



# WESTERN RECORDER

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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, April 12

## Consultants: Strong churches will be flexible on all but Jesus

By Steve DeVane  
North Carolina Biblical Recorder

RALEIGH, N.C. (ABP)—Churches that thrive in the 21st century will be centered on Jesus but flexible about almost everything else, two authors and church consultants said at a recent seminar.

Church leaders must ask themselves, "What is it about my experience with Jesus that this community cannot live without?" according to Bill Easum and Tom Bandy, consultants with Easum, Bandy and Associates and the authors of "Growing Spiritual Redwoods."

Easum concentrated on challenging participants' thinking while Bandy talked about practical ways to lead change in churches.

Easum said the world is moving into a "pre-Christian" era. He said Christianity in the 21st century would look more like the first century than the 20th.

He noted that his new book "Leadership on the Other Side," which is due out later this year, took five years to write.

"Every time I discovered a law of leadership, it changed," he said. "There are no more laws of leadership." There are some clues to leadership, he added, but they are "hidden in the hearts of spiritualists and mystics who avoid our churches like the plague."

"We've lost our heart and soul and all we're worried about is correct theology," he said.

Pastors under age 30 who are leading growing churches share similar characteristics, Easum said.

The young pastors have Jesus at the center of their mission, and Jesus is the only absolute, Easum said.

The pastors are passionate. They are "rabid about Jesus Christ," Easum said.

"These pastors don't build churches," he said. "They live to transform individuals and society." The pastors are also innovative. They make mistakes and learn from them, Easum said.

"When they hear, 'We've never done it that way before,' they know that's the way it's got to be done," he said. "It's like waving a red flag in front of a bull."

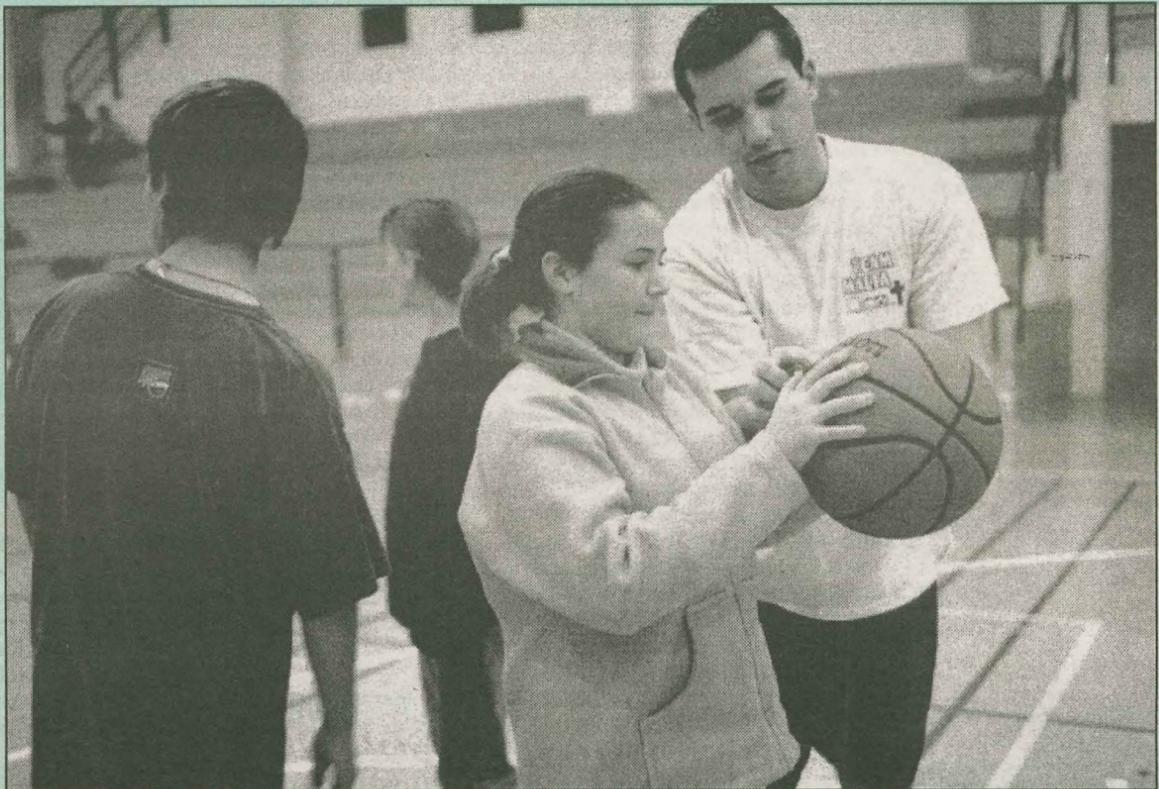
While the pastors are focused on Jesus, they rely on their intuition about effective methods, Easum said.

Leadership is not coercing people, but rather helping people be transformed by God, he added.

Easum said clergy shouldn't spend time visiting people in the

□ See Authors: Strong ..., page 6

## Sports break



**MISSION TRIP** Nine Campbellsville University students traveled to Malta during their spring break for a sports mission trip. ■ Above: Bruce Warf shows a Maltese girl how to hold basketball before she shoots for the basket taken during a basketball clinic. ■ Below: Heather Nunn (right) talks with students. (IMB photos by Sandy King)

## Students: Malta spring trip found God at work

By Tobin Perry  
SBC International Mission Board

FLORIANA, Malta—While the rest of her teammates battled for rebounds on the basketball court and scurried around on the soccer field, Heather Nunn sat with three new Maltese friends.

Instead of an athletic battle, Nunn was involved in an encounter with eternal consequences.

After some small talk, the girls from a secondary school in Naxxar, Malta, inquired about the meaning of Nunn's sports ministry major.

Nunn told them she travels around the world to tell people that Jesus loves them. In a mostly Roman Catholic country, this caught the girls' attention. Nunn went on to tell them how they can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

"One thing that was difficult was they kept agreeing with me like they knew what I was talking about," said Nunn, a member of Hyland Church in Henderson. "I know they have some form of Jesus, but I don't think they get the fact that they can have a personal relationship with Him."

Nine students from the Campbellsville University Baptist Student Union spent a week playing sports and sharing their love of Jesus Christ during their spring break in March. The team spent seven days in Malta playing basketball at different venues, teaching at sports clinics and telling the people of Malta about



how to have a personal relationship with Christ.

Last spring break, through a friend who knew Southern Baptist missionaries and Kentucky Baptists Earl and Robin Pinkston, Campbellsville students Bruce Warf and Brandon Carrier learned of the need for sports teams to minister in Malta, a country made up of three mostly Roman Catholic islands in the Mediterranean Sea. For the next year, the two spearheaded the effort to put the team and trip together.

There are only 400 evangelicals among the 370,000 people in Malta. Known throughout Europe for its impressive Roman Catholic churches and religious art, many assume the country already is evangelized. But according to evangelicals in the country, few

Maltese have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

"When we first got here I personally found some of the churches intimidating. The large paintings and the gold and silver (are here), but I believe Jesus is really needed here," said Warf, a member of Central Baptist Church in Cumberland. "The people of this nation need a strong personal relationship with Jesus Christ. They have a belief in their religion, but they are struggling day-to-day. They need that love for Christ."

But with the help of two flashy ball routines that the team practiced twice a week at 7:30 a.m., the students found that sports opened doors to tell the Maltese people about Christ.

□ See Students say they ..., page 9

# BAPTISTS

## Southern reconsiders plan to close child care center

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Plans to shut down Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Child Development Center prompted sharp outcries from concerned parents and staff members last week and a swift response from seminary president Al Mohler.

Seminary officials announced plans April 4 to close the school's child care program effective July 31. Three days later, Mohler pledged to keep the center open at least one more year while seminary leaders study long-term options to meet the seminary community's child care needs.

The initial announcement came in a letter distributed to parents of children enrolled at the child care center on Southern's Louisville campus. Several students and child care staff members immediately questioned the seminary's motivation for the action.

The child care center, founded in 1971, currently serves 69 children, including 60 from the seminary community. The center is located in a two-story building that formerly housed the seminary's school of church music. The facility reportedly needs more than \$1 million in renovations to remain open.

Calling the April 4 action "a painful

decision," Mohler said, "It was just a business decision. We could not come up with a business plan with adequate income for the center. We're in a competitive market like everyone else."

The decision to close the center was made by the seminary's 10-member executive cabinet which includes Mohler, four vice presidents and five deans. Their decision followed a study on renovation costs by the trustees' real estate committee.

"I stand behind the (initial) decision that was made, given the information we had, and I certainly stand behind the proposal and actions laid out today," Mohler said during a hastily convened press conference April 7.

In the April 4 letter to parents, Dennis Williams wrote, "If the seminary did the renovation, the cost to the parents to use the center for their children would be prohibitive." Williams is dean of Southern's school of Christian education and leadership which is responsible for the center's operation.

Responding in an April 5 letter to Mohler, Mim Dunlap called Williams' claim "ludicrous."

Dunlap, whose children have attended the child care center the past two years, said she was insulted that Williams "would presume to know my or any other seminary family's financial situation."

She said closing the center would force seminary families to use private, non-Christian day care centers, "spending the same 'cost prohibitive' dollars somewhere else."

Dunlap's letter also questioned recent cost increases for rent, tuition and other seminary-related expenses "if a seminary family's finances are such a grave concern."

Dunlap noted that the center's announced closing came just one year after seminary officials unveiled a 10-year, \$70 million campus master plan. "I can't help but wonder how another \$1 million would be that difficult to raise," she wrote.

Emphasizing the decision came after several months of review, Mohler said the child care center's future remained unresolved amid last year's long-range plans. He said seminary officials have no plans to use the building for any other purpose.

Mohler said the child care center is an auxiliary service designed to pay its own way. "It has not broken even for the last several years," he said, explaining the center's budget "has been somewhat subsidized."

He added, however, that the center's financial concerns appear to be "a resolvable budgetary situation."

Countering claims that the initial decision was based on a belief by sem-

inary officials that mothers should stay home with their children, he added, "We are not philosophically opposed" to providing child care on campus.

"We have reflected upon the information we have gathered the last couple of days and we feel this is the right action," Mohler told reporters. He said he will ask trustees to establish a joint task team "to develop a long-term plan for meeting the child care needs of the seminary community."

Mohler said the latest decision was made after meeting with parents and child care center staff members who voiced "some significant, very responsible statements of concern and urgency." He acknowledged those two groups were not consulted by administrators prior to the earlier announcement.

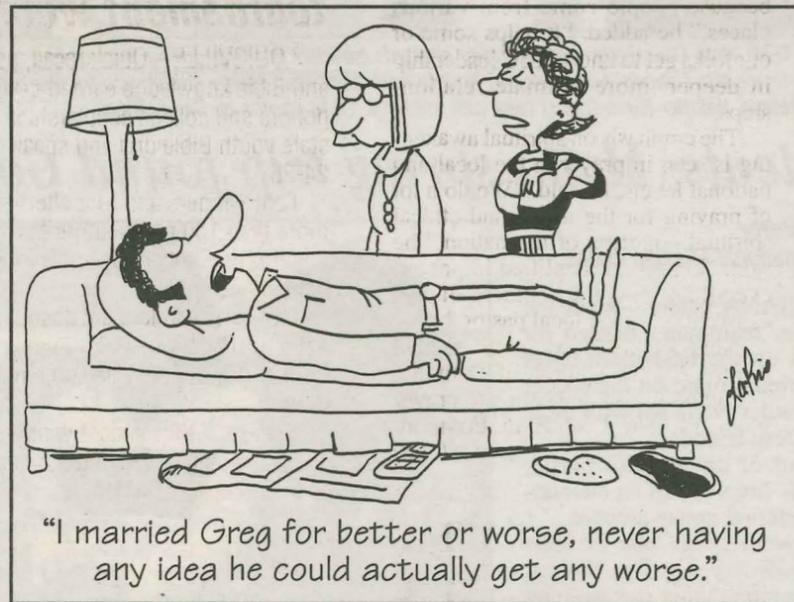
Child Development Center teacher Christy Thomas was among several employees of the center who attended Mohler's April 7 press conference on the front steps of the child care facility.

"It was a mistake that he didn't talk to the staff and parents first," Thomas said. She added, however, that she is satisfied with Mohler's latest announcement.

"I had no idea that this might happen this fast," she said. "I'm very pleased, especially for the children. This is our ministry."

**"The aim of this task team is to point toward the goal of having an ongoing program in child care. One way or another, we need to meet these needs."**

*Southern Seminary President Al Mohler*



## NAMB, Falwell partner to launch new 'flagship' church in Chicago

CHICAGO (ABP)—The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board will give Jerry Falwell's Virginia church \$250,000 over the next two years to help start a new "flagship" Baptist congregation in suburban Chicago.

Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church will match the \$125,000 per year allocation from NAMB, creating an available pool of half a million dollars for the church start.

Falwell and SBC officials said they hope the well-funded church start will create a congregation that within five years will duplicate itself through additional church starts.

The partnership between NAMB and Falwell's church is the first of five such agreements recently negotiated with Southern Baptist mega-churches. Other churches signed on to the plan include First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla.; First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga.; First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas; and Prestonwood Baptist Church of Plano, Texas.

"The basic thesis is that large churches know how to grow churches in cities and impact the cities," said Richard Harris, NAMB vice president of church planting.

Sponsoring churches were asked to participate by NAMB President Bob Reccord during an annual meeting of mega-church pastors, said Doug Metzger, director of NAMB's strategic focus cities emphasis.

Falwell said Thomas Road Church chose Chicago because "we have a strong television constituency in Chicago" and "many, many write us wanting a good 'evangelistic, Bible-teaching church in the area.'"

The Chicago-area church will be the

"first serious attempt to reach the affluent area of Lake County" with the gospel, according to Bob Ryan, director of Association for Lake County Baptist Association.

Lake County lies at the northwest edge of metropolitan Chicago. Willow Creek Community Church, a non-denominational mega-church known nationwide for its "seeker-sensitive" approach, is located in the same vicinity, just across the county line.

A pastor for the new Baptist church has been handpicked by Falwell and approved by NAMB. Another full-time staff position already has been filled.

"There has just been incredible momentum behind this," said Pastor Kevin Garber, who is a member of Thomas Road Baptist Church and is scheduled to earn a doctoral degree this spring at Falwell's Liberty University. Garber and his family plan to move to Chicago in May.

The four Baptist associations in the metro Chicago area are cooperating with the church start, as is the Illinois State Baptist Association. However, the state convention is not part of the funding.

Falwell's formerly independent church joined the SBC in 1997 and contributed \$10,000 that first year to SBC causes through Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, a new state convention formed in opposition to the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Financial support of the SBC's unified budget during the coming year at Thomas Road will be at least \$100,000, Falwell said, which will be the first time the Cooperative Program has been included in the church's budget.

### BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Hunger relief giving on the rise.** Gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention's World Hunger Fund for 1999 were the second highest in the funding's history, according to Steve Nelson, director of hunger concerns for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Hunger relief funds for the year totaled \$10,732,302—an increase of 2.8 percent over the previous year and a 60 percent jump over three years ago. Nelson said the goal for 2000 is \$12.2 million.

■ **IMB's divorce policy upheld.** A trustee committee of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board voted 6-2 to maintain the IMB's current policy against appointing divorced people as career missionaries. The current policy allows divorced people to serve as two-year International Service Corps workers. The ISC

program allows for reassignment, and some divorced people have served as many as five consecutive two-year assignments. Trustees asked the committee to present its findings in writing at the next board meeting in May.

■ **IMB names new vice president.** Larry Cox, regional leader of Southern Baptist International Mission Board work for northern Africa and the Middle East, was elected March 31 as the IMB's vice president for public relations and development. Cox and his wife, Cheryl, were first appointed as Southern Baptist missionaries in 1975. He also has served as assistant to the president at Mississippi College in Clinton as a minister of education. Cox, a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, will succeed David Button, who resigned in January.

## Ministry offers local outreach with international flair

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—The letter from California warmed Edna Keeling's heart. A Chinese student who formerly attended Hurstbourne Baptist Church with Keeling told of accepting Jesus as Savior.

The two women became acquainted through Friendship International Ministry, a Long Run Baptist Association program that celebrates its 25th anniversary this month.

This outreach strives to smooth adjustments to America for international visitors and immigrants. It sponsors weekly classes in English, Bible study and other subjects ranging from quilting to citizenship.

But volunteers say personal relationships are the key to spreading the gospel through practical means.

"I don't know how many lives I've touched," said Keeling, who has participated in the ministry since its inception. "I'll have to leave that to the Holy Spirit. But I've tried to touch them all with Christian love."

Current director Gaye Rountree has been with Friendship International only three years. But the first time

she attended, she knew she would return.

"It felt wonderful to be in a room full of people where I was hearing other languages spoken and seeing many different people," said Rountree, the daughter of missionaries. "It's easy to be isolated where we live and not be aware of other people and places."

Classes are held at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville. Although the group offers more than a dozen special-interest subjects, the program revolves around English instruction, Rountree said.

There are six levels, from introductory classes up to university-level preparation. The 9:15 a.m.-to-noon schedule divides into three periods, although the introductory English class meets all morning.

It takes 50 volunteers to staff the program, which runs from September through May. Over the years, the director estimates the ministry has touched 2,000 internationals from more than 100 nations.

Students come from a variety of age groups. They include visiting college students, health care workers, refugees and business people. Some move to Kentucky to join family members liv-

ing here.

While emphasizing education rather than evangelism, Rountree sees the ministry as a low-key form of missions.

Students are aware it is a Christian-based organization, she said, and leaders sometimes share the gospel. For instance, a showing of the "Jesus" video last Easter resulted in several students asking for a copy of the video in their own language, she said.

English classes coordinator Helen Wilson sees Friendship International as an opportunity to take part in missions.

For example, one summer she taught English to a Czechoslovakian doctor, using a Southern Baptist, biblically-based lesson book. That gave Wilson a chance to share her faith, although the woman didn't make a profession of faith.

"I feel I'm getting to go overseas even though I'm in Louisville," said Wilson, a retired schoolteacher who attends Baptist Tabernacle. "And, I'm grateful I can use my talents to teach people who really want to learn."

But the ministry needs more than instructors. It opens each week with a 15-minute fellowship, which can lead to long-lasting friendships.

"We also want people who can de-

velop one-on-one relationships with people," said Rountree, a member of Crescent Hill Baptist Church. "That's where friendship comes in. We've had volunteers who helped people get to the doctor or go grocery shopping. It's not set up, it just happens."

Feedback often comes in the form of letters from former students.

One Christmas a greeting came from Mexico, concluding, "You are a reason to believe in good people and in God."

A young woman who was about to return to Japan wrote about how much harder her family's stay would have been without the ministry's help. "In Louisville we met, for the first time, people like you whose truthfulness is deep rooted in the firm belief of Christianity," she said.

Students have touched volunteers' hearts, too. When Keeling's husband died three years ago, a former student and her mother flew over from Tokyo to spend a week with her.

"That floored me," she said. "We had a great time."

Friendship International will hold an anniversary celebration April 26, 9:30 a.m. to noon at Walnut Street Baptist Church. For more information, call Gaye Rountree (502) 327-6173.

**"I feel I'm getting to go overseas even though I'm in Louisville."**

*Friendship International volunteer Helen Wilson*

## Quarterly prayer meetings focus on awakening

DANVILLE—Baptists from throughout Kentucky will gather in Danville April 17-18 to pray for spiritual awakening all over the commonwealth.

The quarterly meetings have been held since January 1998 and are coordinated by Larry Martin, missions growth team leader for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Attendance has ranged from about a dozen to 40, and participants praise the events for their inspiration.

Nancy Dinsmore, a member of First Baptist Church of Somerset, said the meetings have shown her what is going on throughout Kentucky. "It's encouraging for us to see that broader picture," she said. "It's encouraging

to hear from them what good thing God is doing in other parts of the state."

Her prayer partner, Ann Niekirk, said she was encouraged to see state Baptist leaders participating in prayer.

"There is a revival going on," she said. "It's across denominational lines."

Carl Boyd said the meetings have deepened his own prayer life.

"The meetings themselves have been to me personally some of the most meaningful experiences I have ever been a part of," said Boyd, director of missions for Pike Baptist Association in Eastern Kentucky.

"Also, it helps you to know some new brothers and sisters in the Lord

because people come from various places," he added. "It helps some of our folks get to know KBC leadership in deeper, more intimate relationships."

The emphasis on spiritual awakening is seen in prayer at the local and national levels, he said. "We do a lot of praying for the moral and ethical spiritual concerns of the nation," he said. "Leaders are uplifted in prayer, everything from the Southern Baptist Convention to the local pastor."

Next week's meeting will be held at First Baptist Church of Danville. The church also is hosting a prayer seminar led by T.W. Hunt. For more information, call Larry Martin at (502) 245-4101.

## Cumberland students spend their spring break in missions

WILLIAMSBURG—More than 60 Cumberland College students spent their spring break on mission trips throughout the central and eastern United States.

Eight teams of students with the Baptist Student Union participated in Road Quest, a project that sent students on trips to undisclosed destinations for missions activities.

A team in Philadelphia sorted more than 3,000 pounds of dry goods and canned goods for a local food bank. They also worked at a nursing home and a consignment shop benefiting an AIDS ministry.

In Houston, students taught English as a second language courses. In Myrtle Beach, S.C., workers led crafts, recreation and creative ministries.

Another team helped church planters in Rhode Island, performing door-to-door survey work to promote a backyard Bible club for a new congregation.

"A lot of times we think of serv-



**MISSIONS** Cumberland students sort food for a food bank.

ing as drudgery and hard work," said BSU director Dean Whitaker. "By adding a measure of fun and an element of surprise, students not only worked hard and accomplished a lot, but they also learned that in giving we are often the ones who are blessed

most."

In addition to the BSU students, workers with the school's Mountain Outreach program used their spring break to help rebuild homes in Pinebluffs, N.C., that had been destroyed by hurricanes and floods.

## Youth Bible drill and speakers' tournament winners selected

LOUISVILLE—Quick recall, polished presentation skills and Bible knowledge earned several Kentucky youth top honors and college scholarships at the Kentucky Baptist state youth Bible drill and speakers' tournaments, March 24-25.

Four winners and four alternates excelled in a field of more than 100 competitors at regional tournaments held at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly in Bagdad and Jonathan Creek Baptist Assembly in Hardin.

Bible drill winners are Joshua Eidson, 14, of Albany and a member of Stony Point Baptist Church; and Karissa Ramey, 13, of Eddyville and a member of Bethany Baptist Church.

Speakers' tournament winners are Taylor Leigh Williford, 17, of Bowling Green and a member of Glendale Baptist Church; and Joel Kenimer, 17, a member of Central Baptist Church in Paris.

Bible drill alternates are Barry Fields, 15, of Bowling Green and a member of Glendale Baptist Church; and Brooklyn Hurley, 14, of London and a member of Corinth Baptist Church.

Speakers' tournament alternates are Daniel McKee, 17, a member of First Baptist Church of Richmond; and Crystal Massingale, 18, of Scottsville and a member of Liberty Baptist Church.

Participants in the youth Bible drills are expected to know the books of the Bible, locate scripture passages, memorize verses and answer questions with scripture references.

Speakers' tournament competitors compose and deliver a four to six minute speech on one of the tournament topics. A total of 147 youth participated in the statewide events.

The winners will represent Kentucky in July at demonstrations sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources in Ridgecrest, N.C., and Glorieta, N.M.

Campbellsville University, Cumberland College and Georgetown College also will give scholarships worth up to \$3,600 total to both winners and alternates.

For more information about the Kentucky Baptist Convention's state Bible drills or speakers' tournaments contact the discipleship training department at (502) 245-4101 or toll-free (888) 254-5708.

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

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## 'Walk' is experiential

It is unfortunate that the North American Mission Board has only "reports" of Emmaus Walk and similar experiences to comment on, instead of having had the actual experiences.

It's much like trying to explain the feeling of God's love, forgiveness and peace to a non-Christian. How can you explain what is, at its core, an experience?

The Walk, like all of Christianity, is not just a set of philosophical or theological tenets. It is an experience with a Person that can only be understood by one who has taken this step. I have been to many retreats and conferences. Nothing ever filled my wife and me as the Walk to Emmaus did.

The really sad thing is that Baptists have lagged behind other groups in providing this type of nurture. A "solid ministry" doesn't necessarily meet the individual needs of people. An experience with God is required for that.

Interestingly, the closest thing to the Walk I have experienced is the SBC's "Experiencing God" program. While they are far different, there are more similarities than differences. But one is not a substitute for the other—they are strongly complimentary.

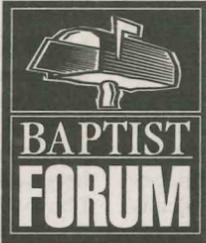
As should be obvious, these pilgrimages are not for everyone. They are for the church leader, for the strong Christian who realizes he needs to go deeper. This is why all who attend must be sponsored by one who has previously attended, and also be recommended by his or her pastor.

It is bad that some who have returned from the Walk are viewed as being superior. Sometimes, having experienced such a blessing, it takes a while to come back to your old rut. As for the "secrets," how do you explain something that can only be experienced? As many have said, "I've had a taste of heaven right here on earth!"

Shelby Ennis  
Elizabethtown

## Why close day care?

Just last year, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary officials announced a \$70 million plan for improvements and additions to the campus. This week, I was greeted with the news that the seminary has decided to close the Child Development Center, a day care which serves 65 seminary families, including two of my own children.



I was given a form letter from Dennis Williams, representing the seminary's school of Christian education and leadership. It stated that a much-needed renovation to the center "to bring it to acceptable standards would cost in the excess of one million dollars."

In addition, the letter said, "If the seminary did the renovation, the cost to the parents to use the center for their children would be prohibitive."

Excuse me, but to close the facility will only force seminary families to seek private day care placement, making it necessary for them to pay higher costs for day care or preschool anyway! Secondly, a million dollars for a renovation sounds like spare change in the large scheme of Dr. Albert Mohler's \$70 million campus master plan.

Does Southern Seminary have other plans for the land on which the Child Development Center now stands? I would wager the Powerball jackpot that it does. Sadly, Southern Seminary has chosen to put its own agenda before the needs of defenseless children of future ministers of the Word.

Mim Dunlap  
Louisville

## Consider the children

The decision by Southern Seminary administrators to close the Child Development Center comes as a great sadness to many.

Sixty-nine precious little children who have been cared for in a loving, Christian environment are left with few options due to long waiting lists for ac-

ceptance and high costs at child care centers in the area. The employees, some of whom are students or student spouses, are left without work and benefits needed to complete their education. Others have given years of dedicated service to the care of these children and now will be unemployed.

The motives for this insensitive action appear less than pure and certainly not wholly financial. The building in question meets state requirements for child care and obviously will require the million dollars, or more, in question to be renovated for whatever purpose the administration has planned.

Many Baptists might be surprised to know how many millions have been spent recently on the campus. Some of these expenditures have not created facilities for theological education but an ostentatious display totally unnecessary for the benefit of students.

Many who have lived on modest incomes while serving in the ministry are disappointed by the use of funds in this manner. Sadly, some students living in the shadow of these magnificent structures have had to resort to welfare benefits to survive while receiving their education. Now they have no child care.

Perhaps this decision is intended to reflect the recently adopted addition to the Baptist Faith and Message statement and the interpretation by some that mothers should not be employed outside the home. Unfortunately, not everyone can afford that luxury.

Maybe in the midst of the decision making at Southern Seminary, someone should remember Matthew 19:14, 25:40 and Mark 9:36-37.

Mary M. Cubine  
Louisville

**Editor's Note:** Southern Seminary President Al Mohler announced April 7 that he will ask trustees to establish a team to develop a long-term plan for meeting the seminary community's child care needs. He said the child care center will remain open at least through July 2001 to allow time for the study and report. (See related article on page 2.)

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

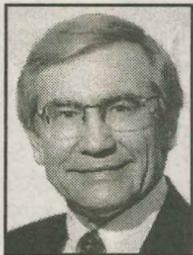
### Financial benefits for church staff

During a recent orientation at the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, I learned that many benefits for ministers and church staff are being overlooked. In fact, one of these is available free through the Kentucky Baptist Convention when the church elects to enroll pastoral staff in the Annuity Retirement Plan.

Through this benefit, a worker may receive \$10,000 to \$100,000 in life insurance-type benefits and up to \$500 per month disability paid by the KBC. I am pleased that the KBC budget provides these benefits for 1,759 church workers. The total budget cost to the KBC, supplemented through 2003 by the Annuity Board, is \$750,000.

Don Spencer, Kentucky Baptists' annuity representative, related the following story of an applicant for annuity relief. The untimely death of a pastor left his widow without income. She had limited job skills and was requesting

help until she could get work. Don was able to share with her that her husband's church had enrolled him for this benefit the year before and that he was eligible for \$50,000 in life insurance. Don said there was a lengthy pause and then sobs as she realized what it was going to mean to her.



Bill Mackey

If you are a layperson and your church already is participating in the annuity plan, please encourage the enrollment of your staff in this significant benefit. The disability benefit complements Social Security up to 60 percent of an employee's salary.

Likewise, if your pastor and staff are not already involved in the annuity plan, I encourage you to take action to make sure they are. The financial resources to plan for retirement seem hard to find when retirement seems so far away. But the consequences of not planning ahead can be devastating.

In Kentucky, there are 334 retired pastors and widows who receive less

than \$200 each month in annuity benefits and another 168 who received \$200 to \$300 per month. The average benefit to retirees in Kentucky is \$471, the second lowest among the old-line state conventions. Relief plans help, but they are inadequate.

It is my prayer that informed laypeople will lead the way to encourage all churches to participate on at least the minimum level. Churches that are in the annuity retirement plan can increase contributions for staff and/or create a matching plan to encourage staff participation.

Many state conventions and churches are providing matching retirement funds to encourage younger ministers and workers to get started early. The years will pass more quickly than these young people can imagine.

If you desire more information, please contact Don Spencer at (502) 254-4732 or (888) 254-5703. You also may call the Annuity Board directly for information and consultation at (800) 262-0511.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## FAMILY

### How much are U.S. savings bonds worth?

By Jeremy White

In this month's column, I will continue to address financial questions received from Western Recorder subscribers.



**Q. I recently found a \$100 savings bond issued in De-**

**ember 1994 as a Christmas gift. Where can I find out how much it is worth? Can I cash it in now?**

As of April 2000, the redemption value of your bond is \$64.52. Therefore, \$14.52 of interest has accrued on the \$50 principal. As you may know, U.S. savings bonds are purchased at one-half their face value (\$100 in your case). You may cash it in at a bank at any time after six months from the issue date.

Any bank can give you the current redemption value of any savings bond. For a free software program pricing savings bonds or for reissuing lost bonds, write the Bureau of Public Debt, Box 1213, Parkersburg, WV 26102-1213 or contact [www.publicdebt.treas.gov](http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov).

**Q: Is interest on student loans deductible for income taxes?**

It depends. If your adjusted gross income is less than \$75,000 for a married couple (\$55,000 for single), then you may deduct student loan interest. Also, the student loan interest must be for the first five years of the loan. In other words, if this is the 10th year of loan payments, then you cannot deduct student loan interest regardless of your income.

**Q. What is the main difference between a Roth IRA and a traditional IRA?**

There are two types of individual retirement accounts. A traditional IRA provides a tax deduction in the year of the contribution to it. A Roth IRA currently does not provide any tax deduction.

A traditional IRA defers the income tax until withdrawn. Upon withdrawal, you pay income tax. Contrasted to tax-deferred, a Roth IRA is tax-free. When you withdraw assets from a Roth IRA, you receive them tax-free. More people qualify to participate in a Roth IRA than a traditional IRA.

The Roth IRA is relatively new, having begun in 1998, and offers a powerful means for compounding earnings without taxing.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. He provides financial tips and tax articles at his Web site ([www.consultcpa.com](http://www.consultcpa.com)).

## What are primary benefits of using hospice care for the terminally ill?

**Q: My friend said she is using hospice care for her grandmother who is dying of cancer. What exactly is hospice care?**

A hospice provides medical care, support and comfort to the terminally ill and counsel to their families. Hospices, which regard dying as a normal process, have brought new dignity and meaning to the experience of dying.

Hospice patients typically have a life expectancy of fewer than six months and are of all ages. Hospices care for the dying through a support team that includes a primary care giver (usually a family member) who arranges through the hospice for the services of a team of nurses, social workers, counselors, chaplain and volunteers supervised by a medical director.

Hospice programs encourage the family to determine which surroundings will offer the greatest comfort to the patient during his or her final days of life. A vital component of all hospice programs is access to 24-hour support and services and medical care.

To receive more information, contact the National Hospice Organization at (703) 243-5900. This program began in 1974 and has been helpful to many people who cope with terminal illness. The main service they provide is support to the family during this difficult time.

Hospices differ from other health care programs only in that their goal is not to save patients' lives or to prolong life, but to help patients live out their lives in dignity, making them as comfortable and free from pain as possible.—*Jon Rainbow*

**Q: My ex-husband and I have different ideas on raising children, so the rules we have for them are different. For instance, he doesn't require them to do chores and doesn't have a set bedtime for them. At my house they have chores and have to be in bed by a set time. He is too controlling with their friendships; I think he needs to lighten up. I don't want to change my rules and my ex-husband doesn't want to change his, but I am concerned that the different rules will be harmful to the children. Any suggestions?**

Different sets of rules are not ideal, but in a situation like yours might be necessary. You and your ex-husband each have reasons for the rules you have set and have a right to expect your children to follow those rules when in your homes. You could fight constantly with your ex-husband, but that probably would create more problems than it would solve, making life difficult for each of you and for your children.

It may be best simply to accept that each of you has the right to set rules in your own home, accept that those rules will differ and expect the children to follow the rules at the house in which they are staying at the time. I understand that you might be concerned about what your children are learning by not having to do things you want them to do (chores, etc.), but there are some things you simply can't control. You can, however, be consistent and firm in enforcing the rules you set for your own household.

Actually, your children may adapt better than you think. We each have the capacity to adjust to our environments. We all know there are certain things we can and cannot do in different settings. Children can do this too. Eventually, they learn what the rules are in each setting, and learn amazingly well how to adjust accordingly.—*Susan Howell*

*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.



## Seminary child care: What's the next step?

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Child Development Center narrowly survived a near-death experience last week. After the center virtually was declared dead in an April 4 letter to parents, seminary officials resurrected the child care ministry three days later—at least temporarily.

The tragedy is the whole uproar basically was unnecessary. Fortunately, seminary president Al Mohler quickly reconsidered the initial announcement and took the initiative to seek a win-win solution.

The scenario began when seminary administrators decided to shut down the school's on-campus child care ministry without seeking input from parents or child care workers. Parents received word of the plan in an April 4 letter from Dennis Williams, dean of Southern's school of Christian education and leadership. Citing needed renovation costs exceeding \$1 million, Williams said the child care center would cease operation by July 31.

Concerned parents and employees expressed shock and anger that they had not been included in the decision-making process. They also voiced concern that the seminary community's long-term child care needs had not been addressed in a 10-year, \$70 million campus master plan unveiled a year ago by seminary leaders.

The crisis escalated when secular media began pursuing the story. James Smith, Southern's public relations director, told a Louisville Courier-Journal reporter, "Our mission is theological education, not child care." While that technically is true, it doesn't come across too well in print. It left the unfortunate impression that Southern is concerned with educating ministers, but not concerned with meeting students' pressing family needs as they make financial sacrifices to pursue theological training.

Smith said the decision was made "with the knowledge that there would be a negative impact," adding that "all of the factors were considered."

Apparently, the negative impact was greater than seminary officials expected and additional factors quickly came to light. After unsuccessfully exploring other

child care options for a number of months, Mohler and other administrators suddenly came up with a plan to breathe new life into the once-doomed program.

In an April 7 press conference, Mohler released a five-point plan finalized after meeting earlier in the day with parents and employees. Key points include:

- Asking seminary trustees to establish a team to develop a long-term plan to meet child care needs.

- Keeping the child care center open at least another full year to allow time for a thorough study and report.

- Addressing certain needs of the current facility to assure safety.

"Our goal," Mohler added, "will be to serve our students and care for their children through a program and in a facility that reflects excellence in every dimension." And that is as it should be.

Where do seminary leaders go from here? Options could include identifying donors with a desire to fund needed improvements to the program, working with other area child care providers willing to offer students child care at a discounted or seminary-subsidized rate or approaching a church about sponsoring child

care options for students. I'm sure the team assigned the responsibility of exploring the issue will discover other creative possibilities.

Mohler said the initial announcement was based on a business decision. That is understandable. Hopefully, however, future decisions in seminary life can be made with meaningful input from students.

The fact is that seminary students are adult Christians responding to God's call to ministry. While administrators and faculty are there to guide and instruct, they also are there to faithfully serve the students Southern Baptists have entrusted to their care. There should be a mutual respect and partnership that encompasses every aspect of campus life.

Perhaps a starting point would be a student advisory group to work with trustees and administrators on the child care issue. Sounds like a win-win situation for everyone concerned.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## Bivocational ministry offers 'double blessing'

By John Chowning

"After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife, Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks." (Acts 18:1-4)

A growing number of Southern Baptist churches are served by bivocational pastors. In many Kentucky Baptist associations, the bivocational pastor is the norm. Bivocational ministry likely will continue to grow in the 21st century.

After entering the ministry in 1984, I struggled with the question of whether to pursue full-time (fully-funded) ministry. Gradually, with the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the confirmation of full-time and bivocational colleagues in the ministry, it became apparent that God's will for my ministry is in the smaller churches where bivocational ministry is essential and even advanta-

geous. God has shown me that bivocational ministry is not "second best" and that, in fact, it is within the biblical model for ministry. Bivocational ministry is an essential, respectable and significant approach to serving Christ's church.

The Apostle Paul wrote about working in order to support himself. He reminded his friends in the church at Ephesus that "these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions" (Acts 20:34). The early church needed bivocational ministers. The 21st century church has the same need.

Leon Wilson, national bivocational missionary for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, recently wrote, "The need for bivocationalism is critical during this period of history. Ministers need to be in the marketplace. Members need to learn to minister. Motivation must come from our God to do whatever it takes to reach our nation and the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Bivocational ministry has afforded me several opportunities and advantages. My family and I have served the churches to which we've been called without concern about financial bene-

fits that the church may or may not be able to provide.

Big is not always best. The small church, with a bivocational pastoral staff, is fully capable of accomplishing great things. Ministry emphasis can be placed on equipping the laity and training lay ministers in the church.

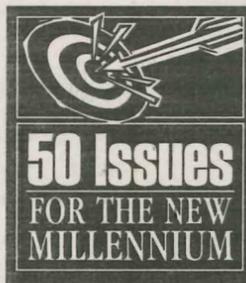
God has used my preaching ministry to proclaim His word in a direct, challenging and loving manner without being concerned for my job. He has afforded me the opportunity to use my education, training and leadership skills in His church and in the secular world.

When I step into the pulpit to proclaim God's message or when I sit down to talk with a member about his or her problems or sorrows, I approach the task fully aware of all the pressures, anxieties and concerns faced by the people to whom I minister.

Is bivocational ministry a "second rate" or inferior approach to doing God's kingdom work? Not at all! Is it better than full-time ministry? No, for God will continue to need many people in full-time ministry. Is bivocational ministry a double blessing? It surely is as we minister in the church, community and world.



John Chowning is bivocational pastor of Saloma Baptist Church and executive assistant to the president at Campbellsville University



## Author: Strong churches flexible on everything but Jesus

**"We're just happy if we're not declining. Do you really think God honors that?"**

Church consultant Bill Easum

*Continued from page 1*

hospital and taking care of church members. Instead, they should equip church members to minister to one another.

The laity should find God's calling and live out their gifts rather than run the church by making decisions, Easum said.

"Laypeople are the heart of the church if they're not in the committee meetings," he said. "If they're in committee meetings, they're not worth squat. No one comes to Christ in committee meetings."

Easum said his own experience has taught him that God can use those whom everyone else has cast off. No one knows who will be a leader, he said. "Almost everyone who wants badly enough can be a leader."

Leaders should ask God to show them what He is doing, Easum said.

"Most of what God is doing today is in the Third World because of our arrogance, our pride and our sheer unwillingness to repent," he said. "We're in serious trouble."

"We're just happy if we're not declining. Do you really think God honors that?" Easum asked. He said the church has become weak "only because we've turned everything over to a few hirelings to do the ministry."

Bandy said that whether a church

lives or dies in the 21st century has nothing to do with its strategic plan. "It has to do with how well you help people experience the holy," he said.

Bandy described four "potent leverage points" for change in a church, adding that they also are the most stressful:

■ **Choosing and preparing team leaders.** Bandy recommends "skewing" the faith of leaders to be Christ-centered, daringly imaginative and biblically grounded. The key, he said is to get leaders who are willing to go beyond their comfort zones or away from the business-as-usual view of the church.

"Don't nominate people for this. Go out and find them," he said. "Gather around you 12 unbalanced people. That's what Jesus did."

■ **Helping players mature.** Bandy emphasized the importance of developing the faith of adult members, calling it "the pivot point around which everything turns." He objected to the idea that youth are the church of tomorrow.

"Adults between the ages of 18 and 45 who are in a spiritually transforming walk with Jesus are the future of the church," Bandy said. "You transform the church, they'll take care of the kids."

"Deep inside, most church members don't want to grow," he said, because they lack a desire for God.

Likewise, most clergy do not want

church members to grow, Bandy said. If church members grow, the clergy will lose their entitlements, which will bruise their egos, he said.

■ **Equipping players for the contemporary playing field.** A "technology-supported faith" will help churches and Christians share their message with others. This can include the use of computers and Internet for Bible study or surround sound, Power Point presentations and movie clips for worship.

"It's not about gadgets; it's about growth," Bandy said. The electronic tools of the 21st century are being used at home and at work, so they also should be used for church. "Technology is the way people grow."

Church members who say their church doesn't need technology or can't afford it are wrong, he added. "They don't want to grow," he said. "They're not prepared to experience God in a new way."

■ **Building team spirit.** Churches can help members increase their spirituality by shattering five myths related to worship, Bandy said. These are:

■ The myth of reasonable religion tries to "explain, gratuitous evil and rationalize grace," causing wordy worship, he said. Instead, worship should open worshippers to "the mysteriousness of God that exceeds our efforts to

define" it.

■ The myth of the controllable holy makes worship predictable, he said. This should be shattered by making worship unpredictable.

■ The myth of "therapeutic process" makes worship an extension of pastoral care, Bandy said, causing healthy people to avoid church.

■ The myth of progressive justice makes worship passive, he said. This results in people believing that if they do good things then God will keep them from experiencing tragedy, Bandy said.

■ The myth of heavenly favors leads people to believe that worship is only for the insiders of the church, he said.

The leverage points for change are stressful, and some people might not stay, Bandy added. "The people who leave will be the people who need to control or need to be controlled."

The solution to dealing with controlling people is not negotiation, Bandy said. "Lead with audacity and authenticity."

Church transformation starts with one key question, Bandy said: "What is it about your experience with Jesus that this community cannot live without?"

"If you don't have the answer to that question, you're helpless, but if you do have an answer to the question, nothing is impossible."

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# RESOURCES

## Conference ponders the theological side of infertility

By Leslie Scanlon  
Louisville Courier-Journal

LOUISVILLE (RNS)—After seven years of marriage, after five years of trying to have a baby, after finally hearing a tiny heartbeat and then suffering her third miscarriage, "I can remember being on my face in the living room with uncontrollable sobbing," said Wendy Fryar of Louisville. "There was the deepest, darkest place, a hole in my soul."

Her husband, Randy, tried to comfort her. But she told him: "You can't help me. Nobody can help me but God."

Infertility, which some experts estimate affects one in six couples of childbearing age, usually is thought of as a medical problem, not a spiritual one. But the private pain of infertility and the lengths to which many couples go to try to have a baby, and sometimes involving techniques on the cutting edge of medical technology, can present complicated spiritual and ethical questions.

Sandra Glahn, a Dallas author who spoke at an April 1 conference on infertility and spirituality at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said of all the women she's

known struggling with infertility, only one "didn't question at some point whether God was punishing her—and she was an atheist."

Glahn and her husband, Gary, endured years of infertility, seven pregnancy losses and three attempts at adoption in which the birth mothers changed their minds before they adopted their daughter, Alexandra, in 1995.

"There were seven" miscarriages, she said. "And at some point you ask questions like, 'What was it theologically that I was supposed to be learning?'"

Glahn said she doesn't believe the myths people sometimes told her, "that if I pray and I don't get what I desire, I don't have faith" or that not having a child was simply God's will for her. She said she thought of many reasons why God allows suffering: to transform us—to bring us to faith, to make us more sensitive to the pain of others—"but the only one that satisfied me is, 'It is a mystery.' ... God's ways are so far beyond us that it is not going to make sense."

William Cutrer, a Christian obstetrician and gynecologist who formerly specialized in the treatment of infertility and now is an associate pro-

fessor of Christian ministry at Southern Seminary, said he sees significant moral and ethical issues being posed by some techniques physicians use to help infertile couples conceive and bear children.

Cutrer, who teaches bioethics, spiritual formation and pastoral counseling, said he does not accept the argument made by some Christians that "people of faith are against any assisted reproductive technologies" or that "medical intervention is playing God."

But he said both physicians and infertile couples must draw their own conclusions about "when this human life is a person"—at conception, at birth or some point in between—and about whether other moral issues are involved, such as violation of the marital relationship between a husband and wife.

For example, some faiths, such as the Roman Catholic, teach that sex between a husband and wife must be part of procreation. He said he does not share that view but noted it poses moral problems with in-vitro fertilization or artificial insemination for those who do.

Cutrer urges patients to fully understand any procedure they're considering and to be sure it "honors the dignity of human life, even at the one-celled

stage. ... From that moment on, in my view, we have human life."

Cutrer said he has no moral difficulty with many basic techniques used by infertility doctors, including hormone therapy, ovulation testing or surgery to fix problems that may be hindering conception.

Although he did use donor sperm early in his practice, Cutrer later declined to do so. "I'm not so sure it's sin" if a woman becomes pregnant with donor sperm, he said. "I do not think it's adultery," because adultery involves the mind, not just science. In addition, "what used to be sealed records are quickly becoming open records," he said, adding he's troubled by the idea of the identities of anonymous sperm donors becoming known to their offspring.

Jennifer Gerber and her husband, Rick, have been infertile for at least four years. Sometimes the frustration and longing are so intense "I can walk through a mall and I see a child and I'm in tears," she said. But "I don't believe that infertility is a curse." Instead, "it might be God's way of drawing me closer to Him."

As much as she wants a baby, Gerber said, "sometimes God's answer is wait."

**The private pain of infertility and the lengths to which many couples go to try to have a baby can present complicated spiritual and ethical questions.**



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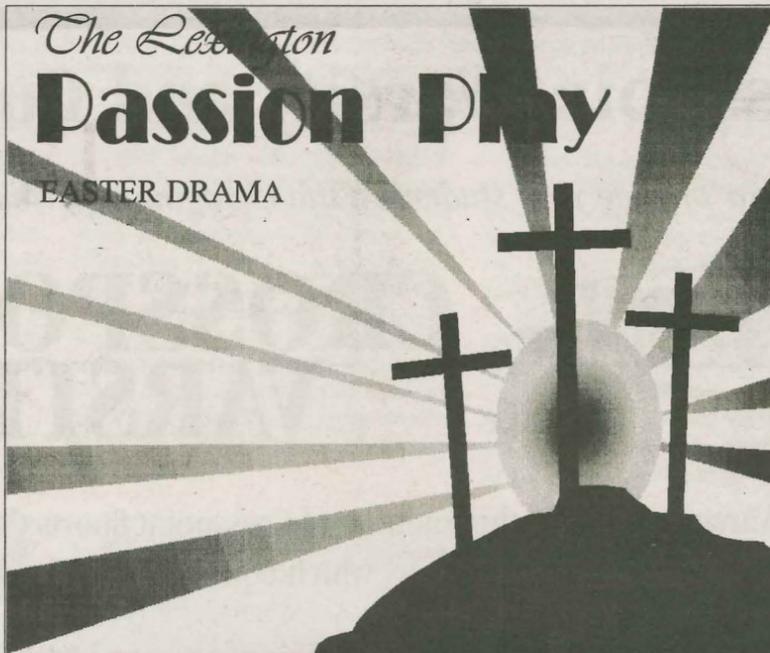
- Mission-cation: Combining a Mission Trip with a Mini-Vacation
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- Using Habitat for Humanity VBS Material
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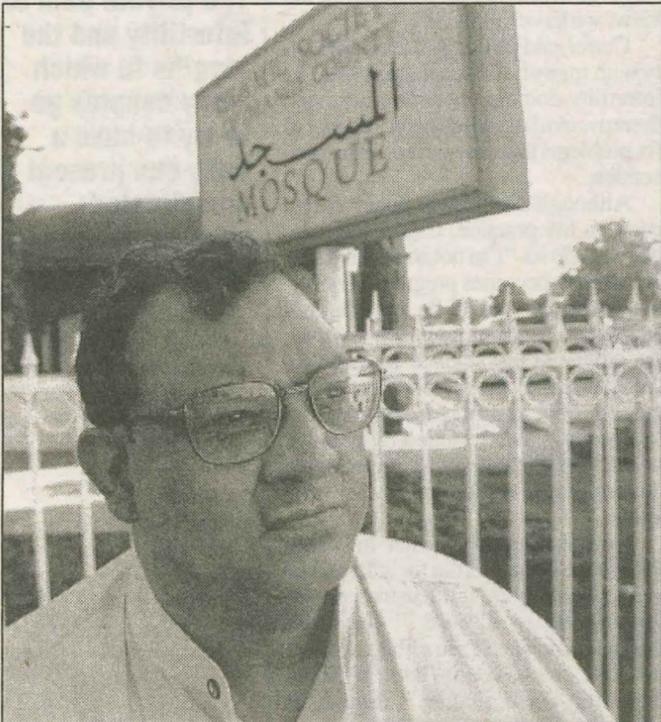
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# MISSIONS

## Missionary helps Middle Easterners discover God of love



**MISSIONARY** Khalil "Charlie" Hanna serves as a catalytic missionary in California, helping start churches among Middle Eastern people. There are more than a million Middle Easterners statewide. His work is among those profited for this year's Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. (North American Mission Board photo)

By Joe Westbury  
Georgia Christian Index

SAN JOSE, Calif.—Helping Arabic-speaking people grow in their understanding of the Christian gospel is a slow and hard task, according to San Jose pastor Basem Qusous.

But it's one that Southern Baptist missionary Khalil "Charlie" Hanna understands.

For the past 20 years, Hanna has been serving as a catalytic missionary for the North American Mission Board, helping plant churches throughout California.

Egyptian-born Hanna spends much of his time teaching Bible studies in homes and offices, encouraging pastors and trying to reach Middle Easterners for Jesus Christ. He knows their homesickness, but more importantly he knows their "heartsickness" for peace with God.

Hanna and his wife, Amal, are among the missionaries whose work is featured as part of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American missions. This year's national goal is \$47 million.

Hanna accepted Christ as his per-

sonal Savior in a small church in Cairo that was started by Southern Baptist missionaries. Later he went to a Southern Baptist Bible school in Lebanon, and has been preaching ever since.

"The overall goal of my ministry is to start churches and lead that group to grow in the Lord and start another church. Our goal is to reach every Middle Easterner in California. It's a big state and I can't do it on my own, but we can all do it working together," he explained.

Starting from scratch, Hanna first began building churches with Middle Easterners who had a Christian background. With that foundation in place, he now teaches those Christians how to reach their unchurched friends with the good news about Jesus.

But it's no easy task. In the Los Angeles area where he lives, more than 15,000 Muslims practice the faith of their fathers. There are more than a million Middle Easterners statewide.

"The Arab feels that Islam is the best religion because they are the first people in the world to be given God's word. Christianity did not arrive until later," he said. "The Arab

may listen to you, but he will politely respond with 'I already have the best (religion), so I don't need to change.' This is what creates the slow response to the gospel by those from the Middle East."

That's why it's so important for Hanna to train others so they, in turn, can start other churches. Others like Qusous, who now serves as pastor of the Arabic mission at San Francisco's 19th Avenue Baptist Church.

After seven hard years, the church has grown from two people to 70 and is leading in the creation of a Middle Eastern leadership development center at the church, as well as building the Arabic work in San Jose.

Hanna said the field is wide open to reach Iranian Muslims in particular. After the war with Iran, many Iranians fled their homeland, penniless with only the few possessions they could carry.

"They lost everything in the name of Islam. Now they are here in America, looking for a God who can teach them how to love, not hate," he said. "I know because several have told me those exact words."

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# MISSIONS

## Mission project to Malta reminds student of homeland

By Tobin Perry  
SBC International Mission Board

FLORIANA, Malta—Andy Rocha has seen it before—large churches, breathtaking religious art and elaborate crosses. Much of Malta reminds Rocha of his home in Brazil.

Religion permeates the culture, but many people are left just short of knowing Christ as their personal Savior.

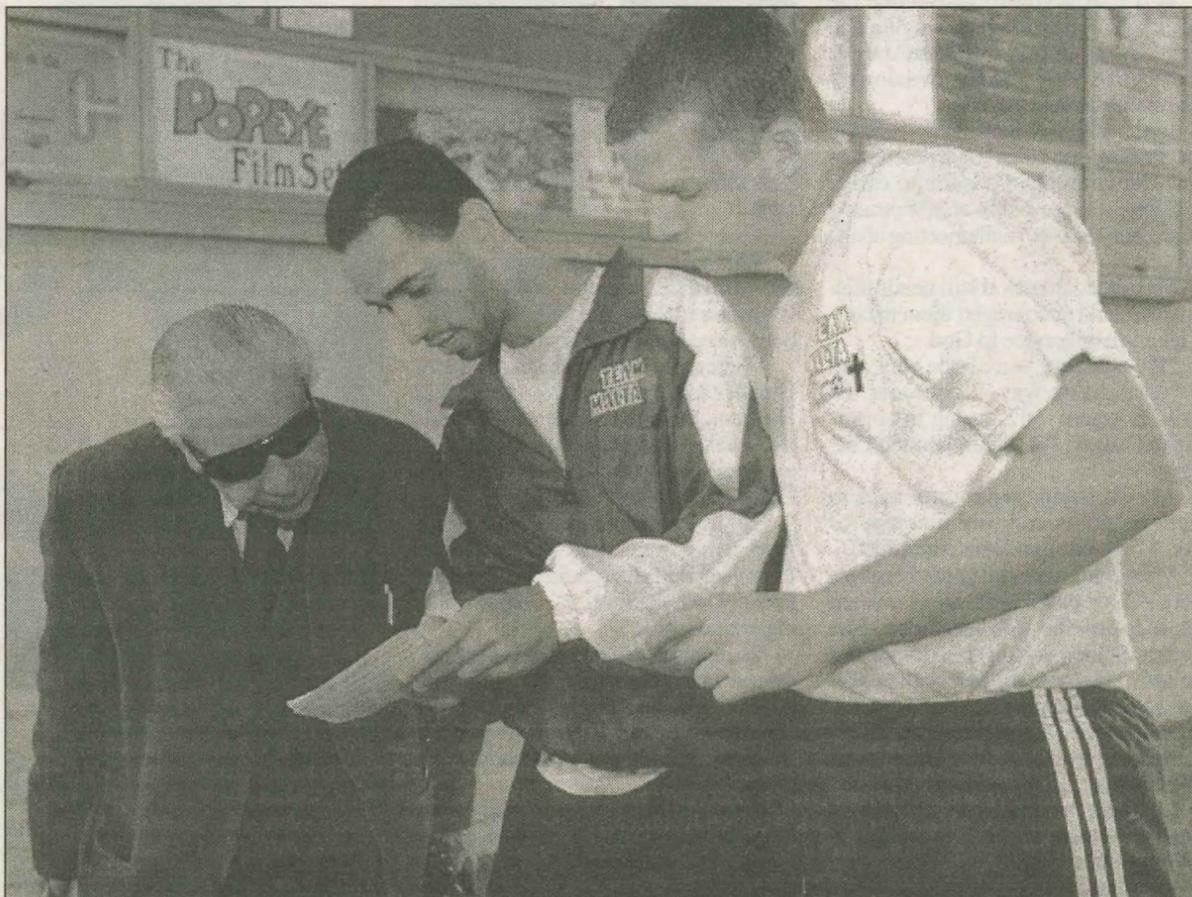
"In both countries, the people are so close to the truth," said Rocha, a senior at Campbellsville University. "They know a lot about Jesus and they know Jesus is God's Son and died on a cross. But there are so many other things that take their focus off Jesus. They are so close, but still there is a big wall between them and Jesus Christ."

Rocha went to Malta with eight classmates last month to play sports and to share his love for Christ. For him, the trip signaled God answering his prayer to get more involved in mission ministries.

"About the time I started praying about it, Bruce (Warf), a fellow student asked me if I was interested in an international mission trip," he said. "That's exactly what I was asking God for—for Him to send me to another country and work with new people."

The sports ministry seemed a natural fit for Rocha, a varsity soccer and tennis player for Campbellsville. From the time he was a teenager in Sao Paulo, Brazil, he has used his athleticism as a bridge to share his faith in Christ. Rocha worked every summer while in high school at sports camps sponsored by Athletes in Action.

"It doesn't matter what language you speak and where you live, sports is something that brings everyone together on a common ground," Rocha said. "It was good to play basketball or (soccer) and just be on the same level as (the Maltese people) and



**MISSION TRIP** Campbellsville University students Andy Rocha (center) and Zach Rice share Scripture with a Maltese man. Rocha said Malta, like his homeland in Brazil, is full of cultural religion, but it does not emphasize a personal relationship with God. "They are so close, but still there is a big wall between them and Jesus Christ." (IMB photo by Sandy King)

speak the same language. After that, start up a conversation and share with them our love for Jesus."

Rocha came to Campbellsville in 1997 through a partnership between the college and Baptist Academy in Sao Paulo, where he attended high school. At first, Rocha said, the move from a major metropolitan city to Campbellsville was quite an adjustment.

"Sometimes I would say things that were a little offensive without knowing

it," said Rocha, who attends South Campbellsville Baptist Church while at school. "Now after three and a half years at Campbellsville when I go home, I have to adapt to the life at home. I'm so used to life in the United States."

Rocha's experience back in mostly Roman Catholic Brazil came in handy during the trip to Malta. The team knew they'd need to understand some things about Catholicism before they tried to share their faith in the small Mediterranean country.

"Growing up in a Catholic environment was really good (for this trip) because I already had a very good idea about the people's beliefs, how they see the Bible and how they see Jesus Christ," he said.

In addition to participating in missions, Rocha said he also learned how he can minister in the Bluegrass State.

"If we can do it here, we can do it anywhere," Rocha said. "We have to be missionaries not only overseas but where we live in our neighborhood."

**"We have to be missionaries not only overseas but where we live in our neighborhood."**

Campbellsville University student Andy Rocha

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### Students say they saw God at work during mission trip

Continued from page 1

"Here sports has been a real golden opportunity," Carrier said. "If you can do something fancy with a ball, it grabs their attention. Once you have their attention, it makes it easier because they already have a little bit of your trust. It makes it a whole lot easier to share with them after they know you can do something and they appreciate what you do."

That's what first drew Marija Borg, a young Maltese girl who eventually made a profession of faith in Christ during the trip. While the team was performing their ball routine at the front gate in Valetta, Carrier noticed Borg watching closely.

Once the routine was over, he picked up a flying disc and started tossing it to her. After a few tosses, he gave her the disc and showed her the plan of salvation written on the back. Just a few minutes later she prayed and accepted Christ as her personal Savior.

That's just one of many ways the trip

expanded the world view of the team. By the end of the week, many team members said they saw God in a whole new way.

"I learned God is not just a God of the United States or the state of Kentucky. He reaches out to so many places, all at once," Carrier said. "It's really neat to see how He can be with the people of the United States and at the same time be with the people of Malta. He has His hand on them the same time He has His hand on us."

But the trip didn't just open team members' eyes to what God is doing in Malta. It also opened their eyes to what He is doing back in Kentucky. Many of the team members said they returned with a renewed passion to share Christ in their own communities.

"God has really been showing me that your whole life is a ministry whether you are at home, overseas or at school," said Abbie Whitley, a senior from Paducah. "You always need to be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is in you."

## Acteens gather for worship and missions education

**"In our world it's easy to underestimate the power and significance of one."**

*Williamsburg native and Southern Baptist missionary Beth Ann Williams*

WILLIAMSBURG—Seeing the hundreds of girls praying, singing and worshipping during the state Acteens conference took former missionary Martha Lytle back in time.

Lytle, a former missionary to Israel and Russia, described for the teenagers how she committed her life to career missions service while at a Woman's Missionary Union youth meeting at age 16.

She added that God still needs missionaries and encouraged them to consider a life of service to God.

"He will lead you all the way, and it's an exciting way," Lytle told the girls, in grades 7-12 during the meeting, held April 7-8 at Cumberland College.

All Christians have gifts to help them communicate the message of God's love through Jesus, she added.

Missionaries are still needed because there still are people who haven't heard about Jesus, she told the group. She compared the religious freedom in the United States with the persecution previously experienced in countries like Russia, where parents during the Soviet era could be arrested for telling their children the Christmas story.

Likewise in Israel, she noted, it is illegal to witness about Christianity to anyone under age 16.

Interpreting the conference theme "For Such a Time as This," taken from the biblical book of Esther, Lytle told the girls that God created them for a special purpose.

"Wait on His call. Learn how to know His call," she said. "Each of you are missionaries. We are missionaries because Jesus said go into all the world."

Williamsburg native and Southern Baptist missionary Beth Ann Williams echoed Lytle's view that missions is a lifestyle.



Lytle



Williams

Williams, who is coordinating Baptist ministries for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, said Christians serve God out of love.

"When we have a desire to serve Him, He will put people in our path that He wants us to reach out to," she added. "Make every encounter with people focus positive attention on Jesus Christ."

The reason Southern Baptists are involved in ministry at places like the Olympics is to get a chance to share the love of God, she said. "It's about building relationships."

Williams asked the Acteens to consider what makes a hero. "In our world it's easy to underestimate the power and significance of one." She described the influence of three women as models for today:

■ Fannie Crosby, who refused to lose her hymns despite becoming blind as a child.

■ Rosa Parks, whose protest led to the segregated bus policy of Montgomery, Ala., being ruled unconstitutional.

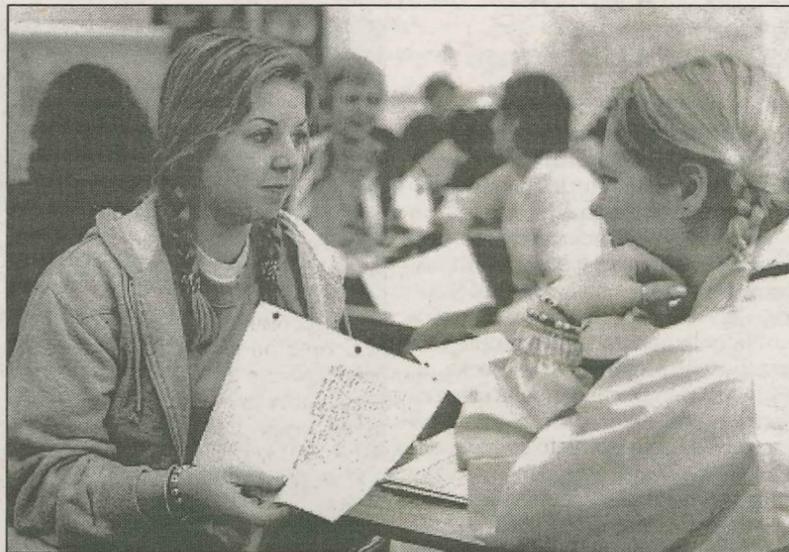
■ Esther, the biblical character who saved the Israelites from massacre.

"It's your turn to take a stand for God," Williams told the teenagers. "My prayer for you is that you will have the spirit of Fannie Crosby, the boldness of Rosa Parks and the courage of faith of Esther for such a time as this."

About 400 Acteens gathered in Williamsburg for the two-day event. They heard about a variety of missions opportunities during the conference.

Kentucky Baptist Belinda Riley talked about the ministry needs in Lynch that drew her back to her hometown. "Will you be the one to come? Will you be the one to help?"

Randy Record, a youth evangelism specialist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, encouraged the girls to participate in Christian clubs on their high school and middle school campuses. "You can have a 180-day mission trip. It's called school."



**ACTEENS** About 400 teenage girls attended the state Acteens conference, April 7-8 at Cumberland College. Nine Acteens groups were commissioned for summer service at the meeting. ■ **Top:** Heather Lassiter (left) and Jacqueline Jordan, both 15 and members of Carter Creek Missionary Baptist Church in Greenville, practice explaining their Christian faith at a workshop. ■ **Above Left:** The praise band, practice Exploring Christian in Lawrenceburg led the music for worship. ■ **Above right:** Members of Bellvue Baptist Church in Paducah (from left) Julie Pegram, Tina Stapleton and Leigh Ann Summers sing along. ■ **Far left:** Members of New Salem Baptist Church and Vine Grove Baptist Church.



### Campers On Mission strike again!

From time to time during the last 30 months, I have made mention of the Campers on Mission and the great help they have been at both Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore.

Last week I witnessed another vivid example of the great impact of this group of dedicated servants at Jonathan Creek.

We were facing a huge challenge at Jonathan Creek as we sought to remodel and renovate a house we need for summer staff members later this spring.

The house was in desperate need of repair, but with our present maintenance staff of one, we were wondering how in the world we could begin and complete the project on a timely basis.

Once again, along come our Campers on Mission. Having recently completed a major overhaul of Gracemore at Cedarmore, they took on this task at Jonathan Creek as well. And did they ever take it on. In just a few days time they transformed a disaster into a delight! It was amazing. Really, truly amazing!

I don't know how they do what they do as well as they do as fast

as they do it, but it has to do mostly with hard work and willing hearts.

We had a small army at work, including Gene and Faye Brown, Neal and Doris Tucker, H.C. Beck, Dale Dunning, Henry and Beadora Stephens, Jerry and Ann Schisler, Ron and Alice Jones, and David and Mattie Fuqua. If I

have left anyone out, please forgive me. But to each of you I publicly thank you and praise the Lord for the work you do. We literally could not do it without you.

And from Jonathan Creek, many of the same group headed for a week to 10 days at Cedarmore to help prepare for summer. At the time I wrote this column, we had 34 Campers on Mission at Cedarmore!

So praise the Lord for all He is doing as He continues to bring His bountiful resources to our ministry. It is exciting to see Him at work in so many marvelous ways.

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

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Rusty Ellison

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## Court: Lesbian ex-partner gets child visitation

TRENTON, N.J. (RNS)—The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled April 6 that a lesbian woman deserves visitation rights for the children she helped raise, even though the woman and her partner are no longer together.

The court found that the woman is a "psychological parent" because she helped raise the couple's twins before the two women separated. The case involved a woman who was artificially inseminated and gave birth to twins in 1994. She and her partner raised the children together before separating in 1996.

After the couple broke up, the woman who did not give birth to the children was denied visitation rights and custody. When the state Supreme Court heard the case, Associate Justice Virginia Long said each woman could be a "fully capable, loving parent committed to the safety and welfare of the twins," Associated Press reported.

Conservatives were upset with the ruling. "They have acknowledged that there is no statute that would grant psychological parenthood, yet they went on to create it," said Jan LaRue, a lawyer with the Washington-based Family Research Council.

## Judge rules in favor of pastor leading Capitol prayer tours

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A District of Columbia federal judge has ruled that a Maryland evangelist had the constitutional right to pray inside the U.S. Capitol.

The judge also ordered U.S. Capitol Police to no longer restrict people from bowing in prayer in the national landmark.

In November 1996, Pierre Bynum accompanied a group of eight people on a "prayer tour" as associate pastor of Waldorf Christian Assembly in Waldorf, Md.

In an order and judgment released April 3, U.S. District Judge Paul Friedman ruled that the police agency is "restrained from enforcing ... the ban on prayer against Rev. Pierre Bynum when he prays as part of the privately conducted prayer tours of the U.S. Capitol that he leads."

The judge further ordered that restrictions against "bowing one's head, closing one's eyes and clasping one's hands within the United States Capitol" can no longer be enforced.

Bynum filed suit in 1997, claiming his visit to the Capitol with the "Capitol Hill Prayer Alert" group resulted in an infringement of his First Amendment rights of free speech and free exercise when Capitol Police threatened him with arrest. He had conducted a "Capitol Hill Prayer Tour" organized by Capitol Hill

Prayer Alert, a Christian ministry that takes small groups around open areas of the Capitol building.

Capitol Police believed the prayers were a form of demonstration.

The U.S. Capitol Police Board has a regulation that describes "demonstration activity" as "expressive conduct that conveys a message supporting or opposing a point of view or has the ... propensity to attract a crowd of onlookers."

Friedman ruled that the regulation cannot be enforced because it is "unconstitutionally vague" and too broad.

"While the regulation is justified by the need ... to prevent disruptive conduct in the Capitol, it sweeps too broadly by inviting the Capitol Police to restrict behavior that is in no way disruptive," he wrote.

James Henderson, senior counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice, welcomed the decision on behalf of Bynum.

"This is an important decision upholding the First Amendment rights of all citizens—including our client," Henderson said in a statement. "We are grateful the court found that prayer is protected speech—and not a form of demonstration."

Calls seeking comment from the U.S. Capitol Police were not immediately returned.

## Christian groups defend radio's Dr. Laura amid gay protesters

MANASSAS, Va. (BP)—The National Religious Broadcasters has come to the defense of syndicated radio psychologist Laura Schlessinger, whose upcoming television program has drawn angry protests by homosexual activists.

NRB President Brandt Gustavson wrote a letter to Paramount Television encouraging the company to stand firm against homosexual activists' protests of Schlessinger's show, which is slated to begin Sept. 11. The NRB encompasses more than 1,250 Christian communicators in the United States.

Gustavson, in a letter to Paramount executive Kerry McClugage, wrote: "Of course, in these days of political correctness anybody who dares to say some decisions are right and some decisions are wrong will be subjected to a barrage of criticism. This is precisely what has happened to Dr. Laura. The logic these protesters are using clearly doesn't make sense."

Schlessinger's radio show reaches an estimated 20 million people through 500 stations in the United States and Canada. Paramount executives said her television program will feature the same type of material featured on the radio program, and that has homosexual activists in an uproar.

Paramount said 85 percent of the country's television markets have signed up her hour-long program, despite the protests.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, issued a call during the agency's "For Faith & Family" radio broadcast encouraging telephone calls to Paramount in support of Schlessinger.

"Dr. Laura has every right to express her views and Americans have every right to hear them," Land told Baptist Press. "It can only serve to provide some balance to the radical homosexual propaganda machine which so dominates national entertainment and media outlets."

## Missions in Poland

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College sophomores Jamey Short, from Glasgow, and Heather Murphree, from Jonesville, Va., spent spring break 2000 in Warsaw, Poland. Each Kentucky Baptist liberal arts college sent a male and female student, and Short and Murphree represented Cumberland and Kentucky very well.

Missionary Susan Carson requested a team of students to help lay the foundation for a ministry to college students in Warsaw. Approximately 200,000 college students live and study in the area with no Christian ministry specifically directed toward them.

Sunday morning all six students on the team led worship at the International Church. That evening a concert helped them meet some of the students.

Monday through Friday mornings, team members prayer-walked through different parts of the city. Since direct evangelism is strongly discouraged, they prayed for opportunities to share their faith. Murphree found the inability to freely share her faith the most difficult aspect of the trip. A veteran of several mission trips, openly sharing her faith comes naturally to her.

Monday through Friday evenings, team members went to one of the college dorms and presented a program of skits and songs. They then engaged the students in conversation so the Polish students could practice their English and the team members could build relationships that God might use to lead people to Him.

Both Short and Murphree had special ministry encounters. Short was able to introduce a new Christian to the pastor of the International Church, who will help the new Christian mature in his faith. Murphree and a fellow team member had the opportunity to talk to a young woman who said she was an atheist but

was very interested in the Christian faith. God used them to plant a seed.

Short is trying to get a team of students to return to Poland in May for further ministry. Team members will have to raise their own support, and Murphree is considering going back. We thank them for their desire to serve Christ and their commitment to international missions.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



## Standing firm

Many of you may have heard from your pastors that Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has been notified by the Lesbian and Gay Rights/AIDS Project of the American Civil Liberties Union that they intend to file a lawsuit against us unless we eliminate our employment policy barring men and women who engage in homosexual behavior from employment with the agency, or discontinue our reimbursement contracts with state government.

Fact: KBHC's employment policy breaks no local, state or federal law, and we have never discriminated against any child or teenager we serve because of race, religion or sexual identity issues. The only time we refuse to care for a child is if we do not have a program appropriate for his or her needs.

Fact: If state contracts are canceled, KBHC will continue to serve children and families just as we have since 1869. The sad difference is not nearly as many children would be touched through this agency. To show your support of family values, please call Gov. Paul Patton at (502) 564-2611, and your local legislators at (800) 372-7181, and encourage them to stand with

KBHC. Ask your friends and church family to do the same.

KBHC's policies and practices are designed to care for children the very best we know how. We believe employing individuals who assert their homosexual behavior is not in the best interest of any child, and it is especially not in the best interest of children and teens who are in crisis because of sexual and physical abuse.

During most of KBHC's 130-year history, we ministered without state reimbursements. The commonwealth came to us because they needed help caring for our state's abused and neglected children and teens. We consistently have provided quality care, and at a financial loss to KBHC. Kentucky Baptists have been there to make sure more children could be served and to enhance the lives of those we already were caring for. Please stand firm with us, for the children.

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

## NATIONAL NOTES

### ■ House passes late-term abortion ban.

The House of Representatives voted April 5 to ban a controversial late-term abortion procedure known in the medical community as intact dilation and extraction and called by its opponents "partial-birth abortion." The vote came despite a promised veto by President Clinton, who has twice vetoed similar legislation. Both his vetoes have been overridden by the House, whose bipartisan 287 to 141 vote again provides the two-thirds majority needed to override a presidential veto. But the Senate, which approved a companion bill last fall, has sustained Clinton's vetoes each time and is expected to do so again.

### ■ Court reinstates nude dancing ban.

In a decision that will make it easier for cities to ban nude dancing, the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated a municipal public-nudity statute that had been invalidated by Pennsylvania's top court. On a 6-3 vote announced March 29, justices reversed the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's ruling that the Erie, Pa., statute violated freedom-of-expression rights of dance club operators.

### ■ Mormons planning six new temples.

Mormon church President Gordon Hinckley announced plans earlier this month for the construction of six new temples, three in the United States and three overseas. "We shall go on in the process of bringing temples to the people," Hinckley said of the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the meeting in Salt Lake City. The new U.S. temples will be in Lubbock, Texas; Snowflake, Ariz.; and "somewhere in the Tri-Cities area in the state of Washington," he said. Temples are also planned for Abu, Nigeria; Asuncion, Paraguay; and Helsinki, Finland. The Mormon church has 78 temples in operation and 32 temples under construction.

### ■ \$105,000 awarded for discrimination.

A jury in Jacksonville, Fla., has awarded a Muslim man \$105,216 after his employer fired him when he wanted to leave work early on Fridays to pray, an obligation required of Muslim men. According to the Florida Times-Union, Fareed Ansari was fired from Ray's Plumbing Contractors of Jacksonville in July 1997 because of "early absences on Fridays." Ansari began working for the company a month earlier and told his boss he would need to leave work early on Fridays to attend a weekly prayer service. Ansari said his supervisor said, "No problem."

### ■ Methodists help Elian's father.

An agency of the United Methodist Church has set up a fund to collect donations to pay for a lawyer for the father of Elian Gonzalez. According to a church news release, the executive committee of the church's Board of Church and Society set up the fund last month after Juan Miguel Gonzalez, the 6-year-old boy's father,

asked for legal representation in his bid to have his son returned to Cuba. Officials said the fund, which receives no church money, was started to collect voluntary donations to help pay for the lawyer.

### ■ Sears settles Sabbath-working suit.

Under terms of a settlement agreement with the office of the New York state attorney general, retail giant Sears, Roebuck & Co. will allow repair technicians who have religious objections to working on Saturdays to work on Sundays instead. Sears has also agreed to give \$225,000 for employer education programs and provide \$120,000 for training scholarships to people who observe the Saturday Sabbath. The attorney general's office launched its investigation of the Sears policy requiring repair workers to work on Saturdays last summer after an Orthodox Jew said he was not hired by the company because he would not work on Saturdays.

### ■ Teens arrested in church attacks.

South Carolina law enforcement officials have charged two teenagers with recent attacks on two predominantly African-American churches in Columbia and are investigating the separate incidents as hate crimes. The teens are charged in connection with a firebomb being thrown through the window of St. Paul AME Church and fire being set to two Easter crosses outside Goodwill Presbyterian. The firebomb at St. Paul did not ignite, and no

one was injured in either incident. Sheriff Tommy Mims said both suspects are also charged with breaking windows at the local office of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

### ■ Church plans black men gathering.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church is spearheading plans for a July 4 national gathering of African-American men to address issues confronting their families and communities. The Christian Men's Freedom Forum 2000 will be held in Cincinnati the day before the denomination's quadrennial General Conference. Organizers hope to attract men from a variety of social and economic backgrounds to develop solutions to issues challenging black men across the country.

### ■ Pastor sues supremacist leader.

A black pastor in Chicago filed a federal lawsuit April 4 charging white supremacist Matt Hale and his World Church of the Creator should be held responsible for the acts of a follower who went on a shooting rampage last July. Stephen Anderson, injured by Benjamin Smith during a July Fourth weekend shooting spree, is seeking unspecified damages in a lawsuit that claims Hale colluded with Smith to violate Anderson's civil rights. Anderson, who said he has forgiven Smith, said he hopes his lawsuit will help bring an end to hate crimes.

## Class of 2000, part 2

This is another in a series of senior essays about "My Oneida Experience":

"My name is 'Tina' and I'm from Tennessee. (In) my first high school ... I would run around with the wrong crowd and abuse drugs and alcohol. I would skip school occasionally. ... I came to Oneida three years ago. When I came ... I was really scared. ... I worried about what people would think of me. ... I'm very fond of what this school has to offer.

"The one thing that really gets my attention ... is the friends you make and the different people you meet. ... I have participated in the work program and Beta Club. Some of (my) jobs ... were working in the grill, dorm, dining hall, kitchen, daycare and I have been a hall monitor.

"There is one person in this school that I have worked with that has helped to change my life. ... No matter what I would do wrong, she would still love me for who I was. I love and thank her for being there for me.

"I will be working hard to achieve the goals that I have for my future. I feel that I am more than ready. ... The single most important thing I have gained from being at Oneida is my life. If it weren't for Oneida Baptist Institute, I would more than likely be dead right now. Since the first day I came to Oneida I started growing as a Christian and as a person. I know I'm not perfect and that I make a lot of mistakes, but I have learned from my mistakes, and they have made me a stronger person."

"My name is 'Benny' and I am from Ethiopia. ... I have been at Oneida since the beginning of this academic year. What I like most about Oneida is the Friday ... praise time in chapel. ... I have by far

learned many things from the chapel services and going to church on Sundays. It gives me some ideas on how to deal with life, and I socialize better with other people. ... I have worked hard ... and have earned good grades. At the present time I am ranked ninth in the senior class.

"The single most important thing I have gained from OBI is that I have learned more about the Bible in the Bible class, chapel services and church. Now I can confidently say that I know more about the

Bible and will be able to give reasons for my beliefs to anybody who asks me. ... I feel I am perfectly ready for my future role in society."

"My name is 'Bob.' ... I came to Oneida during my seventh grade year. When I first came ... I hated it. I thought my parents didn't want me around, ... but that was not true. They left me here for my own good. The reason I have stayed so long is because of the friends I have made. I also like the way the teachers teach and the help they are willing to give me with my school work. ... When I came to Oneida my grades were low, so they put me in (tutoring lab) for one quarter.

... I went back to my old school, ... but my grades fell again, so I decided to come back to Oneida.

"The most important thing I have gained from being at Oneida is respect for others, myself and God. The daily chapel services have been very important to me. ... I can take time to talk with God, the Creator, and tell Him about my problems. He knows about all my problems anyway. ... I have made good friends here who know and trust me. Oneida has been a good experience for me."

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. www.oneidaschool.org

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## Did you attend camp at Clear Creek?

The week of June 12-19, 1941, brought 357 girls, age 9 to 16, to camp at Clear Creek Springs. Each group of eight girls had the leadership of a "group sister," and a "big sister" (usually a YWA girl) was responsible for two or three groups. Each dormitory had a house mother, and Mrs. L.C. Kelly was "camp mother."

Thirty-seven of the girls became Christians at the camp, and 65 dedicated their lives for Christian service. On Sunday afternoon, a G.A. coronation service recognized 52 girls, and Doris Ray of St. Matthews Baptist Church reached the highest rank of "queen regent."

State WMU Secretary Mary Nelle Lyne wrote, "Many Kentucky Baptists do not yet realize the wonderful evangelistic opportunities these summer camps give to the boys and girls of East Kentucky."

The July 9, 1942, issue of the Western Recorder carried a photograph of the annual boys' camp for that summer. State board of missions field worker W.L. Crumpler wrote of the week, "This was my first year to attend the Boys' Camp, so I did not know just what the attraction was. I can see now

why every boy who has ever gone wants to go back. Never have I had the privilege of being with a finer group of boys, and while they enjoyed the games, athletic events, and other such camp activities, there was a deep spiritual atmosphere that gives me great encouragement when they remember that this group is simply

a ten-year advance meeting of the General Assembly."

Boys from 50 towns brought enrollment to a total of 301 campers. Ninety-one of the boys were not Christians, but during the week 57 boys "gave their hearts to the Lord."

The summer camps are a significant part of Clear Creek's history. Many of the campers are now involved in Kentucky Baptist churches. One chapter of the 75th anniversary history of Clear Creek will focus on the camp and assembly days. I have heard from a few of the campers. Send me your summer camp story.

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

# PEOPLE

## Care Team ministry helps ex-convicts prepare for future

By Hillary Wicai  
Religion News Service

ST. LOUIS (RNS)—What do you get when you mix about half a dozen ex-convicts with a nursing home full of senior citizens?

It sounds like the sensational crime story of the week, but the combination actually produces an inspiring result called Care Team, a community re-entry ministry for ex-offenders.

Fifty-two-year-old Marsha Brock used to be a thief to support her drug habit. Now her full-time job is stealing a laugh, spreading good cheer and acting as an advocate for the elderly at Northview Village Nursing Center in St. Louis. She's on the Care Team.

"My life was made out of breaking the law. Basically I was just a crook," Brock said.

Brock served time in prison. Now she reads to Northview's elderly residents, runs to the store for them or just sits with them.

Lutheran Ministries Association, a St. Louis social services agency that runs the program, screens ex-offenders like Brock and recruits those who want to change their lives to be on the Care Team. They earn \$6.25 an hour and work 20 to 25 hours a week at the nursing home.

The seniors at Northview have love to give and lessons to teach.

"By (the ex-offenders) trying to get back into society by working with people who are less fortunate than they are, it gives them a sense of responsibility and peace," Northview resident Manford Pearson said.

And the team of five to seven members makes seniors like Anita



**CARE TEAM** Member Marsha Brock (left) talks with with Jessie Miller, a resident of the Northview Village Nursing Center in St. Louis. The Care Team is an innovative community re-entry ministry for drug and alcohol ex-offenders. The vast majority of participants go on to successfully enter the job market. (RNS photo by Hillary Wicai)

Hennings, who recently had a stroke, feel good. "They spend time with me. They read the Bible with me," Hennings said.

The team does the jobs a busy nursing staff does not have time to accomplish. These tasks include things that make getting through a day a little bit easier for seniors who can feel warehoused and forgotten.

Some might question putting ex-offenders in with a population of vulnerable senior citizens. But coordinators of the program say that when you put two hurting populations together, they give each other hope.

"Ex-offenders know what it's like to be rejected and senior citizens often feel like they've been rejected and neglected," said Vera Marcella Walker, Care Team director. "Care Team members and senior citizens, they know how to show love toward one another."

It was Walker's idea to begin the program, and Lutheran Ministries took a chance. "I think our fears often get in the way of what our judgment should be. I think we often see the church walking away from people rather than toward them," said Dick Tetzloff, executive director of Luthe-

ran Ministries.

After eight years the program has a proven track record. Not one of the 40 past and present team members has been in trouble with the law while on the carefully supervised team. Walker is even prouder that 97 percent of former team members have stayed out of trouble after leaving the team for other jobs.

And that's the point of the Care Team. While working at the nursing home, team members get job skills and build a resume complete with references, when no one else would give them the chance.

"No one would hire me when I told them I'd been incarcerated. Even though they'd look at my credentials and say you're suitable for this job," Care Team member Nathaniel Johnson said. Johnson served 15 years for murder and robbery. He was 21 when he committed the crimes.

When he reached his 40s, Johnson was about to return to crime, "just to get by," he said. But he discovered the Care Team. He said it saved his life.

"It gives you a sense of self-worth and value, that you have a place and you fit because you're interacting with people," Johnson said.

He and Brock both credit the seniors.

"No matter what's going on with the seniors, they say they're blessed," Brock said. "And I say, wow, I'm blessed also. It just changed me."

Brock's in college now. She said she knows she'll do well because the seniors and staff at Northview trusted her. "They allowed me to do good," Brock said. And the more good she does, she said, the better she feels.



**Coordinators of the program say that when you put two hurting populations together, they give each other hope.**

## Student says Exodus program helped overcome struggle with homosexuality

HANNIBAL, Mo. (ABP)—Ryan Black spent most of his teenage years feeling like an outsider.

Black, now a junior psychology major at Hannibal-LaGrange College in Missouri, said that at age 15 he began having feelings he classifies as "homosexual tendencies."

He eventually acted on those desires a couple of times in high school, he said. Black called those years difficult because he had low self-esteem and didn't feel like he fit in with the other guys.

He didn't talk about those feelings with any of his friends or family for fear he would be rejected. "There was no way I was going to let this out," he said. "I was really good at keeping things inside. I guess my biggest fear was that I wouldn't be accepted."

In high school, Black tried to find acceptance through sports. He participated in football, wrestling and track, but he said nothing filled the void in his life. He eventually came to believe he would always feel different.

"Since I didn't know Christ, and I wasn't raised in a Christian home, I pretty much accepted that this was the way things would be," he said.

Black said he believes some of those feelings were triggered by his strained relationship with his father. So Black sought

love in other places.

After graduating from high school, he attended a Christian youth camp with a group of friends from First Baptist Church of O'Fallon, Mo. There, he said, he realized his spiritual need and accepted Christ as his personal Savior.

The next day, while listening to a message focusing on "sin in people's lives," he decided he would have to abandon his homosexual desires.

"There it was right in the Bible, talking about how homosexuals 'will not inherit the kingdom of God,'" he said, referring to 1 Corinthians 6. "After I saw it, I wandered around for a while just crying. I was having one of the greatest and at the same time one of the worst experiences of my life."

Black said it wasn't easy to let go of what he had accepted as his identity. "There was a time when I didn't think there was any way these feelings were going to change."

For a while, he said, Black thought he would have to live a celibate lifestyle, keeping his homosexual feelings bottled up. That led to depression and contemplating suicide, he said. "It got to

the point where I didn't want to feel any more."

Realizing he needed help, Black attended a Promise Keepers rally in Dallas in 1995 and spotted a booth with a banner "Healing for Homosexuals."

He snatched a pamphlet from the edge of the table while walking past the booth. "I was so afraid someone was going to see me."

He later read the pamphlet, which talked about Exodus International, a non-profit, non-denominational organization that preaches that men and women can find their way out of homosexuality.

Some people find that message controversial, but Black, like many others who have gone through the program since 1976, testifies that it worked for him.

It would be months before Black worked up enough courage to call the organization. He then began attending Exodus meetings near his hometown of Lake St. Louis, Mo.

By attending weekly meetings, he said he was able to redefine his role as a Christian man. "The sessions focused on what it means to be a man of God rather than what society defines as a true man."



Black

# 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:

■ Wisdom for missionaries who serve as strategy facilitators in Tanzania: Vance Kirpatrick, Brad Veitch, Paul Hemline, Bill Eardensohn and Ed Giddens.

■ Missionary Annie Byrd and son Eric who will travel from Poland to Louisville April 17 for Eric's eye surgery. They will be in Kentucky through May 9.

■ Missionaries Johnny and Barbara Burnet as they serve at the International Baptist Church of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

■ The hundreds of people who live in shanties on the hillsides of Mwanza, Tanzania. Though many are nominally Christian or Muslim, they depend heavily on animism and witchcraft.

■ The ministry of a small Baptist fellowship in Rzeszow, Poland. Several families who were attending have become active in a religious cult. Missionaries ask prayer "for the fellowship as they seek to be strengthened in the Lord and to minister to the cult members."

■ East Indians and African-Americans to plant churches in Greater Boston.

■ Church planters Richard Henry and Vinnie Cappetta as they work toward the first public worship service for a new church in Framingham, Mass. The service is planned for Easter Sunday.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—Cherry Hill Church called **Travis Fox** of Beaver Dam as youth minister. **Chris Odle** is pastor.

■ **GHEENT**—Ghent Church celebrated its 200th anniversary April 1-2. Ghent Church was instrumental in starting Whites Run, Jordan, First Carrollton, Dallasburg and Warsaw churches in Kentucky and four churches in Indiana. **Tom Collier** is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Bethlehem and Green Hill churches presented the play "Heaven's Gates & Hell's Flames" March 26-28. Three thousand people viewed the play, and 143 decisions were made.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—Casky Church will host revival services April 16-20, Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., and 7 p.m. nightly. **Curtis McGehee** will be the evangelist. **Bob Morgan** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Immanuel Church will present "A Life of Praise" April 16 at 6 p.m. and April 19 at 6:30 p.m. The 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday service will feature **Jhan Moskowitz** for Jesus. Also, the church will host a Good Friday service at noon. For information, call (606) 266-3174.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethany Church will host a prayer and praise service April 15 at 7 p.m. The sanctuary choir and praise team will present "God With Us" April 16 at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. **Todd Robertson** is pastor.

Cloverleaf Church will present the musical drama "The Cross and Beyond" April 21 at 7 p.m. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Minors Lane Church will host revival services April 16-19. **David Liv-**

**ington** will be the evangelist. **Kevin Netherly** is pastor.

Ninth and O Church will present an Easter musical April 21-22 at 7 p.m.; sunrise service April 23 at 7:30 a.m. **Rodney Burnette** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will host FFH in concert April 27 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at Louisville area bookstores. **Les Hollon** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Buena Vista Church will host revival services April 20-23, 11 a.m. Sunday and 6:30 p.m. nightly. **Wyman Copass** will be the evangelist; **Fes Robertson** will be the music evangelist.

Walnut Memorial Church will present "Heaven Rejoices" April 14-16 at 6 p.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. weeknights. For information, call (270) 684-7234. **David Taylor** is music minister; **Odell Beauchamp** is pastor.

■ **PEMBROKE**—Pembroke Church called **Jack Studie** as pastor. Studie previously served at Sharon Church, Mayfield. Also, Pembroke area Methodist and Christian churches will present the musical "The Journey" at Pembroke Baptist April 21-22 at 7 p.m.

■ **PROVIDENCE**—First Church will host revival services April 16-19 at 6 p.m. Sunday and 7 p.m. weeknights. **Bob Martin** will be the evangelist.

■ **SCOTTSVILLE**—Scottsville Church will host revival services April 23-29 at 7 p.m. and April 25-27 at 12:05 p.m. **Jeff Eaton** will be the evangelist. For information, call (502) 237-3451.

■ **WHITESBURG**—First Church will present an Easter cantata, "Alpha and Omega," April 15-16 at 7 p.m. **Sherry Edwards** is music minister.

## West Kentucky churches host 'continuous revivals'

CLINTON—At least 19 churches in West Kentucky Baptist Association are participating in a "continuous revival," which started last month and will continue through early May.

More than half the churches in the association are hosting a revival meeting or special activity, and some activity will occur nearly every night, said Director of Missions Charles Blair.

Participating churches, along with the dates and speakers, are:

■ April 9-13 Hickman County tent revival crusade on U.S. 51 South, Lincoln Bingham.

■ April 9-13 Riceville Baptist Church, Donnie Smith.

■ April 9-14 New Bethel Baptist Church, Ronnie Stinson.

■ April 10-14 Mount Moriah Baptist Church, Mike Farmer.

■ April 16-19 First Baptist Church

of Hickman, Kenneth Basham.

■ April 16 First Baptist Church of Arlington, Heritage Quartet, 1:30 p.m.

■ April 16 Bethlehem Baptist Church, Heritage Quartet, 7 p.m.

■ April 16-20 Arlington First Baptist Church, Tim Allred.

■ April 16-21 Mississippi Baptist Church, Michael Funderburk.

■ April 21-23 Mount Carmel Baptist Church.

■ April 24-28 Crutchfield Baptist Church, Bob Copeland.

■ May 3-5 Oak Grove Baptist Church.

Churches that already have hosted revivals include Green Valley Missionary Baptist Church, New Hope Baptist Church, New Harmony Baptist Church, Sassafras Ridge Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Fulton, First Baptist Church of Clinton and Second Baptist Church of Clinton.



**CAMPBELLSVILLE ADDRESS** David Gushee (left), director of the Center for Christian Leadership at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., speaks with Campbellsville University professors Mark Medley and Walter Jackson following a Campbellsville convocation. Gushee discussed the role of Christian colleges, noting that some people advocate sending Christian students to public colleges. "I disagree. The fundamental task of a Christian college is to serve as an arm of Christ," Gushee said. "By being the Christian university we are, we are letting people grow in Christlikeness. It is the best thing for society." (Campbellsville photo by Crystal Anderson)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**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-conditioning. 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:** Full-time secretary with computer skills. Send resumé to: Trinity Baptist Church, 604 South 21st St., Paducah, KY 42003, or fax: (270) 442-1075.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church, Mt. Zion, Ill., seeks full-time music minister. Please send resumé to: FBC, PO Box 137, Mt. Zion, IL 62549, Attn: Scott Doughty.

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

**SEEKING:** Full-time director/minister for preschoolers/children at First Baptist Church in Madisonville, Ky. Responsibilities to include planning, promoting and evaluating the Christian education ministry of the church for children birth through the sixth grade. Please send resumé to: FBC Staff Development Committee, PO Box 607, Madisonville, KY 42431.

**SEEKING:** Church planter. Unique opportunity: Church starter needed to assist a team of sponsoring churches in a church plant near Richmond, Va. Should be a self-starter, team builder and excellent communicator. Key terms describing the new work are: innovative, seeker-sensitive, worship-based, contemporary, rural/suburban, growing population, strong resource base. Send or e-mail resumé with cover letter by April 28 to: Doug Frazier, church planting strategist, Dover Baptist Association, 1200 New York Ave., Glen Allen, VA 23060; e-mail: dfrazier@netzero.com.

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

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Middleton Baptist Church. We are located just off Highway 100 between Russellville and Franklin, Ky. Send resumé to: Doug Milliken, Middleton Baptist Church, 191 Middleton Circle, Franklin, KY 42134.

**SEEKING:** Full-time director/minister of youth and activities. Responsible for leading the church in developing a comprehensive program of youth Christian education and spiritual development. Lead in planning and conducting a program of activities for church members and other people. Please send resumé to: Staff Development Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 607, Madisonville, KY 42431.

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

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

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

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

## Largest Christian mega-store's aisles draw customers



**MEGA STORE** Rosemary Crowley shops for a Bible for her 10-year-old son at the new Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food Store in Silver Spring, Md. The 40,000-square-foot megastore is billed as the world's largest Christian store. (RNS photo)

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

SILVER SPRING, Md. (RNS)—We have a new candidate for the title "Six Flags Over Jesus."

The new Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food Store—with eight cash registers and 40,000 square feet of shopping space—is billed as the largest Christian bookstore in the world.

Sandwiched between a Target and a pet store, the store has more than quadrupled in size from the nearby location it left behind.

Since early March, shoppers have trickled into the store ahead of its official opening last week. Impressed by its size, they say they now find themselves having to resist the temptation of buying too many things.

Clyde Kinder, the store's general manager and a Christian retailer for 45 years, said traditional stores continue to fill a niche. He added, however, that the small but growing number of megastores like his have become the best way to meet the multifaceted needs of Christian consumers.

"I think that is the future of the Christian bookstore market," he said. "The smaller stores just cannot carry enough product to fill every need that the people have, and so in order to meet that demand and to meet that challenge you've got to go to the larger megastore."

Christian retailing experts confirm that Kinder's store is the biggest based

on square footage, far exceeding the size of the average Christian bookstore, which covers 3,550 square feet. They say only about 5 percent of Christian stores could be considered megastores.

"I don't know of another one that's larger than 40,000 square feet," said Bill Anderson, president of CBA, a Colorado Springs, Colo.-based organization of Christian retailers.

He said Christian stores—even ones that don't merit the "mega" prefix—are attempting to find ways to increase their inventory, sometimes stocking merchandise higher on their walls when they can't afford to expand their square footage.

Distinguishing itself from the nearby secular shopping establishments, the Potomac Adventist store has a life-size bronze statue in its entranceway that depicts Jesus washing the feet of His disciple Peter.

Inside, there's no question about its mission. Steps away from the multiple sets of automatic doors are books by popular Christian authors James Dobson, T.D. Jakes and Chuck Swindoll.

Aisles are categorized by Christian interest topics, from a plethora of Bibles to volumes focused on family life, spiritual growth and money management to books aimed at particular demographic groups—African-Americans, teens, mothers, fathers, singles.

Although affiliated with the Potomac Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the store provides

open accounts to local churches representing 23 other denominations. Kinder has found that non-Seventh-day Adventists far outnumber their Adventist customers.

In the music section, Christian recordings ranging from pop to country are on sale in an area accented with a contemporary video screen, 20 listening stations and two booths for singers to try out accompaniment tapes.

There's also a 200-seat auditorium in the back of the store that's being used for a weekly church service as well as meetings for local schools and pastors.

But not all the store's inventory is strictly Christian. About 47 percent of the store's sales are for food and health-related products. One-fifth of the sales floor is filled with about 12,000 food items, cookbooks, cooking supplies and natural health and beauty aids, reflecting the Seventh-day Adventist Church's focus on healthy living.

"Our motto is we care for your mind, body and soul and we think that the three portions of the person are all interrelated," said Kinder.

Sean Fowlds, associate editor of Christian Retailing magazine, said some customers might feel overwhelmed by the choices in a Christian megastore, but retailers who have gone this route seem to be successful.

"I honestly can't think of any example of anyone doing that and then regretting it and having to downsize," he said. "Once they build these large stores they tend to just grow from there."

**Even before it moved to its larger facility, the store was ranked No. 1 in sales. Last year sales reached about \$7.8 million. This year they are expected to exceed \$10 million.**

## Exhibit shows how Russian iconographer mixes faith & art

By Shelia Dancy  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Alexander Sokolov was 17 years old when he stumbled upon a crossroads for his love of art and Orthodox Christianity, his newly adopted religion: painting religious icons.

"When I first started making them, they were for me an image of another world, a spiritually rich world," Sokolov said. "When I began to paint icons I understood that painting sacred art is a method of building your soul."

Twenty-three years and hundreds of icons later, the passion still blazes, and his new exhibit at the new Russian Cultural Center in Washington bears testament to that fact.

"I love to do this," said Sokolov, now a veteran iconographer whose works command as much as \$5,000 and grace private homes and cathedrals in Japan, England and his native Russia. "It is wonderful to show the beauty of Christ, the beauty of Christianity."

Sokolov's exhibit of nearly a dozen icons—venerated images of Jesus, the Virgin Mary or saints—brings to Washington a religious art tradition that extends as far back as the 6th century.

Emperors and Orthodox church leaders in the 8th century tried to stop the use of icons in Orthodox worship fearing it bordered on idolatry, sparking a doctrinal debate—

the iconoclast controversy—that continued for the next 100 years. The matter was finally resolved in 843, when a synod convened by the Empress Theodora restored icons in Orthodox churches.

Iconmaking made its way to Russia in the 10th century, but fell victim to repression during the Soviet era. The government viewed icons as museum pieces, not venerated images.

"When I first started in this, iconography and religion was not prohibited, but it was repressed," said Sokolov, who parlayed the training he received in art restoration at Moscow Surikov Art School and Stroganov Art College into a career in iconography. "It was difficult to be an artist painting icons, it was difficult to make icons out in the open. I had to do it underground—no sale papers, no taxes."

Undaunted, Sokolov embarked upon a two-year apprenticeship with a master iconographer—a Russian monk—before striking out on his own.

"I did not want to be an artist outside of the church," Sokolov said. "It was too easy. I wanted the challenge of sacred art."

The art form requires discipline and patience, Sokolov said. Just preparing the wood canvasboard—which requires layers of linen, gesso and tempera paint—can take as long as 48 hours, he said. One icon can take as long as seven days to

complete.

"Yes, it can take a long time," conceded Sokolov, "but the end result is so beautiful."

Spiritual preparation before painting is just as important, he added.

"Silence is the right way—no television, no music," Sokolov said. "Iconmaking is a kind of spiritual service, so I must pray, and I try to dedicate my hands and my soul as an offering to God."

His images are lush, resplendent with vibrant blues and autumnal golds and reds. One icon in the Cultural Center exhibit shows a forlorn Madonna cradling Jesus Christ in her arms as she gazes into the distance. Peering inquisitively into her bronze face, Christ cups his mother's cheek with one hand in a frozen gesture of comfort.

"There is the opinion that icons must be cold, only serious—no passion, no emotion in the face," said Sokolov. "For me, that's impossible. I try to show mood, not with a smile or a frown, but with the whole piece—expression, color, everything. I want my work to be emotional."

Exhibitions of religious icons are rare, Sokolov said. Most iconmakers, himself included, are commissioned by churches or private individuals. But Sokolov said he believes icons should be shown to the public.

"I think it is very important to ex-



hibit because there are many people who will never come to church, never see icons in any other place except an exhibit," he said. "Very many people think iconography is something very old, medieval—they don't believe that sacred art is still alive."

**ICON** A religious icon of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, one of nearly a dozen featured in the Washington exhibit of Russian religious iconography by artist Alexander Sokolov. (RNS photo)

# BUILDING BLOCKS OF SERVICE

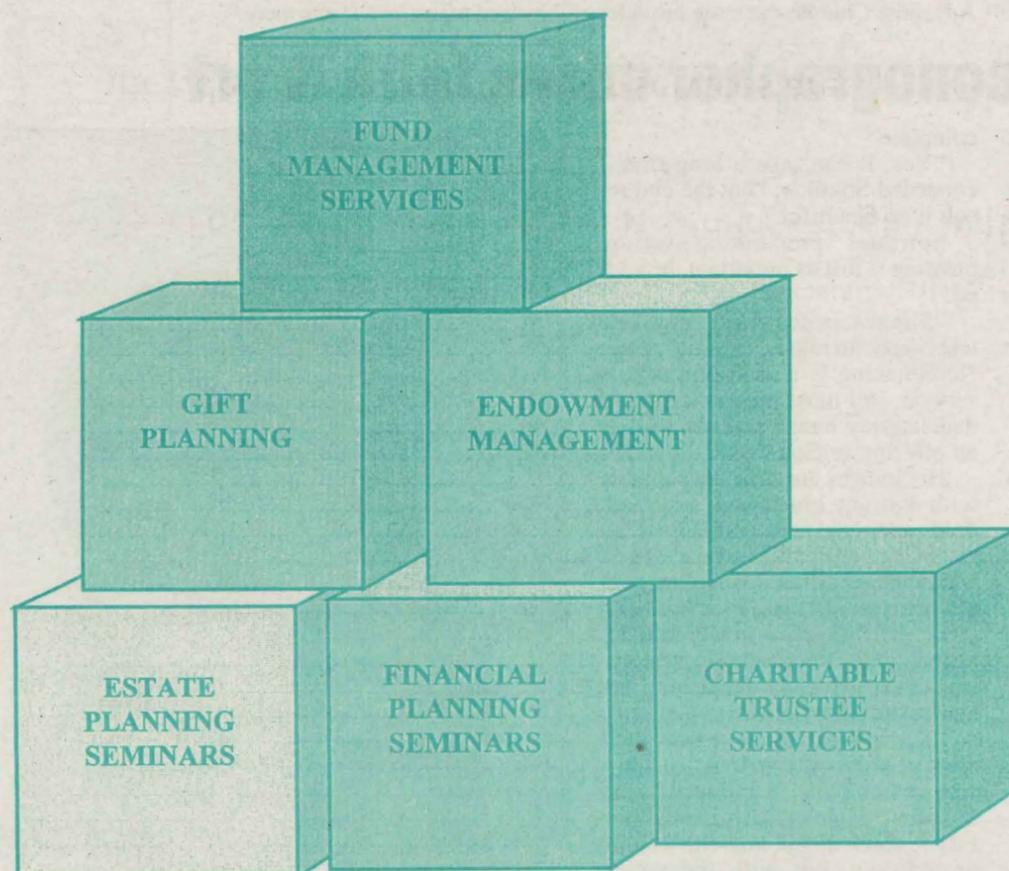


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