



WESTERN RECORDER

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Churches no longer immune to lawsuits, attorneys say

By Brenda Smith

Kentucky Baptist Convention

LOUISVILLE—In today's litigious society, nothing is sacred—including the church.

Statistics aren't available, but litigation against churches has increased dramatically in the past two decades, according to Jim Bonney, assistant vice president for Guidant Insurance Group.

Guidant, based in Des Moines, Iowa, underwrites the property and casualty insurance program of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Churches are treated like any other entity now," he said. "We live in a more litigious society, and that does not exclude the churches."

"It used to be that no one would have thought about suing a church," said Larry Conley, state business director for Guidant Insurance Group in Kentucky.

Now, that's no longer the case. In fact, Conley said, a major problem for churches are church leaders who think

they cannot or will not be sued and therefore put the church at risk.

"The idea that 'We don't have to worry about that' leaves churches wide open," said Don Spencer, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention annuity department.

The annuity department doesn't provide consultation on property and casualty insurance, but recommends that churches consult with their property and casualty provider and attorney.

To reduce the risk of becoming the subject of a lawsuit, churches should assess and address their risks, particularly in the areas of sexual abuse or misconduct and property liability, experts said.

Claims of sexual abuse, harassment or misconduct by a staff member or volunteer deliver perhaps the most devastating blows to a church, Conley said. Not only are church assets threatened, but the ministry of the

church usually is decimated.

"Churches need to have written requirements followed whenever new people are brought in to teach Sunday school, work with youth, whatever," Conley said. "Churches need to put a written program in place and check the background of volunteers and staff members."

Conley recommends using a professional screening organization to do background checks of volunteers. Recommended screening for volunteers should include verification of name and social security number, a criminal records search, a list of prior addresses, a list of prior employers and driving records, he said. Education also should be verified for professional staff members, he added.

Personnel committees also should ask for references from former churches when making decisions

about staff members, Conley said.

"One of the problems is that churches don't tell each other" when former members or staff are troublesome, he said.

Another issue that exposes churches to lawsuits is the use of personal vehicles for church business, he added. In the event of an accident, an individual's personal vehicle coverage may quickly be exhausted, leaving the church open for a lawsuit. Conley recommends that churches include coverage in their insurance policies for such vehicle uses by members.

Activities on or off the premises also may be risky business for churches, he said. "Churches have to be very selective in what they do," Conley said. Ski trips and other such outings are inherently dangerous; but even the ubiquitous church dinner offers the risk of food poisoning.

Conley also recommends that church congregations incorporate.

Good stewardship practices dictate that churches make certain they are adequately insured, Conley said.

■ More stories on page 7.



First construction teams recruited for Tanzania

By Joyce Martin

Partnership Editions Editor

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania—Kentucky Baptists are planning to send their first Tanzania missions partnership construction teams to work on a pastorium in the capital city of Dar es Salaam this summer.

The International Baptist Church in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, has asked for help with construction of a home for their pastor.

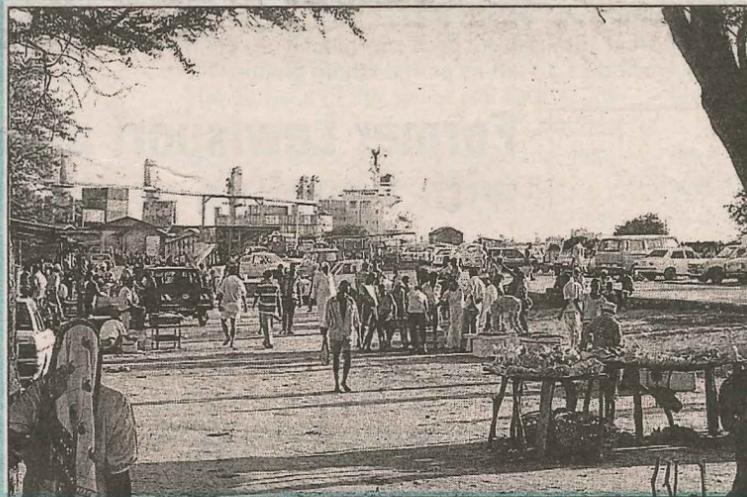
About 100 people attend the church, including most of the Southern Baptist missionaries who reside in the capital city. Others who attend include business and government leaders in the international community.

In the past, a Southern Baptist missionary has served as pastor of the church in addition to shouldering other ministry responsibilities in Tanzania. With the retirement of the current missionary pastor, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board now plans to place a missionary there as full-time pastor, according to Ken Murphy of the Kentucky Baptist Convention partnership missions office.

"They would really like to have someone who can give more time as pastor," said Murphy, who visited the church last July. "It is a growing church and has potential to reach a lot more people."

A home for the pastor would be one piece of the expansion plans for the church, according to Gale Sadler, missionary treasurer of the Baptist Mission of Tanzania and a member of the church.

The church has requested four



TANZANIA Residents shop at a fish market near the coast in Tanzania's capital, Dar Es Salaam. Organizers of Kentucky Baptists' partnership with Tanzania Baptists are recruiting volunteers for the first construction jobs in the capital city. "We can learn a lot (about Tanzania) through this project which we can transfer to more remote areas later," said Ken Murphy of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions office. (IMB stock photo by Warren Johnson)

Kentucky teams of 10-12 members each. Members don't need to be skilled carpenters; they only need basic construction skills, Murphy said. All building materials will be provided by the church. No dates have been set for the project, but Murphy said he hopes the first team will go in early summer. "We will probably just go as we can put the teams together," he said.

The total cost per person will be \$2,495, which includes housing, transportation and meals. Teams will stay in the Kentucky House in Dar es Salaam. In April, Kentucky volunteers built bunk beds and spruced up the house to ready it for future volunteers, Murphy said.

Not only will this be the first building project in the Kentucky

Baptist-Tanzania mission partnership, but it also will give Kentucky Baptist volunteers the opportunity to get their feet on the ground by working in the capital city before other teams venture out into the countryside on other projects, Murphy said.

"We can learn a lot (about Tanzania) through this project which we can transfer to more remote areas later," he said.

"This is an excellent opportunity to plant a good work in the operational base in the Baptist mission of Tanzania," Murphy said. "Everything radiates from Dar es Salaam. Anything we do in the capital city helps the rest of the country."

For more information, call Ken Murphy or Calvin Wilkins at (502) 244-6462 or (888) 254-5724.

Bioethicist: Churches must face parents' genetic issues

By Ken Camp

Baptist General Convention of Texas

COPPER CANYON, Texas (ABP)—The ability to help young adults deal ethically with parenting and reproductive issues increasingly will distinguish churches that are "useful" from those that aren't, said Glenn McGee of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Bioethics.

The "birds-and-bees" story means nothing to a generation that sees reproduction and family more in terms of "ants and termites" or "dogs and cats," McGee recently told the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and its board of consultants.

McGee and his father, Dan McGee of Baylor University, discussed ethical issues related to genetics and parenting during the commission's April 15-16 meeting.

"What does it mean to be family when the birds-and-bees story doesn't fit?" McGee asked.

Many in the under-25 generation who have been reared by more than two parents—often in multiple households—will associate more with the colonies of ants and termites than with a metaphor based on the nuclear family, McGee said.

As fertility drugs make quintuplets and sextuplets more common, young people might turn to an analogy like a litter of household pets. Or as designer sperm and designer eggs grow more common, they may even think in terms of breeding racehorses.

□ See *Bioethicist: Useful ...*, page 10

BAPTISTS

School's pulpit program faces racism charge

Students from Africa claimed they were not allowed to preach in a few churches in the state because they are black.

By Jennifer Davis Rash
Alabama Baptist

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP)—Charges of racial discrimination have prompted Samford University officials to revamp a 50-year-old program by which students are invited as guest preachers in Alabama churches.

Samford President Thomas Corts announced April 12 that spring-semester activities for the university's "H-Day" have been canceled and that the program is being restructured for the fall.

The move came after students from Africa claimed they were not allowed to preach in a few churches in the state because they are black.

The incidents reportedly upset both black and white students at the Baptist-affiliated university in Birmingham, Ala. But administrators vowed to make sure it does not happen again.

"We have a responsibility as an educational institution," Corts said, referring to the university's stated commitment to be racially inclusive.

Dennis Aggrey, a third-year divinity student at Samford's Beeson Divinity School, said he faced racial discrimination within the program the past two years. "I signed up to go, and they told me I could not go," said Aggrey, a native of Nigeria.

"It is painful," he said. "It is like looking down on someone for something they don't have control over. Nobody has control of what they look like or where they are born. To

be pushed aside because of that is painful."

Daniel Chelagat, a Beeson student from Kenya, said he was surprised to learn he could not go to a church because the congregation did not approve of a black preacher. "In Kenya, there is no such thing as color," he said. "I was encouraged to sign up, but then twice I was told I could not go."

H-Day—which gets its name from Samford's original name, Howard College—is a student-led program. Ministerial students sign up during the fall and spring semesters to participate. Churches volunteer to host the students through their local Baptist association.

Sundays during the fall and spring semesters are dedicated to specific associations. Participating students preach and lead music in the churches that invite them. A student director and student committee attempt to match the students with the setting and worship style of the host church.

Along with the experience of leading local congregations, the students also receive an honorarium from the church, as well as possibilities of future ministry opportunities.

Corts said the majority of experiences by the students have been positive and encouraging.

"The churches of Alabama have been enormously helpful in exposing the students to church pulpits," Corts noted. "And generally they have been enormously accepting of all races and ethnic groups."

Some of the African students have received much-larger-than-average honoraria from white churches, along with invitations to return for other church activities, officials said.

Even the African students who are raising concerns about racial discrimination want to see the program continue, because it is such a "rich experience," Corts said. "They want to be involved, and they want all students to be involved."

He said the students continued to participate in the program even after their encounter with discrimination.

Aaron Matti, a Beeson student from Africa, said he feels strongly about continuing relationships with the churches that have offended him and the other two students. He said showing those churches Christian love is the way to help them overcome their prejudice.

The revamped program, which could don a new name, will gain university sponsorship and will no longer be an independent, student-operated activity.

"There needs to be a clear understanding that if this is a university activity, then it has to be just that," Corts said. He also pointed out that undergraduates and graduates need two separate programs because they have different goals.

"I think the whole situation leads us to see that the way H-Day has operated has been a little bit out there on its own," Corts said. "It is not a good arrangement for anybody."

Former Lewisport pastor honored with Chaplain of the Year award

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—A former Kentucky pastor and Southern Baptist Navy chaplain received top honors at last month's awards ceremony for the Military Chaplains Association.

Lt. Mark Hendricks of Marine Corps Base, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, was named the Marine Corps chaplain of the year.

In a nomination sent to the Navy Chief of Chaplains, Hendricks was cited for "providing exceptional pastoral care to his Marines, sailors and family members."

As the senior Protestant chaplain on the base, he has developed a popular midweek after-school

program for children, which, in turn, helped increase participation in chapel services.

His nomination further stated that "he energized the Protestant worship and education programs with substantive preaching, teaching and quality programs designed to accelerate spiritual growth."

Prior to joining the Navy, Hendricks was associate pastor of Lewisport Baptist Church in Lewisport from 1986-1991.

He has served as a chaplain in the Navy since 1991, his first three years on a ship in Charleston, S.C. He has been in Hawaii the past five years.

Chechnyan Baptist pastor beheaded

GROZNY, Chechnya (ABP)—Russian Baptist leaders have confirmed reports that Aleksandr Kulakov, 65, a Baptist pastor in Grozny, Chechnya, has been beheaded.

Kulakov's head reportedly was displayed in an open market area, and police invited church members to come to a public morgue in an effort to identify his body.

Kulakov disappeared March 12 and was widely believed to have been kidnapped by radical Islamic forces in the area. He had led the struggling Baptist congregation in Grozny since its previous pastor, Alexei Sitnikov,

was kidnapped in October 1998. There have been no ransom demands or reports of his whereabouts.

Volodya Kargiev, youth leader of Central Baptist Church in Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia), also has been reported kidnapped by Chechnyan bandits.

A \$100,000 ransom has been demanded for his release, according to an April 8 report in Baptist Times. Two Orthodox priests also were kidnapped in Chechnya the first week in April, one of them taken from his church altar by four men with machine guns, according to the newspaper.

Virginia Baptists study University of Richmond link

Robert Dilday
Virginia Baptist Herald

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—Ties between Virginia Baptists and the University of Richmond will be examined by a task force named April 13 in response to the university's decision to add sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policy.

The task force's findings will be presented at the mission board's Oct. 12-13 meeting. Based on that report, the mission board may choose to bring recommendations to the Baptist General Association of Virginia at its annual meeting, scheduled Nov. 9-10 in Richmond.

Trustees of the University of Richmond expanded the school's non-discrimination policy March 5 to prohibit discrimination against gays and lesbians in student, faculty and staff recruitment and promotion.

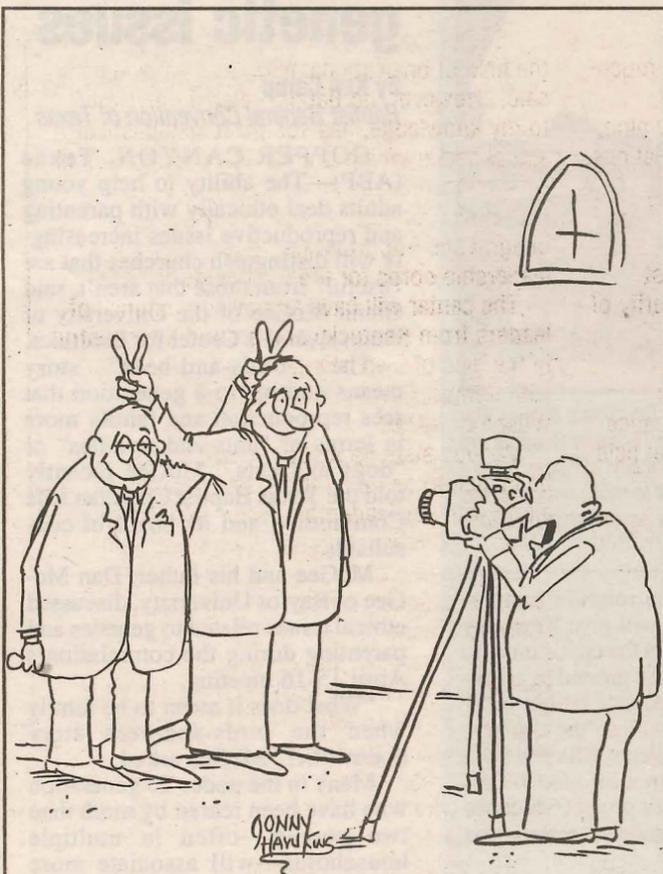
University officials said the decision merely formalizes a long-standing practice. Trustee Lewis Booker, in a letter to the Virginia Baptist newspaper Religious Herald, maintained the new policy "does not in any way approve or advocate a [homosexual] lifestyle."

Last year, Virginia Baptists adopted a statement "affirming the biblical teaching that homosexual behavior is sinful and unacceptable to Christians," while offering guidelines for expressing "Christ-like compassion for homosexual persons."

Three years ago several churches separated from the Baptist General Association of Virginia to form a separate state convention, which now numbers about 150 congregations. One stated rationale for starting the new Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia was a charge that the BGAV is too soft in its stance against homosexuality. The conservative group continues to repeat the charge in efforts to recruit new churches.

In a statement April 13, BGAV Executive Director Reginald McDonough said he applauds the university's commitment to non-discrimination. "However, I feel that making this public pronouncement goes a step beyond non-discrimination to affirm a lifestyle which I and many other Virginia Baptists believe does not square with biblical teachings," he said.

McDonough acknowledged the right of the university's trustees to make decisions "they feel are in the best interest of the school." But, he added, "Virginia Baptists must act in accord with our value system."



"Okay, and now for the church directory ... flash those reconciliation peace signs."

KENTUCKY

One Bosnia mission team rerouted; another now recruiting

By Brenda Smith
Kentucky Baptist Convention

A mission trip to Bosnia for 30 Baptist college students is being diverted to El Salvador, and another group is being organized to take their place.

The May 13-29 trip, a mission jointly sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's campus ministries and Brotherhood departments, originally was scheduled to help with construction projects in Sarajevo.

But ongoing NATO air strikes in neighboring Yugoslavia shut down commercial flights into Bosnia and worried the college students' families.

"At a time when some critical decisions had to be made, the country was closed (by the U.S. State Department) for fear of the fighting in Kosovo," said Larry Koch, disaster relief associate for the KBC Brotherhood department. Organizers decided to divert the mission trip to El Salvador.

The students, who come from 12 Kentucky colleges and universities, now will work to help with Hurricane Mitch recovery. They will build homes and clean wells in San Miguel, El Salvador, and outlying villages. The students also will lead backyard Bible clubs, host evangelistic block parties and organize sporting events.

"We're going to be ministering in villages where the people have been devastated," said Ralph Hopkins, director of student missions for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Hopkins said he hopes the mix of missions activities will open doors for the Kentucky students to minister effectively to Central Americans.

After the decision was made to divert the student trip to El Salvador, the situation in Bosnia improved, Koch said.

"The International Mission Board now considers this a safe area, and it is our understanding that the State Department has now lifted travel restrictions," he said.

Koch is now recruiting volun-

teers—particularly those with masonry and tile roofing skills—to take the place of the students in Bosnia.

Volunteers will go to Bosnia for two weeks and will leave no later than June 3. The International Mission Board and Kentucky Baptists will supply funds for building materials and also will supplement airfare costs; the cost for volunteers will be approximately \$500, Koch said.

For more information, call the Brotherhood department at (888) 254-5720 or (502) 244-6489.

Donations to purchase building supplies for Bosnia can be mailed to the KBC Brotherhood Department, Box 43433, Louisville, Ky., 40253-0433.

Building materials for El Salvador are being supplied through the disaster relief program of the California Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood department.

For more information about the El Salvador trip, call the campus ministries department at (888) 254-5723.

Collection plate can help

A chance to help Kosovar refugees can be as close as next Sunday's offering plate.

Many Baptists don't recognize that their churches already have a system for sending designated checks through the Kentucky Baptist Convention to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, said Jim Clontz, chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's world hunger awareness committee.

"I feel very, very keenly that Kentucky Baptists want to give but don't know how," said Jim Clontz, who also is KBC associate director for discipleship.

Church treasurers can simply forward designated checks to the KBC office, which, in turn, will send it to the IMB's World Hunger Relief Fund. One hundred percent of designated gifts will be used for hunger relief, Clontz said. No administrative costs are deducted from the gifts.

Thus far, the International Mission Board has appropriated \$100,000 in emergency relief funds for refugees from the Balkan war. Eight Southern Baptist missionaries are working in Tirana, Albania, to assemble packets of provisions for the hundreds of thousands of Kosovar refugees. For more information, call Jim Clontz at (502) 254-4716 or (888) 254-5708.

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

Communicators win awards.

Staff of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Western Recorder and Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children were honored recently with awards from the Baptist Communicators Association. Winners were:

■ The KBC communications staff, first place in the logo design category for the new KBC logo.

■ KBC Communications Director Robert Reeves, second place in the web site design category for the KBC web site.

■ Reeves and Larry Brannin, honorable mention in the electronic media division for the video "When the world comes to you."

■ Western Recorder staff, second place in the magazine category for Real Life.

■ Western Recorder News Director David Winfrey, first and second place in the black and white photography category for photo of an abortion protest in Frankfort and

of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies.

■ Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children writer Dannah Prather, first and second place for newsletter feature articles for "Play therapy helps kids overcome abuse" and "Moving day closing in for Wilderness."

Georgetown graduation May 8.

Georgetown College will award 234 bachelor's degrees during graduation ceremonies Saturday, May 8 at 10 a.m. on Giddings Lawn. Joseph Lambert, chief justice of the Kentucky Supreme Court, will deliver the keynote address.

Campbellsville graduation May 7-8.

Campbellsville University will award 231 bachelor's degrees Saturday, May 8 at Powell Athletic Center. The school also will award 138 associate and master's degrees during a separate ceremony May 7, also at the athletic center.

Campbellsville to launch bivocational pastor center

By Marc Whitt
Campbellsville University

CAMPBELLSVILLE—Campbellsville University's board of trustees unanimously approved during its April 27 meeting establishing the Center for Bivocational Christian Ministry.

The purpose of the center will be to study and help enhance the concept of bivocational ministers as an increasingly viable and much-needed way of "serving the church and kingdom work of God," said John Chowning, assistant to the president for church relations.

"There is a growing trend of the employment of bivocational ministers in the local church," Chowning said. "This is particularly true among Southern Baptist congregations where a substantial majority of the churches are small."

Chowning said the Kentucky Baptist Convention is made up of many smaller congregations "which function only because God is calling ministers to a bivocational field rather than a fully-funded location."

The center is a joint project of Campbellsville's office of church relations and the school's recently-established school of theology.

Leon Wilson, national missionary for bivocational ministries with the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, said the center will enhance the work of the North American Mission Board and attract the interest of bivocational ministers across the country.

"I was extremely impressed with what I observed at Campbellsville University," Wilson said. "I am excited about the fact that some of the university's faculty are serving as bivocational ministers, which gives them a special understanding of the needs among their fellow bivocational ministers."

The university "is surrounded by a host of bivocational ministers who need affirmation,

encouragement and training," he added.

Walter Jackson, dean of Campbellsville's school of theology, said the initiative "is a long overdue emphasis within the academic institutions of our denomination."

Chowning, who himself is a bivocational minister serving at Saloma Baptist Church in rural Taylor County, said he is excited about the project.

"Some Baptist institutions are doing work in the field of bivocational ministry," Chowning said. "However, no Baptist-related university, to my knowledge, has sought to establish an actual center which is committed to the overall advancement, academic training and recognition of bivocational ministers as an integral and important part of the church leadership corps for the 21st century."

The center will have an advisory council of leaders from Kentucky and around the country in the field of bivocational ministry to work with Campbellsville University, including Wilson of NAMB.

Various state Baptist conventions also will be invited to serve on the advisory council, along with key leadership within African-American Baptist churches, Chowning said.

University president Ken Winters said the school is uniquely positioned to fill this "Christian niche."

"Our university status provides the appropriate academic setting. The school of theology, in consultation with other schools and divisions of the institution, is poised to provide on-line courses of study for ministry students who may not be able to become full-time students," he said.

"The university will be able to bring the students to the campus periodically for weekend and short-term course work as needed," he added. "Ministry students will also be able to secure training in other fields as well that afford them other career path opportunities as well as enhancing their own Christian service."



ACTEENS CONFERENCE State Acteens panelists speak during the annual Kentucky Acteens conference April 9-10 in Louisville. The panelists helped launch Cross Walk, a year-long series of ministry events performed by Acteens teams throughout the state. About 550 Acteens and advisors attended the conference.

OPINION

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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Providing home & haven to our kids

By Tom Ehrich

Now that Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., has buried its dead and the gun lobby has done its ritual don't-blame-us, we can return our attention to Kosovo and the soaring Dow.

Or we can learn from the tragic massacre of students and a teacher by two classmates armed with assault weapons and an abiding rage.

A fellow member of Columbine's "Black Trenchcoat" subset offered a disturbing insight. While not seeking to excuse murderous behavior, she described life on the outside. In-crowd students taunted them, she said, and jocks throw them against lockers. Every day is a hellish gauntlet of scorn.

On the one hand, this is nothing new. Kids of all ages show remarkable cruelty. Many people are scarred

for life by the pecking orders, exclusionary crudities and bullying which constitute daily teen-age life.

On the other hand, the cost of such alienation may have gotten too high.

What is daily life really like for our children? I remember being bewildered the day my son described being beaten up at middle school.

To him it was nothing unusual. He blamed himself for forgetting that this particular hallway wasn't safe. I suddenly realized his school life wasn't like anything I myself had experienced.

We need to ask why our kids are hanging out at shopping malls and engaging in self-mutilation like pierced tongues, lips and noses.

Does our relentless pursuit of affluence have anything to do with it? Are children trying to escape homes that we have left empty and cold, or

where they don't feel safe because of our unbridled lust and anger?

What we can do is pay attention to our children and to each other's children. Children need adults who ask about their lives and listen to their answers. That takes time. It takes the very time we wish we had for ourselves.

I believe our children need faith—not that triumphalist faith which makes them scorn others, but a sense of being loved and valued. If our children are to learn faith, it will happen at home.

Maybe that's the key word—home. We can't become perfect parents. We can't protect our children from other people's imperfections. But what we can do is provide homes for our children—not just houses, certainly not tokens of our affluence, but safe havens, nests, places where they are treasured.

Tom Ehrich is a pastor, writer and software developer living in Winston-Salem, N.C. (RNS)

Bruce Truman
Owingsville

Minority voter

In response to Wayne Ward's questions in his thoughtful editorial: "Was everybody asleep? Did everyone miss the point?" (April 20), I want to answer, "No. No. Ginny and I were there, and we voted with the minority (seems as if we have done that rather consistently for 20 years). But we were like two drops of water in a wide lake. And all too many around us who noticed our vote against the administration seemed to be looking at us as if we had leprosy."

Some of us trained at Southern Seminary "when there were only heretical professors there" did believe and still believe in contextual exposition of the authoritative holy Scriptures. Bless you, Wayne.

Ted Sisk
Lexington

COMMENTARY

Littleton reminds us

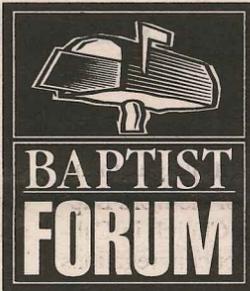
Conventional wisdom in today's society contends that two of the leading causes of violence are poverty and lack of education. Thus, many argue that the solutions to violent crime are to improve the public educational system or simply throw more money into deficient social programs.

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, the 17- and 18-year old assailants in Littleton, Colo., defy these arguments because they do not fit the ballyhooed stereotypes. Both were from affluent suburban neighborhoods, in which the median home price is \$200,000 and where 17-year-olds drive BMWs. Both boys were intelligent and educated, as displayed by their fluent German, their computer literacy and their technological savvy with which

they planned and executed such a hideous plan of mayhem, murder and carnage.

This latest chapter of an increasingly bloody and all-too-familiar tragedy shows that the source of crime is not poverty or ignorance. Instead, as Jesus said, "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders," Matthew 15:19.

The solution to violent crime is not to change a person's environment, but to change a person's heart, and this change is wrought by nothing but the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Littleton tragedy serves to remind us of our responsibility to take the gospel to every creature—to the rich as well as the poor, to the educated as well as the ignorant, and to the elite as well as the outcast.



**BAPTIST
FORUM**

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Missions education

The recent Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union annual convention in Elizabethtown was a delightful experience of missions information, worship, fellowship and conducting the annual business. I was captured by the inspiration and missions emphasis. Every session was filled with inspiration through drama, music, testimonies and messages.

The dramatic parade of 320 Girls In Action members was an inspiring moment and provided hope for the future. An offering was taken to provide Christmas gifts for missionaries and their families.

Emily and Keely Brandon, "missionary kid" twins at Georgetown College, shared their great joy and appreciation for cards, letters and the Christmas gifts. Their testimonies reminded me of how much the little we do is appreciated. When combined with the efforts of others there is a great impact for good and the kingdom.

The combined college choirs were awesome and reminded us of the value of our Baptist colleges and the impor-

ance of Partnership 2000.

The convention program overflowed with exciting missions information representing all dimensions of the Great Commission. Larry and Sharon Pumpelly, missionaries with Kentucky ties, shared with passion and urgency the challenge of international missions. Sharon shared stories of dramatic conversions and commitments to Jesus Christ.

I don't think anyone in attendance will ever forget the powerful, life-transforming story told by Lora Lee Smith. Converted from the

streets, she described an incredible ministry to the inner city as a North American missionary with Greater Cleveland Baptist Association.

A major missions fair featured missions in Kentucky sponsored by the Eliza Broadus Offering. The Eliza Broadus Offering supports nurture of missionary families, scholarships, special ministries and projects as well as WMU training, education and ministries. However, the largest portion of the offering



Bill Mackey

FAMILY

Have you insured your ability to earn money?

By Don Spencer

Most young couples think about the need for life insurance. Often, however, they forget to insure one of their most valuable earthly assets—their

earning power.

For a young adult, the odds are much higher of having a period of disability before age 65 than of dying before age 65.

Death of a family's primary "bread winner" can be tragic. But even in death, the family can deal with their grief and then, with God's help, move on with their lives. If a primary bread winner should suffer an extended period of disability, it sometimes can be worse than death for the family. The least that person can do is protect, or insure, his or her earning power.

We call it "disability insurance," but it really is "income insurance" since it insures a certain level of income if one becomes disabled. In shopping for disability insurance, there are several key issues to consider:

■ How does the policy define "disability," both for your occupation or any occupation?

■ Will benefits be paid for partial disability or must it be total?

■ Is the benefit affected by Social Security or worker's compensation benefits?

■ Is the premium waived when one is disabled?

■ Are there any exclusions?

■ Does the policy distinguish between disability due to illness and injury?

■ Are there rehabilitation benefits?

■ How long is the waiting period before benefits begin?

■ How long will disability payments continue?

■ Does coverage extend past age 65?

■ Is there an adjustment in coverage due to cost of living?

■ How does the policy treat two periods of disability for the same illness/injury?

■ Are there other enhancements to the policy?

■ How do costs compare?

■ What is the company's record of service to its customers?

There are numerous variations in plans available. As always, be a smart shopper. Compare several plans before making a decision. Above all, make sure you have protected your earning power.

Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department



Engaged couple questions the need for premarital counseling

Q: Our pastor said he won't marry us without premarital counseling. Why is that so important?

Premarital counseling can be helpful for many reasons. Some couples don't realize the many issues that can arise when two people choose to live their lives together. So many issues are crucial to having a successful marriage, including learning to communicate, resolving conflicts, setting priorities and making decisions together as a team. Unfortunately, many couples overlook these issues as they begin their marriage relationship.

Premarital counseling can help couples evaluate how well they have addressed these issues thus far. Counseling also allows them to assess their strengths and weakness—both individually and as a couple—and to work on areas where they have the greatest potential for problems in their marriage. While it's impossible to address every issue that could possibly become a problem, premarital counseling can at least help couples prepare for those issues which are most likely to be problematic.

Premarital counseling also can help couples feel more comfortable with the idea of counseling in general, so that when problems arise, they might be more inclined to seek help before it is too late.—*Susan Howell*

Q: How much should I confide in my children?

Popular television shows and movies increasingly feature plots in which adults confide in children, who in turn often come up with answers or solve problems for the adults.

The trend reflects a growing tendency in our society to see children as competent to handle adult concerns and problems—a tendency that contrasts sharply with previously held ideas about childhood as a time of innocence that needs protecting.

The temptation to confide in improper ways might be greater for a single parent who may lack the emotional support of a partner to talk things out with. But careless confiding in any family structure can confront children with situations that cause questions, doubts, fears, emotional upheaval and levels of physical stress that children simply should not have to face.

There are certainly things we should tell our children. There are problems and situations they become aware of, need to know about and may even ask about. But part of our responsibility as parents involves making good decisions about the amount of detail we give our children, as well as knowing when to protect them completely from ideas, issues and information.

Apart from the issue of whether or not children can handle adult problems, fears and frustrations is the question of whether they should have to. Children have the rest of their lives to deal with some of the harder aspects of life. Childhood should be as free as possible from such concerns and worries. Parental responsibility includes shielding children from anything that threatens their innocence and their sense of security and trust.

Resist the temptation to burden your children with adult situations, concerns and fears. When personal pressures of work, decisions, finances or relationships start closing in, find an adult friend to talk with.

When children ask questions about events and situations that have captured their attention, but that are beyond their grasp emotionally and developmentally, learn when to say, "That's something you don't need to worry about."—*David Garrard*

Family Forum writers are David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Susan Howell, assistant professor of psychology at Campbellsville University; Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville; and Al Shackelford, editor of *Mature Living* magazine. Send questions for *Family Forum* to *Western Recorder*, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.



The world needs our Baptist principles

By Dwight Moody

There has never been a time when the people of the world were more in need of the Christian witness of Baptist people. This need emerges in the midst of two trends among Baptists, namely, "baptistification" and "debaptistization."

Baptistification is a term coined several years ago by Lutheran minister and scholar Martin Marty. He used the word to refer to the widespread influence of Baptists in shaping the religious convictions and practices in America.

In other words, many of the things that characterize the Baptist way of being Christian have been adopted by other Christian groups.

To illustrate, let me mention three: "Bible reading" is the gathering of lay people to read and discuss the Bible; "convert dipping" is the immersion in water of people old enough to make a personal profession of faith; "ballot casting" is the democratic style of congregational decision making. Each of these is widely practiced among Christians and churches of various denominations.

In addition, two very important Baptist ideas have been embraced throughout Western culture, namely religious liberty and congregational autonomy.

To properly assess the impact of this baptistification, it only has to be noted that the 20th century's most powerful and important Christian movement, what we normally call the charismatic or Pentecostal movement, exhibits most if not all of these Baptist practices and convictions.

Yet just as this Baptist influence is at its height, many Baptist people are rethinking their use of the word Baptist. Consider Saddleback Community Church in California, which rapidly became a model for congregations all over the country; or Denver Seminary and Truett Seminary, both affiliated with national Baptist networks; or the newly renamed publishing house, LifeWay Christian Resources.

Last year at least one messenger to the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting objected when churches without the word Baptist in their name peti-

tioned to affiliate with the KBC.

If Baptist practices and convictions are of such influence throughout the Christian world, why are we hesitant to employ this word to describe ourselves?

There are several answers. Specialists like Leonard Sweet tell us that the younger generation—age 50 and under—have little interest in denominational identity, and have less loyalty to such structures. Thus dropping the name Baptist is a marketing tactic, like Kentucky Fried Chicken becoming KFC.

Others are aware that the word Baptist is now associated with people and policies that are a public relations nightmare. Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton are both Baptists, and each is an embarrassment to some groups of Baptists. Likewise, Disney boycotts and female submission has created, for most Americans, a negative image of Baptists.

These are legitimate reasons for uncertainty about the word Baptist, and they justify, to some extent, this trend of debaptistization.

The sad irony in all of this is that the peace and prosperity of the world may well depend upon a fresh and vigorous presentation of that most precious of Baptist ideals, namely, religious freedom.

All over this globe, national and international conflict is interwoven with religious intolerance. It is Muslim against Jew, and Catholic versus orthodox, and Hindu battling Sikh, and Christian at war with Muslim, and even Protestant at odds with Catholic.

What the world needs is a compelling vision of society shaped by freedom in matters of faith and conscience. This has been our chief contribution to human civilization. Our banner needs to be raised higher and carried with courage and consistency.

Baptist people and institutions should abandon our market-driven obsessions and our petty irritations with one another and join together, for the glory of God and the common good, to affirm the original, essential and inalienable right to profess, practice and promote our faith without fear of penalty, persecution or protest. This is our mission in the world today.

Dwight Moody is chaplain at Georgetown College

GUEST EDITORIAL

Why do you hide yourself?

By Tommy Valentine

Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? (Psalm 10:1)

As a child, visits to my grandparents occasionally included visits from great aunts and uncles. I remember one great uncle in particular, Uncle Jim.

Whenever Uncle Jim visited, he often teased that he was going to hold my nose to a grinder in my grandfather's shed. As a small child, I took him literally. So when I saw his car pull up at my grandparents, I most often hid upstairs in the house until he left. Though I wasn't convinced of it at the time, I know Uncle Jim had a loving and caring nature.

Though we outgrow hiding from uncles whose teasing scares us, and we outgrow hiding under the blankets from imaginary monsters in our bedroom closets at night, we really don't outgrow our tendency to hide. Hiding seems to stay with us as we go from childhood

to adulthood. What we hide from are changes. What remains constant are the reasons we hide.

We hide from our responsibilities to people and to the institutions we serve. We hide ourselves from the events of life that cause pain, grief and tears. We might even at times hide from those things that bring joy and gladness. We hide from the people who simply want to love us, and we hide from those who desire to hurt us. We hide from relationships and the commitment those relationships involve.

In the wake of the tragic events in Colorado, we hide from the possibility that such a tragedy could ever happen in our community. As the father of two small children, I'm tempted to hide from the uncertainty they will face in their lives. We also hide from God, whose only desire is to love us.

In essence, whether we hide as children or adults, we hide because of our fears. We hide from our fears. And it is no wonder; our fears at times are enough to overwhelm us. Maybe as adults we have come to understand that

our fears have a greater potential to be realized.

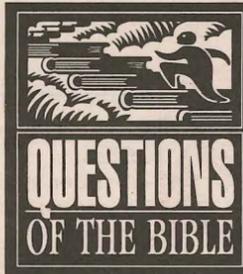
It seems in life, as the psalmist inquires, that at the times of trouble God hides, just as we do. If God grows tired and frustrated by all the evil in the world, surely God must want to hide at times. It's an interesting exercise to ask with the psalmist, "Why do you hide yourself?"

The psalmist answers his own question of God in Psalm 10:14 when he writes, "But you, O God, do see trouble and grief; you consider it to take it in hand." In other words, God doesn't hide. God faces what we ourselves must face—our greatest fears.

I still remember the summer days at my grandparents when my Uncle Jim would visit. I remember the fear and the hiding. I also remember that if my Daddy were outside at the time, I didn't need to hide because I trusted my Daddy to take care of me, even though Uncle Jim still would tease me.

In the same way, we can stop hiding from our fears, not because we magically have mustered a new-found strength to face our fears. We can stop hiding because there is one we can trust to face our fears with us. "You, O God, do see trouble and grief."

Tommy Valentine is pastor of First Baptist Church of Prestonsburg



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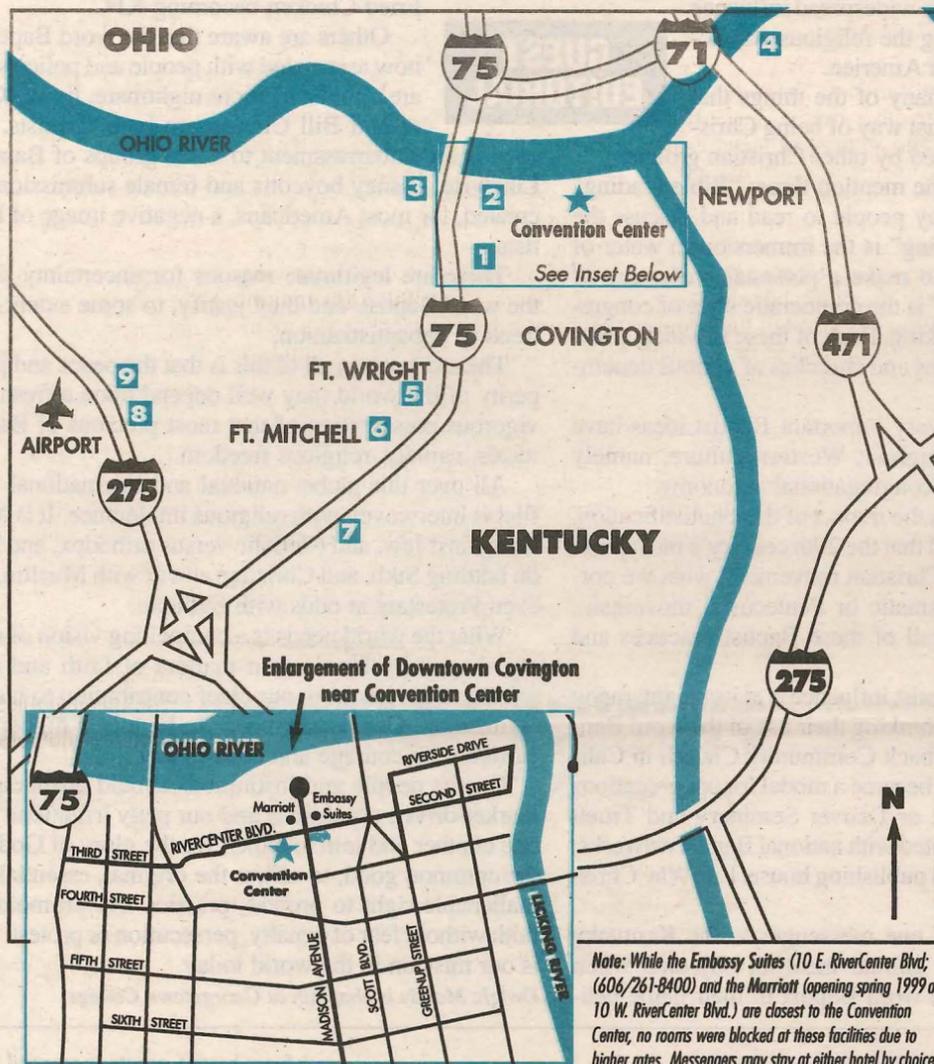
1999 KBC Annual Meeting

November 16-17, 1999

Northern Kentucky Regional Convention Center

50 East RiverCenter Boulevard

Covington, Kentucky



Note: While the Embassy Suites (10 E. RiverCenter Blvd.; 606/261-8400) and the Marriott (opening spring 1999 at 10 W. RiverCenter Blvd.) are closest to the Convention Center, no rooms were blocked at these facilities due to higher rates. Messengers may stay at either hotel by choice.

Parking Facilities

- Kenton County Parking Lot** - Corner of Madison Avenue and RiverCenter Boulevard
Rates: \$.75 each half hour; \$5 maximum 6 am-3 pm; \$3 maximum 3 pm-6 am; \$5 special events
- Kenton County Parking Garage** - 220 Madison Avenue
Rates: \$6 maximum up to 12 hours; \$10 - 12-24 hours; \$1.50 evenings 6 pm-6 am
- Embassy Suites** - Corner of Madison Avenue and RiverCenter Boulevard
Rates: \$.75 each half hour; \$5 maximum per day
- Marriott** - Corner of Madison Avenue and RiverCenter Boulevard
Rates: \$.75 each half hour; \$5 maximum per day
- Southbank Shuttle**
Rates: \$.25 per trip; pickup every 20 minutes at each location from 10 am-10 pm

Restaurants within walking distance of Convention Center

- Covington Landing** (at the Ohio river 1 block from Convention Center):
Applebee's; TGI Friday's; The Glass Onion; The Swamp
- Behle Street Cafe** (across street from Convention Center next to Embassy Suites)
- Marriott and Embassy Suites Restaurants** (across street from Convention Center)
- Coach & Four** - 214 Scott Blvd. (less than 2 blocks from Convention Center)
- Skyline Chili** - Near Scott Blvd. and Third Street (2 blocks from Convention Center)
- Aynie's Deli** - Near Scott Blvd. and Third Street (2 blocks from Convention Center)

Restaurants within a Mile of Convention Center

Restaurants in the **Quality Hotel Riverview** and **Holiday Inn Riverfront**; McDonald's; Waffle House; Burger King; Gold Star Chili; Taco Bell; White Castle; Hardee's; Frisch's Big Boy

Messengers are responsible for making their own reservations.

Kentucky Baptist Convention must be mentioned and reservation deadlines met to receive blocked room rates.

Guest room tax varies slightly between each town listed.

Non-smoking rooms were blocked whenever possible.

For more information, call Denise Withers, at (502) 245-4101, X212.



Covington

1 Quality Hotel Riverview - 668 W. Fifth Street - (606) 491-8600

Reservation Deadline: October 25

Rate: \$89 (single or double)

Amenities: restaurant; indoor pool; room service; sauna/jacuzzi; hair dryer; iron/ironing board; coffee maker; close to several fast food restaurants

Directions: From I-75, Exit 192 (Fifth Street)

2 Holiday Inn Riverfront - 600 W. Third Street - (606) 291-4300

Reservation Deadline: October 17

Rate: \$80 (1-4 persons; king-sofa, king-ottoman and 2 double beds available)

Amenities: restaurant; complimentary continental breakfast buffet; complimentary USA Today; hair dryer; iron; coffee maker; close to several fast food restaurants

Directions: From I-75, Exit 192

3 Hampton Inn Riverfront - 200 Crescent Avenue - (606) 581-7800

Reservation Deadline: November 1

Rate: \$79 (1-4 persons)

Amenities: indoor pool; exercise room; complimentary continental breakfast; close to several fast food restaurants

Directions: From I-75, Exit 192

Newport (2.5 miles from Convention Center)

4 Comfort Suites - 420 Riverboat Row - (606) 291-6700

Reservation Deadline: October 15

Rate: \$69 (1-2 persons); \$74 (3 persons); \$79 (4 persons)

Amenities: beautiful view of Ohio River and downtown Cincinnati; room service (lunch and dinner); complimentary continental breakfast; hair dryer; iron/ironing board; coffee maker; microwave; refrigerator

Directions: From 471, Exit 5 (next to Chart House Restaurant)

Ft. Wright (3 miles from Convention Center)

5 Days Inn Ft. Wright - 1945 Dixie Highway - (606) 341-8801

Reservation Deadline: October 15

Rate: \$43 (1-4 persons)

Amenities: restaurant

Directions: From I-75, Exit 188-B (next to Ramada)

Ft. Mitchell (about 4 miles from Convention Center)

6 Holiday Inn Ft. Mitchell - 2100 Dixie Highway - (606) 331-1500

Reservation Deadline: October 25

Rate: \$65 (single or double)

Amenities: restaurant; indoor pool; room service; sauna/jacuzzi

Directions: From I-75, Exit 188B

7 Drawbridge Estate - 2477 Royal Drive - (606) 341-2800

Reservation Deadline: October 15

Rate: \$73 (1-4 persons; main building)

\$63 (1-4 persons); Garison Building (detached from main building)

Amenities: restaurant; indoor pool; room service; sauna/jacuzzi

Directions: From I-75/71, Exit 186 (Buttermilk Pike)

Erlanger (near Greater Cincinnati Airport - 12 minute drive from Convention Center)

8 Holiday Inn Cincinnati Airport - 1717 Airport Exchange Boulevard - (606) 371-2233

Reservation Deadline: October 25

Rate: \$85 (1-4 persons; king and double beds available)

Amenities: restaurant; indoor pool; sauna; whirlpool; fitness center; hair dryer; iron; coffee maker

Directions: At I-275 and Mineola Pike, Exit 2

9 Baymont Inn & Suites - 1805 Airport Exchange Boulevard - (606) 746-0300

Reservation Deadline: October 16

Rate: \$59.95 (1-4 persons; double beds); \$61.15 (1-2 persons; king beds)

Amenities: complimentary deluxe continental breakfast; hair dryer; iron/ironing board; coffee maker

Directions: From 275, Exit 2 (Mineola Pike)

KENTUCKY

State fellowship learns of ministry to China's 'rock people'

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

SHEPHERDSVILLE—The semi-nomadic "rock people" of China, Burma and northern Thailand are among the world's poorest inhabitants.

The exotic hill tribes live on rocky hillsides. Population estimates of these subsistence farmers are as high as one million. Embracing a mixture of Buddhism and animism (a belief that spirits reside in everything), they are extremely resistant to the gospel message of faith in God through Jesus.

The Rock People are also a ministry field for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. At its recent spring meeting, the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship joined this effort by giving missionaries Rick and Ellen Burnette \$1,200 and pledges of prayer support.

"Few profess Christ as Lord, yet most live in stunning poverty," said Burnette, a former county agricultural agent who went to Thailand in 1994. "They have problems common to poor people—landlessness, lack of citizenship and no voice."

"Christ's example must be our

model," added his wife. "We need to understand their culture and world view. The question must be, 'What can I learn from them before I ask what can I do for them.'"

At the April 23-24 session at First Baptist Church of Shepherdsville, their talks helped spotlight how Kentucky Fellowship members can further the cause of Christ. The meetings drew about 100 registrants, although Coordinator John Lepper said 128 people attended the opening session.

The Burnettes appealed for assistance during their workshop on the Rock People. Blankets and clothing always are needed, Mrs. Burnette said. Because of climatic extremes, that includes warm and cold weather clothing, in children's and small adult sizes.

"That's a real witness to them, that people half a world around the world boxed up their things and sent them," she said.

Shipments must go through the U.S. postal service, since other delivery services get tied up in customs. Send in care of the Burnettes to the Thailand Baptist Missionary Fellowship, P.O. Box 29, Chiang, Mai, Thailand 50000.

Other needed support includes funding, giving money to help furnish water and food, and volunteering for medical teams coming to the region.

Survival for the residents is tough, Burnette said, as more people try to exist on smaller amounts of land. The tribes have depended on forests for supplies, but woodlands are being cleared or left temporarily unusable by reforestation programs.

To help, a CBF team works on a 15-acre tract owned by the Christian church in Thailand. There they grow crops, develop better agricultural methods and sources of clean drinking water, increase the animal population and coordinate health clinics.

The latter is vital in an area where AIDS is a serious problem. In some villages, up to 80 percent of the men are addicted to opium, he said.

The Burnettes also tell the people about Jesus, a challenge in the group whose language has 14 dialects and that knows little of the gospel.

"These people have no knowledge of the Bible," Mrs. Burnette said. "You can't go in and share a gospel message. We start with creation and go from there."

In the business portion of the meeting, Lepper reported that he has held

a dozen "dialogue meetings" around the state, attended by a total of 111 people. While he is the only full-time employee, the new budget includes funding to make the secretary's position a full-time position.

The state group's budget approved for 1999-2000, which began May 1, calls for expenditures of nearly \$144,000. Treasurer Robert Davis said receipts for the 1998-99 fiscal year were expected to reach \$125,000, compared to \$50,000 for the previous year.

The group also approved several changes in its by-laws and elected two members to fill vacancies on the coordinating council: Larry Burcham, pastor of First Baptist Church of Winchester; and Davis, a member of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville.

Officers for 1999-2000 include Moderator Bob Quisenberry, a member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Moderator Elect Mary Royals Driskill of New Hope Community Baptist Church in Jackson; Secretary Naomi Walker, music and children's pastor at Immanuel; and Davis, treasurer.

Next year's meeting will be April 28-29 at First Baptist Church of Winchester.

CBF leader discusses work with refugees

SHEPHERDSVILLE—Prayer, money and medical volunteers are the primary needs for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's work with Kosovo refugees, according to Grace Powell Freeman.

Freeman, CBF's missions education specialist, talked about the group's work with Kosovo refugees during the annual meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship.

A special offering after her address resulted in \$729 for relief efforts in that region.

Three missionary couples are on assignment there, said Freeman, who was Acteans consultant for Woman's Missionary Union in Kentucky from 1988-92.

The medical mission option is for doctors only, she said, because other possibilities have not been developed.

She called this work an example of what the organization terms "doing missions in a world without borders."

Ten more missionaries will join the agency's ranks at the general assembly in June in Birmingham, Ala. A replacement for retiring missions director Keith Parks also is expected to be named at the annual meeting.

While CBF representatives commonly attend state organization meetings, Freeman hoped to recruit volunteers for short-term assignments and its new "Global Service Corps."

The latter involves two-year missions, both domestic and overseas. Nationally, about 30 people have enlisted thus far and raise their financial support.

No one signed up at her workshop on short-term opportunities, but the educator added that a woman nearing retirement told her, "I never thought I could do this until today."

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Church issues range from incorporation to tax credit

By Ken Camp
Baptist General Convention of Texas

WACO, Texas (ABP)—Congregations must beware of a variety of legal snares, lawyers recently told participants at a church-state issues conference.

Three attorneys from the Fort Worth, Texas, firm of Bourland, Smith, Wall and Wenzel spoke on "Keeping Your Church Out of Court: Pitfalls to Avoid as Seen From the Pulpit" during a conference sponsored by George W. Truett Theological Seminary and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The attorneys identified several legal pitfalls common for churches:

■ **Incorporation and operation.** Neither incorporating nor declining to incorporate insulates a church

from legal hassles, Shiela Korb said.

A church must have the consent of a majority of its total membership in order to incorporate. While that may not be difficult for a new congregation, it can be a major hurdle for a long-standing church that continues to carry many non-resident or inactive members on its rolls, she said.

Another problem is that unless churches review their articles of incorporation periodically, they may not realize their period of duration has expired.

"The church's charter can be forfeited if this happens," she said. "It can be corrected by filing articles of amendment and making the period of duration perpetual."

■ **Bylaws.** Many churches don't understand that bylaws are required whether the congregation chooses to incorporate or remain unincorporated, Mrs. Korb added.

Bylaws must stipulate the requirements for a quorum, voting rights of members, information about how business meetings are called, the percentage vote required to approve items and who has authority to conduct business on the church's behalf.

Bylaws also should clarify procedures for calling and dismissing staff, for disciplining or withdrawing fellowship from disruptive members and for amending the bylaws, Mrs. Korb said.

■ **Charitable immunity.** A church might expose staff and volunteers to lawsuits if it fails to meet the requirements of laws protecting church workers from liability, Butch Korb told the conference.

In Texas, for example, to qualify for the protection under the state's Immunity and Liability Act, a church must meet organizational and operational tests, Korb said.

■ **Child abuse.** "Any person

who has cause to believe abuse or neglect has occurred has a duty to report," Korb said. Failure to report is a Class B misdemeanor in Texas, punishable by fine and imprisonment.

That duty overrides all privileges, such as the normally privileged communication between a member of the clergy and a person seeking spiritual counsel, he added.

Another pitfall is the failure of churches to implement prudent policies concerning the prevention of child abuse in a church.

■ **Taxes.** The IRS "\$250-substantiation rule" stipulates that a donor must receive a receipt from the church for all contributions of \$250 or more. The receipts must be

provided prior to the filing of the donor's tax return. Otherwise, the IRS will deny the charitable deduction if the donor is audited.

The "\$75-disclosure rule" states the church must provide a donor at the time of a donation a receipt for a "quid pro quo" payment of more than \$75. The receipt must state the amount of payment, the value of an item purchased, and stipulate that only the difference is deductible.

For instance, a church might hold a golf tournament in which participants pay a set fee to participate with the understanding that proceeds go to a charitable cause. The church should provide participants a receipt noting the value of green fees, golf cart rentals and any souvenirs such as shirts or golf balls provided to those who play. The receipt should indicate that only the difference between the total entry fee and the total amount of the itemized list is deductible.



Keeping your church out of court

Liability land mines

Church premises often are riddled with liability land mines, said Larry Conley, state business director for Guidant Insurance Group in Kentucky. He said churches should especially watch for:

■ **Loose handrails, tears in the carpet and other maintenance problems.** Older members and guests are especially at risk for slipping and falling, and may be more likely to sustain a serious injury. Even areas of the church that aren't routinely used, such as balcony areas, should be maintained.

■ **Overuse and misuse of extension cords.** Too many extension cords plugged into the same outlet or extension cords left where they can become worn and frayed pose a fire hazard.

■ **Using furnace rooms as storage space.** Easter pageant costumes and Christmas decorations propped up next to the furnace may present a fire hazard.

■ **Improperly stored paint.** Paint and supplies are highly combustible and should be stored with great care.

■ **Improperly secured baptismal pools.** Baptismal pools should be emptied immediately after use and secured when full. Small children are especially at risk of falling into baptismal pools and drowning.

Lawyer says 4 steps can reduce likelihood of abuse & lawsuits

WACO, Texas (ABP)—Churches can help prevent child abuse and protect themselves and their workers from lawsuits by putting together prudent policies, a Texas attorney told participants at a Baptist-sponsored church-state conference.

Liability arises because of alleged negligence in selection, supervision and retention of workers with children, Fort Worth attorney Butch Korb told participants in a conference sponsored by Truett Seminary and the Baptist Joint Committee.

Korb suggested four actions churches can take:

■ **Adopt worker-screening policies.** The courts have ruled that churches and charitable organizations have a duty to exercise reasonable care in selecting workers who are in contact with children, Korb said. Screening is needed both for volunteer and paid work-

ers, he said.

■ **Follow the "two-adult" rule.** At no time should one adult be left alone with children, Korb said. Having at least two adults present takes away the opportunity for a bad worker to commit an act of child abuse. It also protects good workers from false claims of abuse by providing a corroborating witness, he added.

■ **Practice the "six-month" rule.** Churches should determine a "reasonable time," usually at least six months, to become acquainted with new members before recruiting them to work with children, Korb suggested.

■ **Employ "due diligence."** Document everything, Korb suggested. That includes writing down every step taken in the selection and supervision of workers with children, he said.



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Columnist links school deaths to abortion

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—School violence is a logical outcome for a society that fails to recognize the link between abortion and moral decay that leads to mass murder, according to conservative newspaper columnist Mona Charen.

Speaking at the Louisville Right to Life banquet April 23, she said that in 1973 the Supreme Court sent a message to society that if a life is inconvenient, it's OK to just get rid of it.

Twenty-six years later, the public shouldn't be surprised when people disrespect life, she said.

"You cannot kill the unborn and then expect the lessons of that callousness and that cruelty will not have a corrupting influence on the rest of society," said Charen, whose column appears in about 200 newspapers nationwide.

The Washington, D.C.-based writer said psychologists and social workers who discuss violent video games or the need for better conflict resolution to reduce teen violence miss the point.

She called it "mind boggling" that people fail to recognize the deep-seated reasons behind young men visiting neo-Nazi Web sites, building bombs and dressing in repugnant styles.

"We are dealing with something far beyond anger management," said the mother of three children, one of them adopted. "We're dealing with serious corruption of the human soul."

The question is not why the shootings happen, but why they didn't occur 30 years ago since there always have been unhappy teenagers, she said. Among the changing factors in society, she said, are:

■ Disintegrating families. Half of the children in America will experience broken homes, she said. Even when both parents are present, they

pay too little attention, she added.

■ A wave of "cultural pollution," from video games to movies to television. Many radio stations air disgusting music and other material, and even diligent parents are often powerless to shield their children from it, she said.

■ Increased birth rates among single mothers. "It's amazing how far we can fall in 25 years," Charen said. "This nation has become so wealthy that nearly every family has a microwave oven, cell phone, designer sneakers and a two-car garage. But the thing that children need to be happy—the love of two, committed marriage parents, a stable home and reliable rules of conduct—have been denied them."

Reminders of a morally lapsed society appear nearly every day, she noted. She cited a poll of Harvard Business School students in which 40 percent said they would cheat their employer if the students knew they wouldn't get caught.

She mentioned a pair of well-publicized cases where teens gave birth and threw the babies in the trash.

"Where did nice, seemingly normal, ordinary, middle-class American kids get the idea that you can dispose of a child like so much trash?" Charen asked. "From the Supreme Court, the president, Planned Parenthood and the entire pro-abortion movement."

When Roe vs. Wade was announced, ethicists, theologians and legal experts warned that the case was the first step on a slippery slope that would lead to dispensing with all inconvenient lives, she said.

Because society ignored those voices, she said, it is reaping a harvest of assisted suicide. She said leading advocate, Dr. Jack Kevorkian, paints himself as compassionate, but her investigation of some of his 100 clients showed otherwise.

One was a 39-year-old woman who complained of suffering from multiple sclerosis, which isn't fatal, Charen said. When the coroner did an

autopsy, he found no evidence of any disease.

Others weren't sick at all, but were suffering from physical or emotional distress, such as the woman beaten by her husband two days before visiting Kevorkian, she said.

"Assisted suicide is seen as great autonomy of the individual; your life is your property to do with as you please," she said. "That's just like (arguments) that the fetus is the property of the mother, to do with as she pleases."

"People who are dying, who are sick, need our compassion and our help," she added. "They don't need a shove toward the grave."

In an interview before her speech, Charen said abortion opponents are seeing victories despite many reasons to get discouraged. In the debate over an abortion procedure called "partial birth abortion" by its opponents, many leading Democrats opposed the practice, which she said signaled a breakthrough.

Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle even proposed legislation to restrict abortion after a fetus can survive outside the womb, which she said would reduce the numbers greatly if it passes.

Pro-life supporters must take opportunities where they find them, she said, such as dropping rigid insistence on a "Human Life Amendment," which has no chance of passing, and making gradual progress.

"I think the partial birth (ban) was the first example of the movement saying, 'All right, we're going to step back from seeking total transformation of this regime and look at how we can chip away at the number of abortions that are taking place.'"

Whether Bill Clinton's two vetoes of that ban prove to be a key that advances the anti-abortion agenda, she said, supporters must continue trying to change the public's mind, "show them the truth" and keep the debate going.

Killer's parents don't know what happened, minister says

LITTLETON, Colo. (RNS)—Tom and Sue Klebold "have got to be the loneliest people on the planet," said the minister who officiated at their youngest son's funeral April 27.

"They thought they had been good parents," Don Marxhausen added. "Tom Klebold told me he thought he had a good finished product."

Their son, Dylan Klebold, 17, would have graduated from Columbine High School this spring and was planning to attend the University of Arizona in the fall.

Instead, on April 20, he and friend Eric Harris, 18, allegedly killed 12 students and one teacher and injured almost two dozen classmates in the worst school shooting in U.S. history. Harris and Klebold then killed themselves.

The Klebolds "are like people who have been run over by a truck, and then the truck backed up over them," Marxhausen said. "They lost their son, but their son was also a killer."

Marxhausen, pastor of St. Philip Lutheran Church in Littleton, was pastor to the family for about eight months five or six years ago, he said.

After the shootings, Marxhausen made it known "through the grapevine" that he would aid the family if they wished. Word came back that they were interested, and he officiated at the private service.

With only 15 people in attendance and such "awkwardness and tension" hanging in the air, Marxhausen said he suggested that everyone "use some time just to talk about Dylan."

While friends of Dylan Klebold and Harris said the two wore swastikas, shouted "Heil Hitler!" during bowling class and chose the anniversary of Adolf Hitler's birthday for their rampage, Tom Klebold "said he didn't know where the Nazi stuff or the violence came from," Marxhausen said.

The family kept only a BB gun in the house and used it just to scare away the woodpeckers, Marxhausen said.

Though Sue Klebold was raised Jewish, the family observed religious rituals of both Judaism and Christianity.

In his eulogy, Marxhausen used scriptures from both the Old and New Testaments. From the Old Testament he recalled the story of King David, whose son, Absalom, was killed trying to take over his father's kingdom.

Marxhausen also used the familiar 23rd Psalm, which has been used in funerals for several of the Columbine victims, and the Lord's Prayer from the New Testament.

In his eulogy for Dylan, Marxhausen stressed God's love and healing power.

"God, who knows about suffering and pain and loss, wants to reach out to you," he said in the eulogy. "God, who raises up and lifts up after the journey through the valley, will do so in time and in surprising ways."

"Some people will run from you; there will be others who will come to you," he said. "There is God's mercy and there is the mercy of others. True enough, there will be those who do not know grace and will want to give only judgment. But God will reach out to you through those who know his grace."

"I have no idea how you are going to heal. God still wants to reach out to you and will always reach out to you in some way," he said.

Marxhausen said he knows from his own daughter that Dylan "was an outcast" at Columbine. Sarah Marxhausen, a Columbine grad now in college, told her father that Dylan often sat alone in the school cafeteria. She would go over and sit with him and play cards.

Dylan was registered and had already paid his dorm fees at the University of Arizona for the fall term, Marxhausen said. But he said "there was a part of Dylan's center that wasn't filled. There was some anger, but I don't know at what."

Marxhausen said he has learned from many people "there was a lot of rage in Harris" and that Klebold followed him "because he was afraid of his safety and that of his family if he left Harris."

One student told Marxhausen, "With Harris you either follow, or get completely away from him."

Killers included in memorial, stirring different responses

LITTLETON, Colo. (RNS)—Crosses bearing the names of Columbine High School gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold have been added to those honoring their 13 victims in the bloody shooting.

The crosses, placed atop a hill near the school in Littleton, Colo., have drawn mourners who have praised and criticized the wooden monuments to the assailants, who opened fire at the school on April 20.

The crosses for the dead gunmen were erected anonymously.

"We allowed all this horrible violence on TV and the movies," said Jean Carney, 79, of Denver. "The whole society failed them. I'm glad to see they put something up for them."

He wrote on Klebold's cross: "May God have mercy on your soul. Sorry we all failed you."

On both crosses, other sayings included "Hate breeds hate" and "I forgive you." A simple question also was written on Klebold's cross:



"Why?"

While some said including the crosses for the killers was appropriate, others were angered by their presence.

"I don't think it's right to have

the killers up here with the victims," said Anna Whitcomb, 21, of Denver. "People come here to mourn and to pay respect to the innocent victims. Dylan and Eric were not the innocent."

Scholarships for low-income kids sparks vouchers debate

The conflict underscores a growing national debate over how to improve education in the public schools.

By Ryan Rockwood
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The nation's largest private scholarship program last week awarded 40,000 low-income children with four-year scholarships to private and religious elementary and junior high schools across the nation.

The awards immediately sparked a debate on private and public schools and the role of vouchers in education.

"It is time to start seeking a good education wherever it can be found," said Children's Scholarship Foundation Chairman Ted Forstmann at the April 21 award ceremony in New York. The scholarships are worth a total of more than \$160 million.

But the awards were criticized as ineffectual by a liberal church-state watchdog group which tracks education issues. According to People for the American Way, real gains in education will occur only by strengthen-

ing public schools.

The conflict underscores a growing national debate over how to improve education in the public schools. School vouchers, or certificates that can be spent at public or private schools—including religious schools—have been proposed as one solution. Publicly funded pilot voucher programs are currently underway—and under court challenge—in Milwaukee, Wis., and Cleveland, Ohio.

Political and religious conservatives, favoring competition and eager to gain funding for religious schools, traditionally have favored vouchers.

Liberals and moderates, meanwhile, generally consider vouchers a faulty solution, saying they drain needed tax money away from public schools. But the debate extends beyond the academic as groups from teachers unions to investors have a financial stake in the outcome. For example, People for the American Way claims private-sector investors stand

to gain billions from privatization.

In its report, the group accused top CSF officials and financial backers who have investments in private schools with conflicts of interest.

Children's Scholarship Fund did not respond to the charges and did not return calls requesting an interview.

Also singled out in the report were numerous conservative, religiously oriented groups, including the Family Research Council.

PFAW said religious schools, which frequently make "religious development" as their most important objective, should not be granted public funding because that would constitute a government support of religion.

But Jennifer Marshall, education policy analyst for the Family Research Council, said vouchers and the private Children's Scholarship Fund awards give kids "another option."

She called the PFAW criticisms "very mean spirited," and compared

complaints against the scholarships to "kicking Mother Teresa."

Generally, both conservatives and liberals agree a crisis exists in public schools—a crisis sharply illustrated by the number of people seeking to get their children out of them. Despite the fact that the Children's Scholarship Fund is only a partial scholarship—families are required to contribute about \$1,000 a year—the group said it received 1.25 million applications for this year's round of awards.

In some cities, the Children's Scholarship Fund reported dramatic levels of participation. In Chicago, it said, 26 percent of the eligible population applied; 29 percent in New York; 33 percent in Washington, D.C.; and 44 percent in Baltimore.

"The old debate is over," Forstmann said. "These families have ended it. In anybody's book this is a thunderous demonstration of dissatisfaction with the present system—and of the demand for alternatives."

Bioethicist: Useful churches will face difficult reproductive issues

Continued from page 1

"There has been a revolution in reproductive technology," McGee said. That technology has advanced exponentially in the last 10 years, from in-vitro fertilization to genetic mapping and cloning.

The number of genetic tests has grown from 85 to 890, but the number of genetic counselors has not kept pace, he added.

Due largely to the growth of managed health care, genetic tests increasingly are being performed by general medical practitioners rather than by costly specialists, McGee said.

Since non-specialists are performing the medical procedures, couples increasingly will turn to churches for counseling on issues related to infertility and alternative approaches to becoming parents, he predicted.

"What does it mean to be infertile? The cure offered is to give you

a different kind of child. It doesn't fix the equipment. It's not a cure for the dysfunction," McGee said.

Once a couple gets "under the hood" trying to fix the problem of childlessness through reproductive technology, new ethical dilemmas arise, he said. If the goal is to make a baby that looks like the parents, and if science makes that kind of designer reproduction possible, what's to prevent the prospective parents from also wanting to choose the baby's IQ or personality type, he asked.

If reproductive practices are ever regulated, it will more likely come from the civil courts than the legislature, McGee said. He predicted a rise in lawsuits based on "failure of expectations" when designer babies don't turn out as their parents envisioned.

Churches and individual Christians should approach the revolution in reproductive technology with gratitude tempered by caution, the elder McGee

advised.

Rather than yielding to a "technological messianism" that promises designer children on demand, he suggested, "We get the kind of children that we want through nurture, education and old-fashioned acts of responsibility."

While approaching technological advances cautiously, Christians should not be paralyzed by fear of the unknown, Dan McGee said.

"We always act without full knowledge of all the consequences," he said. "Life is lived on the slippery slope. There are not many broad, flat lands of absolute moral certainty."

Rather than acting in isolation, couples should be made to feel welcome within churches where there is a shared wisdom and a continuing dialogue on difficult issues, he said. "We need to create communities of conversation."

The number of genetic tests has grown from 85 to 890, but the number of genetic counselors has not kept pace, said Glenn McGee of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Bioethics.

Changing medicine, constant care

I have benefited from the medical and pastoral care ministry of Baptist healthcare all my life.

At age 3, I spent weeks in Mississippi Baptist Hospital with rheumatic fever. My father spent the last 10 months of his life in the Memphis Baptist Hospital. Upon moving to Kentucky in 1970, I had minor surgery in the Kentucky Baptist Hospital in Louisville. Our two sons were born and treated during their growing-up years at Baptist East in Louisville, and I too have been a patient there. I served as a volunteer fundraiser to build Baptist East.

"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching ... preaching ... and healing every disease and sickness," according to Matthew 9:35.

An institutional healing ministry is a crucial ingredient in our Kentucky Baptist cooperative effort to touch people's lives in Jesus' name. How fortunate we are to have that ingredient through Baptist Healthcare System. BHS has an ongoing commitment to its Baptist heritage and its Christ-centered approach to healthcare delivery. It has modeled its service ministry around the servanthood of Christ with a concern for wholeness of body, mind and spirit of every person. BHS' God-

given call to provide quality, competent care in the contexts of a caring, Christian community and changing medicine is a tremendous challenge. This ministry deserves your prayerful and financial support.

I give thanks to our Lord for BHS President Tommy Smith, the board of directors and the thousands of volunteers and staff who are extending 24 hours a day in behalf of Kentucky Baptists the healing ministry of Jesus to thousands of patients. They are doing all they can to meet the emotional and spiritual needs of patients and their families without regard to their ability to pay and within reasonable bounds of responsible stewardship. In addition, BHS' medical and support staff are involved directly in a variety of medical mission partnerships with Kentucky Baptists.

On this Mother's Day I encourage you prayerfully to consider making a lasting difference through an endowment or trust for the perpetual benefit of this Christ-centered healing ministry.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223; (888) 254-5701

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen



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Dare to Care Food Bank is Kentucky's only community-wide emergency food program. The organization uses donations of money, food, and volunteer help to relieve and prevent hunger and malnutrition.

Study group proposes gambling moratorium

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A federal commission studying the impact of gambling voted April 28 to recommend a "moratorium" on gambling expansion until further studies are completed and to urge state and local governments to evaluate the issue more closely by forming their own commissions.

Culminating a two-day meeting of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission in Washington, the fiercely contested recommendation passed by a 5-4 vote.

Although the report is not final and can be amended before it is due to be presented to the White House, Congress, governors and Native American leaders on June 18, the impassioned dissent over the recommendation was indicative of a sharply divided commis-

sion which has struggled to work together for the past 22 months.

The controversy centered on a section of the report-in-progress which contained this sentence: "Some policymakers at all levels may want to impose an explicit moratorium on gambling expansion while awaiting further research and assessment."

Supporters of the moratorium said a pause in the gambling industry's growth is necessary until more comprehensive studies can be done.

"What we're saying is: There's not enough information, we need more research, we need more data, and whatever direction you're going to go, a pause is a prudent course at this point in time," Commission Chairwoman Kay James told Associated Press.

But Commissioner Robert Loescher, an Alaska businessman and Native American, opposed the recommendation.

"I have a problem with the notion that we're going to stop the world or pause or create a moratorium" to wait for more research, he said.

Other pro-gambling members of the commission agreed. Terrence Lanni, chairman of MGM Grand Inc., said he plans to write a minority report.

Commissioner John Wilhelm, who represents casino workers as general president of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union, said that while pro-gambling commissioners are willing to face the industry's social costs, the other side doesn't care about jobs.

May 6 scheduled as U.S. National Day of Prayer

WASHINGTON (RNS)—More than 20,000 prayer events are scheduled to take place on the National Day of Prayer, which will be observed on May 6.

Events are planned at the U.S. Capitol as well as churches, schools, prisons and other locations across the country.

The 1999 theme is "Light the Nation ... with Prayer."

Officials of the National Day of Prayer Task Force are expecting more than 2 million people to attend related events.

"Our prayers can change the course of history," said Shirley Dob-

son, chairman of the task force and wife of James Dobson, the popular host of the Christian radio program "Focus on the Family."

In a statement, she added that the time of prayer is especially appropriate following the April 20 shooting of students in Littleton, Colo.

"If people of faith join together, I'm convinced our prayers will have a powerful impact on our country and help heal the wounds of tragedies like the shooting in Littleton," she said.

Along with the task force, the National Religious Broadcasters and other groups will co-sponsor the Nationally Broadcast Concert of Prayer, a

prayer meeting that will be broadcast 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. EDT May 6 on radio, TV and the Internet.

Among the radio and TV stations that will carry the event are Moody Radio Network and FamilyNet Television.

A Webcast will be available at crosswalk.com and will include virtual prayer rooms and audio and video streaming.

The special day was established in 1952, but has gained prominence since 1988, when President Ronald Reagan signed a bill setting aside the first Thursday in May for its observance.

U.S. teen pregnancy and abortion rates still declining

NEW YORK (RNS)—Teen pregnancy, birth and abortion rates continued to decrease in 1996, the Alan Guttmacher Institute reported last week.

Between 1995 and 1996, the most recent figures available nationally, the teenage pregnancy rate, including births, abortions and miscarriages, dropped 4 percent from 101.1 to 97.3 pregnancies per 1,000 women between the ages of 15 and 19. The teen birthrate declined 4 percent, and the abortion rate declined 3 percent.

Since its peak in 1990, the pregnancy rate has dropped 17 percent. The institute, a nonprofit group focusing on reproductive health research, released the new data April 29.

Most of the decrease in the overall U.S. pregnancy rate is due to steep drops in the early 1990s in the pregnancy rate of sexually experienced teenagers. The institute attributes most of the decline to slight increases in sexually active teens using contraception, teens using long-acting, highly effective methods and modest reductions in failure rates of those using oral contraceptives and condoms.

"About 20 percent of the decrease since the late 1980s is because of decreased sexual activity, and 80 percent of the decrease is because of more effective contraceptive practice," said Jacqueline Darroch, vice president for research at the institute based in New York and Washington.

Abstinence proponents have said programs they support are the key to the lower pregnancy rates among teens.

"Abstinence is the only thing working to bring a real decline in the number of out-of-wedlock pregnancies," said Cathy Brown, director of Why Life?, the youth division of the American Life League in Stafford, Va. "Virginity is up 11 percent over all ... and I don't think there's any question that abstinence is more reliable than a condom or birth control pills."

Helping refugees

By Robert Dunston

All of us are aware of the struggle in Kosovo. Our churches have been praying for a peaceful and quick resolution to the conflict. While we pray in the comfort of our churches and homes, those who are most affected live in refugee camps wondering if and when they might return home.

About 20 Cumberland College students decided to do something to help the refugees who are pouring into Albania from Kosovo. Jane Whitaker, director of our community service and leadership programs, became the staff liaison for this important work.

Fundraising activities were planned immediately. One of the first and most successful involved students donating to have a particularly cooperative faculty or staff member get hit in the face with a pie. Several of our faculty and staff members participated, and the students responded enthusiastically. For every \$5 raised for an individual, he or she would be hit with one creme pie. Since the event was held in conjunction with a campus-wide picnic and carnival, response was excellent.

The pie-in-the-face contest was supplemented by a football toss

competition. The combined events raised more than \$500. While this amount seems insignificant compared to the large number of refugees entering Albania, Baptist World Aid can feed a family of six for \$40 a month. The students decided to send money through this organization because Whitaker knows a missionary from Nova Scotia, her home, who is working directly with the refugees.

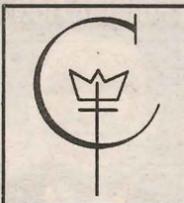
In addition to the special fund-raising events, a bake sale is being held each day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and donation jars have been placed around campus. On Tuesday, May 4, two additional events are planned. One is a "fast-a-thon" in

which people are encouraged to skip lunch and donate what they would have spent to the refugees. A campus-wide yard sale will raise additional funds.

At the present time, more than \$650 has been raised and sent to Baptist World Aid. In addition to the fundraising, the students also are raising awareness among their peers of the situation and the needs of the people.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Imploding in the vacuum

In the wake of Pearl, Paducah, Jonesboro, Springfield and now Littleton, our nation has fallen into a sad routine.

After the lives are lost, our president offers his prayers and the prayers of his country. After the lives are lost, thousands gather in houses of worship to mourn and to seek God's comfort. Like many of you, I wonder when we as a society are going to apply our faith and religious values in advance of such tragedies.

In the name of inclusion, a culture has developed without many moral standards. The church has responded by establishing schools or teaching kids at home, building huge complexes and Christian life centers so we know where our kids are and reduce the odds that they will come in contact with things we'd rather they didn't.

While I applaud individuals and churches for taking responsibility of their immediate environments, I wonder if by circling the wagons we have neglected our responsibility to society as a whole. Those outside the safety of a Bible-believing body of Christ are living in a moral vacuum, and our

kids are imploding.

I am not suggesting that we abandon creating a safe subculture. I would caution us all to make sure our focus is not so internal that we fail to care for what's outside. Our government, our leaders, have decided that faith in God has only modest relevance to modern culture. The spiritual principles and values our founders used as mortar to build our society are falling out, and the structure is collapsing.

Our kids are frantically searching for guidance because they believe they must experience all life has to offer, even the most negative or destructive aspects. No wonder so many are overwhelmed by futility at an early age.

Now, more than ever, believers must be more vocal about the need for Christ and more overt in demonstrating what he has done for us. Children can smell a hypocrite a mile away, but a person who walks the talk will make a lasting impression.

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

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

73,000 teenagers at Christian rally commit to moral standards

PONTIAC, Mich. (RNS)—More than 73,000 teenagers gathered in Pontiac, Mich., at a two-day evangelical Christian conference that encouraged them to commit to "honorable standards."

In the end, tens of thousands of those attending affirmed a "Teenage Bill of Rights" that speaks of living honorably, telling the truth and refusing premarital sex, drugs and alcohol.

"The Teenage Bill of Rights is all about taking a stand for righteousness," said Ron Luce, president and CEO of Teen Mania Ministries, the Garden Valley, Texas-based organization that sponsored the "Acquire the Fire's Day One" gathering April 23-24 at the Silverdome.

"As you sign your name, you are making a covenant with your generation and a contract with your own destiny. ... You represent millions of others in your generation who need this. I say, 'Let the revolution begin!'"

The conference was filled with lively music, dance and drama as well as mentoring. But it was cast in the shadow of the deadly shooting April 20 at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. Christian leaders such as Jack Hayford, senior pastor of The Church on the Way in Van Nuys, Calif., and E.V. Hill, senior pastor of Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, joined the teens in prayer for those affected by the tragedy.

Christian youth speaker Josh McDowell spoke of the confession of faith of Cassie Bernall, a 17-year-old Columbine student who was shot after telling one of the two gunmen she believed in God. "I wonder if I would have stood for my faith like Cassie did," McDowell said. "Cassie is a modern-day martyr for Jesus Christ."

The "Acquire the Fire's Day One" conference, meant to symbolize the first day of the rest of their lives for the teens in attendance, is an extension of "Acquire the Fire" regional events Luce has held across the country since 1991.

Operation Rescue changing name & focus

BUFFALO, N.Y. (RNS)—Operation Rescue, which finished a week-long anti-abortion campaign in Buffalo, N.Y., April 25, has announced a change in name and focus.

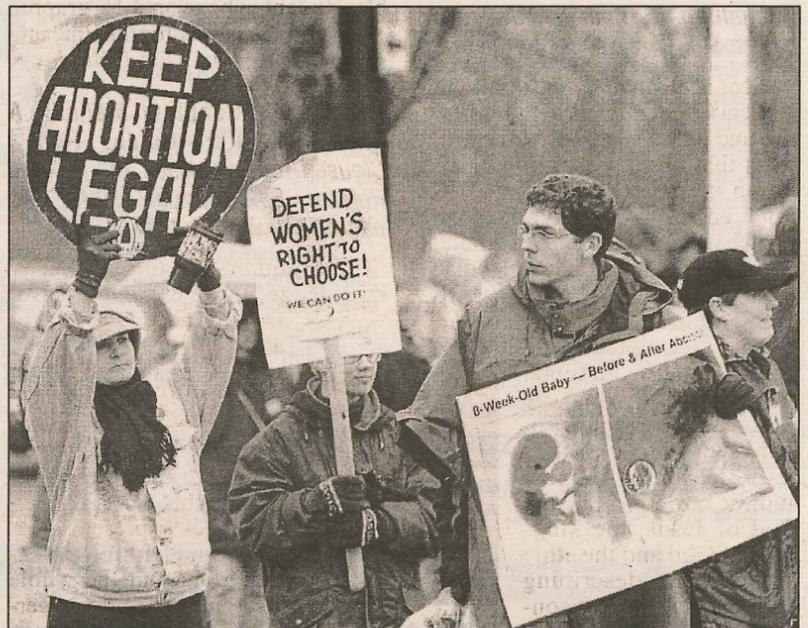
The campaign was much quieter and smaller than a similar effort held seven years ago. Only about 250 abortion opponents were estimated to have participated in the peaceful protests outside abortion clinics, high schools, doctors' offices, bookstores and hospitals. That total was much smaller than the thousands who attended the 1992 Spring of Life abortion protests.

Spokeswoman Eileen Schopf said the organization now will be known as Operation Save America and will fight not only abortion, but teen sex, homosexuality, child pornography and the absence of God from the classroom.

"We do want to save this country, not just the unborn," she said. "We want to show our love for this country and our desire to return to the moral grounds this country was founded on."

There were no indications of how many people might have stayed away from the event because of its timing. The protests were announced a week after Barnett Slepian, an abortion provider, was killed by an unidentified sniper in his home in a Buffalo suburb last October.

Glenn Murray, a Slepian family lawyer, said the doctor's widow "thinks it's despicable that in the af-



ABORTION PROTEST Pro- and anti-abortion demonstrators took to the streets in Buffalo, N.Y., April 17 as the two sides prepared for a week of "Operation Save America." Anna Klappia, of the National Organization for Women (left) and Jeannie Giffear (center) share a corner with Matt Bowman (right) carrying an anti-abortion poster. The October shooting of Barnett Slepian, a Buffalo abortion doctor, brought out both sides for protests at women's health clinics. (RNS/Reuters photo)

termath of her husband's murder they would plan a rally trying to exploit his death and eliminate access to abortion."

A multi-agency law enforcement effort maintained a strong presence at protest sites all week.

The only arrest during the events did not involve a protester. James

Krentel of Rochester was arrested Wednesday after he pretended to shoot an imaginary rifle into picketers at a hospital that provides abortions. He was charged with harassment and possessing a loaded weapon in a vehicle after police found two rifles, ammunition and knives in the car.

1999 spring revival, part 2

Last week I told you about our spring revival, and the students who made professions of faith. One student had said in his admission interview that he wanted to learn patience at Oneida Baptist Institute. Another said he wanted to make better grades, have a better attitude and be a better Christian. We hope the Lord will use us to help meet their needs.

Three of the students who made professions of faith in Jesus have been here for several months or all of this school year. One boy, "Benny" (not his real name), had been failing in school for the past two years. He came from a broken home. His attitude was not good, and he often refused to do chores around the house. We were told he was a slow learner, that he was easily distracted and was only in a few "normal classes."

While Benny isn't on the honor roll yet, he has made passing grades all year. He has a lot of "boy" in him. His mother told us he was a Christian, but they did not have a church home. I believe Benny is happy here and seems to enjoy his job. Hopefully, after a period of time we will be able to help him achieve his goals. We are glad Benny has allowed Jesus into his life.

Another student who made a profession of faith and has been here most of the year is "Tina." Tina is a middle school student and is also from a broken home. Her mother told us Tina was failing in school, had an I-don't-care attitude and wanted to be the boss. We were told that at school she had a "smart mouth" and disrespect for her teachers.

Tina is still struggling academically. We are not sure yet whether her academic problems are from her attitude or from a learning disability. We are beginning to believe she may have some learn-

ing difficulties, and hopefully we will be able to help her. The longer we work with her, the better will be our understanding of her academic needs and how to meet those needs. Overall, she does well for us and loves Oneida. She gets along with most of the other girls her age. Like many of our students, she loves attention, especially the attention of our faculty and staff.

"Kindra" also made a profession of faith during the revival. Both of her parents are deceased, and she is being raised by her grandparents. Kindra was a good student academically before she came to Oneida and was well-behaved in her former school. She and her younger brother were having some problems getting along, but that is common with many siblings. Kindra enjoyed being the big sister, even though her brother was not especially interested in her big sister authority.

Kindra is a middle school student, and has done well in the dorm. She always appreciates attention but is not demanding. She has been a delight to work with, and we try to ease the pain of her having lost both parents.

So our spring revival has been a real blessing to us again. In addition to these professions of faith, several students rededicated their lives to the Lord. There are others we had been praying for, and we were hoping they would make decisions to follow Christ. All we can do is continue to love them and try every day to express God's love for them through our words and lives.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

1991 grad leads more than just meetings

During 35 years of ministry among Southern Baptists, I've gone to many meetings. Some revivals were just "another series of meetings" on the church calendar.

At the first service of the spring revival at First Baptist Church of Roselawn, Ind., I told the people I didn't come to preach in "just another meeting." The pastor and people didn't intend that to happen. Under the leadership of 1991 alumnus Randy Gaskey, a very active revival committee organized and implemented plans that involved many members.

Each night, special emphases created interest, encouraged attendance and strengthened fellowship. Meeting at 6 p.m. encouraged attendance, and folks had time after the service to eat and visit and still get schoolchildren in bed before a late hour. Throughout the week, the invitation response brought people to pray, and individuals professed faith in Christ and united with the church.

Roselawn holds the dubious reputation among some as "naked city," because of two "sun clubs" that operate in the area. First Baptist influences the area for righteousness. An excellent spirit of unity and expectation pervades the

three Sunday worship services.

During the six years since Gaskey became pastor, attendance has increased from 85 to 160. The church averages 12-15 baptisms yearly. Once the church reached a high of 27 baptisms and recognition among the top 25 Southern Baptist churches of Indiana. They soon will break ground on an addition. The

church also seeks an additional staff member to work with music and youth. The church WMU does a "cookie ministry" with the International Seamen's Ministry at the Port of Indiana. Others assist with the migrant ministry.

Pat Roup told of Gaskey's "care for my husband and me during his months of illness with an inoperable brain tumor. Brother Randy invests his life in the lives of people." Member Doris Coates is grateful for the growth she has experienced under the pastor's teaching. She said, "You must be proud and thankful to see the faithful work of a graduate."

I am, and Indiana Baptists, as well as Kentucky Baptists, should feel the same.

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

BOOKS/TV

A New Vision for Israel: The Teachings of Jesus in National Context. Scot McKnight. Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999. 263 pages. \$21. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

Scot McKnight's contribution to biblical Christology is both informative and unsettling. His primary thesis is that "Jesus was a Jew whose vision of the proper religious life centered on the restoration of the Jewish nation and on the fulfillment of the covenants that God had made with the nation." Consequently, Jesus' ministry and vision cannot be understood apart from the national context within which he lived, taught and died.

McKnight probes Jesus' vision by looking at three key concepts: the God of Jesus, the kingdom of God and the ethic of Jesus. By describing both the historic and contemporary dimensions of each concept, McKnight provides valuable insight into key words and troubling aspects of the Gospels. For example, his discussion of Jesus' understanding of God as abba/Father provides rich fodder for preaching or teaching on the Lord's Prayer. This effort to contextualize Jesus' life and ministry will enrich any pastor or teacher's study.

And yet, McKnight's treatment of Jesus' vision and self-understanding is unsettling. While acknowledging that "Jesus' vision was indeed for the world—but only because it was first for Israel," he does not address the expansion of the Christian movement beyond Palestine. His argument does not address how Peter could rapidly move beyond this vision to assert that the church—Jew and gentile—can be the new people of God. His thesis is an unsettling reminder of Paul's words that we

gentiles are adopted children who have been grafted on to Israel's tree.

I commend this book to any Bible student who wants to grapple with who Jesus was for his time and should be for ours. *Jim Holladay*

The New Millennium Manual: A Once and Future Guide. Robert Clouse, Robert Hosack and Richard Pierard. Baker Books, 1999. 222 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦

The authors of this book acknowledge that there is plenty of material already published about the year 2000 and what it might mean for the world as we pass into it. It is precisely because of a lot of the material already out there that they have written this book. The authors seek to present a reasoned and faithful presentation and put the whole issue into the proper perspective.

The authors' faith stance is that the end is coming, sometime, with the return of Christ, but that no one knows, nor can know, the time. The book explores the variety of ways in which the return of Christ currently is viewed, in particular as it is connected with the idea of millennium. In addition, millenarianism throughout the history of the church gets a thorough treatment. Readers will be fascinated and amused by this trip through history. The previous focus on Christian thought is expanded in a chapter on other millennial movements. The most meaningful, and pastoral, instruction for addressing the year 2000 comes in the concluding chapter, which considers the implications of the millennium for the present.

Ministers and laypeople alike will appreciate this balanced and thoughtful voice in the midst of

prophecies of doom and tendencies to ignore the whole idea of millennium. *Wayne Hager*

Dying for a Drink: A Pastor and a Physician Talk about Alcoholism. Alexander Dejong, Martin Doot, Cecilia Hofmann. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999. 63 pages. \$8. ♦♦♦♦

Cecilia Hofmann "wove" the conversation between Alexander Dejong and Martin Doot into the book. Dejong, the pastor, is the alcoholic. Doot is the family physician who helps. The resulting book is a helpful tool for both those struggling with alcoholism and those trying to help—professional or not.

The book's greatest impact is in the personal story of Dejong and his wife, augmented by the professional reflections of Doot. Alcoholism is described not as a sin but as a disease of addiction which can be overcome through the care of family and professional treatment. The physiological explanations are all here, but they are not overwhelming. The sociological effects of alcoholism are presented powerfully as Dejong and his family recount his story. Doot adds helpful medical and psychological commentary.

Ministers have for years valued the book "Good Grief," by Granger Westberg, as a tool to put in the hands of the grieving person. In the same way, "Dying for a Drink" provides a valuable resource for self study and, ultimately, conversation.

I highly recommend this book as a pastoral resource tool for people and families destroyed by alcoholism. Laypeople will want to be acquainted with the book for the time, which comes to almost everyone with eyes to see, when alcoholism

touches one's family, friends or self. *Wayne Hager*

Survival or Revival: Ten Keys to Church Vitality. Carnegie Samuel Calian. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998. 150 pages. \$16. ♦♦♦♦

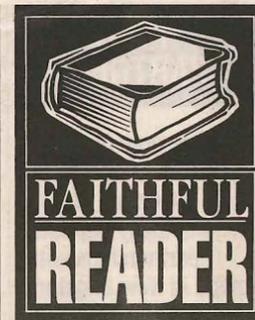
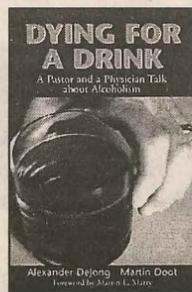
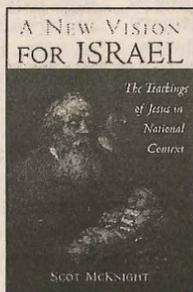
The crucial issue for congregations entering the 21st century, according to Carnegie Samuel, is whether they will "merely survive or come alive." At the heart of congregational vitality is a sense of anticipation. This sense of anticipation gives birth to a "spiritual view of what tomorrow can become that motivates and directs our ministry today." Without this visionary spirit, he claims, our congregations will languish.

Calian maintains that authentic visions are built on clearly identifiable "core values and beliefs."

Without clarity about the church's mission and purpose, congregations experience a loss of commitment when the going gets tough.

The bulk of this book is devoted to Calian's description of the 10 "building blocks to a visionary church."

Though the book offers a good overview of the building blocks for developing a congregational values statement, perhaps the most intriguing, thought-provoking part of the book was the "afterword." In the midst of the now familiar mantra—change is real, change is fast, be ready to change—Calian offers this gem: "Perhaps we should acquire a mindset that views all existing churches (of whatever size) as new church developments. ... To imagine each of our existing churches ... as new church developments might provide a fresh angle of vision." *Jim Holladay*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C., and Jim Holladay, pastor of Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville. Holladay and Hager welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: docholladay@juno.com or jwhager@surry.net

NBC's version of Noah and the Great Flood is theologically all wet

By Steve Rabey
Religion News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—The biblical story of how Noah and his family were protected by God and survived an ancient cataclysmic flood is one of humanity's most powerful sacred stories.

But the meandering and idiosyncratic rendering of the story that filled four hours of prime time May 2-3 was all wet, both theologically and cinematically.

"This is a show that will offend not only people of faith but anybody with the least bit of taste," said Colorado-based movie critic Warren Epstein, who watched a preview version of the program.

"Noah's Ark" made me look back fondly at "Waterworld," said Epstein, referring to the 1995 Kevin Costner film which was near-universally panned by critics.

"Noah's Ark" opened with the following warning: "For dramatic effect, we have taken poetic license with some of the events of the mighty epic of Noah and the Flood."

It seems certain that literary license has rarely been employed so haphazardly or so

unsuccessfully as it was here.

Only a few minutes into the program, viewers knew they were in deep water. After a gratuitously violent battle scene, Noah (played stoically by Jon Voight) was caring for the wounded when he was approached by Lot (F. Murray Abraham), who asked, "Hey, aren't you staying for the orgy?"

People who even briefly attended Hebrew or Sunday school might have wondered, "Didn't Lot live centuries after Noah?" And they would be right. For some mysterious reason, the program blended the biblical account of Noah with the story of Lot.

And even though Noah died centuries before God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, "Noah's Ark" has Noah and Lot living as friends and neighbors amidst these wicked cities.

Biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann teaches Old Testament at Columbia Seminary in Atlanta and has written a commentary on Genesis. He did not preview the program, but before it aired he found the program's comingling of biblical stories laughable.

"The flood story is a narrative, poetic whole that needs to be understood on its own terms," he said. "To intrude other elements into it disrupts, distorts, and destroys its artistic structure, and is not respectful of the flow of the narrative itself."

REVIEW

Unlike entertainment company Dreamworks SKG, which consulted hundreds of biblical scholars during the process of making its successful 1998 animated film about Moses, "The Prince of Egypt," Hallmark Entertainment allowed writer Peter Barnes and director John Irvin to drench "Noah's Ark" with a flood of confusing and conflicting messages.

As Southern Baptist official Bill Merrell told Baptist Press, "The producers would have done themselves and the viewing public a great service by hiring a script consultant who took the Bible seriously."

Equally disturbing was the film's attempt to exploit Genesis for cheap laughs.

After Lot's wife turned back to look at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and was transformed into a pillar of salt as a result, Lot told Noah, "She always said

she was the salt of the earth, and suddenly, she was."

Such malapropos wise cracks were driven home with a relentlessly upbeat soundtrack which serenaded scenes of human tragedy with bouncy, Disneyesque melodies.

There were, however, a few brief moments when "Noah's Ark" got things right. The film consistently portrayed Noah as a man of deep faith. Also noteworthy was the creative way the film showed pairs of animals entering the ark.

But such respites fail to atone for a steady downpour of gargantuan theological and thespian gaffes.

As both the ark and the film itself drifted wildly off course, God told Noah he would destroy all the people and animals on the ark in order to make "a clean sweep." Noah was understandably shocked by God's sudden reversal of an earlier promise, and suffered a nervous breakdown.

Those few intrepid viewers who managed to slog through all four frustrating hours of "Noah's Ark" might at least have gained a better understanding of how interminable the voyage may have seemed.

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for these people and projects, which are part of Kentucky Baptists' partnerships with Baptists in New England, Poland and Tanzania:

■ A phone survey in Waterville, Maine, being conducted by college students from the South this month to determine interest in a new mission there.

■ A new church planting team being formed by Greater Boston Baptist Association, and leader David Jackson.

■ Missionaries Stephen and Deborah Reece in Gilwice, Poland, ask prayer that they will have "spiritual eyes to see where God is already working in the lives of Poles and join him in his work."

■ Missionary to students Susan Carson in Warsaw, Poland, as she seeks to set up multiple Bible studies and enlist new believers in intensive discipleship.

■ An evangelism emphasis in Kigoma, Tanzania, being planned for May 21-24. Life Challenge Africa, an interdenominational group, will lead the witnessing effort to Muslims.

■ Missionaries Patrick and Cynthia Brunson, Chad and Cyndi Tilley, and Rodney and Kelly White as they study Swahili in language school.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **BENTON**—Zion's Cause Church named **Deward Hurst** pastor emeritus and celebrated his retirement as director of Jonathan Creek Baptist Assembly with a fellowship luncheon. Hurst is a former pastor of Zion's Cause. He

recently was honored by Reidland Church for his 50 years in ministry. **Shawn Wasson** is pastor of Zion's Cause.

■ **GREENSBURG**—**Ty Clenney** resigned as pastor at Greensburg Church.



JAZZ BAND TOUR Campbellsville University's jazz ensemble recently completed a concert tour of Brazil to enhance the school's partnership with Baptist-affiliated high schools. The group performed 13 concerts, including three in Baptist churches, for more than 8,000 people.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—A conversational English workshop will be held May 8 and 22, 8:30-4:30 p.m. at the Long Run Association office. For information call (502) 635-2601.

Shively Heights Church will host the **Toney Brothers** May 14. For information, call (502) 447-9544. **Chris Butler** is pastor.

Janet Paschal and **Won By One** will be in concert June 4 at Memorial

Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. For ticket information, call (800) 775-7777.

■ **MT. WASHINGTON**—The youth choir at First Church will present "WWJD" May 16 at 6 p.m. Also, the children's choir will present "Dr. Newheart's Neck Up Check Up" May 19 6:30 p.m. **Travis Collins** is pastor.

■ **PARKSVILLE**—Parksville Church called **Bill Boldt** as pastor. **Dale Niswonger** was interim pastor.

New England pioneer Sizemore dies

HAZARD (BP)—Kentucky native and New England pioneer missionary **Elmer Sizemore** died April 18. He was 71.

Sizemore, the first Southern Baptist missionary to New England, was born in Leslie County. He was ordained in 1950 by Petrey Memorial Baptist Church in Hazard, which was the location of his funeral April 23.

Sizemore began his ministry as a pastor and local missionary in Duane and later at Hyden Baptist Church in Leslie. He was appointed in 1959 by the then-Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to serve as the area missionary for the entire East Coast region north of Maryland.

Though Sizemore's first office was in New Jersey, he actually spent much

time in his car. He drove thousands of miles each year to encourage church planters from Delaware to Maine as they began new chapels.

Ken Lyle, the Baptist Convention of New England's executive director, said, "Elmer Sizemore was the epitome of a pioneer missionary. He had a passion to share the good news of Christ with all people. He was Holy Spirit-driven to plant and grow new churches. Baptists in New England are blessed to build on the solid foundation of ministry laid down by Elmer and his wonderful family."

Sizemore was returning home from a missions conference in Arkansas when he suffered a heart attack and stroke. He is survived by his wife, Jean, two daughters and one grandson.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Part-time education position available immediately. We are a Southern Baptist church with an average attendance of 250. We need a talented person to coordinate an education program and minister to all ages of our church. This position has the potential to become full-time. Resumé and references to: D. Wheeldon, Personnel Committee, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, 1815 Clifty Road, Somerset, KY 42503.

FOR SALE: Baby bed cages, holds four. Please call (502) 737-6645, Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

SERVICE: Bob's Pressure Washing and deck restoration—uses Thompson's Water Seal. (502) 448-6990.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and education. Please send resumé to: Park Baptist Church, 825 Graham Road, St. Louis, MO 63031.

SEEKING: Progressive congregation seeks full-time minister of education and youth. The man or woman called to this position will lead the church in a quality program of Christian education, provide opportunities for youth to develop spiritually, and assist the pastor in the care of the membership and administration of church business. Send cover letter and resumé to: Central Baptist Church, 1644 Nicholasville Road, Lexington, KY 40503. No phone calls please.

SEEKING: Minister to students. Riverside Baptist Church is seeking a person full-time to lead its ministry to students (middle school through junior college). RBC is a large, ethnically-diverse urban church located adjacent to the largest community college in the U.S. Masters-level education, strong leadership skills, creativity and a missionary spirit are needed to meet this opportunity. Send resumé to: Dr. Ray Johnson, senior pastor, Riverside Baptist Church, 10775 SW 104 St., Miami, FL 33176.

SEEKING: Associate pastor/students, missions & seniors. Highland Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., a Christ-centered, theologically moderate, innovative and cutting edge CBF church, is seeking a full-time associate pastor whose primary ministry will be to students from middle school to college age, but will also empower missions ministry and minister to senior adults. Mail resumé to: Phil Collier, chair, Search Committee, 323 Jarvis Lane, Louisville, KY 40207.

SEEKING: Minister to students. Full-time staff position in growing county seat town church (contributes to SBC and CBF). Responsibilities with large youth and children's groups, grades 1-12. Salary package commensurate with education and experience. Send resumé to: Mike Godbey, Personnel Committee, Stanford Baptist Church, 204 Church St., Stanford, KY 40484.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/associate to the pastor. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Valley Station Baptist Church, 5415 Valley Station Road, Louisville, KY 40272.

SEEKING: Youth minister. Growing church. Send resumé to: First Baptist Church, Idlewild & Hanson Street, Easton, MD 21601.

SEEKING: Rapidly growing Baptist church is seeking a full-time music minister who is experienced in leading choirs and congregational singing, and a full-time youth minister. Send resumé to: Mt. Elmira Baptist Church, 3644 Mt. Elmira Road, Shepherdsville, KY 40165, Attn: Pastor.

SEEKING: Turner Ridge Baptist Church, Falmouth, Ky., is seeking a part-time youth minister. Interested applicants should send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Turner Ridge Baptist Church, Route 5, Box 283, Falmouth, KY 41040.

SEEKING: Associate pastor/students, missions & seniors. Highland Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., a Christ-centered, theologically moderate, innovative and cutting edge CBF church, is seeking a full-time associate pastor whose primary ministry will be to students from middle school to college age, but will also empower missions ministry and minister to senior adults. Mail resumé to: Phil Collier, chair, Search Committee, 323 Jarvis Lane, Louisville, KY 40207.

SEEKING: Minister to students. Full-time staff position in growing county seat town church (contributes to SBC and CBF). Responsibilities with large youth and children's groups, grades 1-12. Salary package commensurate with education and experience. Send resumé to: Mike Godbey, Personnel Committee, Stanford Baptist Church, 204 Church St., Stanford, KY 40484.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/associate to the pastor. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Valley Station Baptist Church, 5415 Valley Station Road, Louisville, KY 40272.

SEEKING: A mature, Spirit-filled Christian desiring to serve the Lord in the capacity of full-time minister of music and youth at Springfield Baptist Church (located in central Kentucky). Please send resumé to: Search Committee for Music/Youth Minister, P.O. Box 286, Springfield, KY 40069.

SEEKING: Praying for youth minister. FBC, West Plains, Mo., growing church in the heart of the Ozarks (south-central Missouri). SS: 700; youth: 75-100. Should possess a BA degree. Music a plus. We offer a competitive salary and benefits package commensurate with qualifications and experience. Interested candidates should send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 202 Walnut St., West Plains, MO 65775. www.fbcwp@townsq.com. Dan Singletary.

FOR RENT: 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental, Sanibel Island, Fla. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$630. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752 (home), or (502) 897-5079 (office).

SEEKING: Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church, Bremen, Ky., is accepting resumé for a full-time minister of youth and education. Music background desirable. Send resumé and references to: Personnel Committee, c/o Joe Mitchell, 501 N 4th St., Central City, KY 42330.

SEEKING: Second Baptist Church, Greenville, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a senior pastor. Second Baptist is known as a progressive, growth-oriented, mid-size church with an average Sunday school attendance of 195, and 270 in morning worship. The church is aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention. Please send resumé to: Second Baptist Church, P.O. Box 390, Greenville, KY 42345, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

FOR SALE: Rodgers 725E electronic church organ; two manuals, full AGO pedalboard, great condition. \$3,500 OBO. Church upgraded to a pipe organ. Call (502) 426-5668 or 288-2702 for an appointment.

FOR SALE: Queen-size brass bed with Ortho Firm mattress set and frame (10-year warranty). All new—still in original factory containers. Must sell \$275. Phone: (502) 566-6540.

SEEKING: Farmdale Baptist Church at 5610 US Highway 127 South, Frankfort, Ky., is seeking a part-time children's minister. If you feel God is calling you to this area to work with children, send resumé to: Ms. Bryan, 530 Alfa Drive, Frankfort, KY 40601.

SEEKING: Bardstown Junction Baptist Church, located 20 miles south of Louisville, is seeking a full-time pastor. We are a Southern Baptist church with much interest in mission work, our youth program and various community outreach activities. Send resumé to: Woodie David, search committee chairman, 611 Kirsch Way, Fairdale, KY 40118.

SEEKING: Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church of Midway, Ky., is seeking a part-time youth minister. Send resumé to above at 495 Duckers Road, Midway, KY 40347.

SEEKING: Floyd County-area church seeking part-time worship leader to lead the choir and congregation in meaningful worship and praise. Direct inquiries to: (606) 874-9468, or to: FBC, P.O. Box 541, Allen, KY 41601.

SEEKING: High Point Baptist Church of Mayfield, Ky., is accepting resumé for a part-time minister of youth. Interested applicants should send resumé to: Minister of Youth Search Committee, High Point Baptist Church, 220 West Farthing St., Mayfield, KY 42066.

PEOPLE

Instant megachurch: Just add people

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service

JUPITER, Fla. (RNS)—Sally Field's portrait still hangs on the lobby wall of the old Burt Reynolds Dinner Theater in Jupiter, Fla., next to Florence Henderson's, Dom Deluise's and Dinah Shore's.

By September, they might be replaced with the likes of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

When Bud Paxson, head of the family-friendly PAX TV television network, moved to Florida's east coast several years ago, he had trouble finding a church home.

So he's decided to start a new one, Christ Church of the Palm Beaches, inside a \$2.5 million dinner theater once owned by Burt Reynolds.

His goal? To have the church filled with nearly 1,000 members its first Sunday.

He's recruited Indiana pastor Gary Templeton to lead the church, but the duo doesn't want this to be just any church. Christ Church aims to be an instant megachurch that attracts thousands each Sunday by making church relevant for the 21st century.

It's a strategy well-financed, well-organized church leaders around the country are duplicating.

"Our design is to be a church that runs in the thousands as quickly as we can," said Templeton, who left his Indiana church in 1996 to join Paxson in developing the new non-denominational church.

Templeton is hesitant about using the word "megachurch" because of the big, boxy consumer-driven churches it sometimes represents. Large crowds will be a "byproduct" but not the central mission of the new church, he said.

What's different about Christ Church from similar megachurches across the country is how quickly leaders plan for it to go from nothing to a ready-made church. Even the Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill., America's pre-eminent megachurch, started small and grew larger over several years.

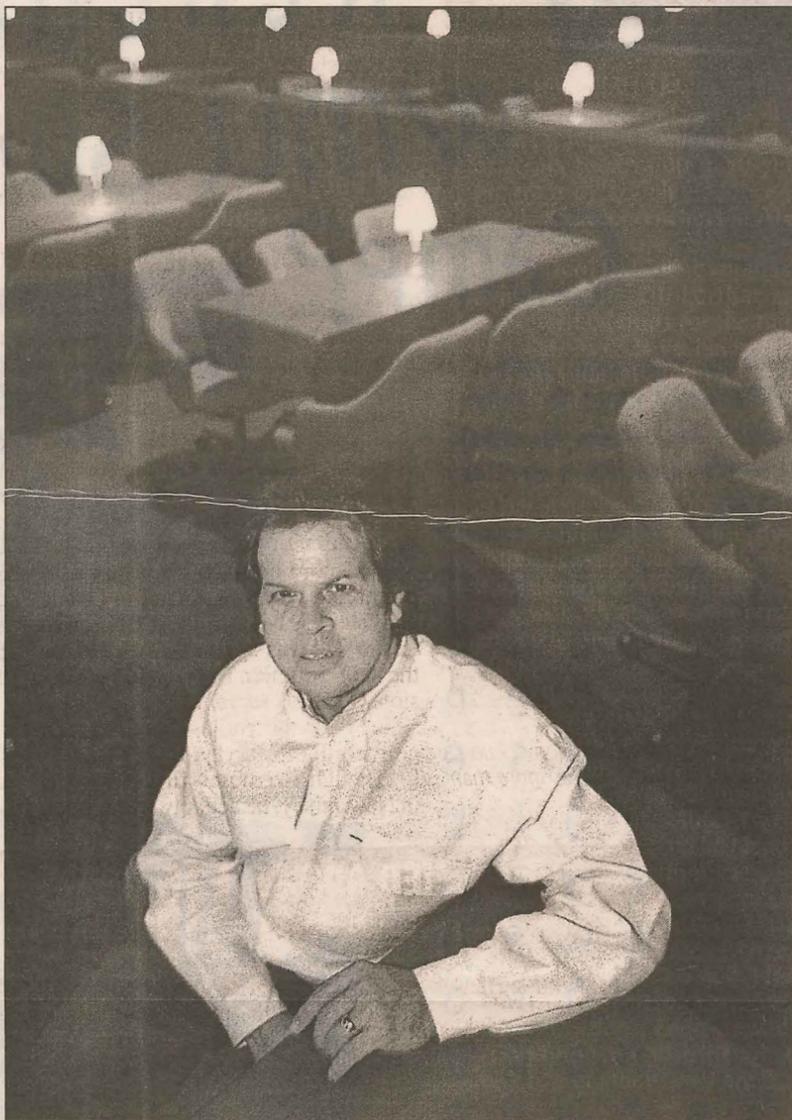
Demographic studies showed the Jupiter area was fast becoming the new destination for small families and easily could support a new church.

Templeton has a targeted audience he wants to reach with the gospel. He wants the church to bring baby boomers and members of Generation X who may have become disillusioned with traditional church back into the fold.

Many churches have failed to adapt to changing needs and audiences to keep church "relevant," he said. Too many churches are sticking with 19th century hymns and 20th century Sunday schools while their parishioners are eager for 21st century programming, he claimed.

The 47-year-old minister said church-goers have to feel that coming to church on Sunday morning is something "worth getting out of bed for." So he said he understands the "entertainment" elements needed to keep folks interested.

"We can change the way it's delivered without changing the message," Templeton said. "It has to have



NEW CHURCH Gary Templeton sits in the former Burt Reynolds Dinner Theater in Jupiter, Fla., where he and Bud Paxson hope to start a church that will have 1,000 people its first day. The instant mega-church model is unusual because churches usually start out small and grow in time. (RNS photo)

an entertainment factor in it, I think."

Templeton and Paxson are not alone in their church-building ventures, experts say. Instant megachurches are being planted around the country and have seen mixed results, said Brad Smith, executive director of the Leadership Network, a Dallas-based church consulting firm.

While most large churches increase their ranks gradually over time, some strategically planned churches have found the recipe for success, Smith said.

"They're unusual because there's not a lot of people who start with what's required to do it, and that's the vision, the leadership, the finances," Smith said. "But if you have that, there's no reason why it doesn't work."

Radio evangelist Chuck Swindoll recently started his own Dallas megachurch and had almost 800 attendees at the Stonebriar Community Church after just six weeks.

Smith said the usual pattern is for large churches of more than 1,000 members to start strong, gradually subside to about 400 or 500 members, and then build up again, "a little more naturally, a little more organically."

But one church growth expert said he'll wait to make a judgment on the church's success until they have been able to establish some stability.

Thom Rainer, dean of the Billy

Graham Center for Evangelism, Missions and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said he couldn't think of a megachurch in the country that had developed overnight.

"If there's an instant megachurch out there, I'm not aware of it," Rainer said.

Rainer said he's a bit more skeptical about the church's hopes to consistently lure parishioners by the thousands.

Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, which Rainer projects will be the country's largest church within three years, took 30 years to build its weekly attendance of 14,000 faithful, he said.

"I hope they prove me wrong, and I wish them luck."

Templeton said he and his wife are taking deliberate steps to make sure nobody is lost in the crowd, a frequent criticism of megachurches. Smaller groups will be the foundation the larger church is built on.

"You don't just build an instant church," Templeton said. "You can get a massive group of people together, but it takes time to build a church out of that."

The next step for the Jupiter church is to fill a few more staff positions and undertake some major remodeling inside the theater. Templeton said he's not sure what to do with Sally Field's portrait yet.

Avalon singer says Christians are taking grace for granted

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Michael Passons often sings about grace, but until recently somehow he'd taken it for granted.

"God has been teaching me about his grace," said Passons, the founding member of Avalon, 1998's Dove winner as New Artist of the Year.

Two months ago, the group received its second Dove when "Testify to Love" was named best song in the pop-contemporary category.

Passons said grace is a word taken for granted by many Christians. "You hear it all your life, especially growing up in church and hearing the songs, sermons and Sunday school (lessons). But we really don't know what that word means."

Besides Bible study, last year Passons immersed himself in the book "What's So Amazing About Grace?" by Phillip Yancey. Passons said he listened to God speak through that book and in other ways.

For Passons, an awareness of grace goes back a long way. To encourage every teenager who feels like a geek, there is Passons' story. Twenty years ago, he wasn't a handsome, versatile singer.

A country boy who grew up outside Yazoo City, Miss., he coped with being "uncool" by secluding himself on the family farm. After school, he often rode horses or four-wheel drive vehicles. "I did have friends at church, and that was a saving grace," he said. "I loved hanging out with my friends after church on Wednesday nights and Sundays."

His musical roots are singing in the choir first at Center Ridge Baptist Church and, later, First Baptist Church of Yazoo City. Today his vocal range, mellow tones and confident stage presence make it difficult to envision him as anything but an extremely talented musician.

In just four years, the group has performed in front of nearly a million people—a long way from those awkward days in Yazoo City.

"It's funny," he chuckled. "You start to hear from people in high school who didn't have much to say to you then. But I take every opportunity to be thankful for where I am and not think more of myself than I should."

Passons called this new status both a God-given blessing and an opportunity. "I want to use it the way he would like me to and represent him in a fashion that's very God-like."

Still, the past taught him an important lesson. His self-esteem no longer lies in being part of the hip crowd, he said, adding that he gets his worth from God.

People often think of themselves in relation to the most important person in their lives, he explained. To put people in that position rather than God can lead to a poor self image if that person becomes indifferent, he said.

But with God in that position, he added, his love and guidelines offer stability and value. Not to mention his leadership, which Passons credits for guiding him down his current path.

Though he became a Christian many years ago, there was no way a 9-year-old could understand the wisdom and vastness of God's love, Passons said.

He said he saw that grace unfold after he earned a degree in classical piano at Mississippi College. Friends at First Baptist Church of Jackson—where he was in music ministry—convinced him to move to Nashville for a shot at the big time. After touring two summers with a New Jersey-based band, he ministered as a solo artist for more than four years, performing for youth groups and in summer camps and concerts.

His presence in Music City also led to the opportunity to audition for the record company that wanted to assemble a modern, Christian version of the 1970s group Abba.

"By opening doors and shutting doors, I've somehow ended up here," he said. "God is leading."

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What will you find at Kentucky Wmu Summer Camp?

Whether you come for a week of camp, a mini-camp or an overnight, you'll find lots of love, laughter and fun. Search the puzzle below for clues to some of the many other things camp offers. Words go forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally, too! After you circle all of the hidden words, look for a special message by reading the rest of the letters from left to right.

M I S S I O N A R I E S G M S G U H
 Y L I D D E V O T I O N S F E A N E
 X B A N L M P L E I C A N T E E N
 Q I Q E A Q K Y W M M U S U M M S E
 R B C I U A M P M A N D W E H A I T
 E L F R G G N I K I H V V E R Y A O
 U E F F H D W T U O K O O C O W R H
 W S A E T S T J H E L R I N W J P O
 O T T H E G R E A T O U T D O O R S
 R U S R R D O S R D E G A E D Y D R
 S D G O I E Q U I E T T I M E T A E
 H Y N L L S C S C N I N T H E N F T
 I A I M T S E R O A G F T H E U L T
 P O R F R D E J E E M I S U N S T I
 C N A T U R E L O A L P N O U S S R
 S R C I A N S C I H T A F G F P H C
 C U L T U R E C A M P I T I E E I P
 R T H R E E V E R S S E O S R E R M
 V A I N A Z N A T E N T E N O E T A
 E C A M P E R S C H O I C E M N S C
 A C T E E N S G N I S I A R G A L F

(Answers: Acteens, Jesus, Bible study, joy, camp critters, camper's choice, campfires, GA, missionaries, canteen, more fun, caring staff, nature, cookout, praise, worship, crafts, quiet time, culture camp, recreation, devotions, singing, flag raising, smiles, friends, swimming, Tanzania, the great outdoors, hiking, tshirts, hugs.)

There's still room for you!

Call 1-888-254-5726 or 244-6485 (in Louisville)
 for more information or registration materials.

