



# WESTERN RECORDER

April 28, 1998  
Vol. 172, No. 17

## FOR THE RECORD

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A Southern Baptist missionary in Colombia was shot and killed outside his home last week. *Page 2*

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## Sheppard: Wins weren't Cats' first priority

Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—Believe it or not, winning games was not the most important goal for University of Kentucky men's basketball coach Orlando "Tubby" Smith, one of his star players said recently.

Jeff Sheppard said Smith's two goals were teaching players how to be men of God and compiling a good win-loss record—in that order.



Sheppard

Speaking to a packed audience April 20 at the state banquet for Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Sheppard talked about his experiences with Smith and the Wildcats, which went 35-4 and won a second national championship in three years.

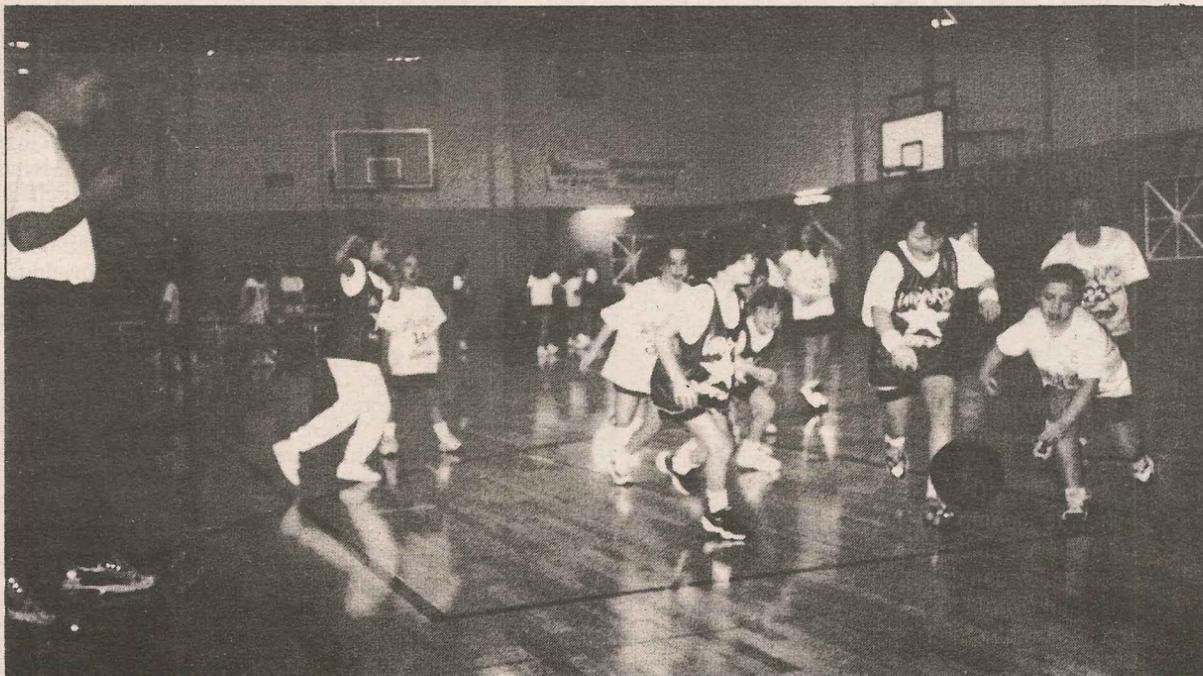
"That was his second goal," he said. "Imagine how well he did on his first."

Smith set the tone for his first year before training began by bringing in two former players from Virginia Commonwealth to speak to the team, Sheppard said.

"Some good things happened on the court this year, but the best things happened off the court. A lot of that started with Coach Smith," Sheppard said.

Affiliated with a group known as Athletes for Jesus, the pair presented the gospel in the toughest way he's ever heard, he said.

"Sure I'm speaking here and stood in front of millions to glorify God," he said, referring to his  
□ See Sheppard: Wins ..., page 3



**BASKETBALL MINISTRY** Girls play basketball in Third Baptist Church of Owensboro's Upward Unlimited league. Third Baptist was one of six Kentucky Baptist churches sponsoring the ministry-based leagues this year. Bellevue Baptist Church Senior Pastor Greg Faulls said his church reached out to 1,100 people every week through its league this season. "The opportunity for relational evangelism was like nothing I had ever seen."

## Leagues have Owensboro churches jumping

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

OWENSBORO—Basketball season ended two months ago for Bellevue Baptist Church, but the congregation is still reaping the benefits from its Upward Unlimited league.

Thirty grade-school children will be baptized May 3 as a result of the church's league. This was the church's second season for the program, part of a ministry affiliated with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The students to be baptized are among 104 youngsters who said they became Christians at an evangelistic presentation in mid-February.

Bellevue's staff contacted all their parents but leaders don't know how many children from other churches

will be baptized at their own churches.

Senior Pastor Greg Faulls, who came to the church as league play began in January, said Upward's effects are still being felt. And he praised the effort as non-coercive of children. "We actually discouraged children from making decisions if they were unclear what they were doing."

"The opportunity for relational evangelism was like nothing I had ever seen," said Faulls. "We had 1,100 people coming through our facility each weekend. The network is constantly expanding."

For example, at a restaurant for lunch recently, Faulls and a deacon met a waitress who told them her two sons played in the league.

After learning Faulls' identity, she said, "I had a Baptist background but

haven't been in church for a long time. When are your services?"

Jacqui Eckdahl, director of recreation and family ministry at Bellevue, got the idea to start the league at a recreation seminar three years ago.

Upward Unlimited was outlined by President Caz McCaslin, former minister of recreation at First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, S.C.

He designed the program at his church and, with the backing of a Christian foundation, expanded it into an independent ministry.

For a \$35-per-player fee, the ministry provides jerseys, T-shirts, a coaches-players handbook, computer software, training videos, brochures and posters. Some churches add a \$5 to \$10 fee to cover additional costs and provide scholarships.  
□ See Basketball leagues ..., page 3

## Kentucky WMU challenged to do missions 'on the brink'

By Mark Wingfield  
Editor

LOUISVILLE—"What do you want me to tell your family if you don't come back?"

That's the last question Ken Perkins asks missions volunteers, new career missionaries and other mission workers preparing to enter the difficult area of Africa where he works as a Southern Baptist missionary.

The threat of death is real in this area of the world, which cannot be associated with his name in media reports due to security concerns.

Yet Perkins, a Kentucky native and missionary in residence at Georgetown College, told members of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union last weekend that taking the gospel of peace to all the world is a dangerous task.

Perkins and his wife, Beth, were keynote speakers for the Kentucky

WMU annual convention, held at Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville April 24-25. The theme of the conference was "Missions on the Brink."

Mrs. Perkins appeared several times in native dress, portraying in monologues some of the women she has met—women struggling to become or live as Christians in a Muslim fundamentalist society where they could be killed if their faith were known.

Christian talk about taking the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth is easy, until you get there, Perkins explained. "If you're going to follow Jesus into all the unchurched areas of the world, what are you going to say to people when believing in Jesus will—not might but will—get them killed?"

This is a question most American Christians never have grappled with,  
□ See Kentucky WMU ..., page 9



**IN CHARACTER** Missionary Beth Perkins visits with members of Kentucky-Woman's Missionary Union while still in costume from a monologue she presented during the WMU annual meeting last weekend. Perkins brought to life the stories of several African women she has known.

Moving? See page 4 (0429)

## BAPTIST BITS

■ **Bobby Bragg**, minister of education at First Baptist Church of Paducah, was named president-elect of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association during the association's April 15-18 meeting in Atlanta. He will begin serving next year.

■ **Bill Cromer** of Louisville was one of three recipients of this year's Distinguished Leadership Awards from the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association. Cromer, a member of St. Matthews Baptist Church, was on the faculty at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1954 until his 1997 retirement as senior professor of Christian education.

■ **George Bagley Sr.**, executive secretary-treasurer of the Alabama Baptist State Convention from 1963 to 1983, died at home Easter Sunday, April 12, after an extended illness.

■ **James McKinney**, dean emeritus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's church music school, died from cancer-related complications April 12. He was 77. McKinney taught at Southwestern 44 years and was dean of the music school 37 years.

## Missionary shot and killed in Colombia

By Mark Kelly  
SBC International Mission Board

BOGOTA, Colombia (BP)—Charles Hood Jr., a Southern Baptist missionary to Colombia, was shot and killed April 21 in front of his home in Bogota.

Hood, 44, left the house about 3 p.m., apparently to go to the bank. His wife, Becky, said she heard a shout and a gunshot. When she ran from the house, she saw her husband on the ground and two men speeding away on a motorcycle.

Neighbors immediately took the unconscious missionary to a nearby clinic. Workers there sent him to a hospital because his wounds were too severe for them to handle. Hood died on the way to the hospital.

The motive for the murder was unclear, said Dickie Nelson, associate director for Southern Baptist International Mission Board work in Colombia. The country has the highest murder rate in the world, with 81 deaths

per 100,000 people—nine times the United States murder rate.

"We were grieved and saddened at the news of Charley's death, but we are deeply grateful for his life and ministry in Colombia," IMB President Jerry Rankin said. "Charley, however, did not die when he was gunned down in Bogota, Colombia, but years ago when he died to self and committed his life to follow Christ."



Hood

While missionaries and the board take seriously the dangers of serving overseas, obedience to the call of God compels them to take risks in places where there is danger, he said.

"There's no place in the world where the safety of a missionary can be guaranteed," he said. "But missionaries follow the call of God wherever it leads, even into dangerous places, because they value making Christ known and bringing the lost to salvation."

Former residents of Missouri, the Hoods were appointed by the IMB in 1987. He worked as a general evangelist in Bogota, a city of 4.2 million

people, and was involved in Theological Education by Extension training.

The Hoods have two children: Rebecca Dawn, an 11th-grader living at home; and Aaron Charles, a student at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark. Hood's parents, Charles Sr. and Ruth Hood, live in Ash Grove, Mo.

Memorial services in Bogota will be scheduled as soon as officials perform the required autopsy and release the body to the family, Nelson said. In addition, the family plans to schedule a funeral in Missouri, he added.

"We don't know the motive for the killing," Nelson said. "I don't know whether an investigation will ever be able to clarify what the motive was."

"But we want to encourage Southern Baptists to pray for Becky and the children. We'd also ask them to pray for the 42 other Southern Baptist missionaries in Colombia as they deal with the loss of a colleague and a good friend."

Hood was the 14th member of a Southern Baptist missionary family to die as a victim of murder or other hostile action since the IMB was founded in 1845.

## Chapman dies; was beloved children's expert

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Longtime Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor Kathryn Nelson Chapman died April 22 of unspecified causes. She was 57.



Chapman

Doctors told Chapman as recently as two weeks ago she was cancer-free after a bout with the disease which began in late 1994. She was hospitalized April 17 with pneumonia and a fever.

Chapman was elected the Gaines S. Dobbins Professor of Childhood Education in 1995. She joined the faculty of the Louisville seminary in 1978 as assistant professor and as director of the seminary child-care center.

Chapman taught fifth grade in the Fulton County Public Schools in Atlanta from 1961-69. She served as director of children's work at Third Baptist Church in St. Louis from 1971 to 1977.

"Kathryn Chapman was a dear and cherished member of this faculty, and she will be greatly missed," said President Al Mohler. "She was a wonderful colleague and teacher. Her love for children was radiant. Her untimely death leaves a great hole in Southern Seminary's heart."

Dennis Williams, dean of Southern's school of Christian education and leadership, said Chapman was "a valued colleague, a person who loved children. In fact her whole life was centered around ministering to children and equipping students to minister to children. She was a person who loved her students and gave her life to them."

Chapman earned the master of religious education degree from Southern Seminary and doctor of education degree from St. Louis University. She earned a bachelor of science degree from Georgia College.

She was a popular member of the seminary faculty. The December 1995 graduating class established the "Kathryn N. Chapman Student Scholarship Fund." She was awarded the first Findley B. and Lounenia Edge Faculty Award for teaching excellence in May 1991.

Chapman wrote numerous books and articles, including the children's books, "Who Jesus Is," "God and I Can Talk" and "Parenting by Grace." She also wrote an unpublished manuscript, "Bald Before God: Discovering Cancer."

Chapman was a longtime, faithful member of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville.

Chapman is survived by a sister, Jane Chapman, and two brothers, Bill and Terry. A memorial service was held April 24 at Crescent Hill Baptist Church.

## Seminary to recreate historic sanctuary

By Mark Wingfield  
Editor

LOUISVILLE—The sanctuary of historic First Baptist Church of Providence, R.I., will be recreated in a new chapel at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The 250-seat worship center, in what currently is Broadus Hall, will be the centerpiece of nearly \$3 million in building renovation projects approved by seminary trustees April 21.

First Baptist Church of Providence was the first Baptist church in America. The New England-style meeting house was built in 1774, although the church was founded in 1638.

Architectural drawings shown to trustees by President Al Mohler indicated features such as boxed pews and

a raised hourglass-style pulpit. Mohler said the decor would be white in color and classical in style.

The \$2.9 million in renovations approved by trustees will be funded largely by borrowing from the seminary's own cash reserves functioning as endowment, Mohler said. Of the seminary's \$80 million endowment, about \$15 million is in unrestricted funds the seminary has chosen to invest as endowment and has the prerogative to use in various ways, he said.

Creation of the new worship center, which also will be used as a preaching laboratory for students, is part of the third phase of a total renovation of Norton Hall, built on the seminary campus in 1926.

Also part of the new project will be relocation of the seminary's business services division to Sampey Hall and Mullins Lounge on the main campus. Most business offices currently are housed in the Carver Building which is away from the heart of the campus.

The Carver Building space vacated by the business services division will be remodeled to house the new James P. Boyce College of the Bible, which is scheduled to begin operations in August.

Mohler justified the need for the new worship center by explaining that the seminary has only Alumni Chapel, which seats 1,600 and a small chapel that seats about 40. The new facility will fill a need for a medium-size sanctuary, he said.

The worship center will be connected to the west wing of Norton Hall by a new lobby. A pipe organ currently housed in the School of Church Music's recital hall will be moved to the new worship center as well.

In other business, seminary trustees approved a \$17.43 million budget

for the coming fiscal year, a 2 percent increase over the current year. The budget includes \$100,000 less in Cooperative Program income from the Southern Baptist Convention, due to recent declines in Southern's enrollment.

However, that loss is made up in part by a range of increases in student fees, ranging from a 5 percent increase in matriculation fees for most degree programs to an 11 percent increase in matriculation fees for doctor of ministry students.

The new budget also includes increases of up to 4 percent of staff and faculty salaries, to be awarded based on merit. Seminary employees received no pay raises last year due to the school's tight financial situation.

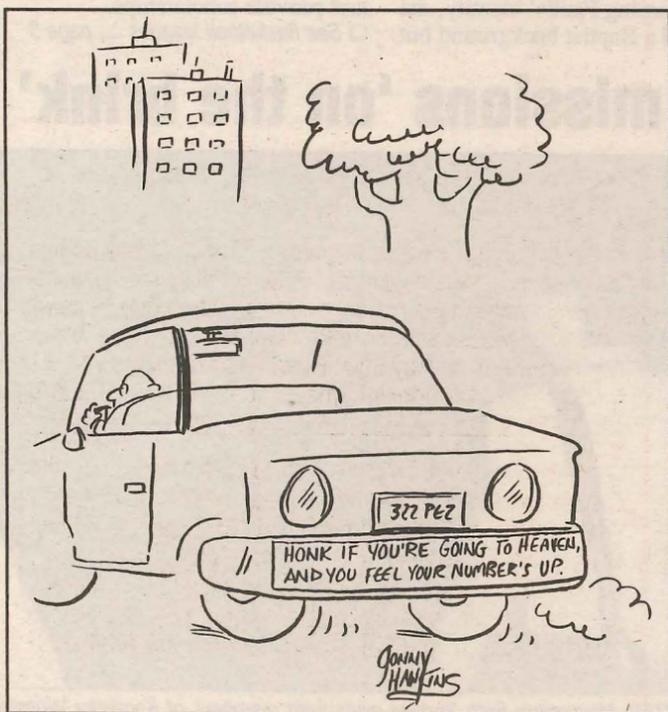
Seminary treasurer T.J. McGlothlin said the school is operating so far this fiscal year with income exceeding expenditures by \$1.3 million.

Mohler also reported that spring on-campus enrollment is 1,267, up from 1,067 last spring. More than half that increase (125 students) is made up by women enrolled in one-night-a-week courses offered through a new Seminary Wives Institute. The institute, directed by Mary Mohler, offers courses such as "MasterLife" and "The Ministry of Hospitality."

Trustees also approved an amendment to the seminary's charter requested by the SBC Executive Committee. The amendment stipulates that the seminary as a corporation has one member, and that member is the SBC.

Mohler explained that all SBC agencies and institutions have been asked to insert similar language into their charters to prevent any defections from SBC control. "The reason for this is the defection of some institutions from state conventions. ... This is intended to keep SBC institutions

□ See Trustees OK ..., page 7



## Kentucky Baptists volunteer to help after storms

EDMONTON—Volunteer organizers are grateful for the more than 50 Kentucky Baptists who helped with clean-up after tornadoes tore through three counties, but lamented that at times it wasn't enough.

"We could have used 100 to 150 people," said Larry Koch, associate director for Kentucky Brotherhood.

Brotherhood's disaster relief crews were working on two different responses last week in Kentucky.

Tornadoes on April 16 destroyed 21 houses and damaged 50 others in Adair, Barren and Metcalf counties. The twisters, which killed three Kentuckians, also damaged many barns, Koch said.

About 50 volunteers there helped farmers clean up their fields so they could cut hay or plow fields without ruining their equipment from the debris scattered throughout, Koch said.

"We've adopted the attitude, 'What would Jesus do?' and we feel he would be helping people."

Koch said larger disasters attract

more volunteers, but workers also are needed for the smaller jobs.

"I think we're so accustomed to Hurricane Andrews and Hugos we don't think the little ones like this are as significant. But for these farmers, they can't cut their hay, ... they can't plant their crops until they get their debris out of the field."

Koch added that Brotherhood offers disaster relief volunteer training to churches that are interested in working on a team.

Meanwhile, other volunteers helped clean houses that were flooded near Prestonburg.

Volunteers from Enterprise, Bracken, Red River and Greenup associations were expected to finish working on about 20 houses last weekend, said Harold Moore, on-site coordinator for Brotherhood volunteers.

The work involves pumping water out of basements, removing ruined furniture and belongings, disinfecting walls and floors and using fans to help

dry out rooms.

In the midst of it, workers communicate that Christian love is their motivation for helping people they've never met before.

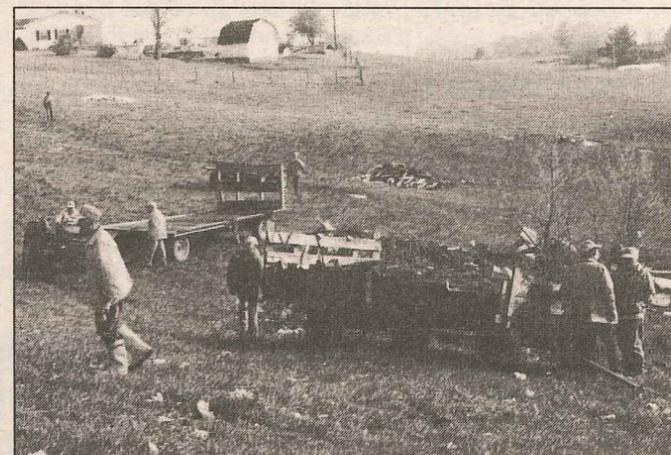
"No matter how hard the job is we don't back down. We try to do it," Moore said. "We try to let them know that God is alive and God loves them and that there are people who care about them."

Moore said that after volunteers were on local TV and radio stations, they got a call to help a woman from Hindman, 35 miles from where they were working.

The woman, a Methodist, was impressed by the help she received, Moore said. "She said she was going to go to church Sunday and tell them that the Methodists wouldn't help her but the Baptists would."

The recent storms also damaged a few churches in Bowling Green.

The roof was blown off Bethany Baptist Church, and a tree fell on the picnic shelter at White Stone Quarry



Baptist Church, according to workers at Warren Baptist Association in Bowling Green.

Also, hail beat much of the paint off the missionary house of First Baptist Church of Bowling Green, and at least two churches, Living Hope and Hillvue Heights, had water in their basements.

**HELPING OUT** Disaster relief volunteers help clear a cattle field of debris. (Photo by Patrick Neal)

## Sheppard: Wins weren't Wildcats' first priority

Continued from page 1

post-championship comments on national television. "But when those guys spoke to me I wanted to crawl under the table. That's how real it was. ... Guys' lives were changed on that team."

Among those were Allen Edwards, who became a Christian this season, about two weeks before his mother died, Sheppard said. The team's spiritual focus helped them rally around Edwards when he needed it. The team gathered at 6 a.m. to pray for their teammate, Sheppard said.

Some of Smith's daily teachings came from the Bible, Sheppard add-

ed. Players prayed before and after games. Sometimes they huddled at half court, including after the NCAA tournament.

"I guess the best thing we realized is that it is basketball," he said. "Even though we had as much success as we did, we just realized there's more important things to life than this basketball game. That's the attitude we had."

Sheppard challenged the audience of mostly middle and high school students to use their leadership positions to stand for Christ.

Mentioning two schools in Virginia where hundreds of students march

down hallways to pre-school prayer groups, he confided that as a teen he wasn't bold about his faith.

"You're the leaders in your (schools)," he said. "Other students look up to you. They won't admit it but they do. If I had walked down the hall at my high school and prayed, they would have followed me."

This spring Sheppard and fellow seniors Edwards and Cameron Mills will go their separate ways, but Sheppard said he expects their Christian bonds to endure. "Winning a national championship is nice but the friendships and relationships are what will last forever."

## Basketball leagues have Owensboro churches jumping

Continued from page 1

Nationally, 145 churches and 29,000 players participated in 1998. Other Kentucky Baptist Convention churches sponsoring leagues included Third Baptist of Owensboro, Florence Baptist, First Baptist of Paducah, Burlington Baptist and Crestwood Baptist. Sixty more have inquired about starting leagues.

About 550 youngsters signed up at Bellevue, which had 60 teams in boys and girls divisions.

Coaches taught fundamental skills and that sportsmanship is as important as winning, Eckdahl said.

The guidelines include a requirement that all players receive equal playing time. No scores were tallied for first and second graders' games.

Upward Unlimited's spiritual emphasis includes prayers at each practice, leading up to an evangelistic presentation.

Awards also are given for "Most Christ-like" players, and churches enlist members as prayer partners. While players are in the locker room at half time, devotions are presented to spectators.

For Eckdahl, one of the season's highlights was the way some players welcomed a mildly-autistic boy to their team despite his disability.

"I was very happy with the league," said the former physical education teacher. "My two daughters play high school ball and you hear a lot of grumbling and screaming at the referees. But this is a place you don't mind coming and sitting around to watch a game. It's a pleasant atmosphere."

About 300 members were involved. Nearly 100 people, mostly senior citizens, were recruited as prayer partners. "I think that's why we had the response we did," said the league director. "We didn't have one serious injury in 12 weeks. I was amazed. I knew that was because of the power of prayer."

Church member Danny Gray, who coached his daughter's team, said he approached the season as an evangelistic opportunity.

He asked a non-Christian neighbor to be his assistant coach and invited the man's daughter to play. Gray's daughter, who recently made a profession of faith in Christ, was the only Bellevue member on the team.

More churches should use Upward Unlimited's model, he said.

"If you get the kids involved, their parents will show up," he added. "Our church has really grown the last few months."

Third Baptist of Owensboro had a more modest-sized league in its first season, with 130 players on 16 teams. Minister of Recreation Todd Camp said it sparked a lot of excitement among members, especially senior citizens.

The church presented the gospel at a season-ending ceremony in its sanctuary. Christian comedian Mike Williams shared his testimony and invited people to fill out decision cards.

About 25 responded, with 15 of those from other churches. Camp called the league a worthwhile endeavor.

"Mixing basketball with learning about Jesus and God's love was one of the highlights," he said. "There were unchurched people who came to the (final) ceremony who said they wanted to come to church."

"It's energized our church," said Faulls. I had heard about recreation ministry but I had never seen what it could do."

For churches interested in starting a league, Upward Unlimited offers off-season training. The sessions closest to Kentucky will be:

■ Memphis, Tenn., Aug. 28-29.

■ Nashville, Sept. 25-26.

For more information, call (800) 585-4721.

### BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **KBC nominating committee chairman named.** Kenneth Brown, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Paducah, has been appointed to be the new chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Executive Board nominating committee. Brown was appointed earlier this month after the resignation of Paul Welch. The appointment also places Brown on the KBC Executive Board's personnel committee and coordinating group for the work of the board.

■ **Fellowship meeting scheduled.** Keith Parks, global missions coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and Bill and Alice Marshall, of Georgetown College's Marshall Ministry Center, will be the keynote speakers for the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship spring meeting May 15-16 at Faith Baptist Church in Georgetown. For more information, call Gary McAbee at (502) 422-5248.

■ **Campbellsville enrollment up.** Campbellsville University's spring enrollment of 1,541 is the highest in school history. The latest figure is 14 percent higher than spring 1997.

■ **Library gets technology grant.** Campbellsville University has received a \$100,000 grant to help establish a technology center in its Montgomery Library. The center will allow for video conferencing and public access to the Internet.

■ **Historical Commission seeking input.** The Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission is planning for a century celebration event Friday, Aug. 28, at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville. The commission is seeking information from longtime Baptists, especially those born before 1910. Those with information can contact Joe Priest Williams at 323 Shawnee Drive, Louisville, Ky. 40212.

■ **Associational training scheduled.** The Kentucky Baptist Convention has scheduled two dates for state associational leadership training conferences. The eastern conference will be May 15-16 at Cedarmore Conference Center. The western conference will be May 30 at First Baptist Church of Madisonville. For more information, call Jim Cordell at (502) 245-4101 or toll-free (888) 254-5707.

■ **Bible drills to be held.** The Kentucky Baptist Convention's Children's Bible drills will be held May 1-15 in seven locations across the state. The events will be in Paducah and Somerset May 1; Bowling Green and Owensboro, May 2; Lexington, May 8; Louisville, May 9; and Russell, May 15. For more information, contact Alice Seymour of the KBC discipleship training department (502) 245-4101 or toll-free (888) 254-5708.

## 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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## Elect a layperson

Do we want laypeople involved in the leadership of the Kentucky Baptist Convention or do we just want them to pay the bills?

The conservatives promote laypeople to witness, which is important, but not to lead the convention as the president. The moderates speak of the use of laypeople in leadership, but reject a layperson as the president of the convention.

The last layman to lead the convention as president was Henry Huff in 1976, and the only lady to serve as an officer, other than secretary, was Betty McSwain in the '70s.

So the questions arise: Are there laypeople who are capable due to services to our denomination to serve as president? Is it time to seriously consider a layperson or persons as elected officers? I believe Eugene Siler, whose father and grandfather served as moderators of the Old General Association of Baptists in Kentucky and he himself has served Kentucky Baptists in every conceivable way possible, is a strong possibility. M.A. Winchester, who has given tirelessly of himself in volunteer medical missions and chaired the convention's finance committee several times, is another capable person. Charles Barnes, a retired banker, has given himself in service to our denomination on boards and committees. Herbert Booth has served Kentucky Baptists in many ways.

All these have had exposure and provided leadership, so the fact is there are laypeople available to serve. I believe it is time both segments of our denomination believe laypeople can lead and admit it is

long overdue and nominate and elect an outstanding layperson.

*John Dunaway  
Henderson*

## Tobacco and guns

Several recent news headlines from across the Commonwealth just beg to be commented on.

First, during President Clinton's recent visit to Northern Kentucky the president assured Kentuckians that he "won't forget the tobacco farmers." Take my word on this, the hard-working farmers from across the state can count on that statement as being written in stone. I know this to be true, since our fine president and his administration haven't forgotten about us hunters and gun-owners either.

The president has big plans for every tobacco farmer across the state. You can all greet each other at the unemployment line five years from now and reminisce about how the previous president stuck to his word (a rare occurrence for an administration which seems plagued by frequent bouts of memory loss) and never forgot about the Kentucky farmers.

Second, a number of the larger and self-infatuated newspapers in Kentucky have expressed their opinion concerning how terrible it is for preachers and pastors (who hold valid, state-issued permits) wanting the right to protect themselves, their congregation and the churches' tithe, by being able to legally carry concealed firearms on church property.

I back this new provision of Kentucky's concealed carry law 100 percent, and I'll tell you why.



But first, sit back, close your eyes and think about this one for a moment. Is there anyone more deserving of being shot than someone who would knowingly and willfully steal from the church tithe? Is there anyone more deserving of an attitude adjustment than someone who would steal from God himself? I think not!

*Donald Haubner  
Covington*

## Make joyful noise

Psalms is a collection of songs of praise. The hymn describes the reason for praising God. Hymns lift the congregation's praise to God and get our spirits in the right frame for worship. The Bible makes it clear that the singing of spiritual songs was a big part of the early Christian church.

God's inspired word for singing is found all through the Bible, and it mentions all kinds of instruments.

There are a multitude of people

who do not think worship in song is important, but God's word tells us to sing his praises. These people are those who just do not like music or did not grow up in a home where music was taught as being important.

Hymns are Scripture (God's word) put to music. Preaching is Scripture (God's word) spoken. Each one has its place in the service of worship.

I feel it is the responsibility of each member to be at church whether it be preaching or a music service. Both are equally important as they are done for the worship and praise of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are many who would not hear the gospel had it not been for gospel message through music. There have also been those saved through hearing the word in music. So let us sing unto God, singing praises to his name with rejoicing (Psalm 68:4, 98:4).

*Joyce Howard  
Penrod*

## You can reach us via e-mail

The Western Recorder has a new direct Internet e-mail box for all staff members. Here's a guide for where to send your questions, comments, story ideas and letters to the editor.

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## A place where somebody knows your name

By Dale Hanson Bourke

"Bigger is better!" exclaimed the president of a large bank recently as he announced plans to merge with a second bank to create yet another mega-institution.

His customers were not so sure. "It's so impersonal," said one woman.

"Will anyone care if you have a problem?" asked a man. "I think you become just a number."

The subject was banks, but it seems a metaphor for life in general these days. People feel lost, overwhelmed, unknown. They say they miss the "good old days," but perhaps the longing is even deeper.

Perhaps it is really a spiritual ache, a need to be intimately understood and valued, what is identified by the psalmist as the soul's thirst for God.

In our societal obsession to build everything from megabanks to megachurches, we must remember that individuals crave intimacy. We all long for places "where everybody knows your name," as the old "Cheers" theme goes.

It is a need that makes TV ensem-

ble shows like "Seinfeld" and "Friends" popular. We all snuggle up to the community of fictional friends for half an hour, sharing inside jokes and knowing glances. And perhaps our national grief over the end of "Seinfeld" is in part an acknowledgment of what is lacking in our own lives.

For many individuals, a religious community helps satisfy the need to be known. There is both the security and familiarity of the liturgy celebrated among the same people week after week.

And religious communities often offer special-interest groups that bring together people dealing with similar painful experiences such as divorce, the death of a child or illness. Other groups bring together people interested in reaching out to others through missions or ministry.

Increasingly, small group fellowships are meeting in homes simply to keep growing congregations from losing the personal touch. These

small groups have become particularly important to megachurches, where large congregations offer the convenience of many services and an array of options to fit everyone's lifestyle but run the risk of being yet another alienating institution.

A "community" of 5,000 or more people, for example, is hardly intimate and hardly a community. Someone can go to service after service without ever meeting another person.

"People are anxious to make and maintain friendships, and the church has emerged as one of the few places left where they can do so," market researcher George Barna writes in his new book, "The Second Coming of the Church."

But, Barna says, even the church can get caught up in the prevailing secular culture and its worship of bigness.

"The church must address the contradiction between what the Bible exhorts us to pursue spiritually, and what Americans have chosen to pursue, based upon cultural assumptions and preferences," he writes.

Ultimately, the "bigger-is-better"

philosophy—so thoroughly American—is a direct contradiction of the wisdom found in the Bible, where we are told God numbers the hairs of our head and he knew each of us "before I formed you in the womb."

God is portrayed as a personal Savior and one who cares about our every thought. It is a comforting image, especially in a modern and faceless culture.

It is noteworthy, then, that the stories of Jesus are most often stories about individuals. Jesus never seemed concerned about counting the number of converts or measuring his success. But humans—especially Americans—love big ideas and big institutions; they want to be part of big movements and have big ideas.

Yet whenever things get too big, individuals get nervous because there is something in each of us that craves intimacy. We need to be in a place where somebody knows our name.

If megabanks and megachurches are to be successful, they must find ways to minimize their bigness and maximize the importance of individuals.

*Dale Hanson Bourke is publisher of Religion News Service.*

## COMMENTARY



Dale Hanson Bourke

## HE SAID/SHE SAID

### Maybe not all men are meant to own & operate power tools

#### SHESAI



Alison Wingfield

It's spring. Thoughts turn to gardening, flowers, green grass ... power tools.

Beware the man with a power tool in his hand. Lawn mowers, electric trimmers and leaf blowers all are helpful in keeping up the lawn. But in the wrong hands, they can be a bit scary.

Mark hasn't damaged himself with one of these things—yet. He does generally exercise caution, but he also tries to finish the job as quickly as possible. One of my beautiful tulips can attest to that. Mark got too close with the weed whacker and whacked the wrong thing.

Luckily, I found the severed bloom and was able to enjoy it for a few days in a vase on our table. Of course, every time we sat down to dinner, I mentioned the fact that it would have lasted a lot longer outside.

I think power tools are the middle-class man's (who can't afford a new car) toys. All that wonderful vibration and loud noise seems to reverberate with them. The more noise a toy makes, the better my boys like it.

I must admit, though, a power lawnmower and leaf blower are two tools I am thankful we have, despite the negative environmental impact. When I was growing up, we didn't have a huge yard, so we mowed it with a little push mower. My dad said it was good exercise (which it was) but I hated every minute of it.

Of course, I've still managed to avoid our power mower. So far, Mark's trips have worked out to where he can get a lawn mowing in once a week. So far, so good.

#### HESAID



Mark Wingfield

After years of reflection, I've decided some men are meant to own and operate power tools, while the rest of us merely are allowed to play with them.

Maintenance of power tools is not my thing at all. I know my weed whacker would last twice as long if I'd take better care of it, but I honestly think I'm doing pretty good to figure out how to replace the cord in it. If they came with a longer supply of cord, perhaps I could wear out the whacker before the cord needed replacing.

Last Saturday I mowed my grass in the rain, not because I planned to but because the "occasional sprinkles" in the forecast turned out to be big ol' drops falling closely together. My neighbor was just finishing mowing his grass, and seeing my increasingly soggy condition wheeled his mower over to help me finish before the potential flood.

I deeply appreciated his help, but I hope no one else noticed the difference in what we each did next. Both mowers were covered with damp grass clippings. He took the water hose to his and thoroughly scrubbed it until it was clean enough to cook on. I whisked a broom across mine a couple of times and shoved it back in the carport. In my book, it doesn't have to look pretty, it just has to run.

Yes, I've done enough damage due to neglect to realize there is a connection between a tool looking good and operating well. But it's just hard for me to waste my Type A energies on lawnmower maintenance.

But even a power tool klutz like me has to admit that spring is the time when we discover whether we've invested wisely enough to survive the winter months. It's true not only of power tools, but of relationships as well.

Without the proper attention and maintenance of our relationships—or by running relationships too hard for too long without ever checking the oil—we risk burn-out or wear-out or even an explosion. It pays to invest well in people you cherish in order to keep things running smoothly.

## New churches needed for a new day

Have you ever wanted to invite a neighbor or friend to your church but stopped short because you realized your friend might not be feel comfortable there?

Not that anyone would be mean or unwelcoming. And not that you're ashamed of your church or that your church doesn't meet your own needs.

Rather, have you stopped short of making the invitation because your friend is a little bit rock and roll while your church is a whole lot high church? Or because your friend has no appreciation for the traditions or etiquette of the church, while making sense of your church requires such knowledge as a prerequisite? Or because your friend doesn't know Habukuk from Hezekiah, while your Sunday school class operates on the level of a college Bible course?

If any of this sounds familiar, you ought to be able to understand the crossroads in mission strategy at which Kentucky Baptists currently find themselves.

The facts are these: Kentucky boasts church buildings on seemingly every corner, including 2,300 affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. At the same time, Kentucky is home to an estimated 1.5 million people who have no relationship with any church, no relationship with Jesus Christ. And that doesn't even take into account the millions who sit on church rolls but lack any authentic relationship with Jesus Christ.

The solution, it would appear on first glance, is to connect all those existing churches with all those people who need the church. Sounds simple enough, but we have ample evidence that concept isn't working.

The reason it doesn't work is one of supply and demand. We have a huge supply of one or two styles of churches, but there's a huge demand for other styles of churches. We have an enormous supply of one or two kinds of Sunday school classes, but there's an overwhelming demand for different kinds of Bible study classes. We have an abundant supply of weekly worship opportunities, but they all are offered at exactly the same time despite the tremendous demand for worship opportunities at other times.

The problem is not that the power of the gospel is lacking. Rather, the problem is that we who are entrusted with this treasure have set unnecessary conditions on how to share the joy.

#### EDITORIAL

Statistical analysis has shown that two-thirds of Southern Baptist churches are plateaued or dying. That means only one-third are experiencing numerical growth.

While numerical growth isn't the only important measure of a local church's health, it is a vital measure of how we're doing collectively in reaching our communities and state with the good news of Christ. And right now, we're not growing at a substantial rate collectively.

So what's the answer? A large part of it is being willing to do new things and start new things.

If people are staying away from churches in droves, it's not because the message is ineffective, but because the messengers aren't as effective as they could be.

Put simply, we need a combination of new churches started in Kentucky, along with some old churches trying new things. That doesn't mean every church ought to convert to a contemporary worship style and start singing choruses with overhead projectors.

But if that's the style of worship that will reach some people, then we need to have some churches all across the state offer that style. The question is, who will take the responsibility to make this happen?

And it may not always take something as dramatic as a change in worship styles to make a difference. Starting new Bible study units almost always results in growth. This is a tried-and-true principle. For example, Andy Anderson offers this rule of thumb: Starting one new unit will increase enrollment by 23 in 12 months, provided that unit is properly supported by leadership.

Every church has the capacity to start one new Bible study class. Many churches have the capacity to start new worship services at new times to reach new people. Some churches have the capacity to reshape themselves to reach people traditional churches never will reach. Some individuals have the capacity to become leaders in launching new congregations.

Reaching our state for Christ will require all of us working together, with different styles, at different times and in different ways.

How will God use you to do something new to reach those who've not yet heard his voice?

— Mark Wingfield

### Why do you eat with sinners?

By Barry Howard

*Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" (Luke 5:29-30)*

Jesus previously had met Levi, a tax collector, at his tax booth. When Jesus invited Levi to become one of his followers, the text says, "Levi got up, left everything and followed him."

Soon afterward, Levi hosted a banquet for Jesus at his house. Levi evidently invited several of his colleagues and neighbors, because Luke reports that there was a multitude of employees from Levi's office present, as well as others.

Also present were Pharisees and teachers of the law. Uncomfortably, these religious leaders were obviously in the presence of those they deemed less worthy of access to Jesus, so they com-

plained, accusing Jesus and his disciples of associating too closely with notorious sinners.

This story reminds believers that, if taken seriously, the gospel is both radical and risky. Neither Jesus nor his followers are commissioned to fulfill the prescribed expectations of the status quo. Rather than recruiting followers from among the religious elite, Jesus recruited most of his followers from the marketplace, from the lake and from the craft shops.

Jesus regularly visited the temple, but he spent most of his time in the community circulating among ordinary people, particularly those with questionable reputations. It seems Jesus intentionally targeted as potential disciples those whom religious groups had shunned or excluded.

This new movement spread quickly as individuals communicated their newfound faith to friends, family members and colleagues. Levi's house was an ideal place to introduce his friends to Jesus.

This story also confirms for us that

Jesus had a different agenda than the Pharisees. Their agenda was to preserve the traditions of their forefathers, to keep the law and rebuke others whose efforts to publicly keep the law were not as successful.

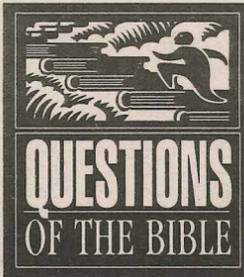
Perhaps Jesus is more radical than we previously have recognized. Some depict Jesus as a staunch legalist and preserver of religious traditionalism. However, that is not the truth of this gospel story.

Here, Jesus rejects any attempt to establish a kind of religious apartheid which segregates sinners by typology. Jesus sits at the table with all kinds of sinners. In fact, the most unpleasant dinner guests are not those who know that they are "sinners" but those who don't.

These hard-shell religious legalists seem never to be satisfied with the way in which Jesus chooses to conduct his ministry. They accusingly ask Jesus and his disciples why they insist on eating and drinking with sinners. The answer is simple: These sinners are the people

Jesus chooses to be his most effective disciples—sinners saved by grace.

Barry Howard is pastor of First Baptist Church of Corbin.



# RESOURCES

## Help when looking for a nursing home

FRANKFORT—Selecting a nursing home for a relative or friend can be a difficult decision for families.

Specialists with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services offer these tips to make the decision easier:

- Before beginning a search, put together a network of family and friends, health care providers, clergy and social workers to assist you with ideas and suggestions.
- Remember there are options other than nursing homes: For example, home care allows a person to remain in the home while receiving services such as meals and medical assistance.
- Find a nursing home in a location with easy access to family members. Experience shows that if a nursing home is too hard to get to, family members aren't able to maintain contact as much.
- Check Medicaid certification. If a person goes into a nursing home using his or her own money but later is forced to use Medicaid, the nursing home must have a bed eligible for Medicaid or the patient could be forced to move.
- Visit the nursing home. This is the most important step. Examine the most recent inspection reports; you are allowed by law to do this. Watch how the staff treats residents. See what kinds of activities are offered. Look for indications of staffing levels. Use your senses of smell, sight, taste and hearing to compare options.
- Call the state ombudsman for long-term care resources at (800) 372-2991 for additional assistance.

**Q. I'm in my mid-30s and have never married. When I go to single adult conferences, there is often a lot of material presented for people who have been married and divorced. Please address the situation of the person who is single longer than anticipated.**

**A.** According to studies done by pollster George Barna, those who have never been married actually form the largest subgroup of single adults. This is often not considered a high priority situation to address, for the young adults in this group see themselves as "just not married yet."

Then comes the "social calendar from hell" where they watch their

friends "all get married," and suddenly, the single adult is five, 10, 15 or 20 years older than he thought he would be when getting married. It is a challenging thing to grieve the death of the dream of getting married at that expected age.



Psychologist Paul Tournier has said that it is often easier to relinquish something you have had than it is to grieve for that which you never have experienced.

What to do? Roberta Rand's excellent book, "Playing the Tuba at Midnight," has these suggestions:

- Pursue a "designer life," one that makes the most of your gifts and circumstances.

- Focus on goals that are not dependent on the whims of another person.

- Stay in circulation, cultivating friendships with all kinds of people, both married and single.

- Cultivate a broad base of friends and acquaintances, remembering that unmarried people of your own sex are not your adversaries.

- Remember, as you harmonize your dreams with God's commands, you have limitless options. Go for the gusto! And when you're tempted to think that singleness is a punishment rather than an opportunity, think of the only perfect person who ever lived; the single adult, Jesus Christ. Share your real emotions with him through prayer. He really does hear and understand. — James Stillwell

## FAMILY

### Financial facts you need to know

By Doug Strader

■ That between 60 percent and 70 percent of all adults in the United States have never written a last will and testament?



■ That for those who have not written a

will, the state in which they reside has a plan of asset distribution written for them? Here in the Kentucky that plan is called the "Kentucky Intestate Succession Statute."

■ That the state court will decide who will raise any minor children if both parents are deceased and they have not made a will or included a nomination of guardian provision in their will for their children? This is a far more important issue than where your assets will go.

■ That Kentucky's plan for asset distribution does not include your church or any other Christian ministry? You also forfeit the option of creating provisions that will benefit both your family and God's work.

■ That without a properly drawn will, the death taxes and cost of administering your estate may be higher, thereby reducing what will be available for your family?

■ That by having a properly drawn will, you get to choose who serves as executor, guardian for your children and trustee? You also get to decide who gets what and when they get it!

■ That the Kentucky Baptist Foundation is the trust agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and can help you design an estate plan that includes family and Christian ministries?

If you did not know, but would like to know about the benefits of making a will and/or other estate and incapacity planning documents, give Barry Allen or me a call at (888) 254-5701.

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

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## Mohler marks fifth year; Johnson ends term at helm

By Mark Wingfield  
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Jerry Johnson quoted Scripture in his final moments as chairman of trustees at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary last week.

"Now let your servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation," Johnson said, quoting Simeon's words upon seeing the infant Jesus at the temple and recognizing the fulfillment of Old Testament messianic prophecy.

Johnson, one of the most controversial and outspoken of Southern's trustees during the past decade of conflict and transition, concluded a two-year term as board chairman April 21. The moment was not lost on him or any of the other trustees or administrators present for the passing of the gavel to a new chairman.

The implication of Johnson's statement, which was echoed by others during the meeting, was that his once-unbelievable mission was now complete and the Southern Baptist Convention's mother seminary has been saved from the threat of liberalism.

As one of the seminary's youngest-ever trustees when he came on board in 1989 at age 26, Johnson gained instant recognition for his declaration that one would have to be "blind as a mole" not to see that then-President Roy Honeycutt "doesn't believe the Bible."

That was one of the loudest initial salvos in what would become a bitter campaign by a newly emerging ultra-conservative majority on the seminary board to radically alter the seminary's direction. Although given a reprieve from Johnson's charges, Honeycutt retired in 1993 and was replaced by Al Mohler, who has presided over a massive shift in the seminary's faculty and student body.

This spring marks the conclusion of Mohler's fifth year in office, a mo-

ment noted in last week's trustee meeting by the unveiling of a new portrait of Mohler.

"When I think of where Southern Seminary stands at present, I am aware the Lord has given us exceedingly, abundantly above what anyone could ask," Mohler told trustees.

He described the seminary's current phase as a "season of promise and fulfillment."

"We are standing on the shoulders of giants who have gone before us," Mohler said in apparent reference to some, but not all, of his predecessors. "We are standing in fulfillment of what I think those founders would have wanted."

Mohler said the seminary has faced "the unilateral doctrinal disarmament of the Christian church" head on and now is standing steadfastly for God's truth.

"I know we could not be where we are today without the support of this board," Mohler added, "and behind you the support of churches who are determined to have a seminary that serves them faithfully."

The seminary now has "the flagship evangelical faculty to be found anywhere," Mohler said, noting he would not trade the current faculty for any other.

Over the course of Mohler's five-year tenure, the seminary has experienced a faculty turnover of 70 percent or more, with both longtime moderate professors and newer conservative professors leaving, being forced out or retiring.

Mohler highlighted the trustees' election of several newer faculty members from appointed posts to more permanent regular teaching posts, noting their "quality" and "commitment."

He said he looks forward to the fall when these faculty members will sign the seminary's 140-year-old doctrinal statement, the Abstract of Principles.

"I know when they sign it they

mean it," he said, referencing published comments by former faculty members that they had signed the Abstract by reasoning their way around some of its harshest doctrinal implications.

Asked in a later interview to explain the reference, Mohler cited the explanation of former professor Henlee Barnette published in the Western Recorder in December 1997.

Barnette specifically said he signed the Abstract though disagreeing with a literal interpretation of Article V on election. He did this in good conscience, however, because of his understanding that the Abstract was a "compromise" document that was not intended as a complete theological statement or a set of rules.

Mohler picked up on that theme in explaining his own comments about Southern's current faculty.

"There is a difference between seeing the Abstract as clearly binding or as more symbolic," he said.

Two of the stickiest points of the Abstract of Principles are Articles IV and V, on providence and election.

Article IV says that "God from eternity decrees or permits all things that come to pass and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events." Article V says that "election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life."

Mohler, like the seminary's first president, adheres to a theology known as five-point Calvinism. A major tenet of Calvinism is the doctrine of limited atonement, which says that Jesus' death on the cross bought salvation only for those God chose before the foundation of the world to be saved, therefore implying that God determined in advance to send other people to hell.

Asked if a faculty member now must affirm limited atonement in order to sign the Abstract and "mean it," Mohler said that was not the case.

Although an increasing number of



**FAMILY MOMENT** Southern Seminary President Al Mohler gathers with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Mohler Sr., and his two children, Christopher and Katie, at the unveiling of a new portrait of Mohler.

Southern's faculty adhere to five-point Calvinism, Mohler cited top administrators Danny Akin and Thom Rainer as two non-five-point-Calvinists who signed the Abstract.

The Abstract actually requires adherence to only three elements of Calvinism, Mohler said: the total depravity of humanity, the doctrine of election and the perseverance of the saints. Barnette, in his published column titled "The Abstract of Principles: Why I Signed It," disagreed with that assessment, particularly as it relates to Article V on election.

The statement in the Abstract expressed the view that "God chose some people to go to heaven, and by implication, others to hell."

Mohler reiterated that holding such a belief is not necessary to affirm the Abstract. A proper reading of the Abstract "allows for" belief in limited atonement but "does not stipulate" such belief, he said. "Both possibilities have been accommodated."

"There is a difference between seeing the Abstract as clearly binding or as more symbolic."  
Al Mohler

### What ever happened to the Covenant Renewal document?

LOUISVILLE—In 1991, as an impasse was mounting between an emerging conservative majority of the trustee board and a more moderate faculty and administration of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, peace was brokered through a "Covenant Renewal" document.

In this document, the administration, faculty and trustees agreed to work together to bring theological balance to the faculty by adding more "conservative evangelical" scholars until parity was achieved.

In the document all parties pledged "fairness in selecting faculty across the theological spectrum of our Baptist constituency" toward the end result of a "balanced representation" on the faculty.

"Until the trustees, in consultation with administration and faculty, determine that the seminary has achieved faculty balance, the seminary will employ only faculty or instructors ... who sign the Abstract

of Principles and positively affirm this covenant, including its statement on Scripture," the document said.

By all accounts, the transition in Southern's faculty now has gone farther than anyone dreamed possible in 1991. With a turnover rate of more than 70 percent, the vast majority of faculty members present in 1991 have departed and been replaced by much more conservative thinkers.

Julian Pentecost, a trustee from Virginia, was chairman of the committee that drafted the Covenant Renewal document.

In a recent interview, Pentecost said the Covenant Renewal was not the "instrument of peace" it could have been, and he was disappointed with the final product.

However, even the hope for achieving a so-called "balance" on the faculty has been abandoned, he said. "I don't think they went to a point of balance and stopped. It has gone far beyond the point of balance."

At the conclusion of an April 21 trustee meeting during which the seminary's faculty transition was once again noted, President Al Mohler was asked whether the Covenant Renewal document is still binding.

"It still stands and is still signed by all faculty members," Mohler replied.

Has the balance in faculty the Covenant Renewal document sought been achieved?

"I think there are many different interpretations of what that balance would look like," Mohler said.

"What was clear at the time was the Covenant Renewal document was a bridge instrument ... to find a way through an impasse," he added. There always was the understanding that the document could be revisited and revised, he said.

Regardless, Mohler said, "I made clear to all when I came as president what kind of faculty I would bring, and I have been true to that commitment."

### Trustees OK \$2.9 million in renovations

Continued from page 2  
from taking any such action."

Seminary trustees also elected new officers. The new chairman is Ruffin Snow, minister of evangelism at First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla. First vice chairman is Roger Spradlin, pastor of Valley View Baptist Church in Bakersfield, Calif.; second vice chairman is Dennis Saller, a dentist from Melbourne, Fla.; and secretary is Byron Boyer, a retired teacher from Louisville.

Six current faculty members were granted promotions either to elected faculty status or tenured status: Thomas Schreiner, professor of New Testament; Mark Seifrid, associate professor of New Testament; Ben Mitchell, assistant professor of Christian ethics; Jack Cunningham, professor of Christian education; Thom Rainer, professor of evangelism and church growth; and Mark Terry, professor of missions and evangelism.

## Sometimes God chooses to work through a Chevy Malibu

By Bob Hill  
Louisville Courier-Journal

**On sale day Goodrich woke at 4 a.m. and walked to Bill Collins Ford. He sat in the blue Malibu four hours waiting to see if that car, which had a price of \$2,995 on the windshield, would be sold for \$5.**

LOUISVILLE—This is a story—if not a parable—about Russell Goodrich and his \$5 miracle. It involves drug addiction, faith, divorce, redemption, baptismal murals, the power of prayer, needy children, Bill Collins Ford and a baby-blue 1979 Chevy Malibu. Read it carefully and you'll remember it the rest of your life.

Goodrich, 40, is a tall, gregarious, instantly likable man who speaks in an accent born of Virginia's Eastern Shore. He attended high school in Richmond, dropped out and worked for a beer distributor. His addiction to drugs—his wild limodelphia spree into New York and Philadelphia funded by a rich friend who took money from a family business—had cost Goodrich his marriage and his only child, a 12-year-old daughter. A Virginia truck accident nearly cost him his life.

"It was a Monday night," he said, "and I hit my favorite bar, as I always did, drinking Bud Light and Wild Turkey.

"After about six or seven of each I got into my truck. The next thing I remember lights were flashing and sirens were going off. ... A medic was leaning over telling me I had been in an accident."

Goodrich had been looking for ways out of his lifestyle. He'd confessed to his sister that he was frightened, that God was trying to put him down. A hospital nurse asked Goodrich as he was being treated whom he wanted to call.

"I had no one to call," Goodrich said.

The next day Goodrich went to see his truck. Its passenger side had been ripped off; he missed death by inches. He went to the site of the wreck, saw that his careening truck had somehow turned uphill just before crashing into a concrete drainage pipe.

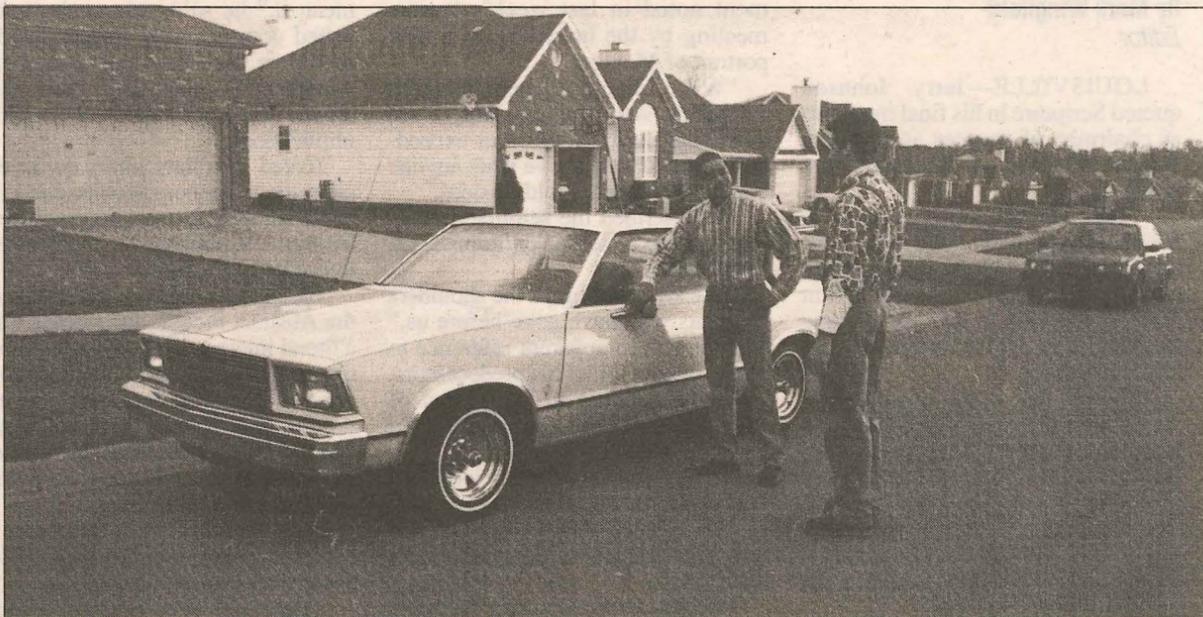
"I dropped to my knees," Goodrich said. "God had my attention."

In January 1997, he began classes at Boyce College of the Bible, a division of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for students called late in life to the ministry. Last May, wanting to extend his personal ministry to Louisville's inner city, Goodrich began volunteer work at Jefferson Street Baptist Community at Liberty.

He rode his bike from the Lexington Road campus until a rainy day stopped him. If his personal ministry was going to continue, he needed a car. That same day a friend showed him a newspaper advertisement: "Used Cars to be Sold for \$5" at Bill Collins Ford, 4220 Bardstown Road.

Goodrich took a bus to Bill Collins Ford and walked among the 2,000 cars and trucks, trying to guess which would be sold for \$5. The new prices would be posted at 10 a.m. the next day; potential buyers had to be sitting in the car.

Goodrich made a list of five likely candidates, including a baby blue 1979 Chevy Malibu. He returned to school, wrote down the car names on pieces of paper and put them into a baseball cap. He asked God to help him choose. The name he pulled from the cap: the blue Malibu.



**WHEELS** Russell Goodrich (right) shows previous owner Dwight Marshall the car he got for \$5. Goodrich and Marshall met after Marshall saw his former car mentioned in a newspaper column. (Southern Seminary photo)

On sale day Goodrich woke at 4 a.m. and walked to Bill Collins Ford. He sat in the blue Malibu four hours waiting to see if that car, which had a price of \$2,995 on the windshield, would be sold for \$5. Collins had picked those sale cars days earlier. Meanwhile, Goodrich had told his story to any customers who came by.

"A whole group of people had gathered where I sat in there," Goodrich said. "They all were cheering when my car went for \$5. It was a miracle."

There would be more. Goodrich is a talented artist but had done nothing with his abilities. In his \$5 car he would make regular trips to Jefferson Street Baptist Community at Liberty, where Diane Moten, minister to the homeless, called him a "breath of fresh air." He would volunteer at Pitt Academy, a school for disabled students, where director Doris Swenson said he is "very patient" with students, "an excellent teacher." He would paint a marvelous baptismal mural at Cooper Road Baptist Church, where Pas-

tor Ed Amundson called him "the most outstanding young man I have ever known."

After graduation Goodrich will return to Virginia. He has reconciled with his ex-wife and dotes on their daughter. He wants to work with the poor of Northampton County, where he once distributed beer. He's going back home in his baby-blue 1979 Chevy Malibu.

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# KENTUCKY

## Kentucky WMU urged to do missions 'on the brink'

Continued from page 1

although it's a vital question as Baptist seek to do "missions on the brink" by taking the gospel to those remaining places where the name of Jesus never has been preached.

"We have been called to shepherd the sheep," he said. "Jesus sends us out into a world we cannot fix ... and sometimes cannot survive."

He told about the time all the known converts to Christianity in a town where he worked were executed the same morning. He told about a list of the 150 alleged Christians circulated in that town as a hit list.

"When the sheep began to get slaughtered, our preparedness was much less than it should have been," he admitted.

As if to underscore the reality of Perkins' comments, a scheduled testimony from a missionary kid became a life-and-death illustration of the dangers missionaries face, along with native believers in some countries.

Missionary kid Susan Atkinson came to the WMU meeting to thank Kentucky women for their financial support of missionaries and missionary kids at Christmas and birthdays. But a greater concern was on her mind that day, the death just days before of one of her parents' missionary co-workers.

Missionary Charles Hood was gunned down in front of his home in Colombia last week. Atkinson's parents had just left the States to return to Colombia the same week.

Rather than taking time to speak about herself, Atkinson tearfully led the women in a prayer for Hood's family and the entire mission family in Colombia.

Later Perkins explained that he once thought being willing to die for Jesus was the most difficult decision a Christian could make. But now, he said, he has determined that being responsible for sending out someone else who might die for the faith is the hardest decision to make.

"Which is hardest: Dying on a cross or sending your only Son to die on that cross?" he asked. "The hardest job in the world is not going, it's sending."

As the role he and his wife played on the mission field evolved into one of equipping others, this burden became all the more evident, he said. "We have never prayed so much in

### Heritage Fund grants awards

LOUISVILLE—Five organizations have received 1998 grants from the Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Heritage Fund.

The awards were announced during the Kentucky WMU annual meeting April 24.

Recipients are:

- Friendship International, a ministry of hospitality and assistance to internationals living in Kentucky, \$400 to purchase copies of the "Jesus" film.

- Bible Study with our Japanese Neighbors, a joint ministry of Georgetown Baptist Church and Faith Baptist Church in Georgetown, \$200 for Bible study materials.

- Kentucky/New England Acteen Activators mission trip to Greece, \$500.

- Senior adult Bible study hosted by Pulaski County WMU, \$200.

- Russell County multi-housing ministry, \$500 to purchase books and Bibles in Spanish.

our lives as when we became equipers or senders."

That's why the work of WMU is so urgent, Perkins explained. As senders and supporters of missionaries, "you have the hardest task and the greatest responsibility."

Kentucky WMU President Peggy Hicks further explained the relevance of the convention's theme: "We need to realize things are not the same. We are standing on the brink of a new time. And we need to be sensitized to what is going on."

WMU stands on the brink of new relationships with the Southern Baptist Convention and with a new generation of women, noted Randy Foster, Kentucky Brotherhood director.

Foster, a former home missionary in Wyoming, identified himself as one of WMU's foremost supporters. And he outlined numerous ways he hopes Kentucky WMU and Kentucky Brotherhood can work together in the future.

"I don't know what is going to be the structural outcome of your relationship to the Southern Baptist Convention," he said. "But I know this ... From Kentucky Brotherhood there will always be an open door."

The times are changing all around, Perkins said in another address. He quoted a missiologist friend who said: "A lot of missionology today has us rushing into the 19th century."

WMU and other missions organizations must resist the temptation to return to the "good old days," Perkins said. Rather than seeking to duplicate

what has been done in the past, Christians must find out what God wants done today, he explained.

The temptation all people and organizations face is to do "just enough" to get by, added Larry Wakefield, missionary to Mexico. "But when we apply that to certain parts of our Christian life, just enough doesn't do it."

"We are not faithful if we just continue doing what they did" in the past, he declared. "We are only faithful if we do what Jesus calls us to do."

Despite the intense challenges today's world presents, Christians must have a proper perspective, Wakefield said, pointing to the biblical description of Jesus having compassion on the crowds because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

"Jesus did not see the world negatively," he said. "He saw it as a harvest field."

"There are millions of people in this world who need us," he concluded. "What we do must never be just enough."

In other events during last weekend's WMU meeting:

- Carol Butler, a representative for Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson, thanked Kentucky WMU for their support of the National Acteens Conference which will be held in Louisville in July. The mayor's office has been working to find places of hands-on ministry for the 15,000 teenage girls expected to attend the conference. "If we don't get on the national news July 2-3, I can't imagine why," she said.

- Kentucky Baptist Convention President Gayle Toole applauded WMU. "You are the people who have kept Kentucky Baptists on the cutting edge of missions," he said. "Thank you today for the excellent job you have done."

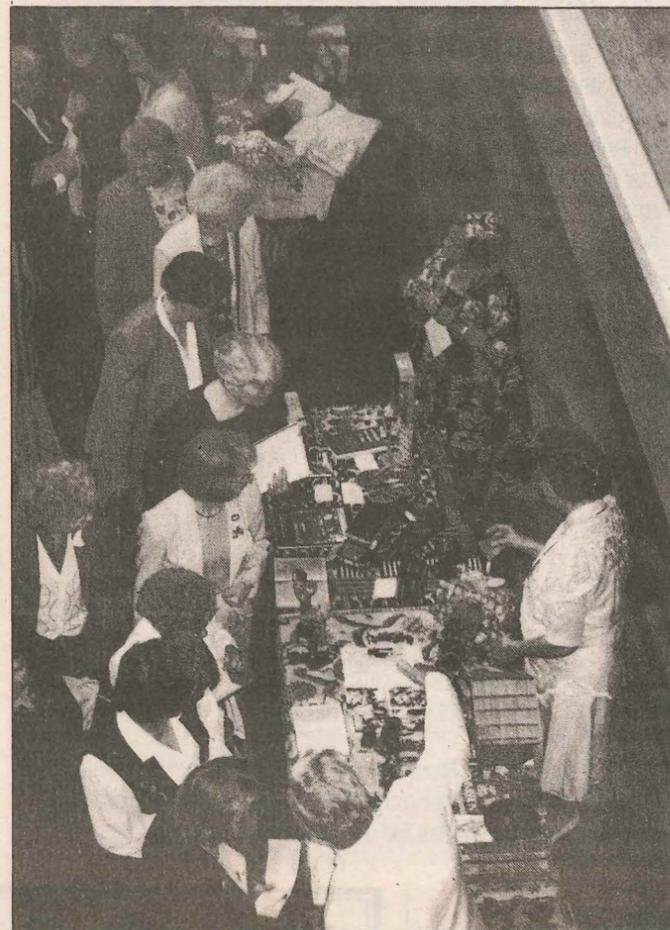
- KBC Executive Secretary-treasurer Bill Mackey echoed Toole's commendation. I thank God for your commitment to God through missions," he said.

- Brenda Price, interim executive director of Kentucky WMU, said the past year has been one of changes, challenges and commitment.

- Price reported that with a boost from a "substantial bequest" this year's Eliza Broadus Offering for state missions already has exceeded its \$750,000 goal with a total of \$767,964 as of March 31.



Missionary Fan Cobb at the Global Prayerwalk



### PRAYER WALK

Participants in last weekend's WMU annual meeting participate in a Global Prayerwalk in which they obtained prayer information from furloughing and retired missionaries dressed in native costumes. The prayerwalkers then spread out for a period of personal prayer for missions, drawing upon the information they had just gleaned.

### WMU executive board

LOUISVILLE—A new executive board for Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union was constituted during last week's WMU annual meeting.

President Peggy Hicks of Louisville and Vice President Kathleen Hall of Stanford were re-elected. Garnett Hutchinson of Dry Ridge was elected as the organization's new recording secretary.

Other WMU executive board members elected are:

- **Central region:** Jeannie Smith of Elizabethtown, Sheila Dearing of Lawrenceburg and Leigh Anne Alexander of Louisville.

- **North central region:** Freida Tackett of Cynthiana, Tyanna White of Lexington and Velma Clifton of Hebron.

- **Northeastern region:** Bonnie Tackett of Lowmansville, Carolyn York of Elkhorn City and Sara Ann Billups of Catlettsburg.

- **South central region:** Joyce Graham of Campbellsville, Geneva Faw of Waynesburg and Irma Woodrow of Burgin.

- **Southeastern region:** Jody Baker of Viper, Janrose DeWees of Corbin and Wanda Whited of London.

- **Southern region:** Joyce Bottoms of Fountain Run, Pat Howard of Bowling Green and Oleta Money of Upton.

- **Southwestern region:** Bettie Wright of Barlow, Debbie Bell of Murray and Gloria Hatzakorzian of Hopkinsville.

- **Western region:** Pat Key of Central City, Sharon Westerfield of Owensboro and Joyce Paris of Sturgis.



ACTEEN ACTION Members of this year's Kentucky Acteens Panel perform an interpretive movement set to music during the WMU annual meeting.

## Court rules schools don't have to rent space to congregations

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court refused last week to force a New York City public school to rent its building to a church for its Sunday morning worship service.

Without comment, the court rejected an appeal in which the church's lawyers argued the public school cannot refuse to allow worship services on its property while allowing other community groups to rent rooms after school hours, Associated Press reported.

The church's appeal said the school district's policy violates the constitutional freedoms of speech and religion of the Bronx Household of Faith, an evangelical group seeking the space for worship until its church building is constructed.

The school district, in refusing to rent the space, cited its policy and a state law barring religious worship services in schools. School lawyers noted church groups can rent rooms for non-religious events or to discuss religious material.

In a separate but related development, the American Center for Law and Justice, a conservative legal advocacy group, said Monday it has filed suit in U.S. District Court in New Orleans against the St. Tammany Parish School Board and its superintendent for refusing to permit a church to use school facilities made available to other community groups and organizations.

The church, the Northpoint Community Church, wants to use school facilities for prayer, religious instruction, praise and worship, as well as for discussion of topical issues.

## Abortion foes found 'guilty'

CHICAGO (RNS)—A federal jury last week found three national leaders of anti-abortion groups guilty of committing acts of extortion against abortion clinics and awarded \$85,000 in damages.

The jury of two men and four women found the defendants damaged the clinics' ability to do business during a 15-year period, Associated Press reported.

The closely watched lawsuit was one of the first filed under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations law, which is used primarily against organized crime's infiltration of businesses or unions.

It named two anti-abortion groups—Operation Rescue and the Pro-Life Action League—as defendants, as well as three of the league's top leaders—Joseph Scheidler, Timothy Murphy and Andrew Scholberg.

Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry was an original defendant but settled with the plaintiffs—the National Organization for Women and abortion clinics in Wisconsin and Delaware—by promising not to participate in any criminal activities against the clinics.

## School board settles with Jewish family

PIKE COUNTY, Ala. (RNS)—An Alabama school board has voted to settle a lawsuit filed by a Jewish family contending their children were teased, mocked and forced to pray by Christian students and teachers.

In the suit, filed last year, Wayne and Sue Willis charged their four children—ages 5 through 14—faced harassment while attending classes in Pike County, where they were the only Jewish students.

They said one of the children was forced to bow his head during

a Christian prayer and another was told to write a paper on "Why Jesus Loves Me."

School officials acknowledged a number of the suit's key allegations but admitted no wrongdoing in agreeing to the settlement, Associated Press reported.

The settlement follows many of the guidelines laid out in a decision last year by U.S. District Court Judge Ira DeMent, who barred DeKalb County, Ala., school officials from promoting religious practices in the public schools.

## Southern Baptist Convention 1998 Messenger Cards

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All messenger cards for voting privileges at the SBC are distributed from the KBC Executive Office. They **MUST** be signed by your church clerk or moderator **BEFORE** being presented for registration.

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## Eisner links Baptist boycotters to Nazis

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—The head of the Disney Co. tossed more barbs at Southern Baptists supporting the boycott of the entertainment giant during a news program April 21.

In an interview with the co-host of NBC's morning program "The Today Show," Michael Eisner said it was a "splinter group" of Southern Baptists who were withholding their financial support of Disney.

Last June messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting passed a resolution calling for economic action against Disney for producing "anti-family" and "anti-Christian" products.

Eisner told "Today Show" co-host Katie Couric it was "a very small part of the Southern Baptists" who took the action during the June 1997 SBC meeting in Dallas. Couric interviewed Eisner as Disney prepared to open its fourth theme park in the central Florida area, Animal Kingdom.

Richard Land, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, called Eisner's comments "both reprehensible and contemptible."

"For a corporate leader who

### Gay Day set

More than 120,000 homosexuals are expected at Gay Day '98 at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla., according to the American Family Association's newsletter. The event, June 3-7, is among the reasons some Baptists and others have called for a boycott of Disney and its affiliates.

preaches tolerance, Mr. Eisner is remarkably intolerant of those who dare question the direction he has led the Disney Co.," Land said.

"Those most concerned with the shift within the Disney Company are not some fringe splinter group, but are those who were traditionally Disney's best customers—families with children who desire family friendly entertainment," Land countered.

Eisner told Couric Southern Baptists were upset because Disney decided to give health benefits to "people of similar persuasions."

Eisner also linked a 1996 Southern Baptist resolution about Jewish evangelism with Nazi Germany.

Eisner mistakenly said that it was

in 1997 that messengers "recommended that they convert the Jews. ... That was something that hasn't been recommended since the '40s in Europe."

Land said Eisner's "thinly veiled" comparison of the SBC's action in 1996 to reaffirm the need for evangelism to all people, including those of the Jewish faith, to "Nazi Germany's horrific persecution of Jews" from 1933 to the late 1940s was "outrageous" and "offensive."

"Evangelism is not extermination," Land said. "In calling for Christians to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Southern Baptists are standing squarely in the middle of apostolic faith passed down through the ages."

Land expressed hope Eisner would step back "from such contemptuous comments" aimed at those who question his leadership of the world's second-largest entertainment conglomerate and agree "to engage in constructive and reasoned dialogue with those who have grave concerns about the message his company is sending to children."

Attempts by the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission to answer Eisner's charges were declined by "The Today Show."

## Israel celebration upsets some Jews

ORLANDO (RNS)—As a major celebration of Israel's 50th anniversary kicks off this week, some Jewish leaders are crying foul.

Ironically, "Israel Jubilee" is sponsored not by Jews but by the Christian Alliance for Israel.

The ad hoc group is composed primarily of evangelical and Pentecostal Christians who regard Israel's rebirth as an independent state an important sign that the Bible's plan for Jesus' return is unfolding as promised.

Among the noted speakers scheduled to appear are evangelist Benny Hinn, religious broadcaster/pastor John Hagee and Campus Crusade for Christ founder Bill Bright.

But Jewish leaders are upset with the large number of Messianic Jews and Christians affiliated with ministries that evangelize Jews who are associated with the event.

Messianic Jews are Jews who have accepted Jesus as the Messiah and claim still to be Jews through their blood ties to the Jewish people.

Both the Jewish Federation of Greater Orlando, the area's primary mainstream Jewish group, and the Orlando Board of Rabbis have urged Jews to stay away from the event.

"We're not protesting or trying to scuttle this event," said Eric Geboff, federation executive director. "But we are concerned that some Jews may be swayed and taken in."

Event organizer Cheryl Schang insists its only intent is to show support for Israel. "We're trying to rally Christian support for Israel and the Jewish people," she said. "I've made no bones about the fact that we're going to talk about Jesus as the Messiah because this is a Christian event. ... This is not an interfaith event."

### NATIONAL NOTES

■ **If at first you don't succeed.** A panel of Lutherans and Episcopalians has released a new draft proposal for establishing full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church. The new proposal seeks to overcome objections in the understanding of the office of bishop and the notion of the "historic episcopate" that resulted in last summer's narrow defeat of the unity proposal. The rejection—six votes short of the necessary two-thirds majority needed for agreement—deeply embarrassed church leaders.

■ **Magazine opposes capital punishment.** Christianity Today magazine has, for the first time, come out against capital punishment. The two-page, unsigned editorial cited reasons why the death penalty is "unfair and discriminatory," does not deter murders and fails to console the survivors of murder victims. Richard Kauffman, an associate editor, said the editorial was sparked in part by the execution of murderer Karla Faye Tucker. Tucker, who was executed Feb. 3, admitted her guilt but became a devout Christian while in prison.

■ **Cardinal cries "foul ball."** Cardinal John O'Connor, the archbishop of New York, plans to boycott the baseball season this year because the major leagues played games on Good Friday. "I love the Yankees. I love the Mets. I love baseball," the archbishop wrote in his archdiocesan newspaper, Catholic New York. "But I will not go to a game because major league teams played on Good Friday."

■ **Deion Sanders laterals money to ministry.** Dallas Cowboys receiver Deion Sanders has turned over more than twice the amount of his first book advance to a ministry project in Dallas. Sanders has received \$465,000 from Word Publishing in Nashville, Tenn., for a book he plans to title "Power, Money & Sex." But he has announced that he will give \$1 million toward the building of a youth center. "For so long, I focused on showing these children Deion, but I'm going to show them J.I.M. now—J.I.M. is the Jesus in me."

■ **Rule struck down for religious groups.** An appeals court has struck down the Federal Communications Commission's affirmative action rules for TV and radio broadcasters, handing two radio stations owned by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod that had been accused of racial discrimination a major victory. Paul Devantier, executive director of the Missouri Synod's Board for Communication Services, said the denomination has long fought against racism but "defended itself for the last eight years against the FCC's efforts to penalize the church and other religious organizations for using religious hiring preferences as a means of fulfilling their religious missions."

■ **Grants awarded for spiritual sensitivity.** The private National Institute for Healthcare Research has announced a new round of grants to medical schools and hospitals that will, for the first time, educate psychiatric residents about patients' spirituality. David Larson, president of NIHR, called the grants a sign of warming relations between the fields of religion and medicine, in this case in the specialty of psychiatry. Winners of the grants include Baylor College of Medicine.

■ **Presbyterians ponder salvation for non-Christians.** A proposed Presbyterian catechism says Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and others might be destined for the life of eternal peace and happiness many Christians envision only for themselves. "How God will deal with those who do not know or follow Christ, but who follow another tradition, we cannot finally say," says the proposed Study Catechism for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). "We can say, however, that God is gracious and merciful."

■ **Congresswoman tied to secret account.** Rep. Corrine Brown, D-Fla., received \$10,000 from a secret bank account of Henry Lyons, a Baptist leader charged with grand theft and racketeering, a newspaper has reported. Brown, a political ally of Lyons, president of the National Baptist Convention USA, did not mention the money on campaign contribution reports or financial disclosure statements, the St. Petersburg Times reported. Her lawyers have denied any wrongdoing.

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## WORLD VIEW

■ **The Shroud of Turin**, believed by many to be the burial cloth of Jesus, went on public display April 19 for the first time in 20 years. The new display is timed to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the first photograph of the shroud.

■ **Paul Cedar**, CEO of Mission America, has been elected as executive chair of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. The movement began in 1974 at an evangelism congress in Lausanne, Switzerland, and was organized by Billy Graham.

■ **A Rwandan court** has sentenced two Roman Catholic priests to death after finding them guilty of organizing the execution of 2,000 people—mostly members of Rwanda's Tutsi minority—in a church during the 1994 genocide in the African country.

■ **Archbishop of Canterbury** George Carey had his Easter sermon disrupted by members of the militant gay rights group OutRage!, who were protesting Carey's refusal to support demands for gay marriage and a reduction in Britain's homosexual age of consent from the present 18 to 16, the same age as for heterosexuals.

■ **In England**, where one in three clergy say they have been attacked in the course of a British firm says help is on the way. Avon Silversmiths says it is ready to begin marketing a necklace-style crucifix with a built-in alarm.

■ **A delegation** from Church World Service, the relief arm of the National Council of Churches, delivered to Baghdad \$100,000 in medical supplies to aid the people of Iraq earlier this month.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Jamestown First Baptist is seeking a minister of youth and education; this is a full-time position. Mail to: Search Committee, Jamestown Baptist, P.O. Box 308, Jamestown, KY 42629-0308.

**SEEKING:** Associated Baptist Press, an independent, not-for-profit news service, seeks executive director of development and marketing in a new position to initiate a fund-raising and marketing program. Qualifications include minimum of bachelor's degree, with master's preferred, in appropriate field such as communications or business; demonstrated experience in major fund development campaign and donor cultivation, particularly in a religious or not-for-profit organization; active church member, with preference given to Baptists; effective leadership; written and oral communication skills. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until position is filled. Letter of application, resumé, statement of fund-raising philosophy and list of three references should be directed to: Development Search Committee, Associated Baptist Press, P.O. Box 23769, Jacksonville, FL 32241.

**SEEKING:** Exciting, growing suburb Springfield, Mo., church is seeking a full-time youth minister to lead a dynamic ministry to youth. Resumés will be accepted through June 1. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Hopedale Baptist Church, 5370 N. Highway NN, Ozark, MO 65721. Our church is praying for you.

**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.

**NEEDED:** Nursery caregiver for mornings and Wednesday evenings. Pay is \$10 per hour. Experience and references required. Interested persons should contact Deer Park Baptist Church for further information: (502) 451-7220.

**SEEKING:** Full-time weekday ministries director. Director's responsibilities include: Leading the program to be safe, Christ-centered and educationally sound; supervising and training caregivers and teachers; ministering to children and families in the program; assisting the church in outreach and ministry to children and families in the program. This thriving program includes 2- and 3-year developmental daycare, 4-year preschool, kindergarten and after-school program for grades 1-6. The program has a healthy budget, adequate material resources and a qualified, caring staff of more than 25. Applicants must meet state licensing requirements. Seminary degree preferred. Salary negotiable based on qualifications. Resumés and inquiries: First Baptist Church, 1400 South Main, Hopkinsville, KY 42240, Attn: Keith Stillwell. (502) 886-1216.

**NEEDED:** Pastoral care: Danny Hodges, 9639 SR 132 W, Clay, KY 42404.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth and children's minister. College graduate or seminarian graduate. A great foundation has been laid. Dry Ridge is a growing church in a growing area—the potential is unlimited. If you have a heart for children and outreach to youth and children, send your resumé to: Dry Ridge Baptist Church, P.O. Box 14, Dry Ridge, KY 41035, Attn: Personnel Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth (grades 7-12). Calvary Baptist Church of Tuscaloosa, Ala., is located adjacent to the University of Alabama campus. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve in a growing, multi-staff church. Youth Sunday school enrollment currently is 160; average SS attendance, 800; average worship attendance, 1,200. Please send information to: Calvary Baptist Church, 1121 Paul Bryant Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401. (205) 758-0495.

**SEEKING:** Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Danville, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister of music. Responsibilities include: sanctuary choir; graded choir program; worship planning; youth and adult handbell choirs. Send resumé to: Dr. Tim Noel, Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, 339 W. Lexington Ave., Danville, KY 40422.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister, Hill Grove Baptist Church, Guston, Ky. Country church 35 miles southwest of Louisville. Please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 55 Ammons Lane, Guston, KY 40142.

**NEEDED:** Church van for youth ministry. Please call (502) 788-6576.

**SEEKING:** Part-time church organist, Versailles Baptist Church, Versailles, Ky. Responsibilities: Wednesday nights, Sunday mornings; blend over worship service. Contact Greg Brewton, (606) 873-7338.

**SEEKING:** Persons with secretarial experience and computer application skills to accept temporary work assignments. Contact: Administrative Services Department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Louisville, Ky. Phone: (502) 244-6468.

**NEEDED:** 1st trumpet and 1st trombone, grades 9-12, for Kentucky Baptist All-State Youth Orchestra, June 21-28. For audition information, call church music department at (888) 254-5707.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister in Frankfort, Ky. Come work with a well-established program and a great group of teens. Good salary and expense account for the person God calls. Send resumé to: Evergreen Baptist Church, 2698 Evergreen Road, Frankfort, KY 40601.

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

**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.

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By Robert Dunston

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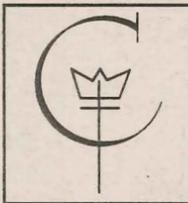
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involved in these ministries have a deep love for Christ and a genuine desire to share what he has done in their lives so that others might discover the forgiveness and strength available through Christ. For more information or to schedule a BSU team, contact Dean Whitaker at (606) 539-4343 or write him at 7521 College Station Drive, Williamsburg, Ky. 40769.

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

## A climate of revival

It's revival weather here in the commonwealth.

I know revivals are no longer contingent upon warm temperatures as they once were, but this kind of weather reminds me of tents, folding chairs and bass-voiced evangelists mopping their brows while crickets and frogs fill in the pregnant pauses that come after the tough questions.

"My friend, if you were to die today, would you see Jesus?"

"Knee-deep, knee-deep."

I'm not making fun. I cherish that heritage of Christianity and the memory of a revival that were truly a re-ignition of the spirit of repentance and witnessing among God's people.

To God's glory, some of those very same experiences are going to happen this year in revivals across Kentucky.

I'm happy to report revival weather at Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. It is a climate created by staff who demonstrate God's love and compassion.

It's a season brought about by churches in our communities reaching out to the young people in their pews every week. It's a "front" of testimony, music and Bible study ushered into our cottages and shel-

ters by prodigals, comedians, magicians and rappers all touched by the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

This front blew in before I joined the agency.

In the last 18 months, our staff has reported an average of 12 decisions for Christ every month. I'm grateful for those numbers, but, more than that, I'm excited that our staff and you, our ministry partners, have created this environment where decisions can be made.

This tells me that kids not only are hearing the gospel in sermon, song and study, but they are making the next step—realizing that a belief in Christ is relevant to them personally.

We know Jesus is the healer for every hurt our children have. When they reach that conclusion themselves, it tells me we are all doing something right!

You as Kentucky Baptists are part of this climate. Thank you for enabling us to witness to hurting kids.

**HOMES FOR CHILDREN**



Bill Smithwick

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/>

# CHURCHES

## 'Auto-pilot church' shows paradox of U.S. Christianity

MESQUITE, Texas (ABP)—The American church context is a "classic paradox," according to researcher George Barna.

Barna recently visited Louisville with his conference on church trends.

Earlier, in Mesquite, Texas, he cited four contradictory themes as an example that the American church is functioning in paradox to trends in America:

■ **Unappealing interest.** Americans are exhibiting the highest interest in religion and spiritual development in 50 years. But "Christianity is unappealing because Christians behave no differently than anyone else—their faith does not impact their lives."

Recent research shows Christians' world views and decision-making factors are not significantly different from non-Christians'.

Based on Christians' behavior, non-Christians "have no reason to be drawn to Christianity," he insisted.

■ **Fruitless contacts.** Christian churches come into contact with more than 100 million adults and

more than 30 million children each month. However, "most of them are involved in a religious ritual and have little connection with Christ," Barna said.

His surveys indicate "one-half of attenders of Protestant churches are not Christians," he said.

■ **Unfulfilled commitment.** Most Christians and churches think evangelism is important. Unfortunately, "few people are accepting Christ as their Savior," he added.

A significant factor in American Christians' anemic evangelistic output is the fact "few Christians have relationships with non-believers" that can make a difference in the non-Christians' lives.

■ **More with less.** Thousands of churches are being started, and Christianity is more accessible to people.

Still, "few churches are led by leaders, and most non-churched people are not seeking a church to attend," Barna warned.

"The 'auto-pilot church'—doing religious activity without intentional, strategic purpose—simply doesn't work," he said.

## Friendship best evangelism tool, non-Christians say

By Marv Knox  
Texas Baptist Standard

LEWISVILLE, Texas (ABP)—Friendship and concern are Christians' greatest tools in leading others to faith in Jesus, both Christians and non-Christians told a recent gathering of Baptists.

Six speakers—three ministers and three non-Christians—drove home the primary theme of Denton Baptist Association's annual evangelism conference: relationships fuel effective evangelism.

Three non-Christians formed a panel to describe their religious upbringing as well as their thoughts on Christianity and the church.

Their ages and backgrounds differ, but they cited several common themes:

■ They were not raised in the Christian faith.

■ Religion had minimal impact on their lives as children and youth.

■ Religion, much less Jesus Christ, is not perceived as a significant factor in the lives of their friends and peers.

But they said they could conceive that new relationships might one day lead them to a relationship with Christ. Two of the panel members are participating in small-group Bible studies, and the third has been befriended by a local pastor.

"We've got to break out of our Christian subculture and get to know non-Christians if we're ever going to expect to lead them to faith," Pastor Lee Strobel later told the crowd.

"We've got to live authentic lives of Christian integrity" in order to make a difference in the lives of non-believers, said Strobel, teaching pastor of

Willow Creek Community Church, a congregation that has led thousands of suburban Chicago residents to faith in Christ.

Steve Stroope, pastor of Lake Pointe Baptist Church in Rockwall, Texas, endorsed the need for "relationship evangelism."

Members of his church—which has grown from a handful of members in 1980 to almost 4,000 in 1998—are expected to maintain a list of three non-Christians for whom they are praying and whom they are seeking to lead to faith.

Leading people to accept Jesus as their Savior is addictive, added Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, one of the convention's most evangelistic congregations.

"Once you get started, you just can't get enough," Graham said.

However, not enough Christians feel compelled to evangelize others, he added.

"Reaching people is not about programs; it's about a passion that will not let go of what God calls us to do," he said. "We have two primary problems with witnessing. First is that we think people who do not know Christ don't want to know Christ. And the real problem is that the people who do know Christ don't want to tell others about him."

But because evangelism is "personal and relational," it naturally flows out of caring Christian friendships with non-Christians, Graham said.

Unfortunately, many Christians have insulated themselves from the non-Christian world and fail to interact in the lives of unbelievers, Stroope insisted. "Shame on you if you don't know 10 people who aren't Christians."

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## Our mission statement

At Jonathan Creek and Cedar-more we are well underway preparing for thousands of youth and children who will come to our summer camps in just a few short weeks.

This is a very busy time for our conference centers, but it is also a time of eager anticipation as we contemplate what God will do this summer in the hearts and lives of these students.

In our board meeting a couple of weeks ago, we developed our mission statement, which reads as follows: "To provide an environment in which all our guests can come to know Christ and more fully experience him."

That's what we are about. If you consider the decades of our ministry, surely thousands of people have come to know Christ while at Cedar-more and Jonathan Creek. And we are convinced that our greatest years are ahead, beginning with this summer.

I would expect that most of you who read this column are strong believers and supporters of our work. What can you do right now for us? Begin to pray for the following, specifically:

■ Pray for the children and

students who will be camping with us this summer. Pray that they will come with hearts sensitive to what God wants to do while they are with us. Pray that those who do not know Christ will experience him here.

■ Pray for the staff and counselors who will be working with the students, GA counselors, RA counselors and the Son-Team staff who will lead our youth. They play a vital role in the ministry. Pray for strength and endurance because the summer is long, the work is hard, but the rewards are great as they experience God at work.

■ Pray for our staff as we strive to serve all who will come to Cedar-more and Jonathan Creek. It is an exciting time for us as we see God work each and every week.

It is going to be a great time, the kingdom will be larger and I wouldn't trade places with anybody in the world. I've never been more excited about ministry.

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

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Chris and Gretchen Brown and Bobby and Diane Williford who recently arrived in Moscow and are beginning language school.

■ Dan and Pam Brown, International Service Corps missionaries involved in a new church start in Penza, Russia.

■ Keven and Leslie Rutland as they continue language school in Moscow.

■ The women's retreat at First Baptist Church of Sudbury, Mass., May 8-9.

■ A new weekly Bible study in East Boston, Mass., led by Dick and Doreen May. Plans are for the study to become a mission congregation.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **BELFRY**—First Church will hold revival services May 17-20. **Dave Hammond**, pastor of Faith Church in Myra, will be the speaker. **Lois Jane Huddleston** will provide the music. **Steve Rice** is pastor. For more information, call (606) 353-4645.

■ **CADIZ**—Maple Grove Church called **Brett Heuring** as pastor. He is a student at Mid-Continent Bible College in Mayfield. He began his new ministry March 1.

■ **DANVILLE**—**Ernest Martin**, pastor of Calvary Church for 31 years, retired April 12. Assistant Pastor **Doug Wesley** will serve as interim pastor. **Matt Flanagan** is minister of youth, **Steve Fegenbush** is interim minister of education and **Brian Mollett** is interim minister of music.

■ **FOUNTAIN RUN**—Fountain Run Church called **Dale Hanson** as pastor. Hanson previously was pastor at Grangertown Church at Sturgis. He began his new ministry April 12.

■ **HARRODSBURG**—Harrodsburg Church will hold its second senior adult revival May 3-6 at 11 a.m. **Ted Sisk** will speak. (606) 734-2339.

■ **HAZARD**—First Church will celebrate its centennial anniversary Aug. 23. An all-day event is planned. **Dean Buchanan** is pastor. For more information, call (606) 436-3533.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Southside Church recently called **Michael Roy** as pastor. He previously was pastor at New Life Church in Peculiar, Mo. Woodland Church called **John**

**Raizer** of Shelbyville as minister to students. He began his new ministry April 20.

Shively Heights Church will host the "Greater Vision Trio" in concert May 8 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 447-9544.

■ **MARION**—**Kenny Odom** resigned as pastor at Repton Church, effective April 30. He will be available to serve as pastor. He can be reached at (502) 965-4453, or 208 N. Maple, Marion, Ky. 42064.

■ **MURRAY**—Flint Church will celebrate its centennial anniversary May 3. An all-day event is planned. Guest speaker will be **Bill Miller**. **Tim Franklin** is pastor.

■ **PARKSVILLE**—Parksville Church will ordain **Jimmy Overstreet** and **Ben Henson** as deacons May 3. **Dale Niswonger** is interim pastor.



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## All publicity is good if they spell the name right

**COPENHAGEN, Denmark (RNS)**—If there's no such thing as bad publicity, then the Church of Scientology is making the best of bad news.

The church, which claims it is suffering religious persecution in its well-publicized struggle with the German government, has launched a multimillion-dollar advertising campaign in Western Europe, designed to urge people to see what the fuss is all about.

"We are being talked about every day, but when you ask people what is (Scientology), they don't know," said Gaetane Asselin, public relations director for the church's European operations, headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark. "So we say, think for yourselves, buy a book."

Billboards, magazine ads, bus

posters and other media will use the catch phrase "Think for yourself" and urge people to read Scientology's seminal work, "Dianetics," authored by the church's late founder, L. Ron Hubbard, in 1950.

The ads show cartoon images such as a line-up of cavemen, all building square wheels except for one confident man who invents the round variety.

The church's publicity campaign recently began in Holland and will also hit Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Austria. About 600 billboards will go up in Germany alone, Asselin said.

The Los Angeles-based Church of Scientology, founded by Hubbard in 1954, claims 8 million followers worldwide, including celebrities John Travolta and Tom Cruise.

Asselin said she had no figures for membership in European countries but said there were 60 churches and 160 missions on the continent. Press reports say the church claims 30,000 members in Germany.

Scientists believe humans can achieve higher levels of existence and overcome mental barriers to success and physical health. They do this through seminars and spiritual counseling known as "auditing."

Critics say the church is not a religion but charges exorbitant fees for its services and employs hardball tactics against perceived enemies.

## A wonderful day

Easter Sunday was a wonderful day. It began on the hill behind our chapel building at 7 a.m. We had our annual sunrise service in the cemetery on top of the hill which overlooks our campus. A score of former students, faculty and staff are buried there, including our school's founder. Our students had been busy the week before, getting the lawn mowed for the service.

During the message, students, faculty, staff and others were blessed to be reminded of the glorious day when we will spend eternity with our Lord.

There is a lot of fog here in the mountains in the mornings, and this Sunday was no exception. Every few years we are blessed to actually see the sunrise while we are there worshipping, but not this year. After a hymn or two, we made our way back down the mountain.

Since I am gone with the choir on most Sundays, I don't get to worship with our students very often. I was looking forward to the 9:30 a.m. service when our students assemble in our chapel for their worship time. It is a little shorter than a traditional service, and the message and music are presented with young people in mind. There are always some faculty and staff who join them during this worship time, but the 11 a.m. service is primarily for the adult worship hour. While many of our students had gone home for the Easter weekend, there was still a large group there. After the 9:30 service, our students go to Sunday school and then to lunch.

I had some guests with me from Nebraska who are considering becoming a part of this ministry. This was the first time they had been able to see most of our students together.

Since we had a little over an hour between services, I took them on a tour of our campus, including some possible housing for them and their three children. We ended up at church and were blessed again with a message of victory in Jesus.

These folks had to catch their plane back home in the afternoon, so they were not able to join us for the evening service, which was the first meeting of our spring revival.

The evangelist who was to conduct the services became very ill the week before, so we had to seek another pastor to preach. We asked Charles Midkiff, pastor of First Baptist Church of Greenville, if he could come on such a short notice. He graciously agreed, but could not join us until Monday evening. That was not a problem, since we had invited a contemporary Christian music group to present a concert for our young people on Sunday night.

The fall and spring revival services are always crucial to us, since we know that many of our students will invite Christ into their lives during these revival meetings.

After the concert an invitation was given, and several students went forward. Most had prayer requests, including concern for lost classmates. This may be one of the last opportunities we will have to reach some of these young people for Christ. We have been blessed this year with a host of young people making professions of faith.

It was a long day, but I really enjoyed the opportunity to worship with our students and later with our faculty and staff. It really was a wonderful day!

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

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## What is going on at Clear Creek?

A recent e-mail from an alumnus asked the question "What is going on at Clear Creek?" Some events of that first day after spring break illustrate much about this ministry and how God continues to bless the efforts of all who work here.

The day began with prayer in the chapel with a member of the staff and one of the faculty.

Students have been there on other days. The executive administrative staff met to discuss agenda items previously submitted. I'm so thankful to work with a team of committed administrators. We share 45 combined years of ministry at Clear Creek—an average of 7.5 years for each administrator. Part of the morning included preparations for the upcoming trustee meeting. These KBC-elected officials guide this ministry with awareness of their accountability to God and the churches.

Our newest faculty members came by for a brief visit. As distinguished professors, Bill and Glenda Tichenor bring a wealth of experience to bless our students. Bill will teach introduction to ministry; Mrs. Tichenor will teach English and help with our remedial program. They continue a long-time

tradition of an excellent faculty with strong academic credentials and practical experience.

Just before lunch I signed letters welcoming five new students accepted by the admissions director and was reminded to write a letter to accompany a receipt for a \$25,000 gift to the classroom building. Lunch followed with several

members of the first-year class. I challenged them to participate in our Beyond 2001 Campaign and also to seek places in their home area where we could tell the Clear Creek story. After lunch a student thanked me for his campus experience. "The religion professor in my former school didn't believe there was any absolute truth," he said.

The rest of my day included a revival service at Faith Church in Corbin. We rejoiced when a couple joined the church. I left to the sounds of Amazing Grace and drove to Columbia to meet family who had brought my wife from Bowling Green. The quiet drive provided time to thank the Lord for all the good things going on at Clear Creek.

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## Does God care how much our temples tip the scales?

By Julia Lieblich  
Religion News Service

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. (RNS) —Is thinness next to godliness?

In 1957 Presbyterian minister Charles Shedd wrote "Pray Your Weight Away," launching today's multimillion-dollar Christian weight-loss industry.

Now, a Purdue University study confirms what diet gurus have long preached: "Firm believers do not have firm bodies."

Indeed, Christians who are most active in practicing their religion are more likely to be overweight, with Southern Baptists being the heaviest.

Baptist preacher Jerry Falwell is not surprised.

"I fit the mold," said Falwell, who recently began a doctor-ordered low-fat and low-sugar diet that excludes his beloved banana pudding. "The Seventh-day Adventists probably live longer, but we have more fun," he added wryly.

Ministers have long ignored the flesh while feeding the spirit, said Marie Griffith, author of "God's Daughters: Evangelical Women and the Power of Submission."

Many preachers find food frivolous, she said, compared to the lure of drugs, alcohol and premarital sex. Few clerics preach about living in a world of caloric temptation. And few know how to address the quiet desperation of portly parishioners.

It's no wonder that Christian diet books like "More of Jesus, Less of Me" and church-based exercise programs like "Faithfully Fit" are filling the void, combining evangelical the-

ology and psychology. Supporters sing praises in testimonials about changed hearts and waistlines.

But critics say such diets are a mixed blessing that can bring more angst than relief. Some programs, they contend, offer questionable advice about nutrition and exercise and erroneously equate losing weight with gaining God's love.

"It may sound like God loves a size six woman more than a size 16," Griffith said.

It was the early 19th century health reform movement that led to the current preoccupation with diet, said Griffith, who is writing a book about Christianity and the body in American culture.

Reformers, she said, preached that "God had given you this body, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and one need not be gluttonous. Notions of diet were connected to temperance."

During the first half of the 20th century, she said, "dieting became much more of a secular pursuit" as dietitians weighed in with prescriptions for health. Only in 1957 did religion re-emerge with Presbyterian minister Charles Shedd, who lost more than 100 pounds and preached of gluttony as sin.

"The God who made me never meant me to be 300 pounds," said Shedd, now 82, who advised readers to do karate kicks while reciting the third chapter of Proverbs.

The difference between Christian and non-Christian diets, he said, is not food but faith. "Believing that your body belongs to God gives you more discipline."

A recent entry, *The Weigh-Down*

Workshop, has grown to more than 17,000 classes, according to the company, with more than a quarter million participants. And founder Gwen Shamblin's book, "The Weigh Down Diet" sold 200,000 copies in the first two months of release.

Conventional diets fail, said Shamblin, a registered dietitian with a master's degree in food and nutrition, because they don't get to the root of the problem: confusing hunger for God with hunger for food. "When you give your heart to God," she said, "the body will follow."

Critics, however, question the theology and psychology behind some best-selling tracts, and maintain that even while programs stress the importance of self-acceptance, the underlying messages reinforce standard notions of beauty.

"We still have a fixation with the size and shape of women's bodies," said theologian Mary Louise Bringle, author of "The God of Thinness." "Even those who are saying the purpose (of losing weight) is to get our souls right with God, are saying we need to get our bodies in socially acceptable shape."

Suggestions that God prefers followers to be an ideal weight draw fierce criticism. "I don't think God gives a flip either way," said Falwell. And he takes issue with an overemphasis on obesity as sin. "I know obesity to an extreme is a bad thing and gluttony is a bad thing. But I don't know many gluttons."

Critics within and outside the industry say they worry that some programs neglect total health.

Shamblin for example, said it's



fine to eat foods high in fat and sugar as long as people stop eating when they hear God-given cues that their bodies are full.

Shamblin downplays the role of genetics in weight loss, informing readers that their problems are not "physiological, psychological, congenital or inherited."

Falwell disagrees. "Some people are genetically overweight and there's not a blooming thing they can do about it."

Bringle also worries about programs encouraging dieters to equate weight loss with God's love.

People who have trouble with the program, she said, think "God hates me because I'm fat."

The Purdue study generally showed that active religious practice is associated with higher levels of well-being whether a person is overweight or underweight, due in part to supportive congregations.

**WEIGHING IN** Diabetic Marilyn Wessels (left) of Taylor, Mich., credits *First Place* weight reduction classes with allowing her to keep her weight under control and avoid going on insulin. But amid the growth of such Christian-based programs, critics question whether some erroneously equate losing weight with gaining God's love. "It may sound like God loves a size six woman more than a size 16," says one observer. (Baptist Press photo by Jim Veneman)

## Ministry keeps rolling along Mississippi River

By Russell Dilday  
Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

WEST MEMPHIS, Ark. (BP)—More than 140 Southern Baptists gathered earlier this month to build partnerships, exchange resources, share dreams and worship in their shared focus on the nation's poorest region, the Mississippi River delta.

The Mississippi River Ministry Convocation, held at First Baptist Church in West Memphis, Ark., was the third such event since the Mississippi River Ministry's inception in 1992.

The Mississippi River Ministry was formed to answer the needs of the 8 million-plus people living along the lower Mississippi River region, known by many as "America's Third World." Inhabitants often suffer from poverty, poor health, substandard housing, illiteracy and high infant mortality.

In 1997, the ministry involved more than 7,000 Baptist volunteers working in care ministries, evangelism and church planting through state Baptist conventions in the target region, including Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana, networking in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention's North American Mission Board and national Woman's Missionary Union.

Meeting planner Tommy Goode, an MRM regional coordinator, highlighted the convocation's theme, "Building Partnerships, Changing Lives," to the group of state convention staff, directors of missions, pastors and lay volunteers.

"Some (of the MRM partnerships) are formal, some are friend-to-friend, but the partnerships are important because without the partnerships that keep us together, we couldn't function," said Goode, a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions ministries team.

Gary Farley, director of missions for Pickens Baptist Association in Alabama, facilitated the rural conference in an examination of different ministry models. He also highlighted the need for intentionality in progressing from ministry awareness to ministry action.

Testimonies from participants in MRM ministries provided a touching addition to the program, as those involved recounted the blessings and trials of working in the Delta.

Audette Jenkins, a semester missionary working at a Memphis church, told the crowd that the ministry is valuable because, as one beneficiary explained, "They not only restored my house, they restored my dignity."

Beverly Smothers, state MRM coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said Tennesseans

often divide their state into three states: eastern, middle and western. "We get the other two states of Tennessee to be aware of the west part and to contribute resources to that and to get western Tennessee to realize its potential."

Diana Lewis, a missionary and leader of an MRM ministry in Dixonville, Ark., noted the impact that ministry is having on residents of the rural community where she ministers.

During a skating trip, Lewis noted that an 8-year-old girl "looked up at me and said, 'Mrs. Diana, God doesn't just love one of us, he loves us all.' What a wonderful comment from a girl who doesn't know the words to 'Jesus Loves Me.'"

One of the women who attends a ladies group with the ministry told Lewis, "I need to talk to you." Lewis said she thought the woman would ask for help with food, clothes or utilities.

"But she said, 'I want to talk to you about being saved' as comfortably as she would ask about food or clothes," Lewis said.

"That's what our ministry is all about—that people can know they can come to us comfortably and talk to us about spiritual things, material needs, whatever they need to talk about," she said. "We must say it over and over again to them that 'You matter to God. Not all of us think you are worthless and you are not beyond his love.'"

## NFL's Reggie White: God told me to play for one more year

GREEN BAY, Wis.—Reggie White said the voice of God persuaded him to come out of retirement and keep a promise to play football one more year for the Green Bay Packers.

"I believe God will heal me," said White, the all-time NFL leader in sacks. His bad back reduced him to part-time duty last season.

White admitted he hadn't done much in the off season to help his back, but he pledged to embark on a rigorous rehabilitation program.

Coach Mike Holmgren earlier had announced White's retirement, and as recently as early last week the 36-year-old defensive end was standing by his decision to leave football because of his bad back.

But White said he had a revelation while having back therapy, according to Associated Press.

White, an ordained Baptist minister, said he just heard something in his mind that gave him extreme peace when he decided to end his two-day retirement from the NFL.

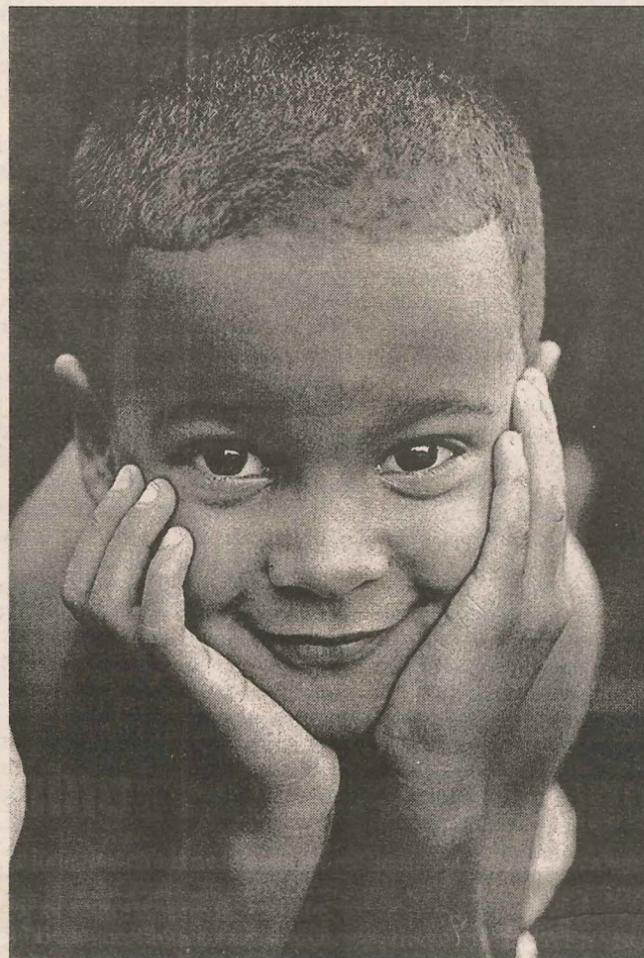
White originally was scheduled last week to talk about his retirement at a mid-week press conference. Instead, he used the opportunity to talk about his new plans. White said it was God speaking to him that changed his mind, reminding him that he promised a year ago to play two more seasons.

"I made a promise to the Green Bay Packers," White said. "I'm a man of my word."

The Packers see White in a reduced role again, but that won't make him any less of a team leader.

White said he unquestionably was making the right move. "It's going to work out," he said. "I never have regrets when God speaks to me. I don't regret when I hear from 'on high.'"

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