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Teens' violence fears decline, suicide attempts rise, poll finds

NEW YORK (ABP)—More than half of American teenagers think a Columbine-style massacre could occur in their school, according to a recent New York Times/CBS News poll.

While 52 percent of teens believe a "murderous rampage" could happen in their schools, teens today are less afraid of violence than their counterparts five years ago.

According to a report in the New York Times, 24 percent of teens today said they fear being victimized at school, compared to 40 percent in 1994.

Despite media attention to violence, half as many teenagers reported fear of being shot in 1999 as in 1994, according to the poll.

Most United States high schools have heightened security, and 45 percent of teenagers reported felling safe or extremely safe in school.

The poll also found that the number of teenagers contemplating or attempting suicide is on the rise. Forty-six percent of teenagers reported knowing someone their age who had attempted suicide.

The suicide rate among teens age 15-19 has declined slightly from a 1994 peak of 11 per 100,000, according to studies conducted by the Centers for Disease Control, but the numbers of suicide attempts are on the rise.

More girls were aware of a suicide attempt than boys (56 percent compared with 37 percent). Forty-eight percent of whites knew someone who had attempted suicide, compared with 39 percent of Hispanics and 28 percent of African-American teens.

Ten Commandments rally draws thousands

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

CORBIN—Part worship service and part pep rally, a Ten Commandments Rally held Nov. 7 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Corbin attracted an overflow crowd. More than 3,000 people attended the Sunday afternoon event, with some observers estimating the crowd at twice that size.

The three-hour rally featured messages by Alabama District Court Judge Roy Moore and Littleton, Colo., pastor Billy Epperhart as well as an offering for the "Ten Commandments Advancement Fund." It concluded with a parade of youngsters carrying posters listing each of the Ten Commandments.

"Praise God. God bless America," declared rally coordinator Herschel Walker, pastor of Hopewell Mission-

ary Baptist Church in Corbin. "It's time for all of us to get behind the effort to get God back in our hearts and back in our homes and back in our schools and back in other public places.

"We've been on defense long enough," Walker insisted. "It's time we get on offense. ... God has started something historical in Kentucky and we're going to go forward with it."

The rally comes at a time when legislation allowing the Ten Commandments to be posted in public schools is being considered on both the state and national levels.

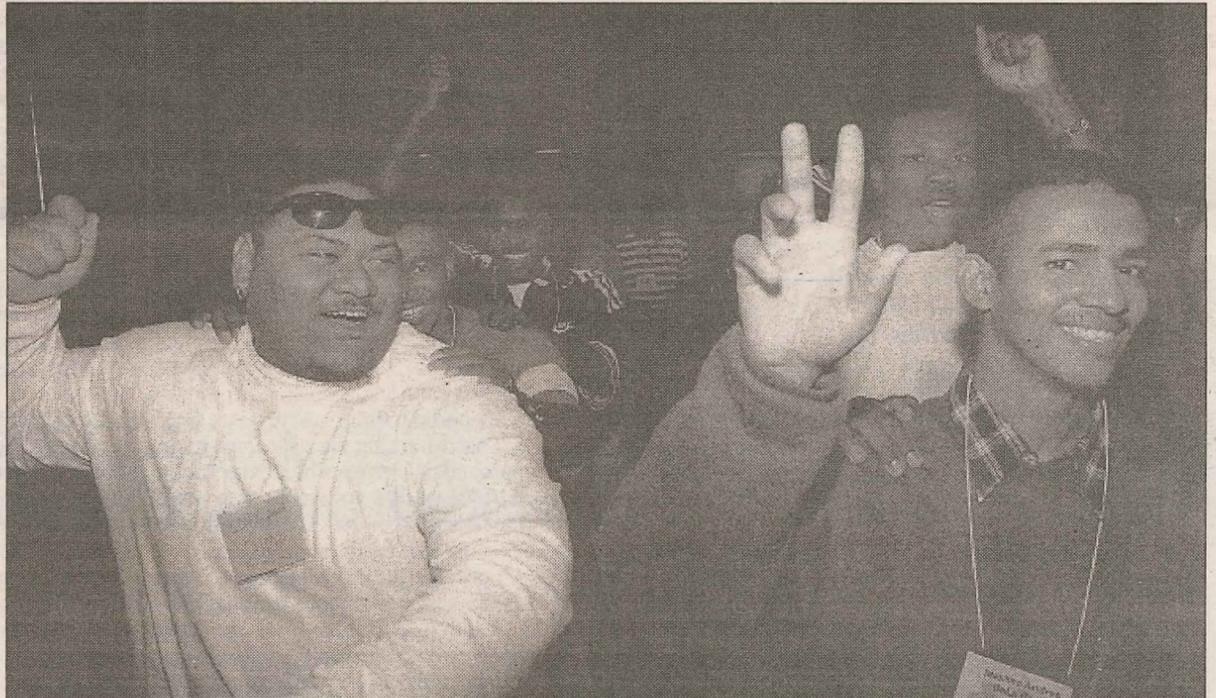
In 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Kentucky law that required schools to post the Ten Commandments. In recent months, several school districts and fiscal courts across the state have voted to allow the religious document to be dis-

played, claiming the postings are constitutional if the plaques are purchased with private funds. The American Civil Liberties Union has responded by threatening lawsuits against school districts that refuse to remove copies of the Ten Commandments.

Judge Moore, whose posting of the Ten Commandments in his courtroom has sparked a series of lawsuits, described separation of church and state as "a metaphor based on bad history."

Quoting George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Franklin and other founding fathers, Moore said, "Our forefathers had no intention of being neutral to God. ... We don't have liberty to be outside of God's bonds."

Moore cited school shootings, abortion, sodomy and teaching evolution as symptoms of a nation that is



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS Students enjoy music during the opening session of the international student conference in Cave City. More than 250 students from around the world attended the meeting, Nov. 5-7. The conference, which draws international students from schools across the state, is sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's collegiate ministry department and Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union. *Story on page 3.*

Report: Many Americans more willing to give time than money

By Constance Casey
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—American families appear more willing to give their time than their money to good causes these days.

A recent survey of household giving and volunteering shows that despite a booming economy, the financial contribution rate stayed near the same place it has been for about 30 years, decreasing ever so slightly—to 2.1 percent of pre-tax household income in 1998, compared with 2.2 percent in 1995.

Still, even that small dip is worrisome to charities, including churches, because incomes have risen far more than charitable giving in the past several years.

Ironically, a related study could suggest that the large are getting

larger while the small are suffering more. A publication's survey found the nation's top 400 charities saw an average 16 percent increase in 1998 (see story on page 10).

The upbeat news is that volunteering is at record levels.

"The number of Americans volunteering—109 million—is staggering," said Susan Saxon-Harrold, vice president for research for Independent Sector, which commissioned the poll of families by the Gallup Organization.

The 1998 volunteer figure, 56 percent of the adult population, is an all-time high. It represents an increase of 13.7 percentage points since 1995—a happy surprise, said Independent Sector President Sara Melendez.

"It reinforces our faith in the wonderful generosity of Americans in do-

ing their time," Melendez said.

Independent Sector, a national coalition of about 700 major charities and grant-makers, has conducted surveys of American patterns of giving and volunteering six times since 1988. This year's conclusions come from Gallup interviews conducted May-July 1999 with a national in-person sample of 2,553 adult Americans.

The Independent Sector poll doesn't include some of the wealthiest Americans, who would drive up the dollar amounts of giving.

"The wealthy are too hard to get to," said Michael McCormack, senior programmer analyst at Independent Sector. "They live in gated communities, and our interviewers were literally knocking on doors."

"Our survey is more a reflection of middle America," McCormack said.

As in past years, more than half the

dollars contributed go to religious organizations, with human services a distant second, at 9 percent.

Empty Tomb Inc., a researcher of giving trends specifically to churches, has reported previously that church-going families typically give less than 3 percent of household income to their house of worship.

Though the percentage of income given to charities remains stagnant according to the Independent Sector survey, the actual dollar amount given has increased as salaries have gone up.

For groups that depend on volunteers, the future looks bright, Melendez said. The most dramatic rise in volunteering since the last survey was in the 35-44 age range—a 12-point increase to 67 percent. All adult volunteers accounted for a

See More Americans ..., page 10

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, Nov. 10

BAPTISTS

National WMU announces downsizing of 39 employees

"While this is a reasonable decision from a business standpoint, it is a heart-wrenching situation from a personal angle."

Wanda Lee, national WMU president

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP)—Woman's Missionary Union will eliminate one-fourth of the staff positions at its national headquarters in Birmingham, Ala., in an effort to "stabilize expenses," the agency's leaders announced Nov. 2.

"While this is a reasonable decision from a business standpoint, it is a heart-wrenching situation from a personal angle," said Wanda Lee, national WMU president. "All the employees at national WMU are loyal, dedicated workers. They see their jobs as a ministry and thereby are not just working, but fulfilling a spiritual commitment."

The downsizing will not affect any program personnel, said Teresa Dickens, a spokesman for the 111-year-old auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Positions to be eliminated primarily are in the areas of customer service, order entry and information technology, Dickens said. The majority of the affected workers are hourly employees rather than salaried employees, she added.

A press release announced the impending elimination of 39 jobs at WMU, which has a current work force of 150. Most of the functions currently performed by these employees will be outsourced to third-party vendors.

"Laying off employees is never an easy thing to do. We wish we did not have to face this," said Kentucky WMU President Peggy Hicks, a member of the national WMU executive board. "WMU is such a closely bonded group, any time something affects the employees, it affects all of us."

Voicing concern "over the loss of 39 people," Hicks added, "We continue to pray for them and that they will find other work."

Despite the difficulty of the decision, "this was a decision we knew we needed to come to," Hicks explained. "I don't see it impacting WMU's ministry in the future. We will still continue as usual."

The first and most pivotal of several third-party contracts has been signed with Media Services Inc. of Birmingham, which will provide technical and personnel support for meeting WMU's customer service requests.

WMU customers should experience no difference in the way they order materials, Dickens said, explaining that all changes will happen behind the scenes. "Media Services will have 10 customer service representatives" assigned to WMU customers, she said.

Negotiations are under way with other vendors to outsource additional

internal operations such as information technology, travel planning and food services.

All the changes are projected to be in place by March 31, and all existing employees may keep their jobs at least through the end of January, Dickens said.

"The challenge of staying current in technology has been consuming more and more of our fiscal budget for several years," Lee explained. "The goal of the board was to free up more of WMU's revenue to support the central purpose of WMU, which is to provide the best possible missions-education resources for churches."

Lee said laid-off employees would receive a "generous" severance package and out-placement assistance.

WMU leaders did not announce how much the changes would save. The effect on the bottom line probably will not be immediate but should become apparent in future years, Dickens said, noting a major reason for the change was the perpetual expense of upgrading equipment.

WMU derives the bulk of its operating income from the sale of age-graded periodicals and other missions-education literature. Circulation of these periodicals has declined over the last de-

cade, some by more than 50 percent.

National WMU does not receive any allocation from the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program or from the two Southern Baptist annual missions offerings it promotes—the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. WMU receives a combined total of about \$500,000 annually from the SBC's International Mission Board and North American Mission Board, Dickens said.

The changes come at a time when WMU is awaiting election of a new executive director. Dellanna O'Brien retired from that post this fall, and a search committee has yet to name her successor.

However, the process leading to the staff reduction started well before O'Brien retired, Dickens said. During the past year, WMU leaders have engaged two separate consultants to analyze the agency's operation, and both independently made similar recommendations, she said.

Having this transition completed before a new executive director comes on board will be "very good" for that person, Dickens predicted. "It will be a tighter ship, and she will not have to make those decisions."

BAPTIST BITS

■ **YouthLink registration growing.** With YouthLink 2000 registration increasing more than 3,000 between Oct. 29 and Nov. 5, executives of the four Southern Baptist agencies sponsoring YouthLink reaffirmed their commitment to the Dec. 29-31 event slated for seven locations throughout the United States. The Nov. 5 registration total includes 43,763 people from 41 states and three foreign countries. YouthLink 2000 will take place in Anaheim; Atlanta; Denver; Houston; Philadelphia; St. Louis; and Tampa, Fla. Information is available by calling (888) YOUTHCLK or visiting the Web site at www.youthlink2000.org.

■ **M-Fuge to offer students international missions.** High school students wanting a taste of international missions can travel to one of two countries next summer as part of M-Fuge International. The new missions initiative is sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention and the International Mission Board. The mission trips to Valencia, Venezuela, and London, England, will combine the elements of Centrifuge with an opportunity to be involved in personal ministry in an international setting, said coordinator Mark Robbins. For more information, call (877) CAMP123 or e-mail fuge@lifeway.com.

■ **McSwain announces retirement.** Shorter College President Larry McSwain announced his intention to retire effective June 30, 2000, calling it "the hardest decision I've ever made in my life." McSwain, 58, assumed the college's presidency in 1993. He noted that the primary factors were his health, personal fatigue and timing related to Shorter's future. The college, located in Rome, Ga., is affiliated with the Georgia Baptist Convention. McSwain previously was dean of the school of theology and provost at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

■ **BJCPA names general counsel.** Melissa Rogers, a legal expert on church-state affairs, has been named general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Rogers, who has worked five years at the BJCPA as associate general counsel, succeeds Brent Walker as general counsel. Walker recently became executive director of the religious-liberty agency in Washington, succeeding James Dunn, who retired. Rogers is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and the University of Pennsylvania School of Law.

New Mexico Baptists to consider doctrinal test for membership

LAS CRUCES, N.M. (ABP)—The Baptist Convention of New Mexico directed its executive board to study language requiring that local churches must affirm the recently amended "Baptist Faith and Message" in order to be in good standing.

That came after the state convention approved new articles of incorporation and bylaws that no longer mandate a church be part of a local association to be recognized by the state group.

Former convention president Dean Mathis, pastor of Taylor Memorial Baptist Church in Hobbs, N.M., said the change would weaken the role of associations, which in the past have enforced doctrinal integrity of churches.

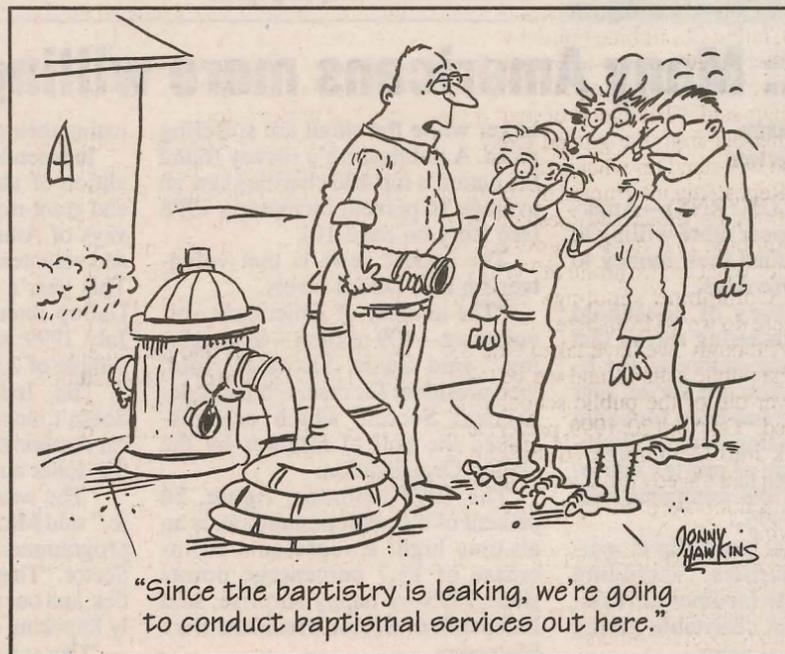
Mathis proposed an amendment to the new articles of incorporation and bylaws to require that messengers to

the annual meeting be "from Baptist churches which have been received into and are cooperating with one of the Baptist associations in New Mexico."

Messengers rejected Mathis' amendment 172-90, however, and then adopted the new governing documents.

Mack McCarthick, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Lovington, made a motion that a credentials committee use the revised "Baptist Faith and Message" as criteria to decide whether to seat messengers to the state convention. The motion passed 190-61.

McCarthick returned later in the meeting with another recommendation, that the executive board study amending the just-approved articles and bylaws to specify that future credentials committees also use the "Baptist Faith and Message" statement as a guide.



SBC has become 'arm' of Religious Right, critic says

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The Southern Baptist Convention has turned its back on church-state separation to become a "virtual arm of the Religious Right," the head of Americans United for Separation of Church and State charged.

AU Executive Director Barry Lynn mentioned the SBC in opening remarks during an awards banquet at AU's annual meeting.

The organization presented Madison-Jefferson awards to Calvin Didier, retired pastor of House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, Minn., and to James Dunn, recently retired executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Church-state separation "is the single grandest idea we've had since the American Revolution," Lynn said. "And the terrible irony is that some of the institutions which struggled to create it and preserve the idea of religious liberty have now turned their back on its powerful message."

"As we honor James Dunn," Lynn said, "we—whether we're Baptists or Presbyterians or humanists—look in horror at the actions of the Southern Baptist Convention, which has become a virtual arm of the Religious Right."

"They are now thought of as the people who are trying to convert Hindus and boycott Walt Disney," Lynn said, "not the powerful voice which demanded pulpit freedom and church autonomy and knew that the best way to guarantee it was for it to shun the resources any government would offer it."

County election defeat called a referendum on gay-rights law

LOUISVILLE—A Jefferson County election last week that was considered a referendum on the county's gay-rights ordinance might be having ripple effects throughout the state.

Bowling Green's mayor and four city commissioners all have said they will not support a possible recommendation for a similar ordinance. And a spokesman for the Jefferson County judge executive said others in the state also are taking notice.

Last week, Republican Barbara Davis unseated incumbent Joe Corradino for the B District seat of Jefferson County Commission.

Corradino himself called the election, in essence, a referendum on his support for the county's gay-rights law, which passed last month on a 3-1 vote.

Davis received about 55 percent of the votes (71,528 votes to Corradino's 57,676 votes). Despite Davis' victory, the county's gay-rights ordinance is expected to remain on the books, according to Troy Riggs, a spokesman for County Judge Executive Rebecca Jackson.

Jackson and the three commissioners vote on ordinances for the county. Jackson voted against the ordinance, but the other two commissioners, who sponsored the gay-rights measure, have shown no sign of changing their votes, Riggs said.

"I think statewide people were looking at Jefferson County to see what would happen in this election," he said. A bill similar to Jefferson County's law, which bars discrimination against homosexuals in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations, has been expected during the next state legislature term.

Riggs said it is significant to note that Corradino spent about \$1 million raising name recognition during this race, the Democratic primary and an unsuccessful run for the Democratic nomination for county judge-executive.

"He was defeated by a community activist who raised just over \$60,000," Riggs added. "I think it shows it wasn't a fluke. It was the will of the people."

In Bowling Green, the city's human rights commission is scheduled to vote Nov. 16 on whether to recommend such an ordinance to city council. A story last week in the Bowling Green Daily News reported that city council members all said they will not support such a measure.

Baptists in Bowling Green have been active in opposing a gay-rights law. The Warren Association of Baptists adopted a resolution of opposition, and Director of Missions Jerry Oakley asked pastors to encourage members to contact their city commissioners.

Alice Marshall to be nominated for KBC office

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Alice Marshall, co-director of the Marshall Center for Christian Ministry at Georgetown College, will be nominated Nov. 16 as Kentucky Baptist Convention first vice president.

Marshall and her husband, Bill, retired KBC executive director, are former Southern Baptist international missionaries. Her candidacy was announced in a recent letter by Robert DeFoor, pastor of Harrodsburg Baptist Church, who plans to nominate Marshall for the position.

"I have been asked to run and I agreed," Marshall said. Noting that only two women have served as convention vice presidents throughout KBC history, she said she is willing to seek "a more visible role for women and to encourage others to get involved."

Marshall, a graduate of Georgetown

College, served in 1995 as president of the Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives organization.

She is the only candidate who has publicly announced plans to seek the KBC first vice presidency. She joins KBC presidential candidate Terry Wilder, pastor of Burlington Baptist Church, as the only announced candidates for convention office. The annual meeting will be held Nov. 16-17 at the Northern Kentucky Regional Convention Center in Covington.

DeFoor said he mailed out approximately 3,000 letters across the state, endorsing the election of both Wilder and Marshall. His letter also endorsed a candidate for second vice president who has declined to be nominated.

Explaining that his letter did not reflect a "slate of officers for any group," DeFoor said his goal was to highlight candidates who "will represent all Kentucky Baptists in an honorable fashion as we move into the 21st century."

DeFoor said he sent copies of the

letter to people who reflect "a middle-of-the-road perspective" in Baptist life. The one-page letter encouraged readers to "make every effort to attend (the KBC annual meeting) and be sensitive to issues affecting moderate Baptists in Kentucky. Do not be lulled into thinking that the SBC fundamentalists have chosen to ignore the takeover of Kentucky."

"Basically we're saying we don't want to have happen in Kentucky what happened on the Southern Baptist Convention level," DeFoor explained.

Wilder, who announced his presidential candidacy in September, will be nominated by Billy Compton, pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. Wilder said at the time that his goal is to "represent the center and the best of who Kentucky Baptists are."

While he is comfortable with DeFoor personally endorsing his candidacy, Wilder added, "It is not my intent to take political sides but to represent all Kentucky Baptists."

"It is not my intent to take political sides but to represent all Kentucky Baptists."

KBC presidential candidate Terry Wilder

International students treated to Christian service

CAVE CITY—A record 255 students from 37 countries attended the annual international student conference Nov. 5-7, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's student ministries department.

The weekend event attracts many non-Christians, said Ralph Hopkins of the Kentucky Baptist Convention student ministries department. "We've been doing this for about 40 years, to some extent."

Organizers are careful to respect other faiths while providing an opportunity for people from around the world to learn more about the Christian faith, said Hopkins and Keith Inman, KBC's director of student min-

istries.

"It's bridge building to gain the right to share the gospel," Inman said.

H.K. Kingkade, Baptist campus minister at the University of Kentucky, agreed. "It's a good opportunity for BSUs to build relationships with international students."

Students pay just \$5 to attend the weekend event. The program, meals and entertainment are underwritten by funds from Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union's Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions.

"We don't ask anything in return from you except your mutual respect," Hopkins told students during the opening session.

Ken and Beth Perkins, missionaries in residence at Georgetown College, were keynote speakers, talking about both the differences between and appreciation for various cultures around the world.

That was a common theme at the conference, as several breakout seminars offered to help students prepare for culture-shock, both here in America and when returning home.

For the first time during the weekend, more than 70 Kentucky Baptist Student Union members attended the weekend to interview for international missions assignments next summer.

Hopkins said there are at least 52 overseas assignments next summer.

Rallies planned for Frankfort, Henderson, Bowling Green

Continued from page 1

"succumbing to man's sovereignty."

"We pay our tax money to teach our kids there is no God," he lamented. "We've given up on righteousness for a life of indulgence. Evil is now called good and darkness is now called light."

Colorado pastor Epperhart conducted funeral services for four of the shooting victims following the April massacre at Columbine High School.

Calling Columbine murder victims Rachel Scott and Cassie Bernall "true martyrs who died for their faith," Epperhart said, "The blood of martyrs is calling out from the ground today. ... Who will stand for what is right?"

Repeatedly interrupted by standing ovations, Epperhart said questions from Columbine that deserve answers include: What are we afraid of? Why did the Columbine shootings happen? Where do we go from here?

Although "we have taken God out of the public schools and we've taken prayer out of the public schools," he added, "On April 20, 1999, prayer came back into Columbine High School. When that tragedy hit, students all over that school were on their knees and praying."

Epperhart said reasons for the Columbine tragedy include "an epidemic of no positive adult influence" as well as "no respect for others."

"When we took the Ten Commandments out of the classroom and out of our hearts, we took respect out of our nation," he said. "Violence is here because godlessness is here."

"The answer is putting God back in the hearts of men and women and in the hearts of young people," he added. "Where do we go from here? We as Christians must take a stand. I'm standing and I believe Christians all across this country are ready to stand."

Despite the enthusiastic response of thousands of rally participants, the event also had its detractors.

Bob Lockhart, a retired Baptist pastor, has served 20 years as a member of the Knox County School Board. Noting that he is disturbed by efforts to place the Ten Commandments in public schools, he said, "These people cannot differentiate between public and parochial schools and are trying to turn our public schools into parochial ones which is a violation of our constitution."

"You've got this mystical idea you can hang the Commandments on the wall and people will start behaving," he said. "That's ridiculous. If that worked so good, why don't they hang them in their churches and quit fighting?"

"We're not trying to be anti-religious," Lockhart said of school board members who oppose posting the document. "We're just trying to be a pub-



lic school."

Walker, who is accustomed to hearing such responses, said he remains committed to "taking back our Christian liberties we have lost."

"If we don't put God's orderly laws back into our hearts and back into our homes and teach them to our children, we are doomed," he said. "As God's people, we've been silent too long. The sleeping giant must wake up."

Walker said future rallies are planned for Nov. 16 in Frankfort, Dec. 5 in Henderson and Dec. 12 in Bowling Green. "If we can get the support of the grassroots people," he said, "we'll take our state back and by the help of God, we'll take our nation back."

FLAG FOCUS

Mark Cunningham displays an American flag altered to include the Ten Commandments during a Nov. 7 rally at Immanuel Baptist Church in Corbin.

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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Don't be timid

Once again it seems the "offense" of the gospel has become offensive to those who are called to proclaim it. When the International Mission Board calls Southern Baptists to pray for those outside of a personal relationship with Christ (whether they be Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Catholic or Baptist), why should this be controversial?

As pastor of Elm Grove Baptist Church, which supports the Cooperative Program with a full 20 percent of all monies given in offerings, I am grateful to God for leaders at the IMB and our convention who pray for harvest among the unreached people around the world. As we enter the final year of "Bold Mission Thrust," have we forgotten the bold?

Recent examples of Christians dying in their faith—several in our American schools, another at the height of golf popularity who found happiness and contentment only in Christ—reached millions in death by the grace of God. These lives remind us not to become timid in our witness or ashamed of Christ, who calls those "from every people, tongue, tribe and nation" to submit to Him (Revelation 5:9). Jesus remains the sole Mediator in the universe between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

Acts 4:12 succinctly proclaims the impossibility of salvation apart from Christ—that there is no other name under heaven (not just in Israel or on earth) given among men (not just among Jews, but all humans everywhere) by which we must be saved. How shall they call upon Him of whom they have never heard?

Salvation is not by Christ incognito. Believers must pray for anyone without a conscious, personal faith in Christ as Savior and Lord. The missionary heart of God continues to call. Pray, give and go! This is truly the only hope for the nations.

Todd Buck
Murray

The greatest peril

Tom Ehrlich's Oct. 19 commentary on "Confronting Dangerous Preaching" where he describes diluting the gospel as the greatest peril to the spiritual vitality of the church is comprehensive and compelling. I'll use it in my conversations with fellow clergy.

I got my first church in 1940 when I was a student minister up in the Bluegrass region. Preaching then was biblical, evangelistic and spiritually alive. But in these latter years I have seen the trend that he describes and God's people are being short-changed.

One of the most characteristic definitions of sin that I heard recently from a liberal preacher was "spiritually impaired." Wow!

I am driven to study and apply the Apostle Paul's application of the gospel in my ministry. It is not easy. He said it would not be. But as an advocate of the gospel, I have no choice.

Thanks to you and your staff for giving us a good paper.

Cecil F. McKee
Huntsville, TX

Confessional confusion

The Oct. 19 article featuring the tenure plan for faculty at Southern Seminary gives one pause. The "covenant" into which faculty enters is based on their willingness to teach according to the Baptist Faith and Message edict of the convention. This statement changes from time to time

What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. The maximum length for a letter is 300 words. Baptist Forum is limited to Western Recorder subscribers, unless someone is responding to a story or editorial of which they are the subject. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; fax, (502) 244-6474; or e-mail, wesrec@ntr.net.

Edward Clark
Danville

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Prayer walking: power for a new millennium

Prayer walking has become an exciting ministry on international mission fields and in American communities and churches. It is defined by the subtitle of a reference book—"Prayer Walking: Praying on Site with Insight" by Steve Hawthorne and Graham Kendrick.

Prayer walking has taken off on the mission field. "One prayer walk team went to the Jola people in the West African country of Senegal," reported an article in the November 1999 issue of the South Carolina Baptist Convention Church Staff Digest.

"In one village, two believers asked the missionary and the team ... to go from house to house praying for the people. As the team walked, they asked people what their needs were and how they might pray. Frequent requests were for peace in the village, rain and a good harvest, and health for many people who were ill. When the missionary returned

the next week, people told him God had answered prayers, and they had experienced peace and healing. They asked him to prayer walk at least once a month. Just a few months ago 18 adult

men prayed to receive Christ during the Bible study he continues to do with them."

Church staff conduct prayer walks in Sunday school classrooms, worship centers and around buildings. Church members prayer walk neighborhoods, new church plant locations, local schools, government buildings or other areas of moral and ministry concern.

People may pray silently or out loud; share insights, sing or quote Scripture; walk individually or in groups; report to group or church leaders. A walk usually begins with confessions and spiritual preparation. Prayer walkers report that God has revealed needs for prayer; that they see God and their communities in a new way; and that their faith in

so as to make impossible any concise comprehension of what one may be asked to teach.

Added to that requirement is the insistence that they teach and publicly support the latest whim of trustee confusion as it relates to confession. Based upon trustee confessions of the last decade, one is hard pressed to know how anyone could sign a document that insists upon blind allegiance to a group of rotating trustees who have been observed leaping over fences and tunneling under road beds of theology to make doctrine supreme.

It is amusing to note that after surviving these two marathons of methodology, the hapless faculty member must face the famous Abstract of Principles. This bulwark of stated principle has buried most of those who did not or could not bow to the will of the fundamentalists who comprise administration and trustee judgements.

One can but wonder if the seven-year requirement is based on the Old Testament story of Jacob and Rachel. Jacob agreed to work for seven years but did not get what was promised. The "Faith and Message" document, required by Laban for his daughter, let Jacob down and Laban's "Abstract" was devoid of any "Principle." Thus, after seven years of hard labor, tenure was denied.

Faculty members should be required to sign these documents after the seven-year requirement. It makes sense ... for in that time frame, the trustee and convention magic will assure them that at this point in their career, they have not one clue about who they are and they can teach anything.

STEWARDSHIP

Church budget time highlights stewardship

By Doug Strader

We are nearing the end of the year 1999 and getting ready to embark on the year 2000. That is a signal to many Kentucky Baptists that it is time for our churches to begin budget promotion for the new year.

Pastors will be preaching on our financial stewardship responsibilities to the Lord. In some instances church members will be asked to sign an intention card or commitment card to indicate how much they plan to give to the Lord through the church budget next year. What criteria will you use in determining your financial stewardship intentions for the year?

When the Apostle Paul wrote his second letter to the Corinthian church, he shared several principles in chapters 8 and 9 to be used in their financial stewardship practices. These principles include:

- Generosity in one's giving cannot be measured solely on one's outward circumstances.
- The giving of one's money should be preceded by the giving of one's self.

- It is a natural thing for believers to excel in the grace of giving.

- One's sincerity of love for God is evidenced by generous giving.

- The grace of God and the grace of giving are different sides of the same coin.

- The willingness to give is more important than the amount given.

- The attitude of the giver should be one of gladness.

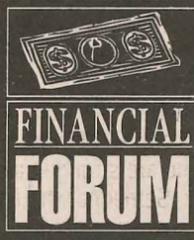
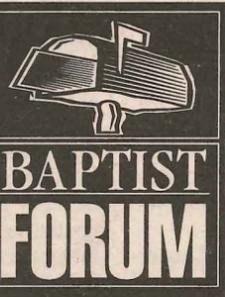
- When people give from a generous spirit and heart, God will receive praise and thanksgiving.

- When people give generously, it is a natural response to God's greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus.

Will you use any of these principles as you and your family prayerfully determine what your financial stewardship commitment to the Lord will be for the new year? Will you be a faithful steward of all God has given to you? Will you determine that you have enough to live a comfortable life, therefore you will give more to the Lord's work so others can hear the gospel, maybe for the first time? Will you consider making a sacrificial commitment to the Lord's work next year?

As a recipient of the grace of God, I can find a way to give at least a tithe (one tenth) back to Him.

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



Bill Mackey

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Finding a compatible mate: What qualities are important?

Q: Am I more likely to have a happy marriage with someone who is very much like me or with someone who is different? Do opposites really attract?

Sometimes we assume finding a partner who shares our values, goals and interests will make for a happy marriage. Agreeing on important issues does seem to help couples work together more effectively and decreases the time arguing about the "right" way to do things.

Some claim, however, that we are attracted to people who differ from us. The idea is we seek out people who complement us, who are strong in areas where we are weak. Someone who is not good at managing money might marry someone who is, ensuring that somebody can look after the family's finances. Someone who spends a great deal of time alone might marry someone who is sociable, prompting the loner to get out and meet people and helping the extrovert appreciate quiet evenings at home. We might be more likely to notice characteristics in which we differ from those close to us since these are often the areas that make us rethink our own position.

However, those who study relationships report that we are more often attracted to people who are similar to us, and along with those similarities come some individual differences in the package. For instance, a couple who agrees on religion and child rearing would undoubtedly have areas of disagreement as well, such as how much time to spend with in-laws or what to plan for their perfect vacation. While they might learn to appreciate these differences and even be grateful for having the challenge the other person's position brings, it is more likely that the similarities are what attract rather than the differences.—*Susan Howell*

Q: I'm concerned about my teenagers' safety at school. What can parents do to help protect their kids?

Your concern is understandable. Teens attacking each other creates unsafe situations at school. Parents can make a difference.

First, teach and model healthy ways to vent anger. Show youth they can walk away or use words, not weapons, to express themselves. Stress the importance of being in control and not a hot-head. Emphasize the process of stopping to think and choosing to act responsibly. Encourage them to think about the consequences of their actions.

Second, shape their attitudes toward others. Inform them of the value of every person as a part of God's creation. Respect for others is at the core of a safe environment. They also can build friendship groups that are inclusive. Teens who are pushed aside and omitted feel shame. That shame is fuel for revenge and violence.

Third, create a community that notices and honors the gifts, accomplishments and contributions of youth. Teenagers need praise for being winners. Support their functions and activities. Generate opportunities for youth involvement such as youth arts and theater, more sports options, better recreation options and outlets for musical interests. Listen to the dreams of teens and help those become a reality.

Finally, bring community leaders together to discuss ways to address teen issues in your neighborhood. Work with the police, school leaders, business pacesetters and church youth personnel to generate areawide resources before it is too late.

Youth are your most important resource. Put yourself into their lives and notice their hurts. Keep weapons out of the hands of unstable teens and keep teens out of the hands of unstable adults.—*Wade Rowatt*

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.



Learning lifelong lessons from Dad

It is a melancholy milestone at best. For me, there always will be a lingering sense of grief—especially over the loss of what might have been. For Dad's sake, I can only rejoice over his delight in spending eternity with his precious Savior.

Although I would have planned things differently, I could never ask for Dad to postpone the joy of heaven.

Next week marks the 20th anniversary of Dad's physical death at the young age of 56. That means I've now spent nearly half my life—and all of my adult years—with only memories of Dad to guide, comfort and encourage me. Thankfully, he left quite a legacy.

I wish each of you could have known him. Before his untimely heart attack, Dad appeared to be the picture of health. He was active, energetic and always just a tad mischievous—much to his six kids' delight.

Why bring up such memories two decades later? Partly because Dad has been on my mind quite a bit lately. And partly because of the timeless lessons he taught me by example during our brief 20 years together, such as:

■ *Never be ashamed of your faith.* The greatest gift Dad and Mom gave our family was the constant nurture of a strong Christian home. Dad was a deacon, Sunday school teacher, choir member and sang in a gospel quartet. Long before I arrived on the scene, he served overseas during World War II. In one of his many letters to my mom and oldest sister, he wrote, "Anyone who walks into my room at any time will find my Bible lying on the chest of drawers beside the picture of my wife and baby girl. I am not ashamed to be seen reading that Blessed Book and I don't care who sees me bow my head before each meal." That commitment became a daily way of life.

■ *Do a day's work for a day's pay.* Perhaps this is a lesson every father teaches his son—hopefully so.

But Dad made a special point of driving this truth home. As a carpenter, he worked long, hard hours to provide for our family. Yet he always paid close attention to quality, took pride in his work and refused to cut corners.

■ *Cherish your wife and family.* As hard as Dad worked to earn a living, he always made time with Mom and the kids a priority. His eyes sparkled with love whenever he and Mom were together. He was never shy about expressing those deep feelings of sincere love and devotion.

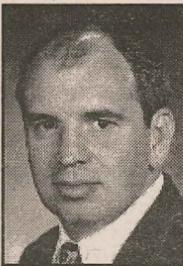
■ *Be true to your word.* Lying was never an option in our house—at least not without severe penalty. Dad knew a person's reputation was only as good as his personal word. His consistent integrity spoke volumes to everyone who knew him. Honesty wasn't merely the best policy; it was the only policy.

■ *Take time for recreation.* Or, more accurately, take time for fishing. Dad was a classic example of the work hard, play hard mentality. He loved to fish, camp and occasionally hunt and sought to instill the joy of those pleasures in his children—especially my brother and me. My mind still wanders back to quiet lakes and ponds where he and I would soak up the wonder of nature as we collected a stringer of crappie and bream. "I fish primarily to be in the quiet, to be alone with God and have time to meditate," Dad declared. Of course, lots of fishermen have made similar claims over the years, but Dad actually meant it.

■ *Enjoy life.* Dad's humor, honesty and heartfelt happiness were contagious. Sure, he had faults too, but his commitment to Christ helped keep his personal priorities in perspective.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," the Apostle Paul wrote. I'm thankful Dad not only shared that belief, but that he shared it with me.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

'How can a man be born when he is old?'

By Tim Menser

"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" (John 3:4)

A few months ago my wife and I experienced one of the greatest miracles we have ever received, the birth of our second child. I remember the excitement and anxiety that built as the day approached.

The day finally arrived. The pains came and went, growing in frequency and intensity with each passing hour until finally the doctor said, "It's time to start pushing." The courage of my wife during such pain amazed me. Though hospitals have given dads a few tasks throughout the birth process, in reality we are only bystanders at this part of the miraculous process of childbirth. One last push and there he was, a son.

I remembered being puzzled in those following moments. While, clinically, we had gone through a process called "natural" childbirth, there was nothing

natural about it. My wife's body had been tested in ways that placed strain and pain on her and she had survived. The result was a beautiful, healthy child. It was nothing short of miraculous.

Since childbirth is something women have been experiencing for centuries we have relegated it to the common, the "natural." That is, until you are the one going through it. The sheer miracle of it all screams for your attention.

Nicodemus, after observing Jesus' miracles and listening to His teachings, expressed faith in Jesus as someone who had come from God. His question was a simple one: "Jesus, how can a man be born when he is old?"

Nicodemus was paralyzed by the same problem as the rest of us. He was looking for the common, the "natural." He had forgotten that life itself is a miraculous gift from God. When a person is "born of the flesh," God has given him physical life. When a person is "born again," God has granted him spiritual life.

Physical life is temporary and filled

with worries and sorrow. Spiritual life is eternal and filled with hope, joy and peace. Jesus came so we could have something that would transcend the common, the "natural." Jesus came that we might have life—an abundant, renewed spiritual life.

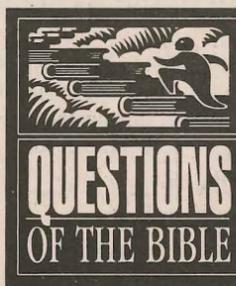
If life itself is a miracle, then a renewed life in Christ must be a greater miracle. The miracle is this: "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

So, how is one born again? By believing in Jesus. In this process, God works within you in order to make you a new creation. He begins to show you His plan for your life, challenge your thinking and mold you into a person who is more like Jesus.

Just like childbirth, there is nothing "natural" about this process. It is often painful and testing. It places strain on you in ways that you never thought possible. But God guides the process and remains in control the entire time.

In reality, we are merely bystanders in the amazing transformation that God enacts. The result is a totally new you, reborn to a spiritual life that you never knew existed. What a miracle!

Tim Menser is pastor of Centerfield Church in Crestwood



Sports stars past & present help Graham reach St. Louis

"You promote your own eternal death by being absorbed with the world around you."

Evangelist Billy Graham

By Tim Palmer
Missouri Word & Way

ST. LOUIS (ABP)—Baseball Hall-of-Famer Lou Brock and football's Kurt Warner were among the stars who discussed their Christian faith as part of Billy Graham's St. Louis crusade last month.

More than 200,000 people attended the crusade, Oct. 14-17. More than 12,800 people reported making professions of faith.

Former St. Louis Cardinal outfielder Lou Brock met Billy Graham for the first time when he shared the stage with the 80-year-old evangelist.

Beforehand, the six-time All Star said he felt the same excitement he had as a player "trying to reach the World Series or steal a base."

Brock set records for single-season and career stolen bases during 18 years in the major leagues. He retired in 1979 and reached baseball's Hall of Fame in 1985.

Addressing 40,000 people at the Oct. 15 session at the TWA Dome in downtown St. Louis, the 60-year-old Brock told of a time in his life when he was successful in the world's eyes but couldn't shake loneliness. "I never seemed to get it right."

He said he found himself wondering: Who can save me from myself? "And the answer became Jesus Christ."

Brock said God led him to the Bible verse Galatians 1:15. Having

gained assurance that he has a purpose on earth, Brock said he is working to become a better disciple of Jesus Christ. "I am not there, but I'm striving to be a member of God's Hall of Fame."

St. Louis Rams quarterback Kurt Warner made a surprise appearance the same night. In an interview with emcee Cliff Barrows, Warner recalled that during his youth, he always kept his life on one side and God on the other. Then, four years ago, "I was born again."

"Right at that moment, those two entities came together," Warner said. "I realized the reason I am here is to praise and worship the Man above."

With the Rams starting their season with five consecutive wins, Warner said his football success gives him a platform to glorify and praise God. "There's just one little secret to all my success—and that secret is Jesus Christ."

"I'm not a football player," Warner said. "That's what I do. All I am is a man who lives for Jesus Christ."

Graham's self-effacing style surfaced when he acknowledged the guests. "My goodness, I never

dreamed I'd meet these men, even, and here I am on the same platform with them."

Preaching from Luke 19, Graham used the familiar story of Zacchaeus to remind his listeners that Jesus is still "passing by."

Zacchaeus was an important and wealthy man, Graham noted, but he was a lonely man who wanted to see Jesus. "I've met some of the wealthiest people in the world," the evangelist said. "They may be famous; they may be wealthy; but they're lonely."

Graham noted that 16 of Christ's 18 parables in the Bible dealt with money. "That's how important it is

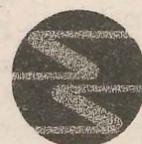
to God what you do with your material possessions," he said.

Today as in Zacchaeus' day, he continued, obstacles block people's view of Jesus. "You promote your own eternal death by being absorbed with the world around you."

When Jesus called up to Zacchaeus, Graham said, He told him to make haste.

"I'm going to ask you tonight to make haste and come to Jesus," Graham said. "Jesus is still passing through St. Louis. He wants to have dinner with you."

Billy Graham and Jimmy Carter are working together to relieve suffering in Iraq. Story on page 12.



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ANNUIITY BOARD

Abortion procedure could come before Supreme Court

By Tom Strode
SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

WASHINGTON (BP)—The legal fate of a controversial abortion technique recently might have moved a step closer to consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld laws in Illinois and Wisconsin prohibiting the procedure, called "partial-birth abortion" by opponents. The court's action, announced Oct. 26, was decided on a 5-4 vote.

That ruling clashes with ones in late September by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. A three-judge panel struck down such abortion bans in Arkansas, Iowa and Nebraska.

"This makes it likely that the Supreme Court will rule, perhaps next year, on whether *Roe v. Wade* covers" this specific procedure, said Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee.

Roe v. Wade is the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

The procedure prohibited by the bans reached public awareness earlier in this decade and is typically performed in the fifth or sixth month of pregnancy. As practiced by some abortion doctors, it involves the delivery of an intact baby feet first until only the head is left in the birth canal. The doctor pierces the base of the baby's skull with surgical scissors, then inserts a catheter into the opening and suctions out the brain. The collapse of the skull enables easier removal of the dead child.

"Clearly the Supreme Court must eventually resolve this conflict between differing federal courts of ap-

peals," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

While the Seventh and Eight circuits have rendered opinions, appeals of decisions on similar bans are pending in the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth circuits, according to the National Right to Life Committee. The Eighth Circuit ruled the laws constituted an "undue burden" on women seeking abortions and were too broad.

Though 27 states have passed partial-birth prohibitions, only eight were in effect before the Seventh Circuit's decision. Nearly all of the others have been struck down or blocked by courts. The bans in effect are in Indiana, Mississippi, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee and Virginia, according to NRLC.

Gloria Feldt, president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said she was "shocked" by the Seventh Circuit's decision and promised to fight the ban in the courts.

While Land and Feldt contrasted sharply in their reactions to the opinion, the abortion opponent and advocate agreed on the impact of elections on the future of abortion.

"It is increasingly clear that the ballot box is the best solution to the legislatures' continuing assault on reproductive health and rights," Feldt said in a written release.

Land said the latest ruling "underscores once again the critical importance of voting only for presidents who will nominate only pro-life federal judges and justices and voting only for senators who will confirm only pro-life federal judges and justices."

Measure would make it a crime for doctors to prescribe suicide drugs

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill that would make it a federal crime for doctors to prescribe drugs to help terminally ill patients take their lives.

The legislation, approved Oct. 27 by a vote of 271-156, was spurred by alarm about an Oregon law permitting physician-assisted suicide.

The bill penalizes physicians who assist in a suicide but encourages doctors to treat the pain of dying patients.

The Family Research Council backed the House's passage of the bill, known as the Pain Relief Promotion Act.

"Our laws must reflect a respect for life, especially for those who are weak, vulnerable and suffering," said Janet Parshall, the conservative Christian group's chief spokesperson.

Likewise, Cardinal William Keeler, chairman of the U.S. Catholic bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities, said the vote

"should mark a turning point in our nation's efforts to promote the comfort and dignity of seriously ill people."

Critics say doctors will fear losing their license to prescribe drugs—and spending at least 20 years in jail for assisting suicide—so much that they would decline to dispense medicine that is needed, Associated Press reported.

"This is an extraordinary intrusion not only into states' rights, but into the practices of medicine," said Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore.

Opponents of assisted suicide have been lobbying for legislation since June 1998, when Attorney General Janet Reno determined that federal drug agents could not penalize doctors who help terminally ill patients die under Oregon's Death With Dignity Act.

"We were disappointed in the vote," Reno said, adding that the administration will work with the Senate in an effort to defeat the legislation there.



C.R. Daley 1918-1999

Daley Observations

Churches: "Today a Baptist church is one of the easiest things to get into and the hardest to get out of. Maybe just the reverse ought to be so."

Friendship: "Jesus thought and expected the best of his humanly weak disciples, and they were the better for his confidence. ... It is better to believe the best about others and be disappointed should they fail than to believe the worst about others and brag on our insight when they fail."

Devotion: "Where were you last Sunday? In Sunday school? Good, then cut this out and slip it under the door of your neighbor who went to the lake. I'll give him one later to slip under yours."

Journalism: "Truth in reporting and sincerity in interpretation of events will be my guiding principle whatever the costs. If I praise, it will be honest; if I criticize or question, it will be with good intentions."

Leadership: "One who is especially sensitive to the spiritual and moral teachings of Jesus often has to stand alone or with the minority. There is something sad about this."

Race: "A sadder truth is that the ideals (Martin Luther) King lived and died for are Baptist ideals. ... Could it be that Baptists provided the insights and dreams for Martin Luther King, only to reject him when he sought to bring them to realization?"

Kentucky: "Heaven is not earth's happiest experiences as some poets say; but, if it were, Kentucky's October colors and Cumberland's dawn would be just inside the pearly gates."

C.R. Daley's death last month cannot diminish his impact on Kentucky Baptists. In pulpits, at Georgetown College and in the *Western Recorder*, Daley not only reminded us of our duties as Christians and Baptists, but he also taught us the importance of staying true to God and our convictions despite popular opinion.

The *Western Recorder* has two projects dedicated to preserve the memory of its former editor:

Daley Observations This book contains 75 of the best and most influential writings by the "Dean of State Baptist Newspaper Editors."

Daley's columns span significant moments in American life and the Baptist world. Topics range from the Civil Rights movement to living in Kentucky. Daley's insights are an important addition to any library.

The C.R. & Christine Daley Endowment This fund, administered by the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, supports the goal of providing the *Western Recorder* to every Kentucky Baptist senior pastor.

Book orders (\$15 each), or endowment donations can be sent to the *Western Recorder* office at Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.



Or come visit us at our booth at the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting in Northern Kentucky, Nov. 15-17. Copies of the book will be on sale there.

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERN RECORDER

Christians asked to be better stewards of creation

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

WACO, Texas (ABP)—Please don't call them nature worshippers.

They are environmentalists, to be sure, but unlike some who claim that title, they care for creation because they believe in God.

"If we take the Bible seriously, we will be environmentalists," explained Tony Campolo, a popular speaker and author who teaches at Eastern College in St. David, Pa.

Campolo joined a group of like-minded activists for a conference last month on environmentalism from a Christian perspective held at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Linking environmental concerns to the biblical mandate and attempting to broaden environmental sensitivity beyond the agenda of secular organizations were recurring themes of the conference, which attracted clergy, educators, laity and students.

Larry Lehr, who teaches in Baylor's environmental studies department, complained that "a forceful and dynamic statement" about the environment is lacking from the pulpits of many denominations. Churches appear more at ease talking about abortion, homosexuality and corporal punishment than ad-

ressing issues of God's creation, he said.

Even more harmful, other speakers added, is that some Christians preach that humans should dominate creation rather than care for it.

This stems from one interpretation of Gen. 1:28. In the King James Version, God tells Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Christians often have taken this passage to mean humans may use creation in any way they need. Biblical environmentalists, meanwhile, believe God commands Christians to be caretakers and stewards rather than rulers of the earth.

"Our theological heritage often has been harmful to the way we view ecology," said James Nash, a United Methodist minister who teaches at Boston University's School of Theology.

"The anti-environmental position must not stand unchallenged," Nash said. "The fact is, we are involved in a

great ethical, theological and social struggle. ... Unfortunately, we can't make our case by appealing to our shared Christian theologies."

Nash disputes a common view taught among Christians that the world was created exclusively for the benefit of humans. He called that position "theologically arrogant" and said it has led Christians to create "a God conformed to our own image."

Nash said Christians are rather called to "reflect the true divine image."

Campolo called it ironic that the very Christians who most often decry the influence

of secular "humanism" in culture are themselves humanistic when it comes to the environment.

"We have this idea that God created the planet just for us," Campolo said. "If that's not humanism, I don't know what is. The heavens were created to declare the glory of God."

Campolo cited Psalm 148 as affirming the idea that all things were created for the purpose of praising God. He drew an illustration from research by scientists on "songs" that are sung by

whales.

"If there weren't any human beings on earth, there would still be a place for whales," Campolo said. "They are not here just to provide blubber but to sing hymns to God."

Several speakers cited key distinctions between a Christian and secular perspective on environmentalism.

"We worship God as creator, not creation itself," said Terri Morgan, special projects coordinator for the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Another speaker said Christians especially should champion the environment because of their belief in the priesthood of the believer.

This doctrine is "vital to understanding care for creation," said Stan LaQuire, director of continuing education for Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and past director of the Evangelical Environmental Network.

If Christians stand as priests before God, others who look at Christians should be able to see in them what God is like, LaQuire said. Christians, he said, must "demonstrate to the rest of the world the joy God has in His creation."

Morgan agreed. "If we claim to know and love the Creator, we must live out our faith in a way that demonstrates respect for creation."

Christians & Creation



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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Ideas offered for Christians to help protect environment

WACO, Texas (ABP)—Be focused. Pick a problem. Start with it.

This simple formula is an easy way for Christians and churches to get involved in environmental concerns, said David Smith, president of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.

"We need advocates. A group like this is very powerful in the effect you can bring," Smith told participants in a conference on caring for creation as Christian stewardship at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

In addition to academic papers, speakers offered practical advice for Christians wanting to put their concern for the earth into practice.

Evangelical author and speaker Tony Campolo described his own work with World Vision and Compassion International and said sponsoring a child in a Third World country is a simple way to make a lifelong difference in another person's life.

For about \$25 a month, sponsors help feed, educate, clothe and love a child, he explained. Such a goal is not beyond the reach of anyone attending the conference, he said, especially challenging students in the audience, whom he suggested spend an equivalent amount each month on soft drinks.

Campolo said he is affiliated with another organization that buys large portions of the rain forest in Belize to save it from development. The world's rain forests are being leveled at a rate of a football field every minute, he said.

An individual can buy an acre of rain forest for \$50, Campolo said.

Campolo also suggested efforts to help create sustainable jobs in the Third World. "If we're going to end poverty in the Third World, we've got to create jobs," he said.

Reducing poverty helps the environment, he said, because it reduces overpopulation. Birth rates are highest among impoverished and uneducated populations, he explained.

Campolo said creating jobs in the Third World around the business of recycling would do double good. He cited an illustration of helping workers in one poor country manufacture sandals from used tires.

Christians & Creation

Get involved

Practical suggestions during a recent Christian environmental stewardship conference included:

■ **Become an advocate for a particular environmental cause.** For example, the rate of deaths caused by asthma is rising in the United States, with polluted air cited as a major contributor.

■ **Find out what's causing environmental hazards at home or around the world.** "Seventy-one percent of emissions come from four or five main industries," said Larry Lehr, a Baylor professor. "These are the result of our consumptive patterns."

■ **Change your own habits to reduce consumption and waste by recycling, conserving energy and water, driving more fuel-efficient vehicles and using mass transit.**

■ **Plant trees.**

■ **Encourage environmentalism as a missionary focus, taking trips to help poor people develop sustainable food supplies.** "Environmentalism has become a form of missionary work," conference speaker Tony Campolo suggested.

■ **Plan an evangelistic Bible study group around themes of creation, drawing from accounts such as the Genesis creation story, God's covenant with Noah and New Testament teachings on stewardship.**

■ **Create bulletin boards at church teaching care for creation from a biblical perspective.**

■ **Hold a congregational forum on issues such as over-consumption, simple living and frugality.**

■ **Hold an outdoor worship service.**

Judge halts anti-Mormon Web duo

SALT LAKE CITY (RNS)—A federal judge has ordered two longtime critics of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to temporarily stop distributing a portion of a Mormon handbook on the couple's Internet site.

The Mormon church claims the critics violated the copyright of Intellectual Reserve Inc., copyright holder for the church, by the posting.

It filed a suit last month against the critics, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, who run Utah Lighthouse Ministry in Salt Lake City, a group that disputes Mormon church teaching and practices.

The Tanners took the pages down when the suit was filed. On Oct. 14 they signed an affidavit promising not to post the materials, said the couple's attorney,

Brian Barnard, Associated Press reported. The group's Web site address is www.utlm.org.

U.S. District Court Judge Tena Campbell rejected other requests by the church, including that the Tanners destroy or turn over every copy of the church material they possessed. She said she could rule later whether the couple has a right to use the material.

The Tanners also said they voluntarily would remove an index reference to the disputed pages they had posted and agreed to refrain from distributing any copies of the material while the copyright controversy is before the courts.

Mrs. Tanner said the pages were posted as a service to Mormons seeking to learn how to remove their names from church membership rolls.

Some Gifts Just Don't Fit Under a Tree

Also:
In search of the "perfect" Christmas
Helping teens measure up
Millennial marks in time

Just ask the families of Kentuckians who've benefited from organ donations. The cover story for the holiday issue of Real Life offers a different view of the season for giving, showing the significance organ donations make in the lives of three recipients and their relatives. Participants also share how their Christian faith gave them hope during transplant and recovery.

Real Life magazine is an ideal resource for churches or individuals. Loaded with helpful stories about families, finance and fun, it shows how Christianity makes a difference in the issues we all face.

For churches, Real Life is the perfect outreach tool. As a gift to visitors, Real Life shows that your congregation cares about the challenges they face.

Whether for yourself or for someone else, Real Life is the ideal gift. For more information, call Mauri Smith toll-free at (888) 254-5728.

Or come visit our booth at the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting in Northern Kentucky, Nov. 15-17. Let us show how we can help your church reach out to its community.



Present this coupon at our booth during the KBC annual meeting to get a free issue of Real Life magazine

Inside this issue

Families

Happiness & heartbreak
Holidays can stir up emotions for single parents, blended families and others facing major life changes. Real Life offers tips for coping.

In search of the "perfect" Christmas Rather than chasing elusive holiday expectations, take time to rediscover the true meaning of the season.

Finance

Is downsizing the right size?
Is it time to downsize your home? We show what steps you should take to determine whether smaller is actually better for you.

Get serious about saving
The beginning of a new year is an ideal time to launch a personal savings plan that really works.

Fun

Tea, anyone? Need a cup of serenity poured on the chaos of life? Try afternoon tea, Kentucky style.

The gift A long-ago act of generosity remains a cherished holiday memory.

Faith

A Gift to you from First Baptist Church

The back cover of every issue features a friendly, evangelistic message to help explain the Christian faith. The back cover also includes a blank area you can personalize with a message from your church. Include us in your outreach strategy and we can provide you with a wrap-around cover that you can fill with a letter from the pastor, church schedule and more.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Internet gambling targeted.** A House of Representatives subcommittee approved legislation outlawing gambling on the Internet. The Crime Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee voted 5-3 Nov. 3 in favor of the Internet Gambling Prohibition Act. It appears the full committee, however, will not consider the bill until 2000. The proposal to ban Internet gambling would update a 1961 law that prohibits the use of telephone facilities to receive bets or send gambling information. Punishment for violation of the law could amount to a prison term of up to four years as well as a substantial fine.

■ **House backs prayer at school sports.** The House of Representatives approved a measure Nov. 2 asking the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn a lower court's ruling against prayers at high school football games. The nonbinding resolution states lawmakers' view that school-sponsored prayers at athletic events do not violate the Constitution. The measure changes no laws or court decisions. Supporters said the resolution is needed after a 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that barred school-sponsored prayer at football games.

■ **Churches of Christ holds meeting on race.** A meeting on race for the Churches of Christ led officials of Abilene (Texas) Christian University to pledge to apologize for past racial discriminations in admissions. Conference participants from the 1.8-million-member denomination said the meeting served as a bridge between black and white groups that they hope will serve as a basis for future discussion. Joe Thurgood, an African-American church elder from Santa Fe, N.M., said the meetings had deepened relationships. "Relationship is what we don't have," he said, referring to the black and white churches in the movement.

More Americans giving time than money

Continued from page 1

total of 19.9 billion hours, with a value of \$225.9 billion, according to Independent Sector estimates.

Americans seem to grow more altruistic as they grow grayer. Both volunteering and giving rose among people over age 65, another hopeful sign for charities because the number of Americans over 65 is expected to more than double to 70 million during the next 30 years.

What accounts for the dramatic jump from 93 million volunteers in 1995 to 109 million in 1998?

"There have been many more opportunities recently for people to do one-time and short-term volunteering," said Susan Ellis, president of Energize Inc., a consulting, training and publishing firm specializing in volunteers.

"Things like Caring Day and Make-a-Difference Day and Martin Luther King Day have raised the visibility factor" of possible outlets for volunteerism, Ellis said.

Independent Sector is pinning its hopes on the connection between volunteering and giving.

"Those who volunteer more contribute more," said research director Saxon-Harrod. "In fact, 84 percent of all charitable contributions were given by households where there was at least one volunteer."

Independent Sector's goal is to get Americans in every household to give 5 percent of their pre-tax income to charity. "That's a lofty goal," Melendez noted.

Charitable giving up

WASHINGTON (RNS)—America's top charities, including many Christian organizations, raised 16 percent more last year than they did in 1997, a Chronicle of Philanthropy survey has found.

The increase in donations is the largest since 1991, the first year the newspaper began ranking the 400 charities that raise the most money from private sources.

For the seventh time in a row, the Salvation Army topped the list, raising \$1.2 billion.

The YMCA of the USA and Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund came in second and third, respectively, each having increases of more than 25 percent. The YMCA raised \$629.3 million and the Fidelity fund raised \$571.9 million.

Several religious organizations in addition to the Salvation Army were among the top 20 groups cited by the magazine that covers the philanthropic community.

Catholic Charities, USA, ranked seventh, raising \$446.2 million. World Vision, an evangelical Chris-

tian relief and development organization, raised \$297.2 million, ranking 13th. Campus Crusade for Christ, an evangelical Christian ministry, raised \$264.6 million, ranking 19th.

Fund raisers attribute the increase in giving to the strong economy.

"With the creation of capital for so many Americans, the last three or four years have been the best time for nonprofit fund-raising in over 25 years—for as long as I've been in the field," said Lauren Libby, chief operating officer at The Navigators, a religious missionary organization that saw an 8 percent rise in its domestic contributions.

In addition to the economy, some groups say they are starting to see a sizable intergenerational wealth transfer, the newspaper reported.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance received so many requests regarding estate planning from donors that it has created a separate entity to advise donors on deferred gifts, such as bequests.

Celebrating Jesus in Parksville

Last Sunday my wife, Pam, and I headed from Louisville to Danville and out of Danville to the beautiful community of Parksville. Upon our arrival at Parksville Baptist Church, we were greeted by a very warm and enthusiastic pastor, Bill Boldt.

Bill was excited and thankful. It was a magnificent fall day in Parksville. The trees were ablaze in color, and Bill's excitement was a result of the previous week's revival services, led by Earl Miller of Campbellsville.

Pam and I were there with the Celebrate Jesus 2000 balloon to cap a great week as Parksville Church celebrated 75 years of ministry. Bill told us of the great services the church had experienced that week. Many decisions were made, and from the time we drove up one could sense it was a great time for the church.

That Sunday afternoon the church held a service that in many ways celebrated the past, with some previous pastors present or participating via telephone. Stories were told of lives that were changed during the ministries of some of these dedicated servants. It was truly a glorious time.

Then, when the service was over, we inflated the Celebrate Jesus balloon, and until darkness came we went up and down with all ages, from the very young to the more chronologically gifted.

The people had a great time, and so did we. It is so great to be able to meet folks who feel so good about what God is doing in their church. We worked hard, with the help of several others, but it was a strong conclusion to what had been a great week for the church.

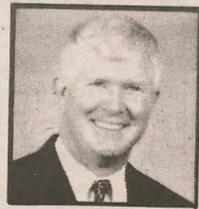
It was a treat for Pam and me. I was reminded, as I frequently am, of the rich heritage and tradition that exists in our churches across the state.

I am so thankful for the opportunity God has given me to travel the state with the balloon, preaching His Word and representing our Kentucky Baptist Assemblies.

That Sunday afternoon in Parksville was just another reminder that it is a good time for Kentucky Baptists. I'm just glad to be a part of it and praise the Lord for the ministry He has given to us.

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

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Rusty Ellison

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Kosher hotel Christmas tree crisis is solved

JERUSALEM (RNS)—Israel's hotels and its Orthodox rabbinical leaders have reached a precedent-setting agreement to permit Christians to celebrate Christmas and New Year's Eve with all of the traditional trimmings in the country's major hotels.

"Christian guests will be able to practice their customs at these two special events, which in this year also signify to many the beginning of the new millennium," Avi Rosenthal, director general of the Israel Hotel Association, said Nov. 2. "Music can be played and Christmas trees can be erected for Christian guests in designated areas."

In previous years, hotels in Jewish areas of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and other major cities that erected Christmas trees or staged New Year's Eve parties risked losing their kosher licenses.

The state-controlled rabbis who certify hotels as kosher viewed such activities as violating the spirit of Jewish law, even if they did not directly impact food preparation.

Both Christmas and New Year's fall on the Jewish Sabbath this year, further complicating the situation. Observant Jews mark the Sabbath by not playing or listening to music. They also do not cook or use electricity from sundown Friday until darkness Saturday evening.

With Israel expecting large numbers of Christian tourists for millennial celebrations, the conflict threatened to cause economic problems

Church of Jesus' burial getting second exit

JERUSALEM (RNS)—Israel's Ministry of Public Security is planning to seize the initiative from rival Christian church denominations and open an emergency exit in Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, officials in the ministry said Nov. 2.

Leaders of the Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Armenian denominations, which all control different sections of the ancient church structure, have been at odds for months over the question of a second exit in the church where tradition holds that Jesus was buried.

Israeli police fear that the church

could pose a fire hazard to some of the million or more millennial pilgrims expected to visit the site, particularly when the church is packed with holiday visitors. There currently is just one entrance and exit to the church.

Privately, leaders of some church denominations have said they would prefer that Israel take charge of the affair in order to break a longstanding impasse over the location of the exit. Other church leaders, however, resent what they view as government intervention into the status of private church property and tradition.

for the hotels.

Under the compromise, hotel Christmas and New Year's Eve celebrations will be confined to locales that are out of sight of Jewish guests, who presumably will be celebrating the Jewish Sabbath, Rosenthal said.

"Christians will be able to get their traditional turkey meal with all of the trimmings—even though it will also be kosher and cooked before the start of the Sabbath," said Rosenthal. "The same goes for New Year's Eve."

He said that no Christmas trees will be erected in public hotel areas, which according to Israel's chief rabbis must preserve a "Jewish character."

Rosenthal said the hotels are happy with the solution, which he called a "live and let live" compromise. But some tourism operators said the rules still will cramp the style of tourists and pilgrims, who will feel they have to curtail their holiday celebrations.

Most of the major hotels in Jerusalem have kosher licenses, but they are expected to be 95 percent full with Christian tourists in December. Hotels in Arab east Jerusalem and Nazareth, however, which are generally Christian or Muslim-owned and operated, are not bound by rabbinical restrictions and typically erect Christmas trees in their lobbies and celebrate Christmas and New Year's.

Denominations closing doors to protest Jerusalem mosque plan

NAZARETH, Israel (RNS)—The three major Christian denominations in Israel and the West Bank will close church doors Nov. 22-23 to protest an Israeli proposal to permit the construction of a mosque alongside Nazareth's Church of the Annunciation.

In their strongest statement on the issue yet, Christian leaders said Nov. 4 that the Israeli government's decision, in effect, constitutes discrimination against the local Christian community and a government show of favoritism toward a small group of Muslim "fundamentalists."

"Peaceful co-existence and confident harmony have recently been shaken by a series of sad events that have been painful and counterproductive for the majority of both faith communities," the letter said.

"Despite the ruling of the court of law in Israel that the land adjacent to the Basilica of the Annunciation is state land, the government has supported a small group of fundamentalists who are intent on building a mosque only a few meters away from the historical church of the Annunciation in Nazareth."

The decision to close the churches in midweek is intended to express the "disapprobation of all the churches at the way that their rights have been summarily violated," added the letter, signed by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Diodoris I, the Latin (Catholic) Patriarch Michel Sabbah and the Armenian Patriarch Torkom Manoogian.

Despite the strong wording of the letter, observers believe the church protest likely will remain relatively limited in impact.

Israeli Minister of Public Security Shlomo Ben Ami, in a response statement, expressed "regret" over the Christian move, saying, "There can't be a shadow of a doubt concerning the government commitment toward Christian freedom of worship in every site in Israel."

Dyer serves in Branson

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College sophomore Jennifer Dyer, daughter of Mike Dyer of London, spent 10 weeks of last summer in Branson, Mo., working with children.

Two summers ago Dyer went to Branson as a member of her church youth group to minister to the children of tourists. She thoroughly enjoyed the experience and, through the help of the US-2 missionary in Branson, returned for an entire summer of ministry this year.

Dyer served on a team with four other college students and the US-2 missionary. Their primary responsibilities consisted of supervising and helping the church youth groups that came to lead day camps at the local campgrounds or vacation Bible schools at the local Boys and Girls Clubs.

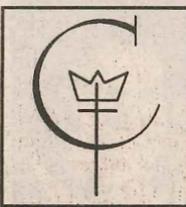
Conducting day camps at the local campgrounds presented interesting challenges because children and their families came and went during the week. Some parents told Dyer they specifically come to Branson each summer knowing there would be a Christian ministry for their children. Dyer remembered some of the children from her mission trip two years before.

The vacation Bible schools held

in the local Boys and Girls Clubs attracted the children of local residents. Many of the children came from broken homes and had nowhere else to go when their sole parent left for work.

During the 10 weeks of the program, 200 children accepted Christ as their personal Savior. Most of these children were reached through the ministry at the Boys and Girls Clubs.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Dyer describes the most difficult part of the summer as coping with being far from home. When she arrived in Branson, she knew only one person, the US-2 missionary. But she also knew God and placed her total trust in Him. Initially she found meeting people to

be somewhat difficult, but as she reflected on her summer she said those relationships formed the best part of her experience. She enjoyed the new friendships with fellow workers, youth and children, but most of all she thanks God for her deeper relationship with Christ.

Her willingness to serve made her a blessing and brought her a blessing.

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

Another child to hold

We've all seen the smudged earth-tone-and-pastel pictures of a man sitting on a rock, surrounded by children—all kinds of children, red and yellow, black and white.

They all are looking at this man with hopeful, smiling faces. The pictures are as familiar to us as white anklets, black patent leather shoes and clip-on neckties. These pictures are the essence of Sunday school.

From the beginning of our personal church histories, it was the goal of our Sunday school teachers to make Jesus relevant to us. We noticed that those hopeful, smiling faces in the pictures weren't all that different from ours.

The children in the picture were looking to this Man for... something. Maybe we should, too.

What were they looking for? He wasn't Santa, there was no bag of presents. He didn't have candy or money like Grandma or Grandpa. All He had to offer, it seemed, was Himself, his lap, his arms, his love.

If all Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children had to offer kids was "three hots and a cot," there would be no need for this weekly column or for the Thanksgiving offering.

But you, Kentucky Baptists, have said you want more for these

kids—your kids. You want them to meet Jesus.

You want them to experience real shelter, real protection, real nurturing. You want them to know what it is like to feel accepted, valued and loved. You want them to know what it's like to find a Savior.

In 130 years, you haven't missed a day on this job of caring for the forgotten children and families of Kentucky.

We need your help now more than ever because the kids need Jesus now more than ever. Many of these boys and girls never have seen those Sunday school pictures that are so familiar to you and me. When they come to us, many of them don't realize they have a God-sized hole in

their heart that He is waiting to fill. Take a moment and ask God to lead you in your giving this year. In a way, we're asking you to give us a bigger lap, so we can have yet another child to hold.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

Bill Smithwick is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Road, Middletown, KY 40243. Call (800) 456-1388. KBHC's Internet address is: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>

WORLD VIEW

■ **Saudis arrest Christians at prayer meetings.** About 40 Filipino Christians were arrested in Saudi Arabia Oct. 8 after police in Riyadh raided prayer gatherings in two private homes, according to reports. Muslim Saudi Arabia does not allow the public practice of other faiths. Officially, private non-Muslim worship is allowed, but it often is not tolerated by the Saudi Muttawa, or religious police. Twenty-seven of those arrested were released the same day, according to an evangelical-oriented news agency that monitors religious freedom issues. The remaining 13 were released Oct. 31. After their release, those arrested were told they would be deported.

■ **Suspect arrested in burning deaths.** A suspect has been arrested in connection with the murder in India of an Australian Christian missionary and his two sons, who were burned alive inside their vehicle in January. Andha Naik was arrested in a village in India's Bihar state, the same area in which Graham Staines, 58, and his young sons were killed by a mob of Hindu extremists. Naik was said to be a deputy to Dara Singh, the accused leader of the mob, who is still at large, Associated Press reported. The murder of Staines and his sons is just one example of Hindu violence against Christians that has swept across India in recent months.

■ **Christian Solidarity International loses U.N. status.** Christian Solidarity International, a Swiss-based group active in freeing slaves in Sudan, has lost its United Nations accreditation after breaching the world body's rules by allowing a Sudanese rebel leader to speak as its

representative. The action grew out of a flap in March when Sudan People's Liberation Army leader John Garang represented CSI at a meeting in Geneva. The SPLA has been fighting the Sudanese government for 16 years to gain autonomy for mostly Christian and animist tribes living in Sudan's south.

■ **Israel turns away Irish Christian pilgrims.** A group of Irish Christians who traveled by boat to Israel were turned away from the port of Haifa by authorities who mistakenly labeled them as members of the controversial Denver-based Concerned Christians sect, an Israeli human rights group said. Rabbi David Rosen, head of the Israel office of the Anti-Defamation League, said the incident reflected the "serious intelligence inadequacies" of police and customs officials who will have to cope with a heightened flow of millennial tourists to Israel while needing to single out potentially dangerous groups from harmless pilgrims.

■ **Islamic law imposed in Nigerian state.** More than 100,000 Muslims attended a celebration to mark the adoption of Islamic law in Nigeria's northern Zamfara state Oct. 27. Zamfara is the first Nigerian state to adopt sharia, or Islamic law. Under the law, men and women will be segregated in public transportation, and beatings and amputations will be carried out on criminals convicted of adultery, murder and theft. Nigeria is divided along sharp religious and ethnic lines. About 45 percent of the population of 120 million is Muslim. An equal number are Christian, with most of the Christian population in the nation's southern region.

Carter & Graham working to relieve suffering in Iraq

ATLANTA (RNS)—Two prominent Baptists are considering ways to relieve the suffering of citizens in Iraq.

Former President Jimmy Carter recently criticized the U.S. policy of sanctions against Iraq and said he is working with evangelist Billy Graham to help people suffering in that country.

"In Iraq ... our ill-advised, sustained sanctions on shipments of food and medicine and so forth have caused a quintupling of the infant mortality rate in the last seven years," Carter said in an interview with Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly, a Public Broadcasting Service program.

Through Friendship Force, an organization he started with his wife, Rosalynn, Carter has been building relations with Christian and Muslim leaders in Iraq.

"Billy Graham and I agreed—I contacted Billy Graham personally—that it would be a good thing to bypass Saddam Hussein and to go directly to the religious leaders of Iraq," Carter said.

Carter said both he and Graham have met with those leaders in the United States. The two men are considering writing an opinion-editorial piece together, he said.

"What we are trying to do is to let the American people know ... that when we try to impose sanctions to hurt Saddam Hussein, we actually hurt the people who are already suffering under his despotic leadership," Carter said.

Carter's son Chip is vice president

of Friendship Force, which also hopes to have a meeting with leaders in Iraq.

"We're talking about the possibility of my son and Billy Graham's son (Franklin) ... going to Baghdad as highly publicized visitors who would certainly avoid the political aspect associated with Saddam Hussein, but who would give publicity to the plight of the people in Iraq who are suffering."

During the interview, Carter commented on numerous other topics, including the "charitable choice" provision of the 1996 welfare reform legislation. Those new regulations permit faith-based groups to use public funds to provide services such as job training, food and basic medical care.

"I don't espouse and don't approve of government grants to churches to carry out the ministry of Christ, which should be a direct responsibility of their members, who profess to be Christians," Carter said.

He said church members should spend their own money and time with people in need.

"I've been in need—and I've been part of it—the self-satisfaction of a homogeneous church congregation who feels very self-satisfied when we go to religious services every Sunday, and we dress in our nice clothes and we sit next to people with clothes just like ours," he said. "And we don't even know the people that live half a mile away, who might not have any of the advantages that we have."

The Oneida Players present...



All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

by Robert Fulghum

Conceived and adapted by
Ernest Zulia and David Caldwell

November 18, 19, 20
7:00 p.m. each evening
Admission is free.

OBI alumni and friends are cordially invited to dinner before the show on Saturday, November 20. Dinner will be served at 5:45 p.m. Visit with friends and enjoy an evening of good food, fun, and entertainment.

We hope you can join us!

Dr. W. E. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, Kentucky 40972, (606) 847-4111, www.oneidaschool.org

A special Rice

Last month Associate Professor Charles Rice was the featured speaker for the Korea Baptist National Youth Camp on the campus of the Baptist seminary in Taejon, South Korea.

The Korean youth gave Charles the name "Chop Sal," which translates as "special rice." The three-day conference brought 1,200 youth, ages 12-18, from across Korea. Charles spoke at two evening worship services and the concluding Saturday evangelistic service. More than 200 youth made professions of faith.

"The enthusiastic youth had spirited services full of praise and joy. The seminary praise band provided outstanding music in services that lasted three hours," Charles said.

"Like our own youth, the Korean kids thrived on attention. The busy Korean pastors don't have time for the teenagers. I tried to talk with them and build a relationship. It was a wonderful experience." On his last day, many of the youth lined up to talk and touch him.

At Sam Tong, Charles preached at the American mission sponsored by the Koreans. The

pastor preaches to 1,500 people who attend five Sunday morning services, beginning at 5 a.m. Men of the church meet five mornings a week at 5 a.m. for prayer.

One Sunday Charles and his wife, Marita, worshipped in a house church 35 miles from Taejon; 16 people attended. The 62-year-old pastor has started seven churches.

Near the church is a Buddhist temple that hosts hundreds of visitors. Charles and Marita were deeply moved by parents teaching their children the religious rituals.

"The parents got so excited when the children did it right. I was convicted about the need to help American parents get excited about Christ. The

Lord dealt with me about moving beyond my comfort zone at Clear Creek," Charles recalled.

That encounter was a crucial step toward the decision that will take Charles and Marita to Florida and a position as associate pastor/minister to families at Oakview Baptist Church in Okeechobee.

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

BOOKS

Bad Girls of the Bible: And What We Can Learn from Them. Liz Curtis Higgs. Water Brook, 1999. 244 pages. \$12.95 ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

Kentuckian Liz Curtis Higgs is an entertaining and humorous speaker, and she brings her humor and insight to this study of "the Bible's bad news belles."

The "bad to the bone" women are there (Jezebel, Delilah, Potiphar's wife) along with those who were "bad for a moment" (Sapphira, Michal, Lot's wife), "bad for a season but not forever" (the sinful woman, Rahab, the woman at the well) and the "first bad girl" (Eve).

Each discussion of a woman begins with Higgs offering a contemporary retelling of the story. The stories vary in their effectiveness at recreating the story for the modern reader, but each is a creative attempt at offering a contemporary counterpart to the ancient "bad girl." The reader certainly will spend more time in application of the stories because Higgs has opened up the possibility of contemporary counterparts.

Where the book shines is in the verse-by-verse study of the biblical text. It is obvious Higgs has done her homework, and she presents an insightful and entertaining exposition of the Scripture.

Higgs uses the examples of these women to encourage her readers to avoid the tragic mistakes of all of these women and to experience the grace of some. Each chapter ends with Higgs listing lessons from the life of the woman and then questions useful in individual or group study. *Wayne Hager*

God Crucified: Monotheism & Christology in the New Testament. Richard Bauckham. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998. 79 pages. \$12. ♦♦♦♦

Affirming the oneness of God while asserting the divinity of Christ has presented both internal and external challenges to Christianity. Externally, non-Christian religions, unable to see the logic of our Trinitarian formulations, have charged us with believing in three gods. Internally, the church has struggled with the most appropriate ways to explain this mystery.

Richard Bauckham, professor of New Testament at St. Mary's College of the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, contends that most attempts to affirm the divinity of Christ while affirming biblical monotheism are unnecessarily confusing because they start at the wrong place; i.e., the philosophical consideration of the nature of divinity.

Rather than trying to define divinity, and then demonstrate how Jesus meets the criteria, Bauckham argues that we should start with a discussion of who God is; i.e., with the particular identity of the one God of the covenant. Rather than starting with the human Jesus, and attempting to reason Him back into the divine person, Bauckham contends we need to begin with the God of Israel, who is distinguished absolutely from all other reality, and point out how Jesus is included "within the unique identity of the one God of Israel." In making his case, Bauckham appeals to the Jewish monotheism of the Second Temple period.

While the subject of this book may seem a bit esoteric, it is nonetheless crucial to Christian apologetics. Bauckham handles a complex subject with clarity. His dialogue between New Testament

and Old Testament texts will prove useful for teacher and preacher. *Jim Holladay*

Voices in the Night: The Prison Poems of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Edited and translated by Edwin Robertson. Zondervan Publishing House, 1999. 128 pages. \$14.99 ♦♦♦♦

During the two years he was imprisoned—charged with sedition against the Third Reich—Dietrich Bonhoeffer continued to write about himself, his friends, his church, the future of Germany and his own future. While much of his writing took the form of letters and essays, the most poignant expression of his hopes and fears took the form of poems.

While many of the poems in this collection appear elsewhere, Robertson's collection serves to contextualize the poems, thereby enhancing their impact. In addition to retranslating the known collection of prison poems, Robertson includes some previously unpublished material.

A unique feature of this compilation is the commentary that follows each poem, which has the value of placing each poem in its historical and conceptual context.

The most fascinating aspect of this collection is the insight it provides into the heart, mind and soul of a man facing the end of his life, who attempts not only to tie up the loose ends of his theological reflection, but to interpret the meaning of his life. For those of us who have struggled with Bonhoeffer's seemingly early pacifism (as reflected in "The Cost of Discipleship") vis a vis his involvement in the plot to assassinate Hitler, the poem *The Death of Moses*, provides a fascinating look into Bonhoeffer's struggles with the twists and

turns of his own life.

Robertson has done a masterful job of translation. One can only imagine the difficulty involved in translating poetry from German to English. Yet, he has maintained the internal and external rhyming scheme that was so important to Bonhoeffer. *Jim Holladay*

Lifesavers: 20 Quick and Easy-to-Use Bible Lessons for Kids. Susan Reith Swan. Illustrated by Susan O'Neill. Judson Press, 1999. 93 pages. \$15. ♦♦♦♦

Every teacher of children faces those weeks when there just isn't enough preparation time. This book is for those times.

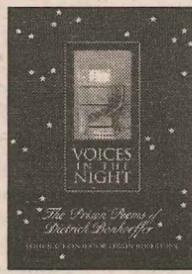
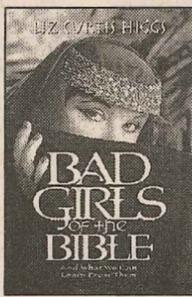
Written by a music teacher/school librarian, these lessons are designed to be quick and easy, requiring very few materials. Each lesson plan includes songs and activities, as well as an easy-to-tell

Bible story. The same lesson gives suggested activities for different ages.

Of particular help are the questions for each lesson that are designed to get the children to participate. The book is divided into three sections: Bible story lessons, topical lessons and Scripture verses.

The strength of this book is the way in which it encourages participation by the children. Even the telling of the stories is hands-on for the children.

Most Sunday school offices would do well to have a book like this on its shelves to pass on to the "spur-of-the-moment" teacher who takes the place of an absent teacher. In addition, these lessons lend themselves to use for those who are home-schooling and need some fresh ideas for Bible activities. *Wayne Hager*



Trio of authors survey America's changing religious landscape

By Steve Rabey
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON—In his 1965 book, "The Secular City," theologian Harvey Cox predicted the imminent collapse of traditional religion. One year later, a provocative Time magazine cover story asked, "Is God Dead?"

But by now it has become crystal clear that a secular city is about as likely as shorter work weeks or paperless offices.

"It would appear that news of God's death will always be premature," writes Michael Shermer in "How We Believe: The Search for God in an Age of Science," one of three new books describing the shifting shapes of contemporary American belief.

The most insightful of the new studies is Wade Clark Roof's "Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion."

"Religion in the United States is like a brilliantly colored kaleidoscope ever taking on new configurations of blended hues," writes sociologist Roof, who has updated his acclaimed 1993 book, "A Generation of Seekers."

Roof revisited some of the baby

boomers he interviewed earlier, and who are remaking the American religious landscape in their own image. His new study illuminates seemingly contradictory reports about the current state of belief, concluding that while religion may be losing some of its influence in public life, spirituality is becoming a more important component of people's lives.

Roof, who was raised a Methodist, finds a growing discontent with secular "salvations" such as progress, science or careers and "a yearning for something that transcends a consumption ethic and material definitions of success."

Like Lester Burnham, played by actor Kevin Spacey in the film "American Beauty," boomers seem to be saying, "I have lost something, but I'm not exactly sure what it is."

Their yearning has given birth to something Roof calls "a quest culture," which is characterized by "a deep hunger for a self-transformation that is both genuine and personally satisfying." For some, this quest has led to church, while others draw inspiration and guidance from books, therapy, self-help groups, the Internet and popular culture. "There is a staggering openness to exploring possibil-

ities of belief," writes Roof.

George Gallup Jr. has been tracking people's religious views for more than half a century, and during that time one thing hasn't changed a bit: Americans remain the most religious people on the planet. Consistently, approximately 95 percent of Americans have reported they believe in God, surpassing Canadians (70 percent of whom believe) or Britons (61 percent).

But as Gallup reports in "Surveying the Religious Landscape: Trends in U.S. Beliefs," interest in spirituality is booming. "The percentage of Americans who say they feel the need in their lives to experience spiritual growth has surged from 58 percent in 1994 to 82 percent in 1998," writes Gallup, an Episcopal layman, and co-author Michael Lindsay.

Church and synagogue attendance and membership figures have remained remarkably stable through the years, with about 40 percent of Americans attending weekly, and approximately 70 percent saying they belong to a congregation.

Still, members don't give their churches the kind of unquestioning loyalty they once did. For example, 79 per-

cent of U.S. Catholics say they are far more likely to follow the dictates of their own conscience than the teachings of the pope.

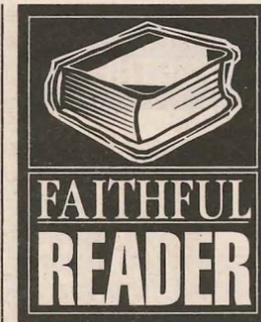
Roof found Baby Boomer Americans of all religious stripes exhibit a mix-and-match approach to meaning that is closer to a jazz musician's improvisational style than a choir member's more classical approach.

"The real story of American religious life in this half century is the rise of a new sovereign self that defines and sets limits on the very meaning of the divine," Roof writes.

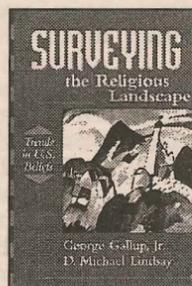
In their quest for meaningful spiritual lives, boomers want to be grounded, but at the same time they want to remain fluid. "There is," Roof states, "the dilemma of wanting social support and community, yet resisting too much infringement on personal space."

Author Michael Shermer is the director of the Skeptics Society, and he says surveys of that group's members find that one-third think it "very likely" or "possible" that there is a God.

In "How We Believe," Shermer states people describe their own beliefs as rational and logical while saying others believe in God for emotional need and comfort.



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



PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Missionaries Marc and Annie Byrd as they work with a Christian English Club that recently began in Poland.

■ Semester missionary Russ Pross as he works with missionaries Marc and Annie Byrd in Poland.

■ Missionaries Mark and Susie Edworthy ask prayer for "attractive ways" to reach Radosc, Poland, where they are starting a church.

■ The annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New England Nov. 11-12 in Hartford, Conn.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **BARBOURVILLE**—Barbourville/Knox County Ministerial Association will host **Life Action Ministries** for a county-wide crusade. Nightly services, youth conference and ladies' luncheons will be held at First Church of Barbourville. For information, call **Tim Mills** at (606) 337-9379.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Elk Horn Church called **Ron Gleaves** as pastor. Liberty Church called **Carlos Compton** as pastor.

Saloma Church reported three professions of faith and a letter of transfer during a recent revival. **John Chowning** is pastor.

Palestine Church reported seven rededications during a revival with **Alan Witham** as evangelist. **Landon Hadley** is pastor.

■ **DE MOSSVILLE**—Wilmington Church will host **The Ball Family Singers** Nov. 21, 7 p.m. For information, call (270) 356-1393. **John Justice** is pastor.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Unity Church hosted a "Trunk or Treat" outreach ministry. **Mitchell Ash** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Heavenbound Church called **Don Daniel** as pastor in October.

■ **HENDERSON**—First Church ordained **Shawn Critser** and **Heath Farmer** into the gospel ministry. **Bill Patterson** is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—First Church will host the **Samford University Baptist Student Union Choir** Nov. 13-14. The choir will work with Neighborhood Ministry and a concert will be presented Nov. 13 at 4 p.m. and in the morning worship. For information, call (270) 886-1216. **John Laida** is the pulpit supply.

■ **LEBANON**—Muldraugh Hill Church ordained **Keith Benningfield** and **Donnie Veatch** as deacons on Oct. 17. The church also celebrated its 125th anniversary Oct. 24. **Vic Stansbury** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Beechmont Church will host a Thanksgiving dinner and service Nov. 21, 6:30 p.m. For information, call (502) 368-5806. **James Ward** is pastor.

Cloverleaf Church will host **The Anchormen** from Goldsboro, N.C., in concert Nov. 21, 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Shively Church will host a note burning ceremony Nov. 21. For information, call (502) 367-9155. **Mark Howell** is pastor.

Valley View Church had 1,450 people in a note burning and worship service celebrating the retirement of a \$2 million debt. **Kevin Hamm** is pastor.

Study suggests prayed-for heart patients fared better than others

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (RNS)—A group of Missouri heart patients who were prayed for without their knowledge suffered 10 percent fewer complications than another group, a study has found.

"It's potentially a natural explanation we don't understand yet," said William Harris, a heart researcher and lead author of the study. "It's potentially a super- or other-than-natural mechanism."

He and other researchers at the Mid America Heart Institute, the heart program of St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Mo., conducted the study of 990 patients admitted during a year to the coronary care unit of the institute.

By a random process, the patients were divided into two groups—one where they were prayed for daily by community volunteers for four weeks and another where no one was assigned to pray for them.

The volunteers were given only the first names of the patients and asked to pray daily for their rapid recovery with no complications. The patients, their families and their caregivers were not aware of the study, Associated Press reported.

After four weeks, the patients who were prayed for had suffered about 10 percent fewer complications, ranging from chest pain to cardiac arrest. The

researchers reported their findings in the issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine, published Oct. 25 by the American Medical Association.

While researchers said the findings suggest prayer might be an effective addition to regular medical care, Harris acknowledged the limitations of his study. For one thing, many patients in the comparison group also could have had friends and relatives praying for them.

An expert not involved in the study said it and a similar 1988 study in San Francisco had questionable methods.

Both studies counted complications using their own scoring systems, which have not been proven to be medically valid, said Dr. Herbert Benson, a professor at Harvard Medical School and president of the Mind/Body Medical Institute at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

Christmas plans?

The Western Recorder is assembling a special listing of Christmas programs throughout Kentucky. Please send information about cantatas, nativity scenes and other happenings to Shirley Wooton by Nov. 29. Mail: Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. Fax: (502) 244-6474. E-mail: shirley_wooton@kybaptist.org.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Minister of praise and family life. Trinity Baptist (CBF/SBC) is a multi-racial church with ministries to handicapped, foster families and internationals. We seek an associate to provide musical leadership in a multi-faceted approach to worship. Responsibilities also include developing a small-group ministry and some pastoral care. Possible preaching opportunities. Send resumé by Nov. 30 to 1675 Strader Drive, Lexington, KY 40505.

SEEKING: Church secretary. Part-time (25 hours/week, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., M-F). \$7-9/hour based on experience, plus paid vacation. Send resumé and references to: Personnel Committee, Deer Park Baptist Church, 1733 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

SEEKING: Minister of music for First Baptist Church of Joelton, Tenn., located 15 miles north of Nashville. Position needs skills in the following areas: contemporary praise and worship; traditional worship; drama; graded choirs; handbells. Education requirements: college degree required, seminary degree preferred. Our church has a new sanctuary which seats 1,000 with a 100-seat choir. In addition, the new building includes a new choir rehearsal suite. Salary range: \$45,000 to 47,000. Please send resumé and a video or audio tape to: First Baptist Church of Joelton, PO Box 86, Joelton, TN 37080, Attn: Personnel Committee.

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: Full-time pastor for Piney Grove Baptist Church, Corbin, Ky. Contact person: Marlon Sams, PO Box 1563, Corbin, KY 40701.

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 rbcbsearch@aol.com, or fax to (804) 272-3926, Attn: Student Ministries Search Committee.

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

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: 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: 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: 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: 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.

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: 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.

FOR SALE: Lodge at Ridgecrest—17 rooms, each with private baths. Capacity: 68. Fully equipped kitchen; 90-seat dining room. (828) 437-6804.

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 Cemetery, "Garden of the Cross" section. \$1,200. Call (502) 935-4242.

What's a grandmother like her doing on a street like this?

By Kristi Hodge
Florida Baptist Witness

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—Sitting on a street corner on the outskirts of downtown Orlando, Fla., Peggy Ament bowed her head and prayed for guidance.

She wasn't sure what she was doing there; she just knew God had drawn her to this particular spot on Orange Blossom Trail.

As soon as she had stepped into her car after services at First Baptist Church of Orlando, she had felt God leading her to vary her normal route home to visit "the Trail."

Situated on a section of the city's Orange Blossom Trail that is littered with strip clubs, bars and motels, Ament looked and felt out of place. Around the nicely dressed grandmotherly figure, neon lights flashed enticements of drink specials and adult entertainment.

Alone on the street corner, she seemed to be the only real "light" amid such spiritual darkness. Puzzled and a little afraid, she prayed, "Lord, why have you brought me here to sit on a corner and pray?"

Her answer came a few moments later when a woman walked toward her, crying and whispering, "If there's a God out there, send me an angel to help me."

As she looked up and saw the silver-haired Ament, she gasped, "You look like an angel."

Ament responded, "I'm not an angel but God did put you and me here together for a reason."

Ament said this divine appointment three years ago confirmed a calling for her to start a ministry to "ladies of the night" on Orange Blossom Trail.

Ament refers to the Trail as "the trail of tears" because of the tragic turn many

women's lives have taken on the streets.

As a longtime jury clerk for Orange County, Ament had seen the lack of hope in women's eyes as life on the streets led to time in jail. Many of them ran away from home to escape child abuse, then as adults became entangled in cycles of prostitution and drugs.

Recalling a prostitute's story, Ament said, "At first, prostitution made her feel loved, then made her feel dirty, then turned her to a life of drug use to block it all out."

Ament said it isn't unusual to see teenage girls on the streets. "It's scary to see girls so young out there. You think you're making headway if you get 12 off the street, but then 30 more, even younger, come in."

Ament wanted to do more to reach out to them but had misgivings about taking on such a difficult ministry. Those thoughts were echoed by family and friends. "They knew I had no street smarts, but they also knew I was determined to do it."

Deputies from the county courthouse coached her in what to expect, and an off-duty plainclothes police officer began accompanying her to the Trail when she went alone after dark.

After retiring to devote more time to her ministry, Ament is training small groups from First Baptist and from the courthouse to befriend the women who have gotten caught up in a life on the streets. First Baptist Church of Kissimmee has asked for Ament's help in starting a similar ministry on the streets of the suburb, located south of Orlando and also in the path of the Trail.

Lynn Latham, church and communities director for Greater Orlando Baptist Association, is interested in starting a Christian Women's Job Corps in Orlando to give women the business skills they need to qualify for better jobs. She also plans to incorporate prayer walking on the Trail into Crossover evangelism efforts when the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting is held in Orlando in June 2000.

"We are in a race against time," Latham said about the ministry. "These women are not really hardened until they end up in prison. Then, it's harder for them to see how they can start over and make a new life for themselves."

The ministry is desperately needed, but Ament stressed that it's not for everyone. It is for women only—women who have hearts of gold and nerves of steel.

"Christians all may agree that these women need redemption, but how many would be comfortable sitting next to them in church?" Ament asked. "This ministry is a calling—a calling to bring the gospel to the streets to those who are hurting."

To talk to women working in the strip clubs, Ament enters the establishments to request permission to talk to the performers backstage before the clubs are open for business. Ament is straightforward about her purpose there, saying she is a Christian who wants to be a friend and a help to women who may not have either. Some owners turn her down flat, but others grant her request.

Taking the precaution to talk to the women during their off hours doesn't always spare Ament from seeing what goes on in the stage area of the clubs. She acknowledges that most Christian women would head for the door in disgust, a reaction she also feels. But someone must look past the sin and the shame to see the possibilities of what these women could be through the cleansing power of Christ, she contends.

It takes about six visits with the women backstage before they trust her enough for her to share the gospel with them, Ament said. Most of the women are distrustful, especially if they don't understand her motives.

"I don't see why we shouldn't be able to grow indefinitely," Rowell said. "This church has already started two others and there's no reason for that to stop."

Some of Rowell's friends couldn't quite understand why he would accept a church so far away. "I was just finishing my doctorate and that's when you're 'supposed' to move to a bigger church. But I moved to the smallest church I had ever pastored, far from friends and family," he said. "Some of my pastor friends jokingly thought I'd lost my mind and said, 'You're going where to do what?'"

But Rowell insists he loves the new church. "I know some folks can't understand that, but I know some who love serving in south Texas," he said with a laugh. "When I'm old and gray, I'm sure I'll sit my grandchildren on my lap and say, 'Let me tell you about the stupidest thing I ever did in my life' or 'Let me tell you about the greatest adventure of my life,'" he added. "I already have an idea which story it's going to be."



Ament babysits the children the women bring to work. Her grandmotherly demeanor isn't quite as out of place as she first thought. "A lot of times, I'm the grandmother or mother these people have never had," she said. "I wouldn't get anywhere with them if I came in waving a Bible," Ament added. "Most of these women know what they're doing is wrong. They need to hear what's right—that Jesus loves them and wants a better life for them."

PEGGY AMENT With a ministry to runaways among Orlando's bars and strip clubs, Ament says, "It's scary to see girls so young out there. You think you're making headway if you get 12 off the street, but then 30 more, even younger, come in. (Photo by Ken Touchton)

Pastor traded in sunglasses for winter parka

By Joe Westbury
Georgia Christian Index

PALMER, Alaska (BP)—If people had told Bruce Rowell a couple of years ago that he and his family would be ushering in the millennium in Alaska, he would have wondered what they were talking about.

"Polly and I had always felt a call to what they used to call pioneer missions, but nothing ever materialized," he said in retrospect. This time, however, they hit the motherlode.

While serving at First Baptist Church of Oakwood, near Gainesville, Ga., he was among 150 volunteers in a year-long project to build a sanctuary for First Baptist Church of Palmer, Alaska, 3,500 miles away.

"I came as a construction worker and ended up as their pastor," he said with a laugh. "That's not exactly what I had in mind when I was driving nails."

In July 1997 the family was welcomed to the new community about 50 miles north of Anchorage, beginning an adjustment which continues to today.

"The climate hasn't been that bad, and the children seem to enjoy the

winter," he noted. "Twenty below (zero) is average, but it can get to minus 50 when the wind blows. You just learn to stay out of the wind."

Mrs. Rowell, who teaches first grade, recalled going to work one day with a temperature of minus 49 degrees. "There wasn't even any talk of canceling because of the cold. After 10 below we just keep the children inside for recess."

Rowell said one of the biggest adjustments he has encountered is the lack of a ministerial support group like he had back home.

"I really miss not being able to sit down on Monday morning at the association office and visit with other pastors. There is only one other full-time Southern Baptist pastor in the Matanuska Valley where we are located. That means only nine churches and missions in a 200-mile-wide area," he said.

"Though there was a congregation when I arrived, in some ways this is like a church start for me," he added. "There is a real freedom to do some new and exciting things even though the church has a long history."

That kind of spirit is important for the future of the church. The valley's population is expected to double in the

next 15 years to about 100,000 people, and a strong congregation is needed to reach the environs.

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"When I'm old and gray, I'm sure I'll sit my grandchildren on my lap and say, 'Let me tell you about the stupidest thing I ever did in my life' or 'Let me tell you about the greatest adventure of my life,'" he added. "I already have an idea which story it's going to be."

And you can forget that 'Be Kind to Pastors' proclamation as well

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (RNS)—The mayor of Asheville, N.C., said she will no longer use proclamations to honor people or groups after her recent recognition of pagan religions prompted anger and protest in the community.

"I am deeply saddened that a gesture of good intention to support religious tolerance and freedom has caused division in our community," Mayor Leni Sitnick said Oct. 27.

She had proclaimed the week of Oct. 25 as "Earth Religions Awareness Week" to recognize Earth-centered, or pagan beliefs.

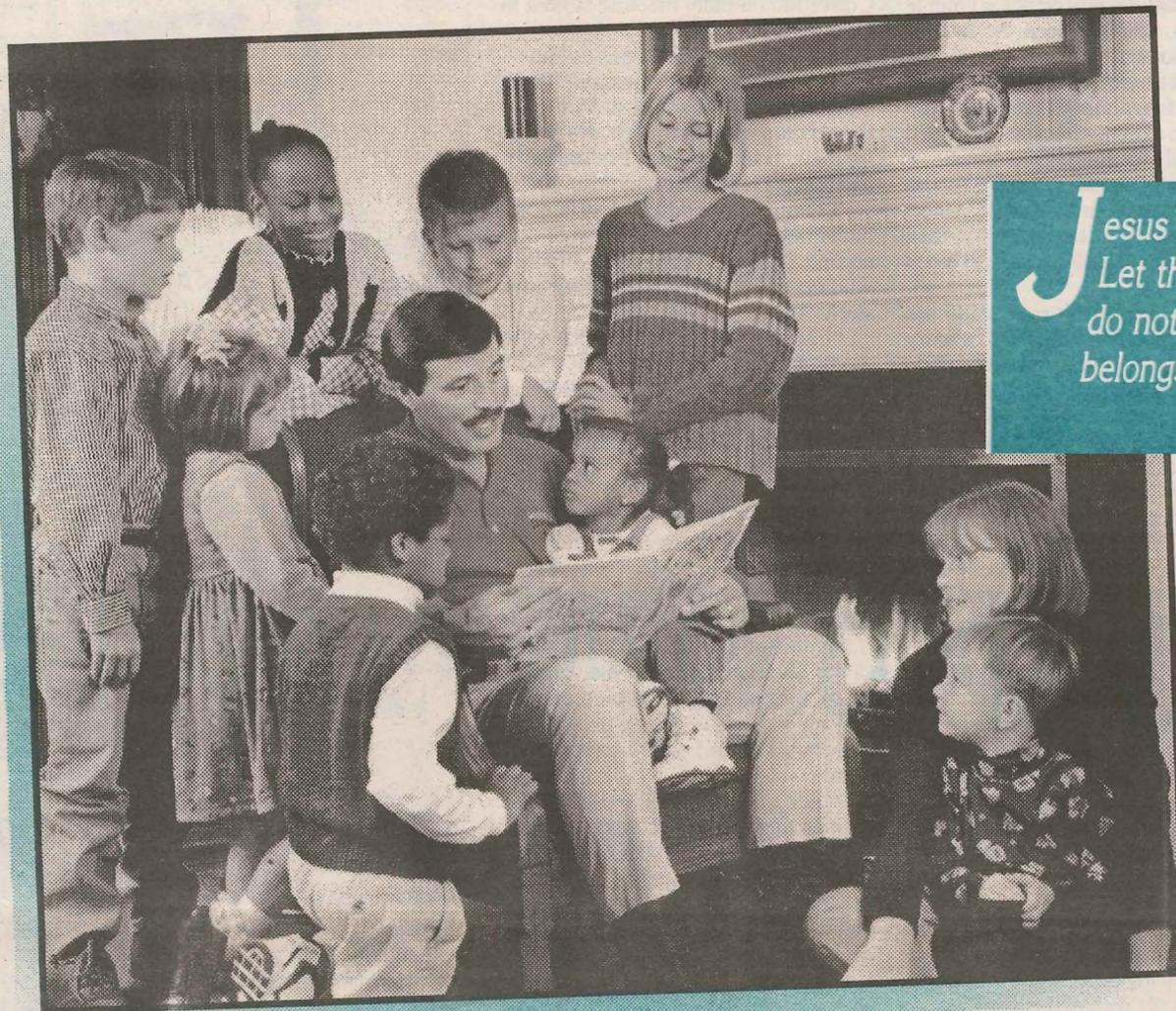
Opponents expressed fears that the event could prompt students to be interested in the occult and witchcraft. Local Christian ministers asked the mayor to instead designate "Lordship of Jesus Christ Awareness Week," Associated Press reported.

Byron Ballard, high priestess of a circle of witches known as Notre Dame del Herbe Mouillee, said she returned the proclamation because it had become a source of infighting in the Christian community.

"It was never, never our intention," Ballard said. "We just wanted to raise awareness that there are people in this community who have this particular spiritual path."

Sitnick had intended to sign the "Lordship" proclamation, but abandoned that plan after other local ministers said it would violate the separation of church and state.

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

Will You Embrace God's Children?

Jesus welcomed *all* the children to come to Him. Even when it seemed He would be overwhelmed by the children, there was always room for one more. Many times Jesus is pictured with His arm outstretched to beckon another child to come to Him. He was always ready for Another Child to Hold.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children strives to be Christ-like every day. We know Jesus wants us to take care of His children. And He wants us to welcome every one of them with open arms.

Every day God gives us Another Child to Hold. And every day, we embrace those children with the love, healing, and care that Christ commanded us to show one another. He gives us these children because He knows we're committed to caring for them. He knows we'll hold them and give them a safe place to heal from the pain they've suffered in their short lives. And He knows that you're there for them, too; praying for them, supporting them, loving them. Please remember Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children with your generous gift this Thanksgiving.



KENTUCKY BAPTIST HOMES FOR CHILDREN

1999 THANKSGIVING OFFERING

Statewide Goal: \$1,100,000