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FOR THE RECORD

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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, May 10

Poll: Americans say they believe miracles happen

WASHINGTON—The vast majority of Americans believe God performs miracles, a Newsweek poll shows.

Nearly half of those asked said they personally have experienced or seen a miracle, according to the poll released in the May 1 edition of the weekly newsmagazine.

Eighty-four percent of Americans said God performs miracles and 79 percent said they believe the miracles detailed in the Bible actually occurred, the poll said.

About two-thirds of Americans (67 percent) said they have prayed for a miracle.

Sixty-three percent said they know someone who claims to have received a miracle and 48 percent said they have witnessed or experienced one themselves.

An overwhelming number of Christians—90 percent—said they believe in miracles, compared to 46 percent of non-Christians.

Ninety-eight percent of evangelical Protestants surveyed said they believe in miracles.

Eighty-seven percent of respondents said they think believers of other faiths can receive miracles.

A majority of Americans—77 percent—said they believe God or the saints heal or cure sick people who medical doctors have said had no chance to survive.

Seventy-two percent of those polled said people who face death in natural disasters or accidents can be saved by a miracle.

The poll, by Princeton Survey Research Associates, is based on a sample of 752 adults interviewed by telephone April 13-14 and had a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

The poll data was included in a story on miracles by religion editor Kenneth Woodward. The article was adapted from his new book "The Major of Miracles."

Kentucky volunteers headed to Bosnia

LOUISVILLE—Following an inspiring mission trip to Bosnia by a Kentucky Changers team in May 1999, two Kentucky Baptist mission teams have been called to return to the war-torn land this month and in June.

"It was so rewarding to allow God to use me in serving the Bosnian people," said P.D. Roller, a member of Stanford Baptist Church who served on the 1999 team. "There are many places that need help, but part of you stays there. That is why we must go back."

Several members will be returning for a second time, while most team members will be working in Bosnia for the first time.

"While rebuilding homes destroyed by the country's recent civil war, the teams will give the Bosnian people hope that they can rebuild their lives with

Jesus Christ," said Dwayne Doyle, Kentucky Baptist Convention missions education associate and former Southern Baptist International Mission Board two-year "Journeyman" missionary to Bosnia.

The first team, comprised mainly of college students along with Roller and his wife, Nancy, and several other returnees, will be in Bosnia starting next week. They will work on numerous construction and community development projects such as finishing a playground and leading backyard Bible clubs.

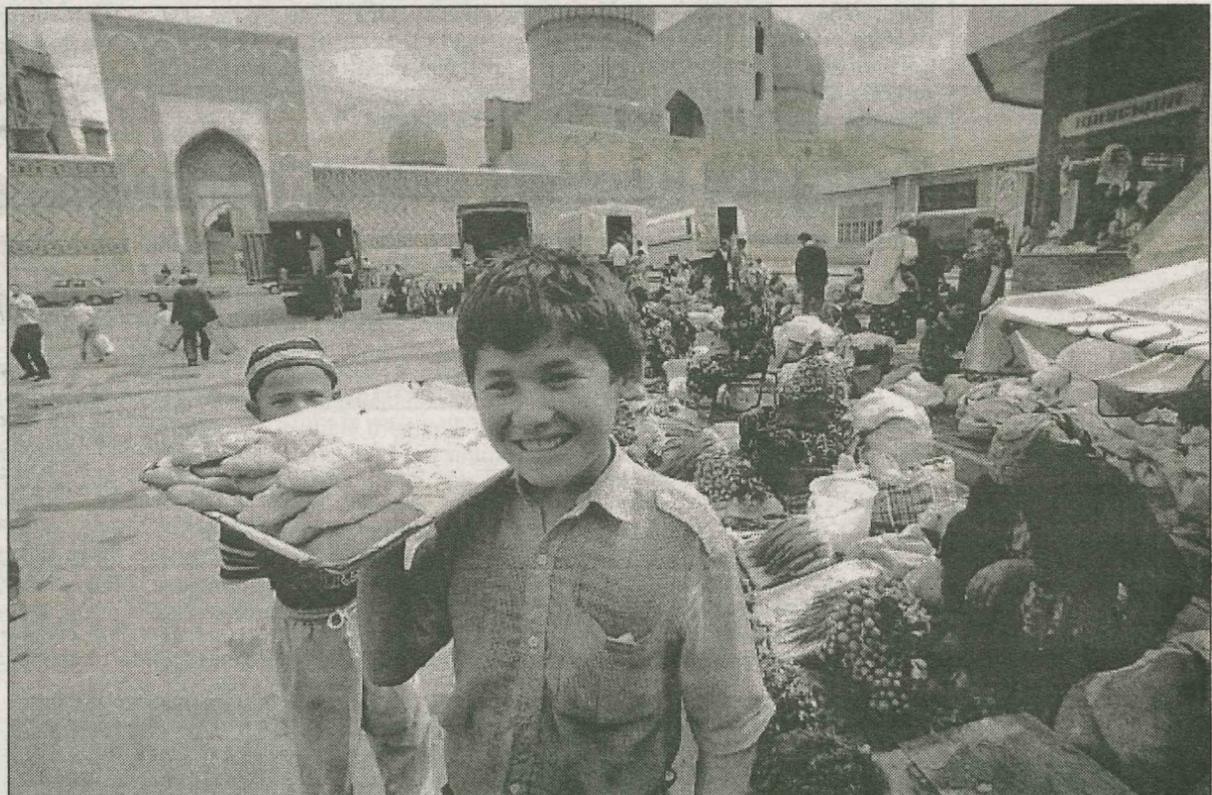
The second group will be in Bosnia June 5-16. Eleven team members from Lincoln County will represent Fairview Baptist Church, Calvary Baptist Church, McKinney Baptist Church and Mt. Salem Baptist Church.

Spiritual results in Bosnia do not

come quickly, Doyle said. "The teams plant seeds to help people move to a faith response in Christ. The Bosnian churches are still young, and Kentucky Baptists are still developing credibility among the people. The interaction with Kentucky Baptists allows the people to see that we are believers in Christ."

Both teams will work with Bosnian foremen and translators to complete projects. Projects include roofing homes, repairing floors and walls, and clearing war-damaged areas.

Team members have raised the funds for their trip and expenses but are seeking assistance for the costs of construction materials, translators and pay for the Bosnian foremen. For more information, call the Kentucky Baptist Convention Brotherhood department at (502) 244-6489 or toll-free (888) 254-5720.



TAJIKS For generations, young Tajiks in the Soviet republics were denied religious instruction. Today's children, like these boys selling potato turnovers in Samarqand, Uzbekistan, are again free to learn about religion. But for Tajiks, that religion is Islam. The Southern Baptist International Mission Board estimates there is only one Christian for every 50,000 Tajiks in Central Asia. (BP photo)

Hollywood producer has communication tips for Christians

By Cindy Kerr
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Christian media must take a cue from the Jewish Swiss pen maker who fashioned Hitler's Mont Blanc pen, an award-winning film, television and video producer told students recently.

That cue: subtlety.

Phil Cooke told how Hitler commissioned a pen maker to design the ultimate pen for a man of his stature. The pen maker did so, including a design at the pen's end. When the pen was held upright and viewed from the side, the design appeared as a snow-covered Swiss Alps peak that Hitler enjoyed from his winter home.

What Hitler never noticed as he car-

ried the pen in his pocket throughout the war: Had he looked down at the pen he would have seen that the mountain design formed the Star of David on the pen's tip.

"We don't have to tell the entire story of salvation and deliverance in every movie," said Cooke, whose work includes the film "The Omega Code" as well as documentaries and a series of ads for Southern Baptists.

Cooke cited a Billy Graham Association study that the average Christian was confronted with the gospel 17 times before accepting it.

"The Bible talks so much about planting seeds" and a part of planting seeds effectively involves learning to think like the world thinks, Cooke said.

Cooke addressed his field of media during a series of talks last month at

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. But his discussion of how Christians are to address the world in which they live could encompass church settings and secular professions.

Pointing to the apostle Paul's example at Mars Hill in Acts 17, Cooke used church historian and futurist Leonard Sweet's designation for today's society in encouraging Christians to understand the "pre-Christian" world.

Paul went where religious leaders weren't going, Cooke noted, and respected the beliefs he found there.

"We can't go in slamming Hollywood," Cooke said. Hollywood "is not a monolithic organization set out to destroy the family. They just want to make a few bucks, and they'll sell their grandma to do it."

Such a mindset is foreign to Christianity, but Cooke emphasized the need to find common ground with society, reminding Christians not to expect unbelievers to respect the authority of the Bible.

Instead he urged Christians to "live like Christ has called us to live, act like Christ has called us to act, but understand completely how the world thinks."

Christians should know society's traditions and beliefs through its books, movies and music just as Paul was familiar with Greek literature and poetry, Cooke said.

Jesus also knew what made the people of His day tick, Cooke said, noting that Jesus always was showing up where people were, be it at parties, the temple square or the marketplace.

□ See Hollywood producer ..., page 12

BF&M report, presidential election top 2000 SBC agenda

Southern Baptist Convention messengers will celebrate "Partners in the Harvest Worldwide" when they gather in Orlando, Fla., June 13-14 for the 2000 SBC annual meeting.

By Todd Starnes
Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—The election of a new president and possible revisions to the historic Baptist Faith and Message statement are on the agenda for next month's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

The event will be held June 13-14 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.

The theme of the meeting, "Partners in the Harvest Worldwide," is taken from Matthew 9:37-38. It ties into this year's 75th anniversary celebration of the SBC's Cooperative Program.

SBC President Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., is completing his second one-year term in office.

James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga., is the only announced candidate for the SBC presidency. He will be nominated by Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas.

Lee Porter, longtime SBC registration secretary, projected registration of 16,500 messengers. "A lot of Southern Baptists will take this opportunity to vacation in central Florida as well as attend the annual meeting," he noted.

SBC program highlights

Tuesday, June 13

- 8:20 a.m.: Call to order
- 9:55 a.m.: SBC Executive Committee report
- 10:55 a.m.: Presidential address by Paige Patterson
- 2:15 p.m.: Presidential election
- 2:40 p.m.: LifeWay Christian Resources presentation
- 8:25 p.m.: International Mission Board presentation

Wednesday, June 14

- 9:15 a.m.: Baptist Faith and Message study committee report
- 9:45 a.m.: Resolutions Committee report
- 11:35 a.m.: Convention sermon by Bailey Smith
- 8 p.m.: North American Mission Board presentation

In an effort to attract younger participants, the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board will host a youth rally June 11 at 7 p.m. in the convention auditorium. Evangelist David Nasser will speak and the contemporary group Foreverafter will lead in worship.

Messengers at the two-day SBC annual meeting will hear preaching, singing and reports from SBC entities as well as vote on business matters, including possible recommendations from the Baptist Faith and Message study committee.

Messengers to the 1999 SBC in Atlanta authorized Patterson to form a study committee to review the Baptist Faith and Message, a statement of Baptist beliefs drafted in 1925, rewritten in 1963 and amended two years ago to include an article on the family. The study committee's recommendations will be made public after its meeting this month.

Messengers will consider a 2000-01 Cooperative Program allocation budget totaling \$167,996,385. An increase of more than \$8.4 million over the current year's budget, the proposed budget will retain the same distribution percentages to 12 SBC entities.

Also on the agenda is a proposed change in the Annuity Board's mission statement and ministry assignments. In February, the SBC Executive Committee approved a proposal for the Annuity Board to expand its ministry assignments to include personal investing for Southern Baptist ministers and employees. The Annuity Board also would be allowed to offer institutional investment

management services for Southern Baptist organizations.

In addition to Patterson delivering the presidential message, the convention sermon will be preached by Bailey Smith, an Atlanta-based evangelist and former SBC president.

The two evenings of the annual meeting will feature missions presentations by the International Mission Board June 13 and the North American Mission Board June 14.

The week prior to the SBC, the annual Crossover evangelistic effort coordinated by NAMB and Florida Baptists, will penetrate metro Orlando with the gospel. Hundreds of teenagers and adults will participate in mission opportunities throughout the city.

The two-day schedule for the annual meeting means messengers wanting to introduce resolutions for consideration must do so before the start of the Tuesday afternoon session. Messengers who want to have resolutions considered are encouraged to send them to the Resolutions Committee before the annual meeting.

The registration area, at the main entrance to the Orange County Convention Center, will open at 4 p.m. on Sunday, June 11, and at 8 a.m. on the following Monday through Wednesday. It will close shortly after 9 p.m. each day.

Kentucky Baptists among nominees, appointees for SBC service

ORLANDO, Fla.—Five Kentucky Baptists are among people nominated this year for Southern Baptist Convention positions.

The nominees, recommended by the SBC Committee on Nominations, will be voted on during next month's SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

The Committee on Nominations is responsible for recommending people to serve on the SBC Executive Committee, mission boards, seminary boards and other denominational positions. Kentuckians serving this year on the 70-member Committee on Nominations are

Donald Rightmyer of Danville and Roger Skipworth of Elkton.

Among Kentuckians recommended for service, Steve Colyer is the only first-time nominee. Colyer, a member of Shively Baptist Church in Louisville, is nominated to serve as a trustee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Those being nominated for a second term of service are:

■ Preston Bailey, a member of Sevens Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, SBC Executive Committee.

■ Roy Faulkner, director of missions for Laurel River Association and a member of Lick Fork Baptist Church

in London, International Mission Board.

■ Ronald Felleme, pastor of Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington, Southern Seminary.

■ Charles Barnes, a member of Hurstbourne Baptist Church in Louisville, Southern Seminary.

The Committee on Nominations also is recommending Jerry Johnson for a second one-year term as chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business. Johnson, Southern Seminary's assistant director of development, is a member of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville.

SBC President Paige Patterson also

announced his appointments to the 2000 Committee on Committees and Resolutions Committee.

Kentucky Baptists named to the 70-member Committee on Committees are John Mackey, a member of Shively Baptist Church in Louisville, and Ruth Ann Williams, a member of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville. The committee is responsible for nominating members to serve on next year's Committee on Nominations.

No Kentuckians were named to this year's Resolutions Committee. Patterson appointed Hayes Wicker, pastor of First Baptist Church of Naples, Fla., as committee chairman.

SBC PREVIEW

■ **Pastors' conference.** June 11-12 at Orange County Convention Center. Theme: "Partners in the Harvest." Featured speakers: Former SBC presidents Jim Henry, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando; Jerry Vines, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.; and Adrian Rogers, senior pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn.; SBC presidential candidate James Merritt, senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Snellville, Ga.; and evangelists Jay Strack of Orlando and Ken Freeman of San Antonio, Texas.

■ **WMU annual meeting.** June 11-12 at Orange County Convention Center. Theme: "Dispelling the Darkness." Program highlights: Installing Wanda Lee as WMU's new executive director, election of a new national president and a Sunday evening missions celebration. Featured speakers: Robert Record, president of the North American Mission Board; Jerry Rankin,

president of the International Mission Board; and Audrey Morikawa, president of the Baptist World Alliance women's department.

■ **Ministers' wives conference.** June 13 at the Omni Rosen Hotel in Orlando. Theme: "Women of Influence." Speaker: Vonette Bright, co-founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. Luncheon tickets: \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. To order tickets, call (318) 752-6147.

■ **Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists.** June 11, 13 at Orange County Convention Center. Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. featuring Henry Blackaby, author of "Experiencing God," and Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark. Annual meeting June 13 in convention center room 303C. For more information, call president Jerry Drace at (901) 784-0087.

■ **Directors of missions' conference.** June 11-12 at the Radisson Universal Hotel in Orlando. Theme: "Your Association Empowered by Christ." Featured speakers: Author Calvin Miller of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.; Wanda Lee, national WMU executive director; leadership speaker John Maxwell of Atlanta; Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church in California; and Henry Blackaby, author of "Experiencing God."

■ **African-American fellowship.** June 11, 5 p.m. at Tangelo Baptist Church in Orlando and June 12 at 10 a.m. at the Omni Rosen Hotel in Orlando. Featured speakers: March Croston, pastor of East End Baptist Church in Suffolk, Va., and Joseph Lyles, president of the African-American Fellowship. Luncheon tickets are \$30. For reservations, contact Ethel Williams at (800) 999-3113, ext. 1423 or ethel.williams@imb.org.

■ **Church music conference.** June 8-10 at Wieuca Road Baptist Church in Atlanta. Theme: "Jesus Is the Song." Featured speakers: Robert Weber, author of "Music and the Arts in Christian Worship," and David Sapp, pastor of Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta. To register, contact www.sbcmc.org.

■ **Campus ministers' conference.** June 11-12 at Travelodge Main Gate East in Kissimmee, Fla. Theme: "The Season of Campus Ministry." Featured speakers: Arliss Dickerson, Baptist Student Union director at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, and Jon Tadlock, state BSU director in Virginia. For information, call Ronnie Brewer at (205) 345-3983 or register at www.student.org.

■ **Seminary luncheons.** June 14, 12:30 p.m. at Orange County Convention Center. Contact seminaries for reservations.

Louisville-area crusade adds prayer to plans

LOUISVILLE—They are used to deliver everything from junk mail to IRS forms. Now Louisville's zip codes are being used to deliver something else: prayer.

The prayer group for the Greater Louisville Tony Evans Crusade has announced plans to organize area churches by zip code to pray for people in the metro Louisville area.

The prayers are for reconciliation and peace for a city that's been racked in recent weeks by strife and controversy.

Nell Bruce, a member of Highview Baptist Church and chairperson for the crusade's prayer committee, said details about each zip code prayer group were announced at a citywide prayer meeting last month at Highview.

"We can't even begin to fathom all God will do when we are on our faces before His throne," Bruce said.

The groups will pray for the city of Louisville to be transformed into what God intended when He created the world, Bruce explained.

Bringing Christians together to take each others' burdens to the throne of God will go a long way toward reconciling people of different races and denominations, she added.

Both the citywide prayer meeting and the prayer group effort center around the upcoming crusade, June 19-21 at Louisville's Freedom Hall. But Bruce said she sees the prayer efforts continuing long after the event.

"In some way or the other this will continue," proclaimed Bruce, who said she sees the prayer groups as a way for churches to cooperate together in ministry.

Churches and individuals who wish to participate in the prayer groups can contact the crusade office at (502) 635-1004.

The Greater Louisville Tony Evans Crusade is an effort by more than 125 area churches to set a tone of reconciliation in the metro Louisville area.

Evans, a well-known author, preacher and leading national speaker will bring the messages at the crusade. Special guests will include contemporary Christian musical artists Kirk Franklin and Truth.

Organizers expect as many as 500 area churches to participate as partners in the June crusade, which will cross denominational and racial lines.

Somerset-area crusade unites churches

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

SOMERSET—Pulaski Baptist Association's recent "Celebrate Jesus 2000" crusade resulted in a modest number of conversions, but that hasn't stopped leaders from calling it a rousing success.

Mitch Bradshaw, associational evangelism director, said the crowd of 2,200 people who attended the first night of the April 16-19 event was the largest crowd ever to gather at the Center for Rural Development convention facility.

He said the significance of associational members cooperating outweighs the modest number of people—13—who accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

"How can you be disappointed when God's hand moves?" said Bradshaw, pastor of Okalona Baptist Church in Nancy. "We filled that place and we celebrated. I would love to report thousands of souls saved, but we still had revival. I think this was revival for the church."

Throughout Kentucky, Baptist associations are conducting Celebrate Jesus 2000 events in a concerted effort to reach more people with the gospel, according to Dan Garland, evangelism director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"We've got 32 associations that have involved themselves in Celebrate Jesus 2000," he said. Participation ranges from simultaneous church revivals and area-wide events like in Pulaski County to radio and TV ads and mass distribution of the Jesus video.

"It hasn't happened at quite that level before," Garland said.

The Somerset crusade marked a homecoming for speaker Richard Harris, vice president of the church planting division for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. A native of Nancy, he graduated from the now-defunct Nancy High School.

Director of Missions Malcolm Cheek said Harris' sensitivity to the large number of Christians in the audi-



CRUSADE MUSIC Joy and Jeff Earle of Atlanta lead singing during the Pulaski Baptist Association crusade in Somerset. The Kentucky Baptist Convention is offering financial help for many of the 32 associations participating in Celebrate Jesus 2000 events. (Photo courtesy of the Commonwealth Journal)

ence led him to adapt his message midway through the week. The speaker reviewed obstacles to revival, which sparked about 75 rededications to Christ the last two nights, he said.

While he had prayed for 1,000 conversions, Cheek said he also had asked God to bring churches together so they could reach non-Christians. With 53 of the 62 churches in the association participating, Cheek said he believes that prayer was answered.

"A lot of churches have seen what we can do," Cheek said. "Several have asked me if we were going to do this every year. They liked the idea of a large group coming together."

The missions director said the event also sparked interest among laypeople in becoming more active in witnessing and counseling.

The group trained nearly 200 counselors for the crusade, and one woman was able for the first time to lead a visitor in prayer to become a Christian, he said.

The rally also led to some dramatic conversions.

Before the second meeting began, a young woman got involved in a talk

with guest singers Jeff and Joy Earle of Atlanta.

"Who's your daddy?" Mrs. Earle asked.

"I don't have a daddy," she replied.

Later, after praying with a counselor, the young woman ran to tell the singer about her decision.

"Do you believe it? I got saved," she said.

"Joy said, 'You may not have a daddy here, but you have a heavenly Father who's watching out for you now,'" Cheek recalled.

There were also a number of conversions recorded at pre-crusade block parties sponsored by High Street Baptist Church in Somerset and First Baptist Church of Bronston to publicize the gathering, he said.

The day the crusade began a man visited a Kentucky Baptist church in Somerset, asking for food because his family was destitute. After asking what time church met, he learned of the crusade and asked if he could come.

That night, the man was the first one who answered Harris' invitation to receive Christ as Savior, the missions director said.

"A lot of churches have seen what we can do."

Malcolm Cheek, director of missions for Pulaski Baptist Association

Kentucky Brotherhood offering variety of youth camping options

LOUISVILLE—Father-son outings, a hiking and camping adventure, and traditional week-long camps are among the experiences offered to boys this summer through the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Brotherhood department.

Summer registration has opened for Mission and Adventure Camps 2000 for boys in grades 1-12.

"The camps will focus on adventure camping while teaching on-mission principles," said Dwayne Doyle, KBC Brotherhood department missions coordinator. "We are committed to providing a purpose-driven camp that leads boys to active participation and a relationship with Christ."

The camps are designed to compliment Royal Ambassadors, Challengers, Mission Kids and Woman's Missionary Union's Kids in Action materials.

Mission and Adventure Camps allow boys

to experience missions while developing skills and learning life lessons.

Courses will be offered in a variety of subjects, including horsemanship, athletic adventure, mountain biking, marksmanship, a challenge ropes course, outdoor adventure, camp crafts, basic water safety and swimming.

An on-site disaster relief team will assist camp RABRO for the summer. They will help with food preparation and will teach campers about disaster relief ministry.

Mission and Adventure Camps will be offered at three locations:

■ Mid-Continent College in Mayfield for boys in grades 4-8, June 12-16 or June 19-23. A father and son overnight event also will be hosted by the college June 16-17.

■ Camp RABRO in Bagdad, for boys in grades 1-8. The dates for grades 4-8 include June 26-30, July 10-14 and July 17-21. The dates for grades 1-3 are July 5-7, July 24-26

and July 26-28. Camp RABRO will also host two father and son overnights for grades 1-3, July 7-8 and July 28-29.

■ "Outdoor Leadership Challenge." The third camp option, June 30-July 5, is a specialized camp for boys in grades 9-12. It focuses on leadership development and adventure skills. Participants will take a two-day backpacking trip into the Red River Gorge. The camp will meet at Camp RABRO for initial training and then leave the following day for the hike.

The cost of camp is \$115 for boys in grades 4-8 and \$50 for boys in grades 1-3. The Calvin Fields Memorial Scholarship fund is available for boys unable to afford camp.

For registration and scholarship information contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention Brotherhood department at (502) 244-6489 or toll-free (888) 254-5720 or register online at www.kybaptist.org/camp.htm.

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

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Mullins affirmed

E.Y. Mullins was a great Baptist leader who lived under the Lordship of Christ and from the authority of Scripture. The recent attack on Dr. Mullins by the current president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is very disturbing. The attack stems from a seemingly blatant desire to rewrite Baptist history and revise Baptist theology.

Through the 20th century, Southern Seminary greatly nourished Kentucky Baptist churches. Mullins' grassroots identity with Baptists enabled him to be a theologian of the common person. He used his leadership, including the presidencies of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist World Alliance, to unite us—not divide us.

Mullins did not "infect" us (as he is accused of doing) with a disease of autonomous individualism by way of the basic Baptist doctrine of soul competency. He believed Christians were to share "Christ's passion for holy living and His abiding fellowship with God; and that the freedom from the law which Christ secures for us is not a freedom to break the law, but by the new spiritual power implanted in us, a freedom to obey it." He wrote this in his "The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression."

We need to remember Mullins' words and example that being a Christian has both social and individual implications. Christians have "soul competency" in that we are responsible and accountable for our life. No other person—whether seminary president, pastor or whoever—is to possess authority over our soul.

From our individuality in Christ, however, comes an "outward transformation." The quality of a believer's relationships—in personal, professional and social spheres—becomes an accurate index to evaluate the quality of a believer's progress in discipleship.

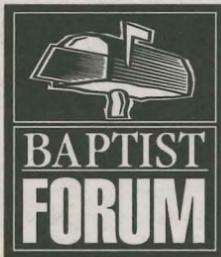
Leslie Hollon
Louisville

Personal vendetta

Thank you for your wonderful example of journalistic fairness by publishing the Associated Baptist Press article by former Western Recorder editor Mark Wingfield, "Mohler critiques Mullins and doctrine of soul competency." It was easy to see that Mr. Wingfield thoroughly researched both sides of the debate by quoting four individuals in opposition to Dr. Mohler's critique, and quoting zero individuals that espoused Dr. Mohler's views.

Tragically, Mark Wingfield's personal vendetta continues "deep in the heart of Texas." You would do Kentucky Baptists a favor if you would leave his biased opinions "deep in the heart of Texas" as well.

David Gifford
Mackville



Solid support for KBHC

At our last quarterly business meeting, Yellow Creek Baptist Church voted by unanimous consent to give solid support to Dr. Bill Smithwick and Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children in their discharging of a homosexual. We believe this agency's hiring policy is morally and biblically sound and with many other Kentucky Baptists, we applaud their implementation of it.

In addition to our prayers, we have forwarded to them a check for \$5,000 to aid in their defense. We call upon other Kentucky Baptist churches to make a gift to this worthy cause.

George Stuart, moderator
Wendell Romans, interim pastor
Yellow Creek Baptist Church
Owensboro

Free exercise ignored?

The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Therefore, if a children's home can't dismiss a homosexual employee, how is that not prohibiting free exercise?

It is written in the Bible that homo-

sexuality is an abomination (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Romans 1:26-27).

Janet Stayton
Harrodsburg

Sound or shallow?

As a minister of music, I read with interest the April 24 article that suggested shallow choruses are replacing biblical hymns in worship.

Admittedly, some of the praise and worship choruses used in worship today are theologically shallow. But I do not think there is anything inherent in the chorus genre that makes them so.

Many of today's choruses are paraphrases from the Psalms or other parts of Scripture. These can be of great aid in memorizing Scripture. One of my favorite choruses—"Seek Ye First"—comes straight from the lips of Jesus. Nothing theologically shallow there!

I agree that "we are what we sing" and that we need to strive for more biblical and theological substance in our musical worship. But I don't believe praise and worship choruses are innately any less scriptural than traditional hymns. Either musical genre can be theologically sound or shallow.

Steven Fitts
Louisville

Thanks for support

Northern Kentucky Baptist Association would like to thank everyone who supported House Bill 70, which allows religious groups to have a choice in who uses their facilities. We offer special thanks to the Kentucky Baptist Convention Public Affairs Committee, associations who helped and Kentucky Baptists who called their legislators to urge support of House Bill 70.

House Bill 70's purpose is to honor and respect the biblical beliefs of religious organizations in regard to what groups use their facilities. Even though the bill passed the House and Senate and was vetoed, there were enough votes to override the veto. This will have a positive effect on KBC assemblies as well as associational and church facilities.

Rick Robbins, director of missions
Northern Kentucky Baptist Association

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Senior adults have reason to celebrate

Comedian Bob Hope said, "If I had known I was going to live this long, I would have taken better care of myself." That's a line many of us can identify with today as we become part of an aging population.

According to U.S. census figures, the number of people over age 65 in the United States has grown to more than 35 million from only three million in 1900. Average life expectancy, which was only 47.3 years in 1900, had increased to 76.5 years by 1997. The 1990 census reported 37,306 centenarians in the U.S. Current projections estimate that number will reach 72,000 this year and 834,000 by 2050.

The good news in these statistics is that we are, on the whole, aging well. We are staying healthy and vital at increasingly older ages.

I recently had the opportunity to observe this firsthand as a guest speaker

at two senior adult conferences sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department. I was impressed with the handsome senior men and beautiful women who attended the conferences in Owensboro and Hopkinsville. They were very active and involved in the worship, workshops and fun time with illusionist David Garrard.

There still are three conferences to come—Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, May 11; First Baptist Church of Whitesburg, May 16; and Campbellsville Baptist Church, May 18. The conference is from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at each site.

"God wants to use you to make a difference" has been the theme of my message to senior adults. Psalms 71:16-23 has a wonderful message for all of us, but especially for seniors.

First, God will strengthen you to

make a difference (v. 16). The strength flows through our personal relationship to God through Jesus Christ. Reduced responsibilities provide the opportunity to spend much time with the Word and in prayer.

Second, continue to learn and declare His wondrous works (v. 17). Record what God has taught you so you can declare it to future generations.

Third, be a mentor to future generations and leave a legacy of faith. "Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed Thy strength unto this generation, and Thy power to every one that is to come" (Psalm 71:18). Mentors are willing to share life experiences and ask the right questions about relationships, attitudes and what God is teaching them.

Fourth, seniors can make a difference by personal preparation for worship and intercession for each person to truly experience God in worship (vv. 22-23). This will be great preparation for heaven (Revelation 5:11-13).

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention



Bill Mackey

FAMILY

Parents' actions, attitudes teach financial values

By Jeremy White



Parents frequently wonder, "How and when do I start teaching my children how to handle money?"

The truth is that you already have started. Children primarily learn about money from two sources: their parents and their own experiences. Parents start by saying no when their two-year-old whines for candy in the checkout aisle. Then, parents must instruct not only with words, but with their own financial actions of saving, limiting debt, waiting, comparing prices and discerning needs from wants.

Our culture and advertising teach kids to live for today and to define life by what and how much one has. Christian parents must teach attitudes embodied in the fruit of the Spirit, not just "teach money."

When you instruct kids to wait and save for that special toy, you are teaching patience and self-control. When you teach giving to God, you really are teaching faithfulness and kindness.

Children also learn from handling their own money from allowances or jobs. The allowance debate rages in many circles. Some say an allowance, without tying it to specific chores, fosters the "something for nothing" attitude. Others say tying a regular payment to household chores builds an "I-need-to-be-paid-for-everything" attitude.

I think an allowance is fine to teach kids how to begin handling money when they are too young to flip hamburgers or babysit. An allowance is not to keep them from bothering you at the mall for stuff or a bribe to get them to behave. Give children an allowance as a benefit of living in the family. Each family member shares in the responsibilities (chores) and benefits of the family.

Here are a few other tips:

■ Don't give advances on allowances (the beginning of credit habits).

■ Use a simple model for younger children, such as a third each for giving, spending now and saving.

■ Set easily attainable savings goals, not a \$500 computer on an allowance of \$1 per week.

■ Use advertisements to teach discernment. What are they trying to get you to buy? How are they trying to get you to buy it?

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. See his weekly financial tip on his Internet Web site at www.consultcpa.com.

Teens must make conscious effort to nurture friendships

Q: What can we do to help our daughter make friends at school? She has changed schools twice in high school because the other teens were not friendly to her. Now she wants to change a third time. Are contemporary youth just too busy to have friends?

Today's youth are busy and somewhat disconnected.

However, most teens have a few good friends. Since I do not know your daughter, I cannot be specific about what blocks her from making friends.

Some of the common complaints I hear from other teens about people they dislike may or may not fit your situation. I do not intend to insinuate that any of these apply to your daughter, but if they do, address them first. Adolescents dislike people who act self-righteous, get upset easily, make sarcastic remarks, dress weird, appear unkempt, bully others, gossip, betray confidences, let other people use them, belittle people who are different, never have anything to say, never go places or don't get involved.

If you have not done so, talk confidentially with her teachers about this problem. Do they see any actions on your daughter's part that might push away possible friends? Ask them to be frank and direct.

Finally, get her involved in activities with other teens. Is she active in a church youth group? Can she sing, go on mission trips or participate in organized sports? Urge her to take part in at least two school clubs or activities. When she is with other teens, help her know how to listen and to respond appropriately. Counsel your daughter in sharing her thoughts and feelings as well as listening to the others at a deeper level. Assist her in communicating with a sense of humor. Remind her to be boldly honest without being hurtful. Be as wise as a serpent, but as harmless as a dove.—*Wade Rowatt*

Q: I serve on a ministry team with other single adults. One other team member and I have diametrically opposite personalities. One of us has the passion, the other the organizational skill. Now, through a series of e-mails, we have offended one another. What do you suggest?

The details of your dispute are not as important as your need to reconcile. The Bible is clear: The world will know we are Christians by our love (John 17:23).

You mention a couple of important points. First, communication happens best face-to-face. E-mail is easily misconstrued. There is no opportunity for voice inflection, facial expression, eye contact or any other physical signs of active listening. Second, you mention personality differences. God has a way of bringing together the most diverse individuals (see 1 Corinthians 12) to show that God is ultimately in charge (Romans 12:3-8).

Scott Peck, in his book, "The Different Drum," talks about the stages of building community. They are: Pseudo-community (politeness, surface conversation); chaos (we're different; therefore I must change you); emptiness (see Philippians 2:6-8); and finally, community (intimate sharing, bonds that transcend differences). In church life, we often want to move quickly from stage one to stage four. But the second and third steps are essential. To learn to appreciate the differences, we must recognize the multi-faceted grace of God in the diversity of those He has brought together.

Sit down with your colleague one-on-one and take turns in active listening. You might need a trusted, mature, third-party Christian to be present, who can help the two of you repair bridges that have been damaged. Don't give up. The cause of Christ is the ultimate goal.—*James Stillwell*

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.



Politics still alive and active in SBC life

Do denominational politics still play a role in the post-controversy Southern Baptist Convention of the 21st century? Surely not.

Then again, a close look at this year's presidential appointments and Committee on Nominations report indicates political favoritism remains very much alive and active.

For starters, Paul Pressler is being nominated to a five-year term on the board of the Baptist World Alliance. Does Pressler, who helped orchestrate the SBC's conservative shift of the past 20 years, have the right to serve in a place of prominence in Baptist life? Certainly.

But how many denominational leadership posts does one Baptist layman need? Beginning in 1984, Pressler served seven years on the powerful SBC Executive Committee. One year after completing that assignment, he was elected as a trustee of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, a position that concludes this year. Now, without any time lapse, he is being nominated to serve on the Baptist World Alliance board. If he completes the traditional pair of five-year terms there, he will have held influential denominational posts 25 out of 26 years.

Why is that a problem? For one thing, conservative leaders of the past 20 years—including Pressler—frequently have criticized the good-old-boy political favoritism of the pre-1979 SBC. They claim that a handful of denominational leaders held tight reins on the appointment and nomination process.

But one person being named to position after position for 20-plus years? In a denomination with nearly 16 million members and a very limited number of slots for denominational service, there is no good reason to hand those roles to the same individual over and over.

Pressler's previous nominations in 1984 and 1992 also raised concerns. Charles Fuller, chairman of the 1984 Committee on Nominations, described Pressler's nomination as "the nomination of the report," adding that "it has caused much interest and reaction."

Eight years later, when Pressler was nominated as an IMB trustee, several conservative leaders privately encouraged him to decline the nomination, fearing his

election would revive concerns about too much control in the hands of a few people. Pressler refused to withdraw his name and was elected despite a challenge on the convention floor.

Now another eight years later, it's doubtful that Pressler's latest nomination will cause much of a ripple. That's unfortunate. Political considerations aside, it's past time for SBC leaders to seek to be as inclusive as possible in all denominational nominations and appointments.

But that doesn't appear likely. In addition to Pressler's nomination, SBC President Paige Patterson named Pressler's wife, Nancy, to this year's Resolutions Committee.

In his 1999 book, "A Hill on Which to Die," Pressler expressed concern that "under liberal domination of the SBC, it was not unusual for liberal husbands and wives to serve simultaneously on different boards." Apparently, the same is true for conservatives.

Other BWA nominees with strong political overtones include Jim Richards, executive director of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, a new conservative convention opposed to the direction of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and Jonathan Falwell, son of conservative Baptist activist Jerry Falwell.

That's not to suggest that all the political maneuvering in Baptist life comes from only one perspective. A group calling themselves "mainstream" Baptists recently organized in Atlanta. Their stated objectives include influencing votes at state conventions to prevent "fundamentalists" from gaining control.

Affirming the moderate group's goals, David Currie, executive director of Texas Baptists Committed, said, "All church work is political. It's about connections and networks."

The fact is Christ-honoring church work doesn't have to be political. It is enough to seek the most qualified individuals for positions of leadership while striving to be inclusive and avoiding political paybacks.

As Southern Baptists gather next month to focus on being "Partners in the Harvest Worldwide," the only effective way to go forward is in a spirit of harmony and trust. There's no excuse to do otherwise.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

What if Christians really tithed?

By Doug Strader

Then He said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Matthew 22:21)

Financing the ministry of the church would be simple if God's people would obey the words of Jesus. However, many people today might ask: What is God's money? Although Jesus did not explicitly command a tithe, He knew the Old Testament standard was a tithe, thus His command to give to God what is God's.

I always have been taught that everything I have belongs to God; He just permits me to manage some of His possessions during my lifetime. I also have been taught that I should give at least a tithe (10 percent) of everything I earn back to Him through the church.

Actually, almost all Christian denominations teach tithing as the way to support the ministry of the church. But that is not the practice of the majority of Christians in the United States today, according to the George Barna Research Group. They recently did a sur-

vey and found that only about one in 10 evangelical Christians tithe through their church.

What would the result be if all Christians tithed? I could possibly calculate the financial results, but I do not know of anyone who could calculate all of the spiritual results of such a practice in the Christian community.

According to the latest records available, there are 552,144 resident members in our Kentucky Baptist churches. That does not mean they all attend their church regularly. In fact, some of them never attend their church services.

Records also reveal our Kentucky Baptist churches received \$210,972,909 in undesignated receipts last year. Sociologists tell us the average family size in Kentucky is 3.1 people. Therefore, there would be approximately 178,110 families who are members of our churches. Using the above figures, the per capita giving by Kentucky Baptists last year was \$382.09, and the gifts per family totaled \$1,184.50.

Based on those figures, if Kentucky Baptist families are tithing, they made an average of \$11,845 last year. But

statistics show the average family in Kentucky made more than three times that amount last year.

It appears then that our churches are receiving about one-third of a tithe from their members. If that is true, Barna's research may be on target with the figures of one in 10 members tithing through their church. Kentucky Baptist churches are doing many wonderful ministries, but what could we be doing if all Kentucky Baptists were faithful to give to God what belongs to God?

What are some practical steps our churches could take to increase the number of tithers?

- Be proactive in developing and implementing a financial stewardship education strategy for church members.

- Use envelope services to mail members their offering envelopes monthly or quarterly.

- Offer personal and family financial money management courses.

- Begin discussion groups using books such as "At Ease" by John and Sylvia Ronsvalle, which is written to encourage church members to be at ease in discussing money.

Implementing these steps would not solve the problem of financial stewardship in the new millennium, but it would be a good place to begin.

Doug Strader is director of the Kentucky Baptist stewardship department



BAPTISTS

Wade: Texas Baptists unlikely to leave SBC

By Dan Martin and Ken Camp
Baptist General Convention of Texas

DALLAS (ABP)—Texas Baptists' top executive says he doesn't foresee the moderate-leaning state organization cutting ties with the conservative-led Southern Baptist Convention.

"I am a Southern Baptist," said Charles Wade, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. "I intend to be a Southern Baptist. The BGCT intends to cooperate with the SBC. We will continue to work with them in any way we can."

Wade met for more than three hours April 19 with 69 of the state's 72 directors of missions, who had requested the meeting with the new executive.

Wade, explaining the DOMs were asked to e-mail questions for discussion prior to the meeting, said: "The biggest question has to do with where we are headed with the SBC."

The state convention has taken steps in recent years to distance itself from the national denomination, most significantly by offering alternative funding channels that do not funnel church gifts into the SBC's unified budget. A break-away state convention has been organized in response by conservatives pledging loyalty to the SBC and support for its current direction.

Despite tensions between the BGCT and SBC, Wade said, "I am going to work to try to help Texas Baptists work with anyone who wants to work with us and to do God's work. I never see a time when we will say we are no longer Southern Baptist. I do not foresee us doing that."

Wade disputed charges that the BGCT is not cooperating with the SBC. "We send more than 20 percent of the dollars received by the SBC and then get accused of not trying to be partners," he said. "That is ludicrous. That is a red herring to threaten and frighten the churches."

'Mainstream' Baptists form nationwide network

By Marv Knox
Texas Baptist Standard

ATLANTA (ABP)—Southern Baptists opposed to the potential "fundamentalism domination" of churches and state Baptist conventions have formed the Network of Mainstream Baptists to strengthen their cause.

Slightly more than 100 representatives from 15 states, including Kentucky, participated in a "mainstream Baptist consultation" in Atlanta April 25-26.

They adopted the label "mainstream" to signal their affinity for what they call historic or traditional Baptist beliefs. Participants disavowed any interest in forming either an alternative national convention to oppose the SBC or a political apparatus to recapture control of the SBC.

"We have no desire to create a massive organization," stressed John Baugh, a Houston layman and leader of the mainstream movement. "We could never clean up the SBC, so why waste our time and effort?"

Instead, participants expressed a desire to prevent their churches and state conventions from following the rightward political/theological path taken by

He also replied to questions about whether he is leading Texas to affiliate with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, which he and other moderates helped create in 1991, and if Texas is moving to form its own national convention.

"You asked me, 'Are you going to lead us into the CBF?'" Wade said. "My answer is 'No.' I am not hired to be a promoter of the CBF."

"I helped get it started. I support it. I give some of my offerings to the CBF, but the CBF does not want state conventions."

Wade said he also is not pushing for establishment of the Baptist Convention of the Americas, an idea first surfaced in 1998 by Baylor University Chancellor Herb Reynolds.

"I have been saying all along that the last thing we need is a new convention," Wade said. "I haven't seen any great groundswell of churches to sign up for it."

While Wade said he intends to help Texas Baptists work with the SBC, he admitted the ultimate decision is not his. "The BGCT will vote whatever it chooses to vote," he said. "I have a vote but I do not have the final word."

He added that he also "cannot control what the SBC leaders will do."

"I have met with them and am open to meeting with them again," Wade said. "I am going to do whatever I can to help us work together better."

Wade said he has asked the chairman of an SBC committee studying the denomination's Baptist Faith and Message statement not to change language in its preamble stating that the document is not a creed.

He said he also urged him not to use the word "inerrancy" in the document's article on the Bible. "Many of us do not use it. I think it is a political word. I love the Bible and the God of the Bible too much to use the word. Many of you might love the God of the Bible so much

you do use it."

But by including it in the confessional statement, "they would be writing off a whole host of loyal Baptists," he said.

Wade said he is personally troubled by those who accuse him of not believing the Bible.

He referred to a controversy shortly before he took office when he defended the BGCT action in reaffirming the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement rather than the version amended by the SBC in 1998 which now includes an article on the family.

Wade said Texas Baptists opposed the SBC family article because it was not biblical enough but were accused of not believing the Bible for their action.

Wade said he "believes the Bible is the inspired Word of God from the first word to the last."

"I believe in the virgin birth, that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, that He was killed by hanging on a cross. He did it for our sin by His own free will and because it was the will of the Father. He was buried, He arose, He ascended, and He is coming again some day. I don't know when and I am suspicious of those who say they do."

Wade said charges that the BGCT accepts abortion and homosexuality seem to have diminished but several people had asked him to state his own views on those issues.

"I have always been against abortion," he said, adding that "years ago" he made a speech at a BGCT annual meeting opposing abortion but allowing exceptions in the case of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother. "I accept those exceptions."

Regarding homosexuality, Wade said, "I have always been against homosexuality. I believe gay marriage is wrong and that homosexual behavior is sinful." He also said that if churches condemn the practice of homosexuality, they need to offer ministries to help homosexuals leave that lifestyle.

the SBC during the past two decades.

"Mainstream Baptists' central objective is to respond to the need of more than 10 million highly vulnerable fellow mainstream Baptists who are subject to being drawn into the juggernaut of fundamentalism," said Baugh, a member of Tallwood Baptist Church in Houston.

The mainstream movement exists to help like-minded Baptists "achieve certain purposes," Baugh said. These include plans to:

- "Educate others regarding Baptist issues" currently confronting churches and state conventions.

- "Get votes at state conventions" to prevent "fundamentalists" from gaining control.

- "Preserve Baptist principles," such as the priesthood of all believers, the autonomy of the local church, ethical decision-making and separation of church and state.

- "Provide leadership" to churches and state conventions to help direct the causes and objectives of mainstream Baptists.

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Coordinator Daniel Vestal, who attended several sessions of the consultation, offered "a positive word about the forma-

tion of mainstream organizations" in the states.

SBC President Paige Patterson described the gathering as "another (John) Baugh-financed effort to control the Southern Baptist Convention," noting that "they are about as mainstream as a small creek is to the Mississippi River."

Patterson said the group has "a moderate agenda and that's not where most Baptists are. I question the integrity of their name. They even admit they are promoting their moderate views."

The proposal to create the mainstream network was presented by Bob Stephenson, a layman from First Baptist Church in Norman, Okla.

Stephenson's original recommendation called for creation of the "Council of Mainstream Baptists," but participants expressed concern that the notion of a council might lead to more of a convention-like organization than they desired.

Participants settled on "Network of Mainstream Baptists" to indicate the loose, voluntary nature of the organization. All participating state organizations will have two representatives on the national network.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

NAMB extends divorce policy to chaplains

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board have broadened the agency's divorce policy to include chaplains applying for endorsement by the SBC Chaplains Commission.

The change was approved during the agency's May 3 meeting at NAMB's Broadcast Communication Center in Fort Worth, Texas, where trustees also appointed 33 missionaries and endorsed 24 chaplains.

NAMB's policy on divorce previously applied to those people appointed and approved as missionaries. The policy now applies to chaplains seeking SBC endorsement after May 3.

The policy states that "divorced people will rarely, and only under unusual circumstances, be appointed, approved or endorsed for mission service." Sexual unfaithfulness and desertion are cited in the policy as biblical rationale for possible divorce exceptions.

Trustee Kelley Burris of Virginia Beach, Va., chairman of the task force that brought the recommendation to the full board, acknowledged the policy is a sensitive issue. But, he said, the action is necessary in order to "apply biblical principles consistently to missionaries and chaplains alike."

NAMB President Robert Record told Baptist Press, "The key goals here were to make sure what we do is biblical, and that we're consistent. Although our society has abandoned biblical standards, we are committed to holding to those standards."

Another new provision of the policy is that it extends the remarriage restriction to the wife of future candidates seeking appointment, approval or endorsement to a pastoral role. Men who have experienced a biblical divorce will be considered for a pastoral role only if they have not remarried. The policy allows for divorced people to serve in a number of non-pastoral roles "if the divorce is determined to be biblically based."

Trustee Jesse Lott of Morganton, N.C., asked if the policy applied to Mission Service Corps volunteers. MSC is for adult volunteers who commit to serve at least 20 hours per week and at least four months in an approved ministry position.

Burris said the divorce guidelines are applied to MSC volunteers serving in a pastoral role, but not to other ministry positions.

Nate Adams, NAMB's vice president responsible for volunteer programs, told trustees that MSC "can be an alternative area of service where people can give their lives in mission service whether they qualify for a pastoral role or not."

The revised policy passed with one dissenting vote.

Former Boyce student files suit against Southern

LOUISVILLE—A former student at Boyce College has filed suit against Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, charging that he was subjected to repeated verbal abuse by a Boyce College professor.

Seminary officials have filed a response, denying the charges and calling for the case to be dismissed. Seminary attorney Stephen Pitt said Southern officials are taking the case seriously "although we do think the claims are entirely groundless."

The lawsuit comes on the heels of a suit filed last fall by a seminary student who was suspended after being accused of cheating. The seminary won initial rulings in that case earlier this year and hopes to have the case dismissed.

"Unfortunately," said seminary President Al Mohler, "with an institution this size and a society this litigious, it takes absolutely nothing to get something before a court."

The latest case was filed in Jefferson Circuit Court on behalf of Floyd Douglas McKnight, a Boyce student for approximately seven months—from August 1998 until early 1999. The suit claims Boyce associate dean David DeKlaven called McKnight "various profane and lewd terms and descriptions."

The suit states McKnight "discontinued his studies due to mental and emotional stress and suffering that he was enduring."

Responding to the charges, Mohler said, "We have investigated the matter thoroughly and I stand behind this professor. We categorically deny the accusations against the professor. We're confident the seminary will be affirmed by the court."

I'm a partner.

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KENTUCKY

Henderson & Owensboro pastors seek nude dancing ban

"We want to make sure we have something that will stand up in court."

Henderson County Judge-Executive Sandy Watkins

By Jamie Neal
Henderson Gleaner

HENDERSON—Several church leaders last week asked Henderson Fiscal Court to throw a blanket on nude dancing in Henderson County.

The six pastors, from Airline Baptist, Faithway Baptist, Mount Zion General Baptist and Beals Pentecostal in Henderson County and Trinity Baptist and Church of God of Holiness in Owensboro, asked the court to ban any adult entertainment businesses from operating in the county.

Their protest was aimed at the recent opening of Uncle Sam's, a nightclub on U.S. 41-Alternate that includes a room set up as a strip club. The club's owner, Charles W. Shourds Jr. of Beaver Dam, said in April he planned to offer nude dancing under the control of SMI Private Club.

Shourds could not be reached for comment.

"I wonder why our county court isn't addressing this very issue—nude dancing," said Ray Werline, pastor of Airline Baptist.

Nude dancing exploits women and has the potential to lead to crime and

sexual addiction, Werline said.

And "public nudity is wrong in the Bible," Trinity Baptist Pastor Jeff Butler told the court.

But County Attorney Charlie McCollom said that the club is supposed to be a private establishment, where members have to pay a fee.

"It's a subterfuge, but we can't prove it," McCollom said.

"It doesn't make a difference if it's private or unprivate, it's still wrong," Butler said.

County Judge-Executive Sandy Watkins told Butler, "We've been trying to come up with a way to totally ban it."

But such ordinances in Kentucky have been struck down by courts because they violate the freedom of expression protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, he said.

Watkins said regulations that have been allowed virtually say, "Put a Band-Aid over your breasts and a pastie somewhere else and keep on dancin'."

Even the City of Henderson's 1993 ordinance on strip clubs, upon which the pastors based their request, only strictly regulates—but does not ban—the practice, he pointed out.

"We want to make sure we have something that will stand up in court," Watkins said.

"I guess what it boils down to is who's law we live by—God's law or man's law," Butler said.

But Ralph Chaney of Beals Pentecostal Church said that even though he wants the strip clubs prohibited, fiscal court can't do anything as long as

the courts are protecting the practice.

McCollom suggested to the group of pastors that they put pressure on those who attend the strip club if they want to take action right now.

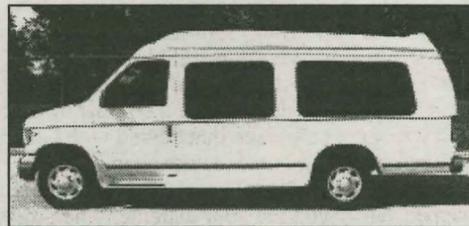
"Tell them it's wrong," he said. "Maybe they don't know."

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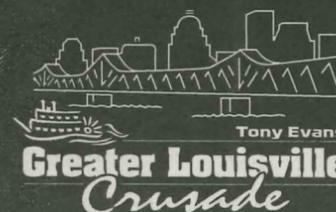
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Columbine survivor tells Shelbyville crowd of God's grace

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

SHELBYVILLE—A former Columbine student who survived last spring's shootings at the Littleton, Colo. high school drew a stark contrast between good and evil as she recently described the physical appearance of the two attackers.

Speaking to about 300 people at First Baptist Church of Shelbyville April 29, Heidi Johnson said she believes something greater than Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold possessed them.

"And it wasn't Christ," said Miss Johnson, 17. "When I saw Eric's face and looked into his eyes, he (Eric) wasn't there."

Despite close proximity to five students who died in the tragedy, Miss Johnson wasn't physically injured. She crouched under a table after a teacher warned a student had been shot. After seeing a bomb go off, "I knew it was no longer a prank."

Immediately, she prayed, "Lord, I don't know what's going to happen, but I pray for your protection."

Seated in the center of the room, she recalled how the two killers entered the library and said, "Every one of you, get ready to die."

She kept praying as they circulated, seeing their boots and black trench coats as they walked by her table. When they saw her praying, they said something to her but didn't fire their weapons.

Eventually she was able to flee the library and was reunited with her father.

"I know God's grace is real," said Miss Johnson, who since has transferred to a private, church-sponsored school.

She and her father, Barry, travel two to three weekends a month speaking about the lessons of Columbine. She was among the speakers at a one-year anniversary prayer vigil that attracted 15,000 people.

Also accompanying her to Shelbyville were her mother, Kathy, and their pastor, Billy Epperhart of Trinity Christian Center. They were invited by the Shelbyville church's evangelism committee.

After a brief description of the tragedy, Miss Johnson shifted to an evangelistic message, reflecting her participation in a campaign to post the Ten

Commandments in schools.

Referring to Christ's command in Matthew 28:18-20 to make disciples, she said that because it was the last thing Jesus said on earth, it must have been important. Yet countless people "don't have a clue" about Jesus or His sacrifice, she said.

"When you experience death like I did, you realize how precious life is," she said. "If you're not right with Jesus Christ, today is the day of salvation."

"How often do we let people pass by every day we could have shared the gospel with, but were scared?" she asked. "I get passionate about this because I believe revival is coming, but it's only going to come when we start standing up. He's going to pour out His Spirit, but first we have to ask."

Barry Johnson called his daughter's survival "incredible."

Recalling how it took hours to find his daughter in the midst of chaos, he compared that pursuit with God reaching out to restore people's lives.

"How do you put into words when you see your daughter when she could have so easily been taken away that day?" said Johnson, who choked up midway through his message.

He also credited faith for her emotional healing, saying some students who didn't see nearly as much are in counseling and taking medication to cope with the after-effects.

Miss Johnson also addressed that issue during a question-and-answer session. A woman from Louisville asked how the happy-looking teen dealt with such a horrible situation. "There's no way I could be doing what I'm doing without" the Lord, she replied. "It's by the power of God I'm able to do this."

Epperhart noted that many mental health professionals attribute her cheerful outlook to a form of denial. But the reality of her faith is not a simplistic answer, he said.

God's hand in the situation was very evident, said Barry Johnson. He related how a member of the bomb squad told him poor craftsmanship and materials prevented much worse damage from occurring.

Harris and Klebold intended to blow up the school with a propane bomb and shoot students as they ran out of the school, he said. But the bomb didn't

explode even when they fired bullets at it, he added. "People have asked, 'Where was God that day?'" he said. "He was all over that school."

Heidi also defended Cassie Bernall, the student who reportedly was asked if she believed in God before being shot to death in the library.

Soon after the release of her mother's book, "She Said Yes," some publications questioned the account. Sheriff's investigators were quoted as saying the statement likely came from an

other student. But some students insist Cassie affirmed her faith.

When an audience member asked about the media accounts, Miss Johnson said she didn't hear whether Bernall was asked about her faith. But that isn't important, Miss Johnson added.

"If she didn't say it, she had been saying 'yes' her whole life," Miss Johnson said. "I think that's what's important and should be reflected on. She did die daily and that's the important part. I think that's what a martyr is."

Pastor: Kids need parents, not friends

SHELBYVILLE— "She Said Yes," a first-person account by the mother of Columbine shooting victim Cassie Bernall, became an instant best-seller after its release last September.

In it, Misty Bernall wrote of her daughter's descent into witchcraft and other unhealthy behavior. That led her parents to put severe restrictions on her to draw her away from the wrong crowd. That ultimately led to her Christian conversion, her mother wrote.

Heidi Johnson said she took a similar path as a freshman and halfway into her sophomore year of high school.

Although raised in a Christian home and becoming a Christian at a young age, the 17-year-old junior told of turning her back on God in ninth grade.

"I did things I would call pagan," she said during a question-and-answer session at First Baptist Church of Shelbyville. "I rededicated my life to God two months before Columbine. He prepared me for what was going to happen."

Her father, Barry, said the time came when he had to put his foot down.

"We had to ... be a parent, not a friend," he said of the decision by him and his wife. "I believe that's what saved her life. You need to be a parent first and a friend second. You have got to draw the line sometimes and reel these kids in."

Afterwards, he said that while Heidi wasn't involved with "bad stuff," the people she was associating with were headed in the wrong direction.

Finally, the Johnsons—who have two other daughters—prohibited her from associating with those friends, he said. A month later, she rededicated her life to Christ.

"If my wife or I weren't involved, she couldn't do it," he said, explaining that their close relationship made it possible to set boundaries without sparking rebellion. "When she got away from it long enough, she saw how destructive (her friends) were."

The family's pastor, Billy Epperhart, said one of the most important lessons of Columbine is that parents must enforce discipline.

"One of the greatest problems we have is immature parents," he said. "They're afraid to set boundaries in their (children's) lives and step in when they need to say 'no.'"

"Parents have not learned how to bond," he added. "Adults aren't connecting emotionally with their children. It's absolutely imperative parents spend time with their children and know what's going on in their lives."

The forces young people face today are not the same as they were 25 years ago, said Epperhart, pastor of Trinity Christian Center in Littleton, Colo.

He outlined several primary lessons of the 1999 tragedy:

- The importance of adult role models in children's lives.

- The need for a check on evil influences in society.

- The need to teach children respect for teachers, police officers and other authority figures.

- The need for parents to set boundaries.

- The seriousness of godlessness in society and the spiritual vacuum created when God is removed from the public square.

"Columbine woke everyone up, including the non-Christian education community," he said. "The heart of man has to be changed and it can only be done through Jesus Christ."

Missions & missionaries head Fellowship meeting in Winchester

WINCHESTER—Missions and new summer missionaries were among the items celebrated during the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship's spring gathering April 28-29.

An estimated 250 people attended the meeting, at which the group's first two summer missionaries were commissioned for service.

Founded in 1984, the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship is a statewide partner for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the moderate organization founded in reaction to the conservative shift in Southern Baptist Convention leadership.

Benjamin Burdette, a sophomore at the University of Kentucky, and Whitney Robertson, a senior at Campbellsville University, will serve at Touching Miami with Love, an inner-city Miami ministry for homeless and low-income residents. It is directed by former Ken-

tuckians Larry and Laquita Wynn.

Moderator Delores Baugh of Glendale said increased support from churches in the past year allowed the group to send two missionaries instead of the initial plan to sponsor one.

"We could have sent more if they were needed, and that's the direction we want to move," said Baugh, a former co-director of missions for Severns Valley and Grayson Baptist associations.

Missionaries Rick and Martha Shaw were among the conference speakers, discussing their work in Kosovo. The two have been based in Lexington for about a year speaking in churches, and they will return to Kosovo in August.

Baugh said Kentucky Baptist Fellowship has worked to clarify its mission and develop strategies. The group hopes to network with other groups rather than re-inventing programs already in existence, she added.

The Fellowship also has an emphasis of involving younger adults, she said.

"I was pleased to see many young faces," she said of the Winchester meeting. "So we're also looking in that direction for projects that they would be interested in."

In his report, coordinator John Lepper said the group continues to receive strong report both from churches and individuals. More than 60 churches contributed to the state organization in 1999; individual donors contribute one-fifth of its budget.

In the past year, Kentucky Baptist Fellowship sponsored nine regional meetings on child and school safety. This fall, leaders have scheduled three meetings in Lexington, Owensboro and Louisville on technology and the church. Next year's spring gathering is scheduled for April 27-28 at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.



SUMMER MISSIONS Whitney Robertson, a senior at Campbellsville University, and Benjamin Burdette, a sophomore at the University of Kentucky, will serve this summer at Touching Miami with Love, an inner-city Miami ministry for homeless and low-income residents.

Retiring music professor models diversity in worship

One last song

Before Phil Landgrave retires this summer, he said he wants one more opportunity to encourage others in their mission for God.

The wide range of music styles that have been a part of his career will be on display May 12 when Landgrave leads a 60-member alumni choir in an evening of music titled, "Let the Song Go On."

"The purpose is praise and worship and not to praise the writer," he insisted.

Music ministers from throughout the Southeast will return to the seminary for the performance, he said.

"I don't want this to be an exercise in narcissism for me," he said. "Every part of the service is designed to lead in worship and witness."

The signature piece he's written for the evening includes a line he said he hopes will take root in the hearts of those who hear it:

"For every ending marks a new beginning when we're praising the Lord and living in His word. So let the song go on."

By David Winfrey
News Director

LOUISVILLE—The current church music wars are nothing new to Phil Landgrave, professor for 35 years at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

"There were many battles," Landgrave recalled recently from his office at the seminary's school of music. "Every innovation has its detractors."

But Landgrave, who is retiring this summer, said the ultimate test for church music should involve purpose more than preference.

"The litmus test is: Does what you do in music assist the people in praising God and edifying the brethren in church?" said Landgrave, who turns 65 this week.

"I really find it hard to believe that God is limited to any one style of anything," he said. "I really think the Lord is pleased when we seek to praise Him."

Landgrave has a variety of experiences and styles in his background from which to draw his opinions. His own music, approximately 30 major works, has spanned the spectrum of styles.

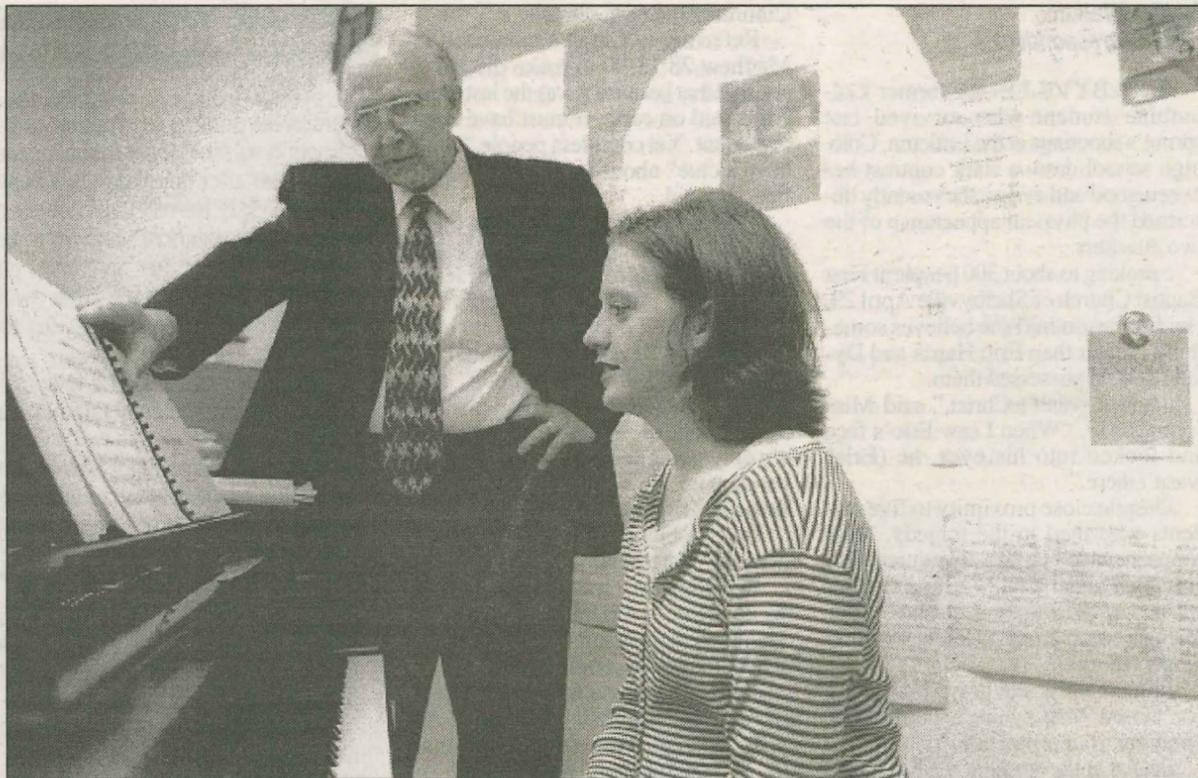
"The music I have written runs the gamut," he said. That has included everything from orchestra pieces, cantatas and anthems to hymns and southern gospel.

"I try to write for the people something that is meaningful to them," he said, though he is quick to add that he doesn't believe in sticking only with the tried-and-true styles.

In 1969, he wrote "Purpose," a youth musical that was among the first ones to use contemporary music in church settings.

"This was an effort to say the music of our culture can be an appropriate expression for worship," he said. "People can learn things that make them grow."

Landgrave's own career is one that has modeled expanding horizons.



MUSIC MINISTRY Phil Landgrave, music professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's school of church music and worship, talks to student Kimberly Dick. Landgrave, who is retiring this summer after 35 years, said he has been fortunate to serve as a writer and performer, as a teacher and as an interim music minister throughout his ministry career.

Throughout his tenure with the seminary, he has continued to serve churches as interim music minister.

"Serving the local churches has been as much a part of my life as teaching at the seminary," he said.

The churches where he has served are as diverse as the music he has written. On one hand, there's Beth Haven Baptist Church, a now-independent Baptist congregation that once was a model among Southern Baptists for evangelistic bus ministry.

On the other hand have been several East Louisville churches, such as Hurstbourne Baptist, Broadway Baptist and Lyndon Baptist, some with more mod-

erate theology and preferences for anthems and high church music.

Then there's Baptist Tabernacle, a multi-ethnic West Louisville congregation where Landgrave served while in seminary.

Landgrave, who currently is music minister at Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville, said his ability to serve such a broad scope of churches supports his belief that more unites Baptists than divides them.

"There's a song, 'We are one in Jesus.' That's been kind of a theme song of my mission projects," he said.

"If we can get past our cosmetic differences, for the real Christian there is

a oneness that surfaces and has a depth that goes beyond all other considerations," he added.

Landgrave's willingness and ability to serve any church is among the characteristics admired by his peers, said Lloyd Mims,

"He is one of the most godly church musicians I know," said Mims, who said Landgrave influenced his own decision to attend Southern Seminary.

"There's not an ounce of ego in that man. He seeks God's will in every aspect of his work," Mims said. "He has always written for the church and has had the normal church choir in mind for the majority of his compositions."

Coming soon to a church choir near you: 'Experiencing God, The Musical'

By Brian Garland
Baptist Press

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (BP)—When representatives of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention approached Henry Blackaby to propose a musical based on his discipleship course, "Experiencing God," he had one question.

"I asked them to tell me how they came to that" idea, Blackaby recalled. "As they described the process and the pilgrimage on which they sensed God was leading them, I felt a deep conviction of the heart that this was a work of God. I couldn't argue with that, since God was at work."

Hundreds of church musicians and worship leaders witnessed the product of that vision last month at the annual MUSICalifornia conference in San Diego when "Experiencing God, The Musical," published under LifeWay's Genevox imprint, premiered.

Written by Claire Cloninger and Gary

Rhodes, the 70-minute work features original songs, along with some classic hymns, praise choruses and contemporary Christian songs made popular by current artists.

An interweaving of narration brought it under the umbrella of the "seven realities of God" discussed in Blackaby's best-selling Bible study.

Premiering the musical was the "3Sixteen" choir from the People's Church of Fresno, Calif., led by Doug Holck, executive pastor and minister through music.

"I had several people approaching me in the past seven years wanting us to do a musical based on Experiencing God, but we never felt right about it," said Mark Blankenship, director of LifeWay's music ministries department.

"Last year we sat down with Henry and told him we felt the time had come for a musical on 'Experiencing God' that could be a worship experience for the church," he added.

Two years ago, a compact disc was

released by Sparrow Records and a LifeWay-produced book of songs inspired by the seven realities, but Blackaby said he could see the importance of another musical medium, as long as it was done sensitively.

"It needs to be expressed through a different medium to expose it to a new generation," he said. "But when you sense the Lord has given you a message, you must be very sensitive in how you express it so it might not be changed."

Blankenship said it was important that the musical have integrity because of "Experiencing God's" biblical basis.

"Experiencing God' is also Henry's life message," Blankenship said. "It's the way he built his ministry in churches. Through the revelation of God's message in him, some people at LifeWay convinced him to put it on paper 10 years ago."

To begin the musical project, Cloninger and Rhodes gathered with LifeWay employees last summer to spend a morning with Blackaby and listen to him share from his heart.

Rhodes said he and Cloninger had to wade prayerfully through a lot of possible material and they had to consult periodically with Blackaby, who said Cloninger and Rhodes' product gets his stamp of approval.

"I was very pleased when I heard the soundtrack," he said. "The lyrics and music matched the message, so the message isn't changed."

In its short 10-year history, "Experiencing God" has been translated into more than 45 languages, and the workbook has sold more than 3.4 million copies worldwide, crossing denominational boundaries.

Blankenship said he hopes the musical will lead not only to a revival of the workbook, but also usher in a spiritual revival in churches.

"I see the musical used not only as a worship tool, encountering God and causing revival, but also as a catalyst to inspire churches to study the book," he said. "We really feel this is anointed, and God has got His hand on it."

National day of prayer observed by Christians, others

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Religious leaders and grassroots community members gathered across the nation May 4 to mark the National Day of Prayer by calling on God to help the country and its political officials.

The 49th annual observance at the Cannon House Office Building featured Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders taking turns at the microphone to offer prayers and exhort listeners to seek guidance from God in addressing the challenges in the nation and in their personal lives.

"We bless our food. We ask God to bless our missionaries and our pastor, but I dare say the vast majority of us do not ask God to bless us," said Bruce Wilkinson, founder and president of the Atlanta-based Walk Thru the Bible Ministries and keynote speaker at the daylong Washington event. "You need to ask God to bless you."

Wilkinson recalled the prayer of Jabez, the head of a family in Judah cited in the Old Testament book of 1 Chronicles, and urged the audience to make it

their own for 60 days from the prayer day to Independence Day.

Hundreds in the audience stood with him and prayed: "Oh, God, will You bless me indeed, enlarge my ministry, put Your hand upon me and keep me from evil." Wilkinson added the phrase "in Jesus' name" to the prayer.

Shirley Dobson, chairman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, said more than 20,000 prayer services were scheduled for the day. Among the locations for observances nationwide were prisons, hospitals and rest homes, she said.

"They are just everywhere, so that's a real encouragement," said Dobson, wife of James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, the evangelical ministry based in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Shirley Dobson said the event has been recognized with official proclamations signed by President Clinton and 49 of the nation's 50 governors. The exception was Gov. Jesse Ventura of Minnesota, who for the second year in a row declined to do so.

"We hope next year, he'll soften a little bit and see the need for a prayer (day) in his state," she said.

Although many of the participants in the Washington observance were evangelical Christians, the opening prayer was given by a Catholic priest from the Archdiocese of Washington, and a rabbi from Chevy Chase, Md., blew on the shofar, a ram's horn used on special occasions, and read from Scripture.

"It's important that there be a Jewish representative in this event since we're concerned about the well-being of the nation," Rabbi Lyle Fishman, spiritual leader of Ohr Kodesh Congregation, a Conservative synagogue, told Religion News Service.

Senate chaplain Lloyd Ogilvie led a prayer for members of Congress.

"Lord, touch the lives of the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate and create in them a desire to be filled with Your Spirit so that they have supernatural power to lead this land," he said.

Some groups, such as Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the American Atheists, protested the observance as one that inappropriately mixes government and religion and focuses primarily on the Christian faith.

"We urge President Clinton, as well as the nation's governors, mayors and other elected officials to remember that millions of Americans have no religious beliefs, don't believe in any gods, or disagree with the Christian message behind the National Day of Prayer," said Ellen Johnson, president of American Atheists in a statement.

Said Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State: "The National Day of Prayer is a reckless mixture of church and state that should be shut down."

Bill Bright, president of the Orlando, Fla.-based Campus Crusade for Christ, defended the Christian emphasis at many observances of the day. Although Muslims, Jews and Hindus have a right to observe the day as well, Bright said, he believes the Christian focus reflects the nation's Christian heritage.

"It would dilute the meaning of this meeting if we just made this a religious gathering instead of a Christian gathering," Bright told Religion News Service just before the start of the Capitol Hill event. "It's not being selfish. It's not being prejudiced. It's simply being faithful to our heritage."

Clergy to cigarette maker: Stop targeting kids

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A group of 58 religious leaders has written to the president of Kraft Foods, a subsidiary of Philip Morris Cos., to urge its parent company to halt its promotion of cigarettes to young people.

"As a top executive of Philip Morris, you must know that 4 million people worldwide will die this year from tobacco-related illnesses, and that economically poor countries increasingly are bearing the brunt of tobacco's staggering toll on human life," the leaders wrote to Robert Eckert, Kraft's president and CEO.

"We believe Philip Morris' marketing around the world, especially to addict young people, is one of the driving forces behind the rise in deaths that result from tobacco," the letter states.

The letter was signed by Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders.

The writers joined INFACT, a Boston-based corporate watchdog group that has organized a boycott of Kraft, in seeking changes in Philip Morris' marketing and public policy work.

Kelle Louaillier, associate director of INFACT, told Religion News Service that the religious leaders previous-

ly had communicated with Philip Morris without "satisfactory" results, so chose to write to Kraft.

They urged Eckert to lead Philip Morris in efforts to reduce the promotion of tobacco products to children across the globe and to halt interference in public policy on tobacco and health issues.

They also requested that if Philip Morris does not correct "abuses" and change course that Kraft separate from the corporation.

A Kraft spokesman could not be reached immediately for comment.

Ten Commandments judge seeking higher court office

GADSDEN, Ala. (RNS)—The Alabama judge who became nationally known after fighting to keep the Ten Commandments in his courtroom is now the front-runner in a four-way Republican race for chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court.

"I feel I have a responsibility to take what I have learned to higher office," said Circuit Judge Roy Moore.

In 1995, Moore was challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union for his display of the Old Testament laws at the Etowah County Courthouse in Gadsden, Ala.

The case was dismissed on technical grounds by the Alabama Supreme

Court, so the judge has been able to keep displaying a plaque with the commandments in his courtroom.

Moore, 53, has said he believes American law is based on nature's laws "and nature is God," Associated Press reported. He said court rulings removing prayer from public schools or religious symbols from courtrooms are wrong.

Alabama's Republican leaders have supported Justice Harold See, one of Moore's pro-business opponents. But a poll released in late April showed Moore is leading among likely Republican voters in the state.

The poll of 265 registered voters

who expect to take part in the June 6 GOP primary showed almost 38 percent supporting Moore, followed by 14 percent for Jefferson County Circuit Judge Wayne Thorn, 10 percent for See and about 8 percent for Criminal Appeals Judge Pam Baschab. More than 29 percent of voters surveyed from April 10-17 were undecided.

But Moore trails See significantly on the fund-raising front. He has about \$18,341 compared to \$366,885 for See. Rather than using television commercials, Moore has been campaigning by speaking from church pulpits, holding in-home gatherings with supporters and meeting with Republican groups.

Survey finds religious concerns are not just conservative

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—A new study by researchers at Princeton University has found that religious groups, led by mainline Protestant denominations, are more interested in progressive—sometimes called liberal—causes than conservative issues favored by the religious right.

A survey of 5,603 adults found that most people think churches should take the lead in advocating racial reconciliation, environmental protection and advocacy for the poor.

While the 1990s saw the rise of con-

servative evangelicals, the study found the causes advocated by mainline groups are the issues the public cares the most about.

"The perception that religious groups are really only interested in conservative issues is not true," said Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow, who led the study. "They are not only focused on abortion or prayer in schools. Progressive issues do seem to be of enormous importance to people."

Only 40 percent of the respondents said clergy should advocate political

issues from the pulpit, and there was little support for organized political lobbying or for religious leaders seeking elected office.

There was also significant evidence that religious groups would like to see more social action on the local level, and less influence by religious conservatives on the national level.

"The public wants churches to be taking a more active role at the local level, but is less keen on religious groups exercising influence at the national level," Wuthnow said.

Study: Sexual images appear on television every 4 minutes

NASHVILLE (ABP)—Sexual imagery occurs once every four minutes on network television and three times every four minutes on cable, according to a new study.

Nearly two out of three (63 percent) occurrences of sexual content in media are visual images, while 37 percent involve spoken words or song lyrics, according to a study released by the Washington D.C.-based Center for Media and Public Affairs.

"The media reflect our behavior and alter it simultaneously," said Cliff Vaughn, project coordinator at the Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville. "The more passive we as consumers are, the more powerful the mediated message becomes, and the greater the media's power to alter our own values, beliefs and attitudes."

Nearly all (98 percent) of sex portrayed in media has no physical consequences, such as pregnancy or a sexually transmitted disease, and 85 percent has no emotional consequences, according to the study.

"Public concern over sexual themes and images in popular entertainment extends beyond the sheer volume of such material to the context in which it is presented," the study said.

Almost 75 percent of sex portrayed in media is extramarital. Sex between married couples occurs much less frequently, according to the study.

The following results were found in various forms of media, according to the Center for Media and Public Affairs:

- Network television shows have 16 "soft-core" sexual scenes or references every hour. There are six hard-core scenes or references every hour.

- Basic cable shows have 12 sexual scenes or references every hour.

- Music videos have 23 soft-core sex scenes every hour.

- Feature films have seven sexual scenes or references every hour.

"These ideas suggest every individual should take responsibility for messages he or she consumes," Vaughn said.

The study examined 284 television episodes, 50 television movies, 50 films and 189 MTV music videos during 1998 and 1999.

Religious freedom panel seeks action against Sudan, China

By Shelvia Dancy
Religion News Service

"The commission discovered a serious loophole in the U.S. sanctions vis-a-vis Sudan."

Rabbi David Saperstein, chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Declaring that freedom of religion "ought to be a centerpiece of American foreign policy," a federal commission released its first report May 1 urging the U.S. government to denounce religious oppression abroad.

The report recommended, among other things, tightening sanctions against Sudan and restricting access to U.S. capital markets for firms doing business with oppressive governments.

Freedom of religion "is the first of the enumerated rights in the First Amendment," declared Rabbi David Saperstein, chairman of the 10-member U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The commission was created under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to monitor religious freedom abroad. "As we look around the world, however, we find this fundamental liberty under serious threat."

In its report that focused primarily on religious rights abuses in Russia, Sudan and China, the commission appealed to the U.S. government to help end the 17-year-old civil war in Sudan—waged between the country's Islamic government and separatist

groups in the south.

The report also urged Washington to help create a "military no-fly zone" over Sudan, increase humanitarian aid to the country's southern half and launch a yearlong effort to pressure Sudan to end human rights violations.

The commission also asked Washington to block firms that conduct business with Sudan and China from offering stock in U.S. markets, noting that the Chinese government-owned parent company of a business that went public on the stock exchange last month owns 40 percent of a Sudanese oil project. Critics say that project is used by the Sudanese government to help fund its fighting against rebel forces.

"The commission discovered a serious loophole in the U.S. sanctions vis-a-vis Sudan: While it's illegal for companies to do business with firms subject to the sanctions, it's still possible for firms doing business in Sudan to raise money in U.S. capital markets," Saperstein said. "We're urging the government to prohibit any foreign corporation from obtaining capital in the U.S. market as long as it is participating in Sudanese oil-field development."

Noting China's "egregious, systematic persecution of religious people of practically every faith," the report cautioned Washington against extending

permanent normal trade relations status to China.

"While many commissioners support free trade, the commission believes that the U.S. Congress should grant China Permanent Normal Trade Relations only after China makes substantial improvement in respect for religious freedom," said commission Vice Chairman Dean Michael Young, dean of the George Washington University Law School.

Russia also came under fire from the commission, which asked that the U.S. government pressure Moscow to extend the length of visas for religious workers and overturn a March edict that would "liquidate" non-registered religious groups at the end of the year.

"We are particularly concerned about President Putin's recent proclamation that all religious groups not registered by the end of this year would be liquidated," said Saperstein. "We urge that the U.S. make reversal of this decree an urgent priority in its discussions with the Russian government, and that the president will raise this issue in his upcoming meeting with President Putin."

The report, which also spoke out against religious oppression in Egypt, Indonesia, Iran and Vietnam, leveled charges against the U.S. Department of

State as well, charging the agency with wrongly using executive privilege to justify withholding documents about economic sanctions against Sudan, "despite the fact that commissioners and commission senior staff hold the requisite security clearances."

"The commission believes that this violates the spirit of Congress' intent in (the International Religious Freedom Act) when it provided: 'The commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary ... subject to applicable law,'" the report concluded.

The report was the culmination of work since the panel first met in June 1999. The panel has traveled to southern Sudan and other places, reviewed State Department Reports and met with human rights and church groups.

Steven McFarland, executive director of the religious-freedom commission, said the ball is now in Congress and President Clinton's court. Under the 1998 religious freedom law, the State Department is required to issue a Sept. 1 report listing "countries of particular concern." The president must decide what, if any, sanctions to apply within 90 days of that report.

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press

Hollywood producer offers some communication tips for Christians

Continued from page 1

Christian television instead often repels secular audiences for a number of reasons, said Cooke, who noted the visual difference between a typical Christian TV station and MSNBC, ESPN, MTV or NBC.

When channel surfers are drawn to a program, it is usually for only three seconds, and what they see on Christian television too often is poor writing, poor acting and poor producing, he lamented.

Cooke also noted Christian television's resistance to change, especially in graphic presentation, which is crucial in a generation that retains 70 to 80 percent more information through its eyes than its ears.

"People look at Christians today and think, 'That's not what I want to be like!' They looked at the early church and said, 'Look at the way they love each other,'" Cooke said.

One way Christians can improve their image, Cooke said, is to "dump the lingo." The words "breakthrough," "dominions" and "prayer walking" frustrated a National Public Radio reporter so much while she investigated a church's prayer ministry that she almost walked out of the assignment, Cooke said.

Cooke encouraged Christians to use "simple, articulate, everyday language" just as doctors do with patients.

This is especially important for preachers since 90 percent of Christian television is preaching, Cooke said.

Storytelling must become a part of this preaching, he asserted.

"The filmmaker Ingmar Bergman said, 'Facts go straight to your head. Stories go straight to your heart,'" Cooke noted. Yet every Sunday, "thousands and thousands of pastors will step into the pulpit without telling a single story."

The three most popular types of programming on network television are movies, episodic dramas and sitcoms—and all are story-based, he said, exhorting, "Learn to tell stories that will change people's lives."

Awaken sleeping giants

FORT WORTH—Christians have great potential to influence Hollywood, as witnessed by what USA Today termed "Omega-Mania," the hype surrounding the 1999 major feature film "The Omega Code."

Phil Cooke worked as second unit director, handling the action and special effects scenes.



Cooke

Because of insightful marketing to the Christian audience, the film was the top-performing movie per theater on its opening weekend in America.

When Christians bought large numbers of tickets at one Texas theater, its computer alerted other theaters throughout the United States to the "blockbuster." "Nobody buys advance pre-buys tickets to movies except for 'Star Wars,'" Cooke said.

"We discovered that if Christians could just mobilize and do some things together, we would revolutionize the industry," he said.

Cooke added that the head of Paramount Pictures said he had no idea there was a sleeping giant of an audience wanting such products with Christian values.

One of Cooke's favorite projects, a Billy Graham television special called "Starting Over," proves there is also a sleeping audience of not-yet Christians ready to be awakened by the gospel in a medium they understand.

The show generated 1 million responses from people making first-time professions of faith when it aired during prime time in 160 countries, seven of which ban Christian broadcasting.



Royal Ambassador - Challenger State Conclaves and Track Meets

East Meet - May 12-13, 2000
Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, Bagdad, KY
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Washington rally seeking to reconcile parents & youth

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Che Ahn hopes a youthful version of Promise Keepers' "Stand in the Gap" prayer rally will take place this September when "TheCallDC" comes to the National Mall.

The Korean-American pastor of the charismatic Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena, Calif., is organizing the Sept. 2 event—with the support of prominent evangelical leaders—in hopes of reconciling Christian youth and their parents and encouraging spiritual renewal in a post-Columbine era.

"Part of the problem ... is that there's such an alienation and separation between the parents and the children," Ahn said last week. "I really believe that children do spell love T-I-M-E and if you don't give them time, they're going to sense the feel-

ing of alienation and rejection."

The title of the event refers to verses in the Old Testament book of Joel, which say "Declare a holy fast, ... call a sacred assembly, ... bring together the elders, gather the children."

Ahn, the 44-year-old father of four teen-agers, said he's been challenged by being away from his family as he plans the event, but looks forward to working with them on plans for the gathering when school is out this summer.

In fact, much of the event—focusing particularly on those people age 14-24—is being planned by an ad hoc nationwide group of people under age 30.

"They've seen the divorce. They've experienced the violence," he said. "They want family to be together. They want kids to be nice to each other on campus."

At the suggestion of the young planners, the music in the event will feature popular Christian artists who will lead

worship rather than serve as "entertainment," Ahn said.

Artists Michael W. Smith and Sonic Flood have agreed to participate.

Still in the early planning stages, confirmed speakers include Darrell Scott, whose daughter Rachel was killed in the Columbine High School tragedy, and Bill McCartney, founder of Promise Keepers, the evangelical men's movement. Many of the speakers will be young people, Ahn said.

The dawn-to-dusk event, viewed as a "solemn assembly" similar to Stand in the Gap, was a vision of an associate pastor of Ahn's.

The idea is turning into a reality after last year's tragic shootings of young people at Columbine in Littleton, Colo., and Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

In addition to the highly publicized violence, Ahn said the event was propelled by concerns about teen church attendance. "We're really facing a real

spiritual, moral crisis among the young people," he said.

Ahn said he doesn't want to focus on how many people might show up at the gathering, but organizers have told the National Park Service as many as 400,000 could be there.

The advisory board for the event includes prominent African-American, Asian-American, Native American and Hispanic Christian leaders.

"We want it to be as diverse as possible," said Ahn, whose California church has a multiethnic congregation. The more than 1,000 people who attend services there come from about 49 nations.

Among those supporting the event are leaders of Mission America, a consortium of about 400 evangelical denominations and ministries; Campus Crusade for Christ; Youth With a Mission; the Christian Broadcasting Network and the Association of Vineyard Churches.

A Campus Crusade for Christ study indicates that 88 percent of teens do not attend church and of the 12 percent who do, 80 percent are likely to stop attending when they graduate from high school.

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Baptist against Chinese trade status

WASHINGTON (BP)—A group that includes the Southern Baptist Convention's public policy agency urged Congress May 4 to not grant China permanent normal trade relations.

The SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission joined the Washington-based Family Research Council and other organizations on the issue, citing China's human rights abuses, including persecution of religious adherents.

The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on PNTR for China the week of May 22. The world's most populous country is seeking not only permanent trade status with the United States but entry into the World

Trade Organization.

President Clinton and the Republican leadership are mounting a fervent campaign for PNTR, while both GOP and Democratic members are fighting to block it. Though the White House has said it is winning the battle, anti-PNTR House members remain hopeful they will swing enough undecided votes to prevail.

"We are doing very well," said Rep. Frank Wolf, R.-Va., one of Congress' leading advocates for religious and other human rights overseas.

ERLC President Richard Land said Congress should consider granting PNTR status only when China "finally demonstrates a change in both human rights policy and practice."

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Religion 'counterattack' offered

WASHINGTON (RNS)—House Majority Whip Tom DeLay proposed an "aggressive counterattack" against those who he said have banned religion from public places.

In a speech May 4, DeLay, R-Texas, suggested that Congress should add two anti-religious discrimination measures to spending bills if Republicans win the White House and a greater majority on Capitol Hill in November, the Washington Post reported.

One would permit religious institutions and groups to get federal funds. He said that would make it easier for Catholic schools to receive government funds without excessive oversight from federal officials or for parents to use tax credits to pay for their children's private religious education.

The other measure would forbid states and schools receiving public money from banning private voluntary prayer and religious activities.

"What we need is simply a return to the healthy appreciation for religion that has always sustained the nation," DeLay said. "Government can't enforce religious teachings or doctrines of specific faiths. But at the same time, federal power must not be distorted into a wedge that splits the vast majority of Americans from the sacred ideals that guide their lives."

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said DeLay's speech shows his "unparalleled ignorance" of the law.

"His idea for additional government support for religion is clearly unconstitutional," Lynn said. "Vouchers have failed almost every court test. And no one is trying to prohibit private voluntary prayer."

Methodists apologize for racism's split of denomination

Methodist bishop predicts merged denomination

CLEVELAND (RNS)—The newly elected president of the Council of Bishops for the United Methodist Church said last week he foresees a day when black and white Methodist churches will merge into one body.

William Oden, the church's bishop in the Dallas area, said the service of racial reconciliation held during the church's General Conference meeting signaled a new era in race relations.

Oden predicted that current discussions of a possible merger eventually will lead to a biracial church that incorporates all the followers of John Wesley's Methodism.

Talk of such a proposed merger has circulated in church circles for several years, but many Methodists consider it unlikely.

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service

CLEVELAND (RNS)—Putting on sackcloth and ashes, the United Methodist Church confronted more than 200 years of institutional racism and discrimination that split John Wesley's Methodist followers into two distinct camps—black and white.

In a three-hour ceremony May 4, delegates to the church's 2000 General Conference apologized to black churches that left the Methodist church because of pervasive racial discrimination.

In addition, they apologized to black United Methodists who still face racial prejudice.

"Racism has lived like a malignancy in the bone marrow of this church for years," said Bishop William Boyd Grove, the ecumenical officer for the church's Council of Bishops. "It is high time to say we're sorry."

Representatives of historically black denominations who split with the Methodists were visibly moved by the apology and said they humbly accepted it.

They also cautioned, however, that the apology must be more than just words.

"For us, the true measure of repentance will come when the lights are down and everyone has gone home," said Bishop McKinley Young of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. "There must not just be words, but there must also be action."



RECONCILIATION Methodist delegates link hands last week during a service of repentance for racism at the United Methodist General Conference in Cleveland. (RNS photo)

The church—the nation's second-largest Protestant body—is meeting through this week in Cleveland for its quadrennial meeting to vote on policy, doctrine and canon law.

While the rest of the meeting is expected to be dominated by the divisive issue of homosexuality and a proposed global restructuring, this ceremony was a significant step toward unity for United Methodists.

The Methodist tradition began in America in the late 1700s.

But gradually, issues of slavery and racism split the church into black and white, north and south. Three primarily black denominations—the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion

Church and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church—all split from the churches that eventually merged as the United Methodist Church in 1968.

But racism continued throughout the life of the church. In 1939, the church established five regional jurisdictions in the reunified church, and added an additional "Central Jurisdiction" for black members.

As late as the 1960s, white Methodist churches in the South were refusing to allow blacks to attend their worship services.

As bishops passed out small swaths of sackcloth and ashes in the biblical tradition of lamentation, black and white delegates reached across aisles and embraced in silent sobs.

Bishop Clarence Carr, representing the AME Zion Church, said blacks did not leave the church for theological reasons but because their white contemporaries treated them as less than equal.

"We were compelled to leave not because of doctrinal differences, not because of statements, but because of practice," he said. "Not with what you said, but what you did. Not with symbolism, but with substance. And my hope is tonight that you would move from symbolism to substance."

'Camperships'

Only a week or two ago, I was in conversation with a man (who wishes to remain anonymous) whom I have known for some time. As usual, I was excited about the progress we were making in our youth camping program at Jonathan Creek this summer.

This is our first venture into programming. To be sure, we have hosted youth camping for years and years, but this summer we are running Crossings at the Creek, a new camp ministry of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies Inc. As he listened to our intent and the vision God had given us as we move to begin this ministry, the man began to ask questions about the camp.

What did we hope would happen when a youth came to Crossings? What did we hope God would do when a youth spent a week with us? Why were we so certain we could provide a life-changing experience?

On and on we talked, and my enthusiasm for what God is doing continued to come forth. So finally, this man moved from being just a friend and wrote a check. I didn't ask for it. Never did. Never thought about it. But he wrote it. And he said, "Get some kids to Crossings who won't be able to come otherwise. I want to pay for some youth to make it there. It

sounds like it is going to be great."

And so began a new program for KBA Inc. And only a week later, in another conversation, the same thing happened. Unsolicited. Another individual, one whom I know well, said, "You guys are doing the right thing with these youth. I want to help send some youth to Crossings. Find some who couldn't go otherwise." Wow!

Almost word for word what the other individual said. I was thrilled and thankful.

These two gifts will provide what we are going to call "Camperships." Want to help a youth go to camp? Why not support the program through a "Campership"? I'll give more information in the future, but call me if you would like to make a difference in the life of a youth and send him or her to camp this summer (or in the summers ahead).

What a blessing that God gives us the opportunity to reach this generation of young people through Christian camping. The vision is spreading, right before our very eyes. More people are grasping this vision. To Him be the glory!

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

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Rusty Ellison

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Nigerian Baptists celebrate 150-year history

ABEOKUTA, Nigeria (BP)—With the new president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, a declared Baptist, and the Baptist community numbering more than 3.5 million, Nigerian Baptists had much to celebrate during their convention's 150th anniversary meeting April 16-20.

Obasanjo by far was the convention's star attraction. He was greeted enthusiastically when he came and led the crowd in singing, "To God Be the Glory."

"This is one of the most fulfilling hours of my life," Obasanjo said. "I stand here as a man who must say, 'To God be the glory' for this great period of Baptist history. May God grant to us more fruitful years of service."

The president singled out the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and thanked Southern Baptists for planting the seeds of the gospel and working diligently to nurture and grow Nigerian Christians.

"Their work has influenced millions of Nigerians and other African countries. I speak as one of those touched by their work," said Obasanjo, who attended a Baptist boys' high school, where he first was introduced to the love of Jesus Christ.

In light of recent Muslim-Christian unrest in Nigeria, Obasanjo stressed the need for reconciliation between the two groups and called on Christians and Muslims to fast and pray for two days for peace.

Perennial leaders in evangelism, Nigerian Baptists in 1999 started 851 churches and baptized 30,150 people.



NIGERIAN PRESIDENT Olusegun Obasanjo waves to an enthusiastic crowd as Nigerian Baptists celebrated 150 years of Baptist witness and ministry April 15-20. Obasanjo, a Baptist himself, told the crowd: "I stand here as a man who must say, 'To God be the glory' for this great period of Baptist history. May God grant to us more fruitful years of service." (BP photo by Bob Siddens)

The convention also has sent 36 missionaries to serve in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea.

The convention now encompasses 7,000-plus churches with 880,000 baptized members.

Nigeria was the springboard for Baptist work in Africa. Nigerian Christian traders shared their faith as they traveled in and out of Benin, Ghana and Togo. Small pockets of believers developed along the trade routes and began asking for mission-

aries and pastors.

IMB President Jerry Rankin told the gathering, "I believe the reason Nigerian Baptists have been blessed is that they are taking the gospel to the world."

More than taking pride in 150 years of Baptist work in Nigeria, Rankin said, "The real reason we have gathered is not to celebrate the past, but to look to the future. Because of the power of God, you will continue to bear fruit."

WORLD VIEW

■ **Pastor jailed for environmental sabotage.** A former Christian Reformed pastor and crusading environmentalist has been sentenced to 28 months in prison for sabotaging oil wells in the Canadian north. Wiebo Ludwig, who heads a religious commune on the Alberta-British Columbia border, was sentenced after being found guilty of five counts related to blowing up and vandalizing oil wells. Ludwig blames pollution from the oil wells for three miscarriages in his family, a stillborn baby, the death of his cows and poisoning of his soil.

■ **Vatican criticizes U.S. on debt relief.** A Vatican official sharply criticized the United States and the European Union April 27 for failing to meet their commitments to reduce the debt of the world's poorest countries. "Of the \$100 billion that the G7 decided to remit at its meeting in Cologne, only \$11 billion has been remitted," said Bishop Diarmuid Martin, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

■ **Presbyterians investigate missionary abuse.** Officials in the Presbyterian Church (USA) have launched an investigation into charges that a former Presbyterian missionary in Africa sexually and physically abused children of church missionaries between 1945 and 1978. About 20 people have claimed to be victims of abuse by the late William Pruitt, a church missionary to the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire).

■ **Court to rule on evangelical teacher training.** The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to make the final ruling on a battle over whether a small, evangelical university in Langley, British Columbia, has the right to train teachers for the province's public schools. At issue is Trinity Western University's list of un-Christian activities, which includes homosexual sex. In 1996, the British Columbia College of Teachers, citing gay discrimination, denied the university's application to operate a fully accredited teaching program.

Returning the favor

By Robert Dunston

One of Cumberland College's spring break mission teams journeyed to Pinetops, N.C., to assist in rebuilding homes devastated by flood waters.

College Park Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C., hosted the team. For the past 11 summers College Park Baptist has sent a mission team to build a house for Cumberland College's Mountain Outreach program. Our students felt it was time to return the favor.

Dean Whitaker, Cumberland's campus minister, and his wife, Jane, who directs the Mountain Outreach program, led the team. Students Joy Bailey, Pete Chapman, Kim Fields, Ernie Freeman, Lena Hayes, Jason Van Hoose, Jon Lee, Terry Lewis, Crystal Matrau, Sandra Sanford and Tracy Welsh served on the team.

On Sunday morning the team divided into two groups and spoke in Sunday school classes and in the morning worship services of College Park Baptist and Clemons First Baptist. In the evening the Clemons First group participated in the church's youth program.

Early Monday morning the team drove three hours to Pinetops to begin insulating and hanging drywall in

four homes. Since most of the team members did not know how to do the work, Monday provided on-the-job training. By the time they quit for the day at 7 p.m. they had almost completed the first home.

On Tuesday the team completed the first house and a second house and began a third. On Wednesday they completed the third house and finished a fourth in four hours! That night they spoke in two churches in the Pinetops area.

Having completed their assignment, on Thursday the team returned to the first house and installed sub-flooring.

Team members were overwhelmed by the devastation the flood waters had caused but were inspired by the resilience and faith in God displayed by the residents. Two women in particular taught the team members to look for the good even in the midst of the difficulties of life.

Our team learned not only about construction but also about life, faith and generosity. Their spring break was life-changing!

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



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To find out more, call
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Watch for dates on other forums in the coming weeks!

Ugandan Ten Commandments group's body count rises to 780

GGABA, Uganda (RNS)—One month after officials unearthed hundreds of bodies on property linked to a religious group in southwestern Uganda, workers on April 27 exhumed 55 more bodies.

These bodies, mostly women and children, were found in three graves on the property of a leader of the group.

They were found in the town of Ggaba—just south of Kampala, Uganda's capital—buried in a garage rented by former Roman Catholic priest Dominic Kataribabao, a leader of the doomsday group Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, according to Associated Press.

The discovery comes a month after about 80 bodies were unearthed on property in southwestern Uganda owned by the Ten Commandments group, who supported strict adherence to the Ten Commandments and predicted the world would end Dec. 31, 1999.

The bodies uncovered April 27 boost to 780 the number of bodies discovered on four group properties since March 17, when a fire inside the group's church killed about 330 people. Officials first believed the fire was a mass suicide, but now believe group leaders are responsible for the deaths.

Police spokesman Assumen Mugenyi said police had suspicions that bodies were buried on the Ggaba property, but delayed search efforts until prisoners were furnished with proper equipment to carry out the search. Authorities had faced a barrage of criticism for improperly protecting the prisoners used to exhume bodies.

Mugenyi said police do not anticipate uncovering any more bodies in Ggaba, but said he suspected more bodies could be found elsewhere.

Arrest warrants have been issued for six of the religious group's leaders, including Kataribabao, but police say they are uncertain whether all six leaders actually died in the March 17 fire or remain alive.

Muslims mystified by Christian volunteers

By Jim Newton
Associated Baptist Press

STARKVILLE, Miss. (ABP)—“Why did Christians kill my sons?”

When an Albanian Muslim woman in Kosovo asked this question last fall, missions volunteer John Breazeale didn't know what to say.

So he and other Cooperative Baptist Fellowship volunteers in Kosovo answered not with English words the woman couldn't understand but with actions she could. They rebuilt her house so she would have a roof over her head during the upcoming winter.

The Albanian woman showed the volunteers the bullet holes and bloodstains in her house where her sons had been killed. Then she said she couldn't understand why Orthodox Serbian Christians would destroy her home and kill her sons, or why American Christians would travel so far to help rebuild her home.

“We didn't have a simple, easy answer,” said Breazeale, who was part of a CBF volunteer missions team working in partnership with Samaritan's Purse, Franklin Graham's organization.

“But through working on rebuilding her home, the team members saw this woman soften her perception of Christianity and show gratitude for our service,” said Breazeale, a construction contractor.

Breazeale said he would like to go back to Kosovo again as a construction volunteer, but the situation there has become much more tense and CBF missionaries are not able to host construc-

tion teams because of security issues. Breazeale said serving as a mission volunteer in Kosovo taught him a lot about attitudes of Muslims toward Christians.

“Most Albanians are as mystified by the Christians who come to help them rebuild as they were by those who came to destroy,” Breazeale said.

He noted that Christian aid workers and Baptist missionaries have their job cut out for them as they try to communicate the gospel to mostly Muslim Albanians whose society was torn apart by mostly Eastern Orthodox Serbs in what Breazeale called an “uncivil war.”

Although Albanians are predominantly Muslim, they are not traditionally as devout as those who are extremely hard to reach in the Middle East. “Most Albanians are probably Muslims to the same extent Serbs are Christians,” Breazeale explained.

Since they could not speak the language, Breazeale and other teams of construction volunteers working to rebuild homes destroyed by the war tried to communicate the love of Christ through their actions.

Similar construction teams went to Kosovo last summer and fall for two-week assignments to rebuild roofs and houses before winter for thousands of refugees who returned to burned-out and destroyed homes.

“We were told that, initially, Serbs killed Albanian professors, professionals, and social and political leaders. Then they began killing the men and breaking up families,” Breazeale said. “The army would go through a city or village and randomly burn Albanian

houses and businesses.”

“Albanians were very resilient,” Breazeale said. “They were working and living in burned-out buildings, and they had memories of personal horrors, but they didn't have teams of therapists helping them cope. Even through the profound personal tragedies and losses of family members, survivors are attempting to restore their communities to some sense of normalcy.”

CBF and other missionaries are addressing the immediate life-and-death issues and ministering to the physical needs of the people.

“Evangelism moves slower in a Muslim world,” Breazeale said. “One CBF volunteer described their work as ‘incarnation evangelism,’ as if Christ was in the flesh reaching out to help,” Breazeale said.

With money donated by Christians in Mississippi, Breazeale was able to help purchase one year's worth of school supplies for a first-grade class and contribute to the purchase of a tractor for one of the last surviving males in a village.

“He will be able to use that tractor to help plant everyone's crops. The main problem for him will be knowing where land mines are located. People are still having the misfortune of finding mines left behind by the Serbs,” he said.

Breazeale said he felt privileged to be part of an effort by CBF to help Muslim Albanians better understand God's love. “It might not be much, but it was a small step in a long journey toward peace and understanding,” he said.

Class of 2000, part 5

This senior essay was written by a girl who has made tremendous progress at Oneida. She came to us two years ago from Illinois. We are so proud of the change we have seen in her life. Here is part of her essay:

“Each year my ... problems were getting worse. My grades started to go down, and my choice of friends was getting worse. I started to make bad decisions so that I could fit in, (including) drug and alcohol abuse. I did not think very highly of myself. I thought ... I would never go anywhere in life. My parents noticed the change in my attitude. They could tell that I was not the person they used to know. So, after numerous fights with me over my friends, drugs and school they decided ... for me to come to Oneida after they found out from my cousin how much he had been helped at Oneida.

“When I came to Oneida I was very ... anti-social. I had a problem with authority figures and people telling me what to do. I always wanted things done my way. ... I didn't like people in general. I felt as if I could not trust anyone.

... I was punished for a lot, ... and I really did not care if I was here or not. Later, I started to feel like I was in danger of getting kicked out, so I decided to straighten up. ... I realized that I needed to stay at Oneida to graduate. I have remained ... because I love this school and the people who work here. ... I made the decision to do better, but I have had good people to influence me in a positive way. They have helped me to make right decisions.

“When I first started going to chapel I disliked it very much. ... I was not a Christian and did not care about any of the messages. ... After I became

a Christian I could not sleep (in chapel) even if I tried. It was like there was something telling me that I needed to stay awake and pay attention.

“I have never really been much of a participant in sports (or) clubs, ... but this past year I joined the Future Farmers of America organization. It has changed the way I look at people. I work on the farm and have for over a year now. ... Working on the farm has helped me to realize that I can do anything that I want to do as long as I set my mind to it. ...

The class that has taught me the most is the leadership class I took last fall. The classes that have given me the greatest challenges were Algebra II and English IV. ... (Farm manager) Mr. Martin helped me to realize that the future is important to me. (Assistant farm manager) Mr. Cole helped me to see that to succeed in life you have to have challenging goals. The deans have helped me to love and care for others because they show their love to us.

“After graduation I plan to ... get a degree in agriculture. ... I have no doubt in my mind that it is going to be hard at first. But I know that if I try hard enough I will make it and be successful.

“I have gained a lot from Oneida. ... I guess (the most important thing) would be the respect I now have for others and my self-confidence. I feel that I will succeed in the future because I have learned to have confidence in myself. Also, when I came here I didn't have any respect for anyone. Now I have respect for people. ... This school is the best thing that has happened to me. ... I love this place, and I thank God every day for it.”

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Senior memories

Thirty-five graduates received degrees at commencement services held May 5 at Binghamtown Baptist Church in Middlesboro.

The service closed a full week that included a ladies' tea, senior banquet, alumni breakfast, president's luncheon and awards chapel.

Some memories of graduates illustrate Clear Creek's ministry:

“When we arrived on campus, our ‘koinonia family’ had placed a welcome banner above the door. The experience of knowing great Christian people while at Clear Creek has been an inspiration.”

“In one of Dean Rice's classes after we sang a song, Dean Rice started to pray; then he started to cry. You could feel the Spirit of the Lord moving through the room. I will always remember that moment and a special teacher.”

“I made a trip to hear Billy Graham my first year and was involved in a disaster relief mission. My true friends stuck by me, supported me and encouraged me in times of discouragement and emotional stress.”

“I sold my car for money to stay at Clear Creek and the Lord

made it possible for me to go on the mission trip to Russia. Many doors opened in the churches to share my testimony, and I discovered I am somebody the Lord can use.”

“I will remember the personal relationship I had with professors. They never acted bigger because they were a professor, they were genuine brothers and sisters in Christ.”

“I have had the honor and privilege to preach in many of the area churches. These opportunities have helped me realize that ministry is people.”

“My fondest memory is Randy asking me to marry him in chapel during the 1998 revival.”

“Overcoming the Clear Creek curse—I lost 20 pounds. I lost two cars. I never got married or had a baby. P.S. It's not in the water!”

“Theological discussions, prayer, rook playing and Tennessee football talk with Mike and Donnie.”

Pray for these graduates as they go through another transition.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

PEOPLE

One-woman dynamo leads Texas ministry to thousands

By Toby Druin
Texas Baptist Standard

ARLINGTON, Texas (ABP)—It's 4 a.m. at Mission Arlington, and Tillie Burgin already has been at work half an hour.

She has completed her morning quiet time and has put on the coffeepot, and now she is writing on the message board.

"Every one of us, tell the story to someone," she writes. "Don't fall into the trap of them saying they've already heard it."

The "story," of course, is the gospel. Burgin's aim is that everyone who comes through the large social ministry at First Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, will hear and respond to "the Jesus story."

"Everyone" in the case of Mission Arlington is thousands of people.

An average of 3,700 people attend Bible studies each Sunday led by Mission Arlington volunteers in more than 200 locations around the city. More than 5,000 people a month receive food, and 3,500 receive other assistance, including furniture.

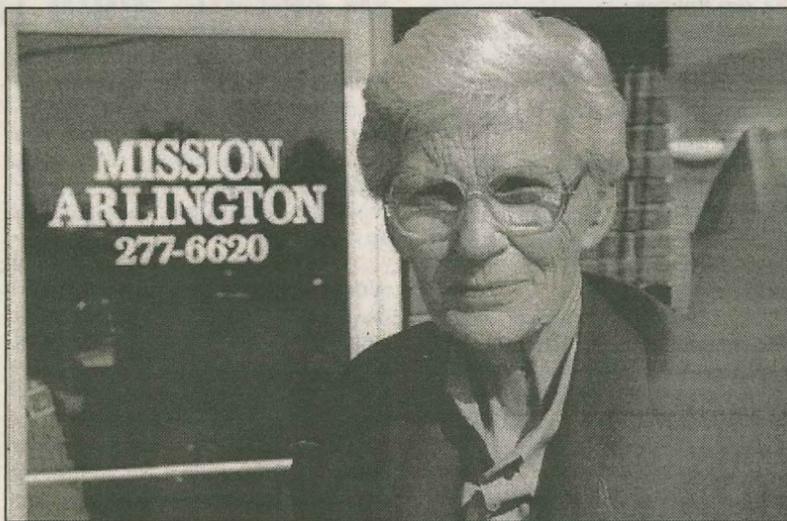
Other ministries include driving people to work or school in donated vehicles, medical and dental care, a homeless shelter and day care. It all adds up to 42,000 families and 189,000 individuals a year who receive some type of ministry from Mission Arlington.

While Mission Arlington occupies buildings all over town, most of the day-to-day ministry is carried on in a complex almost at the back door of the 6,000-member First Baptist Church.

At the center of the swirl of activity is the 63-year-old Burgin. She is in perpetual motion, striding constantly through the sprawling complex, talking on a cell phone or on one or two radios clipped to her belt. Shouts of "Tillie!" emit almost continuously over a radio or above the parking lot noise.

Thin and white-haired, Burgin appears almost frail. But she is indefatigable. Her day starts at 3:30 a.m. and ends somewhere around 10 or 11 p.m.—seven days a week.

As administrator, she oversees the massive operation just as any other executive might. But if the area around the trash dumpster requires cleaning, a floor needs mopped or a pile of orange peels



TILLIE BURGIN She might be the best-known person in Arlington, Texas, because of her tireless work directing Mission Arlington and Mission Metroplex. Her work ethic was learned at her father's filling station. Her call to mission was nurtured by First Baptist Church of Arlington. (Photo by Toby Druin)

needs to be scooped up near the doorway of the medical clinic, she does it herself.

She meets and talks with hundreds of people each day. Many are in need or under stress. She ministers personally with as many as possible with a hug, a smile, an encouraging word. "No one you pass today will be of no significance," she tells staff members during an 8 a.m. devotional.

The Mission Arlington model is being copied by others across the nation. Observers come to the office daily to see how it's done and go home to try to replicate it.

Burgin said God has put it all in place. "The only idea I ever had was, 'Let's start a Bible study,'" she said. "Everything else has come because of a need."

Burgin grew up in the shadow of First Baptist Church. At age 9, she made a profession of faith in Christ, at 15 re-committed her life to Christ and in a Girls Auxiliary meeting felt a calling to be a missionary.

She met her husband, Bob, in a history class at what was then Arlington State College (now the University of Texas at Arlington). They were married within a year.

When he was drafted in 1957, it opened the door for her to answer her missionary calling. She couldn't ac-

company him as a military dependent, but while he served with the Army at Inchon, Korea, she became a teacher with the Methodist Mission in Seoul. When he left the military, they returned to Arlington as schoolteachers.

Bob Burgin, who earned a degree in secondary education, hadn't been inclined to be a missionary at first, but after a few years he, too, felt God was calling him to missions. The Burgins—by this time with two young sons—returned to Korea in 1966 as Southern Baptist missionary teachers.

Tillie Burgin had listed Korea as her first choice for a place of service on her missionary application form and Arlington as her second and third choices. She believed if she couldn't serve in Korea, she should be a missionary in Arlington.

After five years in Korea, the Burgins returned home on what was to be a yearlong furlough. It stretched because of health problems for their younger son. They managed to return to Korea briefly, but the child's problems persisted, and they eventually had to resign as foreign missionaries.

Her move back to an active missions role began in 1986 after her pastor attended a "key church" meeting in Dallas. When he heard another pastor describe starting an apartment ministry with seminary students, he said, "I thought, 'We can do that,' and I thought of Tillie."

The "key church" program offered assistance from the Baptist General Convention of Texas to any church hiring a minister of missions and committing to starting six missions.

What would eventually become Mission Arlington began to take shape with a phone call from a woman who needed help paying her electric bill. Burgin helped her and asked if she could have a Bible study in the woman's apartment. The woman consented but said she had no furniture. Burgin arranged for her to get some and then realized she had no one to teach the Bible study.

She asked Lauren Musgrave, who started attending First Baptist as a college student and was a member of Burgin's Bible study group on Wednesday nights.

"Lauren said she had never taught," Burgin said. "I told her not to worry,

What is Mission Arlington?

The ministry of First Baptist Church of Arlington, Texas, has been hailed by church and government leaders for making a difference in the lives of people. Here's an overview of its scope:

- 215 weekly Bible studies attended by 3,700 people in apartment complexes, mobile home parks, retirement centers, nursing homes, office buildings and homes.
- 3,500 families per month given assistance, 42,000 families and 189,000 individuals last year. Assistance totaled \$310,895.94.
- 2,500 patients seen annually in a free dental clinic.
- 2,200 patients treated annually in a free medical clinic.
- \$2,000 monthly spent to assist needy people with prescription costs.
- 50 children of homeless and at-risk families cared for daily.
- 2,000 volunteers worked at Mission Arlington during 1999, not including more than 100 out-of-town mission groups with 2,000 students from 18 states and more than 1,000 people assigned by legal entities to do community service work.
- \$150,000-plus in direct financial assistance given to approximately 35,000 people to help with rent, utilities, gasoline and prescriptions.
- 350 pickups weekly of furniture, clothing and housewares and delivered at no cost to people in need. More than 45,000 people a year are assisted.
- 5,000 individuals monthly assisted with food.
- 2,000 people a week helped with clothing.
- 650 children each week participating in after-school programs at 26 sites.
- 12 English-as-a-second-language classes held each week.
- 12,768 people in 3,766 families aided through its Christmas store.

probably no one would come anyway." But 17 people came to the first session.

Soon, Bible studies were going at six apartment complexes. Word began to spread among apartment managers that they had a positive impact on tenants' behavior. That opened many more doors.

More than 2,000 volunteers work in the ministry each year—"We need 2,000 more," Burgin remarked—and many of them have been coming for years.

All Mission Arlington asks of Bible-study leaders, Burgin said, is that they be Christians and that they pray.

"They are to knock on doors, visit the people and hang out on the property until they know their people," she said. "That's our basic philosophy: 'Hang out on the property and hover around John 3:16.'"

Burgin is arguably the best-known person in Arlington. "Hi, Miss Tillie," is on the lips of almost every person she passes and frequently is shouted from passing cars. She is embarrassed frequently when introduced as the "Mother Teresa of Arlington."

Her only hero is Jesus. "No one but Him," she said. And rather than thinking of it as work, Burgin says coming to Mission Arlington is "fun," even if it's for an 18-hour day.

She scoffs at the idea that the ministry revolves around her and dismisses questions about who will direct it when she is gone.

"There are a whole lot of people here who could manage it," she said. "Besides, I only kind of hang out here. The rest of the people do the work."



NEW BELIEVER Bob Burgin baptizes a new believer in a portable baptistry. About 3,700 people attend the 215 weekly Bible studies sponsored by Mission Arlington. (Photo by Toby Druin)

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. For information, contact the KBC partnership office at (502) 245-4101.

■ A vacation Bible school team to work in Shrewsbury, Mass., this summer. Call Barbara at (508) 842-6904 for details.

■ The Tuesday and Wednesday night Bible studies and the Thursday Christian English club missionaries lead each week in Warsaw, Poland.

■ Hobie Dos Santos and Brandon Hedrick, volunteers who are ministering in Warsaw, Poland, this month.

■ Russ Pross, an International Service Corps missionary who began his ministry in Poland this month.

■ A church recently begun in Kiberege, Tanzania.

■ Follow-up to recent house-to-house evangelism, preaching and "Jesus" film showing among the Nyakabungo people of Tanzania.

Texas Baptists explore Cuba partnership

FARMERSVILLE, Texas (ABP)—Pastor Bart Barber went to Cuba expecting to find struggling churches desperately in need of help. Instead, he discovered vibrant, growing congregations in need of partners.

"There are 10 churches to every pastor there," said Barber, pastor of First Baptist Church in Farmersville, Texas. "They are working to build leadership. We hope to put together some ways to help train leaders."

The Farmersville church might develop member-to-member partnerships with a Cuban congregation, linking Texas Baptists by correspondence and prayer with a Cuban Baptist family. Barber recently was part of a four-day exploratory trip to Cuba, sponsored by Texas Partnerships.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas is involved in a limited partnership with the Eastern Cuba Baptist Convention.

Cuba has been closed to foreign missionaries for 40 years, but that does not mean the island nation has been without an evangelical witness, according to Don Sewed, director of Texas Partnerships.

"There is a very dynamic, evangelical Christian church in Cuba," Sewed said. "The churches have well-developed work in some areas such as music ministry and new-church starting."

Texas Baptists are being enlisted to help meet key needs of the churches in Cuba such as discipleship training, leadership development, construction and renovation of facilities, and financial support for retired ministers and widows.

Texas Partnerships already has made arrangements to help 100 Cuban pastors secure a basic 40-volume Christian reference library, and the office already has contributed books to the seminary library in Cuba.

Former Louisville pastor forced to resign amid financial scandal

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—A former Louisville pastor and president of a seminary in Europe will resign his Florida church amid allegations that he misappropriated approximately \$184,000 in church contributions to the seminary and falsified receipts to cover up his actions.

A church administrator announced in the morning worship service April 30 that Altus Newell has offered his resignation after nearly 10 years as pastor of Deermeadows Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., and that deacons were "working with him on closure."

Church leaders say Newell, former pastor of Louisville's St. Matthews Baptist Church, was told to resign after admitting he misled the Jacksonville church about the use of funds intended for the seminary and falsified receipts.

Newell told Associated Baptist Press his resignation is primarily for health reasons and that questions about the

contributions are "in the process of being resolved."

According to church leaders, the \$184,000 was contributed to the church for use by the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague, the Czech Republic, between 1992 and 1999.

Documents provided to deacons account for about half the money. The documents allege that Newell authorized payments totaling \$90,520 from the church to a Swiss bank account in 1993, 1995, 1997, 1998 and 1999. The funds were contributed by an unnamed donor and Newell himself to a designated church account for East Europe evangelism.

But IBTS rector Keith Jones said no one at the school has ever heard of an East Europe evangelism program, that the account number cited on the receipts does not belong to the seminary and that the receipts are inauthentic.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Evangelist Wyman Copass has some open dates June-August and November. Good dates available in 2001. Call (270) 683-6040. E-mail: wcmia@aol.com.

FOR RENT: 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental, Sanibel Island, Fla. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$650. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752.

FOR SALE: Church pews. Call (502) 495-3908 for further details.

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.

SEEKING: South Elkhorn Baptist Church, Lexington, is prayerfully seeking a full-time associate pastor of music and youth. Send resumé to SEBC, 4867 Versailles Road, Lexington, KY 40510, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister. Send resumé to: Beechmont Baptist Church, 4574 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40214, or fax: (502) 368-5807.

SEEKING: Second Baptist Church of Greenville, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Please send resumé to: Mr. John Mark Pendley, Search Committee, PO Box 253, Greenville, KY 42345.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky., is seeking an organist. Contact Dick Ham, minister of music, for job description and organ specifications. Phone: (606) 623-4028. Fax: (606) 623-5978. Deadline for applications: May 31.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music (approximately 15 hours/week). Send resumé to: Youngers Creek Baptist Church, 251 Youngers Creek Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Piggott, Ark., is seeking mature, experienced full-time senior pastor. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, FBC, PO Box 365, Piggott, AR 72454.

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

SEEKING: Full-time youth minister in combination with associate pastor or programs minister. Russellville, Ky. Contact church office: (270) 726-2468, or Thomas Bouldin, (800) 718-7372.

SEEKING: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary seeks applicants for director of management information systems. The director provides leadership for campus information systems (administrative systems, LAN and telecommunication systems, help desk and desktop support). The successful candidate will have at least 10 years of increasingly responsible technology management experience. Demonstrated ability to communicate and work effectively with staff, faculty and students is required. Experience in database administration, analysis, design and programming of AS/400, RPGIV, PC and LAN using Windows NT preferred. A bachelor's degree is required with 15 credit hours in computer science preferred. Qualified applicants should send resumé and three letters of reference to: Connie Marrett, personnel services, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or reply to: cmarrett@sbs.edu.

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

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

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: 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: 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.

SEEKING: Opening for full-time plumber at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Two years experience or two years training in plumbing from a technical school needed. \$8.82/hour plus generous benefits. Apply in person at the personnel office, 4118 Sampey Hall, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280.

SERVICES: Web site design. Let us create a custom Web site for your church, business or organization. Our experienced Web designers will work with you to design an attractive, informative Web site. We can provide either complete, turn-key packages and ongoing maintenance of your site, or only initial startup services. Costs are very reasonable. Call Jeff, Linda or Rodney at Educational Computing Services, (502) 897-3791. E-mail us at ecs@classtime.com. Visit our Web site at www.classtime.com.

PEOPLE

Young Baptist pastor helps shape Moldova parliament

By Mike Creswell
SBC International Mission Board

CHISINAU, Moldova (BP)—Valeriu Ghiletschi radiates confidence as he strides toward Moldova's parliament building.

As one of the first Baptists elected to government service in the former Soviet Union, his assurance rises out of a conviction that God has called him to help his struggling people in their quest for freedom.

It's an awesome responsibility, and Ghiletschi is well aware that Baptists and other believers around the world are watching him almost as closely as are the communist legislators down the hall.

Among Moldovan Baptists, Ghiletschi is a respected leader—a pastor in charge of youth ministry for one of the country's largest churches, a teacher who helped establish the Baptist seminary.

Can a lone Baptist make a difference in a former Soviet republic?

Ghiletschi hopes so.

The very idea that a Baptist—especially a Baptist pastor—would run for political office apparently offends many people in Moldova.

Before Ghiletschi won election to parliament in 1998, his Party of Democratic Forces was attacked in many newspaper articles because he was on the candidate list. Orthodox Church leaders threatened to destroy the DPF campaign if Ghiletschi were not removed.

But the party leaders rallied behind Ghiletschi after he met with them and told them about his life.

It was only after Ghiletschi was elected that one of the party leaders—a signer of Moldova's declaration of independence in 1991—told Ghiletschi why he

was willing to risk so much in supporting the pastor.

In 1987 the leader's son was ill, and two men came to visit him. One man was a Moldovan Baptist who had moved to the United States. He asked if he could pray for the son.

After some hesitation, the party leader and his wife agreed. It impressed him that the man wept and prayed fervently for the boy as if he were his own child. The father never saw the man again, but his son recovered in a few days. The incident left the leader respectful of Baptists.

Even some Moldovan believers weren't sure a minister should be running for public office. Ghiletschi didn't ask Baptists to campaign for him, but to pray for him instead.

For Ghiletschi, serving in parliament is not just a whim or chance to help his struggling nation. Instead, he sees it as a spiritual quest, much as the Old Testament leader Joshua had to struggle to take and hold the land God promised.

Ghiletschi often speaks to young people about Moldova's current dark days, which leave many of them despairing of finding decent jobs.

"I believe this generation is like Joshua and Caleb," he says. "They must lead into a new world order. When I speak to them, I always encourage them to be faithful to the Lord during these difficulties. I understand there are many difficulties, but these young people will be able to change the situation."

Ghiletschi is personally committed to change.

Early on he was elected to the parliamentary committee on human rights—a topic dear to the hearts of long-repressed Baptists. And he has kept his Christian faith public while trying not to alienate those of Orthodox faith or no faith. But the "special sta-

tus" of the Orthodox Church keeps religious liberty issues on Ghiletschi's front burner.

He has argued long and hard against Moldova's Law of Religious Cults or Denominations. The measure outlaws proselytizing, a broadly defined term to which the Council of Europe objected. After much debate, the government banned proselytizing "by violence or abuse of authority." Ghiletschi was not fully happy with the revision, but it was better than before.

More recently, he was able to help pass budget amendments that will exempt religious educational institutions from property taxes and allow Christian literature to be brought into the country without import duties.

As the year 2000 began, Moldova's parliament still was struggling to get organized under a new majority. Ghiletschi believes it will take years before pro-communist tendencies are shed.

"Somebody said it took one night for God to take Israel out of Egypt, but it took 40 years for Him to get Egypt out of Israel," he noted. He believes Moldova must wander in a sort of economic and social desert before enjoying the promises of real freedom.

"Freedom and democracy are new wines, but the containers of communism are old," Ghiletschi observes.

Soon after his election, Ghiletschi began twice-a-month prayer meetings and Bible studies with seven other parliament members. He believes it's the first time a group has met here with such an agenda.

"It is amazing that now we meet to pray where communism once held sway!" he exclaims. "Nobody could dream several years ago it would have been possible to have a believer in parliament. It's incredible for us to think God has made this possible."

Journey of faith

CHISINAU, Moldova (BP)—Valeriu Ghiletschi, elected to Moldova's parliament in 1998, was born into a Baptist family near Balti, northern Moldova.

He became a believer at age 17 after attending the funeral of a Baptist youth leader killed in a car accident. "I don't know exactly for sure, but there was some opinion that the accident was arranged by the KGB," Ghiletschi says matter-of-factly.

"His funeral was attended by many, many people. I was impressed that, despite the fact that we were in a town of communists, they allowed the church to have this funeral open. There were many preachers, and they preached outside, on the streets, with no restrictions. At that funeral I was touched by the gospel and a few days after received the Lord as my Savior."

Ghiletschi got involved in the youth ministry of a Baptist church in Balti before his required service of two years in the Soviet army. Army officers tried to force him to abandon his Christian faith and instead become a member of Komsomol, the Soviet communist youth organization. They threatened to send him to the war in Afghanistan if he did not comply.

"It was a difficult time, but God was good," Ghiletschi recalls. "He used some military officers who just took a stand for me—they told the unit leaders I was good at my profession, and they needed someone who was an electronics specialist."

He later graduated from a university in Odessa, Ukraine, and worked for several years as an engineer back in his hometown of Balti.

Ghiletschi's life changed in 1991 when he had a chance to go to Oradea, Romania, and study four years in the Baptist Bible Institute there. He abandoned his job and moved out in faith.

After graduating in 1994, Ghiletschi returned to Chisinau, Moldova's capital, and began the first Baptist Bible school in Moldova. He worked four years as academic dean of the school. He also serves as an associate pastor of Jesus the Savior Baptist Church, a 1,000-member congregation which began about eight years ago with about 80 members. Each year the church baptizes more than 100 people.

Historic ranch breeds horses & Christian faith in Nebraska

By Eva Wilson
Kansas-Nebraska Baptist Digest

NAPER, Neb. (BP)—The home of the American White Horse, the only horse breed native to Nebraska, is thriving once again, as is the historic ranch's Christian witness.

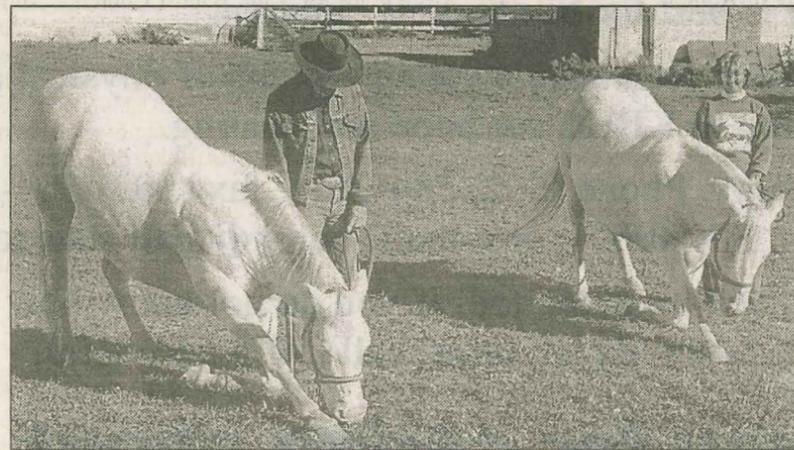
The White Horse Ranch, about seven miles southeast of Naper, Neb., was founded by Cal and Ruth Thompson in 1938. Devout Christians unable to have their own children, the Thompsons started a training and riding school as an avenue for ministering to children.

They began touring with their White Horse troupe, with the children doing the performing. In its heyday during the 1940s and '50s, the White Horse Ranch also became a showplace that attracted 400 to 500 visitors monthly.

But in 1963, the vision of the White Horse Ranch seemed at an end with the death of Cal Thompson. Due to health reasons, Ruth Thompson had to close the ranch, lease the pastures and sell the equipment and horses.

With the ranch's proud past a fading memory, its buildings fell into disrepair.

Today, however, the White Horse Ranch is enjoying a physical rebirth thanks to Dean and Carley Daugherty, a dedicated Southern Baptist couple. Not only are they restoring the build-



PRAYER FOCUS The unique horses at the White Horse Ranch near Naper, Neb., help share the gospel. Dean and Carley Daugherty, who are restoring the ranch, use the horses in a "gospel horse routine." Snow Queen (left) and White Satin bow as Daugherty leads a prayer to begin the routine. (BP photo by Eva Wilson)

ings and raising White Horses, the two are carrying on the ranch's spiritual legacy.

Carley Daugherty was one of the children touched by the Thompsons. She was their foster daughter and lived at the ranch from 1947-49 and then came back in the summers.

"By the time Carley was 8 years old, she had performed (with the White Horse troupe) in 46 states," her husband said.

The Daughertys came to Nebraska

in 1989 to help fulfill Mrs. Thompson's dream of restoring the White Horse Ranch. Dean retired that year from his career with the Maricopa County sheriff's department in Phoenix, Ariz.

Daugherty recalled that the ranch "was in really sad condition" when he and his wife arrived there from Arizona. "We had quite a challenge."

However, Mrs. Thompson only got to see the beginning of her dream come true. She died in 1990.

"It's payback time," Mrs. Daugh-

erty said as she recalled how the Thompsons influenced her life as a young girl.

Along with their work at the ranch, the Daughertys are active in ministry, both at the ranch and in the area.

Soon after they arrived in Nebraska, Mrs. Daugherty contacted the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists to find out what Southern Baptist ministries were available in the area. Since Southern Baptist work was just getting started in that part of Nebraska, the Daughertys have become a part of several new ministry efforts.

Dennis Hampton, a church planter in the Nebraska Sandhills, started a Bible study at the White Horse Ranch in 1991. The Bible study has since moved into Naper to be more accessible, especially during winter. The group has an average attendance of 12 to 14 people and is planning to start a new group.

The White Horse Ranch also has been the site of vacation Bible schools each summer for the past five years, attracting children from as far away as 25 miles.

At the ranch, the horses are trained to help the Daughertys share the gospel with children and adults.

Using the horses in their "gospel horse routine," Daugherty noted, "We pray over our horses that they will accept our dominion over them as we should accept God's dominion over us."

ACLU vs. KBHC

The real losers will be Kentucky's children!

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children is preparing to defend itself against a lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union challenging our policy that prohibits people who engage in homosexual behavior from employment with KBHC. To avoid being a co-defendant with KBHC, the Commonwealth of Kentucky could sever its contractual relationship with KBHC. Those contracts provide partial reimbursement to KBHC for the care of children and teens removed from their homes by the commonwealth because of physical or sexual abuse, neglect or behavioral problems. **Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children will go on, with, or without that funding**, but thousands of Kentucky children and teens will lose out on the compassionate, quality care that has been our mission since 1869.

By discontinuing its relationship with KBHC, the commonwealth will be giving tacit approval of the homosexual lifestyle. Is this a value you want reflected in your state's government?

You can help!

- 1) Contact Gov. Paul Patton at (502) 564-2611 by phone, (502) 564-2517 by fax, 700 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, KY 40601 by mail or governor@mail.state.ky.us by e-mail and tell him to do what is best for Kentucky's children.
- 2) Ask him to support efforts to keep Kentucky's young victims of physical and sexual abuse and neglect coming to KBHC for hope and healing.
- 3) Contact Lt. Governor Steve Henry. Phone (502) 564-2611, fax (502) 564-2849, mail 700 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, KY 40601, or e-mail shenry@mail.state.ky.us
- 4) Call your local representatives and senators, too. If you do not know how to contact them after the General Assembly adjourns, call (502) 564-8100.

***Thank you for caring about
Kentucky's children and teens.***



Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

10200 Linn Station Road, Suite 200

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