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FOR THE RECORD

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Media ministries require 'step of faith to sow the gospel'

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

MYRA—Tucked away in the southeastern corner of rural Pike County, Myra is far away from major media meccas. But Faith Baptist Church's experience indicates broadcasting is an effective way for Kentucky Baptists to spread the gospel regardless of the congregation's size.

Formerly a mission of First Baptist Church of Jenkins, Faith Church began in 1991 with 22 members. Since then the congregation has seen a membership increase of more than tenfold. Pastor Dave Hammond gives partial credit for the church's rapid growth to the

impact of radio and television.

Six years ago he started "Biblical Viewpoints," a one-hour Saturday morning radio show of teaching, testimonies, interviews and listener calls. In addition to the program broadcast over WKVG in Jenkins, the church airs tapes of its Sunday morning services over stations in Whitesburg and Pikeville.

Two years ago, Faith Church invested more than \$8,000 in two cameras to videotape its services. Last summer it added a half-hour segment on a station in Abingdon, Va., which reaches portions of five states.

"TV has been the big lick," Hammond said. "I think that's the best way to reach people. We have visitors every

week who say they watch the program. Plus it reaches shut-ins."

Media outreach not only has helped stimulate church growth, it has enlarged the congregation's ministry, he said. The church currently is expanding its sanctuary, recently started a food pantry ministry and hopes to open a Christian school next fall.

Faith Church's success shows how radio and television offer churches a vast, largely untapped potential, said Larry Brannin, media production associate for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

While the KBC hasn't done a media survey since 1997, the last time only 45 churches responded—less than 2 per-

cent of Kentucky Baptist churches.

Brannin noted that expense is a primary factor in launching a media ministry, with cameras and production equipment alone costing thousands of dollars. But if a church is committed to influencing people who aren't attending church, it will find a way, he said.

"Many times this is how you reach the younger generation," Brannin said. "Right now people in church who hold the wealth grew up on radio, so they don't think visually. Today we have a generation that is growing up on television and the Internet. They respond to visual stimulation."

This visual orientation can take a
□ See *Launching effective ...*, page 7

Deaf minister's outreach impacts Eastern Kentucky

By Brenda Smith
Kentucky Baptist Convention

ROWDY—Richie Noble is uniquely equipped to harvest some very special souls from the stony mountain soil of Eastern Kentucky.

As one of four children born to a coal miner from the region, he understands Appalachian culture. As a graduate of Boyce Bible College, he has the theological and practical training necessary to minister. And as a person deaf since birth, he knows firsthand the struggles of the approximately 1,500 deaf people who live in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky.

Noble, 33, serves with the recently formed Eastern Kentucky Regional Deaf Ministry sponsored by Pike, Enterprise and Three Forks Baptist associations. The purpose of the ministry is to identify, evangelize and disciple the deaf in the region so they can become autonomous Christians in their own culture. Noble's ministry as a regional deaf missionary stretches over 11 Appalachian counties.

"The Lord has put this all together. It couldn't have happened on our own energy," said Ray Cooper, director of missions for Three Forks Baptist Association. Cooper also serves as president of the ministry's board, which is comprised of all three directors of missions and one member each from the three associations.

In addition to support from the sponsoring associations, nearly half the ministry's support comes from Kentucky Baptist Cooperative Program funds, which are used to purchase Bibles and other study materials, supply transportation and pay Noble's salary.

"This money is used to show that all people, including deaf, need to know about Jesus and that
□ See *Deaf minister's ...*, page 8

Baptists respond as famine hits Ethiopia

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)—Southern Baptists have mobilized to help some of the 7.7 million people threatened by an emerging famine in southeastern Ethiopia.

And thanks to a God-inspired gift, workers were able to begin helping even before the crisis hit television screens in the United States.

Three years of drought have destroyed crops and devastated livestock in Ethiopia and six neighboring countries in the Horn of Africa. Regional conflicts are making the delivery of relief supplies difficult, and children and the weak have begun dying from malnutrition-related illnesses.

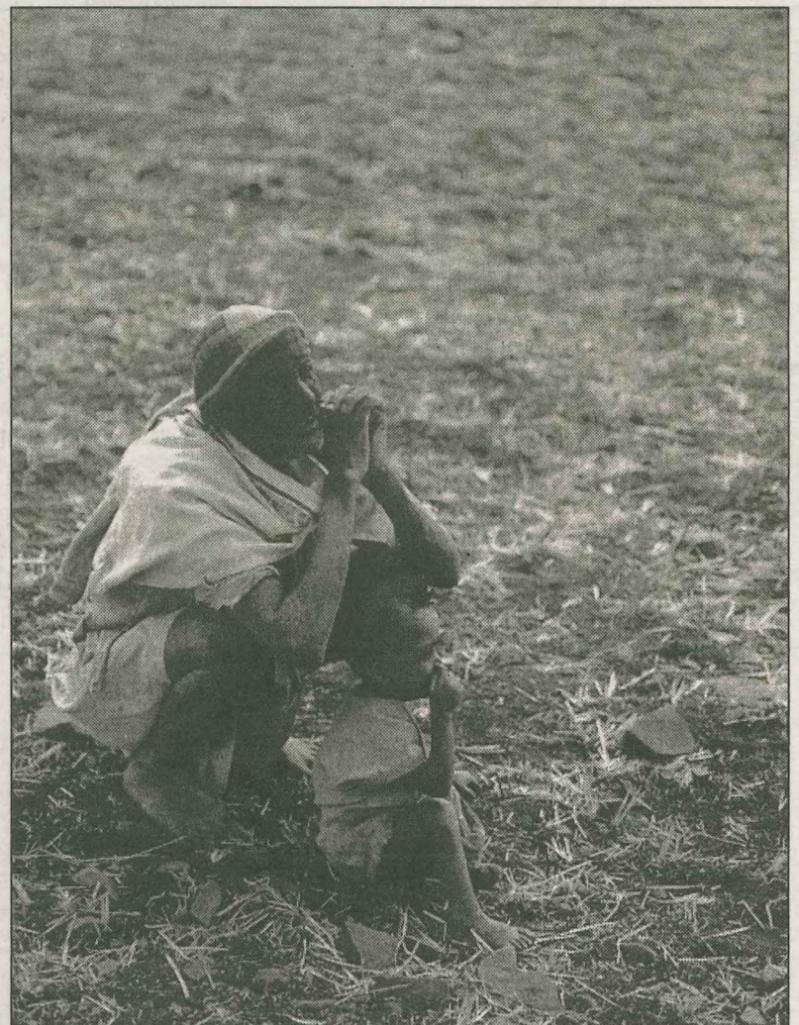
A 1984-85 famine in Ethiopia—which claimed 1 million lives—shocked the world with televised images of starving people. Now the United Nations estimates as many as 16 million people in seven countries are in danger. Governments are trying to deliver massive amounts of grain to the region, hoping a full-blown famine can be averted.

Southern Baptists are working with fellow Baptists and Great Commission Christians, as well as non-governmental organizations, to minister to people who might not be reached by the large-scale programs, said a missions strategist focusing on the region.

"We are seeking to find places where there are gaps that need to be filled in the relief efforts," said the missionary, who asked that his name be withheld for security reasons. "We want to mount a response with a more human face than the massive relief projects and put Southern Baptist money and help where it will benefit some of the more forgotten people."

For example, Southern Baptists will assist one NGO in a water development project that should help people weather future droughts, he said. They also are helping churches minister to refugees who are streaming into cities from the countryside and will help deliver grain to places where it's too dangerous for government workers to go.

"In some places, people have gone to the edge and there's nothing left," said the worker, who just returned from a survey trip in the area. "We're trying



HOPING FOR HELP Southern Baptists are seeking ways to make a long-term difference in the lives of people in the Horn of Africa who are threatened by an emerging famine. Three years of drought have destroyed crops and devastated livestock. (BP photo by Don Rutledge)

to make sure people aren't forced to eat their seed grain, so they'll be able to plant if the rains come."

Southern Baptist workers, who have been dealing with the problem for six months, were delighted when an unexpected gift for Ethiopian hunger relief was received.

"Over a month and a half ago, before this crisis even hit the press, some Baptists sent us \$7,000 for Ethiopian hunger relief," he said. "We've been able to feed these people on the streets and work through these churches because God moved in the hearts of some Southern Baptists even before the big

organizations started moving in.

"In some ways, that couple of loaves and couple of fish are being multiplied because they were there early. We're going to continue to do things that will multiply and make a long-term difference in the lives of people in the Horn of Africa."

Contributions to assist with the famine relief effort may be sent to: SBC International Mission Board, Hunger and Relief Fund—Ethiopia Famine Relief, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. All donations will go directly to Southern Baptist relief work in the region.

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, May 3

NAMB appoints first Internet missionary

By James Dotson
SBC North American Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Siam Rogers, a telecommunications specialist, has been appointed as the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's first missionary devoted entirely to Internet evangelism.

Rogers, a resident of Sugar Hill, Ga., has spent the past five years operating a ministry dedicated to sharing the gospel over the Internet. He will begin serving May 1 as a national missionary with responsibilities for helping coordinate all of NAMB's Internet evangelism efforts. Also appointed was his wife, Jennifer, who will serve in a family and church support role.

"Our historic entry into the cyber world with a missionary force is the recognition of the technology and computer community that has developed rapidly," said John Yarbrough, NAMB's vice president for evangelization. "Siam Rogers has been using this technology to share the gospel and train others to do so. He brings a passion for souls and a technical expertise to this task."

NAMB's Internet evangelism sites have grown to more than 140,000 visitors spending at least eight minutes on one of the gospel presentations each month. Sites include www.thegoodnews.org, www.thekristo.com and www.kidzplace.org. An average of 200

people each month make professions of faith in Christ and are referred to local churches for follow-up.

"Individuals are sharing the gospel in chat rooms, e-mailing tracts and gospel presentation to friends, work associates and family members," Yarbrough said, noting that he envisions on-line training and customizable tracts also made possible by the Internet. "We want to train, resource and encourage the use of this powerful communication tool to share the gospel."

Since 1995 Rogers has operated AccessJesus (www.accessjesus.org), a ministry with Internet evangelism goals similar to those of NAMB.

Rogers said chat rooms have been one of the most successful forms of Internet evangelism, allowing conversations that eventually lead to opportunities for witness. He also sets up and hosts prayer meetings and Bible studies through the chat rooms, which offer non-Christians a safe place to investigate Christianity.

He told of one young woman he led to faith in Christ after two extended discussions in one chat room. She currently is a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

In another case, he was leading a man through the "Eternal Life" gospel tract produced by NAMB when another man appeared and began asking questions. When Rogers later led the

first man through the "sinner's prayer" over the Internet, the prayer was typed back by both men—indicating both had accepted Christ.

"That's just the power of a particular chat room," Rogers said. "You just don't know who's out there, and you don't know where the people are."

Rogers said he also has been helping people develop evangelistic Web sites, an area in which NAMB already has a strong base.

"The power of a Web site," he said, "is that while we're sleeping the Lord is out there using that to reach people who are looking for answers." Rogers received one e-mail at 3:30 a.m. from a man in Indonesia who had accepted Christ after viewing his site.

Describing the potential of the Internet, Rogers cited statistics on the number of years it took popular electronic media to reach 50 million users. Radio took 38 years, television took 13 and the personal computer took 16. For the same number of users, it took the Internet only four years. And because it is so flexible, he said, the opportunities it provides the Christian church are only beginning.

Rogers comes to NAMB from a position as project manager for Intermedia Communications in Atlanta. He also is pursuing a master of divinity degree from Luther Rice Theological Seminary in Florida.

First graduation set for Seminary Wives Institute

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Twenty students will receive a Certificate of Ministry May 19 during Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's first Seminary Wives Institute graduation. The recognition will be part of the seminary's Boyce College graduation ceremonies.

Another eight SWI students have qualified for the Certificate of Ministry but have chosen to take more classes to receive the Advanced Certificate. A total of 175 students are in the program.

The Certificate of Ministry requires the completion of 13 classes, including Baptist beliefs, Old and New Testament survey and the Southern Baptist Convention. Electives include classes on public speaking, marriage, hospitality and women of influence. Most classes are held on Thursday nights, and childcare is provided. Professors and their wives serve as teachers.

SWI was the idea of Mary Mohler, wife of seminary President Al Mohler. She and another faculty wife, Virginia Walker, drew up plans for the program in the spring of 1997 and launched it six months later.

"The success of Seminary Wives Institute has been simply overwhelming," said Mrs. Mohler, who is serving as SWI's director. "We knew there was a need for a program like this, but had no idea how strong the response would be. SWI has become a recruiting draw for the seminary, as prospective wives visit our classes and learn about our program."

Volunteers needed for Chicago evangelism efforts

CHICAGO (BP)—For churches and individuals still seeking outlets for volunteer missions this summer, plenty of opportunities remain for involvement in Chicago's Strategic Focus Cities/Celebrate Jesus 2000 evangelism and church starting effort.

One of the biggest opportunities for one-day involvement is through SearchLight, the July 8 evangelistic emphasis encompassing numerous activities throughout the area, noted

volunteer coordinator Danny Hester. Thousands of volunteers are expected to participate.

For groups able to spend a week or so, one of the greatest needs currently is for 300 volunteers to help with a week of evangelistic sports camps in Lake County Baptist Association. Simultaneous sports camps are being sponsored in baseball, basketball, soccer and possibly football, Hester said.

Also still needed are groups willing

to help conduct vacation Bible schools or backyard Bible clubs in cooperation with local churches.

Other opportunities include block parties; drama, puppet, music or art presentations; and community surveys.

For more information about these and other opportunities related to Celebrate Jesus 2000/Strategic Focus Cities effort in Chicago, visit the www.chicago2000.net Internet site or call (800) 645-2412.

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Pastor seeks SBC post.** A Florida Baptist pastor has announced he will be nominated for first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention when it meets June 12-14 in Orlando. Brad Hoffman, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Tusawilla, Fla., announced his candidacy in a press release. The statement said he will be nominated by Richard Behrers, pastor of First Baptist Church in Largo, Fla., and Alan Berry, minister of music and youth at Catawba Springs Baptist Church in Brewton, Ala. Hoffman's church is one of 17 model "refugee" churches for Antioch Affection Ministries, a program for terminated ministers.

■ **Belmont staffer, family die.** The director of Belmont University's institutional research department and four members of his family were killed April 21 when his private plane crashed in Virginia. William McCulley, 35; his wife Cynthia, 32; their two children, Ryan, 4, and Megan, 20 months;

and Mrs. McCulley's father, Ira Brown Walden, 65, died in the crash. McCulley had joined the Tennessee Baptist school's administration last fall. He previously worked with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

■ **BJCPA fills development post.** Todd Heifner, director of endowment and capital funds at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., since 1995, has been named director of development for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Heifner began his new position May 1. Brent Walker, BJCPA executive director, said Heifner also will with BJCPA Endowment President James Dunn to "build an endowment that will ensure the BJC's financial viability into the next century." Heifner, who served as a BJCPA intern in 1989, was named to the agency's board of directors last year.

■ **CP theme song earns award.** The theme song for the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program's Partners in

the Harvest campaign, "I Will Follow Christ," won a Dove Award for inspirational recorded song of the year. Written by Christian recording artist Clay Crosse, a member of First Baptist Church of Collierville, Tenn., the song and video have been used to promote the Cooperative Program throughout the SBC. The "I Will Follow Christ" music video, featuring performances by Crosse, Bob Carlisle and BeBe Winans, also has been honored with a 2000 Telly Award.

■ **Georgia paper cuts frequency.** The Georgia Baptist Christian Index, Southern Baptists' oldest denominational newspaper, has announced it will cut back from a weekly schedule to every other week later this year. Editor William Neal cited rising postal costs as a major factor in the decision for the publication founded in 1822. The change will leave the Western Recorder, founded in 1826, as Southern Baptists' oldest weekly state paper.



Georgetown shifts budget funds to pursue long-term goals

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Budget cuts, reallocations prompt staff cuts

GEORGETOWN—A long-term initiative approved by Georgetown College trustees eventually could signal changes in the college's relationship with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Georgetown President Bill Crouch said trustees endorsed a proposal for the college to begin a seven-year process to pursue Phi Beta Kappa standards.

In a related development, Crouch said trustees "basically shifted \$1 million from the administration of the college to the academic side of the college" in an effort to move toward PBK priorities.

Crouch said internal reallocations required "substantial cuts in programs, travel and personnel," with nine administrative positions eliminated or restructured. Part of the reallocation will help fund a 6 percent salary increase for faculty members as part of a five-year plan to upgrade faculty salaries.

"We've got to be much more efficient in how we operate the institution," Crouch explained. "The administration is going to have to learn how to do as much or more with less."

Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest undergraduate honors society, was founded in 1776. Designed to foster academic excellence, PBK has grown to include 255 chapters and more than 500,000 members.

Crouch said the society's membership requirements include 10 broad categories ranging from academic programs and library holdings to faculty qualifications and trustee selection.

Kentucky Baptist Convention messengers currently fill vacancies each year on Georgetown's 43-member board of trustees in accordance with guidelines dating to 1941. The relationship between the college and state convention is spelled out in a covenant agreement adopted in 1987.

Crouch said pursuing Phi Beta Kappa status could involve a request to alter the school's trustee selection process, perhaps allowing the college to name up to 25 percent of its trustees.

Bill Mackey, KBC executive director, noted that any change in the trustee selection process would require an amendment to the covenant agreement.

Budget cuts, coupled with budget reallocations of approximately \$1 million, have prompted Georgetown College officials to eliminate seven administrative positions and restructure two others as part of next year's budget.

Georgetown's proposed 2001-2002 budget of \$30.8 million is a decrease of \$620,000 from the school's current budget, according to Frank Mason, Georgetown's vice president and chief financial officer.

College officials also are restructuring approximately \$18 million in debt, including several million dollars for a new library facility completed in 1998.

Michael Dawahare, director of Georgetown's office of college communications, described the changes as part of "a very good, very strong budget."

He said the budget changes and debt restructuring will help the school "anticipate a very good year next year."

Among the administrative positions affected by budget cuts and reallocations, Dawahare said four of the positions eliminated were vacant and two others will continue to be partial-

ly funded.

One of the three staffed positions eliminated was held by Steve Cook, director of church and alumni affairs. Cook, a 1973 graduate of Georgetown, had served on staff 25 years. He also is a bivocational pastor, serving North Fork Baptist Church in Switzer.

"It's not without some pain and mixed feelings that I see my tenure coming to an end" at Georgetown, Cook said. Citing the opportunity for new ministry options as he leaves Georgetown, Cook added, "I certainly choose to look back on a lot of wonderful memories."

Also affected was funding for the school's dean of the chapel. Dwight Moody, who has served in that position since it was established in 1997, also hosts "The Meetinghouse," a one-hour radio program about religion in America. Future funding for Moody's position will be shared by Georgetown and The Meetinghouse.

"The creation of the office of the dean of the chapel three years ago was a major step forward for the college," Moody said. "The college is going to maintain that commitment and not back away from it."

"The Meetinghouse has incorpo-

rated and is expanding operations," he added. "I'm going to be working both for the college and The Meetinghouse in the coming year."

Dawahare declined to name the other positions affected, noting that some individuals may be offered other positions at Georgetown.

"We have over 400 employees," Dawahare said. "It is all about organization and how to utilize limited resources and best structure the organization."

"The institution is going to make every effort to assist these individuals in their transition," he added. "As an institution, we feel it is necessary to help these people in any way we can."

Dawahare noted that other proposed changes, including pursuing Phi Beta Kappa standards, are "not a done deal."

"The driving force is to enhance the academic programs at Georgetown but to do it without abandoning our Christian foundation," Dawahare explained. He said part of the motivation for proposed changes "is to ensure the continued growth and prosperity of the institution as we compete in a changing market of higher education."

That involves a two-thirds majority vote both by Georgetown trustees and convention messengers.

Noting that the current covenant agreement "has been agreed to by the trustees and the state convention," Mackey said, "We are satisfied with the covenant agreement at this point."

"I think excellence is always a worthy goal," Mackey added, "and I hope it would enhance the primary purpose set forth in the covenant agreement to advance the kingdom of God in Christian higher education."

According to Crouch, "If we have to choose between being Phi Beta Kappa and Baptists, we're going to be Baptists. We see this as a no-lose situation. Seven years from now, even if we don't get Phi Beta Kappa status, we're going to be a lot better institution."

Crouch said one of the greatest challenges in achieving PBK status is the

organization's view that a fully Christian faculty is not sufficiently diverse.

Calling Georgetown's goal "a message against secularism," Crouch cited a desire to "force the issue about this Christian faculty situation."

"We not only have to meet every Phi Beta Kappa requirement; we have to exceed it because we're going to try to get Phi Beta Kappa to recognize that we can exceed all their expectations and do it with a Christian faculty."

"All we need to do is work with Kentucky Baptists to figure out a way to change the trustee selection process to satisfy the Phi Beta Kappa people," Crouch added. "I think Kentucky Baptists will want to help us because we're putting a stake in the ground and saying we won't give up our commitment to Baptist Christian higher education."

Emphasizing that Georgetown officials do not want to loosen ties to the

state convention, Crouch said, "If this does anything, it will tie us closer to Baptists and to Christians because of what we're going to attempt to do."

"I'm firmly convinced that an institution that does not have a denominational affiliation to serve as a spiritual conscience always leans toward secularism," he added. "I very much want denominational affiliation. We've got to have that to keep us anchored."

Mackey said he hopes any proposed changes will involve "discussion with appropriate representation from both entities so that mutually agreed upon proposals and decisions could be brought with thorough understanding of rationales and directions."

Citing the "long history of working together" between Georgetown and the KBC, Mackey added, "I think Kentucky Baptists want to maintain a strong working relationship."

"If we have to choose between being Phi Beta Kappa and Baptists, we're going to be Baptists."

Georgetown College President Bill Crouch

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **KBHC names vice president.** Tom Townsend has been named vice president for development and communications of the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Townsend, who joined the KBHC staff May 1, previously directed development and public relations for the Florida Baptist Children's Homes. A graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Townsend is a former pastor of Pond Run Baptist Church in Echols as well as churches in Tennessee and Florida.

■ **Withers named BCA officer.** Denise Withers of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's communications/media department was elected program vice president-elect of the Baptist Communicators Association, a professional

organization for Baptist communications professionals. The BCA's annual meeting will be held in Louisville in 2002.

■ **Gala honors Sherman.** Mozelle Clark Sherman will be honored May 9 with a gala celebration at Walnut Street Baptist Church and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. The event, sponsored by the seminary's school of church music and worship, will honor Sherman for 50 years of teaching and directing. Sherman, director of Southern's church music drama theater, has taught at Southern since 1984. The night will begin with a 4:15 fellowship and 5 p.m. dinner at Walnut Street Church. A 7:15 p.m. concert will be held in Southern's Alumni Chapel. For more information, call (502) 897-4115.

■ **Program honors Landgrave.** Phillip Landgrave will lead a musical program of praise and witness May 12 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Alumni Chapel. The 7:30 p.m. program will honor Landgrave who will retire this summer after 35 years on the faculty of Southern's school of church music and worship. The program will feature a 60-voice reunion seminary vocal ensemble and the Landgrave Family Singers performing musical selections written by Landgrave. For more information, call (502) 897-4707.

■ **Campus revival impacts teens.** Campbellsville University's spring revival attracted more than 300 youth from across Kentucky. Buster Soaries, senior pastor of

First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, N.J., was the featured speaker. The event offered junior and senior high school students the opportunity to participate in area service projects and revival services. Campus minister Ed Pavy said there were 50 public decisions during the week, including 11 professions of faith in Christ.

■ **Walker earns national award.** Ken Walker, a state correspondent for the Western Recorder, recently was honored with a national writing award. Walker, who has written more than 1,200 articles for publication, received the 2000 Pacesetter Award at the Mount Hermon Christian Writers' Conference, one of the nation's largest annual conferences for Christian writers.

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Proud to be a Baptist

I have never been more proud to call myself a Southern Baptist and a Southern Seminary alumnus than I am today.

I am proud to be a Southern Baptist because we believe in the Great Commission. If there had been another way to God other than through the death of Christ, a loving heavenly Father would have spared His beloved Son. We are an evangelical body who truly believes anyone who rejects Christ as Savior is without eternal hope.

I also am proud to be an alumnus of Southern Seminary because of the courageous stance for the truth by President Al Mohler. The gospel of the New Testament is salvation by grace through Christ alone. We are not denying that Catholics are Christian but as we explore the New Testament concept of salvation we cannot deny that there is a major difference between Catholic and Baptist doctrine concerning how someone receives the gospel.

I commend President Mohler for his convictions and the strength of character to boldly defend our need as Southern Baptists to stand for the Word of God and proclaim the Great Commission.

*Jim Stanhope
Corbin*

Jesus a true Baptist

There is a need for true Baptists to stand. I do not like non-Baptist statements that are being printed in the Western Recorder. This Baptist believes that Jesus was a Baptist in faith and practice.

If you are not in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message, then what are you? Before I was appointed

as a missionary I received a phone call and the question presented to me was: "Are you really a Southern Baptist?"

My answer was simply this: "God the Holy Spirit brought me into the fellowship of the Southern Baptist church where I am a member. He brought me into the unity of that body in faith and practice. Jesus was in unity with His Father and the Holy Spirit when He walked 60 miles to be baptized by a Baptist preacher. You cannot argue against the facts. God sent John. He was given the name "the Baptist" by God.

In the April 11 issue of the Western Recorder, a front-page article promoted that we do away with all our doctrinal beliefs (except our belief in Jesus). We are sanctified in truth. Baptists historically have stood for truth and I believe it is time you stop attacking Al Mohler for his Baptist position in faith and practice. At least he is a true Baptist.

Baptists will face the same problem in Kentucky that happened many years ago. They accepted a man who deceived them. His name was Alexander Campbell. Please make a decision. Are you a Baptist in faith and practice? If you are not, be honest and admit that you are not.

I suppose that a paper in the name of good journalism will report different viewpoints. I only represent what I believe. That which we believe should be in agreement with the verbally inspired Word of God.

*Ken Roberts
Crab Orchard*

A spirit of healing

As a footnote to the topic of labeling the Catholic faith a "false gospel," please let me add this.

I recently spent a week in a Catholic hospital, having been transferred there from a Baptist hospital, because

my cardiologist was there.

Soon after arrival there, we were visited by the chaplain who helped us in updating our living will and then he prayed with us. I told him at the time that I would like to have a chat with him.

Toward the end of the week I felt the need to call him and he came for the chat. I explained to him that I was a graduate of this institution from whence came this troubling statement about Catholicism.

I wanted to assure him that in no way did I identify with the substance nor the sentiment of this statement. I tried to assure him that a host of Baptists, even most Baptists, do not agree with this arrogant view of Catholicism as a false gospel.

In a sense, I guess I was trying to apologize. I just felt I needed to do this not for him, but for myself. After the conversation in which we shared similar thoughts and feelings, we had prayer together. I had met a brother and a soul mate and we were one in Christ. He prayed for my healing and well-being, even using the sign of the cross. I was not offended.

As I left this Catholic hospital I was experiencing a healing of my body, but just as important I felt a healing spirit between the two of us and our Lord.

*Milton Murphey
Williamsburg*

Words of affirmation

The article in the April 4 issue of the Western Recorder concerning the Emmaus Walk left me so irritated and upset that I felt bound to respond with a letter. However, after reading Ken Powell's letter in the April 18 issue I realized that there was no way I could improve upon what Ken so capably stated. I therefore wish only to add that I second his comments completely.

Well done, Ken.

*Steve Bland
Cecilia*

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Cooperative Program celebration

On April 12 the Kentucky Baptist staff celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Cooperative Program. In addition to enjoying special music and an anniversary video, staff members shared touching testimonies about what the Cooperative Program means to them.

Many churches also have had Cooperative Program anniversary celebrations in recent weeks. I was privileged to speak at Trinity Baptist Church in Hopkinsville as part of a celebration with a big cake and a weekend focus on missions. This anniversary year offers a wonderful time to celebrate the Cooperative Program as a gift from God for effective and balanced missions support.

I am one who is especially grateful for the Cooperative Program because of the many ways it has impacted my life and the Ministry. Without the funding of the Cooperative Program, my college and seminary

education would have been out of reach financially. In addition, my vision for missions has been influenced in part by the Cooperative Program's emphasis on missions.

The Cooperative Program also has provided strong mentors for me as KBC staff members (whose positions were funded by the Cooperative Program) helped and encouraged me when I was a young pastor in Eastern Kentucky. This is why I value what the staff can mean to pastors, lay leaders and churches today.

I've also been privileged to see how the Cooperative Program has enabled missionaries to build bridges to unreached cultural groups. It has been a joy to have the opportunity to walk across those bridges and become involved in international missions as a volunteer.

An important way in which Kentucky Baptists can celebrate this anniversary is through Operation Coop-

eration. This statewide blood drive set for Sept. 10-23 provides us with a way to celebrate by working cooperatively to give an important birthday gift to our communities. Nothing quite like it has ever been done in Kentucky and I urge every church to participate in showing Christ's love in this dramatic way.

More than 30 sites already have been identified. Local committees already are beginning work to carry out the blood drives and promotional fun runs designed to attract attention to the work of Kentucky Baptist churches.

You can find out more about Operation Cooperation by checking out our KBC Web site. Set your browser to www.kybaptist.org and click on the Operation Cooperation logo. You also can find out more by calling our office at (502) 254-4731 or toll-free at (888) 254-5713. Each of the local committees needs volunteers to be helpers, blood donors and fun run participants. The goal is to have every church participate by having at least one prayer warrior, one blood donor and one fun run participant.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Take a risk: Try tithing & trust God to bless you

By Doug Strader

Last month in this column I wrote about the joy of giving. I must admit that in my early adult years, I did not experience the joy of giving because I was giving more from a sense

of duty rather than from a sense of joy. It was not until I began to give more than a tithe (10 percent) that I began to experience joy in giving. Joy came when I gave more than a tithe, not less than a tithe.

I am a part of the "Builder" generation, and in my early years of church life my pastors did much more preaching about tithing and giving than most pastors today.

In my formative years of growing up in a Baptist church, Baptist Training Union (Discipleship Training) played a big part in my development as a Christian. Tithing was a frequent subject in the BTU material. I frequently was confronted with the teachings of the Bible related to our possessions and the responsibility to be a faithful steward by giving a tithe to the Lord's work.

My assessment of the church today is that many of us are not challenged very much about our financial stewardship responsibilities. Tithing is not a major part of the Christian education program in many churches. As a result, many mainline denomination churches, including Southern Baptists, are struggling to fund their ministries in today's bustling economy.

In a recent survey by Barna Research, several interesting facts were discovered:

■ In 1999 more than 80 percent of non-profits gave money to a non-profit entity during the year.

■ Fewer than one of 10 born-again believers gave 10 percent to their church.

■ Eight percent of those who made \$20,000 or less tithed.

■ Five percent of those who made between \$20,000 and \$39,999 tithed.

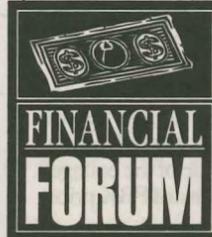
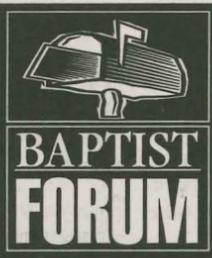
■ Four percent of those who made between \$40,000 and \$59,999 tithed.

■ Two percent of those who made between \$60,000 and \$74,999 tithed.

■ One percent of those who made between \$75,000 and \$99,999 tithed.

Could these statistics shed some light on the financial difficulties of today's church? If you do not already tithe, take a risk. Begin to prayerfully tithe and trust God to bless.

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



Should Christian couples seek advice from a non-Christian?

Q: Should Christian couples seek help from counselors who are not Christians?

Some Christians feel more comfortable going to a marriage counselor who shares their faith. They believe a Christian professional will be more likely to respect their values and use biblical principles in therapy. Many couples believe it will be easier to trust their counselor and be themselves with another Christian who shares their beliefs.

However, any good therapist, whether Christian or not, should be respectful of the clients' values and religious faith. Professional counselors also should be trustworthy and should be quite capable of promoting an environment in which clients feel comfortable and at ease. Many couples have found help from non-Christian therapists who embody these qualities.

Ultimately each couple should seek help from someone in whom they have confidence. For couples who feel more comfortable seeking help from another Christian, doing so might be best. However, they should not assume that a non-Christian will be unable to help.

Of course, it always is essential that the couple choose a counselor who is qualified through proper training and experience to help couples who are struggling with marriage issues.—Susan Howell

Q: Should I let my children read the "Harry Potter" books?

J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" books continue to top best-seller lists. Despite the fact that the books are helping many children discover the joy of reading, many Christian parents are concerned because the main characters are witches and wizards. The Bible, of course, speaks against witchcraft. Popular or not, should our children be reading these books? Will they influence our children for evil?

Although I'm not convinced the potions, spells and magic of witches and wizards possess any real power, wizardry and witchcraft do pose a problem because they represent a belief system that is incompatible with Christianity. As such, involvement constitutes a form of idolatry.

We should be constantly alert for such influences in our own lives, as well as the lives of our children. However, I do not detect that in the Harry Potter books—at least not yet. I experienced the stories as typical of the make-believe fun and fantasy that characterizes a majority of children's literature. Walter R. Brook's "Freddy the Pig" books I enjoyed as a boy featured a pig that could talk, write poems, play football, solve crimes and even perform magic. Most children know how to enjoy these kinds of stories as they gradually grow in their ability to distinguish between fantasy and reality.

As you evaluate the Harry Potter books:

- Read the books yourself. Parents need good awareness and firsthand information about anything that proves so popular with children.

- Consider limiting the books to older readers (grades 4 and up). Young children may find the stories frightening.

- Monitor the progression of the books. Rowling has gone on record as saying the books gradually will become darker. Who knows what that means, but it bears watching.

If you remain fearful that the Harry Potter books will open your child to dark influences, then by all means find something else for your child to read.—David Garrard

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.



Take time to honor senior adults & families

Southern Baptists' denominational calendar is packed with numerous worthy emphases ranging from religious liberty and the sanctity of life to racial reconciliation and international missions. While each focus resonates with certain congregations, many other churches fail to even mention particular calendar highlights.

Among all the needs and priorities competing for each church's attention, two special emphases set for next week deserve careful consideration and celebration by every Kentucky Baptist congregation.

The first is Senior Adult Sunday scheduled for May 7. The other is Christian Home Week which begins May 7 and culminates the following Sunday on Mother's Day.

In a society wracked by domestic violence, broken homes, decaying morals and questionable role models, surely the local church is the place to celebrate the sanctity of family life and the vital contributions of faithful, God-fearing senior adults.

Even with the growth of senior adult ministries in Southern Baptist life, we tend to not fully appreciate those who have laid the foundations for the ministries, resources and freedom we enjoy today. It's easy to take senior adults' commitment for granted and never pause to express our thanks.

The same is true in society at large where many senior adults are treated as second-class citizens. They sometimes are pushed aside and ignored rather than honored and respected. By contrast, many societies around the globe place special emphasis on the wisdom and knowledge of older individuals gained only through decades of personal experience.

Many senior adults are quite active and healthy and have years of productive contributions they can make to their churches, families and communities. And even those who do face crises of health, finances or other obstacles deserve our support and encouragement.

How can local congregations respond on Senior Adult Sunday? Options range from inviting older

members to share testimonies or special music during morning worship to hosting a luncheon in their honor.

On the state convention level, Kentucky Baptists are in the midst of offering Senior Adult Celebrations across the state. Celebrations last week in Owensboro and Hopkinsville attracted several hundred participants. Future events will be held May 11 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, May 16 at First Baptist Church of Prestonsburg and May 18 at Campbellsville University.

Whether churches help facilitate their senior adults' involvement in such events or find other ways to honor them, the key is to say thanks to those who have invested decades of service in God's kingdom.

Remember the words of Leviticus 19:32, "You shall rise up before the grayheaded and honor the aged and you shall revere your God; I am the Lord." Even as congregations focus time and energy on Generation X and contemporary worship and other cutting-edge priorities, God reminds us of the importance of honoring those who have come before us.

What about on the family front? Christian Home Week is an excellent time for church leaders to evaluate their effectiveness in reaching, teaching and empowering today's families.

In a world where Christians continually lament the decline of the strong, stable, traditional family, churches must provide quality resources to help families survive and thrive. Whether it's hosting a marriage enrichment retreat, providing parenting classes or offering a monthly "Parents' Night Out" childcare program, local congregations can be a valuable link in helping families grow stronger in a positive Christian context.

Families today deserve to be reminded of the timeless words of Joshua 24:15, "Choose you this day whom you will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The church of the 21st century should be the starting point to help families make the right choice both for their sake and the sake of future generations. This Sunday is a great time to start.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Christian camping in the new millennium

By Rusty Ellison

"Now glory be to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May He be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

As Kentucky Baptists enter the new millennium, the need has never been greater for Christ-centered camp and conference centers.

We know from experience and studies that God chooses to move in the lives of adults and students when they get away from the "business" that so clutters our lives and gets in the way of our capacity to remain intimate with Him.

Let's face it, we run harder, faster and often longer than ever before. We connect with cell phones, laptops, e-mail, faxes—you name it. We are "in touch" most of our waking hours—in touch with everything and everyone except the Father who created us.

We need to "get away." Hopefully

Cedarmore, Jonathan Creek and other Christian camps can help facilitate the working of God in the lives of those who make Christian camp experiences a personal priority.

Statistics from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board support the need for retreats and camping. Nearly half the spiritual decisions students make for Jesus, either salvation or life direction into vocational ministry, are made in camp and retreat settings.

Here in Kentucky, it was only three years ago that the status of Cedarmore was in question: Would Kentucky Baptists keep it or sell it? Now, as we move closer to our summer camp season for 2000, Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore will serve more than 5,200 youth, and hundreds more in our children's camp ministries. How does this compare with where we were? In the summer of 1997 we served fewer than 2,700 youth and children so we have doubled the numbers of students we serve in three years. And adults are coming in record numbers as well.

Where are we headed? Our mission at Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore is "to

provide an environment in which all our guests can come to know Christ or more fully experience Him."

I see the continued success of our student camping programs. I see hundreds of students coming to our summer camps, coming to know Christ, understanding His call to missions and making life-changing decisions for Him.

I see expanded programs. I see outdoor/environmental education programs all-year round at Cedarmore that will bring children and youth face to face with the glory of God's creation. We have a virtual laboratory on our vast property there. I see sports camps that will be developed not for the sole purpose of sports, but as another means of reaching students for Jesus.

Will Christian camping thrive in this new millennium? It will if we boldly seize the opportunity that God is giving us. If we step up and take the risks involved, God will be glorified "infinitely more than we could ever ask or hope." I believe it with all my heart. I'm willing to invest my life in such an endeavor. There's a generation screaming to be reached. Will you do your part?

Rusty Ellison is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies



Willow Creek relies on low-tech word-of-mouth approach

"People tend to go to church when they're invited by someone else."

Steve Bell, executive vice president of Willow Creek Association

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

CHICAGO (ABP)—Communications strategy has played a key role in the rapid growth of Willow Creek Community Church, yet the church never has advertised in a newspaper or on radio or television, a church official told religious communicators.

The only advertising Willow Creek has done in the last 25 years has been by word of mouth, said Steve Bell, executive vice president of Willow Creek Association, the educational arm of the non-denominational church in suburban Chicago.

"People tend to go to church when they're invited by someone else," he explained.

Bell addressed about 50 participants during the recent Religion Communicators Congress 2000 in Chicago. Nearly 100 Southern Baptists were among the 1,200 conference participants. The Willow Creek conference was a daylong option that included a tour of the church's 145-acre campus in South Barrington, Ill.

Rather than relying on secular marketing strategies such as print and broadcast advertising, Willow Creek determined from its inception to focus on how it communicated the mes-

sage of the gospel itself, Bell said.

Willow Creek was founded with "a commitment to say we must communicate the everlasting truths of Scripture in such a way that people can get it, ... to communicate truth in a way people know what you're talking about," he said.

The church has become known worldwide for its "seeker-sensitive" worship services, its use of drama and contemporary music in worship—and for its success at reaching people who previously were unchurched.

Attendance at Willow Creek's four weekend services now pushes 20,000, with up to 6,000 returning for mid-week services geared for core members. The church baptizes more than 800 people a year, even though baptism services are held only twice a year.

A desire to advertise only by word of mouth is one of three organizational concepts the church has drawn on from its beginning 25 years ago, Bell said. The other concepts are a mandate to be culturally relevant in communicating the message of the gospel and a commitment to do everything with excellence.

When Willow Creek began in 1975 with services held in a movie theater and led by a recent college

graduate, "not too many people took it seriously," Bell explained. The church was spawned from the youth ministry of South Park Church in Chicago.

But after the church began to grow rapidly, its innovative style came to the world's attention through an interview of Pastor Bill Hybels with Peter Jennings on ABC-TV and a feature article in *Time* magazine.

One of the lessons learned from Willow Creek's unexpected success is that "many times a fresh movement of the Spirit of God happens with young people because they simply don't know it can't be done," Bell suggested.

Yet the church that might have been voted least likely to succeed in 1975 is perhaps the nation's most-watched and most-emulated Protestant congregation today.

The success of Willow Creek Church spawned so many inquiries from other churches that Willow Creek Association was formed in 1992 to help tell the church's story through conferences and other special events.

The association now includes 5,240 member churches from 90 denominations, Bell said. Member churches do not formally unite with Willow Creek

but sign on to receive information and updates and purchase literature and products. For example, dramatic sketches written and first performed at Willow Creek have become staples of contemporary worship services in many Baptist churches.

The mission of Willow Creek Association is to "help churches turn irreligious people into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ."

Although the church still does no advertising—and only last year developed its first general brochure—the association does market the church's resources and conferences. Last year, the association trained 76,000 church leaders worldwide through its conferences.

A primary message Willow Creek Association imparts through its conferences comes out of the communications philosophy behind Willow Creek Church from its inception.

"At its core, the church is about community," Bell said. "We have made an all-out, full-scale press to become a church of small groups."

It is in these personal, one-on-one and small-group encounters that the gospel is best presented and best received, he said. Communication, in this sense, is "a very focused evangelistic effort."

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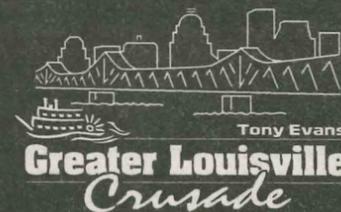
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Cable television offers strengths, weaknesses for church programs

HOPKINSVILLE—When cable television came to Hopkinsville in the early 1980s, Second Baptist Church voted to capitalize on the new medium.

Ever since making that commitment, the church has broadcast three services a week over Western Kentucky's Charter Communications public access channel which reaches south to Clarksville, Tenn., and north to Madisonville. Its Sunday morning and evening services also are picked up by a local UHF outlet.

Pastor Daniel Ferguson said the church regularly receives letters expressing thanks for its media ministry. He also has conducted several funerals for viewers who considered Second Baptist their church home even though they never visited the building.

"Not a day goes by that I don't go out and someone in the store says, 'You're that guy I watch on TV,'" Ferguson said. "In this area, they say we're the second most watched program, next to Kentucky basketball. It has a great impact for us."

Second Baptist has an unusual arrangement with its cable access. The church broadcasts Channel 23 from its in-house broadcasting booth.

The set-up allows for creative options. The church broadcasts tapes of Sunday and Wednesday night services throughout the evening and the following day, as well as vacation Bible school and other events.

Last summer it telecast tapes of the youth group's trip to a World Changers project in Memphis, Tenn., and a mission trip to Arizona.

But the segment that proved most popular was a report on a local home-repair ministry.

"That tape has had an amazing effect on our neighborhood," he said. "They see we're not just a big church sitting there; we care about people and are trying to help them."

Despite Second Baptist's positive experience, not all churches have the same results.

Todd Toole of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky said his church scrubbed its weekly program just a month after going on the air. He said poor-quality programming on the channel harmed the church's image.

Although the service aired a dozen times during the week, viewers never knew what time it would run. The tapes often were broadcast at odd, late-night hours.

"Know who you want to reach," Toole advised churches contemplating broadcast ministry. "Know your target audience. If you're looking to reach lost people, there may be more effective ways."

Commitment, creativity drive media ministry

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—Instead of taking the giant step into launching a television ministry, Larry Brannin suggests churches consider moving into broadcast ministry in small steps.

Start by making audio tapes that can be mailed to shut-in members, suggested Brannin, the media production associate for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Once a church has cassette production in hand, it can make the natural progression to radio, television and Internet ministry, he said.

"Technical assistance is available through our office, and other churches can help," he said. "It's a mentoring process. Find churches who are doing it and find out what they're doing right."

He warned, however, that costs for a full-scale media ministry can be prohibitive for some churches. Brannin estimates minimum start-up costs of \$10,000, although a professional-quality operation with multiple cameras could cost 10 times as much.

Air time isn't cheap either, although costs vary widely throughout Kentucky.

Faith Baptist Church of Myra pays \$200 a week to show its services over a station in Abingdon, Va. But Todd Toole, pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church, said buying time on a network affiliate in Northern Kentucky runs more than \$3,000 a week.

There are ways to lower costs, such as buying used equipment and choosing modest options, Brannin said. However, he noted that today's TV-oriented generation will quickly turn away from low-quality programming.

"You have to be media savvy if you're going to enter this field," he said. "You've got to get out of the box and think, 'If we're going to make this a ministry, we're going to have to budget for it.' Realize the rewards are there."

Creativity is another plus, he said. A member is likely to have a camcorder, which can be used to document the church's presence in the city. Brief video reports on clothing distribution and food drives or community improvement



MEDIA IMPACT Members of Walnut Street Baptist Church's technical crew work behind the scenes to maintain the Louisville church's broadcast ministry. The church reaches an estimated 40,000 viewers a week through broadcasts and TV ads.

projects can be inserted to strengthen a program's appeal, he said.

Another alternative is to videotape testimonies from viewers explaining what it means to them to be able to watch the church's services on TV.

"Play it for the congregation so people see it's not just money going out; it's helping people," Brannin said.

Churches involved in broadcast ministries emphasize it is a way of touching their communities.

Cathy Heberer estimates Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville reaches 40,000 viewers through its Sunday TV broadcast and a series of advertisements during the week.

"We get 100 to 120 letters a month" from viewers, said Heberer, the church's director of media ministries. "A lot of prisoners write us and every so often we have an opportunity to send one a Bible. Our focus is not, 'Can we fill our sanctuary four times a week instead of two?' It's what we can do to be a part of this community and show them we care about them."

Dave and Kay Hammond believe the airwaves help bring their mountain community in Pike County closer together.

Although television has a wider audience, they are just as thrilled with the

response to their Saturday morning radio program that originates in Jenkins.

After Kay Hammond joined her husband on the air last year, their teachings on marriage led to invitations to lead marriage seminars at two churches.

In early February, Mrs. Hammond hosted the show with her daughter when her husband was out of town. During the program, she led a caller in a prayer to receive Christ as Savior.

"We feel like God has His hand on this radio program," she said. "Every time we're in there there's such a sweet spirit."

Steven Gray, minister of music and worship at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, advises churches to pray earnestly before entering media ministry.

While radio and TV are excellent avenues for sharing the gospel, that doesn't mean it's the best option for every congregation, he said.

Look at alternatives, too, said Gray, staff liaison with the technical director who produces Immanuel's weekly radio and TV broadcasts.

"What's taking place with the Internet will allow us to be in ministry in a way TV can't," he said. "Many churches may do better to bypass radio and TV and go straight to the Internet."

"Many churches may do better to bypass radio and TV and go straight to the Internet."

Steven Gray, minister of music and worship, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington

Launching effective media ministry requires 'step of faith'

Continued from page 1

variety of forms other than a standard telecast of worship services.

For example, Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington is experimenting with multi-media touches like slides and video clips.

Immanuel also hopes to have sermons in audio and text formats for inclusion on its Web site by the end of the year, said Steven Gray, minister of music and worship.

At Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, which has televised its Sunday morning service since the 1960s, its video equipment has become an Internet tool.

Using digital cameras, the church posted on-site reports last year about its mission trips to Williamsburg and the Ukraine, along with members' diaries of their experiences.

Immanuel hopes to eventually "live stream" its Sunday morning service, which would make the broadcast available worldwide over the Internet, said Cathy Heberer, director of media ministries.

She said the Sunday broadcast also incorporates videos of church activities, testimonies and inspirational spots to help maintain viewer interest.

It works. More than half of the average 51 guests a week at Walnut Street say they first saw the church's services on television. But the media director said that shouldn't be the motivation behind broadcast ministry.

"Approach it from a ministry perspective," Heberer said. "Don't go into radio or television expecting people to suddenly show up and walk down the aisles. There are people at home who otherwise would never have a chance to hear a word from God this week. It's a step of faith to sow the gospel."

Creative outreach also reaches beyond the TV and Internet. In the past 18 months, First Baptist Church of Shelbyville renovated a room that once held a pipe organ into a two-story TV studio and control booth. It also purchased six color television cameras to produce a multi-camera view of its services.

While that upgraded the quality of the program shown on the cable access channel in Shelby County, radio-TV production director Harold Thom said it also sparked other developments.

Once members learned about the high-quality equipment, they began requesting videotapes of baptisms, weddings and funerals, he said.

The congregation's improved sound equipment also allows it to offer audio tapes of its services, which are aired on three radio stations in the Louisville-Shelbyville area.

Thom currently is negotiating to broadcast services over a radio station in Nashville, which reaches parts of four states. He also is talking with a Christian shortwave radio network about the possibility of international transmissions.

"This is a Great Commission church and our commission is to spread the word of Jesus Christ to the world," Thom said. "What better way than to use modern techniques?"

MISSIONS

Southern's church planting efforts expanding to 17 states

By Bryan Cribb
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Scott Smith and Robert Thomas stood among 21 other planters on the stage. They did not have plows, shovels or overalls, but they will soon sow seeds of the gospel in harvest fields of North America.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Al Mohler commissioned the 21 church planters at the conclusion of an April 13 chapel service. The group represents the most recent addition to more than 80 church planters actively starting churches through Southern Seminary's Church Planting Center in Louisville, in cooperation with the Nehemiah Project of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

"The 21 planters we sent out is the largest number we've commissioned thus far," said Ed Stetzer, director of Southern's Church Planting Center. "I

think that we have the opportunity more and more to mold a generation of church planters here who share our values, our biblical emphasis and a heart for reaching the lost."

The CPC continues to send church starters as far as Canada and as near as downtown Louisville. CPC planters soon will spread across 17 states and two countries.

"We're focusing on groupings of church planters in Boston, in the D.C. area, in Cincinnati and in York, Pa.," Stetzer said. Eventually, he hopes to send interns "not just across 17 states, but across the world through international and through North American church planting."

Southern's home city also is a focus for the project. Thomas, a 1997 graduate of the seminary, just began the sowing process in inner-city Louisville several weeks ago. The new church will form a multi-racial congregation in the lower-income neighborhoods.

"Our motto is transforming lives and transcending racial boundaries," said Thomas, a Henry County native. "We wanted to make sure that we added both dimensions. We believe that God's Word and worship have the ability to transform lives. And we believe we're being consistent with what the kingdom of God will look like when we go to transcend racial boundaries."

To help achieve this diverse congregation, Thomas, an African-American, has put together a multi-racial leadership team, including Tristan Francis, a Filipino-American, and Perry Polnaszek, an Anglo.

But building a diverse core group will require much evangelism as well as a commitment to meet community needs.

"People first have to know you care before they really become open to you," Thomas said. "There's some really pressing needs in that community. ... The overwhelming majority of people express a need for things for the chil-

dren to do—things to keep the children off the streets."

Thomas said the community has responded positively to the team's initial efforts. Two Bible studies already have formed.

"Everybody seems open to it," Thomas said. "It's real exciting, but it's a big faith venture."

Smith, who currently is finishing his master of divinity degree, agrees. This August, he will begin the process of starting a church in Antonia, Mo., a small town 30 miles south of St. Louis.

"I am excited and constantly eager to talk about church planting, but have not been in the process on my own yet," said Smith, who previously has served as an assistant planter in Indianapolis.

"The first several months, I will be spending much time in prayer and spending many hours talking with people in the area, developing relationships, doing evangelism in the 'marketplace' and finding people who are excited about a new church," Smith added.

"We have the opportunity more and more to mold a generation of church planters here who share our values, our biblical emphasis and a heart for reaching the lost."

Ed Stetzer, director of Southern Seminary's Church Planting Center

Deaf minister's efforts reach far-flung flock

Continued from page 1

Caring for others who are different is important in any type of ministry," Noble said. "Without the Cooperative Program funds, fewer deaf would be able to see what God can do when the right tools are used."

While living as a deaf person is a challenge anywhere, the remote nature of mountain life often makes the situation even more challenging.

"Many have forgotten the language they learned while attending the deaf school due to the lack of involvement with other deaf," Noble explained. "Other deaf have never attended school and use home signs which change from family to family and can be quite frustrating."

His ministry offers deaf Eastern Kentuckians an opportunity to connect and communicate with other deaf people. Participating in Bible study and fellowship offers both spiritual growth and the strengthening of valuable communication skills.

"Part of the problem with a deaf fellowship is in transportation," noted Margie Wilson, who serves as secretary on the ministry's board of directors. Whereas churches generally are composed of people from a specific geographic area, members of a deaf fellowship may be scattered over a much larger area.

Noble routinely spends hours driving a van or his truck along winding roads, gathering his far-flung flock for Bible studies held each week in different counties. Part of his time is invested in simply finding the deaf people in the region and establishing a relationship with them.

"You can't just go down to the post office and find out who's deaf and who isn't," Cooper remarked. Noble's deep roots and network of family and friends afford him greater access to unreached members of the community.

Attendance at Pike Baptist Association's monthly Bible study has doubled since Noble took over in January, noted Carl Boyd, director of missions. All three associations have a history of deaf ministry, but establish-

ing consistent, local leadership has remained a challenge. Associational leaders hope that establishing the Eastern Kentucky Regional Deaf Ministry and supporting Noble will change that.

One of the blessings of Noble's ministry is the deaf in Eastern Kentucky have a pastor who knows their language and culture rather than having an interpreter who may not understand the culture, Noble explained. "Many are thrilled to have a deaf pastor because they have never experienced that before."

Noble is one of a handful of Baptist-supported ministers to the deaf in Kentucky. Deaf churches or missions have been established in Danville,

Erlanger, Pikeville, Louisville and Lexington and more than two dozen ministries to the deaf are scattered across the state.

Kentucky Baptists who are deaf, their friends and families, and those who minister to the deaf also find training and fellowship through the Kentucky Baptist Conference of the Deaf. The conference, which also is supported by CP funds, meets once a year for a weekend of fellowship, workshops, training and inspiration, said Tim Bender, Kentucky Baptist Convention deaf ministries consultant. This year's conference will be Nov. 10-12 at Camp Nathanael in Knott County. A deaf camp also is planned for Aug. 7-9 at the same location.

wounded ministers

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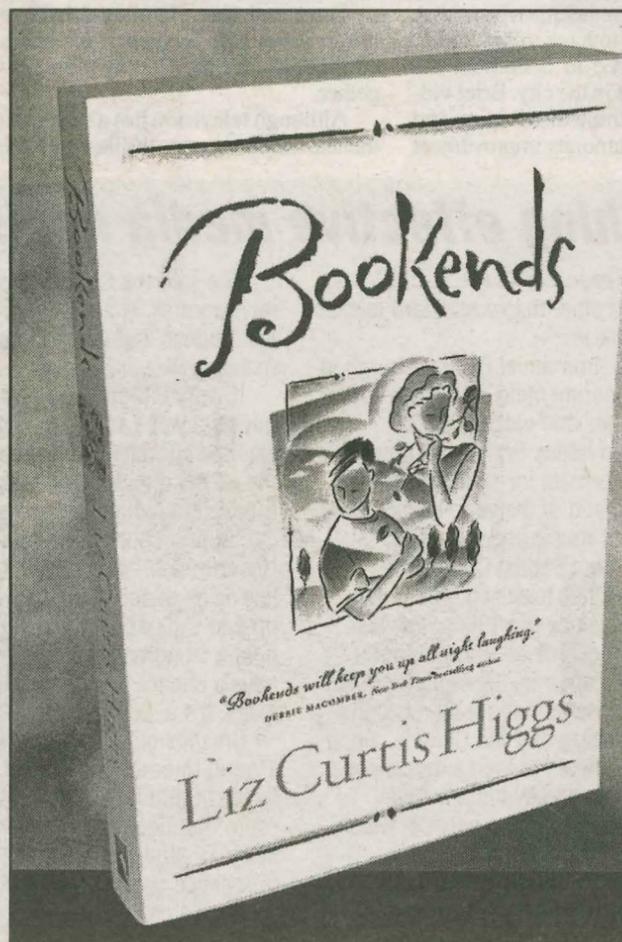
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MISSIONS

Brazil's 'Carnaval' becomes backdrop for Baptist witness

By Louis Moore
SBC International Mission Board

SALVADOR, Brazil (BP)—Nobody walking past the street corner where he was preaching knew, or probably cared, that the speaker was president of the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States.

All that the people on the crowded street could tell was that the man was saying something seemingly important that might offer hope to their meaningless lives.

As the scantily clad "Carnaval"-goers gathered around to listen to Paige Patterson preach in English as a translator interpreted into Portuguese, the smell of beer and urine permeated the air. In the background was blaring Brazilian rock music emerging from the gigantic floats of the nearby Carnival parade—the South American equivalent of New Orleans' Mardi Gras.

Some people turned and walked away when they realized his talk involved how to have a relationship with God in Christ through forgiveness of sins. Three men, who had beer cans in their hands, waved and shouted in Portuguese, trying to disrupt the message. Others listened politely.

"No religion can eliminate sin, which separates us from God," Patterson told his listeners. "A good life cannot do it, either." Only one way to heaven exists, he said. That one way is faith in Jesus Christ.

When Patterson asked those in the audience who desired to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior to step closer to the podium and bow their heads and pray with him, a group of some 30 people moved forward. Among them were two of the three who earlier had shouted and waved their beer cans in the air.

Then Brazilian Baptist volunteers took over, praying individually with the new believers, writing down contact information and agreeing to meet with them later at their homes after Carnival festivities ended.

As Patterson stepped from the makeshift stage, Southern Baptist missionary Wade Akins began making preparations for another speaker to preach a similar message.

Carnaval street-corner preaching posts include a microphone and a black-lighted easel on which fluorescent paints are used to illustrate the gospel message of Christ's death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins.



STREET WITNESS SBC President Paige Patterson preaches during Carnival in Salvador, Brazil, while Southern Baptist missionary Wade Akins illustrates the message with fluorescent drawings. (BP photo by Roy Burroughs)

Akins then escorted Patterson to the next of five preaching points set up by Akins' team along the Carnival parade routes in Salvador. An average of more than 50 presentations were made each night at each of the five preaching stations during the five

days of Carnival.

It was all in a night's work for Akins, a pioneering evangelist who inspired the idea of street-corner preaching at Carnival, a gigantic, outdoor street party that annually becomes a drunken orgy of alcohol, drugs and immoral sex in Brazil. Some 1 million people reportedly attend the event in Salvador alone.

Akins tells about two married men who stopped to listen, prayed to receive Christ, then confessed how they had come to Carnival looking for prostitutes to pick up. Instead, they took the literature given them by the counselors and, as the missionaries watched, got into a taxicab to head home to their wives.

Patterson said, "The most remarkable thing about these people is that they become quickly bored with the party and then are the most open to the gospel that I believe I have ever witnessed. If it were possible to put 10,000 Southern Baptists on the street to preach and witness, every one of them would see a massive harvest."

At Carnival's end, Akins' team counted 314 street-corner presentations to an estimated 9,500 people, including 2,391 who made inquiries about following Christ.

"If it were possible to put 10,000 Southern Baptists on the street to preach and witness, every one of them would see a massive harvest."

SBC President
Paige Patterson






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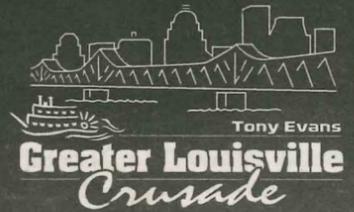
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Vermont governor approves legal benefits for homosexual couples

MONTPELIER, Vt. (BP)—Vermont's governor on April 26 signed into law landmark legislation granting the full benefits of marriage to homosexual and lesbian couples in the state, prompting warnings from opponents that it could spawn similar legislation in other states.

Gov. Howard Dean signed the bill into law during a closed-door meeting with supporters following a 79-68 vote by the Vermont House on April 25 and a 19-11 Senate vote April 19. The new law grants homosexual couples rights in medical decisions, tax benefits and other areas.

"This is a statement that Vermont values people for who they are, not what they are," Dean said following the signing. "This bill enriches not just the very small percentage of gay and lesbian Vermonters who take advantage of this partnership and get the rights that they are due. I believe this bill enriches all of us, as we look with new eyes at a group of people who have been outcasts for many, many generations."

Vermont's Supreme Court in December ruled that state law discriminated against homosexual couples and that a legislative remedy was needed.

Under the new law, which takes effect July 1, same-sex couples will be able to obtain a civil union license from their town clerk. The civil unions would then be certified by a justice of the peace, judge or clergy member.

Family groups believe Vermont's

"civil unions" law will have a negative impact on the state and may be used to undermine marriage laws across the country.

"We hope at least to establish a residency requirement and broaden the bill so that it's not sex-based," Craig Benson, vice president of Take It to the People, told CNSNews.com after a closed-door meeting with the bill's opponents.

Take It to the People is a large grassroots group opposed to civil unions, with a membership of approximately 15,000.

Janet Parshall, chief spokeswoman for the Family Research Council, described the action as "gay marriage" in everything but name, adding that "it is a direct assault on society's most essential institution."

"It means that Vermont's lawmakers no longer believe that marriage—and marriage-based families—have any unique value to society," Parshall said.

Vincent McCarthy, a lawyer for the American Center for Law and Justice, said he believes "there is a concern, justifiably so, that people in Vermont might try to take this decision to another state, seeking somehow to get another state to recognize the rights given in Vermont."

After the Hawaii Supreme Court raised the possibility of same-sex marriages in 1993, 30 states and the federal government passed laws denying recognition to same-sex marriages.

With additional reporting by Religion News Service

Pro-family leaders request meeting with Gov. Bush

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A dozen leaders opposing gay activism have written to Republican presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush to request that he meet with "pro-family" representatives.

Their request follows the April 13 meeting the Texas governor held with a group of gay Republicans.

"Given your highly publicized meeting recently with homosexual activists, we would like to invite you to a meeting with pro-family leaders to discuss the importance of marriage and family," the leaders wrote.

The April 24 letter writers include Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission; Charles Donovan, chief executive officer of the Family Research Council; and Donald Wildmon, president of the American Family Association.

"We respectfully request that you demonstrate your commitment to the family by also scheduling a meeting with those of us who believe that homosexual activism poses a serious threat to our marriage-based culture and to the freedoms of speech, religion and association," the letter said.

They also said the goals of homosexual activists are "antithetical" to the majority of Americans.

"Homosexual activists are trying to use the Republican Party, much like the Democratic Party, as a vehicle to achieve their strategic objective of harnessing government and corporate power to impose acceptance of homosexual behavior," they wrote.

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National Asset Management has created the new National Asset Management Core Equity Mutual Fund for individuals. The investment guidelines of the mutual fund are the same used in managing the large capitalization portion of the Foundation's equity fund, including the Christian ethical restrictions. For every account opened through this arrangement, National Asset Management will pay 20 percent of its management fee to the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

The Foundation will not retain any of this fee. Instead, 100 percent will go to the Reaching Kentucky for Christ Fund administered by the Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board with Bill Mackey's leadership.

The Reaching Kentucky for Christ Fund will be used to reach people groups for Christ as the world comes to Kentucky. Our state currently has growing Hispanic and Asian populations and many of the countries of the world are now represented by the international students attending Kentucky's colleges and universities. The fund also will be used to help churches and associations start new ministries in Kentucky as they develop new ways of sharing the gospel in an increasingly secular culture.

This is an investment, not a donation. A \$10,000 minimum investment is needed to open an account with this mutual fund. The Foundation will perform no services with respect to the actual investment by Kentucky Baptists in the fund and has no role in advising the mutual fund. To receive a prospectus, call NAM toll-free at (877) 626-3863.

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

Scout case impacts religious groups

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court revisited the divisive issue of homosexuality April 26 in a case that pits the Boy Scouts of America against an ousted gay assistant scoutmaster. The outcome could have significant ramifications for religious groups.

Lawyers for the Scouts told the court the Boy Scouts, as a private organization like churches or other religious groups, has the constitutional protection to dictate the standards for its leaders and members.

But the lawyer for James Dale, the former Scout leader, says the Boy Scouts is a public accommodation group with large support from governmental agencies, and as such, cannot discriminate on the basis of a person's sexual orientation.

The original case was brought by Dale, a former New Jersey Eagle Scout, who was dismissed from the Boy Scouts after a local newspaper

identified him in 1990 as part of a gay and lesbian campus group at Rutgers University. At the time, Dale was an assistant scoutmaster.

Boy Scouts officials said Dale's homosexuality was incompatible with the standards the scouting organization holds for its leaders. Dale sued, and after a lengthy legal battle, the New Jersey Supreme Court agreed the Boy Scouts had violated the state's anti-discrimination law.

The justices appeared skeptical of the claims made by both sides, asking the Scouts why someone could be dismissed simply for being gay, and grilling Dale's lawyers about why the Scouts cannot dictate its own leadership standards.

Several religious groups—including the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Mormons and Orthodox Jews—filed briefs with the court supporting the Scouts.

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Supreme Court hears arguments in partial-birth abortion appeal

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Lawyers representing both sides of the abortion debate squared off before the U.S. Supreme Court April 25, presenting oral arguments in a challenge to Nebraska's ban on late-term abortions.

The hour-long session returned justices to a legal and moral battlefield they last visited in 1992 when justices voted 5-4 to uphold their 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision extending constitutional protection to abortions.

At issue last week was a 1997 Nebraska law that banned so-called "partial-birth abortions," in which a doctor partially delivers "a living unborn child before killing the unborn child and completing delivery."

This is the first "partial-birth" case the Supreme Court has heard. Thirty states have banned the procedure, but federal appeals courts have issued conflicting rulings on the constitutionality of those laws. A decision by the Supreme Court is expected by late June.

Simon Heller, the lawyer representing Leroy Carhart, the Nebraska doctor who launched the challenge to the law, told justices the state law is "so broadly written it could prohibit most second-trimester abortions" and could lead to making all abortions "more dangerous for women."

Nebraska Attorney General Don Stenberg disagreed, claiming the state has an interest in upholding the law.

"The state interest here is drawing a bright line between abortion and infanticide," he said.

He said the Nebraska abortion law targets only a procedure known in the medical community as D and X—or intact dilation and extraction—which involves puncturing and emptying a fetus' skull before extraction.

Still, Justices Anthony Kennedy and Sandra Day O'Connor expressed concern about the law's vague wording, questioning its scope and its failure to specifically name D and X abortions as the procedure addressed by the law.

Justice Antonin Scalia, pointing out that the Nebraska law specifically applies to late-term abortions "deliberately and intentionally" performed, seemed doubtful that the law was too vague.

He also queried whether stopping "infanticide" in Nebraska—as Stenberg contended the Nebraska law did—was not a sufficient state interest to uphold the law.

Both Justices Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg expressed concern that the Nebraska abortion statute did not permit exceptions in order to protect a pregnant woman's health.

But health exceptions are not necessary, Stenberg contended, because the D and X procedure "is never necessary to save the life of a woman."

President Clinton has twice vetoed a Republican-backed bill outlawing the abortion procedure. Three weeks ago, the House passed a partial-birth ban for the third time in five years. While supporters say they have the votes to withstand another veto, it's doubtful the Senate could also override a veto.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **It's OK to pray for Elian.** The U.S. District Court in Washington has issued a temporary restraining order against the Secret Service, clearing the way for a Christian group to pray on a public sidewalk for Elian Gonzales. The Christian Defense Coalition was denied access and threatened with arrest if they conducted a prayer vigil on a public sidewalk adjacent to the Cuban interests section of the Swiss Embassy. The ruling came before the April 22 raid by federal agents that took the young Cuban boy from his Miami relatives and reunited him with his father. CDC director Patrick Mahoney said the Secret Service targeted the coalition because the group does not support the Clinton administration's view that Elian should be returned to Cuba.

■ **Revivals target women.** Organizer Ann Graham Lotz says she will be sorely disappointed if "Just Give Me Jesus" gatherings in five cities this year result in anything less than revival. "I don't want to be part of another event. I'm too tired and too busy for that," said the daughter of famed evangelist Billy Graham. Lotz, founder of AnGel Ministries, will join Kay Arthur of Precepts Ministries International as a featured speaker at a two-day "Just Give Me Jesus" gathering May 5-6 in Fort Worth, Texas. Similar revival services, targeted primarily at women, are scheduled in Knoxville, Atlanta, Kansas City and San Diego.

■ **Ohio's 'God' motto thrown out.** The Sixth U.S. Court of Appeals ruled April 25 that Ohio's state motto, "With God, all things are possible," violates the U.S. Constitution and must be thrown out. The federal court sided 2-1 with the American

Civil Liberties Union which contended the words appeared to be a government endorsement of the Christian religion. The lawsuit originally was filed by Matthew Peterson, a Presbyterian minister who objected to the state's use of the motto, adopted in 1959. The decision by the federal court reverses a 1998 decision by a judge in Columbus that allowed Ohio to display the motto as long as it does not cite its biblical origin. State officials intend to challenge the appeals court's ruling.

■ **Voucher injunction postponed.** The Florida judge who ruled in March that the state's voucher program is unconstitutional is allowing the vouchers to continue until an appeal is considered. Circuit Judge Ralph Smith previously decided the voucher law violates the state constitution because it provides state money that will be spent on private schools. Under the law, students at schools that are considered to be failing two years out of four are eligible for vouchers. Two elementary schools qualified this year, but the number of schools eligible next year is uncertain until grades are reported in June.

■ **Publishing agreement ends.** The American Bible Society and Thomas Nelson Publishers have terminated their publishing agreement for the Contemporary English Version translation of the Bible, but the society plans to continue distributing the modern language translation. Representatives of both entities said the decision was based in part on a "crowded" Bible market. ABS officials will evaluate other strategies to continue distributing the CEV, said Bob Briggs, the Bible society's communications director.

Building in Birmingham

By Robert Dunston

During Cumberland College's spring break, nine Cumberland students journeyed to Birmingham, Ala., for a special project. Team leader Kevin Floyd directed a ministry team including Vanessa Chipe, Chip Earle, Tarah Henry, Tyler Mullins, Tara Oaks, Crystal Reams, Troy Shafer and Jo Ann Sternberg.

Green Valley Baptist Church hosted the students and provided accommodations in its recreation center. The students had access to pool tables, ping pong tables, a kitchen and a big-screen television but had little time for such amenities.

After driving down on Saturday, the group worshipped with the church on Sunday. When Monday morning arrived, they started work.

During the week the students worked on the home of an 84-year-old African-American gentleman. His home needed to be razed but he had so many memories attached to his house, he could not move. His wife died 20 years ago and was followed in death shortly thereafter by their daughter. A pencil sharpener the man had bought for his daughter to use still hung in its place on the wall as a constant reminder of her.

The students hung new drywall, painted, caulked, scrubbed and built shelves for the man's kitchen. They also built a back porch for him. He had nailed his back door shut and not entered his backyard in 10 years. When he opened the door and stepped onto his porch for the first time, his face lighted up. "You couldn't give me a million dollars for that moment," Floyd said.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Despite having gone through so much in life, the man never complained. His mental and spiritual strength blessed each of the students.

The students returned physically exhausted but mentally rejuvenated. They hope to return to visit their new friend

again.

Chipe summed up their trip well. "There's a lot to learn even in dry-wall. God seems to have a purpose and when you're doing His will, it all seems to fall into place."

These Cumberland College students certainly did God's will during spring break. God used them and blessed them in a wonderful way.

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

Poised for greatness

The happenings of last summer still amaze me. It was when I was writing a "Summer Highlights" report that I realized why I was so tired.

Through the help of individuals, churches, Baptist colleges and other institutions, Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children offered four camps to our kids in various programs across the state: one at Georgetown College, one at Glen Dale with the BSU team Son Celebration and two at Jonathan Creek. We attended the Youth Evangelism Conference in Lexington, Summer Jam and YouthFest in Louisville and Newsong in Leitchfield. Yellow Creek Baptist Church from Owensboro led revivals on our Glen Dale and Southern Region campuses. The summer ended with a youth rally at Spring Meadows featuring Andre Barnes.

These events have a real impact on our kids. One young man, I'll call him Josh, came up to me after I had shared my testimony and asked if I would go to church with him when he went home. Although his folks live about two hours from my house, I said sure.

Shortly after he left KBHC's care, I contacted his mother and

asked if I could visit with the intention of finding a church for Josh to attend. She agreed enthusiastically. I took him to supper and we talked about the possibilities. We agreed upon a church and set a date to attend. Unfortunately, a snowstorm prevented us from keeping our date at the church. Then, when I called a few weeks later to reschedule, I heard the bad news: Josh had gotten into trouble and was in a state juvenile justice facility. I'm currently trying to get permission to see Josh.

As disappointing as this homecoming was, I know God isn't finished with Josh. Last summer was a beginning, not an end. I look at it this way: It was a great summer; Josh is a great kid with a great deal of problems but whose life still has great potential. Why? Because we have a great God! With Him there is always hope. Please pray for God's greatness to prevail in Josh's life and in the lives of all of those we serve in Christ's name.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Mike Dixon

Mike Dixon is vice president for religious life at 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/>

"Jesus calls us to be salt and light, to make an impact on our culture."

South Carolina Baptist pastor Mike Hamlet

South Carolina churches celebrate moral victory over video gambling

By Todd Starnes
Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to interfere with South Carolina's upcoming ban of video gambling, dealing what opponents of the ban called an end to video gambling in the state.

The justices rejected an appeal, filed by Joytime Distributors & Amusement Co., a Greenville, S.C.-based corporation that owns 164 video gambling machines. The appeal challenged the way the ban was approved in 1999.

The South Carolina General Assembly passed a law last summer that would ban video gambling unless a majority of voters in a November referendum approved continued payouts from the machines.

The South Carolina Supreme Court struck down the referendum, but upheld other parts of the law, effectively ending the state's \$2.8 billion-a-year industry.

Churches and pro-family groups across the state rejoiced over the decision that struck down the referendum.

"There is no question that this is a great victory for the faith community in South Carolina," said Mike Hamlet, senior pastor of North Spartanburg Baptist Church and a former president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

"The Supreme Court decision did not come as a great surprise to me. I think it was a last-ditch effort to try to do something to save the industry."

House Speaker David Wilkins predicted the issue is dead. "By this time next year, video poker will be nothing more than a memory," he said.

Despite an estimated 3,000 video poker employees about to lose their jobs, state economists said they aren't worried.

Frank Hefner, an economist at the College of Charleston, said South Carolina's growing economy should be able to absorb those affected by the industry's demise.

According to the state Department of Revenue, video poker machines in South Carolina generated \$556.4 million in gross receipts in the three months ending Dec. 31, 1999.

Last year, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce commissioned a study that concluded that the \$60 million in tax revenues generated by video poker is less than one percent of the total state budget and that the job losses in video poker would be small compared with the 300,000 unemployment claims filed every year in the state.

Hamlet said the death of video gambling gives a boost to opponents of the state lottery. "Anyone who says that churches need to stay in the four walls and not involve themselves in these issues has no understanding of the New Testament," he said. "Jesus calls us to be salt and light, to make an impact on our culture. In areas where there is a moral principle, not only does a Christian have an opportunity, but a responsibility to take a strong stand."

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One of our greatest challenges

The heart and soul of any ministry like ours is its people. Finding dedicated people who are willing to work long, hard hours with low pay and modest housing is a real challenge.

Recently I got a request for information from a man in Texas who had heard about our ministry and was interested in serving here. I sent him material to read, including our salary and benefits. I received a letter from him that I would like to share.

"I have read everything that was sent, and not just one time. While I thought that I knew something about Oneida, I quickly discovered that such was not true. I did not realize that such a school existed in this day and age. I would be very interested in becoming a part of such an admirable operation. However, at this time, I simply am unable to make do on \$6,000 a year. But, if I cannot work there, I can remember you and the school in my prayers each day.

"It is perplexing for me to realize that I 'grew up' in the Baptist church, and was very active in it, yet never heard of Oneida."

I frequently receive letters requesting information about our school and a position that may be available. While I presume they have heard a little about Oneida, I nearly always am sure they have no idea of the amount of time our people work. And the modest salaries scare off even the most dedicated.

Today as I was reading my mail, there was a letter from one of my staff who also is a semi-retired pastor. Yesterday he and the rest of our staff were given the opportunity to attend our "Share-a-Lot." Normally, once a month our folks may gather food items that have been given to the school. Here is part of what this teacher wrote:

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

"As I was selecting food this morning, food that I did not have to pay for, my mind went back to one painful summer when (my daughter) was still in the highchair. For one week all we had to eat was mostly cheap baloney. (My daughter) pushed hers away and said, 'I don't want any more baloney.' I decided then and there that I had had it with preaching and teaching on low salaries. I decided to look for another job.

"(My wife) and I decided that I would stay with what I loved to do and what we believed that God called me to do. We never regretted that decision. We could not go back on our commitment to God."

Then he finished with this story:

"But above all I am thankful for the privilege of teaching at OBI these last 10 years. One day while (my wife) and I were sitting at the kitchen table at the parsonage at church, I said to her, 'Let's start on a new journey of faith. Let's go to Ur and start out again.' Our Ur was Oneida. And we never regretted the decision."

I did not give the name of this man. He lost his wife to cancer three years ago while they were both serving Oneida as volunteers. He has continued to work as a volunteer, completing his 10th year this past summer.

Many who serve at Oneida Baptist Institute find it to be one of their greatest challenges. Of those who inquire about being part of this ministry, only about one in 50 ever comes for an interview. Most simply say they can't afford to live on such modest salaries. How blessed we are to have 150 very dedicated faculty and staff.

Reprinted from WR, Oct. 20, 1998

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

Dr. Kelly preaches commencement sermon

Nearly 75 years after L.C. Kelly started Clear Creek, we will have Dr. Kelly preach the commencement message for the class of 2000 on May 5. That's Dr. Bobby Jay Kelly, Rowena Strickland Assistant Professor of Bible at Oklahoma Baptist University and a 1988 Clear Creek alumnus. Our faculty recently selected him as a distinguished

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

alumnus and recipient of the Delta Epsilon Chi Award from the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges. Kelly was pastor of Cedar Grove Baptist Church in Tazewell, Tenn., in 1986-89. He completed a master of divinity degree and doctor of philosophy degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He received the H.C. Brown Jr. Memorial Award for outstanding achievement in the study and practice of preaching.

Last month, Kelly was one of seven individuals at OBU honored with the Seven Who Care Award, based on volunteer service, selfless devotion to others, commitment to a cause or acts of bravery.

The OBU campus newspaper, The Bison, described Kelly as "a campus-wide favorite among students from all majors and back-

grounds." Hutch Kufahl, a junior public relations major, said, "Not only does he have a genuine love and care for his students, but he has a passion for what he teaches; it's rare that you see a professor with a true passion. That is why I like him."

"I believe that I still enjoy things that students enjoy," Kelly said. "I like to talk about sports, and help students with problems."

Freshman student Mindy Mayberry said Kelly "makes a point to get to know his students outside of class, and he remembers their names. That makes a difference to students."

Bobby and Angie Kelly married in 1992. She is a graduate of Bell County High School and Lincoln Memorial University and teaches kindergarten. They have no children, but do have a black Labrador retriever named Tubbie.

Kelly is an avid runner, frequently racing in 10Ks and half marathons. He is scheduled to run in the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington in October.

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

BOOKS

Bookends. Liz Curtis Higgs. Multnomah Press, 2000. 334 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

"Bookends" is Higgs' second book of fiction for women. For the setting of this book, Higgs returns to her roots in the Moravian church. The location is Lititz, Pa., and the Lititz Moravian Church.

Emilie Getz, a former Lititz resident and member of the Moravian church, returns to town to write a commemorative book for the Moravian congregation's 250th anniversary. Getz, a professor at Salem College in Winston-Salem, N.C., finds herself involved in more than historical research.

Almost from the beginning she finds her life getting intertwined with Jonas Fielding, a transplant to Lititz. Unlike Emilie, Jonas is a late convert to the Moravian church but the differences only begin here. While the two are turned in opposite ways like bookends, the reader has a feeling from the beginning that they will end up in the same place.

Higgs spends much of the book exploring the growing relationship between Emilie and Jonas, while throwing in other adventures as well. Unlike some Christian fiction, Higgs does not use Christianity in the story in a way that overpowers the story line.

Higgs' story is fast-moving and the story does not bog down. Higgs' trademark humor is very apparent.

I would have enjoyed a bit more introduction to the Moravian church, but Higgs' focus is more on relationship than history. If you want a good fiction read, particularly targeted for women, I recommend "Bookends." Wayne Hager

Beyond the Shadows: Embracing Authentic Worship. T.C. Smith. Smyth & Helwys, 2000. 115 pages. ♦♦

Warning: This book is not a manual for worship planning. Nor is it, per se, a theology of worship. Rather, it is a description of "the distractions that lead us away from the center of Christian faith." Smith seeks to highlight those practices that keep us worshipping God in the shadows, rather than in the light of truth.

T.C. Smith uses his considerable background as a New Testament scholar to assess the hindrances to authentic Christian discipleship. Among the topics he tackles are: the inauthentic use of Scripture, the abuse of theological language, the danger of tithing as a legalistic stewardship requirement, the popular but mistaken view of angels, and more.

The strength of this book is the way Smith connects his criticisms to solid biblical research. Several times I found myself coming face-to-face with fresh and challenging insights from Scripture.

The weakness of the book is twofold. In the first place, it reads more like a loose collection of essays held together by the general premise that we often worship God in the shadows rather than the truth. Second, generally sound biblical presentation occasionally gives way to polemic apparently addressed toward biblical literalists. Jim Holladay

A Hill on Which to Die: One Southern Baptist's Journey. Paul Pressler. Broadman & Holman, 1999. 362 pages. \$29.99 ♦♦♦♦

Judge Paul Pressler, spearhead and architect of the conservative make-

over of the Southern Baptist Convention, writes this book to explain "why I felt that God had me do what I did and how I saw events unfolding in the convention."

It is highly unlikely that reading this book will change significantly the reader's view of the man or his cause. Those who view Pressler as a hero will come away from this book with their perceptions affirmed. Others who see him as a scoundrel will find his piety and God-talk repulsive and insincere.

I found Pressler's first-person narrative of his involvement in the SBC controversy intriguing. From his days in prep school at Exeter, he has been battling the enemy of liberalism. It seems he always has had difficulty believing that people who sincerely confess faith in Jesus Christ might have a different understanding of Scripture than he does.

Reading his account of the flow of events in the SBC between 1979 and 1990, one gets the impression the conservatives were motivated by a sincere love for God, never made errors in judgment and their actions were guided by the Spirit of God. The moderates, on the other hand, come across as dirty gutter fighters, who act out of hidden motivations and who lack a strong faith in God.

At several places in the narrative, Pressler contends that if the moderates had not engaged in some insulting, dishonest activity, there would have been no need for him to act as he did. At times, the whole struggle in the SBC sounds extremely personal.

I doubt many who pick up this book can read it objectively. However, for those seeking to understand the conflict that consumed the SBC for more than a

decade, Pressler's personal narrative will provide fascinating fodder. Jim Holladay

How to Like the Ones You Love: Building Family Friendships for Life. Susan Alexander Yates. Baker Books, 2000. 239 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦

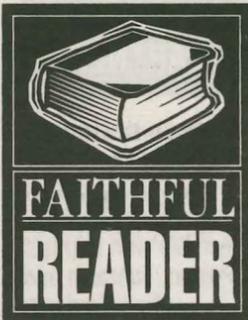
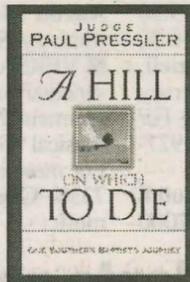
First published in 1995 as "A House Full of Friends," Yates' book addresses the issue of building relationships in families. She considers relationships between spouses, parents and children, siblings, grandparents, in-laws and extended family. She also considers separately single parents and blended families.

As the sub-title suggests, Yates' contention is that the model of being a "friend" should be the primary goal for family relationships. Each chapter of Yates' book is full of case studies which provide real-life examples of successful and unsuccessful "friendships" in families.

She gives careful attention to her examples in an effort to connect with practically everyone. She discusses proven approaches to building friendships between the primary parties she is considering and then gives practical tips for accomplishing the goal of friendship. Each chapter ends with a Bible verse, focus questions and activities for friendship-building.

Yates asks the reader to read chapter by chapter and not skip to one's particular situation. She does this because each chapter builds on previous discussion, and like a family, is interrelated and interdependent.

Yates does a good job not only of inspiring people to be friends in a family but also providing the tools to see the task through. Wayne Hager



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

'He who tells the best story wins,' Christian writers reminded

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

MOUNT HERMON, Calif. (BP)—Christians writers in today's postmodern culture must reach readers through their hearts instead of their heads, an official with Focus on the Family told one of the nation's largest writers' conferences.

Recalling how the movie "Top Gun" boosted military enlistments and legendary author Charles Dickens' stories helped put an end to sweat shops, Al Janssen said convincing arguments won't convert people to Christ.

"We have to communicate through stories," said the senior director of product development for the Colorado Springs, Colo., ministry. "You want to convince the unconvinced? Don't call them to arms, call them to art. That is our challenge today, to master story."

Janssen was one of four keynote speakers at the 31st Mount Hermon Christian Writers' Conference in northern California. This year's April 14-18 sessions attracted a sold-out crowd of 350 participants and 50 faculty members.

Janssen told of writing "Breakaway," a compilation of testimonies of hockey players. He learned that a woman recently found a copy of the book—which has been out of print for more than seven years—on the side of the road in Toronto.

She gave the book to her ex-husband, who read it and called the ministry listed in the back to say, "I want to know what those players had."

Noting how he once thought it would be wonderful to pen an Academy Award-winning script or a novel that made the New York Times' best-seller list, Janssen said writers don't get to choose the results of their efforts.

"We need to be faithful to our role," he said. "If mine is to write a book that is thrown by the side of the road, am I willing to play that role?"

He pointed out that such biblical heroes as Esther and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego didn't know the outcome of their actions in advance, yet remained faithful to God's call.

The need to stand for the truth of God's Word is particularly important in light of a world that has changed drastically in the last few years, Janssen said.

Fortunately, the gospel is going forth through such popular literature as the "Mitford" and "Left Behind" series and top novelist John Grisham depicting conversions in his stories, Janssen said. But much more needs to be done, he added.

"He who tells the best story wins," Janssen said. "We have the best story but we're not telling it very well. Tell it compellingly and the world will come hear it. ... The story can be told if we're willing to pay the price with excellence."

Writing success requires commitment, understanding

Al Janssen said writers who want to communicate the Christian message face three primary challenges:

■ **Maintaining a commitment to studying and mastering their craft.**

Recalling attending his first writers' conference 29 years ago, Janssen said he realizes how little he still knows. While he doesn't recommend it for everyone, he said he attends a lot of movies to better understand why certain messages resonate with people.

"Don't ever stop learning and analyzing," he said, urging participants to ask, "Why is this a good story?"

■ **Thinking more about the worldview they want to communicate than their message.**

Writers who immerse themselves in Scripture, read Christian classics and talk with others who challenge their faith won't need an agenda—it will emerge through their writing, he said.

Posing the question of why "Titanic" was so popular, he answered by referring to the public's thirst for romance, adventure and heroes.

A similar search for answers has attracted many listeners to the "Adventures in Odyssey" radio serial, he said. While many considered Focus on the Family crazy when it created the series 13 years ago, he said many lives have been touched.

■ **Understanding what the world believes.**

"We're so eager to communicate our message we hold up a straw man that doesn't reflect where people are," Janssen said. "We want to get to the punch line too fast. How patient are you to let the story emerge?"

C.S. Lewis, whose "Mere Christianity" recently was named the best book of the 20th century by Christianity Today magazine, understood the view of his age and depicted it in a story, Janssen said.

Ironically, while he was an excellent theologian, Lewis reached more people through the "Chronicles of Narnia" than any scholarly work, he added.

"We have one of the most popular stories," Janssen said, pointing to such elements of the gospel as adventure, betrayal, action and snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. "You need to tell it."

Among them is a computer programmer who listened for years on the way to work. Throughout this time, one of the leading characters, Eugene, resisted God. When Eugene finally gave his heart to Christ, the programmer pulled his car to the side of the road and wept, Janssen said.

"He got to the office, called Focus on the Family and said, 'What do I do now?' He had never been to church."

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ **Urgent needs:** A vacation Bible school team to work in New London, Conn., in July, and two vacation Bible school teams to work at Christ Baptist Church in Worcester, Mass., in June or July. Contact the KBC partnership office for more information, (502) 245-4101.

■ Plans being made by First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, to plant a flagship church in Boston this year. The project is a partnership between the church, the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and Greater Boston Baptist Association.

■ Five new believers who were recently baptized at Bonani Baptist Church in Tanzania.

■ "Pray that Kipoke Secondary School in Tukuyu, Tanzania, will be seen as a 'holy' place, set apart for God's work," missionaries request. "Students come from all over the country, from many different tribes. They are hungry to serve the Lord and know Him personally."

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **BOONEVILLE**—Robbie Napier resigned as pastor of Vincent Church. Napier is a student at Clear Creek Bible College.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Unity Church will host revival services May 7-10. Curtis McGehee will be the evangelist. For information call (270) 824-7405. Mitchell Ash is pastor.

■ **HAWESVILLE**—Hawesville Church will host English as a second language training May 11-13 at 6-9:30 p.m. Thursday & Friday, 8:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. on Saturday. Becky Carnell, Kentucky Baptist Convention literacy consultant, will conduct the training. For registration information, call (270) 927-8787. James Wedding is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Parkway Church will host Women's Conference 2000

May 13 at 8:30 a.m. Linda Childress will speak on "Being a Woman of Confidence." Della Robbins will be the worship leader. For reservation information, call (606) 299-8445. Steve Ellis is pastor.

■ **MANCHESTER**—Horse Creek Church ordained Tim Rogers, youth minister at Island Creek Church, and John Smith, youth minister at Lytleton Church, to the gospel ministry. Aaron Mobley was licensed to the ministry. Scottie Sumner is pastor.

■ **VERSAILLES**—Versailles Church sanctuary choir, adult ensemble and instrumental ensemble will present the musical "God With Us" May 7 at 6 p.m. For more information, call (606) 873-7338. Greg Brewton is minister of music.



MISSIONS FOCUS Clear Creek Baptist Bible College's recent MissionsFest 2000 attracted more than 500 participants. The event, held on the school's Pineville campus, featured Randy Sprinkle, international prayer strategist for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. Debbie and John Enos (above) were among workers at a missions fair held as part of the event.

Southern students gain scholarships for Amsterdam 2000 training

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Thirty students from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville will spend 10 days this summer in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, learning about evangelism through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Southern Seminary has received 30 student scholarships for Amsterdam 2000, which will train participants to do effective evangelism in the 21st century. The conference also seeks to provide participants encouragement from others in ministry around the world.

"This is a huge thing in terms of having this number of students chosen,"

said Tim Beougher, associate dean of Southern Seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth.

"After they go through with this week, I don't think these students will ever look at the world the same way. A high percentage of the people in the past who have participated in these conferences have gone on to be missionaries, because these 10 days burn into their hearts a world vision and a world passion.

"This is the largest gathering of this sort in history," Beougher said. "It is a conference for itinerant evangelists. The

primary thrust is to encourage those involved in itinerant preaching ministries around the world. It will be a unique gathering."

Beougher said students in Southern Seminary's Graham School were given first priority to receive the scholarships. Students from the seminary's other schools, including theology and music, also were able to apply, he said.

The workshops will offer students a broad scope of training and education from the practical to the theological in evangelism and evangelistic preaching. Workshop speakers will include J.I. Packer, Ravi Zacharias and other well-

known scholars and theologians.

Beougher will teach a workshop on the history of evangelism, called "Lessons from Evangelists of the Past."

"We will be asking, 'What can we learn from those who have gone before?'" he said. "We will look at historical examples of evangelists from different backgrounds, like Billy Sunday, who came from a professional baseball background, to Charles Finney, who came from a legal background. We will look at their methods, which will hopefully tell people that evangelists in each age have been on the cutting edge of evangelism."

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: 35 padded oak pews, 14' long, and pulpit furniture. First Baptist Church, Liberty, Ky. Phone: (606) 787-7360 or 787-8217 after 5 p.m.

NEEDED: Full-time duplicating machine operator needed, M-F, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. \$6.83/hour. Benefits included. Apply in person at personnel services, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for FBC, Dayton, Ky. (across river from Cincinnati). Send resumé to: Marvin Flinchum, 307 5th Ave., Dayton, KY 41074-1105.

SEEKING: Knoxville Baptist Church (Crittenden Association) is seeking a part-time minister of youth to work with grades 6-12. Applicant should be available weekends and Wednesday evenings; should be able to lead youth-oriented Bible study and a variety of spiritual and recreational activities. Music ability a plus. Send resumé to: Bro. Dwight Parker, 2150 Dry Ridge-Mt. Zion Road, Dry Ridge, KY 41035.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and children. Calhoun Baptist Church needs an individual with a passion for young people to provide leadership for a cutting-edge ministry to the heart of McLean County, Ky. Send resumé to: Calhoun Baptist Church, PO Box 283, Calhoun, KY 42327.

SEEKING: Director of music for congregational and choir music. Please send resumé to: Donna Strader, 4830 Sonora Road, Hodgenville, KY 42748, or e-mail donnastrader@msn.com.

SEEKING: New traditional Baptist congregation is seeking an experienced minister for a part-time interim position in the Elizabethtown, Ky., area. If interested, please contact the Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 728, Elizabethtown, KY 42702.

SEEKING: Do you love sheep (people)? Castlewood Baptist Church is looking for the shepherd after God's own heart who will lead us with knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:15). Please send resumé for full-time pastor to: Pastor Search Committee, 124 Pajaro Way, Vallejo, CA 94591.

SEEKING: Rapidly growing church in Paducah, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister of education. Send resumé to: Mt. Zion Baptist Church, c/o Anthony Gilbert, 78 Owen Drive, Kevil, KY 42053.

SEEKING: Full-time youth/music minister for Hyattsville Baptist Church, Lancaster, Ky. Please send resumé with salary requirements to: Mike Bolin, Personnel Committee chairman, c/o Hyattsville Baptist Church, 1365 Richmond Road, Lancaster, KY 40444. (606) 792-4851 or 792-6610.

SEEKING: Youth director needed for First Baptist Church, Russellville, Ky. Interim, part-time position. Call (270) 726-2468.

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 minister of music to lead overall music ministry including traditional and contemporary worship services, handbells, all age-group choirs. Also interested in forming other music ministries. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 201 North Main St., Barbourville, KY 40906, Attn: Minister of Music Search Committee. You also may send your resumé to our e-mail address: fbc@barbourville.com.

SEEKING: Full-time ministry opportunity at St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville: church receptionist and secretary to the minister of music and worship arts. For more information, please call Dr. David Stancil at (502) 896-8882.

SEEKING: Kenwood Baptist Church is seeking qualified applicants for the following part-time positions: minister of music and minister of youth. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Kenwood Baptist Church, 6603 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40214.

SEEKING: Full-time maintenance specialist for the support services department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Duties include carpentry, plumbing, electrical, painting and groundskeeping functions. Competitive compensation package. Contact: administrative services department at (502) 244-6468.

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

SEEKING: New Hope Community Baptist Church, Jackson, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor. Church is dually aligned with KBC/KBF and SBC/CBF. Located in Breathitt County in beautiful southeastern Kentucky, our church is based on the priesthood of the believer and gender equity. Please send resumé, cover letter, statement of ministry and faith, and audio or video tape if available to: Pulpit Committee, 1621 Highway 30 W, Jackson, KY 41339.

SEEKING: Rineyville Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of pastoral care and music. Church is located in a rapidly growing rural community five miles west of Elizabethtown. Direct all correspondence and inquiries to RBC, PO Box 197, Rineyville, KY 40162, or Rineyville Baptist@msn.com.

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

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: Part-time children's minister for Farmdale 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.

Miami Baptist pastor ministers to Gonzalez family

By David Lema Jr.
SBC North American Mission Board

MIAMI (BP)—Perhaps it was because Misael Castillo came to the United States from Cuba when he was 6 years old as a political refugee or perhaps because he is a father with a 6-year-old at home. Whatever the reason, the Miami Baptist pastor has identified with the cause of the little “balserito” (“rafter”) Elian Gonzalez.

Castillo's involvement in the 6-year-old Cuban boy's situation developed gradually.

First came the total immersion of the city of Miami in the controversy. It is impossible to live in Miami and not be affected in some way by the controversy, Castillo said.

He chose to become actively involved after hearing news accounts of Joan Brown Campbell of the National Council of Churches saying she spoke for 56 million Christians who favor sending Elian Gonzalez back to Cuba.

Castillo, pastor of Iglesia Bautista Jerusalem, a growing Hispanic Southern Baptist church in Miami's Allapatah neighborhood, knew he was not among those to whom the NCC leader was referring. After meeting with some other evangelical pastors who felt the same way, Castillo decided it was time to take a public stand on the issue.

The first step was through a February news conference at the Cuban Patriotic Board headquarters. Castillo and several other pastors went on record opposing Campbell's views.

For the next two months Castillo simply followed the issue in the news.

Then Manuel Salabarría, a retired Presbyterian minister, invited Castillo to visit the house where Elian Gonzalez was staying and minister to the boy and his relatives.

After this initial contact, Castillo visited the home several times and got to know many of the family members. On April 13, when federal authorities announced they were going to get the child, Castillo and his wife, Wilma, spent the whole day ministering to the Gonzalez family and providing spiritual support.

No crisis erupted that day but the Castillos were able to pray and share the gospel with family members during the tense moments.

Castillo subsequently spent a great deal of time ministering to the family. He talked with them, listened to their hurts and prayed with them individually.

Asked whether Elian Gonzalez should stay in the United States or go back to Cuba, Castillo is unequivocal: “Elian should stay in the United States. The boy has legal grounds on which to stay.”

Castillo said he believes Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, is under the control of Fidel Castro's regime and has not been allowed to speak and act freely.

“The people in the United States believe that the child would continue a normal life once he is back in Cuba but this is not so,” Castillo continued. “In

communist Cuba, a father has no rights over his child. The state is in total control of the life of the individual in Cuba, and this includes all children.

“This child deserves the freedom that his mother died to give him,” he added.

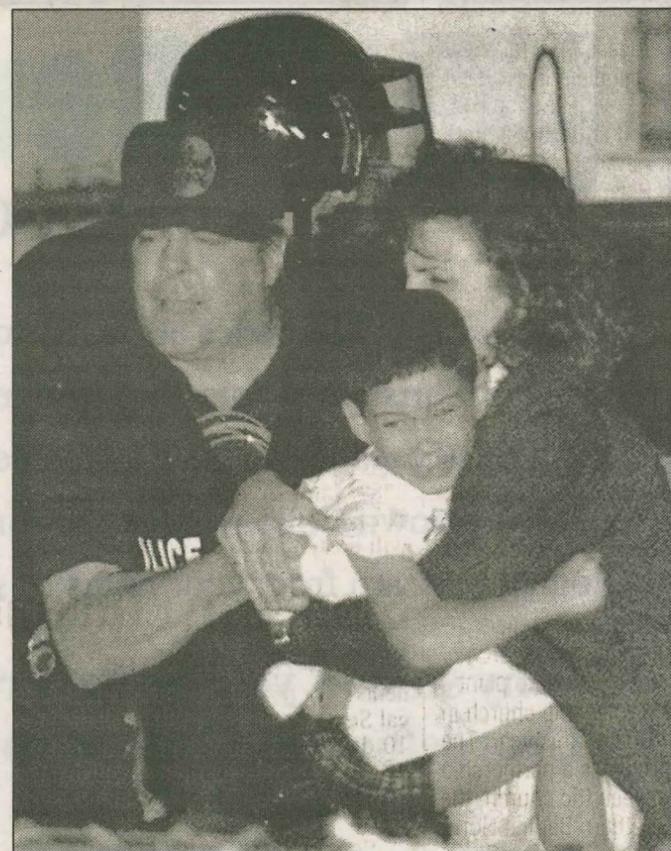
Christians must respond prayerfully to the complex situation, Castillo said. “This is spiritual warfare. We must respond with fervent prayer for God to glorify Himself in this situation, whatever the outcome. Many are crying out for justice in this situation, others are crying out for peace, others are crying out for unity in this community and in our country. We pray for God's will to be done and for us to have the wisdom to see it.”

Castillo said he expects the church to be present in the midst of crisis. “We need to be publicly involved in this affair since it involves our community,” he noted. “We need to offer our resources and demonstrate our love.”

Meanwhile, he added, “The people in the United States must be fully informed so that they can understand the facts and make the correct judgment. Most people are totally misinformed or simply ignorant of the facts underlying this case.”

Assessing the situation in the aftermath of U.S. marshals taking Elian from his Miami home early Saturday morning, April 22, Castillo said he felt heartbroken and sad.

“I believe that as Christians we are commanded to respect the authorities that govern us,” Castillo said. “Howev-



er, we are saddened by the decisions that were made, and in particular how they were executed.

“We are teaching our children that brute force and violence will always solve all the problems in the end,” he said, “and this is not good.”

CHILD CUSTODY Elian Gonzalez, the 6-year-old Cuban boy in the center of an international custody battle, is taken from the home of his Miami relatives in an early-morning raid April 22. Federal agents reunited Gonzalez with his father hours later. (Reuters/RNS photo)

Walk with Christ aids woman's victory over eating disorders

By Stacey Hamby
Missouri Baptist Word & Way

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)—For 15 years, she suffered the effects of an illness. And she didn't even know she was sick.

Stacy Ousley was 30 years old before she sought help for an eating disorder. At times both anorexic and bulimic, Ousley had successfully hidden her disorders first from her parents and then her husband.

“At age 15, I made a decision I was fat,” Ousley, now 37, recalled. “I wanted to look as attractive as I thought other girls were.” She weighed 125 pounds then, but by the time she graduated from high school, she was down to 100.

“Being a sports person, I started running and continuing in sports to lose weight,” she said. “From about 15 to 18, I basically starved myself, which is anorexia. I ate very little. I was 18 when I started bulimia—eating but purging my food.”

She realized at age 20 that she had an eating problem. But it wasn't until 10 years later—while she was in counseling and going through a divorce—that she shared for the first time about her eating disorders.

“It was later that I learned that anorexia and bulimia are emotional disorders,” she said. “The actions of not eating—or purging—are physical manifestations of an emotional disorder.”

The revelation itself did not bring changes. Ousley attributes her admission to her counselor and her gradual victories to Jesus Christ. Though she

had grown up in church and had been baptized at age 9, she said she didn't fully understand what Jesus had done for her on the cross until she was an adult.

“I had gotten baptized because I believed in God, but that didn't save me,” she said. “At age 27, I walked the aisle and got saved and baptized for real.” Ousley is a member of Concord Baptist Church in Jefferson City, Mo.

Her salvation experience marked the turning point for her eating disorder.

“I finally told my counselor about my problem because I was growing as a Christian, and I started to understand I didn't have to beat myself up for having a disorder,” she said. “As I grew spiritually, He was able to convict me of it. I could get help.

“Probably the most difficult thing I've ever done in my life is to say, ‘I've got this problem.’ I was afraid if people found out I had an eating disorder, they would reject me. They didn't.”

Once she admitted her problem, her counselor helped her take control of it. “I still struggle with having an eating disorder,” she acknowledged. “Just like I have to do things to stay fit physically, I have to do things to stay fit emotionally to keep the disorder from manifesting itself again.”

Ousley keeps herself physically fit because for years she has suffered chronic pain in her body, though doctors are puzzled about the reason.

While undergoing physical therapy, she became interested in strength training. Today, as a certified health fitness instructor through the American Col-

Where to turn for help

Stacy Ousley said family members who suffer from eating disorders usually follow a pattern.

She suggested the following signs to look for in a person suspected of having an eating disorder:

- Isolation—more frequent depressed moods.

- A student's grades may slip.

- Eating habits change—“Fussy, picky eating or moving the food around the plate instead of eating.”

- Obsessive about being fat when clearly the individual is not.

- Obsessive about exercise.

Ousley said the most important thing is to confront the family member in a loving manner.

“Lovingly confront the child or spouse,” Ousley said. “If somebody would have looked me straight in the

eye and said their concerns, plus ‘I love you too much to allow you to go through this and I want to help,’ then I don't know if I would have jumped on the recovery bandwagon right then, but maybe sooner than I did. My whole fear was rejection, and if somebody said, ‘I know you have this and I love you anyway,’ it might have made a difference.”

Ousley also suggested several places to call for help:

- Remuda Ranch Programs for Anorexia and Bulimia, (800) 445-1900, www.remudaranch.com.

- Eating Disorders Awareness and Prevention, (800) 931-2237, www.edap.org.

- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, (847) 831-3438, www.anad.org.

lege of Sports Medicine, she is a personal trainer for the YMCA in Jefferson City.

“I still have to manage my physical health and emotional health,” she said. “I may be successful in coping every day, but I'm always in recovery.”

“If I don't take care of myself emotionally, physically and spiritually, I'll be back where I was in 1992—all broken down.”

Ousley admitted she is not successful every day in her efforts to control her disorder.

“I still have tendencies to binge eat,” she said. “I have to stay strong spiritu-

ally through my prayer life. No. 1, God has to be my priority; I have to renew my heart and mind every day with truth. It's the deceit—‘I'm not worthy, no one could love me, I'm inadequate’—lies straight from hell—that fuel this and other disorders.”

Love and encouragement from Christian family and friends are key to helping her overcome her disorder.

“Any doubt or difficulty I have, I can remember they're going to love me anyway. That's how God loves. Regardless of anything—emotional problems, eating disorders, physical pain—God loves me anyway. That's my hope.”



Revival Teams

Georgetown College



Campus Ministries at Georgetown College continues its mission of providing ways for students to grow in Christian scholarship, commitment, fellowship and ministry. We are delighted to inform you of the ministry teams we have available to assist you in your ministry and growth. Each team is comprised of Georgetown College students from around the region and all of the teams are prepared to work with you as we learn from your ministry style and our shared experiences.

Why should you invite a revival team from Georgetown College to your church?

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It provides Georgetown College students the opportunity to experience ministry first hand, and

THEY

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GOD!

Georgetown students combine traditional values and creative ministries to lead worship.



For more information on scheduling a Georgetown College Revival team at your church, contact Scott Stafford in the campus ministries office at 502-863-8153 or via e-mail at Scott_Stafford@georgetowncollege.edu