



WESTERN RECORDER

December 9, 1997
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FOR THE RECORD

Mackey approved
The Kentucky Baptist Convention's Executive Board elects Bill Mackey as the new executive secretary-treasurer. *Page 3.*

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Students draw strength from faith after shootings

By David Winfrey
News Director

WEST PADUCAH—Brittney Thomas and Nicole Hadley were steps apart last week when a teenage gunman opened fire on the Agape Christian Club of Heath High School.

Prayer had just ended and Hadley was laughing at a joke when she was struck by a bullet. She was still laughing just before she lost consciousness, said Thomas, who was thrown by a friend behind the glass entryway, unable to run. Unable to do anything.

"We just had to watch him shoot people from inside the glass doors," she said. "We just watched people fall and scream and run."

Between tears and laughter as she talked with friends Wednesday night, two days after the shooting, Thomas already was finding some positive results from the Dec. 1 tragedy.

"The whole school is now turning to God. It's not just a little circle anymore," she said.

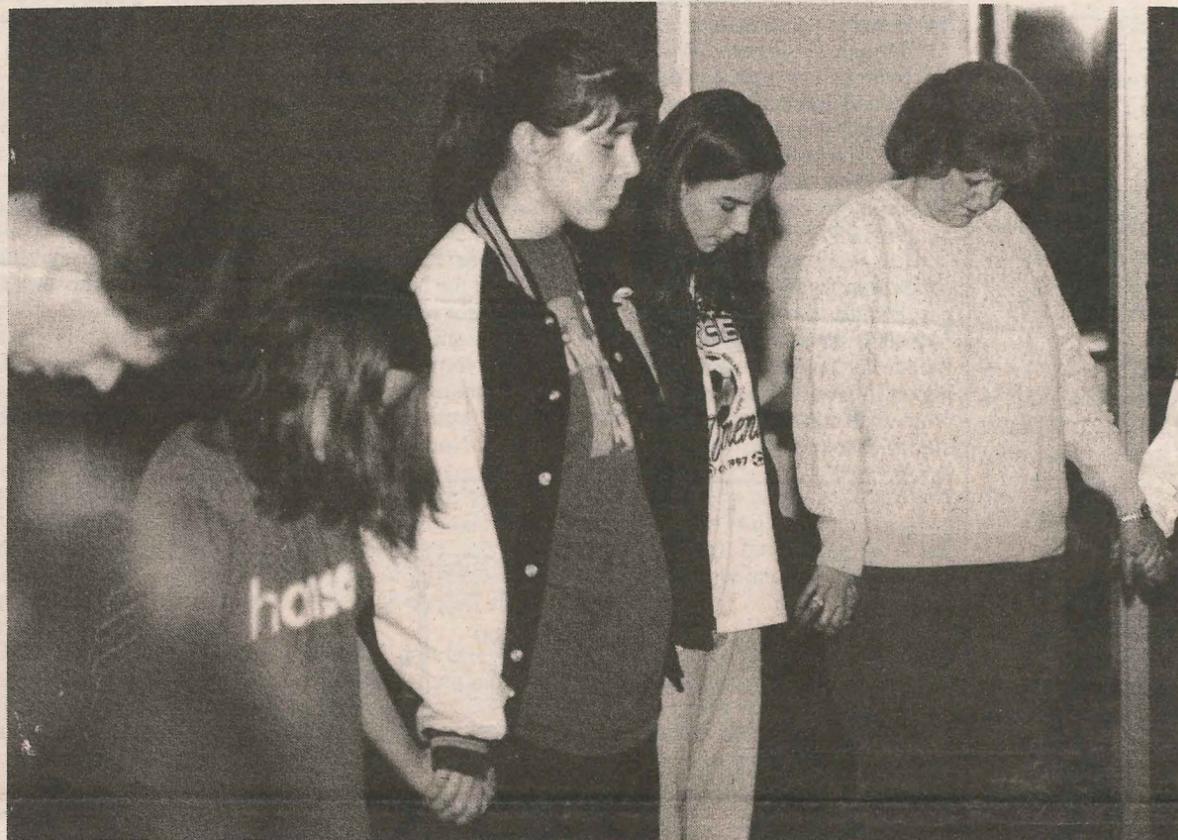
She is among the scores if not hundreds of Christian students from Heath and beyond seeking to redeem last week's tragedy by drawing from and strengthening their Christian faith.

Students and ministers said that amid the pain, sorrow, anger and questions surrounding the shootings many youth are working to ensure the Christian characteristics they talk about in the now-famous prayer group are modeled as the whole world watches.

"I don't want them to say, 'Yeah, I remember Heath. They're the one where all those kids died,'" Thomas said. "I want them to say, 'Yeah, I remember Heath. They're the one with the prayer group of 400 and didn't let one incident ruin their life.'"

Paducah Baptists point to several events in the aftermath of the shootings, in which a 14-year-old student allegedly shot into a prayer group killing three girls and injuring five other Heath students. Among them:

■ Hundreds of students attended



PRAYER TIME After the shootings of eight Heath High School students in a prayer group Dec. 1, many students are working to redeem the tragedy by drawing from and strengthening their faith. ■ Above: Angel Bachuss (center), a 16-year-old student at Heath High School, prays with friends at an evening prayer service at Olivet Baptist Church in Paducah. ■ Right: One of many notes left in the lobby floor of Heath High School for the shooting victims.

the early-morning prayer meeting when they returned to school Tuesday, the day after the shooting. Attendance remained strong throughout the week, students said.

■ Students who were shot and their parents already are telling others of their forgiveness toward the 14-year-old accused assailant, Michael Carneal.

■ Some students have become Christians or rededicated their lives to God.

■ Parents of the three slain girls agreed to televise the joint funeral, expressing the hope that it would help some viewers become Christians.

At a Wednesday night discussion hosted by Harmony Baptist Church in Paducah Dec. 3, 14-year-old Katie Sullivan called it "neat" that people see God at work through this event.

She too was in the prayer group Monday morning. "I'll just never forget the sound of the first bullet," she said. □ See *Students draw strength ...*, page 6



'W.W.J.D.' items are hottest Christian gifts

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—Looking for the perfect Christmas gift with a Christian twist? Just ask yourself one question: "What Would Jesus Do?"

Any product with those words engraved, embroidered or printed on it is hot among Kentucky's Christian retailers this Christmas season.

The "W.W.J.D.?" trend has been gaining steam across the nation all fall, sparked by a resurgent interest in Charles Sheldon's classic book "In His Steps." Fabric wristbands with the "W.W.J.D.?" initials have been big sellers for several months.

The wristbands were designed and marketed as a way for Christians who wear them to be constantly reminded to live as Jesus would. Now the wristbands have given way to a whole line of products: key chains, apparel, caps, book bags, Bible covers, backpacks,

decals, lapel pins, bumper stickers and golf balls.

There's also a book for teens that presents situations and Scriptures showing what Jesus did. Plus, a CD collection featuring various Christian artists, with the title tune sung by "Big Tent Revival."

"Anything with W.W.J.D.? on it is hot this year," said Ward Wells, manager of Wellspring Christian Book Center in Louisville. "The phenomenon has gone through adults as well."

"It's hard to keep the line in stock," echoed Phillip Kays, assistant manager of Louisville's Baptist Book Store. "You even see (bracelets) in gasoline stations now; it's crossed over that much."

In Northern Kentucky, at the Family Christian Store in Florence Mall, David Phillips is experiencing the same trend.

"Kids come in by the tons to get the bracelets and then see what else is

available in T-shirts and caps," he said.

While they're wearing "W.W.J.D.?" apparel, teens also like to listen to the music of "Jars of Clay," atop the charts with their "Much Afraid" album. Sales are especially strong in Louisville because of their recent local concert, said Kays.

Affection for videos featuring the lovable "Veggie Tales" vegetables Bob Tomato, Larry Cucumber and Junior Asparagus also has spawned a children's marketing bonanza.

"Josh & The Big Wall," the newest video about the fall of Jericho, debuted in mid-November and is "flying off the shelves" in Florence, Phillips said.

The product line has accelerated this year, he explained, with such things as wall clocks, kids' dinner sets and popular instructional booklets. The latter is a four-book series teaching. □ See *Biggest Christian gift ...*, page 8

Coats needed now for Koreans

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—North Korean officials have asked Southern Baptists to supply 180,000 coats by Christmas to protect the country's children from the upcoming bitter winter.

Without the coats, officials fear children will freeze to death in several North Korean provinces. Flooding in recent years ravaged homes and devastated farmland, sending the country into an economic tailspin.

Coats should be sent to Coats for Christmas, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230. For information about volume donations from manufacturers or stores, contact the Southern Baptist International Mission Board at (800) 866-3621 or manna@imb.org.

Moving? See page 4 (1209)

BAPTISTS

Hunger aid up but so are needs

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptists have increased their giving to human needs this year, allowing the International Mission Board to respond to major world crises that have left people lacking adequate food and water. But administrators report that needs have increased too.

Through October, the IMB had received just more than \$4 million for hunger and relief, an increase of about 23 percent over the same period last year. If gifts keep streaming in at that rate, receipts at year's end will total \$7.3 million, compared to \$5.9 million for 1996.

However, needs continue to increase sharply at the same time. In the past month, the IMB sent overseas \$400,000, responding to drought in Indonesia, famine in Tanzania, a typhoon in North Korea and economic woes in Bulgaria. In addition, missionaries expect to respond to an

earthquake in Chile, a tropical storm in Mexico and flooding in Spain.

"It seems the number and the severity of disasters that we have been asked to respond to have increased," said Bill Cashion, IMB consultant for human needs. "We're rejoicing over the increased giving, but our hearts are burdened as we see disasters increasing all over the world."

Cashion's office responded to 500 inquiries about overseas suffering in October, a sharp increase from the average 20 his office has taken per month during the past three to four years, he said. "It's as if God is saying, 'There are people who are going to send the help you're needing,' and then he's sending us an increase in funds from these people."

In North Korea, already wracked by years of flood-induced famine, a recent typhoon destroyed key salt reserves. North Koreans use salt to pre-

pare kimchi, a staple dish made of pickled cabbage. An estimated 100,000 metric tons of salt will be needed to replace what was lost, Cashion said. In cooperation with Texas Baptist Men, the IMB has donated \$50,000 toward sending the country 2,000 metric tons of salt; Texas Baptist men have donated \$10,000.

The IMB already has released about \$1.5 million during the past 18 months to respond to North Korea's famine.

In addition, Baptist state conventions working with Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood groups have sent more than 30 ocean containers of food. North Korean government officials credit Southern Baptists with between \$5 million and \$7 million in aid, Cashion said.

Indonesia is bracing for up to two more years of drought resulting from unfavorable trade winds—the effect of "El Nino"—carrying moisture away from parts of East Asia. The resulting lack of a normal rainy season has allowed huge fires to rage in Indonesia, and water is growing scarce.

"They're having to go deeper and deeper down to find water," Cashion said. The IMB has released \$158,247 to buy drilling equipment and materials and to pay for labor to drill 100 deep wells during the next two years. "Water from the new wells will save thousands of people, especially children, from the jaws of death," he said.

Bulgarian churches benefited last year as unbelievers were introduced to Jesus by receiving food packets in the midst of a harsh winter. This year the IMB will provide \$100,000 to Bulgaria Baptists to provide food packets to their own members, plus jobless Gypsies and Turks, as well as others around their churches who have no incomes.

Six more positions filled at NAMB

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Four new hirings and two promotions have been announced by the North American Mission Board.

Ken Tan has been named director of leadership enlistment and training. Tan has been director of evangelism for the Baptist Convention of New York for two years. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Skip Arnhart has been named family evangelism associate for children. He has been minister of preschool and children at East Brent Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla., since 1996. He is a graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary.

Jaye Martin has been named family evangelism associate for women. She has been minister to women at First Baptist Church of Houston since 1989. She is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

N.S.R.K. Ravi has been named interfaith witness associate. Since 1989, he has been president for the Word for the Asians International Ministries Inc. He is a graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary.

Phil Jones, previously NAMB's general research manager, has been named director of the strategic planning support team. He is a graduate of Southern Seminary.

Susan McDaniel has been named editorial manager. She worked with NAMB as an editorial assistant for children's missions education. She is a graduate of Georgia State University.



BAPTIST BITS

■ **Confederate flag causes flap.** The South Carolina Baptist Convention has ended financial support for the state's Christian Action Council after the council supported efforts to remove the Confederate flag from the state capitol. Supporters of the Confederate flag said Gov. David Beasley was driving a wedge in churches by making the flag a moral issue.

■ **New executive in Missouri.** James L. "Jim" Hill, pastor of South County Baptist Church in St. Louis, has been named the new executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention. He was elected by the convention's Executive Board Nov. 24. Before helping start the St. Louis church in 1990, Hill was director of the field services department for church extension with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He previously served as a missionary in Kansas City, Mo.

■ **More leave IMB.** Two more missionary couples have resigned from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board to join a new independent missions enterprise

established by other former IMB missionaries. Mark and Cindy Morris announced their resignations to join All Peoples Nov. 22. Morris has been the IMB's regional leader for central and southern Asia. Don and Robin Martin, missionary journalists, announced their resignations Dec. 2 to join All Peoples. The new entity was formed by Mike Stroope, who previously led the IMB's creative access to unreached people groups.

■ **New name in Hawaii.** The Hawaii Baptist Convention has changed its name to Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention. Executive Director Dub Eford said the new name more accurately reflects the territory served by the convention, which includes Hawaii, American and Western Samoa and Guam.

■ **Deal struck on Louisiana lawsuit.** An out-of-court settlement apparently has been reached in a lawsuit filed last spring by four professors at Louisiana College against members of the conservative group Louisiana Baptists Speaking the Truth in Love. John Alley, chairman of the Louisiana Baptist Convention's Executive

Board, said Nov. 11 he is convinced the suit can be settled if money is raised to pay "some of the legal fees that have already been agreed upon." He said the amount needed is \$41,000, and it would go to pay the professors' attorneys. The professors have claimed they were injured by defamatory and derogatory statements meant to harm their professional and moral reputations.

■ **Carter hosts dialogue.** Former President Jimmy Carter hosted an informal dialogue with Baptist leaders Nov. 14, although little information about the private meeting has been made available to the press. Among Southern Baptists attending the meeting were Timothy George of Samford University; Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando; and Daniel Vestal, coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

■ **What's in a name?** Similar names for two sources of church offering envelopes have caused confusion for some Southern Baptist churches, according to a spokeswoman for Baptist Book Store Envelope Service. A previous vendor for

the Baptist Book Store is continuing to send out renewal notices under the name Baptist Envelope Service, said Linda Lucarini. "That company is not connected with nor endorsed by the Sunday School Board, Baptist Book Stores or the Southern Baptist Convention," she said.

■ **Billy Graham hospitalized.** Evangelist Billy Graham was hospitalized Dec. 3 in Jacksonville, Fla., for a respiratory infection and dehydration. Graham, 79, was admitted to St. Luke's Hospital. Graham was diagnosed with pneumonitis, an inflammation in his right lung.

■ **Indiana names editor.** John "Chip" Bayer has been named editor of the Indiana Baptist, news journal of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. He succeeds John Yeats, who left to become editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger. Bayer, a former editor of the Shelby Sun Times in Germantown, Tenn., is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and the University of Memphis. He is slated to receive a master's degree from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary this month.

KENTUCKY

Bill Mackey elected KBC executive secretary

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

Bill Mackey, 56, was elected executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention by the KBC Executive Board Dec. 8 in a standing vote with no opposition.

Mackey, a former Whitesburg pastor who currently serves on the staff of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, was presented to the Executive Board by a 14-member search committee that has been at work 15 months.

Search committee chairwoman Peggy Hicks of Louisville presented Mackey to the board, calling him "a good family man," "a man of integrity," "a proven leader in denominational life and the local church," "a man of vision," "creative" and "innovative."

She said Mackey is "conservative by conviction and non-political" and predicted he will "work well with the entire constituency."

Mackey then addressed the board briefly, talking about his roots in Kentucky as a seminary student, then as an associate pastor at First Baptist Church in Middlesboro and as pastor of First Baptist Church of Whitesburg.

As a young pastor, he said, the

staff of the KBC Executive Board mentored him. "That colored my attitude toward convention staff and the possibilities" of the state convention's ministry, he said.

Mackey talked about a recent period of spiritual renewal in his own life, during which he "discovered the possibilities of moving to a new level of relationship with Jesus Christ."

He assured the board he is aware of the heritage of Kentucky Baptists. "I think there is a rich heritage on which to build a great future," he said.

He cited two words that are "very important" to him: relationship and service.

"We can't control the issues and challenges that come," he said. "But we can control the relationships in which we confront those issues and challenges."

He explained that service is what the KBC is about, helping churches experience growth and ministry.

When KBC President Gayle Toole then opened the floor for questions, none were asked.

Thurmond Coleman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jeffersonton, which is affiliated with the Central District Association of Baptists, a regional organization of African-American churches, stood to welcome

Mackey to Kentucky.

"Welcome to our community and the work of Kentucky Baptists," he said. "We look forward to working with you in joint ministry."

Before leaving the room for the vote to be taken, Mackey told the Executive Board that his commitment "is to follow Jesus Christ."

"These days demand our best in every way," he said. "We don't just have jobs; we have a mission from God. If you feel led by the Spirit of God to vote this afternoon, I pray it will be a commitment to pursue with all your heart the mission Jesus has for us."

After Mackey and his wife, Kay, stepped out of the room, Hicks and Charles Barnes, secretary of the search committee, presented information about the proposed compensation package.

Mackey will be paid a base salary of \$92,000, plus the normal benefits given all Executive Board employees. That is an \$8,000 increase over the salary Mackey's predecessor would have been scheduled to receive in the current fiscal year.

Barnes, immediate past chairman of the Executive Board's administrative committee, distributed information showing the salaries of executives of the 13 largest state Baptist conven-

tions. According to that data, Kentucky ranks 12th out of 13 in pay for its executive, with a range from \$80,700 to \$135,700.

The recommended increase in the Kentucky executive's salary would move the KBC from 12th to 10th on the list, Barnes said.

Both the salary package and the candidate were approved by the Executive Board without further question.

The board gave Mackey and his wife a standing ovation as they re-entered the room moments later.

Mackey thanked the board for their confidence and noted that the work of the KBC is a "supernatural work."

"It is only as Jesus lives in me and Jesus lives in you and the Jesus in me can identify with the Jesus in you that we can resolve conflicts," he said.

Mackey then asked board members to join him at the front of the Baptist Building chapel for a period of prayer—for him, for the Executive Board staff, for the KBC's agencies and institutions and for the KBC's churches.

Bill Mackey's election occurred just as the Recorder went to press Dec. 8. More information about Mackey and the Executive Board meeting will be presented in next week's paper.

Profile of Bill Mackey

■ Age: 56

■ Married to Kay; they are the parents of two grown daughters who live in South Carolina

■ Current position: Director of leadership development and evangelism growth team for South Carolina Baptist Convention

■ Kentucky links: Pastor of First Baptist Church of Whitesburg 1969-1979; associate pastor of First Baptist Church of Middlesboro 1966-1969

■ Education: Doctor of ministry and bachelor of divinity degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; bachelor of arts degree from Furman University

CHRISTMAS ACROSS KENTUCKY

CENTRAL REGION

■ BETHLEHEM—Churches of Bethlehem community will present the annual "Christmas in Bethlehem," a living nativity scene depicting the birth of Jesus in a stable in Bethlehem of Judea, Dec. 22-25 from 6:30 p.m.-9 p.m. Information: (502) 845-5046.

■ FAIRDALE—First Baptist Church will present a musical drama, "The Gift of Christmas," Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m.

■ FRANKLIN—First Baptist Church's adult choir will present a musical drama, "Adoration... In Search of a King," Dec. 14 at 5 p.m. "Surely He Was Born for Us," a service of worship by the youth choir and handbell group will be presented Dec. 21 at 7 p.m.

■ LAWRENCEBURG—Alton Baptist Church will present an adult choir Christmas musical Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Crescent Hill Baptist Church will host world-class harpist Carol McClure in concert. Also, the madrigal singers and chancel choir singing "A Ceremony of Carols" accompanied by harp Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m. A community Christmas service for bereaved persons Dec. 21 at 3 p.m. Christmas Eve service Dec. 24 at 5:30 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Rockford Lane Baptist Church will present the musical "I Have Seen the Light: The Search for Christmas" by the sanctuary choir, with a special appearance by the children's choir Dec. 20-21 at 6:30 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Melbourne Heights Baptist Church will present a dramatic musical, "Home for Christmas," Dec. 13 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Dessert will be available. Tickets \$5. Call (502) 454-4681. Also, "A Simple Christmas" will be presented Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m., and "Bethlehem Star," a sanctuary choir cantata and drama Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church will present "The Bethlehem Project" with children and youth Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. The sanctuary choir will present "How Great Our Joy" Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Deer Park Baptist Church's chancel choir will present Handel's "Messiah" Dec. 21 at 3 p.m. A Christmas Eve candlelight service will be Dec. 24 at 5:30 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Midlane Park Baptist Church's preschool, children and youth musical drama, "The Bethlehem Project," will be presented Dec. 14 at 10:45 a.m. Church-wide Christmas banquet Dec.

14 at 6 p.m. Sanctuary choir musical, "Wonderful," Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Gethsemane Baptist Church will present "How Great Our Joy," a cantata, Dec. 14 at 10:55 a.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Audubon Baptist Church will present a musical play, "A Time for Christmas," Dec. 14 at 6 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—St. Matthews Baptist Church's adult choir and orchestra will present "O Holy Night" with narration by Wayne Oates Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m. Caroling in the neighborhood Dec. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Christmas Connection at Baptist Tabernacle Dec. 20 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight communion service Dec. 24 at 5 p.m.

■ LOUISVILLE—Clifton Baptist Church will present the choir cantata "How Great Our Joy" Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

■ McDANIELS—Rough River Baptist Church will present the adult choir cantata "Shine the Light of Christmas" Dec. 21 during morning worship. Children and youth program "The Search for Peace" Dec. 21 at 6 p.m.

■ RADCLIFF—Stithton Baptist Church will present the cantata "From Heaven's Throne" Dec. 17, 19 and 21 at 7 p.m.

■ SHEPHERDSVILLE—First Baptist Church, will present a Family Night at Christmas at 6 p.m. Dec. 21. Christmas Eve candlelight service Dec. 24 at 5 p.m.

■ TAYLORSVILLE—Little Mount Baptist Church's youth, children and adult choirs will present the cantata "Joy In This Place" Dec. 14 at 11 a.m.

■ WADDY—Pigeon Fork Baptist Church will present a children's choir program Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. and an adult cantata, "Born a Savior, Born a King," Dec. 21 at 11 a.m.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

■ ALEXANDRIA—Main Street Baptist Church will present a musical/drama, "From Heaven's Throne," Dec. 13-14 at 7:30 p.m.

■ BURLINGTON—Bellevue Baptist Church will present the musical drama "Merry Christmas to You" Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. Christmas Eve service Dec. 25 at 4 p.m.

■ CORBIN—First Baptist Church, "Lighting the Candle of Joy," adult choir and adult handbell choir, Dec. 14 at 10:30 a.m. "The Perfect Christmas," youth Christmas play at 6 p.m. Dec. 14. "The Perfect Gift," young musicians Dec. 17 at 6:30 p.m.

"Lighting the Candle of Love," adult choir Dec. 21 at 10:30 a.m. and Christmas caroling at 5 p.m. Christmas Eve services at 6 p.m. Dec. 24.

■ CRESCENT SPRINGS—Crescent Springs Baptist Church will present the children's cantata "It All Happened in the Country" Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. Adult choir cantata, "The Cradle of Christmas," Dec. 21 at 11 a.m.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

■ CAMPBELLSVILLE—Mt. Roberts Church will present "Back to Bethlehem" Dec. 21 at 6 p.m.

■ CAMPBELLSVILLE—Elk Horn Baptist Church's children's choir will sing in downtown Campbellsville on the steps of the United Methodist Church Dec. 13 from 4 p.m.-5 p.m. The church will participate in a live nativity at Wal-Mart Dec. 22-24 at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m.

■ RICHMOND—Unity Baptist Church, church-wide caroling Dec. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Christmas cantata Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m. Christmas Eve candlelight communion at 6 p.m.

■ STANFORD—Stanford Baptist Church will present an adult choir Christmas musical Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. Children's choirs Christmas program at 6 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight and communion service Dec. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

SOUTHEASTERN REGION

■ WHITESBURG—First Baptist Church will present the youth musical "Cornerstone" Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. Adult cantata, "I Have Seen the Light," Dec. 20-21 at 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service at 5:30 p.m.

SOUTHERN REGION

■ BOWLING GREEN—Living Hope Baptist Church will present the Christmas musical programs "Our Savior, Emmanuel" Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 14 at 6 p.m.; "Immanuel, Our God is With Us," Dec. 21 at 6 p.m. Communion service Christmas Eve at 6 p.m.

■ BOWLING GREEN—Jackson Grove Baptist Church's children and youth will present "A Gift of Love" followed by the musical "Classic Noels" and a potluck supper Dec. 20 at 6 p.m.

SOUTHWESTERN REGION

■ HOPKINSVILLE—Casky Baptist Church will present the adult choir cantata "The Wonder of His Love" at Chapel House Dec. 10; adult cantata Dec. 14 at Casky Church at 11 a.m. Children's Christmas

program Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

■ HOPKINSVILLE—First Baptist Church will present the Christmas musical "The Gift" Dec. 14 at p.m. and Dec. 15 at 7 p.m.; "The Gift of Love with The Christmas Gift for Christ" Dec. 21 at 10:45 a.m. Family Night at Christmas at 6 p.m. Dec. 21. Candlelight service with the Lord's Supper Dec. 24 at p.m.

■ PADUCAH—Immanuel Baptist Church will present "The Life of Christ in Living Pictures," a dramatic musical, Dec. 11-14 at 7:30 p.m.

WESTERN REGION

■ GREENVILLE—Second Baptist Church will present an adult Christmas cantata Dec. 17 at 6:30 p.m. and Dec. 21 at 11 a.m.

■ HENDERSON—Immanuel Baptist Church will present a Family Christmas Praise and White Christmas Dec. 14 at 5:30 p.m. Children's Christmas musical, "Hark the Herald Angel," Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight service Dec. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

■ HENDERSON—Community Baptist Church will present a youth and adult musical drama Dec. 14. Adult choir and Christmas Eve candlelight communion with Christmas music.

■ MADISONVILLE—"Return to Bethlehem," a walk-through drama by First Baptist Church Dec. 13, 5-8 p.m.; Dec. 14, 2-6 p.m.; Dec. 15, 5-8 p.m.; Dec. 16, 5-8 p.m.

■ OWENSBORO—Seven Hills Baptist Church will present a Living Christmas Tree Dec. 10-12 at 7 p.m.

■ OWENSBORO—Lewis Lane Baptist Church's sanctuary choir will present the cantata "Adoration—In Search of a King" Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. Advent Journey Dec. 18-19, 6-8 p.m. and Dec. 20, 5-8 p.m.

■ PHILPOT—Dawson Baptist Church's adult choir will present "Christmas Joy" Dec. 14. "A Christmas Pageant," children's choir Dec. 21 Sunday evening.

■ PROVIDENCE—First Baptist Church will present a candlelight communion service Dec. 24 at 10 p.m.

TO BE LISTED HERE: The Western Recorder will present one more listing of Christmas events in next week's paper. To add your church's event without charge, fax information to (502) 244-6474 or call (502) 244-6470 by noon Dec. 12.

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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A model for moral decision making

By Joe Trull

In 1804, a Kentucky Baptist congregation was divided because they could not decide the right thing to do. The question raised was whether a man, when captured by the Indians, was justified in lying to protect his family concealed nearby.

Some believed the man had a duty to lie in those circumstances, while others maintained he should tell the truth even if it meant the sacrifice of his family. The argument was so vehement that the church split into two congregations known as the Lying Baptists and the Truthful Baptists.

Moral decisions never are easy. How does a Christian determine what is right and what is wrong? Is there a tried-and-tested formula for making good moral judgments?

Across the years, Christians have made moral decisions in a variety of ways. A common method is to follow moral rules predetermined by an external authority, such as the church, religious tradition or biblical norms. This approach is called legalism because it attempts to prescribe rules for every moral decision. Moral rules do have a positive function in Christian ethics; they are important as guidelines for ordinary behavior.

However, as a predominant method, the rules approach has a number of weaknesses:

- Every moral decision cannot be covered by a rule.
- Rules may conflict.
- In keeping the letter of the law, one may miss the spirit and intent.
- Legalism seldom promotes personal moral growth.

A contrasting approach is situation ethics. The situationist opposes legalism, claiming only one rule is important—the law of love.

On the surface, this “new morality” seems very Christian. Did not Jesus and Paul teach that agape love is the highest virtue? Nevertheless, sit-

uation ethics is flawed:

■ Situationism is based on an unrealistic view of human nature. People are sinners. What we decide is the “loving response” may be our own selfish desire.

■ Because situationists believe moral choices must not be predetermined, they often overlook the value of ethical guidelines like biblical commands and moral principles.

■ The most glaring weakness of situation ethics is its individualistic, subjective and fuzzy definition of “love.”

Additional proposals exist.

Is it possible to develop a model for moral decision making that is biblically and theologically sound, ethically credible and logically consistent? The model that follows is an attempt.

■ *Be true to your character.* A basic step in decision making is to develop a mature Christian character. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus emphasized that character precedes conduct and morality is a matter of the heart.

Character is the inner moral orientation that fashions our lives into predictable patterns; it is the cultivation of virtues, those “habits of the heart” that give calmness in doing the right thing and courage in resisting wrong.

■ *Face the facts.* Gathering the facts involves asking the right questions about the situation, examining the people involved, evaluating the information and exploring all possible options.

■ *Follow the guidelines.* Once we understand the issue, the people involved and the options available, we are ready to consider the values that will guide our decision.

First we pay attention to those moral rules that guide us toward good decisions. In addition, we identify the values and principles expressed through these norms. Ethical guidelines in Scripture include the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17), the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew

5-7) and principles like love (Matthew 22:36-40) and justice (Amos 5:24).

When two values conflict, the decision maker struggles to choose the greater good or the lesser evil. In “The Hiding Place,” Corrie ten Boom wrote of her ethical dilemma—does she tell the truth to the Nazis who came to her house searching for Jews, or does she deny they are hiding in her home to save lives?

■ *Consider the consequences.* Anyone interested in doing the right thing must consider consequences, for bringing good to people's lives is a major part of morality. But before we depend on results to justify our actions, we need criteria for knowing what is good, better or best, or maybe what is bad and what is worse.

Asking questions—about which consequences are beneficial and which are harmful, which are short-term and which will last a long time, which will help achieve an ideal and which will involve compromise—helps evaluate consequences.

■ *Act responsibly.* Making moral decisions is a lot like driving a car on a crowded freeway. Certain rules of the road must be followed: speed limits, lane changes and not driving while drinking. However, on any trip there are hundreds of decisions not covered by the rules of the road.

Some situations require you to make your own rules or even change the rules in order to prevent a catastrophe, such as avoiding a reckless driver cutting in front of you. The catch-all rule for driving on a freeway is to drive responsibly.

Making moral decisions requires a mix of methods. As you mature in decision making, you develop an artful ability to make the right response from your stock of skills.

Perhaps the most encouraging words for decision makers are the closing words in Lewis Smede's book “Choices”: “After all is said and done, being right is not the most important thing in the world. Being forgiven is.”

Joe Trull is professor of Christian ethics at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and author of “Walking in the Way: An Introduction to Christian Ethics.”

Turning mourning into joy

By Brenda Gray

Sadness and tragedy are the common bonds among our clients at Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. The names and faces change, but the components of abuse, neglect and crisis are unfortunate constants.

“Weeping may last for the night, but joy comes in the morning.” For me, the psalmist's words are more than prophetic prose, they are a lifeline to the source that keeps me striving in this work.

So, in the spirit of the psalmist, let me share this reminder of God's presence and his presents—gifts he has bestowed through KBHC and our supporters this year.

David recently participated at his church's Hanging of the Green service. He was nervous, although he only had one sentence to speak.

Compared to the other kids on the program, David's performance might have seemed poor. But it was a victory for this 11-year-old.

Last year David would not have

read aloud, much less volunteered to do so in front of a congregation. Last year he could barely read at all.

But because of a foster father who was determined to give the child in his care the best help available, and because of donors and staff at KBHC, David was enrolled in a private school where his learning disability not only was diagnosed, but addressed.

Another child in our care, Shar, is celebrating her first Christmas as a Christian. When she was 12, she became a prostitute. When her parents discovered this, they actually encouraged the arrangement because it meant extra income for their drug use.

Shar's prospective foster parents knew about her past and began praying for her before her arrival. They asked God to make Shar a part of their family, church and community.

Becoming part of the foster family was not easy for Shar. At first she was withdrawn and cautious. But the first time she went to church with her foster family, she was welcomed with open arms, especially from her next-

door neighbor, Miss Mary, who told her: “I love you and so does God.”

“I don't understand,” Shar replied. “Nobody has ever loved me for who I am.” Miss Mary then explained that because God loves us, we can love others. Shar said, “I don't understand all of this, but I want to become a Christian so I can have that love too.” A few weeks later, Shar accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior.

An observant person once said, “God is in the details.” By putting David with his foster father, and by sending Shar to that home, that neighborhood, that church, I am amazed and thankful for our Father's attention to the smallest detail.

These victories are God's gifts to us all. At a time when misfortune and tragedy are all around us, I encourage each of you to claim these lessons in love as your own. Our goal is to bring about brighter mornings for the hurting kids and families we minister to. But as you join us in this work, your mornings will be brighter too.

Brenda Gray is vice president for development and communications with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.

CHILDREN

Is it really more blessed to give?

By Jewell Nelson

Try it and see.

Help your children to be aware (even preschoolers) of the need to share at Christmas. Now is the time to go as a family to see areas where struggling families are trying to cope. Day cares, homeless shelters and schools in those areas need assistance.



Encourage your children to go through

all their toys, books, games and clothes and put aside those items that are outgrown or unused.

Check each item to be sure it is safe, in good condition and still enjoyable.

Get beautiful wrapping paper and ribbon. Brew hot chocolate. Gather the family around and spend an evening in gift wrapping the outgrown toys, books, games and clothing. Put a note of information both inside and outside of the wrapped package. The information should indicate if the gift is for a boy or girl, or either, and the age of the child who could enjoy the gift.

If you deliver gifts to a family or families, rather than an agency, family member names and ages would be helpful in the gift-giving. You might also take cookies or candies to the families. Your own family could increase its Christmas joy by making the candy or cookies to be delivered.

Your church could help in your family sharing by providing Christian literature appropriate for adults, youth and children. Even outdated copies of Parent Life or Home Life may be used. Place a sticker over the date on the publication. The sticker could have the name, address and phone number of your church.

A Bible, or Bibles, would be another good addition to the gifts your family shares.

Before you begin frantically rushing from store to store trying to fill the Christmas lists of your children, take this time to make them aware of children who would be very happy to have outgrown stuff from your household as Christmas gifts.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 35).

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

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

HE SAID/SHE SAID

The season of brotherly love actually is a season of stress

SHE SAID



Alison Wingfield

A recent newspaper article stated that those who procrastinate doing things create more unhealthy stress for themselves than those who approach tasks right away.

That was all I needed to hear. Now I'm stressed out about how I handle stress.

It's a vicious cycle. When I become overwhelmed by everything going on around me, I practically shut down. The more stressed I am, the less I get done.

The less I get done, the more stressed I am.

When the going gets tough, I take a nap. My stress relief is a game of computer solitaire, watching TV or reading a book.

Rather than breaking down each task into bite-size chunks, I put it all off and then run around in a frenzy to get everything done. And, I might add, I tend to get a wee bit cranky in the process. Woe to anyone who gets in my way.

Mark doesn't always put things off like I do. He just takes on too much. So he is in a constant state of putting out fires. And creating more. I need to get him one of those shirts that says "Just Say No," so he won't take on another project when I'm not around to elbow him in the ribs.

When we were first married, it was like opposites colliding. Mark didn't know how to relax, and I was rarely in high gear. We've reached a compromise of sorts. He's definitely better in the relaxation department, but I don't know that I've improved on the high-energy category.

I'm definitely not a "Type A" personality. Thank goodness. I don't need any more stress in my life.

HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

'Tis the season to be stressed. At least for those who are smart enough to know they ought to be stressed about the fact that it's only a few days until Christmas and a whole lot of shopping and baking and cleaning hasn't been done.

As for me, I'm in denial. Give about another week and I'll suddenly wake up, realize Christmas is coming and panic. But it's not time yet.

Alison, on the other hand, has been in a tizzy for weeks. She may not be a "Type A" like yours truly, but she can stretch a stress point out long enough to be more discomforting than the high-octane stress the rest of us experience. My theory is that 20 days of simmering stress may be more lethal than two days of blow-the-top-off stress.

We've been married long enough now that each of us generally knows what creates stress for the other and what response stress brings. Yet we still run into those first-time events that even a spouse's radar can't anticipate: Like your only two children leaving your daily care to start school—in the same month your widower dad begins dating and falls hopelessly in love with the first person he meets.

Unless you come from a really interesting family, you don't get a lot of practice anticipating that kind of stress, even though everyone eventually faces once-in-a-lifetime challenges of some sort or another.

And no matter how well you anticipate someone else's response to stress, you still have to deal with it. Proof once again of that age-old saying: "When mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy."

I, of course, have little room to complain about Alison getting cranky with me or the boys when something entirely unrelated has her stressed out. It's just that my "Type A" personality feels compelled to tell her about it, or else I'll be stressed out too. And why have two stressed-out people in the house when one is quite enough?

Paducah's lesson: We are not home yet

It is impossible for anyone sitting in Louisville or Lexington or even Bowling Green to fully comprehend the current feelings of residents of the Paducah area. Though we are shocked and saddened and mystified just like those who live and work and go to school among the victims of last week's tragedy at Heath High School, we are somehow removed.

We do not personally know the families involved; we cannot visualize the scene of the student prayer meeting turned violent; we are not haunted by the faces of promising young lives snuffed out in the blink of an eye.

Yet in our own way, all Kentuckians mourn Paducah's loss—out of compassion for our westernmost neighbors, for sure, but also because we know that Heath High School could have been our town's high school. We may live somewhere else, but the emotional distance is short.

And so we all join together in asking "Why?"—a question that may never be answered.

It is ironic that some have used this occasion to beat the drum loudly for a return to state-sanctioned prayer in public schools, as if the absence of prayer in schools is what led to this tragedy.

Official school prayers from dawn till dusk would not have made one iota of difference. After all, the students who were shot had just finished praying—in school, in a legal and effective manner.

The problem is not that Heath High School is a prayerless moral wasteland populated by atheist teachers, drug addicts and gang members—the image so many conjure up today when discussing public schools. Rather, the problem is that Heath High School is exactly the kind of school where you wouldn't expect violence to occur.

That bothers us, as well it should.

Despite the get-tough rhetoric of virtually every politician, what America has yet to own up to is that we have created a society permeated by violent influences. And we laugh at it, until it comes off the TV or movie screen into our own lives.

That leads to irony No. 2 of last week. Vice President Al Gore called on Hollywood movie writers and directors to reduce the prevalence of cigarette smoking by movie characters. Some of Hollywood's movers and shakers agreed, acknowledging a link between children and teen-

agers seeing characters on screen smoking and their own willingness to begin smoking.

Certainly smoking is a deadly habit. But a bullet will kill you a million times faster than a cigarette.

Where is the outcry—and the willingness to admit the influential link with children and teenagers—over the pervasive violence depicted in most movies and prime-time TV shows? Where are the parents who will shield their children from learning violent behaviors, just as they shield them from cigarettes?

Of course, the mysterious lesson of the Paducah shootings is that we never really know what lurks in the minds of individuals or what spirals behind the closed doors of a family's home.

It's like those crayon and wax pieces of art children sometimes make in elementary school, the kind where many colors are drawn on a page and then covered with a black waxy substance. When the young artist takes a sharp object and scratches over the black coating, the colors underneath show through to make a picture.

Sometimes we're surprised by what shows up when the exterior coating of our lives is scratched off.

Yet, even as this tragedy demonstrates, sometimes we're pleasantly surprised at how beautiful the picture can be even when the picture is drawn painfully.

The most amazing thing about the Heath High School shootings is that the gunfire fell on a group of committed young Christians. Because of this fact—whether intended by the shooter or not—the world has seen a brilliant display of what a difference authentic Christian faith makes.

The students' willingness to forgive, to not be deterred from their prayer circle even the day after the shooting, to be bereaved but not broken—this was a Christian witness of the greatest magnitude.

The best thing to come out of Paducah last week was that an entire nation had a chance to see how Christians mourn—not as those without hope, but as only those with the hope of Christ can mourn.

Christian songwriter Steven Curtis Chapman summed it up well as he sang at the joint funeral last Friday: "We are not home yet." Then, in a whisper, he added the best news of the week: "Welcome home, Kaycee; welcome home, Nicole; welcome home, Jessica."

—Mark Wingfield

EDITORIAL

When two is better than one

By Carey Newman

Second in a three-part series

Last night we went to our church's "live nativity." Leanne and I thought it would be a sure-fire way to introduce our 2-year-old to the Christmas story. The lights, sounds and costumes elicited the desired effect. She was certainly mesmerized by the performance. Unfortunately, she was more concerned about the movements of the donkey than about the theological significance of Jesus' birth (a fact I privately attribute to the Lewis side of the family.)

My lasting impression: the stable was a very busy place—all those animals, Mary, Joseph, Jesus, the shepherds and the magi crammed into a small lean-to. It dawned on me that, especially in our popular, artistic renderings, we tend to conflate the stories of Matthew and Luke. In fact, there are some striking differences between Matthew and Luke which render our attention.

For example, the genealogies which Matthew and Luke record for Jesus differ. While there are many scholarly opinions on why this is so, it is plain that Matthew stresses Jesus' Jewishness (from Abraham to Jesus), while Luke highlights Jesus' humanity (from Adam to Jesus).

Matthew even recounts events that Luke does not. For example, Matthew tells about the wise men. Although we know almost nothing of them—names, place of origin, exact profession, exact number and time of visit—we do know that they modeled the proper response to Jesus.

Independent of Luke, Matthew also tells of Jesus' escape to Egypt to avoid Herod's massacre. This story shows how God provided for the protection of the vulnerable child in the wake of the ravings of a tyrant.

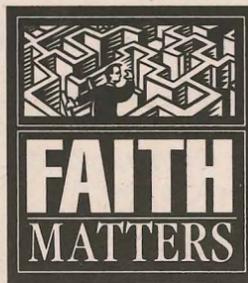
For his part, Luke includes extended stories about Zechariah and Elizabeth, a detailed accounting of Mary and Elizabeth's meeting, Jesus' presentation at the Temple, which included the prophecies of Anna and Simeon, and the shepherds' angelic visita-

tion. Matthew says nothing about these figures. Luke's inclusion follows his larger purpose, to highlight the poor, the outcast and to give women a voice.

In short, Matthew seems to tell the story from the perspective of Joseph, emphasizing dreams, magi and Egypt, while Luke centers on the experience of Mary, emphasizing angelic visitations, shepherds and Jerusalem.

Despite these differences, there are powerful similarities as well. Both Matthew and Luke indicated that the news of Jesus' birth involved a direct revelation from God. Both emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in the birth of Jesus. Both name Mary and Joseph as Jesus' parents. Both identify Bethlehem as the place of birth. And in both Gospels the new family ends up in Nazareth.

But the most important commonality is that both Matthew and Luke fit the birth of Jesus into a larger story, that of God's dealings with the world through his people Israel. Indeed, as both Gospel writers affirm, that story has reached a climactic moment in the birth of this baby. In a real sense, the whole world was crowded into that stable that first Christmas morning.



Students draw strength from faith after shootings

Shootings impact Baptist churches

The Dec. 1 shootings affected many Kentucky Baptist churches in Paducah. Two of the girls who were slain, Kayce Steger and Jessica James, attended churches affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Steger, 15, attended 12th Street Baptist Church. James, 17, attended Kevil Baptist Church. The third slain girl, Nichole Hadley, 14, attended an independent Baptist church. Two of the wounded students also attend Kentucky Baptist churches. Holland Holm, 14, attends Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah. Craig Keene, 15, attends Olivet Baptist Church. In addition, Heath High School's Principal Bill Bond is a member of First Baptist Church of Paducah. Several other churches had students who attend the prayer meeting.

Continued from page 1

Nevertheless, she and a friend were the ones who hung banners the next day that said "We forgive you, Michael, because God forgave us."

Students' feelings of forgiveness are not meant to condone the shooting or pardon the shooter of punishment, she added.

"Of course we all have anger in us," she said. "We have so many questions that we'll never have the answer to. I think we all have the sinful nature in us, but Michael followed through with something that others of us wouldn't.

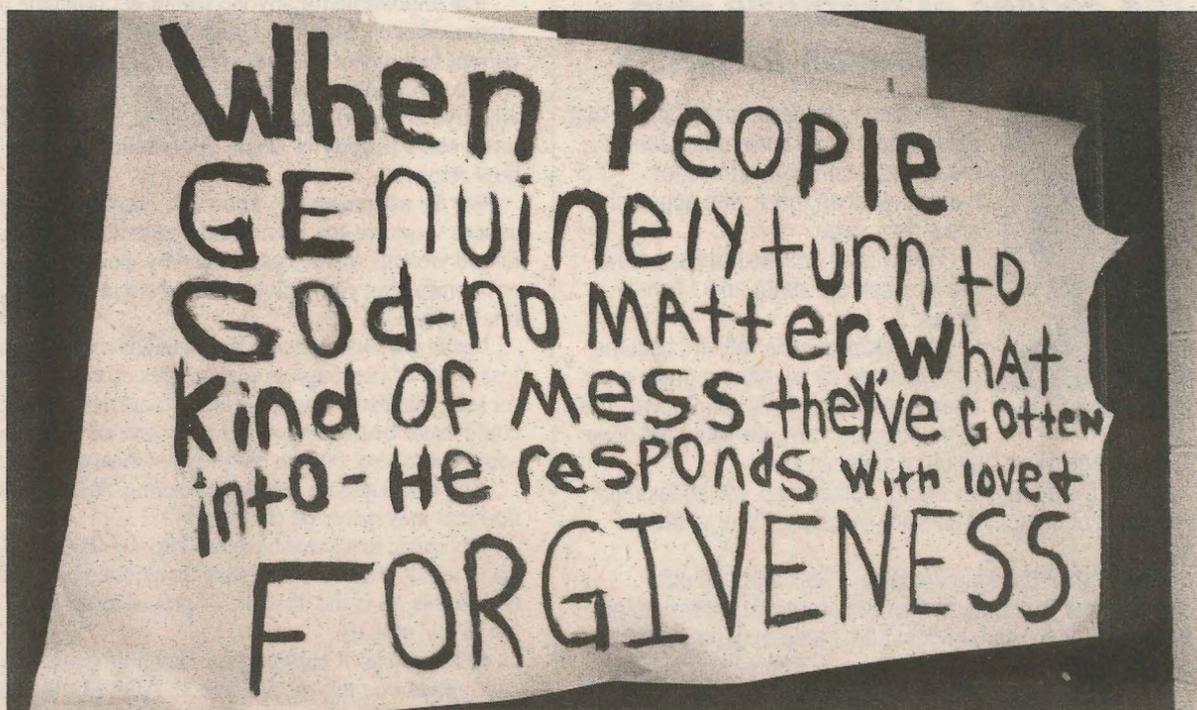
"Look how many times we've fallen in our life, and God forgave us over and over and over," she said. "If you always hold that grudge ... how will you ever go on?"

Tony Steele, a hospice chaplain and leader of the discussion at Harmony Baptist Church, said he's been impressed by the spiritual maturity of the students, especially their willingness to forgive Carneal. "I expected it, but I didn't expect it this quickly," he said.

Bob Enright, a researcher in the field of forgiveness, said he's not surprised that the students already have begun talking about forgiving the shooter.

"They don't have to discover what forgiveness is or how important it is. That lesson has already been learned," said Enright, president of the International Forgiveness Institute in Madison, Wis.

Steve Cothran, youth minister at Immanuel Baptist Church, noted that many students are sincere but will still



SIGNS OF TIMES Less than two days after the Dec. 1 shootings, students already were talking about forgiveness toward the assailant and his family. ■ Above: One of many banners hung in the lobby of Heath High School. ■ Right: Olivet Baptist Church was one of several churches to offer a prayer service the night after the shooting.

face issues of anger and frustration after much of the counseling has ceased. "We've just got to make sure it's there when they need it."

Enright agreed. "In all likelihood there will be some kind of negative emotional reaction. It'll vary from person to person," he said. "There's nothing dishonorable about that."

Like Sullivan, Enright said students' attitudes of forgiveness don't excuse the action. "Forgiveness and justice can exist side by side."

Roger Palmer, youth minister at First Baptist Church of Paducah, said the teens' willingness to forgive is impossible to explain other than the fact that Jesus is working through them. "He's fulfilling in us just what he spoke on the cross: 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.'"

Olivet Baptist Church Pastor Tommy Tucker said many students last week taught adults a lesson on Christianity.

"They seem to have a spiritual foundation that has enabled them to

cope with it far better than I would have expected," he said.

Tucker said one network news reporter asked him why this tragedy would happen to a prayer group. "And my response was, 'What group would be better prepared to handle it than a prayer group?'"

Palmer, the youth minister at First Baptist Church of Paducah, agreed, pointing to the banners of Scripture on the school walls and the growth of the prayer group.

"These kids are saying, 'We know where our strength is found. It's found in the Lord Jesus Christ and not in anywhere else.'"

"What they're hoping for first of all, of course, is that several of their lost friends will come to know the Lord as their Lord and Savior," he said. "Secondly, several of the Christians who are on the campuses have said, 'I'm not going to worry any more whether I'm cool ... I'm going to take a stand for Christ.'"

Tom Hughes, pastor of Kevil Baptist Church in Paducah, said the shoot-



ing has driven home to students that death can come unexpectedly. One of the slain girls, Jessica James, attended Kevil Baptist.

"I think the main message is you need to be prepared spiritually for whatever is encountered in life," Hughes said. "It's a bad situation, but we're all trusting that God will hold true to his promise to work through the situation and bring forth some good."

Many Heath students respond with hope instead of hate

Students who take part in the prayer group at Heath High School said they hope more people learn about Christianity from the recent shooting. Among their comments:



"I hope they see us as a school of faith, not a school of violence."
Katie Sullivan, 14

"Don't let hate destroy you."
Taylor Garland, 14

"I don't believe God had this to happen, but I believe he will take it and use it in a positive way."
Brittany Talloway

"I've rededicated my life since this happened and I plan to be baptized."
Paul Stephens, 16

"I hope it brings a worldwide revival."
Amelia Galloway, 15

"I want them to remember how these three people died and what they died doing."
Brittany Thomas, 15



Thomas

Principal no fan of state-backed school prayer

WEST PADUCAH—People who say kids can't pray in school don't know what they're talking about, according to the principal of the school where eight students were shot in a prayer circle last week.

"When people talk about kids can't pray in school that just bothers me a lot because I know good and well they can," said Bill Bond, principal of Heath High School. "I know they can if they want to. That's not an issue."

Bond, who's also a member of First Baptist Church of Paducah, said a positive result of the shootings, which killed three girls, is that more students are now going to the morning prayer group.

Bond said he believes in prayer but added he does not want to see the gov-

ernment force students to pray during school.

"The law says—and I believe in the law—that we should not promote any religion in public school," he noted. "But it also says we should not suppress."

"If we had a Muslim group that wanted to have a prayer group, they would also have a prayer group, and I would support their right to do that before school just as much as this group," he added.

Bond said that when his Sunday school class visited a synagogue worship service to better understand the Jewish faith, he saw a Heath student who regularly goes to the prayer group reading from the Torah.

"I see him in the prayer group al-

most every day, and he's praying to his God and I think that's so cool."

Students are free to pray not only before school but between classes and before meals, Bond said.

"If students want to pray there's plenty of time to pray," he said. "I've never known a principal anywhere in the nation that stopped a kid from praying over their meal when they got ready to eat it."

Bond said he is not an advocate of state-supported school prayer, in part, because he's seen the student-initiated prayer group work at Heath.

"When I see the politicians going with that issue, I think they're just going after votes of people who don't know what the rules are, what the law is and what the rights of students are."

Kenneth Murphy

Kathi Haueri

Pam Stallard

Linda Hayden

Margie Oliver

Linda Songer

Bill Tiemann

Denise Withers

Jamara Murphy

Mary Livingston

Shirley Harper

Judy LaValle

Ruby Morgan

Jim Clontz

Linda George

Rich Ayer

Guy Futral

John Sessler

Carla Burns

Jim Cordell

Vassar Adams

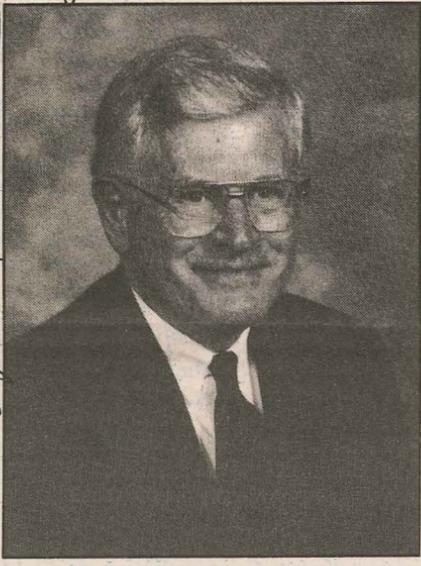
Bill Rogers

Cheryl Davis

Randy Jones

Laura Williams

Don Spencer



Marilee White

Alice Seymour

Douglas D. Hoyt

Ken Baum

Elyse Reeves

Debbie Bannon

Jim Donnell

Robin Burke

Tom Sweet

Bill Jaggard

Pauletta Dick

In appreciation for
your leadership and servanthood as
Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Lat Buech

Lindsay Stattenberg
"Stets"

Scotti White

Elizabeth Zaleski

Angela Pedersen

Shirley Weston

Dawn Emly

Tom Hoyle

Brandy Jones

Ann Young

Thanks, Jim!

The KBC Executive Board Staff

Biggest Christian gift question this season: 'W.W.J.D?'

Projected best-sellers

Fiction books

"Nicolae" by Tim LaHaye & Jerry Jenkins.
 "Left Behind" by LaHaye & Jenkins.
 "Tribulation Force" by LaHaye & Jenkins.
 "Tender Years" by Janette Oke.
 "Solar Flare" by Larry Burkett.

Hardback books

"Great House of God" by Max Lucado.
 "Just as I Am" by Billy Graham.
 "Experiencing God Day by Day" by Henry Blackaby.
 "The Weigh Down Diet" by Gwen Shamblin.
 "What's So Amazing About Grace?" by Philip Yancy.

Paperback books

"Stories for the Heart," edited by Alice Gray.
 "What Happens When Women Pray" by Evelyn Christenson.
 "Living Somewhere Between Estrogen and Death" by Barbara Johnson.
 "Five Love Languages" by Gary Chapman.
 "New Foxes Book of Martyrs."

Bibles

NIV New Adventure Bible.
 NIV Teen Study Bible.
 John MacArthur Study Bible (New King James Version).
 NIV Student Bible, 10th anniversary edition.
 NIV Study Bible, 10th anniversary edition.

Music

"Much Afraid" by Jars of Clay.
 "Behind the Eyes" by Amy Grant.
 "You Light Up My Life" by LeAnn Rimes.
 "Steven Curtis Chapman's Greatest Hits."
 "God's Property" by God's Property.

Source: Projected best-sellers for December as reported by the Baptist Book Store chain

Continued from page 1
 ing pre-schoolers the alphabet, numbers, shapes and colors.

A set of "Veggie Tales" plush toys recently made its debut. Among other merchandise is T-shirts, caps, puzzles, games and stationery.

The videos are so popular, according to Wells, that they dwarf series like the new "Story Keepers" and a long-time favorite, "Adventures in Odyssey." While the latter have sold well, they trail the veggies by a huge margin, he said.

"There are two groups 'Veggie Tales' are popular with—one is kids and the other is college students," he said. "I enjoy watching them for the creativity. There's so much subtlety in them, I think kids miss half the stuff that's there."

Also popular this year is Thomas Kincade's homespun artwork, which features country settings and outdoor landscapes. His artwork also has created a multitude of spin-offs. Kincade prints appear on mugs, calendars, journals, ornaments, magnets, calendars and computer screen savers.

As for his paintings, small framed prints run \$75 to \$200, while paintings range from \$500 to \$1,200. The priciest are for signed and numbered editions.

While these categories top the best-seller lists, there are plenty of other popular items available in Christian retail stores this season.

In fiction books, the "Left Behind" series created by Southern Baptist author Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins

occupies the top three positions at Baptist Book Store. Next is Janette Oke's latest, "The Tender Years."

In addition, Beverly Lewis' "The Confession" and "The Shunning," novels in a historical genre, are selling well in Florence.

On the non-fiction side, perennial best-selling author Max Lucado has a popular new entry, "The Great Hand of God," and a Christmas gift book, "A Cosmic Christmas." Also popular with customers are character studies of David and Esther, written by Chuck Swindoll.

"This time of year devotional books sell real well too," said Phillips. "People like to start the new year doing devotionals together."

Among new devotionals are Charles Stanley's "In Touch With God" and two collections edited by Alice Gray, "Stories for the Heart" and "More Stories for the Heart."

However, retailers say the best-selling ones remain two classics, "My Utmost For His Highest" and "Streams in the Desert." They sell best in recently updated editions containing more modern phrasing.

While many items are so new that sales figures aren't available, computer software is another hot item. Electronic Bible versions now come in English, Spanish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew and Latin.

"Software is exploding," said Ben Williams, sales associate at the Baptist Book Store in Louisville. "Someone has caught on to the fact that Christians use computers a lot."

"We're getting so many programs in we have three sections now and a (demonstration computer) to try it out and see if it's going to work for you."

While there are dozens of new translations and reference collections, BibleSoft's PC Study Bible is still the best seller and the most user-friendly, Williams said.

Its latest complete reference library, currently on sale for \$279, fits the needs of most Bible study users, he added.

The explosion includes a variety of children's computer games and Bible studies. But parents should remember that the material is only usable if their computer has a CD-ROM drive.

"We hardly sell anything but CD-ROM now," Wells said. "That's what it's all going to be shortly; everything on disks is being phased out."

Videos also are popular this year, with "The Visual Bible" attracting considerable attention despite its \$100 price tag. The four-cassette sets, which contain dramatic versions of the complete texts, are available for the books of Matthew and Acts.

Not to be overlooked is the Bible itself, with new study Bibles from pastor John MacArthur and from Promise Keepers sparking a lot of interest.

However, the NIV and Tyndale's New Living Translation remain the most popular Scriptures, Williams said. Fans of The Living Bible are learning they can find language clarity not only in the New Living Translation, but with the accuracy of Greek and Hebrew translation, he said.

Peace

By Robert Dunston

This week's devotional thought on peace was written by Paul Chitwood, pastor of First Baptist Church in Owenton. Chitwood graduated from Cumberland College in 1992 and completed his master of divinity degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Currently he is preparing to begin doctoral work at Southern in 1998.

Paul wrote these words on Mark 1:12-15:

Most of the days Jesus spent in ministry were days of turmoil. Few chapters in the Gospels are free of strife or conflict. Resistance to Jesus came from Jewish leaders, government officials, common folk and even his own followers. Today's scripture reading from the Gospel of Mark provides a good example. In one verse, we discover Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days. In the next, we learn his cousin, John the Baptist, was imprisoned. The life of Jesus seems to progress from one tragic situation to the next. Sometimes our lives seem to do the same.

As I write this devotion, a funeral service is taking place across the street for a 19-year-old man in our community who died of cardiac arrest. I just returned from the local

high school where students are grieving the tragic death of a classmate killed earlier today in an automobile accident. Indeed, sometimes life seems to progress from one tragic situation to the next.

What does Jesus offer in the midst of such turmoil and uncertainty? The gospel of peace. Immediately after John's imprisonment and his own temptation, Mark tells us Jesus preached the gospel in Galilee. Good news to be heard when times are tough. It brings peace. Jesus shared with the world the best news ever to be heard. This is one reason we call him the Prince of Peace.

The peace Jesus brings into the lives of his followers is peace amidst turmoil. The promises of the life of faith do not assure all will be well in our world. The promises assure "all is well with my soul," regardless of what takes place in the world. During this Advent season, whatever difficulties you face, thank God for the inner peace that is yours because you have heard and believed the gospel of peace.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Still, she said nothing

Night after night, misery after misery, and still she said nothing.

Bruise after bruise, broken promises of love—one right after another—and still she said nothing.

Her soul was dead. The fire of life that once burned inside was extinguished by hatred, betrayal.

She knew this was the way it had to be, and though she didn't agree with it, what could she do when she was but a child of 7?

Time passed and the secret came out. She grew older and became a teenager, but the pain inside didn't vanish.

Instead it grew with her, stronger and stronger, torturing her more and more with every passing day.

But still, she said nothing.

has helped provide. Nothing can change her past. But she has learned the important lesson that through God's love and strength she no longer has to live the life of a victim.

Please read this poem again. Think of where this young woman started—in the darkness—and believe me when I tell you she is now a child of light.

Think of her as you pray for all of the children in the care of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Each child's story is different and yet the same. Pray that each one will find the hope and healing he or she needs. Pray that each one will become a child of light.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

A bright, beautiful young woman in our care wrote this poem. Because of the support of Kentucky Baptists, she broke her silence and began a courageous journey of healing. It has not been easy but slowly and surely the grip of past pain is easing.

Think of the different kind of life this young lady will lead now that she has experienced the love and encouragement your support

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/>

RESOURCES

CHURCH

Guidelines for a self-audit

By Doug Strader

In the last article I wrote, I concluded that all churches need a yearly audit. If an outside audit is not practical, then the church can appoint an audit committee made up of church members to do a self-audit.

The basic things the audit committee would look for are income, expenses, records and reporting.

■ **Income:** What should the audit committee do to verify all income is properly handled?

■ Check counting procedures to ensure all money is properly counted and accounted for.

■ Make sure three people properly elected by the church are present when money is counted.

■ Spot-check bank deposits and make sure they correspond with counting committee records for specific dates, amounts, etc.

■ **Expenses:** What should the committee do to make sure all expenses are as reported?

■ Examine the check approval process and how expenses are authorized.

■ Trace sample canceled checks to approved invoices to verify date, amount paid and payee.

■ Verify signature authorization cards from the bank to verify proper check signing.

■ **Records:** What can the committee do to make sure of the accuracy of the financial records?

■ Examine bank reconciliation statements for accuracy.

■ Examine check number sequence for accuracy.

■ Examine sample church treasurer's monthly reports for accuracy, including deposits and disbursements in all church accounts.

■ Check to see that all employee taxes have been properly reported and paid during the year.

■ Check to make sure that all records are kept in a safe place, including computer records, which should be kept on tape in a separate safe location.

■ **Report:** The audit committee should report to the church:

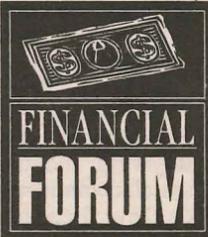
■ Review of audit process.

■ Findings of the committee, including any documentation to substantiate the findings.

■ List of recommended changes.

These suggestions are not intended to be a complete guideline for the church audit committee. They are the beginning. Helps are available from books, computer software and individuals to assist the committee. For more information, call me at (502) 245-4101.

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



Following Jesus without Embarrassing God. Tony Campolo. Word Publishing, 1997. 276 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

Over the past few years, Tony Campolo has become one of my favorite authors. Campolo's new book is a prime example of why. I do not always agree with Campolo but look forward to reading his perspective. I know it will be well thought out and, more than likely, will have a controversial edge.

Campolo writes in an entertaining manner which I appreciate when tackling issues at the heart of living the Christian life. He writes unapologetically as a conservative evangelical, but his honesty in his faith stance leads him into areas many evangelicals ignore and to positions some abhor.

Campolo's newest book confronts issues of everyday life, spiritual growth, beliefs, social action and family life. The essays are more like conversations one friend would have with another over coffee, although you can imagine the conversation might become rather heated at times. The

names of the chapters are typical Campolo: How to Have a Devotional Life without Becoming a Monk, How to Be a Theologian without Being an Intellectual Snob, How to Be an Environmentalist without Becoming a Tree-Hugger, etc.

Campolo challenges the reader to examine everyday actions and measure whether they are in step with Jesus. Campolo seeks to root out pompous statements and positions that cause outsiders to ridicule Christianity. He is audacious enough to suggest that the accepted "Christian position" on an issue of everyday importance may just be an embarrassment to God. Wayne Hager

Sources of Strength: Meditations on Scripture for a Living Faith. Jimmy Carter. Times Books, 1997. 252 pages. \$23. ♦♦♦♦♦

Before he became president of the United States, during his presidency and over the past 17 years, Jimmy

Carter has taught Sunday school. As the teacher of an adult class at Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, Ga., Carter has the opportunity to teach the Bible to Christians, atheists, agnostics and others who stop by the church to hear an ex-president.

"Sources of Strength" consists of 52 Bible studies drawn from those he has presented to that class of the curious. The lessons are arranged under nine headings, which cover the breadth of Christian faith and experience. The first series deals with the incarnation. In the lesson "Full of Grace and Truth," drawn from John 1, Carter defines "grace" and "truth."

"Grace is gentle, grace is nice, but truth can be difficult to face," he writes. "What is the truth about my life, or yours—judged not by human standards but by the standards of Jesus Christ? ... This truth can be troubling, even humiliating. ... But, fortunately in John's Gospel, and in the life of Christ, grace and truth go together. If it weren't for the assurance of grace, how could we acknowledge the full truth about ourselves?"

The insights into Scripture throughout this book are at once simple, yet profound. Carter has provided an excellent model of how to meditate on Scripture. As a pastor, I will find myself turning to this book time and again for fresh perspective or illustrative material. As a Christian, I will be challenged by the depth of this layman's insight into the meaning of the Christian life. As a Baptist, I will appreciate that though Carter's spirit is ecumenical, his insights into the nature of the Christian life and faith are intensely Baptist. Jim Holladay

Day by Day in God's Kingdom: A Discipleship Journal. Avery Willis Jr. and David Carter. LifeWay Press, 1997. 180 pages. ♦♦♦♦♦

Most of us struggle with fashioning a daily devotional time. For many the problem is finding or setting aside the time. We often are at a loss to know where to begin or how to organize the time. Some of us fall back to our children or youth Sunday school pattern: read a passage of Scripture and perhaps a brief devotional thought, then pray for ... whatever. But for some reason, this does not seem to get us where we long to be, so maintaining the discipline to do it becomes harder.

Avery Willis and David Carter have provided an excellent tool to help us move out of the devotional doldrums. "Day by Day" is a 13-week guide/journal designed to assist us in developing a deeper, more relevant daily time with God. Each week begins with a brief essay on the week's theme. Each day begins with a brief centering activity, followed by a guided reading and reflection from the Old and New Testaments. Then we are encouraged to pray for others and ourself.

Each week, we are encouraged to adopt and monitor our progress on three projects dealing with: "fellowship with believers," "witness to the world" and "ministry to others."

I liked the simplicity, yet challenge of this format. The authors have done an excellent job of modeling that a daily quiet time must be connected to one's daily life. Jim Holladay



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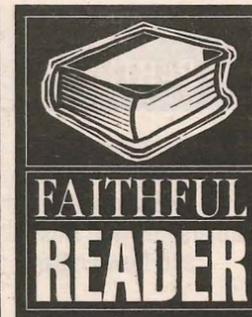
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By Wayne Hager, pastor of Midlane Park Baptist Church in Louisville, and Jim Holladay, pastor of Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville. Holladay and Hager welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: docholladay@juno.com or jwhager@juno.com

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Matt and Carol Spann as they lead Bible studies and attempt to start churches in Moscow.

■ Ed Tarleton, the new mission administrator in Moscow.

■ An evangelistic music program and showing of the "Jesus" film in Moscow during the Christmas season.

■ Southern Baptist congregations in Worcester, Mass., planning to use the one-hour-per week radio time made available free of charge by Ismael Toledo, a member of the Hispanic Bible study in the city. Toledo owns Worcester's only multilingual Christian-format radio station.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ COVINGTON—Immanuel Church called Benjamin Murry as pastor. He began his new ministry Nov. 23.

■ CRESTWOOD—Ron Williams resigned as pastor at Harrods Creek Church, effective Dec. 31, to assume a position at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, N.C. Also, minister of youth and children Ernest Allen was ordained to the gospel ministry Nov. 16.

■ HOPKINSVILLE—First Church ordained Len Hale and Paul Watts as deacons Nov. 30.

■ LOUISVILLE—Carlisle Avenue Church called Steve Andrews as pastor. He previously was pastor at New Bethany Church in Buford, Ga. He will begin his new ministry Jan. 4.

Minors Lane Church recently called Kevin Nethery as interim pastor.

Cedar Creek Church called Dallas Vincent as interim pastor.

Clifton Heights Church called Dan Hyer as pastor. He previously was assistant pastor at Harmony Church in Clarksville, Ind.

■ MADISONVILLE—Ralph Gill resigned as pastor of Park Avenue Church, effective Dec. 31. He will be available for supply ministry, interim and revivals. Contact him at (502) 825-8872 or 1001 Arrowhead Dr., Madisonville, Ky. 42431.

■ MILTON—Corn Creek Church recently called Michael Moore, native of West Virginia, as pastor.

■ SOMERSET—Buena Vista Church ordained Kevin Hampton to the gospel ministry. Also, Perry Dobbs and Johnny Hines were ordained as deacons Nov. 23. Clyde Strunk is pastor.

Former employee files suit against KBHC

LOUISVILLE—A former employee of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has filed suit against the Kentucky Baptist Convention agency, claiming it discriminated against her because she is African-American.

The children's home denies the allegations. Barbara Menefee, an attorney for the children's home, told the Louisville Courier-Journal that an internal investigation of the complaint found many of the claims false or exaggerated.

Christy Brooks filed suit in Jefferson

Circuit Court, contending she was paid less than white employees with similar responsibilities and experience and that she was not given the same support they were. Brooks' job was to recruit black families to adopt children.

The lawsuit was moved from Jefferson Circuit Court to U.S. District Court Dec. 1.

Brooks resigned from her position with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children in September 1996 and has not been employed since.

CLASSIFIED ADS

NEEDED: Piano book for 1975 Hymnal. Beaver Church, RR3, Box 390, Cynthiana, KY 41031; (606) 234-1493.

SEEKING: Auburndale Baptist Church seeks youth minister for grades 6-12, minimum of 20 hours weekly for at least the next two years. Annual salary budgeted at \$9,500. Resumé: Dr. Harry Mills, pastor, 5590 Bruce Ave., Louisville, KY 40214.

SEEKING: Central Florida Baptist church seeks minister of youth/youth music. Send resumé and work samples (bulletins, calendars, brochures, etc.) to: K. Carr, 135 E. Goodheart, Lake Mary, FL 32746.

SEEKING: Accepting resumé for the following positions: full-time minister of youth and children, part-time director of music. Mail resumé to: Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 5664 Highway 56, Owensboro, KY 42301, Attn: Kenny Davis. Phone: (502) 771-4150; fax: (502) 688-0354.

SEEKING: Part-time nursing home minister, 25 hours per week (Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays). Contact Glory, (502) 426-2778.

TOUR: 10 days, best of Israel and full-day London tour, \$1,799. Personally escorted by experienced staff. Call for dates and details: (800) 853-5337. Group rates available.

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.

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.

Twenty turkeys

Like a host of others, my favorite holiday is Thanksgiving. It may be the fact that I can enjoy the day without feeling guilty for not buying a gift or card for a loved one. Maybe it is just the fact that I enjoy a tasty meal with my children, their spouses and the grandchildren.

Thanksgiving at Oneida has a special meaning. While every student has the option of going home for the holiday, some always stay with us. Many are international students, who do not have a holiday quite like this. We had students from India, Ethiopia, Thailand and Brazil. It is exciting to see their responses to the decorated tables and the display of delicious food.

Normally our food is served buffet-style, with each person going through the food line and helping himself. On Thanksgiving the food is served in bowls and on platters, and the tables are rearranged to make it as much like home as possible. We ask our students and other guests to dress in their Sunday best for the occasion.

Another group of students here for Thanksgiving were from Kentucky and across the United States. Some were not able to go home because of the traveling time, while others simply chose to stay here with us.

We do all we can to make this a really special meal for everyone. A total of about 75 students spent Thanksgiving with us. In addition to the wonderful meal, they also got the day off—not only from school but from daily chores. Two or three had to help feed the livestock and some helped in the dining room, but for the most part they had the day off. We did not ask them to do much on Friday or Saturday, either. Getting to sleep in each morning and take a nap after lunch

is a special treat in itself.

About 100 faculty and staff also spent the holiday with us. For many, Oneida is home and there is no reason to travel. Others were too far from family and friends to make the long trip home and back. They are as appreciative as our students for the effort put forth by our cooks. The mothers are especially grateful to enjoy the dinner without all the work and cleanup. Many staff had family members travel here to share our meal.

The last group to dine with us were Oneida friends from far and near. It is exciting to have guests with us, and when we can share a meal with them we are especially blessed. In all, about 230 staff, students and guests were with us to share the Thanksgiving meal.

As always, we were grateful for the cooks who came in very early, leaving their families in order to prepare our Thanksgiving meal. One cook has been doing this for nearly 30 years, while others have been doing it for the past 15 to 20 years. I am so appreciative of the sacrifices they make.

I do not know how many pounds of potatoes we cooked, how many cans of beans were opened or the number of dinner rolls we baked ... nor how much gravy, cranberry sauce, dressing, salad or dessert was prepared. I do know that 20 turkeys were baked and very little was left over. If the smiles on their faces and the rubbing of their "tummies" were any indication, I think everyone had a great day.

We are no less thankful for our many friends who have shared with us so that we could enjoy this special meal.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Indiana alumnus returns as volunteer

At age 39 with a family and no guarantee of work, Harley Skirvin had a little difficulty with the decision to attend Clear Creek.

Skirvin recalls, "I got my registration out of the waste basket and ironed it. Rose and I came with three little kids and \$100. We expressed to Dr. Aldridge our fears about finances and other arrangements." The year was 1961 and the Skirvins soon discovered other families on campus with less resources.

Skirvin left a Bloomington, Ind., factory job and found work in the campus furniture factory helping make pulpit chairs and communion tables. He could begin with rough lumber and take it to finished product.

The Skirvins returned to campus last month as volunteers. Skirvin's carpentry skills helped put a new look on the Jerusalem model room—the furniture display room in his student days. "The fellowship with student workers was just like old times; it was good to be back," Skirvin said.

During lunch in Kelly Hall, Skirvin remembered reworking the firebrick in the furnace. He and other students also had put the

roof on the Mitchell building.

Realizing the need for campus employment motivated the Skirvins to make a pledge to the Beyond 2001 Alumni Campaign. They and other alumni surpassed a \$100,000 goal and committed \$130,000.

"Many of us came to school with the impression we were going to teach the teachers," Skirvin said. "It took us awhile to find out we didn't know anything and awhile longer to admit it," he continued. "I'll never forget the Bible teaching from Dr. Denham. Things have changed, but we've found the same commitment among the present faculty and staff."

"It's also good to see these younger students here now. They have much more ministry ahead of them than I did when I came."

The Skirvins worked for 25 years among American Baptist churches in Indiana. Next year marks 50 years of marriage and the celebration will include another work week at Clear Creek.

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

PEOPLE

Company given to church to avoid Mafia

By Peter Smith
Religion News Service

BANSKA BYSTRICA, Slovakia (RNS)—Like many businessmen in the central European nation of Slovakia, Frantisek Mojzis faced some stark choices when local mobsters demanded huge protection payments.

Mojzis, owner of a prosperous auto-leasing company, could make the payment, plead for help from a police force of questionable strength or do what some of his colleagues have done: hire another mob charging a lower rate.

Instead, Mojzis found a unique sanctuary in an unusual place—the Roman Catholic Church. He transferred his Drukos company, with its 600 employees and millions of dollars in annual sales, to a church-run charity in this central Slovak city.

He has also gone into semi-hiding, operating the company as a church employee but keeping his whereabouts secret.

"The threats were so serious that I had to hand over my company," said Mojzis, whose name is Slovak for Francis Moses. He went to the church, he said, partly because of his religious beliefs but mainly because "the bishop's office is a strong authority and I'm glad to have that strong authority behind me."

The company will now be run by the Society for Helping the Poor and the Sick, run by the office of Banská Bystrica Bishop Jozef Hrtus.

Profits, which Hrtus estimated could reach \$89,000 this year, will benefit the charity.

The bishop said he accepted the one-of-a-kind offer "to help to solve two problems. The first is the social problems" the charity aims to solve. "The second is the problem of racketeering."

Mojzis is not laying all his worldly goods at the feet of the church, however. The charity paid him and



CHURCH'S CHARGE Businessman Frantisek Mojzis gave his auto leasing company to a Catholic run charity in Slovakia after mafia started demanding large protection payments. (RNS photo)

his partners \$30,000 for the Drukos firm, said Hrtus—not a pittance, but far below the firm's market value. Mojzis also remains as director and is paid, like other employees, a percentage of company profits.

Still, his action has hardly brought him peace on earth. Mojzis remains in hiding because he fears mobsters may want to avenge the way he escaped their clutches, said Hrtus. And Mojzis skipped a recent company board meeting for fear of an attack.

Mojzis believes the bishop as well as the company's employees and property are now untouchable in a nation where at least 60 percent of the population is estimated to be Catholic.

"It's good that Slovaks are so religious, because the mothers of the criminals would curse them if they attacked the bishops," he said.

Many formerly Communist European nations are facing problems with organized crime. In this nation, formed in the 1993 breakup of Czechoslovakia, homegrown mobsters com-

pete with crime organizations from the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia to extort money from even small-businessmen.

The Slovak government is skeptical of the whole Drukos episode, however, describing the company transfer as "chaotic" and calling Mojzis's action a calculated effort to embarrass the government.

"From the beginning, he refused to cooperate with the police and was giving information only to the media," said Interior Ministry spokesman Jozef Krosak, who did not specify why Mojzis would do so.

"I am cooperating with the police," Mojzis said. "But I am not so naive as to give my life into the hands of someone who is under-employed, has poor equipment and has no special experience with organized crime."

Hrtus and Mojzis both said there was no guarantee the charity would return the company to its former owners if the extortion crisis passed. "I don't think about these things right now," said Mojzis. "I want to save my life."

Campaign asks Christians to keep a light on for unchurched

By Bob Mathews
Oklahoma Baptist Messenger

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—With electric-lighted candles in a window of their homes, Baptists in Oklahoma City are telling of their pledge to pray for their neighbors during the coming year.

The candles are a part of the local association's "Light Your World" prayer and evangelism emphases for their Celebrate Jesus 2000 initiative.

Launched by associational director of missions Ernie Perkins and his wife, Wanda, the candle-in-the-window project, based on Matt. 5:14-16, has spread across denominational lines and outside the 55-church association and Oklahoma.

More than 5,000 candles have been ordered through the association. Additionally, churches in Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Virginia and South Carolina have contacted the association about the project.

Perkins said he believes non-Christians become concerned over their lack of faith in direct proportion to the concern they see reflected toward them by Christian friends.

"If that is true, it means that until Christians become concerned, the lost won't be concerned about themselves," he said. "The candle in the window is a tangible expression of Christians' concern for lost neighbors."

The greatest motivator for concern is prayer, Perkins added, and Christians who will commit to pray for their neighborhoods should be bold enough to let others know of their prayerful concern.

In addition to the candles in the windows, participants will also display a sticker on their front door telling of their pledge to pray.

"Everybody who comes to the front door, the postman, the delivery persons, anyone, will be made aware that that is a house of prayer," he said.

The candle project, which began Oct. 1 and will continue through Sept. 30, 1998, is part of the Celebrate Jesus 2000 unified effort by many denominations to share the gospel with every American by the year 2000. This year has been proclaimed the year of prayer.

"This candle-in-the-window prayer campaign has the greatest potential of anything we've done at practically no cost," Perkins added. "If we believe what we say we do about the power of prayer, we shouldn't be ashamed to let our neighbors know it."

Missionary pilot lived and died combining his two loves

By Courtney Hardee and Yvonne White
Religion News Service

HOT ROCK, Tenn. (RNS)—On a map in the laundry room of his home here, Robin Bacon runs his fingers across the colored yarn and push pins connecting his world to his son's. The strand covers in inches the thousands of miles from Lincoln County, Tenn., across the Atlantic Ocean to a small tribal land in southern Africa.

"Here's Lesotho," he says. "This is where they lived."

Lesotho, a small country surrounded by South Africa, is where Bacon's son, David, 33, died Oct. 1 when the plane he was flying crashed into a ridge shortly after takeoff.

David Bacon had two loves in life: sharing his God with other people and flying airplanes. Through Mission Aviation Fellowship, a pilots' missionary-support organization, he combined them by transporting medical supplies and mis-

sionaries. He flew around the rough, hilly country of Lesotho for almost three years, dropping off medicine for the body and soul and carrying both doctors and patients to and from villages in his airborne carpool.

The fellowship, founded in 1945, is an international, evangelical Protestant organization based in Redlands, Calif.

On one trip, he picked up a 4-year-old boy who had broken his leg. The child's parents couldn't ride with him, so they placed their son in the front of the small Cessna for the trip to a doctor. The boy was frightened and hurting, and spoke no English.

David Bacon hadn't been in the country long and didn't know much of the tribal language, so the two were at a loss for words. But every few seconds, he would lean back and touch his index finger to the little boy's finger and they would smile.

Other trips weren't so successful. On his first flight, a man died about halfway into the trip.

"I think that's what really vaulted David into the business," Robin Bacon says. "He realized then how serious it could be."

The parents say their son grew up learning his faith at home. They taught him and his brother and sisters about God and sent them to Christian schools. The family also helped support missionaries, including a pilot named Jim Lynne.

Lynne had been a naval pilot in Vietnam with Robin Bacon. Later, Lynne moved to Indonesia, where he did the same kind of work David Bacon would do in Africa. In 1979, Lynne was killed in a plane crash there.

Bacon told his father he believed God wanted him to take Lynne's place.

The airfield at Methalenang in Lesotho is a tough one.

"It's a steep field," Robin Bacon says, moving his hands, like a pilot guiding his craft. "You have to land uphill and take off downhill. And there's a mountain just past it you

have to turn to get over."

Bacon had climbed up through the hard part, his father says, but then crashed into a nearby ridge. The crash is still under investigation. So far, no one is sure why the plane went down.

Bacon's wife, Lisa, and their three daughters have returned to the United States and are staying in Orlando, Fla., with her brother.

"I'm hearing story after story about how he touched people," she says. "When he would fly over, the people would recognize his plane and they would drop their farm tools and wave to him. He was there for them. He loved those people. The villages are mourning."

Mrs. Bacon says she believes God will bring someone else to take her husband's place, just as he was called to take Lynne's place in ministry. Bacon's father takes comfort in knowing his son's work has been to his God's glory.

"We gave David to the Lord a long time ago," he says. "We are thankful to have had him for 33 years."



Bacon

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