

September 26, 2000
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FOR THE RECORD

Baptists

Reactions continue to a proposed plan by Texas Baptists to drastically reduce funding for SBC seminaries, the SBC Executive Committee and the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. *Page 2.*

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Founder Millard Fuller pleads: Send more Baptists. *Page 11.*

More than gold



Southern Baptist volunteers Jerry Haas, center, of Athens, Ga., and Shea Miller, left, from Mobile, Ala., share Christ with young girls who have come to Windsor (Australia) Baptist Church's tent-city ministry complex to watch the Olympic opening ceremony on a large screen TV. Haas and Miller are with Action International, a volunteer group doing evangelism activities during the Olympic games in Sydney. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Kentuckian leads Olympic evangelism effort

By Jenny Rogers
SBC International Mission Board

WINDSOR, Australia (BP)—Little pins, big pins. Just give 'em the pins.

Olympic pins, produced by every company and organization imaginable, are the hottest things on Sydney's streets during the Games. People buy, sell and swap, anything to get a pin. Some are free, others bring big bucks.

And Georgia-based ministry group Action International 2000

Australia has discovered a way to use those pins to share a greater message: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Using glossy enamel pins similar to those showing up all over Sydney, more than 40 American volunteers have gathered at Windsor District Baptist Church's "Tent City" near Sydney for three weeks during the Olympics. Each day the team splits into small groups to take their pins and gospel presentation to hot spots all over Sydney, including Darling Harbour, the landmark opera house and Olympic Park.

The pins show a gold torch surrounded by multicolored rings like the popular evangelistic bracelets developed for sharing the gospel through colors.

Action volunteers come back with stacks of commitment cards to prove just how effective the pins are.

"God continues to pour out blessings far beyond anything we could have imagined," said Richard Palmer of Paducah, personal evangelism coordinator for Action International.

□ See *Kentuckian leads ...*, page 8

More churches ministering to single parents

By Yonat Shimron
Religion News Service

CARY, N.C. (RNS)—Heartbroken and depressed over the breakup of her engagement, Tina Lunde of Cary, N.C., needed the help of her church more than at any other time in her life.

But there was just one problem: She was pregnant, and as a single woman she assumed her church would have nothing to do with her.

"I knew there were churches, especially in the South, that would kick me out," said Lunde, 26, a hairdresser. "They would have looked at me like I was disgraceful."

But to her amazement, Cary Church of God welcomed her with open arms. Members called to see how she was doing, organized a baby shower and tucked envelopes with cash in her hands.

Two years later, the church is still there. Lunde gets practical help and

□ See *More churches ...*, page 9



SINGLE SWINGER Tina Lunde swings her son Joshua, 2. Lunde is part of a support group for single mothers at Cary, N.C., Church of God. (RNS photo)

Hodgenville saw writing on the wall for literacy ministry's need

By Brenda Smith
Kentucky Baptist Convention

HODGENVILLE—Brenda Clopton's English-as-a-Second-Language classes started with a simple request: Could she get Spanish-language Bibles for a few school children?

Clopton's response—and the literacy ministry that grew out of it—illustrate the key elements of successful literacy ministries: faith, determination and compassion.

Clopton's literacy missions efforts started when she acquired a number of Bibles and delivered them to her Hispanic neighbors. Despite the fact that Clopton knew only a few words of Spanish and her new friends knew only a few words of English, their relationship flourished.

Soon after, Clopton learned that Horse Cave Baptist Church was sponsoring a dinner and service for Spanish-speaking people. With halting, fragmented Spanish and the help of one of the family's young English-speaking sons, she asked her new friends if they would like to go someplace where people would be speaking Spanish. They jumped at the chance.

The experience showed Clopton the importance of being able to communicate, and it motivated her to help start an ESL teaching ministry through her church, South Fork Baptist Church in Hodgenville.

With training from Becky Carnell, literacy missions consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Clopton launched an ESL ministry that has touched the lives of approximately 200 Hispanic migrant workers in central Kentucky since 1997.

Using her scant knowledge of Spanish and a stack of photocopied invitations, Clopton seeks out Hispanic migrant workers in her area and invites them to classes, which are now held on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings.

Classes average from eight to 10 students, though the growing season can bring as many as 20 people or no one at all.

Literacy missions volunteers like Clopton were honored and encouraged at the third annual Literacy Missions Conference Sept. 22-23 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

"The conference is our small way of recognizing and encouraging volunteers for their efforts," Carnell said.

The weekend included recog-

□ See *Kentucky literacy ...*, page 3

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, September 27

SBC leaders call Texas plan a 'travesty'

"The proposal by the BGCT represents a unilateral breach of its 75-year partnership agreement as the Southern Baptist Convention's trusted collection agent."

SBC Executive Committee resolution

NASHVILLE (ABP)—If Texas Baptists follow through with a proposal to reduce funding to Southern Baptist Convention entities, SBC leaders are prepared to appeal directly to the state's churches in an effort to recoup lost funds.

The SBC Executive Committee adopted a resolution Sept. 19 urging messengers at the Baptist General Convention of Texas this fall to reject a plan that would redirect funding away from some SBC agencies and seminaries next year.

The Texas proposal would reduce funding for the six SBC seminaries from \$5.3 million to \$1 million, completely defund the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and cut Executive Committee funding from \$706,000 to \$10,000. Funding for the SBC's International Mission Board and North American Mission Board would not be affected.

The Executive Committee resolution labels the Texas proposal "a unilateral breach of a 75-year partnership agreement" as the SBC's collecting agent, adding that the action would "effectively destroy the Cooperative Program process" between the two conventions.

Texas Baptist leaders have said some SBC agencies no longer deserve the same amount of funding because they are not the same agencies and do not espouse the same doctrines as they did when the Cooperative Program was established in 1925.

A statement adopted by the SBC in 1928 defined the relationship between the SBC and the state Baptist conventions, affirming that despite unified funding both remained autonomous in their own sphere.

The statement described the unified funding plan "as a matter of convenience and economy" that could be changed at any time.

It called for "careful discrimination and mutual trust" between state and national bodies and pledged that neither would allocate or divert funds from any object in the other's budget.

In the 1928 document, the SBC re-

tained "as inalienable and inherent the right to direct appeal to the churches."

The threat of Texas Baptist action rippled across virtually every aspect of last week's Executive Committee meeting. In addition to the resolution warning that Texas Baptists' proposed funding changes set "a dangerous precedent in our larger Southern Baptist work," Executive Committee members adopted a second resolution affirming the six SBC seminaries and pledging "all appropriate steps to insure continued financial support."

Morris Chapman, president of the Executive Committee, said if the outcome of the proposal is that the Baptist General Convention of Texas no longer promotes Southern Baptist missions and ministries, "the Southern Baptist Convention will be compelled" to appeal directly to churches in the state.

"The BGCT is systematically attempting to influence Southern Baptist churches in Texas to forsake their loyalty to the SBC," Chapman said.

Chapman, a former Texas pastor, called the state convention proposal a "travesty and miscarriage of cooperation" that would "force local churches in Texas to decide" between support of the state and national conventions.

The Executive Committee resolution states that the SBC "is fully supportive" of all its seminaries and agencies and encourages churches in Texas to "continue to give generously" to the SBC Cooperative Program "through the state conventions." Along with the 2.7 million-member BGCT, the SBC also recognizes a second state convention in Texas, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, a new conservative group with just under 400 churches.

Stan Coffey, president of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, expressed concern that the Executive Committee action didn't recognize the new convention as a channel for national Cooperative Program support.

The new convention "exists in Texas for one purpose—to support all that has been done over the past 20 years" by conservative SBC leaders, Coffey

told Executive Committee members.

"Unless this is a public relations piece to bypass state conventions and solicit churches directly," the resolution is "unnecessary," he added.

Chapman responded that the resolution "does recognize there is more than one state convention in Texas."

Expressing "gratitude for the loyalty of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention to the Southern Baptist Convention," Chapman added. "We're simply trying to say to the BGCT first and foremost that we would like to work together."

"There are pastors in Texas who have expressed to me they are not ready to join another state convention," he said. "The Southern Baptist Convention has some interest here to protect."

The resolution states that the Executive Committee, "while strenuously objecting to this new budget process, is eager to discuss these matters with the BGCT."

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, voiced concern that "we have a campaign of misinformation going on in Texas by the elected leaders of the Baptist General Convention of Texas."

"We need the strongest action possible to get the attention of Texas Baptists," he said. "Texas Baptists need to know Southern Baptists are not going to take this without responding."

In an interview after the Executive Committee action, Charles Wade, executive director of the BGCT, said Texas Baptists stand at a crossroads.

"We have the opportunity to say with a clear voice what kind of Baptists we will be in the coming century," he said. "Our actions demonstrate that we are committed to preserving the independence of Texas Baptists to believe as historic Baptists have always believed. We will remain free to respond to God's leadership and to obey His inspired Word and will not be bound by man-made creeds or 'instruments of doctrinal accountability.'"

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson and Mark Wingfield of the Texas Baptist Standard

Merritt outlines priorities for SBC presidency

NASHVILLE (ABP)—Southern Baptist Convention President James Merritt issued a challenge to denominational leaders Sept. 18 to lead out in volunteering for missions and in personal evangelism.

Merritt gave his first formal remarks as president to the SBC Executive Committee during a two-day meeting in Nashville. Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church in Snellville, Ga., was elected SBC president in June.

Urging Southern Baptists to "lengthen our cords and strengthen our stakes,"

Merritt affirmed the conservative direction the denomination has taken the last 20 years.

"There are those who say our tent is too narrow," Merritt said, referring to critics of the SBC's narrowing stances on biblical inerrancy, women preachers and other issues.

"Our tent is very broad," he responded. "It is as broad as the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is sufficient to save anybody but the only way that anybody is saved."

Merritt said the SBC would not return to the days when he said seminary professors taught views advocating abortion and homosexuality and questioned the literal truth of the Bible.

"Our tent will never be broadened by compromising one jot or one tittle in this sacred book," Merritt said, referring to the Bible. "Our tent is broad, but not so broad as to tolerate heresy."

Merritt outlined four priorities for his presidency:

■ **Missions involvement.** "I want to challenge every member of the Executive Committee, every agency head, every seminary president, within the next two years to take at least one mission trip" outside of the U.S., Merritt said. "Giving to missions is no substitute for living missions."

■ **Evangelism.** Merritt also challenged SBC leaders, by the next Executive Committee meeting in February, to be ready to testify to sharing his or her faith with a lost person. "Dead orthodoxy is just as dangerous as live liberalism," he warned.

■ **Reaching the next generation.** Merritt said that most young people don't attend any church. One survey found that 50 percent of high school students stop going to church when they begin college and half of those never return. He encouraged Baptists to develop ways to reach younger generations with the gospel.

■ **Reaching out to young pastors.** Merritt said the denomination should motivate young pastors and church leaders to take an interest in the SBC.



Merritt

Texas directors of missions urge SBC leaders to seek unity

FORT WORTH, Texas—Texas Baptist directors of missions pleaded Sept. 21 with leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention's 12 agencies to help bridge the chasm they said is developing between the SBC and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

In reply, the SBC leaders affirmed the autonomy of the local association and encouraged the directors of missions to help them tell local churches about the good things happening in the SBC. But they offered no plan to rebuild damaged relations between the SBC and BGCT other than affirming a quickly written resolution pledging their willingness to cooperate with Texas churches.

The statement said: "We, the presidents of the entities of the Southern Baptist Convention, celebrate our partnership with Baptist churches in Texas and we affirm our eagerness to work with all Texas Baptists through our historic partnership."

The two-hour meeting at Southwestern

Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, was called by Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee. No leaders of the BGCT were informed of the afternoon session or invited to attend.

About 35 directors of missions participated in the lively discussion moderated by Chapman. Calling the meeting "unprecedented," he urged association leaders to "shed some light that would be helpful to us in knowing how to operate" in Texas.

Warren Hart of Red River Valley Baptist Association likened the disagreements between the SBC and the BGCT to church members "fussing about the color of the carpet" while bigger problems go unmet.

Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., responded that although some Baptist disagreements have been petty, disagreement on critical doctrinal or moral issues make it difficult to "walk together."

Responding to speculation that SBC leaders were unwilling to work with those who refused to embrace the revised Baptist Faith & Message statement, Patterson said, "At no point to my knowledge have we said that we would not play ball with someone who upholds the 1963 statement."

Several directors of missions said the reason cooperation between the BGCT and the SBC has broken down is because there is a lack of trust.

"Cooperation is spelled 'trust,'" said Ron Horton of Creath-Brazos Baptist Association. "The reason the situation we're in has come about is because trust has eroded."

Larry Johnson of Ellis Baptist Association, said his churches are grieved by the disagreement between the BGCT and SBC.

"My younger pastors are mad, but they're mad at everybody," he said. "We're getting ready to see churches change the way they do business. ... If we can't get together, you can write it off."

Myra pastor models bivocationalists' positive impact

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

FLEMING NEON—Counting a daily commute of more than 120 miles, Dave Hammond estimates he puts in more than 60 hours a week with United Parcel Service.

But overtime hasn't prevented the pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Myra from building a small mission into a 235-member congregation. Since constituting as a church six years ago, it has reported 203 baptisms.

"Sometimes I feel like there's no time to sleep," said Hammond, who will be honored at an upcoming meeting as Bivocational Pastor of the Year by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "I pastor by cell phone. I get a lot of things done while I'm working, getting people to do the work of ministry."

Faith Church's pastor is the first member of Pike Baptist Association to be recognized with the award. It will be presented this week at a five-state conference for bivocational pastors in Johnson City, Tenn.

But Hammond isn't that unusual, according to Pike Association director of missions Carl Boyd. Half of the association's 24 pastors have other jobs outside the pulpit. These marketplace ministers are valuable, he added.

"They're able to preach, do visitation and provide pastoral leadership," Boyd said. "It gives a church stability, even though the pastor



Hammond

isn't as accessible. They're comforted and encouraged that he'll be available and is their pastor."

The percentage of dual-income church leaders is even higher throughout Eastern Kentucky, said David Aker, state director of mountain missions. He estimates that nearly two-thirds of Kentucky Baptist churches in the 47-county region have bivocational pastors. In some associations it reaches 80 percent.

And this form of ministry isn't restricted to Appalachia. State missions director Randy Jones, who recently also became bivocational ministry coordinator, said a third of all KBC-related churches have such pastors.

A closer examination shows the figure may be as high as 60 percent, Jones added. While many pastors aren't classified as such, their low salary often means their wife must work outside the home, he explained.

"Many pastors in that situation don't consider themselves bivocational, even though their salary is only \$20,000," Jones said. "It's a gray area. But most directors of missions and missions strategists agree that bivocationalists will be a vital link in starting new works and sustaining existing ones."

Awareness is spreading, too. In addition to this week's Appalachian Bivocational Jubilee in Tennessee, conferences are scheduled Nov. 3-4 at Campbellsville University and next March at Mid-Continent Col-

lege near Mayfield.

Earlier this year Baker Books published "The Tentmaking Pastor," the first major resource in the field in 12 years. Author Dennis Bickers will be the keynote speaker at Campbellsville's conference.

Mike O'Neal, coordinator of the school's new Center for Bivocational Ministry, hopes the university eventually will host several seminars a year. He also plans to organize an introductory, undergraduate class to emphasize the value of a dual career.

Some occupations lend themselves to such an option. Teachers, entrepreneurs and business owners often have the flexibility to handle church tasks when needs arise, he said.

"The bivocational ministers I've talked to would not be doing anything else," said O'Neal, pastor of Columbia Baptist Church in Columbia. "They wouldn't be fully funded even if they had the chance. They feel there's more freedom to do things they feel the Lord wants them to do."

Bivocationalists have a major presence throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, leading 15,000 (or 37 percent) of its 41,000 churches.

Leon Wilson, national missionary for bivocational ministry with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, wants to change the second-class image of these positions.

"We have to find a way to change the mindset of the person in the pew," he said. "They think if they're not supporting a full-time pastor, something's wrong. There's fully-

funded pastors and bivocational pastors, but they're still pastors.

"I don't feel sorry for bivocational pastors," added Wilson, who owned a truck sales and lube business while pastor of South Park Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. "I feel sorry for these pastors who struggle by on \$20,000 and are frustrated. They would be better off with a second job."

They also might develop a different viewpoint, Wilson said. The missionary said that when he entered the workplace and started putting up with the same problems as his members, it changed his outlook.

He better understood their pains and frustrations, said Wilson, who works from his home in Oklahoma. Sometimes people from other churches came for counseling. When he recommended that they talk to their pastor, they would reply, "He's a nice man but we don't think he would understand."

"If I had to do it all over again, I'd be bivocational from the beginning," he said, recalling how South Park grew from 13 members to 600 during his tenure. "Our membership took a hold of the ministry."

Another advantage is finances, Hammond said. Faith Baptist doesn't have to pay him \$35,000 or \$40,000 a year, he said, so the congregation can put that money into ministry.

The church recently opened a Christian elementary school, has started a food pantry and hopes to complete a 200-seat sanctuary addition by late October. It also broadcasts recordings of its services over five radio and television stations.

"The bivocational ministers I've talked to would not be doing anything else. ... They feel there's more freedom to do things they feel the Lord wants them to do."

Mike O'Neal, coordinator of Campbellsville University's Center for Bivocational Ministry

Kentucky literacy mission opportunities abound

Continued from page 1

nition for two Kentucky literacy workers.

Helen Wilson, a member of Baptist Tabernacle in Louisville, received the D.M. Aldridge Award as the outstanding English as a second language teacher.

Tony Hough, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's extension ministries department, received the Lillian Isaacs Award as outstanding adult reading and writing teacher of the year.

Kendale Moore, a Southern Baptist literacy missionary with the North American Mission Board and a Louisville native, was the keynote speaker at the weekend event. Moore and Patches Roe, president of the NAMB credit union, lead conferences for literacy missions volunteers.

Though not all are actively involved in a literacy ministry, more than 300 Kentuckians have been trained to teach literacy skills, Carnell said.

Churches must be involved in literacy because reading and understanding the Bible is crucial to learning about the God who loves us, said Carnell.

"The Bible is God's love letter to you and me," said Carnell. "How many of (us) have received a love letter? Would we want someone to read it to us?"

Carnell's hope is that literacy ministries will improve the social, economic and spiritual health of students. Last year literacy missions in Kentucky resulted in 146 professions of faith and the establishment of a church, she said.

"It's a wonderful way to reach out to people who are not Christians," said Gracie Erwin, an ESL instructor from Murray. "We're teaching them something they need and the opportunity is just there."

The efforts of ESL volunteers like Clopton and Erwin are made easier by the enthusiastic response of prospective students. Clopton noted that many of her students attend classes and services despite long, tiring days working in fields.

ESL students "need English so badly that they'll come whenever you offer it," Carnell said.

That type of enthusiastic response might be why ESL classes are the most popular type of literacy ministry offered in Kentucky. Carnell is aware of 27 ESL ministries across the state, compared with just 10 adult reading and writing and four tutoring children and youth ministries.

Adult reading and writing ministries have a harder time finding and keeping students, Carnell said. "It must be handled differently," she said, noting that illiterate adults often are embarrassed. "You have to find a way

they can come to you without anyone knowing."

The need for ARW is certainly great in Kentucky, according to Carnell. The 1997 Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey revealed that 40 percent of the working age population reads below the high school level, and 14 percent of the population has virtually no literacy skills.

That often translates into literacy problems for the next generation and points to a need to provide tutoring for children and youth.

Doris Slaten, Baptist Center coordinator for Daviess-McLean Baptist Association, is preparing for the second year of an after-school tutoring program. Approximately 20 volunteers, many of them retired schoolteachers, have signed on to give one-on-one reading, math and homework help to students.

One local elementary school already has signed up 10 students, and Slaten expects a similar number from another school.

While it's too early to tell what kind of impact the tutoring has had, Slaten said he hopes the children see the love of Jesus through the care and attention of the volunteers.

"The volunteers are really excited," Slaten said, referring to a recent orientation meeting. "I've never heard such laughing and cutting up. I have high hopes for this year."

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **Award-winning author to speak at Cumberland.** Scott Russell Sanders, whose latest book, "The Force of Science," addresses the relationship among people, nature, social justice and science, will speak in Gatliff Chapel at Cumberland College Oct. 9 at 7:30 p.m. Sanders is an English professor at Indiana University.

■ **Homes for children schedules open house.** Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's Dixon Center in Webster County will host an open house on Oct. 7, beginning at 10 a.m. Guests are asked to call toll-free (800) 456-1386 by Sept. 30 to register for a complimentary lunch.

■ **Adoption orientation announced.** Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's pregnancy and adoption services will host a free adoption orientation Sept. 29 at 7 p.m. at Immanuel Baptist Church in Pikeville. To register, call (800) 928-5242.

■ **Campbellsville to host Larnelle Harris.** Campbellsville University and the Western Recorder are co-hosting Christian recording artist Larnelle Harris in a benefit concert for the Campbellsville University scholarship fund. The concert will be Oct. 13. Tickets are \$10 in advance; \$12.50 at the door. Call toll-free (800) 264-6014, ext. 5216 or (270) 789-5216.

■ **Campbellsville University televised.** Campbellsville University's low-power television station, WO4BP/TV-4, will air at least five regular weekly programs during the fall semester: Campbellsville University Today; Your Community; What's Cooking, Neighbor?; The Coach Ron Finley Show and the University's Convocation Series. For information, call Bryan Blair, director of broadcast services at (270) 789-5210 or e-mail bblair@campbellsvil.edu.

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Helpful translations

In a recent issue, a writer was concerned about the King James Version of the Bible not being used in Baptist Sunday school material. I certainly agree that the language used in that version is beautiful English, particularly in the Psalms. I realize many of the Bible verses I have learned I quote in the KJV.

While I would not want to do away with this translation, I believe that several more recent translations make it easier for many of us to understand the Scriptures and feel that they really speak to us today.

I recall that when the Revised Standard Version was published, at least one Baptist preacher burned a page of it during a worship service to show his feelings for it. We've heard the story of the old saint who said that if the KJV was good enough for Paul and Silas, it was good enough for him.

I would hope we've gotten past all that. The fact that the majority of congregations apparently accept a modern translation in Sunday school literature indicates we are at least making steps in that direction.

It might be interesting to reflect that the translators of the KJV surely were members of the established Church of England. That is the very church that was persecuting dissenters or non-conformists, including Baptists, at that time. Fortunately the two groups are more congenial today.

Also, the KJV was not the first English Bible. Some, including the early New England settlers, preferred earlier translations such as Tyndale and Geneva.

Would it not be a simple matter, however, if the writer who opposed other versions would simply ask his members to use their KJV as they

study their lessons?

And, as far as his concern that some churches might turn to literature of other denominations and be influenced by their doctrines, hasn't that already happened?

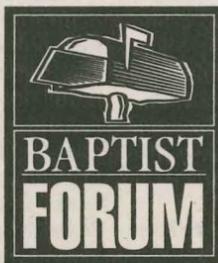
Jon Whitfield
Brandenburg

WMU's vital role

Terri Dowell Ussery is correct in saying that Woman's Missionary Union and women's ministry groups can co-exist. Churches certainly should be providing "entry points for women who are new believers or who come from another denomination," as she states, and WMU should and does support such programs.

The "Mary and Martha" example, however, is too simplistic, since involvement in ministry or "doing missions" is just one of the five "tasks" of WMU, but a very important one. Annie Armstrong, the first corresponding secretary of national WMU, said it best: "After the study of God's word comes study of the fields. Then people pray, then they give." That is the reason another important "task" of WMU is "learn about missions." Others are "pray for and give to missions," "develop spiritually toward a missions lifestyle" and "participate in the work of the church." To fail to do any of these five tasks is to fail Him who charged us to take the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and all the world.

During the more than 30 years my husband and I were on a foreign mission field, we were encouraged by the support we received from WMU. Their prayer support was especially important because we knew they had studied about missions and understood something of the problems we faced.



We knew they would support mission offerings in their churches and they provided missions education for our daughters through Mission Friends and GAS, even in a foreign language.

Catherine Allen in her 1987 book, "A Century to Celebrate," said, "Before WMU arrived on the Southern Baptist scene, people knew little about the subject of missions. No wonder the missionaries were few (and) the mission boards impoverished. ..." Let's not go back to those days, no matter what the organization is called.

June McNeely
Louisville

Spiritual heritage

In a paragraph printed in a Sept. 5 article about recent inductees into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, a brief resume of the Fisk Jubilee Singers stated that they preserved "slave songs."

It is well known and understood that a peculiar institution known as slavery existed in this great republic. However, let me hasten to state that the music of an oppressed people is known as "spirituals."

The beauty and simplicity of these spirituals are known, loved and sung worldwide and I am somewhat disturbed by the phrase "slave songs" attributed to a world-famous organization, the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

I hope that the phrase "slave songs" will not appear in any future articles. The publication is greatly enjoyed; keep up the good work.

Walter Bradley Jr.
Lexington

Editor's note: Paul Kwami, director of the Fisk University Jubilee Singers, in Nashville, said that while he prefers the term "negro spiritual," the term "slave song" is acceptable to "throw more light on the type of music that is performed."

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Prayer is timeless

Kay and I are sailing through uncharted waters with our daughter, Beth, who is expecting our first grandchild Dec. 7. The baby's name is Lillian Grace.

Since Beth and her husband, Bartley, are attending Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and living in Louisville, Kay has been able to accompany Beth on some visits to the doctor. She has enjoyed window shopping and purchasing baby clothes and other supplies. She also has assisted Beth with various tasks and has prepared an occasional meal.

My role, however, had been one of observation and encouragement, with an occasional question, until a recent late-night touch of the Holy Spirit. Suddenly thoughts of Lillian Grace were flooding my mind. Having viewed the ultrasound, I could picture her in my mind. I felt impressed of God to pray for her

growth in her mother's womb, her safe delivery and wholeness. God also impressed me to pray for the stages of her early development, her first day of school and the long educational journey to follow.



Bill Mackey

My prayers then turned to the many influences there will be on her life and on the time I believe will come when she will see the need to ask Christ to become her Savior. I prayed about special concerns for her middle school and teen years.

I also prayed for her future spouse and that his life will be shaped by Christian nurture and values. My prayers for Lillian Grace to become a godly woman then progressed through what I hope will be an abundant life as I reflected alternately upon her spiritual need to trust Jesus and upon my godly mother, grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

It proved to be an emotional night

as God not only led me to pray for Lillian but to begin writing prayers for the stages of her development and anticipated life experiences. I wrote in the initial letter that God had given her Christian parents who will teach her the Scriptures and provide godly counsel, guidance and prayer support. I said I felt called to write these prayers, however, because no one could pray her grandfather's prayers for her except her grandfather.

The reality is that I may not be around to pray for her at all the crucial times in her journey. But I can pray now. Because God is eternal He can utilize our prayers in a timeless and appropriate way.

The praying did not begin too soon. The doctor has discovered a perplexing lining across the uterus that could prevent full-term development.

Please include Lillian and her mother in your prayers, as well as all expectant mothers and their developing children. Pray, too, for godly parents who will provide a living legacy of Christian homes.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

New stewardship resources offer practical help

By Doug Strader

Church Stewardship Services at LifeWay Christian Resources recently introduced two new resources that can be helpful to our churches.

Many pastors, ministers of education and other church leaders always are looking for new materials to stimulate the stewardship education process among their members.

The new resources are "Jesus on Money" and "Money in Marriage: A Biblical Approach" by Larry Burkett.

"Jesus on Money" is divided into three books, each containing a six-week interactive study designed for individual study, with a group meeting at the end of each week's study. The three six-week studies are "Charting a New Course," "Making Mid-Course Corrections" and "Crossing the Finish Line." A leader's guidebook also is included with the set.

The Bible is very practical in its teachings about money and how to handle it. Jesus taught that we must be successful stewards of our possessions if we are to be trusted with greater responsibility in God's work. "Jesus on Money" deals with down-to-earth, real-life issues that relate to living the Christian life as a good steward.

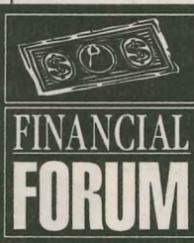
Marriage counselors remind us that most of the marriage break-ups in America are caused in part by money matters. We also know according to statistics that individual and family bankruptcies are at an all-time high. Most couples who enter into marriage have very little guidance in money matters.

"Money in Marriage: A Biblical Approach" can help address the above mentioned problems. In this six-session study, participants will look at the basic biblical principles of managing money in marriage. The material includes a CD-ROM that has all the forms necessary to create a family budget.

This study also can help your church provide marriage-counseling resources in the area of communication and personal finance by helping families study the biblical message of personal finance.

Both of these products can be purchased through LifeWay Christian Resources and LifeWay Christian Book Stores.

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



How can parents encourage teens' spiritual development?

Q: What can I do to get my teenagers more interested in spiritual growth? They both make good grades and are active in music and sports, but church is just a chore for them. My own teenage years were filled with youth group activities, a wonderful youth choir and summer trips to Ridgecrest, but my kids only go when forced. I feel like they are missing so much.

Church played a larger role in the social life of youth in generations past. There was not the competition from movie complexes, Sunday sports activities and the Internet. They have their social needs met in other pastimes. However, their spiritual needs are going unmet. If traditional activities are not their thing, try something new.

What about a family mission trip? Your family could join other families on a mission to another state or country. Have you talked to them about local service projects? Will they go to feed the hungry, visit the sick or help the homeless? Give a cup of cold water in Jesus' name.

Are they related to other church kids in their music, school and sports activities? Perhaps they could attend a Fellowship of Christian Athletes club at school or be in a Christian musical presentation. What about sponsoring a new group if none exists?

Have you talked to the people in charge of youth activities at your church? Are the options meaningful? Do they have suggestions for involving your kids?

Finally, what are you doing at home to activate spiritual growth? Do you discuss God, prayer, faith, hope, love and the fruit of the Spirit? What do they believe and not believe about these issues? Ask and listen. Guide with questions, not long lectures. Do not push too hard, but make it pleasant conversation. Of course, pray for their spiritual development and let the Spirit work in their lives. Be ready when they open doors of opportunity and windows of doubt.—*Wade Rowatt*

Q: I usually sleep six or seven hours a night, but recently I wake up several times during the night and have a hard time going back to sleep. Any suggestions on how I can get back to sleeping well?

First have your family doctor check for causes. Then, he or she may refer you to a sleep evaluation clinic for further testing. As we get older, one of the most noticeable changes for many people is an often major disruption of the daily sleep-wake cycle. Nearly four out of 10 older people seek help about sleep problems, including disturbed or light sleep, frequent awakenings, early-morning awakenings and unwanted daytime sleepiness. These sleep disturbances can make it difficult to function during the day and can interfere seriously with a person's quality of life.

The following is a summary of information from studies done on sleep disturbances in older adults:

- Even healthy older people have sleep patterns that are disturbed compared to those of healthy younger adults.
- Sleep changes caused by age can be affected by many factors such as sleep disturbances as a side effect of physical or mental illness, primary sleep disorders and poor sleep hygiene.
- Successful treatment of a sleep disturbance depends on correctly identifying the cause or causes, and carefully tailoring treatment accordingly.
- Use of sleeping pills for long-term sleep disturbance is not recommended, and their use by older adults has significantly more risks.
- Behavior techniques have proven successful in treating insomnia in older people.—*Jon Rainbow*

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; 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.



Voluntary cooperation is a two-way street

"Autonomy" and "cooperation" are among the most "Baptist" words around. Without local church autonomy and voluntary cooperation, there would be no Southern Baptist Convention as we know it.

While rejecting any form of denominational hierarchy, Southern Baptists have rallied around the principle of voluntary cooperation for decades, especially through financial support of the Cooperative Program.

Now prominent leaders in Baptist life warn that the denomination's historic commitment to cooperation is in jeopardy. The problem is that various Baptist leaders have opposing views about who is to blame.

SBC leaders insist that leaders of the Baptist General Convention of Texas are the culprits. They claim that a proposed Texas Baptist funding plan that would redirect more than \$5 million annually away from SBC entities is a "unilateral breach" of the BGCT's 75-year funding partnership agreement with the SBC. Convention leaders further charge that "such a proposal effectively destroys the Cooperative Program process between the BGCT and the Southern Baptist Convention and sets a dangerous precedent in our larger Southern Baptist work."

Texas Baptist leaders have a significantly different perspective. They say some SBC entities no longer deserve the same level of financial support because the agencies have shifted theologically and philosophically over the past 20 years. A Texas Baptist study committee reported that the selection of Southern Baptist seminary trustees "has been narrowed to no longer represent the broad spectrum of Southern Baptist thought and belief."

Who's right and who's wrong? As in most complex conflicts, there are nuggets of truth and needless accusations on both sides.

On the SBC side, Executive Committee President Morris Chapman said the BGCT "is systematically attempting to influence Southern Baptist churches in Texas to forsake their loyalty to the SBC." He added that its plan is a "travesty and miscarriage of cooperation."

By contrast, BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade declared, "Our actions demonstrate that we are committed to preserving the independence of Texas

Baptists to believe as historic Baptists always have believed. ... We honor the freedom of each church to give according to its convictions."

The conflict hinges on the definition of voluntary cooperation.

According to a statement released by the six SBC seminary presidents, "The Cooperative Program is an agreement between the SBC and the state conventions. No state convention has the right to redefine this agreement unilaterally."

"The Cooperative Program is not just a program," noted SBC President James Merritt. "It's a spirit. It's an attitude. It's as simple as ABC—All Baptists Cooperate."

Not so, Texas Baptist leaders respond. They point out that the majority of Texas Baptists elected and appointed last year to SBC boards and committees are affiliated with the new conservative Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, making that group 10 times more likely to be represented than churches affiliated with the BGCT.

If "all Baptists cooperate," they reason, why have current SBC leaders narrowed the definition of what it means to be a cooperating Southern Baptist—at least in terms of who

can serve in positions of denominational leadership? "No taxation without representation" has become a familiar cry among disgruntled Texas Baptists.

The fact is that every Southern Baptist entity—whether local church, state convention or national convention—has the right to determine its level of cooperation with any other entity. Voluntary cooperation is just that—voluntary. Anything less smacks of hierarchy and coercion.

If SBC leaders expect unwavering financial support for convention causes, they should expand denominational appointments and nominations to encompass diverse Southern Baptist views. If Texas Baptists choose to withhold millions of dollars in SBC support, they should openly acknowledge that their action is a radical departure from the Cooperative Program's historic intent.

While both groups have the right to do as they choose, if authentic Baptist cooperation is to be salvaged, it must be a two-way street.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Technology is vital ministry tool

By Cathy Heberer

"How can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard?" (Romans 10:14b)

Imagine it: one unit in your home that handles all your communication. Your mail, your phone, your fax, your computer and your television are all one piece of technology. You are able to access any information, any entertainment from anywhere in the world, at any time of day or night. It's coming; some say in as soon as three to five years.

As Christians, we have the most vital message of all to communicate, but with budget constraints and limited staff, how can our churches keep up with communications technology? Developing a quality media ministry is key to communicating our message and remaining a visible and viable part of our culture. It used to be that media ministry meant television broadcast. Not so today. If you have a sound system, a VCR and lights—well, you've got a media ministry on your hands.

Throw in a computer and Internet access and you're really cooking.

■ **Creativity.** This is your greatest media tool. Be adventurous and try something new. For instance, with a Motion Picture Umbrella License, you can legally use clips of movies as a sermon illustration or to illustrate a theme.

For more information about the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation, check out its Web site at www.mplc.com.

■ **Laity.** There probably are at least two or three camera buffs in your church. There probably are a couple of computer experts, too. Use them.

The average consumer has access to a variety of technologies.

■ **Funding.** Communications technology is getting cheaper all the time. Don't be afraid to borrow money for start-up capital. Make any loans short-term, though. You don't want to find yourself needing a major upgrade while you are still paying for the equipment. Also, consider leasing options. It may serve you better to budget a "technology expense" every year to pay for a lease that will allow you to

upgrade equipment every three years rather than purchasing new equipment every five years. Get several bids and make sure you've asked thorough questions so hidden costs don't surprise you.

■ **Quality.** We are surrounded by good production and high-budget pieces. Make quality production a priority since people's expectations are high and competition for their attention is even higher.

■ **Freebies.** There are plenty of freebies on the Internet. Every congregation should be able to have a Web site. It's cheap or even free, and since the Internet is the yellow pages of young professionals, you want to be found there. The best freebie is consultation from the Kentucky Baptist communications/media department—free advice and assistance is available for every Baptist church, thanks to the Cooperative Program.

■ **Look to the future.** Technology and consumer expectations change so quickly today that it is important that Kentucky Baptists pay attention and stay in the game. Otherwise, we will find that we have failed to communicate the most important message of all.

Cathy Heberer is director of media ministries for Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville.



BAPTISTS

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Evansville hosts IMB service.** More than 40 candidates for international missions service will be appointed Sept. 26 in Evansville, Ind., by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. The commissioning service will be at 7 p.m. at The Centre, a convention center in Evansville. A 5 p.m. "Global Walkaround" will precede the service, providing participants an opportunity to view missions exhibits and talk with missionaries.

■ **Boyce sponsors youth conference.** Boyce College's National Center for Youth Ministry will host the second annual Youth Ministry Emphasis Week on Boyce's Louisville campus this week. Boyce College is the undergraduate program for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. A group of 25 to 30 youth pastors, leaders and professionals will provide evaluation and feedback of the youth ministry curriculum and programs at Boyce. They will discuss youth ministry issues in classes open to the public Sept. 26-29 at 1 p.m. and Sept. 28-29 at 11:30 a.m. For more information call (502) 897-4207.

■ **LifeWay offers Internet safety kits.** A free resource kit with materials for churches to plan and conduct an Internet safety seminar is available from LifeWayonline in conjunction with Children's Internet Safety Month. LifeWayonline is the filtered Internet service of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. The United States Congress designated October as Children's Internet Safety Month. Thirty-seven state attorneys general have backed the resolution. The Internet Safety Program includes a seminar, videos, safety guides, a step-by-step manual and other materials. The free resource kit is available by calling toll free (888) 408-5580 or by e-mail at pointclickprotect@lwol.com.

Tornadoes hit two Baptist churches in Ohio

XENIA, Ohio (BP)—Two tornadoes tore through a small town in Ohio Sept. 20, killing one person and injuring 145 others, including members of two Southern Baptist churches.

One twister struck Xenia, Ohio, about 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, leaving a two-mile path of destroyed buildings, flipped cars and ripped-down power lines. One person died when a tree crushed a car near the Greene County fairgrounds, Sheriff Jerry Erwin reported.

The twister also destroyed the facilities of Dayton Avenue Baptist Church and Arrowbrook Baptist Church. Keith Jordan, director of church development in nearby Dayton, Ohio, said both sanctuaries were destroyed and the entire roof of the Dayton Avenue facility was blown away.

The tornado hit just as worshippers were holding their weekly prayer meeting. Johnny Tallent, pastor of Arrowbrook Baptist, said he heard the tornado approaching the church.

"First the lights went off," Tallent said. "And then we heard a freight train sound. The folks knew what was coming next."

Tallent tried to lead church members to the basement, but they were caught in a hallway when the storm hit.

"We huddled in the hall and laid on top of each other so we wouldn't get hurt," Tallent said. However, two members of the church were injured when the stained glass windows broke, sending shards of glass into the crowded hallway.

Among those injured were Tallent's wife, and a church deacon. Both

were treated and released from a local hospital.

A spokesman for Miami Valley Hospital said it treated 15 people for injuries including broken bones, head injuries and cuts from flying debris. One woman was reported in critical condition.

Greene Memorial Hospital in Xenia said it treated 100 people, including six people admitted to the hospital.

At Dayton Avenue Baptist Church, Ruby Godfrey said worshippers dove under pews when the storm hit.

"You heard the roar," Godfrey said. "You saw the roof flying off and then it was gone." At least one person at the church was seriously injured.

The second tornado left about a dozen homes damaged or destroyed when it hit Harlem Township, Ohio, around 8:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Funds approved to begin Ridgecrest revitalization

NASHVILLE (BP)—Trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a record operating budget for 2000-01, approved major capital expenditures and reviewed plans for the first phase of building construction in revitalizing LifeWay's conference centers.

The operating budget of \$418,895,000 was approved along with fixed assets expenditures of \$40,330,000.

Major fixed assets expenditures include funding of new information software systems to enable LifeWay Chris-

tian Stores to more effectively serve customers, furnishings for a renovated area of the Nashville complex and the first year of construction on a hotel and conference facility at Ridgecrest, N.C.

Reporting on the first building project in a 15-year revitalization plan for LifeWay's national conference centers at Glorieta, N.M., and Ridgecrest, Michael Arrington, vice president of LifeWay's corporate affairs division, said the goal is "to spiritually transform lives in increasing numbers" and to lead the centers "to become the premier Christian conference centers in America."

Step one of construction at Ridgecrest will begin with an investment of \$8.5 million during fiscal years 2001 and 2002, for a 120-room hotel, conference space for 1,200 people and 100 additional parking spaces. Conference space will include an amphitheater, classrooms and a large assembly room with seating for approximately 900 people.

Trustees also received a report changing the name of National Student Ministry to National Collegiate Ministry to better communicate the target group of single, undergraduate and 18- to 27-year-old collegians.



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All of the events are open to the public and are free-of-charge. Seating is limited for the Pastor Appreciation Day Luncheon and Pastor's Wives Luncheon.

For Luncheon reservations please call the Office of the President at (502) 897-4121.



Dr. James Merritt
Oct. 10



Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
Oct. 11



Dr. O. S. Hawkins
Oct. 12



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Will humans use gene mapping to understand God or play God?

Theologians & ethicists ask, What will happen to the weak, handicapped and mentally challenged in a world where science might be able to create taller, smarter humans free from genetic defects?

By David Briggs
Cleveland Plain Dealer

CLEVELAND (RNS)—On the sixth day, the Bible says, God made man.

Today, scientists say, they have put together a book of life roughly mapping out how God accomplished that miracle.

By cracking the human genetic code, however, the line between knowing God and playing God is radically altered. For the first time in human history, scientists can look down

the road to the possibility of creating human beings in their own image, rather than the image of God.

Not since Charles Darwin's theories of evolution, which led to the fundamentalist-modernist

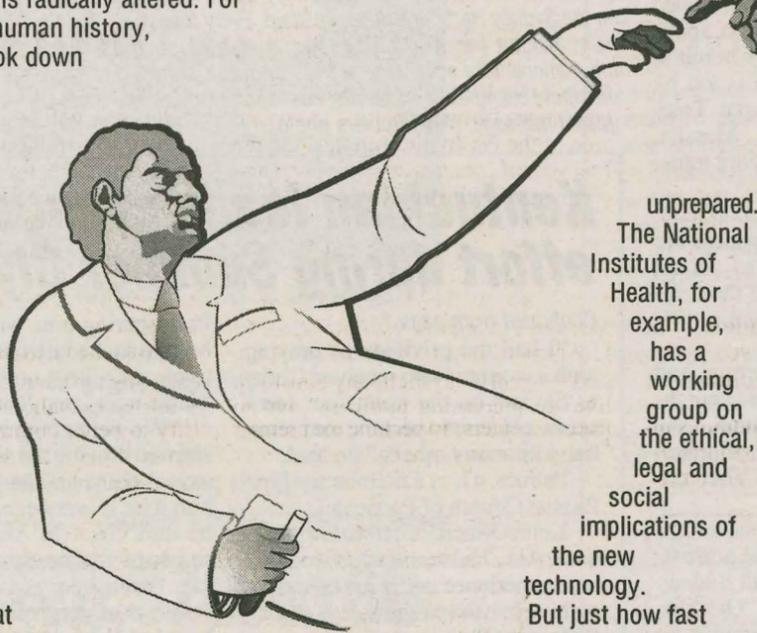
controversies that swept across the 20th century, has there been a moment in time so rife with the possibilities of tension between religion and science.

"This is a crossroads moment for the human community," said Marvin McMickle of Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland. "What I hope we don't do is have a knee-jerk reaction that we have a great ill simply because we have the information. ... If God let us have the knowledge, He's trusting us to make good use of it."

Yet who will make ethical decisions in this brave new world troubles theologians such as McMickle, as well as ethicists and scientists. What will happen to the weak, the handicapped and the mentally challenged in a world where science may be able to create taller, smarter human beings free of genetic defects?

Anyone who does not hear the warning of C.S. Lewis' "The Abolition of Man" or Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World"—two works from the first half of the 20th century that foreshadowed the ominous possibilities of genetic engineering—"just doesn't understand the historical crossroads we find ourselves at," said Richard Neuhaus, director of the Institute on Religion and Public Life in New York.

The discovery of the rough map did not find scientists and theologians



unprepared. The National Institutes of Health, for example, has a working group on the ethical, legal and social implications of the new technology.

But just how fast developments arise was shown earlier this month, when the British government moved to ease a ban on human cloning, drawing immediate criticism from the Vatican that it was a dangerous field to enter.

At the heart of Judeo-Christian theology is the belief that the Creator made human beings in God's own image and gave them the ability to understand the divine will and the freedom to embrace or reject what is good.

But what does the biblical uniqueness of humanity mean now that scientists have discovered human beings and fruit flies share roughly 90 percent of the same genetic material, or that individuals have only the slightest genetic differences from one another?

In a 1994 national poll, 75 percent of respondents said salvation was important to them as a personal goal or guiding principle in their lives. How will traditional beliefs in eternal life offered by a loving God be affected if science over the next century can pinpoint how human beings arise from a single cell, function over a lifetime and die?

Against dire forecasts of genetic determinism, a lot of caution is in order, says nearly everyone involved with the Human Genome Project.

Government and commercial scientists

recently finished the monumental, decade-long task of mapping where those 50,000 or more genes lie. Now they are trying to figure out what each gene does, how they work together and how to fix the defective ones. Even the two groups that have come up with the basic code differ in their estimates of the more than 3 billion letters of DNA making up the genome by about 30 million letters.

The more fantastic scenarios of taking the gene map and genetically engineering human beings could be a century away, if such prospects ever come to pass.

"It's a little bit like having a rough map of the globe of the Earth. It doesn't let you get too easily from Shaker Heights (in Cleveland) to downtown Philadelphia," said Arthur Caplan, bioethicist at the University of Pennsylvania.

Just how rough the ethical terrain can be was demonstrated last week when Caplan, one of the nation's most prominent ethicists on bioethical issues, was named as defendant in a lawsuit filed by the parents of a young man who died during a gene therapy experiment. Caplan allegedly provided ethical advice during the planning stages of the experiment.

Even with the gene map, it might take decades before the human life span can be lengthened to 90 to 95 years, or that this information can be used to provide cures for cancers or diseases such as cystic fibrosis.

In the ethical realm, what is of more immediate concern is whether genetic information that already can predict Huntington's disease and other ills for which there are no cures can be kept private from insurers and potential employers.

Several states have passed legislation prohibiting health insurers from canceling or limiting benefits based on genetic screening or testing, but while several bills have been proposed, there is no comprehensive federal law protecting genetic privacy.

Down the road, particularly in an area where private companies are funding much of the research, there are also questions over whether the technology will be used to benefit humankind by eliminating diseases in the Third World or

whether resources will be devoted to potentially more profitable areas such as giving affluent children a step up in height and brainpower.

The Roman Catholic Church "is in favor of any advance that is therapeutic in nature," but would tend to view as "frivolous" resources devoted to cosmetic enhancements, said David Byers, staff member of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee on Science and Human Values.

Some theologians fear that it's not about the ethics in a climate where billions can be made in genetic manipulation.

"Let's get real about this and follow the money," said Neuhaus, also the editor of the intellectual journal *First Things*.

If genetic decisions are informed by compassion and a desire to cure diseases such as AIDS, this can be a great moment in human history, McMickle said.

Or Orwell could be right.

"In the wrong hands," McMickle said, "will this be a step in the breeding process where you're not breeding out diseases, but you're breeding out undesirables?"

Donald Dunson, a moral theologian at St. Mary Seminary in Wickliffe, Ohio, said "what scares the pants off me" is the prospect of using the technology to create what will be thought of as genetically superior human beings.

There is the danger, Dunson said, of forgetting the inherent dignity of human life, and cutting the ties that bind humanity to the weak and the vulnerable.

If self-sacrificing love is at the apex of humanity, one can see the value of treating every human being with equal dignity, he said.

But if the debate is viewed in purely utilitarian terms, individuals who do not measure up genetically could face discrimination, ethicists said.

George Murphy, who has a doctorate in physics and teaches on science and theology at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, said the development of genetic technology has the same potential for good and evil as nuclear energy, and should not be viewed either in utopian or demonic terms.

But now is the time to start talking about the ethical issues, even if much of it must be in the realm of controlled speculation, he said.

When the time comes, Murphy said, "We are not going to be able to get our ethics from our genetic knowledge."

Illustration by Dora Stanef-Cline

Tokyo Baptists at Olympics to reach fellow Japanese

By Jenny Rogers
SBC International Mission Board

WINDSOR, Australia (BP)—Kickboxing champ "Bazooka" Kishi Nami, tennis great Michael Chang, Micki McKenzie and Arthur Revere are all athletes Japanese revere.

And they're all aiming for a higher prize than gold medals: their personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

So are 11 members of Tokyo Baptist Church, who have spent the past two weeks in Sydney, sharing the gospel with visitors to the Olympics—primarily hard-to-reach Japanese.

The volunteers, at the Olympics with the outreach ministry "Quest Australia," handed out tracts and special Japanese-English New Testaments.

Formatted especially for the Olympics, the Bibles include the Christian testimonies of four world-class athletes Japanese recognize. With Japan's evangelical population at less than 1 percent, there is much work to be done. Overwhelmingly Buddhist and Shinto, the Japanese boast a higher standard of living than most countries—and one of the highest suicide rates as well.

Why? Because they need Jesus, say the volunteers from Tokyo Baptist Church. And at the Olympics, with people from all over the world gathered to meet and talk, these Japanese Baptists are ready to share the Savior.

The volunteers are staying, along with more than 500 other internationals, at Windsor District Baptist Church's "Tent City"—a housing facility designed and built by Australian Baptists for Olympic volunteers. The Tent City is located about an hour's drive from downtown Sydney.

"This is a great way to evangelize with the different nationalities here (for the Olympics) and living in Australia," said volunteer Ferdinand Catibay, a Filipino member of a Tokyo church. But it hasn't been easy.

"When we first came, we were disillusioned because of the many restrictions on what you can do," Catibay said. "But then we remembered (the

apostle) Paul at Philippi and how they tried to keep him from preaching—but so many came to Christ. Likewise, if the Lord called us to be here, we have to do it. He will lead us and tell us where to go and how to approach people."

Catibay said he has seen many people, Japanese and others, come to Christ in Sydney, including children, Hindus and entire families.

Kenji Miwa, a member of Gideons International in Tokyo, came to Sydney to share with others the freedom in Christ he found during World War II. An American soldier gave Miwa a Japanese Bible, and he invited Jesus into his heart.

"God gives us good things," he said. "Even in the middle of something as terrible as war, He still finds a way."

The volunteers sang and preached at a Japanese-English church sponsored by Northside Baptist Church in North Sydney. The church is led by Southern Baptist missionary Tony Woods. He and his wife, Marsha, served in Japan 20 years before transferring to Australia.

"We loved Japan," Woods said. "But we also found that Japanese are seven times more likely to accept Christ outside of Japan than those inside, mainly because of factors like culture and spiritism."

When they saw the potential and growth in Australian Japanese churches, the Woodses were intrigued. "We had to decide: Are we called to the Japanese, or to Japan?" he said. Their decision: the Japanese.

Two years later, the Woodses are witnessing growth among the normally resistant Japanese in North Sydney and elsewhere in Australia. "Our idea is to reach Japanese communities all over Australia and eventually around the world," he said.

Like "Bazooka" Kishi Nami, the Japanese Baptists long to see the people know the truth he proclaimed as All-Japan welterweight champion in 1972: "God is the only champion, and His Son, Jesus Christ, can save you from sin."



SPIRIT OF THE OLYMPICS The Sydney Opera House is illuminated as the Olympic rings on the Sydney Harbour Bridge are lit up. Every four years, the Olympic Games draw fans from around the world. Christian ministries such as Quest Australia and Action International take advantage of the worldwide gathering to share the gospel. Volunteers distribute evangelistic materials, host sports camps and trade Olympic-style pins with a gospel message. (RNS/Reuters photo)

Kentuckian leads evangelism effort during Summer Olympic

Continued from page 1

"I had the privilege of praying with a woman (who received Christ as Savior) on the train, four teenagers and three vendors, and sharing with many others," he said.

Palmer, 41, is a member of First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Keith Gilbert, 35, from Birmingham, Ala., had some street evangelism experience under his belt—but nothing like the past few days among Sydney's Olympic crowd.

"Here you've got a good tool, because people want pins," he said. "It's opened my eyes to people who don't even know (about Jesus). They don't even know the real reason we celebrate Christmas and Easter."

Gilbert spent several days in Sydney's Darling Harbour and Olympic

Park sharing pins with people. But he said he hadn't seen anyone pray to receive Christ until he met a man on the train from Windsor.

"We were going into town, and I showed him the pin and told him the story behind it," he said. "I asked him if he'd ever heard the story, and he said, 'No.' In America you ask someone that question, and they'll say, 'Yeah, but ...' I know there are statistics of people who have never heard of Jesus, but you've never sitting two feet away from them and can touch them, it's very eye-opening. They're people, not a statistic."

The man wanted to accept Christ, and they prayed together right there on the train.

And that, say Action volunteers, is the whole idea.

Southern Baptist missionaries to Uganda escape bandits' ambush, shots

By Brittany Jarvis
SBC International Mission Board

KARAMOJA, Uganda (BP)—A Southern Baptist missionary family in Uganda escaped death Sept. 9 after bandits pumped bullets into their car during an ambush attempt.

Larry and Terry Singletary, missionaries from Texas, were driving with their children outside Karamoja, Uganda.

Andy, 19, and Jackie, 15, were in the back seat singing "God is good, all the time!" with their parents when a tribal warrior stepped from the tall grass alongside the road, according to Mrs. Singletary.

The warrior quickly retreated into the grass, then reappeared, aiming an AK-47 automatic weapon at the car. Another armed man appeared on the other side of the road.

"I knew we were in an ambush," Mrs. Singletary said.

The warrior began firing in front of the missionaries' car, she said. Singletary jammed the gearshift into reverse and swung the car around as his family ducked between the seats. Three bullets pierced the car and entered the vehicle.

"One went in through the roof and hit between Jackie and Andy in the back seats," Mrs. Singletary said. "One shattered the window on Andy's side. We're not sure about the other." A piece of shrapnel hit Jackie's back, but Mrs. Singletary said the wound was not serious.

The family sped away for five minutes before a tire blew out, she said. "With fear and trembling we stopped and changed the tire."

Above the chaos and tears, Mrs. Singletary said, 15-year-old Jackie loudly cried out, "They just need Jesus! They just

need Jesus! They live in darkness. They don't understand. ... Oh God, they just need you!"

The family contacted a missionary on the other side of Kenya with their two-way radio. Within minutes, every missionary who had a radio was listening to the Singletarys' story and praying for the family's safety.

God's peace descended on the family and they began to calm down as they continued driving, Mrs. Singletary said. Soon after, another tire blew out.

With no more spare tires or water, the family worried about when another vehicle might venture their way to help. Eventually, a small truck approached, but when the driver saw the stranded car he backed up and turned around. The priest screamed for help, so the driver stopped.

The driver was with a Catholic priest, and assisted the family once they heard

about the ambush. The priest explained they had started to leave because he was ambushed on the same road the week before and he feared the family was luring him into a trap.

The driver took Mrs. Singletary and the children to a nearby town where they had one of the flat tires repaired while Singletary stayed with the car.

Once the tire was fixed, they drove home. Another tire blew out just as they pulled into the driveway.

"We are in the middle of a battle for the heart and soul of this people," Mrs. Singletary said of the incident, and of the Karamojong people they are striving to reach with the gospel.

"The (devil) is throwing a hissy fit," she added. "We all agree that the experience we went through is the reason we are here. It is the sick who need a doctor ... Dr. Jesus."

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More churches recognize needs of single parents

Continued from page 1

encouragement in a bimonthly support group for single mothers. And on Sunday mornings, the men of the church make her son, Joshua, feel special—hugging and holding him before and after services.

Lunde is lucky. Across the country, churches only just now are beginning to explore ways to help single parents.

Once shunned as irresponsible or branded as sinners, single parents as a group are now getting more of the church's attention. With divorce rates as high among the faithful as in the rest of society, and with government championing church initiatives to help mothers on welfare find work, many religious leaders are recasting single parents in a new light. No longer symbols of disintegrating family values, single mothers and their children are now seen as today's version of the widows and orphans of biblical days.

"We see ministry to single parents as a mandate to take care of those in need," said Brenda Armstrong, director of the single parents ministry at Christian Financial Concepts, an evangelical organization based in Gainesville, Ga. "We see this as being obedient to the word of God."

Many churches have come a long way in ministering to all kinds of minority groups, including people with AIDS, but there has been no systematic outreach to single parents.

There's no denying the need. About 26 percent of all families in the United States are headed by single parents, according to census figures. The majority of children with single parents—85 percent—live with their mothers. But while most single mothers work outside the home, their median income in 1998 was only \$18,000 a year, barely above the poverty level.

Traditionally, churches help out in a pinch with emergency funding for a single parent who has lost a job or a home. Now many congregations are launching a range of programs intend-



PRAYER TIME Women pray at the start of Cary (N.C.) Church of God's single mothers' group. (RNS photo)

ed to offer more consistent support.

Some churches are helping single parents with quarterly car care ministries, in which church members perform an oil change or a maintenance check free of charge. Others are starting housing ministries to help single parents repair a washing machine or a broken doorknob. Still others offer help with financial planning.

"The biggest problem single people face is isolation and feeling like they're the only ones this is happening to," said Skippy Clark of Raleigh, who leads one of the single mothers' support groups at Cary Church of God. "We've got to break that cycle. The church is here to help."

But most single parents never find a support group in church, and few even attend services.

According to Armstrong, only 5 percent of single parents go to church regularly.

"Most of them leave the church because their needs aren't met," she said. "They don't want to be known as a needy family. There's an issue of pride. They've been wounded, and it's hard for them to ask for help."

Part of the problem is that single parents require so much help—from finding affordable day care to job training and career development.

Many pastors say they are vaguely aware of those needs but in the past have been reluctant to help simply because they didn't want to appear condescending.

"We didn't want to insult them, so we didn't ask them what they need help with," said Eddie Thompson, pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Apex, N.C. Thompson's church now plans to launch what he called a "full-blown singles ministry" for about 20 single parents in his church.

When they have tried to help, some churches often lumped all singles together. But while singles without children like to eat out or go bowling after services, single parents can't afford it, don't have the energy and need to rush back home.

Single parents who do attend a church with special programs for people like them say faith in God can be a source of strength for many families struggling to understand their lot in life.

"Having our children here, with the Lord, has provided that stability we cannot provide them as a single parent," said Danielle Piccini, a single mother with two children who goes to Cary Church of God. "It gives them men and mentors in the church as guides for them to use so they're not alone."

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Pastor offers insights for making church dreams reality

Four guiding lights at North Star

MARIETTA, Ga.—North Star Church in Marietta, Ga., follows four principles that make up the church's vision statement:

- To see people the same way Jesus sees them: not as they are, but as they can be.

- To accept people as they are.

- To love people too much to leave them as they are.

- To touch people the way Jesus touched people, by meeting their needs.

"We can change the world if we meet the needs of people in this world," Pastor Ike Reighard said, adding that each person's greatest need is to know Jesus as his or her personal Savior.

By Cory Hailey
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Ministry begins with dreaming but can't remain there, a Georgia pastor told church leaders.

Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor of North Star Church in Marietta, Ga., said that once a minister has a dream, more must be done if that dream is to come to fruition.

"Dreams are where you want to end up. Goals are how to get there," Reighard told a recent leadership conference at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Goals are working blueprints, he continued, and every ministry leader needs these to achieve the "artist's rendering" of the fulfilled dream.

While pursuing their dreams, Reighard said, church leaders must remember that God can answer one of four ways:

- *No.* "God's 'no' today is God's 'no' tomorrow and forever," Reighard said.

- *Slow.* Timing is what makes a miracle a miracle, Reighard said, adding that what the world calls a coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.

- *Grow.* Pointing out that this answer comes when someone isn't ready, Reighard asked participants, "Are you ready for answered prayer? Is your life ready?"

- *Go.* When God does answer prayer, Reighard said, the goals kick in, moving a dream from a state of inertia and giving it impetus.

But as important as dreams are, Reighard said, there is only one thing that keeps ministers going through the cycle of birth, death and rebirth of dreams—God's call.

Reighard said God kept him going even after he had seen a dream wither on the vine. Citing Job's trial and Abram's long, frustrating wait for the child that God promised, Reighard said that despite all of these difficulties, God still brought good out of bad.

"From the very least, God is going to be the One to bring the very best," Reighard said.

Reighard was pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Ga., for nearly 20 years when he was asked by Charles Stanley to become pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta's north location.

Making that transition was difficult for Reighard, mainly because it was hard for him to let go of the relationships he'd built at New Hope. "The thought of leaving was impossible for me to get set in my mind," he said.

He said he went to First Atlanta only to realize less than a year later he was not where he was supposed to be. It was one of the most difficult times of his life, he said, but he maintained that "whenever you do the will of God, you never fail. You are not in failure mode. Ask Job."

Other opportunities came, but the toughest moment occurred when New Hope asked him to come back.

"I felt like Dorothy in the 'Wizard of Oz,'" he said. "I'd been to the Emerald City, I'd met the wizard, and I found it wasn't all it was cracked up to be."

As Reighard was trying to sort out what to do, his wife suggested he discover what he would do if she and their two daughters were not around to worry about and to do that. After fasting and praying, Reighard said, he read Genesis 15, containing God's promise to Abram that his seed would be like the stars in the sky.

Reighard said that looking up at the stars he realized he wanted to start a church from scratch. He said that as he found the North Star, God spoke to his heart, telling him to start a church called "North Star."

He said his dream was to have a church that would be the kind of

church Jesus would start. That kind of church would be one doing God's will, including reaching non-Christians, Reighard said.

"If worship is right, evangelism ought to be right," he said. "Doing the will of God is worship, not just when you sing."

The church would also be one that sought to serve, he added.

"If there was a major need in your community, who would people call?" he asked. "If there's a need, they'll call Home Depot. They'll call banks."

Churches, said Reighard, have become "a joke in most of our communities. We've become this cloistered community, and no wonder we don't impact our culture."

Christians need to be Christians more than just on Sunday, Reighard said. "We need to do church every day," he said. "Something's going to have to change or we're going to be in big trouble."

Wedgwood congregation meets to remember shooting victims

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—A year and a day after Larry Gene Ashbrook walked into their sanctuary and opened fire, the people of Wedgwood Baptist Church praised God for His sovereignty and guidance through the ordeal.

The memorial service, Sept. 16 in Wedgwood's sanctuary in Fort Worth, Texas, featured testimonies from the families of the shooting victims and a church-wide prayer for healing and revival.

"Jesus once calmed a storm, but God didn't do that last year," said Tralissa Griffin, whose daughter, Cassie, was killed in the shooting. "He took me in His arms and He held on to me."

Her husband, David, said he was encouraged by the spiritual growth in Wedgwood's youth after the tragedy. "I'm seeing young people sell out to Jesus Christ."

Wedgwood's youth presented a skit intended to be performed the night of the shooting. Called "Take Up Your Cross," the skit portrayed a Christian who had to carry a large wooden cross as a symbol of her faith.

Judy Stegner, whose son, Justin, was also among the seven people killed, spoke of the importance of remembering. "If the world doesn't remember what happened last year and what's happened since," she said, "then they can't see that it never happens again."

Wedgwood pastor Al Meredith said last year's tragedy has been misunderstood.

The problem, he said, is not mental health or the need for more gun control, but spiritual warfare.

"We are in a battle, but the world will never understand how we approach it," Meredith said. "The heart of warfare is worship."

Stan and Stephanie Jones, parents of Kim Jones, a first-year stu-

dent at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary killed by Ashbrook, told of the comfort of God's presence throughout their grief.

"God said, 'Trust me,'" Stan Jones said. "What do you say to God when He says 'Trust me'?"

"God has taught me that it's not the circumstance, it's that He will be there for us," Mrs. Jones said.

The Joneses said a video of Kim's last message to her church in Saudi Arabia, recorded two months prior to her death, is being produced to share the gospel around the world.

Debbie Beckel, whose daughter, Kristi, died the day after the shooting, expressed her growing faith in God's presence "even if the worst happens to us as far as the world is concerned, even if death comes crashing down on us."

Kathy Jo Brown, whose husband, Shawn, was killed in the shooting, expressed similar sentiments.

God "has been faithful to be patient with me when I have doubted," Brown said. "He's left us here, but He hasn't left us alone."

During the service, Wedgwood's choir sang an arrangement of "It Is Well With My Soul" as the congregation viewed a video showing news footage from the aftermath of the tragedy and the victims' funerals.

Meredith said his prayer is that Wedgwood won't always be known only for the shootings. "When people think of Wedgwood, they won't think of the shootings," he said. "They'll think of a place where revival broke out."

Meredith went on to express forgiveness toward the gunman.

"I pray that the day will come when the Ashbrook name is known for peace," he said. "May there be no more casualties from this tragedy."

Looking for 2001 camp counselors

Though summer camps are over, the results and effects of decisions made at camp continue.

We have received e-mails and letters telling of parents who decided to make decisions for Christ as their teenager returned home and shared Christ with them. There are students who are bolder today in their schools because of decisions made this summer at camp.

And there are adults who decided at camp to "get out of the boat" and walk by faith. They have experienced life change and opportunities for ministry like never before. It is an exciting time in the camping ministry at both Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek.

There is much to be done throughout the fall with many events and weekends planned at both campuses. At the same time, we will begin the process of recruiting and interviewing staff for Crossings 2001.

We will be present at Focus 2000 in Louisville to introduce ourselves to students and to answer questions about the ministry of camp. We will conduct interviews throughout the fall with the intention of hiring about 30 folks to minister to those who will at-

tend camp next summer.

We have a variety of positions and responsibilities to fill. Some of the things we are looking for are experience in teaching Bible study, lifeguard certification (or the ability to obtain), the ability and desire to become an alpine tower facilitator/belayer, ski boat and pontoon boat operators, kitchen and grounds help and more. Most importantly, we are looking for folks to work with us who have a passion and love for our Lord and want to communicate that love to teenagers and to the adults who work with them.

If you are interested or know of someone who you think should be interested, please contact us at Jonathan Creek for more information about interviewing and for applications. Our phone number is (270) 354-8355 or you can e-mail us at www.jonathancreek.org.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

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

Habitat for Humanity's founder: Send us more Baptists

By Barbara Denman
Florida Baptist Convention

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—Habitat for Humanity founder Millard Fuller wants more Baptists to get involved in the Christian organization that helps people get out of sub-standard housing.

Both Fuller and Habitat's most famous volunteer, former President Jimmy Carter, are Baptists, but most people involved in Habitat aren't.

"Habitat needs the Baptists," Fuller said recently while in Jacksonville, Fla., during a 101-home building blitz. "We want a stronger Christian influence at the center of what we do."

Fuller said maintaining a religious focus in the organization is "not by accident."

"The four top people with Habitat are Baptists," he said, referring to himself; his wife, Linda; and Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter. All are members of Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, Ga.

Fuller noted that some evangelistic groups like Southern Baptists often relegate so-called social ministries like Habitat to secondary status. But "people are coming to know Christ through this ministry," he asserted.

Not all the 10,000 Habitat volunteers worldwide are Christians, Fuller said. Working alongside unbelievers gives Christians an opportunity to share the gospel in a setting that adds instant credibility, he added.



BAPTISTS WANTED While Habitat for Humanity's top four leaders are Baptists, including President Jimmy Carter (center), founder Millard Fuller said Baptists need a stronger showing among the rank and file workers. Volunteers recently completed their 100,000th home construction project. (Photo by Barbara Denman)

ed. "It's in private conversation as you hammer a nail or pick up a wall."

Publicity generated by volunteer activity often provides other opportunities for witnessing, Fuller said. For example, an estimated 1,600 volunteers building homes in Jacksonville heard Christian references from both Fuller and Carter as they addressed workers over a public-address system. Prayers were voiced both for the workers and new home-

owners and blessings were said at mealtime. Carter also described his faith in an interview with the local newspaper.

"Some Baptists want to know, 'What does this have to do with evangelism?'" Fuller said.

"Jesus said first to love your God and to love your neighbors as much as yourself," he said in answer. "This is loving your neighbors. This is a practical touch of your love in the name of Jesus."

At the end of every Habitat project, homeowners receive a Bible and the home is dedicated to God. "People know that this is a Lord-built house," Fuller said.

The Carters were in Jacksonville as part of the 17th annual Jimmy Carter Work Project, where they spent a week building homes for Habitat.

Carter described revisiting Habitat homes that were built years earlier. "I've never seen graffiti on the house, any broken windows, anyone's lawn not mowed," he said. "They take pride in their houses."

"If I had to pick out one word that would kind of summarize ... Habitat for Humanity, I would say 'blessing,'" Carter said. "It's God's blessing for you and me to come out here and stand and work in the hot sun and to see the smiles of gratification and friendship on an equal basis from the homeowners that we will grow to love."

Habitat now has 2,500 affiliates around the world in 68 countries. Mrs. Fuller predicted that Habitat will complete the next 100,000 homes in five years. Habitat's goal is to "completely eliminate sub-standard housing in the world," she added.

"God has really blessed this ministry," she said. "We knew there was a great need for affordable housing, and when the Carters became involved there was an explosion of growth. It made news around the world."

"This is loving your neighbors. This is a practical touch of your love in the name of Jesus."

Habitat for Humanity founder Millard Fuller

Sumner in Australia

By Robert Dunston

Chuck Sumner, the son of Riley and Liesa Sumner of Lexington, traveled to the other side of the world this past summer with 139 other students to minister in Australia. His assignment took him to Long Reach in Queensland.

Sumner and another summer missionary served as youth interns working with the local Baptist church. Almost every weekday he taught religious education courses in the local public schools. Most every day he also worked in the local youth center where he organized and directed a basketball league.

On Monday and Wednesday evenings he led a Bible study at the church. He enjoyed the one-on-one times with the youth and treasures the relationships he established.

For two weeks during Sumner's time in Australia the local schools had a holiday. Then he led bush missions, a program similar to vacation Bible school. The high point of the two-week program was the final night when parents came to see what their children had learned. The children performed skits, recited Bible verses, sang praise songs and prayed. The program provided a

wonderful witness to the parents.

Many of the youth with whom Sumner worked at the center came from single parent homes or homes where alcohol was abused. The young people told both summer missionaries how much the workers meant to them. The youth also said how sad they were to see them go.

Sumner also had the opportunity to encourage the youth minister with whom he worked. He provided a listening ear and encouraging words and prayers. God used him to strengthen the youth minister's faith and resolve.

Sumner particularly enjoyed learning more about God and His creation as he met and came to know people from a different nation and tradition. He hopes to serve overseas again as a summer missionary.

Sumner is a sophomore majoring in pre-med. After he receives his medical degree, his interest in international missions might well take him overseas for additional ministry. Wherever God leads him, we know he will share his Christian faith.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Touching lives, touching futures

The McDaniel family came to Cornerstone Counseling lost in a sea of pain, anger and loneliness. When Mrs. McDaniel died, she left a devastated husband and two equally hurt daughters.

Dad and the girls weren't communicating very much. They avoided talking about their loss, so the pain never really left them.

Cornerstone Counseling was a place where this family could grieve. Individual counseling addressed the needs of Dad and each of his daughters. Group sessions helped bridge the gap created by this terrible loss. Slowly, the trio began to communicate. They found healing. Because we were there to touch these lives, their futures also are impacted. Having counselors to help this family face their loss with honesty and courage could mean freedom from a lifetime of crippling depression for one or all of them.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children is beginning the "Touching Lives, Touching the Future" campaign in Owensboro. The \$400,000 goal would purchase the site of our KBHC Cornerstone Family Services Center. This facility offers Cornerstone Counseling, family foster care and pregnancy

and adoption services.

When we first began to ponder a facility in Owensboro, we were looking for land on which to build. The Lord provided a better alternative and led us to an existing building that met all of our needs, right down to its location in the city. God is so good. This wouldn't have happened without our dedicated supporters in the Daviess County area who were pounding the pavement.

I am thrilled that the KBHC Cornerstone Family Services Center will mean prospective foster and adoptive parents in the Owensboro/Daviess County area won't have to drive out of town for orientation and training. It is my prayer that the center will bring support and assistance to women and couples facing unplanned pregnancies.

The McDaniels found a place of healing. That is what we want this center to be for anyone who needs a listening ear and a helping hand.

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

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

Religious groups among those criticizing Senate vote on China

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Senate's passage Sept. 19 of a measure granting permanent normal trade relations to China has drawn harsh reactions from critics in the faith and human rights community.

The 83-15 vote "sacrificed the last peaceable leverage available to the United States for initiating reform in China," said Robert Maginnis, vice president of foreign affairs for the Family Research Council.

He echoed concerns raised by human rights groups that ending Washington's annual review of China's trade status and giving China the same low-tariff access to U.S. markets as other countries would take away Washington's opportunity to call attention to China's human rights record.

"We have given Beijing unqualified privileges, with no way of keeping their tyranny in line and holding them accountable for their human rights abuses," Maginnis said.

"China has repeatedly proved itself to be a rogue nation whose promises cannot be trusted, but the U.S. is nevertheless handing Beijing a trade deal on a silver platter," he said. "There is no accountability, no limitation, no contingency to Beijing's trading privileges—and so we can expect no change in their ever-worsening record of tyranny and abuse."

His concerns were shared by Human Rights Watch.

"Congress and the administration should have used the (permanent normal trade relations status) leverage to get some human rights improvements first," said Mike Jendrzejczyk, the group's Washington director for Asia.

"The timing of the vote is particularly unfortunate, just as human rights conditions are worsening," he added. "Beijing is closing down all channels of political dissent—including on the Internet—even while it's opening up its economy."

The measure, approved by the House in May, now goes to President Clinton for approval.

Three Governor's Scholars

This article comes from our parents' newsletter, "On Campus." I hope you will enjoy reading about three special Oneida students.

While it is normal for Oneida Baptist Institute to have at least one Governor's Scholar each year, for the first time in Oneida's history three OBI juniors were selected to attend the five-week, expenses-paid scholar camp. Established in 1983, the Governor's Scholar program offers a "concentrated academic and personal growth experience for 700 of Kentucky's brightest rising high school seniors," according to program literature. Each OBI junior who meets the initial requirement of grade point average and ACT scores is encouraged to apply and offered assistance from the guidance office with the application process.

Natalie was very surprised to be accepted as a Governor's Scholar. She applied because "everyone kind of expected me to." The chance to meet different people was what Natalie liked best. "I learned how to open up more and make friends with people I didn't know," she explained.

Natalie chose a psychology "major." The class studied the effect of the media on the mind. Her discussion group was her favorite period because she felt free to express her opinion about any topic or concern.

When Will learned about the Governor's Scholar program, he said he thought, "That seemed like the thing to try for. I like to challenge myself. I was real happy when I was chosen." Will enjoyed his classes, describing them as fun and informative. His astronomy class would meet outside at night or even 4 a.m. Will's favorite period included a study of the logging and coal industries in

Appalachia. This group talked to foresters and coal miners while on a three-day camping trip in Pine Mountain State Park.

A highlight for Will was peer interaction. "You were able to start up a conversation about anything, politics or philosophy." Living in a dormitory was a new experience for Will, a day student at OBI. "Now I can relate to the kids in the dorm," he said.

At first, Roy was not interested in applying because he wanted a summer job. Learning more about it, he decided, "It would be a real good advantage if I did go. Everything I heard about it was positive."

Roy was surprised how much he enjoyed his drama class topic, "Kentucky Folklore." His class adapted stories from every area of the commonwealth into monologues, which they performed. A memorable event for Roy was the caving expedition offered as an extracurricular activity. He also enjoyed dorm life and getting to know people from all over the state. He is looking forward to seeing many of his camp friends at Beta Club functions this year. "It was one of the best things I've ever

done," he noted.

You will be happy to know that some schools with four to five times the number of high school students as Oneida did not have three students selected for the Governor's Scholar program. During the past academic year, 45 percent of our students were on the A or B honor roll during the entire year. When you consider that nearly 50 percent of our young people enroll with failing grades, you'll agree that our students do pretty well.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. www.oneidaschool.org; e-mail: president@oneidaschool.org

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Graham released from Mayo.** Evangelist Billy Graham has returned home to North Carolina after being released Sept. 18 from outpatient therapy at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. Graham was hospitalized in June and underwent procedures to treat a condition known as normal pressure hydrocephalus in which too much fluid collects on the brain. Doctors said they were pleased with Graham's progress. Graham, 81, said he looks forward to "several more years of ministry."

■ **Church arsons down.** The number of arsons at U.S. houses of worship continues to decline, a federal task force reports. The total of arsons, bombings and attempted bombings declined 53 percent between 1996 and 1999, dropping from 297 to 140, the National Church Arson Task Force reported. The decline in incidents continued in 2000, with 82 incidents reported as of Aug. 15, Associated Press reported.

■ **Family council head named.** A Florida attorney has been named to succeed Gary Bauer as the president of the Family Research Council. Kenneth Connor, 53, will become the new leader of the conservative Christian public policy organization based in Washington. An anti-abortion proponent, Connor has served as president and chairman of the board for Florida Right to Life.

■ **Man indicted in O'Hair case.** The former office manager for atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair has been indicted in the 1995 disappearance of O'Hair, her son and granddaughter. David Waters, 53, was indicted Sept. 19 by a federal grand jury in Austin, Texas. Currently in prison serving a 60-year sentence on another charge, he is accused of extortion, kidnapping and robbery resulting in the death of another person, Associated Press reported.

■ **Baptists give to Scouts.** A vote by city commissioners in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., against giving the Boy Scouts money to help disabled and disadvantaged children was offset by a Baptist church's show of support recently. Hundreds of Christians rallied on behalf of the Scouts when city commissioners voted against the grant to Learning for Life. Larry Thompson, pastor of Fort Lauderdale's First Baptist Church collected money from members and provided \$10,200 for the Scouts.

■ **Liberals called to action.** Progressive factions within the Presbyterian Church (USA) should take back their church and free it from fundamentalist dogma, the interim pastor of a leading liberal congregation said in a theological call to arms. David Bos, interim pastor of Downtown United Presbyterian Church in Rochester, N.Y., said progressives are due for another "Auburn Affir-

mation" reminiscent of a 1923 statement in which liberal parts of the church asserted their independence.

■ **Leaders back debt relief.** Religious leaders and politicians gathered last week at the U.S. Capitol to urge Congress to speed up debt relief to some of the world's poorest countries. The news conference was organized by Jubilee 2000 USA, a coalition of church groups and non-governmental organizations. Speakers called on Congress to fulfill its commitment to an agreement made last year among wealthy countries to provide debt relief for some two dozen of the world's poorest nations. Under the agreement, the United States promised to contribute roughly \$435 million to the effort for the years 2000 and 2001. But Congress has yet to approve funding.

■ **Council condemns Hindu prayer.** The Family Research Council condemned the inclusion of a Hindu priest among guests giving the invocation in the U.S. House of Representatives. "While it is true that the United States ... was founded on the sacred principle of religious freedom for all, this liberty was never intended to exalt other religions to the level that Christianity holds in our country's heritage," the group said. Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said the group's statement "reeks of religious bigotry."

Shelby Castlen, director of development

On July 1 Shelby Castlen assumed responsibility as Clear Creek's director of development. She was acting director for a year after serving as administrative secretary to the president for eight years. "I am excited about this work and believe God has prepared me for it. I love working with people and love Clear Creek," Mrs. Castlen declared.

She and her husband Jim, professor of music at Clear Creek, served 18 years as Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines and Australia.

"When we came to Clear Creek, we felt we had traded foreign missions for home missions. Clear Creek is very much a mission-minded school, and we have the opportunity to nurture and mentor mission volunteers," Mrs. Castlen stated.

She recently completed a major assignment on the committee for MissionsFest, which resulted in more than 500 campus visitors and 26 different missionary exhibits. "I know God wants me to help people grow. Here I can mentor some of the wives and help them cement God's call," she said.

The Castlens have two children, Tim, 27, who is married and living in Maryland, and Heather, 22, a col-

lege junior in South Carolina. Jim Castlen is associate pastor of First Baptist Church of Tazewell, Tenn., where Mrs. Castlen sings in the choir and teaches Sunday school. Women's conferences have called on her as a guest speaker and conference leader. This spring she completed a bachelor's degree in communications at Western Baptist College in Salem, Ore.

As director of development, Mrs. Castlen builds upon the experience of a successful Beyond 2001 Campaign, completed in 1998. The campaign surpassed the \$3.5 million goal and reached \$3.8 million. This year she directs the \$1.75 million Heritage of Faith Campaign, which will fund the renovation of historic Kelly Hall. She is equipped to conduct will

seminars and available to help with estate plans.

"God requires each of us to be good stewards of our resources. I'm excited to have the opportunity of helping identify and inform our constituents and work with them to fulfill their giving plans while we strengthen Clear Creek," Mrs. Castlen stressed.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

BOOKS & MUSIC

Clear's latest CD shows band's deepening commitment to God

COLUMBIA, S.C. (RNS)—For the Christian contemporary music group Clear, a defining truth of life is that God's grace leads those who are listening.

The Minnesota-based fivesome is maturing after five years as a band. Clear's newest project—"Follow the Narrow," released by Ardent Records of Memphis, Tenn.—shows deepening spirituality and a determined spirit. Songs reflect the experiences of a band that has grown with its music.

"Because all five of us grew up in Christian homes, we have this foundation underneath us," said lead singer Alison Ogren, 21. But as its members have aged, faith has become personal, more essential. So has Scripture, a truth reflected in the new album, which offers moving melodies of Clear's brand of inspired folk/pop music.

The songs reflect the promises and values of such passages as the Beatitudes of the New Testament and Psalm 18. The band's song "Psalm 18" begins with a seeker calling on God and being heard:

"From His temple, He heard my voice," the lyrics say. "My cry came before Him into His ears, Looking down He made me His choice."

The album also speaks to real life and real needs. For example, "Able and Willing" illustrates how life can wound a Christian, but stresses that God is faithful in healing and delivering.

The song was inspired by Christian author Max Lucado's book, "He Still Moves Stones."



CLEARER MESSAGE The five-member Christian contemporary music band Clear says that as they have matured as Christians, so has their music.

Key songwriter and guitarist Matt Berry said Clear hopes the new album leads people beyond where they were when they first heard it. "If they can reflect on God and how amazing He is, that's a definite response we want," Berry said.

"This project really represents where our hearts and musical direction are currently," Berry said. "I guess I would say it's not necessarily a turning point for us as (much as) it is the next step in the growth process for us as a band."

Berry, also a vocalist for the band, said he is delighted with Clear's progress. "The fact that the five of us are still together after being on the road for almost three years is amazing," he said. "I'm proud of that because not only are we still together, but we're still growing."

Children's books unearth little-known Bible treasures

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—From a consultant and college professor to a columnist and a children's author, Mary Manz Simon has reached a lot of audiences.

This time her target is children, ages 4-8, and her subject is little-known Bible characters.

Despite the huge success of the fantasy-filled Harry Potter books, Simon likes using real people with real emotions to catch a child's interest.

That's what she hopes her children's books, "Hidden Treasures of the Old Testament" and "Hidden Treasures of the New Testament," published by Broadman & Holman Publishers, do.

"They should connect in a real emotional way. You can do that by either touching the heart or looking at situations which kids can relate to."

And her books do both, she believes. "They are heart connectors, and they are also real. So it hits kids right where they're at—wanting a real authentic experience, but also one that touches the heart with real emotions."

The characters in her books "are real people who God takes (at) the crisis point in their lives and uses them. They're like us, they're like kids today," Simon said.

She said she's had the idea for a book about little known Bible characters for years, but only recently felt it was the right time to write it.

"I looked for the little stories that might be only two verses about a person."

One of her favorite stories from the New Testament is the story of Rhoda. In the story, a group of Christ's followers was meeting secretly

at the house of Mary, mother of James and John, to pray for Peter's safety while he was in prison. The group heard a knock on the door, which the maid, Rhoda, answered. It was Peter, and Rhoda didn't let him in.

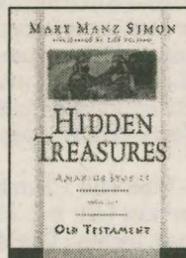
She said the story reminds her that even when we do silly things God still can work through us.

"We are all Rhodas at some time in our lives. We all do stupid things. And for a kid who's growing up, who's trying to deal with sibling rivalry and peer relationships, those kids are making a lot of mistakes and they look at Rhoda and say, 'Hey, God can even work through her. He can work through me.'"

Simon began writing children's books because she couldn't find devotional books for her children. "I wrote my first book, 'Little Visits with Jesus,' on McDonald's napkins in 1987. And my children weren't bored. They didn't say, 'Yuck!' to devotions."

Some of Simon's favorite characters in her new books are women—Rhoda from the New Testament and Deborah from the Old. "I like Deborah because she was a very strong woman. She listened to God."

Other stories in Simon's books include Michal, David's wife, who helped save her husband's life; Shiphrah and Puah, two nurses ordered to kill all baby boys, but who helped save them instead; and Rahab, who hid two of Joshua's spies; Matthew, the tax collector; Eutychus, who Paul brings back to life; Jason, who helped Paul escape; and Zacharias and Elizabeth who are old yet have a son named John.



'Be there' for people dealing with death, author admonishes church

AUSTIN, Texas (RNS)—Chuck Meyer longs to alert Americans that they have choices when it comes to death and dying.

"We've medicalized death over the last 50 years," said Meyer, vice president of operations for St. David's Medical Center in Austin, Texas, and an expert on pastoral care for the dying and their families.

Today, he said, 85 percent of deaths are in medical settings. In 1950, 50 percent of deaths occurred at home.

Meyer said he longs to offer the dying and their families more informed choices without placing all the responsibility for that education on either physicians or clergy.

He contends that both doctors and clergy should receive better training in these areas, but Meyer's target audience is the average person. He would like to see death demystified in popular circles so that the average person is better informed and even television depicts death with less hype and more humanity.

He is also often an outspoken critic of the institutional church, as evidenced in his most recent book, "Dying Church/Living God." In that work, he challenges the reader to examine organized religion and ask difficult questions.

In the field of death and dying, Meyer recommends that to prepare for death the average person discuss with his or her family how that individual would define "quality of life" as well as fill out a "living

will," which outlines the kind of treatment one wants at the end of life.

The living will also should provide a medical power of attorney, which designates who will make decisions when that person no longer can and decide whether to donate organs to science.

An Episcopal priest, Meyer is the author of two books on death and dying, "A Good Death: Challenges, Choices and Care Options" and "Surviving Death: A Practical Guide to Caring for the Dying and Bereaved." Both books explore issues faced by the terminally ill, their families, health care workers and pastoral caregivers.

"One of the things I talk about in the 'Surviving Death' book is that one of the things the church can do is to develop care teams that support patient and family from the instant of initial diagnosis, all the way to illness and death and the bereavement of the family," Meyer said.

"That's what hospice does, of course. But wouldn't it be interesting if the church did that, too? I say in 'Surviving Death: Be there. Be there. Be there."

"Because most people won't be. People run like turkeys when someone gets a terminal diagnosis. People start staying away in droves. We start distancing ourselves from a person with the fantasy

being 'If I distance myself as a person from you now, by the time you die, it won't hurt as much.'

"The opposite is true," he added. "You get hurt a lot more by staying away. Your pain is in the distance."

Meyer knows firsthand the pain of losing a loved one. His first wife, Debby, died in 1982 at age 34.

His work and his writing led Meyer to his newest frontier, his ongoing involvement in Last Acts. The nationwide partnership works to improve care of the dying by raising awareness through conferences, online discussion groups, professional education and other activities. Former first lady Rosalynn Carter is honorary chairwoman.

Death and dying is his main focus today because the issues surrounding end-of-life care combine elements of everything he's ever cared about.

"It's sort of the bottom line of everything I've done for 30 years," he said. "Empowering people to make the best choices for themselves. Making sure that they have all the data they need at their disposal."

His experience as a husband, father and friend has molded his outlook as much as his work. In his personal roles, he has loved people who are gravely ill, and

ministered to their families and friends.

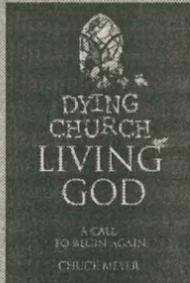
"One of the things I talk about in 'A Good Death' is that a good grief often begins with good death. If the death experience has been really, really painful and fraught with dissension and plain out physical pain, that's what you're going to look back on," he said.

"It doesn't have to be that way," he continued. "It really can be a different kind of experience that is relatively pain free and with the best end-of-life care all the way to the end."

"Jesus said, 'I will be with you always,' and that's what we need to give people, to be with them always, all the way through to the end," Meyer said.

Among Meyer's strengths are his humor and high energy level, said Sally Barthel-Heinze, a lay chaplain at St. David's. "He cuts to the chase and yet he has genuine concern for and cares about his fellow beings. He cares most about empowering and helping these folks figure out what they can do rather than just giving them the answer, spoon feeding them," she said.

"His fault probably is that there is nothing he thinks he can't do. He is determined," she added. "Health care in this millennium is not an easy thing and it is extremely frustrating for someone like Chuck who always wants to have the patient as the focus and it isn't always that way."



PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Missionaries Bill and Phyllis Polly who work with a church in Cheb, Czech Republic.

■ Follow-up to the work of 14 women from North Carolina who distributed Scripture portions in Frankfurt, Germany, last summer.

■ Missionaries in Tanzania: Sonny and Sherry Sledge, Rob and Lisa Moor, Kathy Lydic and Tiffany Threatt and Lisa Pumpelly.

■ Teachers and students at Haven of Peace Christian Academy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, as they have begun the new school year.

■ Upcoming "Calling Out the Called" conferences in Boston to focus on laypeople called to participate in church planting.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **ASHLAND**—Rose Hill Missionary Church will host a women's conference Oct. 6-7. **Mary Glynn Peeples** from Alabama will speak. For information, call (606) 329-2821 or via the Internet at www.rosehillashland.com. **Michael Routt** is pastor.

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Eastwood Church will host motivational speaker **David Ring** Oct. 1 at 9 a.m. **Mike Lee** is pastor.

■ **BURLINGTON**—Burlington Church will host revival services Oct. 1-4. **Jeff Eaton**, pastor of Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg, will be the evangelist. For information, call ((859) 586-6529. **Terry Wilder** is pastor.

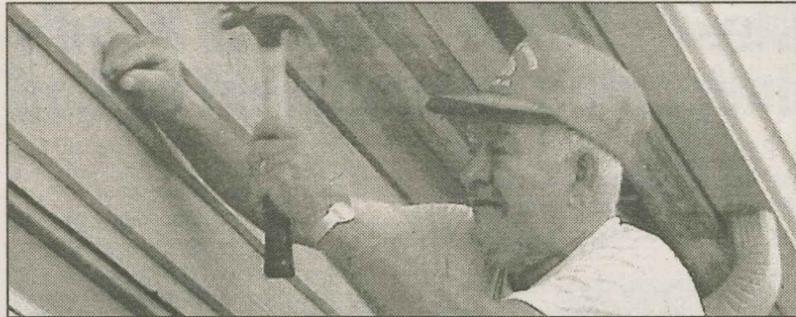
■ **CLERMONT**—Vine Hill Church will host revival services Oct. 1-6; 11 a.m. Oct. 1 and 7 p.m. nightly. **David Livingston** will be the evangelist. **Gregory Crenshaw** is pastor.

■ **CROPPER**—Pleasureville Church will host a 100th anniversary celebration Oct. 5-8; 7 p.m. nightly and 11 a.m. on Oct. 8. Former pastors **Ron Murray**, **Dan Duncan** and **Robert Wade** will speak, as well as **Greg Wingate**, former youth minister. For information, call (502) 845-4840. **Herb Flaughter** is pastor.

■ **FALLS OF ROUGH**—Falls of Rough Church will host homecoming and second anniversary services Oct. 8. For information, call (270) 879-8527. **George Tichenor** is pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Crestwood Church called **Doug Hamblin**, a student at Southern Seminary, as minister of education. **Wallace Kent** is pastor.

■ **GREENUP**—First Church will host homecoming services Oct. 8 at 10:45



WOODFORD COUNTY WORKER Dick Brock of Versailles Baptist Church secures a piece of siding on the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children Bronston Center in Pulaski County. Laymen from the church spent a week at KBHC's southern regional campus recently doing finishing work on four cabins for the wilderness camping treatment program.

a.m. with lunch following. The speaker will be **Tony Jones** from Corinth Church, Winchester. For information, call (606) 473-9744. **Tom Melvin** is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Bethlehem Church hosted a Power Team crusade recently, resulting in 186 decisions for Christ. **Gary Ervin** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethany Church

will host the **Commonwealth Brass Band** in concert Oct. 1 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 452-2681. **Todd Robertson** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church's Women's Ministry will host **Liz Curtis Higgs** Oct. 19 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 896-8882 or via Internet at www.christianhappenings.com. **Cinda King** is director of special events.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Vacation house, available year-round to Christian families. Weekly and monthly rates available. Four bedroom on Panama City Beach, one-half block from Gulf. For details, call First Baptist Church Panama City Beach, Fla., (850) 234-0488.

FOR SALE: 100-percent renovated house (Highlands). New plumbing, electrical, furnace/AC, windows, roof, tile floor, 3BR/2Bath. \$172,000. Open house Sunday. (502) 899-5353.

SEEKING: Full-time executive director position for person with management and supervisory experience. Requirements include: Bachelor's degree, fundraising and grant writing experience, good computer and writing skills, volunteer recruitment and a flexible schedule. Salary based on experience. Deadline for application: Oct. 7. Send resumé to: Fairdale Community Ministries, PO Box 270, Fairdale, KY 40118, Attn: Andy Giltner. No calls please.

SEEKING: Music/worship leader at First Baptist, Metropolis, Ill. Must be team-minded and competent in both contemporary and blended services. Responsible for total music program. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 516 Girard St., Metropolis, IL 62960. Mark envelope "Resumé."

SEEKING: Youth/outreach minister at First Baptist, Metropolis. A good opportunity for the right person to help reach a community for Christ. Full-time, good compensation. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, 516 Girard Street, Metropolis, IL 62960. Please mark envelope "Resumé."

SEEKING: Part-time music director and part-time youth director. Please forward resumé or letter of interest to the attention of Jerry Gifford at Calvary Baptist Church, 3011 Elrod Road, Bowling Green, KY 42104. For more information, call (270) 842-5554.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/children. Looking for a motivated person to serve on a multi-staff, leading the music ministry and children's education and activities. Send resumé to: Lewisport Baptist Church, PO Box 384, Lewisport, KY 42351.

SEEKING: Burgin Baptist Church is currently seeking applications for pastor. Burgin is a Central Kentucky town approximately 30 miles south of Lexington near Harrodsburg, Herrington Lake and Danville. Burgin Baptist Church is mission-minded, has a strong youth program, approximately 170 in Sunday School, and more than 100 years of history in the community. Prayerfully submit resumé to: Search Committee, Burgin Baptist Church, PO Box 266, Burgin, KY 40310.

SEEKING: Executive director. The Presbyterian Community Center, Louisville, Ky., seeks an executive director to operate a faith-based organization servicing the needs of the inner-city neighborhoods of Smoketown and Shelby Park. The center provides a full range of support services which allow the residents to grow physically, emotionally and spiritually. The leader we seek should have: a master's degree in business administration or social work with five-plus years in non-profit leadership or equivalent; demonstrated success in project planning and implementation, fund raising, grant writing and budgeting; and leadership skills in developing and motivating staff excellence. Competitive salary and excellent benefits. Send resumé of qualifications and salary requirement by Dec. 1 to: Search Committee chairperson, Box 21444, Louisville, KY 40241-5100.

SEEKING: Lakewood Baptist Church, Louisville, seeks senior pastor. Multi-staff church anticipates building program and reaching growing community. Church growth experience preferred. See www.lakewoodbc.org for church information. Send resumé to Lakewood Baptist Church, 13803 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40245. Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Trenton Baptist Church, Trenton, Ky., is seeking a part-time minister of youth. Trenton is located in Todd County near Hopkinsville and Clarksville, Tenn. For further information or to submit a resumé, contact the Youth Committee, Trenton Baptist Church, PO Box 191, Trenton, KY 42286.

SEEKING: Part-time worship and praise leader. Possibility of full-time to include youth ministry. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Wing Avenue Baptist Church, 1508 Monarch Ave, Owensboro, KY 42303.

SEEKING: Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention is in search of a person to serve as their director of evangelism and missions. Recommendations with resumé may be sent to: Search Committee, Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention, PO Box 4779, Casper, WY 82604-0779.

SEEKING: Pastor/church secretary. Applicants must have proficient computer skills, ability to perform administrative tasks, people skills and be willing to strictly adhere to the confidentiality of such a position. Applicants should send their resumé to Broadway Baptist Church, 4000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40207, Attn: Roger Lamb.

SEEKING: Full-time worship/music pastor for urban congregation in Central Kentucky. Ministries include planning and leading blended worship services, directing and/or supervising church choirs, and serving as part of a pastoral team. Interested candidates should send a resumé to Memorial Baptist, 130 Holmes St., Frankfort, KY 40601.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, Park Hills, Mo., is seeking a full-time minister of music and education to grow Bible study/discipleship training programs and diverse music ministry, including adult/children's choirs, orchestra, handbells and drama ministries. Send resumé by Oct. 6 to: Search Committee Chairman, First Baptist Church, PO Box 445, Park Hills, MO 63601.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, Park Hills, Mo., is seeking a full-time youth/assistant music minister to lead and grow youth activities/ministry programs and assist minister of music and education in a complete and diverse music ministry, including adult/children's choirs, orchestra, handbells and drama programs. Send resumé by Oct. 6 to: Search Committee Chairman, First Baptist Church, PO Box 445, Park Hills, MO 63601.

SEEKING: Minister of music/youth. Send resumé to Bethlehem Baptist Church, 19360 Alberta St., Oneida, TN 37841, Attn: Tony Duncan. (423) 569-4518. E-mail: duncan_t@scottcounty.net.

SEEKING: Human resources assistant for Kentucky Baptist Convention. Attractive compensation package. Contact Administrative Services Department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Louisville, Ky. Phone: (502) 244-6468.

SEEKING: Middleton Baptist Church is a rural church located half-way between Franklin and Russellville, Ky., just off Highway 100. We are searching for a full-time pastor. Please send resumé to: Middleton Baptist Church, 9193 Middleton Circle, Franklin, KY 42134.

SEEKING: Part-time youth director (24 hours per week) for Buena Vista Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky. Please send resumé to: Search Committee, Buena Vista Baptist Church, 119 West 24th St., Owensboro, KY 42303.

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.

West Bank biblical landmarks suffering from neglect

By Elaine Ruth Fletcher
Religion News Service

BETHEL, Occupied West Bank (RNS)—The few hot and dusty tourists climb the forlorn steps of the crumbling watchtower of Bethel.

This is the place where the Bible says the patriarch Jacob once dreamed his famous dream of a ladder reaching up into the heavens, and where Abraham erected an altar to God.

The staircase, where wild bushes grow from cracks in the stone, was part of the tower built in the second or third century B.C., when Bethel was a bustling city. Nearby, are the foundation stones of a Byzantine-era monastery from the fifth or sixth century A.D., apparently built to commemorate the biblical story of Jacob's dream associated with the site.

Ancient Bethel, on the border of the biblical kingdoms of Israel and Judea, is mentioned in the Old Testament more times than Jerusalem.

It was in honor of Bethel, and the celebrated story of Jacob's ladder, that the modern-day West Bank Jewish settlement of Beit El was built in the 1970s, one of the first to rise up following Israel's 1967 conquest of the West Bank. Countless synagogues and churches in the United States also have taken their name from this famous site, one of the pivotal landmarks of biblical history and the traditional song, "We are Climbing Jacob's Ladder," is an integral part of American Sunday school gospel heritage.

Today, however, the tower of Bethel is crumbling slowly from weather and neglect.

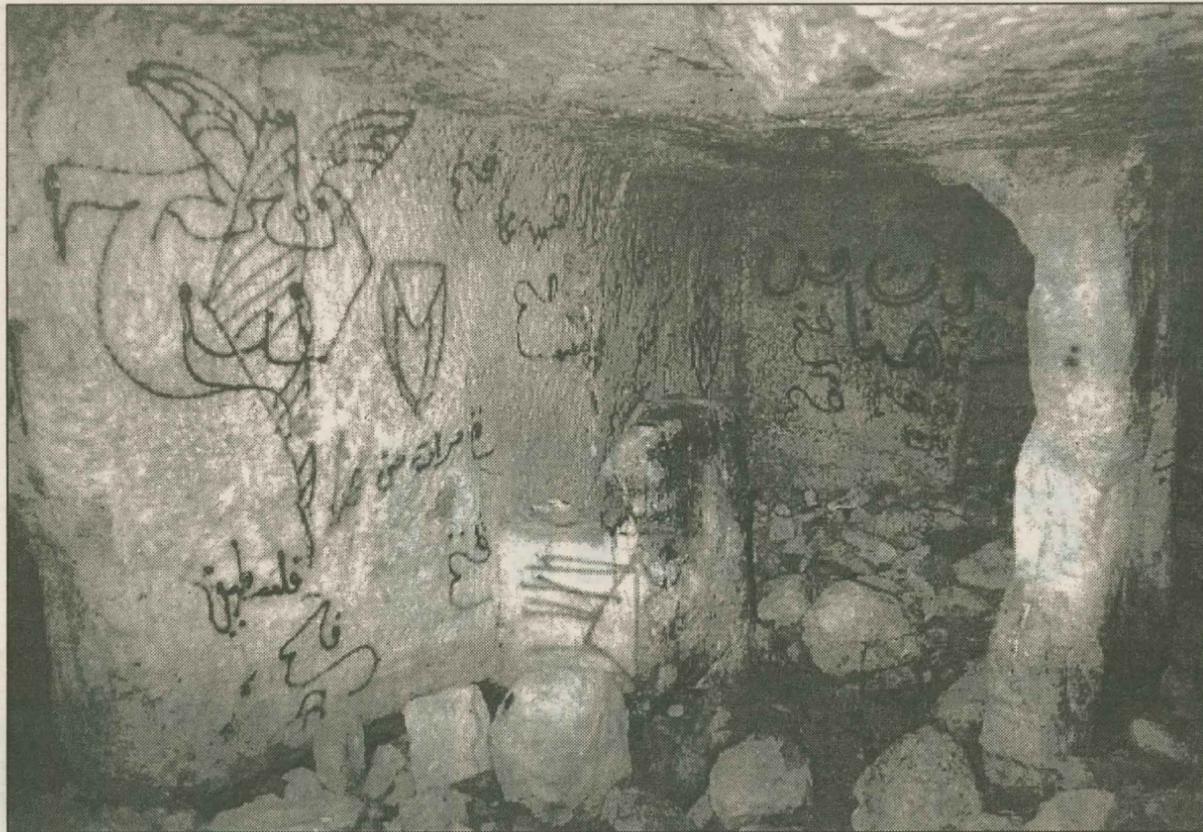
Like many other key biblical landmarks in the West Bank, Bethel today is the victim of a tug-of-war over land and religious heritage dragging on between Israelis and Palestinians despite years of peace talks and interim arrangements.

Jerusalem's holy sites have taken center stage in the peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. But there also are dozens of other religious and historic sites scattered around the West Bank, sites like Bethel that could become a flash point for conflict in any final status agreement—sites that are slowly decaying while their political status remains unresolved.

As enclaves of Israeli rule in a sea of Palestinian territory, sites like Bethel have become isolated, neglected and ignored by Israeli as well as Palestinian antiquities authorities.

"They are in a kind of no man's land," said Adel Yahya, a West Bank Palestinian archaeologist who has become deeply involved in trying to restore and preserve the West Bank's biblical archaeological sites. "They are deteriorating rapidly because they don't have any kind of protection from either the Palestinian Authority or from the Israeli Department of Antiquities."

Bethel's famous tower, for example, is located on the fringes of a Muslim Arab village known as Beitin, whose name recalls the site. But most tour guides tend to shy away



GIBEON'S WELL Graffiti marks a decayed and neglected olive press at Gibeon's Well, where the biblical prophet Joshua prayed to make the sun stand still. Like many West Bank biblical landmarks, it is suffering from neglect and decay. (RNS photo by Elaine Ruth Fletcher)

from West Bank locales like Beitin because of political instability.

Even Jewish settlers from the bustling settlement of Beit El, about a kilometer away, rarely visit.

Recently, however, Yahya has begun to escort Israeli and foreign tourists to Bethel and other such sites as part of the "off-the-beaten-track" Holy Land tours that he directs through his organization, Palestine Archaeological and Cultural Exchange.

Other long-ignored West Bank sites on his itinerary include the famous Gibeon's Well, where the biblical prophet Joshua prayed to make the sun stand still to give him time to complete a battle with the Amorites; and Tel al-Nasbah, or "Mitzpeh," where Saul, first king of Israel, established his capital.

While such sites are associated largely with Christian and Jewish biblical history, they also have acquired a sacred status among Muslim villagers who have lived on the land for most of the past millennium.

Given the existing vacuum of political and archaeological authority, Yahya has seized upon local traditions to engage villagers in modest efforts to stop some of the deterioration at the sites, while waiting for a peace settlement.

"Local Palestinian villagers usually don't understand the precise historical significance of the sites, but they understand their importance in some strange way," Yahya said.

"The tower of Bethel in Beitin, for instance, is not mentioned in the Koran, but yet through all of these centuries it was preserved," he said. "When a garbage dump started to develop ad hoc near the site, I went to the village dignitaries to enlist their help in moving the garbage and cleaning up and they readily agreed.

"They told me that Bethel was known to them as the Assembly of the Prophets, and said that this is a place where the Prophet Mohammed stopped over on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and led the biblical patriarchs Abraham, Jacob and Isaac in prayer. This is the local tradition that explains the site to them. When we told them that it was also associated with the story of Jacob and the dream of the ladder, they were amazed."

Nearby in Gibeon, the remains of the ancient biblical town are even more extensive and impressive than Bethel. But the excavations, begun in the 1950s, have been largely buried, protected by the earth that hid them for centuries until a more favorable political climate—and bigger archaeological budgets—will permit the ancient town's restoration.

Gibeon's impressive 11th or 12th century water pool is still visible to tourists, however. The deep, conical hole carved into solid rock and accessed by a 79-step circular staircase, also of stone, once collected water from a spring situated outside of the city's fortified walls in times of siege. Dozens of round holes, cut in the rock nearby, mark the entrances to the wine cellars that made this city famous for its grape products in the seventh and eighth centuries B.C.

Twenty-five years ago, Gibeon was a popular destination of Israeli tourist guides who came with large busloads of visiting American Jewish youths through the adjacent Arab village of El-Jib.

"What better place than Gibeon to illustrate the link between a people and its land and Bible," said Yadin Roman, a former guide and now the editor of the Israeli geographic magazine ERETZ, in a recent retrospective article on his frequent visits to the Gibeon site.

Initially, he said, the villagers welcomed the visitors while trying to sell them drinks and souvenirs. But the local sales initiatives were largely shunned by the guides and as political tensions in the wider region heightened, the Israeli groups eventually found themselves unwelcome in the town.

"Biblical Gibeon, the place where God was revealed to Solomon in a dream, the city of the Prophet Haniah, went back to being El-Jib. The kids from America now visit Massada instead," Roman wrote.

More recently, Yahya has been working with the Palestinian villagers to try to bring back the tourists and demonstrate how the village might also benefit from such visits in an era of peace and permanent borders.

Even in today's troubled times, he has received the village's permission and assistance in the construction of a modest dirt access road to the antiquities site. But little can be done with the site itself while it remains under Israeli control.

"I think that logically, these places that are in the middle of Palestinian towns will eventually have to be under Palestinian control, simply because the Israelis have no control over them," Yahya said.

Yahya, a Muslim, dreams of a time when the Jewish, as well as Christian tourists, will return. And he believes the broader Israeli and Palestinian community, locked in conflict over religion and heritage, could learn a valuable lesson from a closer look at the history of such sites.

"Look at the tower of Bethel for instance," he said. "Through centuries of rule, not only by the Jews, but by Greeks, Roman, Byzantines and Muslims, the tradition of Jacob continued. People changed their religions, but they kept the tradition. They preserved the sites, and even their names."

"They are deteriorating rapidly because they don't have any kind of protection from either the Palestinian Authority or from the Israeli Department of Antiquities."

Adel Yahya, a West Bank Palestinian archaeologist

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