



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Odd couple takes liquor bills to Kentucky legislature



By David Winfrey
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Need further evidence that politics makes strange bedfellows? Consider that the Kentucky Temperance League's executive director has teamed up with the owner of a Louisville liquor store to push eight alcohol-related issues this legislative term.

The Temperance League's Claude Witt said he hadn't a moment's hesitation in deciding to work with Ken Singer, owner of Expressway Liquors.

"I have linked up before with alcohol on some things," Witt said. "If it's something that's going to limit the sale of alcohol, sure."

Singer, whose family has owned a liquor store for about 35 years, also is vice-chairman of Jefferson County's chapter of Champions for a Drug-Free Kentucky, a rural drug-prevention program sponsored by the governor's office.

Singer recognizes that he's in an unusual position but is unapologetic for his stand.

"When you look at me, you're not going to get the same response as the alcohol industry. My response is let's be responsible about this and let's be reasonable," he said. "I'm a parent of See Odd couple takes ..., page 8

Kentucky
General
Assembly



PACKAGE DEAL Claude Witt (right), executive director for the Kentucky Temperance League, said he didn't hesitate to work with Ken Singer, owner of Expressway Liquors in Louisville, on legislation that would limit alcohol sales. "I have linked up before with alcohol on some things," he said. Nevertheless, Witt said he expects some people to criticize his work with a liquor dealer. "My answer to that is the liquor dealer wants to get something done."

Study finds gap between clergy & psychologists

WASHINGTON (RNS)—There is a sharp divide between the nation's two leading counseling professions—psychology and the ministry—according to a survey of research articles in professional psychology journals.

Based on the survey, which examined 2,400 articles in eight leading psychology journals, just four—or 0.02 percent—of the articles assessed the role of clergy in mental health despite the fact that 40 percent of Americans report seeking assistance from clergy members during times of personal distress.

"Research has repeatedly established the importance of religion in mental health," said David Larson, president of the National Institute for Healthcare Research and a co-author of the study. "It is imperative that those of us in the mental health community begin working more closely with the clergy."

Larson said there are signs of hope. He noted that as of January 1996, "all psychiatric residency programs in the United States are required to address spiritual and religious issues in their formal training."

On average, half of church members inactive

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Pick up the latest copy of your church directory and start thumbing through it. As you go, count the faces or names of people you haven't seen at church lately.

If you attend an average Southern Baptist church, you will have marked off two of every seven people by the time you reach the end of the directory. And if your directory includes what Baptist bureaucrats call "non-resident members," you will have marked off every other person in the directory.

Couldn't happen in your church? It probably already has, and few people have noticed, warns Chip Miller, church leadership consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

According to the latest data available from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Miller said, 31.8 percent of Southern Baptist church members are "non-resident" members. That means they no longer live in the area where their church membership is; they've moved their residence but not their church affiliation.

While that problem is vexing, an even greater issue is the number of church members who haven't

moved anywhere but are nowhere to be found at church, Miller said. Across the Southern Baptist Convention, 20.7 percent of all church members are "resident inactives," he said.

Taken together, that means 52.5 percent of all Southern Baptist church members could be classified as inactive, Miller said. "The older the church and the bigger the church, the more likely you'll fit this profile."

But what's most disturbing, Miller said, is that the percentage of inactive members in Southern Baptist churches is increasing. The current figure of 52.5 percent is up 2.4 percent from the previous year, he said.

"If that doesn't get your attention, what will?" Miller asked. "If this trend continues, how much longer can we stay in business?"

Yet the attitudes of many active church members might prevent them from seeing the serious nature of this problem, Miller said. "It's pretty easy for us who are well-connected to say, 'Phooey on them! Why should we waste our time with them when there are so many other people out there to

be reached?"

Miller reminds Baptists that it is the church's responsibility to keep up with and minister to all its members, inactive and active.

"Until they die or move away, they are still our responsibility," he said.

"Some of these are hard to like; they've caused us grief. But if we're not caring for them spiritually, probably no one else is either."

And anyone who has grown tired and frustrated after attempting to maintain contact with an inactive church member with no apparent result should take heart and keep on trying, Miller advised.

"When we have tried and tried and said, 'She's hopeless,' we have taken on a judgment of God. But God says no one is hopeless."

Statistics demonstrate that inactive church members can be brought back into the life of the church, Miller added. "Fifty percent of currently active church members have dropped out of church at some time in their lives."

See other stories on page 7:

- Listen before church members leap, consultant says.
- Three factors keep members coming to church.



Miller

Moving? See page 4 (0113)

BAPTISTS

Cabal named first dean of Boyce College of the Bible

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Southern Baptist professor Ted Cabal has been named the first dean of Boyce College of the Bible at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, President Al Mohler announced Jan. 5. The new college, approved by seminary trustees last October, is set to begin operations Aug. 1.

Currently assistant professor of philosophy of religion at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, Cabal will assume his new duties June 1, although he will be working with seminary administrators in crafting the new college in the coming months.

Mohler said Cabal is uniquely

qualified for the inaugural deanship.

"Ted Cabal is a man of great gifts who combines tremendous intellect with a teacher's passion," Mohler said. "He has both a keen mind and a wonderful ability to teach complex and challenging subjects to students of all levels. He has proven his effectiveness as a teacher and his passion for training ministers of the gospel."

The new college, named for the founding president of Southern Seminary, will replace Boyce Bible School, which was created in 1974 as a non-degree-granting undergraduate program for ministerial training. In 1994, the Boyce School was accredited to grant associate of arts degrees.

The current dean of Boyce Bible School, Bob Johnson, announced his retirement last August to be effective July 31. Johnson will continue as a consultant to the new college through July 31, 1999, with particular responsibility for relating Boyce's off-campus centers to the new college.

In announcing plans for the new college last fall, seminary officials noted the college will be a fully accredited four-year Bible college which will offer a 129-hour bachelor of arts in biblical studies degree and a 66-hour associate of arts degree. As the fifth school of Southern Seminary, Boyce College will have a separate faculty, although the college faculty and seminary faculty may at times teach courses in the other's academic programs.

The college will have four academic divisions—biblical studies, theological studies, ministry studies and general studies. Each division will be led by a full-time faculty member of the college. The college's additional faculty and staff will be named sometime this spring, Mohler reported.

Mohler said reaction to the creation of the new college has been "most positive" and demonstrates the school will meet "a need on behalf of our churches." Based on inquiries from prospective students, Mohler projected the first semester enrollment to be 100 to 150 students.

Noting the unique mission of the college "is specifically limited to the training of ministers of the gospel," Mohler said the school should not be

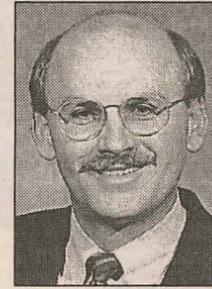
perceived as being in competition with existing liberal arts colleges. "We wish them well and indeed will hope to work in concert with them," he said.

Noting Cabal's appeal to college-age students, Vice President for Academic Administration Danny Akin said: "Ted Cabal is the most exciting and dynamic, up-and-coming philosopher/apologist in Southern Baptist life. I believe he is already making a major impact on college campuses. We are very fortunate God has led him to come and be the founding dean at the Boyce College."

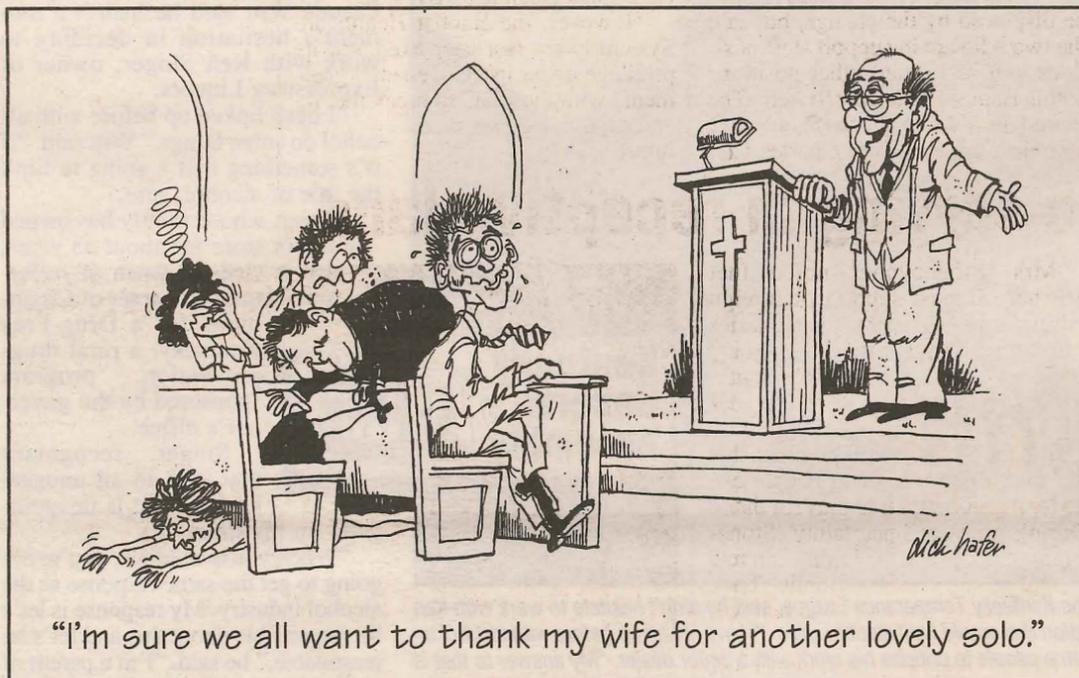
Cabal frequently speaks on college campuses and has presented evangelical positions in recent debates on the existence of God and the ordination of homosexuals.

"I am thrilled about the prospect of making the Boyce College the school I would attend were I starting over today," Cabal said. "Indeed, my goal is to make Boyce the world's finest Bible college, a very tall order in light of other good schools available. But the outstanding faculty, prospective faculty expressing interest in coming to Boyce, its beautiful campus, along with the unique opportunity for our students to share the life of Southern Seminary, make the goal attainable with God's help."

Cabal earned the bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees from Dallas Baptist University and the master of divinity and doctor of philosophy degrees from Southwestern Seminary. He also has served as pastor to three congregations in Texas.



Cabal



BAPTIST BITS

■ **Emeritus missionary dies.** Evelyne Hill, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to Portugal from 1978 to 1984, died in Birmingham, Ala., Jan. 3. She was 77. Hill, a native of Franklin, Ky., was active in associational and state WMU leadership while her husband, Albert Hill, was a pastor in Alabama from 1945 to 1978.

■ **Seminary opens in "forbidden zone."** German Baptists recently celebrated completion of a new seminary built in a former military "forbidden zone" dominated by Hitler's Third Reich during World War II and for decades later by Soviet troops. German Baptists celebrated in November the completion of a 13-acre seminary complex in the village of Elstal, near West Berlin. Elstal Education Center merges several German Baptist institutions.

■ **Cuba aid goes direct.** Baptists in the United States and elsewhere will be able to send humanitarian aid directly to Baptist conventions in Cuba, rather than through an intermediary, reported an international Baptist official returning from a December visit in Havana. During a Dec. 18-22 visit to Cuba, Paul Montacute, director of Baptist World Aid, met with Ministry of Religions official Silverio Platero to discuss needs of Baptist churches and opportunities for help

from BWAid, relief arm of the McLean, Va.-based Baptist World Alliance. After much discussion, according to a BWA report, Platero gave BWAid permission to send medicines and milk to the Baptist conventions and unions in Cuba. Previously, all aid to Baptists was channeled through Cuba's Ecumenical Council, which is closely linked with the Castro government.

■ **Melick named Golden Gate provost.** Richard Melick has been elected provost at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. Melick will oversee day-to-day management of the seminary's academic, business and auxiliary operations. Melick has taught New Testament at Golden Gate since 1996. He previously was president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas.

■ **Evangelism training meeting set.** Highview Baptist Church in Louisville is one of 16 sites nationwide for meetings to introduce a new evangelism strategy called "Faith." The program, produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and North American Mission Board, ties evangelism to a church's Sunday school structure. The Kentucky training session will be held April 23 at 1 p.m.

■ **Donor support drops.** Giving to the International Baptist Theological Seminary dropped precipitously after recent changes in the school's academic program, prompting trustees of the school located in the Czech Republic to determine it is no longer feasible to operate a development office in the United States. As a result, Victor Varner will retire as executive vice president for development at the seminary. However, he will continue as president of the Houston-based development office, which will refocus its fund-raising efforts on scholarships for students at national seminaries across Europe.

■ **BSU hears para-church leaders.** The annual meeting for leaders of Southern Baptist student ministries, sponsored by the Sunday School Board in December, featured addresses by leaders of four para-church campus ministries. Guest speakers included Mike Tilley, national director of expansion for Campus Crusade for Christ; Rod Handley, chief operating officer for Fellowship of Christian Athletes; Janet Balajthy, associate national director of InterVarsity Campus Ministry; and Terry Cook, national director of campus ministry for the Navigators. "I'd like for us to stop seeing these folks as competitors and start

looking at them as potential partners," said Bill Henry, director of the Sunday School Board's student ministry unit.

■ **Probation extended.** The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has extended the accreditation probation of the University of Mobile in Alabama for one more year. That gives the troubled school supported by the Alabama Baptist Convention more time to regroup after several financial and administrative scandals related to a satellite campus in Nicaragua.

■ **Alabama Fellowship names leader.** The Alabama Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has named Mart Gray of Elba, Ala., as the statewide organization's first coordinator. Gray, 34, has been minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church of Elba.

■ **Romanian officials apologize.** Government officials in Romania have apologized for the beating of nine Baptists in the village of Ruginoasa last Easter, according to Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance. Lotz and a delegation of Baptists met in November with the Romanian president and prime minister.

West Kentucky Baptists help burned church

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

COLUMBUS—Volunteers in West Kentucky Baptist Association are helping rebuild a Missionary Baptist church that burned down last June when a hot water heater malfunctioned.

Members from nine of the association's predominantly Anglo churches were among about 65 people who helped erect outer walls, roof trusses and decking in mid-November at Mount Gilead Baptist Church, an African-American congregation.

Participants included members of Columbus Baptist, First Baptist of Fulton, Mississippi Baptist, Beulah Baptist, Bethlehem Baptist, First and Second Baptist of Clinton, Hickman East Baptist and New Harmony Baptist churches.

Roof shingles were added in early December, as workers progressed toward their goal of moving the church into its new sanctuary by March.

"I would say it's a tremendously unifying force for Baptist work in the area," said Charles Blair, West Kentucky Association's director of missions. "This had to be the Lord's work. No human agency could have forced it."

"I'm excited," said Ronnie Conneal, pastor of Mount Gilead. "I've never seen such a movement like I'm seeing, with black and white, genders and denominations coming together. I've never witnessed anything like this in all my years in the ministry."

Meeting temporarily at Columbus United Methodist Church, the Mount Gilead congregation has grown because of the tragedy, Conneal said, and has added a dozen members since last summer.

Columbus Baptist took the lead in fund-raising to help rebuild, sponsoring a benefit sing last August that raised more than \$3,100.

Other church and personal donations boosted that total to \$20,000, added to about \$11,000 Mount Gilead had raised for remodeling before the fire. Area businesses' donations of lumber, and other materials provided at cost, are helping cut expenses.

Contractor Ed Williams, a member of Second Baptist of Clinton, is donating his time to supervise the project. He had been on several mission trips to Indian reservations the last four years. But the fire inspired him to drop this year's travel plans.

"We had some good times out West, but we've been more blessed here. Every time we drive by there we're going to see the results of our work."

Healthcare Foundation likely to disband

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Major changes are in the works for Baptist Healthcare Foundation effective March 1, but exactly what those changes will be has not been finalized, according to Baptist Healthcare System President Tommy Smith and Jan Shockley, chairwoman of the Foundation's board.

"Changes will take place, but I'm not at a point where I can tell you what it will look like," Smith said in a Jan. 7 telephone interview. "We're still talking with the Foundation board."

Shockley, a laywoman and member of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville, also was cautious in talking about the future, noting that several key points still have to be worked out.

However, Shockley did say that

as of March 1, the entire Baptist Healthcare Foundation board likely will resign and the Foundation will cease to exist.

Baptist Healthcare System had proposed that the Foundation board disband and reconstitute as an advisory board for special fund-raising events, Shockley said.

"None of our members were interested in that," she said. "We were more mission-oriented and interested not only in Baptist Healthcare System but in community missions."

Shockley said discussions currently are underway about what will happen to the Foundation's assets.

She confirmed that Baptist Healthcare Foundation's four employees will be displaced by the change, but said the two who are in support staff positions will be offered other positions within Baptist Healthcare System. The Foundation's two professional staff members are President Charles Cox

and Planned Giving Director Robin Oldham.

Baptist Healthcare Foundation is a legally separate entity from Baptist Healthcare System, although its funding for personnel has come entirely from Baptist Healthcare System. The Foundation has raised endowment funds to benefit Baptist Healthcare System's mission.

The Foundation has a separate board from the Baptist Healthcare System board. The Foundation board has been self-perpetuating and never has been appointed by the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Until this year, the KBC appointed two-thirds of the board members for Baptist Healthcare System.

However, the Baptist Healthcare System board last year exercised its privilege under its "Covenant Agreement" with the KBC to break that tie and appoint its own successors in the future.

As of March 1, the entire Baptist Healthcare Foundation board likely will resign and the Foundation will cease to exist.

Kentucky native serving in receptive land

By Leigh Pritchett
Alabama Baptist

ETOWAH COUNTY, Ala.—In Nigeria, where one might not expect rapid Christian church growth, churches are beginning faster than pastors can be found to shepherd the congregations—even with surrounding religious persecution for adopting the Christian faith, say a Baptist missionary couple with ties to Kentucky.

"Right now, most of Nigeria is extremely receptive," said Mike Stonecypher, a Southern Baptist missionary there. Currently, he and his wife Becky, a native of Somerset, are on furlough in Etowah County, Ala.

"Nigeria is struggling with becoming a modern nation, so people are searching to find a foundation for their lives," Stonecypher said.

Though preaching the gospel is met with much enthusiasm, there is significant opposition in some regions. In Nigeria's extreme north—such as Sokoto, Cano and Maiduguri—a strong Muslim influence has blocked many witnessing efforts.

In fact, Christians in some parts of Nigeria suffer persecution, the couple said. Christians are not allowed to buy land or be promoted at work. They experience intimidation. Churches and Christian areas of cities are burned. Mobs attack the Christians. Some Christians are killed. Becoming a Christian may cause someone to be rejected by his family.

"We, as American Christians, need to pray specifically for those Muslims who won't make a step of faith because of fear," Stonecypher said.

Mrs. Stonecypher noted that Southern Baptist support of foreign missions is envied by missionaries from other denominations. They are amazed at how well-cared-for Southern Baptist missionaries are, she added.

But the Stonecyphers point out that the most important thing people can do for missionaries is to pray for them. During times of uncertainty, Stonecypher said he and his family can feel the prayer support from Baptists back home. And the family of four believes prayer has made a difference.

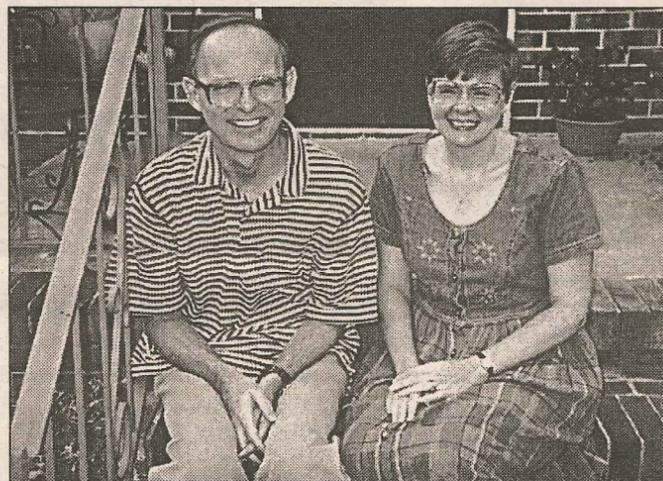
In Jos, Nigeria, where the Stonecypher family serves, Christians have taken to heart the Great Commission given in Matthew 28 and are evangelizing those around them.

Stonecypher sees this regularly as the principal of Baptist High School for Nigerian students. Mrs. Stonecypher teaches at Hillcrest School for missionary kids, specifically aiding those who have learning difficulties. She also assists remedial students at Baptist High School.

"Baptist High School isn't just a school," Stonecypher noted, adding that the students are active in starting churches in the vicinity, particularly evangelizing idol worshipers. "Our students go out each Sunday to about 12 different villages" to preach, teach and witness.

"They have caught a vision of what can be done," he said, adding that he foresees a time when the missionary presence at the school will not be necessary.

The Stonecyphers met because of their mutual knowledge of missions



in Nigeria. She served as a journeyman there from 1980 to 1982. He was appointed a career missionary to Nigeria in 1982. During his first furlough, Stonecypher spoke at a church in Indiana, where he met his bride-to-be.

The land where they live is one where neighbors drop by and walk in without knocking first. One doesn't "dash" anywhere to buy groceries. That task could require two to three hours of visiting several small shops. In the cities, Nigerians tend to live in one- or two-room concrete houses with tin roofs. In the villages, they dwell in mud huts with grass roofs.

Children frequently die of diarrhea, malaria, measles, meningitis, cholera, typhoid or some other preventable disease. The mortality rate for women at delivery is extremely high, Mrs. Stonecypher said, noting that life expectancy is 47 to 52.

MISSIONARIES Southern Baptist missionaries Mike and Becky Stonecypher are on furlough from Nigeria. Mrs. Stonecypher, a native of Somerset, said Southern Baptist support of its foreign missions is envied by missionaries from other denominations.

New history book of Kentucky Baptists in works

Writing of an updated history of the Kentucky Baptist Convention has been commissioned by the Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission, with publication expected in the year 2000.

James Duane Bolin, professor of history at Murray State University, has been hired to write the history, according to Cheryl Doty, KBC archivist.

Bolin has written histories for several Kentucky communities and has had articles published in the Kentucky Encyclopedia and other historical publications. He is a graduate of Belmont University in Nashville and the University of Kentucky.

The last detailed history of Kentucky Baptists was published in 1953. That book, written by Frank Masters,

is titled "A History of Baptists in Kentucky."

Doty said the updated history will begin with implementation of the Cooperative Program unified funding plan in 1926, with historic details covering the period from 1945-1997.

The new book should be available at the KBC annual meeting in November 2000, Doty said.

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

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Reservations

Henlee Barnett's recent article about signing certain documents (Dec. 16, page 4) reminded me of a friend, a Baptist minister, who was to receive a post-graduate degree from Loyola University. At the commencement rehearsal he was asked to "pledge allegiance" to the Virgin Mary. He refused. The dean tried to persuade him to go through the motion anyhow, saying, "Haven't we taught you anything about 'mental reservations'?"

Donald MacDonald
Louisville

God's will?

A student who survived a bullet wound in the December Heath High School shooting was quoted in the Recorder (Dec. 23, page 6) as believing God spared him, but chose the victims who died "for a reason." In a TV interview a few years ago, a Lexington pastor indicated it was God's will that his church burned the night before, though he did not understand why.

Assuming the validity of these views, reflected overwhelmingly in the evangelical community, one may infer that God, not just refusing to use

his power to forestall both tragedies, actually killed three young people and burned the church.

This is the kind of thought (theology) that repels people regarding Christianity. Pursued logically, this approach would indicate that God killed 6 million Jews and 25 million Russians during World War II. Even more confounding is the fact that believers who hold this view usually insist that God knew all about, thus actually foreordaining, these tragedies before the creation.

Did God know about Noah's catastrophic flood before creating Adam? If so, what earthly (or heavenly) reason would there have been for creating a human race destined (predestined?) through all of history for unspeakable misery? Only the most cynical, or perhaps those having not worked out their own system of beliefs, insist that God planned the misery, though he is responsible in the sense that nothing—good or bad—would happen if nothing had been created—a far cry from ordaining events.

Theological and logical are not al-

ways mutually exclusive terms, though mystery (a glass darkly) has its place. However, believers must develop a more profound approach to faith than simply, "Well, God's will was done." If God's will has been done in this world, there likely would have been no need for Christ's ministry—or heaven or hell.

James L. Clark
Lexington

God desires good

As a Paducah native, I have followed with interest and prayer recent events surrounding the tragedy at Heath High School. None have been more disturbing than Christians' efforts to explain what happened.

I refer particularly to the well-intentioned but unfortunately misguided remarks of one of the victims (Dec. 23, page 6). Sadly, he reflects the view of a mechanistic and harsh God too prevalent in our day. To believe, as he states, that he was spared for a reason is to imply that others were chosen to die for a reason. The extension of this logic is tragic: It is God who is

responsible for suffering, and he picks victims arbitrarily. Further, the purveyor of such suffering is simply God's chosen instrument, and should be able to shift blame to God. So, God chooses some for crime, some to be victims and some to be blessed with a special plan.

Let's read Romans 8:28 correctly: God does not cause all things to happen, but he can use them for good if we allow. God desires only good for his creation, and no one is more grieved by this event than God. Now that it is done we can only wait to see the full results of his work in these circumstances.

Another correction: God has a plan for everyone of those children, not just the survivors. Another reason for God and us to grieve. As someone pointed out, perhaps one good result will be greater awareness of the need to be in touch with God's plan for each of us personally.

Mike Harton
Midlothian, Va.

■ *Family Forum has moved to page 6, where it will become part of an expanded Resources page each week. Also, Family Forum has expanded to include more than one question and answer each week.*

Southern Baptists in a post-denominational era

By Hal Poe

Larry Lewis declared that all the talk about post-denominationalism was overrated when he addressed his last annual meeting of the state directors of evangelism in 1995 in Jackson Hole, Wyo. Southern Baptists were too big to have to worry about such things.

Now Lewis, more than any other Southern Baptist, represents what the post-denominational era means. His agency was closed by the Southern Baptist Convention and he now

works for one of the most significant parachurch ministries in America, Mission America. Mission America works with individual congregations of all denominations on a city by city basis to win America for Christ. This strategy completely bypasses traditional denominational structures.

How has the post-denominational era affected Southern Baptists and what further impact can we expect?

First, "post-denominational" does not mean that denominations will disappear, though some may. It does mean, however, that the role of the denominations will change dramatically.

Neither does "post-denominational" have any real connection with the recent controversy in the SBC. The post-denominational era will probably have a more devastating effect on the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship than the SBC because CBF is trying to recreate a golden age of organizational loyalty with a generation that does not believe in organizational loyalty. The SBC is trying to reinvent itself in light of the new realities. How well prepared are Southern Baptists

for these changes?

For the last 70 years the SBC has operated like a pyramid scheme. The denominational agencies produced programs which they franchised to state conventions who in turn used the associations to market them to the churches. Every level of Southern Baptist life, even though no hierarchical relationship existed, mirrored the programs of the SBC.

Each state convention had a Sunday school office with Sunday school workers whose job it was to help churches understand how to use

COMMENTARY



Hal Poe

Baptist Sunday School Board material. Discipleship Training, Brotherhood, WMU and the evangelism section of the Home Mission Board had similar franchises with the state conventions. Each association had a director for each program to work with the state director to promote the programs. Local churches reflected this program approach in their weekly activities.

With every pyramid scheme, however, the bust comes when the last franchise cannot find a buyer.

In the 1970s, conservative churches discouraged by the content of the Sunday School Board material began shopping elsewhere. By the time the Sunday School Board had a more conservative direction, conservative churches had grown used to shopping around. In the meantime, moderate churches began shopping around. Conservative churches discouraged by the direction of the WMU began developing alternative "women's ministries" at the same time young professional women in general showed little interest in belonging to a mission support organization.

After facing years of declining

sales in curriculum material, poor return on books, massive layoffs and restructuring, the Sunday School Board has announced the intention to change its name to LifeWay Christian Resources. The abandonment of the name "Baptist" and the purpose of "Sunday school" seems to indicate that the old agency has decided "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em." With the old Home Mission Board gone, the old Sunday School Board searching for identity and WMU increasingly marginalized, the denominational agencies that support domestic work will be reinventing themselves for the next few years.

Post-denominationalism does not look the same in Southern Baptist life as it does in the mainline denominations because we are not a denomination in the traditional sense. The massive restructuring underway in the SBC, however, indicates the forces of post-denominationalism have had a major impact on the agencies.

State conventions like South Carolina have begun to rethink their purpose, and they have begun to move away from the franchise model.

At a time when many new churches have dropped "Baptist" from their name, no longer have Sunday school for adults, do not use the Baptist Hymnal, and follow a presbyterian rather than congregational polity, the SBC agencies, state conventions and associations are scurrying to have a continuing role in the life of the local congregation.

The post-denominational erosion of the SBC can be seen most clearly at the congregational and associational levels. Churches no longer try to mirror the old Baptist program. Young pastors do not get involved in associational life. Associational seminars and state conferences no longer attract the attention of church leaders. Some of the largest associ-

ations in the country, from moderate-influenced associations like Long Run (Louisville) to conservative-influenced Shelby (Memphis, Tenn.), have become paper organizations that do little more than hold meetings.

While denominational agencies faced increasing pressure, Southern Baptists became increasingly active in national political and social issues. Southern Baptists began to work alongside conservative Christians of other denominations through parachurch structures that deal with issues like abortion.

While moderates who originally called themselves the "denominational loyalists" abandoned the SBC structures, young conservatives found other non-denominational structures for accomplishing their ministry goals. The Brotherhood Commission was one of the victims of this trend. It was laid to rest as thousands of Southern Baptist men flocked to Promise Keepers.

State conventions and associations which always have survived the middlemen or wholesalers from the factory will have to work hard to establish their mission and reason for continued existence. A clue to the future, however, lies in the uniqueness of each state and associational mission field.

The emergence of specialized parachurch ministries which provide resources may create opportunities for partnerships that make it unnecessary for each state or association to support every program. Increasingly, state conventions and associations will look dissimilar as they are shaped by their local context and cease to be local representatives of national agencies.

Hal Poe is a vice president at Union University in Jackson, Tenn. He is a former evangelism associate with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and former professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

HE SAID/SHE SAID

All we needed to know about the gospel we learned in youth choir

HESAI



Mark Wingfield

When we got home from Wednesday night choir rehearsal last week, I felt like I'd been to the mountain. We started rehearsing our Easter music, a 25th anniversary revival of "Celebrate Life."

For a Baby Boomer like me, raised in a Southern Baptist church in the Bible Belt, having sung "Celebrate Life" is the church equivalent of having been at Woodstock.

I can't remember for sure the number of times our youth choir performed "Celebrate Life." We sang it at our church at least two or three times, and we took it on mission tours more than once.

The memories that washed over my mind as our adult choir rehearsed were almost non-stop. (Although I have to admit that I felt vaguely like I was playing a role in one of those 20-years-later TV specials, like "Wally and the Beaver Become Grandparents.")

I was transported back not only to the blue leisure suit and floral-print shirt I wore on one of the choir tours, but also to the faces and sounds of 20 years ago. I could see my friends playing the roles of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, telling the story of Jesus' ministry and resurrection.

It dawned on me how much of the gospel story I had pounded into my head through this one musical experience. Everything I really need to know about the gospel I learned in youth choir. I never realized it before, but by singing songs like "Carry Him Gently" and "He's Alive," I learned as a teenager the meaning of the resurrection.

By the time we got to "In Remembrance" in our rehearsal, I could barely hold back the tears. Not just because of the beautiful music and words, but because of remembering the power the gospel story had on the life of one teenager and understanding in astonishment that though I've aged and changed a lot, God has been faithful through the years. That's something to celebrate.

SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

For once, I wasn't the one who got all teary-eyed.

I just had fun. Singing through "Celebrate Life" made me feel young again. In each song, I could hear our youth choir singing in clear young tones (we probably didn't sound quite as good as my inner ear was remembering).

But I also felt old. The woman next to me, who is in her 20s, said she never had sung "Celebrate Life"—but her mother had. Ouch.

And it's amazing how much I remembered. Our church performed "Celebrate Life" about three times that I can remember, the last one when I was in college and part of the adult choir. We had to memorize it each time, so I guess some things stay in the brain for awhile.

The other thing that struck me is the simple and straightforward drama text. This isn't one of those musicals where the drama is thrown in just to tie together a few pretty songs. The drama is central to the whole thing. The story of Jesus as told in the four gospels melds when the gospel writers come to life.

And I always will remember Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as our ministers at Sandia Baptist Church in Albuquerque, N.M. Our music, youth and education ministers, along with our pastor, played the parts. Our church became that early church, living out and remembering the story of Jesus.

Sometimes we can make the gospel message so complicated. No matter how hokey some might think the music sounds today, "Celebrate Life" spotlights the central message of the gospel: "He is Alive."

Got an opinion? Call someone who cares

We've all heard for years that it's our responsibility as Christian citizens to contact our legislators and express opinions on the issues we care about. But in reality, few of us ever put feet to this thought.

We don't have the time, we say. Or maybe we don't know where to call. Or maybe we're too lazy to write a letter. Or maybe we have good intentions but just forget to follow through.

For whatever reason, most of us spend a whole lot more time spouting our opinions to friends and neighbors who can't do anything about them than to elected officials who can.

Yet the fact remains that your opinion, when expressed properly and to the right person, can make a difference.

Malcolm Lunceford, chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's public affairs committee, tells an insightful story to illustrate this.

Several years ago, Lunceford contacted a Kentucky legislator about a particular bill that involved a moral issue. The legislator assured Lunceford they shared the same position and he intended to vote against this particular bill.

Some time later, debate on the subject heated up, and eventually the Kentucky General Assembly passed the bill Lunceford had called his legislator to oppose. Lunceford later was shocked to read in the roll call that his legislator had voted in favor of the bill.

He called the legislator to ask why. "After I talked with you, I got quite a number of calls in favor of the bill," the legislator explained. "And yours was the only call I received opposing the bill."

Kentucky legislators do pay attention to calls and letters from their constituents. Not only do they realize your support is necessary for re-election, but most legislators genuinely want to represent the opinions of their districts.

The Kentucky General Assembly began its 1998 session last week. So there's no better time than now to commit yourself to letting your opinion be heard.

The General Assembly's Legislative Research Commission has made contacting your legislator as simple as possible, short of connecting computer cables to your brain to pick up your thoughts directly.

Call (800) 372-7181 to leave a message for any state senator or representative. If you aren't sure who your legislators are, someone at the Legislative Research Commission switchboard will help you.

It takes less than five minutes to call and leave a message for your legislators. All you have to say is something like this: "I'd like to leave a message for Rep. John Jones. My name is Sally Smith, and I hope the representative will vote against House Bill 00 on gambling."

If you're computer-savvy and on-line, you also can send an e-mail message to many Kentucky legislators. Check out the Legislative Research Commission's home page on the Internet at www.lrc.state.ky.us/home.htm.

This Web site also is a great resource for finding current information about issues before the General Assembly. You can see all the bills that have been filed, check the status of bills and much more.

Or if you still like to write letters the old-fashioned way, address your legislators by name at Kentucky State Capitol, Frankfort, Ky.

Although this year's General Assembly has just begun, several issues of interest to Kentucky Baptists—particularly gambling, abortion and alcohol—already are on the agenda or are thought to be headed for the agenda. Read the package of stories in this week's Recorder for a preview.

Then keep reading the Recorder, as well as your local newspaper, for additional information as the session progresses.

The Recorder staff pledges to keep you informed about moral and religious issues in the legislature of interest to Kentucky Baptists. Will you pledge to become an active part of our shared government in return?

— Mark Wingfield

'Where are you?'

By Mark Boes

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:8-9)

"Mark! Where are you?" my dad called.

I laid as quietly as I could in my bed. I didn't want him to find me. Maybe the darkness would hide me under the covers of my bed.

"Mark! Are you in here?" he called again.

I kept asking myself, Why did I kick a hole in the door to my sister's room? How could I have been so stupid? Yeah, I was mad because my older sister broke up our football game, then arrogantly walked away. By why did I kick a hole in the door?

"Mark! Are you in here?" my father called patiently.

As a 10-year-old boy it never oc-

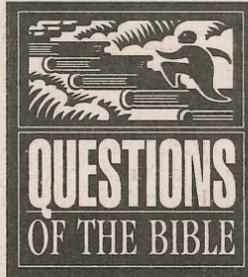
curred to me that my father knew exactly where I was. He knew exactly what I had done. He knew why I was hiding. But still he called out for me, "Mark! Where are you?"

The third chapter of Genesis tells of the time Adam and Eve did something God told them not to do. Almost immediately they realized a terrible loneliness, and they ran to hide.

Since the beginning of time people have felt the urge to run and hide when they have done something wrong. What is amazing is that we attempt to hide from the one who can overcome the effects of our wrongdoing, our heavenly Father.

Yes, Adam and Eve might be able to hide from our heavenly Father in the shadows, but they could not escape him; neither can we.

God came looking for the first couple. He could not ignore their disobedience, nor could he leave them quivering in the guilt of their wrongful deed. They were his own.



Just as Adam and Eve were God's own, so are we. Out of love God comes to find us when we disobey. With his sweet voice he calls, "Where are you?"

Don't misunderstand. God knows where you are. He knows what you have done. He knows how your disobedience affects you. With tenderness and love our heavenly Father is seeking a favorable response from you as he calls, "Where are you?"

I answered my earthly father's call that night and our relationship grew stronger and deeper, in spite of my powerful right foot.

Our heavenly Father desires to deepen and strengthen our relationship with him. So when we run and hide because of our disobedience, our heavenly Father lovingly comes calling, "Where are you? Let's make things right."

Is it time for you to step out of the dark shadows and into the light of God's presence? He is calling you.

Regardless of the damage you have done, he graciously calls, "Where are you, my child?"

Mark Boes is pastor of Cecilia Baptist Church.



RESOURCES

Q. What's an effective way in a family with younger children to have a family devotional time?

A. Family devotions can be extremely meaningful. They also can be times that produce feelings of futility and frustration.

Children have short attention spans, so keep it simple. Read a verse or short passage of Scripture from a modern translation. Then pray.

When you pray, pray in specifics. You might take turns going around and asking "How can we pray for you today?" Pray for family, friends, school activities, pets, events of the day, things happening in the world and things happening at church. Encourage everyone to participate.

Your child's Sunday school materials may include devotional ideas that will correspond with the Sunday Bible study lesson. If you choose to use a published devotional guide, look for one with applications that are clear, concrete and free of symbolism, which children may not understand. Take advantage of Christian celebrations, such as Easter and Advent. Some churches provide special oppor-

tunities and resources for family worship during these seasons.

Besides choosing content, other challenges will be finding a good time, being consistent and not being or feeling hurried or rushed. Don't put yourself under too much pressure.

You might want to consider beginning with a goal of having family devotions once a week. Don't worry if you miss, but do remember that consistency will speak that consistency to your children about the importance of what you're doing. — *David Garrard*

Q. Where can a single person go to meet good potential mates? Please list some alternatives to the bar scene.

A. People in bars often discover that the one thing they have in common is alcohol—not a sure basis for relationship. Neil Clark Warren, author of "Finding the Love of Your Life," suggests these places to meet others:

■ Weddings. Everyone's dressed nicely, feeling romantic and on their

best behavior. Many significant introductions occur at wedding receptions.

■ Church-based single adult ministries/groups/events. Whether these are local, state or national, you're with people interested in a Christian perspective.

■ Book clubs. Find a topic that interests you. Chances are, others in your city gather regularly to discuss books related to that topic.

■ Service organizations/Opportunities. Giving your life away in service really does make you more attractive.

■ Sports events/leagues. It's fun and a great way to keep in shape.

■ Take a walk. Make eye contact, and conversation will follow.

■ Political groups. In your local area there are people who care deeply about current events and issues. It's rewarding to work alongside people of similar convictions.

■ Parties and picnics. Join your street's block party—an easy way to mix conversation and food.

■ Reunions and reunion committees. If you haven't heard from your graduating class or choirs you once participated in, make a few phone calls and get things organized. It's fun to renew acquaintances.

■ Family gatherings. This may seem weird if you've been asked the same old question every year at family reunions. Still, the fact that these people do care and could have some valuable information which you can then assess for yourself.

■ A social networking letter. Think of 10 people whose judgment you trust. Be as specific as you can in what kind of person you're looking for. Keep in touch on a regular basis, updating them of your status. — *James Stillwell*

Family Forum writers are David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; John Lepper, director of family ministries with the Kentucky Baptist Convention; Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville; and Al Shackelford, editor of Mature Living magazine. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.



FAMILY

Be a role model for kids in stewardship

By Doug Strader

I still remember when my mother would wrap my Sunday school offering in the corner of a handkerchief (usually a penny) so I would not lose it before I got to my class.

I was being taught that I should always have an offering when I went to church. That lesson is significant in my stewardship commitment to this day.

It is never too early to begin teaching of giving money to God. Whether the child has earned the money from a weekly allowance or from doing chores, the faithful steward gives at least a tenth to God through the church.

As early as possible, children should be taught the proper use of money. Sometimes that will mean a child will make a mistake. But the best way to learn is by doing and being free to make mistakes. Parents should not always step in and rescue their children. That could be the time for the parents to teach money management.

Parents have the responsibility to be role models for their children in all areas of financial stewardship. The way parents make money, manage money and spend money is very important. Do they make money in an honest manner? Do they spend money wisely? Do they use credit cards wisely? Does money, or the lack of money, dominate the family conversations? These are some of the questions parents need to ask themselves as role models for their children. All parents are either positive or negative role models for their children in the stewardship of money.

If parents want their children to be good stewards of their possessions, they must be good role models by tithing and teaching their children to tithe. Using offering envelopes weekly, and teaching children to use offering envelopes weekly, is one way to be a good role model. As children grow and mature, tithing and good financial stewardship practices will come more naturally.

Parents should remember that good stewardship practices will result from early teaching and role modeling. It is never too early to begin financial stewardship role modeling.

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

'Joy to the World' in marriage revisited

There I was on Christmas Eve, trying to practice what I had just preached, partaking in the joy of the season as I attended a brief but powerful communion celebration.

In the last Family Forum (released two days prior to Christmas Eve), I spoke about how Christian couples can have great joy when they worship and serve the babe of Bethlehem. During the Christmas Eve service, I became aware that while my words in that column were true, they also were one-sided.

A more accurate and balanced description of Christmas is that it is a happy/sad time. While it is a time in which we sing about the joy that Christ brings, it also is a time we can experience great sadness. To paraphrase the words of another writer, Christmas is the most joyous of times, and it is the saddest of times.

I came to a new awareness of this on Christmas Eve 1997. You see, nine Christmas Eves ago, we buried my father. That was the year in which we sang "Joy to the World" through tear-filled eyes. From that Christmas to this, no matter how much we sing or talk about joy, our family experiences some of the grief of that death.

And so I experienced a mixture of joy and sorrow as I heard our youngest daughter sing in a youth ensemble and offer a prayer following the lighting of the Advent candle. I could almost hear Papa say, "I sure am proud of those girls."

Christmas in America is a family holiday. Our culture has taught us that if we possess "the Christmas spirit," then sadness is banished—or at least ignored. In reality however, when family members are absent because of death or estrangement, our sadness is intensified. The high expectations at Christmas make the very joy we proclaim during this season less reachable.

The babe of Bethlehem joined a world of darkness, a world where relationships were fractured almost beyond repair. And while he brought overflowing joy, it existed alongside pain and sorrow.

When we as couples invite him to join us in our dark places, he brings joy. We discover this joy as we grow in relationship to him and in our family relationships. Jesus wishes for us deep, unspeakable joy. The wonder of Christmas is that we can experience this unspeakable joy along with the real hurts of life. — *John Lepper*

Seek to understand angry people, then talk

NASHVILLE (BP)—Learning to deal effectively with angry people is a "life-altering and life-enhancing" skill, according to an education authority.

Some reflexive responses, even if offered with good intentions, may only make angry people even angrier, said Madelyn Swift, president of Stairway Education Programs in Grapevine, Texas.

She listed several barriers to understanding when dealing with angry and distressed people:

■ Diminishing or discounting their perspective through statements such as "You are making a mountain out of a molehill."

■ Moralizing with thoughts that may include "Life is not fair" or "You have to take the bad with the good.

No one promised us a rose garden."

■ Giving advice, solutions or directions when the angry person is not ready to receive instant solutions.

■ Asking questions which may appear to be motivated by accusation, such as "Has this ever happened before?"

■ Appearing to defend one person against the other person in an attempt to understand both sides of a situation.

Helping people shift perspective can be accomplished by giving the person complete attention, stopping other activity and making eye contact, Swift said.

"Avoid explosive responses," she advised. "Anger begets anger. Listen with your eyes and your mind."

She said listeners can demonstrate understanding with non-committal

and non-judgmental responses, such as "I see."

Swift suggested helping to identify the problem by separating "nuggets of gold" from garbage when a problem is surrounded by verbiage. A calm and thoughtful approach is necessary to lead the person to think through and solve the problem.

"Go into their minds and say what they said. Take a moment to demonstrate that you understand by speaking their words better than they did or giving life to their thoughts better than they have," Swift suggested.

"I don't know anyone who deals with anger in this way naturally. But without this skill, I am handicapped in working with people rather than against people. Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

CHURCHES

Listen before church members leap, consultant says

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—If you want to reclaim inactive church members, learn to listen to the stories people are telling without necessarily using words, advises a Kentucky church leadership consultant.

Most people who drop out of church are crying out for help but the church has failed to hear their cry, said Chip Miller, church leadership consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Miller recently led a seminar at a Louisville-area church on

"Reaching Inactive Church Members." It's a seminar he's available to give across the state when invited by a local church or association.

Miller's presentation is based largely on research by John Savage, a United Methodist pastor who two decades ago began looking in earnest at why people leave Protestant churches. Savage's published research is among only a small amount of literature available on the subject, Miller said.

Through interviews with thousands of church dropouts, Savage identified a common track by which people exit through the church's "back door."

"The track out of church may take three months or three years," Miller explained. "But once they cross the line and have dropped out, we have between six and eight weeks to reclaim them. Then there's a sealing off that makes them far more difficult to reclaim."

And the longer a person remains inactive, the longer it will take to bring that person back into the fold, Miller warned. "Some research says for every year they're out, it will take one in-depth visit to bring them back."

So what causes a person or family to head for the church's back door?

Miller said Savage's research provides a crystal clear answer: "In every situation, without exception, there was a cluster of private anxiety-producing events. The pain of that cluster was alive in the psyche of that person even though some of those things happened years in the past."

Furthermore, the church failed to notice or address the pain building inside the person, causing that person to feel rejected or unneeded and left alone to deal with life's pain.

What makes the situation complex, Miller said, is that in many cases the person in pain doesn't verbalize that pain and may not even be fully aware of the pain.

The "private clusters of anxiety" that Miller and Savage talk about may be related to church personalities or events, but they are just as likely to have nothing at all to do with church. In some cases, a person may have a disagreement with the pastor or another church member, but sometimes problems within the family or at work may play themselves out in anger toward the church, Miller said.

Taken individually, these anxiety-producing factors may appear small, he added. "But if they don't get resolved, they begin to stack up" until



Miller: 3 factors keep members coming to church

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—The best remedy for reclaiming inactive members is to catch them before they become inactive, Chip Miller advises.

While it may not be obvious to those who aren't looking, people on their way out the church's back door almost always give clues of where they're headed, said Miller, church leadership consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

One simple indicator is worship participation. For example, a person or family may begin moving further back in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings than where they traditionally have sat. Their worship attendance may become less frequent before they stop attending altogether.

Sunday school attendance may begin sliding as well, Miller said. Or a person may stop attending committee meetings or participating in some other group or activity where they previously were active. Or parents may begin letting their children drop out of church activities as an early step toward a full exit, he added.

The extensive research of John Savage on this topic shows that "a pattern of attendance indicates what's going on at a deeper level," Miller said.

Particularly with worship and Sunday school in a Baptist church, if anyone is absent seven consecutive Sundays, "he's in trouble," Miller warned.

Another key is to understand what keeps a person bonded with a church, Miller added. He cited three essential factors:

- The person's faith is being fed.
- The person is part of a group where people know his name and he finds identity and support.
- The person has a sense of ownership in what the church is doing.

"When one, two or three of these begin to unravel, you've got trouble," Miller said.

The best way for a church to prevent people from sliding away from active participation is to learn to listen, Miller said.

But in addition, keeping an accurate record of attendance and then reading those records also is vital, he said. "If you don't hear us, at least see us."

one more small thing creates an emotional overload.

He cited four major sources of anxiety, or unresolved fear:

■ **Reality.** This includes problems such as sickness, accidents, deaths in the family, dealing with problem children.

■ **Moral.** This includes people who get entangled in their own moral failures, as well as those who become embarrassed or distracted by the moral problems of other family or friends.

■ **Neurotic expectations.** This happens when people maintain expectations of themselves, their family or other church members that are not realistic.

■ **Existential dilemmas.** This happens when a person becomes obsessed with and panicked by the difficult questions of life, such as the meaning of life and death.

According to Savage's research, the church member who faces a cluster of these anxiety-producing events always gives out a cry for help. But it may not always be expressed verbally.

Miller cited the results of Savage's interviews with people who dropped out of church. "These people will be very clear: 'I tried to say it; I tried to communicate it, but nobody heard.'"

One reason nobody hears, Miller said, is because most church members are trained to screen out these negative signals. "We don't like to hear cries for help. It may trigger fear in us, or we may retaliate by telling our own story."

The latter point, Miller said, is as simple as playing a game of "any problem you've got I've got worse." Instead of listening to another's problems, too many church members immediately turn the focus on themselves by telling their own related problems, he said.

And that, Miller said, demonstrates the best key for closing the church's back door toward inactive membership: Learn to listen.

"Anytime your church gathers, people are going to be crying out. You can hear them if you will listen."

He told the story of a man who was chairman of a church committee. During a committee meeting one night the man hit his fist on the table, expressed words of frustration and walked out, saying he was never coming back.

A perceptive member of the committee got in his car and followed the man home. He greeted him there and calmly asked the angry man what was going on in his life. It turned out the man had experienced a major setback in his job. Since the man couldn't express his frustration at work, he projected it on the church, Miller said.

The action of that one perceptive committee member stopped what was destined to become another family dropping out of church, Miller said. And the same could be true in many other churches if members would learn to listen to the verbal and non-verbal signals of people crying out for help.

Left unattended, these clusters of anxiety that cause people to drop out of church fester and grow, Miller said. "The problem may have happened 20 years ago, but when you sit down and talk with that person, it will be as fresh in his mind as if it had happened yesterday."

The challenge of reclaiming inactive church members is to help them unpack these anxieties and resolve them, he suggested. "Until we unpack that cluster to a satisfactory level, we don't have a ghost of a chance of getting them back in church."

While this may sound like a job only years of professional therapy could undo, compassionate church members must take the first step in reclaiming those who have fallen away, Miller said. "There are not enough therapists, there's not enough money to get this done professionally. We've got to do it informally. You'll stumble and bumble, but that's OK."

Numbers in action

According to statistics by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and researcher John Savage:

■ 31.8 percent of Southern Baptist church members are "non-resident" members, meaning they no longer live where their church membership is.

■ 20.7 percent of Southern Baptist church members are "resident inactives," meaning they still live in the area but no longer attend.

■ Members that are absent seven consecutive Sundays are in danger of becoming inactive.

■ Once a member drops out, churches have a six-to-eight-week window to reclaim him or her before it becomes much more difficult.

■ To bring back inactive members, it could take one in-depth visit for every year they've been gone.

■ Half of currently active church members have dropped out of church at some time.



Abortion issues include bill to ban 'partial-birth' procedure

FRANKFORT—The chances are good that the Kentucky legislature will vote this session to ban "partial-birth" abortions, according to the leader of Kentucky Right to Life Association.

The ban is one of four issues the group is promoting this year, said Executive Director Margie Montgomery.

Last year the U.S. Congress was unable to override President Clinton's veto of a ban on "partial-birth" abortions, but several states have enacted their own bans.

Montgomery said she's optimistic after talking with legislators. "They seem to feel that although the chairmen of the judiciary committees in both the House and Senate are not as strongly with us as we might hoped, they have indicated they will hold hearings," she said.

Abortion opponents were working last week with the national Right to Life organization to make sure the wording was constitutional before submitting a bill.

Other issues this term include standards for abortion facilities, an informed consent law for abortion and a bill to define fetal homicide.

House bill 85 and Senate bill 29 would require abortion providers to inform pregnant women about the abortion, including medical risks and alternatives.

House bill 70 would require Kentucky's Cabinet for Human Resources to set licensing standards for abortion clinics.

The fetal homicide bill would permit prosecution of people who assault or otherwise harm a pregnant woman who loses her baby, she said.

Rep. Tom Kurr, of Northern Kentucky, is expected to submit a bill on fetal homicide, and Sen. Gex Williams, of Verona, is expected to propose an amendment to the Kentucky constitution that would legally define life as beginning at fertilization, Montgomery added.

Lottery opponents question scholarship

By David Winfrey
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Creating a scholarship fund from lottery revenue would send the wrong message to families and deepen Kentucky's dependency on gambling revenue, say two Kentucky Baptists who are trying to mobilize opposition against the proposal.

Senate bill No. 21 would take money from lottery revenues to establish a scholarship trust fund for Kentucky students. State Senators Tim Shaughnessy and David Karem, both from Jefferson County, are sponsoring the bill, which is estimated to cost \$150 million.

In his "State of the Commonwealth" address Jan. 6, Gov. Paul Patton said the time had come "to begin a major new initiative" to help families pay for college, although he did not specifically endorse senate bill 21.

But earmarking lottery money for scholarships could open the door for more gambling in the state, said Malcolm Lunceford, chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Public Affairs.

"They've got to make up that money for the general fund," said Lunceford, a resident of Frankfort and interim pastor of Rosedale Baptist Church in Richmond. And the most likely means is by legalizing more gambling, he said.

"Nobody's against education" Lunceford added. "But this opens the door, it seems, to the possibility of video lottery terminals at the racetracks and expansion of gambling in Kentucky."

The Kentucky Lottery Corp. and several state legislators previously have expressed strong interest in offering casino-style video games.

Video lottery terminals would offer games of chance, such as slot machines and "video

funds for scholarships. "You're sending the wrong message not only to children but to families that in order to get an education you must gamble," he said.

In many cases poor families spend more money on gambling than those with median and upper incomes, he said. "The poor people are going to be sending the rich people's kids to college."

The KBC Public Affairs Committee agreed Jan. 6 to send

a letter to every KBC Executive Board member asking for their help telling legislators they oppose video gambling. A letter and material for a bulletin insert also will be sent to KBC pastors.

Lunceford said it

will be easier for Baptists to stop video lottery gambling before it starts than eliminating it if it ever is approved.

"Gaming is becoming more and more acceptable in the state," he said. "We're going to have to fight this for the rest of our lives."

Witt agreed. It's a real volatile issue," he said. "It needs to be dealt with very strongly."

Kentuckians wanting to contact their legislators concerning a bill may call (800) 372-7181 or write to Capital Annex, Frankfort, Ky. 40601.

Kentucky General Assembly



poker," with the proceeds split between the state and the site where the game is played, such as a racetrack or bar.

Claude Witt, executive director of the Kentucky Temperance League, said video gambling that's not linked to the lottery already is "happening all over the state now."

His office has received calls concerning truck stops offering video gambling, he said. One family called after a truck driver lost \$800, he added.

Witt also opposes using lottery

Odd couple takes plans for liquor sales limits to legislature

Continued from page 1

three and that means a lot more to me than just selling alcohol."

Together, Witt and Singer are seeking sponsors for eight bills they

want considered.

"I have three; he has five," Witt said. "If we do our business right, we can pass all eight of them."

Among Witt's proposals are barring the sale of cold beer at gas stations and stopping billboard alcohol ads in "dry" counties, those that outlaw alcohol sales.

But his idea most likely to draw attention is the shutting down of all drive-through liquor sales by the year 2000. Liquor retailers will "fight me tooth and nail on the drive-up window thing," he predicted.

Singer supports the idea, saying drive-through windows promote drinking and driving and lessen a clerk's ability to assess the sobriety and age of the buyer.

"It's just not worth it in my mind," said Singer, who said his store closed its drive-through window years ago.

Witt said he expects retailers to say the windows are safer for clerks in high-crime areas. "Now is that the kind of area where you need to be selling alcohol anyway?"

Among Singer's proposals is a requirement that alcohol sales clerks be trained about laws against selling to minors.

He said his work with Champions has led him during the past four years to try to improve "toothless," vague or outdated laws. He admits that he isn't always popular with his peers.

"I come under fire because I know too much, I guess," he said. But he added that others should be equally involved. "No matter how removed you are from alcohol or how involved

you are in alcohol, it should be a concern of everyone."

Singer said many in his industry believe that alcohol is the "next tobacco," referring to recent harsher regulations. "I believe that's coming."

His goal, he said, is that the industry be proactive so that any new regulations are reasonable and fair.

"Most of the things I'm asking for would make the things a little tougher," he noted. "Just because I'm in the liquor business, I haven't given up my faith, my parenthood, my feelings for my community that I live in. These issues affect me too."

Witt and Singer said they are encouraged that the state Alcohol and Beverage Control Commissioner is attempting to increase license fees to hire more enforcement officers.

"If he changes all the fees he wants, he'll double his budget, and that may sound like a lot but it's not," Singer said.

Rick Johnstone, commissioner of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, said he has 20-25 agents trying to enforce tobacco and alcohol laws in the commonwealth's 120 counties.

"I end up being reactive, not proactive, in what I tend to do here," he said. "I rarely do anything in dry counties, and that's 75 of them."

Johnstone wants to get 70 statutes updated and a vast majority of the fees his commission charged increased, he said. "I was just amazed to see that in many situations the fees had not been changed in 50 years."

Witt noted that in Jefferson Coun-

ty alone the number of alcohol sales permits have tripled while the number of enforcement agents has stayed the same.

Added Singer: "With that many places and not enough people to watch, there are going to be big mistakes and big problems."

Witt said he and Singer hope to have legislative sponsors for their eight bills by the end of the month. While they would prefer to have sponsorship by a member of the majority Democratic Party, "We'll get them even if we have to go to a Republican," Witt said.

He said he expects some people to criticize his work with a liquor dealer. "My answer to that is the liquor dealer wants to get something done."

Experience has shown that the only way to control alcohol is through laws regulating the price, hours of sale and places of sale, he added.

In the past, when he's worked with alcohol lobbyists, "I always tell them, 'If I have an opportunity to shut you down, I'll shut you down,'" he said. "If you're honest and up front with these people and respect them, they'll respect you."

Personally, he added, "I'm just lucky to have Ken as a friend." The two even pray together at times, Witt added.

Singer said he's happy to see a variety of alcohol-related issues coming together. "And I don't think that's by accident," he said. "Divine providence is leading us to this, and I feel positive that things are going to change. And it's about time."

Eight proposals on alcohol

Here are eight proposals Claude Witt of the Kentucky Temperance League and Ken Singer, a Louisville liquor store owner, have teamed up to promote. The first three proposals are offered by Witt; the last five by Singer:

- Prohibiting the sale of alcohol through a drive-up window.
- Prohibiting the sale of cold beer at gas stations.
- Prohibiting alcohol billboards in "dry" counties (those that outlaw alcohol sales).
- Requiring stores selling alcohol to teach their employees about laws prohibiting alcohol sales to minors.
- Defining what identification cards are acceptable for proof of age for someone buying alcohol. Relieving store and clerk from prosecution if a hearing officer believes fraudulent identification was of sufficient quality to fool a reasonable person. Allowing for the suspension of a minor's driver's license for using fake identification to buy alcohol.
- Setting punishments for clerks selling alcohol to minors. Fines would be put on par with those for selling tobacco to minors. It also allows for civil enforcement instead of requiring the seller to go before a criminal court, where many cases are thrown out, Singer said.
- Setting a standard rate of fines and punishments against licensees involving the sale of alcohol to minors, regardless of what agency handles the violation.
- Prohibiting bars from sales promotions that promote excessive drinking, such as "three for one" or "all you can drink." Also prohibits promotions that use drinking alcohol as part of the game or contest.

ISSUES

South Carolina a study in gambling woes

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)—Add South Carolina to the list of states suffering from an acute case of gambling.

Through video poker, South Carolina offers "the nation's widest-open gambling," according to the Wall Street Journal in a front-page article last month.

The 31,000 video poker machines in South Carolina—many in restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores—collected an estimated \$2 billion in 1996. The entire state budget, meanwhile, is \$5.4 billion.

Gamblers Anonymous chapters in South Carolina have more than tripled to 27 in the past four years.

The state legislature is facing six new bills—and 17 from last session—to regulate, eliminate or hold a state-wide referendum on video poker, according to a report in The State, the state capital's daily newspaper.

Anti-gambling forces are slated to begin plotting strategy against video poker in a Jan. 16 noon meeting at the Baptist convention building in Columbia.

Several lawsuits also are pending in state courts, the Journal reported. One contends video poker is a lottery, and thus unconstitutional; another

seeks damages on behalf of thousands of gamblers; a third seeks enforcement of the law banning alcohol sales on gambling premises, a ruling that could force more than half of all businesses with video machines to choose between liquor and poker.

In South Carolina, video poker moved during the 1990s from "a back-room game of dubious legality" to "judicial and legislative sanction as a low-stakes, small-scale exception to the (state's) general gambling ban," the Journal recounted. "But because of the weak enforcement, legal loopholes and aggressive litigation by video-poker operators, this narrow breach has blown open to create a multibillion-dollar industry that now afflicts the state's soul."

In 1994, 12 of the state's 46 counties voted to ban video poker. But industry lawyers convinced the state Supreme Court in 1996 that the vote was unconstitutional because the state criminal code must be uniformly applied.

"They've hired the best lobbyists in the state and basically bought a lot of support with campaign money," Darrell Jackson, a state senator and minister, told the Journal. Jackson acknowledged receiving contributions

from video-poker operators when he first ran for office in 1992—and later voting in support of industry positions.

But Jackson told the Journal he changed his position when one of his constituents came to him for help—as a minister, not as a politician. The woman had gambled away her savings and even spent money her teenage daughter earned working at a fast-food restaurant and had set aside for her college education.

In September, a 10-day-old infant died in a sweltering car while her mother played video poker for hours, the Journal reported. The paper quoted one addict as saying, "I've lost \$38,000 in three years, but what I've really lost is my character. I've lied to my mother, to my wife, to my children. I'd get home two hours late and stop to smear myself with engine grease so I could tell my wife I had battery problems." Another woman told the newspaper, "I wish this was outlawed, because I'm addicted and I can't stop."

"Video poker is the crack cocaine of gambling," said Carl Carlin, an addiction counselor at a psychiatric hospital in Aiken, S.C. He called it "insidious" in its "immediacy, intensity and the way it takes over your life."

Anti-gambling leader says tide finally turning in national fight

HANOVER, Ill. (BP)—After five years of battling legalized gambling, Tom Grey said the tide is turning against the pastime that once was predicted to be the "wave of the future."

"When I started in 1992, gambling was called a great force of history," said the executive director of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling, which was founded in 1994. "It's a major victory when they aren't expanding anymore."

Anti-gambling forces continue to register wins at the ballot box, he said, pointing to the rejection of casinos by the Navajo Indian tribe in November. In Virginia, local elections to legalize off-track betting also were defeated, he said.

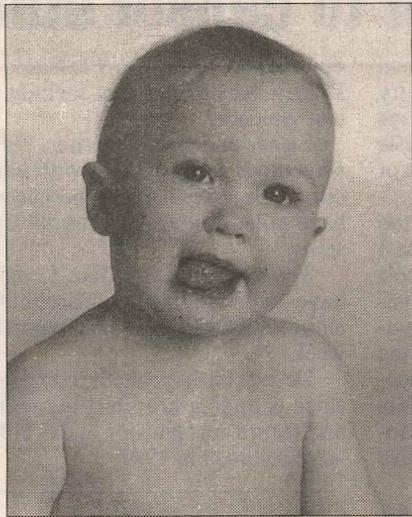
Fighting the influence of gambling, which claimed \$586 billion in wagers last year, will only happen with the leadership, commitment and power of Christians, he said.

The church's resources and vision are necessary to convince people to fight, Grey said. Opposition to gambling requires a very intentional, educational campaign to inform the public about gambling's dangers.

According to the coalition, studies show that for every dollar gambling produces for a regional economy, \$3 is lost because of economic and social costs.

Churches must get involved in the issue even though many pastors think it is too controversial, Grey said.

"This has to do with who will control our communities—the people or special interests. I think the church has a role. The question is whether the church will be actively involved."



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Bible translation conference already gaining interest

By Art Toalston
Baptist Press

"Most of the guidelines are hermeneutically or linguistically naïve. ... I think it was all decided far too quickly without a real examination of Bible translation issues."

Mark Strauss, assistant professor of New Testament at Bethel Seminary in San Diego, evaluating a set of Bible translation guidelines

WHEATON, Ill. (BP)—Even if it's scheduled for next year, a conference on "Gender-Related Issues in Bible Translation" at Wheaton College already is stirring interest.

The conference, postponed from February 1998 and now slated for Feb. 26-27, 1999, stems from controversy in 1997 about a planned "gender-accurate" revision of the New International Version Bible translation for the U.S. market in the year 2001. The NIV revision since has been canceled.

Five papers will be presented at the conference, but the list of the presenters is not yet complete, said Gene Rubingh, one of three steering committee members organizing the event on behalf of the Forum of Bible Agencies, a fellowship of the International Bible Society, American Bible Society, Wycliffe Bible Translators and other Bible-related organizations. Rubingh is vice president for translations with the IBS, based in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Paper topics include:

- "Toward a definition of accuracy in translation."
- "Translation issues in rendering

masculine terms in the Old and New Testaments."

■ "An evaluation of techniques used in inclusive language translation: e.g. changing singular to plural, active verbs to passive, third person to first or second person."

■ "Culture and language: Assessing the role of culture in relation to the original text and the translated text."

■ "The translation of Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament."

Panel discussion topics will be:
■ "Is translation everything? What is the role of the pastor and the church in the inclusive language discussion?"

■ "To what extent should the language usage of the intended audience be allowed to influence translation?"

■ "To what extent should translations respond to the trends in shifts of language usage?"

The other members of the conference steering committee are Katherine Barnwell, international translations coordinator for Wycliffe's Summer Institute of Linguistics, and Basil Rebera, translation services coordinator with the United Bible Societies.

Zondervan Publishing House and IBS were at the center of the gender translation controversy—Zondervan

is the NIV's U.S. publisher and IBS is the NIV's copyright holder.

The NIV, for numerous years, has accounted for 45 percent of all Bibles sold in the United States.

Wayne Grudem, president of the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, said he has been invited to present one of the five papers.

"To my current knowledge, I am the only scheduled presenter who has publicly spoken or written in defense of the Colorado Springs guidelines."

The 14 Colorado Springs "guidelines for translation of gender-related language in Scripture" were adopted by a group of 11 evangelical leaders convened May 27 in Colorado Springs, Colo., by James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family ministry. Among the signers of the guidelines were Grudem, Zondervan President and CEO Bruce Ryskamp and IBS President Lars Dunberg.

The guidelines—which, for example, state, "'Father' ('pater,' 'ab' in the original text) should not be changed to 'parent,' or 'fathers' to 'parents,' or 'ancestors'"—reflect two key points of consensus adopted at the Colorado Springs meeting: "Specifically, we agree that it is inappropriate to use gender-neutral language when it diminishes accuracy in the translation of

the Bible" and "We agree that Bible translations should not be influenced by illegitimate intrusions of secular culture or by political or ideological agendas."

The guidelines, however, have their critics, including Mark Strauss, assistant professor of New Testament at Bethel Seminary in San Diego, and the author of an upcoming book on the Bible translation debate.

Strauss said the guidelines are "wrong" and "have serious problems."

"Most of the guidelines are hermeneutically or linguistically naïve," he said. "I think it was all decided far too quickly without a real examination of Bible translation issues."

More than 50 conservative Bible scholars, theologians and evangelical leaders have publicly endorsed the Colorado Springs consensus statement and Bible translation guidelines, including Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Al Mohler, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson, and two former Southern Baptist Convention presidents, Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., and Jerry Vines, copastor of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Denver church honors Oklahoma victims.** A Denver church bell tolled 168 times Jan. 7 during a memorial service for the victims of the Oklahoma City federal building bombing. Holy Ghost Catholic Church, the site of the service, had opened its doors as a "safe haven" for family members of the bombing victims during their visits to Denver trials for Terry Nichols and Timothy McVeigh. Christians, Jews and Muslims in the Denver area have contributed to the efforts, providing not only a place for relaxation, but counseling and meals during the lengthy time that Oklahomans have traveled west to attend hearings and trials.

■ **Same-sex blessings backed by 1,300 Methodist clergy.** About 1,300 United Methodist clergy have signed a statement expressing their dissent from the denomination's teachings on homosexuality and affirming "appropriate liturgical support" for same-sex marriages or covenant partnerships. The movement was sparked by a statement during the 1996 meeting of the church's top governing body in which 15 bishops said that while they will continue to uphold the denomination's teaching on homosexuality, they disagreed with that teaching.

■ **University to demolish historic Baptist church.** Temple University in Philadelphia plans to demolish most of a 106-year-old Baptist church built by the school's founder, even though the church is a historic landmark and was once the largest Protestant church in the United States. A school planner said upgrading it would cost nearly \$4 million. School officials would like to tear down all of the Baptist Temple with the exception of its stone facade and portions of two side walls. The space would be used for an outdoor "performance garden."

■ **Planning starts for "Souper Bowl."** For the ninth year in a row, churches are being asked to help their local food pantries on Super Bowl Weekend. The Souper Bowl of Caring suggests churches ask \$1 and a canned good from each member, with all money going directly to a local charity of the church's choice. Last year, about 5,500 congregations raised \$1.1 million. For more information, call (800) 358-SOUP, or visit the group's Web site: www.souperbowl.com.

Disney chairman pledges not to censor staff

LOS ANGELES (RNS)—Walt Disney Co. Chairman Michael Eisner said in an annual letter to shareholders he "always will defend the right" of the company to offer entertainment that some might deem offensive.

Although he did not mention a boycott by Southern Baptists by name, Eisner promised to fight attempts by outside organizations to change or control the content of Disney's products, Associated Press reported.

"In each of our divisions ... we seek to be in business with the best and most creative talent we can find," Eis-

ner wrote. "We then try to give them freedom to do their best work. We try not to censor them, and I will always defend the right of the talented artists who work for us to push the limits of their imagination."

At the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention last June, messengers voted to boycott Disney. Baptists and other conservative Christian groups have voiced concerns about what they believe is the corporate giant's anti-Christian direction, in part because it now offers health benefits to partners of homosexual employees. They also have

objected to some films released by Disney subsidiaries that include sex and violence.

Eisner added in his letter, "If we sometimes make choices with which others disagree, it is not because we have failed to look hard at our decisions."

The letter, released Jan. 5, was to have been mailed to shareholders along with Disney's annual report last week.

Despite the boycott, the company's stock is trading near its all-time high and record revenues of \$22.5 billion were received in 1997.

Court refuses to hear bias case

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court refused last week to consider a workplace-bias lawsuit by a Massachusetts woman who said she was demoted because she refused to attend a religious seminar.

Without comment, the court turned away the woman's argument that she should have the right to decline attendance at the seminar even if it did not conflict with her own religious beliefs.

Ruth Kolodziej of Springfield, Mass., was hired in 1987 by Electro-Term as a management-level employee. The firm makes and sells electrical connectors.

Company president Warren Smith required management-level workers to attend a week-long seminar each year that dealt with responding to authority and conflict resolution. Participants in the non-denominational seminar were encouraged to study a workbook with 1,000 biblical references.

Kolodziej, a Roman Catholic, started to attend the session, but objected to a section that depicted God's "plan" for the family with God on the top,

man below God and woman below man. She refused to complete the seminar and Smith demoted her to a non-management position.

Kolodziej quit her job and sued, saying the required seminar attendance was a form of religious discrimination and violated federal law—Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

A jury ruled that even though she had been required to attend a devotional service, the seminar did not conflict with her religious beliefs. Because of that decision, a verdict was entered for the company.

On appeal, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court also ruled against Kolodziej last July. The state court said in order to prove discrimination, she had to demonstrate she was punished for refusing to comply with a requirement that clashed with her religious views.

In the appeal acted on by the U.S. Supreme Court, Kolodziej's lawyer said she should have the right to refrain from religious activity, regardless of her particular beliefs.

Prayer effort unconstitutional

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A District of Columbia appellate court has ruled unconstitutional a proposed ballot amendment that would have required all Washington public schools to authorize "student-initiated" prayer at school events.

The D.C. Court of Appeals ruling was a defeat for the Coalition for Voluntary Prayer, which has tried to get the initiative on the ballot in 1995, the Washington Post reported.

D.C. Superior Court Judge Geoffrey Alprin previously ruled that the initiative was "patently, obviously and unquestionably unconstitutional." The coalition appealed that ruling, which was upheld by the appellate court.

The judges of the appellate court said "it would be an exercise in futility" to allow a vote on an unconstitutional measure.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Preschool teachers. Fern Creek Baptist Child Development Center is currently looking for preschool and parents' day out teachers for the 1997-98 school year. Hours are MWF, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for preschool and TT, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. for parents' day out. We offer competitive wages, a friendly environment and other benefits. Please contact Debbie Gorbandt or Linda Barnes at (502) 239-0316.

SEEKING: Minister of music/associate pastor. Baptist church in central Maryland has immediate opening for individual with calling to full-time ministry. Responsibilities include development of comprehensive music program and promotion of full life and work of church. Mail or fax resumé: Westminster Baptist Church, 354 Crest Lane, Westminster, MD 21157. Fax: (410) 848-6460.

SEEKING: Campbellsville Baptist Church is now accepting resúmes for a full-time minister of students. Seminary degree preferred. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Campbellsville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 530, Campbellsville, KY 42719-0530. Resúmes will be accepted through Jan. 21, 1998.

NEEDED: Pastor. Meadow Creek Baptist Church. Please call: (606) 348-6964.

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: Experienced church hostess/food service director seeks part-time position with church in Louisville area. I have moved recently from First Baptist Church in Bowling Green where I was employed as the Food Service Director for several years. If you are in need of someone to help with your food service needs on a part-time basis, please call Susan Locke at (502) 796-9382 (home) or (502) 452-8326 (work). Specialties include (but not limited to): Wednesday evening meals, Sunday school parties, weddings, receptions, luncheons, etc.

SEEKING: CBF church accepting resúmes for full-time pastor with a vision for a growing area of Louisville. Send resumé to: Hillview Baptist Church, 5319 Dixie Highway, Louisville, KY 40216, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time preschool/children's minister to lead weekday ministries program. This thriving program includes two- and three-year developmental daycare, four-year preschool, kindergarten and after school program (grades 1-6). Must meet state licensing requirements. Seminary degree preferred. Salary negotiable based on qualifications. Resumé: First Baptist Church, 1400 South Main, Hopkinsville, KY 42240, Attn: Keith Stillwell.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for a healthy, growing church—two morning services. Send resumé to: P.O. Box 197, Rineyville, KY 40162.

FREE: Telephone system for church use. A Louisville Christian businessman is offering a free AT&T telephone system to a church which can use it. The system includes six lines and 12 phones. Church must arrange for installation—donor will provide free advice on installation. Interested church should contact Ed Mahanes, Compatible Communications, Louisville, (502) 897-5323. Note: Mr. Mahanes has helped several churches with these donations. Jim Hawkins, KBC.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and recreation. Experience and seminary needed. Send resumé to: Second Baptist Church, 308 S. Russell St., Marion, IL 62959.

SEEKING: Part-time associate pastor of worship. Send resumé to: Pastor Virgle R. Grant, Eastside Bethel Baptist Church, 1675 East Main St., Richmond, KY 40475, Fax to: (606) 624-9646. E-mail: EastsideBethel@CompuServe.com.

FOR SALE: Allen MDS-45 organ. Two 61-note manuals and 32-note pedalboard. Tone card reader, total MIDI, MDS orchestral percussion sounds, console controller, digital reverb, speakers and cables. Beautiful oak finish console, original documentation. Purchase price was \$42,000; asking \$25,000 (negotiable). For more information, contact Craig Sundheimer, First Baptist Church, 511 W. Arrington, Farmington, NM 87401; phone: (505) 325-4528; fax: (505) 325-4529; e-mail: FirstFarmington@CompuServe.com or Sundheimer@Juno.com.

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

Inmate dies protesting religious diet

TUSCON, Ariz. (RNS)—An inmate serving a 20-year sentence for murder died from a hunger strike because he claimed the prison didn't meet his demands for a religious diet.

Teshone Abate, 39, a member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Church, stopped eating in August. He died Jan. 3 at St. Mary's Hospital in Tucson, Associated Press reported.

Ethiopian Orthodox leaders told prison officials their faith requires adherence to Old Testament dietary laws. But officials said Abate refused to eat the prison's kosher meals.

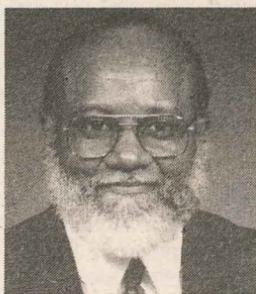
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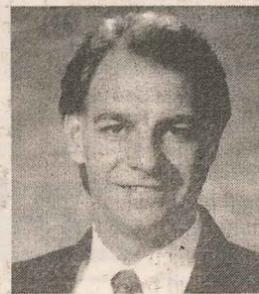
Wm. Sheals, Pastor
Hopewell Baptist Church
Norcross, GA
With more than 10,000 members



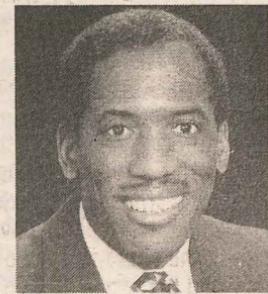
Chas. Roesel, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Leesburg, FL
With more than 4,000 baptisms
"Meeting Needs, Sharing Christ"



Bill Mackey
Executive Secretary/
Treasurer Elect
Kentucky Baptist Convention
Louisville, KY



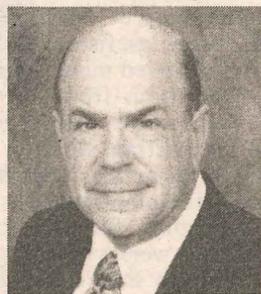
Jerry Pipes
Director, Family Evangelism
North American Mission Board
Alpharetta, GA



Richard Allen Farmer
Preacher/Musician
Duncanville, TX



Lincoln Bingham, Pastor
St. Paul Ms. Baptist Church
Louisville, KY
Preaching:
"The Desire of My Heart"



John Pollhill
New Testament Professor
SBTS, Louisville, KY
Teaching:
"My Favorite Scripture"



Chris Cooper
Director, Mapping Center
for Evangelism, Lenexa, KS
Telling about custom built CD's
with the most current data

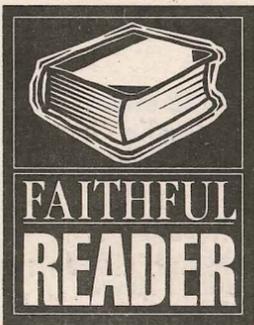


Lois Jane
Soloist
Gallatin, TN



Julie Eaton
Soloist/Pastor's Wife
Lawrenceburg, KY

BOOKS



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

Is It a Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children. Marva Dawn. Eerdmans Publishing, 1997. 256 pages. \$16. ♦♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

Marva Dawn's latest work strikes at the very heart of the future of the church—our children.

She asks if people of Christian faith can raise children who are different than children not raised in a "Christian" environment? Can our "Christian" children maintain different values, morals, outlooks and perspectives than their non-Christian counterparts? Dawn's book explores ways it is possible to raise Christian children in a society where Christianity is no longer the dominant culture.

Dawn believes we must be aware of the "heart of the world," so she explores the non-Christian culture throughout her book. Her perception of the situation is that the church struggles to be successful at raising Christian children. She says this to sound an alarm but not to be reactionary. Rather, she consistently presents the positive contribution Christianity can make in the midst of a world counter to positions of faith. She champions the Scriptures, the church and worship as key elements in conveying the heart of God to our children.

Dawn's work is certainly addressed to parents in their task of raising children. She also includes an excellent chapter challenging pastors and other ministers to lend support through their ministries in raising

Christian children. The wider community of the church also is encouraged to bear responsibility for all of its children. Along the way Dawn addresses television, violence, education, consumerism, etc., with practical strategies to minimize non-Christian influence.

This book is for every parent, pastor, minister and youth leader. The vital task of forming Christian children has a great ally in Marva Dawn and this excellent book. *Wayne Hager*



Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life. Marjorie Thompson. Westminster John Knox, 1995. 173 pages. \$14. ♦♦♦♦♦

With the new year perhaps you are looking to develop a more disciplined spiritual life. Store shelves are abundant with books offering handles. Thompson offers a tool that combines a solid biblical perspective with practical suggestions.

Thompson's focus is the average person in the pew. She presents clear explanations of each spiritual discipline, such as prayer, spiritual reading, worship, hospitality, etc., and then offers simple suggestions for beginning and maintaining each discipline.

Unlike some books on spiritual disciplines, Thompson avoids suggestions which do not find a ready fit with the lives of most Christians seeking a deeper spiritual life. In other words, after reading this book, most people should be able to say, "I can do this!" *Wayne Hager*

My See, Point and Learn Bible Book. Written by Mary Hollingsworth and illustrated by Marlene McAuley. Baker Book House, 1997. 93 pages. \$9.99. ♦♦♦♦♦

Subtitled "An Interactive Picture-Reading Adventure," this Bible story book is an attempt to help "young children...read before they can actually read." Hollingsworth builds on the premise that children read before they recognize words.

Each of the 39 Bible stories in the book is communicated through two colorful illustrations. One is drawn from the world and setting of the Bible. The other attempts to draw a contemporary scene for the moral of the story. Beneath each illustration is questions designed to help the child understand what is happening in the picture and connect the Bible story and life. In the bottom corner is a "Remember Rhyme," designed to reinforce the lesson of the story.

While designed with pre-reading children in mind, this is more than a Bible picture book. The least effective use of the book would be giving it to a young child and leaving him alone to look at the pictures. The interaction Hollingsworth has in mind is clearly more than the child alone with the book. No doubt she envisions a parent or other adult reading this book with the child. To do so will require more than a little biblical literacy. While I think Hollingsworth's book is a winner, its strength is in the interaction of the

child and adult with the Bible stories. *Jim Holladay*

The 77 Habits of Highly Ineffective Christians. Chris Fabry. InterVarsity Press, 1997. 95 pages. \$10.99. ♦♦♦♦♦

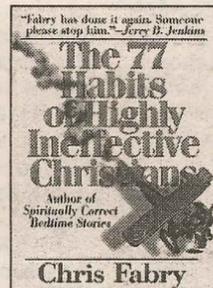
Chris Fabry hosts "Open Line," a nationally syndicated radio program on Moody Broadcasting Network and authored "Spiritually Correct Bedtime Stories" and "Away with the Manager."

With tongue securely planted in cheek, Fabry identifies 77 habits (not an exhaustive list by his own admission), which if practiced will help the best of Christians live down to the Latin motto: "Sola Mediocrum Ineffectum." After identifying each habit, he describes the best way to effect that

habit in one's life, complete with Scriptures to avoid reading. He encourages the reader to develop a support group with whom he or she can work through the material and who can offer the support needed to live an ineffective Christian life. I remember reading somewhere that it takes 21 days

of constant repetition of a new behavior to break a habit. If that is true, it would take most of us 1,617 days, or nearly four and a half years, to master the 77 habits Fabry identifies. Or maybe not. No doubt Fabry hopes a little reverse psychology will take hold on the reader.

I got this book for Christmas. I wonder if somebody is trying to tell me something! *Jim Holladay*



Christmas Elderhostel

By Robert Dunston

During the week of Christmas in 1997, Cumberland College presented an Elderhostel using the beautiful facilities of the Cumberland Lodge. The festive decorations made the always-lovely lodge especially breathtaking.

Twenty-three people journeyed from every corner of the continental United States to the lodge to participate in the Elderhostel program. The personalities of all the participants were delightful and the week was wonderful.

Delanna Reed, an assistant professor in our communication and theater arts department, taught a class on story-telling. Reed has won several story-telling competitions and has taught courses in the art of story-telling at Cumberland. She introduced her class to the art of telling stories, told them stories from Appalachia and beyond, and helped them tell the stories of events in their lives.

Margaret Bowlin, who teaches in the Whitley County School System, taught a class on Appalachian music. Bowlin is not only a historian of Appalachian music but sings and plays several instruments beautifully. Her classes typically became

sing-along times. On Tuesday evening She brought her husband and two sons with her and they performed a concert of Appalachian music. Bowlin also discussed and led the group in singing some of the great Christmas carols.

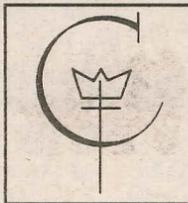
Our third teacher canceled at the last minute due to ill health in her family. Cumberland College professors Keith Semmel, John Broome, Kathy Fish and I each taught one session. The participants seemed to enjoy each teacher and the variety of presentations.

Nedrah Peck, a Cumberland College student, served as coordinator for the program and did an outstanding job. She has been highly involved as a worker and leader in Cumberland's Campus Activity Board. The leadership skills she has developed at Cumberland enabled her to direct a quality Elderhostel program.

This was the second year for Cumberland's Christmas Elderhostel program. Those who attended this year were able to combine learning with worship in local churches during the Christmas season.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Resolve to share

For many, the first month of the new year is a time for making resolutions.

One resolution that often is overlooked is to either update or make a will. January is national "Make Your Will Month," and friends of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children are encouraged to remember the needy children and families of Kentucky in their estate plans.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children is a shared ministry—one that is effective and possible because of our many friends and supporters throughout the years. Income from estates is an important revenue source for KBHC. In our last fiscal year, we received more than \$1 million from concerned people who remembered the hurting children and families in their wills. Generations of the most helpless among us will gain a brighter future because these friends were wise enough to plan a way to share their assets after their deaths.

If tithing and sacrificial giving are a part of who you are now, I encourage you to also be a good steward of what you leave. Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

has been a sound investment of compassion since 1869. I believe this agency has transcended generations because God is involved radically in the lives of the hurting kids and families we touch. God has taken a compassionate idea and made something greater than any of us could have anticipated.

There are many ways to help KBHC which also offer advantages to you and your family. Your own peace of mind and the future needs of your family can be protected. The future ministry of those agencies you have an interest in can be continued.

If you want to know more about how to make your legacy one of helping children and families in need, call me at the number below. A brochure that can serve as a valuable tool in helping you to update or draft your will is also available.

Call us at (800) 456-1386. I think you'll find it a blessing.

Brenda Gray is vice president for development and communications for 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/>

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Brenda Gray

MUSIC

Christian artists among Grammy Award nominees

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (RNS)—Christian musicians were nominated in four categories of the Grammy Awards outside the traditional six categories for gospel music.

Two groups from the Christian music realm were included among the five nominees for Best R&B Performance By a Duo or Group with Vocal: "Stomp," performed by God's Property featuring Kirk Franklin and "Salt," and "You Don't Have to be Afraid," performed by Take 6.

"Stomp" also has been nominated for Best R&B Song.

"Butterfly Kisses," which has been recorded by three different artists—Bob Carlisle, Jeff Carson and Raybon

Bros.—was nominated for Best Country Song.

Kirk Franklin also has been nominated for Producer of the Year, Non-classical.

In addition to Christian musicians, former President Jimmy Carter was nominated for his book "Living Faith" for the Best Spoken Word Album. And "The Preacher's Wife—Soundtrack" by Whitney Houston was nominated for Best R&B Album.

The nominees in the gospel categories, according to Associated Press, are as follows:

Best Rock Gospel Album:

■ "All Star United," All Star United.

■ "Welcome to the Freak Show: dc Talk Live in Concert," dc Talk.

■ "Threads," Geoff Moore & the Distance.

■ "Smalltown Poets," Smalltown Poets.

■ "Conspiracy No. 5," Third Day.

Best Pop/Contemporary Gospel Album:

■ "Under the Influence," Anointed.

■ "This Gift," Gary Chapman.

■ "Much Afraid," Jars of Clay.

■ "Petra Praise 2: We Need Jesus," Petra.

■ "Star Bright," Vanessa Williams.

Best Southern Gospel, Country Gospel or Bluegrass Gospel Album:

■ "Keep Lookin' Up: The Texas Swing Sessions," James Blackwood & the Light Crust Doughboys.

■ "Back Home in Indiana," Gaither Vocal Band.

■ "Light of the World," The Martins.

■ "Amazing Grace 2: A Country Salute to Gospel," various artists.

Best Traditional Soul Gospel Album:

■ "A Miracle in Harlem," Shirley Caesar.

■ "I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray," Fairfield Four.

■ "Woman, Thou Art Loosed! Songs of Healing and Restoration," T.D. Jakes.

■ "Live in Charleston," Mighty Clouds of Joy.

■ "Live in Detroit," Vickie Winans.

Best Contemporary Soul Gospel Album:

■ "Come Walk With Me," Oleta Adams.

■ "Pray," Andrae Crouch.

■ "Donnie McClurkin," Donnie McClurkin.

■ "Grace and Mercy," Marvin Sapp.

■ "Brothers," Take 6.

Best Gospel Album by a Choir or Chorus:

■ "Favorite Song of All," Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir.

■ "God's Property From Kirk Franklin's Nu Nation," God's Property.

■ "He's Still Good!" Milton Brunson's Thompson Community Singers.

■ "Live in London at Wembley," Love Fellowship Crusade Choir.

■ "Time For Healing," Sounds of Blackness.



dctalk

"Butterfly Kisses," which has been recorded by three different artists—Bob Carlisle, Jeff Carson and Raybon Bros.—was nominated for Best Country Song.



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Martin E. Marty • Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor at The University of Chicago. Senior editor of *Christian Century* and author of *Under God, Indivisible* (1996).

Herbert Anderson • Professor of Pastoral Theology at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, a Lutheran pastor, and co-author of a forthcoming publication, *The Family Handbook* (1998), with Don S. Browning, Ian Evison, and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen.

Freda A. Gardner • Thomas W. Synnott Professor Emerita of Christian Education, and Director Emerita of the School of Christian Education, Princeton Theological Seminary, and co-author, with Herbert Anderson, of *Living Alone* (1997).

James H. Costen • President Emeritus of the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC), the largest predominantly African-American seminary in the United States, a Presbyterian minister, and former Moderator for the United Presbyterian Church.

Father John Cusick • Director of the Young Adult Ministry Office for the Archdiocese of Chicago, Associate Pastor at Old St. Patrick's Church, and a young adult ministry leader for 20 years.

Rodger Nishioka • Coordinator for Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and was named 1997 Educator of the Year by the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators.

Daphne Wiggins • Assistant Professor of Religion at Texas Christian University, an American Baptist Minister, and a former university chaplain, she specializes in African-American Religion with a particular emphasis on the African-American woman.

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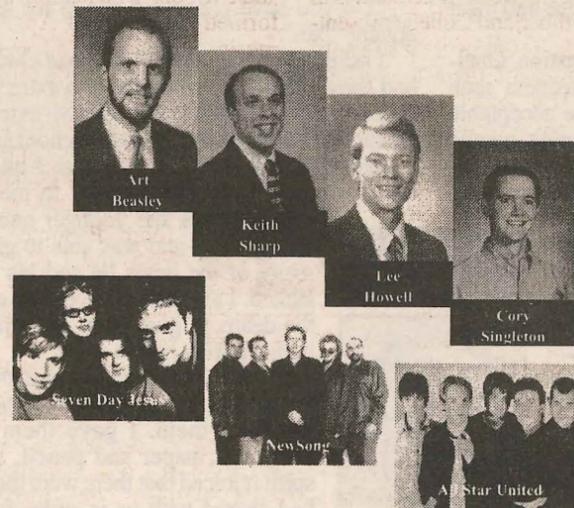
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PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Baptist evangelistic meetings held each Sunday in January in the Lyublino, Russia, public library.

■ Missionary Connie Robbins and two Ukrainian missionaries as they start a church this month in a village two hours from Khabarovsk, Russia.

■ Paul, the son of International Service Corps volunteers Eddie and Donna Tabeling in Moscow, as he adjusts to life in Moscow.

■ Congress '98, Jan. 29-31, the interdenominational conference of New England evangelicals, held in Boston each January.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **BARDSTOWN**—Bardstown Church called **Warner Smith** as pastor. Smith previously was pastor at Clayridge Church in Pinson, Ala. He began his new ministry Jan. 11. **Mark Terry** was interim pastor.

■ **BEREA**—Tates Creek Association elected **Hamp Valentine** as director of missions. He previously was minister of education and administration at Temple Church in Memphis, Tenn. He is a graduate of William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Miss., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He began his new ministry Dec. 1.

■ **EAST BERNSTADT**—**Butch Sizemore** recently resigned as pastor at Mount Zion Church.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—First Church will honor Pastor **Gates Bowman** with a retirement reception Jan. 11 from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. in the activities room.

■ **LONDON**—**Terry Amburgy** recently resigned as pastor at White Oak Church.

White Oak Church called **Steve Wilkerson** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Sunrise Church in Corbin.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Broadway Church ordained **Ken Cox, Dan McCubbin, Barbara Taylor** and

Lawyers debate Scouts' policy on gays, atheists

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (RNS)—Lawyers argued before the California Supreme Court last week about whether the Boy Scouts of America should permit gays and atheists to be members of the nation's largest youth organization.

The two challenges to the organization, founded at the turn of the century, center on whether it is a charity or a business. If the court decides it is a business, it could be forced to admit atheists, homosexuals and women. The decision by the California court could have national implications.

Timothy Curran, a homosexual, was prevented from becoming an assistant scoutmaster 16 years ago. His

lawyer, Jon Davidson, told the court Curran was fired from his Berkeley, Calif., troop when officials discovered that "in addition to being a perfect role model and leader, he was also gay."

Twins Michael and William Randall were kicked out of their Orange County Cub Scout pack in 1991 when they were caught mouthing or omitting words related to God in the Boy Scouts' oath and the Pledge of Allegiance. They were readmitted later in 1991 by an order of a Superior Court judge, who declared the Boy Scouts had violated a state law preventing businesses from discriminating on the basis of race, religion, sex or sexual orientation. A state Court of Appeals

Doris Claiborne as deacons Jan. 4.

Alice Adams resigned as director of the after school children's program at Crescent Hill Church, effective Jan. 15, to accept a position at DePaul School.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church called **John Laida** of Clarksville, Tenn., as interim pastor. He began his new ministry Oct. 22.

■ **SMITHLAND**—First Church called **Joseph Estes** of Indianapolis, Ind. as pastor. He began his new ministry Jan. 4.

■ **SOMERSET**—Pulaski Association recently elected **Malcolm Cheek** as director of missions. Cheek is a graduate of Southwest University in Bolivar, Mo. and Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. He served as pastor in several states, including Kentucky.

Not everybody could make it to seminary's graduation

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Sixteen men incarcerated at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola were listed among the 126 candidates for graduation Dec. 19 at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The 16 men comprised the first group to graduate from the seminary's extension center in Angola. The site was established in 1995 at the invitation of Warden Burl Cain after hundreds of prisoners had completed the "Experiencing God" Bible study and wanted more education to prepare themselves for ministry—whether inside the prison fence or out.

The Angola extension center now has a capacity of 50 students, with many more on a waiting list. Nearly 20 congregations are functioning inside the prison.

Since none of the men could be present for the commencement service on the main campus to receive their associate in pastoral ministries degrees, a separate graduation service was held for them Jan. 8, with NOBTS President Chuck Kelley presiding.

upheld the ruling.

James Randall, the boys' lawyer and father, said the Scouts act like a business and should be considered one. But George Davidson, the attorney for the Boy Scouts, countered that permitting atheists and gays would be comparable to asking the NAACP to provide services for the Ku Klux Klan, Associated Press reported.

He said the group was maintaining its belief in duty to God and conservative sexual morality when it expelled Curran and the Randalls. Holding up a Boy Scout book before the court's justices, Davidson said, "There's God on the front cover, there's God on the back cover."

'I was naked and ye clothed me ...'

How does one go about explaining the many dimensions of Oneida Baptist Institute? It is so unique. Why has God chosen to bless us and meet our many needs?

There is no easy answer to this question. Oneida simply goes about the Lord's business each day, trusting that our offering will be acceptable in his eyes. It has, from its very beginning, put the needs of young people first. We have never looked at our checkbook to decide if we were in a position to minister.

A child comes to us in great need. Parents cannot afford to pay the modest room, board and tuition. Many times the parents cannot even afford to give their child spending money. Historically, we know that when we accept this child there will be many more expenses than meals, housing and an education. Often we have to provide shoes and other clothing. Glasses may be needed and sometimes dental work. Needless to say, we encourage parents or guardians to meet these needs, but often we are the ones who have to supply the funds.

Meeting a person's need when he has one is what giving is all about. If we wait for a more convenient time, or when our resources are more plentiful, we will have missed the blessing and so will the person to whom we minister.

Recently two boys enrolled and their mother told me she could not afford to pay anything for enrollment. It was obvious from their appearance that they did not have much. I asked the younger boy if he had any other clothing. He said he had one other pair of underwear and nothing else. I asked him if he had sheets and a pillow. He said, "No."

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

"Do you have shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush, soap?" His reply was, "No."

"Do you have paper and pencil for school?" Again, "No."

I asked the other brother if he had clothes. He had three other pairs of pants, two extra pairs of socks, one pair of underwear and two extra shirts. He did not have personal items or school supplies.

Though I felt sorry for the boys, I must confess I rejoiced at the opportunity to meet their needs. I took the younger one to our storage area and was able to give him many of the items he and his brother lacked. I also called the deans and told the deans to give them as many other items as they had in stock.

As I gave them toothbrushes and toothpaste, I thought of those who had provided them. I gave them socks, bookbags, paper and pencil, and my spirit rejoiced that there were those who had shared with us in order for us to minister.

Last month as I became president, a new responsibility fell on my shoulders. For the first time, I began to sign the

letters that go to those who have supported our ministry. Attached to each letter is the contribution record of these people or groups. I must confess that tears came to my eyes as I saw how many years these wonderful people have supported this ministry. It is because of your support we are able to meet many needs. You have made these blessings possible. Thank you for helping us "clothe the naked."

Reprinted from WR, Sept. 27, 1994

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

Giving thanks for Clear Creek

Our spring semester faculty and staff retreat opened with a time of thanksgiving and prayer. You'll also be thankful for these good things about Clear Creek:

Privilege of employment in an atmosphere where you can talk about the Lord and pray. Friendship and fellowship of co-workers. A family atmosphere that provides

the help with problems, as testified to by a student, "I have never lived anywhere that expressed love toward me as much as here." A climate that nurtures children in growth and development. An institution that is faithful to train men and women for the work to which God has called them. The school's commitment to maintain a strong emphasis on the Bible and a clear communication of the gospel. Academic freedom in the classroom. Weekly opportunities to hear inspiring chapel messages. The beautiful location of the creek and the hills.

Colleagues expressed thanks for a growing enrollment of students eager to learn and willing to sacrifice. A faculty dedicated to Christ and Christian education and a capable administrative staff. Growing impact on local churches and world-wide impact through our

missions and evangelism emphasis. A new classroom building. Students well-grounded for advanced seminary study. A Christmas bonus. The Russia partnership that provides mission opportunities for faculty, staff and students.

A successful Beyond 2001 Campaign that has reached \$2.8 million of a \$3.5 million goal. The

strongest alumni support in many years. A program for faculty sabbaticals. An excellent library with extensive resources. Many people who contribute books and materials to the library. Volunteers who help with campus construction. Volunteer medical personnel who staff our medical center (Drs. Snowden, Massey and Mays). Ministry to families and safe care of children provided

by the child development center. Fifty-four professions of faith made through the personal evangelism class. The trust people have in Clear Creek. No large debt. The support of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Baseball star says Christ filled void that drugs couldn't

By Clinton Wolf
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)—Despite all the cheers and trophies, former Kansas City Royals catcher Darrell Porter had a void that accolades couldn't fill.

"I was a drug addict and I was an alcoholic," said Porter, a four-time American League All-Star, 1982 National League championship Most Valuable Player and World Series MVP.

"Drugs took me down a road I didn't really want to go, and they kept me there much, much longer than I wanted to stay, and they cost me a price that I really didn't want to pay," Porter recently told a chapel service at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Porter said he began to link performance with status after the championship game of his first Little League season, as he was carried around on the shoulders of his coach amidst cheering teammates and parents.

"That left an indelible impression on a young 9-year-old's life," Porter recalled. "Sports at that point became a way of life for me. I knew after that if I performed well as an athlete that people would treat me special. My self-worth was well intertwined with my performance on an athletic field."

Sports continued to be the foundation of his life through high school, Porter recounted. After graduating from high school he signed a professional baseball contract. Pro ball was extremely challenging, but he got off to a great start by clearing the center field fence in his first at-bat.

"Well, that was the last fastball I saw all year long," Porter said with a grin. Subsequent at-bats filled with curveballs left him struggling, discouraged and depressed.

"I wanted to quit," he said. "What I had counted on for so long to pump me up didn't do it. You see, I was unsuccessful in sports for the first time in my life, and I didn't know how to handle it, and I was miserable."

It was during that depression when he started going with teammates to the local bar.

"I can remember in that bar that day, they said, 'We're not going to leave this room until this table is filled with empty beer bottles.' And you know what? The first one tasted real bad to me. The next one didn't taste so bad. And then I started feeling really pretty good. And I could have cared less that I was a thousand miles from home. I could have cared less that I was hitting .180. I had sort of found myself a friend."

Soon, Porter said, both alcohol and drugs became an established part of his life. His poor record on the field

led to his being traded to the Kansas City Royals in 1977. When he arrived in Kansas City, Porter decided to re-evaluate his life and renewed his commitment to the success that had brought him fulfillment as a youth. His next three seasons were his best ever, and in 1979 he was voted the best catcher in baseball. Yet he still felt empty inside.

"I had reached my goal to become the very best," Porter said. "And at the end of that season, I sat down in my house, and I was sitting there thinking, 'Man, nothing has really changed. This success is really overrated.' Yet I had everything the world would say would make you happy. I spent my entire life trying to be the best, believing that success would fulfill me, and you know what it did? It left me disillusioned, lost and without hope."

As he entered spring training for the next year, Porter heard another pro player tell the team about the devastating effects alcoholism had in his life. As Porter listened, he knew he had to get help.

"It was a mirror," Porter said. "That he was saying was me."

The Royals sent Porter to a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center. There he started reading a Bible recently given to him. He said that while reading Jeremiah 29:11-14 he found hope for the first time.

"I was without hope, so this be-

came my hope," Porter explained. "I began to pray, to fellowship with other believers and to read my Bible. That was the beginning of my faith in God."

When he returned to the Royals after rehabilitation, a Christian teammate asked to room with him. "He became an accountability partner for me. He became someone who knew my struggle, and who knew the commitment I had made to quit doing drugs. So he became someone who could hold me accountable to my commitment. God delivered me through that process."

Today Porter promotes a program through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes that emphasizes the same elements he and his roommate used to keep him off of drugs: faith, commitment and accountability.

"All of us must keep our priorities in order and our focus on the right things," Porter said. "If you don't, sin will take you down a road you don't want to go, and it will keep you there a lot longer than you want to stay, and it will cost you much, much more than you want to pay."

"In a world that tells you so many lies, that offers so much bad, let's reach out for something that's really, really good," Porter continued, "or let's give something that's really, really good, and that's a relationship with Jesus Christ."

"I spent my entire life trying to be the best, believing that success would fulfill me, and you know what it did? It left me disillusioned, lost and without hope."
Former Kansas City Royals catcher Darrell Porter

When it comes to ministry, clowning is serious business

By Charles Willis
SBC Sunday School Board

ATLANTA (BP)—For part of his professional life, Leon McBryde lives as Buttons the Clown, and for the rest, he sells clown noses.

Strictly fun, outsiders might observe, but McBryde, president of Pro Knows in Buchanan, Va., says clowning has more than fun. He sees his career as a God-called profession.

"My God doesn't want me to do something just to be nice. My work has to have a purpose, and I've got to have a fire for that purpose," he said.

While McBryde does not label himself a Christian clown, he accepts the description for those who choose to use it. He says he is a professional clown who also is a Christian.

But those who use the word Christian to describe their clowning, he said, must remember they, too, are professionals.

"If you are a Christian clown, the God that I serve knows good from bad," he said. "As a professional, it is not the amount of money you make, it's your attitude that is important. Fun is the byproduct of what we do."

Not all clowning is fun and games. As a regular visitor for a hospice organization in Greenwood, S.C., Margie Culbertson works to ease the pain of dying patients.

"You just don't realize how much it means to the terminally ill, even for 15 minutes, to take their mind off of pain," she said.

Culbertson began clowning after discovering how much her visits had

meant to one particular person.

Some hospice patients' circumstances have been difficult for Culbertson to see, but she said her clown personality, Dr. Maggie Mae, is better equipped emotionally than she is.

"I've never cried while with the sick person," she said, "but 'I've cried after I leave.'"

Dr. Maggie Mae tells her patients she knows they are tired of other doctors' treatments, so she's "fired those clowns and brought in a different one."

McBryde, a product of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus College, takes his mirth seriously.

"If you don't have a professional attitude, you don't have a ministry. If you don't smile at the little things, what are you going to do about the big things?"

Training, he added, is the most important thing. "We use an art form. We need to know why we do what we do. We need to understand children and adults and to understand why they do what they do."

Clowning, like Christianity, McBryde said, is total freedom.

"If you get into clowning with the right attitude, you can go places you've never gone before in your life," he said.

"And the power of fantasy is there. That's why I never deliver the message of salvation as a clown, because I don't want children to think God is not real. I never want children to think the plan of salvation is anything but truth."

Floods bring showers of blessings for Chile mission

COPIAPO, Chile (BP)—It's a big deal when it rains in the Atacama Desert, one of the driest places on earth. Average yearly rainfall is only one-eighth of an inch.

Copiapó, like most of Chile, was experiencing extensive drought in 1997. There hadn't been enough water for irrigation. Crops and livestock were dying.

Christians in Chile and around the world prayed for rain. They were delighted when rains started all over the country.

Copiapó, where Southern Baptist missionaries Ken and Cathy Yinger live, got a little more than the average yearly rainfall in one gentle three-hour rain.

But a few days later, torrential rain began. Copiapó sits in a valley, surrounded by barren mountains. The water swept down the hillsides, carrying mud and rocks down the streets and through houses lying in the path of the muddy rivers. Three inches fell, more than Copiapó usually gets in decades.

One hard-hit area of the city was Villa Arauco, where the Yingers are planting a church. It is a poor neighborhood of tiny, flimsy houses, not built to withstand any rain. At first, the streets were impassable.

After the water cleared out some, the Yingers quickly assessed needs at Villa Arauco. Then they visited friends and neighbors asking for donations of bedding and clothes for the people there.

The Southern Baptist International Mission Board provided \$5,000 in disaster relief funds. Mrs. Yinger's home church, Scarborough Baptist Church of Prince Albert in Saskatchewan, Canada, sent \$2,000.

The Yingers spent the next few days in a blur, receiving donations and sorting, buying and distributing to those in need. People were open

and receptive to hear of God's love.

That Sunday, the mission had its highest adult attendance ever.

For several months, a group of Baptist women from Temuco, 24 hours south by bus, had planned to travel to help the Yingers. They arrived and pitched right in.

"God's timing is always perfect," Mrs. Yinger said.

Because schools were being used as shelters for the homeless, classes were dismissed. Baptists held vacation Bible school in the morning, with about 50 children attending. In the afternoons Baptists held classes for women in nutrition, cooking, hair styling and crafts, with a short Bible lesson as part of each class. Temuco volunteers distributed food to needy families.

As Baptists followed up with people they met, five women accepted Jesus as their personal Savior.

Yinger said he had been praying for an opportunity to minister to men in the neighborhood and already had begun a men's Bible study group. Three men who received flood relief—but had never participated in the Bible study—attended. They expressed a desire to keep attending and to take turns hosting the group and invite others. The next week, one became a Christian.

That Sunday, 71 people attended worship and Sunday school.

"We were so thrilled. It is so wonderful to be right in the middle of what God is doing," said Mrs. Yinger. "We don't have a lot of a building, just a makeshift shelter of mesh netting in a dirt backyard, with Sunday school classes meeting in another dirt backyard, a kitchen and a bedroom."

"But nobody cares! The Spirit of the Lord is moving."

It's Getting Crowded at Georgetown College

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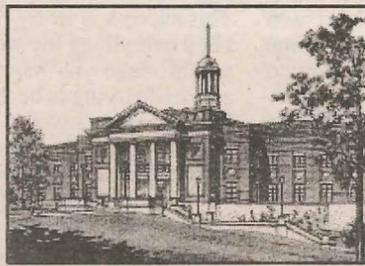
Due to a record new student enrollment for Fall 1997 and increased retention of upperclassmen, space will be limited for Fall 1998.

Why all the excitement? Our recent successes have attracted students from 100 Kentucky counties, 28 states and seven foreign countries. In the heart of the scenic Kentucky Bluegrass, these students have found a college that offers high academic standards and innovative new programs in a Christian environment.

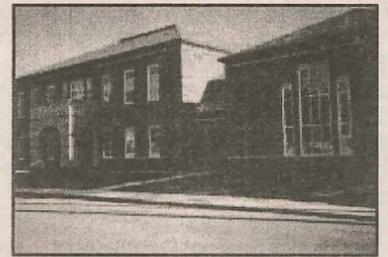
For optimal consideration, don't wait to apply! The deadline is Feb. 1 to apply for Pastors' Christian Leadership Scholarships and academic scholarships. And to see the campus firsthand, come to our next Visit in Person Day on Feb. 7 or set up a personal tour. For more information, call the Office of Admissions at 800-788-9985.

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The new Athletic Complex includes Rawlings Stadium, a leadership center and apartment-style housing for juniors and seniors. During the summer the complex is home to the Cincinnati Bengals Summer Training Camp.

The Georgetown College Center for Ethics and Leadership is giving students the opportunity to enhance their leadership abilities and strengthen ethical decision-making.



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