



# WESTERN RECORDER

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**FOR THE RECORD**

**China questions**  
Questions about the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's two-track approach to work in China has raised a debate over the ethics of sending out missionaries covertly.  
*Pages 2, 10 & 11.*

**New degree**  
Campbellsville University has announced plans to begin offering a master of arts degree in Christian studies.  
*Page 3.*

**Mackey will listen**  
Bill Mackey, the new executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, will hold 37 listening sessions across the state in the next two weeks.  
*Page 3.*

**Small churches**  
Consultant William Easum on "What does it take for a small church to grow?"  
*Page 4.*

**Editorial**  
Christians need to wrestle with the question of what means are justified by the well-intentioned ends of spreading the gospel to every person on earth.  
*Page 5.*

**Olympic gold**  
Baptist volunteers working at the Nagano Olympics helped spread the message that God's love is better than gold.  
*Page 8.*

## Alcohol, abortion foes finding some legislative success

By David Winfrey  
News Director

FRANKFORT—Observers of several bills of interest to Kentucky Baptists say proposed measures to restrict abortion still have a good chance of passing while some bills regarding alcohol might have to wait until next term.

Bills that would set standard fines for alcohol beverage sales offenses, ban alcohol sales from drive-through windows and ban cold beer sales at gas stations likely won't pass this term, said Claude Witt, executive director for the Temperance League of Kentucky.

"You have to gain their attention

in one session a lot of times before you can accomplish your intention in the next session," he said regarding the measures, House Bills 578, 579 and 580, respectively.

Nevertheless, legislators have been open to siding with anti-alcohol interests on some bills, Witt added.

The house voted 27-60 defeating House Bill 323, which would have allowed cities legally classified as "third class" to vote on alcohol sales in a specific precinct rather than city-wide.

Also House Bill 327, which would

lower the legal blood alcohol content level for driving under the influence from 0.10 to 0.08, has passed the House Judiciary Committee and was on the floor of the House as of last Friday.

Witt said it has a good chance of passing, but he added he is disappointed the bill was changed from an earlier version in which a driver would lose his or her license for refusing to take a blood-

alcohol test.

The drunk driving law change could be required by the federal government, he added. That change

would save 3,000 lives a year, according to the American Journal of Public Health, he said.

Also, House Bill 728 which would strengthen laws concerning employees of stores selling alcohol and requiring proof of age, has passed the House Licensing and Occupations Committee.

Witt said some legislators are showing renewed interest in alcohol legislation this year because of the emphasis made by the Alcoholic Beverage Commission. The commission is seeking changes in its structure and the size of fines it can levy.

Kentucky Right to Life Executive Director Margie Montgomery said she

□ See Abortion, alcohol ..., page 7

Kentucky  
General  
Assembly



## Barriers can't stop writer from giving Christian encouragement

By Joyce Sweeney Martin  
Staff Writer

HENDERSON—To understand Billy Edwards, you first should know three things about him: He is a Christian, he is a writer and he has cerebral palsy.

All three are central to his identity, but it is his Christian faith that fuels his ability to do things other people call impossible.

That is why, at 41, he still says, "Of all the things I have been able to accomplish, nothing can ever compare to when I invited the Lord into my life as my personal Savior at age 15."

Born with cerebral palsy, doctors said he would be a vegetable for the rest of his life. But Edwards proved them wrong.

At age 4, he moved from Henderson to a special care home in Murfreesboro, Tenn. The owners of the home took a special interest in him and encouraged him to do things that many people thought impossible. There, in spite of his doctors' predictions, Edwards learned to walk and talk, albeit with limitations.

When he reached eighth grade, Edwards enrolled in school for the first time at Bellwood Christian Academy in Murfreesboro.

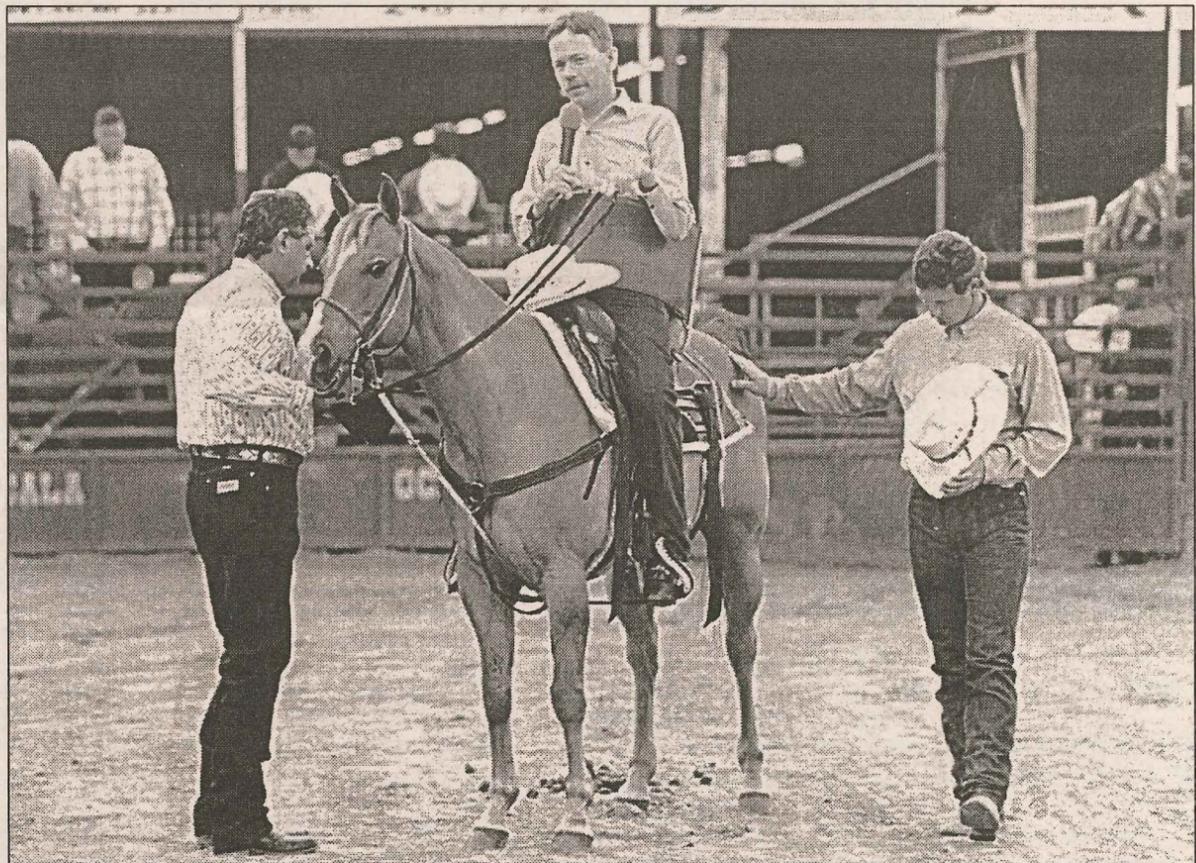
He wasn't excited about attending a religious school, but there he learned lessons that would change the course of his life, he said.

"I learned that God loved me and sent his son to die on the cross for my sins," he said. He became a Christian.

Not long after, Edwards felt God calling him to a church-related vocation.

Again, he faced what seemed to be an impossibility.

□ See Barriers can't ..., page 3



**COWBOY PRAYER** Rodeo chaplain and Southern Baptist volunteer missionary Randy Johnson leads the invocation at the state high school rodeo finals in Ocala, Fla. Johnson is among the missionaries whose work is being highlighted during the Season of North American Missions. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions has a national goal of \$42 million.

## Kentucky Baptists gauge 1997 Russia impact

About 240 Kentucky Baptists volunteered for mission trips to Russia last year, providing more than \$107,000 in assistance for Baptist churches in the former communist country, according to the state convention's partnership missions department.

The volunteers, who worked on 30 projects, were recognized Feb. 27.

In the first four years of the five-year partnership, Kentucky Baptists have sent 1,310 volunteers to work on 153 projects, providing \$1.28 million to help Russian Baptist churches, said Ken Murphy, associate director of partnership missions.

"Because Russian Baptists delay baptism and church membership, it is difficult to estimate the number of conversions, but it would surely number in the hundreds for 1997 and the

thousands to date," Murphy said.

Russian Baptist churches wait to see that a person's conversion is genuine before they are accepted into membership, Murphy noted. "They don't just accept a statement of that. They wait to see the fruits."

The 1997 volunteers worked in a variety of communities in Russia and on many different types of projects, including evangelism, pastors' schools, discipleship training, Scripture distribution, church construction, prison ministry and Sunday school training.

Construction projects during the four years have helped complete and renovate many churches, Murphy added. "Heroic sacrifice by Russian Baptists has inspired the commitment and generosity of Kentucky volunteers," he said. "Stories of God's mi-

raculous intervention abound."

The prison ministry in Borisoglebsk was especially helpful, he said. "Volunteers from Clear Creek College were allowed into the prison, where inmates and staff made professions of faith."

And the women's conference in Nizhney Novgorod was also successful, attracting women from hundreds of miles away he added. "Volunteers provided leadership for a variety of interest groups and inspired the Russian women to multiply the conference in their own areas."

Applications are being accepted for mission projects this year. Trips are scheduled from May through August and will cost \$2,295 per person.

Anyone interested should contact the partnership missions department toll-free at (888) 254-5724.

# BAPTISTS

## Missionaries disagree over use of covert tactics

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

**"If we send someone to China as a shoe salesman, that person sells shoes. He may not sell the most shoes ever sold or make the biggest profit, but he sells shoes."**

IMB President Jerry Rankin

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—While officials at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board deny the agency conducts "clandestine" or "illegal" missionary work in China, several long-time missionaries have joined the China Christian Council in criticizing the IMB's "two-track" approach in the world's most populous nation.

Despite official denials, the Richmond, Va.-based IMB "does encourage illegal activity in China, and its current policies do promote secrecy and deception among its employees," missionary Kim Dickey wrote in an open letter last year to her home church in North Carolina.

Dickey is one of four IMB missionaries to resign recently in protest of the board's China policy. In all, at least 15 long-time missionaries have left China through a series of resignations, retirements and transfers during several years of internal tension between advocates of the board's "open" and "closed" tracks in China.

In the "open" track, established in 1985, Southern Baptist missionaries worked primarily as English teachers in Chinese universities under auspices of the CCC, China's official Protestant organization. They openly represented the IMB, attended registered churches and obeyed laws against proselytizing and other missionary activity by foreigners, while sharing the gospel one-on-one in friendships built through social contact.

Later, the IMB began testing new strategies aimed at reaching "unreached" areas that are closed to traditional missionaries. By the late 1980s, those strategies were being used in parts of China, without knowledge of the CCC or permission of the government.

Last November, CCC President Wenzao Han issued an open letter accusing the IMB of "clandestine" missionary work in China. "We can-

not have partnership with any organization holding a 'two-track' approach and give legitimacy to secret infiltration," Han wrote. "This is in violation of our principles and of Christian teachings."

IMB officials say all personnel in China are there through legal means and are encouraged to operate within the letter of laws governing religious involvement by foreigners. "Because these personnel are sent by the International Mission Board, and not reported to the CCC, it is falsely assumed they are doing clandestine 'missionary' work," IMB President Jerry Rankin said in a statement Feb. 27.

Rankin said the IMB values its relationship with the CCC but that the urgency of reaching more than a billion Chinese who do not profess Christianity supersedes fraternal concerns. He charges the CCC with wanting to "control" all religious work.

Several current and former missionaries, however, have joined the CCC to publicly protest the IMB's so-called "clandestine" track. Some question IMB assurances that all its work in China is legal. Some say it is patently unethical or deceptive practices. Others say there may be a place for clandestine missionary activity in countries which repress Christianity but not in China, with its relative religious freedom and a Christian presence larger than the entire population of many nations.

Critics say the IMB's China policy indicates disrespect for the China Christian Council and hurts Chinese churches by raising suspicion against all Christians and reinforcing prejudices that Christianity is a "foreign" religion.

"The approach the IMB is taking is still patterned after 19th century colonialism—the locals should only

be able to govern themselves in the way we think they ought to be governed," said Britt Towery, a 30-year missionary who took early retirement in 1992 over his opposition to the IMB's "closed" China track.

IMB leaders reportedly view the CCC as government-controlled and not representing the majority of indigenous Christians.

IMB officer Avery Willis said one problem in relating to China is the narrow way the government defines religious freedom. "They provide a channel for Christianity that they can use to control it," he said through a spokesperson.

The IMB's current policy in China is "culturally shaped by a Cold War mentality," said Charlie Wilson, one of the first Southern Baptists to re-enter China, in 1982.

An "anti-communist mentality" has "colored this program in China," said Ron Winstead, a former IMB missionary in China who now works for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Even language used to describe the China Christian Council as China's "government-sanctioned" or "official" church is misleading, Winstead said, because it makes it look like the CCC is controlled by or sympathetic to the Communist Party.

"These people are not communists," Winstead said. "They are not party members."

"Too many (Christians) are spending their time fighting communism instead of spreading the gospel," Towery echoed. "The gospel can take root in any country, in any system."

Others say conservatives in control of the Southern Baptist Convention distrust the ecumenical makeup of the CCC and the fact that its churches ordain women.

CCC churches are "post-denominational." Protestants worship together and do not divide into groupings

like Baptist, Methodist or Presbyterian. One fear CCC leaders have of unregulated churches is they will reintroduce denominational labels which carry baggage from China's colonial past.

IMB President Rankin said most Southern Baptists "don't understand the CCC, is the Protestant Council of Churches, somewhat similar to the National Council of Churches in America." Since Southern Baptists choose not to affiliate with the National Council of Churches at home, Rankin said it would be "grossly inconsistent" for the IMB to "bring our free and autonomous work of the denomination and local churches under the authority" of the CCC.

Though the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches are associated with the liberal mainline churches in the United States, China's open churches are biblically conservative, and others say.

But Rankin and other IMB leaders say their paramount concern is "the issue of lostness."

"In spite of the miraculous Christian growth in China, most of these people have not heard the gospel and will not have an opportunity in their lifetime to hear of God's love, because of the restrictive policies of the Chinese government," Rankin said.

Willis, the IMB's senior vice president over overseas operations, pointed out the CCC claims to represent 10 million to 14 million Christians out of a Chinese population of 1.2 billion. "If we related only to them, we would limit our opportunities to touch the vast majority of Chinese," he said.

But critics say it is arrogant for Westerners to suppose they know better than the Chinese how to reach their own people.

"Church planting in China today is the responsibility of the Chinese," Towery said. "They do not need the replanting of Western denominationalism."

Winstead said the original "open" □ See Missionaries disagree ..., page 10



More on pages 10-11



### BAPTIST BITS

■ **Missionary record set.** Southern Baptists set a new record in overseas missionary appointments in 1997 for the fifth year in a row. The 628 new missionaries sent overseas through the International Mission Board included 275 long-term workers, the largest number in 10 years, and 353 two-year workers. That brought the IMB's total missionary force to 4,249, including both long-term and short-term missionaries.

■ **N.M. leader killed.** One person was killed and three seriously injured in an automobile accident involving a carload of lay leaders in the Baptist Convention of New Mexico Feb. 27. The four were en route to a meeting of the Baptist Foundation of New Mexico's board of directors. Killed was Helen Lambirth of Elida, N.M. Injured were J.B. Tidwell, RoJean Massey and Ivey Massey, all of Hobbs, N.M.

■ **ACP only in Windows.** For the 1998 Annual Church Profile process which begins later this year, associational collector software will be available only in a Windows version, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has announced. The DOS version used by a small number of associations will no longer be produced. Questions should be directed to Cliff Tharp at (615) 251-2517.

■ **Dobson to address SBC.** James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, will bring the concluding message for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Salt Lake City June 11. A February article in the New York Times said Dobson recently told a conservative public policy group in Arizona he intends to become more political in his approach to America's moral crisis, and that his speech at the SBC would be political in nature.

## Mackey to hold listening events

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's new executive secretary-treasurer will take to the road for two weeks in late March with open ears and a blank notepad.

Bill Mackey, who assumed the KBC's top staff position Feb. 1, has scheduled 37 listening sessions across the state from March 15-27. He will be assisted by Bob Orr, a national specialist in church consultations.

Mackey said he hopes the sessions will help him learn how the KBC can meet the needs of churches. From this input, he will recommend plans and priorities for the KBC's work, he said.

Each session will involve 15 to 18 people, chosen at random from the KBC's database to represent a cross-section of church sizes and leadership positions. Those invited to the sessions will include pastors, staff ministers and lay leaders.

Mackey said he welcomes input from all Kentucky Baptists. Anyone not included in the randomly selected listening session groups is invited to express their suggestions to Mackey in a letter by March 26. All input received will be included in the summary of information drawn from the listening sessions.

Letters should be addressed to Mackey at Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43433, Louisville, Ky. 40253-0433.

## Campbellsville offers new master's degree

By Mark Wingfield  
Editor

CAMPBELLSVILLE—Campbellsville University will begin offering a master of arts degree in Christian studies, perhaps next fall.

This is the first foray of a Kentucky Baptist school into master's-level theological education, a territory previously reserved for seminaries.

The three liberal arts schools affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention—Campbellsville, Georgetown College and Cumberland College—all offer bachelor's degrees in religion. In the past, most Kentucky Baptists seeking graduate degrees in religion have gone to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville or a similar seminary.

Campbellsville's new program is not intended to compete with Southern Seminary, explained John Hurtgen, chair of the Christian studies division. "We don't intend to go neck and neck with Southern Seminary with the kind of faculty, library resources, even diversity in student population that is to be found there."

"Our niche will be persons who already have a bachelor's degree in hand who may have several years in the pastorate, have no intention of going to Louisville but would like further instruction," he said. "That may include some of our own students who stay on for graduate work before heading out somewhere."

Campbellsville's entry into the field of graduate-level theological training is another sign of changing times in Baptist education circles. For

decades, Baptist colleges focused almost exclusively on undergraduate education, and Southern Baptist seminaries focused almost exclusively on graduate education.

Change has come from both ends. Southern Seminary last fall announced establishment of the Boyce College of the Bible, which will offer four-year undergraduate degrees in biblical studies, entering the market previously held by Baptist colleges like Campbellsville.

Campbellsville University already operates an undergraduate program in Louisville, but seminary officials said their new school is not intended to compete with Campbellsville. Campbellsville, meanwhile, will begin its new master's degree in Christian studies on its Taylor County campus but will not rule out the possibility of eventually offering the graduate degree through its Louisville campus.

Campbellsville also recently acquired the Carver School of Church Social Work from Southern Seminary and intends to offer a master of arts in social work degree next year.

Both new ventures at Campbellsville are part of a pattern of explosive growth at the central Kentucky school over the last decade. The school's enrollment has grown 140 percent in nine years, and many new academic programs have been added.

University President Ken Winters said Campbellsville is placing a "major emphasis" on serving the needs of those in the workplace who will fit the new program into their schedules. "We plan to use innovative delivery systems with our new Christian stud-

ies master's program, and we will evaluate the weekender options or other electronic delivery systems."

Hurtgen said he believes the university's location in central Kentucky will be an initial asset. "With many Baptists and other pastors in the area, that will be a drawing card for those who don't want to make a longer trip to Louisville or Lexington."

Hurtgen said the Christian studies program would be ideal for pastors, laypeople and educators alike. Students will be required to complete 32 hours of academic credit, with a thesis option available. The program will offer concentrations in three areas: biblical studies (with advanced language study), pastoral ministries and educational ministry.

The new program will be staffed mainly by existing full-time and adjunct faculty, plus one new full-time faculty member, Hurtgen said.

Campbellsville will seek accreditation of the Christian studies degree from the Association of Theological Schools, in addition to the university's current accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, he added.

The master of arts in Christian studies is a significantly different degree from the master of divinity, which is the basic degree offered by a seminary. At Southern Seminary, for example, the master of divinity requires 91 hours of academic credit, nearly three times the work of Campbellsville's new master of arts degree.

For information on Campbellsville's new degree program, contact Hurtgen at (502) 789-5077.

**"Our niche will be persons who already have a bachelor's degree in hand who may have several years in the pastorate, have no intention of going to Louisville but would like further instruction."**

*John Hurtgen, chair of Campbellsville University's Christian studies division*

## Barriers can't stop writer from offering Christian encouragement

Continued from page 1

"I couldn't understand how the Lord could use someone like me with so little to offer," he said. "I could not walk straight and few people could understand the things I said."

He learned another lesson: God was not interested in his disabilities as much as his abilities.

"I realized that it was not what I didn't have, but what I did have that mattered to God."

What Edwards had was the desire to write. He knew he might never preach by word of mouth, but he "could best share (Christ) with others through writing," he said.

So Edwards prepared for a ministry career in writing.

He completed high school. He earned a bachelor's degree in print journalism from Middle Tennessee University in Murfreesboro in 1982. He began writing a weekly inspirational column for a local newspaper. He was ordained as a gospel minister.

Armed with a call from God, a communication degree and some journalism experience, Edwards set out to find a job with a Christian publication.

No one would hire him.

But Edwards didn't give up. With the help of friends and some Christian businessmen in Murfreesboro, he formed a non-profit corporation to

begin a quarterly newsletter.

In the winter of 1984, the first 500 copies of the four-page "The Inspirer" came off the press. Since then, circulation has grown to 1,700. The free eight-page newsletter is mailed to interested people and is distributed at local churches, businesses, nursing homes and jails.

While Edwards writes most of the copy for the newsletter, he also uses freelance articles and poetry as well. He especially likes to print articles from Christian writers with disabilities who have limited means for communicating their message to the world.

"Our main purpose is to spread the gospel of Christ, exalt him and to admonish believers in their walk with the Lord," Edwards said.

Today, most of the work for the newsletter is done in the office/bedroom of his sixth-floor apartment in a complex for senior citizens and the disabled in Henderson where he has lived since 1988. He also writes an inspirational column for the Henderson paper, The Gleaner. He types on a computer by using one finger on his left hand, the method he used for responding to questions for this story.

Edwards' family, board members and friends help with production and distribution of the newsletter. His mother proofreads. Board members

label and prepare each mailing. His father delivers the papers. An assistant helps with office work each week. A caregiver helps him with the personal things he cannot do for himself.

Edwards is a member of Henderson's Hyland Baptist Church and attends almost every Sunday morning.

"He's very much an inspiration to all our church family," said Pastor Alan Witham. "He instills determination in others. As they see his determination to be faithful to serving the Lord, they want to be more faithful too."

And through his weekly inspirational column in The Gleaner newspaper, Edwards' influence touches the larger Henderson community, Witham said.

"He has good insight into spiritual matters and has the ability to communicate the truth of Scripture through his own life events and how the Lord has spoken to him," Witham said.

Knowing Edwards' physical limitations gives greater weight to his expression of faith and his determination to serve God, Witham said.

Edwards acknowledges many times through the years he has wanted to quit. He gives his parents high marks for standing with him.

"When I felt like giving up, they encouraged me to stick it out," he said. "They refused to let me give up on myself or my dream."

But most of all he credits God. "Getting where I am today has not

## Edwards' writings

Billy Edwards, a Christian columnist in The Gleaner newspaper in Henderson, writes about a variety of topics. Among his recent writings:

■ **On anger.** "The sin doesn't come with anger itself, but rather when we chose to add on our emotional distress by hurting others or disobeying God's law."

"The Lord Jesus Christ can help us when we need strength with the emotion of anger. We have the comfort of knowing he is with us in times of rage and emotional distress that is beyond our control."

■ **On blaming others.** "It is not right when we use other people as an excuse for something we have done. It is just as bad when a brother wrongly uses us for their own purposes."

"Blaming other people for all our faults and inadequacies is no laughing matter. In the end, the joke is on us."

■ **On God's love.** "True love doesn't measure the cost."

"God's love is like this. ... Such supreme love deserves our ultimate and highest regard. It is the kind of love that deserves our response by receiving God's expression of salvation through his son Jesus Christ."

been easy, but I am glad that I never gave up on myself or the Savior who said he will be with me always," Edwards wrote in a 1996 article. "The Lord has taught me through the years how to put my whole trust in him for all things."

For information about "The Inspirer," contact Billy Edwards at 737 Kimsey Lane, #620, Henderson, Ky. 42420.



Edwards



## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## What does it take for a small church to grow?

By William Easum

**A disclaimer:** I don't believe the size of a church has any merit in the kingdom of God. Neither do I believe a small church (under 200 in worship) or a large church has any advantages over the other. They both are called of God to perform the same mission: to carry out Christ's last will and testament (as recorded in both Matthew and Acts) and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Churches that make disciples are great churches no matter what size. Churches that don't make disciples aren't churches no matter what size.

I begin with that disclaimer because no matter how I pen this article, someone is going to cry, "He isn't like small churches." The truth is, small churches could be God's gift to the United States, because so many of them exist. In many parts of the country, it seems as if one or more stand on every corner. In every part of the country, we have enough small churches to win the U.S. to Christ.



**Look at the data.** However, every study I've seen shows that, except for the first four years of a new-church start, small churches account for fewer and fewer of the people who claim to attend a Christian church. Studies estimate that 50 percent of all Christians attend anywhere from 14 percent to 2 percent of all churches.

Most people prefer large churches. Large churches are getting larger, and small churches are getting smaller. As you read this article, you'll see that its subject is not the virtue of large churches but how small churches can carry out the Great Commission.



**A lesson in Appalachia.** A couple of years ago, at the request of a major denomination, I spent two days consulting with 11 small, dying churches in an isolated Appalachian valley. The 11 churches were scattered along a farm-to-market road over a 30-mile area. The total worship attendance of the 11 churches amounted to 125 people. Nine of the churches were separated from each other by no more than a mile and a half.

During the interview process, every one of the church leaders shared with me his or her church's struggle to survive. I could hear bitterness and despair in the leaders' voices as they spoke of their denomination's callousness toward their plight and the loss of their young people.

During the interviews, I asked two questions: "Why are you declining?" and "What is the largest church in the area?"

They blamed their churches' decline on their isolated locations, the valley's declining population and the lack of help from their denomination. A favorite phrase was "We're just a small church." They also told me that the largest church in the valley had about 35 in worship.

After listening to the 11 groups tell

the same story, I was almost persuaded that I had found the one place in America where churches could not grow. But on the way back to the airport I noticed a large, square, box-looking building at the intersection of Nowhere and Somewhere. Other than numerous barns, this was the largest building I had seen in the valley. I asked the denominational official to drive by the building. We soon discovered that it was a five-year-old non-denominational church with a very large parking lot. It averaged 800, mostly young adults, in four worship services!

What's wrong with this picture? Lots. The people I interviewed did little but complain about their smallness and their denomination's lack of help. A defeatist attitude numbed every conversation. They were so self-absorbed that they could not or would not admit it was possible to grow a strong, healthy church in their valley. They could not admit the presence of that big box down the road.



**Shrinking to death.** I wonder if it has ever dawned on many church leaders that every denomination biased toward small churches is dying. Here is what 10 years of consulting has taught me about small churches (many of you will realize that much of this list also applies to the large church).

**Dysfunction and bullies.** Small churches tend not to make disciples because they are ruled with a heavy hand by a few individuals who have a deep passion to be big fish in a little pond. Small churches are about the last place left in this world where goodhearted people will put up with totally dysfunctional people.

Most people in small churches are good to the core. They would rather be nice to people than hold them accountable, so they let a handful of mean-spirited people run roughshod over the flock.

Sadly, most of the faithful flock in small churches reading this article can easily identify these dysfunctional people. Maybe it's time for you to treat them like dysfunctional children and hold them accountable for their actions—in the hope they will either repent or ship out.

**Conflict cuts growth.** Willingness to allow a few individuals to rule the roost results in so much conflict that most small churches couldn't make disciples if they wanted to.

Almost all the small churches with which I've worked were being drained by internal conflict. They didn't need a consultant. They didn't need conflict management. They needed conflict resolution. Christians don't "manage" conflict; they develop communities of trust and love.

Healthy people, whether Christian or non-Christian, are seldom drawn to a church steeped in controversy. The few times that they are, upon experiencing the tyranny of such an environment, they leave. I have never seen

a healthy, Christ-centered small church that

failed to grow both in spirit and in numbers.

"But you said this wasn't about growing large churches!" Just wait. I'm getting there.

Churches that are alive with the Spirit, filled with love and focused on carrying out the Great Commission always attract people. People are attracted to loving, caring people who live in the present. People avoid lifeless congregations oriented to the past.

Churches fall into the conflict trap for only one reason: They have forgotten why they exist. They no longer focus on the mission. They turn inward and focus on themselves. Perhaps it's time for your small church to clean house.

**Inward vision.** Small churches don't make disciples because they are oriented around taking care of their members rather than making disciples. (Large churches do this also.)

One of the myths about small churches is that they are more caring than large churches. This just isn't true. I've found more authentic care and community in large churches that focus on dynamic small groups than I have in small churches. The power of this myth arises from the fact that most small churches make the fatal mistake of falling for a pernicious Christian virus: the belief that the church's purpose is to take care of the members' every need.

Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." He did not say, "Take care of my sheep." Sheep grow and mature when fed. In time they learn how to graze for themselves.

The smaller the church, the more likely it is to rely on the pastor for everything. This was not the case in frontier times, when most of today's dying congregations grew like weeds. The laity not only nourished one another, they also welcomed their neighbors into their church with open arms.

Perhaps it's time to reopen the church's place in the community by asking your pastor to equip your leaders to go out into the community and make disciples.

**Size is not a virtue.** Some small churches take pride in being small as if it were a virtue.

Some pastors proudly proclaim that they refuse to play the "numbers game." Others believe in the "righteous remnant" theory of the Old Testament more than in the Great Commission of the New Testament: "We're not declining; we're just separating the wheat from the chaff." Sounds like the same thing Jesus dealt with when he went up against the Pharisees.

"But you said earlier that size

doesn't matter. Now you seem to be saying that healthy churches always grow. Does that mean that all healthy small churches become large churches?"

First, what does it matter if your small church becomes a large church? Isn't the issue whether or not your church is making disciples? Second, let's ask some questions about the relationship of small church to the Great Commission:

■ Does a church have the right to ignore small? Sure.

■ Does a church have a right to ignore the Great Commission and refuse to make disciples? No. That's in the genes of a church.

■ If a church makes disciples, will it grow? Most assuredly.

Hmmm. What's being said here?

By definition a church is a group of people who have been called out of the world for a purpose. Jesus then told us in his last will and teach and baptize all people. A group of people who do not live and breathe making disciples is not a church. It's a club. This still does not mean that small churches have to grow large.

Small churches can elect to remain small and still make disciples by deciding to give people away to start new churches every time they reach the desired level. By starting new churches, they remain small and help expand the kingdom. This is a win-win strategy.

This is not an article extolling the merits of the large church. This article is about the nature of the church.

Churches make disciples; they have no other choice.



**What should we do?** So what can small churches do to stake their claim in carrying out the Great Commission?

■ Begin to ask God to lay a burden on the hearts of your church leaders for those in your community who do not know the experience of God's grace. Pray daily that your church will catch a passion for those who do not know Christ.

■ Give up the notion that "small is more beautiful than making disciples." Do not see the church as a place that is supposed to take care of you but as a community that will equip you to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Remember that those who give life away eventually find life.

■ Realize that every large church once was a small church. In my seminars someone will invariably respond at some point, "When are you going to talk about what will work in a small church? Everything you have said applies to the large church." It's as if large churches were never small churches. Small churches become large churches by using the same principles when they are small, mid-size and large. Sure, a few major differences exist, but the essentials do not vary from size to size.

William Easum is a former United Methodist pastor who now is a consultant with churches of multiple denominations. He may be addressed at 554 Bayside Drive, Port Aransas, Texas 78373. This article originally appeared in Net Results newsletter and is reprinted by permission.

## HE SAID/SHE SAID

### 10 pencils and no sharpener: Even a male can get the point

#### SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

It all started innocently enough. I had a proofreading job to do and needed some decent pencils in the house with which to accomplish this task.

So I purchased some good old No. 2s and an old-fashioned, wall-mounted pencil sharpener, since all we had was a few hand-held cheap sharpeners which had seen better days.

When I opened the sharpener package to put it together, I noticed a few stray plastic pieces fell out, but I thought they were like the extra pieces of string you find on new clothing—not needed. But when I tried to sharpen my pencil, I discovered those tiny bits must have played an important part in the workings of this little gizmo. It fell apart.

So here I was with a package of 10 new pencils. Unsharpened.

Then I remembered Mark's old battery-operated pencil sharpener. I actually found the thing, had the right batteries for it, popped them in and thought, I'm in business.

It didn't work. The sharpener turned and turned, but where there should have been pencil droppings, it was empty. I noticed there were extra blades inside, so I thought, "Aha!" it needs a new blade. After finding a teeny, tiny screwdriver to unscrew the blade, I replaced the blade and tried again. No droppings, no sharpened pencil. So I turned the blade around. A few flakes, but the pencil was not anywhere near the lead after many tries. Apparently a plastic piece had broken off and the pencil couldn't get down far enough.

Back to square one. I used one of the boys' worn sharpeners and got a pencil halfway sharpened so that it was useable and—about two hours later than I intended—began to work.

#### HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

It's nice to see a female experience something like this and admit it. After all, this is exactly the kind of thing that makes any simple task a male undertakes around the house take 20 times longer than anticipated.

Mark's Rule of Projects: It will never work right the first time.

Corollary to Mark's Rule of Projects: When it doesn't work right the first time, you're destined to spend whatever time remains in the day attempting to fix it.

The Male Factor on Mark's Rule of Projects: Even though this same scenario plays out every time, the typical male forgets that when faced with a new project and stupidly begins anyway with over-realistic expectations of success.

While being amused by the hours Alison spent trying to sharpen a single pencil, I've been troubled by the fact that this happened to her. In nearly 12 years of marriage, something like this has happened to me 100 times more often than to her, which usually gives her occasion to chide me for not planning ahead.

And so I've finally come to this conclusion: This happened to her because I wasn't around for her to delegate the doomed task to. It's all become perfectly clear to me now. Females intuitively know which home projects are likely to be subject to Mark's Rule of Projects, and they skillfully add those tasks to their "honey-do" lists. And all these years we men just thought we weren't bright enough to change a light bulb without having to replace the whole fixture. The deck has been stacked against us.

This also reminds me of an important lesson about life: It's the little things that will do you in. If we have the perseverance and patience to fix the little problems we encounter along the way—the little plastic pieces that may seem insignificant—the bigger parts of life fall into place and run better.

## Covert missions raises tough questions

For generations, one of Southern Baptists' most cherished Bible passages promoting missions has been Romans 10:14-15. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

This passage, and others like it, have fueled our missionary zeal and helped us create the world's largest Christian missionary force. Asking "How shall they hear?" has shaped us as a denomination.

But today we are faced with a variation on that question that is much more vexing: How should they hear?

Don't misunderstand. The question is not whether everyone in the world needs to hear about Jesus. We're agreed on that. The question is: In what manner should they hear? Or put another way: What means of taking the good news into hard places is justified since the ends have eternal consequences?

This week's Recorder includes a package of stories about this matter, particularly as it relates to missionary work in China. The questions raised are difficult and troubling. Yet they are questions Southern Baptists must grapple with.

Some will try to read these stories as an extension of the spat between Southern Baptist Convention leaders and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. To do so is to miss the point entirely. A much larger issue than the SBC's internal politics is at stake here.

The question is whether Christians are justified in using covert means of taking the gospel into areas with restricted access to the gospel. Is it sometimes necessary for Christians to lie in order to tell the truth of God?

As the news stories explain, the SBC's International Mission Board has encountered trouble in China because the IMB has used a two-track approach there: One placing missionaries through open channels; the other sending in missionaries covertly, in a CIA-like system that most Southern Baptists had no idea existed.

This issue is so difficult that it has created division

even within the ranks of the IMB's own missionary force. Fifteen long-time missionaries have resigned in disagreement over the two-track approach.

Anyone who wants to point the finger at CBF as stirring the pot on this one ought to be reminded that it was during Keith Parks' tenure as president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board (now IMB) that the practice of sending out undercover missionaries was begun.

Parks, who now leads CBF's mission efforts, admits his own opinion on the subject has changed somewhat through the years. But he, like current IMB administrators, still believes there are times when missionaries must be sent covertly.

Part of the disagreement underway now is whether China qualifies as the kind of place where Christian work cannot be done aboveboard and must be done underground. Critics of the IMB's policy point out that there are millions of Christians in China and, despite government repression, they have a much better chance of spreading the gospel than do the tiny number of Christians in a place like Iran, for example.

That is an important distinction, and one that will sway many Christians against endorsing a covert missionary force in China while perhaps supporting underground work in other countries where it is perceived to be the only way to get the gospel in.

Tied up in the whole discussion, as well, is the issue of our American perspective. Like it or not, we see the world through American eyes, and we read the Bible through American eyes. Thus it is exceedingly difficult for us to separate from the gospel our American ideals of freedom, democracy and individuality.

We can barely begin to understand the perspective of our Christian brothers and sisters in China, and yet our natural tendency is to want to tell them how they ought to do church.

The purpose of this editorial is not to sway the reader to one side or the other, but to raise the issue to a level where people must at least think about it.

Be careful where you land, however, because what you discern to be true for Christian ministry overseas will have implications for how the Christian church should operate at home as well.

— Mark Wingfield

## What will we gain if we kill our brother?

By Tom Curry

"Judah said to his brothers, 'What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites ...'" (Genesis 37:26)

The Joseph narrative gives us a glimpse into a sibling rivalry which almost led to murder. The question asked by Judah is part of a larger scheme to get rid of Joseph, the favored younger brother.

Judah is really saying, "Let's spare his life along with our guilt, and at the same time profit at his expense." Judah's plan sounded like a win/win scenario, but it lacked moral responsibility.

The narrative illustrates ambition and conscience in conflict. The family rivalry centers around conflicting ambitions between Joseph and his brothers. Judah and the brothers dreamed of leading the family business while Joseph dreamed of success over his brothers. Joseph's dream

landed him in Egypt while Judah's dream was foiled by famine.

There is another dreamer in the narrative, the God of Israel. The hand of God was Joseph's silent partner. God's dream for Israel survived through Joseph's ascension to power and wealth in Pharaoh's administration.

The Scripture warns us that ambition without conscience is dangerous. It's just like God to interject himself onto people's ambition. God will punish the bloodshed which the immorally ambitious have covered on the journey to success (Isaiah 26:21). Conversely, God rewards

the ambitious whose journey is marked by justice, kindness and compassion (Amos 5:15).

Like Joseph and Judah, we have ambition. How does a person follow ambition with a clear conscience? If conscience is the noble calling of human beings to be true to the image of God within, then conscience raises us above the animal kingdom and keeps

our behavior noble.

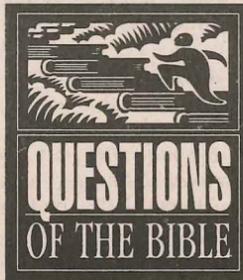
A Christian conscience asks the Holy Spirit's counsel to measure ambition by Christ. He helps us ask a defining question in this moral dilemma when ambition and conscience conflict: "What would Jesus do?" Ambition and conscience are compatible when Christ's counsel guides our ambition.

What would Jesus do whenever someone's dream conflicts with good conscience? I think Jesus would react like Rueben who tried to rescue Joseph.

Whenever someone stands in the way of our dream, I think Jesus would consider the value of people over against the value of a dream. "What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?"

When someone's done all the right things and the dream is still just a dream, I think Jesus would point to the narrator's clue concerning divine providence, "Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt." God's dream lives on in the hidden ways of God.

Tom Curry is pastor of Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville.



# RESOURCES

**Q. Do you have any words of wisdom for me and my fiancée as we begin our married life together?**

A. It would be impossible to fully address the question in this limited space. However, I suggest you base your life on good character and high moral values.

A beginning place is to seek to manifest the fruit of the Spirit in your relationship. Husbands and wives who pay attention to cultivating the fruit of the Spirit have a greater possibility of growing in their relationship.

Goodness, the sixth in Paul's fruit of the Spirit list (Galatians 5:22-23) is an important ingredient in your marriage. This virtue is a quality of character. A person who practices goodness has high moral values. Marriages based on biblical values have a positive edge in what might otherwise be a difficult situation.

Goodness can mean more than positive values. The implication of the word goodness is that Christians need to be good for something instead of good for nothing. Being good for something implies that we have direction and purpose.

As you begin your married life together, consider your purpose. Each of you brings your own uniqueness to this marriage.

As you affirm one another's gifts, you also can consider your purpose as a couple. In so doing, your marriage can have direction and you can avoid wandering aimlessly. In our fast-paced world, it's easy for married couples to become so preoccupied with the pace that they take each other for granted. I challenge and encourage you to place your relationship with one another and with God at the top of your priority list. In so doing you can achieve goodness in your marriage. — *John Lepper*



**Q. While at a party recently my husband became the center of attention and received many laughs, but they were at my expense. Do you agree that put-downs are hurtful to the person being put down?**

A. Not only do I agree that put-downs are hurtful to the person being put down, I believe put-downs are hurtful to relationships.

Married couples have an emotional or relational bank account. We

make deposits to this relational bank account by building up our partner, not by tearing him or her down. Tenderness and kindness are prime contributors to our relational bank accounts. One put-down can wipe out a large relational bank account.

Paul championed the virtue of building others up when he included kindness in his fruit of the Spirit list (Galatians 5:22-23). Achieving the fruit of the Spirit is not automatic. God doesn't simply bestow this on us for being good. Achieving the fruit of the Spirit is a collaborative effort.

We begin by staying connected to the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Remember what Jesus said about the importance of the branch being connected to the vine (John 15:1-5). Staying connected to God infuses us with life-giving resources. Our part is to prune, fertilize and nurture the fruit of the Spirit. In so doing we also build up family members.

Pruning, in this case, means refraining from getting the easy laugh at someone else's expense. We nurture this fruit of the Spirit as we practice large and small kindnesses on a daily basis.

Your challenge is to confront your husband's behavior in a kind, gentle but firm way, without tearing him down. — *John Lepper*

## CHURCH

### Saying 'thanks' to those who give

By Doug Strader

The Bible helps us understand that everyone has some basic needs in life. One of those needs

is affirmation. We need to know that we are appreciated and that what we are doing is making a difference in our world.



Churches are discovering they should say "thanks" to all the people who give of their time, talents, spiritual giftedness and finances. As growing Christians, we know that our Lord expects us to serve him, even if nobody affirms our service. But the church should say "thanks" to those who give, in as many ways as possible.

How can your church say "thanks" to all the people who give financially to the church? I do not have an exhaustive list, but maybe my list will cause you to do some thinking.

■ The pastor and/or stewardship committee chairperson could take two or three minutes during Sunday morning worship to say "thanks."

■ The pastor and/or stewardship committee chairperson could write a thank-you letter to all those who are giving financially to the church. (Have the financial secretary furnish the church secretary the names of those who are contributing financially to the church.)

■ Have special thank-you cards printed and mailed to those who are giving financially to the church.

■ Have testimonies from laypeople related to a specific ministry that is made possible because of the faithful contributions of the people. Encourage the speakers to say they are thankful for the financial contributions that make the ministry possible.

■ Invite your director of missions to speak during morning worship. A part of his message could include a "thank you" for your financial contribution to the association. He could let members know what the association is able to do because of their financial contributions.

■ If possible, have a home missionary and/or an international missionary speak on Sunday morning and thank the church for their financial support that enables them to do their work.

The bottom line is not so much what you say, but just the fact that you are saying "thanks. We appreciate you and what you are doing."

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

## Churches urged to help with sex education

SAN ANTONIO (ABP)—Christian kids will learn about sex—if not from churches and parents, then elsewhere, educator Lane Powell told a group of Baptists.

"If we say our children are not getting sex education, we are fooling ourselves," said Powell, a professor at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. Children are exposed to messages about sexuality on television, in music and from their peers, she said.

"Teaching about human sexuality is a serious and unfulfilled need in the Christian community," Powell said in a seminar at a recent statewide workshop of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Powell said sexuality should be viewed as a "whole person concept,"

instead of being limited to facts about biology and reproduction, she said.

Young people need to learn that sexuality is a "good gift" from God when it is tamed and kept within boundaries, Powell asserted.

Teens need to understand that God wants people to "use our heads as well as our hormones," she said.

Rather than simply instructing young people just to "say no," parents should equip them for a good marital relationship later in life by providing important information, modeling healthy sexuality and encouraging open communication, Powell said.

Church leaders and parents should work together in teaching human sexuality from a Christian perspective, Powell maintained.

Church-based sexuality education is most effective when integrated into an already existing program and taught by someone within the church rather than an outside speaker, she said. Relying on an outside "expert" will communicate that sex is separate from everything else they learn in church, that it is not something people in their church discuss, and that no one in their church is available to answer questions about sex, she explained.

Since most congregations lack a knowledgeable sex educator in their membership and not all churches have staff members who are able to take specialized training in the subject, Powell recommended using a good, ready-made curriculum.

## Expert says teen sexual revolution underway

CHARLESTON, S.C.(BP)—At a time when young people are far more likely to acquire a sexually transmitted disease, a new sexual revolution based on abstinence until marriage appears to be underway, sexual health expert Joe McIlhane said at the annual seminar of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

The number of teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19 who are still virgins increased from 1990 to 1995 by at least 5 percent among both males and females, McIlhane reported in the opening session of the seminar on "The Family & Human Sexuality: Reaffirming God's Design."

In addition, about 25 percent of teenagers who have been sexually active in the past are now abstinent, he said.

This new revolution is marked by a personal commitment to remain sex-

ually abstinent until marriage and societal support for premarital abstinence and faithfulness in marriage, said McIlhane, president of the Medical Institute for Sexual Health in Austin, Texas. He praised "True Love Waits," the Southern Baptist-initiated abstinence campaign for teens that has spread to other countries.

Abstinence is the solution at a time when the risks of acquiring a STD "are enormously more ... than they ever have been," said McIlhane, a longtime obstetrician-gynecologist who has left his practice to direct the institute.

This is "about real-life problems that are real major, and it's happening to a whole lot of people," McIlhane said.

God "made sex a very, very good thing," he said. "Sex can be a very, very good thing. Sex can be a very, very bad thing. What's important is how we use it.

### Church sex-education resources

■ "Christian Sex Education Series," published by Family Touch Press (formerly LifeWay Press, Nashville). The five books, designed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, include three for parents to use with young children, older children and pre-adolescents, as well as a group study book for adolescents and a guide for parents and church leaders.

■ "Learning About Sex: A Series for the Christian Family," published by Concordia Press. The series consists of six age-appropriate books for parents, children and teens.

■ "Teen Sexuality Resources," published by Abingdon Press. This includes a kit for youth leaders with a video, leader's guide and student study guides.

■ "Sex, Lies and ... the Truth," produced by Focus on the Family. This youth leader's guide and video emphasizes biblical standards and stresses abstinence.

## Oakland church finds fund-raiser leads to 'hallelujah'

By Joyce Sweeney Martin  
Staff Writer

OAKLAND—When it comes to fund-raising, it's hard to beat the members of Oakland Baptist Church.

Last fall, in a "Challenge to Build" money-raising marathon for a new building, the church leapt over their basic pledge goal, met the "challenge goal" and moved on to exceed the "hallelujah goal"—in two nights.

In just two nights, members of the Warren County congregation pledged \$400,000—\$100,000 more than the highest goal the church had set. And this month, pledges reached \$470,000.

That is remarkable for a church with an annual budget of \$122,000 and a Sunday school attendance of 200, according to Doug Strader, who leads the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Challenge to Build program.

The program offers a church a

three-month fund-raising method tailor-made for that congregation during which members make pledges to be paid during a three-year period. The cost is usually about one-fourth that of other programs, Strader said.

"We tell a church if they can raise three times their annual budget over a three-year period, they are exceptional," he said. "Oakland has far exceeded that."

The time was right for a major financial challenge, Pastor Tom Stokes said.

"The church hadn't been challenged in years on giving," he said. Plus, the size of the church membership, the addition of 20 new members in the summer of 1996 and the community's economic strength set the stage for enthusiastic response to the project, he said.

The Oakland community is fast becoming a bedroom community of Bowling Green and the potential for numerical church growth is strong, Stokes said.

While raising money wasn't a major hurdle for Oakland, sentimental attachment to the old structure could have been, Stokes said.

For many members, the 91-year-old building was the only home church in which they had worshipped, he said. Members weren't sure they could give it up.

As Stokes talked with them he learned their hesitation was not in building a new church structure but in tearing down the old one.

"They said if we saved the old building, they were for the new one," he said. They liked the idea of using the old sanctuary as a chapel.

Clearing that hurdle involved another obstacle.

It seemed the only way the congregation could keep the old building and erect the proposed 20,000-square-foot structure was to build on the parking lot. That would have limited parking, Stokes said.

Just at the right time, a man who owned land adjacent to the church

gave the land for additional parking. Now, instead of the original 70 parking spaces, the church will have 175 spots.

That was a turning point, Stokes said.

"Ever since we got that lot, the momentum for building has grown," Stokes said.

Pledged money is coming in "right on time" and the church now regularly exceeds its weekly budget, he said. Before the Challenge to Build emphasis, they weren't even meeting it, he added.

Ground-breaking for the \$750,000 facility will be March 15. It will include a sanctuary with offices, fellowship hall and classrooms.

Stokes has nothing but praise for the Challenge to Build program.

"I think it will work in any church," he said.

For information about Challenge to Build, contact Doug Strader, (502) 245-4101.

## Georgetown announces school link

GEORGETOWN—Georgetown College is linking with Central High School of Louisville to provide college mentors for high school students.

The program will emphasize continuing education, such as preparing for college entrance exams, college readiness, cultivation of academic interests, college admission practices, financial planning and scholarship opportunities.

"Career development is important to Georgetown's students, and it is at the core of Central's magnet program," said Judy Rogers, Georgetown's vice president for ethics and leadership.

Central High has 15 students who competed for the mentorship class. The program will include a weekend on the Georgetown College campus, cultural events and etiquette training at the Lafayette Club in Lexington.

Students who complete the program will be eligible for a \$2,000 per year scholarship to Georgetown College.

## Abortion, alcohol foes gain some Kentucky legislative successes

Continued from page 1

too is pleased with the progress made this term.

Four bills important to that group still are alive and expected to be voted on, she said.

"We've been assured that our bills will get heard and have enough time to pass in both chambers," she said. "We've been pursuing this type of legislation for so long, and it looks like we might be successful."

Senate Bill 121, which would ban

"partial-birth" abortions, passed 34-2 in the Senate and is now in the House Judiciary Committee.

Senate Bill 217, which would establish standards for an abortion facility, passed 35-3 in the Senate and is in the House Judiciary Committee.

House Bill 85 to require abortion facilities to give information about abortion, medical risk and alternatives to a client 24 hours before an abortion, was passed out of the House Judiciary Committee. But, as of late last

week, representatives had added at least 18 amendments to the bill on the floor of the House.

House Bill 293, which would have allowed someone to be prosecuted for wrongful death for action destroying a fetus—excluding abortion and actions by the mother—passed 83-5 and was sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

A similar bill, Senate Bill 249, was to have been debated by the full Senate, but instead it was reassigned to

the Senate Budget Committee for another hearing.

Other measures of interest to Kentucky Baptists:

House Bill 13 to ban same-sex marriages in Kentucky was passed by the House Judiciary Committee last week 14-2.

Senate Bill 21 to establish a merit scholarship trust fund from lottery proceeds was passed by the Senate Education Committee and has gone to the full Senate.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and full-time minister of music—could be combined position. Send resumé to: Dennis Sanders, Chairman Search Committee, c/o Big Bone Baptist Church, 11036 Big Bone Church Road, Union, KY 41091. Phone: (606) 384-1717; Pastor Mike Jones.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister to students. Send resumé to: Woodland Baptist Church 809 N. Pope Lick Road, Middletown, KY 40243, Attn: Personnel Committee. (502) 244-8344.

**SEEKING:** Summer intern for active youth ministry. Will begin mid-June and last for 7-8 weeks. Please send resumé to: Stithton Baptist Church, 95 Park Ave., Radcliff, KY 40160.

**SEEKING:** Audubon Baptist Church is currently seeking a part-time minister of music. The church seeks a mature Christian who is committed to music ministry. Experience preferred. Interested persons should send a resumé to: Audubon Baptist Church, 1046 Hess Lane, Louisville, KY 40217, or call the church office at (502) 635-6750.

**FOR SALE:** Church pews, excellent condition, 14 feet long, solid oak with racks for hymnals and Bibles. Quantity of 24, \$300 each. Please call Forest Park Community Church in Louisville, (502) 266-9163 or 266-9898.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music for worship services and choir. All inquiries please respond to: Mt. Freedom Baptist Church, 100 S. Lexington Ave., Wilmore, KY 40390.

**RETREAT:** Glmore Conference Center. Stay with family spring, summer, fall or winter. Call (800) 797-4222 to make reservations or for information.

**WANTED:** Person to fill the position of associate pastor of music and youth. Exciting, growing church in central Kentucky is looking for a dynamic person to fill this dual-role position on its staff. This is a full-time position. If you are interested in applying for this position or learning more about the position, please forward a resumé to the Personnel Committee, Great Crossing Baptist Church, 1061 Stamping Ground Road, Georgetown, KY 40324, Attn: Rev. Art Hardin.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Rockford Lane Baptist, 2006 Rockford Lane, Louisville, KY 40216, Attn: Helen Abell.

**FOR SALE:** Baldwin church organ, manual type. \$500 or best offer. Call (502) 223-0138 or write Hillcrest Baptist Church, 684 Devils Hollow Road, Frankfort, KY 40601.

**SEEKING:** Southside Baptist Church is seeking a part-time custodian for 15-20 hours per week. Call Monday-Thursday (502) 363-3915.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister to college students. Rich Pond Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, 200 Brad Ave, Bowling Green, KY 42104.

**SEEKING:** Minister of education for rapidly growing congregation (199 new members in 1997). Primary responsibilities include implementing improvements in education program and equipping teachers and leaders. Secondary responsibility will be associate pastor. Learn more about us at our web site: www.fbcmaryville.com. For consideration of this exciting role in our ministry team, please send a resumé of experience, education and testimony in confidence to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 309, Maryville, IL 62062.

**SEEKING:** Red House Baptist Church is receiving resúmes for the position of minister of education/music. Please submit your resumé to: Rev. Chris Kurtz, Red House Baptist Church, 2301 Red House Road, Richmond, KY 40475.

**SEEKING:** Pastor; immediate opening. Bivocational or seminary student for small church nestled in a valley just 3 miles east of Dixie Highway on Highway 44 in Bullitt County, Kentucky. Interested parties may submit resumé to: Bruce Sanders, chairman, Pulpit Search Committee, 265 Cuppio Lodge Road, West Point, KY 40177.

**SEEKING:** Tomahawk Baptist Mission, a growing new work in Eastern Kentucky, is in need of an additional church van. If you could help in this regard, contact: (606) 395-0034 or (606) 298-7135.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of LaCenter, Ky., is currently accepting resúmes for a full-time minister of music, C/Y. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 239, LaCenter, KY 42056.

**SEEKING:** Youth minister for approximately 25 youth with good potential for growth in small southeastern community. Need to have genuine love for youth and a heart that desires to reach youth for Christ. Send inquiry or resumé to: Youth Search Committee, c/o First Baptist Church, 317 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858. Telephone: (606) 633-2277.

**SEEKING:** Bogota Baptist Chapel is searching for a pastor able to live and work in a cross-cultural situation. Must have heart for missions, be outgoing, people-person, like working with children of all ages. Feel the call? Please email Inge Ortiz at alortiz@impsat.net or Eric Leaver at leaverbunch@openway.com.

**RETREAT:** Myrtle Beach Ocean View Retreat. Youth, seniors and musical groups (groups of up to 50). 307 1st Ave., Myrtle Beach, SC 29577. Leave message: (803) 626-7069.

# MISSIONS

## Nagano volunteers offer Olympic fans 'more than gold'

**"Several times we commented that this is not the Japan we've lived in."**

*Southern Baptist missionary Tony Woods*

By Marty Croll  
SBC International Mission Board

NAGANO, Japan (BP)—For a few days, the Olympic city of Nagano, Japan, was like a growing mission field.

A great number of people were open to hearing about Jesus. Many were inquiring about issues of faith. A few were even searching.

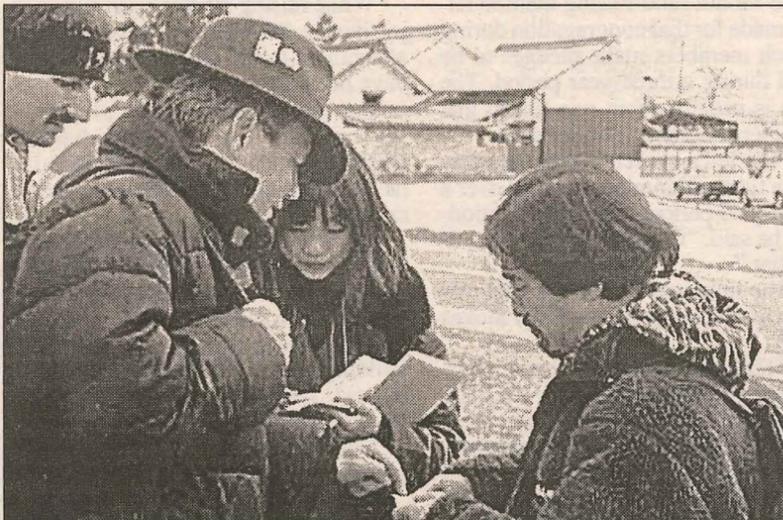
That's quite a change from the Japan most Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries said they know and love. But a welcome one, nonetheless.

And when the Winter Olympic Games were finished, 350 volunteers—including 60 Southern Baptists—and other full-time Christian workers from inside and outside of Japan had greeted thousands of sports fans and led at least 100 people to make professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

"Several times we commented that this is not the Japan we've lived in," said Southern Baptist missionary Tony Woods, who coordinated the Nagano Olympic Evangelism Committee.

Japanese are known for being more open when they're away from the traditions of home, and the great number of foreigners created that atmosphere, Woods said. "It was like when they got off the train in Nagano, they were in a magic land and they wanted to hear what we had to say."

At one point, a coffee shop manned by Christian volunteers reported 10 people a day were deciding to become Christians. Volunteers gave away cross-shaped "Nagano 1998" trading pins the committee designed. Chris-



**MORE THAN GOLD** ■ Left: A Southern Baptist volunteer team shares "More Than Gold" evangelistic booklets outside Olympic Stadium in Nagano. Many volunteer teams passed out literature in the crowd, while others engaged in more direct street evangelism. ■ Right: Dick Reasoner from Atlanta fits a balloon hat on a child outside a Christian ministry cafe. Christian workers—including 60 Southern Baptists and 20 International Mission Board missionaries—cooperated in the Christian outreach project. (BP photos by Tommy Hughes)

tians explained their beliefs by using the pin, and reportedly distributing at least 14,000 of them.

And the ad hoc collection of evangelicals from various groups distributed all of the 200,000 tracts and Scripture portions available to them by the time the games were over.

They also gave out nearly 4,000 copies of the "Jesus" video in 52 languages. One large group of athletes from a country closed to the gospel was able to watch the entire evangelistic film one night in the Olympic Village's religious center, where a Japanese pastor had set up public screenings, Woods said.

Also, a group of Russian athletes kept coming into the religious center

to ask questions. Finally, 13 of them prayed to accept Jesus as Savior.

Evangelicals secured strategic locations near Olympic venues to interact with Japanese and international visitors alike. One coffeehouse sat on a thoroughfare between Olympic festivities and the train station that brought people into Nagano. People walked in from the street and watched Olympics events on the big-screen TV.

Southern Baptist physician Stuart Sanders worked in the hospital set up for athletes inside Olympic Village and was able to share his faith as he met competitors, their families and other hospital staff, said IMB missionary Harsha Woods.



Many volunteer teams passed out Christian literature in the crowd or engaged fans in more direct street evangelism with balloons and puppets. Their Southern accents seemed to attract the attention of international—especially younger people.

Southern Baptist Steve Hoekstra, a resort minister from Aspen, Colo., dressed up like a Colorado mountain man and went into the crowds to preach—only to find himself thronged with people who wanted to get their pictures taken with him. So volunteers stayed close and shared the gospel as people were attracted to him, first explaining he was a Baptist preacher from America and then telling them about Jesus.

## India's 'untouchable' tribe now evangelizing others

NARSAPUR, India (ABP)—Yanadi "untouchables," who accepted Christ with their entire village last Easter in India, have begun to spread the gospel among their people, say the missionaries who led them to profess their faith.

Several of the Yanadis have converted family members in other villages, and "six have responded to a call to become evangelists among their people," said Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries James and Robbi Francovich.

Eighteen of the 60 villagers who embraced Christianity on Easter were baptized by the Francoviches and an Indian Baptist pastor at a baptismal service on Christmas. They also baptized 15 lepers of the untouchable Lazaris and 19 other former Hindus.

The Yanadi baptisms represented about half of the adults in the original 60. Others are in various stages of discipleship training and will be baptized when ready, said the Francoviches.

The Francoviches will enroll the potential evangelists in a one-year training program at their Tribal School of Evangelism that includes both classroom work and field evangelism.

The two CBF missionaries and Pastor Adam Sandipudi of Dayspring Church, all clad in traditional Indian dress, baptized the new converts last Christmas in a waist-deep, muddy canal used by villagers to bathe and wash their clothes, cooking vessels and animals.

The three positioned themselves "so people could be baptized two by two, and married

couples baptized together as new families in Christ," said Robbi Francovich.

A crowd of curious onlookers gathered quickly to watch as the congregation filed out from a four-hour service at Dayspring Church onto a busy road. They assembled at the canal running alongside it. Passing buses, scooters and bikes slowed to a crawl, and neighbors came out to see what was happening.

The 15 Lazaris, among the 52 people baptized that day, had learned of the Christ in much the same way as the Yanadi villagers—through kindness and a loving touch.

Just before Easter, the Francoviches visited the Yanadi village. They shook villagers' hands, embraced them, told them about Jesus, and invited them to a Baptist Good Friday service and meal at Dayspring Church.

Stunned by the kindness—and the warmth of the Francoviches' touch—the "untouchable" Yanadi listened intently. The tribe met after the Francoviches left and decided, in one accord, to reject Hindu gods and follow the God of the ones who came to see them. They began regularly attending Dayspring Church.

The Lazaris, a mixed tribal group of outcasts, had much the same experience after a help them. The missionaries visited the Lazaris' temporary homes in stalls behind a vegetable market, embraced them, touched their leprosy-eroded limbs, and told them about Jesus.

## 250 women accept bishop's alternative to abortion offer

GLASGOW, Scotland (RNS)—A year ago, in a move that attracted attention around the world, Roman Catholic Cardinal Thomas Winning, archbishop of Glasgow, offered financial and practical help to women with unwanted pregnancies if they would carry their babies to term.

During the past 12 months, the cardinal's office said March 3, about 250 pregnant women have taken him up on the offer.

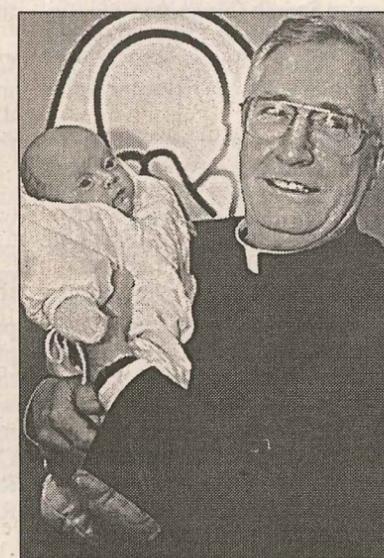
Winning's office said that during the past year, 46 babies, including one set of twins, have been born to women helped by the plan, while another 44 are due in the next few months. Currently, 136 women are being cared for in various practical ways.

But nearly 12,000 abortions took place in Scotland in 1996, the last year for which figures are available—an average of 230 a week.

Winning, however, expressed his delight in knowing that "so many young mothers who desperately wanted to keep their babies, but felt they had no way of doing so, have been helped to make the right decision."

In making his offer a year ago, he said it would all have been worthwhile if just one baby was saved.

"Now, when I look at the figures, I'm bowled over to think that around



**THOMAS WINNING** during last year's announcement. (RNS photo)

100 children are either born or about to be born whose very existence was under threat a few months ago," he added.

Winning's office said a number of dioceses throughout the world, including Ireland, South Africa, Canada and the United States, have expressed interest in the program with a view to setting up similar initiatives.

## Religious freedom under seige, witnesses tell Congress

By David Anderson  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Rich Hamlin, pastor of Evangelical Reformed Church of Tacoma, Wash., feels besieged.

Local prosecutors and the courts, he told members of Congress, are threatening him with jail because he refuses to tell law enforcement officials the contents of a confession he heard from a young suspect.

Hamlin said he was ordered to give a deposition in the case but "respectfully refused to answer... My responsibilities as a pastor would be seriously undermined if the confidential nature of confession could be destroyed by the government wielding a subpoena."

As a result, he said, he was threatened with jail.

Hamlin was one of a parade of witnesses Feb. 26 before a House Judiciary subcommittee who told the panel that their free exercise of religion has been under attack since the 1997 Supreme Court ruling striking down the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

RFRA, as the law is known, was enacted in 1993 and made it more difficult for government officials to interfere with religious practices by requiring they show their actions serve a "compelling state interest" and that there was no less invasive

means of achieving that interest.

When enacted in 1993, RFRA had the support of one of this nation's broadest coalitions of religious groups ever. It included the nation's major Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim and other religious institutions.

"America was founded upon the notion that the government should not interfere with the religious practices of its citizens," Rep. Charles Canady, R-Fla., chairman of the subcommittee, said in opening the hearing.

Canady said the Supreme Court ruling, which struck down RFRA on the grounds it was not a valid exercise of Congress' power, was an unfortunate decision and "we in Congress should work to restore protection" for the free exercise of religion.

The cases of alleged government harassment spelled out for the lawmakers by the nearly one dozen witnesses ranged from cases involving zoning issues to the refusal to rent to unmarried couples on religious grounds.

Zari Wigall, a student at Sacramento City College in 1994, recalled how she declined to sign an "oath of allegiance" when she applied for two jobs at the publicly funded college, one serving as a tour guide, the other working in a theater. As a Jehovah's Witness, she believes she

can pledge allegiance to no one but God.

"I just didn't think this would be such an issue and that, because of my religious beliefs, I would have two jobs taken away from me," she told the committee.

Rabbi Chaim Baruch Rubin of Congregation Etz Chaim in Los Angeles, testified that local zoning laws "are being used as a latter-day restrictive covenant making it essentially impossible for many Orthodox Jews to live." His congregation, he said, was refused permission to build a synagogue in the Hancock Park section of Los Angeles.

"One of the most fundamental practices of an Orthodox Jew is the strict observance of the Sabbath," Rubin said. "Refraining from using any mechanized modes of transportation is a basic tenet of our observance. Consequently, wherever one sees Orthodox Jewish life anywhere in the world, homes and houses of worship exist in close proximity to one another."

Nevertheless, he said, the city has taken the position it will not allow any house of worship in a six-square-mile area of Hancock Park.

Such a position, Rubin said, while not posing a threat or burden to the practice of any other religion, "effectively locks the Orthodox community out of the neighborhood or places an unfair burden on many

### Another state makes its move

RICHMOND, Va. (RNS)—While religious activists and congressional lawmakers ponder how to fix last year's ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that scrapped the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, Virginia legislators are moving ahead to adopt their own measure protecting religious practices from government infringement.

Pending in the state legislature is the Virginia Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which will prohibit local governments from enacting ordinances restricting religious groups from pursuing ministry in their communities.

"We should ensure that all Virginians are able to practice their faith, whether that be feeding the poor or (helping) any other part of their community," said State Delegate Donald McEachin, the measure's chief sponsor.

In moving the proposed legislation forward, Virginia—the cradle of the First Amendment's protection of religious expression and practice—joins others states, including Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Rhode Island, Michigan, New Jersey and California, in not waiting for a national fix of what advocates say is a sharp erosion of religious liberty since the Supreme Court's ruling last June.

of those who chose to live there."

Canady and other supporters of RFRA are still seeking the best approach to respond to the Supreme Court ruling and no legislation has been drafted or introduced that would put new standards into place to restrict government interference with religious practices.

## Updated Lord's Prayer backed despite conservative criticism

By Robert Nowell  
Religion News Service

LONDON (RNS)—Efforts to exile a modern-language version of the Lord's Prayer to the appendix of the Church of England's liturgy have been soundly defeated by the denomination's top decision-making body.

The modern-language version, drawn up by the International Consultation on English in the Liturgy in 1975, and which also is used in some mainline Protestant churches in the United States, has come under sharp fire from conservatives.

As a result of the action by the general synod, which met Feb. 10-11, the new liturgy being prepared for use in congregations of the Church of England in the next century will include the contemporary as well as the traditional version of one of the world's most famous prayers.

The prayer is found in two versions in the Bible—Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4.

The chief differences in the two texts is that the contemporary version uses the words "sins" and "sin" rather than "trespasses" and "trespass" or, in the King James Version, "debts" and "debtors," as most liturgical translations use. The updated translation also renders the familiar "lead us not into temptation" as "save us from the time of trial."

The aim of the contemporary

translation is to create a single modern version of the prayer all English-speaking churches—Protestant, Anglican and Roman Catholic—can agree on.

According to Anglican officials at the synod, the contemporary version already is used in English-language congregations in the Philippines and India, as well as in New Zealand.

According to these officials, the late Mother Teresa once caused some confusion at the Irish shrine of Knock when she used the contemporary version when leading a recitation of the rosary.

But Bishop Peter Nott of Norwich, England, said he found it "both confusing and divisive" to have different versions of the Lord's Prayer in circulation, and questioned whether accuracy of translation should be paramount.

"Beauty of language in liturgy is as important as accuracy of translation," he told the synod.

"And it is beauty that makes language memorable, and by repetitions enables it to be learned by heart," he added.

Nott said he is "absolutely certain" a very substantial number of people both inside and outside the church know the Lord's Prayer by heart—the vast majority of them in the traditional form.

Nevertheless, he failed to persuade the synod to relegate the modern version to an appendix. His motion was defeated by a 272-68 vote.

### Leader: Trip raised freedom of faith issues in China

ORLANDO, Fla. (RNS)—A delegation of U.S. religious leaders received a pledge from Chinese officials that religious freedom will be part of the ongoing discussions between the United States and the communist regime, according to a member of the delegation.

"Chinese President Jiang Zemin did make the statement that in U.S.-Sino relations, the issue of religious freedom would be on the agenda for continued discussion," Don Argue, president of the National Association of Evangelicals, said March 2.

Argue made his comments at a luncheon Monday at the start of the NAE's annual summit meeting which brings together the nation's top evangelical leaders.

At the luncheon, Argue spoke mostly in general terms about the Feb. 8-28 trip he made with a delegation that also included Jewish and Catholic leaders. He said more specific details would be announced at a news conference March 18 in New York City.

Argue's delegation included Roman Catholic Archbishop Theodore McCarrick of Newark, N.J., and Rabbi Arthur Schneier of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation and five others. The trip was paid for by a foundation and all members of the group were funded with private American money rather than from either the U.S. or Chinese government.

In a statement he read at the close of a news conference following the luncheon speech, Argue, noting freedom of belief is included in the Chinese Constitution, said officially registered churches are allowed to pursue "normal religious activities," such as worship, production of religious books and provision of social services within "clearly defined parameters."

But for unregistered, or underground, churches—which many believe include the majority of Chinese Christians—religious freedom is not guaranteed, he said.

"Participants in unofficial religious activities may be subject to harassment, fines, detention, even imprisonment, although treatment by local authorities varies widely from place to place," he said.

Argue reported the delegation was able to make "multiple contacts" with unregistered churches and he reported that members of these underground congregations are not afraid of persecution. "It is a way of life to them," he said.

Argue also told the 350 evangelical leaders gathered at the luncheon that the delegation gave Chinese officials a list of people they were concerned about. Asked at a news conference to describe the people on the list, Argue said they included "those who were persecuted, in prison, not heard from."

But he declined to be more specific because of the sensitive nature of the issue.

In addition, Argue said church officials in China affirmed the NAE's decision last year to remain neutral in the U.S. political fight over granting China Most Favored Nation trade status. A number of conservative Christians, led by the Family Research Council's Gary Bauer, had intensely lobbied Congress to deny China MFN status on the basis of the religious persecution issue.

"That (NAE neutrality) received strong affirmation in my visit, both with the registered and unregistered churches in China," Argue said. "Some are making MFN a political issue and the church in China is saying 'please don't politicize the issue.'"

# BAPTISTS

## Missionaries disagree over use of covert tactics

**"My question is, after you are in the country legally, do you participate in illegal activities?"**

*Continued from page 2*

track in China gradually came to be viewed as "inefficient" by IMB administrators because the nature of the program did not permit missionaries to take credit for large numbers of baptisms or new-church starts.

"The present board strategy toward China may be good for the promotion of missions, but it is, in my opinion, harmful to the practice of missions and is definitely having a limited, if not negative, effect on the church in China," Winstead said.

The IMB will not say how many missionaries work in China. One source estimated between 150 and 200.

But Rankin has targeted China and India, an area which combined represents 35 percent of the world's population, for at least 1,000 missionaries over the next five years.

"They want a blitzkrieg," said Ann Wilson of Midland, Mich., a volunteer English teacher in China through the IMB six of the last seven summers. "Doing that in China is going to create difficulties for Chinese Christians, because that is not within the framework of the law."

Willis said all IMB personnel in China are there legally, "through channels made available to the general public."

"I believe that's true. I do not question that," responded a current missionary who asked not to be identified. "My question is after you are in the country legally, do you participate in illegal activities?" the missionary said.

"My observation is China does not care if you're Christian. China cares if you're legal or not."

One practice reportedly being used is to get missions personnel into China on a visa saying they are there to start a new business, when their main purpose is to start churches.

In an interview with the Alabama Baptist newspaper, Rankin denied the IMB created any "sham" businesses to serve as covers for missionaries. "If we send someone to China as a shoe salesman, that person sells shoes," Rankin said. "He may not sell the most shoes ever sold or make the biggest profit, but he sells shoes."

But Winstead said the issue is more complicated than that. "There may be a shoe salesman who sells shoes, but what the board is not telling you is that the shoe salesman lets his offices and facilities in China be used for religious purposes, which is illegal."

Chinese regulations permit foreigners to participate in Chinese religious activities, but do not allow them to "establish religious organizations, liaison offices and venues for religious activities or run religious schools and institutes within China."

Winstead, who worked 25 years as an IMB missionary, including six years in China, before retiring in protest of the board's China policy, described a meeting he attended one winter in a Guangzhou hotel.

Arriving late, Winstead and his wife registered at the hotel and informed a clerk they were part of the "CSI" conference. (CSI stands for Cooperative Services International, a since-discontinued department originally formed to facilitate IMB work

in China.) Told the hotel had no record of a CSI conference, the Winsteads scanned a list of companies holding meetings and recognized names listed under the company "Watson and Associates." Checking the list further, they found their names there and checked into the hotel.

"When we questioned some in our group about 'Watson and Associates,' we were told it was a consulting firm established by one of the strategic coordinators," Winstead recalled.

"We were quite upset that our name was associated with one of these business fronts, which made it appear that we were participating in their deception."

Such lack of communication was not uncommon between personnel in the IMB's "open" and "closed" China tracks, said Charlie Wilson, a former IMB liaison to the CCC.

"The left hand didn't know what the right hand was doing over there," said Wilson, a 12-year missionary now on leave in North Carolina.

As the IMB began to focus on "unreached peoples" in China, the agency began placing personnel in "places that they would consider very strategic," but which were also "politically strategic and sensitive from a geopolitical perspective," Wilson said.

"I understand some of the secrecy in those areas," Wilson said. "When that kind of secrecy reigned supreme, the blanket of secrecy engulfed us, too."

In casual meetings, non-resident personnel, those in the "closed" track, explained that when questioned about who sent them, they sometimes used the name CSI, even though the two departments were technically sepa-

rate.

Later, CSI showed up on a blacklist issued by China's education department of agencies that Chinese schools "were not supposed to deal with," Wilson said.

Pressing the issue with a local school official, Wilson was told the problem likely occurred over activities in "western China," where CSI had no personnel but work with unreached peoples was well established.

Those activities were "not evil, not immoral, not bad," Wilson said, but personnel using CSI's name were "doing some things that were questionable in the eyes of the Chinese authorities."

Winstead and others close to the CCC say such practices are unethical, unnecessary and harm Christians in China by reinforcing anti-Western ste-

reotypes.

A common perception among typical, non-Christian, communist citizens is that Christianity was used by Westerners to "get into China," Towery said. As a result, Christianity "has always been suspect as a foreign religion," he said.

"This is the biggest job Chinese Christians have had to do, break with that foreign label," Towery said.

The CCC has fought that perception by strict adherence to principles of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, which require that Christianity in China be self-supporting, self-perpetuating and self-governing.



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# BAPTISTS

## Even IMB's critics disagree over covert missionaries

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—Even critics of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's "two-track" China policy disagree over the use of "covert" missions practices.

Some say it is patently unethical for missionaries to use deception or break laws. Others argue there is a place for using non-traditional—even covert—methods in countries which do not allow religious freedom.

"Something has to be done. Those people can't be left without the gospel," said Harlan Spurgeon, who recently retired as a missions administrator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

But Spurgeon, who was an administrator with the IMB (formerly Foreign Mission Board) when it began using a two-track approach in China in the 1980s, said it is a wrong approach for China today.

"This is really against missiology," said Spurgeon, who now serves as the CBF's China consultant. "We have misinterpreted who China is."

Unlike other largely unreached nations, he said, China "has a vital and growing Christian minority," making a two-track approach unnecessary.

When Baptists renewed involvement in China in the 1980s, Spurgeon said, many people in the West doubted new freedoms would last. But China has continued to open to the world and to change. "Mission-sending groups can no longer justify a two-track approach on the basis of an uncertain future," he said.

Britt Towery, the first China liaison of Cooperative Services International, a now defunct department formed primarily to facilitate IMB work in China, claims Southern Baptists originally promised to work exclusively in China with the CCC.

But Keith Parks, who at the time was president of the FMB, said Southern Baptists from the beginning expressed interest in unreached people groups in China.

In the early to mid-1980s, he said, China's Christian leadership "was testing its own new freedom" and "was so overwhelmed with its own needs and the needs of the Han Chinese that they could not focus energy with what they called the minorities—we would call people groups—there."

"We backed away from pressuring them, although we chose to continue to work with them in whatever way we could," Parks said.

Later, the IMB developed a new missions strategy employing "non-resident" missionaries to infiltrate people groups closed to the gospel.

"When we began implementing the non-resident missionary program, some of the people groups were in China," Parks said. "We already knew there was no reason to ask the CCC if this was something they would agree with."

Now, a decade later, Parks said Wenzao Han and other CCC leaders have indicated they are interested in

establishing work with minorities.

Parks' own position on this issue apparently has changed. Though he was president of the FMB when the two-track system was begun, he has not adopted a similar approach in his current work as missions coordinator for CBF.

The main focus of CBF's global missions program is on unreached people groups, Parks said. Most CBF missionaries are in foreign countries on other than a missionary visa, he said. "We don't use false passports.

We don't bribe officials. We don't sneak across borders. Our visas are legitimate."

A missionary's visa may be to teach English or be a technical adviser, Parks said. "The person getting that visa will do something in that area to justify getting that visa."

Asked if a CBF missionary would break a law against proselytizing, Parks responded: "My definition is we keep the letter of the law and violate the spirit of a nation's law at times in order that we carry out the spirit of the Christian law."

Yet even that practice is viewed as unethical by some missionaries.

One current IMB missionary who asked not to be identified said any missions philosophy in China ought to be concerned both with reaching "up" to government leaders as well as "out" to minorities.

"When we use covert methods," the missionary said, "what we are say-

ing to the government leaders and policy makers in China, is ... 'The God we speak of thinks it's OK to disobey the laws of the land, show disrespect for government and leadership. It is a God who approves and sanctions coverup and deceit.'

"Why would anyone want to believe in that kind of God? I wouldn't."

The bottom line for a lot of people is the end justifies the means, added Charlie Wilson, a 12-year China missionary now on leave of absence in North Carolina. "We have a high and noble end—the Great Commission. So, whatever the means."

Wilson disagrees with that viewpoint. "I think our methods should reflect the personality and nature of our Savior," he said.

Parks said one reason that one-fourth of the world has little or no Christian presence is because in many places it is illegal for people to convert to Christianity. "Then you have to ask the question, 'Is that block of 25 million people, or whoever it is, off limits to Christians?' If the government says you can't witness there, you can't go?"

"I had to come down on the side that the Lord's command to go to all people doesn't have any caveats," Parks said.

"I feel like there is a spiritual law that supersedes civil law on some occasions," Parks continued. "And there are times we have to follow the command of the Lord and scriptural teaching, or otherwise we automatically allow governments to determine that a large portion of people will never hear the gospel."

**"When we use covert methods, what we are saying to the government leaders and policy makers in China, is ... 'The God we speak of thinks it's OK to disobey the laws of the land, show disrespect for government and leadership. It is a God who approves and sanctions coverup and deceit.'"**



How should they hear?

## Rankin charges CBF behind China problem; CBF denies it

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—The China Christian Council's decision to break ties with the Southern Baptist Convention may have been prompted by a meeting with a delegation from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Jerry Rankin has suggested.

Officials at the Fellowship, a moderate group which offers Southern Baptist churches an alternative missions program to the SBC's conservative-led International Mission Board, denied the charge. They say leadership changes at both the CCC and IMB are a more likely cause.

In a statement released Feb. 27 through Baptist Press, International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin claimed "nothing had changed in terms of IMB policy and strategy" to prompt a November letter from China Christian Council President Wenzao Han criticizing the IMB's "two-track" missions approach in China.

However, Rankin said, representatives of the Atlanta-based Fellowship met with CCC leaders two weeks before Han's letter was released.

Han's letter, which announced the CCC would no longer work with the IMB or other organizations using a "two-track" approach, left the door open for the CCC "to work in partnership with Southern Baptist individuals, organizations and churches who

are prepared to work openly and above board." Rankin called that statement "an obvious reference to CBF."

"There was an immediate campaign initiated among some IMB personnel in China to resign and seek sponsorship of CBF," Rankin said. "The CBF global missions office has publicly sought to enlist volunteer teachers as the 'legal channel for Southern Baptists to serve in China' in spite of the fact that the International Mission Board is continuing to receive requests and send volunteer teachers to China legally and openly."

Fellowship leaders denied the allegation.

Ron Winstead, a former IMB missionary who now is the Fellowship's China liaison, termed Rankin's suggestion that the Fellowship was somehow responsible for the CCC's action "totally inaccurate."

Winstead admitted that he and another CBF representative, Harlan Spurgeon, visited CCC leaders one month prior to Han's letter but said Han was not present at the meeting. "To suggest that Dr. Spurgeon or I have that kind of influence with Dr. Han is to reveal a lack of understanding of CCC leaders, who do not kowtow to foreigners, and we respect them for that," Winstead said.

Winstead also denied that CBF initiated a campaign to lure China missionaries to leave the IMB. As early as June 1997, IMB teachers in China

began contacting the Fellowship's Hong Kong office to inquire about switching to CBF, Winstead said. They were told CBF had no funds to support them.

After Han's letter, he said, "all but two" of the teachers contacted his office a second time.

At least 15 long-time missionaries have left China through a series of resignations, retirements and transfers during several years of internal tension between advocates of the board's "open" and "closed" tracks in China.

"All resignations were purely individual decisions without pressure or promise from CBF, as the teachers will tell you," Winstead said.

IMB President Rankin has a different take on the situation.

"We regret that five or six valued and effective missionary personnel have chosen to resign in disagreement with the policy and strategy of the IMB," Rankin said.

"It is unfortunate that some of these, who developed very close relationships with CCC leaders, lost their objectivity and ability to respect the calling and conviction of colleagues who were led of God to serve through other channels. Their willingness to reveal and betray those who had no accountability to the CCC and distort their role as illegal contributed to an internal crisis that had to be resolved in order for us to fulfill our mission with unity and integrity."

Other observers say the strained relationship between the CCC and IMB likely has more to do with previous personnel changes in both organizations.

Bishop K.H. Ting, longtime leader of the China Christian Council, disapproved of some IMB activities in China but did not force the issue, according to former missionaries. Ting retired and was replaced last year as CCC president by Han Wenzao, who has a more confrontational style.

At the IMB, meanwhile, a series of retirements, resignations and transfers over several years has replaced a core group of China missionaries committed to cooperation with the CCC with personnel "more or less opposed" to the CCC, said Britt Towery, a 30-year missionary who took early retirement from the IMB in 1992.

Towery described one person now involved in the high-level administration of the IMB's work in China as "a died-in-the-wool Bible smuggler and undercover agent."

Keith Parks, former president of what is now the IMB, concurred with Towery's assessment.

"The truth is (this administrator) ... has been publicly critical of the China Christian Council," Parks said. "Relationships are everything, and he does not have cordial relationships with the CCC."

The administrator named did not respond to a request for comment.

**At least 15 long-time IMB missionaries have left China through a series of resignations, retirements and transfers during several years of internal tension between advocates of the board's "open" and "closed" tracks in China.**

## WORLD VIEW

■ **Missionaries' freedom urged.** The U.S. State Department last month urged a Colombian revolutionary group to free three American missionaries who have been held for five years. The missionaries are of the evangelical Protestant New Tribes Missions, based in Sanford, Fla. They were seized Jan. 31, 1993, by, it is believed, members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. State Department spokesman James Rubin said "high-ranking Colombian military and civilian officials have promised to continue systematic questioning of all captured guerrillas for news of the hostages."

■ **Missions volunteers sought.** Missions volunteers are being sought by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board for both a crusade in Germany and an exposition fair in Portugal later this year. About 90 people are needed for evangelism teams at the Lisbon World Exposition, May 22-Sept. 30. And 32 teams of eight to 10 people are needed for youth evangelism efforts throughout Germany June 17-30. For more information, call the IMB at (800) 888-8657.

■ **Church workers expelled from Laos.** Three U.S. Christian aid workers were expelled from Laos after their arrest for allegedly participating in unauthorized religious activities. The workers are associated with a humanitarian aid group

funded by a Church of Christ congregation in Little Rock, Ark. About 44 people, mostly Laotians, also were arrested when the workers were charged with participating in an unlawful assembly, disseminating religious materials without official permission and "creating dissension between the Laotian people and their government."

■ **Rushdie sentence upheld.** In case you were wondering, Iranian leaders still want author Salman Rushdie to die for allegedly insulting the founder of Islam. Iran's chief prosecutor, Morteze Moqtadaie, said last month "the shedding of (Rushdie's) blood is obligatory" because of his perceived insult of the Prophet Mohammed in Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses," Associated Press reported. The religious ruling ordering Rushdie's death was issued in 1989 by the late Iranian religious and political leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Rushdie has been in hiding ever since.

■ **Samaritan leader dies.** Joseph Cohen, leader of the Samaritan religious sect, died in his sleep last month. He was 79. Samaritans are descendants of a group that broke with mainstream Judaism more than 2,000 years ago by rejecting the authority of Jewish tradition other than that contained in the Hebrew Bible. Today, just about 600 survive in two communities in Israel and the West Bank.

■ **Cult making a comeback.** Aum Shinri Kyo, the Japanese cult implicated in a deadly nerve gas attack, is apparently gaining new members and bolstering its finances, according to Japan's Public Security Investigation Agency. The government agency, in a report released last month, said Aum Shinri Kyo is operating about 100 communes and earned at least \$32 million in 1997 from sales of computers. At its height, the group claimed 10,000 members in Japan and 30,000 members in Russia and had amassed a fortune through various business dealings.

■ **Intermarriage case stirs controversy.** A woman who renounced Islam and sought to marry a Christian has charged in court that her family kidnapped her for six weeks to attempt to prevent the marriage. Nor'aishah Bokhari, 25, told Malaysia's High Court that her father, brother and three unidentified men forcibly kidnapped her Nov. 20 and took her to an aunt's home, where she was held. Bokhari said two policemen held down her boyfriend, Joseph Lee, during the incident. Both she and Lee are reportedly now in hiding.

■ **Businessman: China holding clergy.** A U.S. businessman who has established ties with the Chinese government says Beijing has detained dozens of Catholic priests and bishops during the last four years. Businessman John Kamm, speaking

on Hong Kong radio, said: "At the end of 1993, there were no priests or bishops in prison in China, to the best of our knowledge. That is manifestly not the case now. There are at least several dozen priests and bishops under some form of detention."

■ **Cross to be removed near Auschwitz.** A wooden cross commemorating a 1979 papal Mass will be removed from a site near the former Nazi death camp in Auschwitz, Poland, following Jewish protests. The Polish government said it will remove the 16-foot cross from a site where Pope John Paul II celebrated a mass. Jews objected to the cross, saying it is inappropriate for Christian symbols to be so close to a camp where more than 1 million Jews died during the Holocaust because of their religious heritage.

■ **Chaplain gets first-hand experience.** If you want to find out what it's like being a bus driver you'd better learn to drive a bus, was what one bus driver told British industrial chaplain Sylvia Wood. So at age 57, Wood, one of three full-time industrial chaplains in the Church of England's diocese of Chelmsford, learned how to drive a bus. She's set to take her public service vehicle driver's test this month. Wood's "parish" also includes deep-sea divers, but she has no plans to don a suit and experience deep-sea diving.

## Helping freshmen succeed

By Robert Dunston

Recently two of our faculty members received national recognition for their efforts to help freshmen at Cumberland College adjust to and succeed in college life.

Linda Carter, dean of student life and assistant professor of education, and Kathy Fish, associate professor of English, were recognized by the National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience and by Wadsworth Publishing Company as the Outstanding Freshman Advocates for small private colleges in the United States.

In 1990 Carter and Fish began Cumberland College's INSIGHTS program designed to help students find their way around campus, adjust to the new freedom and responsibility college life brings, meet new people, balance their studies with extracurricular activities and understand the value of a liberal arts education for their personal and career growth.

The program begins with summer orientation and continues in the fall semester through a freshman seminar.

Completion of the seminar leads naturally into the required leadership seminar and Cumberland's

community service requirement.

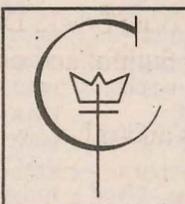
Each INSIGHTS class of 15 to 20 students is led by one faculty member and two students. Faculty members are called STRIPES, an acronym referring to "Some Teachers Really Interested in Preparing Effective Students." Each student leader is called a STAR, "Student Trained And Ready."

The course is team taught providing ample opportunities for STARS to gain valuable leadership experience. The members of each teaching team serve as friends and mentors to the new students and the faculty members provide academic advising for the first year of courses.

Carter and Fish have developed an outstanding program with a proven record of helping new students adjust to the challenges and opportunities of college life and of providing students with the desire and determination to complete their college degree. Through the years many Cumberland College faculty and students have participated and we all appreciate the planning, coordination and leadership Carter and Fish have provided.

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

### CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



## X marks the spot

"Daddy, where are you going and when will you be back?"

I hear these questions often from my daughter, Holly, and son, Bryce. At ages 10 and six they want to know where Mom and Dad are to ensure their feeling of safety. If they only knew how much we love them and watch over them, they would never have to question our concern for their safety and comfort.

My parents were always there for me. My mother was a domestic engineer. She stayed at the house and made a home for her family. Both of your parents may have worked and you knew the same security. However they made it happen, knowing they were there for you made growing up easier. I know it did for me.

I spoke with an adoptive father the other day after a Sunday morning worship service. He told me about the son who first came to him through foster care. The boy was to stay with this family for a brief while, but the brief while turned into months and ultimately they adopted him.

Not long after their foster child first arrived, this father took him to the back yard where the garden plot was being prepared. Growing a gar-

den is a good conversation starter with young children, especially those with whom you are trying to build a relationship.

This father, now with his voice breaking, told me how the boy reached into the fresh dirt with his finger and made an X on his wrist. He then said, "You know how Indians cut their fingers and touch the

blood together to become blood brothers?" The foster dad replied, "Yes, I know." The boy then said, "If we make an X on our wrists with dirt and rub them together, will it mean you will never leave me?" His eyes filled with tears and his throat was so choked he could not speak another word. As he walked away, I thought of the words, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

No child should ever know the pain of being left or forgotten, but they do. I hope every child in our care eventually hears those words from Jesus, and from an adult who cares.

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

### HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

# BOOKS

**Great Souls: Six Who Changed the Century.** David Aikman. Word Publishing, 1998. 388. \$22.99 ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

What do Billy Graham, Mother Teresa, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Pope John Paul II, Elie Wiesel and Nelson Mandela have in common? According to David Aikman, former senior correspondent for Time magazine, their lives have changed our century.

Also, each of these individuals provides the positive model of a hero our culture sorely needs.

Aikman's book is an exploration of the lives of these six people, concentrating on their personal virtue that has influenced our world. For example, Wiesel's impassioned pleas to remember the Ho-

locust highlights the important virtue of "remembrance."

Through six tightly written and engaging biographies, Aikman surveys the lives of these 20th century heroes. There are no shocking revelations in the biographies and no new ground is covered beyond what those familiar with these lives would already know. Aikman's contribution is the exploration of these lives around the central theme of their exemplary virtue. He skillfully extracts the highlighted virtue from the events of each life.

The purpose of the book is to inspire the reader to emulate the virtue of the "great person." Even if one disagrees with the religious or political perspective of the individual, Aik-

man's portrayals lead to admiration and a sense that one has met some genuine heroes in the pages of this book. — Wayne Hager

**Church Financial Management: A Practical Guide for Today's Church Leaders.** Geoffrey Guns. Providence House Publishers, 1997. 98 pages. ♦♦♦♦

This book's title promises more than it delivers. Rather than a guide, it is more of a primer or overview of church financial management.

In seven highly readable chapters, Guns outlines the basic issues in managing a church's financial affairs. In each chapter he offers a concise description of the issue at hand, as well as some suggestions on how to approach it. It was at this point I kept wanting more than he gave. For example, he discussed the need for smaller churches to do an annual internal audit, but he stops short of describing a process for conducting the audit.

Despite its limitations, the book could prove a useful tool to pastors and lay leaders. Guns does a nice job of presenting both the necessity and benefits of a solid management plan. He makes a presentable case for pastoral leadership in the areas of funding development and administration.

I found his emphasis on the church developing both long and short-term financial plans intriguing. He advocates taking a longer look at funding

church missions and ministry than the annual budgeting process.

If you are looking for a detailed, thorough-going guide to church financial management, this book is not for you. However, if you would like a concise presentation of the issues, theory and foundations for developing a financial management plan for your church, this is a good place to start. — Jim Holladay

**Why Bother with the Bible?: Understanding the Book of Faith.** C. Welton Gaddy. Judson Press, 1998. 98 pages. \$12. ♦♦♦♦

C. Welton Gaddy has authored a book of deep passion and confession. Without hesitation he makes a case for

why we should bother with the Bible. After 35 years as a student, pastor and teacher, Gaddy is just as committed to the Bible as when he sang "The B-I-B-L-E."

Gaddy deals with his subject in a relaxed conversational way. Along the journey he gives us reasons why the Bible inspires us, tells us who we are, reveals the nature of God and indeed challenges us to take ourselves and God seriously.

While writing about the Bible, Gaddy lets the Bible speak for itself as to its content and nature. His book is a guidebook to be used in the study of any passage. He leads the reader down a path of questions to ask about the text and of oneself. In the end, Gaddy guides the reader to the place where the text can speak for itself and then the reader must respond.

Gaddy writes with great reverence for the Bible and with the desire that it continue in a central place within the faith. This little volume brings together generations of scholarship and makes it applicable to everyday Bible study. One would do well to study this book first before beginning a serious study of Scripture. Likewise, it can be an invaluable aid for groups as they begin study of the Bible. — Wayne Hager

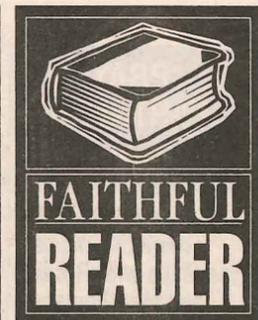
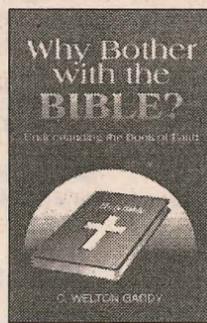
**The Gospel of Luke: The New International Commentary of the New Testament.** Joel Green. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997. 928 pages. ♦♦♦♦

The New International Commentary of the New Testament is a commentary project that is more than 50 years in the making. Do not let the title mislead you, it is not based on the New International Version of the Bible. The New International Commentary was "to provide earnest students of the New Testament with an exposition that is thorough and abreast of modern scholarship and at the same time loyal to Scripture as the infallible word of God."

Joel Green approaches reading Luke as "narrative." Rather than trying to sort through all the form-critical and textual-critical issues related to the Gospel, he prefers to approach the study of Luke through "discourse analysis." His contention is that "Luke concerns himself, self-consciously, with interpretive persuasion—that is, not with validation of events but with their significance."

I must admit that my rather feeble, get-to-the-point mind got a little bogged down in his attempts to distinguish the difference in historicity, historical narrative, biography and history. Once I got through the description (justification?) of his approach, I found Green's reading of Luke informative and helpful. He contends Luke's narrative is "centered on God." The picture he paints of Jesus is one who was absolutely obedient to the will of God. Throughout the entire commentary, Green takes great pains to demonstrate how each story, parable and teaching event is connected.

I appreciated Green's calling us to remember that the Gospel of Luke is more than a loose collection of recollections about the life of Christ. Rather, it is a seamless discourse intended to persuade the reader of the significance of Jesus. — Jim Holladay



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

## Getting ready for summer camps

There continues to be an air of excitement at both your Kentucky Baptist conference centers.

There is a buzz at Jonathan Creek as well as Cedarmore as we hurry to take advantage of the spring-like weather and continue our renovation.

It's hard to imagine, but 90 days from now we will be preparing for our annual summer arrival of hundreds and hundreds of campers. Hundreds of youth, RAs and GAs will descend upon our camps. We will be more ready than we have been in the past. I am praying now that hundreds of kids of all ages will have life-changing experiences in Christ this summer. Pray specifically that all the improvements we are about to make in the facilities will make everyone more comfortable.

I have mentioned that one of the dramatic improvements we have been able to make at Jonathan Creek is to air-condition Waller Dorm. From comments I have heard, that's a long-overdue improvement. So come on and camp with us this summer. Our Kentucky WMU, Brotherhood and Student Ministry departments deliver outstanding camps at very reasonable costs. Please consider showing your

support by sending your kids to one of our camps this summer.

Jonathan Creek Manager Deward Hurst and I recently met with Kim Davis, Joyce Parrish and Beverly Winchester, each of whom will be leading our GA and Acteen camps this summer. These outstanding "young" women will do a great job this summer, and their

passion for the girls and missions is great. They bring years of experience to the task, so when your girls attend GA or Acteen events at our camps, they are in good hands.

Watch for news of our exciting ground-breaking on our "new generation lodge" at Jonathan Creek. We're shooting for March 23, with a completion target of late June. I'll give you more

details on this next time. It's great to see God at work in so many ways. As I travel across the state on behalf of our conference centers, I am continually awed as God's plan continues to unfold. There are great days ahead.

To God be the glory. Keep praying for us as we seek to serve him.

Rusty Ellison is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, Box 37, Bagdad, Ky. 40003. Call (502) 747-8911.

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

### THE OWEN COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Recognizes Rev. George Stack, Director of Missions for forty years of faithful and dedicated service.

Kentucky Baptists and others who have shared in Brother Stack's ministry are invited to attend a special service held in his honor. A reception will follow.

Sunday, March 29, 1998, 4:00-5:30 p.m. at the First Baptist Church in Owenton, KY.  
213 N. Main, (502) 484-2430

#### Speakers:

Rev. Gayle Toole,  
President, Kentucky Baptist Convention  
Rev. Bob Jones  
Retired Director of Missions,  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

# PEOPLE

## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ A pastor for the new church in Pavolsk, near St. Petersburg, Russia.

■ Help in learning the Russian language and in relationship building for Joe and Kimberly Knight in Russia.

■ International Service Corps missionaries Larry and Joy Lindsey as they return to Moscow from the States on March 11.

■ The national youth leaders conference to be held at Grace Baptist Church in Marlboro, Mass., March 14.

■ "Rise Up," the half-hour Sunday afternoon radio program featuring ministries and churches in Greater Boston Baptist Association.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **CENTERTOWN**—West Point Church called **Rhett Wilson** as pastor. He is a student at Southern Seminary.

■ **FORDSVILLE**—Fordsville Church called **Ed Ellis** as minister of music. He began his new ministry Feb. 1.

■ **HARTFORD**—**Rodney Albin** recently resigned as youth director at Hartford Church.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—New Barren Springs Church called **Larry Birkhead** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Pond Run Church in Beaver Dam.

■ **KEVIL**—Spring Bayou Church called **Gary Frizzell** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Unity Church in Ashland. He began his new ministry Feb. 22.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Dorothy Hayes**, 80, died Feb. 27. Hayes worked as bookkeeper for Western Recorder 21 years before her retirement in 1983. She was a member of Woodland Church in Middletown.

Auditions for the production of "Children of Eden" will be held at Crescent Hill Church March 12, 7 p.m.-10 p.m. and March 14, 2 p.m.-5 p.m. Call Christopher Boyer at (502) 562-0880 or Louie Bailey at (502) 896-4425 for more information.

Davis Memorial Church called **Wes Brockway** as pastor. He began his new ministry March 1. He previously had served as associate pastor and minister of music.

Fairmount Church recently called **Mark Shaw** as pastor.

Habitat for Humanity will hold its semi-annual volunteer information meeting at Presbyterian Center USA March 16 at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call (502) 583-6599.

■ **PADUCAH**—Trinity Church ordained **Steve Grubbs** to the deacon ministry Feb. 22. **Kenneth Brown** is pastor.

■ **PINEVILLE**—Bethlehem Church called **Tim Mills** as pastor. Mills previously was pastor at Horse Creek Road Church in Corbin.

■ **ROSINE**—Rosine Church recently called **Alton Brooks** as pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—First Church ordained **Barry Bray** to the deacon ministry Feb. 22. Bob Browning is pastor.

■ **TALLAPOOSA, Ga.**—**S.T. Skaggs**, 92, died Dec. 31. He was pastor of Calvary Church in Bowling Green, Centertown Church, Beech Creek Church, Buck Creek Church in Calhoun and West End Church in Paducah. Survivors include his wife, Mary Lou, two daughters, two sons, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He was the brother of Harold Skaggs of Cadiz.

■ **TAYLORSVILLE**—Plum Creek Church ordained **Cal McIntire** to the gospel ministry Feb. 22.

## Former Kentuckians appointed by IMB

**RICHMOND, Va.**—Former Kentucky Baptist missions worker **Jeff Moats** and his wife, **Ruth**, recently were appointed to work with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in the Southeast Asia and Oceania region.

The Moatses were among 20 people appointed by the International Mission Board Jan. 20 during a service at Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala.

The countries of Southeast Asia and Oceania include more than 200 million Muslims and more than 100 million Buddhists as well as millions of followers of Hinduism, animism and secularism.

Most of the peoples of this part of the world are in the "Last Frontier" and have not yet had an opportunity to hear the gospel in a meaningful way.

Moats is a former multi-housing family minister in Louisville for the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the North American Mission Board while he attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He will teach in a Bible school and Mrs. Moats will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1996 Moats has been the pastor of Livonia Baptist Church in Campbellsville, Ind.

In 1997 IMB workers helped lead 283,100 people to Christ and baptism. They and their overseas partners started 2,451 churches and reported 4.11 million members in 41,521 churches overseas.



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## Senior night, part II

Aaron is one of our most outstanding young men. He came to Oneida at the beginning of the eighth grade in the fall of 1993. We were told Aaron "always tried too hard and he wanted to please." His grades were average, but his parents believed he could do much better. He was having a rough time in school when his parents heard about Oneida.

Aaron has been a joy to work with; a pleasant young man I am always happy to spend time with.

He has maintained a 3.0 grade point average or better the past five years. He has been involved in wrestling, track, tennis, baseball, band, Beta Club and chess. Aaron has had leading rolls in drama and is a Baptist Student Union leader. Aaron has been a tremendous blessing to our choir the past four years.

Ryan enrolled in 1994 as a freshman. We were told Ryan "gets along well at home, but is not motivated." He loves sports, but was failing academically. Ryan's father passed away when Ryan was four years old, and his mother had not been a part of his life the past several years.

Ryan's grades greatly improved and he finished his first year at Oneida with a 3.3 GPA. Ryan has been active in soccer, cross country, wrestling, track and field, choir, drama and student council, and he has been a BSU leader. He plans to attend college.

Amy came to Oneida from Nevada in March, 1996 while a sophomore. The information we received on Amy was that she had an "attitude problem, won't listen and doesn't care." Just a few months after Amy enrolled, we received a letter from her mother. Here is part of what she said: "Ever since she has been with you, Amy has be-

come more confident, more congenial and less arrogant. All in all your school is working wonders for her ..." Amy was making good grades when she came to us and had a 3.75 GPA when she finished her first year with us. She has been active in flags, choir, drama, Beta Club, student council and cheerleading. She has a sweet smile and has been a pleasure to work with.

James came to Oneida just one year ago. We were told he "needs more structure and needs to focus on his education." He finished his junior year with a 3.14 GPA and is on the honor roll now. He has been active in basketball and baseball and plans to enlist in the Marines when he graduates.

Sue also came to us last year. Her mother was concerned about her grades, peers and her lack of responsibility. While she did not make the honor roll last year, she was on the B honor roll first quarter and is currently on the A honor roll. She is a BSU leader and has been active in swimming and drama. Sue plans to enlist in the U.S. Air Force.

Otis came to us this year. He has some problems at home and had been making poor choices which had gotten him into trouble. He has done well here and has been active in the pep band. He plans to attend college when he graduates.

The last senior to be recognized on Senior Night was **Sonia**, who just came to Oneida in January with her younger brother. She had some difficulty following rules at home but has been a wonderful student for us. She is active in student council, drama and basketball and plans to attend college after graduation.

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

## THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## Campaign surpasses \$3 million

Clear Creek has reached \$3,115,755.48 in its Beyond 2001 Campaign.

Two more congregations responded to the church appeal. Memorial Baptist of Frankfort will seek \$2,000 a year during their 1998-2000 Christmas mission offering. Billy Carter is pastor. Springdale church in Louisville voted a five-month commitment of \$500. David Butler is pastor.

Two estate gifts helped us surpass the goal for student scholarship endowment. During the early days of the campaign Gerry Bowen of Atlanta talked with me about a scholarship. He died in December, 1996, and his estate plans provided \$150,000. Long-time friend and former trustee Willie Greer of London left \$25,000.

Gil Wilson of Providence funded a scholarship in honor of former pastor Bob Williams. The Wilson Scholarship provides financial aid to students from the western region of Kentucky. Shirley Horn of Danville endowed the Harold Horn Memorial Scholarship in memory of her husband and Clifford and Helen Bolton. The endowment assists students

from the south central region of Kentucky.

Gaila Edwards of Cincinnati established a scholarship in memory of her husband James B. Edwards. The fund assists Ohio students.

Former Bowling Green resident Mrs. David Ribble funded an endowment to help underwrite campus "workshops." We employ 92 students and spouses through the campus workshop program.

Join us in prayer that contacts with friends will help us reach the \$3.5 million goal by July 1, 1998.

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

## Gospel puts paralyzed cowboy back on rodeo circuit

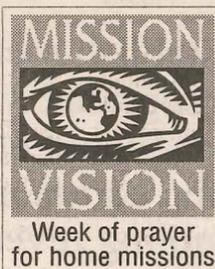
By Shari Schubert  
Florida Baptist Witness

HAINES CITY, Fla.—Ranching and rodeos were Randy Johnson's life until he broke his neck in a swimming accident at age 21.

With his spinal cord severed at the fifth vertebra, "I was not expected to live," let alone return to bull and bronco riding or to earning his living as a working ranch cowboy.

But he said God's plan for his life has taken him back to the rodeo arena—not as a competitor, but as a minister.

As a Mission Service Corps volunteer with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, Johnson now serves as chaplain to the Florida High School Rodeo Association and the Florida Junior Rodeo Association.



He is among the missionaries featured in this year's Week of Prayer for North American Missions. The Week of Prayer is part of the Season of North American Missions. The Season also includes the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering with a national goal this year of \$42 million.

The accident left Johnson a paraplegic, but the extent of his recovery exceeded doctors' expectations. Within a year, he regained enough use of his arms to propel a wheelchair. He eventually could drive a car.

And in the aftermath of the accident, when he could think about something other than just surviving, Johnson recommitted his life to Christ.

As a teenager Johnson had "felt a little bit of a tug" toward serving in some kind of ministry, he recalled, but he had not been sure that it was a clear-cut call.

"I thought I couldn't get up in front of people," he said.

That began to change about three years after his accident, when he started teaching a Sunday school class. Then he felt led to begin a youth outreach at an old movie theater in Avon Park, Fla., offering free Christian films or live music on Saturday nights. He worked in that ministry six and a half years. It eventually was expanded to include a food pantry and prison ministry.

During that time he met his wife, Kitt, a licensed practical nurse whose talents included music and drama.

In 1987, Johnson went to work with Teen Challenge, serving for the next six years.

Johnson had disassociated himself with the cowboy and ranching life after his accident. He had been away 16 years when, in 1990, he read a magazine article about Fellowship of Christian Cowboys.

Inspired by the article, he contacted the Silver Spurs pro rodeo in Kissimmee, Fla., and asked if anyone was doing "cowboy church" for the contestants. If not, he said, he would volunteer. Rodeo officials agreed, and Johnson began leading an informal worship service at the rodeo grounds on Sunday morning.

He soon was approached by Rana Wallace of Eustis, Fla., a member of

the High School Rodeo Association. She asked if he would be willing to lead "cowboy church" at high school rodeos. He agreed.

Then he was invited to provide a similar ministry with the Junior Rodeo Association, which sponsors events for contestants ages 6-14.

He left Teen Challenge in 1992 to give full time to rodeo ministry. His primary focus now is the high school and junior rodeo associations. He continues to do some ministry with pro rodeo, youth livestock fairs, trail rides and other events, and speaks in churches when invited.

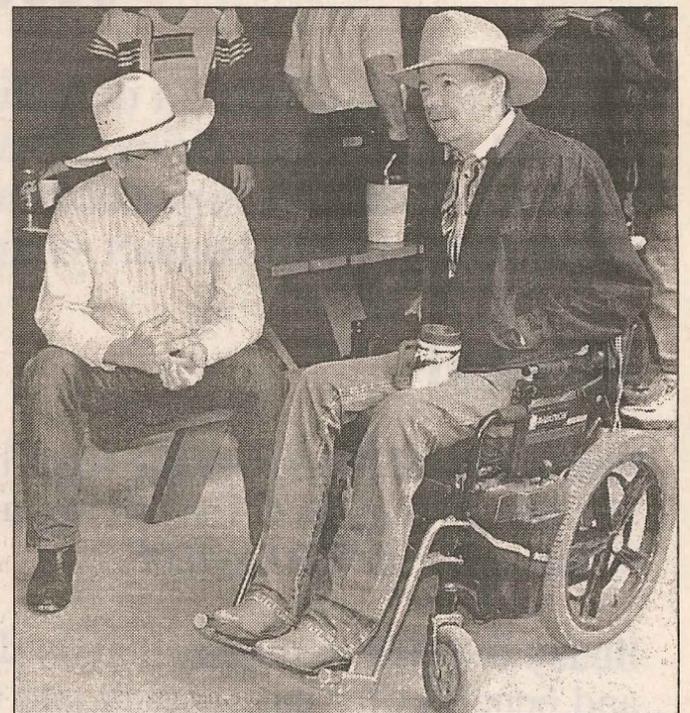
As he ministers with the young rodeo contestants, both in "cowboy church" and in one-on-one contact, Johnson said he tries to encourage them to study the Bible and to stand for Christian values in a world that's influencing them to be anything but Christian. Win or lose, he tries to emphasize to each one that "in God's sight, you're unique and special."

Mrs. Johnson, a self-taught guitarist, sings solos and leads singing in the services. She and Johnson illustrate Christian concepts through skits, sometimes involving their adopted children, Sarah, 10, and Jesse, 7.

The Johnsons don't always see the results of their ministry, but "God gives you glimpses of the fruit of your labors," Johnson said.

He recalled one Sunday morning at a junior rodeo in Kissimmee when, with threatening weather, he and Mrs. Johnson were moving their table and sound equipment to an indoor area. A 10-year-old girl approached and asked what they were doing.

"We're getting ready for church,"



the Johnsons told her.

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

They explained that Mrs. Johnson would sing and do a skit, and that Johnson would preach.

"Will it be like a real church?"

"Yes," Mrs. Johnson told her.

The girl replied, "I've never been to church."

"Cowboy church" is not only an evangelistic outreach, but a ministry to Christian families whose participation in the rodeos takes them away from their home churches several weekends a year, Johnson noted.

**ROPING HEARTS** Randy Johnson visits with John Lamp, after a Cowboys for Christ service at Rockin' Heart Ranch in Lakeland, Fla. Johnson is a Mission Service Corps volunteer missionary with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. He serves as chaplain to the Florida High School Rodeo Association and the Florida Junior Rodeo Association. (Photo by Shari Schubert)

## Missionary gauges ministry's success one person at a time

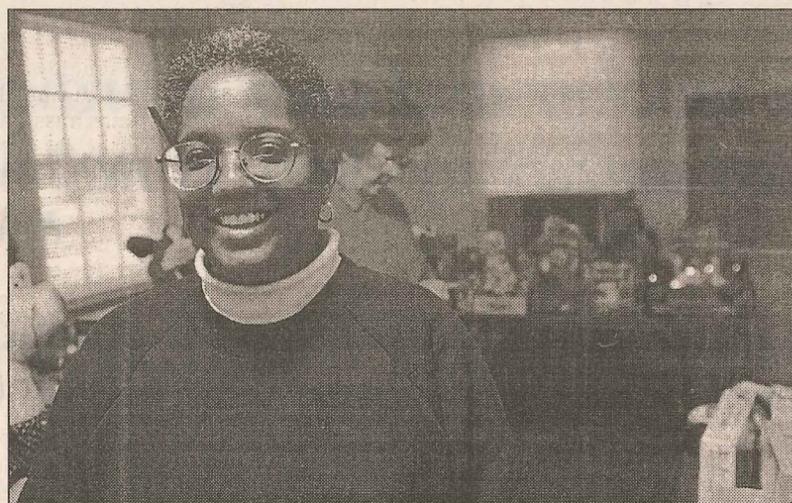
RICHMOND, Va.—To the north, across the river, downtown Richmond rises like a promise: proud of its past, hopeful of the future. But on the south side of the city that promise scarcely casts a shadow.

Hillside Court, an aptly named pocket of poverty, a forgotten corner of Virginia's capital city, nestles against the ridge that inspired its name. Worn lawns, overhung with oaks, connect regimented rows of red brick buildings, reminders of a time when the working poor gathered here, saved their cash and moved on in a grab for a piece of the American dream. Before such places became projects, places of permanent despair.

Now it is different. Few move on. And despair has long since settled in to stay.

There have been two shootings in as many weeks. Last week a teenager died of meningitis. Single-parent families—mothers with children, children who do not know who their fathers are—are the norm. Drugs are a major concern, and the streets have been privatized in an effort to combat trafficking.

Missionary Valerie Carter pauses by a bullet-riddled car, its glass shattered in the latest drive-by shooting. She and her husband, Hylan, are among the featured missionaries during the Southern Baptist Week of



**HOME MISSIONS** Valerie Carter is director of the Hillside Baptist Center in Richmond, Va. In the background, Woman's Missionary Union volunteers prepare gifts for the annual "Christmas store." (NAMB photo by Bill Bangham)

Prayer for North American Missions. The Week of Prayer is part of the Season of North American Missions. The Season also includes the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering with a national goal of \$42 million.

"These are good people," says Carter. "There is just precious little hope here. Hope is a commodity that has to be looked for day-by-day."

Carter is often the one person in the community people turn to when they seek that hope. She has offered it in funeral services for the ones who were

slain, and the little girl who died too soon. In bags of food for hungry families. In a coat for a child in winter. In the reassuring voice of one who knows things can be worked out.

Hillside Baptist Center, where Carter is director, stands like a beacon on the ridge above the community. Part and parcel with Shalom Baptist Church—where her husband, Hylan, is pastor—it is well-worn and somewhat shoddy, in a comfortable way.

In the midst of this community is

Carter, her easy smile and ready laugh a catalyst for all that is around her.

Hillside Court has 402 public housing apartments. About 1,300 people live in them legally, another 1,000 illegally. "Those are cousins living with cousins and boyfriends living with women; that's public housing," says Carter. On the hill above are private homes, mostly elderly and a few Caucasians who did not leave with the white-flight of 30 years ago, bringing the resident total to 4,000.

They are all part of the community in which Hillside Baptist Center seeks to minister.

Yet despite the numbers, despite all the activity—after school programs, tutoring, the adult ceramics classes, women's support group, food pantry, clothes closet, special programs in summer and at Christmas—success is measured in small terms. In the nine years Carter has been here, she has come to terms with that, and rejoices in the ones who accept Christ and find the hope that changes lives.

Late in the afternoon a young woman approaches Carter on the street. She looks little more than a child herself, perhaps in high school. Little by little her story eases out. She is 21. She has two children. She is pregnant with a third. She has no money. No food. No husband.

"Stop by the center later," says Carter. "Let's see what we can do."

**"These are good people. There is just precious little hope here."**  
Southern Baptist missionary Valerie Carter

# Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention Sunday March 15, 1998

Thanks for your help in defeating House Bill 323, which would have allowed legally defined "third-class cities to have precinct elections to sell alcohol. Your help is still needed for several important measures still before the Kentucky Legislature. Please call (800) 372-7181 to contact your representatives about:

## Alcohol

**House Bill 327** to lower the legal blood alcohol content level for driving under the influence from 0.10 to 0.08.

**House Bill 578** to require standardized fines and penalties for city, county and state alcoholic beverage control agencies.

**House Bill 579** to ban alcohol sales from drive-through windows.

**House Bill 580** to ban cold beer sales at gas stations.

**House Bill 728** to strengthen laws concerning employees at places selling alcohol and requiring proof of age from buyers.

## Gambling

**Senate Bill 21** to establish merit scholarships for college access programs, grants and tuition assistance. But funds would come from the lottery, deepening the commonwealth's dependence on gambling revenue and sending the wrong message to our children. If Kentucky becomes more dependent on gambling, many people expect the commonwealth to legalize video lottery terminals, often called the "crack cocaine of gambling."

*"Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler;  
whoever is led astray by them is not wise."*

*Proverbs 20:1*

Alcohol robs people of dignity and judgement and it produces disobedience. Solomon's warning could not be clearer: Those who use alcohol are deceived and are not wise.

For more information, contact:

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2722 Crittenden Drive  
Louisville, KY 40209-1114  
(502) 635-0002  
*Executive Director Claude Witt*