

February 20, 2001  
Vol. 175, No. 7

**FOR THE RECORD**

**Baptists**

The pastor of Herschel Hobbs' former church says the Baptist statesman wasn't "duped" when he led the committee that produced the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message. *Page 2.*

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A speaker at the KBC evangelism conference later this month credits God and professionals for helping her out of the pit of depression. *Page 3.*

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Buddhist Thais cling to rituals seeking forgiveness. *Page 9.*

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, February 21

**Study: Two-thirds of TV shows have sexual content**

By Ken Camp  
*Baptist General Convention of Texas*

DALLAS (ABP)—Sex is more prevalent on TV today than just a couple of years ago, according to a recently released study.

"Sex on TV: Content and Context" was the second biennial study conducted by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, an independent health-care philanthropy based in Menlo Park, Calif.

The study, released earlier this month, revealed that the number of programs containing sexual content rose from 56 percent of all television shows in the 1997-98 season to 68 percent in the 1999-2000 season.

Of the shows that included sexual content, at least one show in four (27 percent) included sexual behavior. The remainder featured conversation about sex.

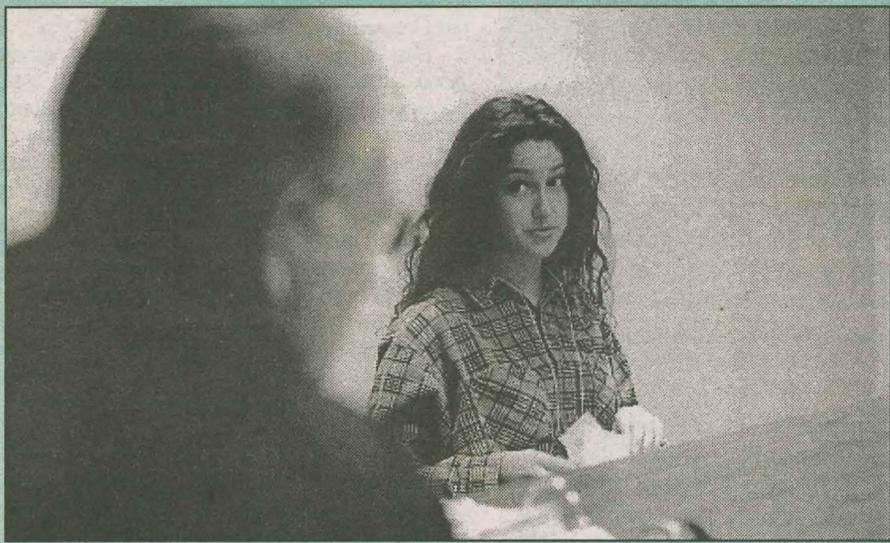
Television's preoccupation with sex offers a skewed view of reality, said Bill Tillman, a professor of Christian ethics at Logsdon School of Theology in Abilene, Texas.

"Sexuality is a major part of life, one of the major shapers of each of our personalities," he said. "Still, we are more than sexual beings. Thus, TV media content proclaims life in an out-of-balanced kind of way."

The research confirmed what Tillman said he already perceived. Television programs he previously had enjoyed have become "more and more bothersome to my sensibilities," he said. "Sexual content is being used increasingly to draw an audience ... and at an increasingly lowest common denominator."

□ See Report: TV's ..., page 8

**Tryout time**



More than 100 college students were in Richmond last weekend for interviews and tryouts for summer mission teams. Kentucky Baptist Student Union participants will take part in a variety of ministries in the commonwealth as well as in national and international projects. ■ Above: Melissa Satterfield of Cumberland College and Susan Reed of Georgetown College perform as part of the tryouts for a drama team. ■ Left: Mashall Stepp of Alice Lloyd College answers an interview question. Story on page 6.

**Questions linger as Bush's faith-based initiatives office opens**

By Adelle Banks  
*Religion News Service*

WASHINGTON (RNS)—As President Bush's new Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives opens its doors this week, the fanfare that greeted the notion of such an office is being replaced with a flurry of unanswered questions about what it will mean for providers and recipients of federally funded social services.

Bush unveiled his plans for a White House office—accompanied by similar new centers within five federal departments—soon after his inauguration.

In one of his first presidential executive orders, Bush said the office is designed to give religious organizations an equal chance at federal funding for programs that will help those in need, such as the poor, the addicted and the victims of crime.

The office builds on the "charitable choice" provision of 1996 welfare reform legislation that was crafted by new Attorney General John Ashcroft when he was serving as a Republican senator from Missouri. It will be led by John DiIulio, a University of Pennsylvania professor who has researched faith-based social programs.

Numerous church-state separatists already have raised the constitutional questions that such proposals prompt. But before the expected legal wrangling can begin, others are wondering about the basic matters of time, energy and equity for already-busy religious organizations.

Do congregations have time for this? Will funded groups spend more time filling out federal forms than doing acts of faith? Will the pot of funds available be equally shared?

Nancy Ammerman, professor of sociology at Hartford Seminary in

Connecticut, said congregational leaders and members often cite worship and fellowship as the key areas of focus for their houses of worship. Even so, many are involved in some kind of partnership with other congregations or secular entities to meet community needs.

"I think a lot of congregations are going to think about Bush's proposal as something that is outside the range of possibilities for a whole variety of reasons," she said. "One is that it's not their primary mission and the other is that they may already feel like they are at capacity for what they can do."

Ammerman, who spoke recently at a session at Hartford's Trinity College on religion's effect on social services, predicted that it is more likely that congregations would leave the work proposed by Bush to other kinds of religious nonprofits, such as Catholic Charities—long a partner with govern-

ment on social service programs.

At Bush's announcement, the faith-based groups represented were diverse—from Christian to Jewish to Muslim organizations—but evangelical Protestant ministries such as Teen Challenge and Prison Fellowship had more of the limelight than mainline Protestant ones.

Will some of the longstanding Catholic and mainline Protestant groups—whose work has been shored up by federal funding—now get a smaller piece of the federal pie?

"I think that also really remains to be seen," said Joanne Negstad, president and CEO of Lutheran Services in America, based in St. Paul, Minn. "I prefer to use the phrase 'opportunity for collaboration' rather than competition."

Stanley Carlson-Thies, director of social policy studies at the Center for □ See Questions linger ..., page 7

# BAPTISTS

## Baptist legend Hobbs wasn't 'duped,' defender claims

**Some advocates of the new Baptist Faith and Message have suggested that Herschel Hobbs was personally conservative but was misled.**

By Mark Wingfield  
*Texas Baptist Standard*

SHAWNEE, Okla. (ABP)—The primary author of the 1963 "Baptist Faith and Message" was neither "naïve" nor "duped" by liberals as critics of the document have charged, claims a successor to his Oklahoma pulpit.

Jeffrey Zurheide, pastor of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, defended Herschel Hobbs for strong language affirming soul competency and the priesthood of believers in the Southern Baptist Convention faith statement during an annual lecture series bearing Hobbs' name at Oklahoma Baptist University.

If Hobbs were alive today and asked what counsel he has for Baptists, he would cry out, "Freedom," Zurheide said.

"I think if Herschel were with us this morning, he would indeed tell us: 'Protect these key Baptist freedoms: the freedom of the individual competent soul and the freedom of the local Baptist competent church community. The Spirit is at work in you, individu-

ally and collectively.'

"This is the bedrock of Dr. Hobbs' faith and message. If we miss him here or minimize his thinking on this point, we misrepresent him."

Revisions adopted last summer to the "Baptist Faith and Message" de-emphasized those beliefs, while elevating biblical authority. Advocates of the changes suggested that Hobbs, a denominational statesman who chaired the 1963 "Baptist Faith and Message" study group, was personally conservative but was misled by those wanting a broad enough statement to accommodate "neo-orthodox" theology.

Neo-orthodoxy arose in the 20th century in reaction to liberal theology, which rejected the miraculous and raised questions about the Bible's historicity. Neo-orthodoxy re-established the centrality of biblical revelation but is objectionable to fundamentalists because it relies on scientific methods of Bible study.

One critic suggested Hobbs was "duped" by neo-orthodox scholars into including broad language describing biblical authority in the 1963 statement and for strong words defending indi-

vidual freedom in interpreting the Bible in its preamble.

But Zurheide claimed Baptist freedom in Christ was a recurring theme of Hobbs' writing, teaching and preaching.

"He reinforced these beliefs; he articulated and rearticulated these priorities," Zurheide said. "At times, he almost seemed to breathe them."

Hobbs wrote extensively about what he believed was Baptists' greatest contribution to Christianity, Zurheide said. "Baptists' most unique contribution to Jesus' church universal, Herschel Hobbs believed, was and is soul competency."

That doctrine is the building block upon which the priesthood of the believer stands, he added. Soul competency is a belief that every soul is competent to deal directly with God. Priesthood of the believer is a Baptist teaching that all believers in Christ have direct access to God, both to hear God's voice and to do God's work.

Soul competency has to do with one's being, while priesthood of the believer relates to what one does, Zurheide explained.

Zurheide said Hobbs also would sound a word of warning today about threats to religious freedom.

"Why not legislate the gospel and the dynamics of the kingdom of God? Because if we resort to anything but 'spiritual means,' as the 1963 'Baptist Faith and Message' puts it, we essentially label as ineffective the power and work of the Holy Spirit," he said.

Zurheide said he would love to ask Hobbs if he believes the SBC today is backing away from these three Baptist freedoms.

An answer might be found in Hobbs' own words, from a lecture he gave at OBU in 1980. Hobbs said: "We must exercise constant vigilance in warding off the threats to religious freedom, both within our denomination and outside it, including the current drift toward creedalism. The storm clouds of creedalism hover over our denomination.

"Well-intentioned people in contending for faith in the Scriptures may discover that the good for which they strive may become the enemy of the best, namely, the competency of the soul in religion."

### BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Retiring Kentucky pastor honored with seminary post.** Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville has honored retiring pastor Ronald Higdon with a visiting professorship at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va. The church will fund the Broadway Baptist Church Visiting Professorship, said seminary spokesman Bob Spinks. Higdon will fill the position for a semester next year, teaching pastoral leadership and preaching.

■ **Former Kentuckian named associate dean at Truett.** New Testament scholar David Garland has been named associate dean for academic affairs at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary. Garland joined the Truett faculty in 1997 as professor of Christian scriptures after teaching 21 years at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

■ **NAMB: No charismatic chaplains.** The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board has expanded its prohibitions regarding the endorsement of chaplains to include those who participate in any kind of "charismatic manifestations." Trustees approved a new "Endorsement Manual for Chaplains and Counselors in Ministry." The manual, a consolidation of policies and guidelines that for the most part already existed, includes the requirement that "no person who is actively participating in or promoting glossolalia (speaking in tongues) hold endorsement as a Southern Baptist chaplain or counselor." The policy was expanded to include "any other charismatic manifestations."

■ **Baptist teacher in China murdered.** A Southern Baptist teacher working for a nondenominational ministry in the central Chinese city of Wuhan was stabbed to death inside a church just before the start of a worship service. Bruce Emerson Morrison, formerly of New Orleans, was stabbed in the abdomen by a Chinese Protestant, identified as Gong Zhili, before the service at the church on Feb. 3. Morrison, 37, had been an English teacher at the Hubei Industrial Institute since 1993. He lived in Wuhan, in Hubei province with his wife, Valori, 34, and six daughters. His wife is pregnant with the couple's seventh child, the church official said. Officials said the suspect, who knew Morrison, suffered from mental illness and as a result might have been oversensitive about his friendship with Morrison.

## Messianic Jewish fellowship breaks link to Southern Baptist Convention

ATLANTA (RNS)—A fellowship of messianic Jews has decided to end its affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The North American Messianic Association sent a letter Jan. 22 to SBC President James Merritt to tell him its decision.

James Austin, president of the group whose members believe Jesus is the Messiah, said in a statement the move will help the group continue its efforts to create more congregations.

"It has been impossible for NAMA to obtain comfort and support within the convention, either at the local or national level," he said. "This is primarily due (to) scriptural and cultural differences."

Austin told Religion News Service that members of his group have been concerned about whether some Southern Baptist leaders are sensitive to racial and ethnic groups.

"There's a lot of people that want

to be a part of us but they don't want to be a part of Southern Baptists," he said. "Southern Baptists, for some people, have a problem identifying with ethnic sensitivities."

Martin King, spokesman for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, said the messianic fellowship was one of almost two dozen fellowships affiliated with the denomination.

"We're saddened that any group that we've been working with feels that we can't continue to work together," he said.

King said some Southern Baptist leaders were "not aware of the problem" and "hoped to be able to work it out if it's just a misunderstanding."

The group, which was known until three years ago as the Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship, has been linked to the Southern Baptist Convention for almost 11 years. It includes more than 100 congregations across the globe.

## New convention in Texas courts state Baptist agencies

DALLAS (ABP)—A break-away Southern Baptist state convention is seeking "fraternal" relationships with agencies and institutions of the Baptist General Convention of Texas to allow churches to pass funds to those entities through the alternative state group.

Jim Richards, executive director of the 600-church Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, has invited presidents of BGCT-affiliated schools, child-care agencies and Texas Baptist Men to a March 7 meeting to discuss the proposal.

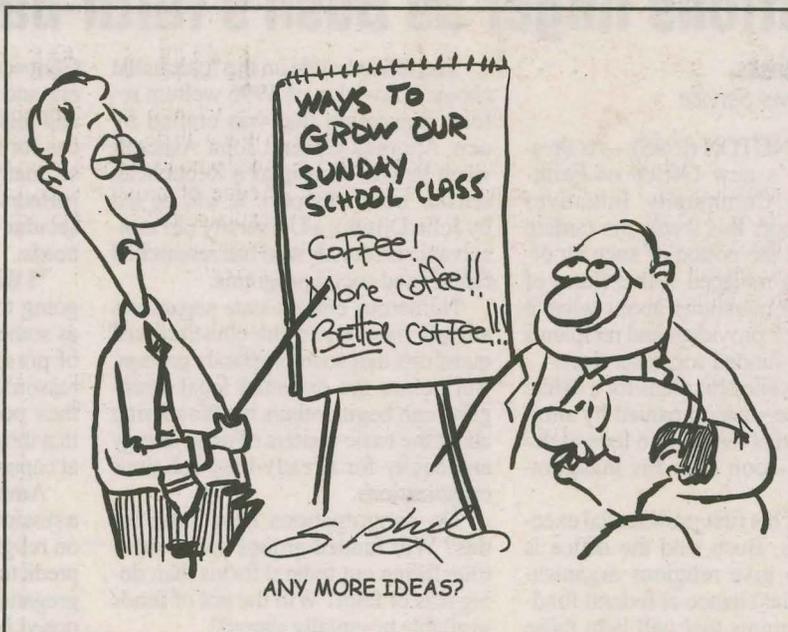
"By networking, the SBTC avoids a bureaucracy," Richards wrote in a letter to agency heads.

Richards said in an interview that the conservative state group has two categories of funding partners. "Affiliates" of the SBTC agree with the group's doctrinal statement and qualify to receive convention funding. The convention may also establish "formal fraternal relationships" with entities that are not in the budget but may receive pass-through funds designated by a local church.

Texas Baptist leaders reacted with suspicion to the proposal.

Some agency heads emphasized their organizations' commitment to work with local churches across the theological spectrum.

Richards said there is nothing sinister in his request to meet with representatives of the BGCT institutions. He rebuffed criticism that SBTC is attempting to "steal" BGCT ministries. "We're not asking for governance," he said. "We're asking for the possibility of partnering with other Great Commission entities."



## Mainstream Baptists group organizing in Kentucky

By David Winfrey  
News Director

MIDWAY—About 50 Kentucky Baptists gathered in Midway last week to ponder how to prevent the conflict that has divided Southern Baptists from splitting Kentucky Baptists.

People cited differing reasons for attending the inaugural meeting of "Mainstream Kentucky Baptists."

Some said they sought a way to keep Kentucky Baptists focused on missions and evangelism and not distracted by the two-decades-old battles that have divided Southern Baptists.

"Men and women across Kentucky want to see Kentucky stay focused on missions and don't want to see Kentucky fragmented," said Terry Wilder, pastor of Burlington Baptist Church and one of five former KBC presidents to attend the meeting.

Others said the group must act immediately to combat what they said is an effort by fundamentalists to take control of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

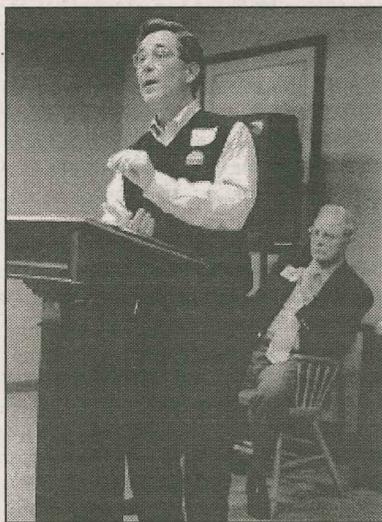
"We are starting at a point in time that makes it imperative that we consider the immediate strategy for Murray," site of this year's KBC annual meeting, said Herb Booth, an organizer of the meeting.

Participants left the daylong meeting Feb. 16 with a slate of officers, a preliminary mission statement and a rough strategy to help elect KBC officers whom organizers say should represent the vast majority of Kentucky Baptists.

Several participants said the group wanted to appeal to "the 80 percent," a reference to the belief by some that 10 percent of Kentucky Baptists are liberal and 10 percent are fundamentalist.

Participants especially expressed concern about the effect of the Kentucky Baptist Laymen's Network, a group that distributed newsletters before last year's KBC annual meeting in Bowling Green and solicited support for losing KBC presidential candidate Kevin Ezell.

"I think the circumstances of the Bowling Green meeting last year have prompted many of the heart and soul of the Kentucky Baptist Convention to realize they are under attack by a group of fundamentalist extremists," said Mark Johnson, pastor of Midway Baptist Church in Midway.



**PAST KBC PRESIDENT** Former Kentucky Baptist Convention President Terry Wilder attended the organizational meeting for Mainstream Kentucky Baptists. He said he would like the group to provide a way for Kentucky Baptists to not be led by either extreme in denominational politics.

Quoting Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson, Booth told the assembly that "sycophants" are pursuing control of state conventions and their colleges and institutions.

He added that the Mainstream group needed 1,000-1,200 messengers in Murray to influence the KBC presidential election at this year's annual meeting.

"We have our work cut out for us," said Booth, a former chairman of the trustees for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. He added that Western Kentucky has many churches that might be attracted to the Network's message.

"If we lose two consecutive presidencies of the KBC, it's over," said Booth, a member of Burlington Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky.

Each KBC president, who can serve just one year, is responsible for appointing three members of the nine-member committee on nominations. That group nominates trustees for KBC colleges, agencies and institutions.

Within the Southern Baptist Convention, organizers of the "conservative resurgence" were able to take control of mission agencies, seminaries and other institutions by the election

### Mainstream movement growing

DALLAS (ABP)—Another Southern Baptist Convention group opposed to its conservative leadership is taking shape.

The Mainstream Baptists Network, a loose coalition of state groups modeled after the highly successful Texas Baptists Committed, has named co-chairmen to lead the year-old national network and is developing a mission statement and structure.

"We are turning a corner as a Mainstream or a Baptists Committed organization," said co-chairman Bill Wilson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Waynesboro, Va. "This is a new day. We are in effect closing down a chapter and starting a new chapter in what will be a pretty long story." Texas pastor Phil Lineberger is the other co-chairman.

Texas Baptists Committed is

credited with leading Texas Baptists to oppose those who moved the Southern Baptist Convention sharply to the right during the last two decades. Ten similar groups have started in other states, with mixed results.

Wilson added, "This is not a movement or an organization that is either in competition or aligned with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship."

The Atlanta-based Fellowship is a 10-year-old organization supporting alternative missions, theological education and church resource programs to Baptists disaffected by the SBC's leadership change.

"Some of us are ardent supporters of the CBF," Wilson said. "Others are not. That is not prerequisite for being involved or not being involved in this organization. Our intent is helping people be Baptist."

of a string of SBC presidents.

Booth said the Kentucky Baptist Convention could be headed toward the same result. "We need to move that conflict out of the pulpit and into the pews."

Similar to the Laymen's Network, Mainstream Baptists will seek to divide the state into regions and appoint leaders in each area to spread its message and recruit messengers to KBC annual meetings. A Texan has promised to match the fundraising efforts of any state Mainstream group that collects at least \$25,000.

But at least two men who attended last week's meeting said that while they didn't support the Laymen's Network's methods, they probably wouldn't take part in the Mainstream group either.

"I agree that we need to make sure that the truth is told out there," said Mike Melloan, a member of Yellow Creek Baptist Church in Henderson. But, "we need to be really careful that we don't further divide."

Mike Stacey, pastor of Dripping Spring Baptist Church in Russell County, agreed.

"I'm in that 80 percent, and I've been there a long time," he said. "I couldn't sell one dime of this where

I'm from. They would see it as 'us against them.'"

Stacey added that he was approached by the Laymen's Network before the convention and couldn't go along with it. Nevertheless, he added, he's worked alongside some of its supporters on mission trips. "I think there's a greater objective that has to come into play, ... evangelism and winning people for Christ."

But Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville, said the same people who divided the Southern Baptist Convention already have started the division among Kentucky Baptists.

"They labeled us as a weak state because we were too happy working together," Holladay said. "Somebody needs to say, 'We love you. We want to work with you, but there are some things you can't do.' We do that with our kids."

During the meeting, the group elected Booth as chairman; Bill Shoulta, pastor of Melbourne Heights Baptist Church in Louisville, as vice chair; Kimbrough Simmons, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lebanon Junction, as secretary; and Jo Griffith, a member of Georgetown Baptist Church, as treasurer.

## Southerland: God, professionals helped overcome depression

By Brenda Smith  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

LEXINGTON—In 1995, Mary Southerland should have been on top of the world. Instead, she hit rock bottom.

Her husband, Dan, was pastor of Flamingo Road Baptist Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. During a period of just a few years, the church grew from 300 members to 2,400 members.

Southerland enjoyed a career as a speaker and conference leader. She had two wonderful children and a lovely home.

But somewhere in the midst of her full and exciting life, Southerland found herself in the pit of clinical depression. She said she was paralyzed by the simplest of decisions and unable

some days even to get out of bed and get dressed.

"I had fallen into a deep, dark, nameless pit. I had no idea how I got there. And even more frightening was the stark reality that I had no idea how to get out," she states in the introduction to her book, "Coming Out of the Dark: Overcoming Depression."

Through counseling, prayer, Bible study and the help of Christian friends and professionals, Southerland did emerge from that pit, and now encourages women through Journey Ministry, a teaching ministry she shares with her husband.

Southerland will share her story during a luncheon for women at the Kentucky Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference Feb. 27. The conference will be Feb. 26-27 at Porter Me-

morial Baptist Church in Lexington.

"This battle with depression has totally redefined who I am and become a precious hedge of protection in my life," she explained. "He has brought the most powerful ministry of my life out of the greatest weakness in my life."

Southerland now wants to offer that encouragement and hope to women facing clinical depression. "My heart desire is that women will see someone who has touched the bottom—and found it to be solid. I want to give them practical steps that they can take to find healing and restoration."

Though they had never heard anyone discuss their battle with depression in church before, the Southerlands decided to be honest and transparent with

their church about her struggle.

They were grateful for the response of their church. She found fast friends who stayed with her through those dark days, supporting Southerland and her family through prayer and more.

"They identified with my brokenness because we are all broken," she said. "I have learned that the more we are broken, the more God can use us. In fact, He is drawn to broken people and can work best through the most broken ones."

The luncheon costs \$5, payable at the door the day of the event. But participants must pre-register so that adequate lunches can be provided.

For more information, call the KBC evangelism growth team office at (888) 254-5722 or visit the KBC Web site, [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org).

### BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ The Kentucky Baptist Committee on Public Affairs is urging state legislators to support a bill that will restrict local option elections on alcohol sales. In a letter mailed last week to legislators, committee members asked state lawmakers to support Senate Bill 88. The measure, introduced by Sen. Vernie McGaha (R-Dist. 15), seeks to reverse legislation approved last year that permits local option elections on alcohol sales in restaurants that meet specific guidelines.

■ The Kentucky Baptist Convention's creative ministries department will sponsor its annual creative ministries festival March 2-3 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. The weekend conference offers training for both adults and youth in such ministries as puppetry, clowning and interpretive movement. Guest artists will include magician David Garrard, Jeff Smith and Charles and Rebecca McCoy-Reese. Registration costs \$75 for churches before Feb. 28; \$100 for churches after Feb. 28; and \$35 for individuals. For more information, call (502) 244-6489 or toll-free in Kentucky (888) 254-5720. Information also is available on the Kentucky Baptist Convention Web site, [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org).

■ Correction: Last week's Western Recorder featured an article in which speaker Ken Schmitt discussed a lawsuit in the city where he lived. The story mistakenly reported that the lawsuit involved the church where he was pastor.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Do you have a passion for missions?

By Wanda Lee

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—It is said that anyone can become a good leader, but a great leader is one who feels passionate about what he or she does.

If you were asked, "What are you most passionate about?" what would you say? Would your answer reveal a passion for missions?

The Bible says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Whatever we are most passionate about in life will rise to the top of our list. It is what we are willing to sacrifice in terms of time, energy and resources.

When you think of passionate leaders in the Bible, whom do you think of? Elijah was passionate about revealing the power of God. He was so convinced that God was the one true God that he challenged the prophets of Baal to a contest. Each would build an altar; each would pray for their God to consume the sacrifice. Elijah went

as far as pouring water on his altar before asking God to ignite it with fire. He was so passionate about helping others come to know God that he was willing to risk his very life.

How passionate are you about missions? Are you willing to risk taking a stand to raise the priority of missions in your church? With a clear perspective of missions and a biblical perspective of its importance, we can place missions at the forefront of our churches.

The word "missions" means different things to different people based on their personal knowledge and experience. Most definitions include the concepts of being sent and crossing cultural and language barriers. Usually people acknowledge that missions is witness and ministry directed toward those outside the church.

One common element in all definitions is the message. It is sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not know Him. I recently read one pastor's definition of missions: "Missions is the work of God through the

church by which the gospel of Jesus Christ is extended in word and deed to all people in the world." Having a clear definition is the first step in putting missions at the top of your list of passions.

Secondly, to heighten the priority of missions, we need to see it from a biblical perspective. Missions began in the heart of God as He reached out to sinful people like you and me. He continues to reach out to each of us today.

Jesus' commands throughout the Scripture compel us to reach out to a lost world. Matthew 28:19-20 issues the command to "go and make disciples of all nations." Acts 1:8 tells us we will be witnesses "to the ends of the earth." Jesus was passionate about missions. As a matter of fact, He risked everything, even His own life, to reach lost humanity.

One of my passions is Woman's Missionary Union because it exists to help ignite a passion for missions in the heart of the church. What are you passionate about?

Wanda Lee is executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union

## COMMENTARY

### Room for diversity

Our Baptist heritage demands dissent. Disagreements must be debated honestly, in Christian love. If disagreement remains, all right. God's house has room for diverse opinions.

Without debate and loving acceptance of those with whom we disagree, division will destroy us. Soul competence and the priesthood of believers were formulated in a church that prohibited dissent and have been the backbone of our tradition. Is equality in freedom unimportant now?

Name-calling, personal attacks, ignoring conflicts, labeling fellow sisters and brothers in Christ by reference to political designations are divisive. Diversity of opinion is not.

Baptists who study the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message and wish to af-

firm it should do so. Those opposing it should do so without fear of recrimination. Such freedom strengthens our cooperative effort to proclaim Christ to the world.

The 2000 faith statement must not be adopted or repudiated for all. Either result alienates good Baptists and subjects us all to politics. We are not a creedal denomination. Despite SBC actions to the contrary, no one can profess faith for another. If so, we would baptize infants. Our forebears died for this principle.

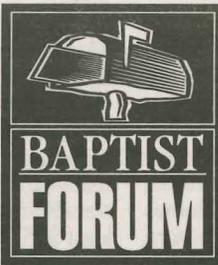
Personal belief in the lordship of Christ is not a battle for dominion over others. It is a commitment to share our faith, loving and serving others as our

Lord loves and serves us. Fights to the death have no place among Christians, let alone Baptists.

We must be an inclusive group, believing devoutly in the competence of each soul to stand before God with no mediator but Christ. We are a priesthood of believers who, through guidance from the life and teaching of Jesus and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are free to follow God's Holy Word.

Adherence to these distinctives made us strong; will heal our rifts and renew our cooperative purpose. Abandonment of our tradition will destroy us.

Charlie Perkins  
Georgetown



## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

### Let the light shine

A laser light beam can be intensive enough to vaporize the hardest and most heat-resistant materials, according to Encyclopedia Britannica. It notes that the word laser is an acronym derived from "light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation."

A moderately small in the hardest materials like diamonds and sapphires. A finely focused laser can vaporize parts of a single cell. One laser beam could carry as much information as all existing radio channels.

Harvard University researchers are using an extremely fast laser to trigger tiny explosions that create "microcraters" to encode data. Physics professor Eric Magur uses red laser pulses lasting a mere 100 femtoseconds to explode glass and other translucent materials. One femtosecond is a billionth of a millionth of a second.

That is extremely fast and yet it is

written "that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). God created all the power and speed of the laser beam of light. God is quicker than light in responding to our needs.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world and he who follows Me will never walk in darkness" (John 8:12).

The Bible is light. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105).

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

Christians are commanded to "Walk in the light, as He is in the light" (1 John 1:7).

Light is so important for vision, growth, healing, warmth, health, and colors.

"Let the Light Shine" is the theme

of the Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Feb. 26-27. All of the above will be available through great music, testimonies, drama and preaching as well as 16 outstanding resource conferences.

Conference leaders are specialists in their subject areas. Eleven of the 16 leaders developed the resource materials they will share with participants.

You will rejoice over the testimonies by Rejoice Southernland, Steve Patchin, Cheryl Baldwin and Bill Houpt. The speakers are leaders who are involved in cutting-edge ministries where they serve. Some are speakers you do not know but I can assure you that you will never forget them.

Pastors, help make the day for laypeople by bringing them with you to the evangelism conference. Organize a bus or van trip to encourage church members to attend.

If you can't come, pray that God will move in a mighty way among His people.

I hope to see you in Lexington.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## CHURCH

### Guidelines can help families build financial skills

By Doug Strader

The more I read and listen to experts in the field of personal and family finance, the more I am convinced they know what they are talking about when they discuss the number of people who are in financial difficulty because they over-extend themselves with consumer debt.

The latest research says the average American family is spending 108 percent of what they make. They are going in debt by an average of 8 percent per year. At that rate it does not take long until they are hurting financially because some company puts pressure on them when they can't make the minimum monthly payment.

What can churches do to help families and individuals in this situation? The following list offers ways churches can help:

■ Offer a one-day seminar on money management. The seminar that our office uses is called Successful Christian Financial Management. This workshop usually is offered on Sundays, utilizing the Sunday school time, the morning and evening worship times and the discipleship training time.

■ After conducting a money management seminar, follow that with small-group studies. Helpful resources include "How Much Is Enough?" by Larry Burkett and "Managing Your Money for the Master" by Lee Davis.

■ Use your church's available resources. If your church has members who are gifted in the area of finances, encourage them to be trained as Christian financial counselors, and offer their services to church members and the community at large.

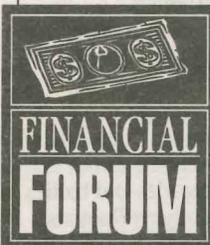
■ The pastor can preach a series of messages on financial issues. Messages could relate to personal finances and offer practical helps to meet the needs.

■ Do a study on finances based on the book of Proverbs. Make a list of all the verses that relate to money, finances and possessions.

You can contact our office and request help in determining areas of need and ways to meet those needs. Call (888) 254-5708 or 254-4716 in the greater Louisville area. My e-mail address is: douglas\_strader@kybaptist.org.

If church leaders begin to do things that are designed to help meet financial needs, it will provide much-needed help to church members and the community.

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



## Self-awareness, communication can help build relationship skills

**Q: As a single adult with a clear life vision, I know what I want and I've taken time to move beyond my past. What further suggestions can you offer to help me find a life partner? I'm ready to take the next step in that quest.**

The following response is part two to the "seeking" question in the Feb. 6 issue, and assumes that you've already covered the first few steps of vision, values and boundaries. You can continue by taking the following steps toward that special relationship:

- **Increase your self-awareness.** By investing in a few sessions of pastoral counseling, taking personality inventories, etc., you can become more aware of your own choices, increase your ownership of those choices and decline to place blame on others.

- **Work on your relationship skills.**

Many marriage enrichment and marriage preparation programs focus on communication. Check out the availability of PREP and PREPARE in your community (see [www.prepinc.com](http://www.prepinc.com) and [www.lifeinnovation.com](http://www.lifeinnovation.com)).

- **Communicate, connect and network; do not isolate.** By using an accountability person or relationship coach as well as letting your family members and others know of your interest in seeking a life partner, you increase your opportunities dramatically. Consider using Neil Clark Warren's networking Web site: [www.eharmony.com](http://www.eharmony.com).

- **Live your vision.** Living a life of successful singleness is attractive to others. Pursue a "Field of Dreams" philosophy: "If you build it (your life vision), they (the right people) will come (into your life)."

- **Be assertive and keep healthy boundaries.** This creates the essence of personal power with responsibility.

To receive a cassette tape with all 10 points from these two articles, see [www.LifePartnerQuest.com](http://www.LifePartnerQuest.com).—James Stillwell

**Q: Our 12-year-old daughter acts like she is 15. She dresses like a teenager, wears make-up and wants to run with an older group at her school. Now she wants to go to the mall or the movies every Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday afternoon. Should we let her go?**

Pre-adolescents struggle with being accepted and learning the rules. She is not yet a teenager by age, but she wants to be accepted in the teen culture. Some 12-year-olds are very much little girls; others are young ladies. She falls into the latter category. Yes, let her go, but not all the time and not without clear guidelines and some supervision.

One time each weekend would be fine for her to go with a group of friends to a movie or the mall. Take her inside and pick her up inside so you can insure her safety and see her friends. If they appear to be acceptable types, continue to let her go. If they spell trouble, then have her invite friends over to your house and chaperone them yourself.

Develop clear rules with your daughter. One sign of maturity is being able to follow the rules. I suggest rules like: Do not leave the building. Always be with a buddy. Do not drink anything you did not get for yourself (there are dangerous odorless, tasteless drugs out there). Do nothing dangerous or illegal. Call if there are any problems. Be at our meeting place on time. If she cannot follow your rules, then she does not get to go the next week or two.

One time each weekend is enough for a 12-year-old. One night should be a family time. Do something fun together. She needs to learn to spend some time alone. She should take time to do her chores and homework. There will be more time to be with friends when she gets older.—Wade Rowatt

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 [WesternRecorder](mailto:WesternRecorder), Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at [wesrec@ntr.net](mailto:wesrec@ntr.net).



## Baptists' volunteer spirit worth celebrating

The analogy of the church functioning as a physical body is found throughout the New Testament.

Among the most intriguing passages is 1 Corinthians 12 in which the Apostle Paul emphasizes that "even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ."

Paul counsels that a foot should not seek to be a hand nor an ear long to be an eye. He adds that "there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another."

Why recount such a familiar teaching? Because just as physical health is important for the growth and well-being of an individual, the health of the body of Christ is essential for effective church growth and ministry impact. The key is for individual members to recognize their specific gifts and abilities and then willingly use those skills for service in God's kingdom.

The bulk of ministry projects accomplished in churches across Kentucky and throughout the nation are fueled by volunteers. Most of those volunteers have a clear understanding of their ministry roles and gladly give of their time and talents to help spread the gospel.

If everyone insisted on being in the spotlight on Sunday morning and no one ever volunteered to work in the nursery or visit shut-ins or stuff envelopes or fulfill countless other tasks, the church's effectiveness would rapidly decline. When each member of the body joyfully fulfills his or her role, however, the church's overall impact is multiplied.

Where would our churches be without willing volunteers? Our deacons, ushers, Sunday school teachers and committee members provide ongoing ministry on a voluntary basis. Our choir lofts are filled with volun-

teers every Sunday. Every worship service, meeting, fellowship and ministry project our churches undertake, they do with the able assistance of enthusiastic volunteers.

One area of Christian ministry we most closely associate with volunteerism is volunteer missions. Thousands of Kentucky Baptists participate each year in volunteer mission projects on the local church level and beyond. Mission projects may range from a Saturday afternoon outreach effort in a nearby community to a two-week overseas trip as part of Kentucky Baptists' international missions partnerships with Baptists in Poland, Tanzania and the European Baptist Convention.

Construction teams, disaster relief efforts, literacy training or youth groups conducting backyard Bible clubs are among the countless ways local church members are involved in volunteer missions. Kentucky Baptists also are involved in a missions partnership with the Baptist Convention of New England.

In honor of the significant contributions by volunteers to the ongoing work of missions, Sunday, Feb. 25, is Southern Baptists' annual Volunteers in Missions Day. It offers local congregations an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the vital work of volunteers in mission efforts at home and around the world.

Volunteerism is an essential ingredient in virtually every area of Christian ministry and missions. When individual Christians are willing to share their gifts and work together for the greater good, Christ-honoring ministry can result.

In the words of the Apostle Paul, "God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." That truth is worth celebrating this Sunday—and every day.

**STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR**



Trennis Henderson

## Baptist historian: Civil War casts 'deep gloom over all the land'

By Duane Bolin

Kentucky Baptist historian and itinerant evangelist John Henderson Spencer offered a poignant eyewitness account of the Civil War years in Kentucky in his autobiography.

With the firing on Fort Sumter and the war's commencement, Spencer recorded that "the year 1861 closed with a deep gloom over all the land." He remembered that the "great Civil War was already raging fiercely" and that the "people in Kentucky were nearly equally divided on the question of the hour." Spencer noted that "families were divided, and many hearthstones where peace and happiness had hitherto prevailed were now embittered by mad passions and bitter strife."

In Kentucky's churches, "division of sentiment and sympathy" resulted in factions and sometimes splits. Many churches were left without pastors, their ministers gone off to fight and die on distant battlefields.

Spencer reported that the Civil War "put a sudden check on all religious and other benevolent enterprises." Colleges and academies were closed and classroom buildings were

converted to makeshift hospitals for the wounded and dying. In 1863, Georgetown College reported only 40 students, while 50 studied at Bethel College in Russellville.

The receipts of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky declined from \$14,099.82 in 1860 to \$8,313.82 in 1861, to only \$2,154.02 in 1862. Even more disturbing than the financial decline, the "active piety of the churches declined in almost equal ratio," Spencer noted. He concluded that the "religious prospects of the country never had been so gloomy" since the close of the War of 1812.

Although Alfred C. Graves became editor of the Western Recorder in 1864, the paper remained "discontinued" through much of the war. Publication could not resume, one contemporary remarked, until "national affairs will justify it, and the cooperation of the brethren will encourage the attempt." Graves did what he could, but the paper's future seemed bleak.

Born in Boone County in 1838, Graves was converted to Christianity at age 15, educated at Georgetown College and then licensed to preach

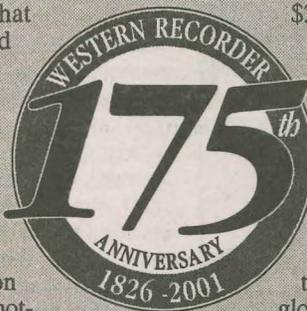
only two years before the war. He completed additional study in theology at Western Baptist Theological Seminary in Covington in 1860.

At the outbreak of the war he assumed pastoral duties at Harrodsburg Baptist Church. After two years there he moved to Louisville to become pastor of Jefferson Street Baptist Church and then a year later he accepted "editorial charge" of the Western Recorder. He preached one year at Portland Avenue Baptist Church before moving on after the war to Stamping Ground Baptist Church and then to a productive tenure beginning in 1871 at First Baptist Church of Manchester, N.H.

Graves' ministry among struggling churches and the instability of the Western Recorder during the war years were indicative of the despair of the divided nation.

When Kentucky Baptists face challenging issues today, let us remember 1863, a time when "the same spirit of sadness and gloom, which pervades our own hearts, (was) breathed upon us by the churches from all parts of the state." And then let us remember that the greatest contributions of the Western Recorder and the greatest achievements of Kentucky Baptists emerged from the ashes of "the destructive war."

Duane Bolin is associate professor of history at Murray State University



## Students interview, audition for summer mission teams

**"It's not what I'm going to do. It's what He's going to do."**

*Cumberland College student Stephanie Dobbs*

By David Winfrey  
News Director

RICHMOND—With three people looking on, Dee Baltimore was asked to describe her Christian faith using a miniature Snickers candy.

Holding the pristine wrapper, the student at Kentucky State University in Frankfort explained that everyone comes into the world like the biblical character Adam, perfect.

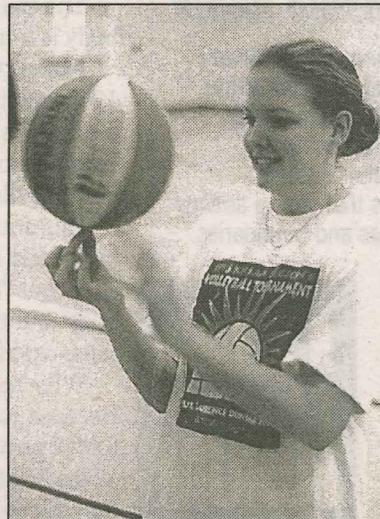
Tearing the wrapper, she said sin damages everyone and no one can repair that damage alone. But through Jesus, she added, God has provided a way to overcome the damage of sin.

With that, she popped the candy into her mouth. "I'm sorry," she said. "I'm really nervous."

Welcome to selection weekend for student summer missions, a mostly fun but sometimes nerve-racking 48 hours. More than 100 students were in Richmond last weekend for the event. Almost all will serve somewhere in Christian ministry this summer, but many arrived not knowing where.

Dozens of students arrived knowing exactly where they will serve. Among them were students approved by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. They spent the weekend training and getting to know their teammates.

But others were seeking one of the positions that BSU directors around the country would distribute at the end of the two days. Students came into the weekend not knowing if they



**YOU'RE ON** More than 100 students were at First Baptist Church of Richmond last weekend, seeking summer mission assignments through the Kentucky Baptist Convention. ■ **Left:** Dee Baltimore, a student at Kentucky State University, explains Christianity during an interview. ■ **Right:** Kandace Belcher, a student at the University of Kentucky, practices for the sports missions team.

would get their first choice for a summer ministry position.

Many students were auditioning for Son Teams, performance and creative ministry groups that will spend the summer together. Son Teams host camps and use their talents in such fields as drama, sports and music to share their Christian beliefs.

"It's a little nerve-racking that at 5 (p.m., Saturday) we're going to have to put a team together," said H.K. Kingkade, Baptist Student Union director at the University of Kentucky. He was sitting in the sanctuary at First

Baptist Church of Richmond, listening to various groupings of 11 singers who were trying out for six spots on Son Celebration.

"I think they come in pretty nervous," he said, adding that team coordinators aren't going by talent alone.

"God's in this process," Kingkade said. "This is not based on the best singers. This is based on who will be good at camp, what personalities go together."

For the first time in a long time, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's collegiate ministries department might

not fill all of its available positions for summer missions in America, according to Ralph Hopkins, associate director for KBC collegiate ministries.

He cited the variety of missions opportunities, especially the growth of overseas missions, as the primary factor. "There will be more Kentucky BSUs doing missions than ever before, but a lot of them will be outside of our state program."

Ten years ago, Baptist Student Unions controlled practically all access to summer missions work. Today, however, "The amount of opportunities has just multiplied," he said. "Part of me says, 'Help,' and part of me says, 'Praise God. There's more going than ever before.'"

Regardless of where they will serve, Mikel Robinson said summer missions can be a life-changing experience. "I really, really see this as a great adventure," said Robinson, campus minister for Kentucky State University. "They grow up a lot. They face reality."

Stephanie Dobbs, a student at Cumberland College, said the weekend was more like a retreat than a try-out.

"It's actually a lot of fun," said Dobbs, who was seeking one of the six slots on the singing team Son Celebration. She said she wasn't nervous about the interview. "I'm nervous about the singing."

She said she sees summer missions as an opportunity to give back to God. "It's not what I'm going to do. It's what He's going to do."

### The Wall Street Journal and the Bible

The Wall Street Journal has a lot to say about the meaning of money in our lives. It claims to be a unique publication because it is the country's only national business daily, and it is put together by the world's largest staff of business, financial and news experts. It has the reputation of being the authoritative word about money matters.

The Bible has a lot to say about the meaning of money in our lives. It is unique because it was written by those inspired by the ultimate authority, the one and only true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a perfect treasure of God's instruction, and it points us to the absolutely reliable standard by which our conduct is and will be judged.

The focus of the Wall Street Journal is man and his purposes and ways. The focus of the Bible is God and His purposes and ways.

If the Wall Street Journal is your source to find meaning in life, you likely will conclude money is the most important thing in your life, and you measure your happiness and success in life by the amount of money you can ac-

cumulate in its various forms.

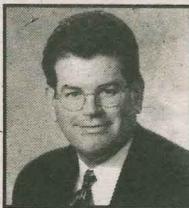
If the Bible is your source to find meaning in life, you will discover the most important thing in life is to love the Lord your God with all you heart, mind and soul, and to have no other gods before Him. You also will discover "no one can serve two masters; either he will love the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other; you cannot serve both God and money" (Matthew 6:24).

My prayer is we Kentucky Baptists will shift our priorities to enable God to be God in our lives. When that happens, our money works for us instead of our working for our money. Our material

possessions become the means by which we live, not the end for which we live.

Please give us the privilege to assist you in your stewardship. Call us toll-free.

**KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION**

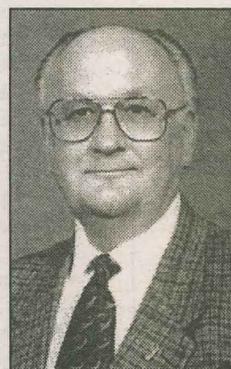


Barry Allen

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

## VOCAL FREEDOM SEMINAR FOR SINGERS

With Vocal Technician Ray Holcomb



Ray Holcomb draws from his 25 years of study to help any singer produce good vocal technique with little apparent effort.

Students also will learn how to control breath management, how to create attractive, mature sounds and how to sing consistently with a rich, resonate quality.

This seminar is suitable for any church or school choir member. From the average singer with no formal training to church and school choral directors, anyone can benefit from this event.

Friday, March 2, 6-9 p.m., and Saturday, March 3, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Ormsby Heights Baptist Church

2102 Lower Hunters Trace, Louisville, KY 40216

COST: \$ 25 per person in advance; \$30 per person at the door; \$50 maximum per family.

Private, video taped, 30-minute vocal coaching sessions are available on Saturday afternoon and evening for \$ 50.

For more information about this seminar, call Music Minister David Scott at Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, (502) 447-6867. For more information about Ray Holcomb and Vocal Freedom, go to: [www.vocalfreedom.com](http://www.vocalfreedom.com)

## Questions linger as Bush's office for faith-based initiatives opens

Continued from page 1

Public Justice, whose organization has been helping the Bush administration with its planning for the new office, predicts that groups that traditionally have not received federal funding may get some now.

"This is leveling the playing field by including groups," he said. "It's not all of a sudden (allow) a new set of groups to get money and an old set of groups not to get money."

In addition to speculation about who might apply and who might receive funding, there is the matter of dealing with the piles of paperwork that inevitably will follow government checks. Experts wonder about how monitoring and accounting will take place and whether fraudulent practices may result.

Though the Bush proposal cites plans for "increased technical assistance," Mark Chaves, a sociology professor at the University of Arizona, said "lots and lots of it" is necessary for congregations to be able to tackle grant writing and accounting responsibilities.

Briefing reporters after Bush unveiled his plans for the new office, former Indianapolis mayor and new administration official Steve Goldsmith referred to reducing "regulatory obstacles" for faith-based groups. But he also said funding would be made "available on a performance and an accountability fashion." Goldsmith will serve as an adviser to Bush on faith-based issues.

The White House has yet to give any financial details, but seems to be open to a diverse range of religious organizations applying for federal assistance. When nontraditional groups like the Nation of Islam and the Church of Scientology knock on the federal door, it will be interesting to see if the embrace of diversity holds.

There are some religious nonprofits that might not even be interested in Bush's new plan.

"I would be very surprised if faith-based community organizations get involved in taking any of that kind of money at all," said Timothy Matovina, associate professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, who addressed the Hartford seminar. Rather than focusing on "Band-Aid" approaches to societal ills, these organizations look at larger issues of justice and long-term solutions.

Carlson-Thies expects the months ahead to be a "creative period" that may bridge the gap between "overly bureaucratic government" and "under-structured groups" in need of funding.

His Annapolis, Md., office is receiving calls from a range of interested parties—large and small congregations as well as more established faith-based providers of social services.

"I think this White House thing all of a sudden has kicked it into high gear," he said. "I think what we are now starting to see is a lot of folks who were very skeptical ... are now taking it a little more seriously."

## Joe Ellison honored

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College's Alumni Board of Directors presented its Alumni Student Service Award during our Founder's Day chapel in January. The award honors a student who has provided assistance to the Office of Admissions and Alumni Services and has been involved in student recruitment.

Joe Ellison, son of Joseph and Deborah Ellison of Cincinnati, received the award this year. Ellison is a senior with a major in English and secondary education and a minor in communication.

Ellison has assisted Cumberland's student recruiting efforts through service as a work-study student, as a Cumberland Ambassador meeting with prospective students and their families, and as an admissions associate. He also has been a valuable participant on student panels for orientation programs.

During his time at Cumberland College, Ellison has been involved in a variety of clubs and organizations. In Cumberland's music department, Ellison has played in concert, jazz, marching and pep bands and has sung in and been an officer of the chorale.

Ellison also has served as a tutor in Cumberland's academic resource

center and as a residence hall assistant. He has been involved in our freshmen orientation program and has been the public address announcer for Cumberland football and basketball.

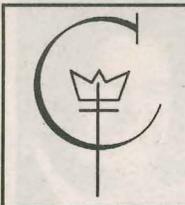
Ellison has a deep commitment to Christ and has ministered in a variety of ways. He served as Baptist Student Union evangelism chairperson and directed the BSU gospel choir. He also played a role in Cumberland's Fellowship of Christian Athletes group.

Ellison's Christian ministry is not confined to the Cumberland campus. He has preached in churches and spoken to youth groups. This past fall he helped lead a Disciple Now weekend at First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, leading an in-depth Bible study for high school males and speaking to the entire youth group at a Saturday evening worship service.

Ellison has enriched the Cumberland College campus with his enthusiasm, dedication and Christian commitment. We know God will continue to bless and use him in His service.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



## NATIONAL NOTES

### ■ Ecumenical group elects gay-church leader.

The ecumenical officer of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, a predominantly gay denomination, has been elected president of the California Council of Churches. Gwynne Guibord assumed the post in January. The West Hollywood, Calif.-based denomination has applied for observer status with the National Council of Churches, but was rejected. Guibord will lead the Sacramento, Calif.-based council of 19 Protestant denominations for one year. At least one group has threatened to leave the council over the election.

### ■ Kansas acts to restore evolution teaching.

The recently elected Kansas Board of Education has restored evolution to the state science curriculum for public schools. The 7-to-3 decision made Feb. 14 reverses the previous board's decision in 1999 to erase from the state's public school curriculum any references to evolution as the only explanation for the origins of humanity. Religious conservatives—who comprised a majority of the board at the time—were widely condemned for pushing for the curriculum change. But conservatives lost their majority on the education board in elections last November, clearing the way for the new standards.

### ■ Transporting minors ban reintroduced.

Legislation regarding parental rights when it comes to abortion for minors was reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Child Custody Protection Act would make it a crime for an adult to transport a minor to another state for

an abortion without a parent's involvement if the state in which the girl lives requires either parental notification or consent before such a procedure. The House easily adopted the bill in 1998 and 1999, but the measure died in the Senate both times. The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission is one of many organizations supporting the bill.

### ■ Tennessee lottery referendum likely.

The Tennessee Senate voted 22-11 on Feb. 7 to allow the state's residents to decide whether to have a lottery. For years the Tennessee Senate has stopped lottery bills. But two new senators replaced senators opposed to the lottery, and the tide turned. The Senate got the two-thirds majority needed to send the issue to the state's House of Representatives. The House traditionally has looked more favorably on lottery bills. According to The Tennessean daily newspaper in Nashville, the lottery question could be placed on the ballot in November 2002.

### ■ Bill asks FCC to curb violence on TV.

Two Democrats are teaming up to create what they call a "safe harbor" of television programming for kids by cracking down on violent TV shows. The Children's Protection from Violent Programming Act would require the Federal Communications Commission to "prohibit the distribution of violent television programming" during times when kids are most prone to watch TV, according to Rep. Ronnie Shows, D.-Miss., the chief House sponsor of the bill. Shows said an identical bill will be introduced in the Senate by Sen. Ernest Hollings, D.-S.C.

## Beauty for ashes

Danielle had already had her share of tough times when she came to Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.

She was a young, single mother. She had never planned on being a mom so soon, and she certainly hadn't planned on going it alone. Still, she was making it. The most important thing was, she wasn't going it alone anymore. Danielle was a new Christian, which is why she came to KBHC for help after she was raped. A friendship had turned to betrayal. Danielle was abused, abandoned and pregnant.

The world would say to Danielle: "It wasn't your fault! Get an abortion. Think about your kids! Is it fair to them, or to you to go through this pain?" To the world, an abortion would be a no-brainer, but not to Danielle. She knew the child she carried was important to God.

The baby also was important to the Taylors, a childless couple, longing to be parents. KBHC brought them all together and Danielle made a plan for adoption. These kinds of decisions are heartbreaking. The adoptive parents' joy is made from the shadow of the birth mother's sacrifice. The Taylors knew their happiness came from Danielle's pain.

With Valentine's Day behind us and Easter ahead, I think of the time and effort we put into gift giving. Whether its flowers, candy, stuffed animals or a new pet, a lot goes into the process. But think about the gift Danielle gave to her daughter and the Taylors! This loving mother took a courageous, selfless, painful path, a path many would never consider, and she gave life and hope to her daughter and to these parents.

"They will give her such a good life," she told the KBHC staff person working on her case. Danielle made a choice that reflected her belief that God values every life and that He can take tragic circumstances and make something wonderful happen. Danielle chose to give a wonderful present, not only to her baby and the Taylors, but to our Lord.

Make sure the young people in your life know that help is available. They can reach one of our pregnancy/adoption coordinators at (800) 928-5242.

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: [www.kbhc.org](http://www.kbhc.org)

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

## Religious broadcasters cut ties to founding evangelical group

DALLAS—The board of the National Religious Broadcasters has voted unanimously to break away from the National Association of Evangelicals, its founding organization.

A spokesman for the NRB confirmed the decision Feb. 13. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported.

The organization of conservative Christian broadcasters has been affiliated with the NAE since 1944, but members grew uncomfortable with the evangelical group's discussions with the more liberal National Council of Churches.

Karl Stoll, communications director of the NRB, said the two groups "were going two different directions." The NRB, which concluded its annual convention last week with a record attendance of 5,550, did not make a public announcement about the decision.

"We just felt like this was a situation that we didn't want to make a big deal about," Stoll said. "It was something that should be done quietly among our membership, among our board."

Bishop Kevin Mannoia, NAE president, described the vote as "a backward step." He said NRB President Brandt Gustavson had voiced concern about the evangelical association's talks with the National Council of Churches.

Last year, the NAE changed its bylaws to allow denominations that were members of other ecclesiastical groups, including the National Council of Churches, to have dual membership with the NAE.

"We have no intention of merging with the National Council of Churches or altering our statement of faith or identity as evangelicals," Mannoia said.

The NAE was founded in 1942 as conservative Protestants sought to coalesce around a basic evangelical program and establish an alternative to the liberal Federal Council of Churches, the precursor to the NCC.

Compiled from Religion News Service and Baptist Press reports

## Report: TV's sexual content still growing

Continued from page 1

Sex is particularly common in primetime network programs, the study demonstrated. In 1997-98, 67 percent of shows included sexual content; 75 percent did in 1999-2000.

These results are not surprising, because they just confirm the truism that "sex sells," said Joe Haag, special moral concerns associate with the Christian Life Commission at the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"Sex is front and center in television programming and cinematic production because sex attracts viewers, and viewers attract advertisers and investors," Haag said. "What is alarming and discouraging is the overwhelming power of this economic reality."

Researchers in southern California examined 1,114 programs that aired between October 1999 and March 2000 on 10 network, syndicated, public television and cable channels. Only scenes in which sexual behavior was a substantial emphasis were counted in the research.

The study revealed:

■ Movies were the most likely type of programming to contain sexual content, at 89 percent. They were followed closely by situation comedies (84 percent) and soap operas (80 percent).

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■ The increase in sexual content was greatest in situation comedies, rising from 56 percent in 1997-98 to 84 percent of all episodes in 1999-2000.

■ No category of programming showed a decrease in sexual content.

■ Sexual intercourse is depicted or strongly implied in 10 percent of all TV shows.

■ Portrayals of teenagers involved in sexual intercourse increased three-fold. In the first study, 3 percent of all TV characters involved in sexual intercourse were teens. In the latest study, that figure jumped to 9 percent.

■ Nine out of 10 TV shows with sexual content included no reference to the risks and responsibilities of sexual

activity. References to the risks and responsibility of sexual activity were most likely to be included in dramas (15 percent) and least likely in situation comedies (5 percent).

While the findings are disturbing, Haag emphasized that Christians are "not powerless" to respond.

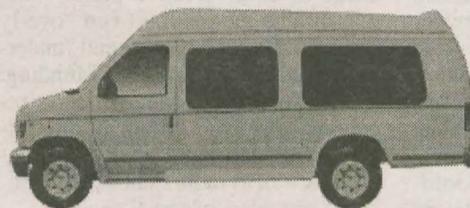
"We can compliment and support the television programs and movies which rise above sexploitation to give a more truthful account of life. We can express our views to advertisers and producers," he said.

Parents can monitor and influence their children's TV viewing and use available technology to lock out some harmful programming, Haag added.

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## To kiss, or not to kiss

This is probably the most unusual title I will ever give any article for the Western Recorder. However, it was my daughter, Laura, who came into my office recently with a very unusual request.

For the past few years we have had a special activity for our students around Valentine's Day. This year my daughter and her husband, Dan, both English teachers, were asked to take charge of the program. They had the help of more than a dozen other faculty and staff. The evening began with an informal banquet for our students and staff. The dining room was decorated for the occasion. After the meal, 250 students, faculty and staff went to the gym for more activities.

The students were given tickets when they entered the gym. Throughout the evening, ticket numbers were called out and special gifts were given away to the winners. The gifts included chocolate hearts, assorted candies and teddy bears.

Some of our staff who have a lot of experience in photography took pictures. The picture could be taken with a special Valentine's Day friend or with several friends. The line was long, but finally all who wanted pictures had them taken.

Another event was guessing the number of items in various glass jars. The jars contained cookies or a variety of candies. Every student was invited to write his or her name on the list in front of each jar and guess how many items were in the container.

Our students also watched a movie, which is something they do not get to do very often. They were given popcorn and a can of pop to enjoy during the film. Seniors were invited to get their snacks first, and then the other students went, grade by grade.

There was an intermission during the movie to announce the winners of the jars of candy. We have done this before, and I can assure you the kids get excited about the opportunity to guess the number of items in the jars, but especially at the opportunity to win the jar of sweets. The movie resumed with the final, special event yet to take place.

When my daughter came into my office, she told me that she had a special request. She suggested that I listen to her proposal and give it serious consideration, but especially not to say "No" without giving it some thought. "Dad," she started, "would it be possible to have a raffle and let five or six couples have a sweetheart kiss during the Valentine's activities?" Most of my readers might not know that we do not allow our students to kiss.

I said we do not allow them to kiss. I did not say that they never sneak a kiss! However, if they get caught kissing, they are not allowed to speak to, sit with or in any way communicate with each other for a specified period of time. I know it's a little old fashioned, but it is the rule.

My daughter knew she was asking for a very special favor. She also knew that her parents sneaked their first kiss here nearly 40 years ago. Boy, am I glad we didn't get caught! She was more than a little surprised when I granted her request. So, the final event for five couples, chosen at random, was a 10-second kiss. That might not sound like a very big deal to you, but it was to our students.

What's next? It's not easy being the president!

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

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## A father to the fatherless

Psalm 103:13 has become the life verse for senior Gus Wilbanks. "As a father has compassion on his children, so God has compassion upon those who reverence Him."

"I grew up without a father because my father, influenced by alcohol, left when I was three years of age. My brother was four and my sister was two. My youth pastor, Scotty Cooper, took me under his wing and cared for me like a father," Gus stated. "That relationship with Scotty and his teaching God's word was a major influence on me and my call."

In his home church in Tiptonville, Tenn., Gus heard the gospel from a revival preacher and was saved. The call to Christian service came in 1995, while working as a warehouse forklift operator. "I had heard God's voice in prayer and Bible study and that day surrendered to Him on the forklift," Gus said.

With feelings of a person deeply blessed, Gus tells about meeting student Jessica Wright. "It was my second semester at Clear Creek, and we met in room 207 in Kelly Hall! We found out we had similar backgrounds with a father involved in alcohol. Things clicked, and we married in the Clear Creek chapel in 1999." He agrees with Martin Luth-

er about marriage, "There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage."

God has confirmed a call to mission service. In May, Gus, Jessica and a team of 14 others from Clear Creek will work with the Shakka people of southern China. Gus expressed his excitement for this mission venture, "I feel like a kid on Christmas morning! The country is very closed, but I pray that by teaching young people about basketball, God will open doors for the gospel."

Gus described a visit with his father two years ago, "He was impressed with my life, and I shared the gospel with him. He rejected, but I'm still praying. God has worked to help me become aware of my father's condition and the need of many others like him."

"Romans 8:15 declares we have a Spirit of sonship and can cry out to God as, 'Abba Father,'" Gus added. "This is my resolve in my relationship to my earthly father. To know that I have an eternal Father that will never leave or forsake me leaves me speechless."

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# MISSIONS

## Thai seek forgiveness through annual Buddhist rituals

By Bill Bangham  
SBC International Mission Board

CHIANG MAI, Thailand (BP)—Each year, Buddhists in Thailand gather to celebrate the ancient festival of Loi Krathong.

Originally a tribute to Me Khongkha, Mother of Waters, the ceremony has evolved into a rite of cleansing in which the Thai seek forgiveness for the past year's sins.

Considered one of the most beautiful festivals in Thailand, Loi Krathong is marked by floating candles and paper lanterns on rivers and irrigation canals and by launching paper lanterns—small hot-air balloons—into the November night sky.

More than 800 years old, Loi Krathong is a time of spectacle and pageantry. Families gather after sunset—some at their homes, others with friends and neighbors.

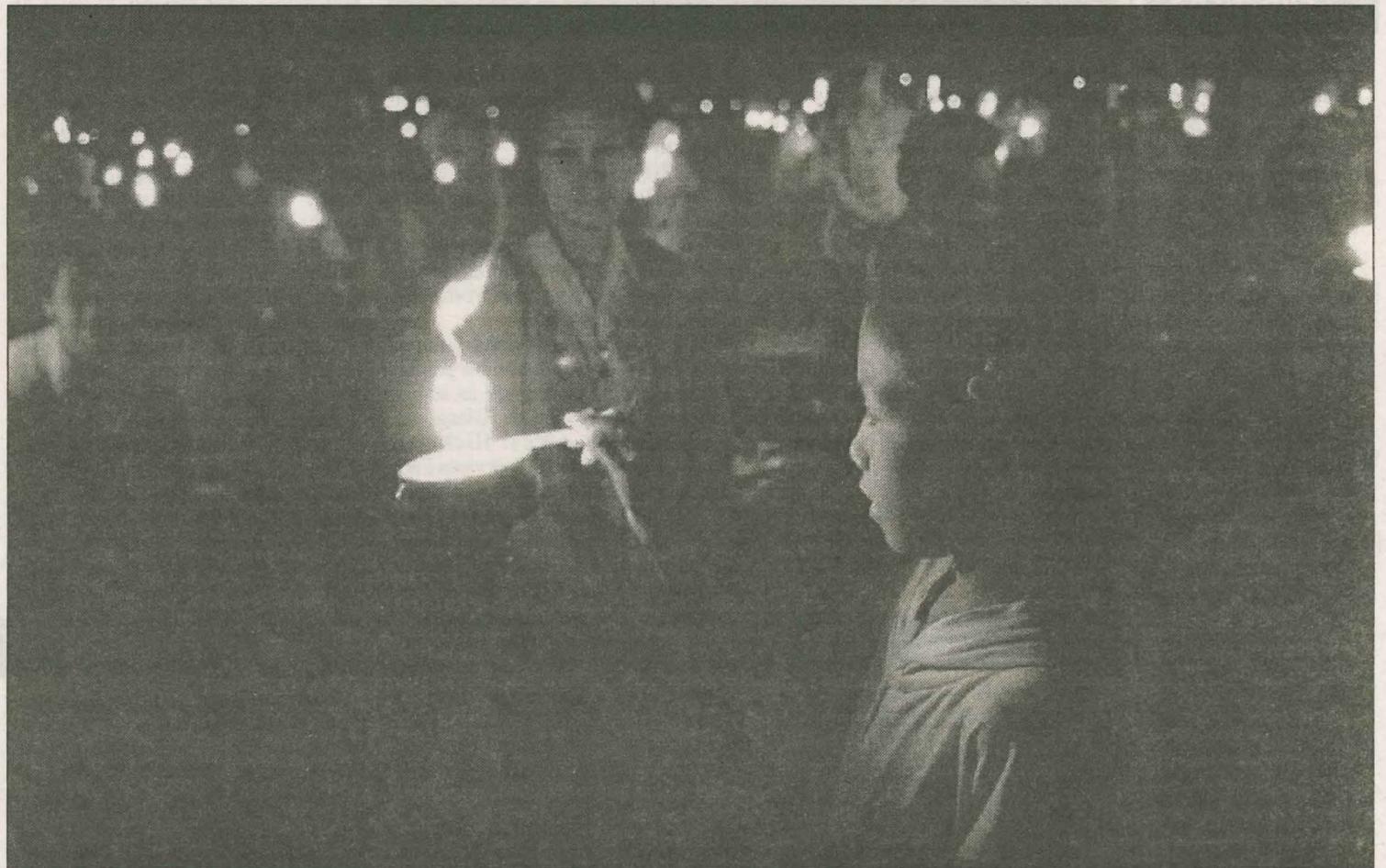
Parades thread through city streets. There are large gatherings where prayers to Buddha are offered and sermons on enlightenment are preached. The atmosphere is one of thanksgiving and celebration.

Then the lanterns are released.

Thousands float through the night sky while more thousands of candles drift along waterways. Fireworks punctuate the night, echoing across the countryside, reverberating and rumbling like the roar of battle, until dawn.

Loi means “to float” and krathong a “leaf cup” or “bowl.” If the krathong stays lit until it disappears from sight, participants believe their sins are forgiven.

Among Thailand's 61 million people, less than one-half of 1 percent are Christian. Yet with them resides the light that leads to the forgiveness of sin that neither candle nor lantern can carry off.



Southern Baptist missionaries are working to start church-planting movements among the people groups of Thailand.

Missionary teams use sports activities, English teaching and campus ministry to build relationships and create opportunities to share the gospel.

Christian medical, agricultural and handcraft ministries improve the quality of daily life and help lead Thais to eternal life. Christian radio programs

and Bible correspondence courses help Thais learn more about God.

Bible studies teach gospel truths in a casual atmosphere where questions may be asked. Distributing Christian literature provides a beginning step in evangelism. Volunteers use their skills to share God's love with communities and witness one on one.

And prayer warriors intercede daily to break down spiritual strongholds and pray for non-Christians in Thai-

land.

For more information about efforts to share the gospel in Thailand, visit [www.peopleteams.org/southernthaiteam](http://www.peopleteams.org/southernthaiteam); [www.peopleteams.org/northernthai](http://www.peopleteams.org/northernthai); [www.peopleteams.org/bangkok/](http://www.peopleteams.org/bangkok/); or [www.peopleteams.org/kuiadvocate/](http://www.peopleteams.org/kuiadvocate/). Prayer requests from Thailand can be found at [www.imb.org/CompassionNet/countries.asp](http://www.imb.org/CompassionNet/countries.asp). Missionary needs in Thailand can be found at [www.imb.org/FP-Needs/LocationSearch.asp](http://www.imb.org/FP-Needs/LocationSearch.asp). Video resources on Thailand can be found at [www.imb.org/video/Default.htm](http://www.imb.org/video/Default.htm).

**RITUAL** A Thai girl prepares to light a paper lantern during the Buddhist festival of Loi Krathong. Thai Buddhists believe that their sins are forgiven if the lantern stays lit until it floats out of sight. (IMB photo by Bill Bangham)

## Pardon our glow



This year marks the Western Recorder's 175th birthday, and we want you to join us for the celebration. If you're coming to the Kentucky Baptist Convention's evangelism conference, visit our table for birthday cake. We'll be the ones next to the fire extinguisher.

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## Baptist missionaries seeing responses in Japan

TOKUSHIMA, Japan (BP)—Missionaries in Japan are rejoicing at work they say God is continuing after a Christian festival last summer.

A former member of a Japanese gang known simply as Mr. Shinohara was the first man who came to faith in Christ, and since the festival he “has been telling everyone he knows that he believes in Jesus now,” said Ron Reynolds, a Southern Baptist missionary to Japan.

Two months after accepting Christ as his personal Savior, Shinohara invited a prayerwalking group to a dinner at his business, a local garage. His wife prayed to accept Jesus as her Savior after the dinner.

Shinohara's 14-year-old daughter also heard his testimony but was skeptical that she truly could trust anyone, missionaries said. They shared with her that as a Christian she never would be forsaken, and she became a Christian.

The next month, missionaries were invited to a dinner hosted by Shinohara's in-laws. He told the guests he has been reading the Bible, often crying over the stories.

“Even though Japanese Christians sometimes boldly witness to employees or friends, the real difficulty comes in speaking to their parents or older relatives,” said missionary Cindy Reynolds. “Tears came into Mr. Shinohara's eyes as he told about the love of Jesus—another thing that

Japanese men aren't known to do—cry before others!”

In January, missionaries began holding weekly worship services in Shinohara's garage.

Barely 2 percent of Japanese profess to be Christian. Most Japanese claim to be both Shintoist and Buddhist. People who convert to Christianity risk social and familial ostracism. Because Japanese often are slow to become Christians, the missionaries said they were excited to see a whole family make public professions of faith.

“The joy of seeing (this couple) tell others about their faith is something that has not been experienced often by our team members,” Reynolds said.

During the festival, Southern Baptists gave audiocassettes about Jesus and response cards to passersby.

Immediately after the festival, few response cards were received, missionaries said. But in the middle of September missionaries received several postcards requesting more information about Christ.

For information about missionary teams serving in Japan, visit the Web site [www.japaneseneedjesus.org](http://www.japaneseneedjesus.org). For information about how students can serve in Japan, visit [www.thetask.org](http://www.thetask.org).

# PEOPLE

## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Praise God that rain finally has come to the drought-stricken Maasai region of Tanzania. "The fields are green again, and the water holes are filling up. The cattle have returned to the villages, and once again the people can continue with their routine lives," a missionary writes.

■ Missionaries Doug and Karen Lehman as they move to Mbeya, Tanzania, after completing language school. Pray that they will continue to develop Swahili language skills and also be able to secure work permits to open a community health clinic.

■ Missionaries Rod and Kellie White in Tabora, Tanzania, as they begin teaching English classes and seek ways to share the gospel with their students.

■ David and Michele Callahan, new church planters in Waltham, Mass.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **ALMO**—Dexter Church called **Carl Butler** as pastor.

■ **BEDFORD**—Bedford Church called **Chad Cunningham** as youth pastor. **Jeffrey Combs** is pastor.

Union Grove Church called **Dennis Planck** as pastor. Planck retired as pastor of First Church, Franklin.

■ **BEREA**—Liberty Avenue Church called **Hoge Hockensmith** as interim pastor.

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—**Matt Wilkins** resigned as pastor of Temple Church to enter full-time evangelism.

■ **FINCHVILLE**—Finchville Church called **Tony Smith**, previously associate pastor at Deer Park in Louisville, as pastor.

■ **FRANKLIN**—First Church called **Stan Meador** as minister of education and administration. **Bob Sutton** is pastor.

■ **FT. MITCHELL**—Ft. Mitchell Church will host **Squire Parsons** in concert Feb. 25 at 10:45 a.m. **French Harmon** is pastor.

■ **GLENDALE**—Gilead Church ordained **Robin Fortune** and **Steve Hall** as deacons.

■ **HAWESVILLE**—First Church called **Willis Henson** as interim pastor. Henson recently retired from Lone Oak Church, Paducah.

■ **HENDERSON**—Hyland Church called **Jeff Coursey** as senior pastor. Coursey previously served as senior pastor of Calvary Church, Glasgow.

■ **HICKMAN**—West Hickman Church will host revival services Feb. 18-21 at 10:50 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday and nightly at 7 p.m. The evangelist will be **Don Mathis**. The music evangelist will be **Gene Hawks**. For information, call (270) 236-0046.

**Champ Thomas** is pastor.

■ **INDEPENDENCE**—**Charles Wilson** retired after serving 22 years as minister of music at Hickory Grove Church.

■ **LaGRANGE**—DeHaven Church called **Rick Davidson** as minister of senior adults. **Anthony Rose** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Calvary Church called **Brian Varble** as minister of youth. **Robert Baker** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethany Church will host **The Darins** in concert March 2 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 452-2681. **Todd Robertson** is pastor.

Louisville native **Arthur Christmas** retired after serving more than 29 years as pastor of North Park Church in Evansville, Ind. Christmas also was pastor of Orville and Panther Creek churches in Kentucky.

■ **MIDDLESBORO**—East Cumberland Avenue Church called **Randall Pressnell** as pastor. Pressnell previously was dean of administrative affairs and assistant professor at Clear

Creek Bible College.

■ **NICHOLASVILLE**—Nicholasville Church called **Ray Cotes** as pastor.

■ **OAK GROVE**—First Church named **Harold Skaggs** pastor emeritus in recognition of 50 years in ministry. Skaggs was pastor of Oak Grove from 1963-1969.

■ **RICHMOND**—**Chris Kurtz** resigned as associate pastor/minister to students at Red House Church to become minister of discipleship at Beacon Hill Church, Somerset. **Larry Sizemore** is pastor.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—Highland Church called **Karl Babb**, director of family ministry for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, as interim pastor.

■ **TAYLORSVILLE**—**Scott Savell** resigned as pastor of Little Mount Church.

■ **WHITLEY CITY**—Flat Rock Church called **Larry Burton** as pastor.

■ **WOODBINE**—Corn Creek Church called **Shawn Bruce** as pastor.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR SALE:** Steel buildings (never put up). 40x48; was \$8,080, now \$5,212. 50x90; was \$16,670, will sell for \$9,980. (800) 292-0111.

**SEEKING:** People with secretarial experience and computer application skills to work in temporary positions. Competitive hourly wage, no benefits. Contact Administrative Services Department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, PO Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433. (502) 244-6468.

**SEEKING:** Missouri Baptist Children's Home seeks to employ a foster/adoptive assistant director for its Kansas City office. MSW or related, 5 years social service experience, 2 years supervisory experience. Contact human resources at (800) 264-6224 or human.resources@mbch.org.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor with strong leadership, preaching and administrative gifts. The ideal candidate should be energetic with a heart for evangelism. They should have a seminary degree, some experience and be willing to work with a female minister of music and deacons. Midlane Park Baptist is a caring congregation desiring to grow and have an effective ministry in the community. Candidates may submit resumés to Pastor Search Committee, 6500 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40218.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for a loving church in Bowling Green. Must be experienced and ambitious. Send resumé to: Forest Park Baptist Church, 520 Old Morgantown Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Minister of youth for young, exciting, growing church. Send resumé to: Emmanuel Baptist Church, PO Box 910, Stanton, KY 40380, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Due to the retirement of our former pastor, North Park Baptist Church of Evansville, Ind., is seeking an experienced spiritual leader for the full-time position of senior pastor. NPBC is a Southern Baptist congregation with an average worship attendance of 150. Seminary graduate preferred. Send resumé to: Search Committee Chairman Steve Humphrey, 4105 Quail Hollow St., Evansville, IN 47715-1536.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor at Howard's Mill Baptist Church in Mt. Sterling, Ky. Send resumé to: Artie Amburgey, 19 Reid Ave., Mt. Sterling, KY 40353.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Direct resumé to: Calvary Hill Baptist Church, 100 John St., PO Box 482, Stanford, KY 40484.

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

**SEEKING:** We are seeking a full-time minister with the primary responsibility of leading our church in music and worship. If interested, please send resumé to: Music Committee, Hall Street Baptist Church, 1102 Hall St., Owensboro, KY 42303.

**SEEKING:** Lawrence County Baptist Association is accepting resumés for director of missions. Send resumés postmarked on or before Feb. 28 to Lawrence County Association of Baptists, 2427 Highway 43 South, Leoma, TN 38468.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music and worship. Our services are blended with traditional and praise and worship. (270) 563-4011. Send resumé to Oakland Baptist Church, PO Box 154, Oakland, KY 42159.

**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:** 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](http://www.mainstreetbaptist.org).

**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](mailto:srice@fuse.net). Phone: (859) 824-4102.

**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:** 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:** 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:** 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](mailto:RineyvilleBaptist@msn.com).

**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:** 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:** 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.

**TOUR:** Adults from your church are invited to join a local group of Lexington Baptists on a 17-day tour of Europe. This professionally escorted tour includes 10 countries. Total cost of \$2,996 each includes air from Lexington, motor coach transportation, all hotels, most of the meals, travel protection insurance and an unforgettable fun time with a group of Christians. Single- or double-occupancy available. For information, call (859) 277-7391 or (859) 278-7155.

**TOUR:** Eleven-day best-of-Italy, July 8-18, See it all, just \$2,879. Lottie Moon's China plus four-night Yangtze River cruise, Oct. 31-Nov. 11, only \$2,375. Call Pastor Jack Studie for info: (270) 475-2197. Experience you can trust.

**TRAVEL:** Reach The World Travel. Established, experienced travel agency offers group mission travel special rates. (800) 277-2001. [www.ReachTheWorldTravel.com](http://www.ReachTheWorldTravel.com).

**TRAVEL:** New Orleans convention packages. Great hotel choices, four-night packages as low as \$233 per person, double-occupancy with free parking and shuttle bus. Discount airfares. City tours. Christian Travelers, (800) 972-8952. [www.christiantravelers.com](http://www.christiantravelers.com).

**WANTED:** A 15-passenger van, late model, low mileage. Brushy Fork Baptist Church. Call Pastor Watts: (606) 349-6262.

## Marshals seize Indy independent Baptist church

INDIANAPOLIS (RNS)—A prayer vigil inside an Indianapolis church came to an abrupt end Feb. 13 as federal marshals seized the Indianapolis Baptist Temple.

"We had a promise from the Bush administration," said Greg Dixon, whose son succeeded him about three years ago as pastor of the independent Baptist congregation. "We had every reason to believe there was a moratorium. They were going to dismiss the case. We had a deal, and they welshed on the deal."

About six or seven people were inside the church praying when authorities entered, Associated Press reported. Officials were forced to remove Dixon by wheeling him out of the church on a gurney, but no one was arrested or injured.

Under a federal judge's ruling last September, the congregation was ordered to relinquish its building to the Internal Revenue Service to pay about \$6 million in delinquent taxes. The church, which lost its tax-exempt status in the mid-1990s, was told to vacate its premises by Nov. 14.

The September ruling followed a 1999 decision that sided with the IRS' claim the church owed \$5.9 million in back taxes, penalties and interest for refusing to withhold federal income, Medicare and Social Security taxes from employees' paychecks. Last month the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that decision.

Pastor Gregory Dixon Jr. insisted the federal government is encroaching on the church's freedom of religion even though a number of court decisions have affirmed the government's right to collect withholding taxes from the paychecks of church employees.

"The fight is still not over," said the younger Dixon, who was not present when the seizure occurred. "We are going to continue this fight for religious liberty."

Dixon and his father attracted hundreds of supporters in the months after the court authorized federal seizure of the church. Supporters held numerous sit-ins, protests and prayer vigils to protest the court's decision.

"I can say personally this has been as difficult a task as I've had in my 37 years of law enforcement," said U.S. Marshal Frank Anderson. "We waited 91 days for the safest and most opportune time to act. ... We didn't want anyone from our side or the other side to get hurt."

The seizure of the church was a first in U.S. history, said one expert on churches and tax law.

"To have the IRS come in and seize the church's property, that is an extraordinary event unparalleled in American history," said Richard Hammar, an attorney for the Assemblies of God church.

## 77 missionaries commissioned at service

By James Dotson  
SBC North American Mission Board

SNELLVILLE, Ga. (BP)—Ken-ny Grant was a U.S. Marines recruit about 22 years ago when he learned his girlfriend was facing an unplanned pregnancy. But he says God used those circumstances and the witness of a fellow soldier to lead him to faith in Christ.

He called his mother first and told her the news, then his girlfriend. "I said, 'I don't know what happened yesterday, but I know our life is going to be different,'" he recalled. "We're going to raise our baby. We're going to get married."

Grant and his wife, Shirley, were among 77 missionaries of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board commissioned during a service Feb. 7 at First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga. Grant now serves as the pastor/director of Savannah Baptist Center, an inner-city ministry reaching multihousing communities in downtown Savannah.

Their testimony was among the highlights of a service that also included descriptions of the work of all of the missionaries; words of challenge from NAMB President Bob Reccord and a drama representing missionary advocate Annie Armstrong.

Another testimony of God's transforming power came from Amy Mitchell, a two-year missionary serving Baptist collegiate ministries in Dayton, Ohio.

Nine years ago, Mitchell said she was a bitter young teenager with a background of physical abuse who had never known genuine love. But then a friend invited her to church, where she heard a sermon about the love of God.

"I told my friend ... 'I want to know about this God,'" Mitchell said. "'I want to know about this



**PRAYER SUPPORT** Members of First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga., pray for missionaries Neal and Mary Hughes (right) during a commissioning service Feb. 7 at the Atlanta-area church. The Hugheses serve as church planting missionaries in Montgomery, Ala. (BP photo by James Dotson)

love. And I want to know about somebody who would love me for who I am without me having to change for them.'

"She said, 'I can tell you about him,' and she led me in a prayer," Mitchell continued. "Ever since then my life has been so full of blessings. I can walk around with a smile on my face, because I know there's a heavenly Father that is wrapping His arms around me every day of my life."

Reccord challenged the congregation—both missionaries and laypeople—to consider their commitment to God's calling in their lives. He told of one instance in his life when obedience was used by God to make an impact.

Reccord said he and his wife, Cheryl, started a neighborhood Bible study in their home after they

moved to Alpharetta, Ga.

The night they were supposed to begin, Reccord said, he was tired after a stressful day and briefly considered calling off the first night's study. But the doorbell rang early, and the woman at the door said she had seen a flyer advertising the Bible study and had been waiting outside for an hour and a half.

"I need God," she said. "I've been to 13 churches and no one can tell me where to find God. ... Can you please tell me how to find God?"

Within the next 24 hours, Reccord said, the woman accepted Christ as her personal Savior. During the next year, after being discipled by Mrs. Reccord, she led six family members to become Christians. Her mother-in-law and father-in-law, both Jewish, now attend Bible studies.

## Recordings reveal gospel music's influence on Elvis' life

By Cecile Holmes  
Religion News Service

FRANKLIN, Tenn. (RNS)—The multilayered Pentecostal faith of his childhood still seems to shape Elvis Presley's music decades after his death.

The Mississippi-born singer loved famous hymns including "Amazing Grace," "In the Garden," "He Is My Everything" and "How Great Thou Art" as much as he loved peanut butter.

Now, a new five-CD release uncovers the soulful side of this rock 'n' roll legend.

Scholars from the Deep South to the Far West have wrestled with the Elvis phenomenon, exploring his complicated personality, his love-hate relationship with his roots and his unparalleled celebrity in the years since his death.

Despite the success of his rock music and his movies, Presley received coveted Grammy awards only for his gospel

recordings and live performances. The best of that music will be released in March in Christian bookstores and retail shops through Provident Music Distribution and RCA. The set offers 56 recordings, many of them rare.



Many baby boomers remember being—or watching—the screaming teen-agers who flocked to Presley's concerts. Social historians recall the dismayed parents who blasted his onstage gyrations. But Presley had another side, steeped in the decisive

rhythms of Southern religious music.

"Southern gospel music was one source of Elvis' performing style," said Charles R. Wilson, a historian of Southern culture who teaches at the University of Mississippi at Oxford. "The movements onstage, the way he dressed, the way he did his hair—all were influenced by the gospel performers he saw and studied in the long gospel concerts he went to in Memphis."

"He took the gospel performing style and

rocked it, becoming the celebrity he was."

Wilson, author of the 1995 book "Judgment and Grace in Dixie: From Faulkner to Elvis," said faith defined Presley because it empowered him to be who he believed himself to be.

"He came from a very poor family, yet his religious faith told him 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so,' to quote a popular Southern religious song that children sing," Wilson said. "Just as his mother told him he was special, so his religious faith gave him much inspiration."

Reared in the Assemblies of God, Presley had sensibilities shaped by that Pentecostal tradition, which is rooted in the early 20th century revivals that added prophecy, speaking in tongues and faith-healing to the already colorful spectrum of soulful Southern religion.

The denomination believes in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Wilson said, noting that music also is very important to the tradition. "The Spirit was alive and well in Elvis. He was drawn to religious music all his life."

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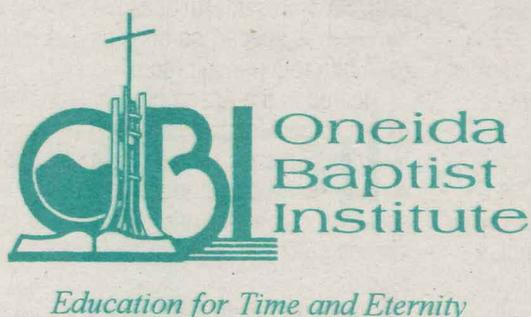
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