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FOR THE RECORD**Baptists**Southern Baptist leaders say they regret offending Hindus. *Page 2.***Kentucky**Churches in Fort Mitchell, Bowling Green, Lexington and Louisville will host master's-level Christian studies classes in a partnership with Campbellsville University. *Page 3.***Editorial**How can Christians reach the world? *Page 5.***Halloween houses**Churches report Halloween dramas can unite members and reach unchurched neighbors. *Page 7.***Family**Have special interests redefined fatherhood? *Page 10.***Georgetown radio explores religion in U.S.**By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

GEORGETOWN—Producers of Georgetown College's new radio show on religion in America say they hope it will make religion an acceptable subject in public discussion.

"The Meetinghouse: Conversations on Religion in American Life" currently is broadcast in Georgetown, Owensboro and Evansville, Ind.

"We think our program is unique in the country," said Dwight Moody, who hosts the one-hour show. "There has been a vacuum in mainstream media in the coverage of religion in American life that (we) are trying to address."

Feedback about the program has been enthusiastic, added executive producer Lee Huckleberry. "The key value for Dwight and me is to create an atmosphere in which we can have not only inter-Christian dialogue but inter-religious dialogue."

The first public affairs program on Georgetown College's World Radio Network, "The Meetinghouse" features interviews with religious and public figures, news summaries, book and movie reviews, music and Moody's commentaries.

Since its debut Sept. 5, the program has featured such guests as:

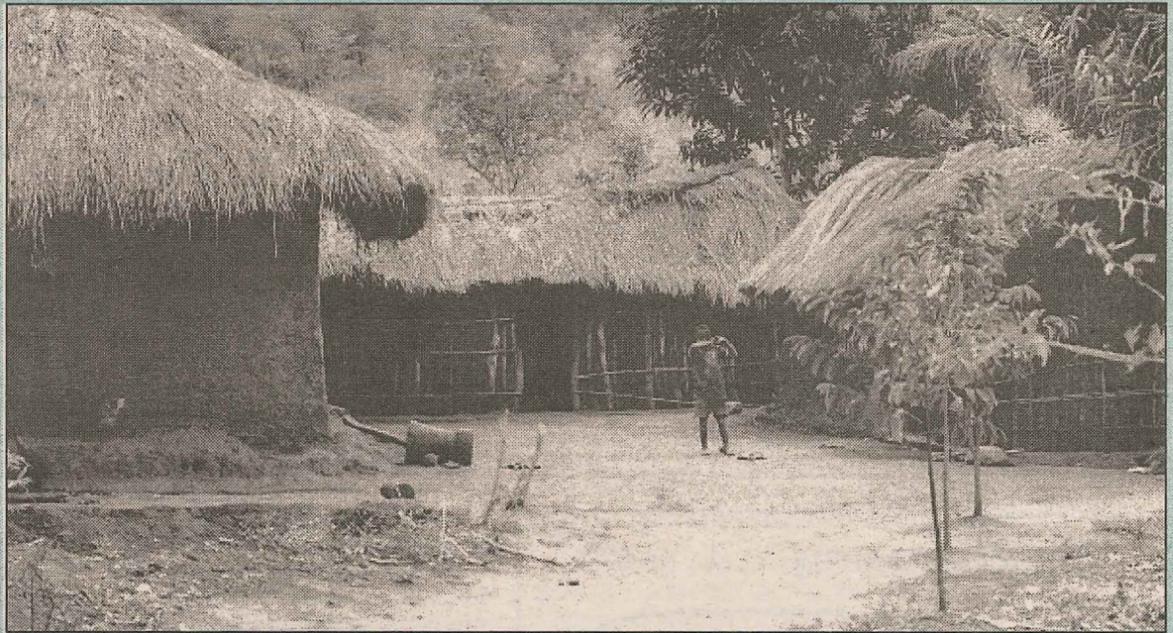
■ Jay Fanin, minister of youth at Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Tex., where seven people were gunned down in mid-September.

■ Former Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor Bill Leonard, now dean of the divinity school at Wake Forest University.

■ Rabbi James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee in New York, and Rabbi Jon Adlin of Temple Adath Israel in Lexington.

■ Former Kentucky Govs. Martha Layne Collins and Brereton Jones.

□ See *Georgetown show ...*, page 3



RURAL TANZANIA Kentucky Baptist volunteers visited several remote Tanzanian villages during a recent partnership missions trip. The thatched-roof mud huts are typical of small Tanzanian settlements. (Photo by Larry Brannin)

Tanzania trip boosts partnership effortBy Trennis Henderson
Editor

Tanzania is a nation of contrasts—from the bustling capital of Dar es Salaam on the Indian Ocean coast to clusters of mud huts in remote villages.

Home to Mount Kilimanjaro, Lake Victoria and sprawling wild game preserves, Tanzania also is one of the world's poorest countries economically. More than half the population lives below the national poverty line.

Many Tanzanians also have tremendous spiritual needs. The nation of 31 million people includes an estimated one third Christians, one third Muslims and one third who practice animism and tribal religions.

That's where Kentucky Baptists' partnership with Baptists in Tanzania comes in. The partnership, approved last year by state convention

leaders, is one of two international missions partnerships launched this year by Kentucky Baptists. The other one is with Baptists in Poland.

While nearly 100 volunteers have participated in a total of 19 projects in Poland this year, the partnership in Tanzania has gotten off to a slower start with only five projects so far. But a recent trip by 11 Kentucky Baptist volunteers may set the stage for greater ministry opportunities in the coming year. Plans also are under way for a volunteer field coordinator from Kentucky to begin serving in Tanzania early next year.

"I keep reminding myself that in God's timing, this is His work," said partnership missions director Calvin Wilkins. "We have to be patient and wait on God and continue to keep praying and be faithful."

Many of those prayers were answered as two evangelism teams ministered last month in Morogoro,

Ifakara and surrounding villages. Initial reports indicate more than 1,000 Tanzanians made professions of faith in Christ in response to showings of the Jesus film, evangelistic preaching and one-on-one witnessing.

Kentucky Baptist Convention President Charles Barnes, participating in his first international missions project, said team members "stirred things up in the name of the Lord."

Noting that he and others "did door-to-door evangelism—really hut-to-hut evangelism," he added, "The partnership provides a fresh breath of the gospel in those areas."

"These people are hungry for information. That is both an opportunity and scary if the wrong people bring information," Barnes said. "Many of them come from Muslim backgrounds and tribal influences. They are not very clear in most of

□ See *Tanzania mission ...*, page 6

Baptist-Jewish dialogue touts benefits of interfaith discussionBy Pat Cole
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—With a national controversy about Southern Baptist efforts to evangelize Jews as its backdrop, an interfaith panel in Louisville called for mutual respect and dialogue between the two faith groups.

The panel, which included a Baptist pastor, a Baptist New Testament scholar and a Jewish rabbi, agreed during an Oct. 21 forum that followers of both faiths have much to learn from each other.

"Conversation between the two traditions has all kinds of possibilities for fruitful dialogue," said panelist Ron Sisk, pastor of Louisville's Crescent Hill Baptist Church. "And we are not through learning from each other yet."

About 200 Baptists and Jews attended the event held at Broadway

Baptist Church and sponsored by the Kentuckiana Interfaith Community.

The Jewish panelist, Joe Rapport, said his faith had been enriched by relationships with people from other faiths. He said he considered one of his Christian friends, Gene March, a Presbyterian biblical scholar who moderated the panel discussion, to be a mentor.

"We need to have mentors from other faiths, and we need to have the kind of respect from people from one faith to another that allows us to truly share what we feel without feeling like that by sharing we are opening ourselves up to showing some sort of weakness or an opportunity for attack," said Rapport, rabbi at The Temple in Louisville.

Carey Newman, the other Baptist panelist, spoke of a Jewish professor who had become a professional role model and a close personal friend. "He cares for my soul," said Newman, an

academic books editor at Westminster/John Knox Press. "There is a pastoral side in our relationship. He's a brilliant theologian and scholar. It's a multifaceted relationship." He said he and his friend had visited in each other's home and had attended both Jewish and Christian worship services together.

The controversy over Jewish evangelism was ignited earlier this fall when the Southern Baptist International Mission Board distributed a prayer guide that urged prayers for the salvation of Jews during one of Judaism's holiest seasons.

The prayer guide offended many Jews in Louisville and embarrassed many Baptists in the city, said Reba Cobb, executive director of the Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, in an interview. She said she organized the forum as a way to build trust and rapport between people of both faiths.

Southern Baptist efforts to "target"

Jews for evangelism show a lack of sensitivity to the Jewish experience of the Holocaust, said Newman, an editor of academic books at Westminster/John Knox Press. During the Holocaust, millions of Jews died at the hands of Nazi persecutors, many of whom identified themselves as Christians.

Newman, a former New Testament professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said the emphasis on Jewish evangelism grieved him greatly. "The near papal-like pronouncements of those in authority should never be construed as being indicative of all Baptists," he said. "Those people do not speak for all Baptists any more than Baptists speak for all Christians."

Sisk said media accounts in Louisville suggested there would be a massive effort to "go after" Jews during Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. In reality, there was never a chance that a

□ See *Baptists question ...*, page 3

BAPTISTS

SBC leaders 'regret' offending Hindus

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—A Southern Baptist prayer guide on Hinduism has prompted outrage in India, home to 800 million Hindus, according to international press reports.

The pocket prayer guide, published by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, urges Southern Baptists to pray that Hindus would be delivered from spiritual "darkness" and accept Christ during Divali, Hinduism's Festival of Lights, a major religious holiday in early November.

Indian newspapers have published excerpts from the prayer guide deemed offensive to Indians,

according to Ecumenical News International.

In a statement dated Oct. 27, IMB officials apologized for offending Hindus.

"The purpose of the Divali guide was to help Southern Baptists understand and identify with Hindu people as we express our love for them in prayer," the statement said. "The language in the prayer guide was chosen to communicate to Southern Baptists, not Hindus, and the truths in it, as we understand them, are rooted in the Bible, the book we believe to be God's revealed Word.

"It is distressing to us that elements of the guide may have offended our Hindu neighbors, and for that we are profoundly sorry. We understand that the good news of God's saving love in Jesus, the Savior, may be offensive to some, but never was it our intent to express that love in an offensive way."

The controversy comes on the heels of an earlier flap involving a previous IMB-produced prayer guide focusing on Judaism. American Jewish leaders called that booklet, coinciding with Judaism's High Holy Days, arrogant and offensive. SBC leaders defended the effort, saying the New Testament commands Christians to share their faith with all people.

"We are never happy when we offend anybody," SBC President Paige Patterson told Jewish leaders following the release of the earlier prayer guide. "It seems contrary to the spirit of Christ to offend anybody."

News of the latest prayer guide has embarrassed many of India's 23 million Christians, who already are under pressure because of violence directed against them by fundamen-

talist Hindus. They also are campaigning against a planned visit to New Delhi by Pope John Paul II, ENI reported.

The Times of India, the nation's largest English-language newspaper, published a portion of the IMB booklet that describes the city formerly known as Bombay as "a city of spiritual darkness" where "eight out of every 10 people are Hindus, slaves bound by fear and tradition to false gods."

Reuters quoted an Indian official who described the booklet as "illiterate and offensive."

"Firstly, India is more religious than any other country in the world," K.R. Malkani, spokesman for the governing Bharatiya Janata Party, said in a statement. "Morally, it is more Christian than any other Christian country. Secondly, is it not an insult to India to tell Hindus that they are all sinners and that only Jesus can save them?"

Religion News Service reported criticism of the effort also coming from Nepal, which is 90 percent Hindu. The World Hindu Federation, based in Katmandu, called the action a "farce."

In an interview with ENI, Pastor Gulkhan Pau, general secretary of the 750,000-member Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India, said he disagreed with the approach taken by Southern Baptists in the Divali prayer guide. "You preach your faith, but you don't play down others," he said.

Pau said an estimated 2 million Baptists in India do preach that Jesus is the answer to life but added: "We recognize anyone's right to worship any god. We share the love of God, and I am not going to condemn the Hindu or the Muslim for his faith."

Argentina prayer focus leads 261 to faith in Christ

USHUAIA, Argentina (BP)—On a windswept hill overlooking Ushuaia, Argentina, a team of Baptist missionaries and pastors gathered to pray. Their petitions launched a series of prayer walks, visitation and evangelistic rallies across Patagonia, the vast southern region of South America, whose 800,000 residents include less than 3 percent who are believers.

In two weeks, churches and mission points in Argentina and Chile saw 261 people accept Christ.

The Ushuaia campaign was the first in a series that eventually will cover Argentina. Baptists in other South American countries are conducting similar campaigns under the same theme.

About 116 of the decisions were made in visitation and meetings of First Baptist Church in Rio Grande, the principal Baptist church on the largest island of the Tierra del Fuego Archipelago. The church has 26 cell groups in Rio Grande, a city of 50,000 people. It sponsors the Baptist work in Ushuaia, which is only 700 miles from Antarctica.

"The fact that 116 persons in Rio Grande accepted Christ confirms that we must pray to God claiming the city for Christ," said Pastor Moises Rizzo. "The prayer walks, specific prayer and prayers of the cell groups gave their results."

"The vision of a Patagonia given over to Christ is possible," he said. "The ends of the earth do indeed belong to the Lord."

"Pastor, you've just retired. What are you going to do now?"



BAPTIST BITS

■ **Missouri conservatives prevail again.** For the second year in a row, conservatives were elected to the top four offices of the Missouri Baptist Convention. Jay Scribner, pastor of First Baptist Church of Branson, was elected convention president by a 58-42 margin. He was the nominee supported by the conservative Project 1000 campaign which is seeking to elect conservative officers for five years in a row. Messengers also approved a "New Directions" strategic plan to help Missouri Baptists grow in the new millennium. They also passed a resolution thanking the Missouri General Assembly for overriding Gov. Mel Carnahan's veto of the Infant Protection Act of 1999, which outlaws partial-birth abortion.

■ **Southeastern revival: 70-plus conversions.** More than 70 people made public professions of faith in Christ during Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's annual Sandy Creek Week Revival on the Wake Forest, N.C., campus. About 60 of those decisions, most of them by teenagers, were made on the first night of the revival when evangelist Bailey Smith preached on Christ's parable about the wheat field mixed with tares—wheat that look like wheat but are destroyed during the harvest. Ten Southeastern students and two deacons also were among those making professions of faith during the service as Smith, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, urged the audience to examine the authenticity of their Christian conversion.

■ **Churches targeted over women pastors.** An Indiana church has dropped ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, anticipating censure by the state convention for having a woman as pastor. In a similar dispute, a church in Savannah, Ga., has been kicked out of its local association. University Baptist Church in Bloomington, Ind., voted to withdraw from the SBC and to align instead with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The Baptist State Convention of Baptists in Indiana was poised to consider a recommendation declaring the church unscriptural. In Georgia, Savannah Baptist Association voted 181-96 to dismiss Memorial Baptist Church for "practices contrary to the association" in calling a woman as pastor.

■ **Pastors' conference to change to Sunday night.** The Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference will begin this year on Sunday evening, rather than the traditional Sunday afternoon, conference President Jerry Sutton announced. The pastors' conference will be June 11-12, 2000, in Orlando, Fla., preceding the June 13-14 SBC annual meeting. The theme of the conference will be "Partners in the Harvest," reflecting the yearlong celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' giving channel for national and international missions and ministries.

■ **Draper, Hultgren receive awards.** The president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern

Baptist Convention and a longtime Tulsa, Okla., pastor were honored Oct. 20 as L.R. Scarborough Award recipients by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. LifeWay President Jimmy Draper and his wife, Carol Ann, along with retired pastor Warren Hultgren and his wife, Wanda, received the award at a luncheon held at the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary. The award, named for the school's second president, was first awarded last year as a way of honoring pastors, ministerial staff members and denominational leaders who have been "influential in the life of Southwestern Seminary," said Jack Terry, vice president for institutional advancement at Southwestern.

■ **Editor steps down over differences.** The executive editor of Baptists Today says he resigned last month over "a radical difference" with his board of directors over the newspaper's future. The independent national newspaper was founded for moderate Southern Baptists in 1983. In an interview with Associated Baptist Press, Bob Ballance said he quit because he disagreed with changes being made in the paper, such as reducing its news hole. During the past year, the publication has featured less news and commentary about Southern Baptists issues and politics, more articles offering resources for local churches and has added news about non-Southern Baptist groups including American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

Baptists question tact of evangelism effort toward Jews

Continued from page 1

major push would occur and that the story had been overplayed, he added.

Nevertheless, he said he was glad that he and others were able to state in media interviews that not all Baptists agreed that Jews should be singled out for evangelism. "And I immediately began to pray that our friends in the Jewish community would hear that," Sisk said.

Rapport said Jews had a variety of responses to the controversy.

First, he said, Holocaust survivors in his congregation expressed much distress over it. "They view it through that filter, and I don't blame them for seeing it much more seriously than I do."

Other Jews think the "wheels are spinning backwards" in terms of religious tolerance, he said. They recall the days when the Christian religion was advocated in public schools and remember feelings of exclusion, Rapport explained.

Rapport said many Jewish people in Louisville felt a deep sense of hurt because Jews and Baptists in the city have had a positive relationship for a century. Some Baptist congregations and Southern Seminary, prior to its conservative transformation, had nurtured that bond, Rapport said.

Rapport's predecessor at The Temple, the late Herbert Waller, earned a doctorate at Southern and Rapport's wife, Gaylia Rooks, who is also a rabbi, once considered doctoral study at Southern. She changed her mind after an initial inquiry, sensing at the time Southern was heading toward its current conservative direction, Rapport said.

In describing his personal reaction to the Southern Baptist effort to convert Jews, Rapport said it caused him no great alarm. In contrast to many Jews, he said he never experienced anti-Semitism while growing up and therefore evangelistic attempts do not disturb him. "When somebody comes and knocks on my door, I consider it quaint," he said. "It's not something that threatens me."

Both Baptist panelists said they believe it appropriate for Christians to share their faith with Jews in appropriate contexts. In making his point, Sisk appealed to the Baptist tradition of placing "responsibility for one's relationship with God squarely on the shoulders of the individual."

"As a Baptist I'm free to say to a Jew or anybody else this is the way Jesus has taught me, but I'm also compelled to listen to what they have learned with-

in their own tradition to give the same freedom I expect and defend their right to disagree with me," Sisk said. "And I am further compelled to live alongside them in mutual respect and as children of the same God which we all worship together."

Yet Sisk and Newman disagreed over the possibility of people receiving salvation without converting to the Christian faith.

"You have to belong and have your life meaningfully joined to (Christ) in some way to enjoy what the New Testament calls salvation," Newman said.

He noted that while he personally has struggled with that position, he came to his view based on his reading of Scripture. Comparing his inner conflict to the biblical story of Jacob wrestling with the angel, Newman said he walks "with a limp when I try to answer this question."

"In the dark of the night and in the pit of my stomach, I have a deep and abiding suspicion that God's grace works in ways that I can't finely articulate," he said. "I have no ground for that textually. I like the text and live inside the text, and I want the textual world to govern me. So I have this one suspicion, but then again I have this other suspicion."

He explained his second suspicion by referring to his friendship with the Jewish professor. "Would I be surprised to find him in the great kingdom of God? Nah," Newman said. "Do I want him there if he doesn't convert to Christianity? Yes I do. Would I be sad if he wasn't there? Yeah I would be."

Sisk said he is open to the possibility that people who do not convert to Christianity could experience God's salvation through the work of Christ's spirit, which he said "operates in places where Christ is not named or known."

"While I believe Jesus is the highest experience of how we relate to God, I also believe in the idea of the cosmic Christ, the idea of a Christ who goes beyond any name or any theology or any community," Sisk said. "So what I would say is that to the degree that a person's life puts them into touch with that spirit of Christ, they have a relationship with God as genuine as my own."

Regarding people of the Jewish faith, Sisk noted that the Apostle Paul suggested in Romans 11 that all Israel will be saved and that God's covenant with the Hebrews cannot be broken. "I must therefore conclude there is a mystery here best left to the mercies of God."

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **The Church Health Summit**, scheduled for October 13-14, 2000, has been canceled due to a scheduling conflict, according to the church growth team of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. A Franklin Graham crusade is being scheduled in Lexington for the same dates, according to Vernon Cole, director of the KBC church growth team. Organizers for the church health event said they didn't want to force Baptist pastors to choose between the two. "After examining several alternatives, it has been decided that nothing is to be gained for evangelism or church health by having these two meetings on the same dates," Cole said. Officials hope to reschedule the summit for October 2002.

■ **Cedarmore Baptist Assembly** recently suffered a fire in its kitchen, forcing the facility to be closed Oct. 22-24. The fire was contained to a breaker box panel inside a concrete wall and near a sprinkler head, said Rusty Ellison, director of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. "We were really blessed that it was so well-contained. The smoke damage was nil, the water damage was minimal."

Campbellsville to offer classes at four churches

CAMPBELLSVILLE—Campbellsville University announced it will offer graduate theological education in Christian studies at four off-campus sites during next year's spring semester.

Starting in January, the school will offer classes at Fort Mitchell Baptist Church in Fort Mitchell, Hillvue Heights Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, and St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

Nearly half of the classes required for a master's degree in Christian studies can be taken at the four sites, Jackson said.

Walter Jackson, dean of the university's school of theology, said the program will offer preparation and enrichment studies for people working in local churches, institutional ministries, national and overseas missions and theological education.

Professors instructing the courses will be either full-time Campbellsville professors or adjunct professors with doctorate research degrees in Christian studies with university or seminary teaching experience.

For more information, contact Campbellsville University at 1 University Drive, Campbellsville, KY 42818-2799, or call (800) 264-6014. Campbellsville's web site is www.campbellsvil.edu.

Georgetown show looks at religion in America

Continued from page 1

Among upcoming topics will be Muslim-Christian dialogue, a review of the ecumenical movement, religion and the arts, apocalyptic literature, and a program discussing Christmas, Hanukkah and Ramadan, Moody said.

Stations in Alabama and North Carolina already have agreed to pick up the program in January. The network is talking to several other stations around Kentucky and in other states.

Moody said he dreams of the program airing over a national network like National Public Radio, which he said avoids the subject of religion like it's the plague.

"There's not a single program about religion on NPR," he said. "And, perhaps some non-public radio stations would like to carry it. It's an interesting format and does not threaten anybody's religious neutrality."

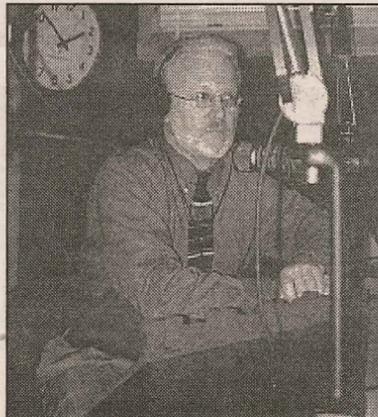
Dean of the chapel at Georgetown College, Moody is familiar to many Kentucky Baptists. He has been a pastor in Indiana, Pennsylvania and Kentucky, including Third Baptist Church of Owensboro.

That is where he met Huckleberry, who served as a volunteer staff member before enrolling at Lexington Theological Seminary. After graduating next May, he might join the program on a full-time basis.

While in Owensboro, a member of Third Baptist invited Moody to fill a slot on her popular Sunday morning radio program. He developed a five-minute commentary on religion in America, touching on everything from the Gideons and abortion to communism and guns.

That experience in 1992-93 formed the roots of the new program, which the college encouraged him to develop when he came to Georgetown in 1997.

President Bill Crouch said one topic that regularly surfaces in talks with oth-



ON THE AIR Georgetown College chaplain Dwight Moody hosts "The Meetinghouse" a one-hour show about religion in America. "There has been a vacuum in mainstream media in the coverage of religion in American life that (we) are trying to address." The show currently is broadcast in Georgetown, Owensboro and Evansville, Ind. (Georgetown photo)

er college presidents is the need for an intellectual dimension in Baptist life. Moody touches on thought-provoking subjects that seldom are aired elsewhere, Crouch noted.

"I'm focused on the impact it can have on Baptists," he said. "We Baptists tend to get narrowly focused. We live in a global world and we're not going to be able to turn our head. Dwight is trying to get people to think about that."

Moody also promises coverage of a wide range of beliefs. In addition to moderate voices, Huckleberry is trying to line up conservative Republican presidential candidate and Georgetown graduate Gary Bauer as a guest.

The host also hopes to interview such figures as fundamentalist pastor Jerry Falwell and Al Mohler, the first president at Southern Seminary installed by conservative leadership of the

Southern Baptist Convention.

"Certainly our slant is different than Jerry Falwell or Al Mohler, but Baptist fundamentalism is a very powerful movement in this country and we intend to engage it in conversation," he said.

"We think there is a strong educational component to what we do," Huckleberry said. "We think we have a lot of Christian listeners, and we want to introduce them to a wider community of faith around the world. We also want to address social, political and cultural issues that are of importance to Christians."

Moody said he has made two important discoveries thus far.

In compiling music from a wide range of backgrounds, among them Hindu, Jewish and African, he also discovered a wealth of religious music produced by such secular artists as Sarah McLachlan, Neil Diamond and Garth Brooks.

The other discovery is the difference between views aired by spokespeople for a denomination or organization and the stories of ordinary people.

"I would say there is too much posturing and too little understanding," he said. "We have found ordinary people of faith who talk about their spiritual journeys. These are fascinating conversations. They have a liveliness, a spontaneity and a delightfulness you don't get when somebody is representing their organization."

"The Meetinghouse" is broadcast on the flagship station, WRVG in Georgetown, at noon and 8 p.m. EDT Sundays. It airs on WKWC in Owensboro at noon CDT Sundays and on WUEV in Evansville, Ind., at 11 a.m. CDT Fridays.

The programs also are simulcast at those times over the Internet. There are links to each at the show's Web site: www.worldradio.org/meetinghouse.html.

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Agreeing to disagree respectfully

By Dale Hanson Bourke

Somewhere between all-inclusive political correctness and exclusive bigotry is a place where people who hold strong and divergent opinions can disagree respectfully.

It is not an easy place to find. Humanly, we feel most comfortable with those who share our beliefs and biases. And the more time we spend with others of like mind, the easier it becomes to demonize those who disagree as ignorant, misguided or evil.

Those of us in the media don't help much either. It's news when people disagree vehemently. It becomes front-page fodder when the debate turns ugly. Shouting matches become news sound bites.

But as citizens we recognize there is something precious and delicate in our right to disagree with one another. It is not upheld by mind-numbing inclusiveness nor is it illustrated by polarized polemics.

The importance of that right is most evident when thinking people come together and debate with dignity. It is most valuable when people can listen to one another and begin to understand even if they never agree.

Recently a series of meetings have

sprung up across the country bringing people of very different mindsets together to "dialogue" as they often bill the occasions. One of the most recent and visible meetings occurred when Jerry Falwell and Mel White met to discuss their very different views of homosexuality.

COMMENTARY



Dale Hanson Bourke

But there have been others. Harvard Divinity School was the setting for women who held widely divergent religious views to find common ground during a weekend of discussions and presentations. The Ethics and Public Policy Center hosted Southern Baptist ministers and Jewish leaders in a series of meetings to discuss the Christian notion of evangelizing Jews.

These and other meetings have been mostly off the record, meaning media either weren't allowed into the sessions or were not permitted to report on the content.

But the spirit of such meetings has been remarkable by most accounts, mostly because the participants have been willing to openly express their views without ascribing motives to their counterparts. In the end people have left such sessions with changed hearts if not changed minds.

Falwell, a well-known conservative

pastor and founder of the Moral Majority, and White, a former ghostwriter for Falwell and other evangelists and now an activist for gay rights, made headlines because of their high visibility. Other meetings were never reported not only because of their off-the-record status but also because people getting along simply isn't news.

Yet in one of the meetings I attended as an observer, it was clear a rabbi and a Southern Baptist minister had started out as potential combatants and had become true friends. The rabbi hadn't converted and the minister hadn't stopped evangelizing. But the two had come to understand one another in a way that seemed to profoundly impact each of them.

That may not be news but it certainly is a story.

And the most wonderful part of the story is that it can be duplicated in other places and with people of all different backgrounds.

As a nation we must get back to discussing the hard questions with one another. We must find ways to set up safe environments where we can meet and disagree without shouting. And we must teach our children to do the same with one another.

A strong democracy is built on lively debate. A vibrant community grows out of diversity. But underpinning it all is communication with one another.

Dale Hanson Bourke is publisher of Religion News Service

Motion affirms BF&M

I am writing to inform readers that I have submitted a motion to the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Order of Business for consideration at the 1999 KBC annual meeting in Northern Kentucky. The intent of the motion will be to affirm Southern Baptists' 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement "as a sufficient confession of faith for all Kentucky Baptists."

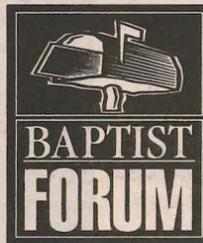
The motion moves to affirm the unamended 1963 statement because it

has stood the test of time. It is based on a documentation of over 150 years of basic Baptist beliefs upon which we can find common ground.

I have discussed the nature of this motion with Baptists throughout the state who represent the diversity of our denomination and have found general support for a vote that demonstrates unity rather than division. I also believe that Celebrate Jesus 2000 will be more effective if we work in harmony.

As pastor of Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, I have just completed a sermon series based on the Baptist Faith and Message statement. I do not wish this motion to be seen as a political effort but it grows out of my personal conviction that we Baptists have a rich history and heritage that we should affirm, not rewrite.

Bill Shoulta
Louisville



PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

New CP percentage proposal outlined

The Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board's Business and Finance Committee has recommended a change in the way Cooperative Program gifts received in Kentucky are distributed to the Southern Baptist Convention. I'd like to use this column to share a few words of explanation.

Currently, the dollar amount of Cooperative Program gifts sent to the SBC is based on the percentage of undesignated gifts from churches. Total CP gifts are known because they flow through the Kentucky Baptist Convention while the percentage of undesignated gifts is determined by using the Annual Church Profile that most churches fill out each year.

The concern with this system is that not every church is consistent in reporting its undesignated receipts on the Annual Church Profile which can have a major impact on the calculations. Therefore, the Business and Finance Committee is recommending that we

eliminate this accuracy concern by sending a fixed percentage of total CP receipts to the SBC.

In addition, the committee is recommending that this percentage be increased slightly each year for the next three years. The committee is proposing incremental increases of 0.242 percent in 2000-2001, 0.2 percent in 2001-2002, and 0.2 percent in 2002-2003. This will increase the percentage Kentucky sends to the SBC to 36 percent, which is the average percentage for state conventions.



Bill Mackey

CP receipts have been excellent for the past two years, and it appeared to the committee to be a good time to compensate for the necessity of reducing the SBC percentage from 37 percent to 35 percent three years ago. If the proposal is approved, the Business and Finance Committee will evaluate the feasibility of the percentage each year based on CP receipts.

The committee also felt this would be a good time to encourage churches

to consider increasing their CP percentage since 2000 is the 75th anniversary of the Cooperative Program. Nearly 90 percent of all receipts for KBC and SBC ministries and missions come through the Cooperative Program. It is my prayer that churches will respond by increasing the percentage of their undesignated receipts going to missions and ministries in Kentucky and beyond.

Churches that prefer to designate for Kentucky causes will continue to have that opportunity. I am grateful for the generosity of Kentucky Baptists in supporting missions and ministry through the Cooperative Program, Kentucky-only gifts, special offerings, personal gifts and personal involvement.

The Executive Board will affirm at their Nov. 15 meeting a poll on this recommendation along with a recommendation that the 2000-2001 budget total be set at \$21 million, a 4 percent increase over the current year. These recommendations will then be presented and modified by the Executive Board to the convention's messengers in Covington on Nov. 16.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

SAVINGS

Want financial freedom? Find a way to save

By Don Spencer

Saving! To some folks that's an "ugly word." A frequent financial mistake is the failure to save regularly. Saving is a critical key to financial freedom.



One of the first priorities in giving funds

should be an emergency fund. Many young couples frequently find they can manage their finances reasonably well as long as everything is routine. The first time there is an unexpected expense, it can throw their finances into a tailspin. That's why everyone should have an emergency fund.

How much and where should it be? Financial planners generally suggest that your emergency fund should be equal to 3-5 months of your spendable income. It should be in a safe, accessible investment that will generate reasonable returns, probably in a money market account.

Too often the approach to saving is: "If there's anything left at the end of the month, we'll save it." We know there is usually more month than money. Unless one sets out to intentionally save from the beginning, it rarely happens.

One financial planner suggests the 10-70-20 plan. After taxes and tithe, save 10 percent. Use 70 percent for basic living expenses such as food, clothes and shelter. Use the remaining 20 percent for discretionary expenses. If you feel it will take more than 70 percent for basic living expenses, adjust the formula. Make it a 5-85-10 plan, or whatever. The critical thing is to have a plan that includes saving.

If you're having trouble saving, here are a few relatively painless ways to save:

- Put your loose change each day in a container. Each month take that change and deposit it in your savings account.

- Pay off a car loan or credit card debt and continue making the same payment—to your savings account.

- Put all or a portion of your tax refund into your savings account.

- When you receive extra cash, such as a holiday bonus or cash gift, put that into savings.

- Watch for better deals on such things as phone service, Internet provider or checking accounts. Put the money saved in your savings account.

- Do you eat out for lunch every day? Take your lunch once a week and put the money saved into your savings account.

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

How can I protect my child from accepting false beliefs?

Q: How can I protect my child from false beliefs and ideas?

A wide variety of ideas and beliefs bombard us every day. Many are wrong; many are untrue. They will not make us happy; they will not take us to heaven. From these options, our children have to choose what they are going to believe, who they are going to believe, who they are going to follow and how they are going to live. Parents have to help children learn to choose wisely.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 says, "Test everything; hold onto what is good." Children can learn to test ideas and beliefs for truth by learning to:

■ **Ask questions.** Teach children to be unafraid to ask questions. "Who says so?" is an especially good question to ask.

■ **Think clearly.** Teach children to consider the evidence and to think clearly about what they see and hear before deciding whether to believe something.

■ **Know what the Bible says.** Jesus used Scripture to counter false ideas the devil threw at Him (see Matthew 4:1-11). Train children to check what they choose to believe against what the Bible teaches. (Scripture memory programs like Children's Bible Drill can help.)

■ **Look to Jesus.** Jesus said, "I am the truth." Help children learn to test ideas and beliefs against the life and teachings of Jesus. See what Jesus said. Don't believe anything that goes against the things He taught and the way He lived.

Model these steps for your children. Choose an idea or belief you encounter in culture through a movie, TV show, popular song or even from a friend and work together to evaluate it and test it for truth.—David Garrard

Q: Are there ever any issues beyond the scope of forgiveness? I am thinking of incest as one example.

There is no past that God cannot redeem. In 1 John 1:9 we read, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Corrie Ten Boom said God casts our sins into the deepest sea and puts up a "no fishing" sign.

When it comes to forgiving others, we may find it is not instantaneous. Corrie Ten Boom faced such a situation when she met one of her Nazi tormentors. When the encounter came, God worked His surprising grace to make forgiveness a reality.

To simply excuse behavior that is inexcusable is false forgiveness and redemptive to no one. For the perpetrator to have new life in Christ, an acknowledgment of sin and genuine repentance is necessary. The victimized are called to acknowledge the evil system wherein they may have been silently compliant. Acknowledgment means real crimes have been committed. Only then may we begin to reframe the scene of the crime through the lens of the cross of Christ.

Jesus used the phrase, "seventy times seven." Forgiveness is an ongoing process. Simmering beneath your awareness may be a resentment and bitterness holding you in like a prison door. As healing occurs, forgiveness can become more like passing through a revolving door. It gets easier with each memory or encounter.

Pretending that nothing happened unwittingly keeps you in the perpetual incarceration of shame. Facing the task of forgiveness brings you to an awareness that you need no longer be dominated by the other person. Through the miracle of healing and the grace of God, you ultimately find that the prisoner you have set free is yourself.—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@ntr.net.



How can Christians reach the world? Go

Six billion people—that is the estimated population of the world based on the United Nations' recent designation of Oct. 12 as the symbolic date when the Earth's population reached that historic milestone.

Although world population growth has slowed in recent years, the number of people on Earth continues to increase by approximately 78 million people per year. Global population has doubled since 1960—and Africa's population has tripled during the same time. Population experts predict world population will peak at about 10 billion people during the next 50 years as life expectancy continues to rise.

What do these statistics mean for the Christian world? According to the most optimistic estimates, approximately one-third of the Earth's six billion people consider themselves Christians. The percentage who are active evangelical Christians would be significantly smaller.

Either way, the latest global population estimate indicates at least 4 billion people have never responded to the Christian gospel—and the number is rapidly growing. In light of the overwhelming statistics and Christ's command to "go ye therefore and teach all nations," how are Kentucky Baptists to respond?

The most obvious answer is to go. But where—and how?

One practical response is personal involvement in partnership missions efforts. Kentucky Baptists have developed a strong reputation in recent years as a missions-focused convention. Successful international partnerships in Kenya, Brazil and Russia have produced significant spiritual dividends.

The state convention currently is in partnership with Baptists in Poland and Tanzania as well as a stateside missions partnership with New England Baptists. Coupled with missions efforts on the local, associational and state levels, that means Kentucky Baptists have almost unlimited opportunities to be active participants in hands-on missions projects.

Even for those who are unable to be physically in-

involved, there are a number of ways to support missions emphases through such avenues as prayer and financial support.

But "go" remains the primary strategy. Calvin Wilkins, Kentucky Baptist partnership missions director, said a variety of missions projects are being planned for 2000 in Poland and Tanzania. The ministry opportunities range from construction projects and personal evangelism efforts to prayer walks and sports ministry. Other options include music evangelism, prison ministry, youth camps and theological education.

"Kentucky Baptists have proven again and again that partnership missions has strengthened local churches here in missions giving and missions involvement," Wilkins declared. "The investment of time and money in going is worth every bit of it."

During a recent missions trip to Tanzania, volunteers ranged from retired pastor O.D. Boyd who was participating in his 15th international missions project to state convention president Charles Barnes who was taking part

in his first overseas ministry experience.

Both men emphasized the two-week trip was a tremendous experience. As two teams of volunteers preached, conducted hut-to-hut evangelism and showed the Jesus film in remote Tanzanian villages, an estimated 1,000 people made personal professions of faith in Christ.

Noting that volunteers "have to be flexible and fluid and ready for the next day's opportunities that are presented," Barnes added, "It was exciting to be able to do that. I will always remember this experience."

Christ calls His followers to "be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." The 2000 version of that command for Kentucky Baptists may read: "Be My witnesses in Kentucky, and in New England, and in Poland and Tanzania, and to the ends of the earth."

In the words of O.D. Boyd, "The Lord has already told us to go. We need to pray about where to go."

Billions are waiting. Will you go?

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

What miraculous sign can you show us?

By Steve Rice

Then the Jews demanded of Him, "What miraculous sign can You show us to prove Your authority to do all this?" (John 2:18)

I am constantly accused of being a practical joker. Fake snakes, plastic lizards, rubber chickens and whoopie-cushions all stand as incriminating evidence that the accusations contain some fragments of truth.

"What miraculous sign can You show us?" asked the Jews. They were not simply asking a question, they were asking for proof. They wanted to see evidence in the form of a "miraculous sign" that would prove Jesus possessed the authority He assumed in clearing the temple. They wanted to know, in modern words, "Who died and left Him boss?"

Their question was not only contextual, but contemporary as well. Aren't you familiar with couples who seem to require such proof before they will commit to tithe? Can't you think of Chris-

tians who refuse God's call on their lives because there is not enough "proof" that He is leading? "Lord, just show me a sign" is a prayer not foreign to this pastor's lips and likely not foreign to the reader's lips.

The other day I strategically placed a realistic-looking black cobra snake in the front seat of a friend's work truck. Already edgy from a recent "lizard episode," the driver relived his fears when he discovered the snake. "I'll get the pastor!" was his instinctive remark

once he regained enough wind to speak. When confronted by the "snake-man," I admitted knowing the snake. "He usually lives in my desk, but felt the need to ride in a diesel" was my defense. I did not even try to deny being involved because he had the proof dangling in his grasp.

Purple sunsets, bumblebee stripes, empty tombs, pony-tailed daughters, spring in the mountains, scattered coins and overturned tables all indicate that He's been here. Alcoholic husbands-turned-preachers are proof that He's

been here. Joy at the graveside confirms that He is not only present, but personally involved with people on a daily basis.

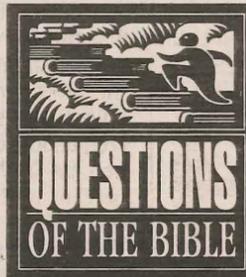
"What miraculous sign can you show us?" the Jews asked. "Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days'" (John 2:19). The Jews imagined that His temple reference was to Herod's temple, but they misunderstood His subject. He was speaking of the temple of His body.

He was indicating that His death and resurrection would be the only signs granted and the only signs needed. He surely had authority to overturn tables if He could overturn history. If He could scatter death, He could scatter denarii. The One who could clear a record from accusation could clear a temple without asking.

"What miraculous sign can you show us?" What telltale sign do we have of His presence?

Look around. He's been here! You can feel it! You can see it! You can smell it! You can taste it! You can read it! You can believe it! And you can know it!

Steve Rice is pastor of First Baptist Church in Belfry



Tanzania mission trip boosts partnership effort

Tanzanian mission trips

Proposed Kentucky Baptist partnership missions projects in Tanzania during 2000:

- Jan. 20-Feb. 2: Evangelism work in Tukuyu.
- Feb. 3-16: Prayer walk and evangelism work in Ifakara. Church starting and evangelism work in Tukuyu. Evangelism work in Kyela.
- April: Evangelism work in Dar es Salaam.
- May: Evangelism work in Dar es Salaam.
- May 11-24: Prayer walk in Shinyanga.
- June 29-July 12: Mission seminar for pastors in Tukuyu.
- Sept. 28-Oct. 11: Evangelism conference in Mbeya.
- Oct. 12-25: Theological education in Shinyanga.

Continued from page 1
their understanding of Jesus."

He said team members "started very basic and told them about creation, the fall of man and the coming of the Messiah as a Savior to redeem them."

"It is incumbent upon us as Kentucky Baptists to give them information about Jesus so they can hear the right information on which to build their lives."

O.D. Boyd, the team leader for those serving in Morogoro, said the two-week trip was "very successful." Boyd, a 74-year-old retired Kentucky Baptist pastor, should know. This was his 15th international missions project.

"I think we accomplished a great deal of good," he affirmed. Noting that the team went into one area that was 90 percent Muslim, he reported that several of the villagers prayed to accept Christ as Savior.

Wilkins added that Morogoro, a city of half a million people, currently has only one established Baptist church.

The Morogoro team witnessed 79 professions of faith while in Tanzania. Praying for an 80th convert, Boyd said God gave him the opportunity to lead a young woman to faith during the return flight home.

"It was a Spirit-filled trip with experiences that were almost unexplainable," Boyd declared. Recalling that he frequently sensed God's presence throughout the trip, he said there were several occasions when he would be witnessing to two or three people that several others would stop to listen and choose to accept Christ also.

Urging other Kentucky Baptists to consider taking part in future trips to Tanzania, Boyd said, "They certainly could use the help in Tanzania—the needs are there."

While Boyd's four-member team was busy in the Morogoro area, a five-member team led by Ross Bauscher was witnessing a spiritual harvest in Ifakara and surrounding villages.

Bauscher, pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church in Owensboro, said team members traveled as much as two and a half hours, sometimes down dry river beds, to preach, witness and show the Jesus film—using a generator to power the video projector.

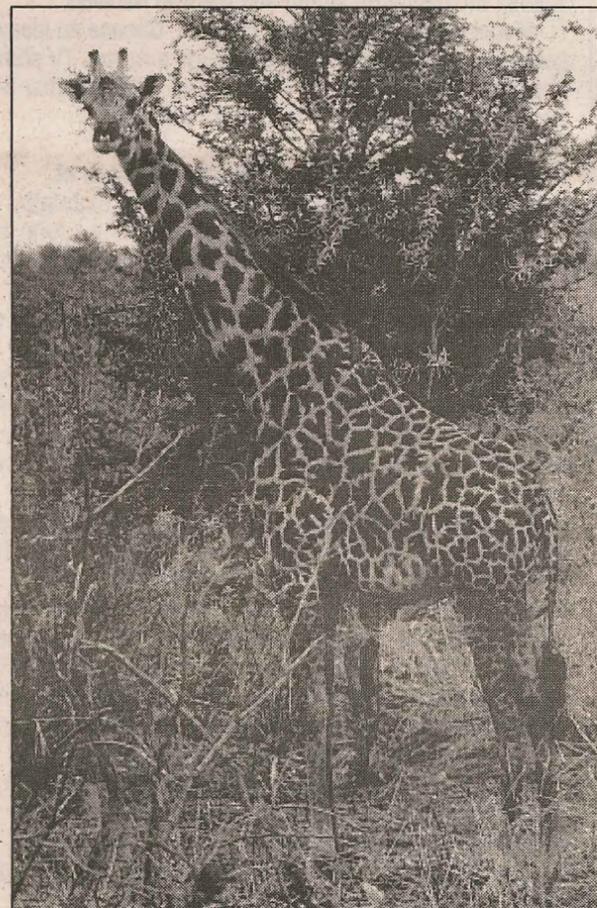
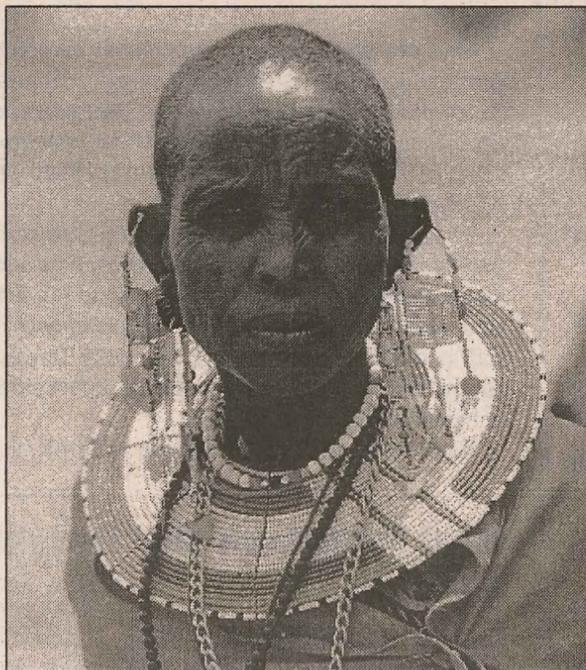
"We went hut to hut witnessing prior to showing the film," Bauscher said. "One area was the closest thing to the book of Acts I've ever seen."

"We had over 100 people standing prior to the film. We had a crowd of over 2,000 people standing in a dirt soccer field to watch the film. We saw approximately 500 people saved at that one village."

"It was absolutely marvelous," Bauscher shared. "I've never seen in my entire life the power of the Holy Spirit or the openness and hunger for the Word of God."

In addition to an estimated 1,000 professions of faith during the project, Bauscher said new preaching points were established in at least three villages.

Emphasizing that "the Word of God still speaks to the hearts of people," he added, "The very fact we can be part of what God is doing is exciting. It's hard to put into words where



MISSIONS VISION Kentucky Baptist volunteers experienced the sights and sounds of Africa during a recent partnership missions trip to Tanzania. ■ **Top:** Children in Morogoro take time to pose for the camera. Morogoro, a city of half a million people, has only one established Baptist church. ■ **Above:** A Masai villager displays the African tribe's traditional adornments. ■ **Right:** A giraffe wandering through Tanzania's Mikumi game preserve is symbolic of the nation's diverse wildlife. (Photos by Larry Brannin)

I've been and what I've experienced."

Southern Baptist international missionary Dan Johnson and his family worked with the team in Ifakara. "These guys were a real blessing to the nationals and us," he wrote in a recent e-mail. "They came ready to work and minister to the Tanzanians and missionaries."

Although "these areas are highly influenced by Islam, God made a way," Johnson added. "Jesus Christ gave the victory and blessing in all circumstances."

Johnson asked Kentucky Baptists to pray for those serving in Tanzania to have wisdom in continuing their current work, discernment in building up the

new works and for more workers to respond to growing needs.

Wilkins said there already are requests for at least 10 partnership projects next year in Tanzania, as well as a request for a team of women to provide missions education training next month for pastors' wives and other church leaders.

He said there also are needs for teachers, medical personnel and others who are available for longer-term volunteer involvement. Currently, Orson Unten, a retired physician from Lexington, is serving for four to five months at a Baptist hospital in Kigoma and Margaret Day of Russellville is teaching English as an International Service

Corps volunteer at International Baptist Seminary in Arusha.

Wilkins said future project needs include evangelistic work, prayer walks and church starting efforts.

"As word gets out, I believe there will be people who are interested in being part of this ministry," he said. "My hope for the year 2000 is to do our best in filling the requests coming from the field to achieve the goals Baptists in Tanzania have set for themselves."

"It will be a sacrifice but the rewards are so great in seeing how God uses simple things and our availability."

For more information about participating in partnership missions projects, contact Wilkins at (888) 254-5724.

Halloween shows unite members & reach unchurched

By David Winfrey
News Director

SHEPHERDSVILLE—Ann Denney knew the two young women were affected by what they'd seen because both were crying as they left the church.

It was 1997, and Mount Elmira Baptist Church in Shepherdsville was into its second year of offering a Halloween drama depicting heaven and hell.

Fifteen minutes later the two 19-year-old twins, nieces of a church member, drove back up the winding road to the church asking to talk to a counselor. "We've got to talk to someone," one of them said. "We can't go home until we get saved."

Denney, organizer of "Nightmare on Mount Elmira Road," has a host of similar stories, as do a growing number of Kentucky Baptist churches.

Churches from Ashland to Paducah offer the walk-through dramas. They range from their own interpretations to such trademarked productions as "Hell House" or "Judgement House." Countless other churches take their youth, sometimes driving hours to see a drama.

Organizers say the programs re-

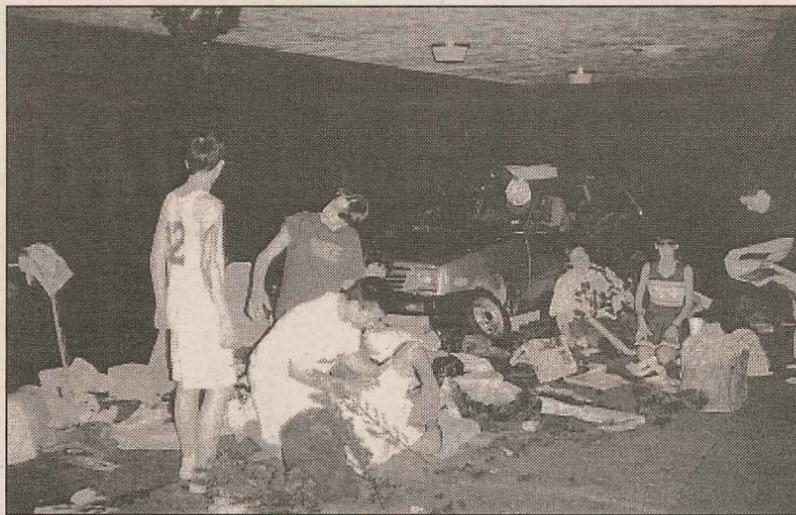
deem a holiday that too often glorifies spiritual darkness in general or Satan specifically. But a Kentucky evangelism specialist says care must be taken to make sure people aren't manipulated into an emotional decision that loses its meaning the next morning.

Everyone contacted for this story reported growing attendance at the productions, with large numbers of people becoming Christians or recommitting to their Christian faith.

"We saw 207 profess faith in Christ and many more make rededications and request prayer," said Floyd Paris, pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland. In eight nights recently, the church's "Judgement House" drew more than 5,000 people, he said.

"What was more amazing to us: We average 250 in Sunday school, and there are over 200 people involved in doing 'Judgement House.'" From nursery-age children in the heaven scene to senior adults in the prayer room, the event drew responses from every age, he said.

Earlier this year the church hosted a national training conference in which a church from Missouri taught congregations from 13 states to produce "Judgement House." (The copy-



righted production spells "judgement" with two Es.)

Paris said events like Judgement House have "phenomenal" potential for church growth.

"The youth are such a visual people," he said. "It was interesting to me, as I talked to young people, ... how many young people in our area—in an area where we have more churches than service stations—who had never been inside any church."

Many of those teens wouldn't attend a traditional revival but, through Judgement House, heard a clear presentation of the message of Christianity, he said. "If we're going to reach this society, the message of Jesus Christ never changes, but the method of presentation can change."

Productions often focus on the effects of poor choices, such as drinking and driving, but several churches added their own flair to the scripts or took a different direction altogether.

The Judgement House at Southside Baptist Church in Princeton focused on a dad who is active in church but lives a different life at home.

"Down deep, Dad's lost," said organizer Jackie Cannon. This is the church's third year to host Judgement House. Last year the event drew 1,700, and more were expected this year.

"The main gist we want to get across to people is you can go to church every time the doors open ... and still be lost and go to hell," she said. "Our churches are full of that type of thing."

At Unity in Ashland, the story follows a winning high school basketball team, whose coach stresses making good choices. Observers follow the choices of characters off the court when the coach and two teens die in an auto accident.

At First Baptist Church of Paducah, Youth Minister Roger Palmer said this year's Judgement House is different from most others because it does not have a death scene or depict heaven and hell.

"Nationwide, with the things happening with teens and shootings, I thought I really don't want to deal with another tragedy from the point of death right now," he said.

Instead, the story focuses on two families. One is a traditional Christian family, and the other is a non-Christian family that has gone overboard on the Y2K scare.

The Christian father is forced to deal

with bitterness after his son is injured in an accident, Palmer said. "The way it ends is really cool, but I hate to give you the ending."

This was the church's sixth year to offer a Judgement House. During the first weekend of this year's production, organizers recorded 510 people who renewed their Christian faith. Another 23 became Christians, Palmer said.

While many productions try to portray scenes of heaven and hell, many organizers insist they are not trying to scare people into becoming Christians.

"I don't want to scare anybody into doing something," Denney said.

Like others, Denney said the production tries to point out that choices have consequences. "So many of our youth today think they're invincible. 'That could never happen to me.' It can, and I just want them to be ready."

Kentucky Baptist Convention evangelism director Dan Garland said that Halloween productions, when done right, also can connect churches with people who aren't attracted to worship services.

Follow-through is important in such cases, he added. "Just like anything else, you can use it to prey on people's emotions and hype people up and then they don't do anything about it."

Garland also recommends that churches have counselors who are prepared to deal with issues in addition to becoming a Christian.

"It isn't just an evangelism tool. It pushes a lot of emotional buttons in people, and I think you've got to be sensitive to that," he said. "Sometimes its dredges up a lot of emotional garbage in peoples' lives. The counselors have got to be sensitive to talk about relationship to God and other family members, building bridges, reconciliation, healing of negative emotions (visitors) are dealing with."

From counselors to actors and prayer teams, organizers said the productions involve a lot of people in their churches.

Budgets range from a couple hundred dollars to several thousand dollars, but leaders said God continues to provide any needs they have.

And what's the hardest scene to put together?

"Heaven," Denney said. "I feel (the depiction of) heaven is very inadequate. We do the best we can with what the world has to offer, and it's beautiful when we get finished with it. But it's nothing compared to what heaven's really going to be like."



HALLOWEEN SCENES
Churches offer a variety of story lines for their Halloween productions.

■ Above: Southside Baptist Church in Princeton highlighted a church-attending father who was not a Christian. ■ Left: Unity Baptist Church in Ashland followed a basketball coach who stressed making good choices.

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ANNUITY BOARD



Nov. 16-17, 1999

The 162nd Annual Meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention will be held on the upper level of the beautiful new Northern Kentucky Regional Convention Center Covington, Kentucky



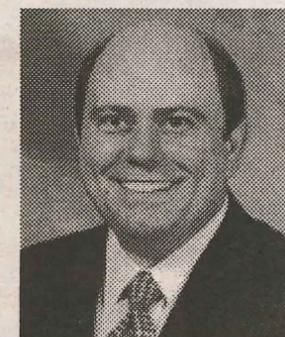
Charles Barnes
KBC President



Bill Mackey
KBC Executive Director



Jeff Smith
Salt & Light Ministries



Mike Caudill
Pastor of FBC, Hindman



Dr. Jim Henry
Pastor of FBC, Orlando



Ken and Beth Perkins
East Africa Missionaries

Directions:

Take I-75 North to Exit 192 (5th Street). Follow 5th Street to Madison Avenue. Turn left onto Madison Avenue. The Convention Center will be on the left at the corner of Madison and RiverCenter Blvd.

Parking Facilities:

Kenton County Parking Lot - Corner of Madison Avenue and RiverCenter Blvd. Rates: \$.75 each half hour, \$5 maximum, 6 a.m.-3 p.m.; \$3 maximum, 3 p.m.-6 a.m.

Kenton County Parking Garage - 220 Madison Avenue. Rates: \$6 maximum up to 12 hours; \$10, 12-24 hours; \$1.50 evenings, 6 p.m.-6 a.m.

Embassy Suites - Corner of Madison Avenue and RiverCenter Blvd. Rates: \$.75 each half hour; \$5 maximum per day.

Marriott - Corner of Madison Avenue and RiverCenter Blvd. Rates: \$.75 each half hour, \$5 maximum per day.

Shuttle Service

Southbank Shuttle - Rates \$.25 per trip. Visits hotels along south bank of Ohio River every 20-30 minutes; 6:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. Mon.-Wed. of annual meeting.

Other Convention Amenities

- Concessions area.
- On-site meal options for lunch and dinner on Tuesday, Nov. 16. Downstairs in Exhibit Hall II. (Items available on cash only basis.)
- Extended teaching care for children ages six weeks-5th grade. ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED! Call (888) 254-5709.



Need more information?

Call 502-254-4731 or
888-254-5713 or check out our
Web site at www.kybaptist.org

Program Highlights

Tuesday Morning - 9 a.m.-11:50 a.m.

- Dramatic theme interpretations by Jeff Smith of Salt & Light Ministries
- Cumberland College Chorale
- Special presentation of the newly-released Russian Harvest, the story of Kentucky Baptists' partnership with Russia by the late Ken Murphy.
- Multi-media Executive Board staff presentation, led by KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey
- Special Music by One Voice
- President's Address by KBC President Charles Barnes who has just returned from an exciting missions trip to Tanzania

Tuesday Afternoon - 1:30 p.m. - 4:55 p.m.

- Music by the Kentucky Baptist Chorale
- Convention sermon by Mike Caudill, pastor of FBC, Hindman who will share how his community turned grief into victories for Christ!
- Launch of Kentucky's celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Cooperative Program
- Elections of the president and first vice president
- Important KBC Executive Board recommendations
- A special video presentation from Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

Tuesday Evening - 6:30 p.m. - 9:25 p.m.

- Special musical performances by the Northern Kentucky Association Choir & Instrumental Ensemble and by the Kentucky Singing Women
- Missions presentations from the Kentucky WMU, the International Missions Board and the North American Missions Board
- Oneida Baptist Institute and Clear Creek Baptist Bible College updates
- Election of second vice president
- Sermon by Dr. Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, and two-time Southern Baptist Convention president!

Wednesday morning - 9 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

- Special music performances by Unity
- Dynamic video presentation from Kentucky Baptist Assemblies
- East Africa Missionaries Ken and Beth Perkins sharing the inspiring stories of modern Christian martyrs

Other Activities:

Exhibits -Open Monday through Wednesday. Learn more about Baptist ministries through more than 30 special exhibits. Browse the LifeWay Christian Store, get a Cooperative Program Report for your church, sign up for door prizes and much more!

Blood Drive -Kentucky Baptists have a tremendous opportunity to impact the Northern Kentucky area with the special message that we care! Participate in a special blood drive from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Monday, November 15 in Ballrooms D & E! Walk-ins will be accepted, but you can ensure a quicker visit by making your appointment in advance. Call 1-800-830-1091 by Wednesday, November 10 to reserve your spot!

Pastors' Conference -Attend the Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference on Monday, November 15, in Ballrooms A-C. Three outstanding sessions of worship and preaching are planned: 10:25-11:55 a.m., 1:25-4:00 p.m. and 5:55-9:00 p.m.

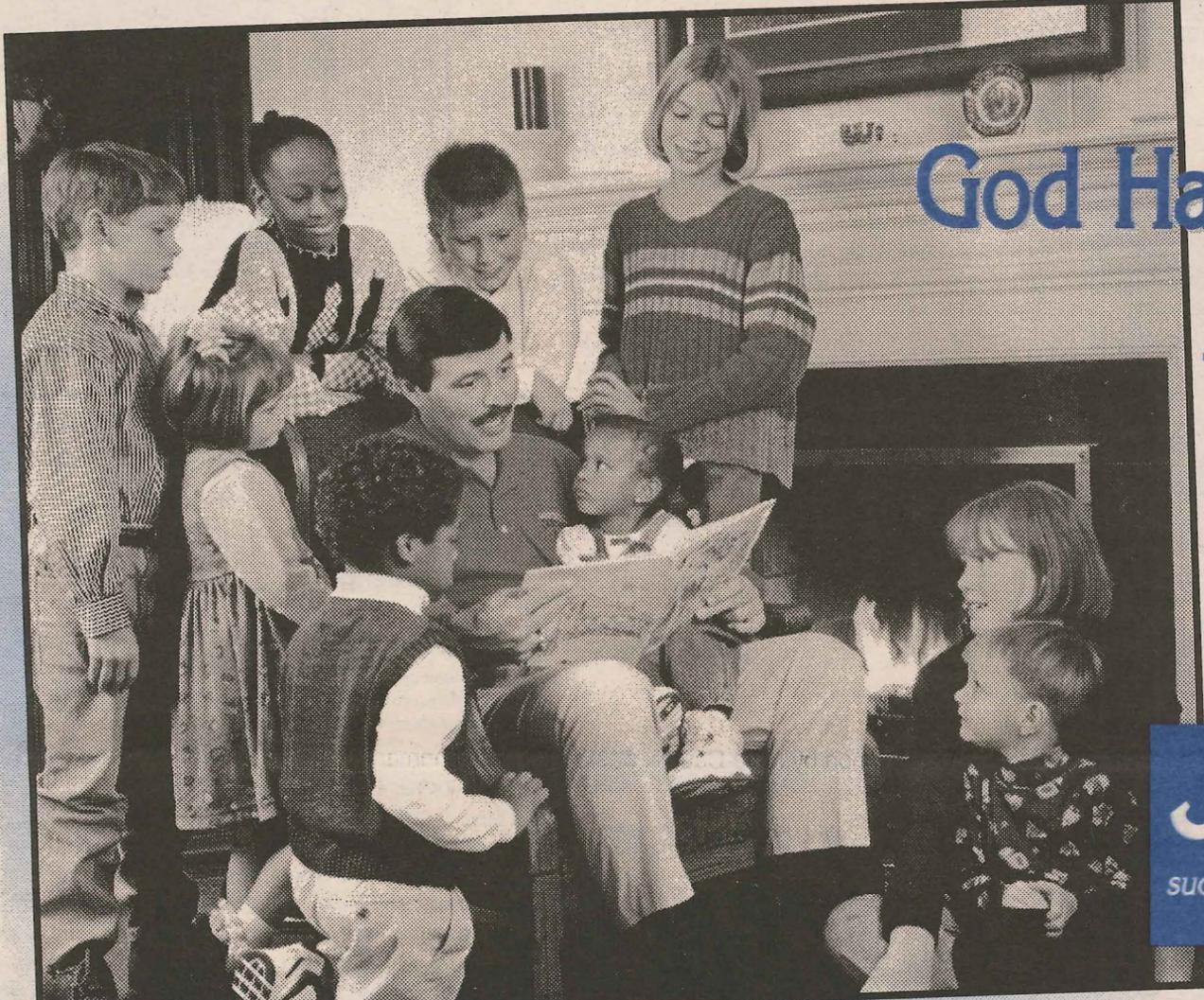


KENTUCKY BAPTIST HOMES FOR CHILDREN

1999 THANKSGIVING OFFERING

November 2, 1999 Supplement to the Western Recorder

10801 Shelbyville Road • Louisville, KY 40243 • (502) 245-2101 • 1-800-456-1386 • www.iglou.com/kbhc • e-mail: kbhc@iglou.com



God Has Given Us Another Child To Hold

*Jesus said --
Let the children come to me,
and do not hinder them, for to
such belongs the kingdom of God."
- Based on Luke 18:15-16*

One precious life...

Leslie had seen the picture before. She saw it the first time she came to the counselor's office. It was of a man, wearing a long white robe. He had dark hair and a beard. He was smiling as he held a little girl on his lap.

No one had ever held Leslie that way. By the time she was six years old, she had been

sexually abused by her father and grandfather. Many of the adults in her life had hurt or neglected her. Leslie's foster mom and foster care worker tried to get her to talk about the past--to guide her through the fear and the pain to a place of hope and stability. She knew they cared, but it made her sad to talk about it and she began to cry. Once again, she looked at the picture.

"Who is that?" Leslie asked.

"That's Jesus," her foster mom said.

"Why doesn't he ever hold me like that?"

The foster care worker immediately scooped Leslie into his arms. "Honey, he's holding you right now." For 130 years, Kentucky Baptists have been the arms of God's love around hurting children like Leslie. Help continue that special ministry to children and families through the 1999 Thanksgiving Offering.

Statewide Goal: \$1,100,000

The need...

"I'm sorry, you'll have to wait."

Depending on the circumstances, those words could mean a minor annoyance, or a devastating setback. At times, the staff of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children have to say, "I'm sorry." It could be to a social worker trying to place a child in one of our residential programs only to find our beds are full. This year, Kentucky Baptists provided funds and labor to build a new cabin at the Wilderness Camping Treatment Program in Bronston so we can say "yes, we have room" for eight more boys.

We could have been forced to say "no" to Susan, who came to us looking for foster parents

for her infant son. Placing and keeping Lee in a loving foster home would not have been possible without private dollars and donations from Kentucky Baptists.

More than 70 youth in our residential and foster care programs could have heard "There won't be Christian summer camp this year. There's no money." But, because individuals, churches and other Baptist institutions partnered with KBHC, we were able to offer camp, weekend spiritual retreats, campus day camps and revival services, Christian concerts, Christian music and religious education materials to our kids, foster parents and staff.

Chastity might have been told "no." She was 18 and our social work system said she should be able to make it on her own. Chastity knew better.

She knew she needed help and because Kentucky Baptists were there through the Thanksgiving Offering and other gifts, Chastity found a safe, nurturing foster home so she could concentrate on finishing high school and starting college instead of wondering where she was going to sleep from week to week, night to night.

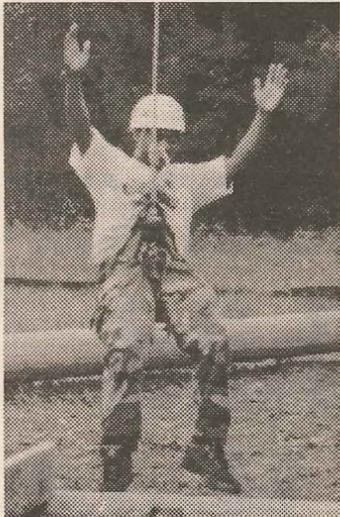
Last year Kentucky Baptists gave more than \$1 million to support their ministry to children and families through Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Even with that generosity, and the outpouring of other kinds of support, we still had to say "I'm sorry," to many children and families. This year's goal is \$1.1 million because, like Jesus, we want to have a big lap and always be able to open our arms to another child in need.

--Dannah Prather

"Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." Ephesians 6:11.

"Every time I got a piece, I felt like I was getting a piece of God," said Marcus a resident of KBHC Wilderness Camping Treatment Program. He was talking about Armor Quest, a study of Ephesians 6:10-17, where participants not only study about the full armor of God, but they physically work to obtain each piece.

"This activity helps keep the boys interested by tying it in with the armor," said Toby Durham, recreational therapist for KBHC's Southern Region Campus. "They want to show their strength and toughness."



As he touches back to earth, Antonio is obviously pleased that he completed this stage of the Armor Quest.

In addition to strength, the boys questing for the armor also have to demonstrate confidence that some of them have never felt before. After completing a traditional study of each piece of the armor, the boys climb part, or all, of the 50-foot Alpine Tower on the Wilderness campus to retrieve that piece. The armor

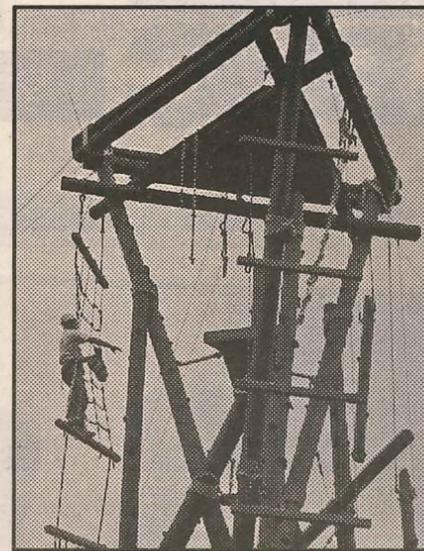
has been updated somewhat: the helmet of salvation and belt of truth come from a local army surplus store; the breastplate of righteousness is a Christian-theme t-shirt; the shield of faith is a Frisbee printed with the gospel message; the sword of the Spirit is, of course, a copy of God's word. "We're still working on the shoes (of the Gospel of peace)," Durham said.

"When we received our belt, we felt like we really accomplished something," said David, who recently climbed for his breastplate. The activity "helps us learn more about Christ and what He did for us," Marcus said. "It teaches you to use the word of God as a sword against the devil," Jansen said.

"This is a voluntary activity that takes away from their free time, and they don't get much free time," Durham said. "All of these guys have made a decision for Christ and they really want to be here. Armor Quest helps give them more understanding of what it's going to take to remain committed as a Christian."

Josh said one thing is certain, after climbing the tower to get all the pieces of the armor, he won't soon forget the apostle Paul's final words to the Ephesians. "I might forget the order they come in, but I won't forget what they are," he said.

--Dannah Prather



A Wilderness resident retrieves a t-shirt from a bag attached to the Alpine Tower. The t-shirt represents the breastplate of Righteousness.

Paducah Couple Lead Bible Study at Genesis Home

"When (the rulers, elders and teachers of the law) saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13

A Bible study leader takes his place in the center of the room, surrounded by his class. "Truth has to come from somewhere," he says. "The Bible never contradicts itself. It never tells you to do something in one place and then in another place tell you to do the opposite. If you read the Bible, and ask for God's help, He will help you understand it and believe it."

It might look like an ordinary Sunday School class and the teacher may seem like an ordinary man, but **Tommy and Cyndi Morreau** of Paducah are not just ordinary, they are people of "astounding ordinariness."

The Morreaus have three kids, own and operate a pizza restaurant and teach high school juniors Sunday School at Lone Oak First Baptist. Like so many busy people, they usually have more items on their to-do list than hours to do them. Despite the hectic schedule, once a week the Morreaus come to Genesis Home in Mayfield to share God's word, and some of themselves, with a group of teenaged girls.

"We're not pastors or ministers or anything," Tommy said, "We just want the girls to know that people care about them."

The Morreaus have led the Bible study at Genesis for two years, offering a consistent, caring presence from outside the facility that treats victims of some of the most severe physical and sexual abuse and neglect.

"You fall in love with them," Cyndi said about the girls. "Doing this every week is inconvenient, but you get here and the girls start asking questions and they all want to sit by me--that makes it all worthwhile right there."

"There have been times that I thought I was doing too much," Tommy admits. "We own our own restaurant and that's very demanding, but even if I don't feel like I'm well prepared, something always happens when we get here. I don't know how that works; Cyndi says it's a God-thing."

"We go to church a lot around here," said Shakara, a Genesis resident. "But when Tommy and Cyndi come here, it's just us and we learn a lot more."

The basket of candy, promises of prayer and occasional free pizzas are other benefits. "We feel the girls need to be shown love," Tommy said. "That's what has made this click for two years, a desire to show God's love."

--Dannah Prather

Note: KBHC has eight residential programs across Kentucky where kids are blessed by caring volunteers who tutor, mentor and lead Bible study. There is always a need for this kind of help. To find out where the program nearest you is located, call 1-800-456-1386 and ask for Tammy.



Cornerstone Counseling:
Healing Lives Through God's Love

by Mitch Holbrook

Mitch Holbrook is the lead counselor with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's Cornerstone Counseling ministry. This year Cornerstone opened its 21st office, continuing the mission to provide quality, professional counseling from a Christ-centered perspective to single adults, couples and families.

"No one can love me. I have done too much bad to be loved. God won't even love me any more." These were some of the first words Sheila said to me when she came for her first session. The reasons she had made the appointment were too numerous to count: unhappy, dissatisfied with life, trouble with her family, trouble in her marriage, her health was becoming affected. As I listened to her story in this first session, I was struck by the strength and honesty she possessed but could not see for herself.

We worked together for the next several months, Sheila was increasingly able to "bless" herself for who she is. One joyous revelation she made was knowing that God could not stop loving her; this was the Source from which she drew the strength to make the needed changes in her life.

Sheila's story is unique, but her experience is shared by many people who come to Cornerstone for help. People come feeling defeated, "bad," "crazy," worthless, weak, confused or any number of other emotions when they call. Yet they find the courage to pick up the phone and make an appointment, then they follow through and come to speak face to face with someone they do not know about things that are often scary. It is little wonder that once people are in the counselor's office they have already begun the process of healing; they have begun to face their issues and approach a means of resolution.

Cornerstone offices are located in twenty-one communities across Kentucky (see map at right.) Call 1-800-981-7493 to find out more or make an appointment. The number of counseling sessions is determined by you and your counselor. Financial assistance is available for those who find the fee a burden. Cornerstone is made possible through partnerships with KBHC, local churches and Baptist institutions.

Dorane: "Spring Meadows gave me back my childhood"



It only took five days for Dorane Cunningham to lose her childhood.

It was when Dorane was five years old that she saw her mother with a suitcase in her hand heading for the door.

"I'm going to town," her mother said. The little girl watched her mother board a Greyhound bus in front of the house. Nearly a week later, after Dorane had fed, diapered and cared for her little sister and baby brother the best she could, a neighbor stopped by and found the children alone.

By the time her youngest sister was born, Dorane had become parent to her siblings. "I used to walk up and down this country road, asking people for milk to put in my baby sister's bottle," said Dorane, now known as Dorane Howard. Photos vividly convey the worry and burden in her young face while her sisters and brother smile broadly for the camera.

"I used to take food from the slop buckets our neighbor filled to feed the hogs," she said. "I usually gave most of it to my sisters and brother. I got a meal every day at school for washing the teachers' chalkboards. This was before the free lunch program."

When it became obvious that Dorane's parents were not taking care of the children, their grandfather took charge. "He was elderly and couldn't take care of four kids, so he took us to Spring Meadows," she said.

On a rainy day in February, 1953, Dorane, her sisters and brother came to the Louisville

children's ministry of Kentucky Baptists. "When we came up that drive, I honestly thought I'd gone through the gates of heaven," Dorane said.

"The thing that was most pleasing to me was a routine," said Dorane. "To know that I was going to have a meal and that I wasn't going to have to wash and iron the clothes and find food for my sisters and brother."

Photos taken by her housemother and sponsor families during Dorane's years at Spring Meadows chronicle a transformation she says can only be attributed to God. "God was so good to me to give me a mature mind so I could take care of my sisters and brother. Even through all that, He also gave me a sweet attitude to the people at the home. I was always appreciative."

Despite being so harshly neglected by her parents, Dorane said she did not find it difficult to trust the staff at Spring Meadows. "I thought 'they must really love Jesus, so they love me, too.' They really showed that."

Dorane's mother returned and took all her children back home, but after eight months, the Cunningham kids were back at Spring Meadows. The second time Dorane's mother came to claim her children, Dorane was a junior in high school. She refused to go and her mother did not force her. However, Dorane's sisters and brother went with their mom, creating a rift between them and the sister who had sacrificed her childhood on their behalf--a rift that took years to mend.

"Somehow I knew that I wasn't going to be a victim," Dorane said. "I knew I was going to do better. I remember my grandfather telling me that

you can be somebody if you're willing to work hard."

Dorane flourished. She was football queen at Eastern High School and was the first teen on the Spring Meadows campus to ever attend the prom. There was never any doubt that she would go to college. "Spring Meadows made that possible," she said. "I also had sponsor families, who helped with expenses."



Upon graduating Campbellsville College, Dorane went back to the public school classroom, but this time she didn't have to wash chalkboards for her lunch. She has taught kindergarten through eighth grade during her tenure of 30 years as an educator. "I always wanted to give back to children," she said.

Since retirement, Dorane is giving back in another way. She is on KBHC's Women's Advisory Board, a team of volunteers who coordinate giving projects and educate churches and communities on the mission and needs of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Dorane is also a member of the KBHC Speakers Bureau. She travels to churches, sharing her testimony about how Kentucky Baptists gave her the opportunity to heal, grow and now give back.

"There's not a week that goes by that I don't think what my life would have been like without Kentucky Baptists," she said. "I tell people that when you give and do for the sake of children, it reaps benefits. If you don't believe it, look at my life."

--Dannah Prather

KBHC's Continuum of Care - Serving families & children every step of their way

At Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, we're particularly proud of the continuum of care available to those we serve. The wide array of services we offer across Kentucky allows us to provide care and hope for hurting families and children across Kentucky as they progress through their stages of healing. From Pregnancy Counseling and Adoption to the Center for Independence, Kentucky Baptists are ministering to children from infancy to adulthood.

Professional Counseling: Ashland, Berea, Bowling Green, Campbellsville, Corbin, Erlanger, Frankfort, Harlan, Harold, Hazard, Henderson, Hopkinsville, LaGrange, London, Louisa, Madisonville, New Castle, Owensboro, Pineville, Somerset and Stanford.

Residential Group Care: Bronston, Dixon, Elizabethtown, Glendale, Louisville, Mayfield and Morehead

Foster Care: Eastern Region, Lexington, Metro Louisville Region, Northern Region, South Central Region, Southern Region, Western Region

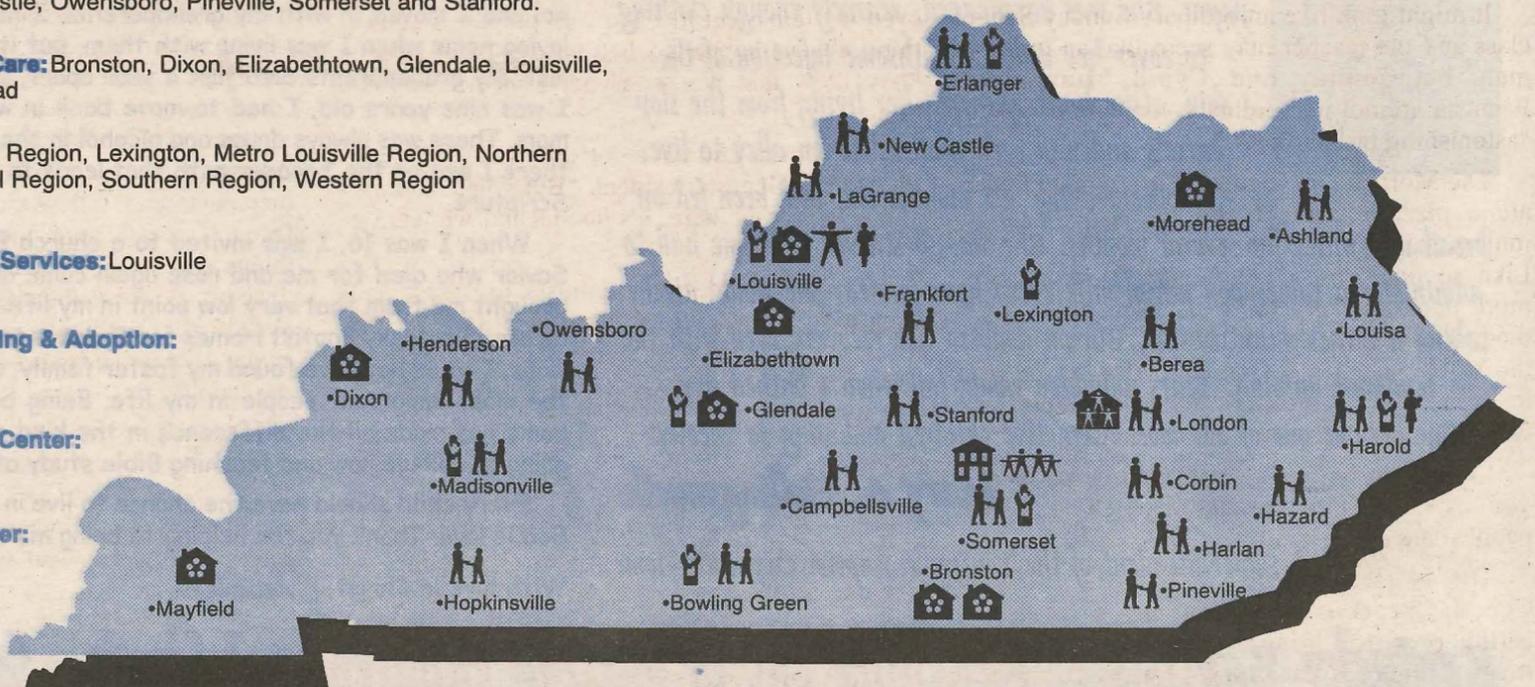
Independent Living Services: Louisville

Pregnancy Counseling & Adoption: Harold and Louisville

Child Development Center: Somerset

Youth Support Center: London

Family Preservation & Reunification: Somerset



Teenage Girls Find Salvation at KBHC

A neglected youth and a former Satanist come to know Jesus through your gifts

Tina remembers the exact moment when she realized she was without Jesus.

"When I was 10 I got baptized, but it was really just because all my friends were doing it," said the 15-year-old who lives on one of KBHC's residential campuses. Years later, when the volatile environment in her home erupted, Tina was in a courtroom where people she didn't know were deciding her future. "I was scared and confused," she said. "I thought I was in that courtroom alone and when I got sent off, I'd be alone too. I just knew that it (her personal salvation) wasn't true."

Tina said her home life was "pretty much fend for yourself." She became involved in drugs and her mother's drinking made their relationship worse. Rebellion and self-sufficiency became Tina's way of life, so it has not been easy to live in a cottage with seven other girls and many rules. "I'm here to learn the ability to accept feedback and take direction from adults," she said.

Like many of her cottage peers, Tina thought about her own spiritual condition as she attended worship, weekly Bible study and other activities. She found it difficult to let go of her rebellious attitude and be honest with herself and others, especially the other youth on the campus. "Then, one of my closest friends got saved. She was like a changed person. She said she wasn't alone anymore."

Tina knew where to look for answers. "I memorized Philippians 4:13 and John 3:16 and then I read the book of Romans," she said. "Three days later, I asked Christ into my life." Tina made a deliberate decision to be baptized in the campus swimming pool. "In order for me to stick with it and to lead a Christian life, I had to confess to the people I never thought I could, that I was a new person."

Vickie is also aware of the influence she has on her peers on campus. "God's blessed me with the ability to be everybody's friend." Her influence was not always so positive.

"In elementary school I wanted to hang out with the cool people," said Vickie, 17. "It turns out that all the cool people were Satanists." It began with dark make-up and the music of Marilyn Manson and Korn. By the time she was 12, Vickie was immersed in the rituals of Satanism to the point that her own family was targeted for violence by the cult. "Everyone at school knew I was a Satanist and they were scared of me."

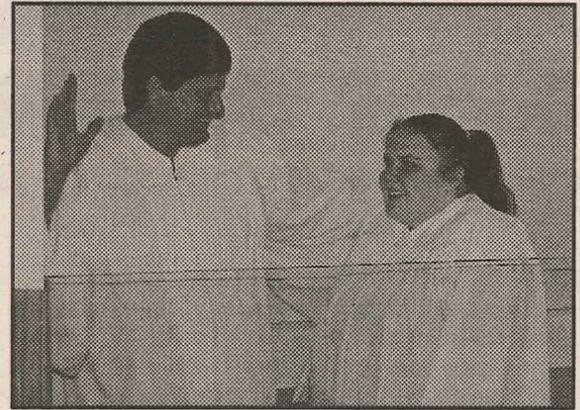
Vickie's involvement in the cult was one of the reasons she was removed from her home. She had two psychiatric hospitalizations before she came to KBHC. "I'd been trying to get out of Satanism off and on," Vickie said. "It was hard. I was into some very strong evil."

A staff member at one of the hospitals helped turn the tide in Vickie's life. "She knew my past, but still loved me. She bought me a Bible and I started reading it."

The teen who once became enraged when classmates brandished crosses at her, was suddenly on a campus surrounded by Christian music, literature and people who talked about God. A staff person and roommate were the ones who led Vickie to Jesus. Her baptism at a Baptist church near the campus was a celebration. "When I came up out of the water I said, 'yeah!' When we got back to the cottage, they threw me this big party."

Vickie uses terms like "groovy" and "very cool" to describe Christianity. "God is the most powerful thing in my life. He's my love."

--Dannah Prather



Above: Vickie's baptism was cause for a celebration at her cottage.

Call His Name
*I am a child of God
 and I will worship Him
 all the days of my life and then
 I'll be in heaven rejoicing
 and singing in His holy name.
 All the sadness and all the pain
 will disappear
 and love I'll gain.
 He is the mighty power.
 He'll never forget your smile.
 So when you're feeling down and
 you feel there's no more hope
 just call his name.*

-Vickie, KBHC resident

Louisville Baptist Orphan's Home - 1869 Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children - 1999



The first child received after the opening of the Home was one of the most pitiful objects of my labours. A true description I could never portray on paper. She was bareheaded, scarcely enough clothing to cover her body, a loathsome infection of the skin... (she had) gathered her living from the slop barrels and had been confined to an alley to live. (Another) child, 12 months old, had been fed on

bread and water for several months. She was so starved that one had to administer a tablespoon full of milk every hour for fear she would die by taking a larger quantity. Dr. Burton doubted her recovery even with the tenderest nursing. Tears unbidden would fall when I bathed her. She became one of our most attractive children and sang so sweetly.

Mary A. Hollingsworth

First Superintendent of the Louisville Baptist Orphan's Home

Dear Kentucky Baptists,

I know what it is like to live in a loving home and I also know what it is like to be outside of one. When I was three months old, my father was shot and killed. After his death, my mother turned to drugs and alcohol and I moved in with my grandparents. I had that loving home when I was living with them, but it didn't last. My grandparents died just a year apart, so when I was nine years old, I had to move back in with my mom. There was always drugs and alcohol in the house and because I was there I was on the 'broader path that leads to destruction' spoken of in Scripture.



When I was 16, I was invited to a church Easter service where the Savior who died for me and rose again came alive in my heart. God has brought me from that very low point in my life to where I am today, and he used Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children to help. Without your donations, I could not have found my foster family, who have become some of the most important people in my life. Being back in a loving, Christian home has made all the difference in the kind of future I will have. I'm going to college now and teaching Bible study at church.

Every child should have the chance to live in a home with love because God is love. Thank you for helping to bring me to my new family.

With love in Christ, *Chastity*

Kentucky Baptists... Reaching out to hurting children and families for 130 years.

KENTUCKY

Kentucky volunteers praised for North Carolina work

By Brenda Smith
Kentucky Baptist Convention

WILSON, N.C. (BP)—Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers left behind a grateful community when they returned home this weekend after serving for more than a month in flood-stricken Wilson, N.C.

"Every time that one (of the volunteers) pulls out, we stand in the parking lot and cry," said Linda Wheeler at Wilson's First Baptist Church, which has served as headquarters for the volunteers.

More than 200 Kentucky disaster relief workers have served in

North Carolina since Hurricane Floyd devastated the region in mid-September. Kentucky crews served about 200,000 meals to both volunteers and victims and cleared sticky, rancid mud out of more than 100 homes.

"If it hadn't been for your crowd, we would have been lost," said Tommy Owens, 44-year-old lifelong resident of Wilson. Owens, his wife and two children lost their home to floods caused by the foot of rain Hurricane Floyd dumped on the area. "Your crowd jelled the whole city."

Kentucky crews helped bring or-

der to a chaotic scene, Wheeler added. "It was the most organized thing I have ever seen in my life."

Feeding crews were set up and ready to feed thousands within hours of their arrival, recounted disaster relief veteran Ken Hinton of Maysville. Hinton, who took vacation from his work as a nuclear medical technician to serve, has volunteered with Kentucky Baptist disaster relief since Hurricane Andrew struck Florida in 1992.

Along with their professionalism, the Kentucky volunteers brought compassion and energy, Wheeler said. The volunteers always were smiling, asking what they could do to help.

"And the energy they've got," she said. Volunteers rose at 5 a.m. to prepare breakfast and get a start on lunch. Their days ended late in the evening with a devotional time and preparation for the next day.

Disaster relief crews also were charged with removing ruined dry-wall, paneling, flooring and other debris from flood-damaged homes. Homeowners often were emotionally devastated from the experience of seeing everything they had worked for heaped in a soggy, shapeless

mess.

"I would work awhile, and then I'd cry awhile," said Owens, whose house was the second home "mudded-out" by Kentucky volunteers. Volunteers were as quick to comfort grieving disaster victims as they were to help clean up, stopping often to offer hugs and encouragement.

The process of cleaning out homes is a step toward emotional healing following a disaster, said Larry Koch, disaster relief associate for the Brotherhood department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"Once we get started in tearing up a house, people are transformed," Koch said. "They see something getting done."

"This happened for a purpose, and I don't know what it is yet, but everything has a silver lining," Owens said. Part of that silver lining may be the family-helping-family relationships that blossomed between volunteers and the community.

Disaster relief efforts will continue and many opportunities to help are still available. North Carolina Baptist Men director Richard Brunson is coordinating the work. For information, contact Brunson's office at (919) 467-5100.

"Every time that one (of the volunteers) pulls out, we stand in the parking lot and cry."

Linda Wheeler of First Baptist Church of Wilson, N.C.



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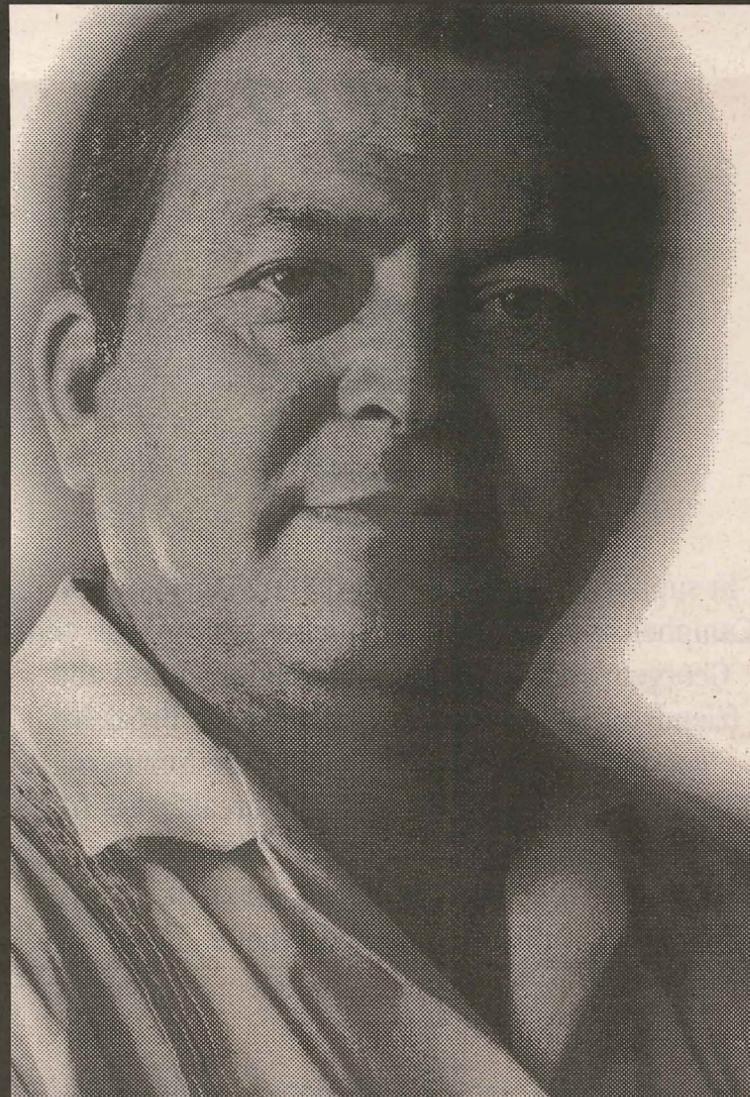
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born in Kentucky and celebrating 75 years
of helping people find the Lord!



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Scholars: Special interests are redefining fatherhood

By Sarah Griffith
Baptist Center for Ethics

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Special interests, including fathers' rights and welfare reform, are causing the fatherhood movement to lose its way, according to an article by two nationally recognized family scholars.

The fatherhood movement started in the early 1990s advocating responsible fathers as a way to combat juvenile crime, child poverty and teen pregnancy, write Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe.

But that movement now is becoming "focused almost entirely on divorced and unwed fathers who live apart from their children," they write in "Defining Daddy Down," in the September/October issue of *The American Enterprise* magazine.

Fathers' rights activists argue for the rights of divorced fathers, claiming the courts and child support system are biased against fathers, write Whitehead and Popenoe. These arguments focus on the father's interests rather than the well being of the child, they contend.

"Their rhetoric is pro-child but their agenda is pro-divorced dads," they state. "The fatherhood movement has created its own set of victims—not fatherless children but dads who live apart from their children."

Welfare reform has contributed to the problem, they argue, as "46 states link their fatherhood agenda to welfare

reform." Those reforms include paternity-establishment programs, supervised visitation for fathers accused of abuse, and license-revocation programs for parents not paying child support.

Ignored in these movements is the concept that being a good husband is a defining characteristic of fatherhood, according to Whitehead and Popenoe.

The definition of fatherhood being used to set public policy expects fathers to share financial responsibility for their children, establish legal paternity and share in the emotional and physical care of children.

"Nowhere does the definition suggest that a responsible father has anything more significant than a financial arrangement with the mother of his children," write Whitehead and Popenoe.

Editing marriage out of the equation creates a definition of fatherhood that "may fit the requirements of the government and the capacities of living-apart fathers" but leaves children with "economic needs and emotional hungers," they argue.

Whitehead and Popenoe cite feminist Barbara Ehrenreich as suggesting marriage will be replaced in the future by a "parenting contract" between a living-apart man and woman who have a child.

"The fatherhood movement should be thinking of ways to prevent unwed and divorced fatherhood," write Whitehead and Popenoe, "rather than advancing efforts to defend and sustain it."

IRS asked to investigate church's political activity

NEW ORLEANS (RNS)—A national public interest group has filed a tax complaint against a small New Orleans church, asking the Internal Revenue Service to determine whether the church went too far in backing a candidate for governor.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State, based in Washington, D.C., directed the IRS to a published account in which Pastor Zebadee Bridges acknowledged he endorsed Rep. William Jefferson, D-La., from the pulpit of Asia Baptist Church.

In the same article, Bridges also said he told church members they could contribute to the Jefferson campaign through envelopes the campaign had placed in the church.

"Collecting money on behalf of a candidate in church seems like a clear violation of the Internal Revenue Code,"

Americans United executive director Barry Lynn wrote in an Oct. 25 letter to the tax agency.

The collection in Bridges' church was part of a larger effort by the Jefferson campaign to solicit support from hundreds of Louisiana churches. The effort was to peak Oct. 17. Jefferson failed in an attempt to unseat incumbent Gov. Mike Foster Oct. 23.

IRS investigations, which can take years to conclude, are confidential. Outcomes are sometimes never disclosed, said Joe Conn, a spokesman for Americans United.

While churches can speak to general political issues, they may be fined or have their tax-exempt status revoked if they engage in partisan politics.

Kentucky Baptist variety

The Apostle Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, "There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; there are varieties of working, but it is the same God that inspires them all in everyone."

I am reminded of this verse when I think of our Kentucky Baptist family of 11 institutions and agencies. How fortunate we are to have the variety and the quality of institutional expressions in our life together in the cause of the gospel.

After 29 years of service to Kentucky Baptists I have a greater appreciation than ever before for what our institutions and agencies do for all of us. You can be pleased that every day each of these Great Commission service ministries is extending your hands and feet, and the hands and feet of your churches, to touch and to change people's lives in the name of Christ.

Furthermore, each is accountable to Kentucky Baptists for the effective fulfillment of its Great Commission ministry. Each is worthy of your continued and enhanced support.

I want to encourage you to do three things in the year 2000 that will make a significant difference in

facilitating Kentucky Baptists' collective efforts in the cause of reaching people for Christ:

First, be an advocate for one or more of your favorite Baptist causes. Plead the case to everyone you know, especially in your church and community.

Second, be an agent for one or more of your favorite Baptist causes. Make sure someone from each of the Kentucky Baptist Convention-related entities speaks in your church at least once in 2000. You and your fellow members deserve to learn more about how these ministries are extending your church's ministry.

Third, be an asset. Financially support one or more of these ministries yourself. If every Kentucky Baptist who attended Sunday school last week gave just \$1 a week for the benefit of these ministries, that would result in \$10.5 million a year for the cause of the gospel.

Please call us toll-free at (888) 254-5701 to discover how to make a lasting difference through one or more of these 11 varied ministries.

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

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Breakfast



In support of Kentucky Baptist higher education, Campbellsville University, Cumberland College and Georgetown College cordially invite alumni and friends to attend the Partnership 2000 Breakfast, Tuesday, Nov. 16 at 7:30 a.m. at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center. The breakfast is free, but reservations are required by calling (270) 789-5216 or via e-mail at whittm@campbellsvil.edu.

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Falwell & others agree with gays to remove rhetoric

LYNCHBURG, Va. (RNS)—Gays and conservative Christians who attended an unprecedented weekend gathering at Jerry Falwell's church in Lynchburg, Va., found some common ground and declared the meeting productive.

Falwell and Mel White, a gay minister who declared his homosexuality years after ghostwriting Fal-

well's autobiography, organized the meeting. The two men apologized for statements they had made in the past and pledged to work to avoid hateful speech in the future.

At a news conference following the meeting on Oct. 23, disagreements remained about whether gays were sinful and in need of conversion to avoid eternal life in hell,

USA Today reported.

Falwell compared the meeting "to building a bridge as we do to drug addicts, alcoholics and other sinners."

His last-minute invitation to Michael Johnston, the leader of a ministry that works to convert gays to heterosexuality, was criticized by White.

"I'm sorry the forum is going in this direction," he said. "Calling someone sinners over and over and over again approaches hate speech very quickly."

Johnston countered by saying, "Preaching God's Word is not hate speech."

Despite this disagreement, those attending the gathering came away with a new perspective of people whom they previously had considered stereotypically.

Donna Moore, an office manager at Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church, said she spoke with an openly gay person at length for the first time in her life.

"I really dreaded this weekend," she said. "But I saw that they were just people, nice people, not the extremists who send us HIV-infected urine."

During the Saturday gathering, 200 evangelical Christians shared tables with an equal number from Souforce, an interdenominational gay rights group that White chairs. Participants drank bottled water after Falwell's supporters chose not to eat with the gays because of what a spokesman said were concerns about the Bible

prohibiting eating with sinners.

Falwell said he was committed to not being "unnecessarily strident" in fundraising letters. Falwell ordered some changes made in one of his ministry's statements after White pointed out fallacies, White said. "We've got to get over the demeaning, dehumanizing kinds of fundraising letters that shoot out at each other from both sides," White said, adding that he will send his fundraising letters to Falwell first from now on.

Both Falwell and White said they had apologized and forgiven each other for some of the things they have said in the past.

"Today, I believe we got a first step in building a bridge to a community of millions of persons who right now, because of many of us—Jerry Falwell being one of them—believe that we not only hate what they do but we hate them," Falwell said.

The weekend gathering culminated with a Sunday worship service at Falwell's church. Outside, dozens of angry anti-homosexual protesters demonstrated and screamed at gay supporters entering the church, the Associated Press reported.

White, who had gathered gay participants from 30 states to take part in the weekend, considered the protest "a shame."

"What we have here is a great moment for our country, gays and Falwell worshipping together," said White. "It's a small start, but it's a start."

Methodist groups take different stands on Boy Scouts issue

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The social action agency of the United Methodist Church says it disagrees with the Boy Scouts of America's ban on homosexuals, a view that conflicts with the stance of the denomination's agency overseeing scouting ministries.

In a statement released last month, the General Board of Church and Society said the denomination—a strong supporter of the Boy Scouts—has condemned discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The board affirmed the decision of the New Jersey Supreme Court that the Scouts' ban on homosexuals is illegal under state anti-discrimination laws.

The board's statement conflicts with a recent decision of the Commission on United Methodist Men, which voted in September to argue against the court's ruling. Officials of the men's organization, which oversees scouting ministries, said they believe the Aug. 4 court decision incorrectly permits government to dictate the religious beliefs of a group.

More than 421,000 boys are members of the Boy Scouts through local United Methodist congregations.

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Nov. 15, 1999

Northern Kentucky Regional Conference Center, Covington, Ky.

10:30 a.m.

Dr. Gary Frost, pastor of Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church in Middleton, Ohio.

Rev. Joe Mobley, evangelist from London, Ky.

1:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Bobby Boyles, pastor of Eagle Heights Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dr. Holly Miller, pastor of Sevier Heights Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn.

Rev. Richard Oldham, pastor of Glendale Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Ky.

Rev. Boyd Bingham, pastor of Binghamtown Baptist Church in Middlesboro, Ky.

Worship with **The Sons of the Father** from West Frankfort, Ill.

Andes works in Brazil

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College sophomore Bethany Andes, the daughter of Craig and Sallyann Andes of Jackson, Tenn., spent two weeks this summer in Recife and Joa Pessoa, Brazil.

She joined a 12-member medical missions team sponsored by PRO-Missions, a missions group based in Memphis, Tenn.

Each person received a list of items to bring for use in the clinics. Her list included medicines. She asked doctors in her home church to provide donations and arrived in Brazil with 140 pounds of medicines.

Her primary assignment was to work with children while the clinics were being held. She played horseshoes and soccer with them, and helped the girls make necklaces and bracelets. Seeing Andes' blond hair and blue eyes, the children all called her "Barbie," which Andes found highly amusing.

Each day, 400 people ranging in age from 4 months to 95 years came to the clinic. Andes saw the ravages of diseases caused by poverty and terrible living conditions.

The plight of the street children was the most heartbreaking sight she encountered. PRO-Missions sponsors orphanages that take children in, feeding and clothing them and keeping them safe. Educational opportunities are severely limited. Spaces are limited in each grade. If a child is not fortunate to get a space, he or she must wait until the next year and try again.

Andes met several 20-year-old men who had only a fourth-grade education.

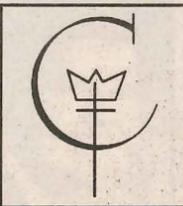
Church services lasted three to four hours and were held three to five times a week. Worship occurred in Portuguese, English and sign language.

When Andes left Brazil, she left her suitcase filled with clothes and toiletries behind for the children in the orphanages to use. She knew she easily could replace those items, while the children she had met and come to love would have great difficulty ever getting anything like them.

Andes' loving and generous spirit is an example to us all.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



The mission field that comes to you

Being a foster parent for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has been one of the most fulfilling adventures I have ever undertaken.

It is one thing to raise a child you have given birth to, but totally another to start at an age when the child has been partially raised. There have been days when I didn't know whether I could go on and then God would let me know He was with me and would guide me as long as I focused on Him and not the circumstances.

The day my foster daughter rededicated her life to the Lord, I was so proud and excited. It hasn't been perfect since then, but I want to hear from anyone who had a perfect life after inviting Jesus into his or her heart.

There was a time after Kim (not her real name) ran away from my home for more than a month. She told her social worker she wanted to come back. I almost said "No," but God told me Kim was a part of my family until He removed her. She came back, and I have seen many times over that God has been in control and has worked through some pretty rough situations.

When Kim first came to us, I had no idea how much of my heart she would capture. I told her that if she decided to stay with us, she would not just be the foster kid, but she would be as much a part of our family as my birth daughter. That meant she would have to put up with me loving her enough to teach her right from wrong.

If anything you have read is tugging at your heart, stop and pray about it. God may be calling you into a ministry of foster parenting. It is one of the few mission fields that comes to you!

This week's Western Recorder includes a four-page insert about Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Please take a moment to read about your continuing ministry to hurting children and families and prayerfully consider your gift to the 1999 Thanksgiving Offering.

Suzanne Noble is a foster parent with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children and an employee with KBHC's South Central Region Family Foster Care ministry. Call KBHC at (800) 456-1386. The World Wide Web address is www.iglou.com/kbhc/.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Suzanne Noble

Stewart's faith impacted both his game & his personality



PAYNE STEWART
The professional golfer, who was killed Oct. 25 in a jet crash, hugs his trophy after winning the 1999 U.S. Open Championship in North Carolina. Stewart's Christian faith recently had been credited for helping him turn around his career and attitude. Note that Stewart is wearing a WWJD bracelet. (RNS photo)

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—U.S. Open winner Payne Stewart, killed in a bizarre plane crash with five others Oct. 25, had credited his Christian faith with helping him turn his career around, making him one of golf's most respected champions.

Stewart, 42, was one of six people killed when a Lear jet they were aboard flew out of control for hours before crashing in South Dakota. Investigators suspected a loss of cabin pressure caused the pilot and passengers to black out.

Stewart's trademark knickers and English-style caps made him one of the most recognizable golfers on the PGA Tour. This had been Stewart's best season in a 19-year career. He won two major tournaments in 1999 after a long drought during much of the 1990s and qualified for a U.S. Ryder Cup team that beat Europe in September in Brookline, Mass.

"I'm proud of the fact that my faith in God is so much stronger and I'm so much more at peace with myself than I've ever been in my life," Stewart said after winning his second U.S. Open championship in June.

"He was a wonderful Christian who had Christ in his life and somehow in his death," Jim Henry, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, told Associated Press. "That brought a great sense of peace to his family in a difficult and tragic time."

Stewart, who lived in Orlando, Fla., was described in press reports as being actively involved at First Baptist, where he spoke just 10 days before his death.

"I've been blessed with an ability. I think God chose me to play golf," Stewart told a crowd at the Orlando church Oct. 15. He said what excited him as much as winning "is being able to make a difference in people's lives."

Once known for being rude and arrogant with sports writers and autograph seekers, Stewart had in recent years become calmer and quieter. He spoke of finding "inner peace" and had been persuaded by his children, Chelsea, 13, and Aaron, 10, to start attending church.

"Payne Stewart died just when he was learning to live," wrote sports columnist Mike Bianchi in the Florida Times-Union in Jacksonville, Fla.

"He didn't wear his newfound Christianity on his sleeve, but he did wear it on his wrist," Bianchi wrote. "He had been seen in a recent tournament wearing a WWJD bracelet, the letters standing for What Would Jesus Do?"

USA Today reported that Stewart began to change after cancer struck close to him a second time in 1994. Ten years earlier, it had taken his father, and Stewart reacted angrily. When it also struck his good friend Paul Azinger, he responded differently.

"I started talking to Paul about it

and saw that he had this unbelievable faith," Stewart said. "That started me going in a more spiritual direction."

Recently, the paper said, Stewart and his wife of 18 years, Tracey, donated, with little fanfare, \$500,000 to the First Foundation, the fund-raising arm of First Baptist Church of Orlando. He became involved in the church through experiences of his children at the church's First Academy private school.

Sports Illustrated magazine took note of Stewart's newfound faith in its U.S. Open coverage last June, stating Stewart began each day by reading a devotional book.

"There used to be a void in my life," Stewart told the magazine, which not-

ed that his mother, Bee, formerly had described her outspoken son as "rude"; his wife had used the word "arrogant"; and his caddie, "impatient and not very self-confident."

"The peace I have now is so wonderful," Stewart told Sports Illustrated. "I don't understand how I lived so long without it."

Stewart's faith also is profiled in an upcoming book, "Finishing the Course: Strategies for the Back Nine of Your Life." Authors Jim Sheard and Wally Armstrong had gotten approval from Stewart for the section about him just a week before his death.

With additional reporting by Art Toalston of Baptist Press

TAYLOR TOURS

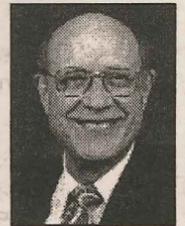
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Harvesting III

This story is a continuation from the past two weeks.

Another young person who accepted Christ during our fall revival is "Thomas" (not his real name), a middle school student from Kentucky. He admits to not getting along very well at home, especially with his brother. Thomas is from a single-parent family and has been struggling with authority. Being one of three boys, he admits that he and his brothers test their mother to the limit.

We were told Thomas was not having serious trouble at school except for "back-talking" and low grades. There had been some minor problems in the neighborhood when Thomas pulled some pranks. When I asked him what he wanted to accomplish at Oneida Baptist Institute, Thomas said he wanted to make better grades and have better discipline in his life.

The last young person in this group of new students who accepted Christ is a middle school girl from Kentucky. "Brook" admitted she was not good about doing her chores and she did not get along with her brothers. Though she usually followed the rules at home, she did back-talk her parents. Brook said she was not trying very hard at school and she has never done really well academically, though she was well-liked by her teachers. Brook is doing very well in the dorm but is struggling with math. Hopefully, she will be able to bring her math grades up in the next few weeks or months.

Remember, the young people you have been reading about in this article and the past two columns were students who had been here only for a few weeks. What a wonderful experience it is to sow "seed" on "good soil" and see that seed take root so quickly.

The next two students are not new to Oneida and have been here for one or two years. The first young lady came to the United States seeking political asylum from another country. Because of the situation she was facing, she was not able to pay any room or board, so she is on a full scholarship. She came to Oneida a few months after arriving in America because she was looking for a Christian school. On her application she indicated she was a Christian. Apparently during the revival she came to believe

she had not been born again and needed to invite Jesus into her life. She is a wonderful student who does well in the dorm and in her schoolwork. She is a senior this year.

The next young lady came to Oneida two years ago from West Kentucky. We were told "Peggy" was "failing in school, argues, hanging with the wrong crowd and wouldn't do her chores." There had been a little drug use, but not much, and we knew math had been a real problem for her in school. Peggy is still struggling in school, and we now believe she is a weak student academically. Some students admit they are just lazy or don't

care, but in Peggy's case this is not the problem. When Peggy enrolled, she told us her most important goal at Oneida was to make good grades.

We wish Peggy could have made more progress. We do believe the smaller classes and the tutoring we provide helped her. Peggy is a senior this year and we know she is not college-bound, but hopefully we have helped her prepare for life after high school.

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

Alumnus leads Church Starts International

Bill Davis worked in a California oil field and through the witness of faithful Baptists came to know the Lord. The pastor's wife told him about Clear Creek. While a student, he was pastor of Newtown Mission, sponsored by First Baptist Church of Pineville. After graduation in 1961, the Lord directed Bill and his wife, Mary, to their home state of Texas.

Before they headed out, he traded his welder for a set of recapped tires. He worked in the oil fields two years before a full-time church opened. His ministry took them to three churches and three missions. The longest pastorate was Beech Grove Baptist in Indianapolis for 13 years. While in Indiana he spent five years starting a church.

His retirement took a new turn after a 1992 trip to Romania when a team of 42 people saw 4,400 professions of faith. "My heart broke when we left them without a pastor and no discipleship materials. The next year the people wept as we left, and I couldn't sleep because of the burden I felt for so many people without churches," Bill recalls. "I was nearly 70 and thought God was probably finished with me, but He soon told me I was to go back and

start seven churches. I only knew one person in Romania who spoke English. By the end of 1994 we had started seven missions."

Today, Church Starts International has 17 training schools along the eastern front of Romania. "The Spearhead Program" seeks to establish a central church and Bible institute. Institute students lead village

missions and attend weekly 2 1/2-hour training sessions for two years. A gypsy, one of the first eight students in Romania, now leads two schools that enroll 32 gypsies and work with 16 gypsy missions.

Southern Baptist International Mission Board workers in Moldova asked Church Starts International for help with the "desperate need for trained leaders" and two schools have opened. The group's materials are available in Spanish, and the work in Guatemala relates to 100 mission points.

Pray that Clear Creek students can be involved with Church Starts International in starting churches.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Costa Rica missionaries reaching 'Valley of the Saints'

By Mary Speidel
SBC International Mission Board

SAN MARCOS DE TARRAZU, Costa Rica (BP)—Missionary Tony Rengifo chats with a passer-by as the sun slips behind the coffee-covered mountains above San Marcos de Tarrazu, Costa Rica.

It's been a long day for Rengifo, but he never tires of sharing his Christian faith. That's what he's doing talking with a man on the streets of San Marcos, the largest town in a Roman Catholic region called "The Valley of the Saints."

The man, a Guaymi Indian from neighboring Panama, tells the missionary he's a migrant worker on a nearby coffee farm. Rengifo listens with interest, then shifts the conversation to spiritual matters. While people pass them on the street, the man prays to become a Christian.

Encounters like this are why Rengifo and his wife, Renee, South-

ern Baptist missionaries, travel most weekends each month to San Marcos, about a two-hour drive from their home in San Jose, Costa Rica's capital.

"Our work here in the valley helps keep lostness alive for us," Rengifo said. "It's here we face most the challenges of the mission field—meeting new people, listening to their needs, leading them to Christ, helping to disciple new believers."

The Rengifos, originally from Peru, already have plenty to do in San Jose. He trains church leaders as a professor at the Costa Rican Baptist seminary. She leads Woman's Missionary Union work and serves on the missionary-sending board of the National Union of Baptist Churches in Costa Rica. The couple, who earlier were Southern Baptist North American Mission Board missionaries in Norman, Okla., also are leaders at San Jose's San Pedro Baptist Church.

But finding time to go to the val-

ley—for centuries a stronghold of Roman Catholicism—has been a top priority for the Rengifos since 1991, when the couple first heard about the region. At the time, no Baptist work existed in any of the valley's 23 towns.

"As we traveled through these towns, we became aware God already was at work here, so we, at His invitation, joined Him in that work," Rengifo said.

In 1997 fellow members of San Pedro church started going to the valley with the Rengifos after the congregation felt God leading it to join in the work.

A major breakthrough occurred that year when Juan Carlos Castro, then the pastor of San Pedro, and Rengifo walked into a San Marcos tailor's shop operated by Jose Ramon Chaves, a former Baptist pastor.

For nearly six months he had prayed God would provide him a pastorate. When Castro and Rengifo introduced themselves, "I felt something

warm in my chest—like a fire," Chaves said. "I knew the Lord was answering my prayers."

Rengifo recalled: "We'd been under a heavy impression that the Lord had someone for us to work with in San Marcos. When He led us to Jose Ramon, we joined God where He was already at work."

Later Chaves helped the Rengifos and San Pedro members start a Baptist congregation in San Marcos, where he now is pastor. The Rengifos' team still travels to the valley to help Chaves spread the gospel and disciple new believers. They're also trying to start congregations in surrounding towns.

All the while, the Rengifos keep sharing their faith in the bustling capital of San Jose, too. The main way they do that, Rengifo said, is by building lasting friendships with Costa Ricans. "We believe incarnational witnessing takes us a long way in missions."

"Our work here in the valley helps keep lostness alive for us."

Southern Baptist missionary Tony Rengifo

Are Israel's arrests of U.S. Christians unfounded?

By Elaine Ruth Fletcher
Religion News Service

JERUSALEM (RNS)—From the roof of her tiny unheated apartment in Bethany, Sharon could look out onto legendary Bible sites where Jesus spent His last days before the crucifixion, and pray for His speedy return in the new millennium.

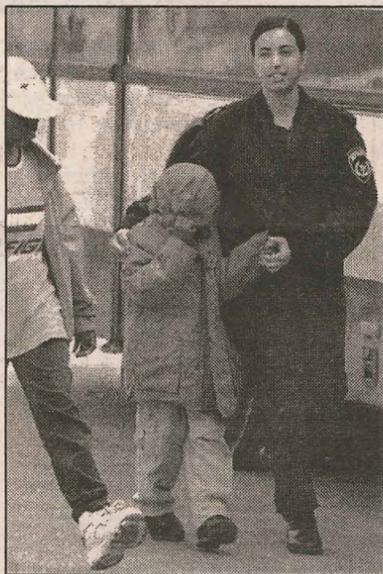
But around midnight on Oct. 24, Sharon and her longtime associate known as Brother David, a leader of a local Christian prayer house in this Arab eastern Jerusalem neighborhood, were caught up in an Israeli police sweep that resulted in the arrest of 21 Christian tourists, mostly Americans.

Also among the detainees were the members of a second, predominantly black congregation in the area, which is an offshoot of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The group's leader, a retired New York City schoolteacher named Winston Rose, happened to be in the United States when the arrests were made. Rose is known to followers as Brother Solomon.

Israeli officials justified the arrest and deportation orders saying that the two groups could "endanger public security" during the upcoming millennium year. Israeli news reports compared the detainees to the Branch Davidian sect whose confrontation with U.S. federal agents resulted in the death of about 80 group members outside Waco, Texas, and to the Denver-based Concerned Christians group who tried to settle here earlier this year. The latter group quoted convicted murderer Charles Manson in its religious teachings.

But on Oct. 26, as a clearer profile of the detainees began emerging, critics asked whether the arrests were justified. Notably, the Anti-Defamation League issued a statement expressing concern the arrests had been based on "incorrect" information and were likely to harm Israel's image in the eyes of Christians.

"While it is important for Israel to address the security threat, the failure to distinguish violent from peaceful groups will prove to be a serious boomerang for Israel," said Rabbi David Ros-



SECT DEPORTATION An Israeli police-woman escorts Christian children to a waiting bus at an East Jerusalem police station Oct. 25. Israeli police, fearing violent acts by fundamentalist Christian groups, arrested 21 sect members, mostly U.S. citizens who were living without visas in an Arab village on the biblical Mount of Olives. (RNS/Reuters photo)

en, the director of the ADL's Israel office.

Indeed, interviews with the leaders and members of the two congregations, conducted by Religion News Service during the past year, yield a profile unlike that of a secretive sect. In both congregations, prayer meetings were generally open to the public and even the press. The gatherings, which featured gospel music and emotional prayer sessions, drew inquisitive television crews and tourists from around the world.

In their repeated interviews with journalists, both Brother David and Brother Solomon denounced violence as a means to bring about the return of the Messiah—and sought to distinguish themselves from groups that had attempted violence or committed mass suicides in the name of divine will.

"Our purpose is to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah," said Brother David, a quiet, affable man in

his late 50s. "But anyone who thinks they are going to commit suicide or blow up other people's buildings certainly didn't get that from the teachings of Jesus."

Prior to the sudden arrests, Brother David supported himself by renovating old apartment buildings in Bethany and subletting the rooms to visiting Christian tourists. Sharon, a 53-year-old with long red hair and 11 grandchildren, spent most of her time distributing used clothing to needy Arab families.

It's no accident millennial Christian groups chose a setting like Bethany as the stage to await the end of the world. This town edges the ancient graveyard on the Mount of Olives where religious Jews as well as Christians believe the resurrection of the dead will take place first.

Sharon first came to Israel in 1992, after receiving what she describes as a direction from God. A week after arriving, she joined the street ministry of Brother David, the former owner of an upstate New York trailer park who had sold his business and embarked on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land more than two decades earlier.

Shortly after their meeting, Brother David was imprisoned for nine months by authorities because he lacked a valid tourist visa. He was released after consistently refusing to provide officials with concrete evidence of his U.S. citizenship. A police list of the detainees made public last week suggests his real name is Ed Anderson, while Sharon's full name is Sharon Peterson.

Now once again under arrest, it is likely the street preacher and other key members of the group will attempt to conceal details of their citizenship and passports again, preferring to test the patience and will of Israeli authorities by spending time in prison rather than board a plane out of the Holy Land.

"I've followed God with all my heart all my life. And I'd rather be called a civil disobedient than a God disobedient," said Brother David, speaking at a Wednesday evening prayer meeting in Bethany earlier this year. "Did Abraham have to fill out papers to come into the Holy Land?"

Baptists among those beaten by Georgian Orthodox group

TBILISI, Georgia (RNS)—An Oct. 17 beating of Jehovah's Witnesses in Tbilisi, Georgia, is the latest in a series of attacks on minority religious groups, including Baptists, attributed to a mob of renegade Orthodox Christians.

According to witnesses and television footage, about 200 Orthodox Christians arrived on foot and in two buses, blocked exits to the three-story building and attacked the 124 Witnesses inside with wooden clubs and foot-long iron crucifixes.

Fati Tabagari was among the 20 Jehovah's Witnesses hospitalized after the 30-minute melee inside a theater rented for Sunday services by the Witnesses.

Tabagari said she initially went unnoticed but after a teenage boy grabbed her purse and discovered a copy of the Witnesses' Watchtower magazine in it, he began punching and kicking her.

Meanwhile, members of defrocked Father Basili Mkalashvili's St. George's Open-Air Church are claiming they were the victims. Spokeswoman Marina Khonelidze said the priest's followers visited the Witnesses "not to fight with them but to talk to them, to explain how they were mistaken."

Khonselidze claimed the Orthodox suffered injuries and local television news doctored videotape to show the Orthodox beating the Witnesses.

In the past, local Baptists, Pentecostals and even fellow Georgian Orthodox have accused Mkalashvili's parishioners of organized physical attacks, sometimes in tandem with the local police, who have not made any arrests in the Oct. 17 incident.

On Aug. 28, leaders of the Pentecostal Word of Life Church were denied access to their rented meeting place and physically harassed by Mkalashvili's followers, according to local human rights activists.

While the Oct. 17 attack was carried out by an Orthodox fringe group, it highlights frustrations in this ancient nation of 5 million people. Since gaining independence in 1991, Western-style reforms have yielded few economic results. Unemployment is rampant.

Non-indigenous faiths ranging from Baptists to Hare Krishnas are perceived as Western imports, part and parcel of the flood of Western ideas and products entering this former Soviet republic.

While other leaders condemned the attack on the Jehovah's Witnesses, public opinion appears to be strongly against the U.S.-based group. A television current affairs show in Tbilisi found 59 percent of more than 20,000 callers supported breaking up and banning the Jehovah's Witnesses.

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Give thanks for the 40 people who last month attended the first service of a new church on the outskirts of Riga, Poland.

■ A church-planting workshop this month in Warsaw, Poland.

■ The 1,000 Tanzanians who became Christians and the three preaching points that were established as a result of the work of an October Kentucky partnership mission trip.

■ Massachusetts Baptist Association, which is searching for a director of missions to replace Dick Risas, who will retire in December.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville University promoted **Mark Medley** from adjunct professor of Christian studies to assistant professor of theology.

South Campbellsville Church ordained **James Durham** to the gospel ministry Oct. 31. **Ted Taylor** is pastor.

■ **FALMOUTH**—Turner Ridge will host revival services Nov. 7-10. **Richard Collins**, pastor of Piner Church in Kenton County, will be the evangelist. **Norman Workman** is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Greensburg Church called **Steve Janes** as pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children and other Kentucky adoption providers will host a free adoption fair Nov. 7, 1 p.m. at Lexington Mall. For information, call (800) 432-9346.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host revival services Nov. 7-10, 7 p.m. nightly. **Homer Martinez** will be

the evangelist. For information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Middletown First Church called **Jim Cobban** as pastor effective Nov. 8. Cobban previously served at Walnut Street Church as director of family ministries and Christian education for 17 years.

Lynn Acres Church will host a fall revival Nov. 14-17. **Geoffrey Lacefield** will preach. **Terry Atchison** will provide special music. For information, call (502) 368-9593. **Donnie Gullion** is pastor.

New Beginning Church will host revival services Nov. 14-17, 6 p.m. **Homer Martinez** will be the evangelist. The music evangelist will be **John Arn. Michael Baker** is pastor.

St. Paul Missionary Church celebrated its 110th anniversary Oct. 23 with a dinner at Convention Center. **Lincoln Bingham** is pastor.

Valley View Church called **Steve Smartt** as minister to college students and singles. Smartt formerly served at Roswell Street Church in Atlanta. **Kevin Hamm** is pastor.

Walnut Street Church will host **Lar-nelle Harris** Nov. 4, 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 589-5290. **Bob Long** is pastor.

■ **MYRA**—Faith Church will host **Michael Combs** in concert, Nov. 5, 7 p.m. For information, call (606) 855-4645. **Dave Hammond** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Cedar Street Church called **Larry Boards** of Bowling Green as pastor.

Wing Avenue Church called **Timothy Royal** as youth minister. **Garswa Matally** is pastor.

■ **PARIS**—Central Church's four-day revival Oct. 3-6 resulted in five professions of faith and several rededications. **Wyman Copass** was the evangelist. **Donald Carroll** is interim pastor.

■ **RUSSELL SPRINGS**—Liberty Church will host revival services Nov. 7-10. The evangelist will be **Mickey Bounds**. **Dean McKinley** will lead the music. **Chris Holloway** is pastor.

Help for 12-year-old mom sparks outcry

GLASGOW, Scotland (RNS)—A controversy has erupted in the British press over news that a 12-year-old schoolgirl is among beneficiaries of a religious program launched to provide practical help for women facing unexpected pregnancies to keep their babies.

Two years ago, Roman Catholic Cardinal Thomas Winning, archbishop of Glasgow, began the program to discourage abortion. According to the newspaper reports the girl's parents are unemployed and her father contacted Winning's program.

Roseann Reddy, coordinator of Winning's program, said the 12-year-old's father claimed the girl would have been "devastated" if she had been forced to get rid of the baby.

"The parents wanted to support the girl but could not afford the baby clothes, and that is where we step in," Reddy said. "A pregnancy can mean getting into debt for the cost of a cot and a pram."

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Part-time nursery worker. Wednesdays: 5:15-8:45 p.m.; Sundays: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Send resumé and references to: Personnel Committee, Deer Park Baptist Church, 1733 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40205. (502) 451-7220.

SEEKING: Bon Air Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., is seeking a full-time student minister with experience. Are you enthusiastic, energetic, organized, a good communicator and team builder, a disciple-maker? If your heart's desire is for the spiritual, physical and social needs of middle school and high school students, put your gifts and talents to use with our active and growing youth group, helping them to discover God's plan for their lives. Send resumé and references to: Student Ministries Search Committee, Bon Air Baptist Church, 2531 Buford Road, Richmond, VA 23235, or e-mail to baabc-search@aol.com, or fax to (804) 272-3926, Attn: Student Ministries Search Committee.

SEEKING: Calvary Baptist Church in Boise, Idaho, is accepting resúmes for the position of associate pastor of worship. This is a full-time position in a growing congregation. Resúmes can be sent to the church office at 911 S Cole Road, Boise, ID 83709, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/youth. For more information, contact Fairview Baptist Church at 6426 Kentucky Hwy 1247, Waynesville, KY 40489, or fbchurch@searnet.com. Please reply by Nov. 27, 1999.

SEEKING: Enterprise Baptist Church seeks a full-time minister of music and education with emphasis on music. Responsibilities include leadership, development and implementation of the music and education ministries of the church. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Enterprise Baptist Church, PO Box 156, Littleton, NC 27850.

SEEKING: Teacher's assistant. Mother's Day Out, two-year-olds. No lesson planning. Shively area. Must love children. Tuesday/Thursday, 8:45-2:15. (502) 447-2591 or 353-1646.

SEEKING: Part-time music director and pianist for Southside Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Ky. Please submit resumé to: Southside Baptist Church, c/o J.T. Haynes, 221 Sugar Mill Drive, Bowling Green, KY 42104.

SEEKING: Business manager for Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. Responsible for college business affairs, including receipt and disbursement of funds according to NACUBO standards. Supervise bookstore, mail services, computer services, food services and financial aid. Accounting and/or business administration experience required. Send resumé to: President Bill Whittaker, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Lyndon Baptist Church. Lyndon's family of faith participates as members of SBC, CBF, LRA and the KBC. Please send resumé to: Search Committee, LBC, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for worship services and choir, Providence Baptist Church, Frankfort, Ky. Please send responses and resúmes to: Hugh Bowman, Music Search Committee Chairman, 40 Forly Court, Frankfort, KY 40601. (502) 695-2968.

SEEKING: Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood, Ky., invites applications for the position of children-preschool minister. This full-time position will have primary responsibility for all preschool and children's ministries from birth to grade 5. Crestwood Baptist Church is a rapidly growing congregation averaging 760 in weekly worship. Qualified applicants shall have training and experience in preschool and children's ministry. Submit resumé to: Associate Pastor Sam Newman, Crestwood Baptist Church, PO Box 70, Crestwood, KY 40014.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. Knowledge of both contemporary and traditional music; possibility of full-time; possibility of scholarship available. Cynthia Baptist Church, Please call or send resumé to: Mrs. Jackie Faulkner, Rt 7, Box 252, Cynthia, KY 41031. (606) 234-2499.

SEEKING: Part-time, bivocational pastor needed for small, rural church near Whitesville, Ky. Three services per week. Call Ed Hemmersbach for details: (270) 264-1478.

SEEKING: Full-time administrative secretary. Salary plus benefits. Contact: Jim Holladay, Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville, (502) 897-1771. Immediate availability.

SEEKING: Pastor for Sparta Baptist Church, Sparta, Ky. Initial part-time position with full-time potential. Send resumé to Denise Humphries, Rt 1, Box 201A, Glencoe, KY 41046. (606) 643-5331 or Pat Fuson, (606) 643-3616.

SEEKING: Fern Creek Baptist Child Development Center is looking for a teacher for the three-year-old preschool program. Hours are 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Requirements: College degree preferred, high school diploma required; experience working with preschool children a plus; love for children; ability to be flexible. Benefits: Competitive hourly wage; paid holidays; free tuition for children; state-certified training provided; pleasant, positive work environment; possibility of additional hours, if desired. It is the goal of this child development center to provide the community of Fern Creek with a quality program at a reasonable cost to families. The center is certified by the Kentucky Cabinet of Human Resources. Interested people should contact Debbie Grobandt, (502) 239-0316, or send resumé to: Fern Creek Baptist Child Development Center, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Allen is seeking a minister to serve as associate pastor in a full-time position with gifts to develop and implement a strategy to evangelize and disciple youth and young adults. Regular preaching opportunities will be given, as well as responsibilities in overall church administration and ministry. Any person desiring to know more may contact Bro. Arnold Turner directly at (606) 886-0415, or send a resumé to: Search Committee, PO Box 541, Allen, KY 41601.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Calvary Baptist Church of Clinton, Iowa. Send resumé to: PSC, Calvary Baptist Church, 1619 2nd Ave. S, Clinton, IA 52732.

SEEKING: Fern Creek Baptist Church is seeking a part-time minister of youth and children, and a part-time bookkeeper. Send resúmes to: Search Committee, Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291.

SEEKING: The School of Christian Studies at Ouachita Baptist University announces an opening for a tenure-track faculty position available fall of 2000 in the department of Christian ministries. Must have an Ed.D or Ph.D. with an emphasis on Christian education. Related teaching fields in survey of the Bible, interpreting the Bible, evangelism and church growth, pastoral ministry, youth ministry or Christian counseling preferred. Practical experience in a Baptist church necessary. Required commitment to both scholarship and teaching/discipling undergraduates. Rank open. Send letter of application and curriculum vita to Dr. Terry Carter, chair of the department of Christian ministries, Ouachita Baptist University, PO Box 3683, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001.

FOR LEASE: Brand-new 15-passenger van, \$300/month, Oct.-May. Call David at (502) 899-9313.

FOR SALE: Nineteen 10-foot and four 7-foot solid oak pews—available about the 1st of February. Please call Lyle Cooper at (270) 866-6615.

FOR SALE: YouthLink 2000 tickets at \$60 per ticket. Call Parkland Baptist Church at (502) 969-1387.

FOR SALE: Two cemetery plots at Bethany Memorial Gardens, "Garden of the Cross" section. \$1,200. Call (502) 935-4242.

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CHURCHES

Impact communities, not just members, churches urged

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (RNS)—While America's religious congregations often are viewed as the spiritual nurturers of individuals in the pews, they also can have a public presence that nurtures society.

Religious scholars and congregational leaders gathered recently for a conference looking at the public role of congregations and discussed how houses of worship can move beyond their in-house concerns to making contributions to their communities.

Martin Marty, director of the Public Religion Project at the University of Chicago, said congregations, when viewed from the inside, are composed of people with a wide variety of mindsets—with politics ranging from liberal to conservative and spirituality ranging from charismatic to meditative.

"What the gathering is is of a great number of apartnesses that find some occasion for unity and moments of community and transcendental moments even of communion," said Marty, the keynote speaker at the conference sponsored by the Alban Institute Oct. 21-22.

But when congregations move beyond the things on which they differ to work together outside their

sanctuaries, they can make a difference in their communities, he said.

The conference brought more than 100 people from across the country together to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Bethesda, Md.-based institute, which has assisted mostly mainline Protestant congregations through books, courses and consulting services.

In a panel discussion featuring experts from congregational, theological and public policy circles, the conference explored the extent to which congregations serve the larger society and the various ways they go about it.

In a survey he conducted in 1998, University of Arizona sociologist Mark Chaves said he found while a majority of congregations do some sort of social service work, "only a very small minority of congregations do social service activity in an intensive, major way."

For example, while about one-third of congregations offer food programs, only about 3 percent offer substance-abuse programs and about 1 percent offer job programs.

With the advent of the "charitable choice" provision in 1996 welfare legislation, the shape of the church's public presence is beginning to change, some panelists said.

Though still little-known by many congregations, the provision allows

faith-based groups to use public funds to provide services such as job training, food and basic medical care.

Chaves found in his study that one-third of U.S. congregations surveyed said they would be interested in applying for government funds for social service activities but today only about 3 percent of houses of worship receive government assistance for such work.

Amy Sherman, director of urban ministries at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Charlottesville, Va., said her studies found about 2,500 church-based welfare-to-work mentoring programs across the country. She has worked as a consultant to churches interested in financial and non-financial partnerships with governments to help their communities.

"We're seeing churches getting into a particular type of ministry that has profound implications on the people they are serving," she said, adding that former welfare recipients have told her they credit the emotional support of churches for smoother transitions.

Participants in the discussion also pointed out examples of instances where projects were created by congregations without assistance from governmental agencies.

Victor Claman, a United Church of Christ layman from the Boston

area, cited an example of a Presbyterian congregation in western Pennsylvania that manufactures small tractors and gives them away to poor farmers.

Claman, president of Insights, a Boston-based research and publishing firm, co-authored a 1994 book titled "Acting on Your Faith: Congregations Making a Difference" detailing projects often funded solely by the congregations.

Clarence Newsome, dean of the Howard University School of Divinity in Washington, said the social service offerings of congregations across the country include a "wide spectrum of possibilities," including housing, health, education, child and senior-citizen care and entrepreneurial projects.

For example, he cited a church in Chicago with a medical clinic and a dental clinic and a Presbyterian church in Baltimore whose efforts to get teenagers off the streets led to a youth-run greeting card company grossing \$1 million a year.

Claman said "success stories" of congregations—whether they use charitable choice or not—must be shared so more houses of worship can meet needs of their communities. "I think it's likely that more congregations would get into more serious and assertive programs if they had more funding."

Sociologist Mark Chaves found a majority of congregations do some sort of social service work, but "only a very small minority of congregations do social service activity in an intensive, major way."

Internet church tries to link members with local congregations

By Doy Cave
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—It's an incorporated church with no building. It has worship services and devotions held in hundreds of homes around the world. It boasts 200 members who've never seen one another.

It's Totalechurch, one of the first totally Internet churches in cyberspace, and though it's only been in the ministry five months, it's seeing rapid growth.

With Christian researcher George Barna predicting that 20 percent of the population will get all religious training from the Internet by the year 2010, Lyndon Glaesman, pastor of Totalechurch and an alumnus of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, said he and his family's burden for an Internet church was part of a logical progression in using technology for the kingdom of God.

An Internet church has been in a lot of people's minds, but the idea has gotten little follow-through, said Glaesman.

Totalechurch, and its technology, have gotten an overwhelming response. Though the church has been open only since June 15 of this year, its site (www.totalechurch.com) has received more than 14,000 visits and has recorded more than 50 professions of faith in Christ.

The church roster currently includes members from across the country and from Bulgaria, Japan, Australia and South Africa. Daily devotions are sent to more than 450 participants every day, which often are forwarded

to many other people.

Billed as "the church that comes to you" the Totalechurch church offers a variety of services, including a recorded weekly sermon that can be heard through the Internet, a prayer ministry and a music page with Christian music that can be downloaded and listened to. Plans call for specific ministries to men and children, as well as a "chat room" for members and staff to interact.

One person who has been responsive to the Internet outreach is Jeff Pancoast of Phoenix, Ariz., who talks regularly with the pastor with questions galore. Pancoast said he was "on the edge" after a 17-year marriage fell apart and he was left with only a shattered life and a lot of questions.

"They're my spiritual support structure," he said of Totalechurch. "They're there when I have questions and they're there when I need support. The daily devotions were a constant reminder to me to stay on the right track."

Admittedly against most organized religion, Pancoast said the church has ministered to him and strengthened his faith in God again. He has a lot of questions, he said, but he's finding the answers.

"I've been kind of a spiritual gypsy all my life. My religion is mostly internalized, which is why Totalechurch appeals to me. Rev. Glaesman and I have written several letters to each other, and he's given me the most straight-forward, intelligent answers I've gotten to all my questions."

Glaesman said his vision for Totalechurch is not to get a list of members who have the Internet church as

Couples start Internet prayer Web site

By Charles Willis
LifeWay Christian Resources

CERES, Calif. (BP)—An on-line prayer ministry established by two young married couples is turning cyberspace into a worldwide prayer circle.

Dawne-Marie and Mike Martin and Cindy and Daniel Ogden live in different parts of California, Turlock and Brea, respectively. But together they unite people who have prayer needs with people who consider prayer an active part of their spiritual lives.

Under the banner of "Ichthus Ministries," the site at www.prayerneeds.org went "live" in April, with start-up money from an unexpected refund check the Martins received.

The Martins said they both felt calls to ministry as youth—he to pastoral ministry and she to missions. Married less than a year and co-managing an apartment complex, the Martins said conducting the ministry on the Internet helps them fulfill those calls.

In early 1999, the Martins began to e-mail prayer requests to some friends throughout the United States. Out of that experience came the

idea to establish a prayer Web site.

"When I first felt called to missions, I had no idea I would have a mission field all over the world from my living room," Mrs. Martin said.

The Ogdens helped set up and maintain the site. Ogden is the site's "web master."

In slightly more than four months, that mission field has included Australia, India, Ireland, China, South Africa, Peru, Indonesia, Puerto Rico, Canada, Finland, the Caribbean islands and the United States. More than 1,800 people have visited the site, and more than 600 prayer requests have been listed in that time.

Prayer request categories include finances, health needs, intercession, missions/pastoral, salvation and a miscellaneous area labeled "other."

"PrayerNeeds.org is not designed to replace or take over the ministry of prayer in churches, but to enhance prayer ministry," Martin said.

Among the group's five-part mission is to engage in Christian missionary work through prayer and to encourage local churches to deepen their prayer ministries. "Our mission field is the world," he said. "There is a need out there. We would like to meet it full time."

their only church home. Instead, he wants to work with local congregations and get his members into an active fellowship as growing Christians.

"We want to share the gospel with them and get them into a church," Bullard concurred. "A lot of people say, 'I'm not going in there. I've never been there, so why should I go

now?' We want to show them why they need to be there."

Pancoast said there are many still to be reached.

"This has the potential to reach a widespread audience," he said, "and there have got to be people out there like me. There has got to be millions of seekers out there like me."

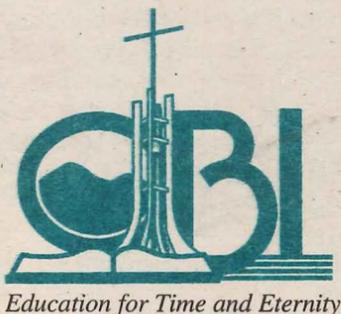
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