



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

Baptists

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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, February 7

Kentucky expo offers more than just books for Christian stores

By Victoria Moon
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—According to reports from exhibitors and retailers at the 2001 Christian Booksellers Association Expo, the average Christian bookstore customer is a woman, and she's buying lots of gifts.

The expo, Jan. 29-Feb. 2 at Louisville's Kentucky International Convention Center, drew more than 5,000 Christian retailers, publishers and distributors from around the world to reflect on the future trends of their marketplace.

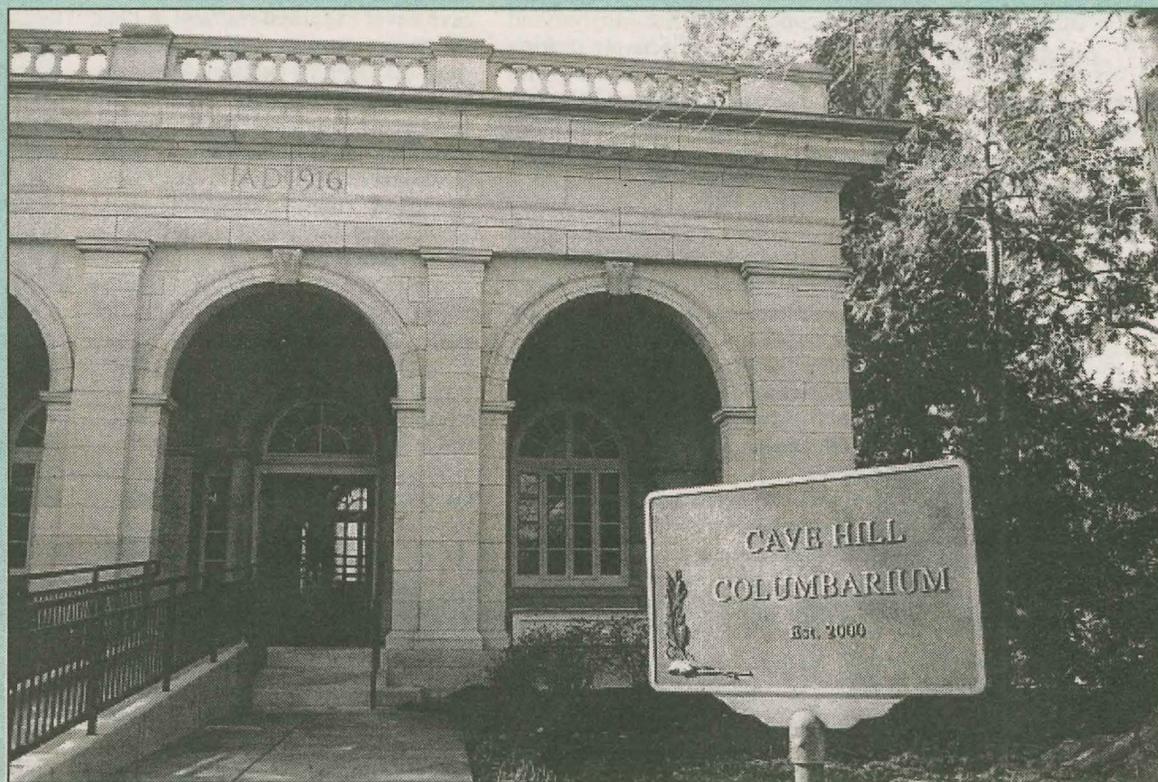
"We're still seeing a strong emphasis on the family and family-oriented products," said Robert Splinter, a Top Most recent representative.

The publishing reports from the Christian Booksellers Association also show that 68 percent of Christian retail customers are women, and 55 percent of those women are married with children. Her average age is mid-40s, and she and her husband have a combined income of \$40,000.

Reports also show that when these women enter a Christian bookstore they mainly are purchasing fiction, greeting cards, children's products and devotionals.

"A lot of people looking for heavier, content-based books are shopping at secular stores like Barnes and Noble rather than Christian bookstores, because many bookstores are not carrying as many books and those they do carry are lighter and more inspirational or known best-selling authors," said Michael Thomson, an exhibitor with Wm.B.Eerdmans Publishing Company. "Generally, there's been a shift toward less books and more gift items, things with a high turnaround percent."
□ See Christian book expo ..., page 6

Ashes to ashes



MEMORIAL Cave Hill Columbarium opened last year in Cave Hill National Cemetery in Louisville. The columbarium, housed in a remodeled building that dates to 1916, contains 750 niches for the placement of cremated remains.

Cremation gaining acceptance among Christians

LOUISVILLE—When Carolyn Léverett's husband died unexpectedly three years ago, she reluctantly complied with his request to be cremated.

Now the Texas Baptist laywoman is making advance plans for when she dies, and she knows one thing for sure: She wants to be cremated and have her remains co-mingled with those of her late husband.

What's happened over the last three years to sway her opinion so strongly? She became the owner of a funeral home and crematory that performs about 200 cremations a year.

Both her personal attitude and her business are part of a growing trend in American society. Cremation is a red-hot business.

In many regions of the nation, including Kentucky, cultural and religious concerns about cremation gradually are disintegrating.

More than one-fourth of all Americans who died last year were cremated, according to esti-

mates from the Cremation Association of North America. That's up from less than 10 percent in 1980.

By the Cremation Association's estimates, the trend toward cremation will continue to grow in the years ahead, with one-third of all the deceased being cremated by 2010.

□ See Cremation gaining ..., page 8



ASHES to ASHES
Changing Attitudes about Cremation

Police team finds needs expand size and scope of ministry

By Victoria Moon
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—In 1998, eight Christian police officers formed a support group they called Shield of Faith to encourage each others' faith in the high-stress environment of the Louisville Police Department.

"We knew we needed a Christian law enforcement organization because of the evils we face day in and day out," said Lieutenant Jeff Manning, one of Shield of Faith's founding members.

A little more than two years later, Shield of Faith has grown from eight to more than 150 members, and has spread from the Louisville Police Department to Jefferson County, Beuchel, Jeffersontown, Shively and the Kentucky State police departments.

"We started out to do one thing, then went in a million different di-

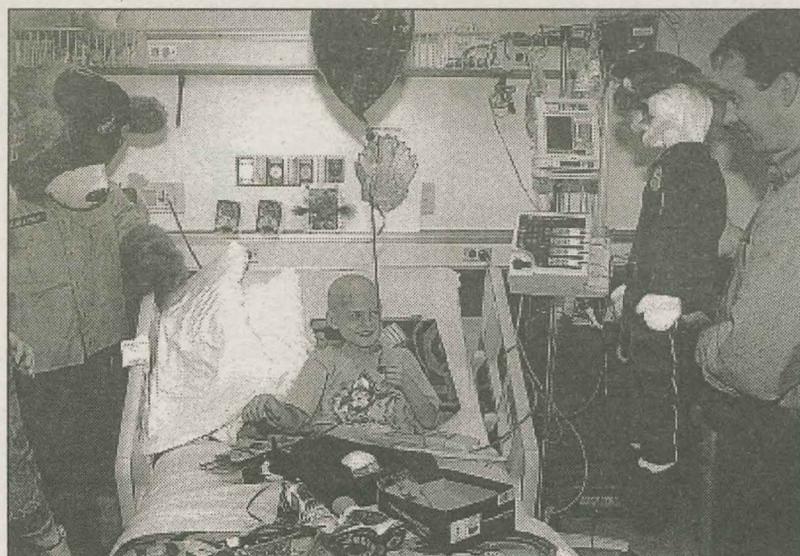
rections from there," said Lieutenant Lynn Hunt, a Louisville officer in Harvest of Faith and member of Shiloh Baptist Church of Louisville.

"We get together for monthly meetings, lunches and weekly Bible studies," said Manning, "and it's amazing to see what God has done."

Shield of Faith's meetings and Bible studies are open to any officer interested in learning more about Christianity as well as ways to deal with the stress that comes from being in law enforcement.

"We wanted to let fellow officers know that the Lord was the One they needed to go to when things got tough, not other forms of stress release like drugs and alcohol," said Manning, who also noted high divorce and suicide rates among police officers.

"It's a great group, because some days just getting through the whole"
□ See Louisville Police find ..., page 3



POLICE MINISTRY A group that was started to encourage Louisville police officers has expanded to care for indigent former police and children in need. The group, which started two years ago, also has grown to more than 150 members from many law offices. (Southeast Outlook photo)

"I doubt that people who come to faith in Jesus Christ consider their life-altering decision to be some sort of passing fad."

Rudy Gonzalez, director of interfaith evangelism, Southern Baptist North American Mission Board

Baptist leader counters Dalai Lama's views

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—A Southern Baptist interfaith evangelism leader has called on the Dalai Lama to reconsider his recent criticism of Christian witness.

The Dalai Lama, the exiled leader of Tibetan Buddhists and a Nobel Peace Prize winner, joined Hindu leaders in condemning the Muslim and Christian practice of actively seeking converts after a Jan. 18 meeting with leaders of the World Hindu Council in India. The council is an influential group that seeks to make India a Hindu state.

"Whether Hindu or Muslim or Christian, whoever tries to convert, it's wrong, not good," the Dalai Lama said. "I always believe it's safer and better and reasonable to keep one's own tradition or belief."

He spoke after the Hindu Council's general secretary, Ashok Singhal, had said, "Buddhism, Hinduism and other non-aggressive religions have to unite to douse Islam ... an aggressive religion."

The Dalai Lama and others signed a statement saying: "We oppose con-

versions by any religious tradition using various methods of enticement."

Rudy Gonzalez, director of interfaith evangelism for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, responded, "With all due respect to the opinions of the Dalai Lama, it is evident that, historically, world religions have never exercised restraint in their efforts to propagate their message beyond the regional borders where the religion had its origin."

Gonzalez noted that Buddhism, for example, "spread beyond its original birthplace of India and went out throughout South and Southeast Asia, including Tibet where Dalai Lama comes from."

Citing the increase of Hindu influence in the United States in recent years, Gonzalez added, "Even today, many Americans convert to the Hindu way of life, in large measure due to the efforts of Hindu religious leaders in the U.S."

Gonzalez also took issue with the Dalai Lama's statement that "conversions are out of date now."

"I doubt that people who come to

faith in Jesus Christ consider their life-altering decision to be some sort of passing fad," Gonzalez said. "Many people who come to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Savior do so at considerable peril."

For people who hold deeply to their religious beliefs, "it is inconceivable that any of the basic tenets of their belief system could be so easily discarded," he added. "Evangelism, outreach to the world with the life-transforming message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, is a fundamental aspect of historic Christianity."

Gonzalez noted that "Southern Baptists reject coercive or manipulative attempts to proselytize peoples from other faiths. ... Still, true Christianity is concerned with the needs of body, soul and spirit."

"Evangelism, from our perspective, is an invitation, nothing more, which people accept or reject on its merits," he emphasized. "We believe those who come to embrace Christ are drawn by God's Spirit. This is an aspect of God's transcendent work, something that is never out of date."

Southern staffer new Fla. editor

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)—James Smith, director of public relations at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, has been named executive editor of the Florida Baptist Witness, the state Baptist paper of the Florida Baptist Convention.

Smith, 37, succeeds Michael Chute, who will become chairman of the communications department at William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Miss.

The Florida Baptist Witness' nine-member board unanimously elected Smith Jan. 23. He began his new duties Feb. 5.

Smith has served as director of public relations at Southern since 1998 and previously was director of news and information. He served two years as director of news and information at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. He also was a member of the 1998 SBC Resolutions Committee.

Pro-Ashcroft memo from Baptist state office sparks controversy

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (ABP)—A South Carolina Baptist Convention employee who sent an e-mail urging churches to endorse John Ashcroft as U.S. attorney general acted without clearance from supervisors, a convention spokesman said Jan. 29.

Joe Mack, director of South Carolina Baptists' Christian Life Concerns Department, sent an "action alert" memo dated Jan. 26 on convention letterhead. It said the Washington office of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission had asked South Carolinians to call Sen. Fritz Hollings' office and ask him to support Ashcroft's nomination. Hollings, a Democrat, earlier announced he would oppose confirmation of the appointment by President Bush.

"I am asking all pastors to make this announcement from the pulpit this

Sunday and to provide the senator's phone number to the congregation," Mack wrote. "We need to flood the Washington office with calls ... until the confirmation vote is taken."

Following news reports including comments criticizing the memo, convention officials issued a statement clarifying that Mack's memo was distributed "without official clearance from the convention."

"The South Carolina Baptist Convention, through its Christian Life and Public Affairs Committee, studies and may make recommendations regarding moral concerns of public interest," read the Jan. 29 statement by Scott Vaughan, director of marketing. "However, this work does not include taking positions on political issues; nor does this work speak for or against the endorsement of political candidates or political appointees."

Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commis-

sion, said he does not endorse candidates for office, either, but he supported Ashcroft's nomination because he believed opponents were using "religious profiling" against Ashcroft.

Land reportedly told the Columbia, S.C., newspaper *The State* that the ERLC's Washington office had sent two memos to state Baptist offices: The second went out in late January to states whose senators were undecided on Ashcroft.

A Jan. 10 e-mail addressed to 50 leaders in various Baptist state conventions was attributed to Shannon Royce, the ERLC's director of government relations and legislative counsel.

Ashcroft's opponents have "tried to vilify him" and engaged in "religious bigotry," Royce wrote. "Sen. Ashcroft is a just man with impeccable integrity who is imminently qualified for this position." The three-page memo urged Baptists to "pray for a just outcome in the confirmation process," to call and

write senators in support of Ashcroft and to "forward this alert to other like-minded believers."

Land said he didn't know what message had been sent to South Carolina pastors but that he would consider sending an e-mail to be an appropriate action. He added that the ERLC "would never attempt to tell pastors what to say from their pulpits."

Some South Carolina Baptists, however, objected to receiving the e-mail from the state convention.

"It raises the hair on the back of my Baptist neck," said Fred Andrea, pastor of First Baptist Church in Aiken, S.C. "Identifying the election of a candidate with the specific will of God is dangerously un-Baptist behavior," he added.

Andrea said his objection has nothing to do with the nominee. "An encouragement to endorse a nominee violates our historic understanding of Baptist polity," he said.

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **SBC meeting to adjourn early.** A Wednesday afternoon session of this summer's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting will replace the traditional Wednesday evening session, SBC officials have announced. The SBC annual meeting, June 12-13 in New Orleans, will conclude after the afternoon session. The 3 p.m. Wednesday session will feature an address by James Dobson, founder of the national Focus on the Family ministry. Otherwise, the two-day SBC schedule is unchanged, with no reduction in the overall time allotted for the annual meeting, said Jerry Johnson, chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business.

■ **Association declines to expel churches.** Messengers to a special called meeting of the Atlanta Baptist Association voted June 30 against a motion to dismiss two

homosexual-friendly churches from membership in the association. The association's action notes that "we do not support or condone homosexual activity, but neither can we support the motion to dismiss two churches with a great history of Christian ministry." The two churches, Oakhurst and Virginia-Highland, were expelled from the Georgia Baptist Convention in 1999 for "affirming and approving and endorsing homosexual behavior." The Atlanta association's 253-164 secret-ballot vote followed a nearly year-long dialogue between the congregations and the association's membership team.

■ **Southern to host conference.** "Give Me An Answer," a conference for college students hosted by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, will be

held Feb. 23-24. The apologetics-based conference will seek to aid students in answering skeptical questions posed by a secular postmodern culture. The event will feature eight seminary faculty members, including President Al Mohler who will be the keynote speaker. For more information, contact (800) 636-5525 or www.sbts.edu.

■ **LifeWay evacuates after anthrax hoax.** A suspicious envelope delivered to the human resources department at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention tested negative for any biological hazards, according to the Nashville Public Health Department. Discovery of the envelope led to a brief quarantine of the SBC agency Jan. 25. The envelope, containing an unknown substance along with a note reading, "Have a good day," was delivered by the

U.S. Postal Service to the LifeWay complex on Jan. 24. It was opened in the human resources department the next morning. The incident marked the second time an SBC facility in Nashville has faced an anthrax-type scare. The SBC Building in Nashville had a similar incident in 1999.

■ **Pastor to lead theological center.** Virginia Baptist pastor Randel Everett has been named president of the John Leland Center for Theological Studies in the Washington, D.C., area. Everett, pastor of Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Va., said the Leland Center is designed to prepare young people to lead evangelical churches in the nation's capital and surrounding area. The center, started in 1997, will graduate its first students in 2002 and plans to seek accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools.

Kentuckian's calling helping others understand C.S. Lewis

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

By Victoria Moon
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—If C.S. Lewis were around today, he no doubt would be astonished to learn that his life and work have become the life's work of a Kentucky minister.

Perry Bramlett, a Louisville resident, has been teaching seminars and leading retreats about Lewis since 1985.

"I'm the only person in the United States who teaches and writes about Lewis as a full-time vocation," he said. "This is the hardest work I've ever done, but the most fun as well."

Bramlett, a native of Fairhope, Ala., graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and served as a pastor in Indiana and Georgia.

During that time, he discovered a tattered copy of Lewis' "Mere Christianity" in a used bookstore and after reading it became an avid Lewis fan.

"I discovered him the way a lot of people do, and I've been a student of Lewis for years," Bramlett said.

Eventually, he returned to Louisville to live and began attending Broadway Baptist Church. In 1985 Broadway's pastor, Ronald Higdon,



LEWIS LECTURER Louisville Baptist Perry Bramlett travels more than 40 weeks a year lecturing about C.S. Lewis. "I probably couldn't make a living off another figure in church history the way I do with Lewis," he said.

asked Bramlett to lead a five-week series on Lewis at their church. In 1989, Higdon asked Bramlett to repeat the series.

This time the lectures drew people from other churches who asked Bramlett to repeat his talks at their

churches.

"I realized this was my calling," Bramlett said, "and I pounded the pavement for about five years establishing the ministry."

Now Lewis travels 40-45 weeks a year throughout the country offering seminars, books studies and retreats on Lewis.

He also has written numerous articles and two books: "C.S. Lewis: Life at the Center" on Lewis' spirituality and "Touring C.S. Lewis' Ireland and England," a guide for those wanting to visit the places where Lewis lived and worked.

Bramlett also was a major contributor to the best-selling "C.S. Lewis Readers' Encyclopedia" and currently has two more books on Lewis in progress. He also has one of the largest private collections of C.S. Lewis books and memorabilia in the United States.

Bramlett said his ability to make a living doing what he does is due to the love C.S. Lewis still inspires in people.

"Lewis has been a best-selling author for half a century, and his books still sell 1.5 million copies a year," he said. "I probably couldn't make a living off another figure in church history the way I do with Lewis."

The reason for Lewis' populari-

ty is found in his life, Bramlett said. "Lewis made mistakes—he was not a perfect man. But Lewis was an authentic Christian."

And Lewis' careful attention to his readers and fans while he was alive only increases the affection readers still feel, Bramlett added.

"He received 100 to 200 letters a week from people, and he always wrote back," he said. "And now I receive 300 e-mails a year from people asking me questions about Lewis."

But Bramlett said he doesn't think Lewis would be pleased with all the publicity he's generated since his death 38 years ago.

"He wouldn't like this at all. He would not like his name associated with a major industry, which is what it has become."

What Lewis would like, however, is the spiritual effect his books, such as "Mere Christianity" and "The Chronicles of Narnia," still have on readers decades after his death.

"I've found that talking about Lewis opens doors, and I can't tell you how many times people have come up to me after one of my talks and told me that C.S. Lewis was instrumental in their faith," Bramlett said. "That's what makes what I do worthwhile."

■ **The Billy Graham Greater Louisville Crusade** staff will host 14 meetings to share how churches can be involved in the June 21-24 crusade. For locations and dates call (502) 412-0978 or visit the crusade Web site at www.louisvillecrusade.org.

■ **Pulaski County** voters defeated two local referendums on alcohol sales last week. Prohibition proponents won in Somerset 1,959 to 1,320, and in Burnside 188 to 180.

■ **Campbellsville** University will host J. Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, as speaker for the school's convocation Feb. 21 at 10 a.m. in the Powell Athletic Center.

Past Nicholasville pastor acquitted of assault charge

NICHOLASVILLE—Nearly a year after being charged with second-degree assault, a former Kentucky Baptist pastor has been acquitted of the charge.

Patrick Wren, former pastor of Nicholasville Baptist Church, was accused of striking John Cox, 86, with a golf club during an argument last February in Wren's front yard. Cox's wife, Elexene, a member of the Nicholasville church, reportedly had argued with Wren the previous night at church after she and other members sought Wren's dismissal as pastor.

A Jessamine Circuit Court jury found Wren not guilty of the charge of assault, determining there was not sufficient evidence of wrongdoing.

Wren told jurors that Cox swung at him with a cane, he blocked the cane with a golf club, Cox lost his balance and both men fell down. Although Cox was treated for a cut above his eye, bruises and an injured shoulder, a police lab exam found no blood on the golf club.

Wren resigned as pastor of the Nicholasville church two weeks after the incident. He has since moved to Texas where he is working as an office manager for an air conditioning company. He told reporters he does not expect to return to the pastorate.

Louisville police find support ministry growing in size and scope

Continued from page 1

day without a cuss word is a good day in this job," Hunt said.

What the members of Shield of Faith did not know, however, was how much more was in store for them than simply an officers' support group.

"We just left the ministry in the Lord's hands, but we never dreamed where it would go," Manning said.

Soon after they formed in 1998, Sergeant Eric Johnson of the Louisville Police Department brought the group a prayer request: A 6-year-old boy named Malachi was rushed to Kosair Children's Hospital after he touched a live wire and burned his thumb and two fingers off.

A few days later Malachi's mother abandoned him there, leaving the boy with nothing but the clothes he'd worn into the hospital.

When Shield of Faith members heard this story, they knew they had to do more than simply pray.

Members solicited donations from the Fraternal Order of Police and chipped in their own money to buy clothes and toys for the boy. After visiting with him, Shield of Faith officers said they knew God had expanded their vision to include children like Malachi.

"We knew we had to add this ministry to what we did," Hunt said.

"It's the most demanding of our ministries," said Hunt, who noted that five of the children they regularly visited in the hospital already had died.

One of those children, Colby, had grown

so close to the officers who visited him before his death that Shield of Faith members served as pallbearers at his funeral.

"Colby was the first kid I went in to see, and when I asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, he said 'a preacher,'" Manning said, "I knew I was in the right place."

Colby's story attracted a lot of media attention as well, and Shield of Faith again saw its ministry expand as a result of the media attention.

"The press picked up on our visits with Colby, and through him we started getting new toys donated from the community each week," Manning said.

The response has been so great, in fact, that executives at a local Toys-R-Us warehouse donated truckloads of toys to Shield of Faith.

"They basically opened up the doors to the place and told us to help ourselves," Manning said. "It was incredible."

Shield of Faith now has a room at the department filled with enough toys to allow members to visit at Kosair Children's Hospital every week.

Sergeant Todd Brimm, a member of Valley View Baptist Church and a founding member of Shield of Faith, brings along "Police Officer Charlie," an oversized hand puppet that puts the children at ease.

"Sometimes when we leave the kids we're laughing, other times we're crying," Hunt said. "It's a profoundly humbling experience that really makes you appreciate how blessed you are."

Officers in Shield of Faith also make it a priority to assist fellow officers with pressing financial needs.

One of their most recent cases was an officer who had been forced into early retirement after he was diagnosed with cancer.

The chemotherapy from the cancer treatments had left him paralyzed, and since he had retired after only 12 years on the force his pension from the police department was not enough to cover his bills.

Shield of Faith members gave him \$1,000 and let fellow officers in another department know of the man's plight.

Those officers raised another \$5,000, helping keep the man out of serious financial trouble.

"Our first priority is to help officers out spiritually, and lead them to the Lord," Hunt said. "Our second is to financially help out indigent officers who need it not just in our department, but throughout the county."

Because the group does not hold fundraisers or actively solicit funds, they count on members to support their ministries.

Payroll deduction accounts have been set up so officers voluntarily can offer from \$1 to \$10 each pay period to support Shield of Faith's vision.

"Our motto in the group is 'Lead by Example,'" Manning said.

"It's amazing to see what the Lord has done through this group," he added. "I have definitely learned that when you put something in His hands, He'll take care of it."

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

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Church conflict? Seek biblical solutions

By Robert Hylton

Conflict is everywhere—in our families, in our friendships, in our churches, in our jobs. And all too often Christians simply imitate the world's approach to resolving conflict—fight or flight. When we do, we deprive ourselves of the heart-searching, God-honoring process that is revealed in the Bible for resolving conflict in our lives and living at peace with one another.

What is church conflict? It is the process of tension that develops in a congregation when two or more members or factions struggle aggressively to achieve goals or interests that appear to be mutually exclusive. Such issues as confessed beliefs, desired goals, assumed powers or the allocation of scarce resources can be potential hot spots for volcanic church conflict.

Almost everyone has heard of a minister who has been fired because he couldn't get along with people in the church. Most everyone also is aware of a church that has a history of chewing up its pastors.

Why is it that Christians can't seem

to get along? One reason is because most ministers never receive any biblical training in conflict mediation skills. A second reason is that most church members do not have an adequate awareness of biblical guidelines for resolving conflicts within the church body.

When minister and members have an inadequate biblical framework for managing disagreements in the church, conflict can and will quickly spiral out of control. By the time churches turn to someone for help, the conflict often has escalated

and many church members feel discouraged about resolving the situation.

One of the best ways of avoiding superficial worldly solutions to conflict in the church is to hold fast to three convictions that distinguish a biblical approach to resolving conflict:

■ *The centrality of the lordship of Christ.* Genuine reconciliation and peace between people can be found only through Jesus Christ. Christians in conflict should be encouraged to believe the gospel, trust in Christ and obey biblical principles of peacemaking given in Scripture such as John 14:27; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Coloss-

ians 3:15-16 and 2 Timothy 3:16.

■ *The spiritual role of the church in peacemaking.* Peacemaking is an essential function of the local church ministry. Christians should be encouraged to resolve conflicts personally and privately, but when we can't, God wants us to turn to our local church for guidance and assistance. God wants the church to restore peace by promoting biblical justice and reconciliation. Check Scriptures such as Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 3:10 and Hebrews 13:17.

■ *The necessity of wise spiritual counsel.* James 4:1-3 states that destructive conflict comes from desires that battle within people's hearts—yes, even very good, Christian people.

Resolving conflict adequately cannot stop with simply resolving surface issues. Both parties must be willing to find their fulfillment in Christ. Scriptures such as Galatians 2:20; Proverbs 18:13 and Romans 15:14 mandate that this can be accomplished only by following the biblical process of renouncing sinful desires and actions that have contributed to the conflict and seeking genuine reconciliation and forgiveness with others in the church.

Robert Hylton is director of the church strengthening division of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey

COMMENTARY

Separation is fantasy

In the Jan. 23 issue of the Western Recorder, Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, questioned whether John Ashcroft "is up to the job" of U.S. attorney general.

"It's important that the attorney general of the United States be committed without apology and without reservation to the separation of church and state," Walker said. "Sen. Ashcroft's record reveals a hostility to

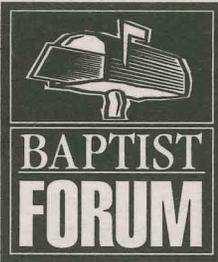
and a lack of understanding of that

cherished principle."

Who, I ask, finds this principle "cherished?" Certainly not the founding fathers or they would have included it in the Constitution of which it is not. It only exists in the fantasies of the enemies of God.

To the contrary, our nation, our government was founded upon the cherished principles contained in the Holy Scriptures, and nowhere do I find that the author of the same is to be excluded from their operation.

Does God Himself find this sep-



PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Shepherding the Shepherd

The Shepherding the Shepherd conference is gaining a reputation for significant ministry to pastors and spouses. The most recent conference was held Jan. 25-27 in Lexington.

"It keeps me going from one year to the next," said one pastor.

"I look forward to sharing with other wives and learning how they deal with the challenges of being a pastor's wife," exclaimed another participant.

"When I needed spiritual refreshing last year I turned on the music used at the conference and the renewal returned," stated Greg Faulls, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro.

Expressions of gratitude for the conference also are coming from church members who are excited because of the renewal experience for their pastor and wife. By providing spiritual enrichment and renewal for the primary caregiver in the church community, everyone benefits.

Another indication of the growing significance of the conference is that at least half of the participants register for the next year before leaving.

The spirit of the conference also seems to carry over to the host hotel staff. The hotel staff this year was prepared to meet every need, according to conference coordinator Richard Adams, director of the KBC's leadership development department.

The KBC leadership development team was equally prepared to conduct the conference and respond to all requests. It was rewarding to observe the competency and effectiveness of the KBC staff at work in this conference. And it was even more rewarding to realize that more than 300 church leaders were being encouraged and strengthened in their ministries.

My wife Kay and I experienced the worship and renewal with the participants. Dave Bullock and the praise band are very unique. Most of the

members are worship leaders in their churches. Bullock brings them together only about seven times each year so we were fortunate to have them.

The workshops provided practical help in dealing with personal and ministry challenges. New insights come when you are in workshops led by a pastor and/or their spouse. Some of these were led by Kentucky pastors and their spouses, permitting closer connection with fellow ministry couples. Garry and Cheryl Baldwin, from First Baptist Church of Owensboro, led a delightful workshop on the "Fruit Flavored Family" based on the fruit of the Spirit. Sue Ann Compton, wife of Billy Compton, the pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, led a workshop on "Pilgrim's Progress 2001."

We are all grateful to Baptist Healthcare System President Tommy Smith and to each hospital president for their willingness to co-sponsor this outstanding conference.

Please join with me in daily prayer for God's protection and anointing for all KBC ministers.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention



Bill Mackey

GIVING

Making a will involves simple 10-step process

By Laurie Valentine

If you have never made a will, here's how to do so in 10 easy steps:



■ *Determine the value of your estate.* List all of your assets in one column. Assets are what you own—your

real estate holdings, investments, bank accounts, business interests, life insurance, retirement plan benefits and IRAs, and your personal property. List all of your current liabilities in another column. Liabilities are what you owe—mortgages, credit card and other debts. Add each column. Subtract the total liabilities from total asset value; the difference is your net worth.

■ *Plan for each family member.* Your first responsibility is to take care of your family.

■ *Decide who you want to name as executor.* This should be someone who is both competent and familiar with your family.

■ *Decide who you want to name as guardian for minor children.* This person or couple will be given custody of your children if both parents die before all children are 18 years old.

■ *Determine how you want your estate distributed.* Make ample provision for your spouse and children.

■ *Consider Christian causes.* Consider tithing your estate through the inclusion of a bequest to your church and other Christian causes. Bequests can be outright or can be used to create an endowment fund from which only the earnings are distributed to the Christian causes named.

■ *Provide for common disaster.* Have an alternate plan of estate distribution should something happen to your entire family.

■ *Choose an attorney to assist in making your will.* Use an attorney whose practice includes estate planning and probate work.

■ *Keep your will in a safe place.* The signed original copy should be kept in your safe deposit box, a fireproof lock-box or by your estate planning attorney. Make sure that your executor has access to the place where it is kept.

■ *Keep your will updated.* Your will and other estate planning documents should be reviewed every three to five years to make sure they reflect God's purposes for your possessions.

For more information about making a Christian will, contact me toll-free at (888) 254-5701.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

Teens are old enough to learn how to manage money wisely

Q: When should our teenager learn about saving her own money? She is 16 and gets \$16 a week allowance. Also, she earns another \$20 to \$30 a week babysitting. She spends it all on clothes, makeup, music and junk food. I do not think she gives any to the church. I want her to open a checking or savings account, but she argues that she is too young to worry about saving money.

She is too young to worry about saving money, but she is not too young to learn to use money wisely. How will she learn to budget, to plan for the future and to experience the joy of giving? She sounds out of control when it comes to money. You should insist that she save a portion of her money each month and give a percentage to her church or some mission cause.

Opening a bank account might help her save or it might just change the way she spends. It could, however, help her know how to write a check, make a deposit and balance monthly statements. Also try a broader approach. Talk about money and its role in your family. Help her reflect on values beyond self-indulgence. Discuss Christian stewardship on a wide self-involving time, talent and money.

It will be a couple of years before college or independent living. Help her see those years as a time to learn to manage her own money. You might offer to match some of what she saves. Help her understand the power of compounding interest over many years. While she should not worry about saving, she should learn to use money wisely.—*Wade Rowatt*

Q: I am single, in my late 20s and ready to "settle down" and start looking for a mate. What steps should I take to begin this process?

The points I share are from a "relationship coaching" organization called "Life Partner Quest" (www.LifePartnerQuest.com). We will begin with five points this issue and share five more points in a later issue:

- *Have a clear vision and a life purpose.* Don't be satisfied merely working on the surface of life. Knowing who you are and where you are going in life will clarify significant issues for you.

- *Know your clearly defined requirements (the nonnegotiable) and needs (the negotiables).* In order to examine that you value and accept responsibility for your life, I suggest that you work through chapter two of Neil Clark Warren's book, "Finding the Love of Your Life."

- *Make an effective relationship plan.* Enlist people who know you well to keep you accountable for your values. These folks can help you avoid the traps of your blind spots, areas of your thinking beyond your own personal awareness.

- *Take personal responsibility for your past, present and future.* Divorces often result from the "blame game." Know that a future spouse is not a knight in shining armor to rescue you from whatever problems you have in your life.

- *Clarify this important question: Are you ready and available for commitment?* If you currently are divorcing, the answer is "no." Take two to five years off from the relationship search to make sure there is no realistic hope of reconciliation to your former spouse and to heal from your past. Otherwise, you are taking loads of baggage into the next relationship that can sabotage it. Check your community for divorce recovery programs. Also, say a big "no" to cohabitation which, besides being outside of God's will, carries with it high risks of breakup, abuse and other problems.—*James Stillwell*

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



Faith-based plan prompts church-state debate

President Bush's commitment to fund faith-based initiatives has drawn mixed reviews from religious leaders—and for good reason.

While the idea of faith-related social programs being infused with billions of dollars certainly sounds inviting, the proposal also raises serious church-state separation concerns.

Bush has emphasized that "we will encourage faith-based and community programs without changing their mission," adding that the government "will not fund the religious activities of any group." The challenge becomes how to fund a ministry's social outreach without impacting its religious mission either financially or philosophically.

The fact is that the separation of church and state is a vital American principle worth preserving and protecting. It also is a hallmark of historic Baptist belief and practice. Every version of the Baptist Faith and Message from 1925 to 2000 has included the clear affirmation that "church and state should be separate."

Declaring that "a free church in a free state is the Christian ideal," the faith statement adds, "The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends."

Taxpayer money is not intended to promote the spread of the gospel—nor should it be. There is no reason for the message of Christ to be funded through taxes paid by Jews, Muslims or Buddhists. Nor should Christians ever be required by government to finance the spread of any other religion. That truth is the essence of maintaining a free church in a free state.

Granted, President Bush has pledged to maintain "a commitment to pluralism." Yet he also speaks of a desire to "help all in their work to change hearts."

The way faith-based programs change hearts is through spiritual means. In the Christian faith, that means pointing people to personal faith in Jesus Christ, whether it's part of a program to help the homeless, drug addicts or unwed mothers. That is a commitment that must never be sacrificed to attract government funding.

Can faith-related social programs be subsidized with public funds without violating church-state separation?

Perhaps, but it will be a delicate tightrope walk that no entity should pursue without careful evaluation.

Any group that chooses to accept government funds should make certain there are no restrictions placed on the organization's religious expression. For their part, government leaders must be careful to fund social programs without providing direct aid to religious promotion. And that's easier said than done.

Even if that is accomplished, concerns remain.

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, called Bush's plan "an unprecedented merger of church and state." He added that "the very existence of a federal office whose principal purpose is to give tax dollars to religious groups is in irreparable conflict with the First Amendment."

By contrast, Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said he believes "there are ways to do this that will pass constitutional muster." He added, however, that if the government attempts to censor the message of any faith group, that organization "should never, under any circumstances, accept the money."

The bottom line, Land said, is that "the faith-based ministry's convictions should never be for sale."

Neither should church-state separation.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Kentucky Baptist journalists play role in state convention's origin

By Jack Birdwhistell

From the beginning of Baptist life, the major organizational unit has been the local congregation.

Very early in their history, Baptists in England and the New World organized into regional associations for fellowship and doctrinal discussion. The first associations in Kentucky were

Elkhorn and Salem, both established in 1785. As Baptist life evolved over the years, a major debate involved the built-in tension between the independence of the local church and the benefits of cooperation and organization. Kentucky was a major center of that debate.

In the midst of the Campbellite controversy, some Kentucky Baptists argued strongly for a state Baptist organization. After all, a loose national Baptist organization had been formed in 1814, and some other Southern states had begun the move toward forming "state conventions." Silas Noel, pastor of First Baptist Church of Frankfort, was in the forefront of this movement. He was joined by the men we already have highlighted as active in Kentucky Baptist journalism: Spencer Clack,

George Waller, Uriel Chambers and John Waller.

As a result of this interest, a "Kentucky Baptist Convention" was organized in 1832 in Bardstown. This convention, for a variety of reasons, seemed doomed from the start. Its meetings were poorly attended and there apparently was much suspicion about the word "convention." In spite of the heroic efforts of Noel and the support of the fledgling Baptist papers, the first Kentucky Baptist Convention was disbanded in 1837.

However, the idea of cooperation and organization lived on. In that same year of 1837, a new organization, the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky, was formed in Louisville. This general association, the precursor of today's Kentucky Baptist Convention, was able to attract enough support from local churches to survive and grow.

George Waller and John Waller, the journalists, were active in their support of the new organization. It probably is no coincidence that John Waller's Baptist Banner, the strongest Kentucky Baptist paper of the day, grew in popularity along with the general association. In fact, the

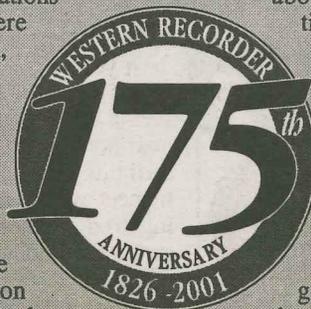
Banner's support probably contributed to the association's initial success.

During the 1840s and 1850s, the gap grew wider between Kentucky Baptists favoring cooperation and organization and those opposing it. While the majority of Kentucky Baptists gradually bought in to the new structures such as the general association, a sizable minority did not. Sometimes called "anti-missions" Baptists or "hardshells," these folks were not so much anti-missions as anti-organization, which they felt violated their Baptist tradition.

In later years, they became known as United Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Old Regular Baptists and other names. While they are noble preservers of Baptist independence, their numbers were soon far outpaced by the cooperating/organizing Baptists who joined forces with the general association.

From an historian's point of view, it seems clear that this move toward organizing and cooperating was what allowed Baptists of Kentucky to far outpace numerically every other Christian denomination in the commonwealth. In all this cooperating, Kentucky Baptist journalism has continued to play a pivotal role.

Ira "Jack" Birdwhistell is associate professor of religion at Georgetown College



Christian book expo expands to include hand cream, food

CBA outlet bestsellers

Nonfiction

- 1 "The Prayer of Jabez" by Bruce Wilkinson.
- 2 "Night Light" by James and Shirley Dobson.
- 3 "He Chose the Nails" by Max Lucado.
- 4 "The Wounded Spirit" by Frank Peretti.
- 5 "Praying God's Word" by Beth Moore.
- 6 "Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire" by Jim Cymbala and Dean Merrill.
- 7 "Reaching for the Invisible God" by Philip Yancey.
- 8 "Payne Stewart: The Authorized Biography" by Tracey Stewart and Ken Abraham.
- 9 "Daily Splashes of Joy" by Barbara Johnson.
- 10 "All Things Possible" by Kurt Warner and Michael Silver.

Fiction

- 1 "The Mark" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 2 "The Indwelling" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 3 "Unashamed" by Francine Rivers.
- 4 "This Present Darkness/Piercing the Darkness" by Frank Peretti.
- 5 "Assassins" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 6 "Left Behind" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 7 "Tribulation Force" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 8 "Nicolae" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 9 "Soul Harvest" by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins.
- 10 "The Redemption of Sarah Cain" by Beverly Lewis.

Continued from page 1
age."

"CBA Marketing," the monthly journal of the Christian Booksellers Association, noted that 30 percent of Christian store sales come from gift products, and more is expected in the future. "Giftware Business" magazine listed inspirational gifts as a top 10 trend for 2001.

Popular trends predicted by Christian retailers at the expo include: inspirational gifts and decor with a strongly Christian message, Bible covers and jewelry of all types and higher-end greeting cards, stationery and paper products. Other retailers predicted personal care items and gourmet foods as two up-and-coming Christian retail gift categories.

"A lot of Christian bookstores now have coffee shops associated with their stores, and these account for the growing interest in gourmet food products," said Michelle Brooks, advertising manager for Alda's Forever Home Collection, a giftware and home decor company.

That would explain the herb-infused crystallized sugars on display at the Expo. Examples of giftware trends included gold-plated crowns of thorns imported from Israel, dyed leather Bible covers with metallic closures and



EXPO More than 5,000 Christian retailers, publishers and distributors were in Louisville last week for the Christian Booksellers Association Expo. In addition to books, Christian gifts was a highly marketed category at the event.



silver pet tags with inspirational messages.

"We feel like our products are used to help build relationships," Brooks said, adding that the company's best-selling products at the expo included the crystallized sugar, luxury hand cream and scented ironing water.

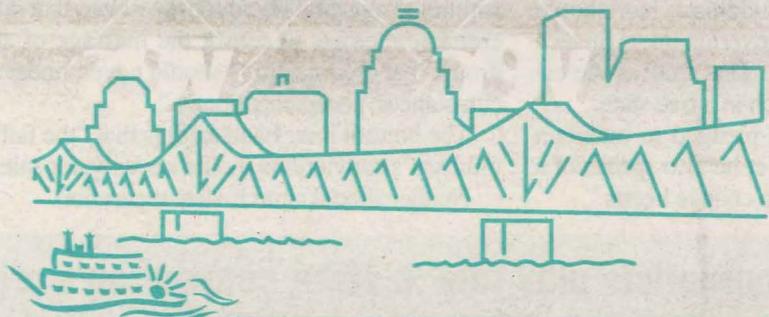
"A lot of our products come with inspirational messages, so they're a perfect fit for Christian retailers," she said.

Throughout the expo display floor, exhibitors and retailers voiced concern about the effect that the current economy is having on retail sales.

"Christmas was not as good a season as we retailers had hoped," said Bob Allums, special accounts manager for Crossway Books. "And we're not sure what the economy holds for us in the near future."

Still, sales are good enough to have sent hundreds of buyers to the expo's 240 exhibition booths at the convention center, and personal appearances at the expo from authors like Calvin Miller and Jay Bakker—son of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker—drew large crowds as well.

"We've had an amazingly good response," Splinter said.



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Rev. Charles Hawkins, Rector, St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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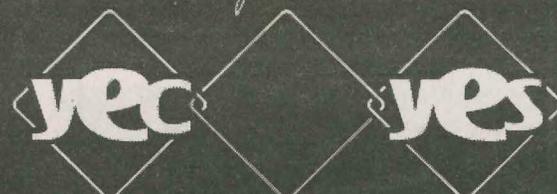
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Williamsburg	Quest	Nov. 16-17

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Theological concerns about cremation on the decline

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

CLAREMONT, Calif.—As cremation becomes more popular in the United States, few people are asking serious theological questions about the practice. But such indifference has not always been the case.

"I don't think there's any doubt but that Christian tradition started off in

favor of burial and against cremation on the grounds that resurrection would be easier for God to pull off," said Steven Davis, professor of philosophy and religious studies at Claremont McKenna College in Southern California.

Davis, a graduate of Princeton University's Divinity School, is one of few American theologians to have addressed this issue in any scholarly manner. He is author of a book titled "Risen Indeed: Making Sense of the Resurrection."

Although cremation had been practiced by the Greeks and Romans prior to the time of Christ, early Christians generally viewed cremation as a pagan practice, according to Davis and other historians.

One of the major arguments against cremation by Christians has been anticipation of a bodily resurrection at the Second Coming of Jesus. The Apostle Paul, for example, talks about a "resurrection body" in 1 Corinthians 15.

Most Baptists and most evangelical scholars agree that the Bible teaches a bodily resurrection from the dead. "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Jesus has been raised," Paul wrote.

From the first century until now, no one this side of heaven has had knowledge of how that bodily resurrection will take place. But early Christians seemed to think the physical body ought to be preserved as much as possible through burial, Davis noted.

"That argument gets a little dicey when you imagine that some bodies of Christians who are going to be resurrected will have been in the ground 2,000 years or more," he noted. "It doesn't seem like it's any more diffi-



HAVEN OF REST Columbaria, an option in a growing number of cemeteries, provide niches for family members to place the cremated remains of loved ones.

Cremation facts

Q. Is cremation cheaper than a traditional burial?

A. Yes, usually. Although not the only reason people choose cremation, cost often is a strong influence. Cremation eliminates the need for one of the most expensive funeral items, the casket. Caskets sell for \$2,000 up to as much as \$10,000, although some cheaper alternatives are available via the Internet. Other costs potentially eliminated through cremation include the purchase of a burial plot, purchase of a grave liner and payment for opening and closing the grave. Cremation services may be purchased for less than \$1,000 in some areas.

Q. What other expenses are associated with cremation?

A. Depending on what type of services are desired, additional expenses could include embalming, funeral arrangements, purchase of an urn or other memorial container and purchase of space in a cemetery or columbarium.

Q. Are family members allowed to witness the cremation?

A. Yes, if desired, most cremationists will allow family members to witness the insertion of the body into the cremation chamber. In some cultures, it is traditional for a designated family member to push the button to begin the cremation process. The actual cremation process, though, takes place within a closed chamber and cannot be viewed.

Q. Can cremated remains be scattered anywhere?

A. No. Cremated remains may only be scattered in areas where prior approval has been received and where allowed by law. While scattering fulfills the desires of some individuals, it can be a traumatic experience for other survivors, expert say.



ASHES to ASHES

Changing
Attitudes
about
Cremation

Cremation gaining acceptance as option in Christian circles

Continued from page 1

A 1999 study by Wirthlin Worldwide confirmed this trend by polling a random sample of American adults. The Wirthlin poll, conducted for the Funeral and Memorial Information Council, found those reporting they intend or their loved ones increasing to 46 percent, up from 32 percent in 1990.

Many experts in the funeral business trace the change in attitude about cremation to the early 1960s. That was when the Roman Catholic Church dropped its ban on cremation and Catholic priests in the U.S. began to allow cremated remains to be brought into church buildings for a funeral mass.

Although "there was a time when people thought it wasn't religiously acceptable, now they see it as more so," said Danny Heady, president of the Cremation Society of Kentucky. He said Catholicism's acceptance of cremation following Vatican II "would be the dominant factor" in increased openness to the practice.

Because of differences in church polity, Baptists never had an official ban on cremation, although the practice was rare. Traditional casket bur-

ials remain by far the most common practice among Kentucky Baptists, but cremation is a growing trend, according to statistics compiled by the Cremation Association of North America.

Data from the association show only about 8 percent of all Kentucky deaths last year went by cremation, placing Kentucky among the lowest cremation rates in the nation, along with Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and West Virginia. That rate is far below the national average of 26 percent, but it's growing annually.

The cremation rate in Kentucky has increased from less than 5 percent of all deaths in 1994 and is projected to reach 18 percent by 2010.

Heady said the primary factor in selecting cremation is personal preference. He added that the choice often is influenced by one's educational level.

"Generally the higher the education level, the more preference there is toward cremation," he noted. He said larger regions of the country with higher literacy rates typically also have higher cremation rates.

Heady said a frequent reason people choose cremation is because they had family members or friends who did

so. "The trend tends to feed on itself," he explained.

Linda Owens, owner of Highlands Funeral Home in Louisville, said open communication between family members and friends also contributes to the acceptance of cremation. Even people who don't feel comfortable with the process generally support a loved one's request to be cremated, she said.

Owens, a member of Audubon Baptist Church in Louisville, said her Christian faith helps her deal with the emotional aspect of cremation. "If I didn't have faith as a funeral director as to where that person is going, I'd have a real problem with this," she acknowledged.

Lloyd Stormont, associate pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, said he typically officiates one or two memorial services a year in which the deceased has been cremated.

Stormont said he has seen a gradual increase in the number of people choosing cremation. "A few years ago you didn't hear too much about cremation," he said. "It really didn't sound like something Christians wanted to do."

Affirming "the theological perspec-

tion, but Scripture is fairly vague on the details of burial and resurrection, he noted.

Many Christians today have a strong belief in bodily resurrection without believing the physical body must be preserved to make that happen. "The bottom line," Davis added, "is I don't think it makes any theological difference at all whether a person is buried or cremated."

Scripture doesn't necessarily teach that, but Scripture is fairly vague on the details of burial and resurrection, he noted. Many Christians today have a strong belief in bodily resurrection without believing the physical body must be preserved to make that happen. "The bottom line," Davis added, "is I don't think it makes any theological difference at all whether a person is buried or cremated."

Leverett's husband considered several factors in his request to be cremated. He liked the simplicity of it, the economy of it, the logic of it, said Leverett, owner of Heritage Funeral Home and Crematory near Baylor Hospital in Dallas.

Leverett keeps a portion of her husband's ashes at home. That's the part she wants to have co-mingled with her own ashes after her death.

But she took part of her husband's remains to Branson, Mo., one of their favorite vacation spots.

"We always hated to see the time coming when we had to go home," she explained. "So I spread his ashes there, and I said, 'Now you can stay here; you don't have to go home.'"

Based on reporting by Mark Wingfield of the Texas Baptist Standard and Editor Trennis Henderson

ISSUES

Cremation makes way for diverse memorial products

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

DALLAS—It's now possible to keep Grandma close to your heart after death.

If she's cremated, a portion of her remains may be placed in a special Keepsake Pendant that can be worn around the neck. In fact, portions of Grandma's remains may be spread out among all the grandchildren in multiple lockets to be worn or displayed.

This is just one of the trends in cremation-related products, spawned by the rapidly increasing acceptance of cremation.

"We used to leave our loved one at the grave site and walk away. Now with cremation, we can take our loved one with us," said Kraig Pike, owner of The Urn Store.com, an Internet vendor of what Pike calls "personalized memorials."

Cremated remains, known in the business as "cremains," may be placed in wind chimes, stored in drawers beneath a home-size eternal flame, mixed in with paint used to create a unique piece of framed art for the home or mixed with concrete to form man-made reefs strategically placed on the ocean floor to help keep nature in alignment.

Of course, cremated remains also may be scattered in a favorite place or kept in a wide assortment of decorative urns.

Cremated remains also may be buried the old-fashioned way or placed in a special niche in a columbarium at a cemetery or church.

Despite all the fancy alternatives, internment in the ground or a columbarium remains the most popular final resting place for cremated remains.

Of all bodies cremated in the United States in 1996, nearly 41 percent had their remains interred at a cemetery, according to a study by the Cremation Association of North America.

Another 36 percent of remains were given to family members to take home. These remains were believed to have been buried, placed in a columbarium, scattered or kept at home.

Eighteen percent of cremated remains were scattered by funeral home personnel as directed by the next of kin.

The remaining 5 percent of all cremated remains were not claimed. Unclaimed remains generally are stored by cemeteries or funeral homes or dis-

posed of in other legal means, the report says.

Cremation has put matters of final disposition of a loved one's remains in the hands of family members like never before. Funeral homes sell some products, such as urns. But other products and services are sold on the open market, especially via the Internet.

For example, The Urn Store.com lists 15 categories of urns, from burial urns to fine art urns to golf-theme urns.

But urns no longer are the primary thing sold by The Urn Store.com, Pike said. He also sells wind chimes, glass art blown by an artist with parts of the loved one's remains mixed in, lockets and a trademarked product called the EternalLight.

The EternalLight comes in two sizes, one small enough to be held in your palm and the other more appropriate for prominent display. Each unit features a small drawer in the base where a portion of the loved one's cremated remains may be kept. The base supports a glass dome covering an electronically simulated flame.

Locketts, however, are the No. 1-selling item at The Urn Store.com, Pike said. Locketts designed to carry portions of cremated remains come in a variety of sizes, shapes and finishes. Some are shaped like little urns, others like stars or hearts or glass domes.

One of the most unique uses for cremated remains is offered nationwide by Eternal Reefs, based in Decatur, Ga.

For \$850 to \$3,200, the cremated remains of a loved one may be mixed with cast concrete to form a man-made reef. The reefs are strategically placed in oceans around the world as part of a conservation effort to enhance sea life. To date, Eternal Reefs has built reefs in 1,500 sites.

Each reef may be labeled with a bronze plaque, and adventurous family members are allowed to dive into the ocean to see the reef in action. Photographs provided by the company show the reefs beginning to attract sea life after three months and fully integrated into sea life after three years. The product is designed to last 500 years.

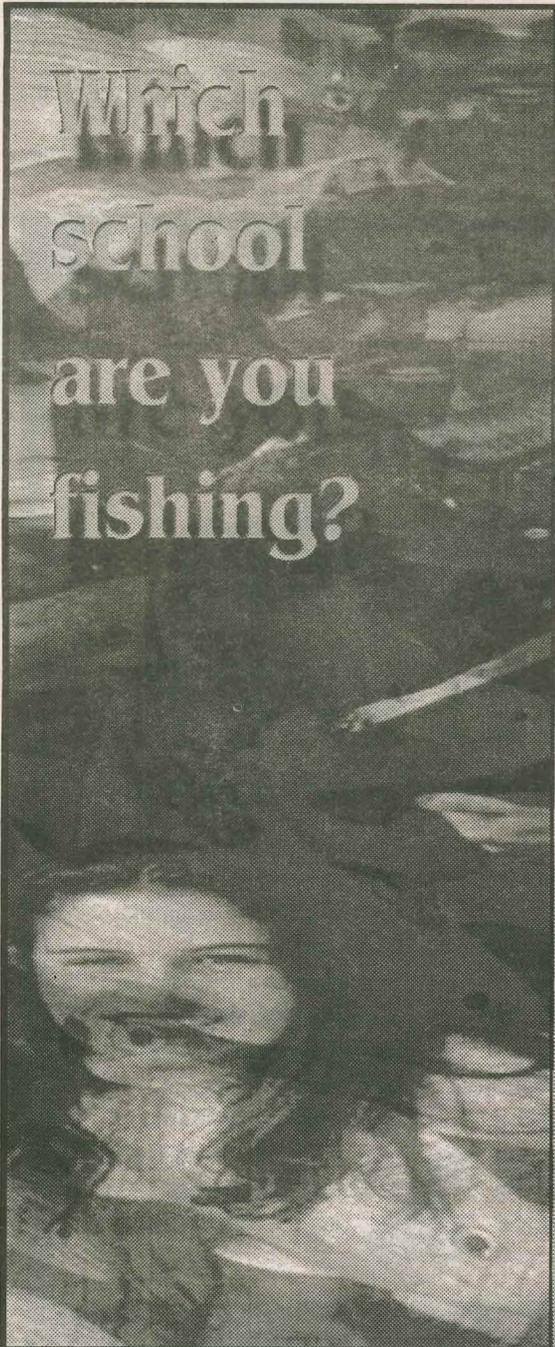
While all these products may sound peculiar to traditionalists, they serve a very traditional purpose, Pike said. "We're meeting the family's need to remember."

For \$850 to \$3,200, the cremated remains of a loved one may be mixed with cast concrete to form a man-made reef placed on the ocean floor.



ASHES to ASHES

Changing
Attitudes
about
Cremation



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- Frankfort Area - March 15, 6 pm est - Millpond Restaurant, 1010 Chico Dr., Lawrenceburg, Rick Long, Crestwood Baptist, 502-695-2088
- Paducah - March 26, 6pm cst - Paducah First Baptist, 2890 Broadway St., Roger Palmer, 270-442-2728
- Bowling Green - March 29, 7 pm cst - Hillvue Heights Church Prayer Chapel, 3219 Nashville Road, Lisa Eason, 270-842-0012, ext. 28
- Hopkinsville - April 2, 12 noon cst - Hillcrest Baptist, 920 Skyline Drive, Bill Houpt, 270-886-6017
- Russellville - March 13, 6:30 pm cst - Baptist Building, 196 West Third St., Carl Freudenthal, 270-726-2392
- Harrodsburg - April 23, 6:00 pm est - Mercer Baptist Association Offices, 315 North Main Street, Rick Snyder, 859-734-2339,
- Henderson - April 11, 11:45 am cst - Golden Corral, 1320 N. Green St., Andy McDonald, Zion Baptist, 270-826-4952
- Fulton - April 17, 6:30 pm cst - First Baptist, 115 Second St., Steve Payne, Lone Oak First Baptist, 270-554-4114
- Murray - April 23, 6:30 pm cst - Boulder's Café and Java, 1510 Chestnut St., Steve Payne, Lone Oak First Baptist, 270-554-4114
- Campbellsville - April 23, 11:30 am est - Campbellsville University, Little Auditorium, Beth Ellen Barton, 270-789-5360
- Owensboro - April 25, 11:00 am cst - Ruby Tuesday's, 500 Frederica Street, Kevin Hall, First Baptist, 270-683-3505
- Williamsburg - March 22, 6:30 pm est - Cumberland Inn (I-75, exit 11), Rick Fleenor, Cumberland College, 1-800-343-1609
- Elizabethtown - March 6, 12 noon est - Severns Valley Baptist, Marsha Dowell, 270-765-7822
- Northern KY - April 23, 6:30 am est - Main St. Baptist, 306 W. Main St., Alexandria, Wayne Deffinger, Main St. Baptist, 1-859-635-5725

Lexington Area:

Versailles Baptist Church - April 5, 6:30 pm est - 125 Green Street East, Versailles, Chris Briggs, 859-873-7338

Louisville Area:

Crestwood, Oldham Co. - March 8, 11:30 am est - Crestwood Baptist, 7105 Floydsburg Rd. Jeff Fusion, 502-241-8534 ext.18
 Highview Baptist Church - March 12, 6:30 pm est - 7711 Fegenbush Lane, Room #305, Kim Schmidt, 502-239-7711
 Hurstborne Baptist Church - March 22, 11:30 am est - 8800 Shelbyville Rd, Billy Thornton, 502-426-2451

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Religious leaders caution Bush on faith-based initiatives

Report: Most churches already do social work

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A majority of the 353,000 religious congregations in the United States do more than tend to a community's religious needs; they also provide aid on a broad range of social services and other charitable work.

Those service programs focus most frequently on human services, 92 percent; health, 90 percent; and international programs, 74 percent, according to "America's Religious Congregations," a 12-page report from Independent Sector.

In 90 percent of congregations, most of these services are carried out by volunteers, the report said.

The report was released the same day President George W. Bush sent his proposal for faith-based social service programs to Congress.

Congregations said they believe their emphasis on spirituality differentiated their social service programs from those offered by the government and other non-religious organizations.

"We provide the program or activity with a spiritual dimension, i.e. parenting classes through the eyes of faith," one congregation member told surveyors.

Nineteen percent of congregations said they considered a client's faith or religious affiliation when making decisions about who could participate in its programs. Of the more than 72 percent of congregations who had a formal ethical or moral statement, a majority said those beliefs guided their selection of programs and clients.

WASHINGTON (RNS)—As President Bush prepared to send Congress details of his plan to involve faith-based institutions in providing social services, religious groups cautioned him not to place too great a burden on charities and to maintain a healthy separation between church and state.

On Jan. 29, Bush announced his promised White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiative, which will help funnel government dollars to secular and religious groups for a range of social services, from homeless feeding programs to prisoner rehabilitation.

Many evangelical and conservative groups welcomed the proposal, while moderate-to-liberal groups warned of possible cracks in the wall of separation between church and state. Groups already involved in social services said some aspects of the program still must be developed.

"We're heartened that President Bush says he wants faith-based organizations to have a place at the table, but we hope the government will not vacate its essential seat at the table," said Joanne Negstad, president of Lutheran Services of America.

The executive director of Catholic Charities in Los Angeles—the nation's largest Roman Catholic archdiocese—welcomed the program but said government cannot attach too many regulations to its funding of faith-based organizations.

"Faith-based groups are wary that they will have to surrender some of their religious beliefs," said Monsignor



PRESIDENTIAL PLAN President Bush, surrounded by members of faith-based groups, speaks following their meeting at the White House, Jan. 29. Bush highlighted his desire for more private and federal money to flow to religious, charitable and community groups to help them do more to combat problems like alcoholism and drug abuse. (Reuters/RNS photo)

Gregory Cox.

The Muslim community, which enjoys a warm relationship with the Bush White House, said the president's plan codifies in an official way what Muslims already believe about helping the less-fortunate.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said he thinks Bush's plan can be implemented in a way that will pass constitutional muster. "The devil is going to be in the details."

He outlined four ground rules that he said would make the program constitutional and successful.

■ Viable secular alternatives must always be available.

■ No religious group should be discriminated against in the distribution

People turn to churches before government

WASHINGTON (RNS)—More Americans think religious groups and nonprofit charities offer hope for solving the nation's problems than local or national governments, according to a new study released Jan. 31.

The study, conducted by the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, bodes well for President George W. Bush's plan to funnel more government money to faith-based groups in exchange for providing social services.

"There's a receptivity in the American people for this kind of outreach," said Dwight Morse, president of the Campaign Study Group, who conducted the study. "Whether there's receptivity for it on Capitol Hill, or it proves constitutional or not, is another question."

Just more than half of all Americans have volunteered in the past year, and about a quarter—60 million—volunteer on a regular basis, the study found. Seventy-eight per-

cent of Americans have donated to charities or religious organizations in the past year.

Asked to name their top concerns, 42 percent ranked a lack of well-paying jobs as a serious problem, followed by affordable health care (39 percent), illegal drugs (38 percent), unsupervised children and teenagers (37 percent) and a decline in moral values (35 percent).

But when participants were asked where they turn for help in addressing these problems, the federal government ranked 14th of 15 possible answers. Most people said local police (58 percent), followed by churches, synagogues and mosques (56 percent) and nonprofit charities, such as the Salvation Army or Goodwill (53 percent).

"What is clear is that religion is playing more and more of a role in our communities," said Suzanne Morse, executive director of the Pew Partnership. "People are ready, willing and able to help."

of funds.

■ All government aid must go for the non-faith-based phases of the program.

■ "Voucherize" the intended beneficiaries of the funds, such as a working mother seeking after-school care, thereby addressing potential church-state problems. The recipients "would be making the decision about whether

they would want to use a faith-based agency and which one," Land said.

If the government attempts to censor the message of any group, then the group should not accept the money, Land added. "The faith-based ministry's convictions should never be for sale."

With additional reporting from Baptist Press

30 Years

It's hard for me to believe it was 30 years ago I began my service with Kentucky Baptists. Time flies when you're having fun. I began as assistant to the business manager of the KBC Executive Board on Feb. 1, 1971, while working on the master of divinity degree at Southern Seminary. I had called then KBC Executive Secretary Harold Sanders seeking a volunteer opportunity for a supervised field education experience. He interviewed me and introduced me to Garnett Morton, who was the business manager. Following that interview, Mr. Morton offered me both a supervised field education experience and a job. The rest, as they say, is history.

Following Mr. Morton's retirement in 1975, Frank Owen, the KBC Executive Secretary at that time, recommended to the Executive Board, and the Board approved, that I succeed Mr. Morton as KBC business manager. Following Dr. Owen's retirement, I had the privilege of serving with his successor, Bill Marshall. After 25 years of serving through the KBC Executive Board, I became president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation Feb. 1, 1996.

I can honestly state I have loved "most" every minute of these 30

years. I have been given so many opportunities to learn, grow and mature in denominational service. I have cultivated so many friends across the state who served in various leadership capacities in the convention, associations, churches, institutions and agencies. My life has been enriched by so many Kentucky Baptists. I have and still do love with a passion what I have been called to do throughout my 30 years. I believe with all my heart in the value of cooperation, and I pledge to continue to serve alongside KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey the missionary, educational and benevolent ministries of our larger family.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

I am one of those fortunate individuals who discovered early in my life God's career path. Had my father not died in 1966, after my graduation from high school, I would likely be an automobile dealer in Grenada, Miss.

Romans 8:28 is true, "... in all things God works for the good of those who love Him and have been called according to His purpose."

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

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Graham released from N.C. hospital

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (RNS)—Billy Graham has been released from a North Carolina hospital after nearly three weeks of hospitalization.

Graham, 82, left Mission St. Joseph's Health System in Asheville on Jan. 31. He had entered the hospital 20 days earlier after tests revealed that a blockage prevented the proper functioning of a shunt inserted last summer to help ease fluid pressure on his brain.

Physicians initially thought Graham would need to undergo surgery to remove the shunt, but the minister's "condition stabilized and tests showed no signs of infection," according to a statement from the hospital.

"I'm very grateful for all the prayers and messages of support that have come to Ruth and me," Graham said in the statement.

Graham, who is scheduled for a June 21-24 crusade in Louisville, was also treated for Parkinson's disease, which he was diagnosed with about six years ago.

The hospital stay thwarted Graham's plans to deliver the invocation at President Bush's swearing-in ceremony last month. His son, evangelist Franklin Graham, spoke in his stead.

Bush talks of faith at prayer breakfast

WASHINGTON—President Bush, attending his first National Prayer Breakfast since becoming president, called himself a believer in the power of prayer and voiced his commitment to serve people of all faiths and no faith.

"Men and women can be good without faith, but faith is a force of goodness," Bush told the crowd of several thousand people at a Washington hotel. "Men and women can be compassionate without faith, but faith often inspires compassion. Human beings can love without faith, but faith is a great teacher of love."

Bush credited the faith of national leaders for helping influence changes in society concerning slavery and civil rights.

"The same impulse over the years has reformed prisons and mental institutions, hospitals, hospices and homeless shelters," he said.

On a more personal note, the president spoke of his appreciation for "countless Americans" praying for his family.

"I believe in the power of prayer," he said. "The prayers of a friend are one of life's most gracious gifts. ... I hope Americans will continue to pray that everyone in my administration finds wisdom and always remembers the common good."

During the 49th annual breakfast, speakers ranging from Navy Adm. Vern Clark, chief of naval operations, to former ambassador and National

Bushes visit black D.C. church

WASHINGTON (ABP)—President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura, attended Sunday services Jan. 28 at the predominantly African-American Lincoln Park United Methodist Church.

The choice followed advice that a mostly black church in the District of Columbia would tend to be more theologically conservative than a predominantly white one, according to Mark Tooley, director of the Institute for Religion and Democracy, a conservative think tank.

Tooley said he made the recommendation and predicted the Bushes would continue to visit different churches before choosing one they will attend regularly.

Tooley noted in an opinion article in the Wall Street Journal that President Clinton's Washington

pastor, Philip Wogaman at Foundry Methodist Church, had invited Bush to attend that church.

"But prominent Republicans have not fared well there," Tooley wrote. "Bob and Elizabeth Dole, longtime Foundry attenders, very publicly left that church in 1995 when Foundry's theological and political stances became too far left."

A black church, Tooley wrote, "would be more than a photo op. It also would fit better with Bush's very genuine evangelical faith."

News reports said the service lasted an hour and 45 minutes. Lincoln Park Pastor Harold Lewis told the congregation he voted for Al Gore but added that Bush "is our president."

"My team lost, but I'm a team player," Lewis added.

Council of Churches President Andrew Young offered prayers for Bush, his administration and leaders across the country and the world.

Keynote speaker Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., urged the audience to be involved in acts of compassion, from signing organ donor cards to providing meals to the hungry to complimenting a family member.

"We have thought about it, but have we acted?" he said.

Vice President Dick Cheney, in

brief remarks, recalled Abraham Lincoln's words about relying on God.

"Our aim as a country is always, as Lincoln put it, to be at peace among ourselves and with the people of all nations," Cheney said. "It is a goal of high purpose, so high that we cannot hope to reach it alone. So we come together on this day, people of many faiths, to speak with one voice humbly asking the Creator for a measure of His grace as we carry out the duties given to us."

Emily Lumsden honored

By Robert Dunston

Each year during Cumberland College's Founder's Day chapel, we present the Mary Mildred Sullivan Award. The award honors a female member of the graduating class who has made significant contributions to college life and has demonstrated spiritual values.

Emily Lumsden, the daughter of Robert and Sally Lumsden of Newcastle, received the Mary Mildred Sullivan Award for 2001. Her major is secondary education with an emphasis in social studies.

Lumsden has involved herself in a variety of activities on the Cumberland College campus. She has been a member of the track team and a manager for the football team.

Lumsden has invested much of her time in Appalachian Ministries, a ministry to children sponsored by our Baptist Student Union.

During the 1999-2000 academic year she served as a team leader and assistant student coordinator for the program.

During the summer of 2000, she took advantage of Cumberland College's international study program in China, spending five weeks in Beijing.

There she studied elementary Chinese, Tai Chi and Chinese culture and society.

Her summer employment while in college has included working with the YMCA in Frankfort. She developed instructional lessons for second and third graders and led group outings to cultural sites in the area.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



In addition to her course work and volunteer work, Lumsden serves as dorm director of Asher Hall. For the past two years she has served in Cumberland College's freshman orientation program.

After graduation, Lumsden plans to pursue a master's degree in student personnel services.

She hopes some day to work at a college where she can establish a freshman orientation program based on the one at Cumberland College.

We congratulate Lumsden on her service to Jesus Christ and to Cumberland College. We know she will continue to represent her Lord and her school very well in the years to come.

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

Thank you, Kentucky Baptists

My mother started taking me to a Baptist church as an infant. We went three times a week with Dad. As I grew older, there were plenty of times I did not want to go, but we went. When the faith of my childhood became a life-changing reality for me, I no longer resisted church attendance, I looked forward to it and still do.

After being a pastor for 19 years, Baptist churches wherever I go feel like home to me. Fortunately for the past three and one-half years I have been in many Kentucky Baptist churches. Each is different, yet they are all alike in their reason for existence and many other "Baptist" ways. Visiting our Kentucky Baptist churches is one of the highlights of my job with Kentucky Baptist Homes

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

for Children. Large and small, rural and urban, traditional or contemporary, one, two or three services on Sunday morning, I enjoy each one.

So many of our churches support our ministries in various ways. Some have us in their budget, most give to the Thanksgiving offering, some save soup labels and pennies and many give food. During the past year many of you have written me letters of support in our fight for traditional family values. You wrote, tele-

phoned or e-mailed the governor and other elected officials on our behalf. We enjoyed your warm support at the Kentucky Baptist Convention in Bowling Green last fall.

Because of you, we have been in continual service to children and families since 1869. We are your ministry to abused, neglected, dependent children and to families who are in crisis. We realize the invaluable role Baptists have played in this ongoing ministry, and we are thankful for your support.

My goal, with the full backing of our board of directors, is to keep KBHC a vital ministry of Kentucky Baptists and not just another child welfare agency that is denominational in name only. We could not do it without you. The Lord will be with us in this life-changing work. Thanks, Kentucky Baptists!

Keep KBHC in your prayers this year as we meet new challenges and strive our very best to serve Kentucky's children and families.

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/>

O'Hair's body found?

AUSTIN, Texas (RNS)—The discovery of human remains on a Texas cattle ranch have brought investigators a step closer to solving the 1995 disappearance of atheist activist Madalyn Murray O'Hair and two of her adult children.

The discovery of the three sets of human remains Jan. 28 came five days after

prosecutors struck a plea bargain with David Roland Waters, who was scheduled to appear in federal court Jan. 29 on charges of kidnapping and extortion in connection with the disappearance of O'Hair, her son Jon Garth Murray and her granddaughter Robin Murray O'Hair.

Prosecutors had claimed the three family members were kidnapped, killed and dismembered by Waters, who had been O'Hair's office manager, and two accomplices.

Waters, 53, had pleaded innocent to the extortion and kidnapping charges. He was found guilty seven years ago of stealing \$54,000 from O'Hair's atheist organizations, and last year was sentenced to prison for probation violation and federal weapons offenses.

Investigators had long suspected that the bodies of the O'Hairs might have been disposed of on the 5,000-acre Cooksey Ranch, though a search of the property in 1999 had unearthed no evidence of the bodies. Last week's discovery of a metal artificial hip and three skulls in a shallow grave at the ranch revived hopes that those suspicions were accurate.

FBI Agent Roderick Beverly told Associated Press that Madalyn O'Hair had hip replacement surgery about two years before she disappeared.

Third Day's Mac Powell leads Dove Award nominees

'Experiencing God' nominated for Dove Award

NASHVILLE (BP)—"Experiencing God ... The Musical" has been nominated for a Dove Award.

The musical, based on the best-selling Baptist Bible study, is among five in the Musical of the Year category.

Since its release last year, approximately 80,000 copies of the musical's choral book have been sold.

Written by Claire Cloninger and Gary Rhodes, the 70-minute work features original songs, along with some classic hymns, praise choruses and contemporary songs.

In its more than 10-year history, the "Experiencing God" Bible study has been translated into more than 45 languages, and the workbook has sold more than 3.5 million copies worldwide.

NASHVILLE (RNS)—Mac Powell of the Christian rock group Third Day received nine nominations for this year's Dove Awards, the most of any Christian artist up for honors from the Gospel Music Association.

Powell's nominations—some of which are with Third Day—are in such categories as best male vocalist, group of the year and artist of the year.

The 32nd annual presentation of the awards will be held April 26 in Nashville. The nominees were announced Jan. 26.

Gospel artist Fred Hammond earned eight nominations—some of which are with his choir Radical for Christ—including urban recorded song, traditional gospel recorded song and contemporary gospel album.

Gospel groups Mary Mary, P.O.D. and Third Day and contemporary Christian musician Michael W. Smith each earned seven nominations.

Categories and nominations include:

Artist of the Year: Steven Curtis Chapman, P.O.D., Michael W. Smith, Third Day, Jaci Velasquez.

Male Vocalist of the Year: Steven Curtis Chapman, Fernando Ortega, Mac Powell, Mark Schultz, Michael W. Smith.

Female Vocalist of the Year: Yolanda Adams, Rachael Lampa, Nicole C. Mullen, Nichole Nordeman, Jaci Velasquez.

Group of the Year: Avalon, P.O.D., Plus One, Point of Grace, Third Day.

New Artist of the Year: Rachael



DOVE NOMINEES Mac Powell, right, of the Christian rock group Third Day, received the most nominations for the Gospel Music Association's Dove Awards. Powell, who won some nominations with the group, received a total of nine. The awards will be presented April 26 in Nashville. (RNS photo)

Lampa, Mary Mary, Stacie Orrico, Plus One, Mark Schultz.

Pop/Contemporary Album of the Year: "Crystal Clear" by Jaci Velasquez; "Live for You" by Rachael Lampa; "Mark Schultz" by Mark Schultz; "The Promise" by Plus One; "This Is Your Time" by Michael W. Smith

Inspirational Album of the Year: "A Story to Tell—Hymns & Praises" by Larnelle Harris; "God Is Working" by Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir; "Home" by Fernando Ortega; "Wayne Watson" by Wayne Watson; "Windows" by The Martins.

Southern Gospel Album of the Year: "A Farewell Celebration" by The Cathedrals; "A Taste of Grace" by Karen Peck and New River; "I Do Believe" by The Gaither Vocal Band; "Perfect Candidate" by Greater Vision; "Strong in the Strength" by Legacy Five; "Vestal and Friends II" by Ves-

tal Goodman.

Bluegrass Album of the Year: "By Request/Greatest Hits" by The Easter Brothers; "Empty Fields" by Lewis Phillips; "Heart and Soul" by The Easter Brothers; "Inspirational Journey" by Randy Travis; "Just Over in Heaven" by Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver; "Many Roads to Home" by David Johnson; "While the Ages Roll On by" by Ralph Stanley.

Dove Awards nominations go to recordings released from Oct. 1, 1999, through Sept. 30, 2000, and are voted on by the 5,000-member Gospel Music Association.

Gospel Music Association President Frank Breeden said he's excited

about the opportunities to move the Dove Awards into the mainstream of American music.

"The best story in Christian music in 2000 was the unprecedented success our industry saw in breaking new talent," Breeden said. "The nominations for this year's new artist of the year category reflect artists who achieved the highest sales for a class of debut album in our industry's history. Our industry's maturity is also displayed as these accomplishments occurred across a wide spectrum of musical styles."

The 32nd annual Dove Awards ceremony, April 26 at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, will be produced by Dick Clark Productions.

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It pays to not be impatient

Patience is a very important part of the Oneida ministry, especially for the president. Those who knew Dr. Moore well knew that our former president was not blessed with patience. No matter how hard and fast one worked, he nearly always believed the job could have been done faster.

Once, when he was a little unhappy with me at the estimated time given to complete a project, I told him that after all, "It took God six days to create the world."

He quickly replied, "Mr. Underwood, I am not asking you to create the world, just to complete this simple little job." The project was going to take three or four days with the help of several boys in the student work program. The amount of time I was given to do the job was a little more than half a day.

A little over a year ago we began to completely refurbish our two high school boys' dormitories. The plan was to do one of the four floors at a time until all were completed. To keep our costs to a minimum, our maintenance and new construction crews would do most of the remodeling. By using our staff and many volunteers, we would save thousands of dollars in labor costs.

The projected time to complete each floor was about six months. We knew the first floor to be remodeled might take one or two extra months. The boys were moved off the floor into other rooms, making conditions crowded, but manageable. Serious work began in January 2000. The projected date of completion was June, or possibly August.

Like most other great plans, this one was destined to be plagued with delays. The first serious dilemma was a major leak in the school's indoor pool. Our men were pulled from the remodeling in

order to take care of that problem. The plumbing was expected to take up to a month to repair, but the problem was much greater than expected. We considered having an outside contractor do the work, but decided to save the money and repair it ourselves. The one-month project turned into three months. Meanwhile, most remodeling in the dorm was at a standstill.

Finally, serious work continued in the dormitory with a new projected date of late September.

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

This date was replaced with a November date, which gave way to a Christmas completion date. Though many of our staff voluntarily gave up Christmas vacation time to work on the dorms, the floor still was not completed when our students returned from the Christmas break.

We could definitely see light at the end of the tunnel, but it was still just light. Maybe the second week in January would bring an end to the work. Finally, the last week in January, our students moved back onto the floor they had vacated 13 months earlier.

I did not hear any complaints from the students. They were more than pleased with the new closets, doors and windows. The restrooms and shower rooms have been remodeled with the finest fixtures and materials. The heating and air conditioning ductwork has been completely redone. New floor tile was installed, along with new light fixtures. Some of our students and other staff worked nights and their days off to complete the work. Now just three more floors. Let's see, would that be 2002, 2003 or 2004?

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

In the beginning, God

As a 9-year-old, Billy Pfoff attended RA camp at Clear Creek in 1944. "The dirt and gravel road ended at the creek near Kelly Hall. We had sessions in Alice Rains Auditorium. The sulfur from the bubbling spring permeated the valley," Pfoff remembers.

As professor of Bible and general studies he regularly drinks the spring water. "We let it stand unopened for 10-12 hours and it loses the sulfur taste; it is excellent water," Pfoff stated.

Pfoff left the mountains for a 27-year career in the Air Force, retiring to a farm in central Kentucky. "My wife, Loretta, and I taught Sunday school class for seven years, and the Lord seemed to knock at the door of our lives and direct me to secure additional preparation in Bible teaching. The seminary required a one-year supervised teaching experience and Clear Creek gave me the opportunity," Pfoff said.

With a Ph.D. in science and biblical training, Academic Dean Darlys Warren and I recommended he join the faculty to teach science and Bible.

"These 12 years have been very rewarding. Our students are

products of a culture and school systems permeated with the theory of evolution. As a Christian I believe God is creator and He literally did it by speaking the world into existence. He is God and has that power. Throughout my scientific studies I discovered laws that support creation: the first and second laws of thermodynamics, gas

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

laws and cell division. There has to be a starting point, a Master behind it all. I help our students understand how the laws of science work, and hopefully they leave here with confidence that evolution is not a workable option," Pfoff explained. He has developed a chronological study of the Bible and teaches Hebrew courses.

When Pfoff is on the teaching team for the senior seminar, students expect to be asked, "What is the most important verse in the Bible?"

They are ready: "In the beginning, God!"

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

Baptists sending help to earthquake-damaged India



INDIA QUAKE Policemen walk past the remains of a department store in Ahmedabad after a powerful earthquake wreaked havoc in western India. More than 14,000 bodies have been recovered since the powerful quake ripped through the region on Jan. 26. (REUTERS/RNS photo)

WASHINGTON (BP)—Christian aid groups were marshaling resources last week to join in the global response to the most devastating earthquake in India in 50 years.

The official death count, as of Feb. 1, had surpassed 14,000 people in western India, with officials in the state of Gujarat estimating that the toll could reach 35,000.

The earthquake struck the morning of Jan. 26, centering in Gujarat and registering 7.9 on the Richter scale.

Baptist World Aid, the relief and development arm of the Baptist World Alliance, has committed an initial \$10,000 to assist immediate relief efforts and has launched a special appeal for funds.

Meanwhile, a Southern Baptist regional assessment team has been dispatched to the area to determine the most pressing needs, such as medical supplies and food, for response.

Gujarat is an area where Christians have suffered in recent years, with churches destroyed and Christians attacked, according to the Baptist World Alliance. There is no known Baptist group in the state; thus BWAid will be working through indigenous evangelical and ecumenical relief groups, such as the Evangelical Fellowship of India Committee on Relief.

Gujarat and four other states suffered the greatest destruction, and all are "frontline areas where missionaries are persecuted," reported Christian Aid Mission, based in Charlottesville, Va.

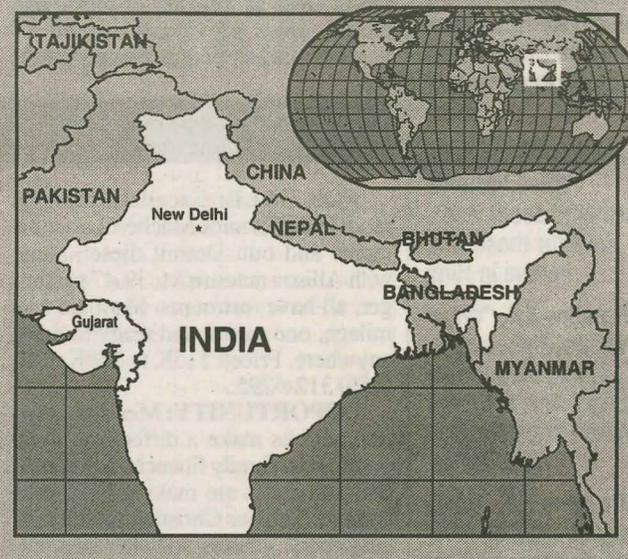
"Indigenous groups are already helping as much as they can," said Lance Thollander, Christian Aid director for India and Pakistan, "but they cannot go to their neighbors with aid they don't have."

Steve Nelson, director of hunger concerns with the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said, "Southern Baptists are moving quickly to meet needs in Jesus' name as they attempt to ease the suffering of these dear people."

How to help India earthquake victims

■ Donations earmarked "India earthquake" can be mailed to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board General Relief Fund, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

■ Donations designated for "Indian Earthquake Appeal" can be mailed to Baptist World Aid, 6733 Curran St., McLean, VA 22101. For more information, call (703)-790-8980.

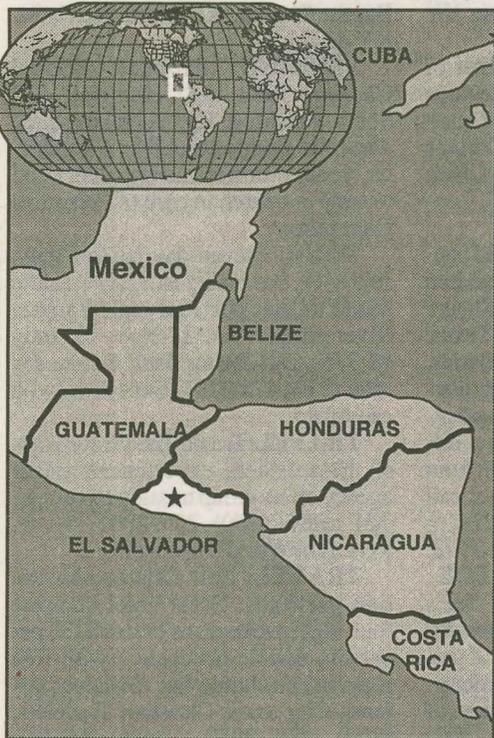


BWA's Asian regional secretary, Bonny Resu, said the greatest needs are medical personnel and medicines for the thousands of people who were injured.

The Indian Church's Auxiliary for Social Action already is responding to needs and aims to assist about 35,000 people with food, shelter, water, blankets, clothes and other basic relief items.

In appealing for financial support, BWAid director Paul Montacute said, "Baptists again have the opportunity of being involved in Carey's India and of standing alongside our Indian sisters and brothers, as they seek to bring relief to those who are suffering."

Baptist disaster relief teams also dispatched to El Salvador earthquake area



By Brittany Jarvis
SBC International Mission Board

SANTIAGO de MARIA, El Salvador (BP)—Southern Baptists are increasing disaster relief efforts in El Salvador, which was rocked Jan. 13 by a devastating earthquake.

More than 700 people were killed and 190,000 homes were damaged or destroyed by the disaster.

Four teams are being assembled to aid local churches with cleaning home sites and distributing blankets, food and plastic sheeting in Santiago de Maria.

The first four groups to aid in relief during February will be composed of volunteers from California, Texas, North Carolina and South Carolina. It is anticipated that after two weeks of ministry in Santiago de Maria, leaders will evaluate new opportunities to minister throughout El Salvador.

In El Salvador, the International Mission Board is focusing on Santiago de

Maria to fulfill one of its main objectives in disaster relief: to help churches and pastors expand their relief ministries, said Jim Brown, the board's human needs consultant.

"The church in Santiago de Maria is very proactive and ministry-minded," Brown said. "The desire whenever we do disaster relief is to work through local churches. We're the resource but the local church is actually doing the ministry."

Brown said relief efforts also are targeting future problems that might cause further damage, such as landslides, which are common during the rainy season.

"We're looking to meet needs now, but also to be the best prepared we can be when the rainy season comes," he said.

Many of the workers helping in El Salvador have previous experience dealing with disaster in this part of the world. When Hurricane Mitch barreled through Central America in 1998, volunteers from California and Southern

Baptist missionaries mobilized to offer relief.

"Southern Baptists' two greatest assets are our speed and availability of resources," Brown said. Currently, the board has provided \$60,000 in relief funds for El Salvador.

He said the main goal of the relief work is to "support and strengthen the local church and meet needs at the same time."

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and International Mission Board are partnering to recruit volunteers for relief trips leaving Feb. 18 and 25.

For more information about joining a relief team, contact Pam Ortego of the North American Mission Board at (770) 410-6000, ext. 6131, or call the International Mission Board's volunteer office for Mid-America at (804) 219-1221.

Contributions to the relief efforts can be sent to: International Mission Board, General Relief Fund—El Salvador Earthquake, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

PEOPLE

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Jim McKinley

Valentine's Day is just a few days away. For many people, that day is the big time of the year to think about love.

But for those of us who know Jesus, our big time of love focuses on the cross of Christ which vividly displays His love for us.

Romans 5:6-10 presents three beautiful statements about God's love for those who believe in Him:

■ Romans 5:6, "When we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly." This is a clear reflection of God's deep love for us.

■ Romans 5:8, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." That is a reminder that even when we were wicked, He gave His life for us.

■ Romans 5:10, "When we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son."

This passage tells us that perhaps on some occasions, one of us might possibly die for a good person but even that is not apt to happen.

We just aren't like that because we usually are thinking mostly of ourselves.

But God in His love is different. His thoughts and actions are about us. He offers us eternal life through faith in His Son. That is true love.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me."

Jim McKinley is president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **CAMPBELLSBURG**—Campbellsburg Church called Russell Winn as pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Siebert Sullivan is available for supply, revivals or interims in central Kentucky. Sullivan previously was pastor of churches in Tennessee and Kentucky. For information, call (270) 465-6090.

■ **FULTON**—First Church called Elwood Doss as minister of music and media. Doss previously served 17 years as minister of music/senior adults

at First Church, Martin, Tenn. Jack Acree is pastor.

■ **GAMALIEL**—Gamaliel Church ordained Randall Baskett and Danny Laster as deacons. Danny Pace is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—The African Children's Choir will be in concert at Edgewood Church, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m., First Church, Feb. 11 at 10:45 a.m. and Second Church, Feb. 11 at 6:30 p.m. For information, call Joe Ball at (270) 886-4461.

Edgewood Church called Nick Sandefur as pastor. Sandefur previously was pastor of Pellville Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host the Journeymen in concert Feb. 18 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 367-0218. Geoffrey Lacefield is pastor.

Lyndon Church will host Muskingum College instrumental group, New Concord, Ohio, in concert Feb. 17 at 7:30 p.m. Jim Holladay is pastor.

Rockford Lane Church will host Mark Swift in concert Feb. 11. For information, call (502) 447-2591. Randal Pollock is pastor.

■ **MAY'S LICK**—May's Lick Church will host Survivor Youth Con-

ference for youth and youth leaders Feb. 23 and 24. For information, call (606) 267-2022. David Cheek is pastor.

■ **MORTONS GAP**—Freedom Church will host homecoming services Feb. 25. Guest speaker will be Bob Morrison, director of missions for Little Bethel Association. Special music by Living Waters. For information, call (270) 258-5659. Terry Jones is pastor.

■ **SMITHFIELD**—Smithfield Church and Henry County Association will host a stroke awareness and prevention seminar by Life Line Screening at Smithfield Church Feb. 13 at 2:30 p.m. For information, call (800) 679-5609.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Excellent 1976-80 model GMC motor coaches. Like new inside and out. Detroit diesel, some with Allison automatics, 39-47 passenger, all have restrooms. Most are low mileage, one owner and ready to drive anywhere. Priced \$15K to \$50K. Call (859) 312-6295.

OPPORTUNITY: Men and women: help us make a difference while giving your family financial assistance. Our associates are making \$100-plus an hour. Sell our Christian products to customers, schools and churches. Direct sales and home parties, 50%; fundraisers, 10%. Call today for your free info packet: (800) 839-2506. Ask for Christine. www.legendsofffaith.com.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor of education and youth to assist new senior pastor. Williamstown Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist church located in a small, northern Kentucky town near large metropolitan areas, is striving for a purpose-driven blended ministry with a weekly attendance of 250-plus and great potential for growth. Candidate should be energetic, self-motivated, well organized and a creative team player who has an ability to relate to youth and adults on a personal and spiritual level. A bachelor's degree is required and a master's with related experience is a plus. Send resumé to: Stephen C. Rice, 214 North Main St., Williamstown, KY 41097; e-mail to: srice@fuse.net. Phone: (859) 824-4102.

SEEKING: Southern Baptist church seeks immediate full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Search Committee, c/o Hillside Baptist Church, 2436 9th Ave., Greeley, CO 80631. Hillsidebaptist@Juno.com.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Richmond, Ky., with a resident membership of 1,336, is seeking a minister of music. The vision for this ministry within our congregation and community is for someone who will coordinate a comprehensive music ministry for people of all ages. Candidate must have a bachelor's degree in music and a music degree from an accredited seminary (or in process). Candidate should have a calling to this particular area of Christian ministry and a minimum of two years experience in coordinating a comprehensive ministry of music or other professional music experience. Superior skills in choral directing are a must. Resumé with references should be sent to: Minister of Music Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 697, Richmond, KY 40476-0697.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church of Carlisle, Ky. A seminary degree is necessary. Previous experience as a church pastor would be beneficial. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Eugene R. Snapp, chairman, 645 Upper Jackstown Road, Carlisle, KY 40311.

SEEKING: Valley Station Baptist Church, 5416 Valley Station Road, Louisville, KY 40272, is now accepting resúmes for full-time pastor position through March 16, 2001. Pastor profile and other information will be provided upon request. Please contact church office, (502) 937-1730, or Eddie Foley, (502) 447-0291.

SEEKING: Bethel Baptist Church in Franklin County, Ky., is seeking a part-time minister of music. Congregation and choir skills necessary. Send resumé to: M/M Search Committee, Bethel Baptist Church, 8200 Owenton Road, Frankfort, KY 40601. Phone: (502) 227-7278.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Hurricane Baptist Church in rural Trigg County. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Hurricane Baptist Church, 4177 Hurricane Road, Cadiz, KY 42211.

SEEKING: Senior pastor. Main Street Baptist Church is a progressive Southern Baptist church located in the Northern Kentucky area. Ideal candidate to fill our position will be highly motivated, spiritually driven and have a master's degree from an accredited seminary. This candidate will be selected to lead this rapidly growing church involved in a very aggressive building program. All interested individuals should send a resumé with cover letter to: Pastor Search Committee, 306 West Main St., Alexandria, KY 41001. For a more detailed job description, go to our Web page at www.mainstreetbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Minister of children/children's pastor. Zion Baptist Church is a purpose-driven Southern Baptist church in Northwestern Kentucky seeking a full-time leader for children's ministries, birth through grade 6. Candidates should possess vibrant people skills and strong administrative and leadership gifts; must also demonstrate a genuine call of God, a mature personal relationship with Jesus and a servant's heart. Send resumé to: ZBC Search Committee, Zion Baptist Church, 8158 Highway 351, Henderson, KY 42420. Telephone: (270) 826-4952; fax: (270) 830-8053; e-mail: edavis@henderson.net; Web site: www.zionbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Immanuel Baptist, a multi-generational church in Lexington, Ky., is seeking an experienced seminary graduate to be on the cutting edge in preschool ministry with a strong leadership gift and a passion for reaching unchurched preschoolers and their families. Respond to IBC Personnel Committee, 3100 Tates Creek Road, 40502.

SEEKING: Christian couple to provide quality childcare to children and adolescents. Opening due to couple resigning to care for elderly family member. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age. Benefit package, competitive salary and housing provided. Send resumé to: Tim Sharp, director of residential care, PO Box 579, Carmi, IL 62821, or phone (618) 382-4165, ext. 14, or e-mail timsharp@bchfs.com.

SEEKING: Full-time minister for rural church. Good environment to live in; parsonage provided. Send resumé to: Betina Florence, PO Box 326, Brownsville, KY 42210.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for New Hope Baptist, a small, rural, conservative (KJV) Eastern Kentucky church. Contact: Pulpit Committee, PO Box 62, West Liberty, KY 41472. Stephen Howard, (606) 743-7437.

SEEKING: Full- or part-time minister of music. Looking for a motivated individual to lead music ministries. Send resumé to: Lewisport Baptist Church, PO Box 384, Lewisport, KY 42351.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. Primary responsibilities include sharing in worship planning and leadership; conducting adult and children's choirs. Send resumé to Chevy Chase Baptist Church, PO Box 22113, Lexington, KY 40522-2113.

SEEKING: Christian married couples and singles to help raise children at Boys and Girls Country, a 200-acre ranch just north of Houston, Texas. Great benefits, competitive salaries, newly renovated, spacious living quarters, plus a rewarding lifestyle and atmosphere. If you want to make a difference in the lives of children from elementary age through college, call Shirley at (281) 351-4976, ext. 214, or fax your resumé to: (281) 351-4978. www.boysandgirlscountry.org. EOE

SEEKING: Person who feels called to ministry with preschoolers for the 3/4-time position of minister of preschool and assistant CDC director. College degree preferred. Salary of \$250-300 weekly. Call Debbie: (502) 239-0316.

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

SEEKING: Full-time administrative assistant to add to our ministry and growing church. Experience preferred. Please inquire at (502) 491-1920 or send resumé to: West Broadway Baptist Church, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40220.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of education and administration to continue development of a comprehensive Christian education program in a growing church. Experience required, seminary degree in education preferred. Send resúmes and inquiries to: Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church, 3400 Summerfield Drive, Louisville KY 40220, Attn: Minister Search Committee. E-mail: Hunsinger.office@att.net.

SEEKING: LaCenter First Baptist Church is seeking a minister of music/senior adults. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, FBC, PO Box 239, LaCenter, KY 42056.

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

SEEKING: Farmdale Baptist Church, 5610 U.S. Highway 127 South, Frankfort, Ky., is seeking three part-time positions: children's minister, youth minister and organist. Send resumé to church in care of Personnel Committee.

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Couple's ministry taking God's commands literally

By Yvonne Betowt
Religion News Service

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (RNS)—Darlene Berry drove up to the door of a crack house at a housing project in October 1998, got out and walked inside not knowing what she might encounter.

But she was there on a mission—to rescue Dee Garrett from a life of drugs that had robbed her of her job, her home, her self-esteem and even her children.

"I had met Darlene about two months before through another friend, and when I saw her (walk into the crack house), I thought I had met an angelic being," Garrett said. "She asked me if I wanted to leave and get help and I did. She took my hand and led me out. She provided me with my immediate needs. She got me dry and safe and helped me more than anyone ever in the state of Alabama."

Garrett, a single mother, had a successful career with Procter & Gamble and even taught Sunday school before ending up on skid row three years ago. Someone offered her a joint of marijuana, laced with crack cocaine, and she said she was "immediately hooked. It took complete control of my life. I tried to kill myself three times."

But the persistence and patience of Mrs. Berry helped Garrett get back on her feet and back in touch with her two daughters, ages 15 and 13, whom she hadn't seen for two years.

"It's not to say I've walked the straight and narrow since Darlene got me out of that house, but she and Brian (Mrs. Berry's husband) have supported me," Garrett said. "They literally saved my life. No matter what the situation or the time, Darlene has been there for me. They've touched my life in so many different ways. I still fight a spiritual warfare every day and live in a state of fear that I will not make it, but thanks to Darlene, I have peace to know I can survive this."

Garrett is just one of many women the Berrys have helped in the last five years. They took Jesus' message to heart when He said to sell what they had and give it to the poor. Five years ago, the Berrys sold their house, bought a motor home and quit their jobs so



FAMILY MINISTRY Brian and Darlene Berry (center) meet with Mary Reeder (left) and Dee Garrett. About five years ago the Berrys started Lighthouse Christian Ministries, an effort to help women in abusive or dependent situations. Reeder is vice president of the board of directors, and Garrett has benefited from the ministry. (RNS photo)

they literally could follow Jesus' command.

With little financial backing and a whole lot of faith, the Berrys ventured into the ministry, not knowing what God wanted them to do—or how they would even survive in this economically driven society.

Today, the Berrys are founders of the Huntsville, Ala.,-based Lighthouse Christian Ministries, which helps women living in abusive or dependent situations start a new life.

"God provided a buyer for our home and a 27-foot motor home," Mrs. Berry said. "Everything we owned would have fit in most people's hallway. Most people told us we were crazy. We knew it wouldn't be a financially successful endeavor, but God has blessed us beyond measure and sustained us."

Mrs. Berry, 42, worked for the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce for seven years and Berry, 39, worked with the Huntsville City Schools' security department for 13 years.

Despite health problems ranging from her diabetes to his stroke two years ago—and no health insurance—the couple's faith has carried them into

a world they never knew existed—drugs, alcohol, poverty, abuse and other situations in which most "respectable people" would not dare venture.

After living two years in the motor home, in 1997 they moved back into a house so their daughter Lindsey, now 8, would have a place to call home when she started school.

But they've kept the motor home just in case. "Lindsey adapts to any environment we find ourselves in," Berry said.

The fact that their ministry is now stationary hasn't stopped the Berrys from going into the highways and byways to lend a hand.

Mrs. Berry and Mary Reeder, vice president of the Lighthouse board of directors, often make late-night visits to help women who are in crisis situations, transporting them to a safe shelter, or helping provide food, clothes and, if it's available, money for utilities or rent. They have even obtained a couple of automobiles for women without transportation.

"It's really nothing we have done," Mrs. Berry said. "It's just the love of God reaching out to help those in need. It has been a real growing and learning experience for us. We're in a ministry

of encouragement and when people are in a crisis and don't have anyone to turn to, we have the time to help them. We just respond to needs."

For Reeder, a member at Huntsville's First Baptist Church, it has been an eye-opening experience to discover the needs of so many women.

Reeder, a former Southern Baptist missionary with her husband, Jim, is a hands-on board member who actively helps in the ministry.

Reeder said many of the situations they face involve people with mental illnesses and she hopes the ministry eventually will operate a recreational drop-in center which will be operated by consumers who have some type of mental illness. She is especially empathetic to people with mental illness because her 42-year-old son has such an affliction and can't work most of the time.

Lighthouse Christian Ministries has two other areas of ministry—music evangelism and Christian publishing.

The Berrys are Christian musicians who perform at churches and religious functions. They also help aspiring Christian writers get their works published.

Berry often serves as an interim minister of music at local churches and does odd jobs to help make ends meet. Mrs. Berry serves as a fill-in secretary for local churches and with the local Baptist association. They also depend on donations from friends and family members to survive.

The Berrys plan to start a Christian magazine to not only help publish aspiring writers' work, but to use it to teach job skills to women in a safe environment. The women won't be fired if they can't work because of personal problems.

"Once I had someone tell me that they hoped the people we were helping deserved it," Reeder said. "I had never really thought about it that way, but I told them, 'No, they probably don't deserve it any more than we deserve all the blessings God gives us.'"

"If you work with someone because they deserve it, you will fail. If you predicate it on their ability to reciprocate, you get hurt," she added. "You try to help them realize their dreams even if they are different from yours."

Five years ago, the Berrys sold their house, bought a motor home and quit their jobs so they literally could follow Jesus' command.

Super Bowl quarterback Trent Dilfer sees God's work in life and career

By Roxanne Robbins
Baptist Press

TAMPA, Fla. (BP)—Super Bowl-winning quarterback Trent Dilfer says he sees God's hand in his life as he looks back at his career.

One year ago Tampa Bay Buccaneer fans applauded when Dilfer was released.

He had persevered through six stormy years with Tampa Bay before going to the Baltimore Ravens and finding a coaching staff that shares his views on offensive strategy. Despite differing opinions and times of adversity, however, Dilfer knows his circumstances in Tampa helped him become the player and man he is today.

Take the week he was benched one game while still on the Buccaneers' roster.

At the time, Dilfer was in the midst of a 70-game start streak—the second longest in the NFL.

"I think more than anything else, that that week showed me that there are no guarantees," Dilfer said. "God's ultimately in control of those things and used that situation to teach me a lesson."

This past season was a year of highs and lows for Dilfer and the Ravens. Dilfer began the season as a backup for starter Tony Banks. Eight weeks into the season, Dilfer was named the starter, inheriting a Ravens offense that had not scored a touchdown in 16 quarters.

Immediately Dilfer proved he was the needed impetus for change. The seven-year NFL veteran, who holds a one-year contract with the Ravens, guided his team

to 10 consecutive regular season victories and the eventual Super Bowl title.

Dilfer said he believes people are called to develop the talents God has given them regardless of their circumstances. He saw his stint as backup as an opportunity to get better, get sharper, learn more about the game and learn more about relationships with teammates and coaches.

This attitude drove the husband and father of three to work harder as a backup than he ever did as a starter. He said his ambition was to develop the skills God had given him and not to worry about what was happening with those skills and the circumstances surrounding them.

Such views are the mark of maturity. Early in his career reporters wrote about Dilfer's cockiness and temper. Today they

describe him as composed, confident, capable and at peace.

"It took a lot of heartache, a lot of adversity for God to get through to me and to build those characteristics in my life," Dilfer said. "I'm a big time work in progress. I spend a lot of time on my knees just asking Him to change me. Any time you ask God to change you He will answer you and it's going to be painful."

"It has been very difficult at times but the reward has been well worth the struggle because as I see Him change me, as I see Him start to mold me into somebody He can use, the hard times just seem like a quick snap of the finger. They don't seem like they really happened because the fruit is so much more powerful than the process."

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