church attendance flat but revenues up

OXNARD, Calif.—The bad news is churches, on average, aren't growing. The good news is their budgets are exploding.

Protestant churches have plateaued during the past five years while their budgets have grown 50 percent, according to studies by the Barna Research Group.

Median attendance for Protestant churches on Sunday has gone from 102 in 1992 to 100 today, a change George Barna calls "statistically insignificant."

The studies found that about 57 percent of all American adults are associated with a Protestant church, and about 45 percent attend church during a typical week.

"Our tracking of attendance patterns shows that most people still attend Christian churches, but that they are attending them less frequently than in the past," Barna wrote in his bi-monthly newsletter "The Barna Report."

Meanwhile the median annual operating budget has grown from \$81,713 to \$122,875 between 1992 and 1997.

"Among the reasons are the increasing personal wealth of Americans; the accelerated closing of small churches; the increased proportion of larger churches; and the heightened generosity of older Americans, many of whom are unloading their wealth upon their church rather than leaving it all for family," Barna wrote.

Other findings:

■ The typical Protestant church spends 35 cents out of every dollar given on direct ministry.

■ Nine out of 10 churches still have a Sunday school program, but an increasing emphasis is being placed on small groups or cell ministries. But 28 percent of churches have no small group activities, and the typical church has only 10 percent of its congregation involved in small groups.

Kentucky campers raise roof & hopes

By Joyce Sweeney Martin
Staff Writer

MACEO—Campers on Mission teams often repair sagging roofs and cracked foundations, but in the aftermath of this year's flood they also brought hope to some sinking hearts.

The 20 members of Campers on Mission along with 42 other volunteers from across Kentucky and Indiana who converged to rebuild Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in late October were a "godsend," said Pastor Steve Boyd.

Campers on Mission is a national fellowship of mostly Baptists, mostly retirees who combine their love for camping with their carpentry skills to help wherever they are needed.

They definitely were needed at Dawson Memorial, Boyd said.

Last spring, more than 6 and a half feet of water stood in the church sanctuary. Walls splayed; floors buckled; the pulpit area floated away, leaving

the rear of the building exposed. The building moved off its foundation.

When the water finally receded, more than 4 inches of mud covered the sanctuary floor and knee-deep cow manure filled the space where the pulpit once stood, Boyd said.

But the congregation of 28 hearty people wasn't ready to quit. In spite of the fact that most members were older than age 65 and had little money, they made plans to repair their 127-year-old building, located on the Ohio River 12 miles east of Owensboro, Boyd said.

Within a week after the flood, donations ranging from \$10 to \$5,000 began pouring in for repairs.

But all too quickly, church members began facing seemingly insurmountable governmental red tape as well as people who thought the church should disband.

Church members learned they could not get a building permit to repair the damage because repair costs

would exceed 50 percent of the structure's value. Instead, the building had to be demolished.

Several volunteer groups canceled after finding out that a new building was needed.

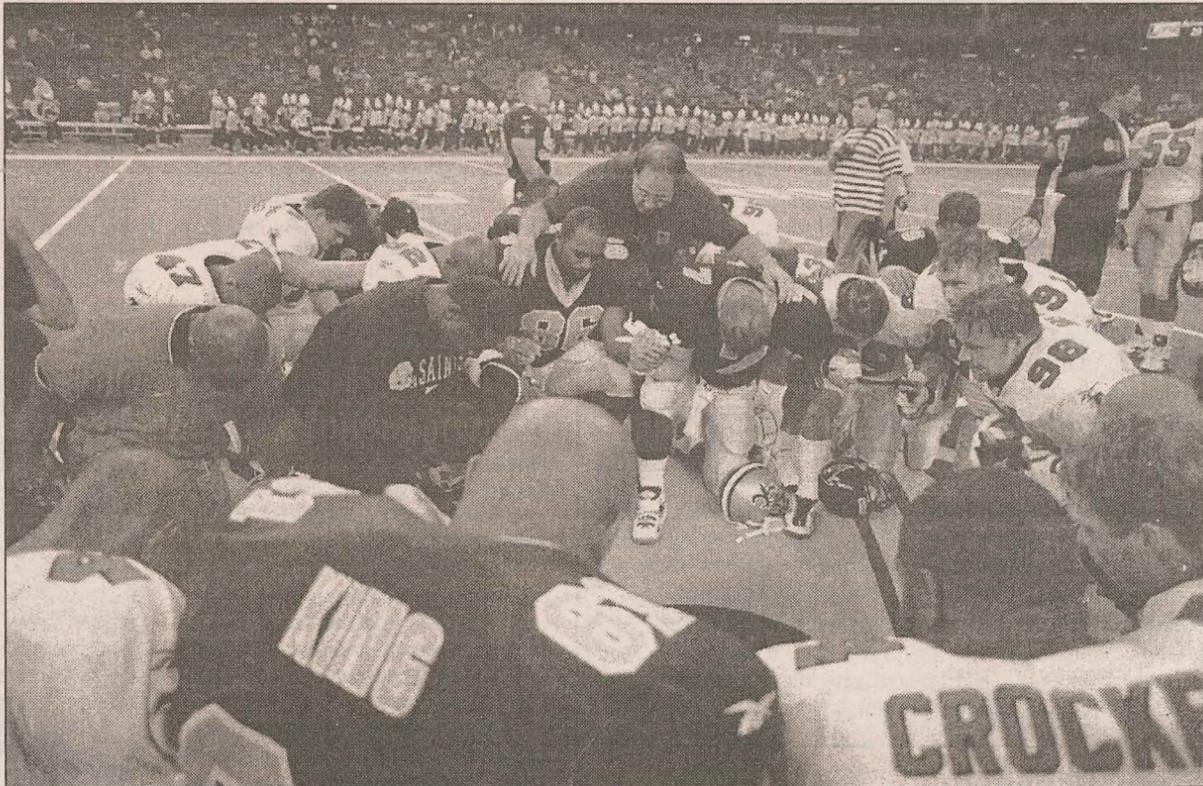
And, most devastating of all, the church learned some groups didn't want to help because they thought the church should disband, Boyd said.

"Members of several churches in our area would talk with me and the members and tell us we should disband and join them," Boyd said. "They suggested we had too much competition (and) did not offer enough programs."

"Someone even said to one of our members, 'I know you people. You're old and you have no money. You can't rebuild that church,'" he added. "What were we going to do?"

For nearly four months the group plowed through the red tape. They secured state and county permits to

□ See *Camper volunteers ...*, page 3



WHEN THE SAINTS GO PRAYING IN Players and coaches from the New Orleans Saints and Atlanta Falcons pray at midfield after the Falcons' victory in the Superdome in October. The after-game prayer has become a tradition in the NFL, but Saints Coach Mike Ditka and his team are in the middle of a spiritual revival. See story on page 11. (RNS photo by Eliot Kamenitz)

Missionaries flee Albania to work in war-ravaged Bosnia

ZIVINICE, Bosnia—You could call them the "frying-pan-to-fire" sort of missionaries.

When Albania slid into nationwide chaos in March, missionaries Gale and Leslie Hartley evacuated with hundreds of other evangelical missionaries, leaving a country that is one of Eastern Europe's poorest yet most responsive to the gospel.

Failed pyramid schemes had left most Albanians broke. The population's fury boiled into massive civil unrest that tilted toward outright civil war; guns appeared in the hands of gangsters and vigilantes.

Tens of thousands of Albanians

fled to Italy or elsewhere, and many evangelical missionaries went back to the United States or to Greece to await the return of peace.

But the Hartleys were among other Southern Baptist missionaries who transferred to Bosnia, itself a seething cauldron of tension kept from boiling over by the presence of NATO troops.

They packed suitcases and boxes of schoolbooks for their three sons, thinking they would be gone maybe

two weeks. Several months later they were still making do with those few clothes, living in a rented house near the city of Tuzla.

Military bases are just a few miles away, and most days that's pretty obvious—tanks, trucks and Humvees rumble past at all hours of the day and night. Heavy machine guns atop each vehicle are manned,

ready for whatever happens in this war-ravaged land. Swarms of attack helicopters bristling with missiles roar

by overhead.

Civilians plopped down into such circumstances might cower behind locked doors. But the Hartleys are of sturdier stock—and faith. They have settled down instead to the task at hand: reaching Bosnia for Christ.

They have been leading Bible studies, visiting in homes and arranging for teams of Southern Baptist volunteers to come and minister. And they've been studying the Serbo-Croatian language.

Most Bosnians have been traumatized by suffering, death and deprivation. Many are refugees. The situation

□ See *Missionaries flee ...*, page 6



■ Week of Prayer for International Missions

Moving? See page 4 (1202)

Texas conservatives go ahead with new convention

By Toby Druin
Texas Baptist Standard

DALLAS (ABP)—Directors of Southern Baptists of Texas, the organization that has pushed for closer alignment of the Baptist General Convention of Texas with the Southern Baptist Convention, voted Nov. 20 instead to establish a new state convention.

Dee Slocum, pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Amarillo and vice president for the organization, said its 30-member board of directors voted unanimously to begin the process of setting up the new organization.

The directors and officers—Executive Director Ronnie Yarber of Mesquite, president Miles Seaborn of Fort Worth and Slocum—will serve as a “transitional team” to give it birth, Slocum said. He said no date has been set for an organizational meeting but that he anticipated it could come as early as spring.

Slocum said he had been appointed spokesperson by Yarber, who declined to answer calls from the Baptist Standard. Seaborn was traveling

in the Philippines.

William Pinson, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said the reasons cited for establishing the new state convention “are not well founded and are not justification for such an act.” He said Texas Baptist leaders have worked to prevent a split and to maintain “togetherness for the sake of the gospel.”

Southern Baptists of Texas was first organized in 1991 as the Conservative Baptist Fellowship of Texas but changed its name two years ago.

Southern Baptists of Texas opposed passage of the report of an efficiency/effectiveness committee at the BGCT meeting in Austin last month because they contended it distanced the BGCT from the SBC, a claim denied by the committee which drafted it and by BGCT leaders.

The special committee’s report affirmed the state convention’s “autonomy” and authorized Texas Baptists to appoint missionaries, offer new options for theological education, publish their own Sunday school literature and create mission partner-

ships with SBC and non-SBC groups, including the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Following approval of the efficiency/effectiveness report, Yarber and Seaborn said the directors of Southern Baptists of Texas were almost unanimous in approving formation of a new state convention. The group conducted a written poll of 400 people attending a rally after the Monday night convention session in Austin.

Slocum said response to the poll was “overwhelmingly” in favor of beginning a new convention.

The purpose of the new body will be “to ensure and maintain a strong SBC presence in Texas,” Slocum said.

“We saw that diminishing. We feel we have seen an erosion of the historic walk with the SBC on the part of elected leadership of the BGCT as far back as the last Amarillo convention” in 1994, he said. “That concerns Southern Baptists across the state.”

News of the decision to start the new convention was released by Baptist Press in a story written by Dave Parker, assistant editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger. The new editor of the Messenger is John Yeats,

who came to Oklahoma from the editorship of the Indiana Baptist and who has been a longtime spokesman for the group now controlling the SBC. Yeats, a former Texas pastor, is now SBC recording secretary.

Slocum was quoted by Parker as saying that an additional factor in the decision to establish a new convention “was outgoing BGCT President Charles Wade’s comments regarding the historical accuracy of Scripture.” Slocum explained: “In an interview with the Austin American-Statesman, Wade said Texas Baptists ‘will support Southern Baptist leaders if they focus on missions and evangelism instead of trying to force all Baptists to believe the Bible is factual and scientifically true.’”

Wade in fact had no interview with the Austin paper. The story carried by the paper was written from a manuscript provided to reporters by Wade. Wade’s manuscript did not include the statement about the Bible being factual and scientifically true. The Austin reporter who wrote the story said the statement about the Bible’s accuracy was not a quote but a paraphrase. □ See *New Convention ...*, page 12

“We feel we have seen an erosion of the historic walk with the SBC on the part of elected leadership of the BGCT.”

Dee Slocum, an organizer of Southern Baptists of Texas, a new state convention

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Hunger giving rises.** Gifts for world hunger through the Southern Baptist International Mission Board have risen more than 23 percent this year over last year, according to Bill Cashion, the IMB’s world hunger consultant. Total world hunger receipts for this year are projected to reach \$7.35 million, up from \$5.9 million last year.

■ **Baptist college offers aid.** Hannibal-LaGrange College, a school affiliated with the Missouri Baptist Convention, has offered full scholarships to the septuplets born Nov. 19 to Kenneth and Bobbi McCaughey of Carlisle, Iowa. The scholarship offer has a current value of nearly \$300,000.

■ **Woman pastor challenged again.** For the fifth year in a row, the seating of messengers from 19th Avenue Baptist Church in San Francisco was challenged at the annual meeting of the California Southern Baptist Convention. This year, the church’s messengers were denied seating because the church has a female pastor. The last three years, such challenges to the church’s voting credentials have been rebuffed. The church last was denied recognition in 1993. Meanwhile, messengers to this year’s annual meeting defeated a proposed constitutional amendment aimed at tightening membership requirements.

Fletcher calls Calvinism ‘recurring fault line’

By Dan Martin
Baptist General Convention of Texas

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)—The question has given rise to the oldest continuing controversy among Baptists, and particularly during the 150-year history of the Southern Baptist Convention, said Jesse Fletcher:

Did Jesus die for everyone or for only a few?

While enormously important to the future of Baptists, the controversy over Calvinism “has been a relatively genteel one, as Baptist battles go, but is not without its passions,” Fletcher, chancellor of Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, told the annual meeting of the Texas Baptist Historical Society Nov. 10.

The issue of Calvinism has existed ever since Baptists began in England, he said, and the “fault line between Calvinism and Arminianism ... periodically resurfaces” as a significant controversy.

Fletcher traced Calvinism from its beginnings in the 1530s in Geneva when Frenchman John Calvin developed an exhaustive and “tightly reasoned” system which he wrote as the “Institutes of the Christian Religion.”

Calvinism has “five high particulars that theological students have memorized for years with the acronym TULIP,” Fletcher explained: “total depravity of man, unconditional election of some to salvation, limited atonement, irresistible grace implied by the foregoing and perseverance of the saints.” He said Calvinism originally included a church-controlled state (theocracy) and infant baptism.

While Calvinism was at first “pervasive among English Puritans and Separatists (Baptists),” English Baptists “soon moved away from Calvinism’s limited atonement to Joseph Arminius’ general atonement concepts,” Fletcher said.

General atonement, he said, holds that Jesus died for all, that grace is free to anyone who will receive it and that people have the right to refuse God’s grace.

Limited atonement holds that Jesus died only for the elect who were chosen in advance by God to be saved.

Calvinism had an impact on early American Baptists, but Fletcher said they “tended toward a modified Calvinism or a general atonement framework.”

The New Hampshire Confession of Faith adopted by Regular Baptists in 1833, he said, reads that the “blessings of salvation are made free to all ... that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth except his own voluntary refusal.”

Southern Baptists, in the course of their 150-year history, “have clearly moved away from Calvinism ... to a free grace, full atonement position that fit their missionary and evangelistic culture,” Fletcher said.

Noting Calvinism has re-emerged as a point of contention among Baptists in recent years, Fletcher said, “When the inerrancy movement broke upon Southern Baptists in the late 1970s and marched resolutely toward dominance in 1990, a number of Calvinists were among its leadership because most Calvinists are inerrantists.”

“Yet, as became evident, very few inerrantists are Calvinists,” Fletcher said. He quoted Larry Lewis, former president of the SBC Home Mission Board, as saying, “Calvinism can be a death blow to missions and evangelism” and former SBC President Bailey Smith saying he does not believe “God elects anybody to be lost.”

Fletcher cited a group of Baptist Calvinists who formed an organization called the Founders Conference to call Southern Baptists back to Calvinism. Leaders of that group include Tom Ascol, Tom Nettles, Al Mohler

and Timothy George, he said.

“Ascol, a Florida pastor, and Nettles, a theological professor, are not well-known names in recent Baptist battles, but Mohler and George are,” Fletcher said, explaining Mohler since has become president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, and George is dean at Beeson School of Divinity at Samford University.

Fletcher said Calvinism “has in fact been the theology of choice for a very limited but elite few who, in turn, find and faithfully disciple other like-minded young theologians.”

However, Fletcher added, that may have changed with Mohler’s ascension as president of Southern, his bringing in of Calvinists to the faculty, including Nettles, and “his call for a return to Reform theology.”

In recent days, two other theologians, W.R. Estep of Southwestern Seminary and Fisher Humphreys of Beeson, have “joined the fray,” Fletcher said.

He quoted Humphreys as saying that the “purpose of the SBC—missions and evangelism—is in direct opposition to the Calvinist doctrines of unconditional predestination.”

In contrast, Fletcher quoted Mohler as predicting that as “Southern Baptists seek to recover our theological inheritance and the essence of biblical Christianity, I believe we will see a return to a more Calvinistic understanding of the gospel and a recognition of the absolute sovereignty of God.”

He added Mohler said the move toward Calvinism would “lead to a blazing recovery of missionary zeal and evangelistic fervor—and the renewal of the church.”

Fletcher, as an unwritten aside, told participants he was “resisting the impulse to say if it did, it would be a historical first.”



“I told you we were using the wrong kind of oil. We should be using 10-W-40!”

Camper volunteers help raise roof & hearts in Maceo

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

Continued from page 1

demolish the building, to rebuild in a flood plain, to install a septic system, to unhook and reconnect the electricity, to rebuild.

At each step, "God intervened" to speed up the time usually needed to secure the permits, Boyd said.

Still, the future of the church was uncertain.

"We needed an 8-foot foundation (above the flood plain) and could not afford it and could not find enough volunteer labor to do foundation work," Boyd said. How could they even consider building?

Then, a breakthrough came.

Boyd and his wife, Brenda, attended a July retreat for pastors and wives whose churches were affected by the '97 flood. The retreat focused on helping participants deal with stress they had experienced and ways to cope.

It was there that they learned about Campers on Mission from Larry Martin, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention missions and evangelism division. The retreat was co-sponsored by the KBC minister/church support division and the missions and evangelism division. Martin offered to contact Guy King, coordinator for Kentucky Campers on Mission, to see what could be done.

The group normally works in Kentucky only in the spring and summer, but when King heard about Dawson Memorial's plight, he said he knew they couldn't say no. The group especially likes to help small, rural, struggling churches, he said.

And although the group had never built a structure from the ground up, within a few days, King had rallied his troops to tackle the project.



NEW VISTAS Wes Simpson (left) of Mount Vernon, Ind., measures a window opening as Walter Keecker, also of Mount Vernon, waits for assistance while working on Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Maceo. The men, both members of Campers on Mission, were helping to build a new structure after the church's former building was damaged after spring floods. (Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer photograph by Robert Bruck)

In September, the congregation gathered one last time to watch as a bulldozer flattened the old structure.

On Oct. 6, the 8-foot-tall foundation was poured. On Oct. 13, the first Campers on Mission crew arrived to begin work on the 28 foot-by-64 foot building.

For the next six weeks, volunteers came and went as the building took shape. Some worked one or two days; others the entire time. And the miracles continued, workers said.

"If we had lots of work to do, a lot of (volunteers) showed up; if we had little to do, a few people showed up," said Camper on Mission Carl Muffet of Owensboro.

"Many times people showed up

out of the clear blue just when we needed them," said on-site coordinator Odrey Embry of Utica.

Added Muffet: "On a daily basis, we saw what God can do."

When the large beams arrived, workers thought they needed to rent equipment to install them. But a farmer stopped and offered a tractor with a forklift to put the beams in place.

Another evening, a retired Indiana pastor and electrician came by to say he wanted to furnish and install all the electrical material.

It was necessary to hire a crane to lift the trusses in place. The work was supposed to cost more than \$250, but when the operator completed the job, he asked for only \$100, King said.

One day, "God intervened twice, at just the right moments," said David Fuqua of Owensboro.

Five men were trying to set trusses by hand for the front porch when they realized they were "in trouble, with not enough help," Fuqua said.

A pickup truck went by, turned

around and came back. "Four men jumped out and came up and helped us just in time," Fuqua said.

Later that same day, the crew was putting sheeting on the roof and found themselves a man short.

A car drove up, a man got out and asked if he could help. Turned out, he could do roof work.

"The man ran up the ladder and around on the roof like a squirrel," Fuqua said. He stayed until the job was finished.

Materials and money also continued to come in at the very time they were needed.

A woman stopped by the pastor's home to say she had purchased a new refrigerator for the church. A cabinet maker donated cherry cabinets for the church kitchen. A Sunday school class gave a communion table.

Ebenezer Baptist Church in Drakesboro gave \$5,000, pews, a pulpit and chairs. A group from Eastside Baptist Church in Henderson hosted a fish fry netting \$4,001.

With \$15,000 from insurance, \$4,000 from the Kentucky Baptist Convention, \$2,000 from the Southern Baptist Annuity Board and \$1,400 from several Virginia churches, the congregation expects to enter the building debt-free, Boyd said. For a church whose average monthly income is \$500-\$600, that too is a miracle, he added.

These months have brought lessons about God's provision, Boyd said. He remembers the day he was feeling especially low after the old building had been demolished.

"Brenda, the building is gone," Boyd recalled telling his wife. "I led these people to build a new one and I think I have gone as far as I can go."

"Stephen, God gave the Israelites only enough manna for one day," Mrs. Boyd replied. "That is what he is going to do (for us)."

When the new building is dedicated Dec. 14, it will be a witness to the God who provides, she said.

■ **Jerry Rankin**, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board, will visit two Kentucky churches Sunday, Dec. 7. Rankin will speak at Crestwood Baptist Church in Frankfort at 8:30 a.m. and 10:55 a.m. Woman's Missionary Union of Franklin Baptist Association will host a reception in Rankin's honor at Crestwood that afternoon from 2-3:30 p.m. Rankin also will speak at 6 p.m. at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

■ **The Louisville-area** Friendship International House, a ministry of Long Run Baptist Association to international students during the Christmas holidays, needs host families for 14 students who will be in Louisville from Dec. 20-Jan. 3. The association will provide activities for the students each day. For more information, contact Pat Reeves at (502) 636-3136.

■ **Clarification:** An advertisement on the back page of the Nov. 18 Recorder should have stated that Georgetown College's new learning center will be 55,000 square feet.

At least 2 Kentucky charities collect pull-tabs for recycling fund-raising

LEXINGTON—At least two charities in Kentucky collect pull-tabs for fund raising efforts, although an aluminum company spokeswoman said they could get more money if they collected the entire can.

This fall, the Western Recorder printed a Baptist Press story stating no charitable causes were conducting tab collection drives.

Actually, the University of Kentucky Children's Hospital and Ronald McDonald House of Louisville solicit the collection of pull-tabs from the top of aluminum soft drink cans.

In two years, the children's hospital has received nearly \$9,000 from recycled tabs, said Ame Sweetall, director of fund development. "It really is a good program."

The Ronald McDonald House effort began in 1987 in Minneapolis and has grown, according to promotional material.

Both groups tout their programs as a convenient way to raise funds for their causes.

But more money could be made by saving the whole can, said Sara Hunt, a spokeswoman for Reynolds Aluminum Recycling Co.

"There's absolutely no intrinsic value to the tab," she said. "It's all recyclable and you get more money if you do the whole thing."

But Sweetall said saving the whole can is messier and more complicated for the collector. "I just don't think people will get as involved and take the time to do that."

It takes 933 pull-tabs to make a pound of aluminum, according to Ronald McDonald House, or the equivalent of 30 whole cans, Hunt said. "You maybe have to find a bigger storage place (for cans) than you would for a tab, but in the long run ... you're going to get more money."

Both Sweetall and Hunt said there are misunderstandings that the tabs can be redeemed for kidney dialysis.

"No one knows where the hoax got started," Hunt said.

Added Sweetall: "Those rumors are out there and we're constantly trying to clear that up but remind people that there is this tab collection program."

Reynolds will donate proceeds from aluminum donated at its centers directly to the National Kidney Foundation's local chapters.



NEW BSU BUILDING Baptists at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights dedicated their new 7,500-square-foot building last month. The new building has a large classroom, a meeting room and prayer room, said Baptist Campus Minister Bill Ellis. Its location is more convenient to students, he added, and the center already has benefited from the increased visibility. "From the very first day we were open, we were getting a lot of foot traffic that we weren't already getting," he said. "We're seeing a lot more usage, and now we're busy retooling what we have done in the past so we can better meet the needs of the students who are coming in." (Photo by Calvin Wilkins)

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

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Restore family faith, not school prayer

By Gene Owens

When school days opened with the Lord's Prayer, "Jesus Loves Me" and a reading from "The Upper Room," kids nevertheless cheated on exams, smoked in the bathrooms, cussed on school grounds and made out at driveways. Girls even got pregnant—not as often as they do today, but it happened.

Knowing the kids of my generation, I'd say prayer in the schools had little to do with any of that. We had just as much native meanness as today's kids; we just lacked the know-how, the wherewithal and the opportunity.

Those limitations stemmed from the home and community more than from school. We didn't learn our religion at school and take it home with us; we learned it at home and took it to school with us.

A lot of things have affected our morals since the placid 1950s, and they had nothing to do with prayer—or its absence—in the school.

The big change has been the destruction of the community and the family as we knew them. The community was our extended family, our mentor, our disciplinarian and our chaperone. When we stepped into our communities, we were among people

who knew us and our parents. If we misbehaved, somebody was watching. The community insulated us from the evil ways of the Philistines.

When the community died, the insulation was peeled away, the watchful eye went blind and we did what kids are wont to do when nobody is watching.

Death came not from prayer deprivation but from fierce forces from within and without. A few of the villains:

■ *The interstate highway.* This benign invention of the Eisenhower administration decentralized the city, moving people from neighborhood streets to subdivisions and commerce from downtowns to shopping malls. It dispersed workers and job centers. In the old community, your next-door neighbor was likely to be the person you parked next to at work and sat next to at worship. Now neighbors scatter in all directions at 8 a.m. and come home at 5:30 or 6 p.m., ready to relax in front of the tube in isolated enclaves. We may know people on the Internet better than we know those next door.

■ *The multi-car family.* No longer tied to Daddy's keychain, teen-agers could take their own wheels wherever they pleased, following those interstates to fun and mischief.

■ *Rising affluence.* Young people with money and credit cards no longer had to stay home and play spin-the-bottle. Beer? Drugs? They could afford them.

■ *Multi-breadwinner families.* To sustain these lifestyles, both parents had to work, which meant less supervision for these affluent, mobile young people.

■ *Birth control.* Reliable birth control removed the practical reasons for abstinence or fidelity, at least in hedonistic eyes. The media portrayed casual sex as normal and routine. As sex outside

marriage became commonplace, parenthood outside marriage became more acceptable.

■ *White flight.* Fleeing desegregation, affluent whites flocked to suburbs while impoverished blacks gravitated to inner cities. There they created a ready market for drugs and a fertile recruiting area for crime. Court-ordered busing destroyed the school as an anchor for the community.

You can add to the list from your own experience.

I wonder what would happen if parents across the land banded together and decided that:

■ Kids can't have that car of their own until they're out of high school. When they take the family car out, they must stay in touch by pager or

cell phone. Socializing will be in chaperoned groups, and not in solitary pairs.

■ Television viewing will be limited to two hours a night, and one of those hours must be spent watching programming the whole family can enjoy. The other hour must be spent watching programs the parents have screened for violence or immorality. Access to the Internet will be similarly limited.

■ Family meals will be taken together and preceded by a prayer of thanks according to the religious beliefs of the parents.

■ On days of worship, spiritual activities will take precedence over sports or other entertainment events.

If parents would take charge in these areas, they wouldn't have to rely on some schoolteacher of uncertain biblical literacy to lead kids in some perfunctory generic prayer that may or may not conform to their own concepts of the way to approach the Creator.

Of course, it would be easier to persuade the Supreme Court to overturn its school-prayer decisions or, failing that, to thumb noses at the Court. It wouldn't return the nation to morality, but a lot of folks would have to find something else to rail about. (RNS)

Gene Owens is political editor of the Mobile (Ala.) Register.

COMMENTARY

While you're praying ...

More than 80 missionaries with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board have connections to Kentucky. They are the focus of this week's Week of Prayer for International Missions. The names listed here were provided by the IMB. Only native Kentuckians are included, so missionary spouses who claim another state as home may not be listed.

■ Ronnie and Freida Adams, of Cunningham, who produce Christian literature in El Paso, Texas.

■ Buddy Albright, of Pineville, an evangelist in Mexico.

■ Howard and Elizabeth Atkinson, of Paducah and Corbin, evangelism in Colombia.

■ Tom and Phyllis Baker of Louisville and Irvington, business management in Spain.

■ Dale and Ann Beighle, of Falmouth and Elkhorn City, veterinary medicine in Southern Africa.

■ Bobby and Oakie Blevins, of Louisville, religious education consultant in Namibia.

■ David and Cathy Brandon, of Greenville and Glendale, agriculture in Kenya.

■ Bonnie Brown, of Lewisport, secretarial support in Nigeria.

■ John and Vivian Conrad, of Louisville and Falmouth, music evangelism in Korea.

■ Sonya Coppedge, of Owenton, evangelism in Uruguay.

■ Ken and Tammy Cummins, of Princeton and Morganfield, evangelism in Honduras.

■ Bill and Lucy Pat Curl, of Georgetown and Louisville, evangelism in the United Kingdom.

■ Diane Davidson, of Louisville, evangelism in Nigeria.

■ Jeff Deasy, of Franklin, seminary instructor in Brazil.

■ Janet Dillard, of Owensboro, secondary education in Kenya.

■ Charles and Carolyn Dixon, of Mortons Gap and White Plains, evangelism in Tanzania.

■ Wanda Dobbins, of Bowling Green, social ministry in Chile.

■ Margaret Drummond, of Louisville, Spain.

■ Bill and Linda Egbert, of Madisonville and Scottsville, evangelism in Costa Rica.

■ Gene Elder, of Shepherdsville, education in Southern Africa.

■ John and Debbie Enos, of Fort Thomas and Louisville, evangelism and community ministry, The Gambia.

■ Mary Jo French, of Warsaw, theological education, Peru.

■ Carl Gallion, of Jenkins, language work, Western Republics.

■ David Graham, of Bowling Green, dentistry, Windward Islands.

■ Wayne and Rebecca Gullion, of Glencoe, evangelism, Niger Republic.

■ Mark and Susan Hatfield, of Ashland, human needs ministry and financial administration, Angola.

■ Carrie Hedrick, of Maysville, Nigeria.

■ Jennifer Hoglen, of Louisville, France.

■ David and Linda Jackson, of Louisville, community ministry, Senegal.

■ Susan Jett, of Williamsburg, Germany.

■ Robert Johnson, of Russellville, church starting, Singapore.

■ Lauretta King, of Louisville, South Brazil.

■ Carolyn Kirk, of Bowling Green, music evangelism, South Brazil.

■ Martha Lytle, of Louisville, Russia.

■ Jean Morgan, of Irvine, Southeast Asia.

■ Robert Morgan Jr., of Smithfield, general evangelism, Southeast Asia.

■ James and Jenny Musen, of La Grange and Smiths Grove, volunteer coordination, Kenya.

■ Wayne and Barbara Myers, of Lexington and Shelbyville, general evangelism, Swaziland.

■ Takahiro and Lana Oue, of Elizabethtown, general evangelism, Japan.

■ James and Jane Park, of Paducah, theological education, Liberia.

■ Clayton and Charolette Rock, of Hodgenville and Barbourville, mission administration, Argentina.

■ Edwina Rowell, of Guston, Burkina Faso.

■ Susan Smith, of Russellville, medical, Tanzania.

■ James and Karen Stanhope, of Winchester, general evangelism, Dominican Republic.

■ Sheila Stone, of Louisville, Southeast Asia.

■ Wilbur Stone, of Louisville, church starting, Southeast Asia.

■ Becky Stonecypher, of Somerset, secondary education, Nigeria.

■ Eldon and Jo Ann Sturgeon, of Milton and Sonora, general evangelism, Mexico.

■ Van and Mary Thompson, of Owensboro and Owingsville, theological education, Malawi.

■ Larry and Peggy Wakefield, of Muldraugh and Hodgenville, religious education, Mexico.

■ Cornelia Walker, of Bowling Green, Japan.

■ Cecilia Wallace, of Paducah, Spain.

■ Jeff Wasserman, of Louisville, seminary instruction, Singapore.

■ Sally Womble, of Hopkinsville, Niger Republic.

■ Karen Wright, of Louisville, church/associational development, Chile.

■ Norma Young, of Louisville, Japan.

Hymns Baptists sing

By William Reynolds

Isaac Watts' "Joy to the World," written in 1719, is an extraordinary Christmas carol. First, it is the second part of Watts' "imitation" of Psalm 98: 4-9.

While the first stanza announces "The Lord is come," it is the only stanza that relates to the birth of Jesus. The other stanzas could easily be appropriate for any season of the year.

There is no mention of the things we normally expect to find in Christmas carols—no Mary, no Joseph, no shepherds, no manger, no wise men—yet who would deny this song a choice place among the carols of Christmas?

The exuberant joy that permeates the psalm as it lauds the God of the Old Testament is present in fullest measure in the carol, but in praise of Jesus Christ.

For more than 120 years, the hymn was sung to numerous common meter tunes. Then in 1839 Lowell Mason, a New England musician, published in Boston a tune for these words. He said it was "from Handel," for he borrowed two musical phrases from Handel's "Messiah" ("Lift Up Your Heads" and "Comfort Ye") and wove them into a joyful song for Christmas.

Mason named the tune Antioch, for the ancient Syrian city, the point of departure for Paul's first two missionary journeys, and where the disciples were first called Christians.

William J. Reynolds
Southwestern Baptist Theological
Seminary

HE SAID/SHE SAID

Giving kids candles at church increases parents' prayers

HESAIID



Mark Wingfield

Well, it must be Christmastime; they've let the kindergartners have candles at church again.

Raising children is exhausting; sending your babies off to school is tough; but letting them hold lit candles at church is downright scary.

After decorating our own Christmas tree Sunday afternoon, all four of us set out for church for the annual Hanging of the Greens service. Our 5-year-olds enjoyed the beautiful music, loved

helping the other kids carry the poinsettias to the altar and were happy to carry a twig of greenery to place beside the creche. However, the highlight of the whole service for them was not the hanging of anything green but instead the lighting of those little white candles while we all sang "Silent Night" and processed out of the sanctuary.

Luke held his unlit candle almost the whole service in anticipation.

Sitting in the pew, the worst a child with a candle could do is light the hair of the person sitting in the adjacent pew. But make that flame-bearing child mobile and things get really scary.

I noticed everyone else gave our family wide berth on the journey from the pews to the foyer. And as we all squeezed around the Chrismon Tree to hear the pastor's final words, you could have ridden a donkey between our boys holding forth their lights and the next nearest person. Probably a good thing. I kept my distance too.

SHESAID



Alison Wingfield

I've always loved candles at Christmastime. Every Christmas, Mother and I would sit together in the living room with the Christmas tree lights on and several candles lit. Now that the boys are a little older, I'm looking forward to lighting a few more candles (up high) than I have in recent years.

Add Christmas tree lights to candlelight and something magical happens.

Our artificial Christmas tree (thanks to Mark's allergies) has seen better days. Every time we bring it out I think there is no way we can make this tree look good. But something happens when the lights (Mark's job), tinsel and ornaments go on. We have our very own Charlie Brown Christmas tree transformation. I get a lump in my throat when I first look at it all lit up.

Candlelight services affect me emotionally also. It might not show on the outside, but I was probably as antsy as the boys to light my candle when the time came last Sunday night. And I cried as usual while trying to sing "Silent Night" by candlelight.

But candlelight services can be tricky things. A few years ago, when the boys were just 2 and half years old, Mark and I were singing in the choir during our Christmas Eve service and the boys were sitting with Mark's parents. They did quite well through most of the service. Then came the candlelight portion.

When all the lights went out, I heard, and everyone else in the congregation heard, one of my children say, "It's DARK! Turn on the lights!" Unfortunately, the candle lighting did not go fast enough for them not to be scared, so they had to leave the sanctuary before the light could reach them.

How often do we turn away from God's presence, not allowing the promised light that dispels the darkness to reach us? And how often do we forget to pass on our own light to someone else living in the darkness?

How do you solve a problem like Maria?

For the next three weeks, most Americans and millions of people around the world will be caught up in the Christmas spirit. Beneath the shopping and parties and family gatherings, the story of Christ's birth in a humble manger will be told and retold and told again.

The central character in the story is Jesus, fully human and fully divine, destined to die on a cross to pay for the sins of all humanity. The supporting cast includes Mary and Joseph, some shepherds, angels and an innkeeper who has no room on that holy night.

But this year, beneath the strains of "O Come Let Us Adore Him" and "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come," there's a movement afoot to alter the focus of that Bethlehem scene. Millions of Roman Catholics are appealing to Pope John Paul II to elevate the status of Mary in this picture, to declare her "co-redemptrix" and "co-mediator" with Christ.

To even the most ecumenically minded Protestant, such a claim is outright heresy. And a number of Roman Catholic theologians also find fault with elevating Mary to such a position.

Protestants already have difficulty accepting the Catholic Church's teachings on Mary and the devotion many Catholics express toward Mary as the mother of Christ. The Catholic assertion that Mary was without sin, that she lived in a state of perpetual virginity and that she did not experience death but was transported directly to heaven have absolutely no biblical basis. Read the Bible from cover to cover in whatever language you choose and you'll find not even a single word to support such doctrines. Nor is there historical evidence to support such claims.

We can agree that Mary was blessed by God, that she was faithful to God, that she was chosen by God to play a vitally important role in history. But beyond that, there is no evidence to support any of the Catholic Church's unique doctrines on Mary.

The Catholic practice of praying to Mary raises even more concern among Protestants, who rightly point out that the Bible teaches us to pray to God in Jesus' name. Nowhere are we taught to pray to God through Mary or any other saint.

Given the unbiblical groundwork the Catholic

Church already has laid regarding Mary, we should not be surprised that more than 4 million parishioners have appealed to the Pope to go yet one step further, to declare Mary "co-redemptrix" with Christ.

While ecumenical relations between Catholics and Protestants have survived despite disagreements about the person and work of Mary, if the Pope takes the Catholic Church one step further, such cooperation will be seriously jeopardized. The effect on Protestant-Catholic relations will be disastrous.

To Baptists, and for that matter to all Protestants who appeal to the Bible as our source of revelation about God, declaring that Mary participates in the redemptive work of Christ and is a "co-mediator" crosses a line no amount of forbearance can cover up.

That doesn't mean all Catholics are headed straight for hell, a pseudo-Baptist doctrine that's as misguided as Catholic teaching on Mary. Just because the Pope says it doesn't mean every Catholic believes it. What it could mean, however, is that the official teaching of the Catholic Church will lead millions of Catholics to put their faith in someone who has no power to save.

If salvation is not found in Christ alone, we have no gospel. This goes to the heart of the Christian message recorded in the Bible: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

While it is appropriate to have respect for Mary and to thank God that she was willing to be, in her own words, the "handmaid" of the Lord, she is not worthy of our devotion. Such misplaced devotion is idolatry.

Mary was the human vehicle God used to deliver his greatest gift to us. We worship the king, not the servant who brings the king.

This Christmas, as you look at a nativity scene or watch a Christmas play, be reminded that the focal character, the essential character, is Jesus.

Rather than praying to Mary, may we pray to be more like her in our shared humanness—willing to be the handmaids of the Lord, unworthy and humble servants of the newborn King.

— Mark Wingfield

The Virgin Birth

By Carey Newman

First in a three-part series

The virgin birth of Jesus (more accurately, the virginal conception) has always been a point of doubt and contention. From the second century until now Christians have faced an uphill battle: should we believe these Gospel accounts of a virginal conception and what is really at stake if we do?

Christianity's earliest critics lodged the claim that Jesus was illegitimate. He was really the son of a Roman soldier, they said. Despite its complete lack of historical footing in the ancient sources, this charge is still repeated.

Others say the birth narratives were borrowed from pagan sources, that Christians made them up in order to make Jesus comparable to other Greco-Roman gods. However, in pagan literature, a god disguises himself as a man and seduces a woman in order to have a son. There is not even the slightest hint of trickery or seduction in the Gospels.

There are simply no convincing parallels to the Gospel accounts.

The strongest argument for authenticity is that it is hard to think of reasons why Matthew and Luke would have created such accounts if they were not true.

One can think of many reasons why, if the stories were true, later Christians might tone them down or excise them altogether.

Christians were getting quite a bit of heat from Jewish and pagan opponents, and it would have been far easier to do battle if the Gospels were not so blunt in their statements about the conception of Jesus.

However, it is extremely difficult to think of reasons why, if the stories were false, Matthew and Luke would introduce them into the tradition. What Matthew and Luke soberly affirm is that Joseph is not the father of the child. They both indicate that Joseph and Mary did not have sexual relations until after the birth.

But Matthew and Luke go much further: They both describe how Jesus' birth is the direct result of God's creative act inside of Mary. In short, this rendering is too improbable, too miraculous not to be true.

What is at stake? Much. Many Chris-

tians simply read the birth narratives as nice stories, and that's all, just stories. However, the virginal conception is integrally linked with many of Christianity's most important and distinguishing doctrines:

(1) When we affirm the virginal conception of Jesus we are saying he is God's Son through the activity of the Holy Spirit. By doing so, we are laying the foundation for affirming the trinity—Father, Son and Spirit.

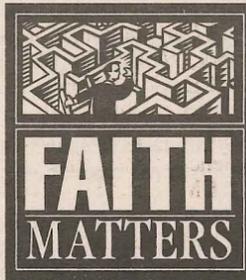
(2) When we affirm the virginal conception of Jesus we are saying that Jesus is unique, different from all other humans who have ever lived. This leads directly to the great confession, "fully human, fully divine."

(3) Jesus' uniqueness is tied to his sinlessness and thus impacts the sacrificial interpretation of his death.

(4) When we say that Jesus was virginally conceived we are opening the door to the notion of pre-existence (that Jesus was with God before the creation of the world).

Far from being a doctrinal ornamentation, the virginal conception of Jesus stands close to the nuclear epicenter of Christian belief.

Indeed, it would not be inaccurate to say if Matthew and Luke got it wrong, then the narratives they construct collapse and their picture of Jesus is imperiled.



MISSIONS

Linda Pegram brings help and hope to people in Asia

**Week of Prayer
for International
Missions
Nov. 30 to Dec. 7**

**Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering
National Goal:
\$100 million**

KINUSKUSAN, Philippines—Evelyn had reached the end of her frayed hope.

Trapped in poverty and married to a mentally ill man who repeatedly attempted suicide, the young woman lived in a shanty in a tribal village in the Philippines. Rejected by her community and her own family because of her husband's condition, she lost interest in life.

She stopped eating—or taking proper care of her 1-year-old daughter, Angela. Soon Evelyn was anemic, and her child began suffering from severe malnutrition and the scabies that covered her body. No one seemed to care.

No one cared, that is, except Elsa Calibay, a health worker from the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center. She visited Evelyn again and again, winning her trust. She brought medicine, taught Evelyn simple health and hygiene lessons and convinced her to plant a FAITH (Food Always In The

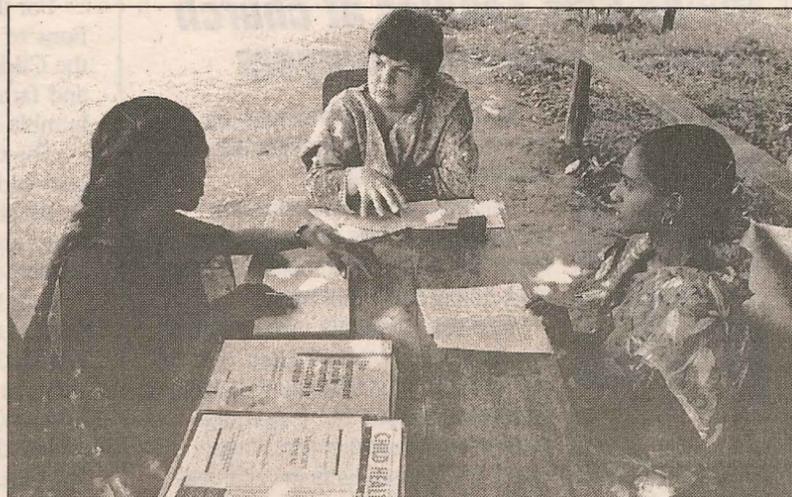
Home) garden, a basic vegetable garden designed by Rural Life Center workers to promote family nutrition.

Mother and child regained health and hope. Meanwhile, God healed Evelyn's husband's mind. The couple gave their lives to Jesus Christ. And they learned how to grow in their new way of life—and share it—through a Rural Life Center training program called TEACH (Tribal Evangelism, Agriculture, Church planting and Health care).

Such stories of redemption make Southern Baptist missionary Linda Pegram's day. There are millions of "Evelyns" in Asia tormented by poverty, ignorance and spiritual lostness, and she would love to help reach them all.

Pegram has spent most of 20 years with the International Mission Board helping heal bodies and souls in Asia. She worked for two years as a missionary journeyman in Vietnam while war still raged there. Later, she aided

**HELP!
THEIR CRY
OUR CALL**



TRAINING WORKERS Linda Pegram trains health care workers Lebi Nayak (left) and Charusila Naik during a morning session at the Rural Life Center in Kondhamal district of India's Orissa state. (IMB photo by Don Rutledge)



OPEN HEARTS Southern Baptist missionary Linda Pegram and workers Lebi Nayak (left) and Charusila Naik (both center right) from the Rural Life Center in Kondhamal district of India's Orissa state talk with residents of Kurmingia village about health care issues. (IMB Photo by Don Rutledge)

Southeast Asian war refugees in Thailand and the United States, and in 1980 she was appointed a career missionary to minister to refugees in Hong Kong and the Philippines.

When refugee work wound down in the late '80s, Pegram transferred to Pakistan to promote health ministries there. In 1995, she returned to the Philippines to work with the Rural Life Center, founded by IMB missionary Harold Watson to aid and evangelize the poorest of Mindanao's rural poor.

Pegram, an expert in public health, heads up the health education work of the Rural Life Center's international arm, the Asian Rural Life Development Foundation. The job takes her and her co-workers into some of the poorest, most isolated—and most restricted—areas of the continent.

"We can have a far greater impact if we can help people all across Asia learn how to deal at the household level with just the simplest things," she says. "Knowing when a child needs medication for what may be turning into pneumonia, things like that. To

teach health care, to help a community get clean water, is a great opportunity to relate to people and help them understand that being a Christian is not a religion or a set of traditions only. It's an exciting kind of life and a relationship."

Wherever they go, they listen before speaking. They hear people who aren't used to being heard, respect people who aren't used to being respected, build up families that have only experienced being worn down by hunger and poverty. That opens a lot of doors. Pegram explains.

"We hope that every time we meet somebody's needs, every encounter we have, we'll raise three questions (in people's minds): 'Why are you doing this? What's the God like that calls you to do this?' And, 'How can I know more about that God?'"

This strategy has resulted in hundreds of new churches in the Philippines through the work of the Rural Life Center. Pegram hopes it will have the same impact in places still untouched by the gospel.

Missionaries flee Albania to work in war-ravaged Bosnia

Continued from page 1

of the Hartleys—refugees of sorts themselves—has not gone unnoticed. "You understand our situation. You're refugees too," one Bosnian woman told them.

International Mission Board workers ministered throughout the former Yugoslavia during five years of war and spent almost \$3 million on humanitarian aid, channeling funds through local Baptists whose aid organizations kept thousands of people alive. Croatian Baptists began holding evangelistic crusades in Tuzla, following up on contacts made as they delivered food and supplies during the

war. Scores of people responded to the gospel.

Soon after a measure of peace settled over the region, the IMB sent six missionary couples into Bosnia to witness and make contacts with people. Two of these couples had served in the Tuzla area: Wayne and Florence Frederick transferred temporarily from France and Jim and Jean Leeper transferred temporarily from Germany.

Gale Hartley pulls out a tattered, well-marked list of hundreds of people these two couples had contacted and began drawing into Bible studies. Hartley spends many of his days trudging up and down the steps of high-rise apartment buildings to talk, witness and lead Bible studies, mostly based on the groundbreaking work of his missionary colleagues.

He says Bosnians are still haunted by the war. Many are walking wounded, with horrible memories bottled up inside. Most are nonpracticing Muslims living without faith.

Bosnians don't respond as quickly to the gospel as Albanians. "When you begin talking to somebody, they first



TIME OUT Family time helps the Gale Hartley family relieve the stresses of evacuating Albania's civil war and refocusing their ministry in war-ravaged Bosnia. (IMB photo by Mike Creswell)

want to know which side you're on. Nobody trusts anybody. Trust is one of the war's casualties," Hartley says.

But he can point to a growing group of believers who have put their remaining trust in Christ.

Bozo Zuric, a coal miner, leads one local group. "We have just eight bap-

tized believers and they want to begin a church," Hartley said. "The government told us we had to have 30 members before we could register. So Bozo says, 'That's great! We just need to find 22 others!'"

"So that's what we're doing," Hartley said.

LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Gale and Leslie Hartley talk with their language teacher, Vojislava Vasiljevic. (IMB photo by Mike Creswell)



Clinton asks clergy to work toward racial harmony

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Within 50 years, no single race will comprise a majority in the United States, President Bill Clinton reminded approximately 120 religious leaders at a White House breakfast Nov. 20.

Such diversity will test the nation's ideals, Clinton told the religious leaders. "The scholars have said for 200 years that America was not about race or a place, it was about an idea," he said. "We're about to find out. And we had best be ready."

The religious leaders represented Christian, Jewish, Islamic and other faiths. During a nearly two-hour private meeting with Clinton, they discussed racial initiatives and other issues. Neither Clinton nor religious leaders brought up controversial topics including affirmative action and abortion, participants reported.

Clinton holds one or two ecumenical breakfasts a year. The last was in January.

During a portion of the meeting open to the press, Clinton said he wanted to discuss race with religious leaders because the administration has

an obligation to think about issues which will affect the next generation. "I think it is a sign of strength if a society can examine its problems before they become a festering sore that people who are otherwise uninvolved have to face," he said.

Clinton said the country "started with a Constitution that we couldn't live up to—just like none of us live up perfectly to the holy Scriptures that we profess to believe in."

He explained: "After all, we said all men are created equal, but you can't vote unless you're a white male landowner. I mean that's where we started. We're a long way from that today."

The growing racial diversity in the country is leading to more diversity in America's religious landscape as well, Clinton said.

"We know what we're going to look like—the demographics can tell us that. But they can't tell us what we're going to be like. That's a decision we have to make," the president said.

"And I am persuaded that we will be an infinitely better, stronger nation

if that decision is informed by, driven by, embraced by and advanced by people of faith in our country."

Clinton thanked the religious leaders for working together for enactment of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 and education guidelines to clarify what religious expression is allowed under current law by public-school officials and students.

The 1993 law bolstering protections for religious practice was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Clinton noted that he issued an executive order instructing federal officials to apply the principles of that law to protect the religious practices of federal employees.

Clinton also applauded the religious community for its work on the issue of global religious persecution.

He said religious groups provide important services for families and children in transition from welfare to work and applauded the religious leaders' involvement in his welfare-to-work initiatives.

This gathering was more racially diverse than previous meetings, according to James Dunn, executive di-

rector of the Baptist Joint Committee, who has attended all five breakfasts for religious leaders.

Some other participants at the White House meeting included: Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of the Southern Baptist Women's Missionary Union; Tony Campolo, professor of sociology at Eastern College in St. Davids, Pa.; T.B. Boyd III, publisher of the National Baptist Union Review; Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ; Brian Harbour, pastor of First Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas; Wintley Phipps, congressional liaison for the Seventh-day Adventist Church; Wallace Charles Smith, pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington D.C.; and Progressive National Baptist Convention leaders Tyrone Pitts and Bennett Smith.

For the first time, the head of the predominantly homosexual Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, Troy Perry, was among the guests at the breakfast.

With additional reporting by Religion News Service

"The scholars have said for 200 years that America was not about race or a place, it was about an idea. We're about to find out. And we had best be ready."

President Bill Clinton

Moon's empire grows while church shrinks

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Membership in Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church continues to decline, even as his multibillion-dollar religious empire continues to grow, the Washington Post reported in a series of in-depth articles on the controversial movement.

In the Washington, D.C., area alone, the newspaper said, Moon's church controls more than \$300 million in commercial, political and cultural enterprises.

Among the holdings is the Washington Times, the liberal Post's conservative newspaper competition for local circulation.

The Post stories coincided with the week-long "World Culture and Sports Festival III." That was scheduled to culminate Nov. 29 with a "blessing" ceremony at Washington's R.F.K. Stadium at which Moon would bless as many as 30,000 couples renewing their marriage vows or being married at that time.

The couples need not be Unification Church members, and Moon's organization said members of all faiths were among the blessed. Marriage and family play a central role in Unification Church theology.

Moon claims Jesus failed as a messiah because he did not establish a family.

Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam, was scheduled to speak at the stadium, and singer Whitney Houston was slated to perform. Couples were asked to pay \$70 to attend the event, but the Post reported that the church would accept as little as \$10 in order to fill the stadium.

Other festival events include academic conferences and cultural and sporting events designed to promote "world peace through ideal families."

The Unification Church claims about 50,000 members in the United States, but the Post, citing unnamed current and former members, said "the actual figure is closer to 3,000 nation-

wide."

"They are in steep decline," said Marvin Borderlon, president of the American Conference on Religious Movements. The Rockville, Md., group fights discrimination against new religions and is, according to the Post, largely funded by the Unification Church.

Despite the reported decline of the church, Moon's business holdings continue to grow.

According to the Post, Moon's global holdings include huge tracts of land in South America, where the Korean-born religious leader was said to be refocusing his energies after deciding that Americans have not embraced his message. In South Korea alone, Moon's holdings were reported to top \$1 billion.

Moon founded his controversial church—considered by some to be a destructive cult—in 1954. In 1982, he was convicted of tax evasion and spent 13 months in federal prison.

Newspaper says Lyons had secret bank account

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (RNS)—The St. Petersburg Times has reported that more than \$1 million intended for the National Baptist Convention USA wound up in a secret bank account under the control of Henry Lyons, the denomination's president, and a one-time employee, Bernice Edwards.

The account at the Guaranty Bank in Milwaukee, Wis., was used by Lyons and Edwards to buy a waterfront home and a diamond ring, the newspaper reported last month.

Lyons has been under fire in the denomination for alleged personal and financial improprieties but an effort to oust him as president during the denomination's convention this summer failed.

According to the newspaper report, the Wisconsin account was opened by

Josephine Hicks, who owns a Milwaukee diner, at the behest of Edwards, a longtime friend.

Hicks, however, said that when she became aware of the large wire transfers of funds going in and out of the account, she became uncomfortable. She closed the account more than a year ago, Associated Press quoted the Times as reporting.

Lyons, however, denied having any control over the Wisconsin account. "Only Mrs. Hicks and Ms. Edwards had access to the funds in the underlying bank account," Lyons said in a written response to questions.

Calvin Butts, pastor of the prestigious Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York's Harlem, warned that the National Baptist Convention USA could divide over the scandals surrounding Lyons' leadership.

"The leadership is woefully inadequate, corrupt and untrustworthy," Butts told Ecumenical News International. "We hope that federal and state authorities will continue with their investigations, and maybe that will lead to indictments."

Butts was among the dissidents who sought to force Lyons' resignation as head of the 8 million-member denomination. The calls for Lyons' resignation came after his wife, Deborah Lyons, was arrested July 6 for setting fire to a house jointly owned by her husband and Edwards in a St. Petersburg, Fla., suburb.

Butts said if the continuing probe of Lyons by federal and state authorities did not result in indictments against the church leaders, "many of us will seek to establish something else."

Carter's pastor says comments about Mormons aren't correct

ATLANTA (BP)—Former President Jimmy Carter is entitled to be wrong when it comes to statements attributed to him concerning Mormonism, his pastor said.

Carter, who significantly raised the profile of evangelical Christianity in general and Southern Baptists in particular during the 1970s, was quoted as saying Southern Baptists are off the mark in their belief that Mormon doctrine is essentially non-Christian and Mormons are therefore in need of evangelization.

"The people in my own local church have no interest in trying to condemn Mormons or trying to convert Mormons to be good old Baptists like me," Carter was quoted as saying in the Nov. 15 edition of the Deseret News, a newspaper in Salt Lake City owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Religion Editor Carrie Moore quoted Carter as saying Southern Baptist leaders were wrong in characterizing Mormons as non-Christians.

"Too many leaders now, I think, in the Southern Baptist Convention and in other conventions, are trying to act as the Pharisees did who were condemned by Christ, in trying to define who can and who cannot be considered an acceptable person in the eyes of God," he said. "In other words, they're making judgments on behalf of God. I think that's wrong."

But Dan Ariail, pastor of Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, Ga., where Carter is known for teaching Sunday school on a regular basis, said he disagrees both with Carter's reported views as well as the statement that his church would not be trying to convert Mormons.

In fact, Ariail said, he plans to use in his church "The Mormon Puzzle," a video and curriculum resource developed by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board to help educate Christians about Mormon beliefs.

"I would disagree with (President Carter) in the most basic way, but he is entitled to his opinion ... he has a right to be wrong," Ariail said. Sharing the biblical gospel with Mormons, Ariail said, "is not a front-burner issue here but we need to share the gospel with them and I would certainly try."



Carter

Scholars look at church response to abused women

"The contemporary church needs to realize that although they regard the family as sacred ... it is not always safe."

Nancy Nason-Clark, author of "The Battered Wife: How Christians Confront Family Violence"

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

SAN DIEGO (RNS)—Nancy Nason-Clark has seen both sides of the way people in churches react to reports of sexual abuse.

She cites one example of an office manager in a denominational headquarters who also is a battered wife. The woman's husband, however, is viewed by clergy as "a fine Christian man" incapable of such acts as beating his wife's head against a cabinet.

But the sociologist also cites the actions of some members of women's groups in conservative churches who quietly, and without the knowledge of their pastor, support transitional housing or provide shelter in their own homes for abused women.

Still, "a pervasive holy hush occurs" around the issue of abuse, said Nason-Clark, author of "The Battered

Wife: How Christians Confront Family Violence."

"The contemporary church needs to realize that although they regard the family as sacred ... it is not always safe," Nason-Clark said.

She organized one of two sessions on abuse and religion at the joint Nov. 7-9 meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association.

According to Nason-Clark's studies of 250 women in conservative churches in eastern Canada, the majority had helped abused women. One-fifth had offered a bed for the night for a woman who was afraid to return home.

Nason-Clark said her findings demonstrate an area that has not received enough attention by some scholars. "As secular feminists, we have been partially blinded to the community of empowerment that re-

ligious congregations offer," she said.

But, she said, a number of obstacles prevent churches from getting more involved in the sensitive issue.

Pastors often are reluctant to address family abuse from the pulpit, because they fear offending men whom they are seeking to attract to worship services and other church activities, she said.

In addition, some pastors feel ill-equipped to deal with the topic, even though they spend significant amounts of time offering pastoral counseling. Seminary courses dealing with abuse, she said, are not well-attended unless they are mandatory. When seminary students graduate to pastor's offices, they "suddenly say, 'Whoa, this is a problem. What are we going to do about this?'"

Some clergy are hesitant to refer women to secular counselors and others view divorce as a sign not only of

failure on the part of the couple but on the part of the clergy themselves to produce reconciliation.

But women in the pews, she said, are already intimately aware of the abuse problems in their midst.

"Women's knowledge of this issue is completely and absolutely framed by their experience with other women," said Nason-Clark, a sociology professor at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton. "It's not book knowledge."

Several of the experts urged acceptance by clergy of abuse claims, for many abused women will not ever disclose their abuse a second time if the first instance is met with disbelief.

"I tell my students, don't even say, 'That's unbelievable,'" said Livezey, who began co-teaching one of the first seminary courses on sexual violence in 1975. "What she hears is one more person that doesn't believe her."

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Gore criticizes gays' mistreatment.** Vice President Al Gore stepped up the national dialogue over civil rights protection for homosexuals in a Nov. 16 news conference, saying God creates homosexuals and is grieved at their mistreatment. "I do not believe that God intended them to suffer persecution and discrimination throughout their lives here on earth. I do not believe God would have created them as he has and intend for them to be mistreated."

■ **Football player can kneel.** After intervention from a non-profit civil liberties group, an eighth-grade football player in Springfield, Mo., will be allowed to kneel in prayer in the end zone to celebrate a touchdown. The boy had been penalized 15 yards for "celebrating" by kneeling.

■ **Bill would target Internet porn.** Sen. Dan Coats, R.-Ind., has sponsored the Commercial Computer Pornography Control Act, a measure to prohibit commercial distributors from offering pornographic images for free. The bill is more narrowly tailored than the Communications Decency Act, which was ruled unconstitutional this year by the Supreme Court.

■ **House passes bills targeting China.** Days after Chinese President Jiang Zemin's visit to the United States, the House of Representatives approved nine bills punishing China for human rights violations and promoting freedom in the world's largest communist country. Among the bills passed are measures denying visas for Chinese officials engaged in religious persecution, banning travel to the United States of officials involved in coercive abortion and sterilization, and directing U.S. representatives at the World Bank to oppose below-market subsidies for China.

■ **'Nothing Sacred' to last all season.** Despite some highly visible criticism, ABC says it has ordered a full season of the TV drama about a Catholic priest, "Nothing Sacred." The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights began complaining against the show before it premiered in September.

■ **House rejects criticism of Germany.** Before adjourning last month, the U.S. House of Representatives defeated a resolution criticizing Germany for its treatment of Scientology. Scientology and the German government have been involved in a long-running feud over the group's status.

Judge grants holiday reprieve for Baptist homeless ministry

BUENA PARK, Calif. (RNS)—An Orange County, Calif., judge last week granted a reprieve to 70 homeless people sheltered at a church led by a controversial Southern Baptist pastor, allowing them to stay put until after the holiday season.

In July, an Orange County Superior Court jury reluctantly convicted Pastor Wiley Drake and his church on four counts of misdemeanor building code violations for his Here's Hope Social Ministry Center, which shelters and feeds the poor.

Drake said Nov. 25 that he still refuses to move the people off the property.

"I'm not gonna kick anybody off. Read my lips—I'm not gonna take anybody off," said Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Buena Park, six miles from Disneyland.

He was sentenced in July to 1,500 hours of community service—which Superior Court Judge Gregg Prickett gave him credit for through his church work—and ordered to resolve the ongoing dispute with city officials.

Attorneys for Drake and city officials Monday told Prickett that 70 people were still living in the church's shelter or in campers in its parking lot.

Prickett said "there has to be a line drawn" for how much help the church can give the homeless.

Based on an agreement reached between Drake and city prosecutors, the judge gave Drake until Jan. 5 to pare the number of homeless staying at his church to 52.

For now, Drake, 54, is planning a Christmas party for them.



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Missionary Union
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Louisville KY
40253-6569
(502) 244-6485
Fax: (502) 244-6486

NOTES

How to plug in

The purpose of Project HELP: Cultural Diversity, the 1997-98 Woman's Missionary Union national ministry project, is to lead Christian believers to become aware of, appreciate, accept and affirm various culture groups with a goal toward spiritual unity in the midst of diversity that leads to actions addressing racial/cultural prejudice and reconciliation.



This project recognizes the value of culture groups—people from various backgrounds who share values and behaviors.

What is reconciliation? Reconciliation is accepting the teachings of Christ to bring people together in love, respect and joy.

Goals of project:

- ◆ For the individual to recognize and become convicted of the personal nature of reconciliation that begins with one's commitment to God and continues in a lifestyle of commitment to others as a witness to the world.
- ◆ For the church to examine and uplift the biblical basis of reconciliation as an integral part of the mandate for evangelism and provide a fellowship of acceptance for all believers and their calls to Christian witness.

Here are some ways you and your church can prepare for Project HELP: Cultural Diversity:

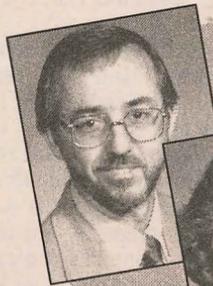
- ◆ Use the *Project HELP: Cultural Diversity Resource Kit's* Personal Prayer Inventory and Church Prayer Project
- ◆ Conduct a cultural-crossroads workshop.
- ◆ Encourage members to read *Many Nations Under God* or hold a churchwide book study.
- ◆ Show the video *On Common Ground*.
- ◆ Conduct a Day of Reconciliation. Feb. 8, "Race Relations" and "Focus on WMU" Sunday, is a suggested date.

Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting April 24-25, 1998

Theme: *Missions on the Brink*

Sessions at 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 7 a.m. Friday;
8:50 a.m.- noon Saturday

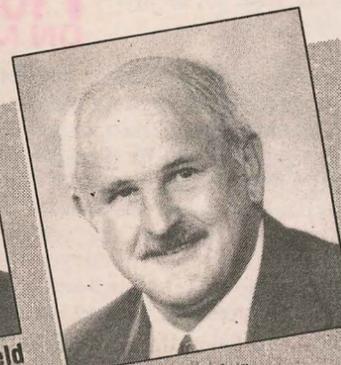
Westport Road Baptist Church
9705 Westport Road, Louisville



Ken and Beth Perkins
Missionaries
East Africa



Larry and Peggy Wakefield
Missionaries
Mexico



Randy Foster
Kentucky Brotherhood
Director



Mission Friends and GA Leaders Retreat March 13-14, 1998 Cedarmore

Featured speaker: Kathy Burns, experienced preschool and children's specialist and WMU Missions Innovator from Birmingham, Ala.

Conference topics include: Using activities with preschoolers, GAs and WorldVentures, spiritual growth for the leader, ministry projects for children and much more.

A Personal Word

Kentucky WMU: A rose by any other name



Kay Trisler
Executive
Director
Kentucky WMU

"Delight yourself in the Lord and he shall give you the desires of your heart" Psalm 37:4 (NIV). I thank God for the opportunity to have served in this place at this time in my journey. For people I have met, for what I have found out about myself, for correction, for encouragement, for growth in my faith, for friendships, for failures, for successes, I am grateful. May I never forget the things that I have learned during these past two years!

For the past few years I have been learning about growing roses. It is not easy to produce a beautiful rose. The

beauty of the rose depends on so many different things. It is amazing to me to look at the displeasing condition of the plant in the early spring and then watch how with hard work, tender loving care and the blessing of God's creation in the form of rain and sun, a beautiful rose is produced.

Through the years, we have watched Woman's Missionary Union grow and bloom into a beautiful rose. During the years there have been times when we had to "start in the spring" when dreams, plans and programs seemed impossible and yet with

prayer, hard work and courage we have kept to the task and accomplished our purpose. There always have been challenges, but they often have been changed into opportunities.

Changing lifestyles and new technology affect the way we do WMU in the church today. Kentucky WMU has a dedicated staff and executive board, and they seek to provide support to WMU organizations in the church. Pray with them as they look at the best ways to do training, program for state meetings, schedule age-level events, provide good communication

to leaders, strengthen relationships with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and its agencies and institutions, plan for special ministries and most of all seek God's will. While WMU always will be a rose, it may be a different variety—but just as beautiful.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve with you and thank you for your love and encouragement. I find encouragement in reflection on what we have done together in the past and joy and excitement in the possibilities that are ahead. I will be praying with you.

IDEAS THAT WORK

Women on Mission

By Denise Jones

◆ **Did you know** that in 1995-96 Kentucky had 82 Adults on Mission organizations involving nearly 1,200 people? The numbers for 1996-97 are just beginning to be compiled, but one thing is sure—the total will be substantially larger than last year when the final figures are tabulated.

Requests for information on co-ed organizations come to our office regularly. If your church is interested in one or more of the co-ed organizations, mark your calendar now for the first-ever co-ed training session in Kentucky set for April 4, 1998, in Elizabethtown. Another session will be offered Sept. 12, 1998, in Richmond. Registration information is located on page 3-A of *Kentucky Notes*.

◆ **Thank you, thank you, thank you** for helping to make the Women on Mission/Adults on Mission retreats such as success this year! A gifted group of speakers received outstanding evaluation marks from participants and the talent shows were alternately outrageously funny, deeply moving and sweetly touching. Thank you for working so hard to make us laugh and help us worship. Next year we hope to top the '97 retreats!

In response to your comments on the re-

treat evaluation forms, several changes have been made to the 1998 retreat schedules. Please take note of these changes:

◆ Oct. 2-3 Women on Mission/Adults on Mission Retreat, Cedarmore

◆ Oct. 9-10 Women on Mission/Kentucky BNF Retreat, Cedarmore

◆ Oct. 16-17 Women on Mission/Adults on Mission Retreat, Jonathan Creek

◆ Oct. 17-18 Women on Mission Retreat, Jonathan Creek

Also please note that in 1999, the Jonathan Creek retreats will tentatively be offered on separate weekends.

Plan now for these events:

◆ Nov. 30-Dec. 7, Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

◆ Feb. 8-4, Focus on WMU

◆ Feb. 15-8, North American Mission Study

◆ March 1-8, Week of Prayer for Home Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

◆ April 24-25, Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting, Westport Road Baptist Church, Louisville.



Acteens

By Julie Keith

◆ **Project HELP: Cultural Diversity and Acteens VENTURE '98.** Acteens are a very special part of the WMU organization so they should be a part of **Focus on WMU**, Feb. 8-14, 1998. A great way to link Project HELP: Cultural Diversity and Focus on WMU is for Acteens to participate in **VENTURE '98**. On Feb. 7, national WMU is encouraging thousands of teenage girls across the country to minister to the various needs of those in their communities who are from different cultural backgrounds.

◆ **Snider-Creal Acteens Scholarships.** Applications are available from the Kentucky WMU office. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1998.

◆ **Creative Ministries.** Come to the 1998 Creative Ministries Festival March 6-7 at Southern Seminary in Louisville to explore new and exciting ways to involve your teens in missions. The cost is just \$40 per church or \$20 for an individual. This is excellent training for Acteens Activators and youth groups preparing for mission trips. A brochure about this conference will be mailed to Acteens advisors in January.

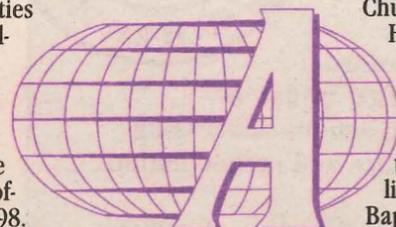
◆ **1998 North American Youth Mission Study: *Rollin' on the River*.** This exciting study will teach your youth about the struggles facing their peers who live in the Missis-

issippi River Ministry area and how Christ can make a difference in anyone's life.

◆ **Kentucky Acteens Advisory Panel.** Meet your 1998 Kentucky Acteens Advisory Panel: Katie Alcort, First Baptist Church, Murray; Meredith Burgher, Northside Baptist Church, Princeton; Meredith Carter, Okolona Baptist Church, Louisville; Andrea Honeycutt, First Baptist Church, Somerset; Missy Mahurin, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville; Nichol Pedigo, Middleton Baptist Church, Franklin; Jennifer Royalty, First Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg; Amy Travis, First Baptist Church, Murray. (Applications for the 1999 Kentucky State Acteens Advisory Panel are available from the Kentucky WMU office.)

◆ **1998 Acteens Activators applications.** These applications must be post-marked to the Kentucky WMU office by Dec. 15, 1997.

◆ **NAC '98 update.** Kentucky NAC t-shirts are in the designing process. More information about these shirts will be mailed out after the first of the year. Shirts will be between \$7-10 each.



Mission Friends/Girls in Action

By Brenda Price

MISSION FRIENDS

◆ **Do people in your church know** about Mission Friends? Focus on WMU, Feb. 8-14, will be an opportunity to help the church recognize Mission Friends as a part of WMU. Plan with the church WMU director using ideas in January-February-March *Start* and the 1997-98 *WMU Year Book*, pages 25-27.

◆ **Don't forget** the home mission study this quarter! The unit of study for all ages of preschoolers is available in the 1997-98 *International and North American Mission Studies for Preschoolers*.

◆ **Come, go with me** to the Mission Friends and GA Leaders Retreat, March 13-14, 1998, at Cedarmore.

GIRLS IN ACTION

◆ Have GAs in your church begun working on WorldVentures? Various questions relating to WorldVentures are being asked across our state:

Q: *Is WorldVentures too expensive?*

A: It is more expensive, but you are getting more for your money. Consider it an investment in the future of your girls. When you break down the figures, it is easier to understand. For one leader and 10 girls to go through the six-year program from first through sixth grades, the cost is \$630.20. This works out to \$63.02 per girl

or \$10.50 per girl per year . . . approximately the cost of two beanie babies. Remember, while beanie babies are a temporary fad, WorldVentures has eternal significance.



Q: *Why are WorldVentures 5 and 6 packaged together?*

A: Effective last September, national WMU reduced the price for WorldVentures 5 and 6 from \$10.95 to \$7.95. When they sell the existing inventory, they will repackage the material to be sold separately.

Q: *Is the patch still available?*

A: Patches will continue to be available directly from national WMU. Customers can order them by calling (800) 968-7301. A number of churches in our state have extra patches. Contact Brenda Price at the Kentucky WMU office at (502) 244-6485 if you have extra patches or if you need some.



Be sure to remember:

◆ Mission Friends and GA Leaders Retreat, March 13-14, 1998, at Cedarmore.

◆ GA and Children in Action Missions Event, Saturday, April 25, during the WMU Annual Meeting at Westport Road Baptist Church, Louisville. The cost is \$1 per person attending. No pre-registration for the event is required. Further information will be in the next *Kentucky Notes*.



WMU Directors

By Anna Mary Byrdwell

◆ **Seasons of Prayer.** This Season of International Missions and emphasis on the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering provides the life blood for our missionaries around the world. Encourage your people to pray diligently and give sacrificially in order to provide the necessary support.

Following the International Missions emphasis in December, all plans for the North American Missions emphasis will be made and implemented. In the fabric department of Wal-Mart and larger fabric stores look for a fabric panel map of the United States. Think of ways to use this as a visual to show how you progress toward your church's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal. The North American Mission Study will help your church become informed about ministries that are meeting the needs of people along the Mississippi River.

See your 1997-98 *WMU Year Book*, pages 21-24, for ideas that will be fun and also will help your folks learn more about what they can do to benefit others.

◆ **Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting.** As WMU director, you can be the determining factor in how many people from your church participate in the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting at Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville in April. Your interest and enthusiasm can lead others from your area to get involved. Choose a motel from the list found in this *Kentucky Notes*. Make reservations now for the April meeting.

Volunteers in Missions Day: Feb. 22.

◆ **Volunteers in Missions Day: Feb. 22.** Many Kentuckians have been involved in Partnership Missions over the past several years, beginning with our partnership with Kenya in 1985. Most recently, Kentucky Baptists have been involved in volunteer trips to Russia and New England. Talk with your pastor about asking someone who has been involved in a missions trip to share their experiences with your church. If you do not know someone, contact us or the Kentucky Baptist Convention Partnership office. This could be a springboard toward folks from your church taking a missions trip. Preparation for projects for next summer is in full swing. If you or someone from your church has an interest in a project during 1998, contact the Partnership Office (502) 244-6462.

◆ **Sincere Appreciation.** I could never express to you the special warmth I feel because so many of you gave to the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund following the death of my father in June. He liked flowers, but having been a church treasurer and life-long missions supporter, he would be so pleased that more than \$500 was invested in his memory. I encourage you to remember the Heritage Fund as a way to honor or memorialize a special person.



UPCOMING EVENTS

GA/Mission Friends Retreat Registration

**Mission Friends and
GA Leaders Retreat
March 13-14, 1998**

Send to:
Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, Box
37, Bagdad, KY 40003-0037

Lodging: Boone Lodge
2 per room, each person \$40.50
3 per room, each person \$39.50
4 per room, each person \$37.50

Cost includes three meals and a \$4
program fee per person

Church:

Person Sending Reservation:

Telephone (daytime):

Address:

Additional Persons:

NOTE: \$19.00 per person registra-
tion fee must accompany reserva-
tion. Cancellation must be made
two weeks prior to event for full
refund; or 48 hours in advance for
a \$7 refund.

WMU Annual Meeting Salt Lake City/June 7-8

Salt Palace Convention Center
Sessions: Sunday 2:30 p.m.
Sunday 7 p.m.
Monday 9:30 a.m.
Monday 2 p.m.
Monday 7 p.m.

Project HELP: Child Advocacy Kentucky report

Association	Churches Reporting	Hours Pledged	Hours Given	National Giving	State Giving	Local Giving
Anderson	1	0	0	0	0	0
Bethel	26	0	17202	2823.23	188.23	961
Blackford	2	0	100	4000	498	0
Blood River	7	1624	23659	1148.38	884	1032
Booneville	21	0	263	75	50	579.95
Breckinridge	2	0	0	0	16	0
Central	1	0	0	0	0	0
Daviess-McLean	1	0	0	0	0	0
East Lynn	1	48	1000	0	0	0
Elkhorn	8	22	5066	1000.06	2080	298.50
Enterprise	1	0	0	0	0	0
Franklin	2	0	62.5	0	50	194
Freedom	1	0	0	0	25	0
Grayson County	10	0	20134	0	4091.63	1229
Green Valley	18	240	2528.50	0	647.50	2513.59
Greenup	2	130	136	221	320	320
Laurel River	2	0	6	30	0	436
Little Bethel	2	0	0	25	110	25
Little River	23	0	8	0	0	184.01
Logan	21	0	0	0	0	154
Long Run	5	0	225	600	713.50	785.50
Muhlenberg	44	140	140	184	0	59.72
Nelson	13	0	0	50	0	260
Northern Kentucky	8	0	257	164	312	413
Ohio County	8	50	85	27.83	1135	360
Owen County	24	0	0	0	50	0
Pulaski	53	0	8071	18139.66	16000	29277
Russell County	18	2500	22162.50	0	100	25360.16
Russell Creek	11	0	130	602	0	1365
Salem	16	0	0	0	0	0
Severns Valley	3	0	200	0	0	2400
Shelby	25	0	0	390.51	2452.91	845.61
Sulphur Fork	1	0	1048	0	0	0
Tates Creek	2	0	100	0	0	140
Taylor	1	48	100	0	0	0
Ten Mile	15	0	291	110	2304.26	0
Three Forks	2	0	0	300	345	90
Union	16	0	0	134.02	0	0
Upper Cumberland	41	0	0	0	0	101
Warren	43	0	1196	1560	1955.75	2845
West Union	1	0	12000	0	145	0
TOTALS	502	4802	103270.50	27984.69	34328.78	72229.04

Hotels for WMU annual meeting

When making hotel reserva-
tions, please state that you
are with Kentucky Woman's
Missionary Union in order to
receive the listed rate.

Wilson Inn East
9802 Bunsen Way
Louisville, KY 40299
(502) 499-0000
\$47 + tax double
\$57 + tax suite
cut-off date 3/24/98
use code - KWM

Louisville Marriott East
1903 Embassy Square Blvd
Louisville, KY
(502) 499-6220
\$79 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 4/10/98

Fairfield Inn
9400 Blairwood Road
Louisville, KY 40222
(502) 339-1900
\$67 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 3/24/98

Microtel
1221 Kentucky Mills Lane
Louisville, KY 40299
(502) 266-6590
1-888-333-8188
\$55.95 + tax double
\$40.95 + tax single
cut-off date 4/1/98

Hampton Inn
1902 Embassy Square Blvd.
Louisville KY 40299
(502) 491-2577
\$69 + tax flat rate

Club Hotel Double Tree
9700 Bluegrass Parkway
Louisville, KY 40299
(502) 491-4830
\$79 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 3/25/98

Comfort Suites Hotel
1850 Resource Way
Louisville, KY 40299
(502) 266-6509
\$69 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 4/1/98

Travelodge, Hurstbourne
9340 Blairwood Road
Louisville, KY 40222

(502) 425-8010
\$40 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 3/24/98

Holiday Inn Hurstbourne
1325 Hurstbourne Lane
Louisville, KY 40222
(502) 426-2600
\$79 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 4/10/98

Days Inn
1850 Embassy Square Blvd.
Louisville KY 40299
(502) 491-1040
\$45.95 + tax flat rate
cut-off date 4/1/98

President's Perspective



**Peggy Hicks
President
Kentucky WMU**

We completed our fall Executive Board meeting in which we accomplished much. Discussions and decisions that were made set the course for our organization and helped the staff better meet your needs.

This was Kay Trisler's last meeting as Executive Director-Treasurer, since her resignation was effective Nov. 1. The board meeting gave us an opportunity to express on behalf of all Kentucky WMU members our appreciation for her years of ministry in our midst. Kay was presented a quilt in the "love-knot" pattern on behalf of all of you who are a part of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

Pat Key, board member from Central City, wrote the following poem for Kay:

For Kay:

*Ninety-six and ninety-seven
Have brought so many changes*

Thank you, Kay Trisler

*With big and little things
Up's and down's in all its ranges.*

*Activities galore
And just keeping up the paces
With the calendar events
Spread in all Kentucky places.*

*While on the home-land court
BIG adjustments did abound
Brand new offices for staff
With "moved belongings" all around.*

*In the middle of this change
WMU history was made
Independence brought the needs
for guidelines and policies to aid.*

*So when you joined Kentucky staff
As "Director" of the "crew"
Knowing what to tackle first
Was no easy task to do.*

*Articles to write
Preparation to go speak*

*Communications, setting dates,
Put agenda at its peak.*

*Somehow you worked it out
To arrange and organize
Needed records, files, and such
And WMU still publicize.*

*Through these busy, busy times
Summers, Winters, Springs, and Fall
Every effort worth its while
As you contributed your all.*

*Now a "New Place" you will seek
As God's path for you unfolds
And we send our best with you
Whate'er this future holds.*

*May God bless your years ahead
And everything you do
Sincerely from our heart
Our prayers will go with you.*

Kay, we wish you well.

Prayer concerns:

◆ Continue your prayers for the many missions needs being met by the Eliza Broadus Offering. Continue to remind people of the importance of their giving for missions work in our state.

◆ There are missionaries around the world waiting to see what we are going to do in our praying and giving to International Missions through the Lottie Moon Offering.

◆ Pray that our hearts will be stirred to **do more** about world hunger as we participate in the missions study, *A Heart for the Hungry*.

◆ Pray for planning underway for our April Kentucky annual meeting. Make your plans now to be with us.

◆ Pray for search committee members as they seek our new Executive Director-Treasurer.

◆ Pray for Brenda Price and all the responsibility she carries as the Interim Executive Director-Treasurer.

MISSIONS INFORMATION

Summer camp

Serving as a camp staffer is definitely a challenging and rewarding experience. You are stretched in ways you would not have imagined. Your creativity, flexibility, endurance and love are tested. Through all of this, God is proven able and willing to give the needed strength, patience, courage, and joy.

A variety of people are needed to fill the camp staff—from high school students to grandmothers and all ages in-between. (Each camp has different age requirements for staff members.) Volunteer counselors and a paid central staff are needed at Jonathan Creek while Cedar Crest enlists volunteer nurses and offers paid counselor, assistant counselor and specialist positions.

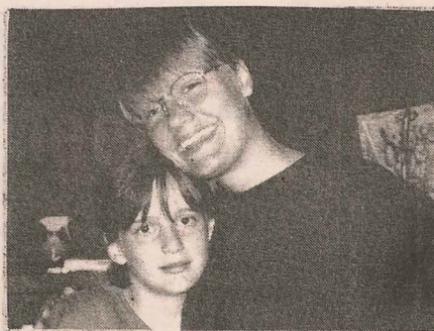
Come, go with me to camp and see what God can do.

Kentucky WMU is accepting applications for all positions. For an application and more information, please contact Kim Davis at the Kentucky WMU office or e-mail her at KYWMUCAMP@juno.com.



Donna DeRossett
Jonathan Creek volunteer counselor, Acteens advisor at Stony Point Baptist Church in Albany, Ky.

"It was wonderful to get away from the daily hustle and bustle and focus for a whole week on Jesus, prayer, Bible Study and missions. I was truly blessed by the way the girls soaked up the information presented to them on missions."



Jacki Lynn Watson
Cedar Crest kitchen coordinator/counselor, student at Campbellsville University

"My experience at Cedar Crest was a wonderful growing opportunity. God showed me that no matter what has happened in the past, he holds the future. If you're ready to grow closer to God than ever before, Cedar Crest is for you."



Diana Detterick
Cedar Crest counselor, student at Campbellsville University

"Being a part of the Cedar Crest Staff was a wonderful, enriching and a God-given experience. Although it was sometimes a draining experience, God continually blessed me with his strength and peace. I know God used me in a mighty way last summer and I feel blessed that he chose me for his work."

Remember to make plans to send your children and youth to Kentucky GA, Acteens or Youth on Mission camp. Week-long camp costs \$84 per camper. Mother/Daughter Overnight costs \$21 per person. Price includes meals, lodging and program fees. Linens are not provided.

Scholarships

Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union is accepting applications for the following scholarships for the 1998-99 school year:

- ◆ **Anderson scholarships** are given to female students preparing for church related vocations.
- ◆ **Eager and Wetterer scholarships** are limited to seminary students from Kentucky who are preparing for a vocation in missions or WMU work. The Wetterer scholarship is the only scholarship for which a man is eligible. Students desir-

ing to apply for one of these \$500-\$750 scholarships should request an application and return it to our office by Feb. 1, 1998. The WMU scholarship committee selects students to recommend to the Kentucky WMU Executive Board.

- ◆ **Anniversary scholarships** are given to sophomores, juniors or seniors in Kentucky Baptist colleges or Oneida Baptist Institute. Students may apply at the president's office or financial aid office of their respective school. Each school selects scholarship recipients.

Baptist Nursing Fellowship

Thank you so much for your overwhelming response to the Kentucky Baptist Nursing Fellowship's mission project.

Last spring, Ruth Ann McConnell, former international missionary to Yemen, talked with the BNF group about the extreme poverty in Yemen and explained that most babies go home from the hospital without a blanket. To help meet this need, Kentucky BNF decided to collect receiving blankets as a mission project.

To date, six large boxes of blankets have been

shipped to Yemen. Members of the Kentucky chapter of BNF wish to thank Women on Mission groups from across the state who have joined in this mission project.

If your group decides to collect blankets for newborns in Yemen, ship the blankets to Ms. Kathy Gariety, Jibla Baptist Hospital, P.O. Box 70080, lbb, Yemen. Remember that surface mail will be slower, but much less expensive. Let Denise Jones in the state WMU office know if you ship blankets to Yemen so we may track the number of blankets Kentuckians collect.

Calendar

December

11/30-12/07 Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

January

2 National Acteens Conference registration opens

February

1 Scholarship Applications deadline
7 Venture '98 Acteens Event

8-14 Focus on WMU
15-18 North American Mission Study
22 Volunteers in Missions Day
26-27 Christian Women's Job Corps training-Atlanta

March

1-8 Week of Prayer for Home Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
5-8 Baptist Nursing Fellowship National Annual Meeting-Atlanta
6-7 Creative Ministries Festival - Southern Seminary
13-14 Mission Friends/GA Leaders Retreat - Cedarmore

National Acteens Convention

By Kym Mitchell

Excitement continues to build for the national Acteens Convention to be held in Louisville July 1-4, 1998. Preparation is in high gear as committees in Birmingham and Louisville work to create the most inspiring and fun-filled convention ever. More than 10,000 Acteens and their advisors are expected to attend the 1998 convention.

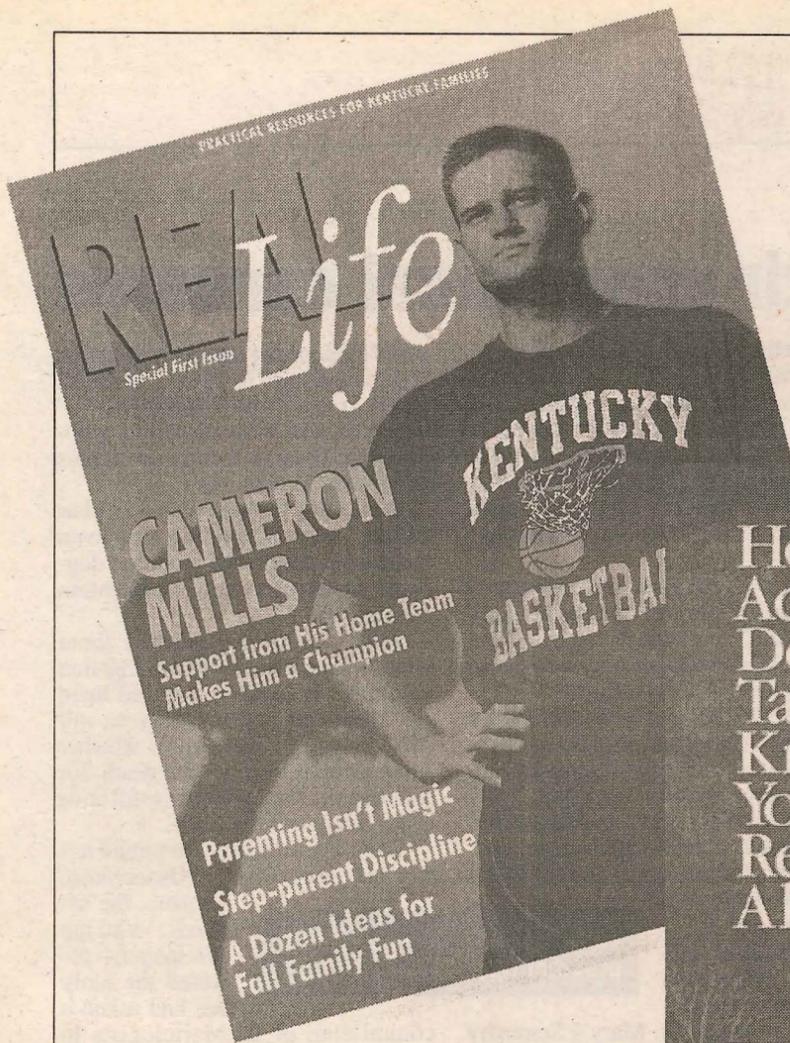
For the first time, the National Acteens Convention is being publicized on the information highway through a website designed specifically for Acteens, advisors, parents and other people interested in the convention. Check out the NAC '98 website at www.nac98.com. While visiting the website you can play games, enter contests to win cool NAC stuff, read about concert artists and convention highlights, and post messages to other Acteens and adults. The website is updated regularly with new convention information.

Convention planners are pleased to announce Jaci Velasquez will be the concert artist for NAC. Seventeen year-old Jaci was the recipient of the 1997 Dove Award for Best New Artist of the Year. She currently is touring the country with contemporary Christian artist Clay Crosse. Jaci's newest album will be out early next year.

Another convention highlight will be the opportunity for all convention attendees to participate in off-site ministry projects throughout the city of Louisville. A wide variety of missions experiences are being planned so that everyone will have a hands-on ministry opportunity while positively impacting the city and residents of Louisville for Christ. See the NAC registration form for more information.

Registration for the National Acteens Convention opens Jan. 2, 1998. See *Accent* magazine or call Julie Keith at Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union for more details. Kentucky is fortunate to host the 1998 convention. Make your plans now to attend the convention and welcome Acteens from all over the world to our state for an amazing four days of inspiration, fun and fellowship.





Make Real Life your church's unique tool for outreach

How Much Adventure Does It Take to Know You're Really Alive?

All of us seek thrills in life. We crave a feeling of exhilaration, to know we're experiencing life to the fullest. Yet sometimes life offers more of the agony of defeat than the thrill of adventure. So where can we find real life?

God offers everyone real life through faith in Jesus Christ. Trusting God is an adventure full of rewards and a thrill that lasts forever. If you're ready to get on board, we'll give you a life.

Your church's message goes here



Every issue of Real Life magazine will feature a gentle evangelistic message drawn from a real-life illustration. This message will include a place for your church to customize the magazine by adding the church's name, address, phone number or other important information. Anyone who receives this helpful magazine full of practical resources for Kentucky families will see it as a gift from your church and a sign that your church cares about your community.

Ideas for using Real Life in outreach

- ◆ Give Real Life to church prospects and visitors
- ◆ Give Real Life to families in your church's day care or parents' day out program
- ◆ Deliver copies of Real Life to families in your community
- ◆ Use Real Life as a direct-mail piece to newcomers
- ◆ Use Real Life as a direct-mail piece to new parents
- ◆ Place copies of Real Life in hospital waiting rooms, doctors' offices and waiting areas in other local businesses
- ◆ Distribute Real Life to church members
- ◆ Distribute Real Life through Sunday school classes

Four issues of Real Life are planned for 1998. The schedule includes a spring issue available in mid-February, a summer issue available in late May, a fall issue available in late August and a holiday issue available in mid-November. Cost is \$9 per subscription (all 4 issues) for churches ordering in bulk, or \$10.60 for individual subscriptions. That means your church could get 100 copies of Real Life for only \$225 per quarter.

Real Life is a new magazine for Kentucky families produced by the Western Recorder

- ◆ Real Life is a faith-based magazine with stories about real Kentucky people
- ◆ Real Life is positive, uplifting and inspirational
- ◆ Real Life is ideal for churches to provide as a resource for member families
- ◆ Real Life can be customized on the back cover to give a church identity
- ◆ Real Life is ideal for churches to use as an outreach tool in the community

Get four issues of Real Life in 1998 by ordering today: (502) 244-6470

New ideas on Virgin Mary stir ecumenical concerns

Mary's resting place found

JERUSALEM (RNS)—A craggy limestone rock revered as the resting place of the Virgin Mary on her journey to Bethlehem to give birth to Jesus has been uncovered amid a newly discovered ancient Byzantine church, archaeologists announced last month.

The Church of the Kathisma—the “seat” in Greek—is mentioned in early Christian sources and was a pilgrimage site for Christians as early as the 5th century A.D., said Yuval Baruch, an archaeologist for the Israeli Antiquities Authority who co-directed the dig that uncovered the rock and the church surrounding the revered site.

“We have known that there were antiquities here for a number of years,” said Baruch. “But archaeologically, what we have found is a sensation. It is rare to excavate a site that can both be identified with certainty, and which is linked to a historical story.”

According to early church tradition, Mary was enroute to Bethlehem with Joseph when she stopped near the rock, feeling unwell. Joseph left her to rest and continued on to find shelter in the town for the night, and then returned to fetch his wife.

The octagonal church that has emerged in view is the largest example of an eight-sided Byzantine structure in the Holy Land, Baruch said. It is centered around the revered rock, which measures about six feet in diameter.

The protrusion of the rock, a few inches above the still-preserved mosaic floor, reflects the preservation of the stone as a holy site, Baruch said. The eight-sided design, moreover, was a style reserved for sacred spaces.

Tourists and pilgrims have already begun spontaneously streaming to the site, but it is not clear if it will be in the near future, said Baruch.

“Right now, the plans are to cover it all back up again merely in order to preserve the site from further degradation,” he said. “Preservation and exposition of the site to the public will require an investment of large sums, maybe hundreds of thousands of dollars, and no one has yet proposed to fund such renovation.”

Baruch said the Church of the Kathisma is believed to have been constructed with a donation from the Christian widow Iqilia in the mid-5th century. This was a period in which the Holy Land’s Byzantine rulers were deeply engaged in the identification of sites associated with Jesus and his family that had already been established in religious and folk tradition. Churches were then typically built to memorialize the location.

By Ed Briggs
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A lay-led, worldwide movement urging Pope John Paul II to declare Mary, the mother of Jesus, “co-redemptrix” with a special role in the Roman Catholic understanding of salvation is gaining concern—and in some instances, anger—in Protestant and ecumenical communities.

It’s an issue that touches the most ardent reaches of theology and the deepest levels of popular Catholic piety. But it also has ramifications far beyond Catholicism.

The Vatican itself has sought to play down the issue; a Vatican commission recommended against it and a church spokesman said in September the subject is not under study. Yet the movement’s leader is confident the pope will act before the year 2000.

Mark Miravalle, a professor of Marian theology at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, has met at least twice with the pontiff to urge Mary’s cause and, while refusing to make public those discussions, is confident of papal support.

If John Paul said, Miravalle said, the new characterization of Mary’s role will not promote her to the realm held by the Trinity—God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit—but she will be given a special place as mediatrix, a feminine rendering of mediator, closest to Christ.

Miravalle said pressures for the new dogma are building because of the turning of the millennium. John Paul, who has a special fondness for Mary, has declared the year 2000 a jubilee year to be marked by recalling Jesus’ role in the redemption of humanity from sin.

“Without Mary’s cooperation with God in agreeing to the birth of Jesus, there would be no redemption,” Miravalle said.

Miravalle said his belief John Paul will act is buttressed by 4.5 million signatures on petitions sent to the pope from Catholics on six continents.

Petition signers include such prominent Catholics as the late Mother Teresa and Cardinal John J. O’Connor of New York, as well as 500 bishops and 42 cardinals from around the globe and thousands of Catholic charismatics and members of parish rosary groups who give special devotion to Mary.

At the same time, the movement is causing concern in Protestant evangelical and ecumenical circles. Non-Catholic theologians have labeled the idea “heresy” and “arrogant.”

Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said if the new dogma naming Mary co-redemptrix is adopted, it will cause a “theological conflagration” between Catholics and evangelicals.

Catholic ecumenists and specialists on Mary are also concerned.

Frederick Jelly, a Dominican priest and Mariologist at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., has called for more study on the issue. Jelly, a founder of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, said despite the grassroots movement there needs to be more “clarification of what people are talking about when they want to elevate Mary to a higher role.”

The society is an organization of Catholics, Orthodox and Protestant Christians who consider Mary “first among the saints.”

Efforts to theologially understand the role of Jesus’ mother stretch back more than 1,500 years.

In 431 A.D., the Council of Ephesus said she was the Mother of God. The Council of Constantinople declared her perpetual virginity in 681, and her Immaculate Conception—free of sin at her birth—came with the first infallible papal declaration in 1854 by Pius IX. Nearly a century later, Pius XII reported seeing an apparition of Mary in the clouds and declared her bodily assumption into heaven.

Jelly said Catholic theologians are divided over Mary’s mediation. He

said the proposed dogma calls for an understanding of Mary as “mediatrix of all graces” and “co-mediatrix,” which he said is “particularly a problem word because it’s like co-signers of a check, for example.”

It puts Mary “on the same level as Christ,” he said, adding that even those who support the proposed dogmatic declaration “have no intention of doing that.”

Jelly said he is concerned about what the response to a promulgation would be. In addition, he said there are “many things about Mary we still don’t know. We don’t know whether Mary actually experienced death, for example. So we theologians still have a few things to fight over.”

The issue first came to public notice last June when L’Osservatore

Romano, the official Vatican newspaper, reported the Holy See had asked a

commission of 23 Mariologists to look at the proposal. The group voted unanimously to advise against the promulgation.

The commission also warned the idea is contrary to Second Vatican Council teachings and would be a serious impediment to thawing ecumenical relations with other Christian groups.

Ironically, the proposal comes at a time when there is an emerging appreciation of Mary among Protestants who previously avoided the kind of devotion to the mother of Jesus that runs deep in Catholicism.

Donald Dawe, a Presbyterian theologian and past president of the ecumenical society dedicated to Mary, is a case in point. He said the idea of such a promulgation is “misleading and dangerous. It is a perilous impediment to the future of ecumenical dialogue.”

William Franklin, a member of the official Anglican-Roman Catholic theological dialogue, said any such declaration as that sought by Miravalle will be “another nail in the coffin of ecumenism.”

Editorial: How do you solve a problem like Maria? Page 5

‘Charitable-choice’ provision a dilemma for many Baptists

By Pam Parry
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A new “charitable-choice” provision attached to the 1996 welfare-reform bill has created a dilemma for some Baptists, traditionally strong supporters of the separation of church and state.

The provision links church and state in ways some say are unprecedented by authorizing local governments to contract with churches for social services such as soup kitchens and emergency food pantries.

“Charitable choice is a radical departure from the traditional relationship between government and churches,” according to a report of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

While the government has long contracted with organizations that are religiously affiliated, it has until now avoided funding of entities that are “pervasively sectarian,” such as

churches and church-related organizations which are “saturated with religious teaching and worship.” Charitable-choice legislation, the report says, crosses that line.

“It is not the role of the church to be a functionary of government,” said Phil Strickland, executive director of the Texas Baptist moral-concerns agency.

Church-related organizations such as hospitals have taken government money before charitable choice, but those organizations don’t proselytize, Strickland said. He said his greatest fear is that as churches become dependent on federal money, they will be forced to compromise the gospel message.

But not all Baptists see it that way. One Virginia Baptist described charitable choice as a new partnership between church and state.

“I feel very good about the faith community being recognized as part

of the overall community,” said Sheri Link, director of church-and-community ministries at Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Va.

Link worked on a task force to help Fairfax County develop the structure to carry out the welfare-reform provisions.

“I feel strongly that a healthy community incorporates all of the principals in the community—business, faith, public services,” Link said.

For example, the church-and-community ministries of Columbia Baptist Church have received Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program funds for years to help people with rent or mortgage payments and utilities within the community, she said. The government requires those funds be used in the county in which they are allocated. “I have no problem with that,” Link said. “I have the responsibility of using those funds within the guidelines to help keep peo-

ple from becoming homeless.”

Strickland said churches should “take a long and careful look before becoming state contractors.” He called it ironic that the government decided to fix the welfare system by creating a new kind of dependency—local-church dependence on federal funds.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, has said religious groups should be entitled to any government funds that are available to non-religious private charities but warned that such funds come with strings attached.

“The federal government does have the right to say if you are going to use federal money in a ministry, you can’t evangelize in that ministry,” Land said in an interview last year. “To me that is an unacceptable price to pay for government funding. I would advise churches to not take the funding.”

Phil Strickland of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission said the government fixed the welfare system by creating a new kind of dependency—local-church dependence on federal funds.

Ditka & Saints go marching into spiritual renewal

By Josh Peter
Religion News Service

NEW ORLEANS (RNS)—Speaking to a packed Christian men's prayer breakfast, New Orleans Saints head coach Mike Ditka became choked with emotion.

"God puts people in places for a reason," Ditka said. "Gang, I had no intention to coach again. I'm here because it's his will."

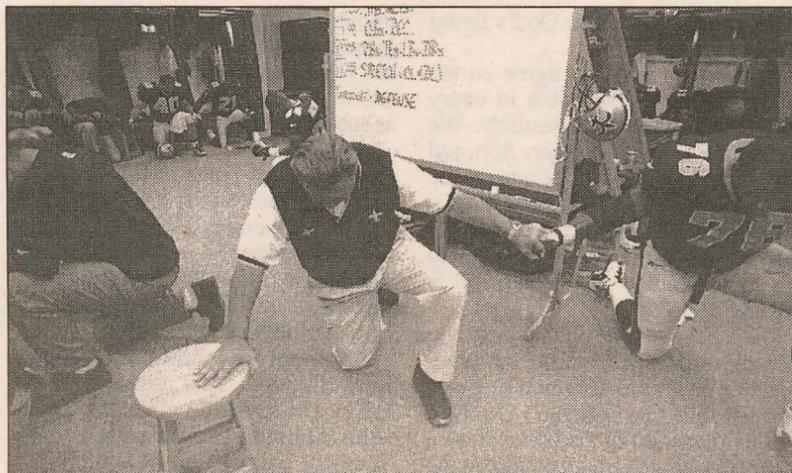
It was no act. In the months since joining the Saints, it has become clear that Ditka, 58, is as consumed with God as he is with football.

"You must plug in daily to the only source of power that counts in our lives, and that is the Lord," said Ditka.

No, he hasn't undergone a metamorphosis from cantankerous coach to choirboy. He still can be hostile, intimidating and profane. Yet, other signs reflect a spiritual transformation for Ditka since he was fired as coach of the Chicago Bears in 1992.

Consider: Ditka made one of his most important off-season decisions—promoting Heath Shuler over veteran Jim Everett—during a three-day Jesuit retreat. He surrounded himself with spiritual men and began reading the Bible with heightened interest. In short, he centered his life on God.

"Strong spiritual beliefs are essential to get through life," Ditka said recently. "But that don't mean we're not going to try to kick the other guy's a**."



PRAYING SAINTS New Orleans Saints coach Mike Ditka prays with Keno Hill (right) and the rest of his team in the locker room before a game. Ditka and many of the Saints are in the midst of a spiritual revival. (RNS photo by Ted Jackson)

Among the results are a Saints team bound in part by a shared faith, the presence of religious advisers who talk of curses and faith healing, and some players who spend as much time with the Good Book as the play book.

Between 10 and 18 players on the 53-man roster attend weekly Bible study. According to several players, the environment has helped keep the team together in times of turmoil.

"If you're playing with guys who have the same beliefs and feel like you do, you can weather anything," defensive tackle Wayne Martin said.

Ditka said coaches and players are not pressured to participate in spiritu-

al activities, but he stressed the need for more spirituality in today's society.

"There's more demonic behavior in our society than Satan has ever seen, maybe in the history of the world," Ditka said. "Why? Because we've taken God out of everything."

Ditka's commitment to God has more to do with his own life than it does with his team.

He is proud of his 1986 Super Bowl ring, but Ditka said he loathes the man he became in his final years with the Bears.

Ditka first turned to God in the 1970s, as an assistant coach with the

Dallas Cowboys. "I realized I was unhappy. I was shallow. I didn't care about people nearly as much as I should have. So I went home and I really prayed about it, and it made a difference. That was the beginning."

After being hired to coach the Bears in 1982, Ditka said, he eventually started cursing coaches, players, fans and reporters and raining fire and brimstone on anyone who questioned his methods.

When he suffered a mild heart attack in 1988, he came face to face with his mortality. Yet not until 1992, his final season with the Bears, did he see the man he had become, consumed with winning, consumed with himself.

"At the end, I'd closed myself into a nutshell, and I stayed there and tried to do it all myself," he said. "It was terrifying."

In the months before he was fired as the Bears' coach, he began contemplating who he wanted to be: someone who could control his temper, tame his ego, trust those around him.

Those changes were in place four years later, when he was introduced as the Saints' new coach on Jan. 28, 1997.

There have been ugly outbursts since then. Same old Ditka, critics snickered.

With a hint of regret, he vowed not to launch into any more tirades and said: "I make mistakes. I wish I was right all the time. I'm not. But that doesn't mean I'm going to quit trying."

Ditka is proud of his 1986 Super Bowl ring, but he loathes the man he became in his final years with the Bears.

Christmas and international missions

Christmas means different things to different people, but to us Kentucky Baptists it means demonstrating in a financial way through the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions our desire for those without Christ to be confronted with the gospel.

Cooperation is still the Kentucky Baptist way to a lost world. What no one individual, no one church or no one state convention can do alone for the cause of Christ in this world, we can do together.

Let us be more intentional this Christmas in praying for the 4,232 appointed missionaries living in 127 different countries of the world, assisting in 25 other countries and proclaiming the gospel in our behalf to 336 different people groups.

Let us be more generous than ever in giving through the Lottie Moon offering. If each of us gives, the \$100 million needed this year will be received and each of us can experience the joy of having a part in reaching for Christ those who are beyond what we can see or where we can go.

Perhaps you have been considering how you can leave a lasting legacy of your commitment to international missions, or to inter-

national missions in combination with other Baptist missionary, educational and benevolent causes. Perhaps you would be interested in including in your consideration, needy retired Kentucky missionaries, ministers and widows.

What better time than this season of giving to take the next step and allow Laurie Valentine, our trust counsel, and me the privilege of assisting you in your consideration of such a legacy?

Please call us at (502) 244-6466. There is no cost or obligation. We exist to serve the family of Kentucky Baptists in this kind of stewardship.

Jesus said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ..." (Matthew 28:18-20); "... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The Apostle Paul reminded us: "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

Hope

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College again has created an Advent devotional book for our students, staff, faculty, administration and friends to use as we prepare our hearts to remember the joy and wonder of Christ's birth. The book contains a devotional for each day of the Advent season. For this week and the next three weeks, devotions from the book will appear in this column to help guide your reflections during this blessed season.

Kenny Faught, associate professor of religion at Cumberland, wrote the devotion on hope in this column. Additionally, he planned, organized and administered the preparation of the book. I am grateful for his loving work. Listen to his words on Matthew 2:13-15:

The need for hope is universal. Jesse Jackson reminds us to "Keep hope alive." Sawyer Brown sings, "I need some hope for a bright tomorrow." The hymn writer proclaims, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." The Bible observes, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but desire fulfilled is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12).

The arrival of the "Christmas Wish Book" (which always takes me back to my childhood) serves as a

reminder that hope comes in all shapes and sizes! A child hopes Santa will come. A believer hopes the choir will sing a favorite Christmas carol. Grandparents hope the children will arrive soon. A pastor hopes the true meaning of Christmas will be remembered. A young man hopes the answer will be "Yes" to his marriage proposal. The doctor, patient, soldier, student, prisoner all find hope essential to survival. And far better than the "Christmas Wish Book," God has a book which points us to the one who is our hope.

It is no accident that hope is one of the central themes of Advent. Did you read the text? Taking Jesus into Egypt, Mary and Joseph remind us that hope needs to be cherished, nourished and protected. Throughout the year discouragement, disappointment and distractions may conspire to threaten the very life of hope within us. Christmas arrives as a perennial reminder of the true source and substance of our ultimate hope. The nativity was God's way of linking time to eternity and giving us real hope. What "great things" are you hoping for this Christmas?

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



BAPTISTS

"While we may not agree on the interpretation of the Bible in every regard, we agree on essentials."

William Pinson, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, making an appeal to Southern Baptists of Texas not to split from the BGCT

BGCT official sees action as 'unfounded'

DALLAS (ABP)—Published reasons for establishing a new state convention among Texas Baptists "are not well founded and are not justification for such an act," Texas Baptist Executive Director William Pinson said.

If a new convention is formed, Pinson added, it will not be because leaders of the Baptist General Convention of Texas have encouraged it. "In fact, just the opposite will be the case," he said. "Written and spoken appeals have been and will be made for togetherness for the sake of the gospel."

Pinson said he had not been given the courtesy of being informed of the decision of the board of directors of Southern Baptists of Texas to begin forming a new convention, but had been apprised of it through a news story released through Baptist Press.

"Neither I nor any officers of the BGCT have been supplied information directly from the SBT about any new convention to be formed by them," Pinson said. "Therefore, we do not know any details of what is proposed and cannot evaluate the matter."

While any Baptist group is free to do what it wills, Pinson said, "I pray that all Southern Baptists in Texas will find a way to continue to serve together in the power and direction of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the Great Commission given us by the Lord Jesus Christ."

Pinson said the BGCT "as a family of Baptists in Texas," has attempted to remain true to "God's written

word, the Bible, and to God's living Word, Jesus."

"While we may not agree on the interpretation of the Bible in every regard, we agree on essentials. We believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe in Jesus as the virgin-born Son of God who lived a sinless life, died on the cross for our sins, rose from the grave, ascended to the right hand of the Father and is coming again.

"We believe the Bible is truth and the sole authority for faith and practice. We believe in salvation by grace through faith; in believer's baptism; in the priesthood of the believer; in a regenerate church membership; in the governance of a church by members under the headship of the Lord Jesus; in autonomous churches which cooperate with one another and voluntarily for missions, evangelism, education and ministry; in religious freedom and soul competency."

Some believe a second convention would be best, Pinson said, but added that he does not share that opinion.

He noted that churches in the BGCT have access to the convention staff and resources, regardless of political persuasion, and flexibility in directing distribution of their Cooperative Program gifts.

He reminded Southern Baptists of Texas of the "terrible disruption caused by having rival state conventions that led to unification in 1886 and the forming of the BGCT."

"As I have prayed about various possible options, I believe that con-

tinuing to cooperate for the sake of the gospel would be most in keeping with the New Testament appeal to unity and to the prayer of Lord Jesus for us as recorded in John 17."

Russell Dilday, new president of the BGCT, also read of the new convention in the Baptist Press story. He said the reasons given for its formation are founded on serious misunderstandings of the BGCT and gross misstatements about Charles Wade's position on biblical authority.

"Some of those misunderstandings were statements that approval of the E/E report in Austin made the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship equal to the Southern Baptist Convention.

"What the report did was open up free choices, not a narrowing of them at all," Dilday said.

He said he prayed that all Baptists in Texas would be challenged by the significant ministries in the state and would not allow differences to keep them from joining together for the sake of the gospel.

If a second convention is formed, it will be the second in recent years. In 1996, a group in Virginia dissatisfied with the Baptist General Association of Virginia formed a new convention known as Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia.

New Convention

Continued from page 2

of the position of moderate Baptists on the Bible. But Wade said the paraphrase misrepresents his position.

In his speech Wade said: "Southern Baptist leaders will have our support if they will focus on missions and evangelism, but they will drive more and more Texas Baptists away if they focus on requiring uniformity as a condition of cooperation."

Wade said the use of the reporter's paraphrase by Southern Baptists of Texas leaders was worse than the reporter's mistake. "Those who claim they have an endless delight in the truth of Scripture are themselves guilty of deliberate misrepresentation of my remarks in the president's address to the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"How can people build a future by telling a lie?" Wade questioned. "An unfortunate mistake by a reporter for the Austin American-Statesman has been shamefully used by (Southern Baptists of Texas) leaders who know better to justify the starting of a new convention in Texas."

Ministry on the front lines

Adjunct, according to the small dictionary on my desk, is defined as "one attached to another in a subordinate relationship."

A similar word is ancillary, defined by the same dictionary as "auxiliary, accessory." I have enjoyed many adjunct professors and used ancillary services in hospitals like radiology and the lab.

Adjunct and ancillary are relevant terms in schools and health care but not in ministry. I think we can all agree that in the ministry there are no subordinate attachments or accessories. Every person and each piece of ministry is essential to the whole. Jesus was not only a preacher but a teacher, physician, counselor and social worker as he demonstrated God's love.

Ministry to children and families is a primary mission of the church and the gospel it cherishes. Giving that "cup of cold water" (Matthew 10:42) can be fulfilled in many different ways by disciples of Jesus. Wherever people are thirsty due to the dehydration of their lives, a word of hope, a hand up and—most of all—a some love becomes that cup of cold water.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has been providing the cup of cold water to parched families and kids since 1869. It has been a primary, not an adjunct ministry, of Kentucky Baptists. Touching lives with the message of grace, love and hope is not auxiliary, ancillary or accessory, but mainstream missions.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

Through our ministry at KBHC, yours and mine, the Great Commission to evangelize is fulfilled. Children and adults make first time decisions or rededications to Christ. Our Lord's command to care for each other is accomplished through our various services to families.

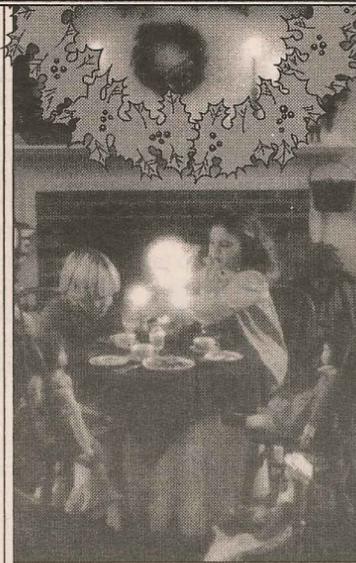
When you think of KBHC and remember us in your prayers, think of us as your missionaries.

Picture us on the front lines, not the side lines, of gospel ministry.

When you pray for our foreign and home missionaries, remember us too as we serve many children in desperate situations right here at home.

Bill Smithwick president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243. Call (800) 456-1386. KBHC's Internet address is: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>

Christmas 1997



Help us make good things happen

- a crackling fire on a snowy night
- a candle-light service at church
- Christmas Eve with family and friends from near and far

For most of us, the Christmas season is a wonderful time of year. Some of our most treasured memories are associated with cherished holiday traditions.

Unfortunately, a difficult illness, accident, or unexpected medical expense, could cloud Christmas for some people this year...perhaps someone you know.

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Your special Christmas gift to Baptist Healthcare Foundation will provide financial assistance to needy patients or it may be used to fund other important projects at a Kentucky Baptist hospital.

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CHARITY

Guidelines offered for year-end gifts to charity

By Laurie Valentine

It's that time of year again. It's time to review tax planning actions taken this year and determine if there are others to be considered before year end to further reduce your 1997 income taxes.



Charitable giving provides both an opportunity to share your financial resources with charitable causes and a tax planning strategy that can help reduce income taxes.

In order for your year-end charitable gifts to provide tax savings in 1997, they must be completed by Dec. 31.

A contribution by check is considered completed by then if it is dated Dec. 31 (or earlier) and is unconditionally delivered or mailed by that date.

Gifts of securities are completed when you deliver properly endorsed stock certificates to the charity or when title to the security has been transferred on the books of the issuing company.

A real estate gift is completed when a properly executed deed is delivered to the charity.

Giving appreciated capital assets such as stock or real estate that you have owned for at least 12 months and one day provides double benefits—a charitable income tax deduction equal to the market value of the security and, generally, avoidance of the capital gains tax that you would owe if you sold the asset.

Income tax deductions for charitable gifts can be taken only by those who itemize their deductions. If your total deductions for 1997 do not exceed the standard deduction, consider paying deductible items that you would normally pay in early 1998 before Dec. 31, 1997, so that you can itemize deductions.

Make sure you have received proper acknowledgments from the charitable recipients. You may not take a deduction for a single gift of \$250 or more unless you have received a written acknowledgment from the charity before you file your tax return. For outright gifts under \$250, your canceled check serves as your receipt.

Make time for year-end tax planning. It can pay off for you and the causes you wish to support.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

Song against homosexuality upsetting some

By Andrena Irvin
Religion News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—When Christian music artists Angie and Debbie Winans released their album "Bold" this fall, they didn't expect negative reactions.

But that's exactly what they got.

A death threat, successive telephone calls from gay and lesbian groups, and boycotts from churchgoers are just some of the responses to "Not Natural," a song that addresses violence, promiscuity and homosexuality.

While all of those issues are socially volatile, it's their stance on homosexuality that is causing fire in both Christian and secular communities. Despite the controversy, however, the duo is sticking to their stand.

"It's just the word of God," said Debbie Winans, 26. "We want to point people back to Jesus and his way of doing things."

She and Angie Winans, 29, are the younger sisters of renowned contemporary Christian artists BeBe and

CeCe Winans. The musical family also includes the Winans, an ensemble composed of several of their brothers.

Angie and Debbie contend homosexuality is not God's intent for human sexual relationships. "It's the truth," Debbie Winans said. "I guess people are upset about the truth."

The duo said they wrote "Not Natural" after watching the lead character of ABC-TV's sitcom "Ellen," played by lesbian actress Ellen DeGeneres, announce her homosexuality last season.

Debbie Winans said they wanted to offer an alternative to what they believe is a glorification of sex in society.

"Wrong has taken precedence for so long," she said. "It's just time that God's principles have some publicity so that we can present an alternative choice."

But Liz Tracey, the associate communications director for the New York City chapter of GLAAD, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, said people who have heard the song performed in concert

have called the group with complaints. "It completely ignores the fact that there are a lot of gay Christians."

Bill Carpenter, spokesman for Angie and Debbie Winans, said the critics don't understand why the song was written. "No one's trying to judge anyone's love life," he said. "We're just putting it out there."

The song, which they are performing in churches across the country, has attracted several threats. The sisters have been told not to walk the streets alone, to watch their backs, and they were banned from singing the song at an October black women's conference in Washington, D.C.

"I don't understand why people are threatening and warning us," Carpenter said. "Angie and Debbie don't hate gay people."

He said the sisters know there are gay Christians, but that doesn't change their stance on homosexuality. Winans family members are supportive of the song because they believe it represents where God stands.

"People call and say, 'This song talks about gays the way the Ku Klux Klan talks about blacks,'" Carpenter said. "People call and say I'm doing the devil's work. But these responses make us believe even more that we're doing the right thing."



Winans

Excerpt from 'Not Natural'

Here's the chorus from the song "Not Natural" on Angie and Debbie Winans' recording "Bold":

It's not natural. No, that's not the way it goes.

It's not natural. Just because it's popular doesn't mean it's cool.

It's not natural. No, that's not the way God planned.

It's not natural, not natural. It's time for the world to understand.

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PRAYER PARTNERS

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

- Kentucky volunteers needed to fill 1998 partnership project requests from churches in Russia.
- Continued financial support for church buildings under construction in Russia.
- Follow-up needed for a saturation-mailing campaign in Dover, N.H.
- The Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry, with home offices in Maryland, as it shifts its focus to non-credit ministry training, while continuing to offer courses leading toward a master of divinity degree.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

- ANNVILLE—Annville Church recently called **Glenn Chasteen** of Oak Ridge, Tenn., as pastor.
- ASHLAND—Rose Hill Church dedicated its \$1.5 million facility Nov. 16. The building includes a 1,200 square foot gym, office suites and classrooms. The facility will be used by the church and Rose Hill Christian School.
- HARLAN—Harlan Church ordained **Terry Loving, Terry Harris** and **Jimmy Allison** as deacons Nov. 23. **John Ditty** is pastor.
- LOUISVILLE—Crescent Hill Church's choirs and handbell groups will participate in Ole Tyme Christmas on Frankfort Avenue, sponsored by the Frankfort Avenue Business

Association Dec. 6 from 1-2:30 p.m. Call (502) 896-4425 for more information.

- MANCHESTER—Horse Creek Church ordained **Shawn Vallance** to the gospel ministry. Vallance is pastor at Southside Church and a student at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.
- POOLE—**Frances Jewell**, 81, died Oct. 29. She was a member of Poole Missionary Church and secretary for Green Valley Association more than 21 years. She is survived by her husband, Wilburn.
- WILLIAMSBURG—**Janus Jones**, director of missions of Mount Zion/South Union associations, was named Kentucky director of missions of the year Nov. 10.

Founder of Vineyard association dies

ANAHEIM, Calif. (RNS)—John Wimber, founder and international director of the charismatic Association of Vineyard Churches, died Nov. 17 after suffering a massive brain hemorrhage the previous evening, his ministry announced. He was 63. Wimber was an international conference speaker as well as a best-selling author and writer of worship songs.

"John was one of those rare people who was a molder of a generation and his contribution

has come in beginning the Vineyard movement," said Peter Wagner, professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

One of the significant decisions Wimber made was to ask the Toronto Airport Vineyard Fellowship to leave the parent church body because the church had placed "extra-biblical" meaning on its "exotic" expressions of the Holy Spirit, including animal sounds, laughing and groaning.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Part-time music director. Send resumé to: Nortonville Baptist Church, Box 1119, Nortonville, KY 42442.

SEEKING: Baptist church in Bowling Green looking for a part-time minister of youth to minister to approximately 40 enrolled youth. Send inquiry or resumé to: Greenwood Baptist Church, 5165 Scottsville Road, Bowling Green, KY 42104. Telephone: (502) 781-2378.

SEEKING: Resumés are being accepted by Green Valley Baptist Church of Henderson, Nevada, for a senior pastor and a minister of music by Jan. 15, 1998. Send resumé to Mike Parnham, chairman of senior pastor search committee, or Larry Reynolds, chairman of music pastor search committee, 270 N. Valle Verde Drive, Henderson, NV 89014.

SEEKING: A dually-aligned CBF and SBC church is looking for a half-time minister to youth. Community-located church, solid foundation and great potential; salary and insurance provided. Send resumé to: First Baptist Church Shepherdsville, P.O. Box 26, Shepherdsville, KY 40165.

SEEKING: Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director-Treasurer Search Committee is accepting resumés for this position from Nov. 1 to Dec. 15, 1997. Minimum qualifications: Master's degree, five years related experience, working knowledge of WMU's organization and function. Forward resumé to: Jo Pelham, chairwoman, 109 Winona Court, Hopkinsville, KY 42240-5256.

SEEKING: The Pastor Search Committee of First Baptist Church of Frankfort is accepting resumés at this time. Mail to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 201 St. Clair St., P.O. Box 5008, Frankfort, KY 40602.

SEEKING: Baptist church in Lexington seeks to fill a full-time ministry position with an emphasis in youth and church-wide education. Send resumé to P.O. Box 22113, Lexington, KY 40502-2113.

FOR SALE: GMC 4905, 42-passenger, air-conditioned, restroom, refreshment center, video system, less than 30,000 miles on 8V-71 Detroit Diesel engine. Extremely well maintained. Coach is in beautiful condition inside and out. Completely updated and refurbished less than four years ago. Must see to appreciate. Asking \$49,000. Call (606) 277-7391, ask for David.

SEEKING: High Point Baptist Church, located in Mayfield, Ky., is accepting resumés for the position of full-time associate pastor/minister of music. Please forward resumé to: Gary Sanderson, 1510 Waverly Drive, Mayfield, KY 42066.

SEEKING: Growing church seeks full-time music worship leader. Forest Park Baptist Church, Bowling Green, KY 42101. (502) 843-3419; fax: (502) 843-3434.

Confused, frightened and up a tree

From the first of April until the middle of November my schedule is rather hectic. Kay and I have very little time to relax. Several months ago we scheduled three days off in November to go to Pigeon Forge, Tenn. We invited my mother-in-law and our four-year-old grandson, Adam, to go with us.

We knew the Christmas lights would be on display, and we hoped to see some wildlife, especially a bear. On our first evening we rode the trolley around Pigeon Forge. It gave us a chance to see the beautiful lights. The driver said just an hour earlier a black bear was up in a tree at the edge of town. We rode past the tree, but it was too dark to see a black bear.

At the end of our ride, we anxiously got in our car and drove back to the tree. My small flashlight was of little use, but we were sure we saw the outline of a bear. Around the base of the tree was a collection of debris, giving ample evidence that a hungry bear had been foraging through the nearby trash bin.

We returned to the tree early the next morning, hoping to see our furry friend before he went back to the forest. Apparently, under the cover of darkness the bear had gone back to the hills. We made two or three trips past the tree during the day, but we never saw him.

Our last day included a trip to Cades Cove with the promise of seeing deer, turkeys and maybe a bear. On our way, we drove past the now-famous tree. Sure enough, our friend had returned for some breakfast. In fact, he dropped a pancake in the grass between the dumpster and the tree. Adam was excited, as we were, at the sight of this bear sitting in the tree. We went on to Cades Cove, where we saw several turkeys and a host of deer.

Driving past the tree on our way out of town, we noticed a police car parked nearby. We stopped to see what was happening. The officer explained that the bear would have to be caught and returned to the safety of the mountains before someone, or the bear, got hurt.

As I stared at the seemingly harmless creature, I wondered what he was thinking. If he could talk he might say, "What is all the commotion about? Haven't you ever seen a bear before?" or "Why all the fuss? I was just hungry. I did not mean to get into trouble." Actually it appeared that the bear retreated to the safety of the tree because someone came by the dumpster and frightened him. More likely than not, the person near the dumpster was a little scared too.

I could not help but draw an analogy between the plight of this little bear and some of the young people Oneida is privileged to minister to. They often come to Oneida having done nothing really wrong. They were totally unaware that they were creating problems for themselves or others. And, like the bear, they are often afraid and confused

about the things happening in their lives. They arrive on our campus with mixed emotions: excited about having the opportunity for a new start in life, but a little afraid of their new environment.

Just as this bear would have to be lured out of the tree with food, we have to lure some of our students "out of the tree" with praise, attention, friendship and love. We are grateful for the chance to help young people who have found themselves "up a tree."

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

God's work in alumni churches

A planning session of national alumni leaders on our campus gave opportunity to hear good news from church leaders in three states.

Bob and Beth Wyatt, '75, work with Old Salem Church in Laurel River Association. The church went 14 years without a baptism and in two months baptized eight, including an 87-year-old man. The church has the only Adults on Mission group in the association.

1978 alumnus Ronnie Pennington and his wife, Cynthia, celebrated 25 years of marriage. Petry Memorial Church in Hazard sent them on an all-expense paid trip to the Bahamas. An unusual partnership to reach multi-housing residents brought together the church, police department, Hazard Housing Authority and Kentucky River Comprehensive Care. The four entities sponsor parenting and spouse abuse seminars, block parties and Bible studies at a local housing project. The church has full access to a building in the community. This Christmas the congregation will sponsor 58 children. The church also has renovated its facilities and currently exceeds its budget.

Eagle Heights Church meets in the rural development center at

Somerset. David Bullock, '88, is pastor of the one-year-old congregation, "a unique Southern Baptist fellowship" with contemporary worship. The group numbers 251 and expects to purchase 10 to 15 acres on the new Somerset bypass.

"We are seeing a strong movement of the Lord," Glasgow pastor Ray Woodie said, describing Coral Hill Church. "It is exciting to baptize several Sundays. We are re-examining every thing we do and raising the standard of excellence."

Two Indiana pastors experience growth. Randy Gaskey, '91, rejoices in the debt reduced below \$100,000 at First Baptist Church of Roselawn. The church plans to acquire additional land and erect a needed educational building. David Purichia, '92, became pastor of one-year-old Immanuel Baptist Church in Rockville. They have grown from 35 members to 200 and baptized 70 people in the past four years.

Englewood, Ohio, Pastor Dan Kincer, '88, launched a Wednesday night program that attracts 50 youth and children.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Volunteer shows age is no barrier to missions service

By Dan Martin
Baptist General Convention of Texas

AUSTIN, Texas (BP)—Lola Mae Daniel turned 95 in late September, doing what God called her to do nine decades ago: teaching Chinese-speaking people about Jesus.

The big difference is that she is teaching in Austin, Texas, where she lives in a retirement apartment building—not China or Taiwan or Hong Kong where she would rather be.

Daniel is the oldest known Mission Service Corps volunteer in the Southern Baptist Convention. While not as active as she once was, she still teaches English—using the Bible—to a group of Chinese women in her home once a week and Sunday school in the international department at Austin's Hyde Park Baptist Church.

"It's never too late to serve if the Lord is calling," Daniel said, although admitting if she had her druthers she would be in China. "I'd be there, right now, if I could," she said.

It almost seems as if God gave the spry senior a missions career after she reached retirement age.

Daniel said she has known most of her life that God called her to be

a missionary to China. When she was a small child, she recalled, her mother asked her where she was going when she went out to play. "I would tell her I was going to China, but that I would be back for lunch," Daniel said with a laugh.

Daniel finished Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, in 1926 and was selected as a mission volunteer. But the International Mission Board (then Foreign Mission Board) did not have the money to send missionaries at the time.

"They told us we could go if we could pay our own way. A few could, but not many," she recounted. Unable to afford the cost, she taught school and went on mission trips in the summer to scratch the mission itch in her soul.

She passed 35, the age at which missionary appointment was then cut off, but she did not give up hope. She was engaged once to be married, but times were hard and her fiancée joined the Navy. He was killed at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. She still wears the engagement ring he gave her.

Life marched on: the war, then the communist takeover in China, then Korea. She continued to teach school and hope.

She went to Alaska and New York and San Francisco on summer

mission trips, still dreaming of someday going to China. She was a volunteer in the 16-week Billy Graham Crusade in New York City, working primarily in Chinatown, where she was particularly drawn.

While she was teaching in Ozona, a small west Texas town, her opportunity came.

"I knew if I ever got to be 60, I would never go," she said. Not long afterward, she read in the Texas Baptist Standard that missionaries were needed to teach in Taiwan and that those up to age 60 could apply.

She did and moved quickly on faith. She purchased her own airplane ticket and shipped some of her personal items to Taiwan in a box she got from a local funeral home.

She laughs as she recalls getting the call from the FMB telling her she was approved and telling them she could leave the next morning.

In Taiwan, she taught English at a mission school during the day and Bible studies at night. She served until she reached the mandatory retirement age of 70, then stayed on two more years. She came home for a while, then went back for another year.

Then Daniel came home and taught in a private school in San Antonio. At age 84, she retired again, only to learn that universities in the

People's Republic of China were recruiting teachers for their universities.

She applied immediately, and despite her age, was accepted. "They didn't ask and I didn't tell," she said.

Finally, well beyond retirement age, she was able to serve in her beloved China, teaching at two schools for a semester each.

China was in her heart, as was sharing Jesus. She led 95 students to faith in Christ; 57 in one school and 38 in the other.

After her service in China, she was called to Howard Payne University where she counseled, taught and led Chinese—and other—students to Jesus Christ. During seven years working in the Brownwood, Texas, school, she led 114 students—some Chinese and some not—to faith in her Savior.

After seven years at Howard Payne, she "retired" again, this time to Austin, where she still keeps busy with her classes and her Sunday school.

She has a ready laugh and a story to tell. She is quick to point out her name is Daniel, without the "s." "I tell the students that without the 's,' it is singular. If it has an 's,' it is plural, and I am still single."

And, singular she is, in age, in experience and in commitment.

"It's never too late to serve if the Lord is calling."

*95-year-old Mission Service Corps volunteer
Lola Mae Daniel*

Poll: Americans are ambivalent about adoption

NEW YORK (RNS)—An adoption group survey found Americans have mixed feelings about adoption—supporting it in general but harboring misgivings when asked about the details of forming a non-biological family.

The survey by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute found people believe adopting a child is not as good as physically bearing a child. One in four say it is sometimes harder to love an adopted child, Associated Press reported.

"Once you ... ask more probing questions about adoption, people really have very mixed feelings," said Madeline Freundlich, executive director of the private, nonprofit research group.

"It's very important for us to understand this if we want to move forward to make sure that all of the children in this country who are waiting for adoptive families actually find them," Freundlich said.

The poll found Americans who had relatives who adopted were more likely to support adoption than those without such an experience. Nearly six in 10 Americans had a friend or family member involved with an adoption. The poll also found half of those surveyed believe adoption is better than being childless, but not as good as having one's own child.

Potter's Place brings hope to the homeless

By Clay Renick
Baptist Press

KUNKLETOWN, Pa. (BP)—Snow had fallen in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania as a small group was discussing the Bible study "Experiencing God."

"God is at work all around you," Grover and Melinda Fletcher told men who had come to the Potter's Place, an outreach to the homeless, jobless or addicted. "All you have to do is wait."

Then a knock was heard at the door. Two people in a truck had slid off the road and needed help.

Grover Fletcher and the men went out for a look while the passenger walked in. She was an 18-year-old girl with a beer in her hand. She had been for a ride with a married man.

"She was very lost and searching for more than someone to pull out their truck," Melinda Fletcher said. "They had to stay until we could take them home."

Mrs. Fletcher explained the gospel in private. The girl was interested and wanted to know more. She returned several days later and became a Christian.

The event allowed those in the Bible study to see God moving, Mrs. Fletcher said. "He brought those people to our door."

The Fletchers, directors of Potter's Place, are Mission Service Corps volunteers with the North American Mission Board.

Pastors in the New York Metro Baptist Association wanted an outreach for homeless people.

Two families donated 33 acres to Southern Baptists for the outreach and

sponsored the new program.

The compound is 100 miles from New York City and another 100 miles from the Philadelphia airport. But much of the ministry is local, Mrs. Fletcher said.

Participants agree to a 20-week program combining Bible study, career development, problem-solving and a 12-step alcohol rehabilitation program called "God Help Me Stop."

"This is a re-creation ministry," she said. "We love them right where they are."

The outreach's name came from the Old Testament book of Jeremiah where the potter refashions the clay.

Fletcher is a third-generation contractor who graduated from seminary at age 53.

"It's not a rehab, and it's not a detox," Mrs. Fletcher explained. "These men will be dealing with this (addiction) the rest of their lives."

Five men have been in the program so far. One spent four years on the streets of New York City.

"The only thing I was living for was to drink," said the man, who asked that he not be identified.

"I didn't want to face reality. I thought it was too harsh," he said.

Although he has an associate's degree from college and worked for a grocery chain several years, his alcoholism led to joblessness.

He collected cans and slept in parks. A small welfare check helped.

"Most of the time I made enough to get something to eat or drink," he said.

His cardboard or plastic shelters were no match for the cold temperatures, rain and snow.

He got sick and needed help at the

hospital. Doctors told him he was drinking himself to death.

"I asked him (God) for help," he said.

A Lutheran priest knew the man and suggested the Potter's Place. Nine months later, he now has a job, attends church and recently got a driver's license and car.

"My life has never been this happy," he said. "I'm at peace with myself."

The Potter's Place program starts with an interview and probation period.

"If they don't want help, we can't help them," Fletcher said.

That's followed with a survey of job skills and a personal work project. Fletcher builds something with each man to put "God's truth and their hands to work," he explained.

Projects have included a chicken coop and fire pit. One man even helped build a new workshop.

"It's a wonderful place," said Johnny Rodriguez, a member of Middle Creek Baptist Church in Kresgeville, Pa. Rodriguez attends the Fletcher's Bible study, which is open to anyone.

Rodriguez dropped out of school in Puerto Rico and never learned to read. He's now married with children and works as a garbage man.

"One day I'm going to be able to read the Bible," he said. "That's my dream."

A woman from the Bible study tutored him but couldn't continue when his work hours changed. He's praying for another tutor.

"I'm patient," he said. "That's one thing I learned at the Bible study. You have to be waiting for what you want."

"She was very lost and searching for more than someone to pull out their truck."

Melinda Fletcher, co-director of the Potter's House, an outreach to the homeless, jobless or addicted



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