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**FOR THE RECORD**

## Lack of creativity hinders many churches, pastor says

**By Ken Camp**  
*Baptist General Convention of Texas*

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—The intentional or non-intentional lack of creativity hinders worship in many churches, according to pastor Roddy Clyde.

"Contrary to popular opinion, the ability to bore people is neither a gift nor a fruit of the Spirit," said Clyde, pastor of The Fellowship at Forest Creek in Round Rock, Texas, a self-described "seeker-sensitive" congregation near Austin.

When Clyde preached a message on God as the architect of marriage, he involved an actor playing the part of God to interrupt the sermon and deliver a message of his own.

At another church that Clyde's congregation helped launch, the pas-

tor preached a series of lifestyle sermons under the title: "Who Kidnapped Barney Fife? Recapturing the Spirit of Mayberry in Our Lives."

Church leaders must recognize creativity as "a precious gift from God, a primary tool for outreach and a pathway into the conscience of believers," Clyde said during an evangelism conference seminar in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Intentional non-creativity occurs when we see creativity as trivializing God, contradicting Scripture, breaking traditions or offending Christians," Clyde said. "Unintentional non-creativity occurs when we see creativity as an additional responsibility in which we have neither the time, talent nor energy to invest."

Clyde offered eight keys to increasing creativity:

■ **Plan ahead.** The paid and volunteer staff of Clyde's church meet for a retreat each October to develop sermon themes for the year.

■ **Use simple language.** "We need to define our terms," he said. A secular person's first impression of the phrase "washed in the blood" is probably an image from a horror movie, he said. "What unchurched people hear and what we hear are two different things."

■ **Incorporate other media.** Use music, drama, video and computer-projected images to enhance the service. "Media underscore the one central truth of the worship service," he said.

■ **Season with humor.** Preachers should learn to speak in seven-minute segments, punctuated with genuine humor. "No one is going to listen to

you for 20, 30, 45 or 55 minutes unless you do something every seven minutes to draw them back in," Clyde said.

■ **Use follow-up events.** After a sermon series on parenting, plan a weekend parenting seminar, he suggested. A sermon on marriage could be followed by a marriage-enrichment retreat.

■ **Don't reinvent the wheel.** "There is nothing new. All there is is your spin on what's old," he said.

■ **Advertise upcoming series.** Use catchy titles and communicate them to the community outside the church, he suggested.

■ **Always scout for ideas.** Clyde said he browses bookstores to find potential sermon titles. "What you call your messages will make a world of difference."

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**Churches**  
Author Jim Cymbala says congregations should rely on the Holy Spirit, not trends, to reach more people. *Page 12.*

## Unmarried moms giving birth to 30 percent of Kentucky babies

**By David Winfrey**  
*News Director*

LOUISVILLE—About 30 percent of all babies in Kentucky are born to unwed mothers, according to a recent nationwide study of at-risk children.

The study, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, also found that Kentucky was above the national average for births to teenage moms.

The report, "The Right Start," charts statistics for at-risk newborns, including birth weight, prenatal care and characteristics of the mother.

It found a slightly higher percentage of healthy Kentucky babies compared to the national average. That came despite a ranking slightly below the national average for a combination of at-risk characteristics for the state's mothers.

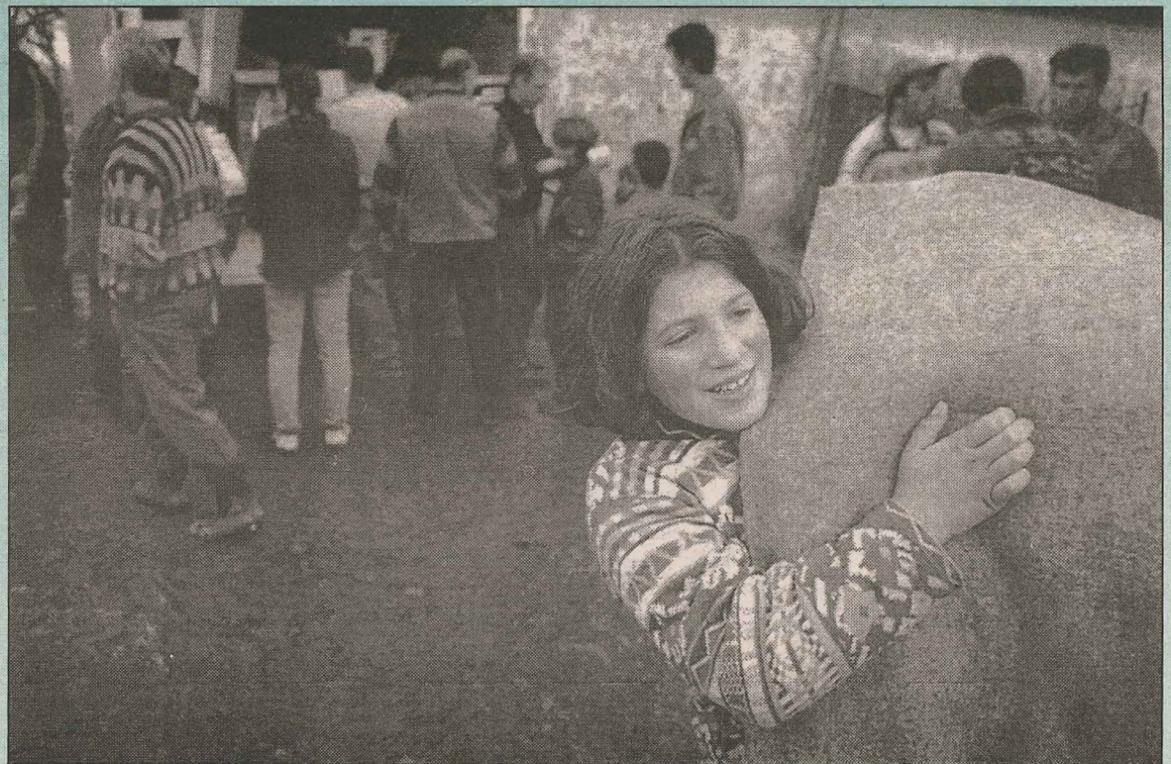
In Kentucky, 16.3 percent of all births were to women under age 20 in 1997, the latest date for which statistics were available, according to the report. That rate was higher than the national average of 12.7 percent of all births. Massachusetts (7.4 percent) had the lowest rate; Mississippi (20.7) was highest.

Cathy Neel, director of the Infant Resource Project in Louisville, said she wasn't surprised by the percentage of teenage moms. The center is a Christian ministry for low-income moms, offering food, clothing and other resources. Neel said the number of clients has grown since she arrived three years ago.

Neel estimated at least 32 of the center's clients are age 21 or younger. "In 1999, I saw four

□ See Statistics show ..., page 3

## Blanketed with love



**GRATEFUL KOSOVAR** Gentiana Thaqi, 10, who lives in a village in southwestern Kosovo, carries blankets her family received from Southern Baptists as part of the "Blanket Kosovo With Love" project. Kosovars face a desperate situation, with most of their houses burned out during the war, "but thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptists it will be a little warmer," missionary Connie Davis said. (BP photo by Steven Reese)

## Kosovars receive 36,000 ways to stay warm

**By Mark Kelly**  
*Baptist Press*

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (BP)—The 36,000 blankets Southern Baptists sent to war-ravaged Kosovo last fall are keeping people warm and daily reminding them of God's love, missionaries working in the area say.

The blankets were divided between two major cities, Pristina and Pec, where Southern Baptist workers and their Kosovar helpers distributed them to people in need, said Connie Davis, a Southern Baptist missionary in Pristina.

"In Pristina, we donated 400 blankets to a group that has a widow assistance program, and more than 1,000 went to the unemployed families of a brick factory," Davis said. "The hospital was given blankets for every bed. Another 1,200 were distributed to a small village named Vragoli, where we were putting roofs on houses."

As many as 860,000 Kosovar Albanians fled or were expelled from the province of Yugoslavia this past spring. The vast majority returned to find their homes destroyed by Serbs or damaged by NATO bombs.

The "Blanket Kosovo With Love"

project began in August as the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's response to thousands of ethnic Albanian refugees returning to Kosovo and facing a harsh winter climate similar to America's Colorado Rockies.

Kentucky Baptists contributed approximately 7,000 blankets, which were collected by Kentucky Brotherhood.

"Many Kosovars are living in homes that were burned during the war. Most live in one room with windows and doors of plastic to

□ See Baptist effort ..., page 7

# BAPTISTS

## BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Baptist Press leader to retire.** Herb Hollinger announced his retirement as vice president for convention news from the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee effective July 1. Hollinger has directed Baptist Press, the SBC's official daily news service, since March 1, 1991. He was elected to the post after the 1990 firings of Baptist Press editors Al Shackelford and Dan Martin. Hollinger, who will be 60 upon retirement, previously was editor of the California Southern Baptist newsmagazine and the Northwest Baptist Witness.

■ **Arizona Baptists face decision.** Messengers to a special called session of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention March 23 in Phoenix will determine the relationship of Grand Canyon University to the state convention. Messengers will be asked to ratify a resolution unanimously adopted by the state convention's Executive Board expressing "great disappointment" but allowing Grand Canyon University to sever its ties with the state convention. The Executive Board's action came after GCU's board of trustees voted 21-3 in a closed meeting Jan. 13 to become a self-perpetuating board. The Executive Board said it will not pursue legal action against the school but did vote to continue to escrow Cooperative Program funds budgeted for the university.

■ **Norton to head Lord's Day Alliance.** Tim Norton, business manager of the Georgia Baptist Christian Index since 1996, has been elected executive director of The Lord's Day Alliance of the United States. The 112-year-old ecumenical organization promotes the observance of Sunday as the Lord's Day. Norton, 38, previously held development, marketing and business posts at Palm Beach Atlantic College in Florida, the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and Home Mission Board and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Christian Index Editor William Neal also announced the hiring of Gregory Brett as managing editor of the Christian Index, effective March 1. Brett currently is vice president for institutional development at Truett-McConnell College in Cleveland, Ga.

■ **Duke resigns theology post.** Former Kentucky Baptist pastor Paul Duke, a founding professor of Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology, has resigned suddenly. Duke, professor of preaching and worship at the 3-year-old school in Atlanta, resigned effective Jan. 31 "for personal reasons," according to a statement released by officials of the theology school. A spokesman for the university refused to elaborate. Duke previously was pastor of Kirkwood Baptist Church in St. Louis and Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.



## NAMB media plans feature Retton, Bernal

By James Dotson  
SBC North American Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—The announcement of two broadcast media projects—a new children's program featuring gymnast Mary Lou Retton and a potential theatrical production or television movie based on the life of Columbine High School shooting victim Cassie Bernal—highlighted the Feb. 9 trustee meeting of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Also introduced was another program for NAMB's FamilyNet television ministry titled, "Open House," a talk show featuring hosts Chuck and Jennie Borsellino. The show will be designed to strengthen the home and family through the discussion of Christian truths.

The Mary Lou Retton television show—titled "Mary Lou's Flip Flop Shop"—will combine "creative movement" for preschool children with positive Christian values.

Retton will be joined by a cast of costumed characters, each with characteristics that reinforce specific values. The show also will include a group of children who will participate in the activities.

"My show will create a foundation for kids—teach them the values of honesty and truthfulness," Retton said in a news release announcing the program. "We will educate and entertain through the use of physical movement. This will be an interactive program that will be both educational and fun."

Retton, a multiple gold medalist in

the 1984 Olympics, is a member of Second Baptist Church of Houston. NAMB President Bob Reccord said discussions about producing "Mary Lou's Flip Flop Shop" arose after she was featured in an evangelistic television commercial produced by NAMB.

FamilyNet will partner with producer Bill Young to market the program to commercial television as well, Reccord said. The version of the show produced for FamilyNet audiences, however, will have an explicitly biblical ending.

The Cassie Bernal project will provide NAMB the possibility of producing a feature-length project for theatrical or television release.

Reccord said the agency had reached a verbal agreement with Brad and Misty Bernal for an option to acquire all motion picture and television rights to their daughter Cassie's story—described in Mrs. Bernal's book "She Said Yes."

Cassie Bernal was one of 13 victims in the April 20, 1999, shooting at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. Reports of her answer of "Yes" when asked by her killer if she believed in God gained widespread media attention after the shootings.

Mrs. Bernal's book focuses on Cassie's personal transformation in the years and months before the shooting. It describes how God's grace and "tough love" led Cassie from a life of rebellion and involvement in the occult to a personal commitment to Jesus.

Brad Bernal told Baptist Press he talked with several producers and their agents regarding rights to the Bernalls' story, but he "never was completely

comfortable with anything."

He said he felt differently when NAMB contacted him, based on his positive experience speaking as part of NAMB's report to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting last June.

"I just knew the North American Mission Board was a group of really good folks, and we shared the same beliefs, values and morals," he said. "Right away I knew that was the right path to take." Bernal said he expected the agreement to be signed within days.

Bernal, a member of West Bowles Community Church in Littleton, said their hopes for the movie project are the same as for the book—that others might benefit from their story.

"We felt Cassie's story before her death needed to be shared, and by doing the movie we would be able to encourage parents and young people with her story," he said. "They can see how much trouble she was in and how she made a conscious decision to turn away from the dark and follow the light."

In other business, Reccord reported on YouthLink 2000 and the recently overturned FCC ruling that would have added to restrictions for religious television broadcasts.

Trustees also were told that 72 new missionaries have been appointed or approved since Jan. 1, joining more than 5,000 missionaries currently serving in the United States and Canada. They also learned that the agency's Chaplains Commission had endorsed 24 new chaplains and pastoral counselors, and renewed endorsements for 63 others.

## Proposal approved to revitalize Ridgecrest, Glorieta facilities

NASHVILLE (BP)—The direction and concepts outlined in a 15-year revitalization plan for Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) conference centers have been approved by trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In their semiannual meeting at the agency's Nashville headquarters Feb. 7-8, trustees received a report citing the condition of facilities, the ministry of the conference centers and projections for the future based on independent market research.

Among facts about the physical condition of the centers were observations that current conditions do not represent the quality and standards needed to serve and minister effectively. No new accommodations have been constructed at either conference center in 27 years, the report continued, and deferred maintenance has left deteriorated facilities and less than suitable environments.

Mike Arrington, vice president of LifeWay's corporate affairs division, said revitalization of the centers is a key "next step in LifeWay's total ministry as we move into the 21st century."

The strategic plan calls for incremental site development with review of results before subsequent steps of development. The first step would be \$8.5 million in construction at Ridgecrest in 2000-2001, followed by a \$7.8 million project at Glorieta in 2001-2002. Requests for funding will be presented to

trustees for review and budget approval before each step.

Arrington said a 10-year fund-raising plan projected by LifeWay's capital resource development department would provide \$73 million toward the estimated \$84.7 million cost through the 15th year.

"This is not a campaign but an ongoing fund-raising process for specific projects," he said.

As conference center facilities are upgraded, Arrington said attention also will be given to strengthening programming and marketing of events.

Ridgecrest, begun in 1907, and Glorieta, started in 1952, served more than 107,000 people in LifeWay's 1998-99 fiscal year. Thousands of spiritual decisions have been reported at each location throughout the years.

Market research identified large groups in adult conferences as the greatest ministry opportunity, but one which will require significant facilities upgrades and new development, the report indicated.

Arrington said a master site plan to be developed will identify needed new facilities, refurbishing some existing structures. The master plan will be presented to trustees for consideration at their September meeting.

Trustees also approved a 3.5 percent rate increase for conference centers from Oct. 1, 2002, through Sept. 30, 2003.

## 'Widows' Might prayer emphasis targets Baptists

DALLAS (BP)—The Southern Baptist Annuity Board is launching a nationwide "Widows' Might" prayer initiative to focus on the work of Southern Baptist organizations. The prayer effort will begin April 1.

Calling widowed annuitants to prayer, Annuity Board President O.S. Hawkins said, "The objective is to undergird the mission of Southern Baptists around the world."

Widows are being asked to set aside time to pray daily for specific needs related to Southern Baptists' world mission efforts, theological education ministries, Christian ethics and religious liberty ministries and facilitating ministries including the Annuity Board and SBC Executive Committee. Also targeted are LifeWay Christian Resources and Woman's Missionary Union as well as missionaries, denominational workers, ministers and retired ministers.

"The widow who gave her two mites was chosen by Jesus as a model of impacting the world for good," Hawkins said. "Through this new prayer ministry, the Widows' Might has the potential of impacting today's world in ways beyond our comprehension."

## Ministry combines love for children with love from God

BLUEGRASS BURGOO

LOUISVILLE—A young mother holds the gift of a New Testament as a worker asks if she would like to be referred to a local church for spiritual counseling.

The young woman declines but is thankful for the baby clothes, formula and other items she receives from the Infant Resource Project.

While not all clients appear receptive to spiritual assistance, another seed has been planted, according to Cathy Neel, executive director of the Infant Resource Project in downtown Louisville.

Started in 1984, the Infant Resource Project exists "to prevent or lessen the devastating effects of poverty during the critical first years of life," according to its mission statement.

Each year the agency serves hundreds of low-income moms with kids up to age 3. With the generosity of area churches, it distributes car seats and other equipment, linens, diapers, feeding supplies, clothing and toiletries.

But Neel is quick to add that the ministry also has a spiritual purpose.

"We end up being a planting ministry, not a harvesting ministry," said Neel, who came to the ministry three years ago. "She can never take away the fact that I say that 'God loves you and cares about your family.'"

The Infant Resource Project has been doing more planting each year. The center averaged 90-100 clients per month when Neel arrived three years ago. Now it's up to 150 per month, she estimated.

Referrals come from a variety of sources, including churches, schools, police, courts, hospitals and social service agencies.

Need is determined based on what other assistance a mother already is receiving. Help goes to women who receive food stamps, WIC assistance or help from the Kentucky Temporary Assistance Program, Neel said. "If they qualify for those programs, then they probably need our help, too."



**INFANT RESOURCE PROJECT** *Ida Butterworth, a member of Kings Baptist Church in Mt. Washington, talks with a new mom. The Infant Resource Project in Louisville sees about 150 low-income moms each month.*

Churches and individual volunteers and others support the work. Three times a week, a consignment shop fills the ministry's van with donated baby clothes.

The center is constantly in need of diapers, formula, money and volunteers, Neel said.

"You can see how God works," she said. "My volunteers will come down and say 'We're out of diapers.' ... Inevitably a bag will come in the next day and it'll have two or three bags of diapers."

"We just begin to pray and say, 'OK, God, it's Your ministry ... You need to take care of us.' And He does," she said.

Church youth groups often help package outfits, praying for the clients who will take them.

About 40 percent of the group's \$51,000 budget comes from an endowment. The ministry was started by East Baptist Church, and when that church closed and sold the building, a portion of the funds went to support Infant Resource Project.

Neel must raise another \$30,000 each year, including support from Lou-

isville's Long Run Baptist Association and some individual churches. Eighty percent of the project's support comes from Southern Baptist churches, she said.

She said she scours the fine print of all grant applications, making sure money doesn't come with strings attached that would limit the center's ability to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with clients. "I want people to know we are a ministry that's about planting that seed."

The center already has helped start two similar ministries as a result of working with Acteens during the National Acteens Conference in Louisville in 1998.

In addition to being inundated with diapers and other resources by donors from around the country, Acteen groups from Immanuel Baptist Church in Frankfort and Springfield, Tenn., asked for help in setting up similar ministries, Neel said. "It is my heart's desire for us to become the hub and have satellites throughout the state."

For more information, call the Infant Resource Project at (502) 584-2343.

### Statistics show need for ministry, director says

*Continued from page 1*  
12-year-olds."

Neel, who reviewed the report, said the statistics show the need for churches to become active in meeting physical needs as a way to later minister to spiritual needs.

"These statistics confirm for me the fact that the church needs to begin to be involved in social issues and social needs," she said. "We have the answer in Jesus Christ, and, sadly enough, we are keeping that to ourselves by not stepping out."

A holistic approach to ministry mirrors Jesus' method, she added. "He worked in a holistic approach to people and their needs. We as the church have got to meet society holistically—emotionally, physically and then spiritually."

Even churches that cannot sponsor specific ministries can minister by helping those in need find help elsewhere, she added. "The churches are going to need to at least become resource managers."

Churches could point members and others in need toward relief from such issues as domestic abuse if they are willing to research what help is available, she said. "We want to turn our backs and pretend it isn't happening because we don't know how to handle it."

Other needs the church could gain information about include hunger, mental illness and transportation, she added. "The need is going to be met, and the local, state and federal governments are not going to put a spiritual slant on it as we're going to do."

■ **A single adults'** retreat, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department, will be held March 24-26 at General Butler State Resort Park in Carrollton. Conference topics will include experiencing God in the workplace, starting a single adult ministry and loneliness. Registration costs \$26 before March 1, and \$30 afterward. For more information, call toll-free (888) 254-5704 or (502) 254-4719.

■ **Jackie Bishop** of Louisville has joined the staff of the Kentucky Baptist Convention as an intern in the communications/media department. Bishop will assist the department in news writing and special projects. She is a senior at Campbellsville University, pursuing a major in communications and a minor in sports ministry.

## Baptist Joint Committee's Walker affirms church-state separation

GEORGETOWN—Describing religious liberty as "nothing less than a gift from God," a church-state specialist told students at Georgetown College, "If anyone's religious liberty is denied, everyone's religious liberty is threatened. We're all in this together."

Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, shared his views Feb. 10 during a campus lecture on "Religious Freedom and Separation of Church and State."

"The theological principle of soul freedom should be enjoyed by every single person on earth," he said. "This freedom benefits the atheist as much as the believer. It's for the Buddhist as much as the Baptist; for the Moonie as much as the Methodist."

Addressing such issues as school prayer, vouchers and posting the Ten Commandments, Walker emphasized that "religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government."

He said the principle of separation of church and state means "govern-

ment should not try to help religion or try to hurt religion but be neutral toward religion—to turn it loose and leave it alone."

The Baptist Joint Committee, based in Washington, D.C., has represented the First Amendment concerns of several Baptist groups for more than 60 years. The organization fell out of favor with Southern Baptist Convention leaders during the SBC's conservative shift of the past 20 years. Taking issue with the BJCPA's strict separationist views on such issues as school prayer, SBC messengers defunded the organization in 1991.

Walker, who took the helm of the BJCPA last year, had served as the organization's general counsel since 1993. "As a minister, I know that the separation of church and state is good, not bad for religion," he said. "As an attorney, I know it's good for government too."

Fielding questions about school vouchers and related initiatives, Walker said, "Direct support to sectarian schools is wrong; vouchers are the same

thing. ... We don't want government to give us a helping hand. We can do it quite nicely without Caesar's help. What government funds, government inevitably regulates."

Concerning the current debate over posting the Ten Commandments in public schools, Walker responded, "As a Baptist preacher, I would say I can think of nothing better than for every person in this city, state and country to read and observe the Ten Commandments. I can think of little worse than for the government to tell us to do it."

The truths of the Ten Commandments "are something I wish we would take more seriously as a country, as a culture, even as Christians," he added, "but it's just not the government's job to tell us to do it."

"You can teach about religion in the public schools in a responsible academic and objective way," he said. "You can teach the Ten Commandments academically. Why not do it the right way rather than passing laws to stick it up on the wall as some kind of magic talisman to ward off evil?"

### Panelists debate posting Commandments

LEXINGTON (BP)—A generation of "angry children" is reason enough for the Ten Commandments to be posted in America's schools, seminary professor Hershael York said Feb. 7 on a PBS show broadcast across Kentucky.

York, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, was one of four panelists on "Kentucky Tonight." Other panelists included Kent Ostrander of the Family Foundation of Kentucky; Jeffrey Vessels of the American Civil Liberties Union of Kentucky; and Johanna Bos, a professor at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary.

York and Ostrander said the U.S. Supreme Court was wrong 20 years ago to strike down a law mandating the posting of the Ten Commandments in Kentucky schools.

Vessels countered that "government is forbidden from promoting religion and taking a stance to inhibit or endorse religion."

Bos argued that posting the Ten Commandments alone takes them out of their historical religious context.

York responded that the Ten Commandments are "basic to our respect for others, our respect for ourselves, our respect for property. Quite frankly, what we're doing today is not working real great."

## 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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## God's Word stands

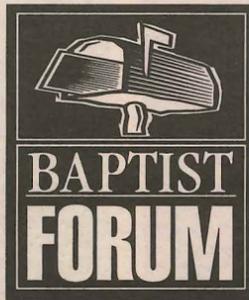
Russell Bennett writes in the Feb. 1 issue of the Western Recorder that "the heresy of inerrancy has caused great harm. The deification of Scripture is blasphemy."

What is Scripture other than the Word (Logos) of God? Man does not deify Scripture; Scripture deifies itself.

John 1:1 states, "In the beginning was the Word (Logos) and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." We also find in verse 14 that the Word became flesh (Christ) and lived for a while among us.

I suspect Bennett has found some personal pills in Scripture too rough to swallow and wants to claim salvation anyway.

*Chuck Estridge  
Williamstown*



mind. How does Bennett know about Jesus Christ? The Scriptures are the only trustworthy witness (Romans 10:17). If the Bible is filled with errors, who decides which part is false? Is it John 3:16 that calls everyone to believe and be saved? What about John 14:6 when Jesus claims to be the only way to the Father?

Unfortunately, Bennett levels a charge against all Christians who believe in an inerrant Bible. I'm sure he has seen many sincere pastors and laymen misuse God's Word. But when Satan misused Scripture to tempt Jesus, the weapon of choice for the Son of God was still the Word of God. If we cannot trust the Word of God, we cannot trust the One to whom the Word bears witness.

*James Veal  
Louisville*

## Disappointing letter

I was disappointed with the letter by Russell Bennett in the Feb. 1 issue of the Western Recorder. He attacks pastors who believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. He goes on to make it appear that for 200 years the early church had no Bible, and by implication the church today does not even need a Bible; we simply need to preach Jesus. This sounds very tolerant and charitable, which is what people seem to want to hear today. But the implications of Bennett's statements are rather frightening.

The early church used the Old Testament as its Bible. In fact Paul went from city to city preaching Christ in the synagogues from the Old Testament Scriptures (Acts 17:1-2). He complimented the Berean Jews when they went home and searched the Scriptures to evaluate his teachings (Acts 17:10-11). He even made it a point to write to Timothy about the value of Scripture to equip Christians for everything in life (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Another important thought comes to

## Inconsistent view

Russell Bennett's argument for the "heresy of inerrancy" is a flawed argument. I have some simple questions about his argument. How can one know that Baptists are "free of human creeds"? How can one know that Baptists should "turn only to the Bible as a sufficient guide for faith and practice"? Also, how can one know "the earliest Gentile believers heard only the story of Jesus but were saved by faith in our living Lord"? Moreover, how can one know "none of us are without sin"? How can one know that we should repent? How can one know "Jesus alone is the living Word of God"?

## 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.

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

## Evangelism Conference 2000: Be there

The 2000 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference has been planned with specific benefits for Kentucky Baptists in mind. Pastors, church staff and laypeople will experience powerful worship and encouragement through inspirational music and messages. I encourage you to be a part of this exciting time.

The conference will be Feb. 28-29 at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville. It begins Monday at 1:45 p.m. and concludes Tuesday night.

The conference will focus on reaching and assimilating youth and young adults. Ron Hutchcraft, a nationally recognized leader in these areas, will speak twice and conduct a workshop. If you're interested in reaching youth and young adults in your church, you won't want to miss this presentation.

Participants will hear some of the most popular preachers today, including Herb Reavis, Junior Hill and Bob

Pitman. Outstanding musicians and worship leaders will provide inspirational music in all sessions. Fifteen workshops will provide information on the best methods and models as leaders share out of their dynamic personal experiences.

The Monday night session will be a hallelujah time as Kevin Cosby and the St. Stephen Baptist Church choir lead us in worship. Ron Hutchcraft will share a message titled "The Imperatives of Evangelism in the 21st Century" which is filled with passion to reach youth. I can visualize the power and excitement of that session already. Pastors can help mobilize laypeople in outreach and evangelism by enlisting them to attend this session.

The Tuesday night session has been dedicated to demonstrating methods for reaching youth and young adults. Rob Turner, a Kentucky native, is building a church focused on reaching young adults in Dayton, Ohio. He will speak

In short, all of these things that one can "know" came from Scripture. If one believes the Scriptures are with errors, then how can one make biblical appeals? It is inconsistent for one to use the Bible for the basis of one's argument when one doubts the authority of the Bible. That person rips the heart out of his or her own argument. Bennett's argument is a flawed argument because it discredits the source (the Bible) of his own argument.

*Shannon Mitchell  
Louisville*

## Christian soldier

I read in the Jan. 24 issue of the Western Recorder of the death of Maurice Barnes. The Christian army has lost one of its stalwart soldiers.

During my early adolescent years, my family were members of Southside Baptist Church in Louisville where Bro. Barnes was pastor. This was a man who had a profound influence, mainly because he had time for us unruly kids. He played ball with us, he took us on trips, he took a group of Royal Ambassadors to R.A. camp one summer and spent the entire week with us. He was always available. He could be stern at times, but in a very loving way.

My mother was the choir director at Southside in those days and I even remember that Bro. Barnes was the tenor soloist in one of the choir programs at Easter or Christmas. He was not a one-talented person but a multi-talented one.

As I look back on my life and try to list my heroes, Maurice Barnes would be in that number. I thank God that he was an important influence in my life.

*Dick Ham  
Richmond*

## FAMILY

## Questions focus on inheritance, checking accounts

By Jeremy White

In this week's column, I've decided to let the readers select the topics. I've received the following financial questions from Western Recorder subscribers:



**Q: Is an amount received as inheritance taxable?**

For the most part, an individual who receives an inheritance does not have to pay income tax. If you receive cash, real estate or investments, you do not have to pay income tax. (You may have to pay income tax on traditional individual retirement accounts or other retirement plans.)

Any future income, such as interest or appreciation, resulting from the inheritance is taxable to the recipient.

Depending on the size of the estate, estate tax may be due. The estate pays all federal estate taxes, if any, before distributing any assets. Depending on your relationship with the deceased, you may have to pay Kentucky inheritance tax.

Estates and inheritances are complex. You can save significant taxes by seeking sound counsel for estate planning.

**Q: Is it best for married couples to maintain separate checking accounts?**

I don't think so. Although some couples say it works for them, I think it can cause a wedge and begin a "mine-yours" mentality. Very subtly, couples break down the oneness by saying, "These are your bills to pay" or "These are my assets and those are yours."

The biblical concept of marriage is "oneness." I think this concept extends to finances. It's very common for married individuals to have different financial strengths and weaknesses. As a result, a spouse sometimes may get frustrated with the other's financial actions. But this is more reason to work out an understanding, not quit and go down separate financial paths.

I would allow a few exceptions to my opinion about separate accounts. If a spouse maintains a separate business or if addictions, such as gambling or drinking, threaten the financial livelihood of a family, then a separate account makes sense.

*Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. He provides weekly financial tips and tax articles at his Web site (www.consultcpa.com).*

## Parents, churches should show teens realistic view of marriage

**Q: I've heard that teenage marriages are more likely to end in divorce. Why is that true?**

The maturation that occurs during the teen and early adult years is probably one factor. Individuals do a lot of growing up during this period, particularly in the area of identity formation, which involves developing an understanding of who we are and what we want out of life.

When a couple marries before they have had the opportunity to make identity decisions, they sometimes discover they want different things out of life and end up growing apart rather than together. Deciding you want different things after you have joined your lives together can make for some difficult years or, as often happens, the ending of a relationship.

Young people also might have unrealistic expectations of marriage, over-emphasizing the benefits but not taking as seriously the work involved in making marriage successful. When conflicts arise, the individuals can become disillusioned.

It also seems that in our society we see marriage as a passage into adulthood, which can look very appealing to teenagers who are anxious to be "grown up" and want to be taken seriously.

It isn't difficult to see, then, how teenagers looking for a way to prove themselves as adults, expecting more out of marriage than is realistic and not having developed their own sense of identity might get into a marriage for which they are not ready and may later regret.

Families and churches can help by encouraging teens and young adults to put thought into what they want out of life before making a lifelong commitment to someone else. We also can help by promoting a more realistic view of marriage, which certainly includes many positive aspects, but includes many challenges as well.— *Susan Howell*

**Q: How do we help foster individuality for our two teenage sons who share a room? They argue often about losing each other's stuff and beg us to build on another room or move to a bigger house. We can't afford to do either. How can we relieve this stressful situation?**

Your sons have a common problem of being themselves in the midst of a shared room. It works in colleges and boarding schools. It can work at home. Make clear and simple rules for sharing the space.

For example, divide the room into halves, using tape if necessary, and request each son to stay in his own space unless they ask permission from each other. Put names on individual items. Let each decorate one side of the room as he chooses.

Have clear guidelines for borrowing, sharing and using each other's items: Ask before using your brother's stuff. Return things in good shape. Repair or replace lost or damaged belongings.

The golden rule is especially necessary in tight situations like this. Insist that each treat the other as he wishes to be treated. Once the rules reduce the conflict, your sons can decide to loosen up if they can "get along" by talking out situations on their own. As they mature, the quarreling, bickering and squabbling should taper off.— *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.*



## Don't miss out on spiritual awakening

2 Chronicles 7:14, that grand Scripture passage read at the beginning of most Baptist revival meetings, offers a daunting recipe for spiritual renewal.

"If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways," God declares, "then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

While most Baptists claim to crave God's forgiveness and healing, how many are willing to practice humility and fervent prayer as they seek God's face and abandon sin?

According to Bruce Leafblad, professor of church music and worship at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, "Prayer is not on the front burner of most churches or individuals' lives. We have ceased to become a praying people and have substituted work for prayer."

Obviously, it's a lot easier to slap a "Prayer Is the Answer" bumper sticker on the back of one's car than to engage in a lifestyle of daily, disciplined prayer for spiritual healing and renewal. Even at church, much of our prayer energy is focused on members' physical needs. As important as that is, pressing spiritual needs also deserve our rapt attention.

Amid such challenges, there are growing signs indicating a fresh commitment to deep, life-changing prayer among concerned Christians in Kentucky and beyond. Examples range from prayer vigils on college campuses and in local churches to ongoing regional and statewide prayer gatherings.

Larry Martin, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions growth team, has been instrumental in helping facilitate prayer emphases throughout the state. His office is coordinating an ongoing series of quarterly prayer meetings across the state. Begun in early 1998, the two-day events focus specifically on prayer for spiritual awakening. The next one will be April 17-18 at First Baptist Church of Danville.

"The only agenda is to pray for revival and spiritual awakening," he explained. "The motivation is the need for ongoing personal and corporate revival."

Citing several other prayer emphases reported throughout Kentucky, Martin said, "There is a growing number of people who have such a hunger to see God do something different than they're seeing in routine, everyday life.

"All of these things are originating from the grassroots," he added. "That's the key."

Spiritual renewal fueled by fervent prayer among American Christians dates back to the pre-Revolutionary War days of the First Great Awakening. The Second Great Awakening of the early 1800s and other revival movements also can trace their start to grassroots prayer efforts.

Missionary pioneer Hudson Taylor once said, "I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help Him. I ended up by asking God to do His work through me." Henry Blackaby has updated that challenge for this generation of Baptists by urging believers to find out where God is at work and join Him.

The key is prayer and personal involvement go hand-in-hand. And that level of commitment is limited neither by state nor denominational boundaries.

Tennessee Baptists are preparing to launch a statewide prayer thrust for revival and spiritual awakening throughout 2000. Southern Baptist Annuity Board officials have established the "Widows' Might," a prayer emphasis targeting Baptist ministries around the world. The National Pastors' Prayer Network ([www.nppn.org](http://www.nppn.org)) reports prayer emphases involving dozens of denominations in Chicago, Atlanta and other cities.

Closer to home, prayer efforts continue to grow. Individuals interested in participating in the April prayer for spiritual awakening in Danville or other future gatherings may contact Larry Martin at (800) 266-6477, ext. 255. Kentucky Baptist churches already involved in specific prayer ministries can report their efforts to Jim Cordell at ext. 326.

As prayer for spiritual renewal expands, many Christian leaders are voicing hope that God will respond with another historic awakening. Don't risk missing your opportunity to be involved.

**STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR**



Trennis Henderson

## The impact of intentional church starting

By Alan Witham

*"Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35).*

An appropriate prayer for Kentucky Baptists as we begin this new millennium is, "Lord, open our eyes to see the people of Kentucky as You see them."

A close look at our state reveals that 24 percent of our population is between the ages of 18 and 34. This rather large segment of our population is not being effectively reached by any religious group, including Baptists.

Approximately 28 percent of our population lives in multihousing areas, yet we are effectively reaching only 4 percent of those residents. In the decade of the '90s our churches experienced a 5.8 percent decline in resident membership while the population of Kentucky grew significantly.

The bottom line is that we are losing ground. The harvest field is growing while the number of harvesters and their impact seems to be declining.

The issue is, "What will our response be to what we see?" Seeing our state as Jesus sees it is not enough. Our response also should be like His. Matthew states that when Jesus saw the multitudes, He had compassion on them. His compassion led Him to make an intentional response, sending His disciples out into the harvest.

One way we can respond and make a lasting impact is through intentional church planting. The book of Acts is a reminder of the effectiveness of this strategy. It is an account of how God pushed the boundaries of the gospel toward the ends of the earth by planting new churches. Acts 11:21 pointedly describes the effectiveness of this effort by stating, "The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord."

Church growth expert Peter Wagner calls church planting "the most effective means of evangelism." Fellow church planting authority Bob Logan reminds us that "you and I are Christians today because those who preceded us faithfully reproduced their churches through church planting." Statistics tell

us that new churches are four times more effective in evangelism than existing churches.

Here are specific ways Christians can make a difference through participation in a church planting effort:

■ **A ministry of prayer.** Pray that God will call and send out church planters into the harvest. You may choose to enter into a covenant with an existing church planter to be part of his or her intercessory prayer team.

■ **A ministry of financial support.** Your church or association can choose to sponsor a new church financially.

■ **A ministry of personal involvement.** You can become a member of a core group and help a new church by assisting in a leadership role.

■ **A ministry of encouragement.** Realizing the significance of new work, you can help create a climate of acceptance and encouragement among those who view new work as a threat to existing congregations.

Lord, give us eyes to see the people of Kentucky as You see them. Give us willing hearts to start new churches that will reach people who are ready for the good news of the gospel.

*Alan Witham is a church planter strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention*



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## Grozny Baptists hope to return & minister

By Tobin Perry  
SBC International Mission Board

LARNACA, Cyprus (BP)—Alexis Sitnikov had already been kidnapped twice and his ribs had been broken.

He had a clear shot at a visa to the United States, thousands of miles from the people tormenting him. But with all its dangers and faults, Grozny, Chechnya, was still home. And he could never leave the Baptist church he served as pastor.

When a friend and church leader encouraged him to leave, Sitnikov refused. He wanted to stay and build up the church in Grozny. "I will stay here and work for the Lord's glory," Sitnikov replied.

"He is a very committed Christian," said the church leader, who asked not to be identified. As a church leader, his role is similar to a minister of missions in an American church.

In October 1998, Sitnikov was kidnapped again. Now, more than a year after his abduction, his church family still prays for him regularly, even though hopes grow dim that they will see him alive.

After four kidnappings in the past year, the church reacted quickly in

August when fighting broke out between Russia and Chechnya. All but 40 of the church's 100 members evacuated to a neighboring city in another area of Russia's North Caucasus region. The 40 church members remained hidden inside Chechnya's capital.

Since the Soviet Union crumbled in 1991, Chechnya has become one of the most dangerous places on earth—particularly for Christians. Chechnya declared its independence in 1991, a claim Russia has never fully recognized. After the second war there this decade ended in 1996, Russia granted Chechnya limited political autonomy.

Tensions reheated in August when Chechen militants seized control of the Russian republic of Dagestan. In September, after a wave of bombings around the Russian capital of Moscow, Russia invaded Chechnya in what it called a terrorist-fighting operation.

But the new wave of violence was just the latest in a series of setbacks for Grozny Baptist Church.

In October 1998, Muslim extremists kidnapped Sitnikov, who was pastor of the church. In March, the next pastor, Alexander Kulokov, was kidnapped. Two weeks later, a church

member saw Kulokov's head on display in a booth at the market in Grozny. Since then, a young deacon and a teenage girl have been kidnapped from the church.

The kidnappings aren't limited to evangelicals. In the past several years, a handful of Russian Orthodox priests also have been kidnapped.

The church leader and his wife, ethnic Russians who have lived their entire lives in Grozny, haven't escaped the escalating violence in their hometown either. Both have faced loaded rifles and been accosted by both Chechen militants and Russian soldiers over their ethnic identity. Although they both are Russian, they've been confused with Chechens before.

But whatever hardships they will face, the man said his church hopes to return to Grozny and rebuild. Many Chechens will return from refugee camps to a destroyed homeland. Therein lies a new ministry for the church, he said.

"The Bible says your fruit shows your faith," he said. "That's what we believe."

"We want to return to Grozny and show people we don't hate them for what they have done," he added. "We love them and want to help them."



**HEADED HOME** A family loads their wagon with blankets Southern Baptists gave to Kosovars whose lives have been turned upside-down by war in the Yugoslav province. (BP photo by Steven Reese)

## Baptist effort blankets Kosovo with warmth and God's love

Continued from page 1

help block out the cold winds and under makeshift plastic roofs to help keep the moisture out," Davis said. "The whole family sleeps in this one room and then they gather up their beds and live there during the day."

"It is a desperate situation, but thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptists the winter will be a little warmer," she said. "It's a humbling experience to realize that something we would take for granted, being warm inside our homes, would be so valued by these people who have suffered so much."

In the Pec area, blankets were given to the 1,300 families already receiving food aid provided by Southern Baptists, said Southern Baptist missionary Debbie Rouse. Others were taken to a school for blind children, many of whom were separated from their families during the entire course of the war.

About 30 blankets were put to a special holiday use, doubling as costumes for children participating in a Christmas play, Rouse said. Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus, shepherds, wise men and even angels donned their makeshift robes while a Kosovar Christian read the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke.

In addition to the blankets, Southern Baptist volunteers helped put roofs on houses damaged during the war and distributed wood-burning stoves to families without heat, Rouse said. Workers in both Pec and Pristina partnered with the Samaritan's Purse aid group to distribute some of that group's 300,000 shoeboxes filled with Christmas gifts to children in area schools and hospitals.

In the midst of all the suffering in Kosovo, God is answering prayers and revealing Himself, Rouse added.

"We were working at our warehouse and heard some men screaming next door at the cement factory," she recounted. "We rushed over and saw a man had fallen in the machinery. A big piece of equipment was on his back."

"I started praying immediately. I asked God to reveal Himself to the workers in a miraculous way and that this man would not be hurt," she said. "When the workers finally lifted the equipment off the man, he jumped up. He was not even hurt."

Rouse said she started praising God and telling the workers how God had saved the man. "They all knew something incredible had happened."

Rouse asked Southern Baptists to pray for Kosovars and the witness and ministry efforts being conducted among them.

"Some are believing, others have heard and are asking questions," she said. "Our prayer is that they will continue to be open to the gospel and that they will see Jesus clearly and know the truth."

## France: U.S. is 'soft' on sects

PARIS (RNS)—In a report issued last week, the French government called on nations worldwide to stop the growth of religious sects and criticized the United States for offering too much religious freedom to "cults."

"The confusion maintained across the Atlantic between religious freedom ... and prevention, even repression, of punishable sectarian excesses does not make dialogue any easier," said the report, issued by the Interministerial Mission for the Fight Against Sects.

The government report said U.S. criticism of the status of religious freedom in France was unfair. A U.S. State Department report last year questioned freedom of religion in several European countries, including France.

The U.S. report was critical of the French government's view of the U.S.-based Church of Scientology. France does not recognize the Church of Scientology as a legitimate religion and is considering banning the group.

Though France and the United States have differing opinions on the matter of religious freedom, the issue does not create any real conflict, said a U.S. State Department official.

The report identified about 200 sects in France, singling out the Order of the Solar Temple sect as particularly dangerous. Solar Temple adherents were involved in at least three mass suicide incidents in the mid-1990s.

The report also called for legislation against anti-democratic sects, as well as those advocating racist ideas and violating human rights.



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## Christian hunger relief advocate calls for U.S. action

By Shelvia Dancy  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—One in 10 U.S. households cannot afford food, according to a new report issued by Bread for the World Institute.

In the last 50 years, more people have died of hunger and poor sanitation than were killed in all the wars of the 20th century, the Christian hunger-relief-advocacy group said.

"In the United States, hunger does not manifest itself dramatically like famine and starvation," said David Beckmann, president of the organization. "The face of hunger is much different in our country than it is overseas. But although it's easier for us to ignore, it is still a widespread problem."

Bread for the World is a 25-year-old agency, representing 2,000 churches and 44,000 people, to lobby national

leaders regarding legislation about hunger. Bread for the World Institute is a partner organization engaged in research and education concerning hunger and economic development.

For "just pennies a day," the United States within two years could reduce by half the number of people in the nation suffering from hunger, and could eliminate hunger worldwide within 20 years, the report said. The United States is the only industrialized nation with a widespread hunger problem, it said. Hunger affects about 31 million people in the United States, according to the report.

And though in 1998 the nation's unemployment rate hovered at a very low 4.5 percent and inflation remained at 1.9 percent, nearly one in five children and one in 10 adults suffered from hunger or were at risk of periodic hunger, the report said.

"As much as we'd like to think that

ours is a generous society, the fact is that the richest country in the world does less than any other developed nation to combat pervasive hunger," Beckmann said.

If the United States committed \$5 billion a year to the fight to end hunger, the number of people suffering from hunger in the nation could be slashed to about 16 million, the report stated. To end hunger worldwide, the U.S. government would need to contribute "less than one-third of 1 percent" of the federal budget each year.

The report called upon the U.S. Congress to take steps to strengthen and improve programs such as the Food Stamp Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

Noting that the food stamp program aids about 20 million people—and is the "first line of defense against hunger"—the report urged Congress to pass the

Hunger Relief Act, which would expand the number of people eligible to receive food stamps.

The report also called for a \$1 increase in the minimum wage during the next two years.

"The Hunger Relief Act would extend food stamps to more hungry people, and a \$1 increase in the minimum wage would put food on the table of a low-income family for six months," said Beckmann. "Churches and charities can't do it all. Our government must do its part."

The persistence of hunger is "the 20th century's greatest moral blind spot," Beckmann said. "Although people are hungry because they are poor and political systems do not function properly, because of wars or because people belong to oppressed ethnic and racial groups, we do not have to end all these problems to end hunger," he said.

## Souper Bowl raises \$2.8 million

COLUMBIA, S.C. (RNS)—The Souper Bowl of Caring, a grassroots effort to help the hungry at the time of the annual Super Bowl football competition, raised more than \$2.8 million this year.

Brad Smith, founder of the initiative, said more than 11,500 congregations participated, up from 11,000 in 1999. The congregations contribute food and cash donations received during the effort to local soup kitchens.

Last year the effort raised \$2.5 million.

Smith, associate pastor of Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C., said some churches, which usually collect donations on Super Bowl Sunday, delayed their collection from Jan. 30 to the following Sunday.

"I bet we'll get to \$3 million," he said Feb. 9.

## Vermont bill would give broadest benefits to homosexual couples

MONTPELIER, Vt. (RNS)—A Vermont House committee has decided that gay couples should be given the same rights and benefits as heterosexual couples through a broad civil rights statute rather than marriage.

The Judiciary Committee voted Feb. 9 to draft legislation to extend legal rights to homosexual domestic partnerships. Three of the 11 committee members wanted a bill that would have made gay marriage legal.

If such a bill is enacted, Vermont would become the state providing the

most rights and benefits to gay couples.

"This is a momentous vote," said Gov. Howard Dean. "It's a vote to move forward and become the first state to really grant equal rights" to gays and lesbians.

The full House must approve any legislation and various changes could be introduced at that level, Associated Press reported.

The state's legislature has been struggling to respond to a state Supreme Court ruling in December that declared

gay couples are unconstitutionally denied benefits and rights that accompany legal marriage.

Homosexual rights advocates hailed the opinion, which was based on the state constitution, while opponents of legalizing same-sex partnerships decried it.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, called it "one more example of the fact that the radical homosexual agenda is the normalization of same-sex relationships and

the affirmation and acceptance by society of the homosexual and lesbian lifestyle."

In late January, about 3,000 people attended a rally at the state capitol in Montpelier opposing the court's ruling, according to CultureFacts, a publication of the Washington-based Family Research Council.

A recent poll showed 52 percent of Vermont residents disagreed with the ruling, while 38 percent agreed, CultureFacts reported.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

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### NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Oklahoma official drops evolution disclaimer.** An Oklahoma state committee had no authority to mandate that biology textbooks describe evolution as a "controversial theory," the state's attorney general ruled Feb. 2. In November the state's textbook committee approved the use of the disclaimer for all new biology books. The disclaimer, which came under fire from scientists, educators and some religious groups, described evolution as a "controversial theory" that can refer "to the unproven belief that random, undirected forces produced a world of living things."

■ **Some Protestants oppose marriage initiative.** Mainline Protestant leaders in Southern California have called for the defeat of the statewide "Limits on Marriage" ballot initiative, which they said amounts to anti-gay legislation. Local leaders of the Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ faiths voiced their opposition to the proposal, which would define marriage as only that joining a man and a woman. The initiative is backed by Roman Catholics, Southern Baptists, Mormons and some Muslim officials in California.

■ **Bible club sues over censored mural.** Claiming religious discrimination and violation of their First Amendment rights, two members of a high school Bible club filed a federal lawsuit Feb. 3 against the Kenosha Unified School District in Wisconsin. Two members of the Trojans Loving Christ Bible Club at Tempor High School in Kenosha said the school discriminated against the

club by censoring a mural painting. The students said Tempor High School Principal Chester Pulaski stopped them from painting a cross on a mural that represented the group. The Bible club's mural was part of a larger one on a school wall reserved for student clubs.

■ **Creation scientist's life work lost in blaze.** The life work of creation scientist Kurt Wise was destroyed in a Feb. 6 blaze that caused more than \$10 million in damage to William Jennings Bryan College's administration building in Dayton, Tenn. Wise, a Harvard-trained paleontologist, said he lost more than 5,000 photographic slides as well as hundreds of research files in the fire. "My professional life is up in smoke. Everything is lost," Wise told The Chattanooga Times. State fire investigators have not determined a cause for the blaze that nearly destroyed the administration building, which housed 90 percent of the school's classrooms, administration offices, faculty offices and the library.

■ **End sought for school sports gambling.** Calling gambling a "black eye" for the nation's educational system, two senators have introduced legislation to prohibit gambling on college and high school sports. The bill would also ban gambling on the summer and winter Olympic games. Sens. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., and Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., said the High School and College Gambling Prohibition Act was prompted by a recommendation in a report issued last year by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission.

## Conservatives debate Christianity's role in politics

### Attorney General won't investigate Americans United

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The U.S. Justice Department has decided not to investigate Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which was accused by several U.S. senators of intimidating voters through efforts to counter the Christian Coalition.

In their letter to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, six U.S. senators questioned whether Americans United had "attempted to disenfranchise religious voters by intimidating people of faith into not participating in the political process."

Americans United sent materials to churches across the country advising them that Christian Coalition voter guides are partisan and distributing them could cause churches to lose their tax-exempt status. The Christian Coalition states that its guides are nonpartisan.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General John Keeney, in a Feb. 4 letter to the Washington public policy group, said the two criminal statutes that would relate to such a complaint "reach only threats of physical or economic harm that are communicated to voters to stimulate or deter them from registering to vote or voting in federal elections.

"They do not reach the mere expression of opinions concerning the possible tax ramifications to organizations that engage in such activities," he wrote. "For that reason, we declined to initiate a criminal investigation of the matter about which the senators had complained."

ANAHEIM, Calif. (BP)—Christians should participate in politics, but "not with illusion," author and Christian columnist Cal Thomas told those attending last week's National Religious Broadcasters' public policy breakfast.

Meanwhile, religious rights attorney Jay Sekulow took exception with Thomas during a debate on the role of religion in politics.

A point-counterpoint exchange on the subject centered around a book co-authored by Thomas, "Blinded by Might: Can the Religious Right Save America?"

Despite the differences of opinion, moderator and NRB chairman Wayne Pederson alluded to the closeness of opinion when he quipped, "We spent all morning arguing who's going to sit on the right."

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice, filled in for Christian broadcaster Pat Robertson, who was home ill with the flu.

"I like Cal Thomas," he said in his opening statement. "I don't like his book." Sekulow said the book's title is unfair and aimed at Christian conservatives.

Sekulow admitted that political attempts are not always successful, but "that's part of the fight. That's also part of the price for freedom. If it wasn't for the active role of Christians participating in these issues, they wouldn't be discussed.

"Someone's morality is being legislated," Sekulow added. "If our position

is correct, even those on the left will see it. It's not conservative-liberal or Republican-Democrat. It's about Jesus, and we must stay engaged."

Rather than being "blinded by might," Sekulow argued that Christians have a cultural mandate to uphold. "Blinded by might, absolutely not. Desiring change in our culture, absolutely."

Cal Thomas opened his remarks on a light note, saying, "It's now time to hear from the heretic."

During the exchange, Thomas declared, "We are an appendage of the Republican Party, ladies and gentlemen."

Thomas said it is important for ordained clergy to be set apart and preach something different from what the Republican Party espouses.

"As an ordained person, you carry the authority of Christ with you," he said. "When you get into the subject of defense spending and taxes, you blur the intent of the gospel and marry it off to a political suitor. The politics comes to replace the gospel."

"Democrat or Republican—without Jesus, they both die," Thomas added, stating that the political concerns of the church often become the sole priority, replacing that of spreading the gospel.

NRB is an association of Christian communicators with more than 1,250 members. It was formed in 1944 to maintain access to the airwaves and promote excellence, ethics and integrity in the industry.

Also during its annual meeting, the group honored radio talk-show host

"Dr. Laura" Schlessinger, artist Thomas Kinkade and Pat Robertson's "The 700 Club."

Schlessinger received the NRB Chairman's Award. The evangelical Christian NRB praised Schlessinger, who is Jewish, for her defense of religion and morality. The award honors recipients for serving the Christian community in an exemplary and distinguished manner.

California artist Thomas Kinkade received the NRB President's Award. Kinkade, who is known as the "Painter of Light," was praised for his ability to imbue his paintings with a sense of spiritual illumination.

The award for TV Program of the Year went to Pat Robertson's "The 700 Club."

With additional reporting by Religion News Service

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Warren Association of Baptists, 7:00 p.m.-9:15 p.m. (CST)  
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### Here's what happened!

Recently, I received a call from a couple in their 40s who had attended the Christian estate planning seminar we conducted in their church.

Participation in the seminar prompted them to become more intentional about their estate plans. Each of them had a will, which included provisions for each other and their teenage and older children. However, they had not incorporated God's purposes into their plans. Furthermore, neither of them had executed any other estate planning documents such as a durable power of attorney, healthcare surrogate designation or a living will directive. Laurie Valentine, our trust counsel, had the privilege of assisting them in incorporating some Christian components into their estate plans.

Because of their love for the Lord and His mission in the world, they wanted to be faithful in their financial stewardship. They knew something about Annie Armstrong and Lottie Moon. The husband had heard at a deacons' meeting about Partnership 2000 and Christian higher education through Campbellsville, Cumberland and Georgetown. Laurie and I introduced them and oriented them to all the ways we Kentucky Baptists cooperate in missionary, educational

and benevolent ministries in Kentucky and throughout the world.

After prayerful consideration, they determined God's purposes and put in place a plan to accomplish those purposes. They immediately established in the foundation, with a modest gift, a permanent endowment fund in the name of their family and for the benefit of several Baptist causes. They plan to make quarterly contributions to the fund during their lifetimes. Through their estate planning documents, the endowment fund will receive a portion of their estates at death.

What an inspiration it was for Laurie and me to experience this couple's desire to be faithful to the Lord in the matter of financial stewardship! What a wonderful legacy of their Christian testimonies they will be leaving behind! What an example their children have to emulate!

If you have been thinking about incorporating into your estate plan a Christian component, please give Laurie and me the privilege of assisting you. There is no cost or obligation for the service. Our toll-free number is (888) 254-5701.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

## Abortion poll: Americans 'of two minds'

PRINCETON, N.J. (ABP)— Though abortion is hotly debated among presidential candidates, a majority of Americans remain "of two minds" on the issue, according to a new review of poll data.

Conflicting opinions in America on abortion result from a simultaneous respect for life and desire for autonomous decision-making, wrote Karlyn Bowman, a resident fellow

of the American Enterprise Institute, in a January article reviewing the Gallup polling information.

"Americans do not want to outlaw abortion, because they value individual choice," Bowman wrote. "They are, however, willing to see some restrictions put on its use because of their reverence for life, and they don't want abortion to be undertaken simply for convenience."

In an April 1999 Gallup poll, 48 percent of Americans said they are "pro-choice" and 42 percent said they are "pro-life." But a majority (55 percent) said they want abortion to be legal only under certain circumstances.

Less than a fourth (16 percent) said abortion should be illegal in all situations, while 27 percent said it should be legal in all situations.

Acceptable circumstances cited by the majority include cases of rape, incest or when the mother or fetus's health is seriously endangered, Bowman said.

While abortion divides Americans, 51 percent of voters said it is not a major issue in choosing a candidate. One in five voters said they would vote for a candidate who shares their opinion on abortion.

Protestants and Catholics usually do not differ widely on abortion, Bowman said. But the April poll shows Catholics are more likely than Protestants to be pro-choice.

A Baptist ethicist said single-issue groups on both sides inflame the issue, especially in presidential politics, by framing the debate "in terms of false choices."

"They insist that Americans decide between being either totally anti-abortion or completely pro-choice," said Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville, "keeping the nation away from common-ground agreement and constructive solutions."

## Baptists send students to school with Commandments book covers

CARTHAGE, Tenn. (BP)—A Tennessee Baptist association plans to distribute 10,000 book covers with the Ten Commandments to public school students in its county this fall.

At the start of school, students who are members of the 11 churches in New Salem Baptist Association in Smith County, Tenn., will distribute the book covers by giving them to their friends, said Ricky Scott, pastor of Rome Baptist Church in Lebanon, Tenn. Other book covers might be distributed from churches, he added.

Scott, who presented the idea to the association, said his research found distribution of the book covers by students is lawful in schools if done at times other than class time.

Both students and others can distribute book covers in a religious club held at school, he noted. But he found the book covers bearing the Ten Commandments could not be distributed by someone other than a student on the campus of a public school.

The association, based in Carthage, Tenn., has bought some book covers from the Family Research Council of Washington, D.C., for 18 cents each. Scott said he also found book covers bearing the Ten Commandments available from Love Worth Finding, a ministry of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., in suburban Memphis.

To fund the project, the association gave \$400, an individual gave \$400 and the churches are giving \$120 each. The association also might buy adhesive versions of the Ten Commandments for young children who don't have books, but have folders and notebooks, Scott said.

Scott said he felt led by God to initiate the project after the school shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., last year.

For more information on the project, contact Scott at [revricrome@cs.com](mailto:revricrome@cs.com) or (615) 444-0801.

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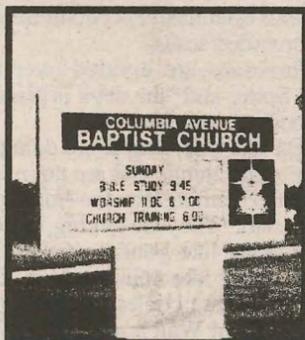
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## Grigsby serves in Taiwan

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College junior Lori Grigsby, the daughter of Arnold and Betty Bishop of Manchester, spent two weeks this past summer in Taiwan. Grigsby taught English as a second language and engaged in lifestyle evangelism.

On the trip over, Grigsby became sick. She has serious allergies, especially to molds, and was heading to a place where those problems would become more acute. By the time the airplane landed, she was very sick. Within 24 hours of arriving, she was sicker than she had ever been in her life. Grigsby reached the point where she either had to get well or return home.

During a meeting with the missionaries in Taiwan on her first full day there, she asked for prayer. They gathered around her, praying for her, and they added her to their network prayer list so Christians around the world could pray too. Grigsby went to bed that night with her head aching, stomach upset and her breathing labored. She slept all night and awoke able to breathe and feeling well.

"God healed me," Grigsby said. "We shy away from that. But I truly believe God healed me."

Throughout her stay in Taiwan,

Grigsby was amazed by the power of prayer. One day she and her partner, Brooke Andrew, prayer-walked in area parks. As they walked they sang choruses and prayed for the opportunity to witness. As they made their circuit around one park, they noticed a young family and prayed for an opportunity to witness to them. As Grigsby and Andrew made a second circuit, the family came up to them and began to talk.

Again and again God answered their prayers, providing opportunities to share the gospel, Grigsby said.

Another high point for Grigsby and Andrew was a visit with a middle school class for children with low self-esteem. God worked through the two to bring joy and excitement to the children. When Grigsby and Andrew left, the children stood waving to them until they were out of sight.

Grigsby is majoring in middle school education. Imagine the experiences she will be able to share with her future students. Imagine the impact she will have for Christ. God has used her in a great way and certainly will continue to do so in the future.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



## Labels of Love

Time is running out! This spring the **Women's Auxiliary of Spring Meadows Children's Home** in Louisville and the **KBHC Women's Advisory Board** will wind up their collection of labels from Campbell's products. The labels will be redeemed for much-needed educational equipment and materials!

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# CHURCHES

## Best-selling author: Churches need Holy Spirit, not trends

**"If doctrinal sermons were all that was needed, we would have won the entire world by now, but we need the Holy Spirit."**

*Jim Cymbala, author of "Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire"*

By Dan Martin  
Baptist General Convention of Texas

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—Christianity doesn't need better methods or more political clout but an encounter with the third person of the Trinity, according to Jim Cymbala.

"Christianity is hopeless without the Holy Ghost," the author of "Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire" told those attending a Texas evangelism conference in Fort Worth.

"You can give the people the words, but unless they are anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit, they are powerless," said Cymbala, pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle, a New York church famous for its multi-racial and multi-cultural blend.

The early church described in the New Testament got its power and leadership from God, Cymbala said. Many modern churches, he charged, rely instead on man-made efforts.

"If doctrinal sermons were all that was needed, we would have won the entire world by now, but we need the Holy Spirit. Revival will not happen by doing methods or programs. We need an invasion from heaven; we need the power and blessing and anointing of the Holy Spirit on our churches and our work," he said.

Cymbala pointed out that the New Testament church was able to evangelize without the aid of computers, committees or seminars on

church growth. "They depended on their only source of strength, the Holy Spirit."

Today, he continued, churches choose leaders on the basis of job resumés and education instead of "validation" or "affirmation" from the Holy Spirit.

Too many churches and pastors say they believe the Bible, he said, but "when it comes to running the church or doing evangelism or calling leaders, they throw out the Bible and go by tradition or somebody's vision, or what somebody thinks the church should be like."

The Holy Spirit "is the agent of God, the administrator of the church," he said.

Cymbala said the popular "church growth" movement is "destroying the church" by "giving principles which aren't even in the Bible."

"Church growth has proved to be a mirage," he said. "Over 90 percent of what we call church growth is just moving Christians from one building to another. We are not having water baptismal services for 80 or 90 or 100 people every other week. We are just moving people from one building to another; from First Nazarene to First Assembly, from First Presbyterian to First Methodist, to First Baptist."

Fine-tuned strategies of "stealing members from each other," he said, is one reason for little love among clergy. "They know what game they

are playing."

"What a way to waste your life, moving Christians from one building to another," he said. "Aren't there enough sinners around for us to do God's work?"

Cymbala also criticized the church-growth movement's teaching that "homogenous units" grow fastest.

"Churches that don't want black people or brown people, or even poor white people, are not Spirit-filled churches," he said. "That appeals to the prejudices of the people and makes a social club of the church. That is not what Jesus wants of His church."

Cymbala said today's religious establishment is so sophisticated that it is in danger of "crucifying" the Holy Spirit—"grieving Him right out of our churches"—in the same way that the religious establishment two millennia ago crucified Jesus.

Christians are divided over the Holy Spirit, and "the devil is playing both sides," he added.

"On one side, people are doing so many weird things that are not in the Bible and blaming it on the Holy Spirit," he said. "They are jerking, twitching, roaring like lions, tweeting like birds, acting like animals. Very few people in those circles have the guts to say, 'Stop! Wait a minute! That is not in the Bible. Can you imagine Jesus doing that, or Paul doing that?'"

"These people are adding to the word of God. They say He is doing a new thing, so new that it is not even in the Bible. If it is a new thing, I want

to see the people in church, souls being won, people seeking the Lord.

"On the other side are those who have tossed the Spirit out the window. They have watched that foolishness on television—those showoffs, those shysters, those con men—and don't want any of it," he said. "But how are you going to run a church without the Holy Spirit? Trying to do so results in little one-hour, packaged 'Protestant masses,' where there is no spontaneity, no spirit, no anointing."

Cymbala said people will sit through a three-hour football game but "get itchy" if Sunday worship lasts longer than an hour.

"Can you imagine Paul telling Peter he has only 18 minutes to preach because the chariot races are about to start and people need to get home to watch?" he asked.

"Something is wrong with the church today," Cymbala said. Divorce rates and the percentage of people who are taking drugs for depression is the same for Christians as for people who don't attend church, he said.

"Don't tell me it is the culture, the environment. It is the lack of the presence of the Holy Spirit and His power in our lives," he said.

"We are not going to change it by computers and committees or by fanaticism or foolishness or emotionalism or by throwing the Holy Spirit out of our churches," he said. "We need a revival. We need a Holy Ghost revival. We need the power of God in our lives."

### F's, D's, C's, B's and A's, part 3

This is the third and final article about some of our students who made the honor roll for the first time. During the second quarter of this school year, 45 percent of our students earned either A or B honor roll status.

Amanda came to Oneida at the beginning of the second quarter as a seventh-grader from Corbin. Amanda had been struggling with her grades for some time. She got along well with teachers, but did not always turn in her homework. We believed Amanda wanted to make better grades and could benefit from a boarding school environment. She was not making D's and F's, but I don't think she would have made the honor roll without the extra help and support she has received here. We are very pleased that she made the B honor roll.

Solomon came to Oneida from Maryland as a freshman last summer. He enrolled in the fall as a sophomore. Solomon was a good student in his old school, was considered respectful and did his class work. None of his grades were really low, but he was struggling in math. He told us one of his goals was to earn a 2.8 GPA so he could be on the honor roll. Solomon did not reach his goal during the first quarter, but he did in the second.

Like Solomon, Ernest was basically a good student. He was respectful, had a good attitude and was cooperative with his teachers. Ernest also was having trouble with mathematics. He enrolled this past fall as a junior from New Jersey. One of his goals was to make better grades, and he did by earning B honor roll status the second quarter.

Finally, I want to tell you about Bet-el, a freshman. Bet-el asked her mother if she could enroll with us. Her grades were average, and she was

well-liked by teachers. She recognized that good grades were not a priority in her life, and one reason she wanted to come to Oneida Baptist Institute was to improve academically. She has put forth the effort and earned B honor roll status this past quarter.

If you have read these past three articles, you may have noticed that each of the students I wrote about was on the B honor roll. You may have wondered why none were on the A honor roll. Remember, I have written about these students because this is the first time they have been on the honor roll at OBI. Some of them enrolled just a few months ago, others up to four years ago.

Some of these students came to Oneida making all D's and F's, while others had been making average grades. Most told us that one of their primary goals in coming to OBI was to make better grades. Not all of these students have put forth equal effort. Some achieved their goal in a few months. Others took several years. We learned long ago that we cannot make them excel academically. However, most will respond, sooner or later, to individual attention, smaller classes, extra tutoring and praise.

None of these students is on the A honor roll. We must take one step at a time. I believe some will earn A honor roll status in the months and years to come. Many of our A honor roll students today were failing and then B honor roll students in the past.

We count it a great privilege to have the opportunity to help our students in various areas of need, including academic needs.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. [www.oneidaschool.org](http://www.oneidaschool.org)

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

### Helping others with grief

"People told me not to make any major decisions for a year," Louise Duncan Day said of the days after her husband's death in 1992. "But some things have to be done, and I couldn't live in the parsonage a year."

Ralph Duncan was pastor of Springfield Baptist Church in Knox County at the time of his death. "I stayed on in the community working at the Barbourville Housing Authority. With work, family and the church I did good in many ways, but I had not accepted Ralph's death. He was a preacher 365 days of the year, and I thought God had made a mistake," she recalled.

"My pastor, Bob Lowery, asked me to give the obituary report at the 1993 Kentucky Baptist Convention," she said. "In preparation I read an epitaph: 'The Lord gives. The Lord takes. The Lord restores. The Lord does all things well.' When I spoke those words at the KBC, I found release from my own grief."

She and Ralph went through deep sorrow at the death of their son Kelly at age 39. In 1997, Louise married Sillus Day. They each sold a home and built another in

Claiborne County, Tenn. Sillus died of cancer one month after the home was finished. "This is my qualification for a grief seminar," Louise said. "We will discuss the grief process, the funeral, when reality sets in, and what to say when someone dies. I hope to let them talk."

Ralph and Louise Duncan attended Clear Creek from 1964 to 1967. He later became director of public relations, and she was secretary to President D.M. Aldridge for three years.

"Our years at Clear Creek are happy memories," Louise said. "The children still talk about the weekend trips the five years we drove to two churches where Ralph was pastor. Everyone on campus was a family. It is healing to come back and visit the school."

She told me she was "looking for a cause" to which she could devote the coming years of her life. Pray for her as she helps others cope with grief and continue on to fulfill God's purpose.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# MINISTRY

## Touched Twice project meeting spiritual & physical needs

By Bryan Cribb  
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE—The first volunteers arrived early in the morning. Despite the threat of snow and the chilling temperatures, 65 volunteers gathered to “touch twice” people in need, both physically and spiritually.

The volunteers braved the elements to participate in the 12th Touched Twice Clinic, a ministry designed to open doors for sharing the gospel by first meeting physical needs.

Whether “guests” needed food, medical care, dental exams or vision screenings, the volunteers of Touched Twice Ministries sought to provide that care at the clinic Jan. 22 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Louisville. A second clinic was held simultaneously at Marcus Lindsay United Methodist Church.

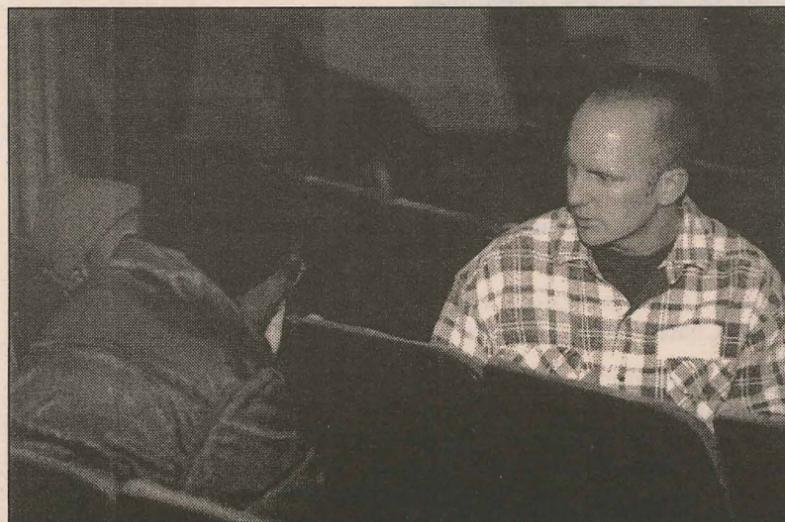
Perry Polnaszek, a master of divinity student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, has organized the clinics for more than six years.

“Our first touch is that of the temporal, people who need glasses or dentistry or clothing or food or jobs,” explained Polnaszek. “We put together on a Saturday an event where people can come for free and have as many of those services met as possible.”

While people wait, volunteers on the main stage see to the biggest need—to hear the gospel, he said. At the two locations on Jan. 22, nearly 500 people listened to preaching, live Christian singing and testimonies.

“It’s almost like a festival,” Polnaszek said. “It’s fairly ruckus. But God is glorified in the fact that we present the gospel message in a very excellent, clear and concise way.”

In addition to the activities on the



**TOUCHED TWICE** Southern Seminary student Douglas Yates of Merritt Island, Fla., counsels two individuals at the Jan. 22 Touched Twice clinic in Louisville. The event drew about 500 people. (Photo by Norman Snead)

main stage, volunteers walk with and share their faith with clinic visitors.

“Volunteers are there to serve them,” Polnaszek explained. “They’re there to get them food. But, first and foremost they’re there to testify.”

Polnaszek has seen a variety of successes from the efforts. Not only have many people become Christians, but the ministry also has reached non-Christian volunteers who help Touched Twice merely for the social aspects. At the Jan. 22 clinic, 11 children and many more adults made personal professions of faith.

“The ultimate goal of this whole ministry is to build the kingdom of God and not just to do social ministry,” Polnaszek said.

Follow-up also is important for Touched Twice. After the event, Polnaszek gets local churches to contact the

people who attend the clinic.

Polnaszek said such follow-up could build core groups for church plants—an idea that soon might be tried in conjunction with Southern’s church planting center.

At each event, Polnaszek said, both the clinic and the follow-up have had tremendous responses.

At the first event in 1993, he and 12 other volunteers promised God to do their best even if the event attracted only two people.

But as they arrived at the church three hours early, hundreds of people already had lined up waiting to be served.

“We recognized that we had stumbled over something,” Polnaszek said.

Since 1993, the events have averaged 300 people in attendance. He laments that each time workers are forced

to turn people away because of lack of resources. Jan. 22 was no different, as one of the doctors was unable to attend, forcing several people to leave without medical attention.

But Polnaszek said the ministry has an opportunity for tremendous growth. Individuals, churches and parachurch organizations have offered services that could allow Touched Twice to increase the frequency of the clinics and thus meet community needs on a larger scale.

“What I thought was a big vision of having a clinic a quarter, God seems to be showing something a lot different,” Polnaszek said. “Our goal is that from April 2000 to April 2001, we can become a part of making sure that everyone in the city of Louisville hears the gospel message.”

Polnaszek pointed to two stories that exemplify the ministry of Touched Twice. In one, a woman claimed her eyes were “broken,” preventing her from reading for 19 years. Touched Twice had a pair of donated glasses which closely matched her prescription, and she was reading the Bible before she left.

At another clinic, an elderly woman came in crying. She said she had terminal cancer and had been to a previous clinic. She returned, she said, simply because she felt loved by the volunteers.

“She didn’t want anything else,” Polnaszek noted.

Polnaszek said both stories demonstrate the need for workers.

“I don’t think we could ever become fully staffed,” he said. “We need people who have a heart for the lost, not next semester but now.”

Three clinics are planned for May 13. For more information, contact Polnaszek at [plpolnaszek@maryhurst.org](mailto:plpolnaszek@maryhurst.org).

**Not only have many visitors become Christians, but the ministry also has reached non-Christian volunteers who help Touched Twice merely for the social aspects.**

## Church meets spiritual hunger with use of Baptist hunger funds

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)—Acting on what he felt was God’s calling, pharmaceutical salesman Antoine Scruggs, at age 31, resigned his job and, with five other people, started Promise-Land Church in Little Rock in 1997.

Since then, the church has found that meeting physical hunger has led to addressing the spiritual hunger of residents in their community. Many of the church projects benefit from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

The group immediately began ministering to the community, using the motto, “Meet a Need: Plant a Seed.”

The church has reached an average attendance of more than 200 people. A building was virtually given to the church by a declining congregation in the neighborhood. “God has provided this facility for us to use in His work,” Scruggs said.

An after-school program known as “Promise University,” provides children with a snack and help with homework.

Hunger funds also made it possible for the church to distribute Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to the needy in the community.

The church also hosts three youth basketball teams, providing snacks and involvement in a spiritual atmosphere.

The church’s day-camp summer program provides balanced meals to needy children while teaching them of Christ’s love through activities and Bible studies. A preschool program called “Promise Christian Academy” will begin in the fall.

Even during the week, visitors find the congregation active and enthusiastic. Virtually every member gets involved in some way. Some teach while others work to renovate the church’s recently acquired building. Other volunteers distribute food and counsel the needy who come by for help.

Spiritual impact remains central. During the past two years, the church has had more than 70 baptisms. One 11-year-old boy, a former gang member, became a Christian after becoming involved in the church’s activities.

Gifts to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund assist ministries across the United States and in more than 50 other countries. With personnel and volunteers already in place, all gifts are used 100 percent for hunger relief with nothing taken out for administration or promotion.

For more information about the World Hunger Fund, call the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission at (800) 475-9127.

## Translation project is music to Chinese churches’ ears

By Robyn Little  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Flipping through books on church music is just a research assignment for some people. But for Fang-Lan Hsieh it was the beginning of a ministry.

Hsieh, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary’s music librarian, had looked through many books on church music when she became burdened for Chinese churches that don’t have the same resources to study church music in their language.

She began to pray about finding a church music book she could translate into Chinese.

“By (translating a book), I felt maybe I could help all of the Chinese churches,” she said.

Hsieh came across “Jubilate II,” a standard church music book written by Louisvillian Don Hustad in 1993 and used for training worship leaders.

After much prayer and discussion with Campus Evangelical Publishing House, the publisher decided that “Jubilate II” would be the book to translate.

“There are some (church music books) written by Chinese, but they are not as comprehensive as Jubilate II,” she said.

After receiving permission from Hope Publishing Company, the book’s original publisher, Hsieh began translating. Soon after

beginning the project, Hsieh met Hustad when he came to Southwestern for a church music workshop. Hsieh said Hustad was delighted about the translation project.

For the next couple of years, Hsieh worked each day at Bowld Music Library, then went home and translated each evening while also balancing her duties as a mother and pastor’s wife.

Hsieh, who speaks Mandarin and Taiwanese, used computer software to help her in the translation process and consulted her husband about proper wording and editing.

Hsieh began translating the 595-page book in 1994. It was published in 1998 by Campus Evangelical Publishing House in Taiwan and will be used for philosophy of church music classes in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

The translation process was challenging, she said.

“The structure of the two languages are very different,” she said. “I had to ask myself, ‘How can I say this (so) that the Chinese readers will understand?’”

She read Chinese newspapers regularly to better understand proper wording as well as to understand the cultural context for which she was translating.

“This book will help students understand church music from the biblical perspective,” she said. “It will help them understand the whole spectrum of church music.”

## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Baptist representatives Steven and Deborah Reece as they begin Bible studies in Gliwice and Bytom, Poland. They ask for prayer that God will provide encouragement for the slow process of locating people interested in attending the Bible studies.

■ Praise God that Goko, an older Maasai woman in Tanzania, recently professed faith in Jesus. Pray that she will grow strong in her new-found faith, requests missionary Annie Tidenberg.

■ International Service Corps worker Todd Crabtree asks prayer for the twice-monthly showing of the "Jesus" film in the Turuya area of Tanzania.

■ Ken Lyle, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New England, as he moves toward retirement in June.

■ Peggy Peek, collegiate minister at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church will host revival services Feb. 20-23. Kentucky Baptist Convention evangelism team leader **Dan Garland** will be the evangelist. For information, call (270) 465-8115. **James Jones** is pastor.

■ **CLOVERPORT**—Cloverport Church recorded 22 professions of faith and 50 rededications from a revival with evangelist **Dale Rose**. The church has recorded 41 professions of faith and 96 rededications since August 1999. **Dave Renfroe** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Association will host a "Harvest Weekend" evangelism rally Feb. 25 at 7 p.m. at Berean Church. **David Gray** will be the speaker. Participating churches—Barren Run, Berean, Blue

Ball, Central Avenue, East Rhudes Creek, Franklin Crossroads, Locust Grove, Ovesen Heights and Unity—will host revivals Feb. 26-27. Evangelists include **Jimmy Lee Chapman, Wyman Copass, David Gray, L.C. Gray, Steve Hardy, Leroy Jennings, Earl Jones, Jeff Noffsinger and Dale Rose**. For information, call (270) 765-4023.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Calvary Church called **Charles White** as interim pastor.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—Ovesen Heights Church ordained **Stewart Skaggs**, pastor of Cold Spring Church, Battletown, Feb. 6. **Richard Carver** is pastor of Ovesen Heights.

■ **LaCENTER**—LaCenter First Church called **Jack Fugate** as youth

and children's minister. **Mark Bond** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Carlisle Avenue Church will host **Bill Fay**, author of "Sharing Jesus Without Fear," Feb. 27 in the morning service and a 5 p.m. seminar. For information, call (502) 363-2606. **Shawn Merithew** is pastor.

Cloverleaf Church will host the **Perry Sisters** from Ceredo, W.Va., Feb. 25 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Laceyfield** is pastor.

West Broadway Church recently provided child care for a dedication service at neighboring Hunsinger Lane Church's new building and Hunsinger Lane reciprocated at a West Broadway service to launch an addition to their facilities. **Charles Davis** is pastor of Hunsinger Lane. **Skip Alexander** is pastor of West Broadway.

■ **MIDDLETOWN**—First Church called **Brad Unland**, a student at

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, as minister of youth. **James Cobban** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Lone Oak First Church will host a concert Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. to benefit Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Artists include the **Hawkins Quartet**, the **Immanuel Quartet** and the **Lone Oak Quartet & Ensemble**. For information, call the West Union Association office at (800) 995-0133.

Strathmoor Church called **Gene Coley** of Joppa, Ill., as pastor. **Walter Peck** was interim pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—Cumberland College student **Jami Benning** has been selected as a co-recipient of the Shackleford/Martin Undergraduate Scholarship from Baptist Communicators Association.

■ **WILMORE**—Mt. Freedom Church called **David Hewitt** as pastor. Hewitt previously served as pastor of Dallasburg Church in Wheatley.



**AT-HOME WEEK** Staff from the Kentucky Baptist Convention performed several ministries in the Louisville area as part of the annual January KBC At-home week activities. ■ **Top:** Staff sing hymns for residents at The Forum assisted-living center. ■ **Above:** Donna Dye (right), of Kentucky WMU, and Cheryl Doty, of KBC archives, prepare meals for shut-ins as part of a ministry in cooperation with Fourth Avenue Baptist in downtown Louisville. (KBC photos by Brenda Smith)

## Game forfeited due to yarmulke ruling

**PORTSMOUTH, Va. (RNS)**—The coach of a Hebrew school's boys basketball team forfeited a game rather than abide by the referee's request that the players remove their yarmulkes.

Nathan Drory, coach of the team of sixth- through eighth-graders at Hebrew Academy of Tidewater, Va., was preparing his team to play Sweethaven Christian Academy of Portsmouth, Va., on Feb. 3 when the referee informed six of his players they could play only if they removed their yarmulkes.

The yarmulkes, worn by some Jewish males as a show of respect for God, had not been an issue previously, Drory said.

Four of the players are sons of rabbis, and the wearing of yarmulkes is "not something we are going to be flex-

ible on," Drory said. "We're going to wear them."

Dick Bowie, commissioner of the Southeastern Virginia Officials Association, defended the referee's decision, Associated Press reported. "If the clips were to come loose and stick someone in the eye, our \$5 million liability insurance wouldn't cover it."

Sweethaven's basketball coach David Clark said his team has played Hebrew Academy in other sports and the issue never came up.

After the forfeit was official, the coaches decided to play anyway. Sweethaven won, 33-22.

"They were gracious; they were understanding; they were very good hosts," Drory said. "The kids were great on both sides. Our kids were very happy to uphold something they believe in."

## N.Y. Giuliani-Clinton race involves religion

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. (RNS)**—Accusing New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani of "injecting religion" into the U.S. Senate race, Hillary Rodham Clinton denounced a Giuliani fund-raising letter that accused her of "hostility toward America's religious traditions."

Giuliani's eight-page letter—mailed to conservatives—claimed Clinton opposed Texas Gov. George W. Bush's plan for faith-based solutions to social problems and cited that as another

example of her "hostility."

"I am outraged that he would inject religion into this campaign in any form whatsoever," she said. "And to do it in a way to raise money for his campaign is something that he should take responsibility for."

A spokesman for Clinton's campaign said she does support allowing faith-based charities to manage social programs if done without violating the Constitution.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth. Growing congregation 10 miles from Elizabethtown (approximately 40 miles from Louisville). Please send resumé to: Minister of Youth Search Committee, Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, PO Box 253, Hodgenville, KY 42748-0253.

**SEEKING:** Resumés are being sought from individuals who desire to be considered for director of missions for Madison Baptist Association in Huntsville, Ala. (82 churches with 48,000 members). Send resumé to: Dr. Walter G. Nunn, Chairman of Search Committee, 1007 Speake Road, Huntsville, AL 35816. Deadline is March 15.

**SEEKING:** Church secretary, Hurstbourne Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky. 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., M-F. Full ben-

efits/vacation. Computer experience preferred. For more information or to apply, call the church office at (502) 246-2444.

**SEEKING:** Part-time administrative assistant—20 hours per week. Please apply to: Personnel Committee, Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, PO Box 253, Hodgenville, KY 42748-0253.

**SEEKING:** Office assistant for Christian social service agency. Have a real heart for ministry? Part-time Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Skills needed: typing, data entry, some knowledge of Windows 95, Microsoft Office, great phone skills and ability to deal with clients and the public. Interested? Call Infant Resource Project at (502) 584-0774 and ask for Cathy Neel.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for a loving church in Bowling Green. Must be experienced and ambitious. Send resumé to: Forest Park Baptist Church, 520 Old Morgantown Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of education. Please send resumé to: Crestwood Baptist Church, 1006 East Main St., Frankfort, KY 40601, Attn: Minister of Education Search Committee. For information regarding our church, please visit our Web site: [www.crestwoodbaptist.com](http://www.crestwoodbaptist.com).

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister needed immediately. Approximately 10 hours weekly, primarily week-ends. Call pastor: (606) 299-5649.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, Ky., is prayerfully seek-

ing applicants for pastor. Please send resumé to: FBC Pastor Search Committee, 1400 South Main St., Hopkinsville, KY 42240.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: New Bethel Baptist Church, PO Box 100, Verona, KY 41092, Attn: Music Search Committee.

**FOR RENT:** 2-room apartment (sleeps 6), 2 baths, kitchenette. Cocoa Beach, Fla. Available April 2-9 or April 9-16, 2000. Call (812) 944-3866.

**FOR SALE:** Very nice one-owner bus in excellent condition. Comfortable reclining seats, restroom, air-conditioned, large luggage storage, easy to drive and inexpensive to maintain. The most reliable transportation a church can own. For information or photos, please call David at (606) 278-7224.

# PEOPLE

## The Company uses drama to portray the gospel story

By Cory Hailey  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The man with AIDS sat alone on the stage. The Bosnian refugee and battered wife had been ministered to and exited.

First, a long, uncomfortable pause, then the lights began to dim. Suddenly, a woman who had come to watch the drama ran to the stage and with tears in her eyes hugged the actor portraying the AIDS victim. The power of the drama literally pulled her out of her seat.

Their pulpit is different from most ministers. And their messages are a far cry from the 20-minute, Sunday morning sermons.

But with dramatic power, The Company communicates the gospel around the world, fulfilling its simple goal summed up in its theme verse, Psalm 68:11: "The Lord announced the word and great was the company of those who proclaimed it."

The Company, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's touring repertory theater group, ministers by performing dramatic sketches and visual interpretations of songs.

The sketches are short and to the point—some taken directly from Bible stories and others created to communicate a message from Scripture. They include:

■ A king dying for a woman condemned to death.

■ A debate between a seeker and a cynic, contrasting the dead prophets of other religions with the truth of Christ's resurrection.

■ A press conference with Moses about the deliverance at the Red Sea and

the victory over the Amalekites.

■ A story based on Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant.

About 10 to 20 students perform with The Company. The group has taken the gospel across the nation and overseas.

The main goals of the troupe are to use creative arts to communicate the gospel and to inspire people to use such methods in their own church or setting, according to acting director John Tillman, a master of communications student.

The Company began in 1985 through the efforts of Dennis Parrish, assistant professor of communication arts, who has guided the group since its creation. Parrish has been involved in theater since college when a football injury required him to take ballet as part of his rehabilitation. The exposure to theater changed the course of Parrish's ministry.

The cast members' closeness to each other and their dedication to God are central to any good performance, he said.

Both performer and performance have benefited through The Company, according to Southwestern professor Robert DeVargas. He performed with the group from 1992 to 1994 and knows its benefits firsthand.

DeVargas said he has seen The Company develop members in a way that classes never do, helping them develop character and discipline.

When he was part of The Company, he signed a promise to commit his time and talents to support The Company. The promise included staying "physically fit, spiritually firm, emotionally solid and theatrically professional," as

well as supporting and praying for all other group members.

The Company also helps members develop creativity, confidence to minister and communication skills, DeVargas added. The commitment level is high, he noted, because of the nature of the effort. Members participate in spiritual formation groups and short devotional times when they pray for the ministry and other needs.

To keep creative juices flowing, members write weekly creative journal entries. Some of those entries later develop into scripts, songs and poems, or are published in "In Good Company," the group's newsletter.

Becoming a member of the organization is less about having dramatic talent than demonstrating the availability to be used by God in the ministry and a willingness to learn, DeVargas said.

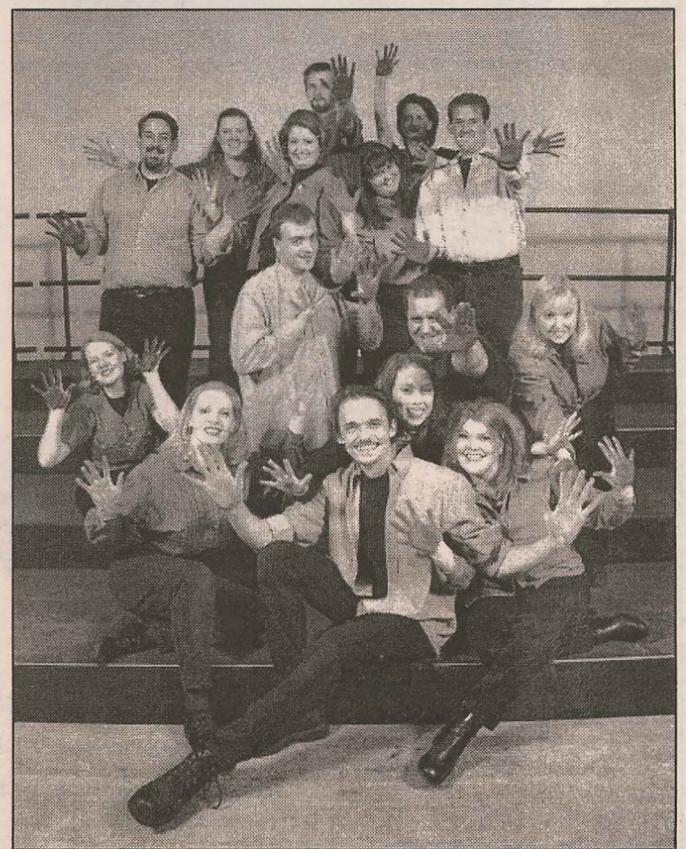
"Talent can be learned; the attitude has to come from the Lord," he said.

Because of today's media-centered and visually oriented society, DeVargas said, God can use drama to reach those who might not listen to a sermon.

The Company is one of the foundation stones of Southwestern's communications program, said DeVargas, and has helped the seminary maintain a high level of visibility.

In addition to the sketch that ended with the AIDS victim on stage several years ago, DeVargas recalled the impact of a visual interpretation of the Steve Green song "He Holds the Keys" at the meeting of the Baptist Youth Congress in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The actors portrayed the death and resurrection of Christ, who takes from Satan keys to set Satan's captives free. The actor portraying Christ used the



keys to unshackle other actors portraying people held captive by sin.

During the closing chorus, more than 3,000 students from around the world jumped to their feet and began praising God, screaming, clapping and yelling, DeVargas remembered.

"You could feel the absolute electricity of that moment," he said. "We had visually presented the testimony of every believer in that room."

**THE COMPANY** Started in 1985, this group of 10 to 20 students have shared the gospel through drama around the country and overseas.

## Christian gospel singer has gone from despair to the verge of stardom

By Yvonne White  
Religion News Service

ATHENS, Ala. (RNS)—Debbie White was ecstatic as she finished performing at Nashville's historic Ryman Auditorium in front of several thousand people and millions of television viewers for the Christian Country Music Association's annual awards show in November.

Out of the view of the cameras, lights and fans, however, she lost her composure. "I wasn't that nervous when I was on stage, but it hit me after I finished singing and left the auditorium," White said. "I just fell apart."

A year before, while on a visit to Nashville, White pointed out the famous auditorium to her two children. She told them she would perform there one day. They laughed.

But White is now getting the last laugh. The Huntsville, Ala., native is on the threshold of stardom as one of the nation's top country gospel singers.

She recently was named 1999's "Female Vocalist of the Year," by both the Country Gospel Music Association and the Country Gospel Music Guild. She was named "New Artist of the Year" in 1997 by the Country Gospel Music Association.

She has recorded two albums, including her latest, "Heaven's Country." One of the

singles from her new project, "Practice What You Preach," was No. 1 on the gospel music industry's international chart and two national Christian country charts. Her latest single, "Going Through Some Memories," was No. 1 for four straight weeks.

Performing on stage is nothing new to White, who was raised in a Christian home and sang as a 14-year-old with her relatives, The White Family, at gospel singings throughout north Alabama.

But the teenager soon decided life in the fast lane was more exciting than singing hymns in church.

While in high school in the late 1970s, White became involved with drugs and alcohol. Her life became one big party and she dropped out of school. She worked at the Plush Horse, then a popular Huntsville nightclub.

She became pregnant, but had an abortion. She sank deeper and deeper into a life that eventually found her facing the end of a cocked gun held by a former boyfriend. He put the gun down when she agreed to go back to him.

White said she believes the prayers of her mother saved her.

Her mother called to check on her shortly after the gun incident and said she felt something was wrong.

"I didn't tell her what happened, but I

knew she was praying for me," White said.

Despite the prayers, White didn't get any better grip on her life. She married, but was divorced about a year later.

In 1984, White was reunited with her high school sweetheart, Bill Cawthon, and they married five days after he returned from the Navy.

Marriage and parenthood didn't temper their destructive lifestyle. Their children, Dustin and Amber, who were born in 1986 and 1987, respectively, would be confined to their rooms while their parents were high on drugs.

White's mother, Doris White, kept inviting her daughter and son-in-law to gospel concerts to hear the family perform. They finally agreed to attend a homecoming service at the family's home church, Gurley Church of God, one Saturday night in October 1989.

The following Wednesday, while sitting together on their couch smoking marijuana, Bill Cawthon excused himself and went to the bedroom. When he returned, his wife noticed he had tears in his eyes. He told her, "Debbie, I just gave my heart to the Lord."

She didn't take it well.

"I was mad," she said. "I told him to leave me alone. I also told my mama to stop praying for me and that she was making me miserable."

But the following weekend, they attended another White Family concert. This time it was Debbie White who found God.

"I saw my younger sister, Sherry, singing with the family," White said. "I saw how pure she was, and I knew how dirty I was. It shouldn't be that way. As the older sister, I was supposed to be the role model. I received the Lord that night and was instantly healed from my addictions. I've never wanted another joint."

It was an instant change in the Cawthon household. "It was much calmer," said 13-year-old Dustin. "There was always a lot of noise and parties. We're much closer as a family."

Dustin and 12-year-old sister Amber are home-schooled by their parents so the family can travel together to performances.

"It's really cool," Amber said about their lifestyle. "I have a lot of friends around the country and I like traveling and helping out."

A couple of months after their conversion experience, Cawthon and White joined The White Family.

They performed with the family for seven years until White decided to start her own ministry in 1997.

While many people try to hide their past, White said that sharing hers with others can offer them hope. "If God can do this for me, He can do it for anyone."



*"This is my commandment,  
that ye love one another,  
as I have loved you."*

— John 15:12

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