

June 27, 2000
Vol. 174, No. 26

Notice

No Western Recorder will be published during the July 4 holiday week.

FOR THE RECORD

Baptists

Charles Colson asks why Southern Baptists have been quiet about Charles Stanley's divorce. *Page 2.*

KBC presidential nominees

A Louisville pastor and a former missionary to Bangladesh have agreed to be nominated for KBC president this fall. *Page 3.*

Editorial

A series of interdenominational ministry events makes a spiritual impact on Kentucky. *Page 5.*

Beth Moore

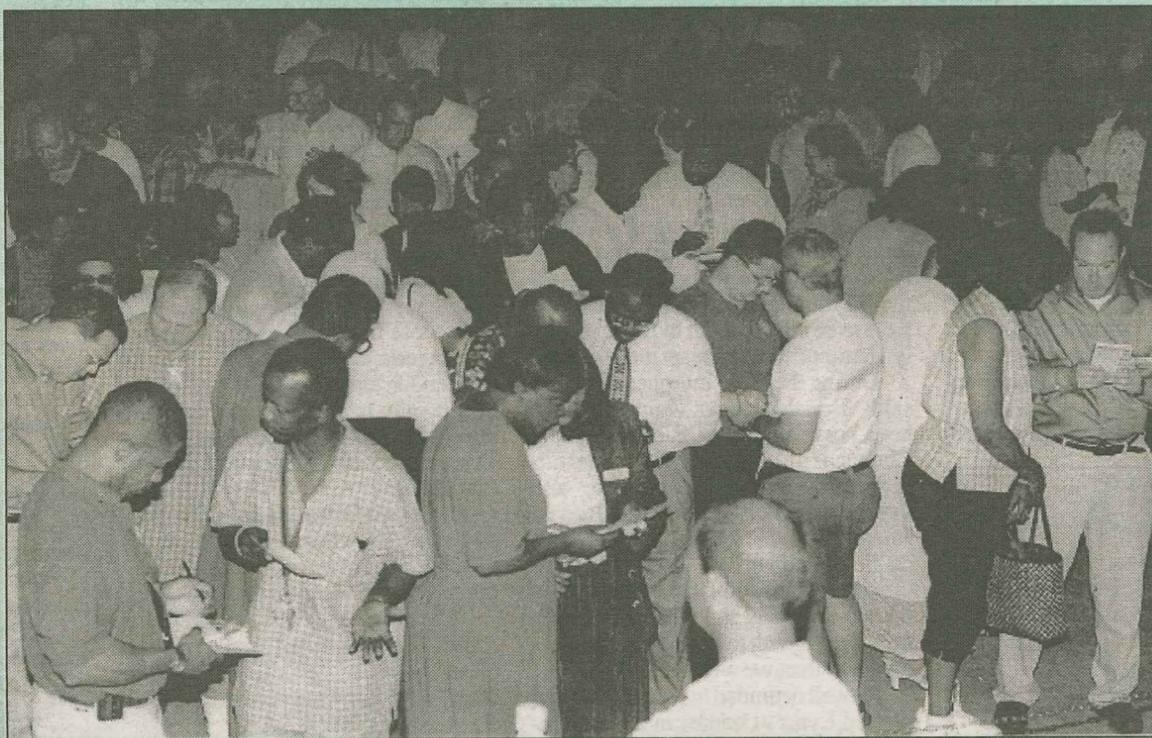
The popular author told a sold-out audience in Louisville to fall in love with God. *Page 8.*

Music

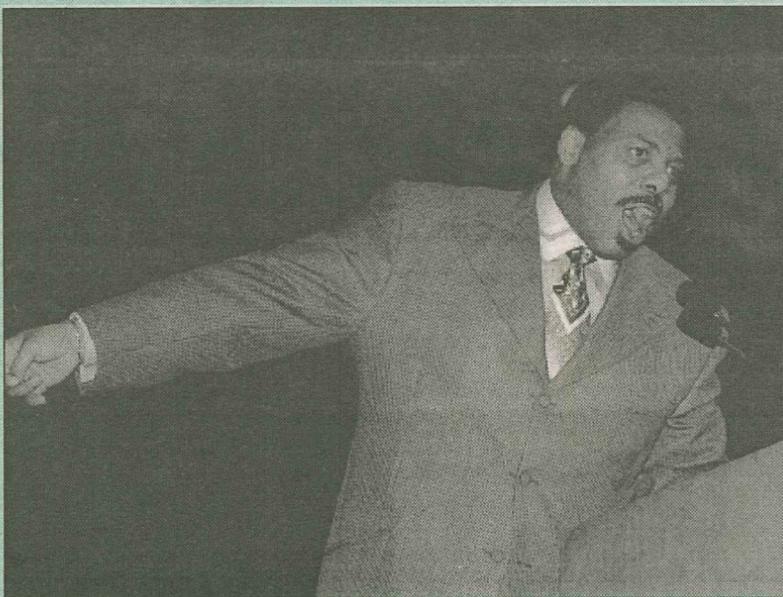
A Horse Cave singer learned about the power of prayer. *Page 12.*

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, June 28

A call to reconciliation



More than 400 people responded to the altar calls during the three-day Tony Evans Greater Louisville Crusade, June 19-21. The event came on the heels of heightened racial unrest in recent months, ranging from conflict between police and city hall to arson attacks at area churches. Evans' message of racial, cultural and denominational reconciliation was reinforced by speakers and musicians who shared testimonies about the impact of reconciliation in their lives. The interracial, interdenominational event involved more than 160 churches in the Louisville area. ■ Above: Scores of people respond to the invitation on the crusade's final night. ■ Right: Dallas pastor Tony Evans speaks on achieving true reconciliation by first establishing a proper relationship with God and then allowing that to affect everything one does. *Stories on pages 6-7.*



Churches must respond to changing settings to grow, pastor says

By Dan Martin
Baptist General Convention of Texas

GLORIETA, N.M. (ABP)—Church growth might not be easy, but according to pastor Steve Stroope it is a logical process.

"Church growth is not so much a magic formula as it is a series of sensitive and creative responses to a changing environment," said Stroope, who led Lake Pointe Baptist Church in Rockwall, Texas, from 53 members in 1980 to more than 5,000 in 2000.

"Three things make up environment," said Stroope, a key speaker at the National Innovative Church Leadership Conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

"The first is our understanding of the mind of God. God does not change, but our understanding does. The second is the community in

which we minister. And the third is the church itself."

Stroope said every congregation must find its own strategy and purpose. Churches cannot merely transfer a program that works somewhere else and expect it to be effective, he noted.

He quoted futurist and theologian Leonard Sweet who mocked churches that blindly mimic the innovative Willow Creek congregation in suburban Chicago and its pastor Bill Hybels.

Leonard said such congregations "find themselves up a Willow Creek without a Hybels."

Reaching people requires a "clear, concise biblical purpose," a reliance on the sovereignty of God and intentional prayer, Stroope said.

He and Lake Pointe's minister of education, Carter Shotwell, said the purpose statement of the church

hasn't changed much in the 20 years since it was founded.

Shotwell quoted the purpose statement: "Share the love of God with unchurched people in the Lake Ray Hubbard community and the world in such a way that they have the best opportunity to become fully developing followers of Jesus Christ."

The purpose of the church is to reach unchurched people and then to develop them into fully developing followers of Christ, he explained.

The church emphasizes four parts of the process of creating "fully developing followers," Shotwell said.

"The first is to worship God. The second is to live by God's word. The third is to contribute to God's work. And the fourth is to have an impact on God's world," Shotwell said. "No one is there yet, and we must con-

KBHC keeps state money, kids for now

By David Winfrey
News Director

LOUISVILLE—Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children could lose some state business despite a decision last week to accept a new contract with stricter language.

The basic agreement, hammered out for more than a month and announced June 24, will maintain two key aspects, according to KBHC President Bill Smithwick:

First, troubled children who are under the protective wing of state agencies will continue to be referred to KBHC homes and foster parents for care.

Second, the contract does not require the Baptist agency to change its policy that prevents employment of people involved in homosexual activity.

That policy is at the root of a lawsuit filed against KBHC and the state by a former employee, who is lesbian, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Smithwick said that during a conference call, KBHC trustee's five-member executive board voted unanimously to accept the new contract. "Really, in essence, nothing's changed."

But the contract does spell out two issues regarding KBHC's relationship with Kentucky's Cabinet for Families and Children and the Department of Juvenile Justice.

In one, KBHC agrees to pay for the state's legal defense in the current lawsuit filed by former employee Alicia Pedreira.

"There's always been 'hold harmless' language in the contracts," Smithwick said. "It was our employment practices that got the state into court, and we have agreed to indemnify them." He added that the bulk of KBHC's legal costs up to this point have been paid for. □ See *Bowling Green* ..., page 3

tinue to develop in all four areas."

To help them continue developing, Lake Point requires five basic commitments from its members, Stroope said. They are:

■ *Become involved in Bible study.* "A person can't join the church without making a commitment to go to adult Bible fellowship."

■ *Serve somewhere in the church.* "There is no committee on committees, where somebody can get stuck in a job. We let people experiment in finding their spiritual gift."

■ *Give in a biblical way.* "We expect our people to give systematically, proportionately and sacrificially."

■ *Keep a list of three people they are actively witnessing to.*

■ *Work at least once a year in the nursery.* "He or she can choose the age group and whether it is in Sunday school or worship, but they are expected to participate at least annually."

Land, Americans United square off over Falwell

By Kenny Byrd
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Responding to a warning not to air partisan political comments by televangelist Jerry Falwell, officials of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission said they would never jeopardize the agency's tax status by endorsing candidates for office.

ERLC President Richard Land wrote a letter June 21 to Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Land's letter responded to an earlier letter by Lynn asking that Land's agency not air certain comments by Falwell during a June 12 taping to be edited and aired later on the commission's "For Faith and Family" radio program.

Lynn warned that the Southern Baptist Convention's tax-exempt status could be jeopardized if the ERLC airs

the interview, because listeners would conclude Falwell's "partisan agenda has the official endorsement" of the denomination.

In an interview with Associated Baptist Press, however, Land said, "This is an attempt to threaten and an attempt by Mr. Lynn—bully that he is—to engage in prior restraint of our speech. Whatever decision we make concerning that airing of our program with Dr. Falwell or with anyone else, Barry Lynn's opinions and his advice will have absolutely no influence or impact whatsoever."

Land said he expects the Falwell interview to air on "For Faith and Family" around the first week in July. He said the 40-minute tape with Falwell will have to be edited down to fit the roughly 18 minutes of space on the program.

During the radio interview, Falwell said: "Ronald Reagan would not have been president unless Bible-believing Christians in 1979 and 1980 by the millions said, 'We've had enough,' and threw Jimmy Carter out and put Ronald Reagan in, to put it bluntly. If we don't do the same thing Nov. 7 with Mr. Gore ... and get somebody in there to rebuild the moral values and fabric of this nation, we're going to be in the same mess or worse than we were in 1980."

Falwell defended his statements and blasted Lynn's charges in a phone interview with ABP.

"As a private citizen," Falwell said, "I'm working to elect George W. Bush in the same way I worked to elect Ronald Reagan. I'm not working any harder than Barry Lynn is working to elect Al Gore. He's not kidding anybody."

Falwell said he told Land before the taping that "I was going to be pretty outspoken as a private citizen and if I were you, I would carefully select and use the comments that I am about to make."

In his letter, Land tells Lynn that "your letter demonstrates a total misun-

derstanding of the way the Southern Baptist Convention operates." Land said Lynn's suggestion that Falwell's comments have the endorsement of the SBC because he is a "prominent" SBC leader is "not consistent with Southern Baptist polity, which emphasizes the autonomy of the local church and the priesthood of believers."

Land cited Lynn's "thinly veiled threat" to file more complaints with the IRS if necessary and charged that Americans United is not as quick to file IRS complaints about churches that endorse Democratic candidates.

Americans United released a fact sheet countering those claims. Of the 28 houses of worship and religious ministries that AU has reported to the IRS, eight arose from entities that endorsed Democratic candidates and 10 arose from endorsements of GOP candidates. Seven were related to churches handing out Christian Coalition voter guides. Three dealt with independent or other candidates.

Lynn said IRS rules on tax exemption allow churches to speak about political issues but restrict them from endorsing or opposing candidates.

"I do not make threats," Lynn added. If Land decides "to take the statements that we complained about and air them, we will then be forced to report that activity to the IRS."

Land said the ERLC program is dedicated to discussing issues and not advancing partisan political agendas.

"But we are not going to impose censorship on our guests," he continued, "particularly as a result of the threats of any organization to file a complaint with federal authorities, ... particularly when that complaint has no merit."

Land said he does not endorse candidates for office because "it is very difficult for people to separate me, the individual, from me, the head of the ERLC." He added that God is not a Republican or a Democrat, "but God is pro-life."

Colson urges accountability in Stanley divorce

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Southern Baptist leaders who have opposed no-fault divorce and have criticized President Clinton for moral lapses should not remain silent on the divorce of Charles Stanley, Chuck Colson said.

Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta and a former Southern Baptist Convention president, announced May 21 that he and his wife, Anna, had divorced.

Five years ago, during a separation and threatened divorce, Stanley told his congregation that if the conflict turned to divorce he would step down as pastor. But when the divorce was announced last month, Stanley indicated he planned to remain as pastor.

A church spokesman explained that "God has positioned Dr. Stanley in a place where his personal pain has validated his ability to minister to all of us." The congregation applauded when told Stanley would remain.

The church's explanation and the congregation's applause are unsettling to Colson, founder of Pitting Fellowship and a Southern Baptist himself.

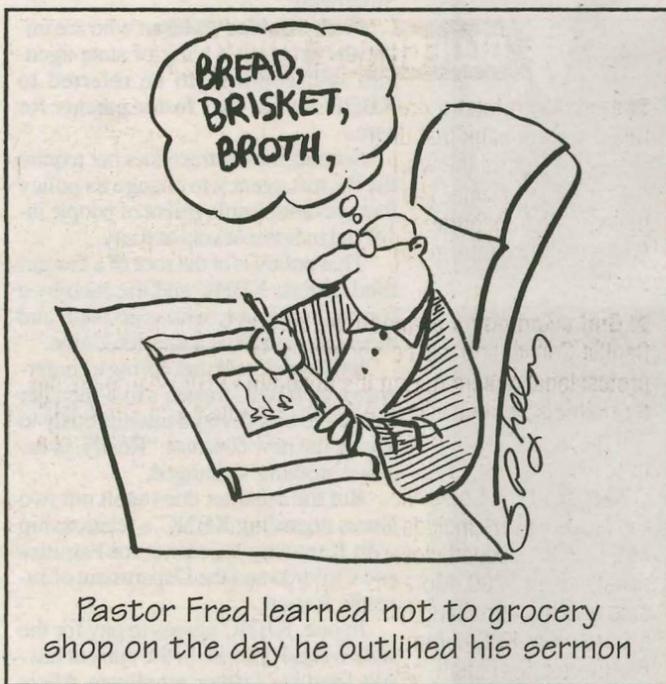
"Have our churches become so accustomed to moral failure that we applaud it?" he asked in the June 13 radio commentary. "If this is the test of being a good shepherd, should we also endorse pedophiles as pastors so they can better empathize with people who commit child abuse? How far do you carry this preposterous argument?"

The church's explanation of why Stanley should remain as pastor is "pure Clinton-speak," Colson said. "Those of us who criticized the president for quibbling over words to defend his sordid behavior have to be even-handed. And what was wrong for Mr. Clinton is certainly wrong for the pastor of one of America's leading churches."

SBC leaders have freely expressed criticism of Clinton throughout his administration, even calling on his home church in Arkansas to expel him from membership. But to date, no SBC leader has publicly questioned Stanley's divorce. "Stanley's decision places his fellow Baptists in a difficult position," Colson asserted, noting that in 1998 the SBC passed a resolution calling on states to revoke "no fault" divorce laws. "Yet now a former president of the convention is using these very same laws to secure a divorce without consequences."

"If Charles Stanley can do this, then how can Southern Baptists presume to speak to their neighbors about marital fidelity?" Colson asked.

Colson expressed personal admiration for Stanley as a minister, calling him a "good and faithful servant." However, he said, "he needs first a time for personal repentance and healing."



Pastor Fred learned not to grocery shop on the day he outlined his sermon

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Golden Gate marks 50 years in SBC.** Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, started by two local churches in the San Francisco Bay area more than a half-century ago, recently celebrated its 50th anniversary as a Southern Baptist Convention-owned seminary. "We are grateful to Southern Baptists for their prayers, their support and the gift of their sons and daughters," said President William Crews. Since being "adopted" as an SBC seminary in 1950, Crews said, Golden Gate has grown beyond its residential campus just north of San Francisco to include four other regional campuses in California, Arizona, Colorado and Washington.

■ **D.C. Baptist executive to retire.** Jere Allen, executive director of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention since 1992, announced his retirement, effective at the end of this year. The convention is aligned with both the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. In 1998, Allen led the group to become triply aligned, establishing ties with the predominantly African-American

Progressive National Baptist Convention. Allen, 66, served 12 years on the staff of the Board Southern Home Mission Board. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

■ **Montana leader announces retirement.** Clyde Billingsley, executive director of the Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship, announced his retirement effective Dec. 31. He plans to return to full-time evangelism. Billingsley, 60, has led the Montana Fellowship since 1994, the previous serving in the same capacity with the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention from 1989-94. He also has been director of evangelism for the Florida Baptist Convention, and director of the evangelism division of the Northwest Baptist Convention. He previously served in vocational evangelism.

■ **CBF approves nine for missions service.** The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has approved seven new career missionaries, one Global Service Corps missionary and one Envoy. Global Service Corps missionaries serve for two years at their own expense.

Envoys perform ministry tasks while working at secular jobs. The new workers will be commissioned June 29 during the CBF General Assembly in Orlando, Fla. The new appointments bring the CBF missions personnel total to 140.

■ **ABP bureau gains credentials.** The new Washington bureau of Associated Baptist Press has obtained congressional press credentials, a step that will enhance the news agency's coverage of issues in the nation's capital. A committee of Washington journalists that grants the credentials determined that the ABP bureau complies with press gallery guidelines that require editorial independence and prohibit members from lobbying the government.

■ **Couples named Nevada Baptist editor.** Chris Cupples, 31, has been named editor of the Nevada Baptist newsjournal. Cupples, who has served as the Nevada Baptist Convention's director of ministry resources since April 1999, also will continue in that role. He previously was pastor of churches in Illinois and Texas.

Two candidates already identified for KBC presidency

LOUISVILLE—Two Kentucky Baptists—a 38-year-old pastor and a 71-year-old retired international missionary—have announced they will be nominated this fall for the Kentucky Baptist Convention presidency.

Jim McKinley served 34 years as a Southern Baptist missionary in Bangladesh. After retirement, he served three years as a KBC consultant for missions and Cooperative Program support.

Kevin Ezell has been pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville since 1996. He previously was pastor of churches in Illinois and Tennessee.

Mike Melloan, a lay leader at Yellow Creek Baptist Church in Owensboro, said several people asked McKinley to be willing to serve as KBC president.

"We couldn't think of a better person to lead us and work with Bill



Ezell



McKinley

Mackey than Jim McKinley," Melloan said. "Jim's the kind of guy who can lead us in the way we need to go, down the center of the path."

McKinley described himself as "a middle of the roader" amid Southern Baptists' division between conservatives and moderates.

"I've been called a coward because I'm in the middle of the road, and I intend to stay there," he noted. He said one of his main goals has been the

support of the Cooperative Program, the joint funding plan for Kentucky Baptist and Southern Baptist institutions and missions efforts.

Born in Clinton County, McKinley now lives in Louisville, where he and his wife, Betty, are members of Westport Road Baptist Church.

He is the author of four books, including "Death to Life Bangladesh" and "Missionary Stories." He said the proceeds from the sale of three books has contributed more than \$250,000 to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. Proceeds from the sale of his latest book, "Missionary Stories II," are being donated to his alma mater, Campbellsville University.

Ezell said he was approached by his friend and fellow pastor Kevin Hamm about being nominated for KBC president.

Ezell "has a heart for evangelism and I think he would work well with

Kentucky Baptists," said Hamm, pastor of Valley View Baptist Church in Louisville.

Affirming Ezell's "commitment to unity and harmony and moving forward together," Hamm said, "I think his leadership gifts could be beneficial to Kentucky Baptists."

Ezell, who was ordained at First Baptist Church of Paducah, has served on the Southern Baptist Convention Committee on Committees and as president of the Illinois Baptist Pastors' Conference.

If elected, "I would want to focus the state on evangelism. That's what my passion is," Ezell said. "I'm embarrassed by the number of churches that baptize no one."

"I would definitely be considered a conservative, but I would like to see myself as a conservative without an attitude," he added. "I have friends with all sorts of perspectives."



KENTUCKY CHANGERS Teenage missions volunteers helped renovate 20 houses in Covington earlier this month. ■ Above: Amanda Adkins (left) and Sara Greenert of Maple Grove Baptist Church in Louisville paint a fence. ■ Below: Antonio Webb (left) of Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville and Brent Goodlett of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Waddy saw a board. (Photos by Dwayne Doyle)

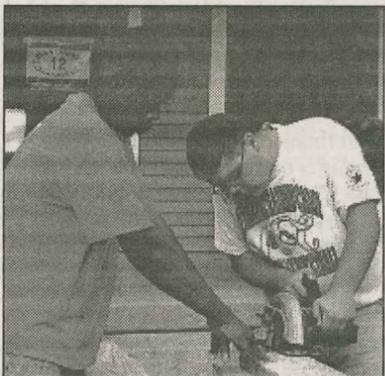
Kentucky Changers hammer away in Covington

COVINGTON—Approximately 160 teenage volunteers from 14 churches helped renovate homes in Covington earlier this month as part of the summer Kentucky Changers missions program.

The projects, organized by the Brotherhood department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, offer free labor for home renovations in cities that are willing to provide the paint, roof shingles and other needed supplies.

In the process, the volunteers get numerous opportunities to explain to homeowners and neighbors that they are volunteering their time in order to share God's love, according to Dwayne Doyle.

"This project focuses primarily on those who are already believers and moving them to living 'on mission



lifestyles," said Doyle, an associate with the KBC Brotherhood department. "They're learning missions as a lifestyle, not as a location."

Each summer, two Kentucky Changers weeks are offered, and the size and scope of the effort continues to

grow, he said.

Volunteers worked on 20 Covington houses June 10-17, he said. "That's way up. The last time we were in Covington (1996), we only did 12."

Workers installed new roofs, scraped and painted houses, built porches and installed fences, he said. In the evening, workers held worship services led by Son Burst, a Kentucky Baptist creative ministry team of collegiate summer missionaries.

Before they arrived on site, the Kentucky Changer teens engaged in six weeks of preparation, including a local ministry project, Doyle said. "They are learning missions as a way of life before they even get on location."

Next month, the second Kentucky Changers week will take place in Henderson. Projects are planned next year for Covington and Frankfort.

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Kentucky ministry profiled in magazine.** Book-Link, a ministry in Eubank that distributes Bibles and other religious materials around the world, is profiled in the July issue of HomeLife magazine. The article describes the 12-year old ministry and encourages readers to send donations to Book-Link. For more information about Book-Link, call (606) 379-2140.

■ **Golf event offers evangelistic outreach.** The Kentucky Baptist Convention will co-sponsor a banquet featuring professional golfers during the upcoming PGA Championship tournament in Louisville in August. "Up Close and Personal," will feature prominent tour players who will share insights on golf, life and their Christian faith. The event will be Aug. 15 at 6:30 p.m. at the Louisville Radisson Hotel and Conference Center. Speakers include Steve Jones and Bobby Clampett; others will be added closer to the event. A table of eight tickets costs \$200. More than half of the tables have been sold and the remaining tables are expected to sell quickly, according to KBC communications specialist Denise Withers. For more information, call (502) 254-4736.

■ **Clear Creek reports student work.** Clear Creek Baptist Bible College students delivered 2,820 messages during the past school year, according to a report from the school. Students also made 5,852 evangelistic contacts and saw 264 people make professions of faith, the report states. During the past five years, officials stated, students have delivered 11,937 messages and seen 1,233 professions of faith.

■ **Campbellsville links with Internet company.** Campbellsville University will partner with Internet company Cisco Systems to train personnel for jobs in the information technology field. By being a Cisco academy, one of approximately 3,900 worldwide, the school will offer training for credit and noncredit at its new technology training center. Cisco will work with the school in purchasing equipment for labs. Classes are scheduled to begin this fall.

■ **Two Cornerstone centers moving.** Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's Cornerstone Counseling offices in Ashland and Northern Kentucky are relocating. In Ashland, the office shares space with Greenup Baptist Association, and both are moving to a new facility at 1217 Midland Trail Road. In Northern Kentucky, the office, previously located in Erlanger, has moved to Baptist Towers at 800 Highland Avenue in Covington.

■ **Georgetown receives grants.** Georgetown College has received two grants from the Margaret Voorhies Haggin Trust. A grant of \$15,000 will support the school's summer session of the Pre-College Academic Experience in Math and Science. A second grant of \$25,000 will purchase chemistry equipment.

WESTERN RECORDER

P.O. Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
(ISSN 0043-4132)

TRENNIS HENDERSON
Editor

DAVID WINFREY
News Director

MAURI SMITH
Marketing & Business
Manager

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

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 244-6470. Fax: (502) 244-6474. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

To subscribe: Send \$10.60 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$8.50 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax exemption number.

POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to: Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

To give news tips: Call (502) 244-6471, fax to (502) 244-6474 or write the editor or news director.

To submit a letter: Letters on any subject will be considered for publication, provided they do not make a personal attack on anyone. Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for length. Submit by mail or fax or by e-mail to: wesrec@ntr.net

To place an advertisement: Rates are available upon request by calling (502) 244-6470. Institutional columns on an inside page are paid space. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff and directors.

Directors: Charles Midkiff, Greenville, chairman; Barry Howard, Corbin, vice chairman; Jim Abernathy, Covington, secretary; Laura Beville, Bowling Green; Mark Boes, Cecilia; Mike Harmon, Princeton; David Harmon-Vaught, Louisville; Don Mantooth, Morehead; Bill Marshall, Louisville; June B. Rice, Paintsville; Bill Thurman, Lexington; Kenneth Wells, Somerset.

Biblical accuracy

In 1 Timothy 2:12, Scripture states, "But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man." Judging from the amount of negative attention the new Baptist Faith and Message recently received, I would guess that many Kentucky Baptists simply disregard or grossly misinterpret this verse of Scripture. However, if we desire to truly be biblical people, we cannot afford ourselves that luxury.

The fact is that this verse—and many others like it—is in the Bible. Furthermore, the Apostle Paul, immediately following this verse, traced this hierarchy of function all the way back to creation (1 Timothy 2:13-14), so we cannot dismiss it as a cultural nuance meant only for the time and place to which Paul was writing.

Thus, when Southern Baptists recently approved the proposed changes to the Baptist Faith and Message, they were standing firmly upon the Scriptures. It is not an "issue of control and power," as some would contend; it is an issue of being biblical.

Nor is it an assault on the idea of equality between the sexes. Even the most conservative biblical scholars agree that men and women are equal before God. However, they also affirm that there is a hierarchy of function between the sexes, just like the Father and the Son are equal members of the Trinity but subservient in their roles (1 Corinthians 11:3).

I am proud of the biblical stand our denomination is taking. It is my hope and prayer that my fellow Kentucky Baptists will likewise recover a biblical theology of gender roles. Let us follow the clear teachings of Scripture by honoring and supporting women and men in the biblical expression of their God-given gifts.

Shawn Merithew
Louisville

Who can be pastors?

If we are going to get real scriptural and forbid women to be pastors, we had better exclude men also. Why? Because in Bible times there was no office that functioned as what we now call a pastor.

Nowhere in the New Testament will you find an individual who stays in one location, is supported by one group of people, and in turn for that support



teaches them about God by conducting services. "You don't charge people to tell them about God" was a common understanding among Jews in the time of Jesus and was still practiced by them until about 100 years ago.

Bishops are mentioned in the New Testament and no serious Bible scholars would equate them to a pastor of today. The writing of Ignatius around 125 A.D. seems to change their role, giving them more authority and duties, but the writings are not clear. The one church, one pastor idea seems to have come in much later.

The office changed because of the panic that gripped the church when the last apostles died, Jesus had not returned and there was no clear succession of authority. It is a shame that people can't rely on the Holy Spirit to lead them but have to have a holy man to lead them.

Bishops mainly authenticated baptisms, Lord's Supper, examined converts, etc. This grew into the priest-layman bondage that lasted for 1,500 years. Please don't take us back to those days.

Jesus' teachings warned against assuming a level higher than others. He functioned as an itinerant rabbi and a servant to His followers. While some modern pastors are better than others in fulfilling the servant role, none have the God-given right to use selective scriptures to browbeat, mislead us or belittle the work of the Holy Spirit.

Gene Iglehart
Bowling Green

God is still God

Thank you for your June 20 editorial. "Priesthood is what it all comes down to."

Having been reared as a Southern Baptist as a child and choosing to remain a Southern Baptist as an adult, I find it appalling that our denominational leaders could even think that there is any means of interpreting or understanding Scripture without using Jesus Christ as the criterion.

It is a very dangerous thing to place the interpretation of any man or group of men over the guidance of the Holy Spirit. From what I read, it seems that Al Mohler and a few others have determined that they and they alone have the inside track on what God says.

I think they are wrong. God is free to be God even if they don't like what He does.

Tom Miller
Covington

Accentuate positives

I write regarding a Baptist Press article in the June 20 issue of the Western Recorder that deals with the Southern Baptist Director of Missions' Conference recently held in Orlando.

Many of us who were present in this meeting could suggest a more suitable title to the article than "Directors of missions: SBC controversy being brought into associations." By the author's own admission, "The issue surfaced briefly. ..."

We heard John Maxwell, Henry Blackaby, Calvin Miller and others. Our meeting was efficient, positive, non-controversial and spiritual. We spent three minutes talking about doing a discussion about the SBC controversy.

Therefore, I think that we sometimes emulate the secular media in trying to focus on issues that divide rather than bring us together.

Rick Robbins
Director of Missions
Northern Kentucky Association

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Celebrate Jesus 2000 gains momentum

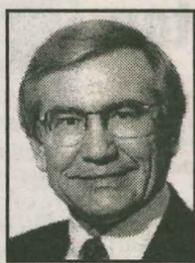
The name of Jesus certainly is being celebrated and lifted up during this special year! Celebrate Jesus 2000 emphases are being conducted across the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Successful associational evangelistic crusades already have been conducted this spring in Crittenden, Lincoln/Casey, Long Run, Pulaski and Rockcastle associations. A number of other associations conducted evangelistic emphases last year. Evangelistic crusades are still to come for Bracken, Christian County, Davies-McLean, Elkhorn, Little Bethel, Little River, Mercer County, Pike, and Severns Valley associations this summer and fall.

A special thanks is due associational and church leaders for their initiative in planning and coordinating these efforts. The celebrations have included prayer walks, counselor training, distribution of the "Who Split Time?" tract, media placement, Jesus video distribution and special worship celebrations.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's

evangelism growth team office has distributed to churches and associations 450,000 copies of the "Who Split Time?" tract and 30,000 copies of the Jesus video. Estimates are that at least



Bill Mackey

one person comes to Christ for each video that is placed.

Jim Coldiron, a Celebrate Jesus 2000 consultant with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, has helped plan and coordinate most of the crusades. However, credit is due a host of volunteers who have served as chairpersons and members of committees. Volunteers have prayed, promoted, invited, distributed literature, counseled, attended, given, provided music and followed up on decisions.

The Celebrate Jesus 2000 emphasis in Louisville has focused on prayer for the city and placing gospel tracts in every home by the churches of Long Run Baptist Association. The Tony Evans Greater Louisville Crusade has provided an opportunity for other Christian denominations to participate in the celebration. More than 160 churches par-

ticipated in this crusade during which hundreds of personal spiritual decisions were made. A special word of thanks is due Dr. Lincoln Bingham whose vision for the crusade enabled it to become a reality.

In addition to handling their regular KBC staff responsibilities, several staff members served as chairpersons for major committees: Robert Reeves, promotion and publicity; Dan Garland, counseling and follow-up; and Shelly Johns Hill, arrangements. Charles Barnes, former KBC president, spent many days in the crusade office as business and finance chairman. Doug Crawley, minister of music at Walnut Street Baptist Church, served effectively as co-chairmen for music and as worship leader. Wesley Pitts, director of missions for Long Run Association, and Thurmond Coleman, moderator of Central District, served as chairmen for enlistment. There were many others, too numerous to mention, who rendered gracious service.

I thank God for the thousands of volunteers who are willing to be used by God in the family of faith to advance His Kingdom.

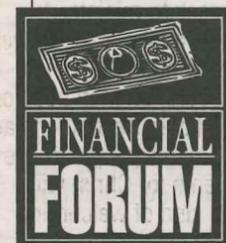
Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Plan a mid-year budget checkup for your church

By Doug Strader

We are just about ready to complete the first half of the year 2000.



That means most of our churches have completed half of their budget year. So now is a good time to take an inventory of

how well your church is doing with its budget this year. Some of the things you should look for include:

■ If you set budget goals, how well are you doing so far?

■ Have you noticed any patterns in your giving habits? That is, have some Sundays each month been the Sundays when your offerings are higher than other Sundays of the month?

■ Do your spending habits need to be adjusted to conform to the giving habits and patterns?

■ If your budget year begins the first of January, will you have received at least 50 percent of your budget income by the end of June?

■ Are you keeping financial stewardship matters before the congregation?

■ Are you making monthly financial reports available on Sundays as well as on business meeting nights?

■ Are you periodically having financial stewardship testimonies from a cross-section of the membership?

■ Are you periodically offering opportunities for the members to be involved in stewardship education activities?

■ Are you sending quarterly financial statements to your members?

■ Are you providing offering envelopes to all family members? Better yet, are you having your envelope service company mail the envelopes monthly or quarterly to all members?

■ As a church, are you making wise decisions about how to spend the money in accordance with the church policies and the budget?

■ Are you looking for and following through on innovative ways to say "thank you" to those who give regularly to the church?

■ How long has it been since your staff members had a salary increase? A mid-year adjustment might be a possibility if it has been some time since an increase was given.

■ Are you already thinking about next year's budget and how you can improve the whole budget process by beginning in plenty of time to do a thorough job?

Why not use this list to begin budget checkup in your church?

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

Christian single adults seek outlets for ministry, fellowship

Q: Many churches tend to view single adults simply as overgrown youth, unable to handle responsibility. Single adult ministry sometimes amounts to little more than a "cruise director" trying to keep single folks busy, entertained and out of trouble. Is this really what single adults need?

As churches seek to minister effectively to single adults, they do well to start with the assumption that single people are their peers, often in positions of high responsibility in the marketplace. Opportunities for single people to use their gifts and talents for Christ will communicate the kind of welcoming spirit single people need to find in a church. Remember, Paul indicated that singleness enhanced, rather than detracted from, a person's ability to serve God (1 Corinthians 7).

Secular society assumes single people are obsessed with sex. Rather than "buy into" that view, churches can help provide healthy contexts for positive relationships. Single adults are normal people. They want to have fun. The church can be a refreshing alternative to the obsession with dating offered by popular culture. It can be a contagious place for single Christians to make an evangelistic connection with other singles who do not yet know the Lord.

Single people, like married people, need Jesus Christ. Demographically, there is a higher percentage of single people than married people who are unchurched. True Christian community, when experienced, can be a powerful revelation, especially to those without traditional family structures. The bottom line is that single people need relationships, and the most important relationship is with Jesus Christ—God's single Son.

Many single people need a context in which to grieve the death of a dream, the death of a marriage or the death of a spouse. When the church is viewed as a safe and welcoming place for grief, healing and wholeness can result.

Single folks need a context in which to live, love, learn and leave a legacy. Your church can be that context. But don't just take my word for it. Ask your single adults. Listen. That will be your greatest investment in finding out what single adults need.—James Stillwell

Q: My high school daughter has a friend who is going to have a child outside of marriage in a few months. The father is dating my daughter now. I trust that my daughter can handle herself, but the other girl does not want the father to bring the baby around our home when he gets visitation. How can we help her see that we won't harm the infant?

Where is your sensitivity? That girl is expecting a child and the boy who got her pregnant broke up with her. She is hurt, frightened and feels abandoned. She is probably so upset at the boy and your daughter that she is not thinking about the baby's safety. She is thinking of her child being with another girl and her boyfriend. Teenagers are mature physically, but their sense of self is still in formation. Few adult women could feel comfortable with this situation.

Back off and let the father see the child without your daughter being around. This expectant teenage mother has been through enough trauma without subjecting her to more emotional torture. Do you remember the story in the Old Testament about the two women fighting over an infant? Let her have peace of mind.—Wade Rowatt

Family Forum writers are David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Susan Howell, assistant professor of psychology at Campbellsville University; Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.



Ecumenical events make spiritual impact

Two recent events in Louisville have the potential for long-term spiritual impact in the city and surrounding regions—if participants are willing to build on the momentum generated at each event.

Last week's Tony Evans Greater Louisville Crusade in Freedom Hall attracted an interracial, interdenominational, intergenerational crowd that topped 7,000 people on the crusade's opening night. More than 160 area churches worked together to plan, promote and participate in the three-day crusade that focused on spiritual, racial and denominational reconciliation.

Earlier in the month, an estimated 9,000 women gathered at Southeast Christian Church for a weekend "Living Proof... Live" Bible conference led by author Beth Moore. She issued a clear call for women to fall in love with God through a personal commitment to in-depth Bible study and discipleship.

The two interdenominational events came during the same month that Southern Baptist Convention leaders reported they had called on SBC entities to "maintain the historic position of Southern Baptists as they cooperate with various other groups in appropriate evangelistic enterprises or moral advocacy initiatives." The report also cautioned the Baptist agencies to "avoid committing Southern Baptist resources, personnel or ministries to relationships which would compromise the historic distinctives or the unique witness of Southern Baptists to the world."

Southern Baptists and other denominations should pursue "appropriate evangelistic enterprises" while carefully guarding their "historic distinctives." Yet we must avoid ever giving the impression that our denomination's "unique witness" is more important than working alongside other evangelical faith groups to spread the gospel.

According to the Apostle Paul, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:5-6). Yes, Southern Baptists have unique perspectives on historic doctrines that deserve defense and affirmation.

But that must never lapse into an anti-ecumenical elitism that claims Southern Baptists have the corner on biblical revelation.

The most urgent "unique witness" among Baptists and other Christian denominations is the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We should actively seek opportunities to cross denominational, racial, cultural and generational lines to share that message of hope with a hurting world.

The ecumenical events led by Tony Evans and Beth Moore are prime examples of what the broader Christian community can accomplish when we band together without worrying about who gets the credit or gains the public accolades. Relationships nurtured in those settings hopefully will be maintained and strengthened for the sake of God's kingdom.

For those who failed to take part in either of those gatherings, there are other opportunities ahead. Promise Keepers will host a weekend rally July 28-29 in Freedom Hall. Franklin Graham will be the featured speaker at a regional crusade Oct. 13-15 at Rupp Arena in Lexington.

Each of these worship and training opportunities shares a common biblical focus while highlighting specific needs and priorities. The Tony Evans crusade paved the way for ongoing spiritual and racial reconciliation. Beth Moore's focus is on Bible study and discipleship for women. Promise Keepers challenges men to be spiritual leaders in their homes, churches and communities. Franklin Graham will deliver a strong evangelistic emphasis.

All four messages are vital for Christians seeking to make a positive spiritual impact in today's world.

It's not a matter of Southern Baptists or Kentucky Baptists trying to do it alone. We must renew our commitment to cooperate with brothers and sisters in Christ, pursuing the greater good for the sake of the gospel. What a testimony we can share when the world sees us joyfully serving together under "the name that is above every name"—Jesus Christ our Lord.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Tannis Henderson

True worship transcends music styles

By Greg Faulls

"True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks" (John 4:23).

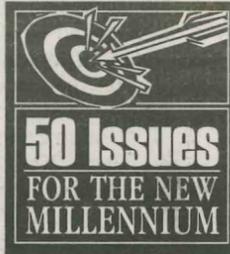
As we enter the new millennium, the controversy rages over contemporary worship vs. traditional worship. Many churches are seriously conflicted over the issue.

The debate usually is centered on the weekend services and their music style. Do we sing hymns with an organ or choruses to an electric guitar? The unfortunate thing about this debate is that it is distracting churches from the real issue.

People argue that contemporary music is shallow and trendy or that traditional music doesn't resonate with the postmodern unbeliever. But these are stylistic issues about music and have nothing to do with the ultimate definition of worship. If we are to lead 21st century men and women to worship, we must wake up to the fact that music is not worship. Worship is not singing songs. It is much more.

God never said, "True worshipers

worship Me with organ music accompaniment" or "true worshipers sing to the sounds of electric guitar and drums." He said they would worship "in spirit and truth."



I seriously doubt God looks down from heaven on Sunday morning and says, "Wow! I really love it when they sing 'The Old Rugged Cross.'" Nor do I think He says, "Man, that worship band really rocked today." No, He asks, "Do I have their hearts? Do they love Me with the totality of their souls? Have they given Me dominion over their lives?"

We should stop placing our primary focus on the issue of music style. Instead we need to get clear on the true definition of worship. To do this we must first ask what worship is not. Music, preaching and singing are not worship. These can be vital tools and activities that promote worship, but in and of themselves these are not worship. We can sing a beautiful, theologically rich song and fail to exalt God in our spirits.

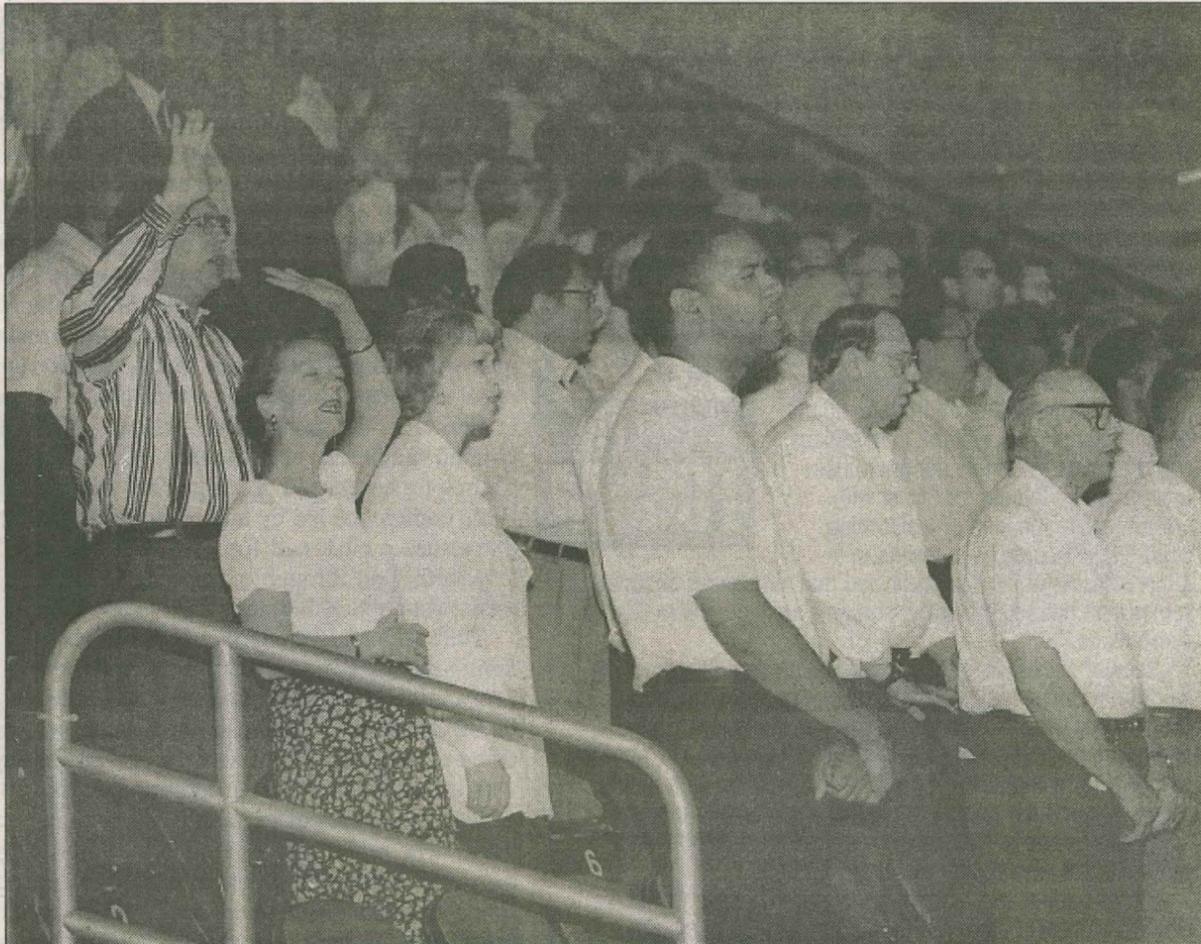
So what about the Sunday "worship service?" What is it for? It is not about maintaining stylistic traditions. Nor is

it about grandstanding the latest in contemporary Christian music. Pure and simple, the worship service is about connecting people to God. The central focus always must be on God, not the style.

When you get the purpose of the worship service right, you find that music styles always will be evolving and changing. Music is then seen not as worship, but as a powerful tool that can help people connect with God and express faith, praise and sacrifice to Him. When music is seen as such a tool, we will no longer say, "What is our tradition so we can maintain it?" Instead we will ask, "What kind of music will best connect members of our community and church to God?" For some, that might be music with a traditional focus. For others, that might mean country, jazzy pop sounds or edgy alternative. Each church must decide what will best usher people into the Lord's presence in their context.

Let's leave the traditional vs. contemporary debate behind and focus our sights on connecting people to God. People do not need our debate. They need to be led to truly and passionately worship. Let's be willing to do whatever it takes, to use whatever music style it takes, to connect people to God.

Greg Faulls is senior pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro



RECONCILIATION CRUSADE Against a backdrop of recent racial tension in Louisville, evangelist Tony Evans (inset) urged citizens to address the foundational issue of being reconciled with God and allowing that to impact all other relationships. ■ **Left:** Glen Gordon (left), a decision counselor and member of Kenwood Baptist Church Northeast in Louisville, prays with an individual who responded to Evans' invitation. ■ **Right:** Members of choirs from throughout Louisville provided music at the three-day event.

Louisville crusade urges reconciliation through Jesus

By **Trennis Henderson**
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Proclaiming freedom through Christ in Louisville's Freedom Hall, Tony Evans urged listeners to pursue spiritual reconciliation.

The three-day Tony Evans Greater Louisville Crusade attracted thousands of participants from throughout the region. The June 19-21 event came on the heels of heightened racial unrest in recent months, fueling fear from arson attacks at area churches and city hall to confront attacks at area churches.

Evans said those problems are merely symptoms of deeper issues that must be addressed on an individual basis. Comparing racial tension to cracks on his bedroom wall, Evans said a painter told him, "You don't have a problem with cracks on your wall. Your problem is you have a shifting foundation. If you don't fix your foundation, you'll be forever fixing cracks on your wall."

Making direct application to the city's problems, Evans declared, "After you patch up whatever is wrong in Louisville tonight, a new crack will take its place. Would you forgive me if I don't spend a lot of time discussing cracks? ... If I can leave Louisville with a stronger foundation, I will have accomplished my purpose."

"When the cracks are visible, then we want to reconcile," he noted. "I want to talk about holistic reconciliation."

Evans' message of racial, cultural and denominational reconciliation was reinforced by a line-up of speakers and musicians who shared testimonies about the impact of reconciliation in their lives.

The interracial, interdenominational event

involved more than 160 churches in the greater Louisville area. More than 13,000 people attended the evening services, including an opening night crowd exceeding 7,000 participants. Nightly altar calls resulted in 430 people making public spiritual decisions, including more than 200 personal professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

Musical guests included Grammy-winning gospel hip-hop recording artist Kirk Franklin, contemporary Christian ensemble Truth and country recording artist Keith Langboat.

"You can be in the church six days a week and the church not be in you," Franklin told an enthusiastic Monday night crowd of teen fans. Warning that money, jewelry and girlfriends aren't the answer to lasting happiness, he emphasized the need for a personal relationship to Christ "on the inside to give you joy when everything on the outside is going crazy."

Although Tuesday and Wednesday evening crusade crowds were smaller than organizers had hoped, crusade co-chairman Lincoln Bingham said the months of preparation were worthwhile.

"Reconciliation cost God His Son and it cost His Son His life," noted Bingham, pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville, "so the price that has been paid is small in comparison to the importance of the goal."

"The major goal was not just an event," he explained. "The major goal was what

would happen in preparation for the event and the preservation of the results of the event."

Bingham, who also is the Kentucky Baptist Convention's cooperative ministries consultant, added, "I believe we moved reconciliation closer to the front burner for many people, and I believe there will be an ongoing work toward more meaningful cooperation" among churches involved in the crusade effort.

"The main thing is the churches coming together," Evans agreed. "I am in this not primarily for the crusade but for the coming together of the churches."

Offering practical steps to fulfill that goal, Evans spoke at a pair of reconciliation seminars for pastors and other church leaders. He urged pastors to maintain ongoing fellowship across racial and denominational lines, to host an annual spiritual fellowship event and to work together on projects with an ongoing social impact.

"We want to see the power of God, and He does not work in the context of division," noted Evans, senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas. "The Bible, when applied, changes lives and communities."

During his opening night message, Evans said Psalm 128 details "four areas where people need to experience reconciliation, beginning with reconciliation to God."

"If you are not reconciled with God, whatever you are trying to build on the

foundation of your life at some point is going to crumble," he said. "If your vertical relationship with God is in trouble, your horizontal relationship with people is going to be in a mess sooner or later."

One's personal life eventually impacts one's family, church, community, city, county, state, nation and world, Evans declared. "Don't tell me you want a better Louisville if you're not willing to be a better person," he said. "That all starts with a relationship to God."

Evans said the next step is family reconciliation. "If you can't get along with the folks you love, then how in the world are you going to get along with folks you don't even know?" he asked. "When a man fears God, the first place he is going to seek reconciliation is home."

The third priority, he said, is reconciliation in the church. "How can you get sinners to come together if the saints won't even talk?" he asked.

"We live in the McChristian generation with people who want drive-through Christianity," he lamented. "One of the problems is we have people in the church who have not met God."

Once individuals reconcile with God, their families and their churches, Evans said, "Now we can talk about the city of Louisville because we've got changed people in it."

Comparing the three-day crusade to a football huddle, Evans said people in the community will "want to know what difference the huddle makes."

"When we break huddle," he said, "will the city of Louisville see a group of people reconciled? ... Until you change people's hearts, it's hard to change their actions. The question is: Will you be reconciled to God?"



EVANGELISM



CRUSADE SCENES

- Far Left: Decision counselor Brenda Elliott talks with a woman who responded to Evans' invitation to make a spiritual decision.
- Above: Kirk Franklin leads in worship during the first night of the event.
- Left: Former University of Kentucky basketball star Cameron Mills gives his testimony.

Speakers give testimonies of God's impact on their lives

LOUISVILLE—Mayor Dave Armstrong welcomed Tony Evans to Louisville last week, presenting Evans with a key to the city and a citation naming him an honorary citizen of Louisville.

"Your message of reconciliation is one we need to hear tonight in Louisville, Ky.," Armstrong affirmed. "We have faced many trials and challenges during these past four months but I believe we're going in the right direction."

Those "trials and challenges" include Armstrong's decision to fire Police Chief Gene Sherrard in March after Sherrard approved commendations for two white police officers who killed a black robbery suspect. The actions sparked a series of public protests and counter-protests.

Noting that reconciliation involves "breaking down barriers," Armstrong said Evans' messages of reconciliation can "help us heal."

Several guest speakers shared their personal testimonies during the crusade.

Cameron Mills, who played on the Kentucky Wildcats' past two national championship basketball teams, said those victories don't compare to his personal relationship to Jesus Christ.

"Money, power, fame—it doesn't matter. Nothing compares to Christ," Mills declared. Urging individuals to make a relationship with Jesus "the most important thing in your life," he said, "That's the only championship you'll ever need."

Giving equal time to University of Louisville fans, Doris Bridgeman shared her testimony the following evening. Bridgeman, the wife of former Cardinals and Milwaukee Bucks basketball star Junior Bridgeman, described herself as "an ordinary person with no dramatic testimony."

Noting that "I can hardly believe I am standing here in Freedom Hall," she added, "What better place to lift up my freedom in Christ other than in Freedom Hall."



TRUTH The band led worship throughout the event. The presence of the band, which rotates singers, was significant because its latest incarnation includes Tony Evans' son, Anthony.

Bridgeman said she is blessed because God is her creator and provider and Jesus is her teacher and redeemer.

"I have been saved from a life of emptiness, despair, helplessness and hopelessness," she said. "In Christ I am blessed with peace, purpose and love."

Garry Gupton, sports director of WHAS-TV, recounted his family's spiritual pilgrimage following his first son's birth with Down's syndrome.

"This is not supposed to happen to me. I'm a good Christian guy," Gupton recalls thinking.

As his son, Grant, underwent 16 surgeries in two years, "I got so angry at God," Gupton admitted. "I was tired of God. I was furious with Him."

When a friend told Gupton he could choose to quit or fight, he eventually decided to turn his questions, fear and anger over to God. "God gave us such a peace that transcends all understanding," he said. "We know now it was the power of Jesus Christ."

Contrasting their sense of peace with their former fears, Gupton said, "We cannot let fear rule our lives." Regardless of the struggles of life, he told the crowd, "I'm challenging you to fight in the name of Jesus."

Evans' wife and son also shared

words of testimony during the crusade.

Citing the challenges of parenthood, Lois Evans acknowledged that raising four children "has its peaks and valleys."

The key to coping with such challenges, she said, is spending quality time in regular Bible study. "Spending time with the Lord means a whole lot because you need Him at those times," she said. "Give Him all you have because He can give you peace in the midst of the storms that might come in your life."

Evans' son, Anthony, is a member of Truth, the contemporary Christian musical group that provided special music throughout the crusade.

"Obviously I grew up in a Christian home," Anthony said as he glanced at his parents sitting nearby. "One thing I had to learn that was a hard lesson to learn is that my walk is my walk."

"My relationship with the Lord is based on how much I put into knowing Him," he explained. Although "the pastor came home with me every day, I had to learn I couldn't ride on his coattails. It had to be me and God."

"I have learned that my relationship with the Lord is what I make it," he said, urging the crowd to "focus in tonight on where you need to be in the Lord."

Leaders: Effort will continue

LOUISVILLE—Last week's three-day crusade in Freedom Hall is just the starting point in reconciliation efforts throughout the area, according to crusade organizers.

"I hope the follow-up and the continuation of our working together will convince the community that we mean this and we're here for the long haul," said crusade co-chairman Lincoln Bingham, pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville.

Bingham said crusade leaders hope to involve the event's more than 160 cooperating churches in ongoing projects "that will benefit the coalition of churches and the community."

Recent racial tensions in Louisville "clearly indicate the need for what we are trying to do," he added.

Crusade steering committee member Les Hollon agreed that the crusade's timing was significant.

"In God's sovereignty what a right timing it is to have a crusade that gives equal emphasis to spiritual conversion and social justice through reconciliation," said Hollon, pastor of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. "These two emphases bring together a powerful focus for Louisville."

"The crusade reminds us how bold and confident we can be as Christians to give leadership to our community so we are driven by love and not by fear," he said. "We have a responsibility to keep this thing going."

Keynote speaker Tony Evans said he believes "the stage has been set" for ongoing reconciliation efforts in Louisville. "If the churches will take it seriously, it absolutely can happen," he insisted. "If you can change the atmosphere, problems can be resolved quickly."

Bill Mackey, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said the opportunity for event organizers to work together across denominational and racial lines sends a clear message to the community that area churches "are working together for the enhancement of the well-being of the community."

"The other thing that is so significant is changed lives," Mackey noted. He said the 200-plus professions of faith recorded during the crusade "make it all worthwhile."

Beth Moore shares 'Proof' with 9,000 women in Louisville

By Trennis Henderson
Editor



"Are you absolutely convinced you are lavishly loved by God and do you love Him too?"

Author Beth Moore

LOUISVILLE—Mixing biblical insight, humor and practical advice, Houston author Beth Moore challenged a sold-out crowd of 9,000 women in Louisville to fall in love with God.

"Does your life speak well of our God?" asked Moore, who brought her popular "Living Proof... Live" weekend conference to Louisville's Southeast Christian Church, June 9-10.

"Do you bless His name? We do that with our mouths and we do that with our lives," said Moore, author of five in-depth Bible studies that have sold more than 1 million copies.

"Our entire lives will begin to purge acidic bitterness if we begin to boast of God," she said. "He is someone worth running to with open arms."

Teaching from Ephesians 1, Moore emphasized that followers of Jesus Christ are called to abide in His love. "It means to walk so closely in Him that at all times, at all moments you are keenly aware that God loves you," Moore explained.

"You can make it through anything based on two things," she added. "Are you absolutely convinced you are lavishly loved by God and do you love Him too? Do you know that God relishes you? He esteems you. He cherishes you. He is totally devoted to you."

Noting that "God has a very particular will for your life," Moore warned that Satan also has a will for each person's life. She said the key to gaining spiritual victory is to stay close to God on a daily basis.

"The most important thing that could happen today for all 9,000 of us is for us to choose to submit to the loving, ruling power of Jesus Christ," she urged. "He is the boss. He is the One. He is incomparable."

"Satan is a powerful enemy, but he is pitiful in comparison to God. The power he has over us is the power of bluff. He certainly cannot possess a believer—oppress, yes; possess, no."

Moore said God wants His followers "saying yes even before we know what the question is. Do not surren-

Moore completes new Bible study on life of Jesus

It's been a busy month for Beth Moore. A week after leading a weekend conference in Louisville, she finished writing her sixth in-depth Bible study for publication by LifeWay Christian Resources.

Moore's latest study, "Jesus: The One and Only," is due for release in December through the Southern Baptist publishing agency. She said researching and writing each of the studies "usually takes about a year of total focus and being immersed in a project."

"I just put the period on the last sentence an hour ago," she said during a phone interview from her office in Houston. "That is an incredible feeling."

The new study is based on the Gospel of Luke. The teaching video that will accompany it was taped earlier this year in Israel.

"The whole setting is almost indescribable," she said. "It changed my complete perspective" of the study.

Moore said she hopes people who explore the life of Jesus through the 11-week study will "view it as an eyewitness as much as possible.

My goal is to feel like we got the same sand in our sandals" that Jesus did.

Noting that her studies are designed specifically for women, Moore said, "I like to imagine what the scene looked like and smelled like. I think I write from a romantic point of view. I wanted to know all about Mary's pregnancy" and other details of first century life.

Moore said she asked God to "do something miraculously" through the pages of the study, prompting women to "experience something in their hearts and minds that is beyond anything I've written."

Such bold, direct requests of God are not unusual in Moore's life and ministry. Telling conference participants that "a romance with God is just incredible," she said she frequently asks God to "satisfy me with your unending love."

"I don't ask small things of God because I don't have a small God," she said. "God is God and He is so merciful."

Moore said she doesn't understand why God has chosen to use her to minister to thousands of women. "This is

not false humility," she emphasized. "There are times I weep and ask, 'Why do you let me be a part of this?' God over and over and over says, 'This isn't about you.'"

Describing her ministry and inspiration, Moore explained, "If God tells me to write something and He begins to press on my heart to study that subject matter, I do it. I write how God leads me. It's a very liberating way to work."

Moore said she believes the rapid growth of numerous Bible-based ministries in recent years "is the work of the Spirit in our generation."

"There is an unparalleled work of discipleship," she said. "What I am called to do is part of what God is doing in this generation. Every person on the planet needs hope. Somewhere along the way, my life helps represent some of that to them—that God can do anything with anybody."

Describing her ministry "for this season," Moore said, "What God has called me to do is encourage people to love Him through His Word. I'm convinced to know Him is to love Him. Nothing beats the pure excitement and delight of God's Word."

der to ministry; surrender to God. God will work through us in all sorts of ministry."

Moore has been described as "one of the leading female evangelical voices in the U.S. today." She seeks to promote Bible literacy among Christian women through such studies as "Breaking Free: Making Liberty in Christ a Reality in Life" and "A Heart Like His: Seeking the Heart of God Through a Study of David."

She also teaches a weekly Sunday school class at First Baptist Church of Houston which has grown to more than 300 members.

During a Saturday morning question-and-answer session, Moore described her motivation for ministry. "I've been called to write Bible studies for this season of my life," she explained. "I'm called to encourage people to get into the Word of God. That is

the delight of my life."

Moore nearly had to cancel the Louisville conference after becoming ill a few days before the event. Declaring that she was "sicker than a dog," she told the Friday night crowd, "I cannot even feel it at this moment, and I know it is the prayers of the saints."

God "is so faithful to sustain us when we are in need so He can show us His all-surpassing power," she affirmed. "He wanted me to be dependent upon Him this weekend from second to second."

Moore assured the women that God has plenty of grace to lavish over His followers, regardless of their past sin. "God wants us to come to a place of mental agreement with Him that we have sorrow over that sin. We're not going to be released as long as we're cherishing sin in our heart."

Insisting that "God wants to ro-

mance you," Moore remarked, "He wants to be your delight and show you the wonders of His love. God wants to ring your heart like a bell. So often we just want Him to fix things. He can fix anything but we would go on in our dissatisfaction."

Warning the interdenominational crowd that "stale ministry is tied to a lack of intimacy," she said, "One of the most important things that could happen today is to surrender to His calling. I like to stay fresh in God's Word daily."

"We've got to break down barriers between denominations and races," she added. "God has not called me to be a good Baptist. He has called me to be a woman of the Word."

"How do I live the kind of life that opens the pipe of God's power in my life? Bend the knee. ... You will never take a risk when you choose to trust God and believe Him."

Smithwick: New state contract won't affect KBHC hiring policy

Continued from page 1
by insurance.

The other more specific area of the contract spells out for state employees that they don't have to refer children to KBHC if they disagree with the Baptist agency's employment policy.

"If in certain state employees feel that this is in violation of any code of ethics that they have, they don't have to refer to us," Smithwick said.

During the initial controversy after Pedreira's firing, Smithwick said, several state employees in the Louisville area stopped referring children to KBHC facilities and foster parents.

"But there are many, many others across the state that have very high remarks to say about our quality of care and are very glad that we are going to be continuing our services," he said.

"This is probably going to cost us some reduction in referrals, which means reduction in revenues," he add-

ed. "We hope Kentucky Baptists will stand up and help make up the difference because of the stand we've taken."

The state reimburses KBHC on a per diem rate for each state-referred child the Baptist agency cares for. Current KBHC facilities still require a minimum number of staff regardless of the number of children served, Smithwick noted, so if the state sends fewer children, the loss in state revenue will increase the average cost per day for children who remain.

Of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's \$21 million budget, approximately \$12 million is earmarked as state funds.

Had KBHC's executive board rejected the contracts, the agency's contingency plan would have enacted across-the-board reductions in programs that include eight residential facilities and multiple Cornerstone Counseling facilities through the state.

"We'd just be much smaller," Smithwick said, noting that until 30 years ago the agency did not receive state money. The contracts have been as much a "blessing" to the state as to the agency because "providers like us have been able to take care of the state's children where they didn't have the facilities to do that."

Smith said that despite the issues regarding legal costs and individual agent referrals, the agency ultimately accepted the contract because it allows KBHC to care for more children without compromising its core values.

"Some state social workers objected to our employment policies, but it was, it is, and it always will be our position that the admitted homosexual lifestyle is contrary to KBHC's core values and it is not in the best interest of the children that we serve," he said. "We will not—I repeat—we will not change our core values or change our employ-

ment policy regarding homosexuality."

KBHC will continue to take state dollars as long as it doesn't impede the agency's key goals, Smithwick added. "When it gets to the point that we can no longer fulfill our mission, then the state can find somebody else to take care of their children."

That could happen if the Pedreira lawsuit against KBHC and the state is successful. Among its claims is that the state's funding for KBHC and its religious-based employment policy violates the First Amendment call for separation of church and state.

Smithwick reiterated during a press conference last week that the agency's emphasis on role models requires that employees be held to a high level of accountability. "I've told you folks before, if we have employees who are living together outside the covenant of marriage we'll discriminate against them too."

Supreme Court decision could impact graduation prayers

By Kenny Byrd
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A Baptist church-state scholar said the Supreme Court ruling banning formal prayers at high school football games might influence similar disputes involving prayer at graduation ceremonies in public schools.

The ruling in "Santa Fe Independent School District vs. Doe" doesn't directly address the issue of graduation prayer, said Derek Davis, director of the J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. "But the tone of it and the language included throws into question the process by which a majority vote names a student to lead in prayer at any kind of public-school event."

The June 19 Santa Fe decision ruled unconstitutional the district's policy allowing students to lead stadium crowds in prayer over the intercom to open foot-

ball games. In a 6-3 decision, the high court said the policy amounted to school-sponsored prayer and violated the Constitution's Establishment Clause designed to prevent government from promoting religion.

Davis authored a friend-of-the-court brief in the case opposing the prayer policy. He was joined by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The Supreme Court has said that outside ministers cannot be invited to deliver prayers at graduations in public high schools, but it has not ruled against student-led prayers that are non-proselytizing and non-sectarian.

However, the high court's latest ruling could affect pending cases challenging the method used to select a student to lead graduation prayers.

The Santa Fe policy, for example, allows students to elect a representative to lead an invocation or benediction at

graduation ceremonies. The outcome, invariably, is a Christian prayer.

The high court said Santa Fe's policy placed too much power in the hands of the majority over minority faith groups.

"Any time you have a majoritarian process it violates the spirit of the Bill of Rights—which in many respects is intended to protect minorities," Davis said.

Davis said he would not oppose a student who happens to have a place on the program, such as a valedictorian, from "offering a religious message."

"But that's different in that it is a spontaneous event," he said. Unlike the Santa Fe policy and others that are similar to it, "it's not a pre-programmed event."

Davis said he is "very much opposed to this majoritarian process which is carried with a guaranteed outcome," a Christian prayer. "I've never seen it be anything else."

Candidates comment on decision

WASHINGTON (ABP)—In short statements, the two leading presidential candidates voiced opposing views on the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling against school-sponsored prayer to open public high school football games.

Texas Gov. George W. Bush issued a two-sentence statement. "Today's ruling is disappointing," he said. "I support the constitutionally guaranteed right of all students to express their faith freely and participate in voluntary, student-led prayer."

A spokesman for Vice President Al Gore said Gore also favors voluntary student prayer but affirms the Supreme Court ruling.

"He supports the decision by the Supreme Court," Gore spokesman Jano Cabrera said. Gore "does support prayer in school and school-related events as long as the participation is truly voluntary and it follows the Department of Education guidelines," Cabrera said. But Gore feels the court reached the appropriate conclusion that the Santa Fe policy amounted to "government-sponsored prayer," he added.

Proposed FDA regulations might restrict use of abortion drug RU 486

WASHINGTON (BP)—As the abortion drug RU 486 continues to move toward introduction into the United States, recently revealed rules tied to FDA approval might greatly restrict its use, according to a published report.

The Food and Drug Administration has proposed the abortion drug be approved with the following guidelines, according to a report earlier this month in the Washington Post:

- Physicians who prescribe RU 486 would have to be registered nationally.

- Only doctors trained in performing surgical abortions could prescribe the drug.

- Such doctors must have admitting privileges at a hospital within a mile of their offices.

- A study would be conducted of all women who have had abortions using the drug.

If the FDA's proposed guidelines are approved, they would dramatically restrict the number of doctors who would prescribe the drug. Abortion proponents said the process would not be nearly as secretive as they had expected.

News of the FDA's proposed guidelines came after a representative of The Danco Group, a New York pharmaceutical company arranging for manufac-

ture of the drug, revealed them at a June 2 meeting of abortion advocates, according to the Post.

RU 486, also known as mifepristone, is used with a prostaglandin, misoprostol, to induce abortion, usually in the first seven weeks of pregnancy. Mifepristone causes the lining of the uterus to release the fetus. Misoprostol, taken two days after mifepristone, causes the uterus to contract, expelling the fetus.

Anti-abortion organizations have long fought RU 486's introduction into the United States. The U.S. House of Representatives twice has voted to prevent federal funds from being used in

the testing, development or approval of any abortion-inducing drug. Both times the Senate has not followed the House's lead.

More than 5,000 women in America have used the drug in clinical tests. Tests on 2,100 women in 1994 and '95 showed the two-step method ended in abortion for 92 percent of women in the first seven weeks of pregnancy.

Abortion opponents have said RU 486 not only kills a child but also poses a threat to the physical and psychological health of women. Side effects in the trials included severe bleeding, severe cramping, vomiting and nausea.

NATIONAL NOTES

- Billy Graham hospitalized.** Evangelist Billy Graham has been hospitalized at Mayo Clinic and is being treated to relieve a buildup of fluid around his brain. Graham, 81, is stable and his condition is not life-threatening, said his spokesman, Larry Ross. He said the evangelist was "exhausted" after leading the June crusade in Nashville. Graham plans to lead an international conference for evangelists in the Netherlands July 29-Aug. 6. Ross called the fluid buildup around Graham's brain a "recent development." Based on medical tests, his physicians expect Graham will be able to travel to Amsterdam as well as to Jacksonville, Fla., where he is scheduled to lead a crusade Nov. 2-5.

- Anti-abortion group sues court.** The Supreme Court, which usually considers others' legal issues, is itself at the center of a lawsuit by anti-abortion activists. The Christian Defense Coalition sued the high court June 20, saying a regulation barring large signs on the sidewalks outside the court violates the First Amendment. An attorney for the Supreme Court asked for a dismissal of the lawsuit or a summary judgment in the court's favor.

- Legislation protects broadcasters.** The U.S. House of Representatives voted

June 20 to protect religious broadcasters by barring the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the content of speech aired by noncommercial educational television and radio stations. In January, the FCC commissioners voted to drop controversial language in a December ruling that declared that some religious programming aired on noncommercial stations—including that which focused on proselytizing—could not be considered educational. But the new legislation intends to prevent similar moves in the future.

- Judge Roy Moore wins primary race.** An Alabama judge who became famous for his decision to post the Ten Commandments in his courtroom has won a Republican primary for chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court. Judge Roy Moore, who sits on the Circuit Court in Gadsden, Ala., defeated three other judges in the June 6 primary race. He will face Judge Sharon Yates, a Democrat who sits on the Court of Civil Appeals, in the November general election.

- Maryland governor grants clemency.** Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening on June 7 commuted the death sentence of a convicted murderer just days before his scheduled execution after a personal plea by Pope John Paul II and three

Washington-area Catholic bishops. Eugene Colvin-el was scheduled to die for the 1980 stabbing death of an 82-year-old woman. Glendening, a two-term Democrat, decided the evidence presented in the case was not enough to sentence the 55-year-old inmate to death.

- Methodists' gay policy gets backlash.** A month after United Methodist Church leaders voted to uphold policies against same-sex unions and gay ordination, the church's New England conference is leading a backlash of open defiance against the controversial stands. Meeting in Massachusetts June 1-4, more than 300 delegates to the New England Annual Conference signed the "New England Declaration," promising to conduct same-sex union ceremonies and to welcome gays and lesbians through ordination to ministry.

- School prayer law struck down.** A Louisiana federal court struck down June 14 a state law permitting student volunteers to open the public school day with a prayer. The law "cannot help but create the appearance that the state of Louisiana is endorsing religion" by "creating a venue for public prayer ... under the supervision of public officials," said U.S. District Judge Robert James.

The ruling does not apply to students' individual prayers, or to group prayers by self-selected students before, during or after the school day.

- Persecution panel elects chairman.** A former State Department official has been elected chairman of a year-old commission established to monitor religious persecution around the world. Elliott Abrams, who served as an assistant secretary of state during the Reagan administration, is new chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. While the panel has focused this past year on abuses in Sudan and China, Abrams said the commission will seek to have a broader impact in the coming year by looking at a larger number of countries.

- Judaism convert alleges bias.** An Alabama man who converted from Christianity to Judaism said he was fired after complaining about Christian prayers and an evangelism program conducted at a local high school. Greg Thomas, of Hamilton, Ala., said that within weeks of making the complaints he was fired from his jobs as an artistic director at a community theater and a Bevill State Community College drama instructor. His former employers insist he was terminated for economic reasons.

Faith-based community groups to get increased funding

By Chris Herlinger
Religion News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has given a vote of confidence to faith-based organizations that administer federal assistance for housing and community development work.

At a recent conference at New York's Riverside Church, HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo said the amount of HUD assistance administered by faith-based housing and community groups would increase to at least \$1 billion by 2001—a \$200 million increase compared to this year.

Speaking at the June 15 HUD-sponsored conference, "Faith Communities and Community Building," Cuomo called faith-based groups "the eyes and ears, hearts and souls" of their communities. He praised their role in being "ef-

fective and innovative partners" in providing affordable housing and being catalysts for economic development, particularly in areas where the national economic boom has not been felt.

"We intend to significantly step up our partnership with these groups to help people and places left behind by the current boom," he said.

One of the aims of the conference was to provide a forum for clergy and faith-based groups to learn how HUD could assist them in community development projects.

Churches and other faith-based organizations have worked for years with private developers, federal, state and local governments and others in the construction of low- and moderate-income housing and other community projects. The role of such groups has become more important, Cuomo said, as federal and local governments have looked

to such groups to provide social and economic services.

Cuomo said the record of such groups has been excellent, and has been one of the unsung successes of the drive, since the 1960s, to provide affordable housing in the United States.

One example of this work has been in Harlem, just blocks away from Riverside Church. There, Abyssinian Baptist Church, among others, formed a development entity, the Abyssinian Development Corporation.

The corporation has renovated apartment units and constructed senior citizen housing and moderate-income condominiums.

Calvin Butts, Abyssinian's pastor, told the conference that while he was proud of the development corporation's record, churches also must be careful and face a "difficult balancing act" when they become involved in such

work because of the temptations and dilemmas faced when working with government and private developers.

Churches must be prepared to uphold their "prophetic tradition," he cautioned.

"In fact, if you want to be in community development work, you have to be prophetic," he said.

But he said community development work is often difficult for churches to sustain. He said churches should try to leave the day-to-day operations to a community development corporation "once it is on its own two feet."

Some attending the conference suggested there were political undertones to the event, as Cuomo has been mentioned as both a possible Democratic vice presidential candidate with Vice President Al Gore or, as seems more likely, a candidate for New York governor in the year 2002.

"We intend to significantly step up our partnership with these groups to help people and places left behind by the current boom."

U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo

Senate passes controversial hate crimes legislation by wide margin

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Senate voted overwhelmingly last week to expand federal hate crimes laws to include crimes based on sexual orientation, prompting praise from Jewish groups and scorn from conservative Christian organizations.

The 57-42 vote came after intense lobbying by the Clinton administration, which had promised gay rights groups it would push for the measure before Clinton leaves office next year. Despite opposition from Republican leadership, 13 Republicans crossed the aisle to vote with Democrats to pass the measure.

Supporters invoked the murders of James Byrd, a black Texas man dragged to his death by white supremacists, and Matthew Shepard, a gay Wyoming college student who was beaten, tied to a fence and left to die in freezing temperatures last year.

The bill also adds handicapped status to the list of crimes that can be prosecuted as federal crimes, adding to race, religion and national origin. The bill would allow federal officials to prosecute if local officials refuse to press charges.

Several Jewish groups praised the

bill, saying Jews are especially vulnerable to crimes based on bias or prejudice.

Conservatives, however, said the bill would give special rights to a specific class of people—homosexuals. Supporters of the bill blasted such criticism, saying groups like the Family Research Council, the Traditional Values Coalition and Focus on the Family were using their opposition to mask their resistance to equality for gays and lesbians.

"So-called hate crimes laws are by nature unfair because they accord some victims more government protection under law than others," said Janet Par-

shall, a spokeswoman for the Family Research Council. "The government has no business creating special classes of crime and politicizing crime."

The measure faces an uncertain future, however. The bill was attached to the Defense Department appropriations bill, and several Republican leaders say they will try to split the two bills. President Clinton has said he will veto the spending bill if it does not include the hate crimes provision, and the GOP-led House of Representatives has been reluctant to pass similar measures in the past.

Camp time at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek

Once again I write from Jonathan Creek, where we have completed our first two weeks of Crossings at the Creek, our new summer youth camp. Wow! God has moved in the lives of many, many students, and I am continually thankful for the work He is doing here at Crossings.

We're also full steam ahead at Cedarmore, where the Discovery camps are led by the Son Teams. And when I say full steam ahead, that's what I mean. The student camps are operating at capacity. The place is jammed. This summer continues the great tradition that has grown to be such a part of Kentucky Baptist life. In addition to the youth campers, there's a big crowd of GAs as well at Cedar Crest. The RA camp gears up next week.

All in all, this is the time of year that our leadership at Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore celebrates. To be sure, there's more work than any army could get done, but we rejoice that every week there are 650-750 youth and children at our camps. Students are making decisions for Christ, professions of faith, every night of the week. There are countless rededications. There are adult counselors whose lives are changed as well, as

they participate in the Bible studies and joyous, celebrative worship services. As a matter of fact, for some of the adults it's the first time they have ever been a part of such worship services. Many adults leave Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek with their eyes opened and their hearts moved to reach this generation of young adults.

Please continue to pray that:

- Lost students would come to know Jesus.
- Students would respond to God's call and will for their lives.
- Adult counselors would be drawn closer to God during their camp experience.
- The staffs at both places (about 70 students and 25 adults) would have the strength to press on for

the remaining five weeks of camp.

- That God would safely protect every camper and staff member at both places.

Thank you, Kentucky Baptists, for making this possible through your continued support. This vital ministry is growing stronger every year, with record numbers this summer. To God be the glory.

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

Are you serious about the Word? We are.

The Boyce College offers the B.A. and A.A. degrees in Biblical Studies to God-called men and women with these distinctives:

- *Confessional.* Committed to historic Baptist convictions
- *Focused.* Provides classical biblical and theological studies
- *Relevant.* Addresses worldview issues of the 21st century
- *Practical.* Dedicated to local church ministry, evangelism, and biblical preaching and teaching

Boyce College
a school of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
 2825 Lexington Rd • Louisville, KY 40280 • 1 800 728-7044 • boyce.sbsts.edu

Southern officials give ABC show low grade

LOUISVILLE (BP)—An ABC documentary on the life of Jesus amounts to little more than an advertisement for the controversial Jesus Seminar, according to officials at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

The two-hour program, "Peter Jennings Reporting: The Search for Jesus," aired Monday. It followed Jennings through the Holy Land and derived much of its content from interviews with Jesus Seminar participants and like-minded biblical scholars.

Southern Seminary showed a review copy of the documentary to selected faculty members and to

Southern Baptist Convention President James Merritt.

"The scholars that were on the show were certainly reflective of a particular worldview perspective—the anti-supernatural," said Danny Akin, dean of the seminary's school of theology.

"You had extensive representation from the Jesus Seminar," he added. "I thought 'The Search for Jesus' was a marvelous commercial for the Jesus Seminar's perspective on who was Jesus and what did He do."

The Jesus Seminar was a gathering of more than 200 men and women who voted on the historical reli-

ability of the Gospels. They concluded that Jesus "probably" said only 18 percent of what is attributed to him and that only 16 percent of events in the Gospels "probably" occurred.

Such thought dominates the ABC program, according to the Southern Seminary reviewers. Only one scholar was shown defending the historical reliability of Jesus' resurrection.

"The Jesus that was presented on ABC would not be worthy of the adoration and worship and veneration of untold millions of people in the last 2,000 years," Merritt said.

Southern Seminary preaching professor Hershael York, who received his doctorate in New Testament studies, said he was bothered by Jennings' implications. "What troubled me the most was the way (Jennings) would say, 'historians say, scholars believe'—not 'some scholars believe' or 'some historians think.'"

The SBC president said he hopes viewers will turn to the Bible after watching the program.

"I hope that there will be enough discernment out there by the viewing audience that they will say, 'Wait a minute. What does the Bible say? And why are there some strong brilliant biblical scholars—who have every bit the credentials these other men do and every bit the intellectual firepower these other men do—and yet they believe in the resurrection, they believe in the substitutionary atonement, they believe in the virgin birth,'" he said.

Conservative Presbyterian group sets policy on women teachers

TAMPA, Fla. (RNS)—The Presbyterian Church in America, meeting for its annual general assembly, has approved a policy permitting women to teach—but not preach—and adopted a measure permitting a diversity of interpretations regarding the Creation.

The policy concerning women supersedes a 1997 decision by the conservative denomination declaring women could only conduct seminars where the intended audience was other women.

The assembly determined that the prohibition in 1 Timothy 2 on women teaching or having authority over men applies to formal worship. That prohibition is "not that of the more informal seminar which is generally more subjective and based on personal experience than is the preaching of the Word in worship."

During its June 20-23 meeting, the assembly affirmed that women should not preach in public worship, said Dominic Aquila, the denomination's news officer.

After a lengthy discussion regarding Creation, the assembly approved a motion that eliminated a two-year waiting period and endorsed a committee report acknowledging various viewpoints on the length of days of the Creation. The motion noted that diversity of opinion is "acceptable as long as the full historicity of the Creation account is accepted."

In other action, the assembly voted overwhelmingly to have its representatives to the National Association of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches propose that the Christian Reformed Church in North America be expelled from the association because it allows ordination of women as pastors and elders.

The Presbyterian Church in America, which has about 300,000 members in North America, was founded in 1973. It formed after splitting with a precursor of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Minister of Education Needed

Lexington Avenue Baptist Church in Danville, Ky., is seeking a minister of education. He or she will be responsible for planning religious education programs for all age groups and for training and coordinating volunteers for the programs. The preferred candidate will have ministerial experience and a seminary degree. Lexington Avenue is a moderate church dually aligned with CBF/SBC. Send resumé to: Minister of Education Search Committee, Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, 339 W Lexington Ave, Danville, KY 40422. For more information on our church, see our Web site at www.lexingtonavenue.org or www.danvilleky.com/BoyleCounty/.

Jessica Faught: Outstanding senior

By Robert Dunston

Each year at graduation, Cumberland College presents the Berger Award to an outstanding male and female member of the graduating class. Jessica Faught received this year's Berger Award for outstanding female graduate.

Faught is the daughter of Kenny and Jolly Faught of Williamsburg. During her academic career at Cumberland, she completed a major in communication arts and a minor in English.

Faught has excelled academically, being on the dean's list every semester. She is a member of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honor society, and of the J. T. Vallandigham Honor Society, Cumberland's society recognizing superior academic performance.

Throughout her academic career, Faught has gone the extra mile. A research paper she prepared for a religion and mass media course at Cumberland College was accepted for presentation at the 1999 Kentucky Communication Association Conference and published in the conference's proceedings. She continued to delve into her subject, and in the spring of this year completed the first Presidential Scholars re-

search project from Cumberland's communication arts and theater department. Her research project was titled, "Uncovering Spiritual Ideology in the 1998 Film, 'City of Angels.'"

Her excellent work ethic has been evident in her service in our freshman orientation program and in Baptist Student Union. Faught

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



has been an especially valuable part of our admissions office, displaying an outstanding commitment to Cumberland College and providing information and service to prospective students and their families.

Faught now resides in Greensboro, N.C., where she will begin work in the fall on a master of arts degree in communication studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The university awarded her a teaching assistantship to teach two freshman-level courses each semester in the communication department.

We extend our appreciation to Faught for her excellent work and service and pray God's richest blessings upon her.

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



"I was a stranger and you took me in."

Matthew 25:35

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children needs foster parents to care for children who have been abused and neglected. Training, ongoing support and financial assistance are provided.

Eastern Kentucky-1-800-752-5063

Bowling Green-1-888-618-6712

Lexington-1-800-570-3976

Louisville-1-800-928-5242

Northern Kentucky-(606) 727-4880

South Central Kentucky-1-800-952-3724

Southern Kentucky-(606) 677-1008

Western Kentucky-1-877-992-5242

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children
1-800-456-1386—www.iglou.com/kbhc/



Horse Cave singer's crisis teaches the power of prayer

"They said it would be 'nothing short of a miracle.'"

Robin Wagner, minister of music at Horse Cave Baptist Church

By Victoria Austen Moon
State Correspondent

HORSE CAVE—Robin Wagner had long believed in the power of prayer to change people's lives, but it wasn't until this year that she truly understood how prayer could change her own life.

Wagner, a music minister and contemporary Christian performer, has been singing in public since the fifth grade and involved in church music ministry since 1977.

Currently the music minister for Horse Cave Baptist Church, she drove to Nashville last October to record a CD at the Playground Recording Studio with studio owner and fellow performing songwriter Brent Lamb.

"On the day I drove down to record, I could not sing," she recalled. "I thought it was just Kentucky allergies acting up, so I didn't pay it too much attention."

When she arrived at the studio, Lamb had assembled the studio musicians and was ready to record some initial tracks, but Wagner still had no voice. Concerned, Lamb made an appointment for her to meet with specialists at the Vanderbilt Voice Center in Nashville.

"When I went in, they discovered a polyp on my right vocal cord," Wagner said, "and while nodules on their own, polyps do not." Since polyps such as Wagner's can cause perma-

nent damage to the vocal cords, doctors advised her not to record until after she had surgery to remove the polyp.

"I had to stop singing immediately, and I even had to back off from speaking," she said, "and the doctors set me up for surgery in January."

Meanwhile, Wagner's recording project was put on hold indefinitely. Not knowing what her future held, she asked her church family and her friends and family across the nation to pray for her.

"People were praying all over the place in a lot of different states," she said. "A lot of different churches

were praying, too."

On Jan. 19, 2000, the night before her scheduled surgery, Wagner went into the hospital for some pre-operative tests. To the doctors' amazement they discovered that the polyp had shrunk so much that performing surgery to remove it would prove too risky.

"I'm only the second patient that my particular doctor has ever sent home without performing surgery," she said.

Given the green light to return to singing, Wagner started vocal exercises again and began working with a voice therapist in Nashville. In April she re-entered the studio and

recorded an independent CD titled "Grace Alone." The recording is scheduled for release the first week in July.

Recent tests have shown the polyp on Wagner's vocal cord is completely gone, and she shares the story of her miraculous healing at her performances with a new understanding of the power of prayer.

"Prayer had absolutely everything to do with my recovery," she explained. "When I asked the doctors about the polyp shrinking and going away on its own, they said it would be 'nothing short of a miracle.' And I truly believe that's exactly what happened to me."

WHY PAY MORE FOR LIFE INSURANCE?

VERY LOW MONTHLY COST FEMALE, NON-TOBACCO, SELECT CLASS 1		
AGE	\$100.00	\$250,000
40	9.45	17.06
55	18.99	40.91
70	52.59	124.91

Call Roy Napier (Knoxville, Tenn.)
Toll-Free 1-800-274-0776

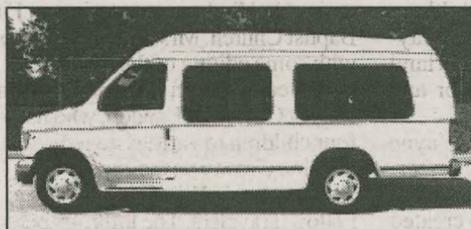
Western Recorder advertiser since 1990

LTC2000 10 Policy forms nos. 80-RCT790, 80-RCT99D, 80-RCT98D, RCTG 87D (CA & NJ) is a term life insurance policy with guaranteed level premiums for 10 years. (Not all forms are available in all states.) Illustrated monthly premiums shown are for female, non-tobacco select class 1. It is issued by the Old Line Life Insurance Company of America, Milwaukee, WI. Premiums increase at the end of the guaranteed term if policy is renewed. Premiums for other rate classes, age and payment plans are available upon request. Death benefit remains level and is payable in lump sum or installments, if elected. The insurance company may contest the policy for two years from date of policy issue for material misstatements or omissions on the application. Death benefit payable from any cause, except suicide within first two policy years. In the event of suicide in the first two years, policy benefit is limited to return of premium paid. Not available in all states.

LifeWay's Exclusive Bus Source

CARPENTER BUS SALES, INC.

"Raised Roof" Vans in Stock (No CDL)



- ◆ Center Aisle
- ◆ Low First Step
- ◆ 2/1 Seating
- ◆ Bucket Seats
- ◆ More Headroom
- ◆ 15-passengers

Since 1953

2000 Models: \$34,000 (New)
1999 Models: \$29,900 (Low Miles)
1998 Models: \$28,500 (Low Miles)

(800) 370-6180
www.carpenterbus.com

Class of 2000, class of 2001

There are two absolute, sure-fire facts about Oneida: There is never a dull moment, and the work never ends.

We were pleased and honored to have 69 graduates in the class of 2000. Most family members and friends who came for commencement were not prepared for an Oneida graduation. Graduation at a speech consists of the class marching in, a speech from the valedictorian or salutatorian, a few other words and the presentation of diplomas. When I told our guests that we would be taking more time than they were accustomed to, they laughed and thought it was a bit humorous—until later in the afternoon.

Oneida has a longstanding tradition of recognizing our students for their accomplishments. When one considers the difficulties and frustrations many of these students have overcome, it should be easy to understand why we want to brag on them a little.

In April and May you might have read in this essay excerpts from some of the essays the seniors wrote about "My Oneida Experience." Many described longstanding academic failure, social problems, family conflicts or peer problems, to say nothing of their spiritual needs. During the graduation program, I read excerpts from those essays. For the most part, we do not tell our faculty and staff about a student's past when he or she enrolls. It has been our experience that the less we tell about a student, the better chance he or she has to get off to a good start. While our faculty and staff are dedicated to this ministry, they are all human. If we tell teachers that a student has been a "class clown" or has been in trouble for having an "attitude" at school, you can be assured

that the teachers who have that student will look for the negative. We tell new students that the staff and their peers will only know what they tell them. If they disrupt a class, they will have told everyone in the room who they really are.

As I read excerpts from the essays, many faculty and staff were hearing for the first time about a student's past. Many were quite surprised to know that a student had been dealing with a particular problem. Some faculty and staff would not have believed what they were hearing were it not for the fact that I was sharing the information with them.

When the faculty and staff hear about some of the problems these students have overcome and see the progress they have made, they are pleased to know that they have had a part in the success of these young people.

Well, three and one-half hours after we began, graduation was over. For the most part, our work with these students is finished, and our time to be directly involved with them is over. If we have done our work well, these students will remember not only the book knowledge they have learned, but also the lessons of life. Most importantly, we hope they will allow Jesus to give them direction as they continue their journeys in life.

Summer school already is well under way, and now we are focused on the class of 2001. Many of those students are here for summer school. The rest will return in August. What a wonderful blessing it is to never run out of something to do, and to be able to daily invest in the lives of the young people who have been entrusted to us.

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

Exactly what Dr. Kelly had in mind

Does Clear Creek still train mountain preachers? The question usually comes from people who know that in 1926 L.C. Kelly started Clear Creek as a school for mountain preachers.

"I feel I'm exactly what Dr. Kelly had in mind," Associate Professor of Biblical Studies Bill Helton declares. "Certainly, I was a typical Clear Creeker when I came—in my early 30s, 17 years as an engineer and a lifelong member of the mountain community. I grew up in Harlan County and felt for years that God needed more preachers willing to disciple people as well as win them to Christ. I have benefited greatly from Dr. Kelly's heritage."

In his second year as a student, Helton came to believe that God was "placing His hand upon me to return and teach New Testament Greek. Now I'm doing exactly what He said." Helton also teaches New Testament core classes, systematic theology and biblical interpretation.

Helton received a bachelor of arts in ministry degree from Clear Creek in May 1989, the first class after I became president. He completed a master of divinity degree

at Southwestern Seminary, graduating with honors in Greek.

He was pastor for six years of East LaFollett Baptist Church in Tennessee. While at the church he completed a doctor of ministry degree from Southern Seminary. His field project involved developing an outreach program at the church that brought increases in attendance and finances.

His solid experience as pastor was essential to joining Clear Creek's faculty. In May he also was called as bivocational pastor of East Jellico Baptist Church, located six miles from the campus. His wife, Brenda, is campus mail clerk, and their daughter, Melissa, will enroll as a student in August.

What is Bill Helton's desire for our students?

"I pray each student would have a true love in their heart for the Lord Jesus Christ and a firm commitment to be used by Him wherever they might be. I can share how the Lord has shown His faithfulness to me, and I want to encourage others to discover it."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

'Dome' explores surviving loss of a child

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

WILLIAMSBURG—Many visitors to the Cumberland Inn have noticed the hand-painted dome in the lobby featuring a dozen cherubs and images. Now a 312-page book has been released that brings the seven-year-old artistic display to life.

"Children of the Dome" was compiled by Rosemary Smith, a pharmacist who grew up in Williamsburg and now lives in Beatyville.

The book relates the stories of 28 families who have lost children. It leads off with the story of Mrs. Smith's sons, Drew and Jeremiah, who died in a car crash on June 23, 1992.

The volume draws its name from the dome painting, commissioned by Smith's family. It honors 12 children, including the Smiths and James Taylor II, the only son of Cumberland College President James Taylor and his wife, Dinah.

The painting was done by Wayne Taylor, a 1972 graduate of Cumberland College who teaches high school in Springboro, Ohio. He also created 29 oil paintings for the book.

"I hope it's an inspiration to people, to see there is hope and that you survive the loss of a child," Smith said. "It's phenomenal to see what these families have done. Secondly, all of us want to keep these children alive, to let people see that they made a difference."

Four years in the making, the book was released in early June. Smith held her first signing June 9 at the inn, which is operated by Cumberland College.

Twenty-six of the 28 chapters are by Kentuckians, all but two written by mothers. The survivors have some common ground, she said. Many have coped by talking about their children, reading

material on grief and meeting others with similar stories.

"We talk about what we can do to help others," said Mrs. Smith, who attended Wolf Creek Baptist Church as a child but now attends her husband's Episcopal church. "A lot of fathers have trouble talking about it. They're supposed to be strong. Sharing about these children has been very valuable."



The book also has a strong Christian base, she said. While she doesn't know all the denominational affiliations, among the Kentucky Baptists who contributed material are:

■ Dinah Taylor. Her son, James II, died in an accident in 1991, the night before his high school graduation.

■ Ella Mae Prater, whose daughter, Merri Kathryn, died after a 1996 accident. The Western Recorder reported previously how her death touched off a revival in Hindman, centering on First Baptist Church. Mrs. Prater also helped with some editing of the manuscript.

■ Becky Greer, a member of First Baptist Church of London, who has lost four children to various tragedies.

Mrs. Greer was the speaker June 10 at the annual Williamsburg picnic of Fellow Travelers. The informal parents group sprang up through the efforts of Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Smith to comfort others.

"I call her my lifeline," said Mrs. Smith, who received a letter of consolation from the college leader's wife soon after her 18- and 15-year-old sons died. "I called her in five minutes. In five days my husband and I drove to Cumberland (to meet her) and came away thinking we might make it."

In addition to contacting grieving parents by phone, Mrs. Taylor wrote so many letters her efforts evolved into a newsletter titled Lamentations. Published monthly for seven years, she now puts out two issues annually.

In 1993 she also organized a "Joining In Memory" picnic, which draws about 100 visitors from around the nation.

"I didn't get the support I needed from people," Mrs. Taylor said of her early efforts to cope with her son's death. "I thought if that's what happening to me, what's happening to everybody else?"

The dome painting grew out of a discussion Mrs. Taylor had with her husband. She suggested grieving parents pick out a symbol that represented their child, such as James II's love of horses. Then they would combine the symbols with cherubs.

As soon as Mrs. Smith heard about the idea, her family offered to pay for the painting. The Smiths hope to commission a similar painting for the dome in the college's fine arts building when it is completed next year.

The two women's networking eventually led to the creation of the book.

"Rosemary contacted so many families she said, 'There's a book here. We need to write about our children,'" Mrs. Taylor said. "'Children of the Dome' is sacred ground to us."

The book includes many color photographs and paintings. The Smiths paid for the printing. Mrs. Smith said that if they recover their costs, she plans to put any profits into grief ministry.

Even though she wishes none of the parents in Fellow Travelers had met, Mrs. Smith recognizes there have been positive elements to coping with tragedy.

Her faith has grown much stronger, she said, recalling how she asked God two weeks after her sons died to help her deal with the pain.

Telling God she had to turn over the situation to Him because she couldn't handle it any longer, she slept soundly that night.

"The next morning I felt like a ton of bricks had been lifted off my shoulder," she said. "I knew He was helping me with this."

Stewart biography shows 'how God brings hope out of tragedy'

NASHVILLE (BP)—Months after a tragic plane crash claimed the life of her husband, championship golfer Payne Stewart, Tracey Stewart is the first to admit she still asks God, "Why?"

But she also can answer the question and frequently does as she speaks to the media since the recent publication of her book, "Payne Stewart: The Authorized Biography."

"I believe God has a plan for everyone," Tracey Stewart told "Today" show anchor Matt Lauer earlier this month. For her husband, she said, God's plan was to call him home at the age of 42, shortly after his career soared with his second U.S. Open victory, and at a time when he was nurturing his relationship with his wife and children, Chelsea, 14, and Aaron, 11.

But the golfer who was known professionally for his colorful outfits and personally for his practical jokes was also devoting a great deal of time to renewing his relationship with Jesus Christ.

Stewart died Oct. 25, 1999, in a bizarre crash of a private jet that flew 2,400 miles on automatic pilot before falling out of the sky in South Dakota. At the time, he was wearing a black nylon bracelet inscribed with "W.W.J.D.?"—What Would Jesus Do?

"He possessed a deeper, unusual sense of peace ... that had not always been there," Mrs. Stewart wrote in the new book, which also tells of his early years learning golf from his father, of his 11 victories on the PGA Tour and of their 18-year marriage.

Mrs. Stewart said it is her hope and that of co-author Ken Abraham that the biography will not only honor the memory of the golfer, husband, father and Christian, but also will inspire others who are seeking a greater spiritual dimension in their lives.

"It is interesting to me how, in the last part of his life, God surrounded this guy with people who were feeding into his life positive things," Abraham said. Payne Stewart had grown up as a Christian and attended church with his family in Springfield, Mo. He had never renounced his faith, but there were busy periods in his life when it was not his priority.

"He knew Christian principles, and he tried to live that way. But a lot of things Baptists consider going along with a Christian life, Payne blew out the window," Abraham said. As a young golfer, he was known for brashness and sometimes arrogance. As a frustrated golfer in the early 1990s, he began drinking in a way that concerned his wife.

But God did for Payne what Abraham said God does for everyone. "God puts people in our lives, circumstances in our lives, to draw us closer to Him," he said. For Stewart, that meant Christians like manager Robert Fraley who died in the plane crash, and good friend golfer Paul Azinger, whose faith in the face of cancer was a powerful example of living a Christian life under any circumstance.

Mrs. Stewart and Abraham said they wanted to share that promise in the biography.

"A lot of this story is about how God brings hope out of tragedy," Abraham said. "But it is also the story of a changed man, which Payne Stewart was."

Mrs. Stewart's faith, too, was growing, and when she and Abraham sat down to begin the book, they began with prayer. "Everybody talks about Tracey's strength, yet I think we'd be remiss if we ignored that she lost her best friend, her husband, lover and the father of her children," he said. "There is a lot of hurt there. She will grapple with those questions for a long time to come."

"Her faith, however, is strong, and she believes that God has a purpose, even if it is difficult to see," he said.

A visible sign of that is the black nylon W.W.J.D.? bracelet, recovered from the wreck. Mrs. Stewart wears it all the time as she goes about her active days, trying to live her life and to set an example for her children, so that those around her can see what Jesus would do.

Author encourages fellow pastors to look ahead

By Greg Heyman
Alabama Baptist

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Gary Fenton is a man who loves to tell stories, regularly weaving life experiences and the latest news into his sermons.

The Birmingham, Ala., pastor's book, "Your Ministry's Next Chapter," proves his writing is no different.

Focusing on ministers who often burn out after losing their vision, Fenton's book is part of Bethany House Publishers' "The Pastor's Soul Series," a collection that addresses issues in pastors' lives.

"I hope pastors will not assume that the best is behind them," said Fenton, pastor of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church.

"I am 52 (and) I enjoy my work more than I ever have in my life," he said. "I want pastors to see that the last stage is not something you have to endure in order to get to retirement."

Fenton contends the latter years of pastors' lives can be the strongest of their ministries. He also tackles the issues that cause many of them to become

discouraged.

Pointing out that the book covers only one facet relating to a pastor's life, Fenton said his book is targeted for people ages 40 to 50.

Fenton is a contributor to Leadership Journal, an interdenominational magazine published by Christianity Today magazine that focuses on spiritual and leadership issues for pastors, church leaders and staff members. He said the publications recognized a need for a series of books addressing issues in pastors' lives, such as mid-life career concerns.

One of the stories he shares in the book tells of a friend who was searching for a new church because his pastor was retiring. Fenton told the friend that the loss of a pastor was a poor reason to seek a new church, stressing the new pastor would need the congregation's support. It was then that the friend clarified his comments, telling Fenton the pastor wasn't leaving the church, but was "retiring" in his approach to ministry.

Fenton said many ministers lose their vision because they forget what

they're all about.

"Pride gets in the way of so much of their ministry—pride in themselves," he said. "You have to stay humble."

Fenton added that people in any profession are faced with the temptation of taking themselves too seriously and not placing enough importance on their work.

"There's another temptation that speaks primarily to this book. It's assuming that you've come to a stage of life where you could just put it on automatic and where you can disengage," he said. "The days I do my ministry best, I'm engaged."

Discussing his style of ministry and writing, Fenton said he believes storytelling is biblical.

"I really think that when God communicated truth, He did it primarily by means of stories," Fenton said. "There are very few essays in the Bible."

Almost all of the Bible is narrative, he added. "I think you're going to see the return of more stories in preaching," he said. "A story allows you to communicate the feeling, not just the information."

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Join missionaries who work with the Digo people group in Tanzania in giving thanks that four books of the Bible recently were translated into the Digo language. Pray that the Holy Spirit will prepare the people to receive the gospel.

■ Missionary Journeyman Diane Teafatiller as she prepares to teach at Haven of Peace Academy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

■ Cornerstone Church, a new church in Framingham, Mass., and its partner church, Stone Creek Church in Atlanta.

■ Ten students from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary who are helping plant churches in Boston this summer.

■ Missionary Susan Carson gives thanks for the success of a team of single adults from Germany who recently ministered among singles in Poland.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **CADIZ**—Little River Association will sponsor Celebrate Jesus 2000 revivals July 9-13, 7 p.m., at Trigg County High School gym. **Harold Hunter** will be the evangelist. **Gary Miller** will lead the music.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Pitman Valley called **Roger Moran**, of Greensburg, as pastor.

■ **LAWRENCEBURG**—Alton Church will host revival services July 7-9. **John Crittenden** will be the evangelist. Son Praise will provide music. For information, call (502) 839-3487. **John Charles** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Joe Phelps**, pastor of Highland Church, will participate in a panel discussion on spirituality and the environment, June 27, 7 p.m. in the Henry Vogt Building at the University of Louisville. For information, call **Jackie Green** at (502) 451-5732.

Melbourne Heights Church will host **Layton Howerton** in concert July 9 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 454-4681. **Bill Shoulta** is pastor.

William Tuck recently retired as

pastor of First Church, Lumberton, N.C. He previously served 10 years as pastor of St. Matthews Church and as professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary. The Tucks will move to Virginia this fall.

■ **OWENTON**—Old Cedar Church will host **David Livingston** in concert July 2 at 11 a.m. **James Bondurant** is pastor.

Greenup Fork Church will host **David Livingston** in concert July 2 at 6 p.m. **Kendall Collins** is pastor.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—Meta Church called **Jeff Foster**, a recent graduate of Clear Creek Bible College, as pastor.

■ **PARIS**—**Samuel Hatton**, 83, retired minister from Clark County died June 7. He served as pastor of Glen's Creek Church in Versailles, Ephesus Church in Clark County and Spears Mill Church in Bourbon County. He was preceded in death by his wife, **Mildred** on April 27.

■ **WESTPORT**—**Lynn Traylor** recently celebrated his third anniversary as pastor of Westport Church.

Evangelical plea doesn't sway Procter & Gamble on Dr. Laura

CINCINNATI (RNS)—Powerful TV advertiser Procter & Gamble has told conservative Christian activists it is standing by its decision to not advertise on this fall's scheduled talk show hosted by radio advice guru Dr. Laura Schlessinger.

"We cannot sponsor Dr. Laura's television show," wrote Bob Wehling, a Procter & Gamble officer, in a letter faxed June 16 to one of the six Christian groups that met with company officials about its mid-May decision regarding the "Dr. Laura" show.

Procter & Gamble dropped its advertising plans after heavy lobbying by gay and lesbian activists who object to comments against homosexuality Schlessinger made on her daily radio talk show.

"It's a shame that she has become so polarizing on several issues, because we think the majority of the advice she gives is good and helpful, if not always compassionate," Wehling wrote in the letter. "While she has every right to assert her views on

all subjects in the context of her show, we have an equal right as an advertiser to place our commercials in less polarizing environments."

The letter was faxed two days after Southern Baptist Convention messengers voted to commend Schlessinger for her "courageous stand" against homosexuality.

P&G met for an hour last week with leaders from the American Family Association, Concerned Women for America, Coral Ridge Ministries' Center for Reclaiming America, the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family and Citizens for Community Values, a local group in Cincinnati, which is home to P&G world headquarters.

Christian activists have no immediate plans for a P&G boycott. "The 'B' word has not been mentioned," said Phil Burress, president of Citizens for Community Values. "I do not believe that is a solution to the problem. That's a quantum leap to the end of everything, and once you do that, you kind of lose your opportunities."

CLASSIFIED ADS

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: 1991 Dodge 15-passenger van. 105k miles. Asking \$4,500. Please contact Jerry Gifford at (270) 842-5554.

FOR SALE: 1970 47-passenger coach bus, fair condition, needs work. \$12,000. Leave message: (812) 941-7799 key 806.

FOR SALE: New 1999 Dodge easy-access vans: 15-passenger, raised-roof, lowered stepwell, center aisle, ducted rear heat and a/c, plus many more options. Retail: \$35,739; net cost after rebates and discounts: \$29,990. Call (800) 582-7118.

SEEKING: Part-time secretary, Church Music department. Position requires secretarial experience and computer application skills. Competitive hourly wage. Contact: Administrative services department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Louisville, Ky. Phone: (502) 244-6468.

SEEKING: FBC Prestonsburg is seeking a highly motivated and Spirit-filled individual to lead and direct its youth toward a more fulfilling and enriched Christian experience. The full-time position has primary emphasis on youth and their salvation and daily walk with our Lord. Send resumé to Cara Hall, FBC, PO Box 756, Prestonsburg, KY 41653.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for a contemporary church. Please send resumé to: Elk Horn Baptist Church, 3145 East Elkhorn Road, Campbellsville, KY 42718, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: FT administrative assistant, Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church. \$8.50-\$11/hour, 2-3 years work experience, good Microsoft Office, verbal and written skills. Church office: (502) 491-4356; Fax: 491-4848.

SEEKING: Part-time minister to children for First Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, Ky. Send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 238 Frank E Simon Ave., Shepherdsville, KY 40165, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Secretarial position available. Telephone and computer skills required. Health insurance provided. Call: (502) 426-6577.

SEEKING: Elementary school teachers and high school teachers (chemistry/physics and math). Call Highview Baptist School, Louisville, Ky., (502) 239-2509, or e-mail brose@highviewbaptistschool.org or jmarcy@highviewbaptistschool.org.

SEEKING: Growing church is in search of a full-time staff member to work with music/youth/children. Dry Ridge Baptist is in a growing area and has great potential in all three of these areas. A church parsonage is available if desired, and salary will be determined by experience, qualifications and need. If you are interested, please inquire by phone: (606) 824-5501 or 824-9229, or send your resumé to: Dry Ridge Baptist Church, 19 Broadway, PO#14, Dry Ridge, KY 41035.

SEEKING: Church secretary. Full-time position with complete responsibility for operation of church office. Experience with MS Word is preferred. Call (502) 368-5806 or send resumé to: Beechmont Baptist Church, 4574 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40214. Fax: 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: Union Baptist Church (Northern Kentucky) has an opening for a part-time minister of music. The position will require approximately 13 hours per week. Send resumé to: PO Box 194, Union, KY 41091, or call (859) 384-3855 for additional information.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth. Lyndon Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222. E-mail: south01@win.net.

SEEKING: Gethsemane Baptist Church, 10400 Blue Lick Road, Louisville, KY 40229 (Okolona), is currently seeking someone to fill the position of minister of music. This is a part-time position. Responsibilities will include leading worship services in traditional and contemporary music, leading the adult choir and working with a youth choir. We are a mission-minded, ministry-minded fellowship of believers seeking someone who is inspirational and led of the Lord to lead in dynamic worship. Resumés should be sent to the church address in care of the Personnel Committee. You may contact the church at (502) 969-3191 if you have any questions.

SEEKING: Stanford Baptist Church invites applications for the position of senior pastor. We're a rural-town church in a fast-growing area of beautiful central Kentucky. We have an outstanding music ministry, youth ministry and Christian Life Center program. Please send inquiries or resumés to: Pulpit Committee, Stanford Baptist Church, 204 Church St., Stanford, KY 40484, or call (606) 365-2178.

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: East Cadiz Baptist Church of Cadiz is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Send resumé to: M/Y Search Committee, East Cadiz Baptist Church, 407 Third St., Cadiz, KY 42211.

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: Caneyville Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a full-time, experienced, energetic pastor. Prefer college and/or seminary training. Send resumé to: Eddie A. Majors, 164 Clay Way, Leitchfield, KY 42754.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pioneer Baptist Church, 264 Sparrow Lane, Harrodsburg, KY 40330.

SEEKING: Experienced full-time youth/children's minister for a 1-1/2 year old contemporary style, growing church (225+) in a small town in central Kentucky. Must be self-motivated, creative, a team player and able to work in a portable church situation. Send resumé to: River of Life Community Church, PO Box 192, Springfield, KY 40069.

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: 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.

SERVICES: Home care for the elderly. Meal preparation, housekeeping, personal hygiene. Bonded, insured, eight years experience. Kinnett Care, (502) 499-7777.

TOUR: 10-Day China tour. Beijing, Xian, Shanghai, Great Wall, terra cotta soldiers, Yangtze River. Nov. 7-16, \$2,085. From our area. For info., call Judy Studie, (270) 475-2197.

Forgiveness trend becomes politically, theologically chic

By Shelvia Dancy
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Sprinkled liberally throughout the books of the Bible are reminders of the virtue of forgiveness.

The New Testament book of Ephesians, for example, tells Christians: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Even at Jesus' death the theme is emphasized. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing," He says.

Religious leaders have long been the primary town criers touting the virtues of forgiveness and repentance, but within the past decade apologies have blossomed into quasi-political chic as clergy and political leaders from Brazil to Benin embrace the "forgiveness movement"—seeking forgiveness from those whom their countries and institutions have injured in the past.

To wit:

■ In the late 1980s the U.S. government formally apologized for the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II and offered each survivor \$20,000 in reparation.

■ Two years ago National Sorry Day was launched in Australia to apologize for the forced removal of thousands of Aboriginal children from their families.

■ In March, Pope John Paul II apologized for sins committed by members of the Roman Catholic Church against, among other groups, Jews, African-Americans, women and those who had been sexually abused by Catholic clergy.

■ In April, Rwanda's Hutu prime minister sought forgiveness for his party's role in the genocide of Tutsis and Hutus six years ago.

■ In May, Emperor Akihito of Japan expressed regret for the pain that World War II caused people in the Netherlands, while officials from the west African country of Benin apologized for their role in African slavery.

"I think what we have entered is a decade of reconciliation," said Everett Worthington, chairman of the Department of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University and executive director of the Virginia-based Campaign for Forgiveness Research, which sponsors studies about the effects of forgiveness. "We have a real social hunger for forgiveness right now—politically and at the personal level. We're really yearning for reconciliation."

That yearning is partly the offspring of the social and political climate of the past 15 years, Worthington said, particularly the fall of the Berlin Wall and the work of organizations like South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, led by Nobel Peace Prize winner retired

Archbishop Desmond Tutu and created to investigate the human rights violations of South Africa's apartheid regime.

"When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and communism collapsed, all of a sudden countries that were enemies had to reconcile with each other, so there was this worldwide interest in how do you get past these hurts," Worthington said. "And when (South African black leader Nelson) Mandela was released from prison, he chose to promote reconciliation and forgiveness instead of retribution—and that was of great interest to people throughout the world. Forces like that got people talking about reconciliation and forgiveness."

The movement also is propelled by an international desire to crawl from beneath centuries-thick layers of hurt and anger caused by historical injustices, said Michael Henderson, author of "Forgiveness: Breaking the Chains of Hate."

Far from "letting someone off the hook," forgiveness is a step toward freedom for those who have been wronged, said Johann Christoph Arnold, author of "Why Forgive?"

"In forgiveness we don't exonerate anyone, we just let the hurt and the pain go," said Arnold, a veteran pastor and elder of the Bruderhof Christian community. "Our culture thinks forgiveness is a weakness when it is actually a strength—forgiveness lets

you move on. Forgiveness heals—it breaks all kinds of barriers between nations and cultures."

When those barriers aren't removed, nations remain frozen in a sort of social suspended animation with bruises of the past never fully healed, Henderson said.

"People who have been wronged need to feel they have a part in the country, and they don't always feel that until they have an acknowledgment of their pain," he said. "When people are honest about the past, they can share together the pain of the past rather than the guilt of the past. Otherwise, there can be a seedbed of bitterness."

Worthington agreed. "Without forgiveness you have a kind of social inertia with hatred lying beneath the surface waiting for an opportunity to be justified and turn into violence," he said.

But for every official who apologizes, others remain silent.

"I don't say everybody has to forgive. What I do try to show in my book is that even in the most extreme circumstances people have been willing to," Henderson said. "Jews do not have to forgive Germans for the Holocaust, but I do know Jews who have. I don't say all whites should apologize for slavery, but I do know whites who have. Not everybody is ready to walk the road of forgiveness, but I think it's been a blessing to those who have."

"We have a real social hunger for forgiveness right now—politically and at the personal level."

Everett Worthington,
executive director of
the Campaign for
Forgiveness Research

Did missing Baptist minister scam investors of \$3 million?

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (RNS)—Narvin Edwardson would frequently break down in tears when he talked about the dire need to raise money for his Christian orphanages, hospitals and rice programs in the Philippines.

The 68-year-old Canadian, who claimed he was moderator of the "South Asian Baptist Church," also would suddenly burst into booming Christian hymns in the midst of promoting ventures in diesel engine parts, high-tech dryers and luxury Mercedes.

And when Edwardson tried to convince well-off North Americans, most of them Christians, to invest millions of dollars in his schemes, he often would grab their hands and pray fervently, saying how grateful they should be for all that God had granted.

But many Christians in the United States and Canada—including prominent Colorado-based evangelist Bob Larson—now bitterly regret the day they became financially embroiled with the tall, extroverted, ever-grinning, self-proclaimed Christian pastor and his Filipino wife, Michie.

At least seven people said they recently lost approximately \$3 million as a result of their dealings with Edwardson.

It also has been learned that Edwardson has a criminal record. He was sentenced to 4 1/2 years in prison in 1977 on six counts of fraud and two of theft stemming from shady car and hotel deals in Penticton, British Columbia, Victoria, British Columbia, and Calgary, Alberta. He bilked those victims of \$160,000.

Edwardson, who became aware that disillusioned former partners had begun filing complaints with police and are seeking compensation from him, pulled his three young children out of a private Christian school in Kelowna, British Columbia, this month and disappeared.

Since then, Edwardson sent a fax to one of his angry former associates, which appeared to originate from the Philippines.

Edwardson's Kelowna phone numbers are no longer in service. There is also no evidence a "South Asian Baptist" denomination exists.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Kelowna confirmed they have received complaints about Edwardson and are investigating.

James Wilson, owner of Active Chemicals Ltd. in Delta, a suburb of Vancouver, said he has lost \$1.25 million to Edwardson.

Three years ago, Wilson said, he entered into a deal with an Edwardson company called University Diesel Products. Wilson said Edwardson used his connection with his well-respected industrial chemical company to gain legitimacy with other potential investors.

Wilson said Edwardson promised that part of the profits from the joint venture would go to Christian missionary orphanages and rice programs. But Wilson recently grew suspicious after he flew to Edwardson's so-called manufacturing plant in the province of Zambalos, Philippines.

The plant was supposed to be producing devices that Edwardson said make diesel engines run more efficiently. But Wilson found only an

empty building. Additionally, some equipment Wilson had contributed to the plant was sitting abandoned.

Wilson, along with others, took his story to the police, but he remains frustrated by the apparent lack of progress.

Kelowna evangelical Tom Johnson, a retired public relations manager with the giant ATCO Company, said he believes he'll never see the \$400,000 he invested through Edwardson in a plan to buy luxury cars in Canada and sell them in Seattle.

Johnson recently began trying to track down others who have lost money to Edwardson. Johnson said he received a fax from Edwardson this month, apparently originating in the Philippines. In the fax, Edwardson attacks Johnson for criticizing him, and claims he is an upstanding man of faith.

"I am truly a Christian and under God's promise," Edwardson said in the fax. "No weapons formed against me can prosper (because) I put my full trust in Him (God)."

Johnson, who initially trusted Edwardson because he said he was a leader of the so-called South Asian Baptist Church, said of Edwardson, "He'd break down and cry about his orphanages. He'd cry about his hospitals. He'd burst into hymns at strange moments. Later, he tells you, 'Don't worry, I'll get you your money.' But I'm finding out he tells everybody that."

Many of Edwardson's victims said his wife, Michie, appears to be intimately involved in his business dealings. Edwardson has told people his wife owns a housing subdivision and an oceanside resort in the Philippine



province of Zambalos. She has aggressively denounced investors who dare criticize Edwardson.

Many frustrated former investors also said Edwardson rarely signs his name on legal documents. He generally prefers to make handshake agreements. When people have contacted Edwardson to ask what's happened to their investments, he invariably tells them to stop worrying and that they will eventually get their money back.

"I've been devastated by this," Kelowna's Johnson said of his aborted investment through Edwardson in 13 luxury vehicles. "I don't have much left. I don't even own my own car anymore. ... I don't know if I'll ever see my money again. But I want to see justice done."

"This man is very persuasive. He's slick, professional and shrewd," Johnson added. "He prays and sings and tells you how rich he is. And the key he uses to open doors is Christianity."

HAVE YOU SEEN ME?
Narvin Edwardson disappeared after investors became suspicious of his alleged enterprises with the "South Asian Baptist Church," an organization that appears not to exist. Seven people say they have lost approximately \$3 million. (RNS photo)

A Summer of Service

From Williamsburg, Ky., to Mojandita, Ecuador, and Ghana, Africa, 68 Cumberland College students will spend the summer serving locally and around the world. For many of these students, the commitment is for the entire summer, most of them as volunteers. They may not be spending their summer earning money, but these students will gain something far more valuable from their experience—a value for other people and the blessing received in service.

Kentucky

Jennifer Dyer - First Baptist Church, Richmond
Ernie Freeman - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
Terry Lewis - Mountain Outreach
Andy Cooper - Appalachian Ministries (Cumberland College)
T.J. Wright - Edgewood Baptist Church, Hopkinsville
Elizabeth Bailey - Son Bound
Aaron Hogue - Pleasant View Baptist Church, Waynesburg
Emily Shipp - Son Bound
Abby Kinlaw - Northeast Christian Church
Lori Lunsford - Manchester Baptist Church
Lori Grigsby - Manchester Baptist Church
Troy Shafer - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
Tracy Welsh - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
Christy Hall - Camp Nathanael
Heather Murphree - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
Betsy Moore - Son Share
Brandon Moore - Providence Baptist Church
Tyler Mullins - Appalachian Ministries (Cumberland College)
Crystal Reams - Hickory Groove Baptist Church
Nathan Riner - Crosspoint
Bryan Summerford - Son Praise
Cassandra Tedford - World Changers
Matt Walton - Crosspoint
Rae Woodruff - High Street United Methodist Church
Toney Cooksey, Jr. - Sycamore Baptist Church
Michelle Henson - Plum Creek Baptist Church
Stephanie Petz - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
David Riggs - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
Jennifer Cox - Appalachian Ministries (Cumberland College)
Emily Flack - Son Share
Aaron Austin - Mountain Outreach/Appalachian Min. (Cumberland College)
Melissa Chrisman - Bellvue Baptist Church
Chuck Smith - Son Share
Mandy Fish - Clear Creek Christian Church
Jon Lee - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)
Wayne Cecil - Appalachian Ministries (Cumberland College)
LaTisha Brown - Appalachian Ministries (Cumberland College)
Leah Burnett - Crosspoint
Michael Cabell - Pleasureville Baptist Church
Jarrod Cavanaugh - New Bethel Baptist Association
Sabrina Fanin - Clifton Baptist Church
Ryan Foulk - Mountain Outreach (Cumberland College)

Florida

Matt and Jessica McKee - Centrifuge (Panama City)
Becca Adkins - Reach Teams

Georgia

Beth Croley - Camp All-American (Atlanta)
Jamey Short - Camp All-American (Atlanta)
Amy Floyd - Camp All-American (Atlanta)
Danette Kelly - Camp All-American (Atlanta)

Ohio

David Hockney - Chestnut Ridge Baptist Church

Louisiana

Kristie Aubrey - Carver Baptist Church, New Orleans

New York

Kelly Noel - Schenectady
Julie Ross - Schenectady

Australia

Chuck Sumner - Queensland
Monica Haydon - Queensland

Bolivia

Jeremy Haile

Bosnia

Tracy Welsh
Bryan Summerford
Jason McKinney

China

Emily Lumsdon

Ecuador

JoAnn Sterneberg

Ghana

Kevin Floyd
Jessica Margrave

India

Amber Jones

Poland

Scott Gilbert
Kristin Keenan

Taiwan

Amy Larkin
Paige Kolok

Cumberland College

6178 College Station Drive ♦ Williamsburg, KY 40769

(800) 343-1609