

May 8, 2001
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FOR THE RECORD

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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, May 9

Report questions seminarians' ability to handle conflict

By Victoria Moon
 Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—Seminary graduates might be well-trained in theology and the Bible, but they often lack the people skills necessary to lead a congregation successfully, according to a recent national report.

"Faith Communities Today," a survey of 260,000 congregations in 41 denominations, published by Hartford Seminary, found that seminary graduates and clergy with advanced degrees scored lower than non-seminarians in dealing with conflict and leadership skills.

Hartford researcher Carl Dudley said the report should not be interpreted

as an attack on seminary education, but rather shows flaws that leaders should address. "We're not trying to knock seminaries, but religious leadership needs to be prepared for change."

The report found that seminary graduates and clergy with advanced degrees scored lower in both dealing with conflict and having a "clear sense of purpose."

Clergy with no ministerial education or a certificate program scored the highest, around 50 percent who "often" or "always" deal well with conflict. Bible college graduates scored slightly less, and clergy with seminary and advanced degree training scored the lowest, at around 40 percent.

Vernon Cole, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church growth team, said personal experience leads him to believe the report is generally correct.

"This is a broad statement, but those with an advanced education and little 'real world' experiences tend to have a certitude about their beliefs that doesn't allow for the flexibility people who have been educated through life experiences often have."

Church-minister relations specialists have long wished that seminaries would teach more conflict management skills, added Guy Futral, KBC leadership development team leader.

"We long for the day when seminaries would give serious attention to

helping ministers develop their 'people skills,'" said Futral, who often works with churches in conflict.

He added however, that he has found church conflict to be no respecter of persons regarding education.

"Among Southern Baptists, about half of our churches are served by non-seminary trained pastors," Futral said. "Our experience has been that we see severe conflict—often leading to terminations—occurring among the seminary trained and the non-seminary trained; the large churches and the small churches."

The more successful pastors are those who have learned to demonstrate the give and take associated with good

□ See Report questions ..., page 12

Poll: Americans concerned about U.S. moral climate

VENTURA, Calif. (RNS)—Three out of four adults surveyed said they are concerned about the moral condition of the nation, and those committed to the Christian faith were more likely to express that concern, the Barna Research Group has found.

The marketing research company surveyed 1,005 adults. Seventy-four percent of them said they were concerned about the moral state of the country.

Researchers learned that 41 percent of atheists surveyed were worried about the moral condition of the nation. Fifty-six percent of adults associated with non-Christian faith groups said they had a similar worry. Sixty-eight percent of those associated with the Christian faith but not considered born-again said they were worried about the nation's moral situation.

Eighty-nine percent of the born-again Christians surveyed were concerned about the moral state of the nation, compared to 92 percent of evangelical Christians.

Barna Research Group defines born-again Christians as those who maintain a personal commitment to Jesus and who believe they will go to heaven when they die because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as their savior.

It defines evangelicals as a subset of born-again Christians who meet several other criteria, including a belief that Satan exists and that they need to share their Christian faith with non-Christians.

The survey found that 80 percent of Protestants were concerned about the nation's moral state, compared to 73 percent of Catholics. Eighty-three percent of those attending non-mainline Protestant congregations had a similar concern, compared to 76 percent of those affiliated with a mainline Protestant church.

Overall, the researchers found that the segments of the American population with the most concerns about moral ideals were Republicans (84 percent), women (80 percent), people 55 and older (80 percent), and residents of the South (80 percent).

Christians persecuted



OPRESSED On the Indonesian island of Ambon, hundreds of Christian men and women have been forced to convert to Islam and circumcised under threat of death. As Muslim jihad warriors press their efforts to kill or convert all Christians in Indonesia, many Christians are forced to choose between their faith and their lives. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

Indonesians report forced conversions to Islam

By Brittany Jarvis
 SBC International Mission Board

AMBON, Indonesia (BP)—As traumatic as Christina Sagat's story sounds, it's hardly unique.

"My scar healed quite fast, but the sad, humiliated feeling stayed," said Sagat, a 32-year-old Christian from Kasiui, Indonesia. "I feel like I'm no longer complete, both as a person and a woman."

Sagat says she is among the hundreds of Indonesian Christian women who have been circumcised forcibly by her Muslim neighbors.

"My niece, Cecilia, who at that time was eight months pregnant, was also circumcised," Sagat said. "My mother, who was in her 70s, was also

circumcised. Teenagers, and even infants, were circumcised. I don't understand these people."

As Muslim jihad warriors press their efforts to kill or convert all Christians in Indonesia, many Christians are forced to choose between their faith and their lives.

Sagat, who is Catholic, was born and raised on Kasiui island with her seven brothers and sisters. Until recently Catholics, Protestants and Muslims lived peacefully on the island, even helping each other build places of worship.

Then the fighting began. "At first we did not believe when we heard about the bloody conflict in Ambon," she said. "We said it was impossible that our own friends and

neighbors would attack us."

Jihad leaders from other islands began visiting Muslim villages on Kasiui last October. Christians did not realize until later that the leaders were pressuring local Muslims to attack their Christian neighbors. Sagat's uncle was one of the first victims.

While returning from a neighboring Muslim village he was surrounded and attacked by a mob. Bleeding from numerous machete and spear wounds, he somehow managed to return home.

"Still he told us not to take revenge," she said.

But when Muslims murdered another Christian man, Sagat's Chris-

□ See Indonesian Christians ..., page 10

Texas proposal: Bypass NAMB for in-state mission work

The committee asserts that changing the faith statement used in hiring missionary personnel without the consent of the Texas convention violates the 1991 covenant agreement between the state convention and the former Home Mission Board.

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

DALLAS—Although expressing major concerns about some aspects of missions work done by the Southern Baptist Convention, a study committee of the Baptist General Convention of Texas has recommended few changes on the BGCT's part.

The most significant recommendation of the BGCT's Missions-Sending Agencies Study Committee report, released May 3, is to retain in Texas about \$1.28 million of Cooperative Program money that is sent to the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and then spent by NAMB in Texas.

Such an arrangement already is practiced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Making this change would not constitute "defunding," the committee's report says, "but simply is administering more efficiently that portion of Texas funds which would be returned to Texas under the current agreement."

The BGCT would continue to forward to NAMB about \$4.6 million in Cooperative Program funds for use in North American missions outside Texas.

The committee cites numerous concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of NAMB, which was created in 1997 by a merger of the SBC's former Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio & Television Commission.

The mission study committee's report does not recommend any change in funding for the SBC's International Mission Board. Nor does it recommend adding any direct BGCT funding of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The 19-member committee, created by vote of messengers attending the BGCT annual session in 1999, is chaired by Jim Denison, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas.

Denison presented the committee's final report to the BGCT Administrative Committee in Dallas May 4. The same report, along with any additional input from the Administrative Committee, will be presented to the BGCT Executive Board May 22.

The report strikes a much more cautious tone than many critics of the BGCT had predicted. Its recommendations also are far less dramatic than those of a similar Seminary Study Committee that reported to the BGCT last fall.

Unlike the Seminary Study Committee, which reported difficulty in obtaining full cooperation from the six SBC seminaries, the missions study committee reported full and gracious cooperation from all three agencies it studied—the IMB, NAMB and CBF.

The missions committee's 21-page report includes several recommendations:

■ That the overall missions efforts of the BGCT, though strong, should be enhanced, "focusing on connecting Texas Baptists with Baptist groups

around the world" and involving more people in volunteer missions.

■ That the BGCT make no change in its current budgetary relationship to the IMB, although several areas of concern are noted.

■ That a new cooperative agreement be negotiated between the BGCT and NAMB no later than next January, with multiple areas of concern noted.

■ That an amount of Cooperative Program funding equal to what NAMB currently spends on BGCT cooperative projects in Texas be retained for use in Texas by the BGCT, thus "reducing paperwork, bureaucracy, time-consuming documentation and delays."

■ That the BGCT "continue to honor the designations of affiliated churches which wish to contribute to and partner with CBF." Currently, the BGCT funds CBF only through designated contributions from churches. This recommendation would not change that pattern or expand it.

■ That leaders of the SBC be urged to include more individuals supportive of the BGCT to serve on trustee boards of the IMB and NAMB.

The report notes a problem has arisen in the joint selection of missionary personnel between NAMB and the BGCT because NAMB requires adherence to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, but the BGCT has voted not to endorse that version of the faith statement.

This creates a conflict for BGCT-supported missionaries who are candidates for joint funding with NAMB,

the committee says. The report also asserts that changing the faith statement used in hiring missionary personnel without the consent of the BGCT violates the 1991 covenant agreement between the BGCT and Home Mission Board, predecessor to NAMB.

While not recommending any funding changes for the International Mission Board, the study committee cited several concerns about the IMB's operation.

Among major concerns are that current strategy of the IMB has abandoned meeting the "total needs of humanity" in order to focus almost exclusively on church starting. This new focus, adopted by IMB administrators three years ago, is called New Directions and has been somewhat controversial among missionaries and some IMB trustees.

The committee also cited a decrease in the number of people appointed as career missionaries through the IMB.

While the IMB has reported an increase in total missionary numbers, "the number of career missionaries has not grown for some years," the committee notes. For example, the IMB had 3,365 career missionaries in 1990 and 3,323 in 1999.

Most of the increase in the IMB's missionary count has come through short-term workers who serve for two years, the committee explains.

The committee calls on the IMB to be more clear in its public reporting of missionary totals and to begin replenishing the dwindling ranks of career missionaries.

Ariz. Foundation officials face charges

PHOENIX (ABP)—Baptist Foundation of Arizona officials have been ordered to appear in court to face criminal charges stemming from the largest fraud case involving a religious organization in U.S. history.

Due to secrecy rules governing grand juries, the Arizona Attorney General's Office declined to say who is being charged. Possible charges include fraudulent schemes, theft and illegally conducting an enterprise.

A letter to 13,000 investors who lost money when the Foundation collapsed two years ago said that most criminal cases are settled through negotiated agreements rather than trial. Some of the defendants may plead guilty.

The Arizona Republic reported May 1 that William Crotts, the Founda-

tion's former chief executive, has been summoned and will not plead guilty. The paper also reported that up to eight former executives and board members are expected to be charged with crimes carrying penalties of two years to 24 years.

Assets of the Foundation currently are being sold in order to return investors a portion of their money. The Foundation declared about \$640 million in debts and \$240 million in assets when it filed bankruptcy in November 1999. Investors are expected to recover between 31 percent and 41 percent of their money over five years as part of a court-ordered restructuring.

The expected charges follow several civil lawsuits against the Foundation and its auditor, Arthur Andersen.

Two seminary professors lose jobs rather than sign statement

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP)—Two professors at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will leave their jobs rather than sign the Baptist Faith and Message as revised by the Southern Baptist Convention last year.

According to a May 1 article in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 49-year-old Old Testament professor Rick Johnson and 44-year-old ethics professor Jeph Holloway have been told they must leave within a year.

Holloway, who joined the seminary faculty in 1998, said it would be a breach of his conscience to sign the new faith statement, which he considers "very different from the 1963 statement."

He said his main concern is that when he was elected to the faculty, he signed the seminary's bylaws "which said I was to teach consistent with and not contrary to the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963."

"While I respect the seminary's right to a faculty that is in accordance with its own sense of identity, I also feel that I cannot with integrity sign the Baptist Faith and Message 2000."

Seminary trustees amended the bylaws in 1999, which had specifically indicated the 1963 version. Faculty now sign a statement affirming "the Baptist Faith and Message, which may be revised from time to

time by the Southern Baptist Convention to address specific needs in light of our living faith."

That happened once before, in 1998, when the Baptist Faith and Message received a new amendment on the family declaring, among other things, that wives should submit to their husbands. Three professors left rather than endorse that view.

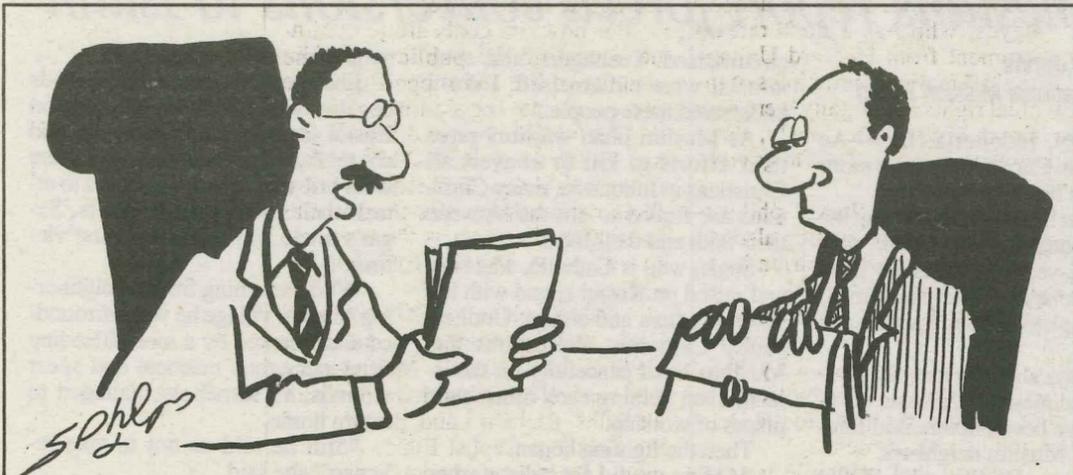
Seminary President Ken Hemphill told the Texas newspaper that limiting employment to faculty who are willing to sign the new document is in the SBC's best interest. Of the 86 full-time faculty members, 84 have agreed to sign the most recent edition of the faith statement first adopted by the SBC in 1925.

"Southwestern Seminary bylaws require all faculty to sign the Baptist Faith and Message as established by the Southern Baptist Convention," Hemphill explained. "This is a matter of faithfulness to our bylaws and a matter of integrity to our constituency."

"We feel that it would be inappropriate for someone to take Southern Baptist funding and advocate a position that is contrary to a statement of faith that Baptists endorse."

Other Baptists, disagree, however, saying the 2000 version has crossed over from a voluntary confession of faith to a binding creed.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press



We were looking for a .com or an .org, but we'll settle for an .edu."

Highview pastor, member to chair top SBC committees

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Kentucky Baptists will play a prominent role in next month's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans. That is especially true of Baptists affiliated with Louisville's Highview Baptist Church and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In an unusual move, SBC President James Merritt named individuals from the same church as chairmen of two of the convention's most influential committees. Highview Pastor Kevin Ezell was named chairman of the SBC Committee on Committees. Highview member Danny Akin, vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology at Southern Seminary, was appointed chairman of the SBC Resolutions Committee.

The Committee on Committees is

responsible for nominating people to serve on the SBC Committee on Nominations which then nominates trustees the following year to serve on the boards of the SBC's national entities. The Resolutions Committee will submit resolutions for consideration by messengers during the June 12-13 SBC meeting in the Louisiana Superdome.

Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Snellville, Ga., said he selected Akin and Ezell on their individual merits, not thinking about the fact they are affiliated with the same congregation.

"It was not intentional; purely coincidental," he said. "There was no conscious effort to stack the deck in favor of one church or another."

"We have really tried our best to reach out to a lot of people, including minorities and women," Merritt added. "We're doing our best to reach out and involve as many Bap-

tists as we can."

Akin and Ezell will join fellow church members Jerry Johnson and Al Mohler who are on next month's convention program. Johnson, Southern's assistant director of development, is serving his second year as chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business. Mohler, in his role as president of Southern Seminary, will present a report during the convention's Wednesday morning session.

Akin, Ezell and Johnson are among six members of Highview who have been appointed or elected to SBC leadership positions in the past three years. Adding to Highview's involvement, Ezell also is being nominated as a trustee for Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

Among other appointments and nominations are:

■ Marilyn Boyd, a member of Chapel Park Baptist Church in Louis-

ville, Committee on Committees.

■ Mike Routt, pastor of Rose Hill Baptist Church in Ashland, Committee on Order of Business.

■ William Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, LifeWay Christian Resources.

■ Randall Murray, a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Louisville, Southern Seminary.

■ Ray Moncrief, a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Corbin, New Orleans Seminary.

Trustees nominated for a second term of service are:

■ James Hales of Highland Heights, SBC Executive Committee.

■ Willis Henson of Paducah, Annuity Board.

■ Timothy Alexander of Florence, International Mission Board.

■ Byron Boyer of Louisville, Southern Seminary.

■ Mark Payton of Danville, Southwestern Seminary.

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ **Campbellsville** University held graduation services May 5. Wanda Lee, executive director for national Woman's Missionary Union, was the speaker, and 233 students received degrees.

■ **Clear Creek Baptist Bible College** will hold graduation services May 11. Richard Adams, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's leadership development department, will be the speaker, and 36 students will graduate.

■ **Cumberland College** held graduation services May 6. The school had 151 graduating seniors.

■ **Georgetown College** will hold graduation services May 12. Radio executive William Stakelin, founder and owner of Regent II Communications, will be the speaker, and 263 seniors will graduate.

■ **Mid-Continent College** will hold graduation services May 19, at Trace Creek Baptist Church. Ronnie Stinson, pastor of Trace Creek, will be the speaker, and 54 students will graduate.

Campbellsville trustees approve budget, degrees

CAMPBELLVILLE—A new budget and new degree programs were approved by Campbellsville University's board of trustees during their recent spring meeting.

Trustees approved an \$18.7 million budget for fiscal year 2001-2002, a 7.42 percent increase compared to the current fiscal year.

Trustees approved a new communications major and minor with a public relations emphasis, establishment of the Kentucky Heartland Institute on Public Policy, a 27-hour certificate in Christian ministry program specifically designed for the needs of bivocational ministers and an associate of science degree in Christian ministries.

The board also approved Campbellsville to offer the associate of science degree in Christian ministries at off-campus locations. The school currently operates an off-campus center in Louisville.

In other business, trustees:

■ Approved for the university to take initial steps toward offering the master of arts in music degree program at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Northern Brazil in Recife. The action continues an educational partnership begun during the mid-1990s with Brazilian Baptists.

The agreement between the two institutions will permit Campbellsville's school of music to take initial steps toward offering a master's degree program.

■ Designated all residence halls to be non-smoking facilities effective fall 2001.

■ Approved a recommendation that the university's administration proceed with planning and fund raising for athletic facility needs.

Keyes: Abortion leads to abuse of all human life

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—The abortion movement represents the first step toward an era in which humans will feel free to abuse all forms of life, according to a two-time presidential candidate.

Speaking to the 28th Louisville Right to Life banquet April 27, Alan Keyes warned that advanced technologies can be evil when controlled by people who do not acknowledge morality.

"It is through the abortion issue that those who seek great power and profit in this future manipulation of humankind wish to disabuse us of the notion that there are any limits to what we can do to one another with this power," he said.

The 1996 and 2000 Republican presidential hopeful pointed out many people eagerly anticipate multi-billion-dollar profits from cloning, growing new organs and other genetic experimentation.

The only thing standing in their way is the idea that just because someone brings a life into the world, it does not give them the right to abuse that life, he said.

"Don't you get it?" the speaker asked. "What they are doing with abortion is the prophylactic work of evil. It is the work that is necessary to poison our conscience against the truth that power does not legitimize injustice and abuse."

This was the one-time assistant secretary of state's second appearance at the group's annual banquet.

His speech attracted the largest crowd in the event's history. The 1,400 people in attendance was double the usual size, including the number who heard him in 1993.

Margie Montgomery, executive director of the Louisville organization, credited Keyes with sparking the turnout. But she said she also believes pro-life forces are gaining momentum because of President George Bush.

"I think people are upbeat with the new administration," she said.

"They feel there's more hope. More young people are getting involved, too."

Despite this enthusiasm, Keyes said the nation is headed "down the road of perdition." The lies of self-indulgence, materialism and convenience are worming their ways into people's hearts and perverting their conscience, he said.

Speaking without notes and sounding more like a Baptist preacher than a politician, he said that time is running out.

Citizens can lie to themselves and think there is a way of escaping the consequences, but unless they wake up they will be overwhelmed by anti-liberty forces, he said.

Referring to the Supreme Court's 1973 ruling that established abortion as a legal right, he said people must recognize that no right to life exists in America.

"The great principles this nation was founded on have been cast aside, thrown on the trash heap of history by a judgment that has withdrawn our allegiance from that first and greatest principle of our nation's life," he said, echoing a theme from his campaigns.

"(Namely), that our rights come not from human judgment, power, will and decision, but from the hand of almighty God. It was that truth the nation was founded on," he added.

Keyes, who has a doctorate in government from Harvard University, said America's principles of individual rights and dignity were new in human history. Previously, absolute power dominated world government, he said.

Yet, the United States' philosophy of basic human justice also relied on a willingness to surrender to God's authority, he argued.

This is at the heart of the foundational principle that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, he said, referring to the Declaration of Independence.

"Because that principle is true, we have a claim to be treated with justice and dignity," he said. "We

have a claim to participate in the great decisions that shape the future of our community and our nation."

Pro-abortion forces argue that government shouldn't be involved in such a personal decision, he said. But Keyes called the idea of a mother in absolute charge of the life in her womb a return to a philosophy of might makes right.

Despite turning away from its founding principles, the nation's way of life has continued for nearly three decades, he said. But he questioned how long America can survive in its spiritually dead state.

Many weaknesses that people lament, such as violence and the undermining of families, are signs of a rotting corpse, he said.

"Of course, there is a way around this, because all things are possible with God," he said. "But, you know, it becomes more and more difficult to expect those possibilities when we no longer acknowledge the power, existence and authority of God."

After concluding his remarks to a standing ovation, Keyes greeted hundreds of well-wishers who lined up to shake his hand.

Looking over the crowd, Montgomery predicted the organization will become such a formidable force nationwide that it will be able to pass a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to life.

For now, its goals are to continue educating the public about the sanctity of life and supporting three pieces of state legislation.

One would require a fetus to be anesthetized before an abortion. Another would equate destruction of a fetus with murder. The third would guarantee pharmacists the right not to fill prescriptions for abortive agents.

While an estimated 70 percent of Right to Life members come from Catholic backgrounds, Montgomery said she welcomes participation from all faiths. Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, will speak at the Kentucky Right to Life convention in Covington this fall.

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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Seek reconciliation

The chaos among many Southern Baptists seems to be a name-calling family fight that puzzles me.

I'm sure Southern Baptists on both sides of this disagreement believe Jesus Christ lived, suffered, died and rose again. That is the gospel. I'm sure they all believe the Holy Spirit is in us and at work in our lives. Any person who believes that is my brother or sister.

Once, years ago, I had a disagreement with my dear sister. We dispensed with it by getting together and discussing our differences. Each of us died to self, humbling ourselves before God and asking for forgiveness. We were reconciled.

Reconciliation is our business as Christians. One cannot sidestep the cross. In this present controversy regarding truth and liberty, one or the other must go to the cross to die to self. Jesus Christ set the pattern for us. He went to the cross and took all the blame for us even though He had done nothing wrong. It was grace, not legal rights, that brought us back together. In John 15:12, Jesus says, "This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

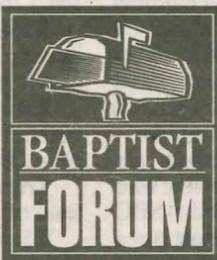
How many seekers of truth have backed away from the Southern Baptist Convention because of all the bickering and name-calling?

How many Southern Baptists have left the Baptist church to seek more loving homes?

What can be done? God tells us in Hebrews 12:14-15, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."

On the question of truth vs. liberty, there is no choice. It is not either/or. It is both/and.

H.L. "Bert" Akin
Louisville



Political control

Over the past several months, I have read numerous articles and letters bemoaning the conservative takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention and the new Baptist Faith and Message.

This latter development is especially interesting when one considers that the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message was a touchstone doctrinal statement used by our denomination's agencies for decades. Before the new revisions, I did not hear anyone crying out against the fact that assent to the document was required to serve with most SBC ministries. It seems that my more moderate brethren don't have a problem with doctrinal (or dare I say creedal) statements as long as they allow enough theological "wiggle room" to include divergent beliefs.

Shawn Merithew
Louisville

BF&M affirmed

The Greenup Association of Baptists, meeting in semi-annual session on Monday, March 16, at Fairview Baptist Church in Ashland, voted unanimously to adopt the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message as the association's statement of faith.

This confessional statement identifies who we are as Kentucky and Southern Baptists. The association commends the leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention for crafting a statement which so reflects our Baptist identity.

Greenup Association of Baptists

What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. The maximum length for a letter is 300 words. Baptist Forum is limited to Western Recorder subscribers, unless someone is responding to a story or editorial of which they are the subject. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; fax, (502) 244-6474; or e-mail, wesrec@ntr.net.

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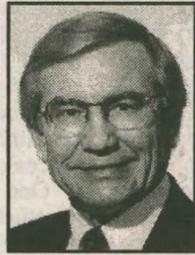
Start new Sunday school classes

Sunday school is vital in helping churches grow and be healthy. In the last two weeks I have talked with three pastors who have launched new Sunday school classes for people not in Bible study and have been blessed to hear about exciting Sunday school ministries in other churches.

Steve Curtis, pastor of Providence Baptist Church and moderator of Simpson Baptist Association, launched a pastor's class that has more than 130 people enrolled. During the 14 years that Steve has been pastor, the Sunday school average attendance has increased from 50 to more than 260. Steve has led the church to use small group studies on Sunday nights, which doubled the Sunday night participation.

Joe Leonard has just arrived as pastor of First Baptist Church of Madisonville. He said the search committee, deacons and members were keenly interested in the fact that God had led him to start new Sunday school

classes in his last three churches. While pastor at Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Joe started a Sunday school class with a Sunday morning coffee group at a local restaurant. He moved the class to the church's family life center following renovations.



Bill Mackey

On a recent Sunday I presented a special Cooperative Program recognition to First Baptist Church of Somerset for outstanding giving. The church ranked third in total CP giving and fifth in per capita CP gifts for 1999-2000. Last year the church gave 36 percent of undesignated gifts to missions through the Cooperative Program. This truly is one of the great missionary churches. I was not surprised to discover that the pastor, Paul Chitwood, is teaching a Sunday school class.

Ron Shaver, pastor of Little Flock Baptist Church in Long Run Association, and Ken Lupton, staff minister, recently shared with me plans to start seven new classes. These classes are

At the root, it is not a problem with doctrinal statements at all. It is a problem with a statement that specifically espouses inerrancy, that upholds the scriptural limitations for those serving as pastors and that states individuals are to be held accountable to the Scriptures and to their brethren in their doctrinal understandings.

Furthermore, in recent conversations, I had one friend in ministry tell me that many of the moderate churches in the Louisville area were not actively participating in the Billy Graham crusade because Al Mohler is chairman of the crusade committee.

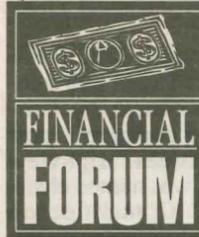
For years I've been hearing that we all just need to put our politics aside in the SBC and be united around those great endeavors of evangelism and missions. Now, one of the greatest interdenominational evangelistic ministries of all time has come to Kentucky and some churches are not supporting it as they should. Whose politics are interfering with our mission now? I'm afraid my more moderate brethren don't have a problem with convention politics at all. Their only problem is that their politics are not in control.

STEWARDSHIP

Take specific steps to avoid common financial mistakes

By Don Spencer

Most people can improve their handling of finances simply by avoiding common mistakes. How many of these mistakes are you making?



■ *Neglecting to cover gaps in insurance.* A sure

way to wipe out years of hard-earned money is to suffer an uninsured loss. Deficiencies in any area of insurance can be disastrous. Without adequate insurance, you are betting your life savings that nothing bad will happen.

■ *Mismanaging credit.* Credit and debt are not always bad, but many people lack the self-discipline needed to manage debt effectively. Financial institutions do not help by promoting high limit credit cards, five-year car loans and large home equity loans with liberal repayment terms. You never can have financial freedom if your debts are controlling you.

■ *Failing to save regularly.* Saving is essential to financial security. Too many people approach savings as something to be done if there is money left at the end of a month. It should be a priority, coming off the top. Savings should include an emergency fund as well as adequate provision for retirement years.

■ *Making inappropriate investments.* Due to fear, ignorance or greed, many people make inappropriate investments. Your investments need to be right for your risk tolerance and for the time horizon that goes with the intended use of the money invested.

■ *Overspending.* Living beyond your means always puts your finances in jeopardy. Living within one's means is an affirmation of everything the Scriptures teach about stewardship.

■ *Failing to take tax breaks.* Tax reduction techniques often are not used, sometimes out of ignorance and sometimes out of unnecessary fear of the IRS. By reducing taxes as allowed by law, a person is being a good steward.

■ *Neglecting to prepare a will.* While not around to witness the havoc, people who do not prepare basic estate planning documents do their heirs a disservice. It can cost heirs a great deal in terms of inconvenience and money.

■ *Failing to be a Christian steward.* A Christian's perspective on money should be different. God owns it all. We are stewards or managers. How we handle our money should reflect that view.

Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department

When 'opposites attract,' couples need to discover healthy balance

Q: My wife is always telling me that we need to spend more time together. I love her very much, but I also enjoy time by myself fishing. I'm kind of a loner. How can we work this difference out?

Often, things that initially attract us to our mates eventually can drive us crazy. One of these differences is the optimal amount of time to spend together. For some spouses, spending half a day alone together seems like a long time. The other spouse may feel like that's just a beginning. While some couples are well-matched in their needs for together time, a large number of people have difficulty finding a balance.

Some people are attracted to individuals who have qualities that are lacking in themselves. People, in other words, seek someone who can fill personal deficits. This tendency probably resulted in the saying, "Opposites attract."

At first, the pairing works well. The pursuer enjoys the wooing of the distancer. In turn, the distancer receives some rich closeness. However, after a while, both partners often resent the behavior of the other. The pursuer desires some reciprocity from the partner. The distancer longs for someone to respect his or her privacy.

Spouses need to discuss what their mutual needs are. It might be that the pursuer can have other interests and friendships while the distancer is getting recharged. Or it might be that the lack of connection reflects indifference to the needs of one's partner.

Harville Hendrix's "Getting the Love You Want" explores how individuals choose marital partners. It includes some great exercises to try. If nothing improves, a marriage counselor with a Christian perspective could be helpful.—
Suzanne Coyle

Q: My father, who is age 76, is interested in lifting weights. Is this possible?

Older adults often feel that exercising is not important by suggesting "It's too late" or "I'm too old for exercise." Fear of injury is another common concern. Let's look at the benefits that can be achieved through a weight resistance program and why age is not a factor when it comes to being more fit.

Believe it or not, your muscles do not know your age. Remember that your heart is muscle and that a sedentary lifestyle can increase the risk of having a heart attack. Regular exercise is one way to help reduce heart attack risk. Whether you are in a wheelchair, use a walker or can dance the night away, exercise should be a part of your life.

How can weight resistance, or weight lifting, benefit older adults? When people keep their muscles strong, they often have better balance and likely can avoid a fall. This helps one maintain an independent and active lifestyle. Muscle strength is gained by overloading the muscles and weight lifting will increase strength fastest. Before beginning a strength program, discuss with a doctor the type of fitness program that best fits personal needs. After receiving a doctor's clearance, individuals should locate a qualified trainer with whom to work. Call a church, senior retirement facility or senior recreation center and ask what programs are offered using weight resistance. Lift weights only two to three days per week, with a 24-hour rest period between exercises.

Weight lifting has helped many older adults walk faster, climb steps easier, improve posture and increase flexibility. It also can help increase energy, maintain independence and decrease risk of certain diseases.—
Jon Rainbow

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



Grassroots Baptists deserve representation

Interested in serving on an influential Southern Baptist Convention committee or board? The best option might be to join Louisville's Highview Baptist Church.

While the vast majority of Kentucky Baptists' 2,500 churches never have had even one member elected as a trustee or appointed as a committee member on the national denominational level, Highview has had six members named to various SBC leadership posts in the past three years.

This year's appointments and nominations are particularly significant for Highview, with two individuals appointed as chairmen of key convention committees by SBC President James Merritt.

Highview Pastor Kevin Ezell was named chairman of the SBC Committee on Committees, a 70-member committee responsible for nominating members to the powerful SBC Committee on Nominations. That committee, in turn, nominates trustees to serve on the boards of each SBC agency and institution. Ezell also is being nominated by this year's Committee on Nominations as a trustee of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Another prominent group in SBC life is the Resolutions Committee which typically helps shape the convention's public stance on such issues as abortion, capital punishment and religious persecution. Merritt named Highview member Danny Akin, a vice president and dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, as chairman of that committee.

In recent years, other Highview members have been elected or appointed to serve on the Committee on Committees, Committee on Order of Business and Southern Seminary board of trustees. Among those is Highview member Jerry Johnson, Southern's assistant director of development, who is serving his second year as chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business.

Coincidentally, high-profile SBC leader Al Mohler, president of Southern Seminary, also is a member of Highview Baptist. In addition to his role as president, Mohler was a member of the committee that proposed last year's revision to the Baptist Faith and Message.

What difference does it make if members of one church and employees of one seminary continually are called on to fill key leadership positions? It's not that individual members of Highview or administrators at Southern are unqualified to fill the roles.

In fact, Ezell, Akin and others unquestionably fulfill Merritt's guidelines for appointment which include being "fully supportive of our 2000 edition of the Baptist Faith and Message" as well as being "a faithful contributor to our Cooperative Program."

According to the 2000 Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual, Highview baptized 174 people last year and gave more than \$126,000 through the Cooperative Program. While that is less than 5 percent of Highview's \$2.7 million budget, it still is higher than several SBC leaders' CP giving records in recent years.

If it's not a matter of qualification, then what's the problem? The concern is that when several individuals affiliated with one church or one institution dominate annual appointments and nominations, that robs other congregations of ever having the opportunity to serve on that level.

Even if members of 10 different Kentucky Baptist churches were tapped for SBC leadership positions every year, it would take some 250 years for every congregation to be directly involved. Considering that most of the elected positions allow members to serve two terms, the number of years for some churches to wait in line would double to five centuries.

Granted, not every church has to be directly involved for Southern Baptists' representative form of leadership to be effective. But returning to the same congregation year after year while hundreds of other equally qualified churches are passed over is not the way the SBC system was designed to operate.

While Merritt said his appointment of two committee chairmen from one church was "purely coincidental," he noted that "I probably should have thought about that." Hopefully he and other SBC leaders will work diligently in the future to involve as many churches as possible in convention leadership.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Porter's tenure as editor mixes stability, controversy

By Duane Bolin

The unexpected death of Western Recorder editor and long-time Walnut Street Baptist Church pastor T.T. Eaton came only one day after the adjournment of the 1907 annual meeting of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky in Mayfield, a meeting in which Eaton had played a prominent role.

At the time of his death, the 62-year-old pastor/editor "was doubtless the most potent and influential personality among Baptists in the South," according to one historian. Eaton was succeeded at the Recorder by J.M. Weaver, the pastor of Louisville's Chestnut Street Baptist Church. Weaver served as acting editor until C.M. Thompson was elected editor in 1908. Thompson's tenure proved to be equally short. Thompson, who later became executive secretary of the General Association (1921-1938), left his Western Recorder post after less than a year to become pastor of Hopkinsville's First Baptist Church.

On July 1, 1909, John William Porter was appointed editor, a post he held for 12 years. Porter gave stability to the paper during a period of world upheaval brought on by World War I and during a time that witnessed dramatic changes in the organization of Baptist work in Kentucky.

During Porter's tenure as editor, he covered the state convention's adoption of a unified giving plan in 1915; the state convention's purchase of the Western Recorder in 1919; and the SBC's inauguration of the Seventy-five Million Campaign, also in 1919.

Beyond his service with the Western Recorder, Porter's pastoral ministry was wide-ranging and lasting. Early pastorates included Germantown and Collierville, Tenn., Newport News, Va.; and Crestwood, Maysville and Louisville's Third Avenue Church in Kentucky. During his 14-year pastorate at Lexington's First Baptist Church, Porter also was instrumental in founding that city's

Ashland Avenue Baptist Church as well as Porter Memorial Baptist Church, a church whose name paid tribute to this prominent Kentucky minister. Porter also served as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington for 13 years before his death in 1937. He also was moderator of the General Association in 1913 and 1914 and preached the annual sermon of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1915.

Porter's ministry was filled with energy and vision, but he also was at times controversial. As editor of the Recorder he assumed Eaton's mantle, promising "to wage unremitting war" on what he perceived as "heretical" attacks on Landmarkism. He often attacked the stands of Southern Seminary President E.Y. Mullins. Mullins counted Porter among a number of "ultra brethren," a group whose rigid doctrinal views sometimes brought division among Baptist ranks.

Still, Porter's legacy remained secure: through the churches he founded and served as pastor and through his strong and stabilizing work as editor of the Western Recorder.

James Duane Bolin is associate professor of history at Murray State University



Church groups on both sides of 'charitable choice' issue

Black churches also divided

By Adelle Banks

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Is the much-touted White House faith-based initiative a welcome reinforcement to social services long provided by African-American congregations? Or is it a partisan effort that will silence the black church's political voice?

As the debate over government funding of religious social services continues, African-American churches are lining up on either side of what appears to be a growing divide over whether the efforts spearheaded by the White House and developing on Capitol Hill should be embraced or shunned.

When the White House initiative was unveiled shortly after President Bush took office, a consortium of mostly theologically conservative black ministers was in the limelight voicing support for efforts to increase partnerships between their churches and departments of the federal government. But more recently, some of the more traditional forces in the African-American religious community have started asking questions.

The Congress of National Black Churches, a coalition of eight historically black denominations, is drafting a formal statement that is sure to add to the debate over plans to expand the access religious organizations have to federal funds for their social service programs.

"About a dozen questions are raised about the faith-based initiative and with what we know about it now, our position ranges from somewhere between alarm to caution to militant opposition," said Bishop John Hurst Adams, chairman emeritus and founder of the Washington-based congress, and the senior bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Religious Affairs Committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has formulated a resolution that states that "the NAACP opposes any and all faith-based and charitable choice initiatives which do not include traditional and well-established employment rights, civil rights and anti-discrimination protections which can be enforced by our nation's courts."

Julius Hope, national director of religious affairs for the NAACP, questioned whether the issue is a "Trojan horse" to divide and conquer black church leaders.

Eugene Rivers of Dorchester, Mass., a member of the theologically conservative consortium that supports the initiative, dismissed those suspicions. He noted former President Bill Clinton first approved the "charitable choice" provision. "How come the very program that was initiated by Clinton somehow becomes transformed because now you've got Bush dealing with it?"

Rivers, who said he voted for former Vice President Al Gore in the last presidential election, argued support of the federal faith-based initiatives relates to policy more than party.

"The reality is that smart black people will deal with all political leaders on an issue-by-issue basis," said Rivers, a Church of God in Christ pastor who serves as the general secretary of the Pan African Charismatic Evangelical Congress.

Bishop Harold Calvin Ray, the pastor of a nondenominational church in West Palm Beach, Fla., agreed. He helped bring hundreds of clergy—more than half of them African-American—to a summit on faith-based issues on Capitol Hill in late April.

"People are fearing that religious partnership is creating Republican partisanship," said Ray, founder of the National Center for Faith Based Initiative, a year-old network of clergy that intends to foster economic and social development in local communities. "I don't see that. Whether it is Democratic or Republican, good policies need to be embraced."

By Kenny Byrd
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—As Congress gears for battle over President Bush's plan to offer tax dollars directly to religious organizations that provide social services, both sides worked to marshal clergy into their camp.

More than 850 religious leaders—including approximately 200 Baptists—signed a statement opposing proposed expansion of "charitable-choice" funding, arguing the proposal would undermine laws on civil rights and the separation of church and state.

At the same time, House supporters of the initiative promoted the plan at a summit meeting with nearly 500 religious leaders, including two Southern Baptist officials.

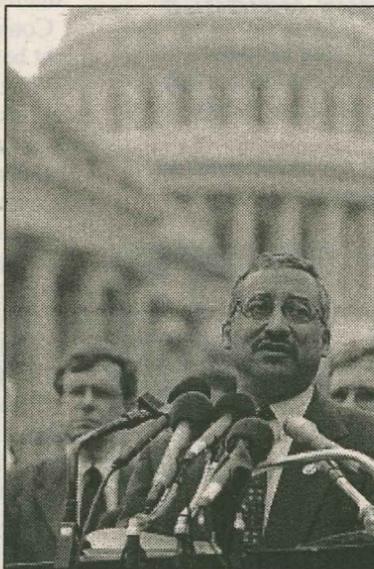
"Faith-based organizations should not be discriminated against simply because they are comprised of people of God," said Rep. J.C. Watts, R-Okla. "They do good work, and we ought to use their talents."

Watts, a sponsor of both the Bush-backed measure and the summit, labeled the closed-door meeting a success.

To some religious leaders, charitable choice is a no-brainer. Faith-based programs have proven to be some of the most effective ways to fight problems such as addiction. Programs that seek to advance a particular religion through such programs, however, don't qualify for government funds that are available to secular service providers.

That's just fine with others, who say religious organizations—whether effective or not—should continue to pay their own way.

"It is out of our commitment to the success of such faith-based enterprises that we are writing today to express our serious reservations," said a letter from



OBJECTION Rep. Robert Scott, D-Va., says a bill allowing faith-based organizations to discriminate in employment threatens "to turn the clock back on our civil rights." (Photo by Carl Bower)

the Coalition Against Religious Discrimination presented to Democratic House members at a Capitol Hill press conference April 24.

In all, 879 religious leaders signed the petition. They included Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims and Hindus, along with representatives of minority religious sects such as Wiccans.

The religious leaders warned that charitable choice would "inject government dollars and bureaucratic oversight" into houses of worship. It would "entangle religions and government in an unprecedented and perilous way," they said, and "undermine the independence" of churches while fostering "unhealthy competition" between religions, the letter stated.

"Charitable choice is a solution in

search of a problem," said Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Texas. He said faith-based groups already qualify for federal funds as long as they don't proselytize or discriminate in hiring.

Edwards called religious liberty and church-state separation the "crown jewel" of American democracy. "We tamper with that right at our own peril," he said.

A particular stumbling block is the issue of employment discrimination. As legislation begins its journey through Congress, several lawmakers say that guaranteeing civil rights in religious employment is key to their support.

Gay and lesbian advocacy organizations say they will highlight the issue, while church-state separation groups contend that they've found an argument to derail the president's plans.

Meanwhile, Richard Land, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said he left the pro-charitable choice meeting better assured that the White House is committed to protecting religious liberty in its program.

The summit was an "absolutely extraordinary event," Land said. "As the day progressed, you could feel an almost palpable sense among the participants that they had the possibility of being empowered by their government through the faith-based initiatives program to provide real help to real people in the zip codes where they live without having to go to the liberal elites' social welfare plantation to get the resources."

Bob Reccord, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, also attended the summit.

With additional reporting by Religion News Service and Tom Strobe of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

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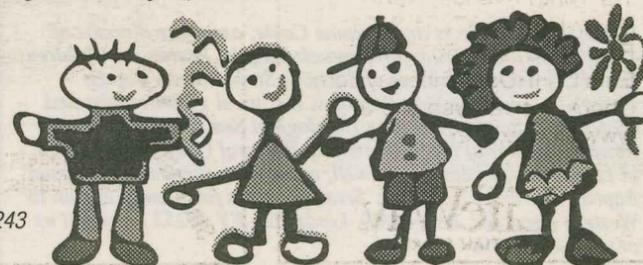
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Bush, Merritt and others observe National Day of Prayer

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Hundreds of observers of the National Day of Prayer gathered in the nation's capital May 3 to mark its 50th celebration.

In addition to the Washington observance, people across the country attended tens of thousands of events to pray for their neighbors, their political leaders and the nation.

"This is a day when our nation recognizes a power beyond our power, an influence beyond our influence, a guiding wisdom far greater than our own," President Bush said in brief remarks at a reception featuring religious leaders and members of his Cabinet.

"The American character is strong ... but we have never been reluctant to speak of our own dependence on Providence."

Bush, who thanked the nation for its prayers for him and his family, said Americans may have varied faith experiences but all may be changed by praying to God.

"We learn humility before His will and acceptance of things beyond our understanding," the president said. "We discover that the most sincere of all prayers can be the simple words 'Thy will be done' and that is a comfort more powerful than all our plans."

The president welcomed more than 125 people to the White House, including such religious leaders as Jerry Falwell, Southern Baptist Convention President James Merritt and Focus on the Family President James Dobson and his wife, Shirley, chairman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force.

Evangelist Billy Graham, named 2001 honorary chairman for the prayer day by the task force, wrote a special

prayer for the occasion which Americans were asked to recite at 12:30 p.m.

Mrs. Dobson estimated more than 30,000 prayer gatherings would take place at state capitols, county courthouses, prisons, public parks, churches and synagogues.

The Capitol Hill event was so popular that hundreds of people waited outside for seats to become available. Some gathered in a circle for prayer and others read from pocket-sized Bibles.

Prison Fellowship Ministries Chairman Chuck Colson, the keynote speaker, encouraged people to pray for themselves, the nation and their churches.

"There is one prayer that God will never, ever fail to answer: God, take me and make me like You," he said, adding that prayer changed his life when he was tied up in the Watergate scandal when he served as a special counsel to President Richard Nixon. "I

stand here today as one who for the last 28 years has seen the richest blessings of God."

Colson urged repentance for indifference about "the marginalized, the left out, and the disabled and the unborn and the elderly." He said Americans should be ashamed for not caring more about those suffering from slavery in Sudan.

"America depends upon righteous, God-fearing, praying people who will seek God's face," he said. "We have no business praying unless we repent ourselves."

U.S. Senate Chaplain Lloyd Ogilvie told the crowd about numerous prayer meetings and Bible studies attended by senators, their staffs and spouses.

"Your prayers are being answered," he said, garnering applause. "There is an authentic spiritual renewal taking place in Congress."

Robertson's comments on abortion drawing fire

By Kenny Byrd
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Christian Coalition founder and President Pat Robertson claims he was misunderstood in comments taken by some as justifying forced abortions in China.

Robertson's recent statement aired on CNN that Chinese officials are "doing what they have to do" to curb population growth by implementing a one-child policy has bewildered and angered abortion opponents.

In a recent interview, CNN's Wolf Blitzer asked Robertson about "the so-called forced abortions in China."

"Well, you know, I don't agree with it," Robertson said. He went on to say: "But at the same time, they've got 1.2

billion people, and they don't know what to do. If every family over there was allowed to have three or four children, the population would be completely unsustainable.

"So, I think that right now they're doing what they have to do," Robertson added. "I don't agree with the forced abortion, but I don't think the United States needs to interfere with what they're doing internally in this regard."

Fellow members of the Religious Right objected to what they called Robertson's backing of "forced abortion" in China.

The American Life League issued a statement by President Judie Brown, saying, "Of all people, Pat Robertson should have faith that God will find a way to provide for the Chinese people that doesn't require slaughtering millions of babies in the womb."

And Robertson's clarification statement did not do much to appease the criticism.

The statement, according to a press release by the Family Research Council, said: "In my CNN interview, I did not preface my remarks with my long-held view (favoring the right to life), but I merely expressed what to me seemed obvious ... that the Chinese people with a population of 1.2 billion will face a dilemma of massive pro-

portions if they permit their population to explode upwards of 2 billion people." He added that the one-child policy reflects "an obvious necessity."

FRC President Ken Connor said, "I have profound respect for Pat Robertson and all he has done to champion faith and family, ... but these statements, and the clarification that failed to clarify, are misguided and just plain wrong."

A Christian Coalition spokesman told Associated Baptist Press that Robertson wrongly assumed his audience would understand his comments in the context of his long-held views against abortion. The Christian Coalition aide also called Robertson's subsequent clarification "a bit mucky."

But the spokesman cited a more recent television interview in which Robertson stated: "I am unalterably opposed to forced abortion. I am opposed to abortion as a means of population control and that has always been my position for the past 40 years or so."

The spokesman attributed criticism from the Religious Right in part to competition that sometimes occurs between various organizations and the desire to keep each other in check. He added, however, that the Christian Coalition still "works closely" with the Family Research Council on legislative issues.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Nonprofits support non-itemizer deduction plan.** Seeking a boost in charitable giving from Americans "whose hearts are often larger than their wallets," a coalition of more than 500 nonprofit organizations announced support for a proposal that would allow non-itemizing taxpayers to deduct charitable gifts. Leaders of the Coalition to Help America Give say the move could help the 85 million households—70 percent of all taxpayers—who do not itemize their returns and could increase giving to charities by \$14.6 billion every year.

■ **Methodists plan discussions on homosexuality.** The United Methodist Church is planning a series of dialogues on the divisive issue of homosexuality after last year's General Conference meeting, which saw more than 200 people arrested in protests over the issue. After last year's turbulent meeting, delegates voted to sponsor a series of discussions on issues relating to the homosexuality debate. Church policy upheld at last year's meeting affirms the "sacred worth" of gays and lesbians but calls the practice of homosexuality "incompatible with Christian teaching."

■ **Preacher, apartheid foe, dead at 78.** Leon Sullivan, an American Baptist preacher renowned for his work to end apartheid in South Africa, died April 24 of leukemia. Sullivan who was 78, wrote the Sullivan Principles, an international code of business conduct that helped lead to the dismantling of apartheid in the 1990s, Associated Press reported. He created them in the 1970s after he became the first African-American named to the board of General Motors Corp.

■ **ADL faults Christian leaders.** The national director of the Anti-Defamation League blasted Christian leaders April 30 for not speaking out against what he called a spate of recent anti-Semitic incidents. In an address to the ADL's annual meeting in Washington, Abraham Foxman said Christian leaders failed to be "responsible" by not refuting a growing spirit of religious "triumphalism." Foxman referred to incidents ranging from remarks by basketball players to an evangelical cartoon showing a menorah morphing into a cross.

■ **Update: Minister resigns from panel.** A former Cleveland police chaplain who was fired in 1995 for comments about other religions has resigned from a committee advising congressional Republicans on faith-based issues. The resignation of Delano Ellis, pastor of the Pentecostal Church of Christ in Cleveland, averted a conflict with Jewish committee members. It came as Republicans are trying to showcase support for the Bush administration's faith-based initiative and opponents are gearing up to fight it.

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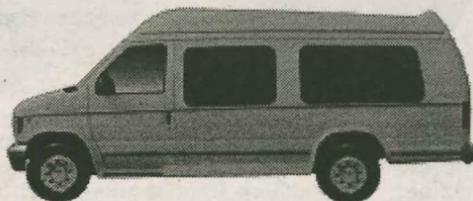
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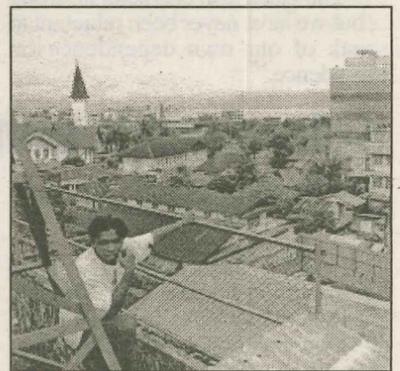
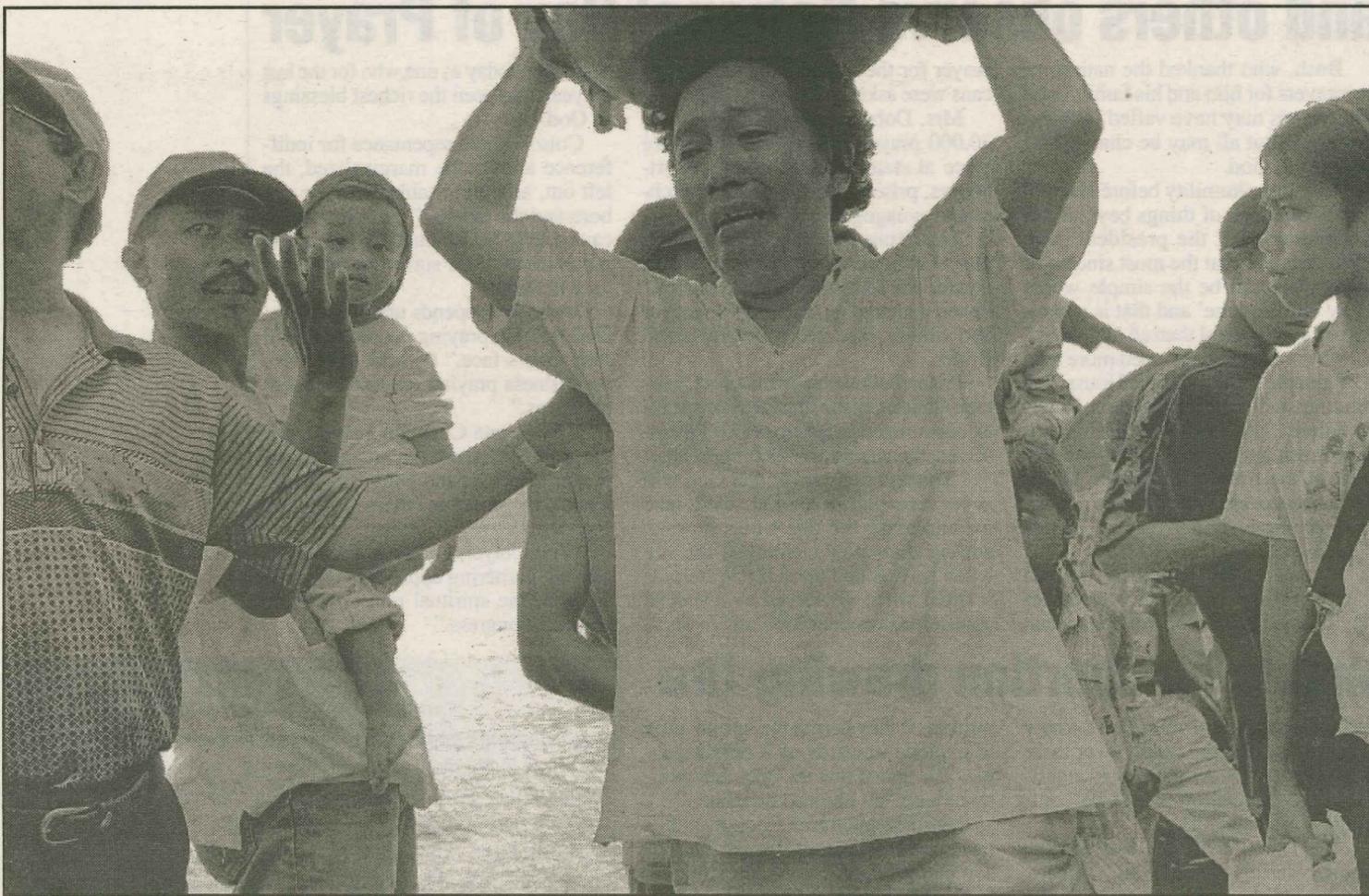
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MEDIA



THE COMMISSION The Southern Baptist International Mission Board's magazine recently was honored for its use of photography, including these pictures from the Indonesian island of Ambon, where Christians have been under attack by militant Muslims.

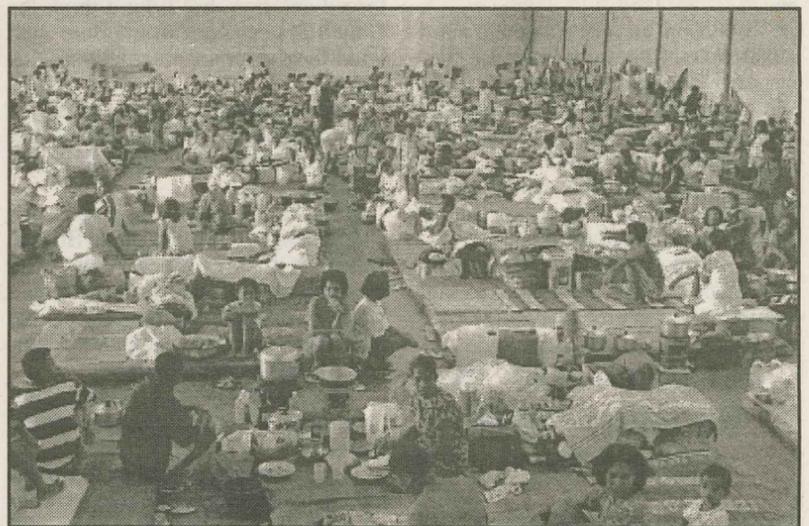
■ **Above:** A refugee from the Christian village of Hative Besar, which was pillaged, gets off a boat in Ambon City.

■ **Top right:** Christians protest in front of the local governor's office, urging the government to stop the killing of Christians.

■ **Middle right:** From a hotel roof, the smoke of a burning Christian village is visible across the bay.

■ **Bottom left:** A member of Elim Baptist Church in Ambon City holds a Bible.

■ **Bottom right:** Refugees, many of whom walked for days to find safety, stay in a former clove warehouse in the city of Passo
(© International Mission Board photos by Warren Johnson)



Baptist magazine honored by major photography award

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—The Southern Baptist International Mission Board's monthly magazine has won a major photography award in an international competition of top-rank publications.

"The Commission" won second place for Best Use of Photography by a Magazine in the annual Pictures of the Year International contest, sponsored by the University of Missouri School of Journalism and the National Press Photographers Association.

Perennial favorite National Geographic received the first place award in the category. Other entrants in the category included Time, Newsweek, Sports Illustrated and the New York Times Magazine.

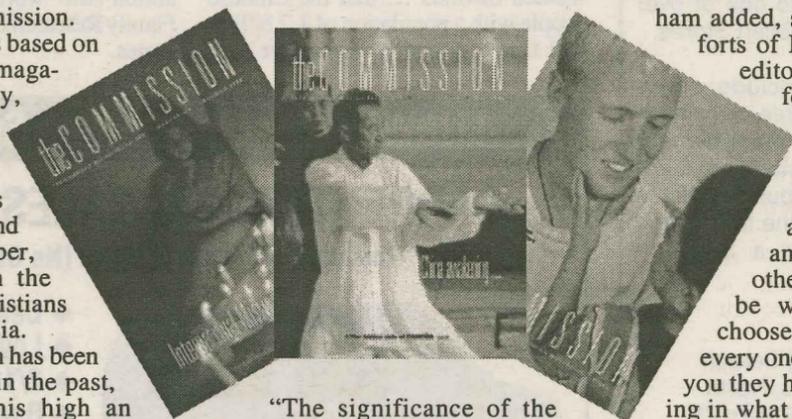
The worldwide competition drew nearly 33,000 photographs and 1,800 page layouts submitted by 1,914 newspaper and magazine photographers and editors in 54 categories, said Bill Bangham, editor in

chief of The Commission.

The judging was based on three issues of the magazine in 2000: May, which included a feature on China; November, which included features on Turkey, India and China; and December, which focused on the persecution of Christians in Ambon, Indonesia.

The Commission has been honored by POYI in the past, but never with this high an award.

The recognition reflects on the strength of the entire magazine, Bangham said. "The contest judges magazines as a package, with an eye toward the use of strong visual photography," he noted. "It looks not just at the photography, but also at the editing and design and how it all comes together."



"The significance of the award for us is realizing that our competition is on the coffee tables of Southern Baptist homes. When our magazine hits our readers' homes, we are competing with secular magazines like Newsweek and Sports Illustrated. This award shows we are competitive."

The quality of the magazine reflects the quality of its people, Bang-

ham added, singling out the efforts of Dan Beatty, design editor on the magazine for 23 years, for his leadership in photo editing and design.

"Our people are very talented, and there are a lot of other places they could be working. But they choose to work here, and every one of them would tell you they have a sense of calling in what they do."

The awards ceremony was held April 19 at the Newseum in Arlington, Va. Canon and Fuji were corporate sponsors of the contest.

The Commission is published 10 times a year by the International Mission Board, a Southern Baptist Convention agency supported by the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Evangelicals exploring arts for expression and outreach

By Jo Kadlecak
Religion News Service

WACO, Texas (RNS)—Deep into the heart of Texas, 2,500 writers, poets and scholars brought their creative hunger in February for a big helping of “Art and Soul,” an international festival of religious faith and literary art.

In the basement of New York’s Empire State Building, 400 painters, actors and musicians from 14 states and three countries gathered in March for a week-long conference on “Art as Prayer, Prayer as Art.”

And this summer, from Hollywood and Santa Fe to Minneapolis and Washington, hundreds of other artistic souls will bring their creative passions together for one purpose: Jesus.

It seems the evangelical church giant is beginning to stir from its long aesthetic sleep. For the first time in decades, artists are finding new opportunities for expression in their Christian communities.

Since the early 1990s, an arts movement among evangelicals has been gaining momentum, confronting decades of legalistic ostracism and producing scores of publications, books, Web sites, festivals and associations addressing the issues of Christian faith and art. This year alone more than two dozen gatherings for evangelical artists are scheduled across the country—many at Christian college campuses and churches.

Sculptors, songwriters and filmmakers are discovering new opportunities to bring Jesus into the artistic process.

But why now? What has changed in evangelicalism, and what impact will such a creative movement have on U.S. culture and the evangelical church at large?

In the case of Baylor University’s “Art and Soul” Conference in Texas, Greg Garrett convinced his Baptist board that “we could create a community of writers and artists that don’t have many places to go.” The conference’s success, he said, was due largely to those same board members, who were willing to take risks in achieving their goal of “being at the forefront of Christian colleges. I think they began to see it is possible to be a Christian and an artist.”

Luci Shaw, a poet, author and pioneer in the arts movement among evangelicals, says the efforts of artists are starting to pay off: “Artists have had to prove themselves true servants of the church, faithful and responsible in areas other than their art, before being acknowledged as artists with gifts that can enrich the church community.”

Various Christian arts groups—Christians in the Visual Arts, Ad Lib, Christians in the Theatre Arts—have formed, initially for mutual support and later for outreach. Gradually, others joined the battle: Calvin College’s Festival of Writing and Faith, Act One Screenwriting workshops, and magazines and journals like IMAGE, Mars Hill Review and Christianity & the Arts.

“Even though they’ve struggled, these [efforts] have raised the profile

of the arts for serious Christian thinkers and provided a forum for the contributions of artists and a discussion of their value,” Shaw said.

The New York-based International Arts Movement, sponsor of the “Art as Prayer” conference, also provides such a forum. Renowned painter and IAM founder Mako Fujimura says the role of the artist who is Christian is to “propose a new framework for creativity. I believe Christians can show a new paradigm to artists that is not self-reverential but liberating.”

Some believe the arts movement has grown out of a disillusionment with the legalistic spirituality many evangelicals grew up in, churches that labeled art as bad, worldly and “of the flesh.” They say today’s arts movement is partly a reaction to such rigid religion and partly a result of the popularity of art in mainstream culture.

Some pastors say that when evangelicals lost their sense of tradition in the arts almost a century ago, they began to view such rituals from an anti-intellectual skepticism and discouraged members from participating in the arts.

Consequently, Brent Beasley, pastor of First Baptist Church in Eagle Lake, Texas, says evangelicals today “have bare, multipurpose worship centers that double as the gym. There’s 45 minutes of choruses, 45 minutes of preaching and then you go home. People want more.”

His congregation has reintroduced the Christian calendar as a way of getting back in touch with the larger liturgical traditions of the church.

Beasley’s seminary friend, Chris Ceay, is pastor of a young evangelical church in Houston known as Ecclesia Christian Church, targeting artists in their 20s. Last year, they purchased a building that includes a gallery so members can showcase their works.

Others people see the new artistic expressions as an outgrowth of a maturing evangelical church.

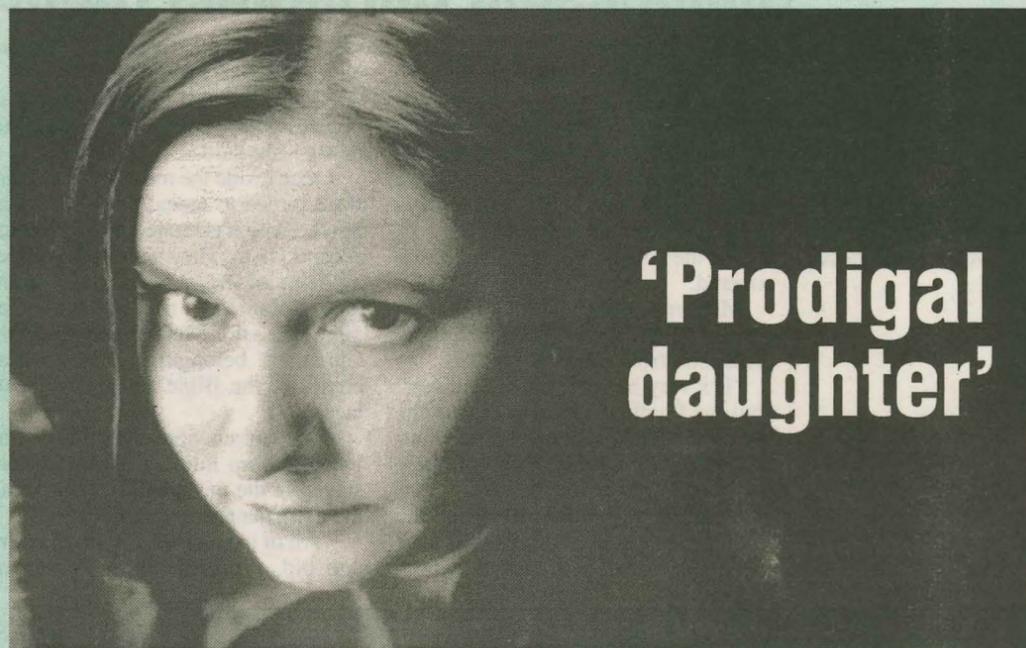
“It’s possible that evangelicals have done a good job, and in the process of renewing their minds people are seeking a more complicated expression,” said North Carolina State University lecturer Sheryl Cornett. “We live complicated lives, but art that tells the truth from a variety of spiritually viable angles leads us home ultimately to the Word, or at least nearer to it.” Cornett sees the increasing interest in art and liturgy as part of “the growth process.”

There is a consensus that evangelicals have become more “artistically aware.”

Michael Curtis, fiction editor of Atlantic Monthly, says that could be because mainstream editors are “generally more receptive to faith-based stories today.” Others suggest the Internet has contributed to the movement, creating a sense of community and connecting artists and organizations to each other’s work.

And for poet and editor Joy Sawyer, it is “a return to the symbolic, to metaphor. It’s about the incarnational aspects of life, that which we taste and touch.

“I think we’re starting to see the evangelical purpose of beauty and truth finally surface.”



‘Prodigal daughter’

Singer-songwriter explores faith with fun & insight

By John Pierce
Baptists Today

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP)—Hearing a preacher’s kid sing is not so unusual, but hearing Kate Campbell is. Her clear voice, thought-provoking lyrics and musical warmth draw listeners from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Though her fifth and latest CD release, “Wandering Strange,” contains soulfully arranged hymns and original songs of faith, Campbell cannot be rightly labeled “a Christian singer.”

Her folk-country-blues-shaped music and philosophical openness make her at home in both churches and the numerous music clubs she visits across the country and beyond.

“I resisted it a long time,” Campbell said of the gospel album she recorded in three days with talented friends in Muscle Shoals, Ala. “This is not contemporary Christian music; this is Kate Campbell doing what I want to do.”

What she did first was sing “On Jordan’s Stormy Banks” as an encore while touring England with Emmylou Harris. Fans suggested she record some of the hymns she has sung since her early church days in Sledge, Miss.

As the oldest child of former Southern Baptist Convention president Jim Henry and his wife, Jeanette, much of Kate’s music has been shaped by church experiences and growing up in a time of racial unrest. Social justice is a theme found on each of her recording projects.

So it’s not surprising the album that started out to be a collection of hymns now includes powerful original compositions like “10,000 Lures,” which wrestles with the age-old struggles of temptation, and “Bear It Away,” which focuses on the deadly 1963 bombing of Birmingham’s Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

Starting with a catchy phrase—what Campbell calls “Nashville-style song writing”—is evident throughout her impressive collection from heart-wrenching songs to her lighter works like “See Rock City,” “Jesus and Tomatoes,” and the oft-requested “Funeral Food.”

“I just see things and think, ‘That’s a story that’s got to be told,’” Campbell told a coffeehouse crowd at Birmingham’s Church at Brook Hills in March. And not all of her songs deal with life’s harshest moments.

“My mother doesn’t know if I’m serious or not—and she’s afraid that I am,” said Campbell with a grin before strumming her guitar and

singing the song based on a roadside sign proclaiming, “Jesus and Tomatoes Coming Soon.”

“My mother is the musical person in our family and my father is the story-teller,” said Campbell, 39, who did not become a professional musician until age 30.

“I used to love going to church, and I loved the singing more than the preaching—but don’t tell my daddy,” Campbell told her audience between songs. She speaks often of being the preacher’s kid, but doesn’t identify the prominent pastor of the 10,000-member First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla.

“I wish I could take some credit,” Henry said of his daughter’s talent and growing success as a musician. “Her mother saw it (Campbell’s talent and potential) more than I did.”

Henry recalled sitting in the balcony at the Baptist conference center in Ridgecrest, N.C., when an associate at the church he was serving in Nashville urged Kate, as a seventh grader, to enter a talent show.

“They gave her a standing ovation,” Henry said proudly. “I thought, ‘That little rascal—look at her up there.’ You could see it developing.”

Henry admitted that he first wished his daughter had become exclusively a Christian singer. But Campbell’s comfort in both secular and church settings won out—and even her pastor-father now can appreciate that.

“I’ve preached and taught our people to be involved in the secular world,” as a means of “being salt and light,” Henry said, adding that the various musical venues give his daughter opportunities to express faith among people unrelated to church.

“There is an artistic, mystical side to her,” he said. “Some of her music leaves you wondering—wondering what she is saying.”

“I think there’s a hunger for that ... mystical, quiet place,” he added.

This is especially true of Campbell’s 1998 project “Rosaryville.” One song on the CD gives a peek into her relationship with her parents.

The lyrics to “In My Mother’s House” reveal that during holiday visits they sometimes “disagree on politics and theology.”

And though Campbell describes herself in the song as “a prodigal daughter,” the moving conclusion emphasizes, “I have found there is a wideness in mercy and there’ll always be a place for me in my mother’s house.”

Indonesian Christians report forced conversions to Islam

"I saw my parents cry because they could not board the ship."

Christina Sagat, a 32-year-old Christian from Kasiui, Indonesia.

Continued from page 1

tian neighbors fled into the mountains. Sagat's family stayed in the village until late November, when advancing mobs forced all Christians to seek refuge in the mountains. More than 260 people hiked an exhausting three days to escape the Muslim forces.

On the fourth day, they were discovered.

Muslims urged the Christians to convert to Islam, and promised them protection from the jihad fighters.

"It's very hard for us," Sagat said, "but we finally decided to follow the Muslims to their village and do whatever they told us to do in order to save our lives."

When the Christians fled into the Muslim village they discovered their neighbors had lied. A crowd of peo-

ple, including jihad warriors, lined the path leading to the mosque.

"I felt like we're just a group of hopeless sheep being led to a slaughter house," she said.

Once inside the mosque, Christians were forced to repeat the "Al Fatiha" prayer, which is recited when a person accepts Islam. They were then stripped of their clothes, given a ritual washing and re-clothed in traditional Muslim garb, she said. Muslims searched the Christians' belongings and burned all copies of the Bible and rosary necklaces.

The women were sent to stay with local Muslim families while the men stayed in the mosque. It was then that the Christians were circumcised.

"All of us, men and women, young and old, even infants and pregnant

women, were circumcised under threat," she said.

Ironically, none of the Muslim women living in the village had ever been circumcised, she added.

Using only a kitchen knife and warm water, a female religious leader performed the procedure on the Christian women without anesthesia and left them to heal without antibiotics.

Widely called "female circumcision," the procedure actually is a genital mutilation, often performed with crude instruments. Though illegal in many places, it still is widely practiced. Human rights groups decry the practice, which is falsely believed to suppress a woman's sex drive and ensure chastity.

During the next two weeks the government repeatedly tried to evacuate the Christians from the mosque. Each time the government forces encountered Muslim resistance. Finally on the third attempt, Sagat was able to sneak aboard a government ship.

"The ship took off with only 41 people, including me," she said. "I saw my parents cry because they could not board the ship."

Sagat found refuge in Ambon. But she is far from secure.

"I don't know what to do with my future," she said. "I guess the first thing to do is to find a way to get my parents off of the island. But I don't know how."

Charles Cole, a Southern Baptist representative who serves in Indonesia, urged Southern Baptists to pray for both the victims and the perpetrators

Info & advocacy

■ For information about conditions in Indonesia, contact the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's human needs office at (804) 219-1675.

■ Financial contributions for Ambon relief efforts can be sent to International Mission Board, General Relief Fund—Ambon, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

■ Search for video reports on Ambon at www.imb.org/video.

■ Contact congressmen through the U.S. House and Senate directories of www.congress.gov.

■ Encourage diplomats to act on behalf of persecuted Christians in the Maluku Islands: U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, e-mail jakconsul@state.gov, fax 62-21-386-2259; Indonesian Embassy in Washington, D.C., e-mail poldiv-kbriwash@erols.com, fax (202) 775-5365.



of the violence in Ambon.

"Our hearts go out to Christians in Indonesia who are suffering injustice," he said. "We pray that God will comfort them and draw them closer to Himself."

"But God also loves the people who are committing these acts. We need to pray that He would make His love known to them and help them understand the injustice of these horrible acts."

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Camp in Trinidad

In our ongoing effort to expand our ministries at Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, I have just returned from a very brief trip to Trinidad where we have been working on a partnership with the Salvador Camp there.

For about a year and a half, I have had conversations pertaining to this partnership with Hal Hostetler, one of our Southern Baptist missionaries. I've also been in touch with pastor Nelson Richardson, president of the Independent International Baptist Church of Trinidad & Tobago.

My quick trip proved to be fruitful. Hal met me at the airport in Port-of-Spain on Sunday evening. On Monday morning we drove to the Salvador Camp that is operated by the IIBC of Trinidad & Tobago. Pastor Richardson was there waiting for us, and greeted me with great exuberance and excitement. I first met "Ritchie" at the Blood River Association annual meeting in November 1999. He was eager then to work out a partnership, but I told him it would take us awhile to even get ready to talk about such an endeavor. But now the time had come.

We decided our first step would be to send a team of about 10 of our Crossings staff to Trinidad as soon

as our Crossings at the Creek concludes this summer. Camp will end on the first Sunday in August and this group will leave for Trinidad on Sunday. This trip will be a working effort as we assist another group that already will be on site. Then next spring, the IIBC will send four of their camp "administrators" to spend four weeks with us at Jonathan Creek as we prepare for Crossings 2002.

I'm excited about this new venture. Once again we have an example that the world is getting smaller. And our opportunities to do missions at home and overseas continue to grow. As I visited with the Trinidadians for three days, I was blessed with their warmth, hospitality and love for Christ. Pastor Richardson is without

question one of the most dynamic pastors I have ever had the chance to spend time with, and his enthusiasm for spreading the gospel is contagious. I pray that God will continue to lead Kentucky Baptist Assemblies as we spread the good news of Jesus Christ through camp and conference ministries here and around the world.

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

Panel: Make religious freedom key in U.S. foreign policy

By Shelvia Dancy
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Pointing to “egregious” violations of religious freedom in several countries, a federal commission on religious freedom abroad has issued a new report urging the Bush administration to make the issue a central part of U.S. foreign policy.

In its second annual report, released April 30, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom reviewed the status of religious freedom in North Korea, India, Iran, Indonesia, Sudan, Vietnam, Russia, China, Nigeria and Pakistan.

In China, religious freedom has sharply deteriorated since the commission issued its first report in May 2000, the report said.

“The government has intensified its campaign against the Falun Gong movement and its followers. It apparently has also been involved in the confiscation and destruction of up to 3,000 unregistered religious buildings and sites in southeastern China,” the report said.

“Government control over the official Protestant and Catholic churches has increased. It continues to interfere in the training and selection of religious leaders and clergy. At the same time, the government continues to maintain tight control over Uighur Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists.”

That deterioration “validated” concerns the commission had last

fall that Congress’ decision to grant permanent normal trade relations status to China without demanding religious freedom reform would foster the assumption that Washington attached little importance to freedom of religion in China, the report stated.

It said the United States could take steps to correct that notion by blocking China’s bid to host the 2008 International Olympic Games until the country institutes reforms.

Similar reform guarantees could be extracted from the Vietnamese government if the United States withheld its support for a proposal that would have the World Bank and International Monetary Fund give the country \$800 million in loans for economic reform, the commission suggested.

Pressure for reform in both China and Sudan—where, the report said, religious persecution has reached “genocidal proportions”—could be applied by limiting access to U.S. capital markets for companies conducting business with those governments, the panel said.

“There is a significant, undesirable gap in U.S. law regarding China and other ... egregious religious-freedom violators,” the report said, pointing out that in some instances, companies—particularly oil companies—that conduct business with such governments can sell securities on U.S. markets without fully exposing details such as any connection between their business activities and violations of religious

Panel lists major offenders

WASHINGTON (BP)—In addition to China, the Sudan and Russia, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom listed seven other countries where it said religious freedom is at risk:

India: While a democratic country, India has experienced an increase in violence against religious minorities. The commission notes the violence has coincided with the rise of Hindu nationalist groups.

Indonesia: The report focuses on increasing communal violence in the Moluccas, or Spice Islands.

Iran: The report notes unofficial and evangelistic minority religious groups suffer particularly acute official discrimination—the most vulnerable group being the Baha’i community.

North Korea: Though it is difficult to gain reliable information on this country, the report states, religious freedom in North Korea is “non-existent.”

Nigeria: “Religious life in Nigeria is public, vigorous and diverse,” the report asserts. Yet communal violence along religious and ethnic lines continues to break out. In particular, as several northern states move to expand the implementation of Sharia—Islamic law—tension between Muslims and Christians continues to increase.

Pakistan: The report argues that Pakistan is not doing enough to ensure religious freedom for minority groups. Many such groups argue they are marginalized politically by a system of separate electorates. Laws against blasphemy in this Islamic nation reportedly are abused to the detriment of minority faith groups. Detention and violence sometimes result.

Vietnam: “Despite a marked increase in religious practice among the Vietnamese people in the last 10 years, the Vietnamese government continues to suppress organized religious activities forcefully and to monitor and control religious communities,” the report notes.

freedom.

“The commission recommends that the United States require such disclosure,” the report said.

The report also recommended Washington keep close watch on religious freedom in Russia, where “some 1,500 religious groups face liquidation” under a 1997 law that mandates government registration before a religious group can operate as a legal entity within the country.

“The Russian federal government has yet to articulate a policy regarding the situation created by its decision not to extend the deadline for registration” under the law, the report said.

Moreover, “The government of President Vladimir I. Putin has yet to establish an effective way to ensure that local and regional laws, policies and practices do not abridge religious freedom,” the report concluded.

Rebuilding homes and lives

By Robert Dunston

During spring break this year, seven Cumberland College students and a Cumberland College staff member journeyed south to Gadsden, Ala., to help the community rebuild after a devastating December tornado.

The student team included leader Heather Murphree, Rebecca Faw, Theresa Hudson, Jessie Mosely, Betsy Moore, Mike Townsend and Jennifer Wolf. They were accompanied by Ed Woods, building director of Cumberland’s Mountain Outreach program.

The team left Saturday morning and arrived at their destination in the afternoon. Macedonia Baptist Church served as the team’s sponsoring church, but members stayed in the gymnasium of First United Methodist Church due to the severe damage sustained by Macedonia Baptist.

On Sunday morning, the team members joined Macedonia Baptist Church members for the first worship service celebrated in their own building since the tornado.

The giant steeple that had graced the top of the church had been swept off by the tornado and still had not been located.

Each day, team members worked diligently on rebuilding projects. On Monday they insulated a home, began to rebuild a bathroom and floor an attic, and they unloaded insulation at a warehouse. On Tuesday they built a deck, and on Wednesday they cleaned up the remains of a trailer scattered in a field.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



On Thursday the team returned to the house where they had worked on Monday and finished the bathroom and attic and built stairs to the garage. On Friday they began preparing for the journey back to Cumberland College.

All of the team members said they received a greater blessing than they

gave.

They enjoyed the fellowship they experienced with each other and with those in the community, and they matured spiritually through their daily Bible studies and conversations.

They returned to the campus physically exhausted but mentally and spiritually rejuvenated. We thank God for them.

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

Things I never had, until now

Billy, Amy and Katie came to Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children last summer. The trio had known little stability in their short lives, and they were actually homeless when they came to us. Billy is 10; Amy, 6; and Katie, 4. Since being placed in the custody of the commonwealth and the care of KBHC, neither our staff nor the children’s social workers have heard from the parents of these children. The three could be with us for some time, perhaps until adulthood.

All three siblings were placed together in one home. This was a tremendous blessing. Sometimes it is difficult to find homes that will take sibling groups of three or more children.

One day, when the KBHC foster care specialist was visiting, she asked Billy to make a list of things he has in his new home that are important to him and his sisters. What this little boy wrote should humble us all.

“Before I came here, I never had a house. I never had a Christmas tree. I never had a birthday party. I never had toys or coloring books. I never had a phone. My sisters and I never had a bed. We never had new clothes or shoes. We did not ever brush our teeth. We never were visited by fam-

ily. We never had our picture made. We had never eaten at a restaurant. We had never been to church. Since we have a new home, we go to church three times a week, we have new clothes and shoes that fit. We go places. We have our own beds.”

I have a feeling some tears were shed over that simple piece of notebook paper Billy gave to his foster care worker. What a ministry these foster parents have to these little ones!

If you think, “Those foster parents must be saints. I could never do that,” think again. Review the simplicity of Billy’s treasures recorded on that paper: a photograph, a trip to McDonald’s, Sunday school, a coat that fits, a toothbrush, a Christmas tree, a bed of his own.

You could do that! Foster parents are people just like you, supported by people just like us, working together to overcome a troubled past and build a brighter future. Call us today to find out more. We have foster care workers in virtually every region of the state ready to talk to you.

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

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

RESOURCES

Report questions seminarians' ability to handle conflict

"The problem is that we let the little things pile up and then they become big issues."

Guy Futral, Kentucky Baptist Convention leadership development team leader

Continued from page 1
people, he added.

Instead, too many pastors and church members attend church meetings with the impression that they must suppress any negative feelings, Futral said. But that's not good for the long-term health of the group.

"To acknowledge our differences and work out our differences is not a difficult thing to do, especially at a beginning level," he said. "The problem is that we let the little things pile up and then they become big issues."

Danny Akin, vice president for academic administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said some of the report's findings did not clearly reflect ministerial leadership in Baptist life. Still, he said the study shows that Baptist seminaries should take a closer look at teaching their students conflict resolution and people skills. "There has been conflict in the church since New Testament

times, and it should not be unexpected."

Akin said feedback from alumni has prompted Southern to better equip their students for conflict resolution through required leadership training courses and supervised internships.

"We had a lot of students telling us they wish they'd been better equipped in this area, so now students in the school of theology and Billy Graham school of evangelism at Southern are required to take classes in leadership training, the practice of ministry and spiritual formations," he said.

He added that the leadership classes help students improve their people skills and work with conflict management and resolution. The "Practice of Ministry" class teaches students the practical, real-life aspects of being a pastor, and spiritual formations introduces students to practical issues that relate to church life.

Seminary students also are required to spend approximately a year in a supervised ministry experience, where they work in some area of their chosen ministry with a mentor who assists them with practical ways of resolving conflict and effectively leading people.

But Cole said that supervised ministry experience often was not effective due to time constraints and the lack of honest evaluation.

"The pastors who are mentoring these students in internships need to be taught how to coach them effectively," he said. "A lot of times these pastors are very busy, squeezed for time and don't have the training necessary to

teach others good leadership skills."

Akin said Southern has tried to address that issue by keeping a closer eye on the program.

For pastors who already have left seminary and are in the throes of conflict at their church, Akin suggested they remember the classic TV western, "The Lone Ranger".

"A lot of pastors try to be the Lone Ranger," he said, "and go it alone. But

if you try and go solo, you're going to get shot. After all, even the Lone Ranger had Tonto."

"Pastors should surround themselves with godly men who are honest and transparent, and see the blind spots they might miss and give them advice on handling conflict."

With additional reporting by Religion News Service and News Director David Winfrey

For more information

Danny Akin and Guy Futral recommend several books that might help pastors deal better with conflict:

- **The Effective Executive** by Peter Drucker.
- **The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People will Follow You** by John Maxwell.
- **Transitioning: Leading Your Church Through Change** by Dan Southerland.
- **Generation to Generation** by Ed Freedman.
- **Never Call Them Jerks** by Arthur Boers.
- **People Skills** by Robert Bolton.

Meet some of the class of 2001 (part 5)

This senior essay was written by "Steve," who is from Louisville. Steve came to Oneida Baptist Institute as a sophomore. Unlike the vast majority of our students, he had never experienced the loss of a parent or the pain that comes from divorce. Steve came from a Christian home. His parents had read a lot about Oneida in the Western Recorder, so they thought we might be able to help their son. I like to dedicate several Western Recorder columns each spring to these essays so our readers will better understand our ministry from a student's perspective.

Steve's parents told us he was "struggling in school and having a hard time focusing. He comes from a Christian home, but needs more structure and is struggling with authority. Steve wants to be in sports, is a little lazy, won't do his chores, has a temper and has been talking back to us." Drugs were not part of his problem. Steve admitted that his poor grades were from not doing homework, and being "lazy."

Steve said his two primary goals in coming to Oneida were to "make much better grades and to be a leader in our BSU." Here is part of his essay:

"I first heard about the possibility of a boarding school from my dad. ... He said if I didn't start ... making better grades, and acting normal, they might send me off to a boarding school. I thought, 'No way! They wouldn't.' So I kept ... slacking in school and fighting with my parents. They told me about Oneida and ... presented me with a choice. I said, 'No way would I go,' but ... God worked in my life, and I soon realized that this would probably be best. I could start over in school, get ready for college and mature. ... I then decided to give it a try.

"I came to Oneida not knowing what to expect. I didn't like it for about a half a year. Then ... I started enjoying it so much. ... The thing I like the most about Oneida are the teachers. They actually care about you and work hard with you as long as you are willing to work hard with them. Also, daily chapel has helped me to grow as a Christian.

"When I first got here, I was so happy to finally get out of the dorm and to go to school. As time went on ... I had more fun. Lastly, baseball made my stay here incredibly fun. I love playing baseball, and have loved playing for the past two years.

"During my junior year ... I worked on the yard crew. ... Then I played baseball. ... I was the co-captain of the team last year. This year, I was involved in Beta, KYA, Salt and Light, a BSU small group leader, soccer and captain of the baseball team again. So many classes have been influential to me. My two favorites were physics and world history. There have been a number of teachers who have been so helpful to me, ... but I wouldn't feel comfortable naming them all, in case I leave one out.

"After graduation, I plan on going to Western Kentucky University, where I will major in broadcasting and play baseball.

"In conclusion, of all the things I have gained while I have been here, I have strengthened my faith. I have grown and matured, and I have started a whole new relationship with God. Lastly, I have gained some great friends that I'll hate to leave.

"Thank you, Oneida!"

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Answering God's call to Brazil

Glasgow native Jimmy Shaw came to Christ at age 27 in a revival service at Coral Hill Baptist Church where alumnus Ray Woodie is pastor.

"Brother Ray has had a big impact on my life. I was not raised in a Christian home, and in high school no one shared Jesus with me," Jimmy said. "Brother Ray got me involved in a discipleship course at the church that helped me grow. He challenged me to participate in mission work."

His first mission trip was 60 miles from the beach, and Jimmy thought it would be a good vacation. "We conducted Bible schools for children. On the second day God humbled me as I saw the children run after our bus, eager to hear about Jesus. I realized

God didn't call me there for a vacation. Twenty children came to know the Lord," Jimmy stated.

That experience also confirmed God's direction into mission service. He accompanied Brother Woodie on a two-week evangelism assignment in Brazil that resulted in 300 professions of faith.

His pastor brought him to Clear Creek the following semester, and Jimmy vividly remembers the chapel service in the Family Life Center

gymnasium (our chapel was under renovation).

"I was overwhelmed with assurance that Clear Creek was the place to prepare for mission service," he said.

As a member of Pump Springs Baptist Church in Harrogate, Tenn., Jimmy works in the children's ministry and does outreach with the college and career group at Lincoln Memorial University. With the campus Baptist Student Union, he helps with Parents Night Out and Thursday night community witnessing.

On May 2, Jimmy departed for an eight-month assignment in Brazil. He will evangelize and disciple high school and university students, teach English and complete an intensive Portuguese language course.

It is another step toward a future appointment as a career missionary in Brazil.

When Jimmy returns for the January 2002 semester he will be used by God to broaden the mission consciousness of the Clear Creek campus.

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

BOOKS

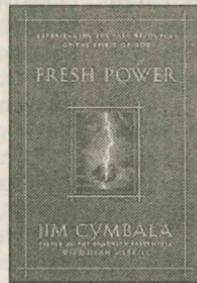
Fresh Power: Experiencing the Vast Resources of the Spirit of God. *Jim Cymbala with Dean Merrill. Zondervan Publishing, 2001. 204 pages. \$18.99* ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

This is Cymbala's third book. The first two, especially "Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire," have taken the Christian publishing world by storm. I have to admit that each time I begin to read one of Cymbala's books I expect to soon be at odds with what he is saying. But each time I find myself nodding my head in agreement nearly all the time.

Cymbala writes from a decidedly conservative viewpoint, but he is a master at negotiating those waters to present a basic message which will find wide endorsement in the church. Cymbala is very effective in his biblical interpretation and his telling of personal experiences.

In this effort, Cymbala is calling the church to seek the power of the Holy Spirit. He writes, "I am well aware that because of the excesses that go on in certain churches—the emotionalism, the psychological manipulations, the wild and zany manifestations—many people have gotten dubious about the Spirit. ... Because of this, many sincere believers have said, 'No, thank you,' and they're right. Unfortunately, they go on to throw the baby out with the bath water, giving no place at all to the Spirit of God."

Cymbala is brutally honest when confronting those he identifies as "charlatans" in matters of the Spirit. His call is not for specific programs but for prayer. His encouragement is not for a particular style of worship but sensitivity to the Spirit. His message is not about celebration of human ability but, rather, recognition of powerlessness without the Spirit. All these messages should strike a chord in any church. *Wayne Hager*



At the Origins of Christian Worship: The Context and Character of Earliest Christian Devotion. *Larry Hurtado. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999. 138 pages. \$16.* ♦♦♦♦

One of the hottest topics in many churches is how we worship. Too often, the debates that swirl around this topic focus on peripheral stylistic issues, without addressing more foundational concerns: Why do we worship? What is the nature of the God we worship? How does our worship connect with the ongoing faith story of the church? What theological precepts do we communicate through our acts of worship?

Larry Hurtado does not seek to address all the foundational questions related to worship, but he does invite us to look in on the worship of the early church. By doing so, he hopes we will gain some insight on how to shape the worship of the church in our day.

One key assumption Hurtado makes, though it is not explicitly stated, is that the mission context of the church today parallels that of the early church.

In four brief chapters, Hurtado reviews the religious milieu of the early church, the features of Christian worship, the shape of early church worship and what we can learn from the early church.

Many of the insights into the cultural context of the early church sound eerily familiar to our own context.

If we are going to worship authentically, we must get past our focus on stylistic preferences.

Before we can integrate any musical or other preference, we should settle, or at least address, the foundational questions. Hurtado's book makes a significant contribution to that effort. *Jim Holladay*

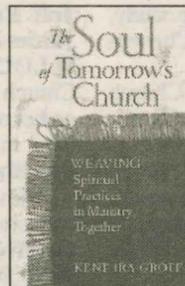
The Soul of Tomorrow's Church: Weaving Spiritual Practices in Ministry Together. *Ira Groff. Upper Room Books, 2000. 181 pages. \$13.* ♦♦♦♦

Beginning with the conviction that the Incarnation is the crucial issue at the "heart of the Christian faith," Ira Groff contends every local church must address six need areas if they are going to be "a transmitter of God's presence." Those are: the renewal of the spiritual life of spiritual leaders, the ability of clergy and laity to address conflict together, the weaving together of the spiritual and the structural, the integration of simplicity with complexity, the assimilation of church growth and spiritual growth, and the empowering of part-time and lay ministry.

Each section of the book addresses each of the six need areas by examining the dimensions of the church's life: worship, service/administration, education, community and mission. Groff believes that true church renewal will occur when the soul of each dimension is returned and allowed to breathe and grow.

His answer to how the soul can be restored to each area, thereby addressing the need areas, is a recommitment to the life of honest-to-God contemplation and prayer in and through every dimension of a church's life. "Every good action arises out of contemplation. ... Contemplation is listening prayer: 'Be still and know that I am God!' (Psalms 46:10). It is the practice of the presence of God to be present in the world."

While Groff could be accused of being overly pious, that impression is quickly dispelled. The opening section of the book contains a caution: "Do not read this book alone." Groff has designed this book as a living, breathing workshop for church leaders. It is rich



with Bible study, prayer exercises, interactive learning tools and spiritual nurture. It is intended as an educational tool to transform church life. *Jim Holladay*

Reel Spirituality: Theology and Film in Dialogue. *Robert Johnston. Baker Academic Books, 2000. 236 pages. \$16.99.* ♦♦♦♦

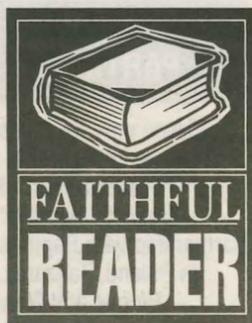
Any Christian looking to follow the biblical dictum "be in the world, but not of it" should read "Reel Spirituality."

Part of Baker's "Engaging Culture" series, Johnston's book leads readers through the history of Christian film criticism from avoidance—dumping all movies into the same category of sin as gambling, drinking and fast women—to what Johnston calls "divine encounter," a movement toward a theological conversation about a film and its aesthetics.

Using films from "American Beauty" to "Dogma" to "The Apostle," Johnston interacts with the movies not as an arbiter of morality but as a film critic who happens to be Christian. He sees these films as opportunities to engage the culture from which they came in a conversation about his faith.

The final chapters of the book involve an in-depth discussion about the films of Peter Weir, an Australian filmmaker responsible for films like "Galipoli," "The Truman Show," "Dead Poets Society" and "The Year of Living Dangerously."

Pastors looking to use film discussion groups as a way to reach the unchurched, or laymen and women looking to discuss film from an aesthetic as well as Christian perspective will find this book an invaluable tool. After reading it, a Christian might never look at a movie the same way again. *Victoria Moon*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C.; Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville; and Victoria Moon, librarian for Deer Park Baptist Church in Louisville. They welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: jwhager@surry.net, docholladay@juno.com or victoria.moon@kybaptist.org

Author: Internet becoming sacred space of the future, but dangers exist

By Cecile Holmes
Religion News Service

ALLIANCE, Ohio (RNS)—Not too long ago, the best place to look for spiritual seekers was a church or synagogue, but a new book suggests the Internet may be the sacred space of the future.

Religion scholar Brenda Brasher writes in her new book, "Give Me That Online Religion," that more than 1 million Web sites related to religion have been launched.

Her work documents and analyzes the phenomenon of religion in cyberspace, suggesting the trend will only continue as groups ranging from Catholics to neo-pagans turn to the 'Net to spread their messages.

"A lot of different groups are using the Internet to accomplish their goals. The goals are different, so the way they're doing it varies considerably," said Brasher, an assistant professor of religion and philosophy at Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio.

Patterns on the Internet often reflect the usual stylistic differences among religious groups. The Vatican's Web site, for

example, features a sedate beige background and is used by the church to make particular resources available to the faithful, not to promote religion online.

In contrast, apocalyptic groups tend to tailor their message to the medium, Brasher said. "They're trying to visually stimulate and draw people into and lure them into taking seriously this idea that the world is going to end soon. The apocalyptic people have been much more adventurous in terms of graphics, techniques and color and sound."

In her book, Brasher explores the implications of this latter phenomenon. In the past, outbreaks of apocalyptic enthusiasm often were triggered by factors such as rare or unusual astronomical events or social upheaval that were interpreted as "signs of the end times."

But before mass communication and mass transportation, such messages might take decades to filter through society. "Today, thanks to the World Wide Web, they can be global news in an instant," Brasher writes. "Not surprisingly,

the Netcasting of end-times prophetic pronouncements has become standard practice for apocalyptic groups. There is no question that the Internet furthers the spread of apocalyptic messages."

Such "Netcasting" is standard practice for people including evangelist Jack Van Impe and Marian devotee Veronica Lueken. Her "Mary in America" site declares that "The Apocalypse is Now."

In cyberspace, this trend must be handled with care, said Brasher, an expert in millennialism.

"Dreams of world judgment contain tremendous energy," she contends in the book. "When tapped, they can inspire revolts, promote social justice or convince 39 people to kill themselves."

Trends among individual congregations are harder to quantify, she said. When the first congregational Web sites were constructed, they resembled ads in a telephone book's yellow pages. Newer sites are creative efforts to think globally, allowing an individual congregation to advertise itself to the world.



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:

■ Volunteers are needed for prayer walking and showing the "Jesus" film in Mtwara, Tanzania, Aug. 1-17.

■ Baptist representatives Larry and Trish Erwin, as they move from France to Corsica this month.

■ Polish women who recently completed a 22-week Bible study led by missionary Tatiana McNiel. Seven of the women have offered to host future studies in their homes.

■ People to work with internationals in Warsaw, Poland.

■ Give thanks for the 75 people who professed faith in Jesus as Savior during a recent evangelistic crusade at International Baptist Church in Stuttgart, Germany. Many of the 75 people were teenagers. Pray for Pastor Jay McFadden as he counsels each person who made a decision.

■ The steering committee studying the future of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Arusha, Tanzania. Students represent at least 25 people groups and speak more than 28 languages.

■ The 30 teachers who attended a children's Sunday school workers seminar in Tanzania in late March. Missionaries Bill and Pauline Eardensohn report that attendance was triple that of past seminars.

■ A group of women leaders in Tanzania who travel among their people each Saturday to lead "Repentance Through Prayer" seminars.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **BARLOW**—First Church called **Danny Donato** as youth minister. **Tom Camp** is pastor.

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Living Hope Church called **Ransom Bennett** of Atlanta as pastor of lay ministry and pastoral care.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Green River Memorial Church called **David Sander** of Chattanooga as interim pastor.

Saloma Church will begin "Amazing Grace," a Baptist doctrine study, May 13 at 6 p.m. Pastor **John Chowning** will lead the study.

■ **DE MOSSVILLE**—Unity Church called **Jerry Durden** of North Carolina as pastor.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Dry Ridge Church ordained **Brent Raitz** into the gospel ministry. Raitz is serving as associate pastor of youth and education. **Willie Ailstock** is pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Truth Mission Church called **Sherman Warfield** as its first full-time pastor.

■ **GEORGETOWN**—Mallard Point Church called **Keith Weldon** as pastor. Weldon was previously pastor of

Freewill Church in Harrodsburg.

Mallard Point Church will host revival services May 6-11, 7 p.m. nightly. Pastor **Keith Weldon** will preach and **Ron Wilburn** will direct music.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—Concord Church called **Jerry Barron** of Illinois as pastor.

■ **IRVINE**—Valley View Church called **Ricky Powell** as pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Palomar Church will host revival services May 13-17. **Jeff Eaton** will be the evangelist. **James Heard** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Carlisle Avenue Church honored **Dorothy Robinson** on her retirement after 53 years of ministry in the church nursery. **Shawn Merithew** is pastor.

Cloverleaf Church will host a piano concert by **Jeff Stice** May 17, 7 p.m. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

■ **MUNFORDVILLE**—James Middleton Sr., former pastor of Munfordville Church and Cave City Church, died April 26.

■ **PADUCAH**—East Church called **Curtis Harrell** as pastor.

■ **HELPS**—First Church called **John Mauldin** as pastor.

■ **REYNOLDS STATION**—Zion Church called **Jon Settlemoir** of Arkansas as pastor.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—Second Church presented "The Christos" April 11-15 to more than 3,700 people. More than 20 professions of faith and nearly 200 re-commitments were made. **Ron Wells** is pastor.

What's going on?

Send your happenings to Shirley Wooton for Mountains to the Mississippi. Mail: Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. Fax: (502) 244-6474. E-mail: shirley.wooton@kybaptist.org.

AVAILABLE: Minister Larry Moore, 59, experienced, is available for supply work, interim pastor or possible pastor positions. Call (859) 278-3524, or write 226 Westwood Court, Lexington, KY 40503. Resumé on request.

FOR RENT: 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental, Sanibel Island, Fla. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$745. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752.

FOR SALE: 1989 low-mileage, 15-passenger van. Send bid to Buena Vista Baptist Church, 119 W 24th St., Owensboro, KY 42303. Bid deadline: April 30.

FOR SALE: Two steel buildings, engineer-certified. 40x40: was \$8,680, now \$4,580. 50x100: was \$17,940, now \$11,935. Must sell; can deliver. (800) 292-0111.

SEEKING: Full-time minister to students to work with children, youth and college-age students for 600-member suburban church. Immediate opening. Send resumé to: Personnel Comm., Fairmount Memorial Baptist Church, 4205 Ravenswood Road, Richmond, VA 23222. Fax: (804) 329-2549.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and education for loving, growing church in Southwestern Kentucky. Seminary preferred. Please send resumé to: Elkton Baptist Church, PO Box 547, Elkton, KY 42220, Attn: Staff Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth. Send resumé to Gene McIntosh, Concord Baptist Church, 1945 Concord Lane, Hopkinsville, KY 42240.

SEEKING: Springfield Southern Baptist Church, Springfield, Ill., is seeking a full-time associate pastor of family ministries. Appropriate education and experience preferred. Send resumé to: SSBC Staff Search Team, 225 N Grand Ave. East, Springfield, IL 62702. E-mail: ssbc@springnet1.com

SEEKING: Calhoun First Baptist Church is seeking a full-time, evangelistic, mission-minded pastor. Send resumé to PO Box 175, Calhoun, TN 37309.

SEEKING: Daycare director. Top pay; 40 hours per week; must meet state requirements. Mail resumé to 8415 Masnon Way, Louisville, KY 40258.

SEEKING: Part-time bookkeeper (10 hours/week). Send resumé to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291.

SEEKING: Nursery worker for Wednesday and special services. Send resumé to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, or call (502) 239-0316.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth for church committed to historic Baptist freedoms. Master's degree desired, preferably from a seminary. Highly competitive salary package. Send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Broadway Baptist Church, 4000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40207.

LifeWay temp finds faith during work

ELIZABETHTOWN (BP)—Hired to haul out empty boxes and trash, a man working through a temporary employment agency accepted Jesus as Savior minutes before an Elizabethtown LifeWay store opened in March.

Having worked alongside LifeWay's store set-up team, Jason Steinrock said he realized his need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

As people began to gather at the front door to be among the store's first customers, Don Murray, a regional director for the LifeWay chain, talked with Steinrock in the store office.

Murray said the set-up crew was part of the story, even though they didn't realize it.

Two store sales associates—Mary Van Meter and Barbara Kerfoot—each woke up the morning of the store opening with a burden to pray for Steinrock, but not knowing why.

That week, Steinrock had been ea-

ger to join in the store staff's conversations and devotions held each morning, so much so, the staff thought he was a Christian.

Actually, the young man was struggling spiritually. As the LifeWay team waited for Murray and Steinrock to leave the office, they prayed for him.

With only minutes to go before the store was to open, the two men came out of the office, grinning. Murray introduced Steinrock as a new Christian.

Mindy Barmer, another LifeWay employee, recalled that Steinrock said he had been "amazed how we cared for one another—like family. He said he didn't have that kind of relationship in his own family, and he wanted to be a part of ours."

Elizabethtown store manager Jonathan Gallegly said he told his staff that morning, "If we ask God to work through us, He will honor that request and minister to others."

Kentucky leader Raymond Lawrence dies

CORBIN—Kentucky Baptist leader Raymond Lawrence died April 26 in Corbin. He was 79.

A native of Grant County, Lawrence was former pastor of several Kentucky Baptist churches, including Oak Island in Alexandria, Crittenden, Mount Vernon, First Baptist of Shelbyville and Central Baptist in Corbin.

In 1972, he left the pastorate to become assistant to the president and religion professor at Cumberland College in Williamsburg.

He became president of Mid-Con-

tinental College in Mayfield and served from 1981 to 1987.

After retirement, he served as assistant to the president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville.

In addition to serving as pastor for 21 churches, Lawrence also served on the boards of several Southern Baptist and Kentucky Baptist agencies, including the Western Recorder.

Survivors include his wife, Eula, two daughters, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Memorials can be given to Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor/minister of education. If interested, send resumé to: Grace Baptist Church, 1510 Old Hickory Blvd., Nashville, TN 37207, Attn: Pastor André K. Dugger.

SEEKING: The Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, Louisville and Southern Indiana's interfaith organization, seeks an executive director to continue a tradition of energetic, visionary leadership. The successful candidate will be a clergy or layperson who is an able administrator, sensitive to theological diversity, community-minded and capable in fund development. Ability to work with volunteers a must. Full job description available upon request. Total compensation range: \$50,000 to \$60,000 dependent upon qualifications. Send resumé and letter of interest by May 31, 2001, to Rev. Ron Sisk, Chair, KIC Search Committee, 1113 S 4th St., Louisville, KY 40203, or e-mail interfaith@bell.south.net.

SEEKING: Senior pastor. Church is located in one of the fastest growing areas in Northern Kentucky. We have daycare, family life center and average 550 in worship. Send resumé to: Pulpit Search Committee, Hickory Grove Baptist Church, 11969 Taylor Mill Road, Independence, KY 41051.

SEEKING: Immediate opening for part-time youth minister (15 hours per week). Send resumé to: Jim Holladay, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222. (502) 425-7150.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church of Collinsville, Va., located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, has an opening for a minister to youth, children and their families. FBC is a multi-staff church affiliated with the Baptist General Association of Virginia and the SBC. Please send any inquiries and/or resúmes to: Dr. Rob Edwards, FBC Collinsville, PO Box 36, Collinsville, VA 24078.

SEEKING: Minister of music for Hyland Baptist Church in Henderson, Ky. If interested, please send resumé to: Hyland Baptist Church, 1400 Wright St., Henderson, KY 42420.

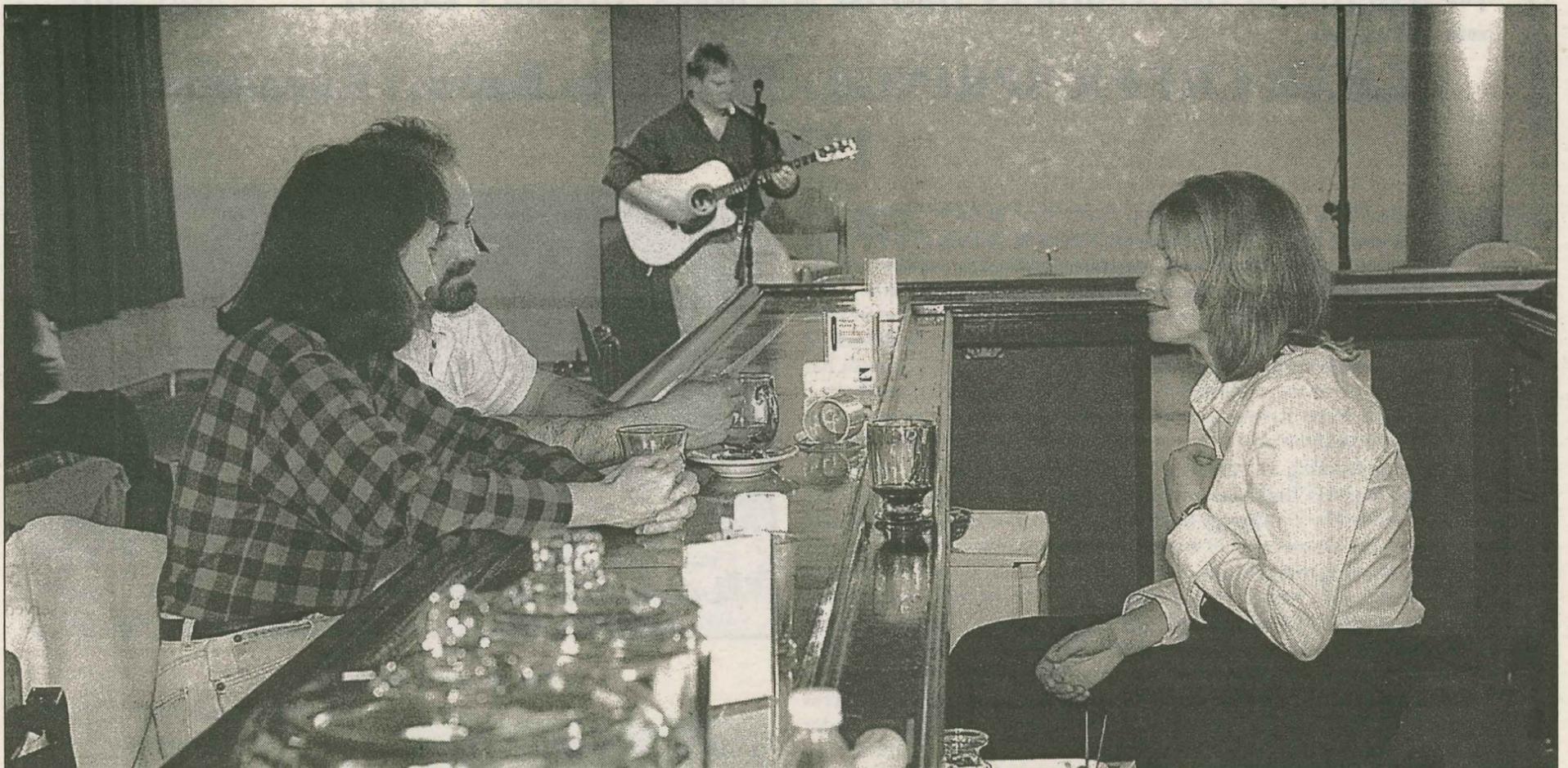
SEEKING: Immediate opening for part-time children's minister (15 hours per week). Send resumé to: Jim Holladay, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222. (502) 425-7150.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for East Hickman Baptist Church, an historic, rural church located four miles from Lexington, Ky. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 2125 Azalea Dr., Lexington, KY 40504.

SEEKING: Immediate opening for part-time nursery coordinator (10-12 hours per week). Send resumé to: Jim Holladay, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222. (502) 425-7150.

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

PEOPLE



Former night club turned into church for young adults

By David Briggs
Cleveland Plain Dealer

CLEVELAND (RNS)—Nestled amid such jumpin' joints as the Sixth Street Under Jazz Club and the Blind Pig Speakeasy, the Alternate Grind offers music for young adults to listen to on Friday night, and then encourages them to come back Sunday morning for worship.

This former Warehouse District bar known as the Humidor has become a Generation X church. While the long bar running down one side of the church remains, it now serves cheesecake and coffee instead of booze and cigars.

It is a church for a generation turned off by the idea of traditional churches.

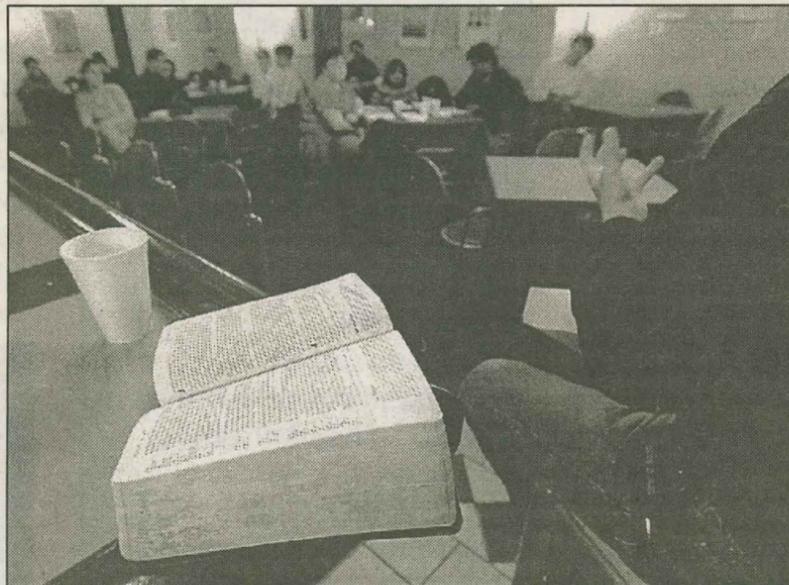
"Being a disciple of Jesus Christ can be relevant and can be fun," said Brian Upton, a Lutheran layman who founded the ministry. "Being attached to organized religion doesn't have to be a dirty word."

Upton walked the path of a 20-something spiritual seeker before coming up with the idea for the Alternate Grind. After a childhood spent in Lutheran schools, he found himself falling away from the church during college. It was not until he wandered back one Easter to Trinity Lutheran Church in Cleveland that he was again drawn to the faith he once treated so casually.

"Through a period of time it all became mine again," he said.

That got him thinking about how to reach out to others from his generation of 20- to 30-somethings who have not found a church they think is relevant, or who have become disillusioned with organized religion.

With the support of Trinity Lutheran, he started In Search Of ministry, which since January 2000 has offered informal Sunday morning worship at



various downtown sites. Now an official mission project of the Ohio District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the ministry recently leased its own space in the former bar.

It is part of a larger effort by traditional Protestant churches to reach out to young adults who might be leery of organized religion. Another example in Cleveland is the Church Without Walls, started last year by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The In Search Of ministry opened the Alternate Grind coffeehouse last month, offering music on Friday nights and a worship service on Sunday morning. The church hopes to expand into other activities such as poetry slams or game nights on other weekdays.

"We're not out on the street handing out tracts, beating people with the law," said Upton, 32. "The greatest way we can bear witness is to let people know we care for one another."

Amy Cousens, 35, of Cleveland,

said she and her husband were church shopping when they discovered Upton's ministry.

"As soon as we ended up in In Search Of, we decided we wanted to come back. It just felt like home," she said. "We like the contemporary worship. We like the relaxed atmosphere."

Walk down the steps to the Alternate Grind on a Friday night, and you still see a sign advertising the Humidor's happy hour.

Once inside, there is little evidence this is a church other than an exhibit of religious art along the walls. A long wooden bar still dominates the room, and there are tables and chairs where there would be pews in a traditional church.

While a musician performs up front, patrons engage in quiet conversations along the bar, or at tables facing the stage.

Any evangelism that occurs on Friday nights is low-key. At the end of

the night, a leader invites people to Sunday worship.

And atop each table, in the type of plastic sleeve where a bar might advertise exotic drinks or restaurant dessert specials, is a brief explanation of the Alternate Grind that begins with the question: "This is a church?"

"We believe being a disciple of Jesus Christ can be a real and relevant experience, that faith should affect the way we live," the flier states. People interested in learning more are encouraged to attend the 11 a.m. Sunday worship service in the bar-turned-church.

There is no table-to-table evangelism on Friday nights.

"I don't want to pull a bait-and-switch on people," Upton said. "I don't want people to come in, I lock the doors and then I give a sermon."

But on Sundays, the message is unapologetic. Contemporary musicians with a keyboard and electric guitar open the service with song. Upton gives his sermon from atop a stool near the old bar.

In the middle of the service, worshippers in jeans and comfortable shirts and sweaters break up into small groups to discuss that Sunday's theme. On a recent Sunday, Upton and the congregation talked about the commandment prohibiting lying and how they could make changes in their own lives.

Alternate Grind patrons like the approach.

"It's more real, more relevant to the day and age we live in," said Beth Putinski, 31.

Melvyn Fernando, 36, said In Search Of is geared to his generation.

"It's very good. It's simple, but it has a good message," he said. "We're looking for something more progressive, something that makes God's message more relevant to us."

ALTERNATE GRIND
On Friday evenings, the Alternate Grind is a Cleveland coffeehouse designed to give young adults a non-alcoholic place to hang out and listen to music. On Sunday mornings, the club serves as a Generation X church.

■ Above: Tom Holland plays guitar while (from left) Cindy DuPerow, Kevin Novotny and Beth Putinski talk across the bar. (RNS photo by Joshua Gunter)

■ Left: With a Bible perched on the bar, Brian Upton delivers an informal sermon during Sunday morning worship. (RNS photo by Mike Levy)

Kentucky Baptist Heritage

Newsletter of the Kentucky Baptist Archives Advisory Board

May 2001

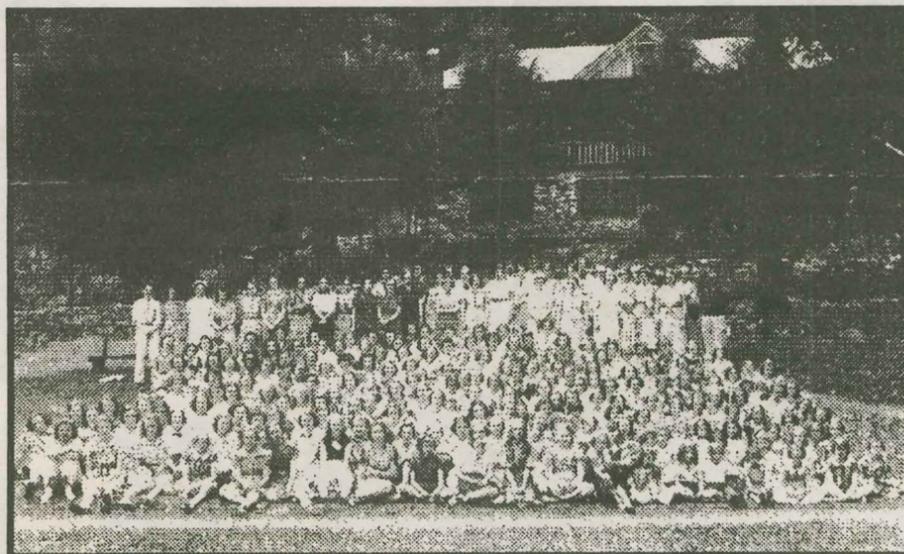
Bill D. Whittaker, Editor

CLEAR CREEK SPRINGS - Kentucky Baptist Encampment 1924-1950

2001 marks the 75th anniversary for Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. But two years before the first 12 mountain preachers gathered under a tent Kentucky Baptists gathered at Clear Creek Mountain Springs for summer camp. In the early twenty's Baptist encampments were held at Bethel and Georgetown Colleges. In November 1922 the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky convened in Middlesboro, The *Western Recorder* described the city as "a wonderfully progressive and wide city itself, its growth has been and is a type of the remarkable growth in Southeastern Kentucky." (Nov. 21, 1922). Many Kentucky Baptists came and enjoyed the beauty of the mountains and some probably pondered the possibility of the area as a site for ongoing training and fellowship. The following Spring a revival at Pineville First Baptist Church contributed to this development. A four week crusade conducted by Dr. George Stair of Boston included decisions by two men to preach the Gospel and 20 women volunteered for Christian service. In the days following that crusade, as the red bud and dogwood trees began to bloom, Pastor L.C. Kelly relaxed with a walk down the L&N railroad track to Clear Creek. There the Lord gave him a vision. "Surely God has more in mind for this beautiful valley than a corn field. God has hallowed this place for some spiritual uplift for the mountain people." With the help of Pineville and Middlesboro business people and area churches 400 acres were purchased for \$14,000. The August 16, 1923 issue of *Western Recorder* featured an article by Kelly promoting "A Baptist Encampment in the Mountains." The editor observed "the underlying purpose of this movement on the part of Baptist laymen ... in that region, is to create a spiritual dynamic that should afford needed balance to the marvelous material development now going on there. We think it probable that it shall become the great encampment place for our Baptist people." The first camp rates were \$1.50 a day for meals and .50 a day for dormitory space. O.K. Radford of Hopkinsville was elected camp manager (*Western Recorder* April 3, 1924). The state Bible School Department encouraged attendance and advised, "The best train to take is the one leaving Louisville about 8 o'clock Monday night. This will put you on the ground at about 8 in the morning" (*Western Recorder*, July 31, 1924).

The WMU reported, "We felt that it was indeed a momentous hour when the opening song was sung on Tuesday night, August 5, 1924 and then Rev. L.C. Kelly of Pineville led in a prayer of thanksgiving that at last the dream or vision of this Encampment had become a reality. Surely this Encampment will meet the needs of all, as there is swimming, hiking, horse back riding, and the mineral water makes one feel like a new person, and the delicious things to eat! Many people brought their tents and camped by the side of the beautiful Clear Creek. Many others bought lots while they were there and no doubt by next summer there will be a number of new cottages over the hills." (*Western Recorder*, September 25, 1924)

In 1939 Clear Creek hosted a girls camp, a boys camp, a YWA camp, the sixteenth annual session of the Baptist Assembly, and a three-week session of the Mountain Preachers' School. Attendance at the 1949 Assembly totaled 325. In 1950 the State Board of Missions decided to withdraw the summer camps from Clear Creek and develop Cedarmore Baptist Assembly. Marvin Byrdwell moved from Clear Creek to Cedarmore.



1938 Girl's Camp

Photo provided by Martha Weller Vitale

AUGUST 5-10, 1945 PROGRAM Kentucky Baptist Encampment

Clear Creek Springs
Dr. W. Fred Kendall, President

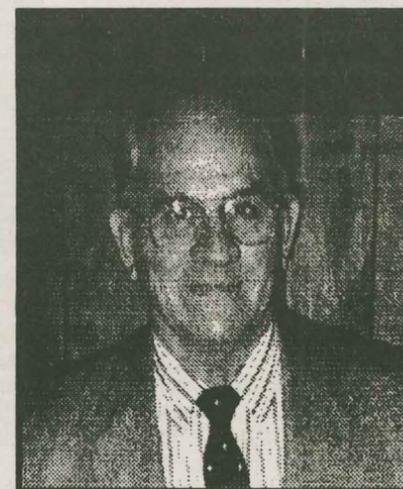
- Missionary messages:
Margie Shumate, China;
Dr. George Sadler, Secretary
for Africa/Europe/Near East.
- Preaching:
Dr. R. Paul Caudill.
- Bible Hour:
Dr. J. Leo Green.
- Fellowship and Recreation
Director: Chester Durham

L.O. Griffith

Clear Creek Springs Manager
Daily Charge: Kelly Hall w/
private bath: \$3:50 Camp
Buildings for men and boys:
\$1.50

Summer Camper to Clear Creek Professor

Billy Pfoff came to Boys Camp in 1944 and 1945 with a church group from First Baptist, Hazard. After graduating with a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, 27 years in the Military, and two seminary degrees he joined the Clear Creek faculty as professor science and Bible in 1989.



1938 Intermediate GA's - Georgetown
Many still active in church today

Campers Remember

Virginia Cranfield Halbrook, Louisville, was one of 357 girls in the June 12-19, 1941 camp. The theme was "This Is My Father's World." She still has her "Camp Pals" book and a certificate, signed by L. O. Griffith, stating her personal record in field events, Scripture verses, daily games, and other activities. "It was a great experience and helped us to be devoted Christians," Mrs. Halbrook stated. Wilma Gaines, Thornhill Baptist Church, Frankfort remembers attending the Seventh State Baptist Training Union Assembly at Clear Creek in 1950. Mrs. Albert Mitchell took twelve youth from the church

Mrs. Gaines recalled, "At one of the Assemblies the campers were challenged to write a jingle promoting the Baptist Book Store on campus. That particular week Dr. Chester Swor was one of the featured speakers- so I wrote- If you want to be smart like Chester Swor, Buy your books at the Baptist Book Store. It was good enough to win second place. The jingle has stuck with me these 45-50 years"