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Study: America showing no signs of major revival

VENTURA, Calif. (RNS)—Notions of major American spiritual revival, and particularly spiritual awakening among men, are mythical, according to pollster George Barna.

"There does not seem to be revival taking place in America," Barna said in a statement released with an annual survey that showed little change in religious beliefs and behavior tracked by his Barna Research Group.

"Whether that is measured by church attendance, born-again status or theological purity, the statistics simply do not reflect a surge of any noticeable proportions," Barna said. "The increase in Bible reading may be setting the stage for such a revival, but it does not appear to be occurring at the moment."

Barna's organization reported that Bible reading was popular in the early 1990s, then fell out of favor later in the decade. Now, it reports that 40 percent of adults read the Bible in a typical week.

Barna said there has not been a sizable increase in evidence of Christian men's spiritual activity.

"There is reason to believe that America experienced a small increase in the proportion of men who are born again between 1990 and 2000," he said. But he added, "The increase in the proportion of women who are born again was double that of men during the past decade."

"Church attendance among men has dropped in the past decade, as has Bible reading, Sunday school attendance and church volunteerism. Some good things have happened among men during the '90s, but it does not appear that there has been a massive reawakening of the male soul in the last 10 years."

The organization also reported that 40 percent of adults attend a church service on a typical Sunday. That figure is relatively unchanged since 1994 but is a significant drop from the early '90s when close to half of all adults reported attending churches on Sunday.

The survey showed that born-again Christians continue to represent 41 percent of adults. The Barna Research Group defines born-again Christians as "people who say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and who say they know they will go to heaven after they die because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior."

The survey results are based on phone interviews with a random nationwide sample of 1,002 adults and have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Ministry draws couple to Eastern Kentucky

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LYNCH—When Lonnie and Belinda Riley moved back to her hometown a year ago, they said they hoped to see God make a difference in this northeast corner of Harlan County.

Today, thanks to a new ministry center and a wealth of donations for community projects, they say brighter days are ahead for the "tri-cities" of Lynch, Benham and Cumberland.

"When we first came and saw people's faces, it was an immediate burden," said Mrs. Riley, who visited in the fall of 1998 to settle her mother's estate. "We have seen changes in the countenances of people we've come in contact with. Even though we haven't seen a lot of physical changes yet, they have hope."

One reason for the couple's optimism is the donation of an old tavern in Cumberland. A former resident whose family owned the property decided last summer she wanted it used for Christian purposes.

Today a sign reading "Freedom Center" hangs next to old ones promoting beer and liquor. While not yet open, the building will house the Rileys' Meridzo ministry. Meridzo is a Greek word for "care." The Kentucky Baptist Convention has given the center \$11,000 for renovations.

The building will be used for such activities as food and clothing distribution, counseling and a Christian Women's Job Corps program.

Donations from various sources have poured in, too, such as food, furniture, clothing, paint and lumber. After learning of local needs, First Baptist Church of Griffin, Ga., contacted

Riley with an offer of 200 roofing squares.

Later, a non-Christian truck driver in West Kentucky—grateful for the change a church there had made in his son's life—volunteered to go to Georgia to pick up the shingles.

"You know the Lord is at work when stuff like that happens," Riley said. "We're just sitting here and watching it unfold."

Thanks to networking with state missions officials and Appalachian Regional Ministry, numerous groups also are coming to help.

A Campbellsville University volunteer team sponsored a three-night coffee house last Christmas. Adairsville Baptist Church sent a group to help repair Freedom Center, and they plan to return soon to put on a new roof.

□ See *Ministry needs draw ...*, page 3



DISASTER RELIEF Refugees at Samora Michel camp in Mozambique struggle and fight for relief supplies. The number of dead still is unknown since flooding began in February. Thousands are homeless and living in shelters. Baptists from America are providing clean water for residents of several camps. Food and other essentials are scarce at the Samora Michel camp, where more than 3,000 flood victims live in tents. *Story on page 9.* (IMB photo by Grace Robinette)

Retreats causing division among some Baptists

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—A Southern Baptist is marooned, alone, on a desert island. When he is rescued, the ship's captain finds three huts and asks what they are for.

"This one is where I live," replies the hermit, "and the other one is where I go to church."

Commending the man's piety, the captain asks, "What's the third?"

"That's where I used to go to church."

The above is but one from a whole genre of jokes about Southern Baptists' dubious reputation for church splits.

And while it's not a laughing matter, a relatively new issue is giving rise to Baptist church division.

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board issued an advisory last year urging caution about a num-

ber of weekend retreats known collectively as the "Cursillo" movement.

Cursillo is Spanish for "little course." It describes a three-day spiritual-renewal experience in a retreat setting. Originating in the Roman Catholic Church, the term now includes spin-off organizations sponsored by Methodists, Lutherans and interdenominational groups. Retreats carry names including "Tres Dias," "Camino," "Emmaus Walk" and the youth-focused "Chrysalis."

Participants describe the retreats, which often include people from various denominations, as a positive experience. Officials from NAMB, however, said reports about the movement becoming a divisive issue in Baptist congregations suggest a pattern.

Complaints include that participants

often return from retreats with a charged-up spiritual attitude that comes across as elitist, that they are influenced by charismatic tendencies and that alumni are urged not to disclose details of the experience to others.

Tal Davis, who works for NAMB's interfaith witness team, said his office has received a number of complaints from pastors and others about spiritual renewal weekends during the past 10 years. He advised Southern Baptists to steer clear of the movement.

"These weekend retreats often create more problems than they resolve," he said. "There are plenty of Southern Baptist programs that can provide solid discipleship ministries."

The secrecy element is particularly troubling for many Southern Baptists, □ See *Retreat movement ...*, page 8

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Messengers** to a special called session of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention voted March 23 to accept Grand Canyon University's move to break formal ties to the convention. The 355 messengers ratified two resolutions adopted Feb. 1 by the ABSCE Executive Board. The first expressed "great disappointment" but allowed Grand Canyon to officially sever ties. The second action affirmed placing the university's Cooperative Program funds in escrow for future reallocation, except for ministerial scholarship funds.

■ **Peter Rhea Jones**, a former professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, has been named to the faculty of Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology. Jones taught New Testament interpretation at Southern for 11 years before becoming pastor of First Baptist Church of Decatur, Ga., in 1979.

Latin American Baptists highlight worship, reconciliation

By Wendy Ryan
Baptist World Alliance

NITEROI, Brazil—For four days, more than 2,000 Baptist pastors, musicians, theologians and laypeople from 18 countries packed the sanctuary of First Baptist Church of Niteroi, Brazil. The first-ever Latin American Baptist congress on worship was filled with vibrant praise, searching questions on worship styles and content, especially music, and a historic moment of reconciliation.

Nilson Fanini, president of the Baptist World Alliance, hosted the March 15-18 congress sponsored by BWA's study and research division and the Union of Baptists in Latin America. It was a follow-up to the BWA Conference on Worship held in Berlin in 1998.

Participants adopted "The Niteroi Declaration on Worship" calling on Latin American Baptist churches to center their worship "upon God and His glory" and music leaders to constantly seek "true Christian worship."

Each day, three different styles of worship were modeled—traditional, contemporary and renewal/charismatic. Several aspects of worship were addressed in afternoon workshops.

"We do not worship worship traditions or styles, we worship Almighty God," said Tony Cupit, who heads BWA's study and research division.

Urging participants "not to demonize the way others worship," he said, "We may not embrace each style, but let there be no worship wars. Let us celebrate that God by His Spirit has given others insights on worship."

Tomas Mackey, professor of systematic theology at the Baptist Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, shared a theological foundation for worship. "To worship is to be conscious of God," Mackey said, "to open our hearts to His voice, do His will, obey His Word."

"Worship lifts up our lives to God and causes us to recognize our dependence on God," Mackey added. "In adoration we seek, and God allows us to find Him. This is not just a philosophical thought, it is an experience."

Roberto Alves de Souza, president of the Baptist Seminary of Southern Brazil, urged that more attention be paid to worship in theological seminaries. He said seminaries should present a biblical view of worship, noting that "what we teach about the way we worship is very important."

Peruvian missiologist Samuel Escobar, a professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania and president of United Bible Societies, shared an overview of Baptist worship. He said all of Baptist worship has been influenced by the worldwide movement of worship in the Wesleyan, Lutheran and even the Catholic church.

Rather than focus on forms of worship, Escobar said the church needs to find ways to respond to modern challenges such as the great interest in religion that is not necessarily Christian, and even includes new religions.

Denton Lotz, BWA general secretary, said a mighty force of the Holy Spirit is moving all over the world, reminding participants that governments cannot prevent worship. Although many believers do not have the freedom to worship, they do so anyway, Lotz said, because no human institution can deny the movement of the Spirit in the life of the church and believers.

Lotz described two kinds of worship, priestly and prophetic. He said priestly worship is praise and worship to God while prophetic worship speaks the Word of God and brings people to repentance. "Baptists must bring both celebration and prophesy together," Lotz said. "Celebration without proclamation

becomes emotionalism and proclamation without celebration becomes rationalism."

Congress participants witnessed a public act of reconciliation between the two BWA member bodies in Brazil.

Thirty-five years ago 14 churches of the National Baptist Convention were expelled from the Baptist Convention of Brazil because of their different worship style influenced greatly by the charismatic movement. Fanini welcomed National Baptist Convention President Eneas Tognini in the very church where they had been voted out.

The National Baptist Convention, which became a member of the BWA in 1997, today has 3,000 congregations and more than 200,000 members.

"This is a historic moment," said BWA Vice President Fausto Aguiar de Vasconcelos, pastor of First Baptist Church of Rio de Janeiro. "I remember as a boy 14 years old, sitting in the back of this church with my parents, when the convention expelled Tognini's group."

"I believe what is happening is a miracle of the Holy Spirit," Tognini responded, "because we don't see it as two conventions, only one—the Brazilian Convention."

Disaster relief workers offer help, hope for Texas tornado victims

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Tarrant County Baptists quickly responded with food and counseling to victims of rush-hour tornadoes that devastated parts of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, Texas, March 28.

The storm hit shortly after 6 p.m., doing the most damage to the downtown area. Tornadoes also struck glancing blows at South Arlington and portions of Grand Prairie.

Five people were killed, two in storm damage, one in a storm-related traffic accident and two to drowning. More than 100 people were injured, several seriously, and property damage was in the millions of dollars.

Officials said the death toll would have been much higher had the tornado hit an hour earlier, before workers in the high-rise, glass-covered office buildings in the downtown area had left for home.

The storm damaged several downtown buildings, including Calvary Cathedral—which formerly was First Baptist Church of Fort Worth. More than 100 people were in the church, at least two in the prayer tower, which was devastated by the winds. No one was injured at the church.

The storm then hit residential sections south of Interstate 20 in Arlington and Grand Prairie.

Tarrant Baptist Association activated its disaster relief unit—a truck and 30-foot trailer—about midmorning March 29 at the request of the Arlington Police Department.

Staffed by 10 volunteers, along with helpers from Mission Arlington, the unit was moved into a devastated upscale neighborhood near Matlock and Bardin. Many of the homes were nearly destroyed, with torn away roofs, broken windows, and other damage.

Bobby Cox, director of church and community ministries for Tarrant Baptist Association, said the unit prepared more than 1,000 meals the first day.

Cox said the American Red Cross requested Baptists move the unit back to the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth for service later in the week. It was scheduled to prepare 3,000 meals a day, which were to be transported to relief workers and victims across the county.

Cox said volunteer counselors were dispatched to the Will Rogers Coliseum where about 175 victims were given emergency shelter. The counselors were on hand to help with the emotional trauma.

Tom Law, director of missions for Tarrant Baptist Association, said early reports indicate no Baptist church was damaged by the storm or related flooding.



Vines: 'Heart preaching' key to power in the pulpit

By Bryan Cribb
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Power in the pulpit comes not only by expounding the Word of God, but also by preaching with heart, Jerry Vines told more than 200 pastors and students March 27 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"What makes a heart preacher?" asked Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla. "A genuine, personal, intimate walk with God. Love for people. ... When our hearts are moved, we move people."

Vines, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was the keynote speaker for the seminary's first "Power in the Pulpit" preaching seminar. He said sincere emotion, coupled with a commitment to the exposition of Scripture, is the key to becoming "masters of assemblies"—a phrase from Ecclesiastes 12:9-11, Vines' text for his three addresses.

"Wouldn't you agree that all of us who preach would like to be a master of assemblies?" Vines asked. "That God would use us in a very special way under the anointing of the Holy Spirit to

be masters of the art of sermon preparation and delivery?"

These verses in Ecclesiastes give three ways to become more proficient preachers, Vines noted. He said the three main components of the preaching enterprise are exposition, composition and proclamation.

Exposition, or "unpacking the passage," is crucial to the whole process of preaching, he said.

Engaging in true and accurate exposition demands that the preacher be a devoted exegete, a consummate learner and an "early riser," Vines said.

"If you're going to be a serious expositor of biblical truth, you're going to have to put a lot of time in on it," he added.

Preachers have an able ally as they apply the Word to their congregations, Vines said. "You have something no communicator has but the Bible teacher and the Bible preacher, and that's the Holy Spirit," he said. "The Holy Spirit can take the truth and apply it to the heart in amazing, supernatural, unbelievable ways."

Vines said a sermon should not sacrifice truth to keep the congregation's

attention.

"A sermon does not have to be uninteresting to be biblically faithful," he added. "The reason some people are bored with sermons is because the sermons are boring. You don't have to be boring when you preach Bible truth."

The composition of the sermon also should be simple because God's truth is simple, Vines said. "I've always felt it was a great compliment when parents said to me, 'My children like to hear you preach because they understand what you say,'" he noted. "If you put the food down there where the little rabbits can get it, I guarantee that the giraffes can go down and get it too."

The final phase of the expository process is proclamation—the actual delivery of the sermon, Vines said.

"The delivery aspect is the more difficult of the tasks," he said. "Good proclamation, good delivery either makes or breaks a sermon."

All good proclamation involves "preaching for decision," he said.

"The preacher has a larger and a nobler purpose than just preaching," Vines said. "He is not a manipulator. He is to be a Christian persuader."

KBHC defends hiring practices amid threatened lawsuit

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Responding to a threatened lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union, the head of the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children said KBHC officials “will vigorously defend the practices of our agency for the good of Kentucky’s children.”

Bill Smithwick, KBHC president since 1997, said ACLU officials have announced they intend to file suit against the Kentucky Baptist childcare agency for religious discrimination “unless we eliminate our employment policy barring men and women who engage in homosexual behavior from employment with the agency or discontinue our reimbursements contracts with state government.”

Smithwick shared his views March 30 during a KBHC press conference at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville. He said ACLU officials are expected to file suit sometime this week.

“We have met with the ACLU but have not been able to reach an agreement,” Smithwick said. Though state officials “would prefer that we settle with the ACLU,” he added, “We don’t think we’ll be able to reach an out-of-court settlement.”

The lawsuit stems from KBHC administrators firing Alicia Pedreira in October 1998, five months after she

was hired. Pedreira, who was an art therapist and supervisor for the agency’s Spring Meadows Children’s Home in Middletown, acknowledged she is a lesbian.

Jack Cox, the KBHC manager who hired Pedreira, reportedly knew she was homosexual when she was hired. He and four other employees resigned in protest after administrators were informed of Pedreira’s homosexuality and dismissed her.

KBHC’s employment application specifies that employees “are expected to exhibit values in their professional conduct and personal lifestyles that are consistent with the Christian mission and purpose of the statement.”

KBHC trustees also amended the agency’s hiring policies to specifically exclude from employment people who engage in homosexual activity.

ACLU officials not only oppose Pedreira’s firing and the KBHC’s hiring policy, but the fact that the Baptist agency receives several million dollars of state funds each year for childcare reimbursement.

Though state funds currently provide approximately \$15 million of the KBHC’s \$21 million budget, Smithwick said, “The money we receive from the state is only a partial reimbursement for the services we provide to the children who are referred to us by the state.” He said state funds help provide service to approximately 345

of the 360 children currently in KBHC out-of-home care.

The ACLU of Kentucky reportedly held a fund-raising reception March 1 in Louisville to help offset lawsuit expenses. The reception was followed by a public forum at Louisville’s First Unitarian Church. The forum featured Michael Adams, associate director of ACLU’s national Lesbian and Gay Rights Project.

A memo from Fairness Campaign leaders about the ACLU events said Pedreira’s firing “shocked and outraged the entire community.”

Calling her dismissal “a turning point in the journey for fairness,” the memo said last year’s passage of a homosexual rights ordinance in Jefferson County “came too late for Alicia.” It said the pending lawsuit is important because “there are still questions as to whether (such ordinances) will even cover organizations like KBHC.”

In a March 29 letter to Kentucky Baptist pastors, Smithwick emphasized that “no law, and nothing with our contracts with the state, requires us to employ people who engage in homosexual behavior to counsel our children.”

Noting that the KBHC operated during most of its 130-year history with no state funds, Smithwick said state officials “came to us because they needed care for Kentucky’s

abused and neglected children.”

Michael Jennings, a spokesman for Kentucky’s Cabinet for Families and Children said the agency regards the lawsuit to be an issue between KBHC and the ACLU. “For months, we’ve encouraged those parties to reach an accommodation and we regret that they have been unable to do so,” he said.

“We are reviewing our options with respect to the part we might play in any litigation and with respect to our future involvement with Kentucky Homes,” he added. “In doing so, our first priority will continue to be the interests of the children who have been placed in our care.”

Smithwick urged Kentucky Baptists to contact Gov. Paul Patton and state legislators, encouraging them to “stand for what is clearly in the best interests of Kentucky’s children.”

Noting that the KBHC is a faith-based organization, he added, “We believe for us to promote homosexual behavior is not in the best interest of any child. Such behavior could have devastating emotional and physical consequences.”

Kentucky Baptist Convention President Terry Wilder, pastor of Burlington Baptist Church, said he commends Smithwick and KBHC trustees “for taking the stand for what is right, for what is biblical and what I believe God would have us do in this situation.”

Western Recorder wins honors

CHICAGO—Western Recorder staff won four awards last week at the Baptist Communicators Association’s annual awards competition.

The Western Recorder won first place for state Baptist newspaper design.

Marketing Manager Mauri Smith, Partnerships Editor Joyce Sweeney Martin and designer John Bailey received a third place award in the national or regional magazine category for Real Life magazine.

Editor Trennis Henderson received a first place award for interpretive reporting for his story, “SBC Faith Statement Faces Study.”

Henderson also received a second place award in the newspaper editorial category for “Faith Statement Stands the Test of Time.”

Watts elected to lead KBC resort ministry efforts

Affirming the need for a statewide program of resort ministries, Kentucky Baptist leaders elected Mike Watts as the Kentucky Baptist Convention’s first resort ministries consultant.

Watts was named to the new position March 30 by the KBC Executive Board’s administrative committee. As a part-time consultant, he will prioritize ministry needs in Kentucky resort areas and work with churches and associations to help meet those needs.

Larry Martin, leader of the KBC missions growth team, said tourism is among Kentucky’s major industries. While many KBC churches and associations are involved in resort ministries, “We’ve never had a state program to give them support.”

Martin said Watts’ involvement “will allow us to provide a support system of encouragement, networking and training” for workers involved in resort ministry.

Watts recently retired as pastor of Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville. He also is a former vice president of Campbellsville University. Watts, a graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, also has been actively involved in resort ministries.

Ministry needs draw couple to Eastern Kentucky

Continued from page 1

First Baptist of Griffin was scheduled to arrive last weekend to renovate the dining hall at Upper Cumberland Baptist Association’s camp and to lead backyard Bible clubs. Twenty other groups have signed up for summer visits.

KBC State Missions Director Randy Jones said this activity is an example of the potential of Appalachian Regional Ministry, a 10-state Southern Baptist collective promoting missions in mountain areas.

“In the last 18 months we’ve seen five new ministry centers spring up in Eastern Kentucky,” he said. “Most of these have been grassroots efforts. As people go off welfare there are a lot of social needs, like food and clothing.”

As this work progresses, Ernest Boggs, director of missions for Upper Cumberland Baptist Association, said he hopes to see a balance maintained between helping residents and doing too much.

“You don’t want to come and do people’s work for them that they can do,” he said. “It just makes them lazy. The idea of what we’re trying to do is to help churches help themselves.”

Still, projects completed in recent years have provided encouragement, he said. Among signs of progress are a new building erected for Jones Creek Baptist Church and extensive renovations to Coxton Baptist Church, which had dry-rotted floors.

The Rileys’ return also has helped boost the community, Boggs said. “There is some optimism by them being here,” he said. “They didn’t bring a pot of gold, but people appreciate them being here. They’ve done a lot

of good work.”

Previously, Riley was a pastor in eastern Mississippi with no intention of returning to Kentucky after his mother-in-law died. His church had just completed a \$2.5 million building project, and the couple was getting settled after four years in the Memphis, Tenn., suburb.

But while visiting old friends, they kept hearing the comment, “We wish someone would come and help us.”

Riley, who credits “Experiencing God” author Henry Blackaby with setting him on a new direction in ministry nine years ago, asked himself whether God was at work.

The couple faced a critical decision as they tried to discern whether God wanted them to leave a comfortable position for no job in an area with 18 percent unemployment.

Riley said that after praying, he and his wife decided the lack of hope they saw represented a divine call to come back and make a difference.

As proof of God’s direction, Riley points to not having a full-time position for nine months. He works for the National Mainstreet program, a redevelopment effort funded by several government agencies.

“The Lord provided for us,” he said. “We never worried about that. It was one of those ‘mailbox stories.’ We’d go to the mailbox, and there would be a check for \$100 or \$500 or whatever was needed.”

In addition to focusing on physical improvements, the ministry director helped organize an “Experiencing God” weekend retreat last October, which he said brought spiritual healing.

About 40 percent of nearly 100 participants were African-American. The

Appalachian ministry leader resigns

SCOTT DEPOT, W.Va.—Tommy Goode has resigned as coordinator of Appalachian Regional Ministry in order to take a job with the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Goode has led the 10-state cooperative effort to focus Baptist ministries on the region since its beginning last year.

“I sensed from the beginning that we would not be in West Virginia for a long time,” Goode said in a message to friends. “But the timing of this change is God’s timing for our ministry, and, I believe for the next level of leadership and development for ARM.”

He said he will serve out the month of April in West Virginia and then move to southeastern Missouri in May.

Goode’s new role will be to help Missouri Baptist associations and churches develop strategies and to help focus denominational resources to assist them.

He said his departure will have no impact on this summer’s coordination of volunteers to help with ministry work throughout the region. “My role is to collect and publish information on the volunteers requests. We have mailed the latest and last listing of 2000 summer requests,” he said. “Actually, my leaving at this time of year may be the best timing as it impacts this part of the ARM function.”

Goode said he believes God is at work in the Appalachian region, accelerating the development of Southern Baptist churches and ministries.

“I believe Southern Baptists need ARM to accomplish all that is in the mind of Christ for Appalachia,” he said. “We have only begun to see what is the potential growth and impact for Southern Baptist missions and ministry in Appalachia as a result of ARM.”

event stirred reconciliation between races and cultures, and within families, he said.

“We had affluent folks and poverty people weeping together,” Riley said. “They got a sense that God could do something here and only God could do it.”

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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The hunt for heresy

Every so often I allow myself the luxury of believing that the rhetoric of the current Southern Baptist leaders cannot sink any lower.

With Al Mohler's labeling of the Catholic faith as "false gospel," I am again reminded that my occasional "luxury" is pure fantasy. Is there no end to our hunt for heresy and our insensitivity to people whose faith experience is different from our own?

Will Mohler next announce that the Pope is the Antichrist? If Mohler disagrees with the teachings of the Catholic Church, let him say so; but as a follower of Christ, he should refrain from making disparaging remarks about our brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church.

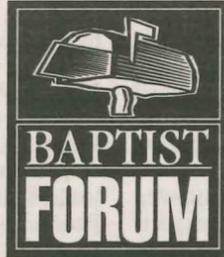
I grew up in a church in which everything outside our narrow tradition was considered false. As a child, I heard so many awful stories about Catholics that I was afraid to be near them.

How surprising it was to discover a friend who was Catholic and to begin understanding her church. My perspective continued to change and grow as I

studied at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in the early 1970s. On campus and in my classes, I sat and studied with Catholics and discovered through dialogue with both Catholic laypeople and church leaders that ours is a common heritage. What a shame that current students at Southern Seminary will not be exposed to such openness.

As a pastor, I give thanks for the ministry I share with Father C.J. Batchelor and the members of St. John's Catholic Church. My prayer is that Father Batchelor and other members of the Catholic Church who hear or read Mohler's remarks will know that he does not speak for all who serve our Lord under the church name of Baptist!

Michael Duncan
Eminence



Women make impact

I am writing in reference to the March 14 article, "Barna: Female church members still the backbone of

churches." The article pertained to a poll conducted by the Barna Research Group that verified several interesting facts (information that women have always known).

■ Women make up the backbone of Christian churches.

■ They show more commitment to their faith and the work of their congregation.

■ Women outrank men in at least 12 faith-related activities.

■ Fourteen percent of women serve in a leadership capacity at church, compared to 9 percent of men.

■ In the area of family spiritual health, the responsibility still falls to women.

■ Many women appear to be burning out from their intense level of involvement.

In response to this article, I have only three things to say: Amen! Amen! Amen!

Connie Pruitt
Louisville

Nobody knows Easter like Cadbury's

By David Garrard

Nobody knows Easter like Cadbury's. You know, the candy people. They make those wonderful cream-filled eggs and chocolate covered bunnies—the ones that make Easter such a special time. Their candies capture the true essence and spirit of Easter, don't you think? The commercial is right: "Nobody knows Easter like Cadbury's."

Unless, of course, you're talking about greeting cards. Then we might have to give the nod to Kroger. They carry a complete line of famous Ambassador cards with just the right Easter messages, including "There is no

Easter Bunny. Santa Claus ate him for Thanksgiving" and "A tisket, a tasket, attack your Easter basket."

Actually, when you get right down to it, nobody knows Easter like our area restaurants. The wide assortment of brunch specials is particularly appealing. Sleep in; then head out for a late morning/early afternoon Easter brunch. It seems like the perfect way to celebrate the day.

I've changed my mind again. Nobody knows Easter like the local mall! The mall has it all—clothes, shoes, hats, cards, candy, flowers, baskets, plastic grass—everything you need to celebrate the holiday in grand style, and all under one roof. Your kids can even have their picture taken with the

COMMENTARY

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Joy Bolton—a missions leader

In the eight months Joy Bolton has served as executive director of Kentucky Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, she has demonstrated that she is a strong missions leader. I am grateful Kentucky WMU was led to elect her to this strategic position. I am equally delighted that Joy was willing to accept this challenging position due to a strong sense of call from God.

Joy has led the WMU staff to be seamless in its relationship to Kentucky Baptist Convention staff. The WMU staff has become a full partner in all staff development and planning. They are participating in the staff cluster groups that are developing big objectives related to leadership development, authentic spirituality, intergenerational issues, transitions (dealing with change) and young adults (reaching and keeping).

Developing calendar is always a challenge for staff. Joy has demonstrated flexibility in requesting the WMU

Executive Board to make unprecedented adjustments.

Joy also understands financial process and management. As a result, she has been able to develop an excellent working relationship with the KBC business services team.

Her missions leadership has been demonstrated most clearly in the development of the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions. She has recommended priority be given to ongoing KBC mission causes and the WMU Executive Board has been supportive. The Eliza Broadus Offering challenge budget provided \$200,000 for new work in Kentucky. I pray that Kentucky Baptists will respond to this wonderful opportunity to see the kingdom of God grow forward in Kentucky.

Joy has spent considerable time in listening sessions across Kentucky to gain input into the development of a world crisis response process in consultation with directors of missions and coordinated by state missions depart-



Bill Mackey

holiday's hero, the Easter Bunny himself!

Without a doubt, the world knows Easter pretty well. Or does it?

News flash: The world's understanding is as empty as Jesus' tomb.

The truth is, nobody knows Easter like a Christian. The Christian understands the real meaning of Easter is found in a cross, not a candy. It is wrapped in a burial shroud, not a piece of fancy foil. The cause for celebration is a living Lord, not a special sale—not new clothes, but new life!

Maybe it's time for Christians to speak up and help folks discover the real word on Easter. After all, nobody knows Easter like a Christian.

The tomb is empty. The Word is out. He is risen! He is risen, indeed!

David Garrard is minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville

ment director Randy Jones.

Joy has a God-given passion for missions and God-given skills to communicate that passion. Kentucky Baptists will be blessed to hear her passion for missions, ministry, evangelism and missions education. However, she is more than a promoter; she participates in partnership missions locally and internationally and leads missions education in her local church.

She also is an excellent mother to Carol, a sophomore at Anderson College in Anderson, S.C., and Ros, a freshman at Shelby County High School, and a wonderful spouse to Lee.

It will be a privilege to participate in the installation of Joy Bolton as WMU executive director/treasurer during the WMU annual convention at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green, April 14-15. The program will be informative, inspirational and interactive.

There is a new wave of excitement for WMU in Kentucky and I hope you will catch that wave in Bowling Green. For more information about the annual meeting call Denise Gardner at (888) 254-5726 or (502) 244-6485.

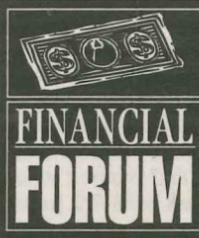
Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Discover true joy through faithful giving to God

By Doug Strader

Our Heavenly Father is a giving Father. He gave us our physical life, and He also gave us our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



Since we are made in His image, although I am not sure what all that

entails, I do think part of that image is to be a giving person. It is natural for Christians to be giving people.

If that is true, and I believe it is, why is it that in many of our Baptist churches, 15 to 20 percent of our people give 80 to 85 percent of the money? I do not know all the reasons, but I do think I know some of them.

In many of our churches we have not been good stewards in our responsibility to teach people the joy of giving. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians he noted that "God loves a cheerful giver." Somehow we have lost our emphasis on the joy of giving, and some people have the idea that giving is drudgery.

Because we are made in the image of God, who has given us everything we have, we have a need to give. Our need to give is much more important than God's need to receive. People who hoard resources become slaves to their possessions, while those who freely give become free to follow the will of God for their lives.

Others have not discovered the joy of giving to the Lord because they have heavy consumer debt, and it takes all they make and more just to pay their monthly credit card debt. In his book titled "Gaining Personal Financial Freedom," Larry Maxwell offers some practical guidelines for credit card use:

■ Never use credit cards for anything except budgeted items.

■ Pay your credit cards off every month.

■ The first month you receive a credit card bill you cannot pay, cut up the card and never use it again.

■ Just because you can afford something does not mean you need it.

Would you describe your giving as joyful giving? If you answered "yes," thank God you have discovered the joy of giving. If you answered "no," seek God's guidance until you discover the joy of giving to Him.

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

Looking for 'Mr. Right'? Seek God's will and trust His timing

Q: Is there only one person on earth I could be happy with, and is God hiding him from me?

The will of God is not a "needle in a haystack" proposition. God invites you to cooperate with Him in building His kingdom, including the kingdom of right relationships. Are you living in obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ? Our first calling as Christians is the call to obey Christ, to take His word seriously and live it out.

Rather than focusing on finding love, concentrate on being loving. Get to know yourself before you go after an image of a person who may or may not exist. What are your deepest needs? Your deepest longings? Your wants and your "don't wants?" Take quality and quantity time to think through these issues. You might use several blank sheets of paper in your quiet time as you work through this process. Write a general category across the top of each page. Then fill each page with your personal preferences in each area. You might be surprised to find that you want and need someone very different from the "ideal" image sold to us through our culture.

What are your "no compromise" categories? What's not as important? You may find things such as spiritual compatibility, personality and communication ability are more important than height or hair density, for example. With every "he's got to be..." you are eliminating thousands of people from your potential list.

Do mate selection for the right reasons, at the right time and with your own realistic ideas of what "right" means for you. It might be that in the daily process of following Jesus you will find yourself alongside someone moving in the same direction. Then one of you can ask the other to take the rest of the journey together.

Know yourself. Know the Lord God. Know other believers in the joyful living out of God's will. In joy, with faith, God will keep your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6; Jeremiah 29:11).—*James Stillwell*

Q: How can we deal with the "cultural shock" we experience as our teens get older?

Each new teen generation develops its own culture to be different. They want us to be shocked and to take notice of their faddish developments. It is their way of being noticed.

Do you recall how your generation wore bell bottoms, fitted jeans or short shorts to get attention? Hair styles change even more often. If your teens are not engaged in illegal, immoral or self-destructive lifestyles, then just ignore it as a part of their growing up craze. Youth like to be distinct, unique and unusual. Accept what you can by remembering that your generation had its original trends also.

Furthermore, you can talk with other parents about their kids' culture. What is the norm for your church, community and school? If your teens are in line with the others, then take comfort. One parent found that joining the new craze caused his adolescent to stop it. If the parents are doing it, it must not be "tight."

But if your youth are way out of line, confront their excessiveness. You do not have to accept every new mania or style that comes along. Change what you can't accept, but celebrate what you can. They like to be noticed as different.—*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.



CP: 75 years of cooperative partnerships

The year was 1925. Calvin Coolidge was president, Lou Gehrig and Louis Armstrong were becoming household names, the Roaring '20s were in full swing—and Southern Baptists founded the Cooperative Program.

The 1920s were heady days in the United States. Americans were still celebrating the victory of The Great War, half the cars in the world were Ford's mass-produced Model T's and early experiments were under way in television technology. Industry was king and "program" was a term that spoke of man's ingenuity and progress.

According to an article in the May 21, 1925, issue of the Western Recorder, the Cooperative Program was designed to support a budget "large enough to adequately provide for the legitimate needs" of every Southern Baptist mission board, institution and agency.

Seventy-five years later, at the dawn of the 21st century, the Cooperative Program continues to thrive. Even amid the past two decades of denominational infighting, CP support has remained strong. Here in Kentucky, CP gifts have exceeded budget goals each of the past three years.

As churches observe Cooperative Program Day April 9, Kentucky Baptists can take pride in their connection to CP's historic roots. Boyce Taylor, pastor of First Baptist Church of Murray at the turn of the 20th century, introduced a unified budget plan to his congregation around 1900. He later was influential in leading the state convention to adopt a similar plan in 1915. Kentucky Baptists' unified budget plan became the pattern for Southern Baptists' giving plan 10 years later.

While many aspects of the Cooperative Program remain virtually unchanged since its inception in the 1920s, times and terms have changed. Society's fascination with programs and bureaucratic organizations has given way to a renewed focus on personal interaction and involvement.

While technology continues to expand at dizzying rates, connecting on a personal level has become a growing motivation for many people. In Baptist life, church planters, missions volunteers, disaster relief workers and

other hands-on volunteers are making a valuable difference in people's lives. In addition to giving money to support missionaries and other needs, Baptists are discovering the satisfaction of personal participation.

And that brings us back to the Cooperative Program. While the word "cooperative" successfully has stood the test of time, "program" had become a dated word. It doesn't communicate the same energy and enthusiasm it did decades ago. At the same time, finding creative ways to communicate CP's impact to younger generations is becoming increasingly challenging.

Southern Baptist Executive Committee members voted two years ago against renaming the Cooperative Program. They noted that the name "continues to have widespread acceptance and recognition among Southern Baptists." While the historic connection and name recognition are important, even more important is making sure the plan's concept and content are clearly communicated in the decades ahead.

Kentucky Baptist leaders are working diligently to find ways to update the CP message. This year's CP anniversary events include regional blood drives and fun runs to illustrate the significance of statewide cooperation. The "Operation Cooperation" blood drives also reflect CP's role as the lifeblood of support for Southern Baptist ministries.

On the national level, the theme for CP's 75th anniversary is "Partners in the Harvest." Somehow, "Programmers in the Harvest" wouldn't sound quite as inviting.

During a recent meeting at the Baptist Building, KBC Business Manager Lowell Ashby suggested "Cooperative Partnerships" might be a more accurate description of CP's work. I think he may be on to something.

As we celebrate 75 years of CP ministry, we also must be willing to explore new ways to communicate treasured truths. With CP's deep roots in Kentucky Baptist life, perhaps Kentucky can again set the pace in defining the principle of cooperation for a new generation of Baptists.

Cooperative Partnerships—has a nice ring to it, doesn't it?

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Sexual purity includes actions, attitudes

By H.K. Kingkade

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your word." (Psalms 119:9)

Last October in San Francisco, more than 1,500 teens crossed the mile-long Golden Gate Bridge to represent their commitment to head into the 21st century remaining sexually pure.

This was part of the familiar "True Love Waits" campaign that began in 1993. Since then, thousands of youth and college students have made personal commitments to abstain from sex until marriage.

Youth today grow up craving love in their lives, and many times look for it in all the wrong places. The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health states that 17 percent of 7th and 8th graders and 49.3 percent of high school students reported having had sexual intercourse.

We must never underestimate the power of peer pressure in the life of a

young person. Also, we must never underestimate the need for love in that same young person. The same study also showed that when a student feels

connected to his or her family and when the parents are involved in the life of their young person, that young person is less likely to become sexually active at an early age. The opposite also can be concluded: When parents are not connected to the life of their young person, that

youth might look for attention and love elsewhere.

Sexual purity makes sense from a secular standpoint since it prevents teen pregnancy and the transmission of sexual diseases. For the Christian, however, sexual purity means much more. Sexual purity is not just abstaining from sex, but involves things such as not making out to the point of sexually exciting each other.

Purity also includes how we treat the person we supposedly care about. Are our motives ones that treat the person as a means to fulfill our desires

or do we treat that person as an end toward which our love and affection is directed?

Jesus shared in Scripture that it is not just the action of sin we need to avoid, but the thoughts and attitudes also. We read in God's Word to flee sexual immorality, which includes premarital sex. When God instructs us not to do something, it is not to deprive us of that thing, but rather so God's perfect will can be experienced in our lives. In the case of sexual activity, God desires for us to experience His best in a marriage relationship. When we bring scars from previous relationships to a marriage, it is hard to avoid guilt and pain related to those scars.

As I affirm sexual purity, I realize there are many who already have made mistakes in life within this area. Don't forget that a life in Christ is a life in grace. We serve a God of second chances and everyone needs those second chances.

God does not look at us in light of what we have done, but in light of who we are. We choose each day how we will live our lives before God. Let us live according to God's Word and exercise purity in every area of life.

H.K. Kingkade is campus minister at the University of Kentucky in Lexington

RESOURCES

Seniors must face long-term care needs, costs

By Linda Lawson
LifeWay Christian Resources

NASHVILLE (BP)—While 75 percent of Americans think they will never need long-term care, almost half (48.6 percent) who reach age 65 will spend some time in a nursing home, participants in a session on preparing for long-term care were told.

The session was part of the March 22-24 Senior Adult Summit which drew more than 350 seniors and leaders to LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"The average nursing home stay in the United States today is two and one-half to three years," said John Marshall of Signator Financial Network. He said 10 percent of nursing home residents stay five or more years and the average Alzheimer's patient will need long-term care for eight years.

"Many obviously will not be prepared for the expense associated with long-term care," Marshall said. The average annual cost for a private room in a skilled nursing home is \$125 per day, \$3,800 per month or \$46,000 per year. In 10 years, the cost is projected to increase to \$6,250 per month or \$75,000 per year.

He cited three common misconceptions about long-term care, beginning with "it will never

happen to me." Others think family members will care for them or that Medicare will pay the costs.

Family members may have every desire to care for an aging family member, Marshall said, but they lack medical expertise, may not be able to handle the costs or deal with the physical and emotional demands.

Medicare, he emphasized, pays for short hospital stays but not for long-term care.

"Keep in mind, the first 100 days in a nursing home may be paid by Medicare," Marshall said, as a best-case scenario.

When private funds are exhausted for long-term care, the remaining option may be Medicaid, he said. "The average family today will qualify for Medicaid after 13 weeks of long-term care," Marshall added.

In planning for the future, he said, people have the option of funding all or part of the risk themselves, looking to Medicaid or purchasing long-term care insurance, an option currently exercised by only 10 percent of Americans.

Long-term care insurance enables seniors to preserve independence, freedom of choice and their standard of living, Marshall said. It also is a tool for protecting assets and avoiding welfare.

"For some people it's simply a pride issue," he said. "They can feel good about taking care of themselves."

Children's worship leaders urged to return childhood to children

NASHVILLE (BP)—Today's children, many of whom have their childhood taken from them early in life, should have their spiritual childhood returned to them, a Southern Baptist pastor told children's worship leaders meeting in Nashville.

The Children's Worship Conference was held March 20-22 at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Frank Lewis, pastor of First Baptist Church of Nashville, said Southern Baptists have become proficient in evangelism but deficient in worship.

"Worship can be evangelism," he said, "but it has other elements too. If we are going to give our children a spiritual childhood, we have to help them to understand the value of God's Word and to have the ability to listen to it."

Adults need to help children "realize God still speaks and that what He says is precious," Lewis noted.

Children's worship leaders need to lead parents "to reclaim the biblical responsibility of blessing their children," he added. When his first child was still very young, he recounted, he began the practice of blessing her after she had said her prayers at bedtime. The tradition has continued with both his chil-

dren, and he said he hopes they will remember that blessing when they face temptations as youth.

"It is as simple as placing my hand on their heads and saying, 'Be wise, be strong and be pure. In Jesus' name, amen.'"

Whether children worship with their parents or in a separate children's service, Lewis said pastors and leaders should ask themselves if what takes place is meaningful and spiritually transforming to boys and girls.

Lewis listed five factors necessary for every worship service: God must be honored, the culture of the congregation should be engaged, intellect should be stimulated, hearts should be moved and lives should be changed.

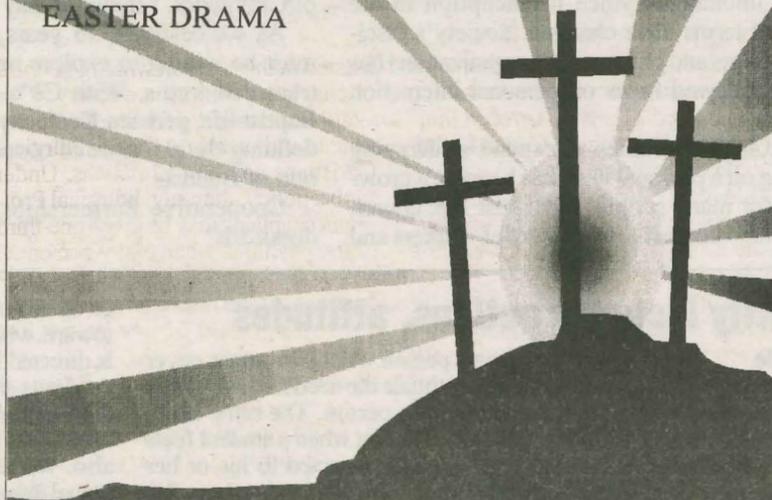
Today's children are growing up in a landscape completely different from that of their parents, Lewis noted.

"We must do everything we can to get our children to Jesus," he said. "If we don't get them to Jesus, there are too many other places that will get them."

Information about next year's conference, March 19-21 in Nashville, is available by contacting Pamela Boucher, children's worship consultant for LifeWay at (615) 251-3614 or by e-mail at pboucher@lifeway.com.

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Supreme Court tackles prayer at high school football games

By Tom Strode
SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty
Commission

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court wrestled March 29 with whether student-led, student-initiated prayers at public school football games are permissible under the First Amendment.

In oral arguments, the justices questioned aspects of a policy in a Texas school district that permits the high school student body to determine if it wants a student to speak over the public address system before football games. If so, the students elect the speaker, who determines whether he will pray or give some other message.

The high court is reviewing an opinion by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The lower court declared the policy permitting the practice in a Galveston County school district violated the First Amendment's clause prohibiting a government establishment of religion. The prayers were illegal because they occurred at a school-sponsored event before a "government-organized audience," a panel of the court wrote.

The Santa Fe Independent School District appealed the decision, arguing the establishment clause is not violated

if students are able to offer religious speech in the same forum where nonreligious speech is permitted. It also said banning religious speech by students in the same forum where nonreligious speech is allowed would violate their free-speech rights.

Telling the justices there "is not a religious speech exception to the First Amendment," Jay Sekulow, the lawyer for the school district, said the policy is a neutral one that "creates a venue of student expression."

The student chosen is not a government speaker, and there is "no majority vote here on the content of the message," said Sekulow, chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice.

Anthony Griffin, who argued on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union for two families who brought the suit, said the policy has a religious purpose and is "unconstitutional on its face."

Some of the justices expressed particular concerns about the process of electing a speaker who is to "solemnize" the occasion.

Calling the election a "government mechanism," Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy said that seemed to be the kind of thing the establishment clause wants to keep out of schools. The elec-

tion method does not seem to work constitutionally, he said.

Sekulow countered there is no campaigning on campus as in a normal election and students also can vote not to have a message. The student is the "ultimate circuit-breaker" who determines the message, he said.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, expressed support for the policy, although he voiced reservations about the process of selecting a speaker.

"I would hope that a majority of this closely divided court would accept this attempt by a school district to accommodate itself to the desire for religious expression at such public events by its young people," Land said.

He noted it would have been better if there had been some provision by the school district to allow students from as wide a religious perspective as possible to have had an opportunity "to express or solemnize that athletic event in keeping with their own faith perspectives at some time during the school year."

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs filed a brief opposing the policy.

Melissa Rogers, the BJC's general counsel, said in a written statement, "By any measure this case involves

government-sponsored religion. Government controls the pre-game program, the stadium, the public address system and the voting process. The school requires attendance at the game for some students and encourages it for all. The reasonable observer accurately perceives these prayers as having the government stamp of approval on them. But as Baptists and Christians we do not seek government's stamp of approval but God's. The Santa Fe policy will result in coercion, control and compromise of prayer."

Students should be permitted to pray at games during a "neutral moment of silence" or voluntarily in pre-game and post-game huddles, Rogers said.

The decision in Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe should be announced in early summer.

The last decision by the high court concerning prayer at school events came in 1992. The justices ruled in a 5-4 vote a school administration-organized, clergy-led prayer at a graduation ceremony was unconstitutional. That case, *Lee v. Weisman*, involved the prayer of a Jewish rabbi at a middle school graduation.

Last fall, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted by voice vote a non-binding resolution supporting prayers at high school football games.

NBC pulls plug on controversial 'God, the Devil and Bob'

HOLLYWOOD (BP)—NBC has canceled "God, the Devil and Bob," a controversial animated comedy that featured a beer-swilling version of God. The series had come under fire from several religious groups throughout the nation.

NBC cited a poor showing in the Nielson ratings as the reason for terminating the show. By March 30, 22 NBC affiliates had refused to run the program, including WPSD-TV in Paducah. Those stations represented 5 percent of the country's viewing audience.

The show earned a 4.4 ratings share, NBC's lowest rating ever in the slot with regular programming, according to a report from CNN. An NBC spokesman said the network will not run the nine remaining episodes of "God, the Devil and Bob."

Apparently, viewers weren't the only ones turned off by the show's irreverence toward God. CNN reported that NBC had problems selling ad inventory on the show.

The local affiliate boycott began with the NBC station in Salt Lake City, which claimed the show was "not very funny." Other stations refused to air the program because of its content.

Eleven evangelical chaplains file discrimination suit against Navy

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A group of evangelical U.S. Navy chaplains claim in a recent lawsuit they are being discriminated against in favor of liturgical chaplains such as Roman Catholics and Lutherans.

Eleven "nonliturgical Christian" Navy chaplains, including at least one Southern Baptist, filed the class-action suit March 17 against the Navy. The suit alleges a range of discrimination, including "illegal religious quotas" for promotions and career opportunities for chaplains and a "pervasive climate of bias, animosity and deceit toward nonliturgical Christian Navy chaplains."

The lawsuit is one of three filed since October 1999, escalating complaints by evangelical Christian chaplains into the legal arena.

"The Navy has basically ignored the complaints and the concerns that have been raised by chaplains as to the perception of religious discrimination," said lawyer Art Schulz.

Cmdr. Frank Thorp, spokesman for the Navy's Personnel Command, declined comment on the particulars of the suit. "I can't speak to the specific lawsuit because I haven't seen it," he said. "But I can tell you that the Navy has chaplains from more than 110 different faith groups whose responsibility is to provide spiritual leadership to sailors around the world in fair fashion."

The latest lawsuit estimates the class involved in the suit could represent as many as 600 current and former chaplains, some of whom were passed over for promotions or forced to retire. Among those bringing the suit are chaplains endorsed by the Southern Baptist Convention, Church of the Nazarene,

Church of Christ and the National Association of Evangelicals.

The plaintiffs argue that an "irrational and arbitrary Thirds Policy" has existed in the Navy in which one-third of chaplain positions are reserved for Catholics, one-third for liturgical Protestants and one-third for nonliturgical Christians and non-Christians. Under such a policy, they say, liturgical Protestant chaplains may be given one-third of the positions when Navy personnel of liturgical Protestant faiths represent 9 percent of the military service.

"I'm unaware of any policy like that," Thorp said.

Citing an Armed Forces Religious Preference Report from 1998, the suit contends that 24 percent of sailors and Marines are Catholic and more than 50 percent of the Navy's religious population is affiliated with nonliturgical faith groups. The Navy provides chaplains for both the Navy and Marine Corps.

The chaplains are not seeking financial compensation, but hope the process by which chaplains are currently promoted will be declared unconstitutional and the Navy will "realign its chaplain corps with the religious demographics of the Navy."

The suit has prompted the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board to begin an investigation into possible mistreatment of its chaplains. NAMB said its executives and chaplaincy team do not allege wrongdoing in promotions within the Navy chaplain corps.

"However, in response to requests from several Southern Baptist-endorsed Navy chaplains, NAMB is reviewing both statistical and anecdotal information concerning promotion opportunities for Southern Baptist active duty chaplains," a statement from the mission board reads.

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Retreat movement causing some division among Baptists

Continued from page 1

because of their tradition of making decisions about faith and practice through democratic processes involving the entire congregation.

"Anything that involves a measure of secrecy sends up a red flag," Davis said. "There's no need for anybody in a Christian church to keep anything secret."

Defenders of the retreats say the meetings are often misunderstood and there is nothing insidious about the element of secrecy. The reason, they say, is that some events in the retreats are intended to come across as serendipity, and telling prospects about them would spoil the surprise.

"There are no secrets, just gifts of love that add to the joy, depth and meaning of the weekend," said Wilson Burton of Brentwood, Tenn., a member of the Church of Christ who sits on the interdenominational Tres Dias organization's international board.

Betty Marlin of Aurora, Mo., a

planner for the Heartland Ecumenical Camino, said participants are warned against acting superior to fellow church members. "You come back overexuberant sometimes, and people accuse you of acting like you're better—on a higher plane," she said.

Timothy Bonney, an American Baptist pastor from Rushville, Ind., defended The Walk to Emmaus, a retreat sponsored by the Upper Room prayer ministry associated with the United Methodist Church.

"The purpose of the Emmaus program is to lead people to a closer relationship with Christ and to encourage them to return to their church with a greater commitment to living out the Christian life in their local setting," Bonney wrote in a letter to the editor in the March issue of Baptists Today.

Norman Woods of Shell Knob, Mo., meanwhile, has mixed feelings about the movement. He rates two weekends last year with the Heartland Ecumenical Camino in southwest Missouri as one of the "highs" of his spiritual life

and his church's split over the issue as one of the "lows."

A number of members at First Baptist Church in Shell Knob, including Pastor Nick Arnold, were involved in Camino events during 1998 and 1999.

Then-deacon Frank Bennington said he and his wife were encouraged to attend a retreat, and he felt looked down on when he declined.

Eventually, church leaders began wondering what was going on, Bennington said.

Opponents became concerned about the secrecy and because retreat participants receive communion, which Baptists typically view as an ordinance for the local church.

The issue came to a head in August, when a majority of deacons said the pastor and pro-Camino deacons either should take the matter to the whole church or drop out. Arnold agreed, and apologized in October for attending a retreat, but the damage was done.

Some members wanted to attend a Camino retreat, which requires approv-

al from the pastor. It became an issue at the next deacon election, when members supported and opposed candidates based on their position on Camino.

Arnold narrowly survived a vote of confidence at a business meeting in November but decided to resign. Half of the church's 100 members left First Baptist to form a new church, Grace Community Fellowship, and called Arnold as interim pastor.

Arnold said dissension in the church was larger than the retreat issue, but in hindsight, "If I had known Camino was going to create this big a problem, I never would have gotten involved in it."

Woods said he enjoyed the retreat experience. "It's a very spiritual, uplifting weekend," he said. "You wallow in God's grace for the whole weekend, and you come home revived."

The church split, however, was painful for all concerned, he said. "That's something I hope I never go through again in my life."

With reporting from Baptist Press, Missouri Word & Way and Baptists Today

Study finds increase in television sex & foul language

WASHINGTON (BP)—Prime-time television has produced a dramatic increase in sexual references and foul language in the last decade, according to a new study, and a United States senator says it is time for the federal government to hold the networks accountable.

The report, which compared the first four weeks of prime-time programming in the 1989-1990 season with the first four weeks of 1999-2000, found:

- Foul language increased more than 550 percent in its frequency on a per-hour basis, and the curse words used were more vulgar in 1999 than in 1989.

- Sexual content more than tripled.

- Homosexual references, which were rare in 1989, were 24 times as common in 1999.

On the other hand, violent content declined slightly during the decade.

The study shows "network television content

standards in a complete freefall as we enter the 21st century," said Brent Bozell, chairman of the Parents Television Council, the organization that conducted the analysis and announced its findings March 30.

The networks have a legal obligation to serve the public's interest in order to telecast their material, Sens. Sam Brownback, R.-Kan., and Joseph Lieberman, D.-Ct., said at the news conference.

The Federal Communications Commission, which issues broadcast licenses, should examine the problem, as should Congress, Brownback said. The Senate Commerce Committee is expected to hold the first of a series of hearings on the subject in late April, he said.

The report may be accessed on PTC's Internet site, www.parentstv.org. Individuals should note, however, that the site contains graphic examples of sexual content and profanity on network TV.

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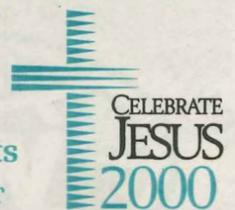
...that as many as one fourth of all baptisms in Southern Baptist churches can be linked directly to VBS conversion experiences?

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*data obtained from a recent study of churches conducted by the Barna Research Group.

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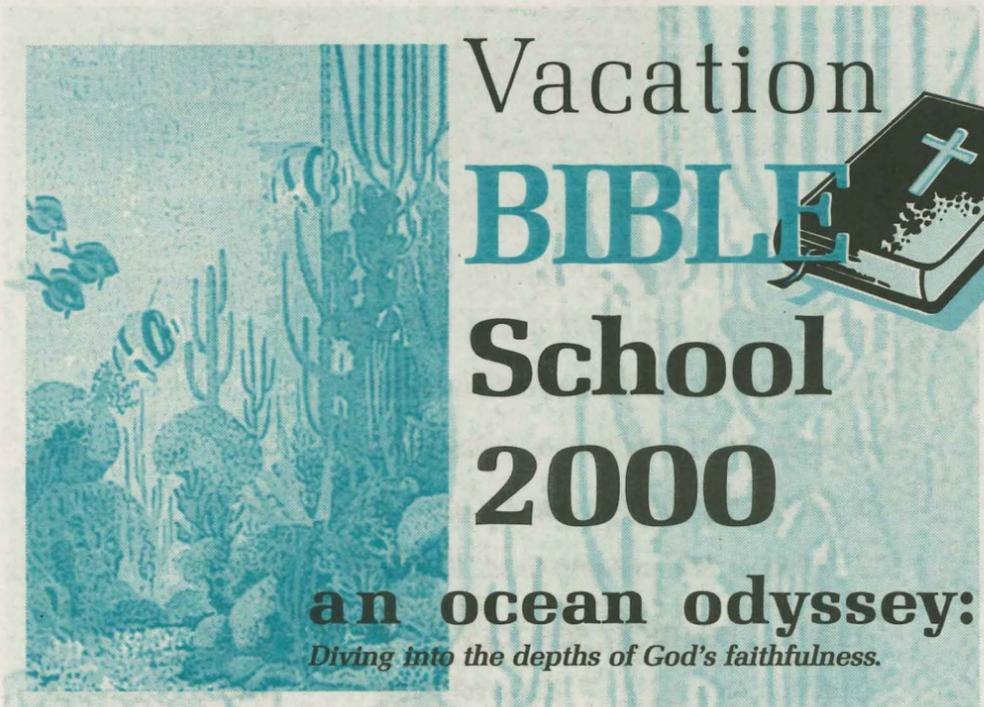


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Evangelism Growth Team Office

Kentucky Baptist Convention

(502) 245-4101 or toll free 1-(888) 254-5722

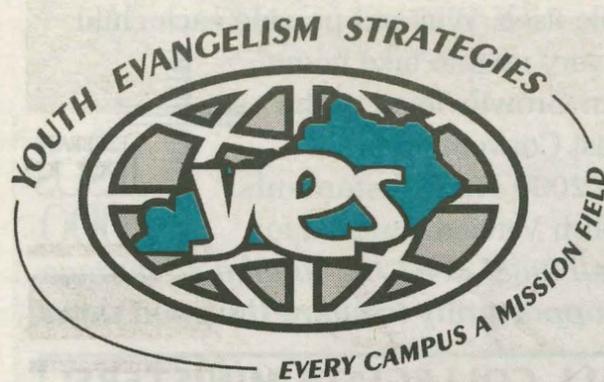
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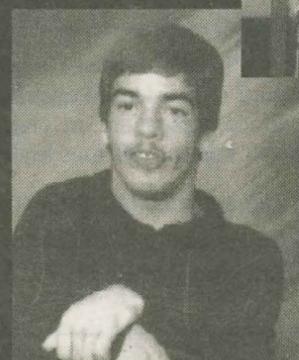
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To register for the Youth Evangelism Conference, detach and mail this completed form (you may duplicate the form) along with registration fees to:

Youth Department • Kentucky Baptist Convention
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Church _____ Contact Person _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Number of People _____ X \$15.00 = \$ _____

Number of People _____ X \$28.50* = \$ _____

*This rate includes the cost of the conference, as well as half-price tickets to Kentucky Kingdom Amusement Park, should you wish to go on Saturday after the conference is over (park is open until 7:00 p.m.).

Special needs: _____ deaf interpretation _____ wheelchair access

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Make checks payable to Kentucky Baptist Convention. Payments are non-refundable. Registrants will be sent a form of identification which must be worn during the event; there will be an extra charge for replacements.

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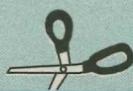
women reaching women

Dates/Sites

May 22, 2000 - 8:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (EDT)
First Baptist Church, Cold Spring

May 22, 2000 - 6:45 p.m.-9:00 p.m. (EDT)
St. Stephen Baptist Church, Louisville

May 23, 2000 - 8:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (CDT)
Bellevue Baptist Church, Owensboro



Registration Information

Registration deadline is May 8, 2000. Conference ticket(s) will be mailed directly to the group contact or individual. Registrations will not be accepted by mail after this date. Group registrations are preferred, and should be coordinated by your church women's missions leader/designee.

To register, complete, clip and mail this form and applicable fees to:
Kentucky Baptist Convention • Evangelism Growth Team Office
P.O. Box 43433 • Louisville, Kentucky 40253-0433

Cost

The conference fee is \$10.00 per person, and includes refreshments. Payments should be made to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and accompany this registration form in full. On-site registrations are permitted at a cost of \$15.00 per person, but will be limited to available space. Fees are non-refundable.

Date/Site Selection

Place a checkmark in the box beside the event date/site you wish to attend.

- May 22 (day) Cold Spring, First Baptist Church
- May 22 (evening) Louisville, St. Stephen Baptist Church
- May 23 (day) Owensboro, Bellevue Baptist Church

Contact/Ticket Information

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Name of Group Contact/
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Childcare is not provided.

MISSIONS

Baptists provide clean water for homeless in Mozambique

By Sue Sprengle
SBC International Mission Board

JANTIGUE, Mozambique (BP)—A woman lay exhausted on the ground almost 10 feet from the water spigot.

From the deep, muddy trail behind her, Dale Duncan guessed that she crawled until she could no longer move, all for a drink of water.

Duncan, a Baptist volunteer from North Carolina, pulled an empty bottle from the truck and filled it up. He walked over to the elderly woman, brushed away the flies, held her head up and gave her a drink.

"This lady was near death and couldn't get to the water," Duncan said. "Somehow she had crawled close enough to the water in hopes that someone would see her and help. Many of the people in Mozambique have gone days without clean water."

Since February, nearly 1 million people in Mozambique have lost their homes.

Tragedy struck when Cyclone Eline hit Mozambique and rains spread west into neighboring countries. As the rains poured down, streams grew into rivers, rivers became torrents and dams overflowed, sending sheets of water east through Mozambique to the sea.

The Limpopo River, not long ago reduced to almost a trickle by drought, swelled to almost 10 miles wide. It washed away numerous villages, as well as the regional capital of Xai-Xai.

Though the official death count remains below 500, aid workers fear it will climb well into the thousands as floodwaters recede. With food scarce and livestock rotting in the water, the tragedy only worsens.

Since the Mozambique flooding began in early February, adults and children have been drinking floodwater—a major health hazard because the torrent loosened the primitive latrines used by villages and the water is contaminated with dead bodies and animal carcasses.

A Baptist disaster relief team made up of volunteers from North Carolina, Texas and Oklahoma Baptist men responded quickly to the need for clean water. The team worked closely with the South African Baptist Union in establishing a makeshift watering hole.

Norman Wagner, project coordinator from Oklahoma, said getting the water purifiers set up was not an easy task. Constant rain hampered the start of the project, and one of the pumps broke down.

"In the beginning, we were pumping as much mud as we were water," Wagner said. "Now we are going strong and pumping about 24 gallons a minute."

The water pumps deposit clean water in a holding pool until trucks loaded with 5,000-liter water tanks come to fill up. The project provided water for three relief camps—housing almost 20,000 people. Water also was given to people coming with their own containers.

"Our goal is to meet the physical needs of the Mozambicans first and then their spiritual needs," Wagner said. "After they see that we care that they have water to drink and food to



eat, they will ask more questions and then we will be able to share Christ."

While the main work of the volunteer team took place on the edge of a small creek, many local residents hopped rides with the water truck to see where the tanks ended up. Once in the camp, the water tanks were connected to a long hose and water spigot. Usually, a crowd already was formed and waiting for the precious clean water.

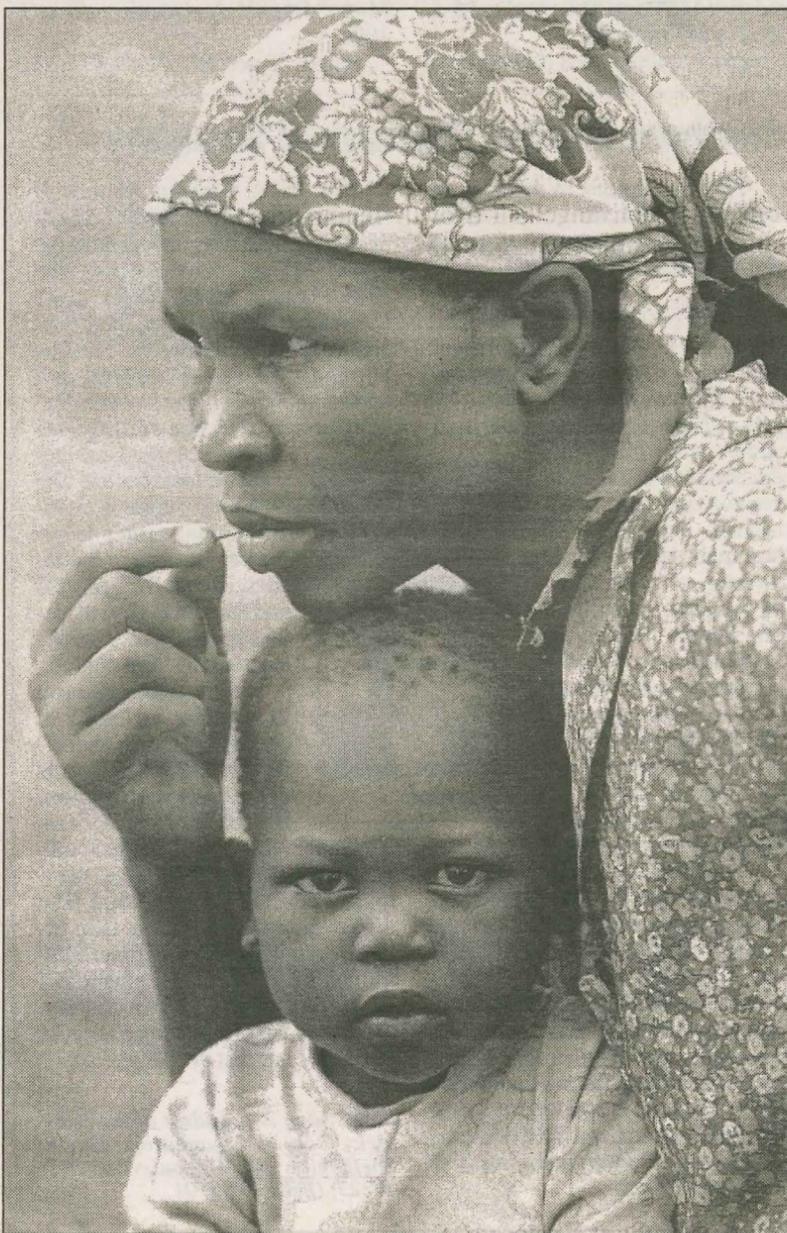
Missionary Scott Flowers said the clean water helped lift people's spirits. "Everyone is happier now, it is like they have their own town now—just because they have their own water," he said. "Even in places that were not heavily hit by the flood, people need clean water. These areas can't get to their water because there is no electricity to run the pumps."

Flowers sees the water he pumps as "water for life," water that lets the people live, but also water that lets them hear about the "living water" of Jesus Christ.

"If it takes a massive flood for this country to know God and start a spiritual revival, then we need to start praying and working," Flowers said. "The people are hungry. They are hungry for something to hang on to."

In one village, volunteers experienced this desperation firsthand. Duncan said the people were so thankful for the water but wanted to know why he would come so far to help. He told them that Jesus gave a drink to the thirsty and fed the hungry. As he spoke, villagers erupted in a chorus of praise to God.

"All it takes is one drop of water to save someone's life," Duncan said. "And all it takes is one drop of water to show the people we love and care for them because Christ loves us."



MOZAMBIQUE DISASTER
Baptists are ministering in Mozambique where flooding has left thousands of people homeless and without safe drinking water. ■ Above: Refugees at Samora Michel camp usually get two meals a day consisting of a soup mixture. Refugees continue to arrive by boat at the camp which already has 3,000 people living in tents. Baptist volunteers purify water that is distributed to this refugee camp and nearby villages. ■ Left: Flood refugee mother and child. (IMB photos by Grace Robinette)

Cuban refugee building bridges as missionary in Miami

Much of the ministry in Miami requires an understanding of what David Lema calls the "refugee mindset." They're not after money or even the American dream. They simply are looking for security.

By James Dotson
SBC North American Mission Board

MIAMI—In the middle of Hialeah, Fla., in the middle of a residential neighborhood, Iglesia Bautista Maranahta struggles to stay ahead.

High property values keep members from relocating, code restrictions keep them from expanding, and zoning regulations keep them from even putting out a sign indicating they are a church. In fact, they continue to struggle over a paved parking area that city officials initially wanted them to completely remove.

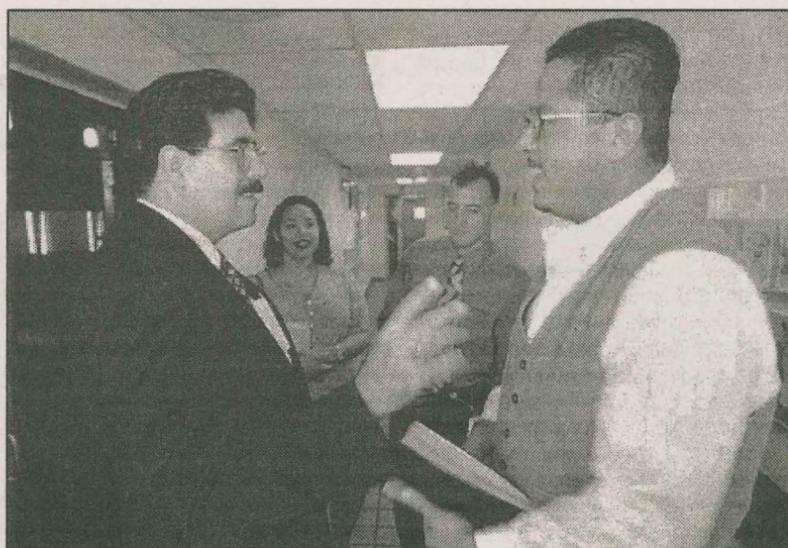
Through it all, however, David Lema has been there offering advice, encouragement, and even serving as a liaison with city officials in the church's attempt to overcome language and cultural barriers.

As director of Hispanic and international ministries for Miami Baptist Association, Lema said that is one of the key areas where God has equipped him uniquely for the position he now holds.

"I am an interfacier," he said, borrowing a term from his early days as a computer science student in college. "I can relate from one culture to another, and I can make things more open for communications. I can relate thought patterns that do not translate sometimes from one culture to another."

Lema and his wife, Milvia, are featured missionaries of the 2000 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. This year's national goal is \$47 million.

Lema's abilities as a multicultural



MISSIONARY David Lema, director of Hispanic and international ministries for Miami Baptist Association, greets another worshipper during a visit at Iglesia Bautista Gethsemane in Miami. Lema, a native of Cuba, helps start churches and supports congregations and pastors in the Miami area, where 55 percent of the population is Hispanic. (NAMB photo)

facilitator stem from his background. His father was exiled from Cuba because of his beliefs when Lema was 6. After living in Spain and New York, the family settled in New Orleans, where David Lema Sr. was a Southern Baptist missionary.

Lema Jr. entered the ministry at a relatively young age, and went to Miami as pastor of West Hialeah Baptist Church in 1989. His call to work with Miami Baptist Association came in 1996.

About 55 percent of the area's pop-

ulation is Hispanic, most of them Cuban. Much of the ministry in Miami also requires a thorough understanding of what Lema calls the "refugee mindset." They're not after money, or even the American dream, he explained. They simply are looking for security.

At a practical level, Lema's duties primarily are to help start new churches and to serve as a support and encouragement to the pastors. In the language of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, Lema is a "catalytic missionary," a term he said describes

his church-planting role well.

"I'm the person that loves to make something happen," he said. "So I will go to a pastor in a church that is not even thinking about starting a new work and I will make something happen."

Beginning next year, Lema and the entire association have bold plans to plant 48 churches. Those intentional new works will be in addition to other churches that form spontaneously or existing churches that seek affiliation.

The other side of Lema's ministry is that of a friend and confidant to the pastors. Because of the friendships Lema has nurtured through his regular visits and his pastoral background, church leaders also are likely to count themselves as members of the team when Lema suggests new ideas.

"I thank God for him," said Julio Pineiro, pastor of Iglesia Bautista de Biblica. "He's a man full of vision, and he's always willing to help. ... He shows me that he's not only a Christian but a friend."

Lema said he also is thankful for the support of his wife in helping him "disengage."

"Sometimes she reminds me of areas that I have neglected or people that I have neglected," he said.

At heart, Lema said he remains a pastor. His goal is to be perceived as a "colleague in the trench," having earned the respect of the pastors by working alongside them. It keeps him focused on the need of the people, and the urgency of his calling, he said. "I love to be out there experiencing God working in Miami."

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

The first Sunday in April on the denominational calendar is dedicated to an annual emphasis on the six Southern Baptist Convention-related seminaries.

Given its location in Kentucky, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has had a unique relationship with Kentucky Baptists across the years. Its mission statement demonstrates its commitment to the Southern Baptist Convention and convention-related churches. The statement is: "Under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the mission of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is to be totally committed to the Word of God and to be a servant of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention by training, educating and preparing ministers of the gospel for more faithful service."

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation is pleased to be the fiduciary of permanent endowment funds for which various aspects of Southern Seminary's mission are the perpetual income beneficiaries. In addition to ministerial student scholarship endowments, the foundation administers endowments for the seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth and the Dehoney Center for the Study of the Local Church.

The Billy Graham School at Southern Seminary is the only school of any kind that bears the name of the famed and beloved evangelist. The Billy Graham School helps make missions and evangelism the heartbeat of Southern Seminary. The Dehoney Center was established as a tribute to Wayne and Lealice Dehoney and a reflection of their lives of service through and beyond the local church. The Dehoney Center is an international center in research, training and consultation on the spiritual and numerical growth, development and competence of the local church.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION

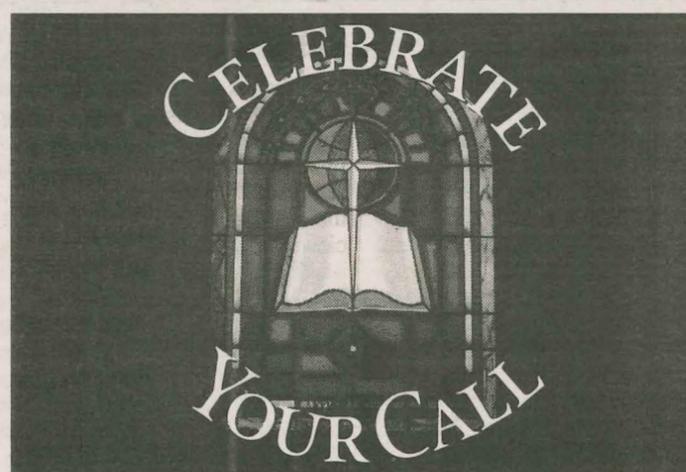


Barry Allen

Let me encourage you to consider including in your gift planning endowing these and other aspects of the mission of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which historically is the Southern Baptist Convention's first theological educational institution. The seminary's goal is to more than triple its endowment to more than \$250 million by 2009. To the extent that Laurie Valentine, our trust counsel, and I can be of assistance to you, please give us that privilege.

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

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



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Call today, 1 800 626-5525, ext. 4617, to receive registration information or download a form from www.sbts.edu. Cost is \$10 for singles and \$15 for couples which covers all meals and lodging for two nights. Registration deadline is April 6, 2000.



The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
2825 Lexington Road · Louisville, Kentucky 40280
Visit us on the Internet – <http://www.sbts.edu>

Nigerian Baptists look to future after seminary attack

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

KADUNA, Nigeria (BP)—Baptists in Nigeria are sifting through the ashes and counting the cost after the Baptist seminary in Kaduna was attacked during riots in late February.

Eleven people—including two students and a retired maintenance man—were killed when a mob overran the campus Feb. 22. Another student had been killed in town the day before.

The cost of replacing buildings burned during the assault may run as high as \$5.3 million, reported Uche Enyioha, president of the seminary. And that doesn't include the cost of replacing school furnishings, personal belongings and library books, which had just reached the total of 10,000 volumes required for accreditation.

But the destruction of buildings and even the loss of life will not stop the growth of God's kingdom in Nigeria, Baptist workers say.

Former Kentucky Baptist pastor Charles Hedrick was president of the seminary in Kaduna for six years before returning to Kentucky last summer. He said initial reports about the riots "were almost more than I could comprehend."

Although he and his wife, Carrie, had witnessed Muslims rioting near the seminary during their nine years in Nigeria as Southern Baptist international missionaries, Hedrick said they never had seen the attacks on such a large scale.

Rioters killed 21 members of one Baptist church and burned 17 Baptist church buildings and 13 pastors' homes, reported Southern Baptist missionary Don Copeland. Another six church buildings only were looted, apparently because they were located too close to Muslim homes to be burned.

Four days of clashes between Muslims and Christians in the northern Nigeria city broke out Feb. 20 as Christians protested Muslim activist appeals to institute Islamic criminal law in Kaduna state. Hundreds of people were killed in the attacks. Mosques, churches and businesses were burned. Hundreds of vehicles were destroyed or damaged.

Nigeria's president, Olusegun Obasanjo, a southern Christian, condemned the violence, which quickly spread to the southeastern town of Aba, where Muslim traders were killed by Christians in revenge for the Kaduna attacks. Within days, leaders of Muslim northern states agreed not to pursue strict "Sharia" law in order to preserve peace.

Emeritus Nigeria missionary Payton Myers had traveled to Nigeria to help repair a single men's dormitory on the Kaduna seminary campus. He was unable to reach the campus Feb. 21 because of the rioting.

After the violence subsided, Myers bought corn, cassava and other food supplies and took them to the Kaduna air force base, where both Muslims and Christians had taken refuge from the fighting.

Missionary got out just in time

ZARIA, Nigeria (BP)—Missionary D'Anna Shotts almost called off traveling from Nigeria to Ghana in February to visit some old friends. The arrangements had been difficult to make, but she decided to go ahead with her getaway.

The day after she left Kaduna, Nigeria, where she has served as a librarian for the Baptist seminary, a riot broke out between Muslims and Christians, leaving a death toll in the hundreds. The next day, a mob of more than 3,000 people breached the block wall surrounding the seminary.

"It's incredible how quickly a life can turn upside-down," Shotts said in an e-mail to the Illinois Baptist newsjournal. "God has been very present with us through this entire crisis."

Shotts returned to Kaduna Feb. 28 and moved

her belongings to Zaria, a community about 45 minutes away. Shotts' home was looted several times, but little had been taken. She is staying with other missionaries until repairs are finished on a nearby mission house.

Shotts said she has been encouraged by the faithfulness of Christians caught in the turmoil.

"The persecution is causing them to scatter, but they are already talking about how to share the gospel in new places," she said.

While Shotts has been discipling Nigerian Christians, the pastor she works with has been trying to relocate to a safer location where Christians can feel free to come to him. "Pray with us as we try to find safe havens for all those who need to leave until things settle down some," she wrote.

He watched as the people killed at the seminary were buried in a mass grave in a nearby cemetery—where the battle for the seminary had raged two days earlier.

Hedrick said that "after living there and working with the Nigerian Christians, we've learned they are very much survivors." He said Christian leaders there view attacks by Muslim extremists as their price to pay in spreading the gospel.

"We do not see this as a total defeat of our Baptist work, especially through the seminary," Hedrick said. "I believe they will come back."

Classes for graduating seniors will resume after Easter at a temporary lo-

cation, the seminary's board of governors decided, but other students might not resume their studies until August or even January.

The board of governors is discussing whether to rebuild the seminary campus at its present site or relocate, Copeland said.

Hedrick said the tragedy provides an opportunity for the seminary to relocate with expanded property in a more secure location. Despite the high financial cost, he added, "Our seminary is one of the key links in establishing new churches in the north. They have to rebuild."

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson

Church planting in Rhode Island

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College sent a mission team to Rhode Island during spring break, March 11-19.

Senior Aaron Austin and sophomore Melissa Chrisman led the team, which included junior Andy Cooper, sophomore Jennifer Dyer and freshmen Maegan Ballard, Jamey Hill, Matt McKay and Betsy Moore.

This team of eight students worked with North County Baptist Church in North Smithfield, R.I., in beginning a church. Some of their time was spent going door-to-door in the neighborhoods, leaving pamphlets and talking with residents about the new church.

The difficulty of church planting soon became evident as they encountered people who had little interest in their ministry. An informational meeting one night drew no one, but the pastor told them such a response was typical in church planting.

Team members did not become discouraged. They ministered in a variety of other ways. One day they worked in a clothing closet sponsored by the Salvation Army. Another day they led a service at a retirement home in the area.

Tuesday they worked with the

youth of North County Baptist to prepare a Wednesday evening worship service for the church. McKay preached and Cooper spoke about relationships. Church members said they had never seen the youth so excited and involved.

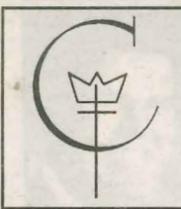
The team members also led a backyard Bible club during the week. On the first day an 11-year-old girl accepted Christ as her personal Savior! Dyer said sharing her faith and praying with the girl was the "most amazing and humbling experience" of her life.

One of the team members stayed with a family going through a divorce. The father had moved away and an older child had moved with him, creating a deep rift in the family. The team member had been through a similar experience herself and was able to listen, share her own experiences and offer encouragement and hope.

God worked through each team member in a unique way to make a difference for Christ. We thank these Cumberland College students for their faith and willingness to witness for Christ.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Especially for Christ

Here's a letter one of our programs received recently from a former KBHC kid. I wanted to share it with you because it reflects such hope and promise.

This young life that was touched by tragedy, physical or sexual abuse or neglect could have ended in suicide, addiction, poverty or crime. Instead, she found a place of refuge where people valued her and listened to her.

The thing I like most about this letter is that this young woman conveys a love for the Lord and a commitment to the things of God. That doesn't happen by accident, and it doesn't happen at most child care agencies. As you give to Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children and as you pray for our children and families, you become part of this process of healing and transformation.

The letter was sent to a program director or counselor who passed it around the office, along with the photos. But it is a letter also written to you. Take a moment to really ponder our child's words and don't forget where she came from.

"Hello everyone! I hope everything is going well for you. I thought you might enjoy seeing a senior picture of me. Can you be-

lieve it? I'm a senior!

"It is somewhat of an exciting year for me. Besides the difficult classes I have to take, it has been a great year. I am involved in six clubs this year and that's only in school. They are the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, drama club, art club, Students Against Destructive Decisions, pep club, and lastly, choir. Outside school I am involved in activities and choir at my church, and karate and horseback riding. On weekends I work at my local McDonald's. Needless to say, I am quite busy.

"I also wrote you all because I wanted to tell you how much you've helped me succeed in life. If it wasn't for you all, I wouldn't be where I am today. I say that from the depths of my heart.

Thank you so much for giving me a life and especially showing me to Christ. Well, I'd better stop writing and send these pictures. Thank you, love you and God bless!"

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

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

Iran inching toward freedom, but Christians still oppressed

Death toll reaches 673 in Uganda sect

KANANGU, Uganda (RNS)—Less than two weeks after more than 300 members of a religious group burned to death inside their church in southwestern Uganda, the estimated death toll rose to 673 as searchers discovered bodies at other sites.

Eighty-one bodies were uncovered during a search of the former home of former Roman Catholic priest Dominic Kataribabo—a leader in the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God.

The rising number of adult and child victims—many of whom appeared to have been strangled and mutilated—has prompted officials to investigate the deaths as murder, not mass suicide as was initially believed.

TEHRAN, Iran (BP)—Iran moved another step closer to freedom nearly a generation after the nation's Islamic revolution when reformist President Mohammad Khatami and his allies won major victories in February's parliamentary elections.

But Iranian Christians have some advice for outsiders expecting a new birth of religious liberty in post-revolutionary Iran: Don't hold your breath.

"I've seen a lot of indications of change, and I believe (Khatami) wants change," said a Christian worker in close touch with Iran's much-persecuted evangelical minority. "But make no mistake. Even though the rhetoric is moderation, it doesn't necessarily mean there is more openness for what we want to do."

Just a week after the elections, Iran's "religion police" were searching apartments in Tehran, Iran's capital, for forbidden satellite TV receivers. The dragnet illustrated the continuing power of Islamic fundamentalists to intimidate average Iranians. Iran's small evangelical Christian community and other religious minorities can expect the same and probably worse.

"Among the Iranian Christians we talked to there is no real sense that anything is going to change for Christians" in the near term, another long-time Iran observer said. "They do not feel Muslim converts (to Christ) are going to have any better deal in Iran."

Despite Khatami's first election in

1997, Iran's Islamic religious authorities retain ultimate power, including the military and the right to veto any legislation passed by parliament. The ayatollahs have shown no sign of greater tolerance toward certain religious minorities.

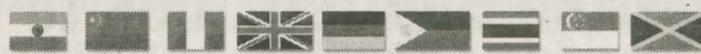
Converts to Christ and those who lead them to faith can still face harsh persecution—including death.

"Authorities have become particularly vigilant in recent years in curbing what is perceived as increased proselytizing activities by evangelical Christians," notes the just-released 1999 Report on International Religious Freedom from the U.S. State Department. "Government officials have reacted to this perceived activity by closing evangelical churches and arresting converts."

Christians also must carry church membership cards and present them on demand, according to the report. Church leaders must inform the Ministry of Information and Islamic Guidance before receiving new believers into their churches. Reports of harassment include the posting of Islamic Revolutionary Guards outside Christian churches to "discourage" Muslims or Muslim converts to Christ from entering.

Up to 23 "disappearances" of evangelical believers in Iran were reported in 1997-1998 alone.

Despite such conditions, Iranian believers inside and outside Iran are cautiously optimistic about the political changes—and hoping for more.



"New Millennium. New Wonders." Great Commission Week April 11-13, 2000

"Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days — You would not believe if you were told." Habakkuk 1:5

Join us at Southern Seminary as we are emboldened to follow our Lord's Great Commission mandate of missions, evangelism and church growth through workshops, missionary presentations and chapel services led by:

- April 11 **D. James Kennedy**
Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- April 12 **Al Gilbert**
SBC International Mission Board
Richmond, Virginia
- April 13 **Kevin Cosby**
St. Stephen Baptist Church
Louisville, Kentucky



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By Frances Hodgson Burnett
Adapted by Sylvia Ashby

April 13, 14, 15
7:00 p.m. each evening

Admission is FREE

We hope you can join us
for this enchanting play.



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

Testimonies from the past

The April 4, 1940, issue of the Western Recorder carried these testimonials from preachers who attended Clear Creek. Pray that we shall continue to make such an impact on those whom the Lord sends our way.

"When I felt the call to preach, the question with me was, 'How can I preach when I have been reared in a home where there is no Bible—not even a song book?' I knew nothing of the Bible. How could God use me, uneducated as I was? When I found Clear Creek, it helped me to find myself and how to study the Bible. It has meant everything to me." —R.B. Moyers, Fonde, Ky.

"The school ... at Clear Creek has given me a new and a better conception of God, His work and His plan for my life in His service. It has been of great help to me intellectually and spiritually. It has inspired me to complete my literary education. I had given up until I got this new inspiration. Whatever success I have had or may have in the ministry can be largely traced to Clear Creek." —Bill John, Gatliff, Ky.

"Clear Creek Preachers School caused me to realize my need for more education. My folks were

Adventists and Holiness. I did not know which way to turn. The school helped me not only to stabilize my faith, but gave me a vision of my own possibilities and a deep sense of my intellectual and spiritual need. I then worked my way through Magoffin Institute and hope soon to graduate from Georgetown College. I am headed toward the seminary in Louisville." —John S. Rose

Pastor and evangelist A.H. Keith explained, "I never saw inside of a grammar (book), and never went halfway through the first reader until I came to the Preachers' School. When I surrendered to preach, I was getting \$200 a month. But for my first year's service in the ministry, I received 35 cents."

Mt. Zion missionary M.R. Lovett wrote, "To me the Preachers' School meant greater scriptural knowledge, larger vision, deeper consecration, spiritual strength, delightful fellowship and greater love and sympathy for my brethren in the ministry."

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

BOOKS

Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations. Walter Kaiser, Jr. Baker Books, 2000. 101 pages. \$8.99. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

Mission is the subject matter of this book. For most people, a study of the mission of the church turns first to Jesus and the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20. Kaiser, an Old Testament scholar, explores the idea that the divine mission to the world did not begin with the Great Commission in Matthew but actually began in the Bible as early as Genesis 3:15.

After making his case that Genesis 1-11 is decidedly universalistic in its scope, Kaiser focuses on the call of Abraham in Genesis 12. Kaiser calls this the first "great commission" in the Bible.

Kaiser traces the universalistic nature of God's call through Genesis and Exodus, through the Psalms and into the prophets. Kaiser's work is thankfully not weighted down with scholarly jargon, while it is thoroughly grounded in sound biblical scholarship. A most fascinating chapter on the Apostle Paul's understanding of mission grounds Paul's marching orders for his missionary zeal squarely in the Old Testament, particularly the Psalms and Isaiah.

This little book provides an important corrective to the idea that God suddenly gave up on Israel and switched to the Gentiles. In a day when some people want to make the tent of God's family smaller, Kaiser points out that God's promises always have been for all the nations. *Wayne Hager*

A Christian View of Money: Celebrating God's Generosity. Mark Vincent. Herald Press, 1997. 136 pages. \$8.99. ♦♦♦♦

"Belief: Because money has a godlike strength, our earning and use of money communicate our values."

Money is godlike? On what basis does Mark Vincent make such a bold assertion? In "A Christian View of Money," he offers seven reasons: money outlives each of us; money goes places and touches people we cannot; money is a mystery, i.e. its impact and behavior cannot be fully understood by even the best financial minds; money lives among things we are tempted to worship; money promises to give us things God offers us; money is a tool that can be used for good or ill; and everything, even the mission of the church, can be economized.

Because of the godlike character of money, it is vitally important that Christians learn and incorporate into their lives the biblical view of money, stewardship and generosity. Toward that end, Vincent has written this book and an accompanying study guide for congregations seeking to develop not only more faithful stewards, but more authentic disciples of Jesus Christ.

Vincent's book is a well-developed, easy to follow study of the biblical understanding of money. Each chapter begins with a basic belief statement followed by a pithy exegesis of appropriate scripture passages.

Church leaders seeking to provide a sound basis for discussing financial priorities will find Vincent's book a valuable resource. *Jim Holladay*

You Can Experience a Purposeful Life. James Emery White. Word Publishing, 2000. 193 pages. \$10.99. ♦♦♦♦

White's book addresses what at one time or another is a concern for most people: Do I have a purpose for living?

This concern, according to White, is the result of God creating in us the desire to know we have made a difference with our lives—that we have a sense of mission.

White contends that everyone can have a purposeful life if we discover and follow our God-given life purpose. He takes his readers on a path toward uncovering this purpose by exploring values, strengths and mission.

White's book is jam-packed with illustrative material. Sometimes, however, the illustrations get in the way of the flow of the content. Many of the illustrations will ring a bell with readers from other books, sermons or speeches and do not always add the punch fewer but fresher illustrations would have brought to the subject.

Nevertheless, White does accomplish his goal of laying out an understandable path one may follow to discover purpose in life. White is good at giving the reader a clear set of actions in moving through each step of the process toward uncovering purpose in life.

All the reader may be able to do at the first reading is to concentrate on one step. At some point in the future, a reader may pick up the book again and move to the next step. The book really does cover a process which, for many, takes a lifetime. *Wayne Hager*

Beside Still Waters: Resources for Shepherds in the Market Place. Edited by Stephen Muse. Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2000. 184 pages. ♦♦♦♦

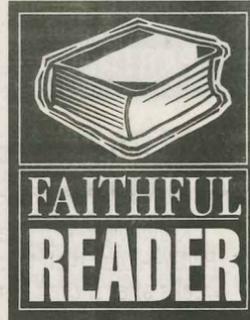
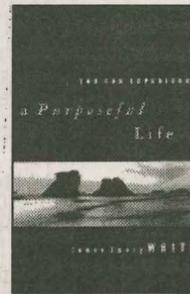
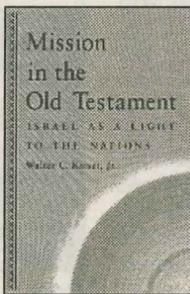
Given the book's title, I was not prepared for its content. I expected the book to address the work of the pastor in the community outside the church. Instead, I found the various authors were offering resources to help pastors deal with what they understand to be the unique stresses in the life of the minister.

Using the 23rd Psalm as an outline, Stephen Muse, director of the Pastoral Counseling Training Program at the Pastoral Institute in Columbus, Ga., has enlisted a variety of colleagues to explore the dynamics of pastoral ministry.

Like most compiled collections, "Beside Still Waters" is a bit uneven in its usefulness. For example, the chapter dealing with sabbaticals offers the unrealistic suggestion that every congregation ought to be willing to provide a three-month sabbatical for its pastor on an annual basis.

An intriguing chapter was the one titled "Coping with Radical Evil in the Community of Faith." Edwin Chase contends that pastors need to come face-to-face with the fact that in the church "there are vicious evil persons whose intent is destruction." Failure to face that reality, Chase argues, creates and continues destructive patterns in churches.

The creative connection between the 23rd Psalm and the issues of pastoral ministry provide an opportunity to use this book as a collection of helpful advice, and a guide for reflection. *Jim Holladay*



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

Christian retailers urged to expand e-commerce

By Eric Gorski
Religion News Service

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (RNS)—The \$3 billion-a-year Christian retail industry, an enterprise built on words, must adjust to a new consumer society that identifies more with images, store owners and suppliers were told at a conference March 24-25.

To sway shoppers under age 30, retailers should either invest in e-commerce or transform their stores into multifaceted showplaces, not unlike Mall of America, according to one speaker at the CBA Future of the Industry 2000 conference.

The trade group was known as the Christian Booksellers Association until five years ago, when it adopted the acronym in a nod to the industry's move beyond Bibles and books.

"What the printed page was for you and me, the screen is for them," author Leonard Sweet told more than 200 industry officials. "The new stained-glass window is that screen. It's an image culture."

Though all sorts of retailers are seeking to cash in on the Internet explosion, the mood among Christian merchandisers is a bit more guarded. To many in the industry, the bricks-and-mortar Christian store holds a niche as a place believers can come not only to shop but to bond.

"The Internet has tremendous opportunity," said Bill Anderson, CBA president and chief executive officer. "The

industry needs to assess that, embrace it and use it like 10 or 15 years ago when we were urging people to use direct mail and catalogs."

A number of companies have heeded the call. Some have won the confidence of prominent investors. One site, iChristian.com, of Beaverton, Ore., is financed by Softbank Venture Capital, an Internet investment company.

Another Christian site, iBelieve.com of Grand Rapids, Mich., is a subsidiary of Family Christian Stores, the country's largest Christian retail chain.

In other cases, Christian companies are striking alliances with e-tailers. Zondervan, a division of HarperCollins and the world's largest publisher of Bibles, joined with Amazon.com in February to create an "online Bible store."

One study found Christian e-tailers have some work to do. A survey by Barna Research Group, an evangelical Christian research firm in California, found there are nearly 40 million committed, active Christians on the Web, but only 15 percent of them feel strongly about the Internet as a source for information about matters of faith.

The architects of iBelieve.com are trying to change that.

Despite the fact that it sells more than 70,000 products, the company plays down its function as a place to buy things. Allen Arnold, a vice president for the company, calls it a "Christian lifestyle Web site." The site is driven not by commerce but by content, with

between 150 and 170 new articles posted every week on subjects ranging from sex to finance.

"We really wanted a relationship with the consumer," Arnold said. "We want to be a place where ideas could be exchanged."

Like most Web-based stores, iBelieve.com isn't turning a profit and doesn't expect to "for the first few years," Arnold said.

Sweet, dean of the theology school at Drew University in Madison, N.J., said retailers should either get into e-commerce, which appeals to people in a hurry, or offer a shopping "experience" at their stores. He cited the Mall of America in Minneapolis, where an indoor roller coaster rumbles past department stores.

Sweet said Christian retailers must consider a multisensory experience, "paying attention to smell, taste, touch, that this is about the whole body. We have to literally come to our senses."

Jim Seybert, vice president of marketing for the Parable Group, an association of 300 independent Christian stores, said that doesn't necessarily mean spending thousands of dollars on glitzy multimedia displays.

"I've seen people come into a store distraught, ask for a book about divorce, and it turns out her husband just filed for divorce," he said. "The clerk will go into a corner and pray with her. That doesn't happen at Niketown. You don't need a basketball court to provide an experience."

Magazine lists top 1999 books

WHEATON, Ill. (RNS)—The evangelical magazine Christianity Today has named the winners of its 1999 Book Awards, honoring the top book in each of 10 categories.

Winners are:

■ **Apologetics/evangelism** "Is the Bible True? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of the Scriptures" by Jeffrey Sheler.

■ **Biblical studies** "A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew" by Craig Keener.

■ **Christian living** "The Bible Jesus Read" by Philip Yancey.

■ **Christianity and culture** "Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology" by William Dembski.

Awards of merit in the category were given to "How Now Shall We Live?" by Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey; "Blinded by Might: Can the Religious Right Save America?" by Cal Thomas and Ed Dobson; and "Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America" by Ronald Sider.

■ **Church/pastoral leadership** "Leadership That Works: Help and Hope for Church and Parachurch Leaders in Today's Complex World" by Leith Anderson.

■ **Fiction** "A New Song" by Jan Karon.

■ **History/biography** "Saint Augustine" by Gary Wills. An award of merit was given to "Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President" by Allan Guelzo.

■ **Spirituality** "The Unknown God: Searching for Spiritual Fulfillment" by Alister McGrath.

■ **Theology/ethics** "The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform" by Roger Olson. An award of merit was given to John Stott for "Evangelical Truth: A Personal Plea for Unity, Integrity and Faithfulness."

■ **Missions/global affairs** "The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics" by Peter Berger.

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ A volunteer team from Kentucky as they pray and plan for an upcoming April evangelistic mission to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Pray also for the host church, Vingunguti Baptist Church.

■ Pray that God will raise up a Tanzanian national to work in an area north of Biharamulo, Tanzania.

■ Join missionary Janet Erwin in giving thanks for the 10 women who gather regularly in her living room in Poland to study the Bible. Several of them are not believers.

■ Funds needed for housing and food for at least 12 missionaries who will work in the Greater Boston area this summer to establish three new congregations.

■ A church planting associate to assist missionary strategist David Jackson in Greater Boston.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Living Hope Church will present its Easter pageant April 12, 14-15 at 7 p.m. nightly and 6 p.m. April 16. For ticket information, call (270) 843-9462.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Pleasant Hill Church will host revival services April 16-22. **Ron Ellis** will be the evangelist. **Donnie Blick** is pastor.

■ **HENDERSON**—Zion Church will present its Easter pageant, "The Week that Changed the World" April 15-17 at 7 p.m., also 4 p.m. April 16. For ticket information, call (270) 826-4952. **David Hankins** is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—Casky Church will host revival services April 16-20. **Curtis McGehee** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 885-0546. **Bob Morgan** is pastor.

Second Church will celebrate its 90th anniversary April 16 with **Desmond Hargis** as guest speaker for 10:45 a.m. (CST) worship, lunch and a 2 p.m. service. For information, call (270) 886-0291. **Dan Ferguson** is pastor.

■ **LAWRENCEBURG**—Alton Church will host revival services April 16-19. **Paul Badgett** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 839-3487. **John Charles** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Carlisle Avenue Church will host revival services April 9-12. **Hershael York** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 499-5616. **Shawn Merithew** is pastor.

Cedar Creek Church sanctuary choir will present the musical "Alpha and Omega" April 22 and 23 at 7 p.m. **Mike Eicher** is music minister. **Tim Beougher** is pastor.

Cloverleaf Church will host revival services April 16-20 at 7 p.m., featuring a variety of speakers and music groups. For information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Crescent Hill Church will host a Good Friday service with **Dale Brannon** and **Helen Starr** of the Louisville Ballet April 21 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 896-4425. **Ron Sisk** is pastor.

Davis Memorial Church will present the musical "Save in the Cross" April 16 at 5 p.m. For information, call (502) 491-6083. **Wes Brockway** is pastor.

Fern Creek Church adult choir will present the musical "Song of the Shadows" April 21. For information, call (502) 239-0316. **Debbie Gorbandt** is music minister. **Linda Barnes** is pastor.

Hazelwood Church will host revival services April 9-12, 10:45 a.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. nightly. **Mark Harrison** will be the evangelist and **Ivan Shely** will be the music evangelist. **Hilton Davis** is pastor.

Jeffersonstown Church will host revival services April 16-19 at 10:45 a.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. nightly. **Wesley Pitts**, director of Long Run Association, will be the evangelist. **Sanford Hill** is pastor.

Living Hope Church will host revival services April 9-12. **David Livingston** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 543-5418. **Jack Naylor** is pastor.

Melbourne Heights Church called **Bill Dunlap**, previously of Bardstown, as music minister beginning April 24.

Midlane Park will host revival ser-

vices April 9-12. **Fred Donovan** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 491-7966. **Johnnie Bailey** is pastor.

Parkland Church will host Celebrate Jesus 2000 revival services April 9-12. **Kevin Hamm** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 969-1387. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

West Broadway Church will present the cantata "Written in Red" April 16 at 9:30 and 10:45 a.m. Also, Good Friday service April 21 at 7 p.m. **Skip Alexander** is pastor.

■ **SHELBY COUNTY**—The Shelby County **Right to Life** chapter will sponsor a 5K run/walk April 15 at 8 a.m. Registration costs \$20 in advance, \$25 on site. For information, call (502) 722-9454.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—First Church will present a musical drama, "To Calvary and Beyond" April 16 and 20 at 7 p.m. Also, Easter sunrise service April 23 at 6:30 a.m. at Davidson Memorial United Methodist Church. **Rich Lloyd** is pastor.

■ **SONORA**—First Church will host revival services April 9-12 at 11 a.m. Sunday and nightly at 7 p.m. **Randy Jones**, KBC director of state missions, will be the evangelist. **James Hill** is pastor.

■ **WADDY**—Pigeon Fork Church will host revival services April 13-16 at 7 p.m. nightly and 11 a.m. Sunday. **Eddie Nation** will be the evangelist, and **Dave Stahl** will be the music evangelist. For information, call (502) 829-5858. **Tim Shockley** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Williamstown Church will host revival services April 16-19 at 11 a.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. nightly. Interim pastor **Colburn Hooten** will be the evangelist and **Gary Griesser** will be the music evangelist.

Freeman Dyson receives 2000 Templeton Prize

NEW YORK—Freeman Dyson, a world-renowned physicist and author who for more than 50 years has worked to make science a tool for social justice, was awarded the 2000 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion last month.

Dyson, 76, a professor emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study in

Princeton, N.J., has long supported the idea that if science and religion work together, "the gross inequalities of the world could be abolished."

The Templeton Prize, valued at \$948,000 this year, is named

for its founder, John Templeton. The global financier created the award in 1973 to recognize living individuals for advancing the world's understanding of God and spirituality.

Author of 11 books, Dyson has challenged the science and technology establishment to let ethics set the agenda in a field driven by profit and fashionable research.

Dyson has criticized scientists for focusing technology on making "toys for the rich," such as cellular phones and miniature computers rather than helping spread knowledge and improve people's lives.

Dyson has also sought to foster better relations between scientists and theologians.



Dyson

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DIRECTORY: One of America's most respected church directory companies is now offering a professionally done pictorial directory for your church that allows you to keep your membership roll, pictures, committees and other information in one book, and it can be kept up-to-date. For more information, call Jim Hensley at (800) 500-6526, ext. 777.

EVENT: Rich Pond Baptist Church presents four performances of "Thieves in the Night," an Easter pageant, April 20-23. For free tickets call: (270) 842-2593. **Jim Krutza** is minister of music.

FOR SALE: RENA DA 300 direct address printer (top-of-the-line in barcode printers). Like new. \$800. Call the Temperance League of Kentucky at (502) 635-0002.

FOR SALE: Brick house and siding garage that needs to be removed from property in Bloomfield, Ky. House measures 36' wide and 38' deep, has 6 rooms, 1 bath, fireplace and 2 rooms upstairs. Garage measures 24' wide and 32' deep. Owner accepting sealed bids on each structure. For more information or appointment, call (502) 252-8435.

FOR SALE: 1989 Carpenter 41-passenger church coach. Cat diesel, auto transmission, low mileage, new tires, leather upholstery. The coach rides on an International Asiaian-Smith chassis with air ride and air brakes. It is equipped with a separate Cobota diesel compressor for air-con-

ditioning. For information or appointment, please contact Scott Guthrie at First American in Franklin, Ky., (270) 586-4473; fax: (270) 586-2666. For sale by FBC Franklin.

SEEKING: Degreed foreign language teacher (high school). Call (606) 272-1217 for application.

SEEKING: Full-time youth and music minister, FBC of Anderson Hills, Cincinnati. Contact Tom Porter: (513) 232-6945, or church: (513) 474-2441.

SEEKING: East Cadiz Baptist Church of Cadiz is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth to assist the senior pastor in developing, coordinating and conducting comprehensive music programs and directing all youth ministries. Send resumé to: Search Committee, East Cadiz Baptist Church, 407 Third St., Cadiz, KY 42211.

SEEKING: The First Baptist Church, Ashland, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a senior pastor. A progressive, multi-staff church, First Baptist has two morning services (one contemporary, one traditional), a very active Sunday school, and numerous opportunities for midweek prayer meetings and congregational fellowship. It is a church that reflects the values of true Christian love and gender equity. For more information about our church and the requirements of the position, visit our Web site at www.fbcashlandky.com. Resumés should be sent to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 787, Ashland, KY 41105-0787, Attn: Dr. Eugene H. Foster.

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: Palestine Baptist Church of Campbellsville, Ky., is prayerfully seeking candidates for a full-time pastor. Please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Palestine Baptist Church, 80 Church Lane, Campbellsville, KY 42718.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for an excited and growing SBC church in Cloverport. Please send resumé to: Cloverport Baptist Church, 314 W Main St., Cloverport, KY 40111, or call (270) 788-6650.

SEEKING: Williamstown Baptist Church, Williamstown, Ky., is prayerfully seeking applications for full-time pastor. Please send your resumé along with a cover letter, statement of ministry and faith, and audio or video tapes if available to: Pastor Search Committee, Williamstown Baptist Church, 214 N Main St., Williamstown, KY 41097. Resumés will be received until April 21, 2000.

SEEKING: Part-time activities assistant. Dependable, compassionate individual to assist in implementing recreational program. Apply in person: Meadowview Health & Rehab Center, 9701 Whipps Mill Road, Louisville. (502) 426-2778.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor. Please send resumé to: Search Committee, West Covington Baptist Church, 1003 Highway Ave., Covington, KY 41011.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Twelve Mile Baptist Church, California, Ky. (eight miles south of Alexandria). Send resume to Linda Winkler, 8 Raintree Drive, Melbourne, KY 41059-9612.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister for Farndale Baptist Church, 5610 U.S. Highway 127 South, Frankfort, Ky. If you feel God is calling you to this area to work with children, send resumé to: Ms. Bryan, 530 Alfa Drive, Frankfort, KY 40601.

SEEKING: Rineyville Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of pastoral care and music. Church is located in a rapidly growing rural community five miles west of Elizabethtown. Direct all correspondence and inquiries to RBC, PO Box 197, Rineyville, KY 60162, or Rineyville Baptist@msn.com.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and music to guide the youth ministry and overall music ministry. Send cover letter and resumé to: FBC of St. Charles, 136 Stoddard Ave., Waldorf, MD 20602, Attn: MYM Search.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and youth. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 506, Hindman, KY 41822, Attn: Search Committee.

Ministry to Chicago's homeless is 'about saving souls'

By Michael Leathers
Illinois Baptist

CHICAGO (BP)—A homeless man steps out of the shadows cast by the dingy streetlights and saunters toward the two cars parked in downtown Chicago.

He often walks without shoes, but this frosty February evening is too cold for even him. Alerted by one of the other homeless men gathered around the trunk of the first car, Linda Caston has a hot plate of spaghetti and chicken ready and waiting.

The man quietly takes the plate from Caston, a member of Rose of Light Missionary Baptist Church, and walks away. He prefers to keep to himself, and the others respect his privacy. He fades into the darkness as he walks away, illuminated by the occasional patch of light before disappearing around one of the concrete pillars in this section of downtown Chicago.

It's the side of Chicago that few tourists see while they're shopping at the glitzy stores on Michigan Avenue or checking out the attractions along Navy Pier. Most downtown visitors zip by too fast to notice the tattered blankets and frayed boxes arranged into makeshift shelters.

But on this Monday night, as Charlie Jones Sr., pastor of Chicago's Rose of Light, pilots the two-vehicle caravan, he's looking for all the familiar hangouts of the people who live here. Spaghetti and meatballs, crispy fried chicken and grilled garlic bread stay warm in the metal serving trays in his car trunk. Cookies and fruit drinks also are stashed in back. The second car's trunk has been loaded down with nearly 50 gray blankets.

Rose of Light, along with many other Baptist churches in Chicago, communicates the gospel of Jesus Christ to homeless and low-income people by offering them a plate of food.

Mount Carmel Ridge Baptist, for example, has been feeding between 50 and 100 people on Wednesday afternoons. Some are homeless; others are

low-income residents in the neighborhood, said Eddie Martin, the church's pastor. Each meal begins with a 15-minute Bible study. "It's about saving souls," Martin said. "It's very difficult to minister to somebody if they're hungry."

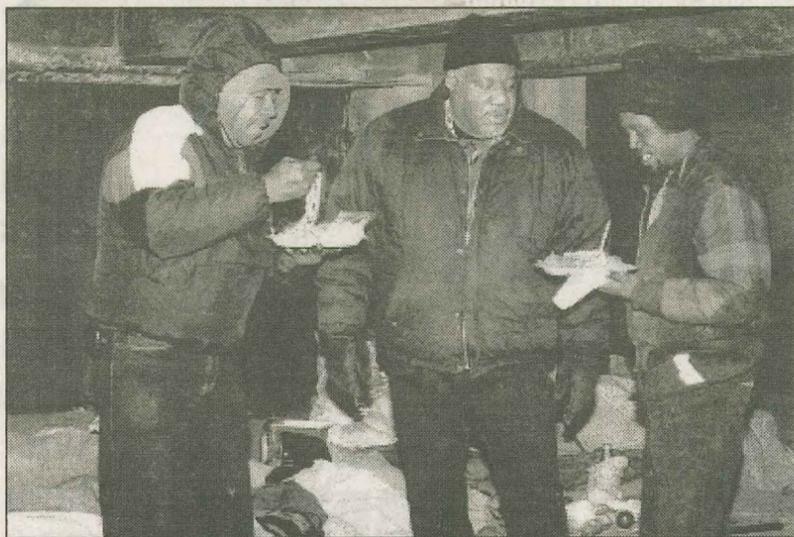
Evening Star Missionary Baptist prepares hot meals for 60 people on Monday nights. About 300 people receive food from the church's food pantry program on Thursdays, said Vesta Dixon, Evening Star's pastor. The church has held a Kids' Cafe every other Wednesday afternoon for six months, feeding and tutoring 20 children. Another 30 to 40 churches and ministries pick up food stored in Evening Star's warehouse.

Good Hope Baptist prepares hot meals for 25 to 60 homeless people on Lower Wacker Drive on Tuesday nights. Church members take food to shelters and to pantries almost every day of the week. "We don't use this ministry just to feed people," said Edward Clark, the church's pastor. "It's good evangelism. We ask people to trust in God."

Rose of Light's members, meanwhile, hit the streets every Monday night of the year, offering the food along with gospel tracts. They pray with the men and ask them about other needs. For Jones, this passion to take care of the hungry has been part of his family for as long as he can remember.

His mother often would take people in or prepare a good meal for them. At times, Jones said, "it would make me mad as a boy because we didn't have much," but sharing with others was a core value in his family that has stayed with Jones into his adult years. He has been involved with feeding the homeless for 27 years. He and others have fed as many as 285 people on one night, and as few as 14 on another night. They have helped an estimated 400 people off the streets.

When Jones organized Rose of Light in 1988, that family conviction became part of the congregation's heartbeat, a



SPECIAL DELIVERY Pastor Charlie Jones Sr. (center) shares hot meals with two homeless men living on Chicago's Lower Wacker Drive. (BP photo by Michael Leathers)

ministry that involves more than just filling empty stomachs. Their mission is to tell people about Jesus' love for them as they hand them plates of food, Jones said.

Many of the homeless on Lower Wacker Drive, mostly men, have an unshakable camaraderie and keep track of each other. If Jones and his church members can't find one of their regulars, they ask the other men, who usually know if someone has found a new spot. Jones has a commanding rapport with the men, many of whom call him "Rev." He greets several with big bear hugs.

Not only does Rose of Light reach the homeless population in downtown Chicago, which is about 15 minutes away from the church, they provide meals for the people in their surrounding neighborhoods. Last year, the church began the Lord's Kitchen, a ministry that serves hot meals to anyone in the community who wants to eat in the church basement.

On this night, Kenneth Jones Sr. cuts up chickens on a wooden block in the center of the small kitchen. He turns up

the heat on the stove to boil the water for the spaghetti. Another volunteer, Harold Jackson, is cleaning out the deep fryer so it's ready for the chicken.

About a dozen people are on hand for the meal. Rose of Light asks for a donation of 50 cents but also makes sure people know that they don't have to pay even that much if they don't have it. "That donation's important," Charlie Jones said. "People need to feel they are contributing something."

As people enjoy their homemade meals, church members join them to talk about Jesus' love for them and to invite them to Sunday services, said Jones' wife, Roselle.

"This building is the base where the Lord lets us set up ministries," Charlie Jones said. Those ministries extend beyond providing food, including a range of outreach initiatives from helping battered women, to holding sports clinics to reach gang members, to operating two massive block parties last year that drew 1,600 people.

"You have to do the ministries," Jones reflected, "and let Christ lead you."

"It's very difficult to minister to somebody if they're hungry."

Eddie Martin, pastor of Mount Carmel Ridge Baptist Church in Chicago

New Mexico sheriff catches flak for buying, mailing prayer videos

KIRTLAND, N.M. (BP)—A New Mexico sheriff was so moved by a video shown at his church that he purchased copies for churches in his county, urging them to pray for revival.

Sheriff Mike Davidson's action has drawn applause from area pastors, but it also has raised concern from those who feel it may violate the separation of church and state.

The video at the heart of the debate is "Transformations," produced by Global Net Productions. The video focuses on four communities around the world where Christians united in prayer and, as a result, revival broke out and the crime rate dropped dramatically.

Davidson first saw the video in February at the church where he is a member, First Baptist Church of Kirtland, N.M.

Convinced that prayer could make a difference in his county, Davidson used sheriff department discretionary

funds to purchase 90 videos. He sent them with a letter on department letterhead to Christian pastors in the area, urging them to lead their churches to pray.

When word of the sheriff's action reached the media, concern was raised about the appropriateness of using county funds for the \$1,600 project and the county's main law enforcement official promoting one religion.

In response, approximately 150 people gathered at the sheriff's office March 23 for a rally in support of Davidson.

During the rally the pastors said they will lead their churches to take up an offering to pay back the sheriff's discretionary fund. The pastors emphasized their actions should not be construed as an admission that Davidson's use of the funds was wrong.

Shortly after the rally, Davidson announced he had written a personal check to the county to reimburse the fund.

'Lydia's Lunch' offers spiritual nourishment

PENSACOLA, Fla. (BP)—The meeting place is a banquet hall in Pensacola, Fla., rather than a riverbank near Philippi.

But the purpose of "Lydia's Lunch" is much the same as its biblical counterpart—offering women fellowship and spiritual nourishment.

Lydia's Lunch was launched as a women's group at First Baptist Church of Pensacola. Three years ago, Pat Evans set in motion a vision to meet the spiritual needs of women in the church and community.

"Our target group was businesswomen because we are a downtown church that would be in an accessible area," she explained.

"We thought, 'What better role model for career ladies than Lydia?' Lydia was a seller of purple dye from the Book of Acts who became a Christian.

After a year of planning and prayer, organizers mailed invitations for the first Lydia's Lunch. Church members spread the word through personal contacts.

"I went to a member of our church who happened to be the president of a local bank and

asked him to encourage his female employees to attend," Evans said. "He said he would do better than that. He would sponsor the first lunch by paying for the meal."

The church could have held the monthly luncheon at its facilities but organizers preferred a neutral location where non-Christians would not feel threatened. Thus, a year's contract was signed with a downtown banquet facility.

"We expected 50 women for the first luncheon," Evans said. "We had over 100."

The event is a major outreach tool for the church, she added. Guests are asked to fill out information cards so the church can mail a reminder about the next month's luncheon.

"Women come from all over. A secretary for a law firm has progressively brought her entire office and says that, as a result, a new atmosphere has been created among them at work," organizer Linda Farrell said.

"We have been blessed in the area of speakers," she noted. "We just ask that they be a Christian and present the gospel through personal testimony or Scripture."

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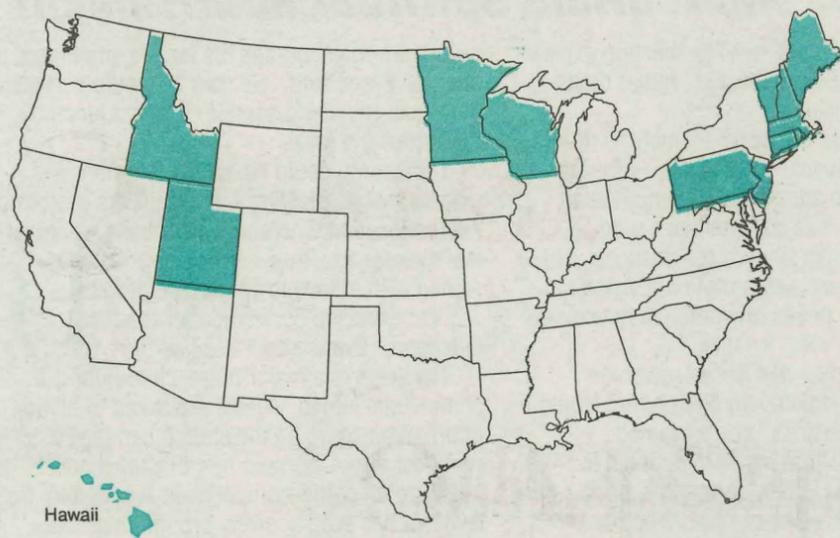
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*The Western Recorder works in cooperation with
5 Baptist conventions representing 13 states*

A while back at the Western Recorder we got a call asking if we knew another state Baptist newspaper was copying our design format.

It struck us anew that one of the Western Recorder's best kept secrets has been its publishing relationship with newspapers in five state conventions where Southern Baptist work is in its infancy.

For seven years now, the Western Recorder has worked with these conventions to help them publish their monthly newspapers.

In most of these conventions the responsibility for producing the state paper previously fell on the executive director or a staff person whose primary focus was another ministry field. Now, with the help of the Western Recorder, they no longer have to handle the production of their paper.

The process works like this:

Editors or their assistants in the Baptist state conventions of New England, Pennsylvania-South Jersey, Minnesota-Wisconsin, Utah-Idaho and Hawaii Pacific assemble their local news stories, photos, advertisements and editorials and transmit them electronically to our office.

Here, Partnership Editions Editor Joyce Martin edits and prepares layouts, adding national and international news, missions and feature stories from the Western Recorder.

And, yes, she uses the same design format as the Western Recorder.

The result is a win-win situation. Staff in these partnership conventions are freed up to focus on their primary responsibilities and readers get a paper chock full of local, national and international news.

And it looks good, too.