



WESTERN RECORDER

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TO GO, SEE + DO

See insert

FOR THE RECORD

IMB cuts ties to Asian seminary

The Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary has forged a new partnership with Mercer University, causing the Southern Baptist International Mission Board to terminate its 40-year relationship with the Asian school. *Page 2.*

Jonathan Creek changes

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Dellanna retiring

WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien is retiring at the end of the month. *Page 7.*

Super Saturday

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Despite court ruling, schools vote to post Ten Commandments

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

It's back-to-school time in Kentucky. In addition to reading, writing and arithmetic, students in several schools are being exposed to another topic this year—the Ten Commandments.

Nearly two decades ago, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Kentucky law that required schools to post the Ten Commandments. Despite that ruling, two Kentucky school districts have voted to permit volunteers to purchase and post copies of the biblical commands in school classrooms.

The Jackson County school board and superintendent recently decided to allow volunteers to post the Ten Commandments in every classroom in the county's five schools. That was followed by Harlan County's school board voting unanimously to allow copies of the document to be placed in each classroom.

The recent actions come as legislative efforts are under way on both the state and national levels to authorize schools to post the Ten Commandments.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted in June to permit states to post the Ten Commandments in government-owned buildings. The amendment to the Consequences for Juvenile Offenders Act awaits action by the U.S. Senate.

"Our nation was founded on Judeo-Christian principles," said Rep. Robert Aderholt, R-Ala., the sponsor of the amendment. "Simply posting the Ten Commandments will not change the moral character of our nation overnight," he noted. "It is one step that states can take to promote morality and work toward an end of children killing children."

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Gambling foes prepare for expected fight

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

ELIZABETHTOWN—What can the average citizen do to combat expanded gambling in Kentucky? Plenty, according to anti-gambling experts from across the nation.

Nancy Jo Kemper, moderator of the Kentucky coalition Citizens Against Gambling Expansion, welcomed an estimated 75 participants to a CAGE training workshop Aug. 21 at Sevens Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

"CAGE has begun from a religious base," explained Kemper, executive director of the Kentucky Council of Churches. "We began our full campaign this week to stop the expansion of gambling in the commonwealth of Kentucky." The effort is aimed at prevent-

ing the introduction of casinos and slot machines into the state.

Tom Grey, executive director of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling, said the key to organizing grassroots efforts to defeat gambling expansion is TNT: truth, networking and tactics.

Calling gambling "predatory in nature," he declared, "The truth is it's not good economics, it's not good public policy and it's not good for the quality of life."

He said effective networking requires involving others in anti-gambling efforts on the community level. "You've got to go public with the truth," he added.

Grey said key tactics include emphasizing that legalized gambling is "a state-induced addiction." He urged participants to confront "the predators, the

promoters, the product and the political system that allows it."

Calling for education, discussion and debate on the local level, Grey said, "Hold elected officials accountable. ... In Kentucky, I think we have the opportunity to cut this off before it ever gets to the ballot."

Robert Goodman, author of "The Luck Business: The Devastating Consequences and Broken Promises of America's Gambling Expansion," addressed the economic and social consequences of expanded gambling.

"The clear conclusion of almost all research, including research paid for by the gambling industry, is the more access you have to gambling, the more cost there will be," he said. "With the increase of accessibility and the increased sanction by government of

□ See *Coalition hears ...*, page 12



STATE FAIR Kentucky Baptist Convention volunteer Ruby Morgan paints a youngster's face as part of the KBC's "Casting God's Love" booth at the Kentucky State Fair. The convention's fishing-themed exhibit is located in the East Wing of the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center. The fair will continue through Aug. 29. "Fishing is such a popular sport in Kentucky and is frequently mentioned in the Bible," explained exhibit coordinator Denise Withers, communications specialist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "It seemed natural to have this fishing-related theme for our exhibit this year." Children can "fish" from the exhibit's wooden dock and win free prizes such as glow-in-the-dark fish or packs of goldfish-shaped crackers.

Professor: Christians must prepare to reach radically unchurched

By Terri Lackey
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—Churches that take the Great Commission seriously should start reaching out to people with purple hair and nose rings, an evangelism professor recently told church leaders.

"We tend to look at our churches as hotels for saints, not hospitals for sinners, and consequently we are not reaching the radically unchurched culture," said Alvin Reid, associate professor of evangelism at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Reid defined the radically unchurched as Americans who "have no

clear personal understanding of the message of the gospel and who have had little or no contact with a Bible-teaching, Christ-honoring church."

In other words, he said, many of the 41 percent of the American population considered radically unchurched have never set foot inside a church—not for Easter, Christmas, or even weddings and funerals.

Reid said that the only way to reach the radically unchurched culture "is through radical Christianity."

Reid, speaking at a church leadership conference sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, reminded pastors that Jesus did not hang out with church-attending folks.

"Jesus was accessible to unchurched people. He went after those types of people intentionally. He made a tax collector his friend and he showed concern for an immoral, Samaritan woman.

"There are places that we as churches don't want to go, but we have to raise the bar if we are going to focus on the radically unchurched," Reid said. "And if you become a church that reaches out to these people, you will face hostility like Jesus did."

The religious hypocrites of Jesus' day called him a "friend to sinners," Reid noted. "And that was not a complimentary title."

Reid listed some approaches for reaching the radically unchurched:

■ Testimonial evangelism or "telling

people what happened to you."

■ Servanthood evangelism, or simple acts of kindness (like free car washes) coupled with intentional evangelism.

■ Inviting a lost person to a worship service filled with people who love God.

■ Evangelism through the arts. This involves taking drama out of the church and into the community. It can include non-conventional drama at church.

■ Evangelistic church planting where the radically unchurched are intentionally targeted.

"The most significant thing the Southern Baptist Convention could do," Reid said, "is to go where the radically unchurched are. I'm concerned that the SBC is not penetrating that culture."

BAPTISTS

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Brent Walker**, an attorney and ordained Baptist minister, has been nominated by a search committee to become executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. If elected by the agency's directors at an Oct. 4-5 meeting, Walker, the BJCPA's general counsel and associate executive director, would succeed James Dunn, who retired.

■ **University of Mobile** officials have reaffirmed a school policy of hiring only hiring Christians for faculty positions, despite the protest of a Jewish donor. Gordon Kahn, a retired bankruptcy judge who has given more than \$30,000 to the Alabama Baptist institution, wrote a letter to the seminary's trustees in July calling the policy one of "bigotry and prejudice."

■ **Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary** has named Bill Vinson, a current Southwestern administrator, as director of undergraduate studies. In this newly created position, he will oversee the school's diploma and extension programs and course offerings for seminary wives and bivocational ministers.

Asia seminary vote leads IMB to cut ties

PENANG, Malaysia (BP)—Trustees of the Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary have voted to forge a new partnership with Mercer University of Macon, Ga., terminating a 40-year relationship with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Trustees of the seminary—actually a consortium of nine Baptist schools located in Asia—voted for the partnership despite warnings from IMB leaders in Asia that the board would not participate in a partnership that involved Mercer.

IMB officials expressed concern over theological views associated with Mercer President Kirby Godsey. Conservatives accused Godsey of being a liberal following the release of his 1996 book, "When We Talk about God ... Let's Be Honest." Messengers to the Georgia Baptist Convention repudiated the book saying Godsey advocated views at odds with conservative Baptist theology.

In an Aug. 6 letter to consortium trustees, Don Dent, the IMB's regional leader for Southeast Asia and Oceania, expressed the regional leaders' regret over the prospect of parting ways with the ABGTS.

"You cannot imagine the grief the Mercer proposal has caused in our hearts," Dent wrote in the letter, which was addressed to ABGTS President Chow Lien Hwa. "We cannot work with Mercer in the area of theological education, but we do not want to give up our relationship with you."

"We have not taken this stance lightly, but rather after many hours of reflection, prayer and dialogue together."

Dent said the ABGTS board's vote left the International Mission Board with little choice but to withdraw from the partnership, which currently serves about 250 graduate students from 15 countries.

"If we were to officially partner with Mercer, we would either be stating that Dr. Godsey's theology is of no concern for us or that we believe the president has no influence over an institution," he said. "We are unable to make either of those affirmations."

According to President Chow, the new partnership will generate ministry

opportunities for both parties and give the Asian seminary the financial security it needs.

"I am happy about the resolution of the board of trustees ... to form a partnership with Mercer University," Chow noted. He said the vote was "neither personal nor sentimental" but represents "the careful and prayerful deliberations" of the board of trustees.

Because of the consortium's vote, the flow of IMB funds will end and missionary personnel will no longer teach ABGTS graduate-level courses, said Avery Willis, the IMB's senior vice president of overseas operations. Missionaries will continue to be available to teach bachelor's- and master's-level courses in member seminaries in their respective countries.

Eight IMB missionaries have carried doctoral-level teaching loads in Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary, while seven more have taught occasionally.

Senior IMB administrators agree with the regional leaders' decision to withdraw from the consortium, Willis said.

IMB President "Jerry Rankin and I completely and totally support the decision to withdraw from ABGTS," said Willis, who himself served on the consortium's executive committee while he was president of Indonesia Baptist Theological Seminary for six years in the 1970s.

"We regret that what we had hoped would be an Asian solution for contextualized theological education turns out to be continued dependence on American financial support with a partner whose views are not in harmony with the Bible."

Asian leaders, however, characterized their vote as reflecting a growing desire to have the direction of the schools determined by Asians and not Western missionary organizations that provide funding. It also represents dissatisfaction with IMB policies that Asian critics say increasingly try to dictate theology and administrative practices from the United States.

IMB and Asian Baptist leaders had been involved in a 10-year program to phase down the board's role in ABGTS

and allow Asian Baptists to assume responsibility for providing advanced theological education for Asian students in an Asian setting. Similar drawdowns have been conducted on other mission fields worldwide to encourage Baptists in those countries to develop their own contextualized ministries.

The ABGTS phase-down program anticipated election of an Asian in August of this year to the dean's position occupied by Graham Walker, the IMB missionary who has served as dean of the consortium since 1993. During the Aug. 11 meeting, ABGTS trustees elected Tereso Casino of the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary to serve as dean.

Walker, who negotiated the partnership with Mercer, expressed regret over the IMB's withdrawal.

"Of course, I am very sad to hear of the IMB's intentions to withdraw active support from the school," he said. "The IMB had already begun withdrawing funds from a number of our theological education institutions in the region and in at least four of the schools represented by ABGTS there is no continued funding from the IMB and a limited representation of IMB personnel."

Walker resigned as an IMB missionary and has joined the faculty of Mercer's McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta as professor of theology. He also will serve as Mercer's partnership liaison with the consortium.

For its part, Mercer has pledged \$660,300 over 15 years to support the ABGTS administrative office and primary meetings. Mercer also will establish a scholarship fund for an ABGTS student to study at Mercer every three years.

Godsey said the partnership will benefit both schools by cultivating contacts and relationships between Mercer and Asian Baptists. "We are always eager to partner with other Baptists who affirm and perpetuate our strong Baptist traditions, particularly in the arena of theological education," he said.

Mercer currently has similar relationships with 20 other schools around the world.

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press

Trustees request meeting to discuss Coppenger issue

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (ABP)—Sixteen trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary reportedly have requested a called meeting of the full board to discuss the leadership of seminary President Mark Coppenger.

Coppenger, 51, who has been president of the Southern Baptist seminary in Kansas City, Mo., four years, confessed "misappropriation of anger" at a called meeting of the trustee executive committee July 30. That meeting followed a two-month investigation by trustee leaders into complaints that Coppenger had misdirected his anger toward seminary employees.

At the July meeting, held in executive session, Coppenger confessed to having a problem with controlling his anger and agreed to specific recommendations by the executive committee for "steps to repentance and restoration," according to statements released after the meeting.

In a press conference after that meeting, trustee chairman Carl Weiser told reporters the full board would be briefed on the process, also in executive session, at the next scheduled trustee meeting in October.

Seminary bylaws, however, permit as few as 10 trustees to request a called meeting.

Weiser, pastor of Hyland Heights Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., said it appears there will be a called meeting of the full board in response to a petition signed by 16 trustees.

He said a previously scheduled meeting of the seminary's executive committee Aug. 26-27 had been cancelled in anticipation of holding a full board meeting.

Refugee needs continue beyond Kosovo

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—While thousands of refugees from war-torn Kosovo have returned home to attempt to rebuild their lives, Southern Baptists have sponsored—or soon will sponsor—more than 140 refugees in 32 families.

Richard Robinson, immigration ministries specialist with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, said refugees will continue to arrive through the end of August. Although the need for sponsors for Kosovars has begun to wane because of the end of hostilities, Robinson said the overall need for refugee sponsors remains.

"We have hundreds of refugee families from other countries, many of whom have been waiting for sponsors since before Kosovo erupted," he said. "Please don't think that because the worst of the Kosovo crisis is over that the refugee crisis is over. The ref-

ugee crisis continues."

For instance, strong needs remain for sponsors for Bosnian refugees, whose experience is similar to the Kosovars. Many have been in refugee camps in Germany for six or seven years. In the first six months of this year, Southern Baptists resettled 57 Bosnian refugees in 21 families. During the same period, Southern Baptists have sponsored 302 individuals of 15 different nationalities—with 34 professions of faith recorded.

Needs also remain extremely high for sponsors for families from Sudan, which has been in civil war for 16 years. Approximately 1.9 million of the predominantly Christian black Africans from the Southern Sudan have lost their lives in their civil war with Muslims in the north, who are primarily of Middle Eastern origin.

"These are people whose families have been captured and sold into sla-

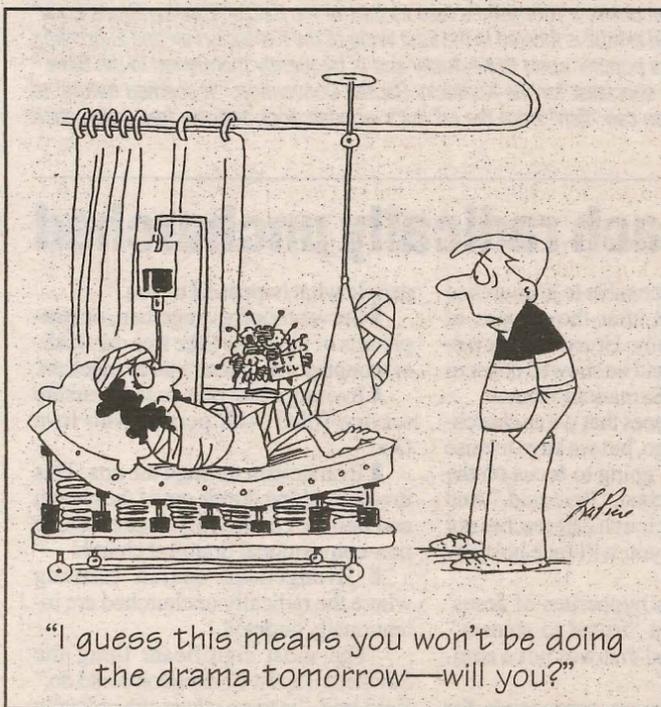
very. They have faced death threats because of their faith in Christ," Robinson said. "To me it's just a moral imperative for Christians to sponsor these people."

Large numbers of refugees also are coming from Vietnam, Ukraine and Liberia. Civil war also is raging in Sierra Leone, creating more refugees.

"When a civil war heats up, the refugees begin fleeing immediately, but we may not see them coming here until six months down the road," he said, noting the rapid resettlement of refugees from Kosovo "was highly unusual."

With the Kosovo refugees, many churches had applied to sponsor a family, but were unable to do so because the refugees returned to their homes instead.

For information about becoming a church sponsor or co-sponsor, contact Robinson at (770) 410-6343 or via e-mail at rrobinson@namb.net.



New Jonathan Creek camps cause other cancellations

By David Winfrey
News Director

When summer camp opens next June at Jonathan Creek, hundreds of Christian and unchurched teenagers are expected to be attracted to the West Kentucky facility's new programs.

"Crossings at the Creek" will combine lake sports and other activities with religious services. The nine, week-long camps are designed to challenge youth both physically and spiritually, according to promotional material soon to be sent to Kentucky Baptist churches and others.

But schedule changes caused by the new programs concern both Kentucky Baptist and Woman's Missionary Union leaders who no longer can host their own week-long summer camps there.

This summer Jonathan Creek, on the bank of Kentucky Lake, hosted two camps for teenagers led by Kentucky Baptist Student Union Son Teams, one week of WMU camps for Girls in Action and Acteens, and one Missions Adventure Camp for Kentucky Brotherhood. The assembly center also hosts a variety of weekend retreats and conferences scheduled by WMU and individual churches.

Rusty Ellison, president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, said the new program and resulting cancellation of other camps are the result of a necessary link between evangelistic mission and financial realities.

"Our primary focus at Jonathan Creek is reaching this generation of youth for Christ," said Ellison, whose organization is responsible for both Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore.

Two years ago, the Kentucky Baptist Convention launched Kentucky Baptist Assemblies and transferred ownership of the two assembly cen-

ters to the new agency.

The effort followed a vote by messengers to the Kentucky Baptist Convention against selling Cedarmore. The camps had experienced what Ellison called a "decade of decline" from decreased spending at the sites in anticipation of the sale.

"Neither place was fit for kids and what they expect in the late 1990s," he said. Such conditions require Kentucky Baptist Assemblies to consider every decision for its Christian "kingdom impact" and its financial impact, he said. "In that order."

"We're not in a situation where we can do anything without weighing the financial impact," he said. "It's going to take us 10 years to get them where they need to be and we told people that when we took them over."

The schedule changes at Jonathan Creek will not affect the summer camps schedule at Cedarmore, near Bagdad, but Kentucky Baptist and WMU leaders said they are concerned about the impact of halting their camps in West Kentucky.

"I hate to lose the Western Kentucky connection with our churches," said KBC youth director Tom Smoot.

Two sold-out Jonathan Creek youth camps this summer were staffed by creative ministry "Son Teams," members of Baptist Student Unions throughout the state. Because they led the camps, the teams were invited by church leaders to participate in worship services at their churches.

Those Son Team appearances at the camps and in the churches attract new college students to be involved in Baptist Student Unions, Smoot said. "Because we will not be able to have youth camps at Jonathan Creek, we will probably lose anywhere from 20 to 25 churches that we would be in front of."

Smoot said he recognizes that

many churches currently go outside the state for summer camp and that he hopes the new programming can attract churches that otherwise wouldn't have gone to a Kentucky Baptist camp. "I do hope that we do encourage Kentucky churches to stay in Kentucky."

Meanwhile, he said he also hopes that the price and programming will be distinct enough that Crossings at the Creek doesn't compete with the Son Team-led camps at Cedarmore.

Some WMU leaders in West Kentucky are "grieving" over the cancellation of week-long camps at Jonathan Creek, according to Brenda Price, WMU interim executive secretary-treasurer.

This summer the WMU week at Jonathan Creek drew 243 youth and staff. Also, the mother-daughter overnight event attracted 121 people, Price said.

"Kentucky WMU strongly believes in a missions camping program," she said. Such camps "help children and youth develop a closer relationship with God as well as realize their responsibility as Christians to share Jesus with the world."

Price said Kentucky WMU will focus on its opportunities at Cedar Crest—the WMU camp adjacent to Cedarmore—while continuing to explore other scheduling options at Jonathan Creek.

Price said she recognizes the financial pressures on Kentucky Baptist Assemblies and the resulting change in procedures. "It's hard for us to adjust to that sometimes."

She added that WMU is grateful for the improvements already made to Cedar Crest, including the installation of air conditioning at the site's cabins and dining halls.

Kentucky Brotherhood Director Randy Foster said he's concerned by

the poor attendance at the one week of missions education camp for boys held at Jonathan Creek. Only 19 youth attended the Missions Adventure Camp this summer.

"We're trying to strengthen our missions education program by assigning one staff member to focus entirely on the youth for their missions education and involvement."

Ellison said he has heard criticism from eight churches "that felt strongly against what we were doing at Jonathan Creek."

"But for every church that I have heard from that is against us, I have heard from dozens and dozens of people who are supporting what we are doing and where we're heading," he added.

"We feel great about our direction, but I have to remind people that when we took over 23 months ago it was not working," he said. "When we looked at the financial pressure it was going to put on us to make the necessary improvements, we knew we would have to make some hard decisions."

In the first two years Kentucky Baptist Assemblies has spent \$700,000 in improvements and repairs to the two facilities, Ellison said.

Ellison predicts the new camp program at Jonathan Creek will bring in the necessary students to make both a kingdom and financial impact.

Plans are to hire more than 40 college students as staff and charge an average cost of \$254 per camper, about twice what it is now, according to Ellison. Camps will be five nights instead of the current four nights, he said, and will include more labor-intensive recreation.

"We will offer more camp for the dollar, in our price range, than anybody in America," he said. "Most of the people doing what we are doing are 50 to 100 percent higher than we are."

"When we looked at the financial pressure it was going to put on us to make the necessary improvements, we knew we would have to make some hard decisions."

Rusty Ellison, president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies

Teachers: New Age & occult attractive to spiritual searchers

By Pat Cole
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—While neither occultism nor New Ageism are well-defined movements, they hold a definite attraction for some people's misplaced religious longings, according to two informed observers of cults.

The shift from the modern era and its focus on reason to the postmodern era and its emphasis on experience has provided fertile soil for New Age beliefs, Don Metcalf said in a recent interview.

In modernity, God was "left out of the picture," Metcalf said. "People are searching spiritually. ... Unfortunately they are searching in the wrong places."

Metcalf, a member of Parkwood Baptist Church in Louisville, has studied the New Age movement extensively and has taken courses offered by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and other organizations.

Last week, he spoke on cults at conferences sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention in Pikeville and Winchester.

Mark Terry, a speaker at the Win-

chester conference, said in an interview that hopeless people who believe there's no reality beyond this life are drawn to the occult.

"They believe they can indulge their passions by participating in Satanism, and they believe they can achieve spiritual power by worshipping power and participating in Satanism," said Terry, a missions and evangelism professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Both occultism and New Ageism are "umbrella terms" that include various religious expressions, Metcalf and Terry said.

New age adherents "pick up beliefs here and there," Metcalf said. "They have no strong foundation on what they believe." The movement borrows many concepts from Eastern religions, he added.

Monism, a belief in the unity of everything, and pantheism, a belief that God is in everything, are pervasive in New Age thought, he said.

Those subscribing to the New Age movement seek self realization and search for the divine within themselves, he said.

"It is a very self-centered belief system," Metcalf observed. "You choose

what (you believe) is good for you."

While Terry speaks mostly about Satanism, occultism encompasses witchcraft, sorcery, demonology and fortune telling, he said. Terry classifies Satanism in three categories:

■ The Church of Satan. It's typically pointed more toward hedonism than Satan worship per se. The church is registered with the IRS and is the most public and best organized expression of Satanism.

■ Cultic Satanism. News reports of Satanist involvement in animal sacrifice and criminal activities usually comes from this group. Their rituals are well hidden from public view.

■ Recreational Satanism. This term describes people "who dabble in it" occasionally, Terry said. Seances and Ouija boards are popular among this group.

For Christians, evangelistic efforts for followers of the occult or the New Age movement are challenging, Terry and Metcalf said.

In approaching someone involved in New Ageism, Metcalf recommended Christians build relationships and engage in dialogue about their beliefs. "They are open to talking about Jesus, but it is a different Jesus," he said.

In New Age thought Jesus is simply one of many "way shores" who have reached a state of enlightenment, he added.

They believe Jesus is divine, but they also maintain that divinity lives in everything, Metcalf noted.

"You must have a good ear to listen," he explained. "If they believe you are unconcerned about what they believe, you are going nowhere."

Terry said dialogue has almost no possibility with a cultic Satanist. Only one who wants out of the movement would dare talk about converting to Christianity, he said.

In that case, he speculated a Satan follower would have to relocate for reasons of personal safety.

A Church of Satan member would be "less hard core" and more open to a conversation about faith, he said.

At seminars, Terry warns parents, grandparents and youth leaders that Satanism preys on young people.

"If a young person begins to make a radical change in lifestyle, dress all in black, display satanic symbols on clothing or their body, become withdrawn, forsake friends for new friends and activities, those are danger signs," he said.

"People are searching spiritually. ... Unfortunately they are searching in the wrong places."

Don Metcalf, a teacher for the Kentucky Baptist Convention conference on cults

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

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Facing the masquerade of prejudice

Despite the horror of the recent shootings in Los Angeles, most of us find some comfort in the fact that the confessed assailant was an unstable extremist.

We have spent our time focusing on "those people" who perpetrate hatred and racism. It is much easier to look from afar at white supremacists than to come closer to home and examine our own hearts.

This lesson became clear to me during the time I spent in Bosnia during the war. One evening I sat in a recently reopened restaurant in Sarajevo. The owner, once a wealthy man, was now waiting on the few tables himself. The life of privilege he had known was gone forever.

"This war should never have happened," he told me. "It was only a few extremists who stirred things up."

It was something I heard from Bosnians, Croats and Serbs alike. Everything had been fine except for the actions of some madmen who had stirred

up the latent nationalism of their fellow citizens and destroyed the country.

I met many Bosnians who had married Croats or Serbs and many families who weren't even sure what to call themselves anymore.

COMMENTARY



Dale Hanson Bourke

But there was something else that made me realize the war was not just because of extremists. Sitting with a group of Croats I'd hear comments like, "That's how Bosnians are. They are dirty. They don't take care of their property."

Or with Bosnians, "The Croats have all the money and power. They only help each other."

And the Serb perspective: "We are the ones who worked hard to defend this country. The Croats live off of what we created. The Bosnians are just lazy and live like animals."

These types of comments often came from peace-loving, upstanding people who abhorred the war and the atrocities committed by extremists. Their comments were not hateful in

Grace affirmed

Thanks for your excellent editorial Aug. 10 entitled "Midwestern trustees model grace." It was refreshing to read an objective statement on grace as it relates to moral responsibility between religious administrators and employees.

The trustees took the high road in disciplining the seminary president. Now he has a second chance to deal with his problem of anger. Had he been a moderate, he would have been fired on the spot.

I was fortunate to serve as a professor for almost half a century in uni-

versities, a seminary and a medical school where the administrators demonstrated a generous amount of grace in the light of the fact that the FBI was on my back for 16 years for participating in the civil rights movement and opposing the war in Vietnam.

Generous grace is compassionate and contagious. Give us more.

Henlee Barnette
Louisville



What do signs mean?

At a recent meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, one of the messengers discussed the fact that we

were admitting several new churches that did not have the word "Baptist" in their name. This was in no way a reflection on any church admitted.

The messenger was concerned that if we failed to identify ourselves as "Baptist," we may lose some of our identity and distinctiveness.

Driving recently on Lexington Road in front of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, I noticed a different sign. Instead of the old sign reading Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, there are signs at each of the drives that say only, Southern Seminary.

What does this mean?

Donald Cole
Brandenburg

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

New work challenges and opportunities

Kentucky is a growing state. Between 1990 and 1997 our population as a whole grew 6 percent. But did you realize that as a convention we haven't been keeping pace with the growth?

During this same period of overall population increase, the resident membership loss in our churches was 5.8 percent (a decline of 32,345 resident members). Combine this decrease with the overall population increase and you quickly see that a significant population-to-resident membership loss followed. In 1990, the ratio of resident members to population was 1 to 6.6. In 1997, it was 1 to 7.5. Unless this trend is reversed, it will accelerate the loss in the next seven years.

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board has provided an evangelism index based on a scale of 1 to 10. The index is based on the number of unreached and unaffiliated people per county. In Kentucky, 43 percent of the 120 counties have an index over 5 and 18 counties exceed an index of 7.

An index of 7 indicates that at least 65 percent of the population is unreached for Christ.

What does all this mean? It means Kentucky Baptists have a wonderful opportunity to provide worshiping, nurturing and growing communities of faith for all people in Kentucky.



Bill Mackey

One of the most effective ways to reach growing populations has proven to be through starting new churches. I'd like to challenge Kentucky Baptists to pray and be open to a new work strategy.

To be successful, this strategy will need the input, wisdom and partnership of pastors, directors of missions and key lay leaders—especially in growth areas.

I see several challenges for Kentucky Baptists:

■ To create a climate for new work—especially in growth areas.

■ To develop a process for enlisting, assessing and providing hands-on training, or internships, for new work pas-

■ To work with local associations and churches in identifying geographic target groups and sponsors for new work.

■ To develop and implement transferable models for starting and developing healthy churches focused on conversion growth and authentic discipleship.

■ To provide continuing education on being effective and relational leaders of transition and change.

■ To discover and develop partnerships and financial resources to fund an aggressive strategy for new work.

Other needs will include a network of prayer support, field coordination, training and support for new church starters, matching grants for facility rental and equipment costs, funds for pastoral assistance and low-interest loans.

Gifts by Kentucky Baptists through the Cooperative Program and Eliza Broadus State Missions Offering will provide basic resources, but significant additional resources will be needed. We would love to hear from people who would pray, participate or assist with resources.

Bill Mackey is executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

FAMILY

Does your giving reflect God's blessings?

By Jeremy White

A disturbing trend from the 1960s to the present is the decline in giving to our churches as a percentage of income. A survey by Empty Tomb, Inc. found that members from 29 Protestant denominations now give an average of 2.5 percent of their income.



Even more convicting is a recent study in Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine. Southern Baptist members give 3.07 percent of their income while Mormon members give 7.13 percent.

How can we, receiving the truth by God's grace, give half as much as members of a cult spreading falsehoods? Are we afraid we will not have enough?

In my personal finance seminars, one of the first steps to move toward financial freedom is giving at least 10 percent to God. This is often a surprise to those in debt. Secular financial planners will tell you that giving is not a priority to get your finances straight.

You may agree and say there is no way you can tithe. God says, however, to test Him to see if He is faithful (Malachi 3:10). Many Christians do not tithe and, consequently, have the same financial problems of others in the world.

Cheerful giving reminds us, and is a testimony to God and others, that we are only managers. If we don't tithe and give to God's work, it's easy to start acting like an owner. God owns it all and loans it to us. God is the owner and we are temporary managers.

Admittedly, giving is hard to prove mathematically as a necessary step toward improving your finances. God's ways are not man's ways. We can trust Him to provide for His faithful managers. When I say He will provide, I am not saying God will rain down one hundred dollar bills in your backyard or cause you to win a magazine sweepstakes contest.

Being God, He could do that. Probably, however, He will help your car run longer, have someone share something with you, give you more control over impulses or just help the ends meet.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. See his free weekly financial tip on his Internet Web site at www.consultcpa.com.

How can the use of humor make a significant ministry impact?

Q: My pastor visited my grandmother in the hospital and through the use of humor changed her despairing attitude into happiness. How can one moment of humor make such a dramatic difference?

I am sure part of the change simply was due to the pastor's presence.

Additionally, however, authentic humor reaches out and draws others into its aura of delight. Humor is a wonderful God-given human capacity that unites people across what might initially appear to be vast emotional and spiritual distances. Humorous moments affirm the essential humanity that we share regardless of how different our circumstances may be.

Ministers also can employ authentic humor to enable their church members to reach a new perspective about themselves—God's perspective. While it is important to exercise caution when using humor to interpret ministry, those ministers open to the faith dimensions of the situation can respond to the travails of the moment with a sense of spiritual growth.

Humor can help facilitate a person's approach to difficult times, putting life in perspective according to God's plan and purpose. Humor that can enable a person to laugh in spite of suffering is an articulation of faith in an ultimate order which heals brokenness. Maintaining trust, hope and faith is the goal.—*Jon Rainbow*

Q: My husband and I have agreed to a separation. We both hope it will be temporary. Our concern right now is for the children. How do we tell them?

Books with helpful chapters on this topic include: "Innocent Victims" by Thomas Whiteman, "Divorce Recovery Guide" by Greeson, Hollingsworth and Washburn, and "Does Wednesday Mean Mom's House or Dad's?" by Marc Ackerman.

Consider the following points:

- If possible, tell them together. This makes possible a balanced and honest presentation. It allows the child to ask questions of whichever parent is best able to answer. A united front reduces the splitting of loyalties. If one parent is missing, children may discount to some extent what is told. It may not be possible for both parents to be present, but the truth should be spoken as lovingly as possible. The dispute is between the parents. You both still love the children.

- Be as honest as possible without casting judgment on the other parent's motives. You will want the children later to remember you as a parent who took a loving approach.

- Consider the developmental level of the children. Get key points across and then allow time for discussion. If children are old enough to ask a question, they are old enough to receive an honest, loving and age-appropriate answer.

- Uppermost in the child's mind is what will happen to him or her. Reassure them that they will be cared for, that they are wanted and loved. Talk about how their lives will be changed. They likely will express concern about what the future will mean for them.

- Emphasize that they are not the reason for the breakup; that there is nothing they could have done to avoid it.

- Follow up with other opportunities for the children to express their concerns. Seek to create an environment that encourages their honest questions.

- Seek God's strength. See Ephesians 4:29-32, and especially the first part of Ephesians 4:15.—*James Stillwell*

Family Forum writers are David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Susan Howell, assistant professor of psychology at Campbellsville University; Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@nr.net.



'Casting God's Love' at the state fair

The Kentucky State Fair: What better way to gain a quick, up-close orientation to life in the Bluegrass State? With that mission in mind, I volunteered to work a four-hour shift at this year's Kentucky Baptist Convention fair booth. In my exuberance, I also volunteered my wife, Pam, and our daughters: Emily, 13, and Audrey, 10. So far so good since they tend to be pretty good sports about such things.

Once the assigned day rolled around, Pam and the girls decided to head to the fair several hours early so they could "get all the goody" out of the experience. That meant we would rendezvous at the fairgrounds after I arrived later in the day. How hard could that be, right?

The adventure begins. Just in case you've never driven to the state fair on a Friday afternoon, allow me to share a word of warning: Finding an open parking space can be a little tricky. But with lots of patience and a willingness to totally ignore your family's agreed-upon meeting time, it can be done.

Once I finally found a parking spot, the next challenge was to weave my way through the fairgrounds to Kentucky Kingdom where the girls were sizing up the rides. After our family actually managed to find each other, Emily (remember, she's 13) talked me into riding "Chang," a stand-up roller coaster with an estimated gazillion upside-down loops. What fun!

Immediately after that joyful experience, Audrey invited me to join her on "Blizzard River," a ride dedicated to the goal of soaking every passenger from shirt to socks. Another cherished daddy-daughter moment.

Mercifully, my water-resistant watch was still ticking and indicated it was time to start moving toward the East Wing for our shift in the KBC booth. Recalling the advice of fair veterans, we stopped along the way for pork chop sandwiches at the Kentucky Pork Producers tent—a definite highlight.

From there, it was on to the KBC booth, where

Kentucky Baptists are sharing a ministry of presence for the third straight year. Highlighting the theme, "Casting God's Love," this year's booth features a scenic 16-foot mural of a youngster fishing at a calm Kentucky lake. Keeping with the theme, volunteers invite kids to "fish" for prizes. Youngsters also can get their faces painted with a colorful fish, daisy or ladybug. Other "freebies" include connect-the-dot puzzle pages that feature Christ's words found in Matthew 4:19, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

Parents and grandparents visiting the booth are invited to pick up a "letter from God." The handout, based on several passages of Scripture, notes that God wants each person "to know how much I love you." Sharing a basic plan of salvation, the letter emphasizes that Jesus "died so that you can come to me and say you are sorry for the sin in your life and ask me into your heart."

KBC volunteer Ruby Morgan said one of the highlights of working in the booth is "just

seeing the reactions of the children. They love it. ... We're sharing a Christian presence and spreading God's love by interacting with people."

As our family took responsibility for the 6 to 10 p.m. shift, Pam and Emily began painting kids' faces while Audrey and I manned the fishing booth. It was a privilege to represent Kentucky Baptists, sharing warm smiles and kind words with hundreds of people who strolled by or stopped to visit.

Yet sandwiched between a cosmetic counter and a hand-made sweater display in a huge exhibit hall, we were quickly reminded that the KBC booth is just one tiny part of the whole fair experience. But that's the way life is in the broader world too.

God doesn't call His followers to be the biggest or loudest or flashiest. He calls us to faithfully use the ministry resources and opportunities He provides—to continually "cast His love" among the people we encounter every day.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Where are the nine?

By John Huffman

Jesus asked, "Were not all 10 cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this one foreigner?" Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well" (Luke 17:17-19).

There were 10 of them. All were ill with a dreadful disease.

Lepers were required by the commandment of Moses to keep a distance from non-lepers (Leviticus 13:45-46). Yet it was common to see them gravitating to the trafficways to beg for charity. As Jesus moved toward Jerusalem, He encountered them in a nameless village, and standing away from Him, they begged for mercy.

Seeing them as already healed, Jesus instructed them, according to the law, to go show themselves to the priests who would release them from the status of uncleanness. Then in faith-response they went, and Luke, in an understated fashion, says, "As they went, they were cleansed."

One of them, a Samaritan, a social outcast and religious heretic, upon realizing that he was healed, turned back to glorify God and to worship with the most humble devotion.

At that moment Jesus made a peculiar statement in light of the previous circumstances: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Had He not already cleansed all 10 of them from their leprosy? Yet He apparently bestowed something additional on this outsider. Some students of this passage note that the word translated "whole" is the same word Jesus spoke to Zacchaeus when He said: "This day is 'salvation' come to this house" (Luke 19:9). Evidently the Samaritan received the full blessing of Jesus' ministry while the others went on their way with much less.

The other nine fade into oblivion. We hear about them only when Jesus asked: "Where are the nine?" Yes, where are they? That may be a very instructive question for us.

Scripture is silent. We do not know. However, based on our own experience, we can imagine what happened.

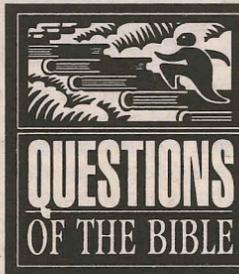
Leaving the priests with their cleansing validated, and beginning to grasp more fully the new health pulsating through their bodies as a result of their gift of healing, I can imagine them sprinting breathlessly back to their villages and homes.

It is easy to imagine that one of them could hardly wait to get home to see how much his children had grown in his absence. Another rushed home to see if his sweetheart was still waiting. The others could have been completely absorbed by the need to discover if their old jobs were still available. For whatever reasons, they did not return. Thankful or not, most likely it was their preoccupation with the derived blessings of the gift that obscured the Giver.

Isn't this the way most of us operate? Isn't it more often through preoccupation with the derivatives of the gift that Christ gives us that we are separated from His fellowship and fuller blessings? Preoccupied with our prosperity and robust health, it is easy to allow the Giver of all our gifts to become less prominent.

No longer am I inclined to be too hard on the nine healed lepers. I am still learning how easy it is to permit the gift to obscure the Giver.

John Huffman, a retired Kentucky pastor, is a former president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention



MINISTRY

Baptist ministries race to help after Turkey earthquake

"The resource we need more than anything else is finances."

Southern Baptist human needs specialist Jim Brown

ISTANBUL, Turkey (BP)—Several Baptist agencies, including the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship have dispatched immediate relief to help survivors of the earthquake that killed thousands in western Turkey Aug. 17.

"We're working on the immediate needs of food, water and medical supplies," said Southern Baptist human needs specialist Jim Brown. Those supplies would be directed especially in areas not being reached by other aid agencies.

Other forms of aid will follow soon. An assessment team representing multiple Southern Baptist agencies planned to leave for Turkey Aug. 21 to evaluate the most effective ways to contribute to the rescue effort.

A 10-member Texas Baptist Men disaster relief team—equipped with a mobile field kitchen—anticipated arriving in Turkey Aug. 23. They'll set up in one of the tent cities mushrooming in quake-devastated areas to house survivors. Other state volunteer teams are on standby and ready to go.

Until then, Brown said, "the resource we need more than anything else is finances" to buy supplies.

Two members of the Atlanta-based Cooperative Baptist Fellowship global-missions field team were in Turkey when the earthquake occurred. They cannot be named for their security and for the protection of people seeking information about Christianity.

The couple reported that they were safe but asked for funds to purchase



TURKEY EARTHQUAKE An aerial photo shows collapsed houses in Adapazari, Turkey, after a powerful earthquake measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale struck Aug. 17. Southern Baptist agencies are collecting money and studying other ways to help with relief work. (Reuters/RNS photo)

bread, water and medicine. They will help coordinate American relief efforts through a local U.S. embassy.

"In the providence of God, we already had veteran personnel in Turkey," said Gary Baldrige, interim global-missions coordinator. "They are moving quickly to meet needs with emergency funds."

CBF immediately sent \$5,000 from emergency relief funds, but additional funds are urgently needed, Baldrige said.

Financial contributions are the fastest and most flexible way to meet immediate needs, said Ben Bryant, missions financial assistant for CBF. Other

ways to help, such as volunteer rebuilding efforts and clothing contributions, will continue to be assessed.

The reported death toll has soared past 20,000, with more than 29,000 people injured and thousands more still missing. The temblor measured 7.4 on the Richter scale, according to Turkish authorities—among the most powerful earthquakes of the century. A 7.9 quake killed 33,000 people in eastern Turkey in 1939.

One visiting Southern Baptist group had just arrived in Istanbul when their hotel was damaged by the early morning quake. Unhurt, they joined other Americans in the sprawling city to dis-

How to help

At least three Baptist groups are collecting money for Baptist relief work in Turkey. Checks marked for "Turkey earthquake relief" can be sent to:

■ SBC International Mission Board Baptist World Relief, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

■ Baptist World Aid, 6733 Curran St., McLean, VA 22101.

■ Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Box 101699, Atlanta, GA 30392.

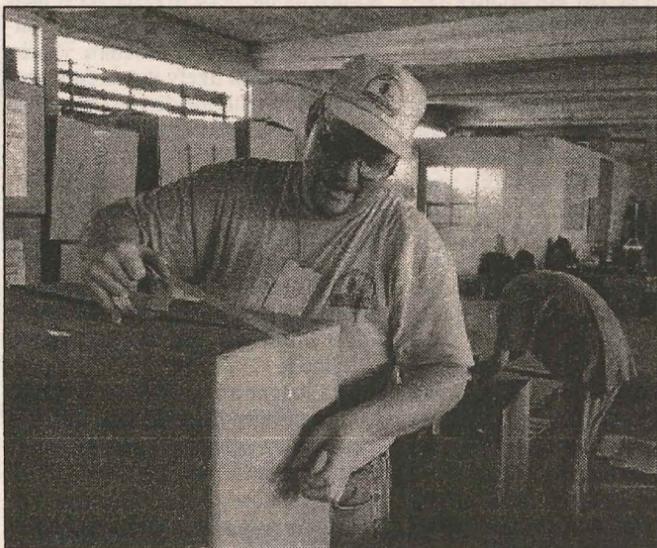
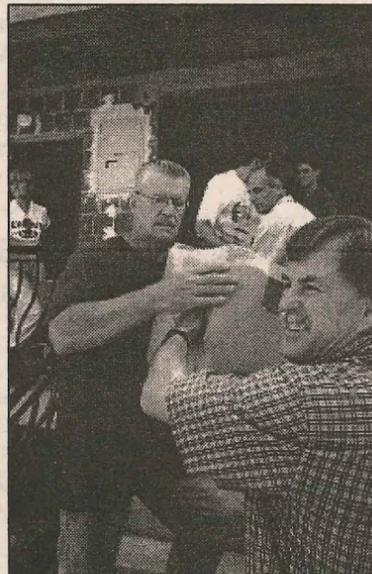
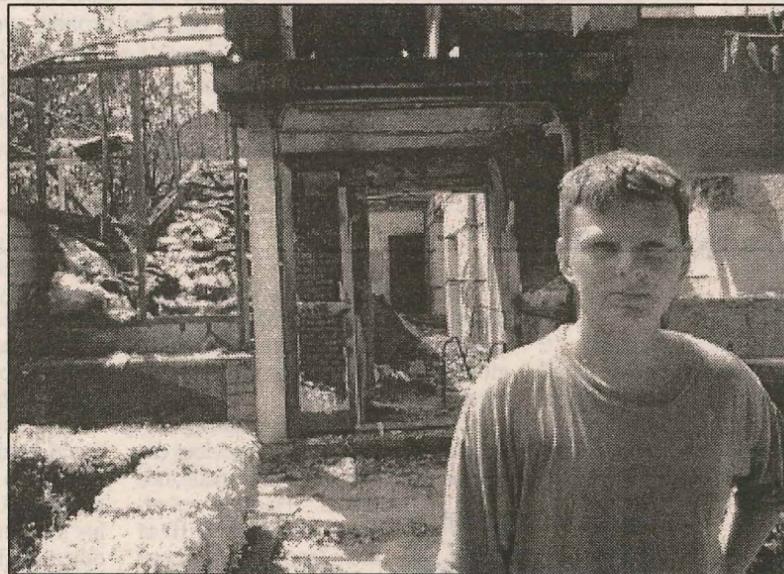
tribute water, bread and other items in public parks to residents terrified to return to their apartments.

Pockets of Istanbul sustained major damage, but most of the death and destruction struck areas farther east—like Izmit, the epicenter of the quake, about 55 miles away.

Christians in Istanbul sent volunteers Aug. 19 to three of the hardest-hit towns. Another group was preparing food packets for distribution and working to obtain a truck to deliver water.

At the Washington-based Baptist World Alliance, the organization's BWAid relief and development arm reported it had begun work with European Baptists and other Baptist groups and Christian relief organizations to provide relief in Turkey.

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press



KOSOVO IMAGES ■ Top left: Vigan Dishoni and his family fled Kosovo with only what they could carry. Now they've returned to find all that remains is rubble and ash. ■ Top right: Southern Baptist missionary Fred Dallas (foreground), volunteer Greg Morris (center) from Texas, and Esad Murati (behind Morris), a Kosovar Albanian, unload relief supplies at a warehouse in Peje, Kosovo. It is one of three warehouses the Southern Baptist International Mission Board has established to assist refugees returning home after the war. Southern Baptist volunteers also are working alongside Kosovars, helping rebuild homes. Missionaries met and assisted them during their exile in Macedonia and Albania. Many of the Kosovars became Christians while they were refugees and already are meeting for worship and Bible study now that they have returned to their homeland. ■ Left: South Carolina volunteers helped close down relief efforts among the refugees in Macedonia, then opened a warehouse in Pristina to assist those who returned home. Food, clothing and blankets already are being distributed from this and two other centers. South Carolina Baptist volunteer Cliff Dunlap packs a box that will feed a family of four for two weeks. Southern Baptists are collecting wool and acrylic blankets (no cotton) to help recently returned ethnic Albanian refugees cope with the harsh winter conditions that come early to Kosovo. Under the theme, "Blanket Kosovo with Love," blankets will be shipped by mid-September. Regional collection points in Kentucky include Ninth & O Baptist Church in Louisville as well as many Kentucky Baptist regional associations. The deadline for collecting blankets from association offices is Sept. 8. For information, call Kentucky Brotherhood at (888) 254-5720. (BP photos by Bill Bangham.)

CBF seeking volunteers to work in Kosovo

ATLANTA (ABP)—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is seeking volunteers to spend two weeks in Kosovo helping returned refugees prepare for winter.

Initial plans call for volunteers to work in Gjakova with Samaritan's Purse, the humanitarian organization led by Franklin Graham. In Pristina, volunteers will work with "Love in Action," a ministry organized by Albanian pastor Bikim Beka.

In both places, volunteers are needed for food distribution and warehouse coordination. Carpenters also are needed to help winterize homes and teach Kosovars how to roof their houses, said Don McNeely, a CBF volunteer coordinator.

Cost will be \$1,840 per person, which includes airfare, insurance, housing and most meals.

By mid-August, CBF's Albanian refugee relief fund had reached \$568,928. Funds have been used to purchase medicines for clinics in Macedonia, help U.S. churches which are sponsoring refugees and assist Baptist groups in Germany, Italy, Hungary and Croatia with Kosovar refugee-relief projects.

MISSIONS

WMU's Dellanna O'Brien led 'for the sake of missions'

By Rebecca England
Woman's Missionary Union

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Favorite quotes from Dellanna O'Brien abound.

For future-lookers, it might be "God is not finished with us yet," a hopeful defense against discouraging thoughts.

For current-events watchers, it might be the question, "Where are the peacemakers?" asked as WMU launched its anti-violence emphasis.

For the ministry-minded, it might be, "Some places are so dangerous, only a woman can go there," a quote borrowed from inner-city pastor Ray Bakke.

O'Brien's words—and the life they represent—have been a source of encouragement and challenge to her friends and co-workers and spurred many others to join her in devoting their lives to God's mission.

On Sept. 1, O'Brien will retire after 10 years as executive director of Woman's Missionary Union. She and her husband, Bill, will continue to live in Birmingham, Ala., where WMU is headquartered.

O'Brien has served at the helm of WMU in interesting times. The Southern Baptist Convention has undergone

a sweeping restructuring, with almost every SBC entity being significantly reorganized, and relationships between them newly designed. In local churches, patterns of attendance have shifted, with Christian education becoming more diversified.

Through it all, O'Brien has led WMU through a series of new initiatives and added to its missions education lineup in order to involve the whole church in missions.

O'Brien's predecessor, Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, noted that O'Brien's perspective as a missionary, educator and devoted mother and grandmother made her ideal to lead WMU.

"In a unique way she has used WMU as a vital force in missions education for the sake of missions, rather than for the sake of WMU," Crumpler said. First and foremost, O'Brien's decisions have been for the sake of non-Christians around the world—people who await being told about faith in Jesus Christ, Crumpler added.

O'Brien has traveled across the country and around the world, encouraging the work of missionaries and, in particular, women involved in missions. She has challenged WMU leaders to study the needs of a changing

world and develop ministries to help Christians meet those needs.

One example happened in 1993, when O'Brien and several WMU leaders took an "urban plunge" in Chicago, learning of ministry needs in the city. Then they visited Appalachia to identify causes and effects of hunger in the United States. In these two very different environments, the urgent situation of women in poverty—primarily single parents and welfare recipients—raised the same haunting question: Isn't there something we can do?

Christian Women's Job Corps was born out of that search. A ministry of WMU, Job Corps not only provides job and life skills for women in need, but also a caring mentor, Bible study and a chance to know Jesus Christ.

Praised by Vice President Al Gore and Texas Gov. George W. Bush, that ministry has raised enthusiasm among Christian women who find it an exciting place to share their gifts. Growing from five pilot sites to about 100 ministry sites in 21 states and one international site, Job Corps has helped hundreds of women move from dependency to self-sufficiency.

It is only one of the new initiatives begun under O'Brien's leadership. Others include:

■ **WorldCrafts.** This WMU ministry gives missionaries a way to market and distribute unique items hand-crafted by economically deprived people on the missions field, with sales directly benefiting the crafters. WMU currently works on this project with missionaries in more than a dozen countries.

■ **Volunteer Connection.** A network identifies missions needs and resources, both national and international, and matches them with volunteers willing to serve. Two major projects coordinated through Volunteer Connection are WMU's recent partnership with Habitat for Humanity International and an ongoing partnership with IMB personnel in Bosnia.



■ **New Hope Publishers.** Now a separate department, this group focuses on producing books for the larger Christian audience.

■ **www.wmu.com.** WMU's Internet Web site includes missions education materials, age-appropriate areas and an on-line bookstore.

■ **Missions Innovators.** These trained, certified, experienced consultants work with churches, associations and states looking for hands-on help in planning missions involvement.

■ **Expanded language materials.** WMU has increased its involvement with language/ethnic groups and provides materials and services for more groups than ever before.

■ **WMU Foundation.** Founded in 1995, it receives gifts to provide for the future of WMU and its ministries. The foundation's assets stand at more than \$5.5 million.

In her final address to members attending the June WMU annual meeting in Atlanta, O'Brien once again encouraged her listeners to move forward.

"We are part of a seamless history in which we connect the stories of the past to write our own chapters in preparation for those who come after us," she said. "May God keep you in His grace, love, joy and wisdom."

With additional reporting by Teresa Dickens of Woman's Missionary Union.

LEADERSHIP Dellanna O'Brien, shown here during the Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting in Atlanta, will retire Sept. 1 after 10 years as president of the missions support auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo)

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Annual KBC Literacy Conference

The annual Kentucky Baptist Convention Literacy Conference for all volunteers in literacy ministry in Kentucky will be held at Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, beginning with dinner at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 24, and ending at 1 p.m. Saturday. Special guests will include Gayle Leininger, NAMB national literacy missionary, and Patches Roe, president of NAMB Credit Union. This will be a time of information, fun and sharing for literacy volunteers. For more information and to pre-register for Friday dinner, please call Becky Carnell at (888) 254-5725, ext. 264, no later than Sept. 7. There is no fee for any of the events.



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RESOURCES

Communication, planning listed as ways to boost church giving

LOUISVILLE—Good communication, attitude and planning can help church leaders increase giving at churches, according to Director of Missions Truett Cocanaugher.

Cocanaugher, speaking at a session at the Super Saturday church leadership training event in Louisville on Aug. 14, listed several ideas to increase stewardship.

"Talk about what increased resources can mean to the church and her ministries and mission," said Cocanaugher of Bracken Baptist Association in Mays Lick. "Explain why we're here to do God's work for reaching people. It takes money, just like it takes money to operate our own household."

A "Dare to Dream" planning session in the church can inspire members to give more, he added. "Put a label on those things and make it a goal and a project."

Creating a positive attitude among leadership is also important, he added. "People do not give to a sinking ship. Guilt and fear is rarely a good motivator."

Featuring "giving testimonies" during worship can help others catch the vision for giving, Cocanaugher added. On the practical side, having a challenging but reachable budget will excite members when they reach it, he said. "You need something to celebrate, so make it something you can reach, at least occasionally."

Cocanaugher also encouraged church leaders not to be persuaded to not talk about stewardship. "Some people say they don't like to hear a sermon on giving," he said. "A lot of times that's a person who is not giving."

Discipleship leader: Focus on member needs

By David Winfrey
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Specialized programs led by devoted laypeople are an important key to a successful discipleship program in small churches, a discipleship leader told participants at a recent Super Saturday church leadership training session in Louisville.

Super Saturday

"Healthy churches have healthy leaders," said Ken Lupton, minister of discipleship and outreach at

Little Flock Baptist Church in Shepherdsville. "Healthy churches have healthy members who are being transformed into the likeness of Christ."

The driving force for a strong discipleship program should be the Great Commission in which Jesus told His followers to make disciples, not just converts, Lupton said. The main challenge is to develop disciples who, in turn, become leaders and develop disciples themselves, he added.

"Get members to learn they are to be ministers," Lupton said. "Focus 80 percent of your time on the 20 percent of the people who are going to make a difference. Who are the po-

tential leaders?"

Discipleship is an important factor in church growth because members who are growing will stay in church, he said.

"Your church isn't going to grow unless you reproduce leaders," he said. "You might get people, but they won't stay unless you disciple them."

Churches should recognize that the structure of discipleship training from the 1950s won't work today, he added. Three significant changes have occurred in people's views toward discipleship, he said. They are:

■ **How people want to be disciplined.** People prefer small groups with individual attention, Lupton said. People also prefer classes that foster interaction with course guides, not instruction from "know-it-all" teachers.

■ **When people want to participate.** People and society no longer structure their schedules according to "Baptist Standard Time," Sunday morning and night and Wednesday evening, he said. Quoting Lyle Schaller's book "The Seven-Day-A-Week Church," Lupton said churches should schedule classes for the convenience of participants. "Not because it's Baptist Standard Time," he said.

■ **What people want to study.** "People's needs vary at different stag-

es of their lives," Lupton said. A needs assessment survey would uncover what courses members want to study, he added. "Focus on the needs of the client."

Seasonal or modular classes can help discipleship programs match people's needs and schedules, he added. Such plans offer specific eight- to 12-week classes on such topics as parenting, Sunday school teaching or the Bible study Experiencing God.

People are more likely to enroll in a course for a specific length that meets their needs than they are to attend an open-ended course that meets weekly and covers a variety of topics, he said.

Even MasterLife, the discipleship course that for several years was 26 weeks long, has been broken down into four more manageable courses that last six weeks each.

While larger churches often use paid staff to lead discipleship programs, "even in a small church you can have people who will champion a specific track," Lupton said.

Super Saturday is a church leadership training event sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Remaining events are scheduled for Corbin and Owensboro Aug. 28 and Ashland and Paducah Sept. 11.

Discover...

- How the principle of personalization will release your people to build a Great Commission Church.
- How to implement the essential dynamics of a globally involved church.
- How to develop a balanced, biblical strategy for your church to reach people for Christ locally and globally.
- How to increase the amount of money available for local and global evangelism.

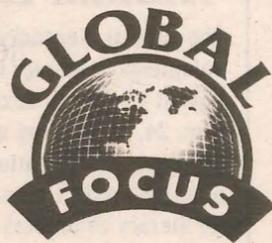
In Cooperation With:



NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD, SBC
NAMB

GROWING A GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH

Conducted By:



Wednesday - Friday
October 27 - 29, 1999
Little Flock Baptist Church
Shepherdsville, Kentucky

Call 770.592.7011 To Register or
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What Others Say...

"Global Focus is working with the International Mission Board in assisting local churches to develop personalized involvement in world evangelization."

Dr. Jerry Rankin, President
International Mission Board

"Global Focus brings missions down to the individual level where each and every member of your church feels personally involved in missions. As a result people give more, they go more, and they grow more."

Dr. Ronald Shaver, Host Pastor
Little Flock Baptist Church
Shepherdsville, Kentucky

"God has used Global Focus to greatly impact our church. Sixty-eight FBCW members have committed to career missions service and over 1000 FBCW members have gone on short-term mission trips since 1991. We increased our annual missions giving from \$140,000 in 1991 to over \$1.2 million in 1998. At the same time, our church greatly expanded its local outreach."

Dr. Johnny Hunt, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Woodstock, Georgia

TRANSFORMED TO GO, SEE & DO



God's will in Kentucky

God is in the business of transforming lives. How much we are transformed is dependent upon how willing we are to yield to the shaping and molding that God wants to do. In recognizing what God has already given to us in His Son, Jesus, we are reminded of His endless love for us -- for everyone. Can our response be any less than total commitment? Sad to say, sometimes it is. Our challenge as individuals is to recognize the joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment that comes from totally yielding our will to His Will.

As we yield to His Will, our vision and motivation will expand beyond our own normal circle of activities. We will become more aware of the needs of others -- the needs of folks for whom we can make a difference --and of how God can use us in transforming the lives of others.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- his good, pleasing, and perfect will."

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Transformed To Go, See and Do God's Will in Kentucky is the theme for our 1999 Season of State Missions and the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions. The opportunities we have to Go, See, and Do are all around us. The three areas chosen as examples of Eliza Broadus offering-funded ministries include the Hospital Hospitality House, Language Missions, and the MK (Missionary Kids) Retreat. However, these are but a few of the many causes that are supported by your praying and giving to the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions.

**"Come, all Christians,
be committed to the
service of the Lord..."**

Your church has received a packet of materials to help with this special emphasis. It includes a complete list of allocations for the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions; samples of the adult, youth, children and preschool material; bulletin insert, poster, offering envelope, churchwide suggestions, and a card to order additional copies of these materials. You may receive the packet by phoning the office of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, (888) 254-5726. The offering should be mailed to: Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions, Kentucky Baptist Convention, PO Box 43433, Louisville KY 40253-0433.

1999

Eliza Broadus

State Missions
Week of Prayer

September 12-19

Offering Goal: \$750,000

Challenge Goal: \$800,000



Kentucky
Woman's
Missionary
Union



Kentucky Baptist Convention

TRANSFORMED

What is an MK? What are questions that MKs face? What is an MK retreat? How did the MK retreat develop? What are benefits of the MK Retreats? How does the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions benefit MKs?

Colors

I grew up in Yellow Country,
But my parents are Blue.
I'm Blue,
Or at least, that is what they told me.

But I played with the Yellows,
I went to school with the Yellows,
I spoke the Yellow language,
I even dress and appeared to be Yellow.

Then I moved to the Blue land.
Now I go to a school with the Blues.
I speak the Blue language.
I even dress and look Blue.

But deep down inside me,
Something's yellow.
I love the Blue country,
But my ways are tinted with Yellow.
When I am in Blue land,
I want to be Yellow.
When I am in Yellow land,
I want to be Blue.

Why can't I find a place
Where I can be both?
A place where I can be me.
A place where I can be green.

I just want to be green.

-Written by Whitney Thomas in December, 1991 as an expression of her cross-cultural background.

**"Of your time and talents give ye,
they are gifts from God above.."**

pray

- The five Kentucky MKs entering college this year
- The students and their parents as they experience separation
- Older MKs who can be of support to the Freshmen

do

- Write notes or send "care packages" to any Kentucky MK.

Missionary Kids Retreat

Background - History - Benefits

by Audrey and Bill Cowley, Birmingham, Alabama, former missionaries to Nigeria

Woman's Missionary Union's love and care for missionaries' children (MKs) has been strong for over 100 years. WMU has a long history of promoting scholarships for MKs and providing nurturing relationships to vulnerable young people while they are away from their parents.

Through the years WMU and the Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) have tried to make this separation from home and family less traumatic for MKs. In 1965, the Foreign Mission Board began giving each MK one trip back to the field to visit their parents and friends. Five years later, the Foreign Mission Board started the policy of inviting college freshmen MKs to spend the Thanksgiving weekend in Richmond, Virginia, with Board staff and older student MKs serving as resource persons. These two ministries have meant a lot to students who suffered the anxiety of being separated from home, family and all the other MKs and international friends with whom they had grown up. These two reunion times offered by the Foreign Mission Board helped to relieve the MKs' feelings of being alone in a strange new world. Nothing their parents had said or done quite prepared most of them for the feelings of isolation and failure to fit in.

When we came on furlough from Nigeria in 1975, we felt an increasing and overwhelming burden for MKs. Three years earlier, the University which our daughters were attending initiated a special orientation for MKs which preceded

the usual orientation for all freshmen. MKs from around the world found instant rapport with and acceptance of one another. Some gained a support group

which would sustain them for the rest of their lives.

For many MKs around the US, however, nothing like this orientation was available other than the Richmond Thanksgiving Retreat. Even so, many could not and did not attend the retreat. By Thanksgiving, most MKs had already selected or fallen into a lifestyle which would determine most of their future choices. We asked the Foreign Mission Board to offer a retreat which MKs could attend before starting their college education. The Board was sympathetic, but felt that an additional meeting was beyond their financial and personnel resources.

Finally, in talking with Beverly Sutton (now Beverly Miller), Executive Director for Alabama WMU, we shared our dream of such a Re-Entry Retreat. She took the idea and began to make plans, offering the Foreign Mission Board enough Alabama WMU support to enable the

first Re-Entry Retreat to be held in 1986. The response to that first meeting was tremendous. The number of participants has grown every year and the full benefits can only be known in the future. Since this beginning in 1986, national WMU and other state WMUs, including Kentucky, have become involved and contributed to the support of these annual retreats.

MKs attending the Retreats sometimes come directly from their parents' field on their way to their college campuses, heavy suitcases and collected memorabilia in hand. Older MKs, former missionaries and others who are interested serve as professional and lay resource persons. Nearby WMUs provide transportation and snacks.

In 1995, Kentucky was privileged to host the MK Re-Entry Retreat at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly. Kentucky WMU provided snacks, "goodie bags" with small gifts, transportation from the airport to Cedarmore, and adult "encouragers" such as Kay Trisler (former Kentucky WMU Executive Director-Treasurer), and her husband, John.

Kentucky Baptists help sponsor the MK Re-Entry Retreat through the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions. An allocation is designated for transportation to the retreat for freshmen children of missionaries who consider Kentucky their home state.

Five Kentucky MKs were eligible to attend the 1999 retreat in Arkansas. Kentucky WMU will provide names and addresses of these and other MKs in Kentucky schools if you'd like to send encouraging notes or "care packages".

Many MKs who attend the Retreats have questions and problems. For some it takes a few sessions for them to feel accepted and confident enough to open up.

How do I:

- order in a fast food restaurant?
- pump gas?
- use a coin-operated washer and dryer?
- know the right clothes to buy and how much to pay?
- find a church home where I will feel at home? (unbelievably, this is one of their bigger problems.)
- deal with homesickness?
- get a driver's license?
- find a good doctor and dentist?
- find a part-time job?
- find friends who will let me be myself yet will appreciate my uniqueness?
- share out of my uniqueness without becoming vulnerable?

During the Re-Entry Retreat, many MKs find the answers and solutions they need. Shy, nervous, fearful individuals will go on to college with greater confidence, the potential of making a significant contribution, and of gaining immeasurable benefits from their experience.

T R A N S F O R M E D

Language Missions

Worship of God and His Son, Jesus, occurs each week among at least 10 different culture or language groups that are touched by Kentucky Baptists. Baptist work among people groups for whom English is a second language has grown faster in recent years than in any other segment of our population.

Hispanics make up the largest language group in Kentucky, with an estimated 75,000 people statewide. Kentucky Baptists support six full-time appointed catalytic missionary couples who plant churches among Hispanic people. At least two other full-time and several part-time or bi-vocational pastors cooperate with these missionaries to establish churches where Hispanics live and work.

According to Grundy Janes, the ethnic/language consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, other language groups in Kentucky who worship in their own language or culture include Cambodians, Chinese, Filipinos, Russians and other eastern Europeans, Vietnamese, Haitians, Japanese, and Koreans. Asian Indians, Pakistanis and a variety of Middle Easterners, along with other ethnic groups, reside in Kentucky, but have not yet been evangelized by Kentucky Baptists. Presently, these people groups do not have congregations that worship in their own language or culture.

Baptist language ministries usually include Bible study or worship services. A few congregations worship in English. Others have bilingual services, but these churches are exceptional. Most have leaders who speak the language of that group. Some are missions, others are self-supporting. One of the greatest needs in ethnic/language ministry is to discover committed Christians who can become leaders, pastors, and church "planters" for their own language group.

Deaf persons constitute the second-largest language and culture group in our state. Deaf Baptists worship or hold Bible Study in sign language in at least six communities in Kentucky. Many "hearing" churches also interpret worship services for the deaf through sign language. Some deaf persons actually prefer interpreted "hearing" worship, but most probably like to worship in their own language.

The large number of deaf persons living in the mountains of eastern Kentucky make up the second-largest concentration of congenitally-deaf persons in the United States. Tim Bender, KBC consultant with deaf persons, indicates that although the presence of full-time ministers has been somewhat inconsistent in the past three years, outreach there should be full-time because of the overwhelming need. Kentucky Baptists financially support this ministry at both state and association levels.

Literacy Ministry

As the literacy consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, one phase of Becky Camell's work involves providing training for persons willing to promote adult and children's literacy. This overwhelming need, particularly in eastern Kentucky, provides an opportunity for Baptists to witness and minister to these lost and unchurched persons while teaching them language skills. Available training courses for volunteers are listed below.

Conversational English (CE)/English as a Second Language (ESL)

Equips students to help Internationals learn English. Those who may have studied English in school can benefit by learning to comprehend "everyday" English like grocery store labels, newspaper advertisements, road signs, or "broken" sentences. By far the most requested and popular literacy training session in the state, because Kentucky Baptists are seizing the opportunity to do missions at home.

Requires 16 hours for volunteer certification.

Adult Reading and Writing (ARW)

Requires 16 hours for certification.

Tutoring Children and Youth (TCY)

Training to help educate children or youth from "low motivation" backgrounds to avoid becoming adult non-readers. Churches that provide after school programs for "latchkey" kids can benefit from this training for volunteers.

Requires 14 hours for certification.

Literacy missions training events can be scheduled through Becky Camell at (888) 224-6491. More information on reaching ethnic and language groups is available through Kentucky Baptist Extension-Ministries personnel, Grundy Janes and Tim Bender, at 1-800-254-5725.

Friendship International

Friendship International is a language ministry for people of many different language groups who are usually in the United States for only a defined period of time. Several churches cooperate to reach out to internationals in their communities. One morning each week during the school year, church members provide transportation for the internationals and their preschool children to meet at a local church. Some volunteers teach and take care of the preschool children, while others teach English as a second language to the parents. Drivers' education, citizenship preparation, crafts, cooking, Bible study, aerobics and other forms of recreation are also offered. Volunteers become "American friends" to these visitors, most of whom are women, but a few men do participate. One of the highlights of the Friendship International year is the day on which the internationals share food that they have prepared with recipes from their homelands.

There are Friendship International programs in Louisville, Lexington, Bardstown, Murray, and Paducah. Kentucky participants represented about two dozen nations this past year. Participants are generally wives of university students or spouses of medical professionals or leaders in automobile manufacturing/electronics industries.

The Friendship International at Bardstown began in 1990, and has hosted more than 70 participants since that time. Most participants attend for four years, and then return home or move to another part of the United States. When the Nelson Association WMU director, Virginia Drake, recently visited Japan, she met 29 people who had been involved in the Bardstown program. Although few Friendship International participants ever publicly profess Christ, Christian people have the opportunity to show them love through their friendship and service in Christ's name.

A Personal Experience

by Becky Camell,
Literacy Consultant, Metropolitan Missions, KBC

In September of 1995, I was invited to participate in the World Mission Conference of Severns Valley Association. At that time I was assigned as a Mission Service Corps volunteer in Kentucky literacy missions ministry. One of my assignments was the Sunday evening service at First Korean Baptist Church, Radcliff. I did not know before I arrived that evening that the pastor and his wife spoke very little English and there was no interpreter for the service. It was awkward for us to try to communicate before the service began. All of the service was in Korean except for my part.

During fellowship after the service, I learned that Pastor Kwang P. Choi and his wife, Younghee, had been at the church for about a year. Their children attended high school and college and spoke English very well. Later, I wrote a letter to Pastor Choi, knowing that his children could interpret. I offered to begin English lessons with him and his wife if they would like. I received a swift reply stating that they would like to begin. It amazed me that they had been in the community for so long and no one had offered to help them with the language.

Within months, we were not only pupils and teacher, but friends as well. I learned so much about Korean culture and they were eager to learn about my American life. We exchanged visits in our homes and shared our problems and prayer concerns. For three years we met regularly for English lessons at the church in Radcliff.

The Chois consider themselves missionaries for the US and Pastor Choi wanted to be able to preach and teach in English. I recently received an email from him telling me that he had performed a wedding for the first time in 'all English.' (They are now serving in Dayton, Ohio.)

The Chois were my first Korean friends. Our friendship came as a direct result of my training as a Conversational English tutor. It has been a great blessing in my life to call Kwang and Younghee my friends.

I have been blessed to meet many other internationals since I became a tutor four years ago. These are people I would not have met at my church or in my neighborhood. Some have been of other faiths and may not have ever had a personal relationship with a Christian. Sixteen hours of training as a tutor has given me many hours of ministry to those eager to learn my language.

To learn more about this ministry, contact:

Becky Camell - Phone (888) 224-6491
E-mail: rcamell@bbtel.com

•Tony Hough, KBC Director of Metropolitan Missions
•Grundy Janes, Ethnic/Language Consultant
•Becky Camell, Literacy Consultant
•Tim Bender, Deaf Consultant

pray

•Be aware of persons in your community who need better language skills.
•Take the literacy training courses to become a tutor.
•Begin a ministry for Internationals in your area. Become their friends.

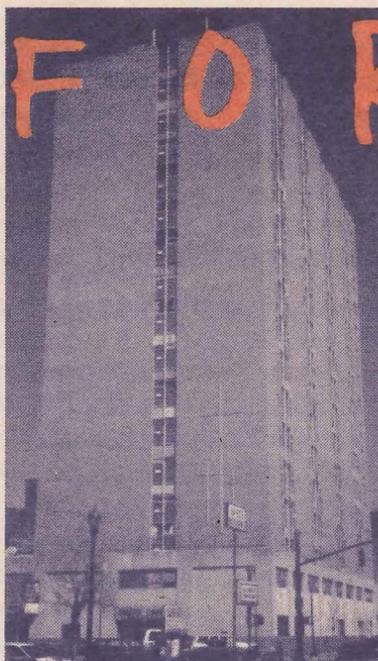
do

TRANSFORMED

A Touch of Home in Louisville

What would you do if you were from Cub Run, Kentucky, and were facing eight weeks of radiation in Louisville? Or what if you were an eight year old boy from the Ukraine who had suffered third degree burns over most of your body and were flown to Louisville for treatment? Or what if you were seven months pregnant with triplets and lived in Paducah and your doctor sent you to one of the Louisville hospitals to await their arrival? Where would you and your family stay?

Hospital Hospitality House offers some answers for these folks and others who must come to the Louisville area for medical reasons. The HHH mission statement says, "Hospital Hospitality House of Louisville offers affordable, comfortable, safe lodging for families (and some outpatients) who must travel from outside the city to accompany loved ones to undergo treatment in the Louisville medical community. HHH is a place where guests receive emotional and spiritual support and offer each other care and compassion to help endure a difficult time in their lives."



The Hospital Hospitality House

Hospitality House has 16 efficiency apartments where families can stay for a night, a week, or several months. HHH seeks to provide "a touch of home in Louisville" while families are under tremendous emotional and physical stress.

Last year, almost 500 families stayed at HHH, including over a thousand individuals who stayed 4,400 nights. These folks came from 74 cities in Kentucky, 30 states, Greece and the Ukraine, and stayed anywhere from one night to six months. Their reasons for being in Louisville included multiple types of cancer, emphysema, heart attacks, kidney failure, burns, gall bladder disease, stroke, pneumonia, pregnancy and premature delivery, accidents, plastic surgery, transplants (heart, bone marrow, lung, kidney) and coronary artery bypass.

"Showing mercy to a brother mirrors his redemptive plan.."

You can see that people who come to HHH are under a lot of physical and emotional stress. The facility's staff and volunteers try

to ease each situation and make the stay as pleasant as possible.

A woman named Gene stayed at HHH while her son underwent a bone marrow transplant. Each morning, Gene would go to the roof garden and have her devotions. One morning she shared with a staff member that she had prayed, "God, I hate this place. But I am so grateful for it." That sums up why Hospitality House exists. HHH is in Louisville because families must be in Louisville. Despite the unfortunate circumstances which bring them here, they are grateful to have a safe, comfortable haven during such tough times.

HHH Programs

Power of Prayer Program. Each week, school groups, church congregations and individuals receive the first names of HHH guests' loved ones who are hospitalized, and covenant to pray for them daily.

Friendly Visitors. HHH is designed to take care of family members who must stay in Louisville with their loved ones, and has a staff to tend to those needs. Additionally, there are a number of volunteers who visit hospital patients. This provides a link between HHH and patients who are undergoing treatment, and is another way to say "we care."

Provide a Meal/Snacks. For those who are at HHH for months, eating out at a restaurant every meal is tiring and unaffordable. Sunday School classes, women's mission groups, and medical-affiliated organizations provide meals about once a week for the guests. This sends the message that they are cared for by people who do not even know them.

Adopt a Family. When people come to Louisville and a family member must be hospitalized, they usually have no idea how long they will need to stay. HHH is designed for temporary long-term care, which means a week, a month, or six months. Sometimes, a family member is here alone. The Guest Relations Team of the HHH Executive Board has implemented the Adopt a Family program. This allows a volunteer to meet a



The Wolfes: an HHH guest family.

family who is here long-term and establish a relationship with them by perhaps taking them out for lunch, cutting their hair, or just calling to see how they are. For those who have been involved, it has been a very meaningful experience for both volunteer and guest family.

•HHH guests; their loved ones in the hospitals; outpatients at The House.

•Volunteers who pray for families; visit people in the hospital; bring meals, snacks, goodies for guests; wash, clean, do whatever is needed at HHH.

•The staff who work to ensure that HHH fulfills its mission statement.

•A permanent home for HHH.

pray

•Toilet paper, paper towels, window cleaner, disinfectant spray, cleansers, dishwashing liquid, pump soaps, laundry detergent, dryer sheets, light bulbs, large self-seal plastic bags.

•Regular ground coffee, canned soup.

•White Xerox paper, electric typewriter, small microwave.

give

•Become a part of the **Power of Prayer Program.**

•Volunteer to do hospital visitation.

•Volunteer to bring a meal, snacks, goodies for guests.

•Visit HHH; tour the facilities; hold a regular meeting of your organization here.

•Adopt a family here long-term.

do



Jane Morris (l) tells HHH Executive Director Carol Noffsinger how happy she is to have a safe and friendly place to stay.

If Kentucky churches reach this years' Eliza Broadus Offering goal, HHH will receive a \$2,000 allocation. Plan a visit to Hospital Hospitality House. This is one way you can "Go, See, and Do God's Will in Kentucky."

Hospital Hospitality House information was prepared by **Carol Noffsinger**, who served on the Georgia WMU Staff, and fifteen years on the Kentucky WMU Staff before becoming Executive Director of the Louisville Hospital Hospitality House. Her office phone (502) 625-1360.

Bivocational pastor trend still growing

By Linda Lawson
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—If present trends continue, bivocational pastors will outnumber full-time pastors in Southern Baptist churches within 10 years, a missionary told Christian college students recently.

Bivocational work is strongest in areas such as major cities outside the Bible Belt where Southern Baptists are weakest, according to Carl Barrington, a national missionary for "tentmaking" ministries for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Tentmaking is the term NAMB uses to refer to bivocational pastors, linking the concept with the Apostle Paul, who worked as a tent maker to support his missionary work.

Barrington, who led a recent student conference session, noted that 2.6 people are graduating from seminaries today for every one existing full-time ministry position. "The greatest challenge we face in the 21st century is the connecting of every person to their God-called ministry."

Only since 1948 has full-time ministry been the dominant Southern Baptist model, Barrington said. In 1972, only 32 percent of Southern Baptist

pastors were bivocational, but in 1999 it has risen to 39 percent and is still climbing. By 2008, he predicted, more than half of pastors serving Southern Baptist churches will be supporting themselves and their families through another vocation.

In Kentucky, more than 60 percent of churches are staffed by non-funded pastors, according to Randy Jones, state missions director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. That figure includes retired and student pastors as well as pastors who are employed elsewhere in addition to the church where they serve.

Barrington called on campus and church student leaders to challenge today's collegians to prepare themselves both for a vocation in the marketplace and for ministry in the major cities of the United States.

"We need to be graduating people who consider themselves to be life-time tentmaker ministers," he said.

Barrington emphasized that the traditional 20th-century model of starting a church by buying land, building a building and calling a full-time pastor will continue. But additional ministry paradigms must be added, he said, in part due to a disparity in where trained leaders are located.

Eighty percent of trained Southern

Baptist leaders live south of the Mason-Dixon line and east of New Mexico, he said. Barrington cited a small Atlanta church that received 130 resumes to fill its pastorate while churches in Nebraska, Pennsylvania and other places outside the Bible Belt go leaderless for a year or longer.

In addition to tentmaker pastors and church staff members, Barrington said "we've got to have new ways of taking the church to the people. It is no longer true that just doing ministry well enough at the local church will eventually reach people.

"We must get more of us involved in ministry where we work, where we play and get to know people in many different ways," he said.

As examples, Barrington cited an Atlanta man who leads a Tuesday night Bible study for taxi drivers, a professional fisherman who ministers to participants in fishing tournaments and a medical doctor who leads a Thursday night Bible study for his colleagues.

Barrington called on student ministers to consider sponsoring innovative ministry conferences to acquaint students, especially freshmen and sophomores, with the ministry opportunities available to persons willing to consider tentmaking.

Center provides national phone network for evangelism response

ATLANTA (BP)—A national phone network for people interested in Christianity was launched recently by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

The Evangelism Response Center provides a central number—(888) JESUS 2000—that churches, regional Baptist associations or state conventions can use in ads or other outreach materials. Callers are linked with an "encourager" in their area, and any spiritual decisions are forwarded to local churches for immediate follow-up.

The concept was fully implemented for the first time during the Arms Around Atlanta evangelistic media campaign earlier this summer. More than 12,745 calls were received, 7,826 callers requested a free "Jesus" video and 1,933 spoke with an encourager. About 230 people made first-time professions of faith, organizers said.

The low-risk nature of the encounters is attractive for both callers and encouragers, according to Joy Neal, a decision counseling specialist for NAMB. Both are anonymous, allowing them to be more open with each other, she said. Because encouragers are working from their homes, they need not fear for their safety, she said. Even if a caller becomes hostile, repeat calls likely will be routed to someone else because of the nature of the system.

Toby Frost, manager of event evangelism for NAMB, said an Internet component to the plan also is being developed.

For more information contact Kentucky Baptist Convention Evangelism Director Dan Garland at (888) 254-5722 or Joy Neal at NAMB at (817) 737-4011.

INTERFAITH WITNESS

ASSOCIATES' TRAINING

Interfaith Witness Associates' training is being offered to those who would like to become North American Mission Board certified for teaching others about sharing their faith with followers of Islam and the Occult.

September 25, 1999

9:00am till 4:00pm CDT

Warren Association Office

6448 Scottsville Road, Bowling Green, Kentucky



I would like to attend the Interfaith Witness Associates' Training.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Church _____

Cost: \$15.00 per person or \$20.00 per couple
Make checks payable to Kentucky Baptist Convention

Mail to: Kentucky Baptist Convention
Evangelism Growth Team Office
P.O. Box 43433
Louisville, KY 40253-0433

Please choose one:

Dr. Ravi's Discussion of Islam

Jimmy Furr's Discussion of the Occult

FEE: \$15.00 per person or \$20.00 per couple
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 9, 1999

Please fill in the registration information on the left and return promptly.



Evangelism Growth Team Office
10701 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40243
502-254-4737 or Toll Free 1-888-254-5722
<http://www.kybaptist.org>

Dr. N.S.R.K. Ravi

N.S.R.K. Ravi is an Interfaith Evangelism Associate of the North American Mission Board in Atlanta, Georgia. Ravi received his call for the ministry at age 22. He came to the North American Mission Board with both an Eastern and Western educational and cultural background.

Ravi was born into a high caste Hindu family near Hyderabad, India. He served as President for the Word for the Asians International Ministries, Memphis, Tennessee. While in Memphis, Ravi designed and taught "Third World Perspective on Missions" at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He was also the Director of Interfaith Ministries for Shelby Baptist Association, Memphis. Ravi ministered as an Associate Pastor for Templo Baptista and served in Evangelism and Media ministries at Bellevue Baptist Church, all in Memphis.

Jimmy Furr

Rev. Furr, North American Mission Board Interfaith Witness Consultant, will lead the Occult training classes. Rev. Furr has pastored churches in Mississippi and Nebraska and is a graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary with an MDiv. He has worked with the Home Mission Board/NAMB since 1988 and has taught conferences at Glorieta and Ridgecrest as well as all across the U.S. and Canada.

Megacities pose major challenges for evangelism

Southern Baptist leaders want to learn from other urban evangelism efforts before they face the Big Apple.

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—As the "Good News New York" crusade band started to play, the scoreboards of Madison Square Garden announced Christian book sales instead of basketball scores.

Rodney Howard-Browne, a Tampa, Fla.-based preacher, has accomplished what he says God told him to do through a dream: to hold a crusade in New York four decades after evangelist Billy Graham held a 16-week crusade at the same location.

"Religion and tradition walk through the streets of New York and pass judgment on those who are bound by sin," shouted Howard-Browne, shadowed by an enthusiastic Spanish interpreter throughout his 40-minute sermon. "But Jesus walks the streets of New York and says to New York, 'Your sins are forgiven you. I paid the price for you. You can go free. Only believe.'"

In an interview, Howard-Browne, a 38-year-old South African native, said he is "one very small part" of a movement of evangelists who want to take the gospel to the nation's urban centers. Plans range from big meetings, such as the ones at the arena, to person-to-person street evangelism.

But his dream of filling the 19,000-seat Garden on each of the 24 nights from July 7 through Aug. 13 did not come true. Unlike Graham, who spoke to more than 2 million people during his event, Howard-Browne's effort drew



NEW YORK CITY The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board is among many groups that are focusing evangelism work on America's major cities (NAMB photo)

only a few thousand each night.

Howard-Browne, who said donations to his organization helped pay the \$3.2 million cost to rent the Garden, expressed more concern about the seats that were filled than those remaining vacant.

"I'd do it all over again," he said. "The thing is to get the attention of the city."

That's the goal of other groups as well, from the Southern Baptist Convention to Mission America, a consortium of about 400 evangelical groups. Both speak of strategic plans to evangelize the nation's cities.

Mission America is seeking to pinpoint "lighthouse champions" in each city who will promote the "Lighthouse Movement," a plan aiming to get evangelical church members to pray for and share their faith with every person in the country.

At the June meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, officials trumpeted plans to evangelize cities outside the denomination's Southern strongholds. They plan to focus on two cities a year: Chicago and Phoenix in 2000, Las Vegas and Boston in 2001, and Philadelphia and Seattle in 2002.

Phil Roberts, vice president of stra-

tegic cities strategies for the SBC North American Mission Board, said millions of dollars will be spent on "saturation evangelism" and the opening of new churches, rather than focusing primarily on large, crusade-like events.

"This is more a roll up your sleeves, grab the shovel and let's do the spade work on evangelism," Roberts said.

Local churches are a key factor in urban evangelism, he added. Churches representing the diversity of the cities, including African-Americans, Hispanics and Koreans, have been invited to participate in the SBC efforts, he said.

New York, Roberts said, will be a focus a few years down the road because it requires "a lot more thought" and SBC leaders want to learn from other urban evangelism efforts before they face the Big Apple.

While others plan their city focus, teams of volunteers participating in the Good News New York effort have blanketed the metropolitan area, handing out more than 8 million free tickets to the evening crusade meetings and witnessing about their Christian faith in one-on-one encounters with strangers.

Some New Yorkers hurriedly wave off the volunteers as they approach. Others listen patiently.

"If anybody stopped me out on the street and they talk about the Almighty, I give them time," said David Summers, 45, a Manhattan man on disability. "Those guys on the street, they're more serious than those guys with big churches."

Jason Ellerbrook joins Jonathan Creek team

We're excited at Kentucky Baptist Assemblies about our new associate director who came on board this week at Jonathan Creek.

Jason Ellerbrook has joined our leadership team after spending the summer at the beach. Panama City Beach, to be specific. But Jason wasn't there just having fun in the sun. He was directing the Centrifuge Panama City camp as part of his responsibilities as an intern with the Centrifuge/Crosspoint section of LifeWay (formerly the Baptist Sunday School Board). At the Panama City Centrifuge, the camp hosted 600 to 650 youth each week throughout the summer. Many lives were changed there this summer, many decisions were made for Christ and many more rededicated their lives.

Jason brings great experience and a heart for camping to our ministry. I have worked with Jason for several years. He served as youth minister in both churches where I was pastor. I know his heart for youth. I first met Jason through Keith Inman, when Keith was campus minister at Murray State. I was pastor at First Baptist Church of Benton, and I had been looking for a youth minister for quite some time. Keith and I were becoming

good friends, and Keith was one of Jason's mentors. Finally Keith got to know me well enough to tell me that he had the right man for our church. Jason and I got together. As we talked about youth ministry opportunities, from our first conversation, Jason expressed his passion for youth camping. Now, in his role at Jonathan Creek, Jason will be the

front-line leader for our new camp that we are launching next summer, "Crossings at the Creek."

So pray for us as we chart new waters. Pray for Jason as he transitions to a great new position with an opportunity to have a huge kingdom impact in the lives of thousands of youth. It's going to be exciting to watch what God does in the months and years

ahead. "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21).

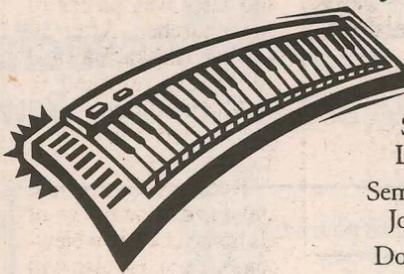
Rusty Ellison is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, Box 37, Bagdad, KY 40003. Call (502) 747-8911

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

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NATIONAL NOTES

■ Lutherans approve unity pact.

Delegates to the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in a major vote of confidence for the ecumenical movement, agreed Aug. 19 to a historic "full communion" proposal with the Episcopal Church. The proposal was approved by the Episcopal Church in 1997, but the ELCA rejected it that year. The full communion plan means pastors and priests from the two denominations may be called by congregations of either body. It is also likely to lead to increased sharing of Holy Communion and joint ministry at all levels of the church.

■ Scouts fined for discrimination.

An Illinois court upheld a fine and sanctions against the Boy Scouts of America in Chicago Aug. 14 for discouraging a job application from a gay man. Cook County Circuit Judge Stephen Schiller approved a token \$100 fine levied against the Scouts by the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and enjoined the BSA's Chicago Area Council from enforcing or publishing rules against hiring homosexuals.

■ **O'Hair associate sentenced.** A man suspected in the 1995 disappearance of Madalyn Murray O'Hair has been sentenced to 60 years in prison for stealing more than \$50,000 from her family's atheist organization. David Waters, 52, a three-time felon from Austin, Texas, was sentenced Aug. 11. He had been on probation since

1995, but ended up back in court after federal authorities discovered 119 rounds of handgun ammunition in March in his Austin apartment.

■ "Son of Sam" discusses faith.

Confessed killer David Berkowitz told Larry King Aug. 16 that "God has had mercy on me and he'll have mercy on anyone who calls upon him." The so-called "Son of Sam" slayer spent most of an hour long interview on CNN's "Larry King Live" discussing his faith and life in prison. The 46-year-old Berkowitz, sentenced to consecutive life terms with no chance for parole, said he has been "a believer in Jesus for 12 years."

■ Florida issues school vouchers.

The first statewide school voucher program began Aug. 16 in Florida as supporters cheered the change and opponents criticized the move as a violation of the separation of church and state. The only eligible children are those who have attended schools the state has determined are failures, Associated Press reported.

■ **Airlines offer partners benefits.** Three major airlines have decided to provide benefits to the homosexual and unmarried heterosexual partners of their employees. United, American and U.S. Airways changed their policies after the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused to make an exception for airlines to a 1997 San

Francisco ordinance requiring companies that conduct business with the city to offer such benefits.

■ "Morning after pill" prompts lawsuit.

A pharmacist who says she was fired by Kmart for refusing to dispense a so-called "morning-after pill" has sued the retail company claiming she was wrongfully terminated. Karen Brauer of Indiana filed her suit Aug. 12. The American Center for Law and Justice filed the suit in U.S. District Court in Cincinnati on Brauer's behalf.

■ Bank reverses Focus on Family decision.

The Mellon Bank has reversed itself and now is willing to do business with Focus on the Family. Bank spokesman Ron Gruendl said Mellon sent a letter to the conservative ministry Aug. 12 and enclosed a copy of the bank's nondiscrimination policy. The letter said doing business with Focus on the Family was contingent on the group's not violating that policy. Mellon had refused to do business with Focus on the Family, claiming the ministry's mission statement conflicted with Mellon's nondiscrimination policy. But James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, said the ministry, too, has changed its mind and now will not give its business to Mellon.

■ **Counselor sued over teen's abortion.** A Pennsylvania couple has sued a public

school guidance counselor, charging he violated their constitutional rights by helping their minor daughter obtain a secret abortion. Howard and Marie Carter of Hatboro, a Philadelphia suburb, sued the Hatboro-Horsham School District and counselor William Hickey Aug. 16 in Philadelphia.

■ **Judge upholds Bible readers' rights.** A federal judge has ruled the Minnesota Department of Corrections violated the constitutional rights of its employees when it disciplined them for reading Bibles during a training session on gays in the workplace. Francis Manion, the attorney for the three employees, said U.S. District Court Judge Ann Montgomery issued a decision Aug. 9 in Minneapolis saying that "freedom to read their Bibles as a form of protest is accorded added protection against the DOC's asserted interests in an efficient workplace."

■ **Suit filed to halt cult probe.** A Maryland task force looking into the extent of cult activity at the state's public universities and colleges had prompted a lawsuit by opponents who say the panel violates constitutional rights and amounts to a religious inquisition. The suit was filed Aug. 15 in Baltimore by several groups and individuals, including the International Coalition for Religious Freedom, which is associated with Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. The suit seeks to halt the task force's investigation.

A legend returns

By Robert Dunston

Robert Day and David Emmert founded Mountain Outreach in 1982 at Cumberland College. Establishing a new ministry is not that unusual, but two elements made Day's and Emmert's accomplishment amazing. First, they were students at the time. Second, the ministry continues to be vibrant, blessing all who participate.

Day is from an area in Tennessee not far from Cumberland College. One day he took Emmert on some of the back roads to show him the area. The poverty shocked Emmert. They both decided something had to be done, and they committed to do it.

Working with fellow students, they began building a home for an elderly man. The group had few resources and little building experience, but local builders and Cumberland College offered support and work began and progressed.

Christmas break brought construction to an end. The group had repaired the old home to make it more weather-tight and had cut and piled firewood. Upon returning from break, the group discovered the old man was desperately ill. Although an ambulance was called,

he died.

The group had lost a friend but not their commitment. Day's ministry exemplifies that commitment to God.

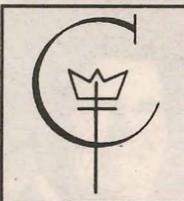
After Day graduated from Cumberland, he earned a master's degree in social work at Southern Seminary. From there, Day and his wife, Karen, journeyed to her home state of Alaska where he served as a social worker and later was pastor of two churches. After 10 years in Alaska, Day and his family returned to Southern Seminary and Day earned a master of divinity degree.

Recently God called Day back to be pastor of his home church in Newcomb, Tenn. He also will teach sociology at Cumberland College and plans to involve himself and his church in Mountain Outreach.

We are delighted to have Day with us again and know his presence and example will bless the lives of our students and many others. Although he is a legend to us, he is really a faithful servant showing us how to put our faith into action.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



The changing face of child advocacy

I have no clue if Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children spoke out regarding child labor laws or social security benefits for children earlier this century. It could be that our boards and superintendents were too busy keeping all those kids fed and clothed to be involved in public policy issues.

Today, KBHC—and agencies we are members of such as the Child Welfare League of America and the Children's Alliance—are advocates for children and their public policy issues. Sometimes those policies are good; some clearly are not in the best interest of our kids.

The Fairness Ordinance passed in Louisville and Lexington now will surely pass in Jefferson County. There is also a pre-filed bill by a state representative from Lexington to pass the same legislation state wide. This same representative plans to propose a bill that will "deal with intolerance" by requiring the state Department of Education to have "certified and classified personnel who reflect the diversity of society." Should this be of concern to those of us who want to protect children? You bet.

The 1999 California General

Assembly entertained 10 different bills elevating homosexuality or extending it statewide. The most controversial bill mandates homosexual/bisexual curriculum and promotes gay marriage to public school students. Also included is a provision for hiring quotas for homosexual instructors. Another bill would award "parental rights to non-parents, especially in the cases of lesbian relationships."

You say: "That is liberal California, and this is rural, conservative Kentucky." The proverbial camel has his nose under the tent regarding this issue in our state. What other issues will the rest of him bring along as he feels more at home? If you believe the homosexual lifestyle is natural for some, and our children should be educated as such,

then this is not an advocacy issue. If you do not concur, then it is time we speak out boldly on behalf of our grandchildren and children living in our totally "tolerant" society.

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

Coalition hears reasons to oppose gambling expansion

"You have a problem in this state; don't make it bigger. You need to think in terms of prevention and intervention."

Valerie Lorenz, executive director of the Compulsive Gambling Center

Continued from page 1

more hard-core forms of gambling, we've seen a major increase in the number of problem gamblers."

Goodman said expanded gambling in Missouri has created social problems that cost the state up to \$700 million a year. Those costs include bad checks, embezzlement, fraud and bankruptcy, he said.

"Casino communities tend to have 20 percent more bankruptcies" than other communities, he said.

He warned that slot machines are a "pariah activity" that has "a very high appeal for people with low income."

"One of the fundamental issues that has not been fully considered by legislators who have jumped into this is what it means in terms of the nature of government," Goodman added. Formerly

"regulating gambling to protect the public, government has shifted from regulatory to promotional." He said, studies show government is contributing to social problems and related costs that outweigh any perceived benefits.

Valerie Lorenz, executive director of the Compulsive Gambling Center in Baltimore, said those who become problem gamblers typically battle "terror, anger, guilt, depression and hopelessness."

"Suicide is the most common way of coping with compulsive gambling," she said.

With gambling's increased accessibility, the number of women, children and senior citizens who gamble has risen sharply, she added.

"We have an entire generation with government and private industry telling

children it's okay to gamble," she noted. "From a public policy perspective, we need to look at what we're doing and what we're thinking and what our ultimate goals are."

Homicides, robberies, domestic violence and child neglect are among the social problems associated with problem gambling, Lorenz said.

"The critical issue is to put a moratorium on gambling," she insisted. "I would urge you to fight for that moratorium. You have a problem in this state; don't make it bigger. You need to think in terms of prevention and intervention."

Other workshop speakers included Dan Ireland, director of the Alabama Citizens Action Program, and Barrett Duke, a staff member of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty

Commission.

"This is a people issue," Ireland emphasized. "We are voting on the future of our children."

"Gambling has always been a vice; they want to dress it up and make it nice," he said. "The churches need to take a stand. If the churches don't do it, it won't be done."

Duke described the church as "the last great organized roadblock to the collapse of Christian morality in America."

"If the church will not protect the weakest members of society, who will?" Duke asked. "When it comes to gambling, the government will not do it. The church can and should."

For information about Citizens Against Gambling Expansion call (606) 269-7715.

Despite court ruling, schools vote to post Ten Commandments

Continued from page 1

On the state level, Rep. Sheldon Baugh of Russellville has pre-filed a bill in the Kentucky General Assembly that would allow schools to decide whether to post the Ten Commandments.

In the meantime, supporters and opponents of the school district actions are evaluating the next step in the process, which may include legal challenges.

At least half a dozen other school districts in the state are seeking information about the impact of posting the Ten Commandments, according to Brad Hughes, director of communication services for Kentucky School

Boards Association. "Our position is that the standing ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court would not allow the posting of the Ten Commandments in public schools," he explained. "We don't see anything in the court's standing opinion that would make it acceptable regardless of who paid for the project."

While he believes many school officials in the state personally would favor posting the Ten Commandments in schools, Hughes said, "For many of our members, it is not simply a moral question or a legal question but an ethical question. They know they can't just willy-nilly go out and put themselves in

a position of legal liability.

"Once you start, you must treat everybody equally," he added, including allowing teachings from other religions to be posted.

In Jackson County, however, Lonzo Moore said the school board's decision was a response to community action calling for the Ten Commandments to be posted.

Emphasizing that school officials "are not trying to push the religious aspect on anyone," he added, "I think it's a good thing. The Ten Commandments are a good set of rules to live by."

Moore said the only negative reac-

tion he has heard was a media report of an individual who has threatened to file suit against the school district if the documents are not removed within 30 days.

Beyond that, he added, "the only personal comments I have received have been positive."

Claude Witt, executive director of the Temperance League of Kentucky, said his organization will support Baugh's legislative effort to allow school districts to make their own decisions on the issue.

With additional reporting by Kenny Byrd of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

It's worth the effort

A big portion of each summer is spent getting ready for the students to return to school. This summer was no exception. Hundreds of gallons of paint were used to paint several classrooms. We also painted every dorm room as we do each summer. Volunteers also painted every classroom and hall in our middle school building.

Several hundred volunteers were busy this summer helping us with many projects that will greatly benefit our students. The campus store and bank were painted, and the 20-year-old carpet was replaced with attractive vinyl. Two beautiful new counters were built to replace the old ones. A porch with a roof was built in front of our middle school building, and our main high school building also got a much-needed roof to cover the entrance. That building was constructed in 1954, and for all these years the faculty and students often have had to stand in the rain and snow until the doors were unlocked.

I received a call from Southern Seminary in May stating that they had some dormitory and classroom furniture they were replacing. They offered us their old furniture. If you know much about Oneida, you know we don't turn much away. Not knowing exactly what we would be getting, I sent one of our big trucks to Louisville. The driver came back with a full load and said there were at least two more truck loads. Two days later I sent two big trucks, which returned full that evening. I was told there was still a lot more, so I sent a semitrailer and two of our big trucks for a third trip to Southern. A total of 12 trucks loads, including two semitrailer loads of used furniture, were brought to our campus.

Nearly every room in the girls' dorm and al-

most every room in our older boys' dorms were blessed with chairs, dressers, mirrors, study desks and more. Our library and classrooms also received several tables, chairs and desks. Making all those trips to Louisville, including two that I made, and sorting through all the furniture was a lot of work. We did much of this when it was terribly hot.

All these things were done to make our students as comfortable as possible. When they returned and began to receive the benefits of our efforts, we knew it was worth it.

It is always exciting to see the students assemble in chapel for the first time. We have to smile with pride when we see so many familiar faces; boys and girls we have come to love just like our own. And then, to see a host of new faces we are going to get to know, it makes for a delightful experience.

The first day of school is used to test every student. This obviously will help us make sure we place students in classes that match their abilities. One-third of our students are new at Oneida each year. Often, we do not know what they are capable of doing until the test scores are in. After the testing, students work on their class schedules.

It was rewarding when I went to the Campus Ministry Center where all the seniors were being tested. After having a smaller than normal senior class last year, it was a blessing to see a 50 percent increase in the senior class. There was also a 30 percent increase in the number of girls compared to this time last year. We are going to have a great year!

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

A visit to Western Kentucky

After a 10-month interim, my wife and I took a weekend to visit two former church fields in Western Kentucky. Charles and Sharon Omer hosted us at Sturgis. Their beautiful hilltop farmhouse overlooks corn and bean fields. Turning into the drive renewed memories of sledding on the hill and a hilarious couples costume party in a pole barn. I didn't make the usual morning with Charlie to feed hogs and cattle, but he did let me try out an all-terrain vehicle enjoyed by their grandkids.

Sunday morning we had a good Bible study in deacon Pete Brown's class. Pete brought a group of Sturgis volunteers to campus a few years back to help build a bridge. Four men in the choir were Royal Ambassadors during my years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Sturgis, 1969 to 1975. We laughed again about a trip to Cedarmore RA camp. For 18 years, Minister of Music Kelly Beaver has blessed the church and community. Renewed growth has come under the loving leadership of Pastor Don Phelps.

Sunday evening we worshipped with First Baptist Church of Murray, where I was pastor from 1976 to 1982. Pastor Terry Ellis preached

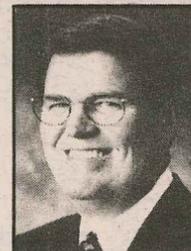
an excellent Bible message with strong relevance to daily living. The tradition of inspiring music continues under the leadership of Mike Crook. Recently retired Campbellsville University President Ken Winters and his wife, Shirley, sat in front of us. That morning they renewed their fellowship with the church. During my years as pastor, they sang in the choir and Ken was church training director.

Since Murray State University was not in session, we missed the dynamic presence of college students that the church has an opportunity to influence and encourage. One purpose of our trip was to thank Mabel Rogers for her gift of a charitable annuity that made possible the renovation of Clear Creek's campus chapel. Mabel hosted a group of friends in her home for an after-church fellowship.

I pray that the pastors we train will have the blessing of working with good churches and leave them in such a way they always can return and feel welcomed and at home.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Zealots use Old Testament prophet to justify actions

By Jim Nesbitt
Religion News Service

ATLANTA (RNS)—In the decidedly Old Testament eyes of Walter Elijah Thody, bank robberies, killings, bombings and other acts of crime and violence can be justified if committed to avenge a transgression against God's law or the U.S. Constitution.

A gangly, bespectacled bank robber with the long, ragged beard of a prophet and a prison sentence that will keep him behind bars until the day he dies, Thody sees himself as a soldier of God, fighting a war against those bent on handing America over to a satanic cabal of one-world government conspirators.

"We're having to fight to keep our country," said Thody, interviewed in 1996 while serving time at one of America's toughest prisons, the federal penitentiary in Atlanta. "Killing is normally murder. ... Theft is theft. But if you're in warfare, then those same acts are acts of war. I'm at warfare against the enemies of my country."

Thody, 60, is a believer of the racist theology known as Christian Identity and is one of the leading proselytizers of the Phineas Priesthood—a violent credo rooted in an interpretation of biblical vengeance gaining popularity among white supremacists, anti-government zealots and the extreme fringe of the anti-abortion movement.

Experts on hate groups say there may be a connection between the Phineas Priesthood and Buford O'Neal Furrow, the self-confessed suspect in the shooting spree at a Jewish community center in Los Angeles who reportedly told FBI agents he wanted to send a "wake-up call to America to kill Jews." Furrow is also charged with killing a Filipino-American postal worker in Los Angeles because of his race and government job.

In a van believed to have been driven by Furrow at the time of the community center attack, authorities found a book authored by Richard Kelly Hoskins, a Lynchburg, Va., leader of the Christian Identity movement who also wrote "The Vigilantes of Christendom," the prime text advocating commission of violent "Phineas actions" to re-

store the authority of God's law.

The Phineas Priesthood is seen as the most dangerous credo of violence, a powerful combination of religious zealotry, racist ideology and almost-foolproof tactics.

Less an organization than a call to action and a badge of honor, followers of this blood-stained faith strive to live up to the example of the Old Testament character Phineas, who killed an Israelite and his heathen wife with a javelin for violating God's prohibition against consorting with women not of the chosen people.

According to the Old Testament book of Numbers, Phineas' zealous action saved the people of Israel from a plague God loosed on the land and won this faithful servant and his descendants a perpetual priesthood.

"It is the American equivalent of the Islamic Jihad," said Mike Reynolds, a senior researcher with Klan-Watch, the investigatory arm of the Southern Poverty Law Center, a civil rights watchdog group based in Montgomery, Ala. "You just can't overstate the power of the religious component in all of this. These folks are willing to step over that line and stay there. They're willing to die for what they believe."

"It's like an ion in a chamber," said Mark Thomas, a Pennsylvania Christian Identity minister who is an advocate of the Phineas example. "You can't see it, but you can see the trail. And you see a lot of trails criss-crossing about. ... It's more than evident that there is a rise in Phineas actions because of a total breakdown in respect for the state."

The movement has no formal infrastructure, he added. "It's informal, good or bad. Tactically, because of the omnipotence of the government and its technology, it has to be that. ... Individual action taken for the glory of God would be best."

But even Thomas admits the rising faddishness of Phineas among skinheads and ex-cons who get turned on to Christian Identity and the Aryan Nations credo while in prison makes it difficult to determine whether an unsolved act of violence is that of a true believer or a common criminal.

"How many of these acts are an-

swering a higher calling and how many are the actions of skinheads who've had too much to drink, I don't know," he said.

Even Furrow may have been more of a Phineas wannabe than a true believer, said Brian Levin, a criminal justice professor at California State University, who notes that Furrow surrendered to the FBI instead of committing suicide or dying in a bloody shootout with police, as did slain Christian Identity martyr Robert Mathews. Mathews was leader of The Order, a violent Aryan Nations spinoff group responsible for a chain of armored car robberies in the mid-1980s and the murder of a Denver talk radio host who was Jewish.

"Furrow may be more of a Phineas Lite than anything else," said Levin. "This is a religious calling that makes it much more likely that they will want to shoot it out and less likely that they will surrender. I think Furrow found martyrdom much better on paper than he did in reality."

Thody, who has also served time for counterfeiting and started down the road to racial revolution as a John Birch Society leader and tax protester, has a simple counter to this concern. "It is simply a shared philosophy," he said.

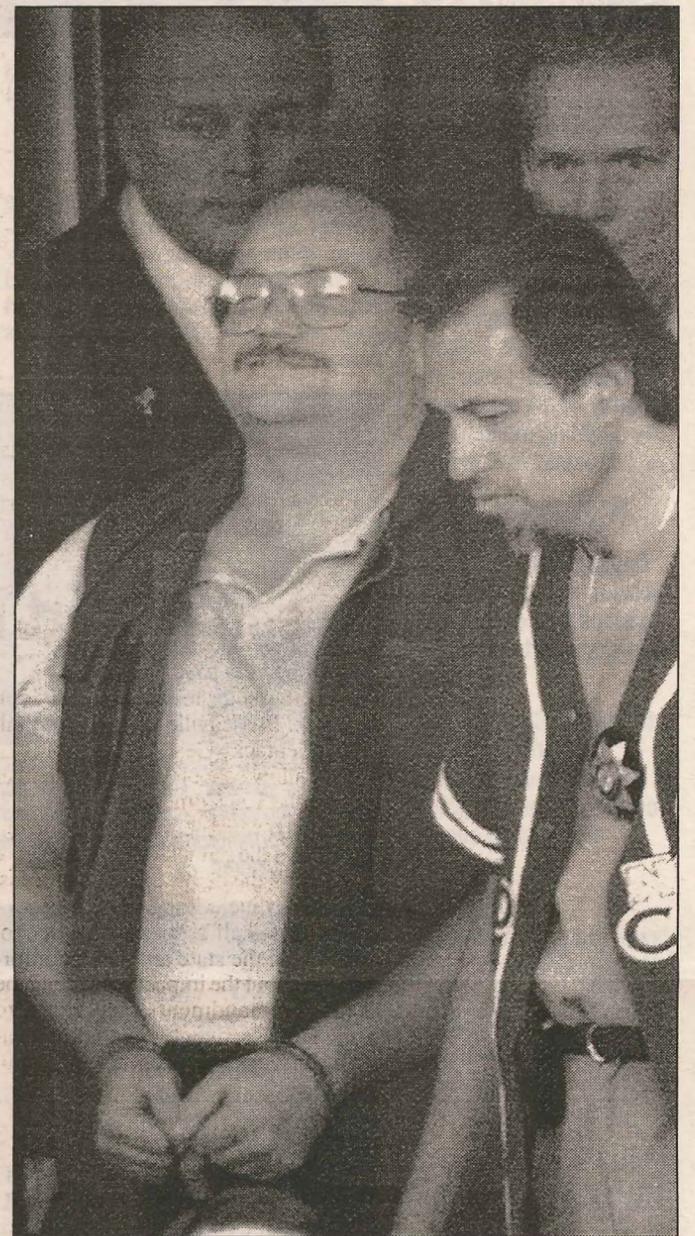
"Look at the individual and see what he is doing with what he is getting," he said. "Is he using it for personal gain and self-aggrandizement or is he using it for the purpose he said he was setting out to do?"

When Thody was arrested in 1991 after a running gunfight with police in Muskogee, Okla., he was driving a '78 Oldsmobile and living in a \$300-a-month rental house.

"My liabilities exceeded my assets," he said.

For Thody, who now has been transferred from Atlanta to the federal prison at Beaumont, Texas, these are the proofs of a true believer—a soldier of God, a Phineas Priest.

"Get up and get past the point of talking and writing," he said. "There's a place for talking and writing, but there's also places for those who will take action on their own and that's where I believe the Phineas Priesthood has its major role."



When you look at Walter Elijah Thody and consider how softly and rationally he advocates harsh, bloody action, it's natural to wonder how far he has taken his role as a Phineas Priest.

There is little doubt he was prepared to kill while outside the walls of this prison: "It's part of what you have to do when you're in warfare."

Has he killed? A long pause and a direct, meaningful look at the questioner before this careful answer: "I have not been charged with any killing."

RELIGIOUS ZEALOT?
Buford O'Neal Furrow, the self-confessed suspect in the shooting spree at a Jewish community center in Los Angeles, might be a follower of those who call for "Phineas actions" to restore the authority of God's law. (Reuters photo)

Columbine student is spokeswoman for national Christian book covers campaign

LITTLETON, Colo. (RNS)—Heidi Johnson, a student at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., is urging teens to help "change our nation's direction" in a radio campaign sponsored by the Family Research Council.

The radio spots began airing in 166 markets Aug. 21.

Johnson is promoting book covers produced by the Family Research Council, a Washington-based conservative Christian public interest group.

One book cover is a graphic depiction of the Ten Commandments. The second shows photos of teens from different racial

and ethnic backgrounds with the quote, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Johnson, who was in the school library when the shootings took place last spring, was not hurt but tells in the radio spot of seeing her classmates shot.

"How could this happen in America?" she asks. "Why are kids killing other kids?"

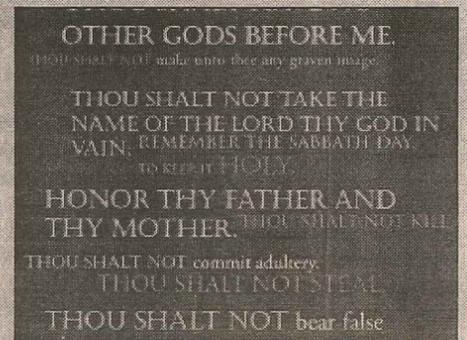
Johnson urges other Christian teens to carry the covers on their books as a memorial to the students who died and as a testimony to fellow students.

"America's young people need to know God loves them," she says.

The spot will air on Christian radio stations during teen-oriented programs.

"Although we realize that a piece of paper does not change hearts," Janet Parshall, Family Research Council spokeswoman, said, "our book covers are a practical and constitutional way to start a discussion on the role that moral law plays in the public marketplace of ideas."

The Family Research Council said it has distributed 277,000 of the book covers since the program began in 1996. The new campaign offers two free covers to any student who calls a toll-free number provided during the radio advertisement.



BOOK COVERS The Family Research Council said it has distributed 277,000 book covers since the program began in 1996. (RNS photo)

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ An evangelistic outreach planned for Rzeszow, Poland. Missionaries Doug and Marcy Shaw ask prayer for "fighting the spiritual darkness in Poland."

■ Leaders of Boston 2001, the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's initiative to focus evangelism and ministry efforts on major U.S. cities.

■ Allyson Clark, Baptist Convention of New England youth ministry consultant, as she plans discipleship events for youth.

■ Volunteer construction workers as they continue work on a new Baptist Convention of New England office and training center in Northborough, Mass.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

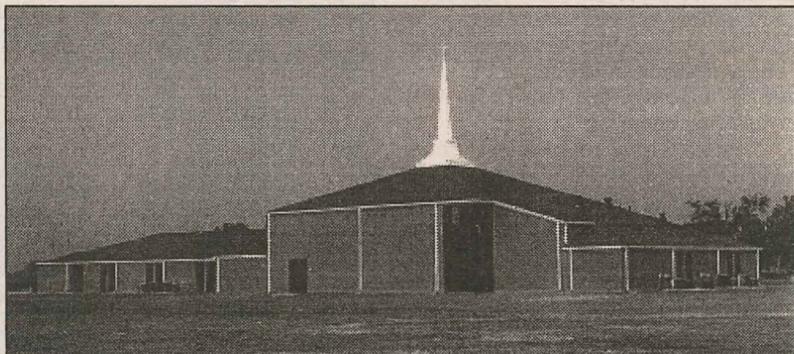
■ **BRANDENBURG**—First Church called **Timothy Bell** as pastor. Bell recently served First Church, Jasper, Ind., and previously served 14 years at Panther Creek Church, Owensboro.

First Church called Breckinridge County native **Steve Butler** as minister of youth and children.

New Brandenburg Church will host **David Livingston** in concert Aug. 29, 7 p.m. **Ronnie Melton** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host Homecoming 99 Aug. 29. **Bill Mackey** will be guest speaker. **Mike Carter**, new president of Campbellsville University, will bring greetings. An afternoon gospel music service will follow the noon meal. All activities will be held at the city/county park's community center due to ongoing construction. **John Chowning** is pastor; **Todd Parish** is associate pastor.

■ **CLINTON**—Evangelist **Lincoln**



NEW BUILDING Crosspoint Baptist Church in Owensboro moved into its new building earlier this summer. Formerly Temple Baptist Church, the new facility contains a 320-seat worship center, classrooms, fellowship hall and offices. The building sits on 10.5 acres on Worthington Road. Farrell Isenberg is pastor; Tim Hooper is minister of music, youth and children.

Bingham is preaching in an area-wide "Year 2 Know Christ" crusade at the Carlisle County Fairgrounds through Aug. 25. The crusade is sponsored by Southern and National Baptists and is a community-wide event. **Charles Blair** is director of missions for West Kentucky Association.

■ **COLD SPRING**—**Leo Sheffel**, former pastor of Licking Valley Church, recently celebrated 50 years of ministry.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—Edgewood Church and Compassion International will host **Randy Stonehill** in concert Aug. 29, 6 p.m. For information, call

(270) 886-4461. **Mike Watts** is pastor.

North Christian County Tent Crusade will be held Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 7 p.m. nightly at Lacey school grounds. The evangelist will be **Don Mathis**. The crusade is sponsored by several Christian County Baptist churches. For information, call (270) 269-2194.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Minors Lina Church will host **David Livingston** in concert Aug. 28, 7 p.m. **Kevin Nethery** is pastor.

Ridgewood Church will host a free children's fair Aug. 28, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. For information, call (502) 933-8580. **Louis Twyman** is pastor.

Star of David barred as gang symbol

GULFPORT, Miss. (RNS)—A Mississippi school board has told a Jewish 11th grader he cannot display his Star of David pendant because it could be mistaken for a gang symbol.

Earlier this month, Harrison Central High School administrators ordered Ryan Green to wear the pendant under his shirt or not at all. On Aug. 16, the local school board in Gulfport, Miss., backed the decision.

"I don't appreciate calling the Star of David a gang symbol," said Green's father, Tom.

"Ryan Green's Star of David necklace is clearly an expression of his Jewish faith, just as a necklace with a cross is an expression of Christian

faith," added David Inggebretsen, who heads the Mississippi branch of the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU was mulling legal action in the case.

The six-pointed Star of David—"Magen David" in Hebrew—has been associated with Jews and Judaism since biblical times, according to the Encyclopedia of Judaism.

But Harrison County law enforcement and Gulfport school officials said the star also is incorporated into some gang symbols.

"This is not a religious issue. This is a safety issue," said Harrison County sheriff's public affairs officer Frank Baskin, Associated Press reported.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Mexico Baptist Church is seeking a part-time minister of youth. Good potential for growth in youth department. Send resumé or contact: Rodney Groff, 175 Mexico Road, Marion, KY 42064. (270) 965-9026.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music to lead worship services, adult and children's choirs. Send resumé to: South Elkhorn Baptist Church, 4867 Versailles Road, Lexington, KY 40510.

SEEKING: Organist. Resumé to: Music Committee, Lynn Acres Baptist Church, 5007 Southside Drive, Louisville, KY 40214.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé by Sept. 30 to: Pastor Search Committee, Cumberland Missionary Baptist Church, PO Box 273, Cumberland, KY 40823.

SEEKING: Green Acres Baptist Church is seeking a part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: Green Acres Baptist Church, 5189 Poplar Level Road, Louisville, KY 40219, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Keyboardist for Sunday morning and evening worship services and Wednesday evening prayer service and choir rehearsal. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Parkway Baptist Church, 1915 N Broadway, Lexington, KY 40505.

SEEKING: Orville Baptist Church, Henry County, is seeking a bivocational pastor. Seminary students considered. Send resumé with references to: Robbie O'Brien, 6929 Gest Road, Pleasureville, KY 40057.

SEEKING: Williamstown Baptist Church, Williamstown, Ky., is seeking applicants for the position of full-time senior pastor. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, c/o Kenneth Kenner, 313 Sunset Drive, Williamstown, KY 41097.

SEEKING: Minister to children; 15 hours/week. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Woodland Baptist Church, 809 N Pope Lick Road, Louisville, KY 40243.

SEEKING: Glasgow Baptist Church is seeking a minister of youth/education. 400 worship attendance, two worship services. \$37,000-42,000 package range, depending on experience. Our Web site is www.glasgowbaptist.com. The successful candidate will be self-motivated, currently part of a vital ministry and able to reach the lost youth of today's culture. Send resumé to: Y/E Search Committee, Glasgow Baptist Church, 401 S Green St., Glasgow, KY 42141.

SEEKING: Bloomfield Baptist Church, Bloomfield, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a pastor. Bloomfield Baptist is a growth-oriented church with an average attendance of 250 in morning worship. MDiv. is minimal requirement. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Bloomfield Baptist Church, PO Box 217, Bloomfield, KY 40008.

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 youth and children. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 239, LaCenter, KY 42056.

SEEKING: Full-time administrative secretary; start Aug. 23. Contact Jim Holladay, Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., (502) 897-1771 for information and application.

SEEKING: Historic Fee Fee Baptist Church is seeking God's person to serve as minister of education with the additional responsibility of developing ministries to singles in this suburban St. Louis, Mo., community. Prior singles ministry considered a plus. Fee Fee is a strong traditional Southern Baptist church averaging over 500 in Sunday school. Forward resumé or referrals to: Minister of Education and Singles Search Committee, Fee Fee Baptist Church, 11330 St. Charles Rock Road, Bridgeton, MO 63044. Fax: (314) 739-1302.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Maple Grove Baptist Church. Please send resumé to: Search Committee, Maple Grove Baptist Church, 5911 E. Manslick Road, Louisville, KY 40219.

SEEKING: Associate pastor, music/education. Responsibilities include: worship planning and leadership, guiding the Christian education ministry and assisting with outreach to youth and their families. Send resumé to: Clifton Baptist Church, 1947 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206, Attn: Jim Holladay. For information call (502) 897-1771. Deadline for resúmes: Aug. 27.

SEEKING: Full-time worship leader to guide the overall music program and lead worship services—both contemporary and traditional styles. Send resumé to: Lake Shore Baptist Church, 4613 Mountain Road, Pasadena, MD 21122, Attn: Boyd Frank. Fax: (410) 255-3645; e-mail: Lake.Shore@cwix.com.

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

SEEKING: Church secretary/receptionist needed for Hurstbourne Baptist Church, Louisville. Full benefits, 37.5-hour work week, vacation. Experience with Microsoft Word and PageMaker preferred. Call the church office at (502) 426-2444 for further information or application.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music. Experience required. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Central Baptist Church, 201 W 4th St., Corbin, KY 40701.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister. Accepting resúmes through Sept. 15. Send to: Youth Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 26, Shepherdsville, KY 40165.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music. Some experience required. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Central Baptist Church, 201 W 4th St., Corbin, KY 40701.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Harmony Baptist Church. Send resumé: Pastor Search Committee, c/o Harmony Baptist Church, 9215 Ogden Landing Road, West Paducah, KY 42086.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Frenchburg Baptist Church, Frenchburg, Ky. Please send resumé to: James Ligon, HCR 66, PO Box 90, Wellington, KY 40387.

FOR SALE: 1988 Ford Falcon 30-passenger bus. 65,000 miles; \$8,000. Call (270) 237-3451 for details.

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).

FOR LEASE: 1999 Ford 15-passenger van: \$450/month. Available from September to May. Call David at (502) 899-9313.

PEOPLE

Vacation Bible school kids learn how prayer changes things

NORTH SPARTANBURG, S.C. (BP)—Even the police are surprised by a recent robbery recovery from a Baptist church in upstate South Carolina.

"If there's ever been a case of 'They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good,' this is one," said Mike Hamlet, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Spartanburg.

Hamlet said God answered the prayers of vacation Bible school kids after the church was broken into July 20, a Tuesday.

In addition to electronic equipment—VCRs, television cameras, televisions and microphones—the thieves took everything that was on stage for the Bible school, including a four-man tent, cooler and sleeping bags, which were part of the school theme, "Mt. Extreme."

The next morning, Hamlet and Bible school workers told the kids what had happened and urged them to pray for the items to be returned and for the robbers.

On Wednesday evening, at the weekly meeting of Sunday school workers, Hamlet again urged those present to pray for the return of the church's property.

Police officers who dusted for fingerprints explained to church officials that the case was a difficult one. Stolen electronic goods are sold very quickly.

That evening, however, police followed up on a tip when someone noticed a suspicious truck and some men camping in what appeared to be the stolen tent.

On Thursday morning, the sheriff's office called Hamlet, asking him to identify the church's property.

"We got it all back. Everything. Every last bit of it," he said.

"When I told the VBS kids at 11:30 a.m., they went wild. A lot of them were quivering. They cheered about getting the equipment back. And we told them that the power of their prayers made the difference."

At vacation Bible school commencement, the robbery and the result of the kids' prayers became an opportunity for workers to share their faith with parents who are not Christians, Hamlet said.

"The robbers messed with the wrong people," he added. "I'm not talking about me or First Baptist Church, but hundreds of children praying."

Recordings help preserve missions history

By Greg Carpenter
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—A group of Southern Baptists is using modern technology to keep alive the history of missions in the denomination.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's Center for Great Commission Studies began the "Oral History Project" in 1997.

It was created to preserve the wisdom and insights of significant contributors to Southern Baptist missions through digital audio recordings of interviews with people who have been integrally involved in the modern missions movement. The interviews can be downloaded from the center's Internet site, www.greatcomm.org.

Keith Eitel, professor of Christian missions at Southeastern and director of the center, said he started the project to expose the "next generation" to Southern Baptists' missions philosophy and methods since World War II.

"There's quite a generational shift

occurring at or around the turn of the century," Eitel said. "The post-World War II generation is retiring off, and a new generation is emerging."

Eitel said an interview conducted last year with former Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Robert Naylor, before his death Feb. 22 at the age of 90, underscored the importance of the project.

"Well, it's probably one of, if not the last, oral academic functions he was involved in, and so, that's exactly a case in point of why this is valuable, because now, nobody can interview that man," Eitel said. "So, we've got his mind, at least in summary oral depiction, of a whole generation of Southern Baptist history as it impacted missions." Naylor was Southwestern's president from 1958-78.

Other interviews with Southern Baptist missiologists currently available on the center's Web site include:

■ Cal Guy, visiting Fletcher professor of missions at Southeastern and professor emeritus of missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

in Fort Worth, Texas.

■ Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

■ Avery Willis, IMB senior vice president for overseas operations.

■ Mike Stroope, former director of the Cooperative Services International of the Foreign Mission Board (now the International Mission Board).

Eitel said in future interviews he plans to focus on missionaries who served in Vietnam during the war. "I sense their stories would be historically significant especially in these days," he said.

Southeastern is employing up-to-date technology to relay the audio versions of the interviews via the Internet and plans to make transcripts available to download off the center's Web site.

Preserving oral histories is vital, Eitel said, because "there are things you can hear on a tape that you can't hear in printed form. Inflection of voices, jitteriness, nervousness, anger, emotion, passion—you can't see and hear that in a transcript."

The Oral History Project was created to preserve the wisdom and insights of significant contributors to Southern Baptist missions.

Failed prophecy hasn't slowed Jehovah's Witnesses

By David Briggs
Cleveland Plain Dealer

CLEVELAND (RNS)—Forty-five-year-old Delecia Wilcox believes Christ will rule over a paradise on Earth free of wickedness, crime and death in her lifetime. So does 75-year-old Louise Bell.

Angelo Natali, 72, had thought God already would have acted, striking down the wicked and establishing His kingdom on Earth. He also believes a new world order is imminent and millions of people now living will never die.

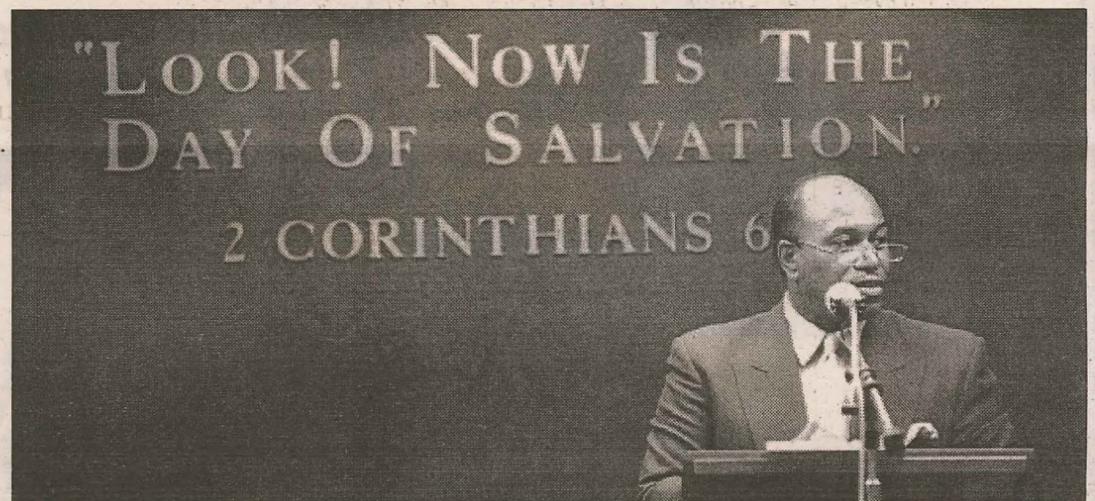
In all the apocalyptic speculation surrounding the turn of the millennium, Jehovah's Witnesses have lost little of the sense of urgency concerning the end times that have made the movement one of the world's fastest growing faiths. Yet Americans should not expect any fewer visits from these dark-suited missionaries if 2000 is ushered in without incident.

This is one made-in-America religion that has survived the date-setting prophecies of its founders to build a worldwide following with a new message: The end is near, we just don't know how near.

This summer, hundreds of thousands of Witnesses are discussing Bible prophecy at regional district conventions. In a religious world littered with failed movements forecasting how God will act in human history, the Witnesses have spent the final years of the second millennium striking a balance between urgently anticipating the end and shying away from predictions.

"Everyone believes it's going to happen in our lifetime," said Donald Madzay, an elder in the Brunswick West congregation in Cleveland and the keynote speaker at a regional convention. "We believe it could happen any day. So we live that way, as if it could happen tomorrow."

Being a Jehovah's Witness involves commitment. Congregations have as many as five meetings a week, and some members volunteer 50 hours a



month or more spreading their message door to door or on street corners or in home Bible studies.

Gail Gordon, 46, spends 70 to 80 hours a month in evangelism work. Her sense of urgency to save others from eternal destruction resonates with a history of the movement that had its beginnings in the prophecies of William Miller, the founder of Adventism.

The "Great Disappointment" of 1844—when Miller's predictions of the Second Coming did not come true—did not stop him and others from establishing a religious group based on prophecy. Coming out of the Adventist tradition was the founder of the Witnesses, Charles Taze Russell.

Russell set 1874 as the date for Jesus' return, and 1914 for the battle of Armageddon and the beginning of Jesus' rulership on Earth. In their book "The New Millennium Manual," Robert Clouse, Robert Hosack and Richard Pierard said that was only the beginning of the Witnesses' date-setting.

Russell, they said, reset his timetable to 1918, but the slogan of Russellites—that millions now living will never die—lost some impact when Russell died in 1916. Russell's successor, Joseph Rutherford, predicted the "full restoration" of humankind would occur in 1925. Other dates many Witnesses

looked to for the end of this world and the beginning of an earthly paradise were 1941, 1954 and 1975, the authors said.

The Witnesses taught Christ returned in 1914 and established His kingdom in heaven. They await the establishment of God's kingdom on Earth. But they have steadily moved away from predictions. In 1995, the masthead of its magazine *Awake!* talked of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation alive in 1914 passes away. That timetable was blurred to speak less specifically of a new world "that is about to replace the present, wicked lawless system of things."

"What's happened in recent years is they've sort of fuzzified this kind of stuff," Pierard said. "They've downplayed this stuff considerably."

And their growth—particularly internationally—has been explosive, according to the Witnesses. The organization says its membership has increased 1.4 million in the last four years to nearly 5.9 million. There are 1,040,000 U.S. Witnesses.

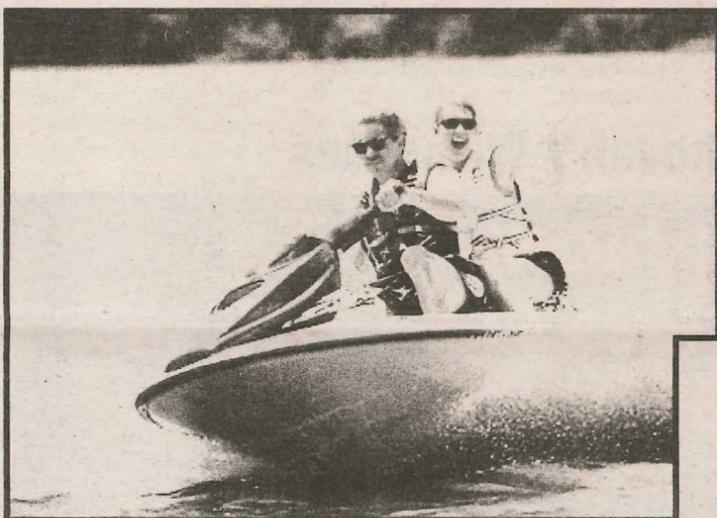
Ironically, said Clouse, Hosack and Pierard, what the failed prophecies did was strengthen the movement "by separating the chaff from the wheat, the true believers from the hangers-on, and thereby reinforced in-group cohesion."

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS
Donald Madzay, a Jehovah's Witness elder in the Brunswick West congregation in Cleveland, speaks at a regional convention on Bible prophecy and the end times. "We believe it could happen any day. So we live that way, as if it could happen tomorrow," he said. (RNS photo)

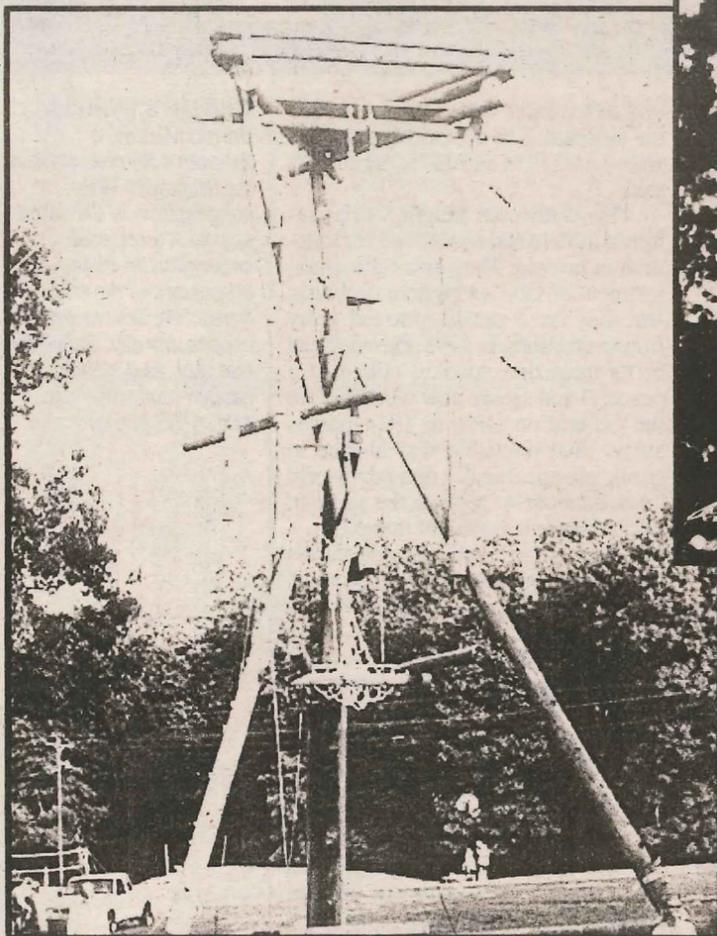
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