


PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Best ministry teams model 6 characteristics, consultant says

By David Winfrey
News Director

LOUISVILLE—A common purpose is one of six key characteristics of powerful ministry teams, a leadership consultant recently told pastors and other church leaders during a Super Saturday training conference.

"Purpose is the cornerstone of team effectiveness," said Benj Smith, a consultant for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Throughout the Bible, Smith said, teams and teamwork are used to accomplish God's missions.

"God never intended for us to do His work alone," Smith said. "Teams don't make work easier but rather the results bigger and better."

Such teams can be the deacon body, a church committee, Sunday school teachers or ministry group, he added. "We all have teams."

A common purpose comprises 80 percent of what it takes to have an effective team, Smith said. That purpose should be clear, compelling and common, he added, using as an example Jesus' invitation for some disciples to join Him and become "fishers of men."

A common purpose with those characteristics provides a diverse group of people the reason to align their various goals and interests, answering the question, "Why should I?" Smith said.

"Everyone is asking that question in their own particular way," he added.

Smith said the other five characteristics of powerful ministry teams are:

■ **Clear roles.** Every team has a variety of roles, which is not the same as positions, Smith said.

Some roles are formal, such as leader, he said, and other roles are informal, such as peacemaker or gatekeeper. The best teams have members who understand their roles and the roles of everyone else on the team.

"Powerful ministry teams believe in taking advantage of the collective brilliance of the team," he added.

Among the ways such teams leverage their members' different roles: focusing on team members' strengths, adding team members to cover weaknesses, proactively seeking input and making sure that ministry roles are gift-based.

The only proper way a team

□ See Consultant ..., page 9



DISASTER RELIEF Kentucky Baptist volunteers could work another two weeks in Eastern Kentucky after more than 100 families requested help cleaning up the damage from flash floods Aug. 3-4. ■ **Above:** O.A. Collins, a member of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, removes water-soaked materials from a house last week near McDowell. ■ **Middle:** One of approximately 150 bridges in Floyd County alone that was damaged by swollen streams. ■ **Bottom:** Tom Biddle, director of missions for Enterprise Baptist Association in Prestonsburg, hauls a wheelbarrow load of damaged materials from a house. (Photos by David Winfrey)

Kentucky Baptists help flood victims cope

By David Winfrey
News Director

MUD BRANCH—It is a scene all too familiar for Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers. But for the victims, it's brand new.

Dora Newsome looks at the buckling hardwood floor, less than three years old, that she now must tear out of her home.

For four days, she has been cleaning her house, which filled with water after flash floods Aug. 3-4.

Teenagers from Missouri who were scheduled to help First Baptist Church of McDowell with vacation Bible school instead helped her get the mud out of her living room and kitchen.

"We've used so much Clorox (bleach) it's eating my hands up," Newsome said.

And yet, it's still not enough to save most of her belongings.

The water rose so quickly from the stream behind her house that she had just 10 minutes to get her car up a hill to safety.

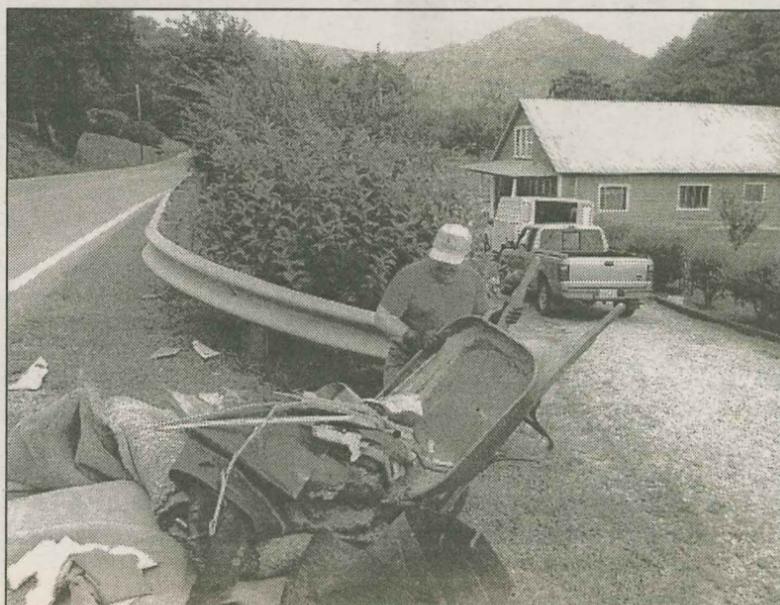
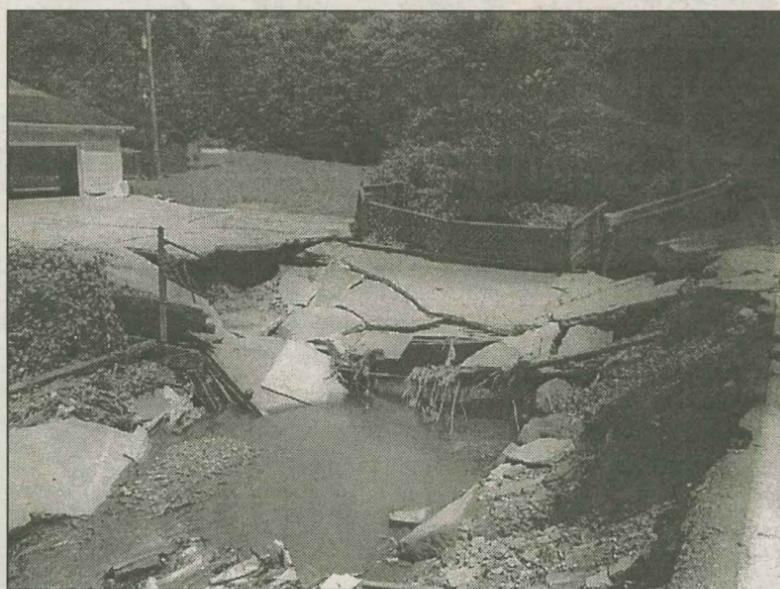
"People ask, 'Why didn't you save anything?'" she recalled. "It just came so fast. You don't have time. You're saving your life."

Now, she is left with problems seen and unseen. Disaster relief workers already had told her she would have to toss her mattress, and she knew the water-logged boxes of belongings would have to go.

Doors on the kitchen cabinets are falling apart, and tiles are popping up from the floor. But that's not all.

The rose colored wall in the dining room is freshly scrubbed, but

□ See Kentucky Baptists ..., page 11



Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, August 15

Three NAMB employees decline to sign faith statement

"I could not look myself in the face in the morning if I signed the Baptist Faith and Message just to keep a job."

Gerry Hutchinson, former manager of NAMB's church and community ministries evangelism

ALPHARETTA, Ga.—Three employees of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board have left the agency over a requirement that workers affirm the Southern Baptist Convention's 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement.

Earlier this year, a regional leader with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board resigned his position after declining to sign a document affirming the revised faith statement. Two professors at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, are losing their jobs for the same reason.

NAMB spokesman Martin King said Gerry Hutchinson, Donoso Escobar and George Pickle "have left the board because they said they could not do their ministries in accordance with" the revised faith statement adopted last year by SBC messengers.

Hutchinson was manager of NAMB's church and community ministries evangelism. Escobar was an associate in that department. Pickle was a chaplaincy associate for health care and pastoral counseling.

Hutchinson resigned effective July 31. Escobar and Pickle took early retirement.

King said a memo from NAMB President Bob Reccord asked the professional and management staff for accountability to the SBC and to be in step with NAMB trustees, who formally have affirmed the current faith statement, as well as other agencies.

He said NAMB's professional and management employees, which make up about half the agency's 425 workers, were given a copy of the revised faith statement to review in May. The

employees were then given a two-part document, he said.

The first part contained a statement that the employee had read and agreed with the Baptist Faith and Message. If the employee answered "no" to this, he or she was asked to explain "any areas of difference."

The employees were then asked to sign the second part of the document promising to carry out their responsibilities "in accordance with and not contrary to" the 2000 version of the faith statement.

King said it was possible for employees to check "no" on the first part, as long as their differences with the statement were minor, and they signed the second part.

Hutchinson, Escobar and Pickle declined to sign the second part, King said. "They said they couldn't work according to the guidelines of the Southern Baptist Convention."

King said several other employees stated areas of disagreement with the faith statement but signed the second part of the form affirming they could conduct their ministries in accordance with the document. He said those responses are being reviewed by NAMB's executive leadership.

The Baptist Faith and Message, first approved in 1925 and revised in 1963, underwent a second major revision last year. King said NAMB sees the Baptist Faith and Message as guidance for SBC agencies.

"That's different from a creed which is forced on a local church, an association or a state convention," he said. "A local church is autonomous from the Southern Baptist Convention, but the agencies are not. They are

owned by the Southern Baptist Convention."

Hutchinson said he told his supervisors he objects to three parts of the revised faith statement:

■ The removal of the statement that Jesus is the criterion by which Scripture should be interpreted.

■ The inclusion of what Hutchinson called "one-way submission," in the amendment on the family that calls for wives to submit to their husbands. "I favor mutual submission as referenced in Ephesians 5:21," he said.

■ The prohibition against women pastors in the section about the church.

Hutchinson said that after he discussed the issue with his superiors they "agreed to disagree" and he chose to resign.

"I could not look myself in the face in the morning if I signed the Baptist Faith and Message just to keep a job," he said.

Hutchinson said he had affirmed the 1963 version of the statement five times during his 20 years with NAMB, most recently in 1994. He said he is leaving on good terms, noting that NAMB plans to honor the three employees at a reception.

"I felt very good about the way we concluded my service at the board," he said. "I have no ax to grind in wanting to be judgmental or vengeful toward the agency." Hutchinson said he prefers to remember his good experiences with NAMB and its predecessor, the Home Mission Board.

"I feel deeply about my sentiments," he said. "I was willing to pay whatever price necessary."

He said he is exploring his career options and hopes to return to his na-

tive state of North Carolina.

Escobar declined to discuss his views about the faith statement, except to say, "I wish I could discuss that with you, but part of my agreement allowing me to take early retirement was that I was not going to discuss publicly the reasons other than that I was taking early retirement," Escobar said. "Under contract, I'm not at liberty to discuss it."

Pickle said he would defer to comments by King as NAMB's spokesman.

King said he did not know the specific conditions of the retirement agreements. "I know often when someone leaves the board or other types of employment, it's not unusual to have an agreement that we won't speak critically of one another," he said.

King called the three men "good employees, brothers in Christ."

"It's sad for us that they've left, but they're the ones that made the determination that they couldn't conduct their ministries in accordance with guidelines set down by the owners of the agency, the Southern Baptist Convention," he said.

King said the three were given severance packages that are "fair" and additional assistance to help their transitions to other ministries.

NAMB missionaries are asked to affirm the Baptist Faith and Message during the application process, King said. "We have not gone back to the mission force of 5,000 and asked them to reaffirm the current Baptist Faith and Message," he added.

Based on reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

IMB trustees elect executive vice president & director for Central Asia

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board filled two key leadership roles and conducted a detailed review of overseas strategy during a July 31-Aug. 2 meeting at LifeWay Conference Center in Glorieta, N.M.

They also appointed 47 new missionaries in an Aug. 2 service in Glorieta's Holcomb Auditorium.

Trustees elected John White to serve as IMB executive vice president after the Sept. 30 retirement of Don Kammerdiener. They also elected Southern Baptist missionary Gregory Pratt to direct the board's work in the nine countries of Central Asia.

White, 44, has been serving as IMB associate vice president for overseas operations since 1995. Prior to that, he and his wife, Trudy, served 12 years as missionaries to Brazil. In his new role, he will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency.

"John White is a person who can step into this very strategic role and fulfill its responsibilities without the organization losing any momentum," IMB President Jerry Rankin said.

White, a native of Alabama, is a graduate of Samford University in Birmingham. He



MISSIONS FOCUS Dozens of people respond to an invitation to allow God to use them to help reach the world with the gospel of Christ. The response came during an Aug. 2 missionary appointment service in Glorieta, N.M. (IMB photo by Sandy King)

also attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, before missionary appointment.

After retirement, Kammerdiener will serve 15 months as a special assistant to the president, mentoring leaders and nurturing relationships with national Baptists in Latin America. Clyde Meador, regional leader for the board's Southern

Asia region, will step into the position White is vacating. David Garrison, the board's associate vice president for strategy coordination, will direct work in Southern Asia until a successor to Meador is selected.

Pratt, 43, is a Georgia native. He and his wife were appointed by the IMB in 1991.

Central Asia previously was part of a larger Central and Southern Asia region. Trustees carved it out as a separate region in their May meeting, convinced that missions efforts would be more effective because of vast differences between the two areas in culture and in the way Christianity is developing.

When Pratt was appointed 10 years ago to focus on taking the gospel to a Muslim people group in Central Asia, only one believer was known among that people group's 13 million people. Ten years later, Christians there number about 800.

"Our heart and our desire is to see Central Asia become a place from which the gospel goes out to the rest of the world," Pratt told trustees.

Trustees reviewed strategies for mobilizing Southern Baptists for world missions and starting church-planting movements among all the world's people groups.

Rankin challenged trustees to prayerfully seek God's wisdom and direction for every decision they make.

"We face unprecedented opportunities around the world that we dare not forfeit or neglect," Rankin said. "We must not approach our task in a passive or haphazard way, but rather bathed in prayer, seeking God's wisdom and guidance."

Proposed seminary taps Greg Earwood as first president

GEORGETOWN—Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, a moderate seminary that has been in the planning stages for several years, has named a president to seek to move those plans into reality.

Greg Earwood, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Georgetown since 1995, was elected president July 16 by seminary trustees. He announced his resignation as pastor Aug. 5 and will begin his seminary role Sept. 1.



Earwood

The proposed seminary was incorporated in the mid-1990s in response to the conservative shift at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and other Southern Baptist entities. Earwood has served since 1998 as chairman of a committee to give direction to the seminary's future.

"When the Spirit of God blows a fresh breeze of new direction into your life, you must follow God's leading," Earwood wrote in a letter of resignation to his congregation.

Though details of his job description have not been finalized, he is expected to provide leadership for fund-raising, faculty recruitment, curriculum development and other administrative responsibilities. Trustees will meet later this month to address those and other issues.

Trustee Bob Baker, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington, noted, "One of the reasons Baptist Seminary of Kentucky has not been established yet is that we have not had that leader who was willing to step forward and provide the leadership the seminary needs."

"We have that type of person in Greg," he added. "I think he is one who can take the best of scholarship and the best of church life and blend the two together to enhance the kingdom of God."

Earwood compared the seminary's future to building a new home. "After envisioning what our home might look like, we are ready to proceed to the architect stage by working on the details," he said, noting that the seminary's foundation "will be our historic Baptist principles."

Earwood, a native of Mississippi, is a graduate of the University of Mississippi and Southern Seminary. Prior to serving at Faith Baptist, he was pastor of First Baptist Church of Murray, West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville and Indian Fork Baptist Church in Bagdad. He also has been a member of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board and Western Recorder board of directors.

Rankin: 'God is breaking down barriers'

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

ALBANY—Who says you can't be in two places at one time? Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, preached Aug. 12 at the 11 a.m. worship services in two Kentucky Baptist churches in different towns.

Rankin, who spoke at an associational missions rally the night before, took advantage of the two time zones in south central Kentucky to preach Sunday morning at Elk Springs Valley Baptist Church in Wayne County and at First Baptist Church of Albany. Rankin's wife, Bobbye, also spoke at two churches on Sunday morning—10:30 a.m. (EST) at First Baptist Church of Monticello and 11 a.m. (CST) at Stony Point Baptist Church in Albany.

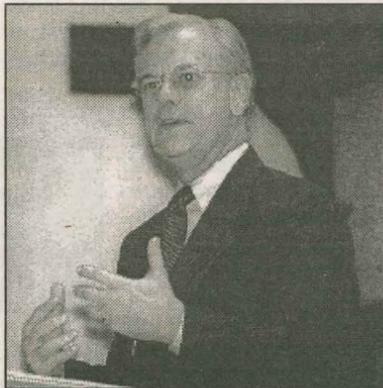
Describing the Rankins' speaking blitz as a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" for Freedom and Wayne County associations, Director of Missions Kenneth Dick noted, "We're trying to utilize them to the maximum in our churches."

Dick said he worked closely with Kentucky Baptist Convention President Jim McKinley, a retired Southern Baptist international missionary, to arrange the Rankins' visit.

"I had it in my heart the Rankins were supposed to come," Dick explained. "God just worked it out."

During the Saturday night missions rally at Stony Point, McKinley welcomed the Rankins to his home church, recounting his Christian conversion there in 1938 at age 9. The Aug. 11 "Lord of the Harvest Missions & Evangelism Rally," which attracted more than 300 people, also featured a mini-concert by gospel singer Lois Jane Wallace.

Declaring that "God is breaking down the barriers" to the gospel around the world, Rankin urged the crowd to be sensitive to God's call to



MISSIONS FOCUS Jerry Rankin (left) and his wife, Bobbye, challenge Kentucky Baptists in Freedom and Wayne County Baptist associations to strengthen their commitment to global missions. They spoke in four area churches Aug. 11-12.



missions.

Describing 1 Chronicles 16 as "one of my favorite Great Commission passages," Rankin said the children of Israel were challenged to "sing God's praises and glory in His name that people in all the ends of the earth would praise Him."

Centuries later, however, "we're the only ones singing those praises," Rankin noted. He said Muslims, Buddhists, unreached people groups and others "know nothing of God's grace that will elicit a song of praise."

The answer, he said, is for Christians to accept God's call to go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"Where is the uttermost?" he asked. "It's those places where people are still waiting to hear the message of Jesus Christ. It's where Jesus said we're to go to proclaim the gospel to every creature and to make disciples."

Despite overwhelming challenges, "God is at work throughout our world to exalt His name among the nations," Rankin added. He said record Southern Baptist missionary appointments and thousands of mission volunteers are helping impact the world with the gospel.

Sounding a theme that frequently

punctuates his mission messages, Rankin said, "I tell our missionaries I believe we're sending them out to be the last generation of missionaries."

Citing Matthew 24:14—"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"—Rankin said, "When I read those words, my heart beats with excitement. Those words are being fulfilled."

Though "I don't get caught up in end-time eschatology," he added, "The fact is the gospel has penetrated every nation of the world. ... God is opening the doors."

"God is moving in providence and power," Rankin said. "God's Spirit is moving to fulfill the Great Commission."

Highlighting Southern Baptists' role in reaching the world with the gospel, he told the crowd, "If we're going to be faithful and obedient to what God would have us do, we must have a vision for evangelizing the nations."

"God has not given any church permission to draw a circle around itself and limit its ministry, he insisted. "The heart and passion of God is the ends of the earth."



WITNESSING OPPORTUNITY Georgetown College student Stephanie Collins, a counselor with Centri-KID in Lynchburg, Va., prays with camper Jennifer Blasack who made a spiritual decision during the camp's evening worship time. Centri-KID is a week-long camp sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

KBHC president announces nine staff layoffs

LOUISVILLE—Citing a decrease in the number of referrals from the state, Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children leaders have announced nine staff layoffs on two campuses.

In an Aug. 7 memo to employees, KBHC President Bill Smithwick wrote, "The loss of these jobs is a result in a decrease of referrals from the commonwealth of Kentucky."

He said reasons for the reduced number of referrals include new placement strategies by the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children, the KBHC's hiring standards which are being challenged in court and the design of the agency's available programs.

Smithwick said the state has placed approximately 5,000 children with relatives, significantly reducing the number of children referred to private child care providers.

He said the KBHC's policy against hiring homosexual staff members also is a factor but "that's not the real reason referrals have dropped recently."

Vickie Grassman, KBHC communications director, said the recent layoffs include five staff members on the Spring Meadows campus and four at Glen Dale. She said the agency currently is operating three of six cottages at Spring Meadows and two of six at Glen Dale, serving a total of 50 children on the two campuses.

Smithwick said the reduction in staff was an effort to "get our personnel in line with the number of referrals we're receiving. It's a matter of managing resources."

"This is not the closure of the program," he added, noting that referrals typically increase in the 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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Thanks for relief

I want to thank God for the volunteers of the Kentucky Baptist disaster relief team.

On the afternoon of July 4, a tornado hit Somerset, Science Hill and the surrounding area. Many families were devastated, not knowing where to turn.

Then God, as He always does, saw the need, heard the cry and responded in love. Kentucky Baptist disaster relief director Larry Koch and the crew came and "set up camp" at Camp Ground Baptist Church. They worked in the heat and humidity until the last call had been answered.

Many families were touched with Jesus' compassion because of these fine men and women who gave all they had to give hope to others. Thank God for them; we will never be the same.

David Muse, pastor
Camp Ground Baptist Church
Somerset

Sprinklers save lives

They say, "A picture is worth a thousand words." If that is true, your picture on page one of the July 31

Western Recorder just set the sprinkler industry back 100,000 words. The picture showing the sprinkler head and the "Building blocks?" heading leads a person to believe a sprinkler system is a negative factor in building churches, gyms and schools.

To the contrary, sprinkler systems do save lives and money. The installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system in new construction is one of the few items that pays for itself. The savings are reflected in that, if sprinkled, the building does not require expensive fire doors, carpeting, exiting doors and wall construction. In addition, insurance rates are lowered in a sprinkled building.

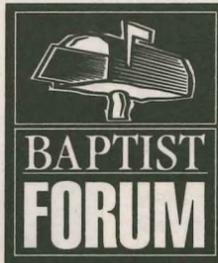
My partner and I have been in the sprinkler industry for 38 years each, and have worked on many church-related construction projects. As Christian businessmen, we always have tried to be fair to our customers and have built a reputation as being not only reliable and knowledgeable but also fair and honest. We are very proud to be in an industry that has saved many lives. As more people

learn about the value of fire sprinklers, the result will be more lives being saved. In your article, you did an injustice to a valuable life-saving device by highlighting it in a picture with a negative connotation.

The general public has an overall misunderstanding of the value of fire sprinklers. I am very disappointed when articles like yours add to that unfair and misinformed opinion.

In a nationwide fire sprinkler ad, there is a picture much like yours, except the caption reads: "Look up for fire safety." We all need to be more aware of the dangers of fire and the benefits of fire sprinklers.

Robert Dooley
Lexington



Editor's Note: The article accompanying the photograph explains that the church's building delay and added expenses were caused by differing views by the fire marshal and architect about installing sprinklers. The actual sprinklers were not the cause of the "building blocks."

Guard your heart against distractions

By Henry Blackaby

ATLANTA (BP)—Too many people never reach the goal they set for themselves in their workplace. They entered their workplace with a clear sense of mission and a determination "to make a

difference." Along the way there is a trembling, or a sorrow, or even a sense of failure that the highest and best of ideals are not and may not be reached.

Over the years, talking with hundreds of people who have experienced this trauma, I have heard them exclaim, "How did this happen? How and why did I miss it?" There are

many answers but the one factor I notice more than any other is that they became distracted along the way. Not necessarily "big" things, but the distractions were fatal to accomplishing their goal.

How does this happen? How is one "distracted" in the workplace?

■ Their main goal was never firmly established. They did not have enough passion.

■ The suggestions and urgings of others attracted them away from their own goal.

■ The "grass" seemed greener in another project or direction.

■ They did not establish a standard (plumbline) to recognize distractions.

■ They did not realize that "good things" often are the enemy of the best.

■ They did not weigh carefully the counsel they were receiving (Psalm 1).

■ They did not daily affirm their goal.

■ Sometimes, successes along the way can distract and get us stuck there. Today:

■ Restate your original goal, given by God to you for your workplace.

■ Determine if you are still "on track" or have moved away.

■ Ask God for clear discernment on your life in your workplace.

■ Seek counsel from proven godly men and women.

COMMENTARY

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Discovery Camps & Son Teams make impact

This has been an exciting summer with youth camps at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek operating at full capacity. Tom Smoot, Discovery Camps director, reported a total of 428 decisions for Christ, including 83 professions of faith and numerous commitments to vocational Christian service.

James McBride of Simpsonville Baptist Church reported taking 52 teens to Youth Discovery Camp at Cedarmore where the blessings flowed.

"As a result of the camp, we had 33 decisions for Christ or lifestyle changes," he said. "My group was transformed (and they were pretty good going in!). I thought the blessings were complete, ... but then we had the Son Celebration team come to lead in our worship." In the services three children were saved, two youth committed to start Bible study groups and one youth shared with McBride his belief that God may be calling him into ministry.

"This year I will be graduating

about 15 students," McBride added. "Keep those BSUs (Baptist Student Unions) going because they all need to be in one. I'm looking forward to the day when I get to see some of my former youth leading my present youth at Cedarmore."

It was rewarding for me to be present at Yelvington Baptist Church recently when two teenage girls presented themselves for baptism. Pastor Wally Capps said they had made their commitments to Jesus Christ during the ministry of the Son Share team, one of five teams of Kentucky Baptist college students who spend their summer sharing their faith in a variety of settings.

Here's what the Son Teams have been up to this summer:

■ Son Reach has been involved in conducting vacation Bible schools in Eastern Kentucky. Team members have worked in the Williamsburg, Corbin, Jellico and Prestonsburg areas.

■ Son Life, a team for out-of-state missions, has conducted pre-Olympic games ministry in Salt Lake City. In addition to public performances, the team ministered in smaller churches in the region. These young people also have worked in a food pantry and conducted two vacation Bible schools.

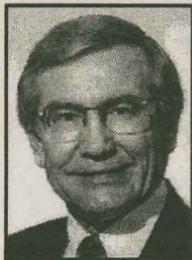
■ The Son Praise team worked at Cedarmore Youth Camp all summer and, along with the other four teams, ministered in churches on weekends.

■ Son Share and Son Burst traveled to New England to minister in churches and conduct a youth camp in Maine.

In addition to the camp weeks and other ministries, the Son Teams conducted ministries in 76 churches this summer. I am so proud of the high level of commitment demonstrated by these college students.

On behalf of all Kentucky Baptists, I say "thank you" to these students for their outstanding passion to serve our Lord. Congratulations as well to Tom Smoot and the BSU directors who serve as coaches for these teams.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention



Bill Mackey

FAMILY

2001 tax changes include long list of financial benefits

By Jeremy White

You might not remember the long name of the new tax act—The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001—but you will benefit from the tax savings in it.

As Don Spencer pointed out in last week's Financial Forum column, many people have not heard how good this tax act really is.

The only bad news is that many of the benefits take effect in later years. Most changes begin in 2002 with the larger reductions in 2006 and later.

Here are some highlights:

■ \$1.35 trillion tax cut over 10 years, but \$875 billion cut in final five year.

■ All rates go down over time beginning in 2001.

■ Increased IRA, 401(k) and Education IRA contributions for 2002 and later.

■ Increased child credit (\$600 in 2001 and increasing later).

■ Education IRAs can be used for elementary and secondary private schools (not only higher education as in the past).

■ Doubling of adoption credit in 2002.

■ Expansion of the student loan interest deduction in 2002.

■ Gradual elimination of the "marriage penalty" beginning in 2005.

■ New college tuition deduction in 2002.

■ Increased exemptions for estates in 2002.

■ Complete phase out of estate tax in 2010.

Although the new tax act is favorable to taxpayers, it further complicates a tax code that already is overly complex. This act has 85 new major provisions and 441 Internal Revenue Code changes. In addition, many benefits phase out at varying income levels.

All of the complexity requires more planning. Although we still must render to Caesar what is his, you can be a better steward by taking advantage of the new tax breaks and rendering more to God.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. He offers additional information about the new tax act on his Web site at www.consultcpa.com.

What traits are single men really looking for in a potential mate?

Q: The recent movie "What Women Want" reminds me of a dilemma I face as a never-married single woman: What is it that men are looking for? I don't want to compromise my dress or behavior to get men's attention, but I would like to meet someone who is ready to get married.

Confront yourself with the following questions and points:

■ **Are you being your best self?** Are you able to draw out of others' their best selves? Men generally want someone who can bring out their true potential. Caution: This does not mean someone who is out to change them, but someone who can draw out the best in them.

■ **Avoid playing "ditsy."** Guys generally need stability and sanity in their lives. If you are too "way out there," you might not be considered "marriage material."

■ **Be yourself.** Trying to appeal too much to what is "hot" in Hollywood or Madison Avenue will not only frustrate you with an unattainable goal, but you won't be yourself, the true person who will be married for a lifetime.

■ **Avoid bitterness.** Women who constantly say things like "all men are dogs and should be shot" likely will find themselves without the company of men. Hatred and bitterness against all men is a strong "man repellent."

■ **Wait for the "right man."** Each man must come to his own "aha" moment when he is ready to be married. For some men that happens in their 20s, while for others it is when they reach their 30s, 40s or even later.

■ **Seek compatibility.** He has to have a sense that you're his choice as "leading lady" in the drama of his life. Job description for life companion includes friendship, rapport, an ability to validate each other's feelings and a life vision the two of you share.—James Stillwell

Q. Our Bible study class is developing a ministry to homebound older adults in our community. What are some ideas for activities while visiting with these people?

- Talk about the purpose for the visit.
- Ask about photos of family and friends from days gone by or recent snapshots.
- Help create a photo album, framed photograph collection or poster to display.
- Help make a special scrapbook celebrating the older adult's life.
- Write down or record the individual's autobiography and make copies available for family members.
- Share your own favorite stories and memories.
- Ask about vacation photos, souvenirs, postcards, maps and tales of his or her travels.
- Read newspapers and magazines aloud to help keep the individual in touch with current events.
- Read religious or inspirational articles, magazines or books.
- Subscribe to the person's hometown newspaper and bring it along to read.
- Help the individual write letters or cards to family and friends.
- Bring items related to the season or an upcoming holiday to discuss together.
- Prepare a favorite snack or beverage and bring it along to share together.
- Bring a musical instrument you play and give the person a private concert.
- Have an indoor picnic with the person's favorite picnic foods.—Jon Rainbow

Family Forum writers are Suzanne Coyle, 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; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; and Scott Wigginton, director of LifeCare Counseling at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.



Guard against Baptist connectionalism

The list is growing longer as fallout from Southern Baptists' revised Baptist Faith and Message statement continues.

The latest casualties, reported this week in a page 2 article, are three employees of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. The three men—Donoso Escobar, Gerry Hutchinson and George Pickle—declined to comply with a recent directive by NAMB President Bob Reccord to sign a statement affirming the 2000 version of the Baptist Faith and Message.

Hutchinson, manager of NAMB's church and community ministries evangelism, resigned effective July 31. Escobar, an associate in Hutchinson's department, and Pickle, a chaplaincy associate, took early retirement.

Hutchinson said he had affirmed the 1963 version of the faith statement five times during his 20-year career with NAMB, most recently in 1994. He noted, however, that he could not agree to work "in accordance with and not contrary to" the 2000 statement.

Hutchinson cited concern over the removal of the statement that "the criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ," the "one-way submission" of wives to husbands in the document's 1998 family amendment and the prohibition against women pastors.

"I could not look myself in the face in the morning if I signed the Baptist Faith and Message just to keep a job," he explained.

The action by NAMB and the responses by Hutchinson, Escobar and Pickle are part of a growing pattern in Baptist life. Consider these other recent examples:

■ Bill Phillips, regional leader for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's work in West Africa, resigned his leadership position May 21 after declining to sign a document affirming the revised faith statement. Phillips, who will continue to serve as an IMB missionary, said his decision "is a matter of personal conscience related to signing such a form

and has nothing to do with the content of the Baptist Faith and Message."

■ Two professors at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will leave their jobs rather than sign the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. Seminary President Ken Hemphill said limiting employment to faculty who are willing to sign the new document is in the SBC's best interest. He gave ethics professor Jeph Holloway and Old Testament professor Rick Johnson a year to find positions elsewhere. Holloway said it would be a breach of his conscience to sign the new faith statement, which he considers "very different from the 1963 statement."

■ In Florida, three churches in Santa Re River Baptist Association are calling for the dismissal of a church that ordained a woman as minister of education and students earlier this year. The churches claim Lynn Williams' ordination goes against the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message even though the association never has adopted the 2000 SBC document or any other faith statement to

guide its work.

■ A joint proposal by the Missouri Baptist Convention's committee on continuing review and credentials committee calls for churches to affirm either the 1963 or 2000 Baptist Faith and Message in order to be member congregations of the state convention. The proposal will be introduced during the MBC annual meeting this fall and voted on in 2002.

Amid such developments, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Faith and Message study committee is working on a proposal to present to KBC messengers in November. The nine-member committee has the responsibility to recommend how the KBC "can best relate to" the revised faith statement.

Regardless of the details of the proposal, hopefully all Kentucky Baptists will guard against merely deferring to an SBC document to dictate employment or membership requirements on the state, associational or church levels. Autonomy remains a basic Baptist principle. Creedalism and connectionalism are not

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

'46 Recorder offers readers cure for 'Morbus Sabbaticus'

By Joyce Martin

Picture this: It's Sunday morning and you'd really like to skip church and sleep in. After all, you tell yourself, "I've had a really hard week." Besides, you stayed out late on Saturday night. "It's the only night I can relax," you rationalize. "Plus, I really don't feel well today." What's wrong? You may have "Morbus Sabbaticus."

Take heart. While it is an illness that has been around a long time, there is a cure, according to an article in the Nov. 21, 1946, issue of the Western Recorder:

"Morbus Sabbaticus. A Sunday illness peculiar to church-goers; symptoms vary, but never lasts more than twenty-four hours; physician never needed; intermittent attacks at first, then chronic, mali-

gant and fatal—in order named. The attacks come suddenly every Sunday morning; no symptoms felt on Saturday night, patient (sic) sleeps well until late Sunday, eats hearty breakfast, but about church time complains and feels the disease coming on. Difficulty passes just in time for patient to eat hearty dinner and go for an afternoon walk or auto ride. Similar occurrence comes at time of evening church service. Patient sleeps well on Sunday night and has no further symptoms until the following Sunday morning."

(Editor's Note): We suggest the following remedy for this spiritually dangerous malady:

Patient should retire not later than 11:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Set the alarm clock to ring at 7:30.

Arise promptly when alarm sounds, drink one or two glasses of cold water.

Wash face and hands thoroughly, put on clean garments.

Eat moderate breakfast, without unnecessary loss of time.

Leave morning paper unopened on living room table.

Promptly at 9:15 o'clock, open garage doors, start motor and direct the car towards God's house.

Greet all with friendly smile; listen attentively to teacher and preacher.

At conclusion of morning service the patient should feel definitely better.

To assure full recovery and make possible happy week ahead, patient should have neighbor or close friend accompany him to evening services.

"If this remedy fails after four consecutive doses, patient should immediately go for examination to New Testament Clinic."

Joyce Martin is partnership editions editor for the Western Recorder



BAPTISTS

Annuity Board delays expanded services, ups insurance rates

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Annuity Board briefly will postpone launching its expanded ministry assignment, trustees were told during a July 30-31 meeting in Colorado Springs, Colo.

John Jones, the board's chief operating officer, told trustees that the board had hoped to convert to a registered investment environment on July 2, but that it is now anticipated to occur by Sept. 1.

Upon approval of new ministry assignments by the Southern Baptist Convention during the June 2000 annual meeting, the Annuity Board sponsored the creation of AB Funds Trust, a series of no-load mutual funds. When the funds become available, eligible investors may open IRAs or personal investment accounts.

Jeffrey Billinger, the board's treasurer and chief financial officer, reported total assets of \$7.4 billion at June 30, compared to \$8 billion a year ago. While total assets were down due to overall market declines, net income for the second quarter was \$225.9 million, the highest quarterly net income since the last quarter of 1999.

Trustees approved a Jan. 1, 2002, rate increase for participants in the board's Personal Security Program and Employer Security Program plans, including Medicare supplement plans. The Personal Security Program will receive a 5 percent increase while groups of 10-25 employees in the Employer Security Program will receive a rate increase of 12 percent. Premiums in the Medicare Supplement plans will increase \$20 per month.

NAMB pilots 'Walk Thru the Bible' partnership

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)—Leaders of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board hope a plan to bring an innovative Bible study seminar to Southern Baptist churches will spark increased evangelism and church planting.

NAMB leaders made a pitch in early August during meetings in Atlanta with state convention leaders to bring Walk Thru the Bible Ministries' "Walk Thru the Old Testament" seminar to churches at a lower cost than the ministry's typical fee of \$2,000 to \$3,000.

Dave Clippard, associate executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, said NAMB

officials approached him last winter about using Oklahoma as a proving ground for the program.

Walk Thru the Bible has since trained 15 Oklahoma-based instructors who have conducted the seminar in about 20 churches, Clippard added.

During the pilot program phase, the cost to small- to medium-attendance churches was \$350 for program and promotional materials, with a minimum participation of 30 people, and a commitment to distribute 1,000 brochures promoting the seminar. NAMB helped subsidize the pilot program in Oklahoma, said Richard Harris, NAMB vice president for church

planting.

NAMB's purpose in partnering with Walk Thru the Bible—the ministry headed by Bruce Wilkinson, author of "The Prayer of Jabez"—is to foster church planting and evangelism by equipping laypeople with a "big picture" view of the Bible, Harris said. Using hand signs, catch phrases, repetition and humor, participants are taught 77 key Old Testament people, places and events in chronological order from Genesis to Malachi.

Harris said the required promotion makes the seminar an effective evangelistic tool, as well as an equipping device for church members and a tool for launching new congregations.

SBC leaders create 'Super Dude' video to promote CP

NASHVILLE (BP)—Super Dude, dubbed the Southern Baptist Convention's teenage missions superhero, will expand the scope of his live-action Cooperative Program adventures this fall with a videotaped production of "Super Dude and the CP Squad."

The video will be available to churches later this year, said David Hankins, vice president for Cooperative Program with the SBC Executive Committee.

"When we originally introduced

Super Dude, we discovered that many churches do not have the resources to produce the Super Dude skits," Hankins said. "That is why we are so excited about this video."

"Our state conventions had been asking for some new, creative ways to communicate the CP missions message to children," said John Kyle, director of Cooperative Program development. "We feel Super Dude provides a fun, imaginative way ... to learn about CP missions."

The Super Dude story line: David Hicks, an ordinary Southern Baptist teenager, wins a Bible drill competition. His prize is a Bible that hasn't been opened in 700 years. When he opens the Bible and begins to read Scripture, David receives a visit from an angel named Fred who gives David the opportunity to become a Christian superhero. He joins forces with the CP Squad on a mission to show kids how they can take the gospel of Christ to the world.



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- Participants must have been in kindergarten through grade six during the 2000-2001 school year.
- Poems and essays should be no longer than 300 words.
- No computer-generated artwork will be eligible for the contest.
- The participant's full name, address and telephone number should be on the back of each entry.
- Judging will take place after the fair. Two \$50 Savings Bonds will be awarded, one for the poem/essay division and one for the art division.
- All entries submitted with a complete address will be returned.
- KBHC reserves the right to reproduce any part of an entry for publicity purposes.

Pastor outlines how church dealt with sexual misconduct

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)—Eastside Baptist Church is coming out of what we hope to be the worst part of an unbelievable nightmare.

One of our staff members, who served as a Tae Kwon Do instructor in our Christian Activity Center, has had multiple charges of child molestation leveled against him.

This colleague in ministry was a model staff member and a model citizen. There never was any indication that he could ever be charged with such a horrible crime. A criminal background check would not have produced any evidence to create the slightest suspicion that he was capable of such conduct.

He was loved and respected. He is married to one of the most devout Christian young women in our church. He taught Sunday school. He was faithful to his responsibilities. He was winsome in his personality.

When the news of his possible sex-

ual misconduct surfaced, our church in Marietta, Ga., went into shock, then denial that such preposterous accusations could be directed toward such an apparent fine young man. However, when the smoke began to clear, it was evident that scores of families were dealing with the stark realization that their sons, some of preschool age, could have been subjected to their worst fears.

I was made aware of this unfolding saga by a 5:35 a.m. telephone call on the first Monday last December. I was actually awake when the phone rang and was preparing to go to the church to meet with a small prayer group that I had been meeting with on Monday mornings for more than three years.

After meeting with them for prayer, I confirmed the report that I

had initially heard. I provided some general information to the staff at our 9 a.m. chapel service and then scheduled a meeting with our senior staff to map out a plan of action.

Calls to the Georgia Baptist Convention and LifeWay Christian Resources provided helpful information about legal advice. A Christian attorney in Oklahoma who deals with churches in such crises provided great counsel. A Christian attorney in our own church began to meet with us and provide excellent counsel as we began to navigate our way through the murky waters that seemed to surround us.

The young man who was being charged with the misconduct fled the area, and authorities already had begun their search for his whereabouts. Several things became apparent to those of us in the midst of this crisis. We decided that our first priority was to the families whose children had allegedly been the subject of any misconduct. Next, we felt we had an obligation to our staff member, who had become the center of this controversy. Our third concern was for the health of the church.

The parents of children in the Tae Kwon Do class began calling the church fearing that their child may have been molested. Since our first concern was for the children and their families, we immediately called a Christian therapist and arranged for him to meet with all interested parties on the very next night, Tuesday night. We called all of the families who had children in the Tae Kwon Do classes and more than 100 parents showed up for the meeting.

Some parents vented their anger

and others wept quietly as the counselor told the parents how they might be able to detect whether their child had been the subject of any sexual misconduct. We assured the parents that nothing was more important to us than the welfare of their children. We assured all those in attendance that the church would provide counseling to anyone and everyone who needed it at absolutely no cost to them.

We had a second meeting with all interested parties the next night to provide additional counseling resources and to allow the law enforcement officers assigned to the crimes against children department to report on their investigation. A week later, a meeting was scheduled for the parents with the district attorney and his staff to gain an understanding of the process.

Since early in December, the church has continued to provide a variety of counseling options and support to all interested families. I even began preaching a series of messages on the general theme, "Crises Don't Last but Christians Do."

Our second concern was for our own staff member who was at the epicenter of this crisis. He was still missing and there was no way that any of us could get closure in this dark scenario until he was in custody. We knew that he was outside of the Atlanta area but that he had a cell phone and had called various people on several occasions.

I called him, left a message, and he returned my call. I tried to impress upon him the wisdom of presenting himself to the authorities and being accountable. I even offered to meet him and go with him to the law enforcement officials. The church secured the services of a Christian attorney and offered to pay for the first two hours of consultation as an inducement to get him to come back and face the charges against him.

In response to the encouragement of others and after being a fugitive for almost a week, the missing staff member came back and committed himself to one of the FBI agents who had been assigned to his case. Since that time, he has been incarcerated, but our church has prayed for him and I have visited him regularly in jail.

We also made a decision to be very open and transparent to the media. We have tried to be cooperative and courteous, open and honest to the television and newspaper reporters; consequently, they have been gracious and kind to the church.

From the very beginning, we have as a church prayed a prayer that is suggested by Genesis 50:20 where Joseph said, "But as for you, you thought evil against me but God meant it unto good"

At this point, we cannot say that God has turned a tragedy into a triumph because there are hurting people all around us. However, we know that man's extremity is God's opportunity. And our wonderful Lord is proving Himself sufficient in the lives of many and doors of ministry are opening to people we would never have known otherwise, and we have discovered that God is good—all the time.

Harris is pastor of Eastside Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.

When the smoke began to clear, it was evident that scores of families were dealing with the stark realization that their sons could have been subjected to their worst fears.

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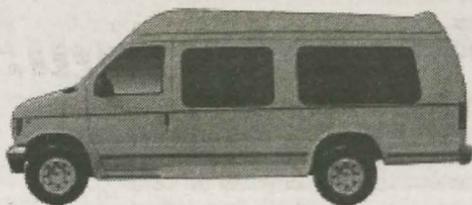


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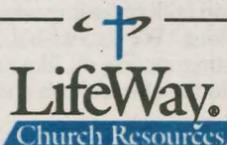
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Barna: Christians still divorcing at same rate as others

The research firm also found 25 percent of born-again Christians had lived with someone outside of marriage.

VENTURA, Calif. (RNS)—Born-again Christians are just as likely to get divorced as adults who are not born-again Christians, according to a recent report by Barna Research Group.

Researchers found that 33 percent of born-again adults who have been married have been divorced compared with 34 percent of adults not considered born-again Christians who reported the same experience.

The study is consistent with a similar report by Barna two years ago. In 1999, the research firm con-

ducted a study that found born-again Christians had a slightly higher rate of divorce than those who were not born-again Christians.

This time, researchers also found that 29 percent of Catholics and 32 percent of Protestants have been married and divorced.

"More than 90 percent of the born-again adults who have been divorced experienced that divorce after they accepted Christ, not before," George Barna, president of Barna Research Group, said in a statement.

"It is unfortunate that so many peo-

ple, regardless of their faith, experience a divorce, but especially unsettling to find that the faith commitment of so many born-again individuals has not enabled them to strengthen and save their marriages," he added.

He said the people surveyed did not claim to be born-again Christians but met the group's definition for them.

The Ventura, Calif., research firm also studied trends in adults living together outside of marriage. It found that 33 percent of all adults had cohabited. Twenty-five percent of born-again Christians had cohabited, com-

pared to 39 percent of adults who were not born-again Christians. Thirty-six percent of Catholics and 30 percent of Protestants had cohabited.

The data on cohabitation is based on a national telephone survey of 1,005 adults in February and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The marriage and divorce figures, which have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points, are based on a combination of seven samples of adults totaling 7,043 who were interviewed by telephone between January 2000 and July 2001.

St. Matthews Baptist Church's Response to the Revised *Baptist Faith & Message of 2000*

The following "Open Letter from St. Matthews Baptist Church" is meant to provide a helpful witness during this challenging era in Baptist life. We humbly offer this prayerfully worded letter to help strengthen the fellowship among Baptists by expressing our consanguineous witness, as is the right and responsibility of each Baptist individual and congregation. The letter seeks to model Baptist polity of giving witness without being infected by the germs of political divisions and animosity.

Among the signers of the letter are two former presidents of the Kentucky Baptist Convention: Eldred Taylor, who chairs our Denominational Relations Committee, and our Pastor Emeritus, Verlin Kruschwitz, who also served on the *Baptist Faith & Message* Committee of 1962-1963.

As a church we are grateful to God for our shared partnership with churches in the Kentucky Baptist Convention to reach the world for Christ.

With this intent,
D. Leslie Hollon, pastor

An Open Letter from St. Matthews Baptist Church

In June of 2000, several thousand Messengers gathered from a scattering of churches around the country to meet in annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention. One focused item of consideration was a proposed set of revisions to the 1963 *Baptist Faith & Message*.

The 1963 *Baptist Faith & Message* was a revision of the 1925 *Baptist Faith & Message*. The 1925 document was the first such statement of faith the SBC had ever adopted. The Convention had been in existence for eighty years before it felt the need for such a document. In 1962 the SBC authorized a committee to revise the 1925 *Baptist Faith & Message*. This revision committee was composed of the presidents of each state convention, and was chaired by Dr. Hershel Hobbs, then President of the SBC. It was thus comprised of members who were elected by persons from the various state conventions, and was truly a committee of the people. When the 1962 document was presented, it was a Confession that a true majority of Baptists related to, and that the SBC could and did support.

Unlike the process in 1963, however, the 2000 changes come from a much smaller number of persons, appointed by the Convention president. Therefore, from the inception, the 2000 revisions do not rise from the "grass roots" of Baptists, and fail to be truly representative of thousands of churches affiliated with the SBC.

Last November, during the Annual Meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, a special committee was appointed to recommend what, if any, response the KBC should give to the 2000 revisions. That committee will issue its report by summer's end.

In the meantime, our own church formed a Denominational Relations Committee, which was, in part, charged to thoughtfully and prayerfully study the 2000 revisions, and to make recommendations to guide our congregation regarding the issues raised. That nine-member committee subsequently met over a three-month period to study the revisions, both in comparison to the previous two *Baptist Faith & Messages*, and within the context of our denomination's long heritage of openness and democratic process.

As a result of its work, the committee unanimously identified and articulated the following five specific areas of concern with the 2000 revisions:

1. Instead of helping to heal and strengthen Southern Baptists, the amended Confession serves to narrow our fellowship by imposing viewpoints of a particular group upon the rest of the Convention. That group seemingly attempts to empower their work by calling it "an instrument of doctrinal accountability." The committees which helped to formulate the first two *Baptist Faith & Messages* consisted of a much broader and balanced representation of Baptists. The work of the 2000 committee thus appears flawed from the start, because a limited perspective of our denomination was represented.
2. A diminished emphasis upon priesthood of the believer and soul competency before God, also inherently flaws the document. Dr. Hobbs, who coordinated the 1963 work, warned that an attitude which undermines these essential doc-

trines will cause a confession to be used, instead, as a creed. In fact, he predicted that, "in all likelihood, the only thing that would divide Southern Baptists with regard to their faith would be for one group—to the right or left of center or even in the center—to attempt to force upon others a creedal faith."

Affirming priesthood of the believer and soul competency before God enables us to experience the freedom of Christ, and not be subservient to any one group of people. These doctrines do not mean that church members can do or believe whatever they want, and rationalize that their decisions are all acceptable to God. Rather, the opposite is true. E. Y. Mullins, chair of the committee which drafted the 1925 *Baptist Faith & Message*, wrote that Christians are to share "Christ's passion for holy living and His abiding fellowship with God; and that the freedom from the law which Christ secures for us is not a freedom to break the law, but by the new spiritual power implanted in us, a freedom to obey it."

3. The statement on scripture deletes the final sentence from the 1963 version of the *Baptist Faith & Message*, which provided that "the criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ." Only through Christ as the final authority, however, can any one person or congregation begin to adequately interpret and understand God's Word.
4. The new statement on "the church" imposes upon local congregations a particular view of the Bible. Specifically, it denotes that the scriptural offices of pastor and deacon are to exclude women—stating that "while both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by scripture." Many devout Baptists, however, including many within our own congregation, believe the scriptures reveal that men and women may equally serve as leaders in the church, and only local congregations have the scriptural authority to make such decisions.
5. The revised *Baptist Faith & Message* includes an article on "the family" that was added in 1998 to the 1963 *Baptist Faith & Message*. This article denotes a particular way of interpreting the scriptural teaching for wives to submit to the authority of their husbands. Again, however, many Baptists, including many members of our congregation, believe that the true biblical admonition is one of mutual submission, which emphasizes the importance and responsibility of both the wife and husband. That while husbands do have a responsibility to help model values and standards in order to allow the whole family to be influenced by God, one spouse is not designated to serve as a director over the other, nor is the wife to be the only submissive partner in a marriage.

These observations and concerns of the Denominational Relations Committee were published in our church newsletter, shared with the Deacons, and subsequently discussed by our congregation in an open forum held on May 20, 2001. Based upon the feelings and opinions shared during that forum, a clear consensus exists within our congregation, in agreement with the above five points.

Over the years, St. Matthews Baptist Church has attempted to provide its own clear and measured responses to various points of change or controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention. In keeping with that tradition, we hereby, respectfully, express our disagreement with the 2000 revisions to the 1963 *Baptist Faith & Message*.

At the same time, we wish to acknowledge and embrace the many doctrinal issues and core elements of the Christian faith regarding which we are in full agreement with the vast majority of SBC congregations. We also wish to emphasize our dedication to the greater common denominator existing among all like-minded Baptists—that being a dynamic and living faith, dedicated to the ultimate mission of winning souls for Christ.

The above letter was adopted by St. Matthews Baptist Church at a regular business meeting on June 10, 2001, and signed by the following members:

D. Leslie Hollon, Pastor
Eldred Taylor, Chair of the Denominational Relations Committee
Verlin Kruschwitz, Pastor Emeritus
Doug Cotton, Chair of the Deacon Council
Mildred Render, Church Clerk

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Speaker: Christians mirror society with money

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—When it comes to money, Christians mirror the world's problems with debt and marriages strained by financial disputes, according to a stewardship consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Harold Price, the leader of a Super Saturday workshop titled "Jesus on Money," cited several statistics from Christian financial adviser Larry Burkett to show how Americans struggle with fiscal management:

- Money is the leading cause of conflict in marriage.

- Americans spend an average of \$1.20 for every \$1 of take-home pay.

- One in three Christians say debt will keep them from ever getting ahead in life.

- At one-half of one percent, current savings is at its lowest rate in history.

The church as a whole has the same ratio of people struggling with debt as those outside the church, said Price, who counsels couples and individuals regarding finances.

"What that means is they haven't applied biblical principles to their lives," he said. "A lot of times people will sabotage their situation and fall back into old ruts."

"It's like people with a drinking problem; in times of weakness they will have a drink. It's the same thing with credit cards."

Price, minister of education at First Baptist Church of Shelbyville, reviewed "Jesus on Money." This three-book series is co-authored by Burkett.

Although each six-part lesson series includes daily homework, one of the most beneficial aspects is a weekly group meeting, Price said.

In groups, people struggling with

debt can learn what worked for another person and find encouragement to continue, he explained.

Usually, Price said, those who succeed realistically review their financial situation and then acknowledge it is possible to overcome debt by changing old habits.

He said another key to financial health is recognizing that people are merely stewards of God's provision, not owners.

"A lot of people who consider themselves outstanding Christians don't connect their financial situation with their Christianity," Price said. "I know people who tithe on everything they make, and then charge stuff they can't afford. And then they don't see that the two conflict."

In marriage, couples must be in agreement to overcome debt, he added. Both husband and wife must agree to follow certain guidelines even if they don't agree with them at first.

Price said he's seen husbands sabotage debt reduction plans by maintaining that because they earn most of the money they have the right to say how it's spent.

Other times a wife's insecurity is the primary problem, causing her to spend money on clothes, makeup and other items as a psychological crutch, he added.

Churches that offer "Jesus on Money" will discover young adults are the most interested in the course, he said.

He attributes that to "Generation Xers" being more interested in family closeness than making money, which in turn creates a need to spend resources more wisely.



MAGIC CARPET Church leaders participate in a team exercise, trying to get from one side of a carpet to the other, during a conference on high performing ministry teams.

Consultant: Powerful ministry teams share 6 characteristics

Continued from page 1

leader can best coordinate each member's role is to spend time getting to know each person, Smith added.

- Accepted leadership.** Team members who don't accept the leader won't follow him or her to exceptional levels of performance, Smith said.

All teams are volunteer organizations, he added. Even if they are paid for their tasks, they must volunteer to commit to peak performance, he said.

Excellent team leaders believe in the power of diversity; believe that leadership is a role, not a position; and see leadership and power as something to be released and shared, not something to be held and controlled, Smith said.

"The team empowers the leader ... when the leader serves the team," he said.

- Effective processes.** Excellent teams have two processes: times when they work together, and times when they think together, Smith said.

"We don't spend enough time in ministry teams really thinking together."

Smith, a former employee of the Coca-Cola Co., said his teams used to tap the collective IQ of its members. Those team meetings included "get crazy mode," when members brought a variety of ideas to the table, and "get real mode" when members analyzed, consolidated and weeded those ideas into a shared sense of direction.

Mastering the team process involves identifying the task, designing the process, reviewing the performance and constantly implementing improvements to the process, he said. "High performing ministry teams fix or get rid of processes."

- Solid relationships.** Calling relationships the "climate of cooperation," Smith said solid relationships require that team members trust each other's character and competence.

"When people lose trust in each other, they don't have relationships," he said.

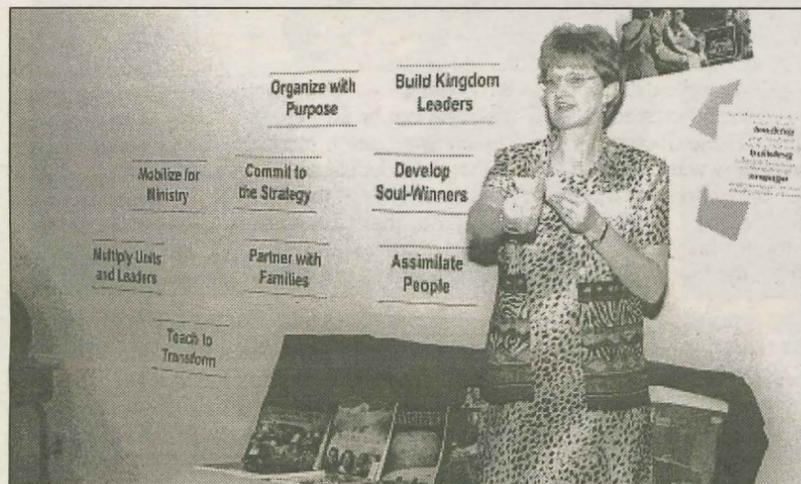
Other qualities of solid relationships are respect, acceptance, understanding, sincerity, mutual accountability and love, he added.

- Excellent communication.** Smith noted that everyone listens with his or her own set of filters based on expectations, past experiences and personality. Therefore it's important that people constantly clarify what's being said.

Excellent communication is clear, open and honest, timely and accurate, he said.

Smith noted a study that found words convey only 6 percent of a person's meaning. Body language expresses 46 percent of meaning, and voice tone conveys 48 percent, he said.

"We are always communicating something whether we are talking or not," he added. "The old adage, 'Actions speak louder than words,' is still true."



REACHING OTHERS Belinda Jolley, a consultant for LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, leads a Super Saturday conference on creative ways to reach adults. Super Saturday, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention, will be held Aug. 18 in Lexington, Aug. 25 in Corbin and Owensboro, and Sept. 8 in Ashland and Paducah. For more information, call Cheryl Davis at (502) 254-4780 or (888) 254-5710.

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Kentucky Baptist

All-State Jr. High Choir & Orchestra

2001

Plans are underway for the 2001 Kentucky Baptist All-State Junior High Choir. This year, 65 students from many different Kentucky Baptist churches will meet in **London at Corinth Baptist Church, November 9-11.** Our guest conductor will be **Randy Holt, Minister of Music at Lone Oak Baptist Church, Paducah.**

The choir is open to students in grades 7-9 who are active in a Kentucky Baptist Church. Each student must prepare an audition tape and send it to the Church Music office by **Friday, September 14.** Audition instructions and forms are available by calling the Church Music Department toll-free at (888) 254-5707 or in Louisville at (502) 245-4101

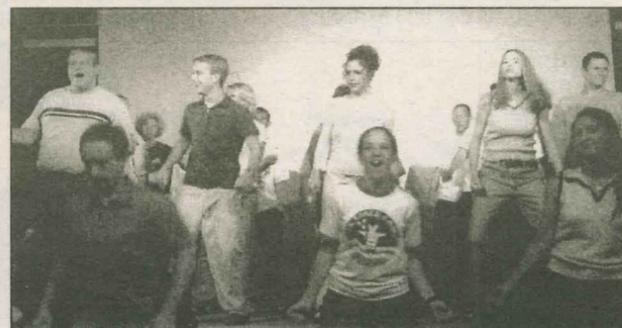
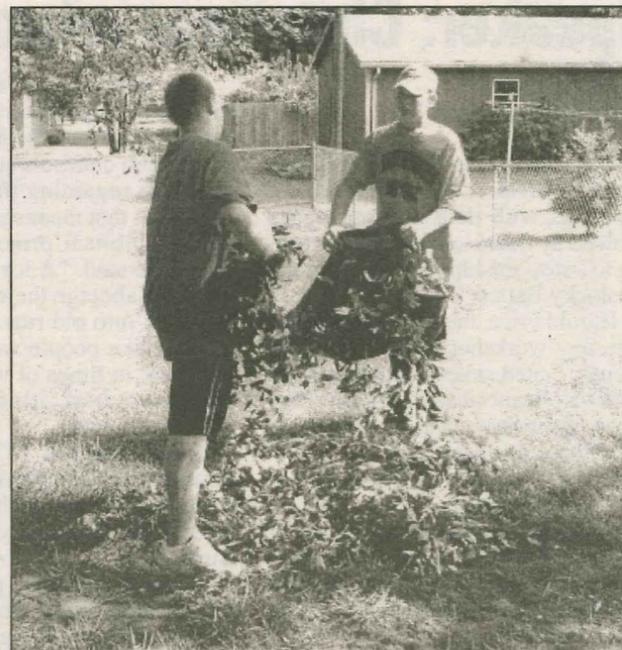
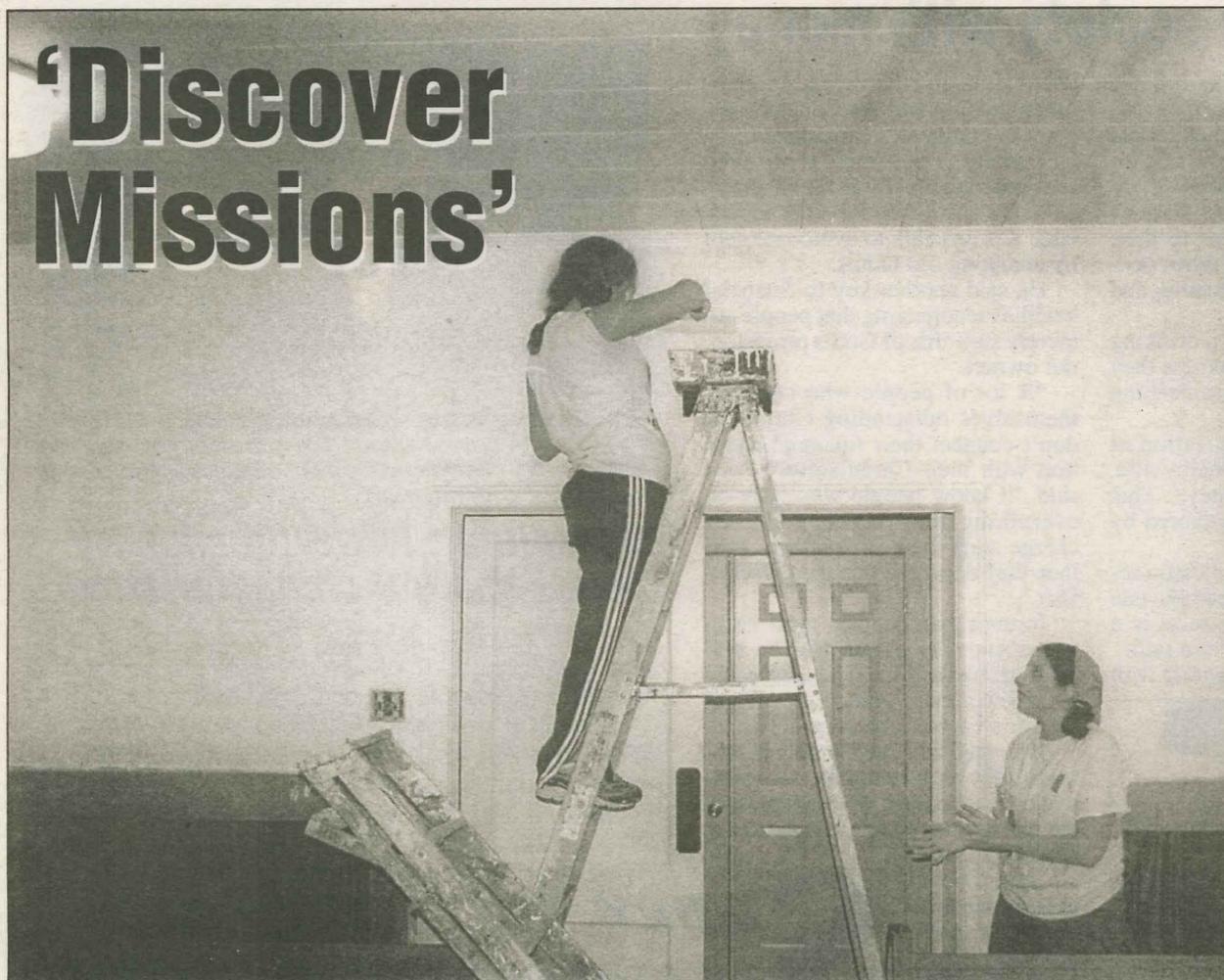
We are attempting to encourage young singers to be involved in church music and improve their skills as well as strengthen their relationship to the Lord. The cost for All-State Junior High Choir is \$110 per student. This fee includes meals, hotel housing and choir shirt.

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'Discover Missions'



SUMMER CAMP The recent "Discover Missions" camp at Cedarmore combined ministry with the usual Christian summer camp experiences of worship and fellowship. ■ **Above left:** Campers paint the walls of a building in Shelbyville. ■ **Top right:** Chase Holleman (left) and Josh Jeffries bag limbs at a work site in Shelbyville. ■ **Above right:** SonTeam camp staff dance during an evening activity. ■ **Below:** The youth group from First Twelve Mile Baptist Church in California, Ky., enjoys fellowship before a group Bible study. (Photos by Christopher Hedglin)

Teenagers combine summer camp with ministry at Cedarmore

By Christopher Hedglin
Special to the Western Recorder

CEDARMORE—On a 90-degree August afternoon, smiling Kentucky teenagers rake leaves and pick up branches at an elderly woman's home.

Does this seem like a likely scenario in your neighborhood?

Most youth might not think of this as an ideal summer day, but 186 campers at the Kentucky Baptist Convention's "Discover Missions" camp chose to spend a recent week improving the community and ministering to local residents.

"It's hard," said camper Andrew Rhorer of Lexington, "but I did it for one reason—to serve and to help other people."

The "Discover Missions" camp is the final experience in a series of eight "Discovery Youth Week" programs organized by the creative ministries department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The first seven camps provided youth with a traditional church camp experience that included a full day of Bible study, games and worship. However, this final camp is unique due to the special emphasis placed on doing work in the community.

The campers worked on several projects in and around Cedarmore including cleaning yards for local elderly citizens, visiting nursing homes and painting and repairing buildings in the area.

"Overall, the campers come knowing that it is a discover missions week, knowing that they have to work," said Tom Smoot, director of the KBC's creative ministries



department.

Camper Josh Jeffries of Louisville seemed up to the challenge of the physical week.

"It wasn't hard at all," said Jeffries as he raked leaves in a Shelbyville yard. "I thought it was kind of fun scraping and painting."

The improvements that the campers made did not go unnoticed in the community. One passerby in Frankfort likened riding by a camper work site to being in the "Twilight Zone" because the house looked so much better in the span of 24 hours.

Smoot said the mission camp, which is now in its third year, came about because some youth ministers felt that they were forced to choose between taking their kids to a summer camp or on a mission experience.

In order to integrate aspects of a more traditional summer camp into the week, the camp allows free time during the late

afternoon at the Cedarmore facility. During this time, campers can swim, organize a softball game, shoot baskets or play nine holes on the camp's disc golf course.

After dinner, the campers' evening routine includes a "special features" session when the camp staff performs skits and leads songs. This is followed by a campwide worship, and then group Bible studies.

Smoot is quick to point out the efforts of his staff are crucial to the success of the week.

The 23-person staff is composed of Baptist Student Union summer missionaries. The camp is an important part of their summer-long job of spreading the gospel throughout the commonwealth. This group was selected from more than 100 college students who auditioned to be part of the program's five creative missions teams, known as Son Teams.

"From 9 o'clock in the morning until

about 10:15 at night, that Son Team staff is in some way or another directly involved with young people," Smoot said.

Smoot believes that the work in the community as well as the dedication of the Son Team staff has had a definite spiritual effect on the campers.

"This is undoubtedly the best summer we have had in a long time as far as commitments made," Smoot said.

Camp pastors, who lead the evening worship services, also have been an important part of the summer program. Smoot said these pastors had a direct effect on the spiritual focus of each camp week.

"Every camp pastor that we've had understands where they (the campers) are, what their needs are, and spoke to them on their level," he said.

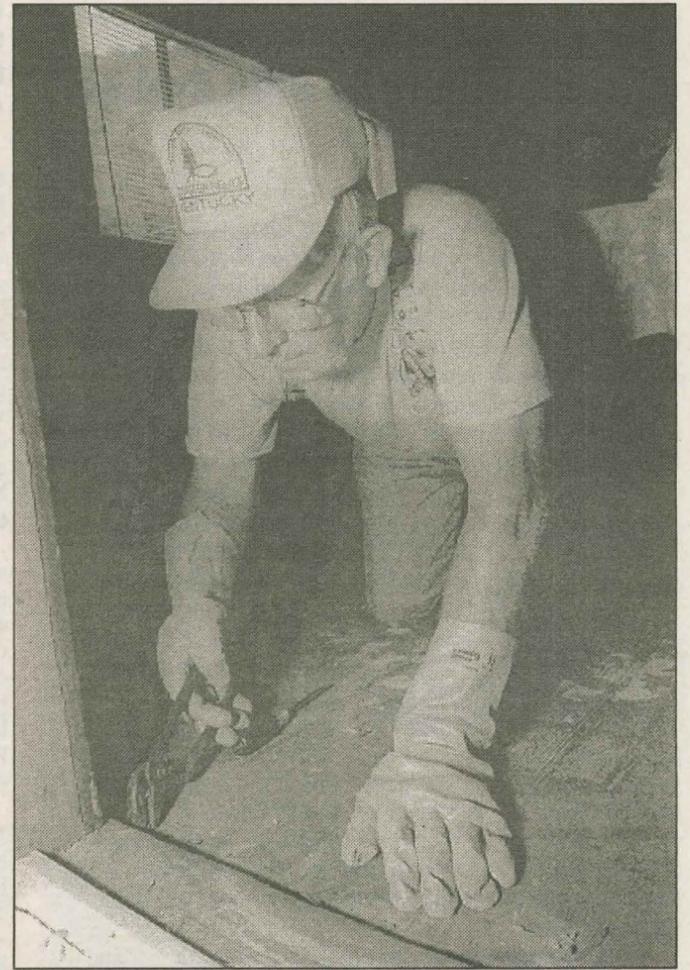
This summer, the eight weeks of Cedarmore camps resulted in 429 spiritual decisions by campers. Of those, 84 people made first-time professions of faith in Jesus as their personal Savior; 234 people rededicated their lives to Jesus; and 111 people made other decisions.

Wyndee Holbrook, BSU campus minister at Berea College, spent a recent week helping the Son Team staff. She said this week would influence campers long after they leave Cedarmore.

"They're taking with them the sweat of the gospel because they are putting hands and feet to the message, so it's our prayer that when they go home they become doers of the Word."

Christopher Hedglin, a summer intern for Associated Baptist Press, recently spent a week working at the Western Recorder.

MINISTRY



Kentucky Baptists help flood victims cope with loss

Continued from page 1

officials have told her an unseen enemy—mold—will force her to tear out the wall to remove any insulation that was soaked by the rising tide.

"I had everything looking so pretty, and it's gone," she said with a nervous laugh.

Kentucky Baptist Convention disaster relief volunteer O.A. Collins has seen this over and over again. Tearing out wet, white insulation from behind a wall, it's hard to imagine that the material has to be discarded.

But within a day, mold turns insulation black. Leaving it in the walls—or refusing to throw away a soaked couch—will pose serious health problems, said Collins, a member of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland.

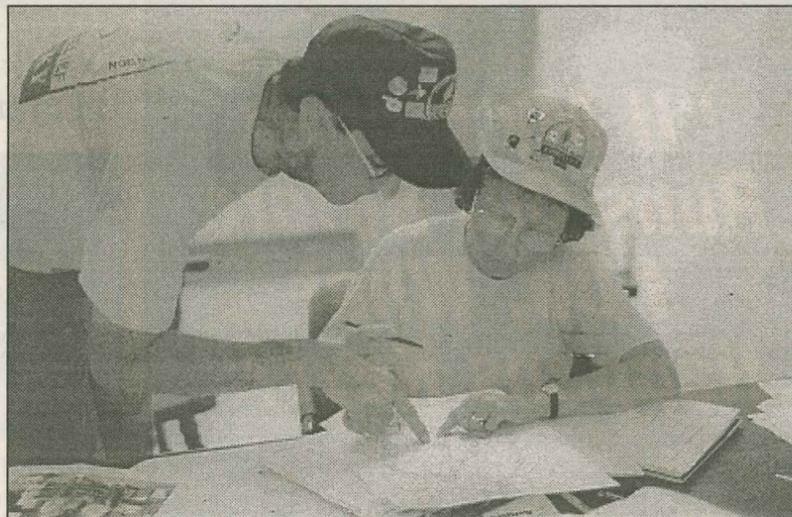
Harold Moore's voice quivers when he talks about the losses he's seen as a coordinator for the KBC workers.

"The hardest thing we have to do is to tell people that they have to tear out as much of their home that they do," said Moore. He estimated that a third of the families they serve in Eastern Kentucky will have lost all their belongings. "Sometimes, this job gets to you. It really does."

Volunteers must maintain their own spiritual health while working at disasters in order to be able to adequately serve others, according to Mickey Caison, national coordinator for Southern Baptist disaster relief at the North American Mission Board.

"The unique thing about the mud-out ministry is that you spend hours or days with families," he said.

As opposed to feeding, when volunteers must keep the food line moving, workers have a chance to develop a close bond with families touched by disaster when cleaning out a house,



Caison said. "It opens the door for us to give a verbal witness to Christ and His love."

Thirty-five state Baptist conventions have organized disaster relief units, with approximately 21,000 trained volunteers.

Many of the 300 mobile units in-

volve equipment and crews for feeding or cleanup. But some teams also provide such services as child care, communication, water purification and clean showers.

Last year, workers responded to 79 natural disasters, including disasters in Turkey and Venezuela. Workers

served approximately 300,000 meals last year, but that was far fewer than the 1.6 million meals served in 1999 when hundreds of volunteers responded to Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina.

In Kentucky, there are approximately 2,400 trained volunteers who staff three feeding units and four cleanup units.

"Kentucky's one of our old stand-bys. We depend heavily upon them," Caison said. "Kentucky took the lead in establishing the mud-out units."

Volunteer Earl Leach Sr. said he first learned about disaster relief work from a Western Recorder article about volunteers needed in North Carolina after Floyd.

"I haven't missed a job since," said Earl, a member of New Hope Baptist Church in Winchester. "I love the Lord and I love people. When I asked Him (God) about it before I started, I knew before I got off my knees that was what I was supposed to do."

Volunteers could be in Eastern Kentucky at least two more weeks if enough workers are available, according to volunteer Wanda Klein.

Gov. Paul Patton has asked President Bush to declare Floyd, Knott, Letcher, Perry and Pike counties federal disaster areas, freeing them up to receive federal assistance.

The heavy rains, dumping approximately 4 1/2 inches in four hours, damaged at least \$11.5 million worth of roads, bridges and public buildings, according to the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management. At least another \$1.5 million worth of personal property also was destroyed, state emergency management officials said.

Kentucky Baptists had more than 100 requests for clean-up assistance as of Aug. 10.

FLOOD & RESPONSE

Gov. Paul Patton has asked that Floyd, Knott, Letcher, Perry and Pike counties be declared federal disaster areas after flash flooding Aug. 3-4.

■ **Above left:** Mud-covered debris litters the road beside a stream that swelled during the flood. ■ **Above right:** Earl Leach, a Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteer from New Hope Baptist Church in Winchester, removes tacks from the floor of a home where workers just removed carpet. "I can work as good now as I could when I was 69," said Leach, 70.

■ **Middle:** A Floyd County house sits in the middle of a mud pit. ■ **Bottom:** Bernard Randall, a member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Monticello, and job coordinator Wanda Klein look up the address of a resident who asked for help. (Photos by David Winfrey.)

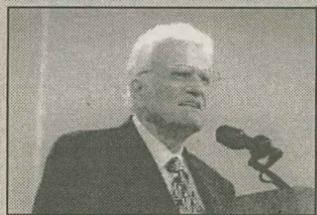
Companies joining forces for musical tribute to Billy Graham

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

REDONDO BEACH, Calif. (RNS)—Evangelist Billy Graham has been applauded by audiences, lauded in books and honored with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Now, three California companies are joining forces to pay tribute to him in a musical manner: through a song, a Web site and, potentially, a concert and television special.

ThankYouBillyGraham.com was unveiled in late July, with online tributes to the man who has evangelized the world for half a century. Celebrities such as rock musician Bono and



BILLY GRAHAM A tribute project includes a song, Web site and possible concert and TV special.

country singer Reba McEntire are featured on the site, calling Graham "part poet, part preacher" and a "great inspiration."

"We thought by using these various celebrities and celebrating his ministry in a song, it'd reach a new generation," said David Pack, founder and chairman of

Mpowered Ideas, a year-old "pop spiritual media company" in Redondo Beach, Calif., that is trying to bridge the Christian and mainstream pop culture markets.

The idea began with singer Pat Boone, a longtime friend of Graham's, who thought of writing a song to honor the evangelist. Boone co-wrote the song "Thank You Billy Graham" with Pack, former lead singer of the rock group Ambrosia, and country music performer Billy Dean, who sings the single chronicling Graham's life.

Performers involved in the CD project include a range of Christian and mainstream artists, including dc Talk, Take 6, Kenny Rogers and Michael McDonald.

The Web site includes quotes about Graham from world leaders over the decades—from the late Martin Luther King Jr. to former President George H.W. Bush. Pack hopes additional accolades will be added by visitors to the site.

Lauren Hunter, public relations manager for Starwire Corp., the Hayward, Calif., company that designed the Web site, said the online location is a way for people across the globe to pay tribute to Graham.

Snippets of the song and a related video can be played by computer users who visit the site. The project will feature singing stars such as Rogers, Bono and Faith Hill either performing the song or giving testimonials about Graham's effect on their lives.

Pack, who served as musical director for former President Clinton's largest inaugural balls, expects the single and the video to be released this fall by House of Blues Records, a Hollywood-based subsidiary of the House of Blues entertainment company.

Proceeds from the sales will be donated to two Christian ministries, Samaritan's Purse, which is run by Franklin Graham, the elder evangelist's son, and Mercy Corps, which focuses on relief and development efforts.

If plans continue to take shape, the project may include a full-length CD and a concert and television special.

"The idea here is to focus on his ministry," said Pack. "That's the only way he would want it 'cause he's such a humble person."

Larry Ross, Graham's spokesman, said the evangelist was not directly involved in the project but his ministry has provided footage for the video. Graham, who suffers from Parkinson's disease as well as a buildup of fluid on his brain, is continuing therapy in preparation for a crusade scheduled Oct. 11-14 in Fresno, Calif.

Pack declined to say how much the project is costing. "It's a serious amount of money because we believe Billy Graham, if anybody, is worth it," he said. "He's worth whatever it takes to do it the right way."

Stem-cell decision draws mixed reactions

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

CRAWFORD, Texas (ABP)—Christian leaders gave President Bush a mixed reaction to his decision to allow federal funding of medical research using existing stem-cell lines.

In a decision he reportedly has struggled over for months, Bush refused to use taxpayer funds for development of new stem cells for research from about 100,000 frozen embryos that exist in U.S. fertility clinics.

Scientists say stem-cell research offers promise for breakthrough treatment of debilitating illnesses including diabetes, neurological diseases and spinal-cord injuries. Many pro-life Christians, however, say human life is sacred even in its earliest stages and shouldn't be used for research.

Focus on the Family founder James Dobson, an opponent of embryonic stem-cell research, gave Bush's middle-ground decision "generally a thumbs up."

"We were pleased by the fact that he—he may not have said it directly, but he implied that life begins at

conception. That's a good thing." Dobson said on CNN's Larry King Live. "And although we grieve the loss of the babies that were sacrificed for the cells that now exist, they are now gone, and these cells are there. And I think we can live with that."

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said he was "deeply disappointed" with the decision. "I fear that this first halting step in the direction of embryonic stem-cell research will build pressure to cross the important moral barrier barring the killing of more embryos to obtain their stem cells."



Bush

Despite that, Land commended the president "for a reflective, thoughtful speech" to "champion the humanity of human embryos."

Bishop Joseph Fiorenza, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, harshly criticized the president's actions.

"The trade-off he has announced is morally unacceptable: The federal government, for the first time in history, will support research that relies on the destruction of some defenseless human beings for possible benefit to others," Fiorenza said in a

statement.

Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said on CNN's "Larry King Live" he is relieved that tax dollars will not be used for direct destruction of embryos but concerned that more will be destroyed in the private sector as a result of Bush's decision.

Mohler said it is "fundamentally wrong to use human embryos" for research, but appreciated Bush's declaring embryo tissue as human life.

A moderate Baptist ethicist said Bush engaged in "moral zigzag" that avoided major ethical issues.

"He correctly raised the two fundamental issues," said Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville. "First, are frozen embryos human life? And second, if they are, should they be used for the greater good?"

From there, Parham said, Bush "used the word ethics or its derivatives nine times and made 15 other religious references. But he failed to make a compelling ethical case or give clear, personal answers."

Parham said the president's "short-term solution leaves the nation more time to chew on the moral aspects of this issue."

With additional reporting by Religion News Service

Judge forbids Christian Coalition employee retaliation

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The Christian Coalition has been ordered to stop retaliating against four black employees who filed a racial discrimination lawsuit against the organization.

In issuing the preliminary injunction against the coalition, U.S. District Judge Ricardo Urbina concluded that the employees have a convincing case that coalition leader Roberta Combs subjected them to "unlawful retaliation" after they joined six other black employees in a \$621 million lawsuit filed in February.

The employees said they are not allowed to work later than 12:30 p.m.

each day, and that the bulk of their duties have been given to a private contractor and other coalition employees who are paid to work overtime.

Urbina rejected Combs' contention that the employees' workload reduction was not linked to the lawsuit they filed, and ordered the coalition to schedule standard eight-hour workdays for the employees.

"The plaintiffs are likely to persuade the jury that there is a causal connection between the filing of their complaint and the adverse action," Urbina declared, according to the Washington Times.

In their discrimination lawsuit

against the coalition, the four employees and six others claimed, among other things, that they were not given the same health benefits as white employees, not allowed to use the same building entrance or kitchen break room as white employees, and excluded from office parties and coalition events that were open to white employees.

The coalition's attorney said he plans to file an appeal. In a statement, the Coalition's Michael Rothberg insisted "the reduced work hours of the plaintiffs arose not because of retaliation but because of a substantial decline in the volume of mail for them to process."

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Religious investment scams on the rise, regulators warn

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Investment frauds that take advantage of people's faith are on the rise, state security regulators warned at a press conference last week.

Three large cases alone combined for losses of nearly \$1.5 billion, the North American Securities Administrators Association told reporters at the National Press Club in Washington.

"I've been a securities regulator for 20 years, and I've seen more money stolen in the name of God than in any other way," said Deborah Bortner, director of securities for Washington state and president of the association, according to a press release on the group's Web site.

In all, regulators identified 75 such cases affecting more than 90,000 victims and costing investors \$1.8 billion in lost funds.

That is up sharply from a previous study of the five years before 1989, when 15,000 investors nationwide lost \$450 million in religious scams.

In comparison, the Baptist Foundation of Arizona by itself took in more than \$590 million from 13,000 investors before being shut down by state officials in August 1999.

An agency of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, the Foundation began managing church building funds and some retirement accounts, investing much of the money in Arizona real estate. When property values fell sharply in the late 1980s, officers of the Foundation allegedly refused to admit losses, covering them up with paper transactions through a network of 120 shell corporations. They then aggressively solicited new investors, court documents charge, using their money to pay earlier investors, setting up an illegal Ponzi scheme.

Investors, meanwhile, were promised a high rate of return, assured their money was safe and led to believe it was being used to advance Baptist causes.

Bortner said investors shouldn't let their guard down merely because someone appeals to their faith. "Be as skeptical and as careful when you invest with someone who shares your faith as you would with anyone else."

The press conference followed by one day the sentencing of Greater Ministries International founder Gerald Payne in federal district court in Tampa, Fla. Convicted of fraud and conspiracy, Payne was sentenced to 27 years in prison. His wife, Betty,

What to look for

WASHINGTON—During a press conference on religious-based financial scams, state regulators urged investors to ask the following questions before making any investment:

■ *Are the seller and investment licensed and registered in your state?* If not, they might be operating illegally. Call the state securities regulator to find out.

■ *Has the seller given you written information fully explaining the investment?* Documentation should be clear and accurate enough to allow you or a financial adviser to evaluate and verify the particulars.

■ *Are claims made for the investment realistic?* Some offers are too good to be true. Pie-in-the-sky promises often signal fraud. Use common sense and get professional, third-party advice when offered unusually high returns in comparison with other investment options.

■ *Does this investment meet your personal investment goals?* Whether you are investing for long-term growth, investment income or other reasons, any investment should be consistent with those goals.

For more information, visit the North American Securities Administration's Web site, www.nasaa.org.

was sentenced to 13 years.

Greater Ministries allegedly took in nearly \$580 million between 1993 and 1999, promising investors that the church would double their money through divinely inspired investments in the foreign-currency market and gold, silver and diamond mines in Africa and the Caribbean.

In another case, the IRM Corporation allegedly raised \$400 million in at least five states selling bogus promissory notes and limited partnerships before being shut down by Michigan officials in May 1999.

Securities officials said con artists who use religion to promote their scams often predict an imminent financial or social crisis, claim they will reinvest a portion of profits in a worthy cause and equate faith in their organization with faith in God.

"Cloaking an investment with religion can give it a false aura of safety," said Brad Skolnik, an Indiana securities commissioner. "It's one thing to tithe or give an offering so that your money is used for good works. It's another thing if you're led to believe you'll get a monetary return."

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NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Senator wants God in oaths.** On Aug. 2, Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., lashed out at Judiciary Chairman Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., for not including the words "So help me God" at the end of the oath taken by nominees appearing before the committee. Leahy said he simply reads the oath—to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth"—from a card and will include the reference to God if the committee desires it. Sessions said the committee failed to include the phrase in several recent hearings and that he is considering the possibility of including "So help me God" in the Senate rules to make it a permanent fixture of hearings.

■ **Brethren donations down 20 percent.** Leaders of the Church of the Brethren are "seriously concerned and disappointed" that revenue dropped 20 percent in the 141,000-member denomination. As of July 31, giving to the church's General Ministries Fund stood at \$1.9 million, down from \$2.5 million during the same period last year. The fund covers most activities for the church, which is one of three churches—along with the Mennonites and the Amish—with roots in the Anabaptist tradition of 18th century Switzerland and Germany.

■ **Campus Crusade reaps most e-donations.** Campus Crusade for Christ International received more online donations last year than any other group surveyed by The Chronicle of Philanthropy. The Orlando, Fla.-based evangelical Christian organization raised \$2.5

million in gifts over the Internet, the journal reported. In 1999, it raised \$750,000 online. Ministry officials credited the growth in Internet gifts to increased awareness of its site for online giving and to donors growing more comfortable with making transactions over the Internet. The Chronicle found online donations totaled less than 1 percent of all money raised by 181 groups studied.

■ **Judge: AA is private religious talk.** Ruling that the conversations are a form of confidential religious communication, a federal judge has overturned the manslaughter conviction of a man who talked about his memories of the crime with other members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The remarks made by Paul Cox—convicted of two 1988 stabbing deaths—should be accorded "a privilege granted to other religions similarly situated," U.S. District Judge Charles Brieant ruled July 31. District Attorney Jeanine Pirro—who said Cox reportedly talked about the crime outside of, not during, AA meetings—said she planned to appeal.

■ **Religious solicitation protected.** A federal judge has concluded that a city statute that would have slapped money solicitors at the Los Angeles International Airport with a \$1,000 fine is a violation of free speech rights guaranteed by the state constitution. The Society of Krishna Consciousness and the Committee for Human Rights in Iran, both of whom use the airport to ask for

donations, had launched a legal challenge to the ordinance when it was approved in 1997. U.S. District Judge Consuelo Marshall stated that neither group obstructed access to ticket counters, arrival and departure gates or baggage claim areas.

■ **Presbyterian battle brewing.** A simmering battle between conservative members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the church's leadership has erupted into a full-blown war of words after conservatives called the recent General Assembly meeting "apostate" for its positions on salvation and gay clergy. The Presbyterian Lay Committee said the church had "abandoned its religious tradition and the moral principles that emanate from it" in an editorial in the July edition of its newspaper, The Presbyterian Layman. When church leaders read the editorial, they shot back, accusing the Lay Committee of violating "the spirit of our ordination vows."

■ **N.C. Senate: Graham a 'favorite son.'** Billy Graham has been designated a "favorite son of North Carolina" by a state Senate resolution approved last week. Graham, 82, is the first living state resident to receive the honor, which his daughter, Anne Graham Lotz, accepted on his behalf. The Senate resolution, which next moves to the state House, praises Graham as a man "admired and beloved by both Christians and non-Christians," and urges the governor to establish a "Billy Graham Day" next year.

Poll finds differing opinions on abortion and homosexuality

VENTURA, Calif. (RNS)—Christians and non-Christians remain divided in their opinions about abortion and homosexuality, a Barna Research Group survey shows.

Researchers found that 23 percent of born-again Christians think abortion should be legal in all or most circumstances while 69 percent of people of non-Christian faiths said the procedure should be legal all or most of the time.

When asked if homosexual relations between consenting adults should be legal or illegal, 48 percent of adults said they should be legal and 42 percent said they should not be legal. Forty-five percent said homosexuality should be considered an acceptable lifestyle, 46 percent said it should not and 9 percent were unsure.

Sixty-six percent of born-again Christians, 64 percent of non-mainline Protestants, 44 percent of mainline Protestants and 38 percent of Catholics consider homosexuality to be an unacceptable lifestyle. Twenty-seven percent of people of non-Christian faiths and 20 percent of atheists shared that viewpoint.

In general, researchers found that people ages 35 and younger were far more likely to approve of abortion in all or most circumstances and believe that homosexual relations should be legal.

The telephone survey of 1,003 adults in May has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Camp's over; the impact isn't

Only a few days ago, I was driving across the Jonathan Creek bridge. I was listening to a song called "Press On" that is the title track on an album by Selah. The time was precisely 4:30 p.m. It was Thursday, Aug. 2. Crossings at the Creek was almost over. Only the evening worship and Friday's closing celebration remained.

Those of you who know me understand that I am a very emotional person. As I drove across the bridge with the realization that another summer of youth camp was about over, I was somewhat overcome when that sense blended together with the lyrics to "Press On." We had been blessed with another fantastic, safe summer in which God moved in remarkable ways.

The lyrics rang out: "In Jesus' name, we press on..."

And that's what we had done. And God worked all summer long. We witnessed youth make a couple of hundred decisions for Christ. We saw God move to heal hurting youth. We saw God move to work in the lives of the adults who were there with the students. We even saw families restored through the power of God working in that camp setting. So even in the midst of the

weariness from the long, hot summer of camping, on that day I drove across the bridge, my heart was filled with thanksgiving to God for allowing me, once again, to be a part of such an incredible ministry.

To be sure, the same things occurred all summer long at Cedar-moore, but I spent the summer at Jonathan Creek so I experienced God's working firsthand there.

Yes, youth camp is over again, but the impact of what God did in the lives of the students will continue. These students will impact their high school campuses. These students will impact their own homes. Some of these students truly believe they can be instruments of God to make a difference in the

world. They can be. They will be.

So the summer of 2001 is over. It was all I hoped it would be and then some. So with all this considered, "In Jesus name, we press on..."

And that's what we will do. To reach this young generation. 'Til we have nothing left to give, I pray.

Bring on next summer. I'll be ready to go again.

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

Bright stars

What is your favorite Baptist cause? I like to ask my fellow Kentucky Baptists that question everywhere I go. I have discovered over and over that most of us have more than one. It may be a combination of our children's homes, a college and international missions. Or, it may be a combination of one's church, Kentucky WMU, a scholarship fund and one or more of our Christian education institutions.

I recently read where an anonymous philanthropist in another state made a \$31.8 million gift to a public university. The overriding concern of the benefactor was to use his personal wealth to enhance the lives of others. He believed education was the key, and this public university was clearly the bright star through which he felt his gift would improve his state and beyond.

This was not an outright gift; it was set up as a charitable remainder unitrust, and the donor will receive 5 percent in earnings annually for the rest of his life. The balance of the earnings will be added to the trust corpus until the donor's death. At that time the entire trust will become part of the university's permanent endowment. Based upon his age and the expected investment

returns, the trust will grow to \$200 million by the time of his death. At that time it will be producing \$10 million per year for use by the university. The impact of this gift is indescribable and beyond measure.

We Kentucky Baptists are fortunate to have a variety of bright stars through which our philanthropic giving can dramatically impact our state, our nation and our world for the cause of Christ. There are Kentucky Baptists who could make a similar kind of incredible gift for the benefit of one or more of our bright stars. What an impact such a gift would be. What an opportunity dramatically to make a difference in the world for the cause of Christ beyond your lifetime!

Who will be first to step forward with an eight- or nine-digit gift? Laurie Valentine and I prayerfully await your toll-free call to offer our assistance in facilitating your stewardship.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

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

BOOKS

Authors: Express, don't repress, feelings of anger at God

By David Briggs
Cleveland Plain Dealer

CLEVELAND — The prophet Jeremiah asks God, "Why is my pain unending?"

The faithful Job, his children dead, his body covered with boils from his feet to his head, cries out, "Pity me, pity me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has struck me."

And among His last words on the cross, Jesus is reported in the Bible to have said, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?"

A pretty impressive lineup of pillars of faith who have expressed feelings of pain toward God.

So why are so many contemporary faithful afraid to get angry at God?

It just doesn't seem natural, say Michele Novotni and Randy Petersen, authors of a new book titled "Angry With God." Getting angry at God seems almost sinful, and well-meaning people who feel the need to defend God against any criticism only make it worse for someone who would like to cry to the heavens over a diagnosis of cancer or the sudden loss of a loved one in a traffic accident.

But what is unnatural is holding one's feelings in, Novotni and Petersen say. Instead of protecting God, many people who sublimate their anger often end up with an impersonal faith. Like marriage partners afraid of any argument, people of faith unable to disclose

their feelings to God allow their relationships to drift away and wither, the authors say.

"If there is one thing you can learn from this book," they write, "it is OK to get angry at God."

Throughout the book's discussion, Novotni weaves the experience of her grandmother, a woman she names only as Helen, who gave up her faith after enduring nearly Job-like suffering in the Armenian genocide.

As a young girl, Helen watched in horror at the beginning of the genocidal period in 1915 as Turkish soldiers shot her father for refusing to renounce his faith and later burned her 8-year-old brother alive. Before she finally escaped to America, a Turkish officer took her away from her mother to become his "wife," according to the book.

"I spit on God" is the way Novotni describes her grandmother's attitude toward the tragedy she experienced. If God existed, her grandmother figured, God was her worst enemy.

But it would be this woman who at the end of her life would embrace God. At the persistent urging of her granddaughter, Helen finally just talked to God about her anger. She "forgave" God, Novotni said, and then allowed herself to accept God's forgiveness.

In the end, Novotni said, her grand-

mother said she was filled with a heavenly peace as she approached death.

Novotni said her grandmother encouraged her to write the book so others would not spend their lives apart from the presence of God.

"You tell other people my story, so maybe they won't wait so long," were the last words Novotni heard from her grandmother before the older woman slipped into a coma.

The authors' first bit of advice: Do not deny the anger.

"When we insist that it's wrong to be angry at God, we don't stop the anger—we just stuff it deeper, where it will probably do more damage," Novotni and Petersen write.

Still feel guilty getting mad at God? Look to the Bible, say the authors and some local religious observers.

Of the 150 psalms, 33 are known as imprecatory, or cursing, psalms, the authors say.

The emotional process of dealing with anger cannot be sidestepped, said Mark Olds of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church in Cleveland.

Christians need to approach one another with compassion, understanding that the pain is real and not encouraging others to deny it, he said.

"I would let them know I understand their grief. I understand their anger. I understand their pain," Olds said.

So how do you express anger to

God?

You could write a letter, the authors say. If you are stuck on what to say, use one of the cursing psalms as a model.

For example, according to the authors, Psalm 23 offers the quiet assurance that "The Lord is my shepherd," but flip back to Psalm 22 and one reads: "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? I have cried desperately for help, but still it does not come."

Then, release the anger.

Scream, shout at God, punch a pillow, get your feelings out spiritually, emotionally and physically, the authors say.

Much worse than getting angry at God, many spiritual leaders say, is losing faith because God becomes too distant or uncaring.

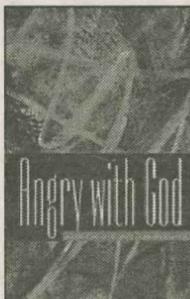
"The most important thing for people who are angry at God is to examine their faith, not to lose their faith, not to let a human emotion overtake their faith," Olds said.

Once individuals work through their anger, they can establish a relationship with God based on compassion and love, realizing that God is larger than their anger and never leaves them during the healing process, many religious leaders say.

If they keep God in their lives, Novotni said, God will meet people where they are and walk with them where they need to go next.

"The best thing about having a fight with God," Novotni and Petersen say, "is making up."

Much worse than getting angry at God, many spiritual leaders say, is losing faith because God becomes too distant or uncaring.



Ministering in Ohio

By Robert Dunston

The last of Cumberland College's eight spring mission teams spent their week ministering in Utica, Ohio.

Cumberland College campus ministry intern Matt Rosencrans led a team consisting of Paige Kolok, Brandon Moore, Nicole Stacy, JoAnn Sternerberg, Rachel Tharp and David Wilson.

The team worked with Lighthouse of Utica Church. When they arrived, the church had been meeting for only two months using a storefront facility. Four families in the church opened their homes to house the students.

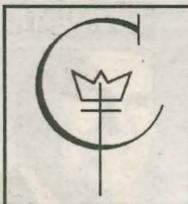
During the team's first evening in the area, the pastor and host families served them a light meal. Following the meal and fellowship, they joined together for worship. The pastor and host families laid hands on each team member praying God would bless and use them during the week for His glory. The worship time proved very moving for all of the team members.

On Monday, the team members began their week by cleaning an area of two city blocks around the church. Later in the

week they learned the businesses had noticed and appreciated their hard work. During the day's work they met a group of boys and invited them to a Friday night youth event.

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday some of the team members renovated the upstairs of the church's storefront building. Other team members visited

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



area high schools, dropping off flyers about the Friday night event and others prayer walked in the area.

The Friday youth event attracted about 30 young people. After a pizza party, the team members held a praise and worship service. The boys they had met

on Monday came, and several made decisions for Christ.

These Cumberland College students had the opportunity to plant seeds and help harvest. We rejoice with them.

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

Watch this space

It is one of the most familiar of all Hollywood scenes. The protagonist—he could be a farmer, scientist, sheriff or adventurer/archeologist—stands quietly in a seemingly safe place and then he gets that "feeling." His brow furrows, his eyes dart and we, the audience, strain to hear what he hears or see what he sees that is so suspicious, so troubling, so ominous.

Then, BAM! Whether the "bam" belongs to a tornado, avalanche, or explosion, the shoe has dropped and the story progresses, sometimes quite interestingly, as the protagonist deals with what the story line has deposited on his doorstep.

KBHC is far from Hollywood, but the scene is similar. We are grateful that part of the lawsuit

filed against us last year by the ACLU and Americans United for Separation of Church and State was dropped. This "story" continues as another part of the lawsuit progresses. Throughout this process, we will keep our mission the focus of all of our energies. We are about serving children and families in crisis, still and always. KBHC's heritage and future fit hand-in-glove with today's mission. We look to the past for inspiration and dedication, we

look to the future with the hope that we will discover new ways to reach individual children and teenagers, couples and families who need help. We want to preserve or restore families affected by physical or sexual abuse, neglect, poverty and addiction. We want to be the bridge of healing from troubled teenagers to a healthy, fulfilled future.

In the weeks and months ahead, I will be sharing important news with you about the direction that the Lord is taking us. I am very excited and optimistic about these changes. Please watch this space in the Western Recorder for these messages. If you are not on KBHC's mailing list, call (800) 456-1386. Our quarterly newsletter is free and an important conduit of information.

As you become informed about the issues that are at stake and the desires the Lord has given us all to serve children, I believe we will see great things accomplished in His name and for His purposes. I hope you will watch and pray.

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

YOUTH

Churches: 500,000 prospects from last year's vacation Bible schools

NASHVILLE (BP)—Churches gained more than a half million prospects for Southern Baptist Sunday schools as a result of last year's vacation Bible schools.

Statistics were gathered from church vacation Bible school report forms and the Annual Church Profile to LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Among the data discovered:

- Churches hosted 25,244 schools.
- Nearly 2.8 million children enrolled in Southern Baptist vacation Bible schools.
- An average of 111 youth attended each event.
- 91,477 children made professions of faith.
- Churches discovered 532,243 prospects for enrollment in Sunday school.

Vacation Bible school remains the "No. 1 avenue we have for reaching prospects for Sunday school," LifeWay consultant Becky Martin said.

The 2000 numbers are estimates based on the ratios of the total enrollment from actual school reports to the total enrollment reported on the automated church profile, Martin said.

Of the total enrollment in 2000 vacation Bible schools, about 25 percent were preschool-age children; another 25 percent were children in grades one through six; 25 percent, faculty; 14 percent, youth; and the rest in other categories.

Martin said a new reporting system will be in place for next year that will allow churches to enter their reports directly into the Southern Baptist Directory Services through the Internet.

"If churches follow up with the VBS prospects discovered and the decisions to accept Christ recorded during the event, VBS is worth every hour of work and preparation," she said. "Unreached families will be reached for the Lord. Who wouldn't want to do VBS with these kinds of results?"



Pat Hill has discovered there's no need to outgrow playing with dolls. Hill has been teaching vacation Bible school for more than 35 years, including the past 21 years at Ralph Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, where her husband, Bob, is pastor. For the past six years she has been using Barbie and Ken dolls to help present the VBS Bible story each day. She makes costumes that complement each Bible lesson and she and her husband construct the scenes. This year's scenes included Daniel in the lions' den, Joseph's reunion with his brothers, Jonathan warning David to flee, Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree and Jesus teaching a rich young man. Hill said her goal is for the doll scenes to help the children attending VBS to more easily understand the Bible stories.



53rd Mountain Missions Conference

We only had a few hours from the time summer school was over until dozens of guests began arriving for the Mountain Missions Conference.

I was only five years old when the first MMC was held on our campus in 1949, and D. Chester Sparks had just completed his first year as president of Oneida Baptist Institute. "Pa-Pa" Sparks, as we affectionately called him, was president of OBI when I enrolled as a junior.

A lot has changed on our campus since the late 1940s. Of our 17 major buildings, only one, Anderson Hall, which was built in 1911, dates back over half a century. The other 16 buildings on our campus today are less than 45 years old.

The first MMC had the support of A.B. Cash, who was the mountain missions director; W.C. Boone, the KBC executive secretary; and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The MMC was established to provide mountain pastors and their families a spiritual and physical retreat.

While we have added a lot of sleeping accommodations for our overnight guests, we still depend heavily on our dormitory housing. Baker Hall, which is undergoing major renovations, has been used for the past 19 years for the MMC. With the renovations going on, we had to resort to other housing.

Some of that additional housing came from rooms across Goose Creek on the farm side of our campus. We have been blessed with a lot of rain during the past several weeks. Goose Creek runs right through our campus and can get quite high if we have heavy rainfall. The weekend before the conference, we had just over three and one-half inches of rain in a little over 36 hours. By the time our guests arrived, the water was over

the low water bridge that spans the creek.

I had placed a van on the other side of the creek near the school's swinging bridge that our farm students use daily to get to the farm. The responses were quite varied when we told our guests they had to cross the swinging bridge to get to their rooms.

While it did take a little persuasion for some, they all agreed to test their faith on the swinging bridge. After getting across, the only question they had was, "How long will it be until we can drive across the low water bridge?" I could not tell them for sure, but I estimated that by late that evening they would be able to drive across the bridge. I can assure you, most were relieved when my predictions came true.

We were honored this year to have our OBI campus minister, Michael Spencer, teach the Bible study for the MMC. The Bible study was on Genesis 1-12. I was given the honor of introducing Bro. Spencer to the congregation. I told them they were in for a special treat, as Spencer is one of the best preachers I have ever heard.

While we did not set any attendance records this year, we had a good conference and all seemed to really enjoy themselves. In addition to the Bible study, prayer groups, preaching, crafts and other program activities, meal time is nearly everyone's favorite time. And it happens three times each day! As usual, nearly everyone filled his or her tray to capacity the first meal or two. Then several repented, remembering they were on diets and had to refrain from filling their trays to capacity.

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

Tennessee volunteers at Clear Creek

On a cold snowy day in February 1989, Jim Ramey made a campus visit with his associational director of missions, Tommy Holtzclaw, a 1975 Clear Creek graduate and former faculty member.

"As we headed out for a campus tour, the devil used the weather against me and seemed to say, 'What are you doing here?' When Tommy asked me, I didn't even know where Clear Creek was located," Jim remembers. They came to examine Holly Hill cottage No. 50. The house (and most of student housing in 1989) required major renovation after nearly a half century of service.

"Before we left that day, God worked in my life. We developed a three-week plan that brought volunteers from my home church, Sullivan Baptist, and Sullivan Association to totally renovate the cottage. It was the beginning of mission volunteer work that has grown with the blessing of God," Jim stated.

The Kingsport, Tenn., association volunteers have worked at Clear Creek 11 of the past 12 years, with the largest contingent being 52 people. This summer 44 volunteers from six churches came to campus. "Accommodations and food are

so great that people call me about our time for Clear Creek," Jim said. "First-timers recruit others. We are especially excited to work on Kelly Hall. We caught your vision for a beautiful facility with marvelous detail. It is a God-sized project and we are grateful to help Him see this through."

Jim is associational volunteer missions coordinator and has seen God expand the borders of their involvement.

"For 15 years, Tommy Holtzclaw has led us to believe Acts 1:8. We like to wait on God's leadership and He now has us at work in 17 countries, including our first medical mission to Honduras," Jim said.

Missions is a family affair for the Rameys, involving Jim; his wife, Faye; and their two sons. "I had my son Joshua planned to play football, but God had other plans," Jim stated with thanksgiving.

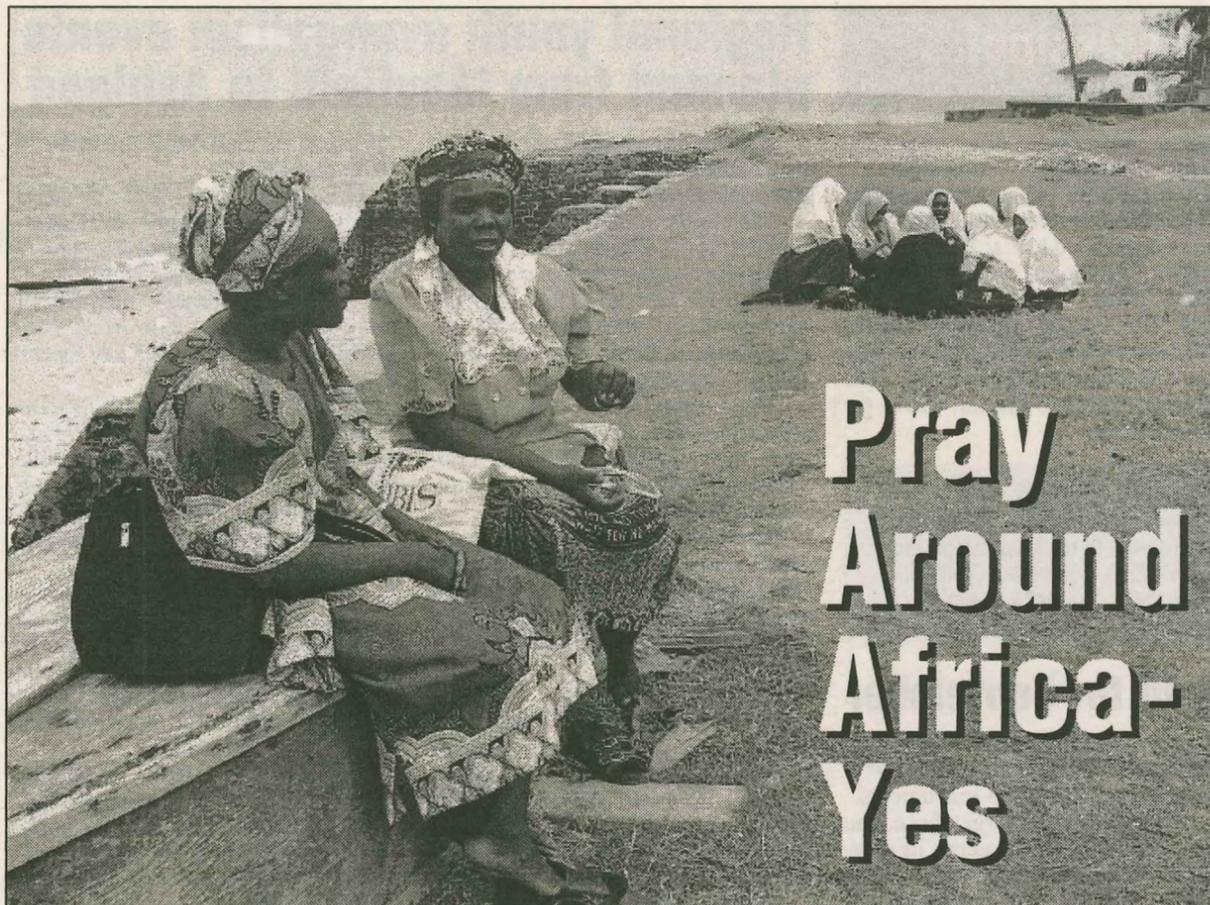
Joshua will marry this month and also begin his second year at Clear Creek. You never know how God will use a volunteer mission experience.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker



Pray Around Africa- Yes



Christians around the world intercede for continent

By Sue Sprenkle
SBC International Mission Board

ZANZIBAR, Tanzania (BP)—Three Muslim men sitting on a set of stairs smile and greet the group of women walking past.

The women are an odd-looking bunch. Three dress in traditional African clothing, complete with headties; the other five wear American-style clothes.

As they walk the narrow streets of Zanzibar's "Stone Town," the group stops randomly and whispers among themselves before continuing on.

Again the women pass by the same men—only this time, they are walking in pairs at different paces. Some stroll along leisurely, stopping to talk or look at the ornately carved doors. Others walk with soldier-like determination.

The third time past the stairs, the men ask if they are lost.

"No, we are just walking around taking in this part of town," one woman replies. "We like this area."

The men stare back in amazement. No one likes this part of town. Every storefront invites patrons in for beer and dancing. Homosexuality is hidden in the back rooms while prostitutes openly sell their bodies. Tourists don't come to this part of town—unless they are prayer walking.

The women visiting Tanzania's island of Zanzibar joined hundreds of thousands of other people across the continent and the rest of the world in praying for Africa Aug. 3. The special day set aside for prayer was celebrated through a variety of events, from prayer walking to 24-hour prayer vigils to community-wide rallies.

The executive director of the Nigerian Women's Missionary Union



joined the prayer team in Zanzibar. Every time Yemi Ladokun thought of people praying for her beloved continent, tears came to her eyes.

"Thank you, Lord, for bringing different nations together to pray," she prayed. "The whole Christian world is lifting up prayer and focusing on Africa. This prayer effort is making a difference already simply by bringing so many people together for one common cause—to turn Africa to You."

The women walking through Stone Town had an international flair. The team came from Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Virginia, Ohio and Florida. They spent four days on the island, praying with a unique approach. They sectioned off the island and circled each section seven times in prayer. The first six laps were spent praying for God's victory. The final trek thanked God for the victory He would accomplish.

The idea for a special day of prayer came after Southern Baptist missionaries in West Africa gathered around a map of Africa to pray.

As the group prayed for their continent, the needs seemed overwhelming. Africa needed more prayer support, they decided.

"2001 Pray 'Round Africa—Yes" coordinators Anita Hunt and Sharon Pumpelly started working on logistics for the special event more than two years ago.

"Once you write down the needs of Africa, there's nothing to do but pray," Pumpelly said. "The situation is so much bigger than any of us. Human response to all of the famines, disasters and persecution will not save people's lives. God is the only One Who can."

The event was designed to unite as many people praying in each country of Africa as possible and even more support around the world. More than a thousand volunteers from the United States as well as Africa and Europe responded to the call of praying onsite. Other Great Commission churches represented in Africa joined in promoting the special day of prayer, too, making it an event that transcended denominational lines.

All around the world, people stopped to pray. Among them:

■ In Ghana, two summer missionaries rode their bicycles to small villages, praying. People in one village are now attending local church services after seeing these young men bicycle to their village to greet them and pray.

■ Christians from the Tennessee State Prison for Women joined in prayer. They prayed 24 hours, one hour each on their knees in their individual cells.

■ Churches in the United States partnered with churches in Mombasa, Kenya. Through e-mail, the churches from the two continents connected and voiced prayer concerns.

■ Silverdale Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tenn., hosted a citywide event, reaching across denominational lines. Prayer clusters met in individual homes to intercede for Africa.

■ West African Baptist leaders left their homes to travel throughout Africa to pray. Leaders went to Zimbabwe, countries in North Africa, Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania to pray.

■ The Xtreme Team, made up of college students, was organized just for the 2001-PRAY event. They backpacked into Marensé villages in Burkina Faso to pray. Christians elsewhere originally thought that no Marensé churches existed, but the team found a small church in one village.

As prayer was lifted up throughout the world, the small group of women in Zanzibar stood at the eastern-most point of Africa and faced west. They prayed for the continent, country by country.

"I realize that we are not going to change Zanzibar or any other place because we prayed," Pumpelly said. "I think what is going to happen is that all of us will be changed because we prayed."

HEART OF CONCERN

Thousands of people around the world participated in Pray Around Africa—Yes, Aug. 3. The event attracted Christians to the continent to ask for God to help missions work there. Others prayed for Africa in their own land.

■ Above left: Two African Christians pause near a group of Muslim women to pray. ■ Above right: After drawing an outline of Africa in the sand, Southern Baptist missionary Sharon Pumpelly kneels to ask God to bless the continent and its people. ■ Inset: Doris Kanu of Sierra Leone prays at the coast. (BP photos by Sue Sprenkle)

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:

■ Missionary Keven Barnes who works among the Zaramo peoples of Tanzania, shares this praise, "While serving alongside 10 volunteers from Kentucky (in June), we witnessed God move mightily in the hearts and lives of many in (the village of Yombo). With God's help, in full partnership with the local community, we successfully completed the restoration work on the local government primary school. People are now saying that the hearts of Baptists are as shining white and pure as the walls of their new-looking school."

■ Jeffrey and Wibke Rees, new pastor and wife of International Baptist Church in Hamburg, Germany.

■ Deacon Dale Krebs and his wife, Melanie, who are leading Fellowship Baptist Church in Mannheim/Weinheim, Germany, until the church calls a pastor.

■ Rafael Hernandez, newly elected associational missionary for Southeastern New England Baptist Association which includes Rhode Island and eastern Connecticut.

■ Church planter Hikaru Adachi in Peabody, Mass., as he seeks people to form a core group for Bible study and performers for a coffee house ministry.

■ Continued opportunities for a newly formed praise band in Czestochowa, Poland. The Christian band recently performed in a local secondary school.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ CALVERT CITY—First Church will celebrate its 125th anniversary Sept. 9. **Jim McKinley**, president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, will speak at the 10:45 a.m. service. A fellowship meal will follow. **Jerome Browne** is interim pastor.

■ HENDERSON—Cash Creek Church will hold homecoming services Aug. 26. Services begin at 11 a.m. followed by a potluck lunch and entertainment.

■ LOUISVILLE—Beechmont Church will host "One Accord" in an outdoor musical service Aug. 26 at 6:30 p.m. For information, call (502) 368-5806.

Deer Park Church called **David Platt** as pastor. He previously was pastor of First Baptist Church of Sudbury, Mass., and church development director for the

Baptist Convention of New England and Greater Boston Baptist Association.

■ SOMERSET—First Church called **Todd Meadows** as youth minister. He currently is a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

■ SPOTTSVILLE—Spottsville Church will dedicate its new church facility Sept. 9 at 1:30 p.m. **Steve Thompson**, KBC associate executive director, will be the guest speaker.

What's going on?

Send your happenings to Mountains to the Mississippi. Mail: Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. Fax: (502) 244-6474. E-mail: wesrec@ntr.net.

Keyboard retreat planned for September

LEXINGTON—Church pianists, organists and electronic keyboard players will be the focus of a two-day conference sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"Magnify and Glorify" will be the theme of the Keyboard Ministers Retreat Sept. 28-29 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

The retreat offers an opportunity for church keyboardists to interact with experts in the field. Guest artists include Don Phillips, a composer, pianist and arranger from Franklin; Albin Whitworth, music professor at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore; Jerry Johnson, organist at Central Baptist Church in Paris; and Joy Carden, educational consultant for the

Yamaha Corp. Participants also will participate in hands-on activities with organ, piano and MIDI instruments.

"We specifically target those who play keyboard instruments in worship," said Nina Belle Durr, KBC keyboard consultant. "This retreat will allow people to learn or review knowledge in keyboard skills necessary to be an effective worship leader, and a time to reflect in understanding the ministry that we provide to our congregations."

Registration is \$25 per day or \$45 for both days and includes all sessions, meals and materials. The registration deadline is Sept. 19.

For details and online registration visit www.kybaptist.org.

Regional youth evangelism events planned from Mayfield to Ashland

A series of regional youth evangelism conferences will begin this week and continue through November.

The events, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's youth evangelism department, are a new strategy for helping churches reach their youth and other teens for Christ, according to Randy Record, KBC youth evangelism strategist.

"Back when we were doing one statewide event, attendance averaged less than 3,000," Record said. "Through the regional events we expect more than 10,000 total."

Earlier this year in Bowling Green, 1,023 youth attended "Sozo" at Hillvue Heights Church. At the two-day event in April, 23 youth made first-time professions of faith in Jesus as their personal Savior.

Events scheduled are:

■ **Firm Foundation**, Aug. 17 at the Graves County High School Events Center in Mayfield. Speakers include Dawson McAllister. Jeff Deyo, former lead singer for Sonic Flood, will lead worship. For more information, call (270) 251-3446.

■ **Sozo**, Sept. 15 at the Western Kentucky Convention Center in Hopkinsville. In addition to worship with Centrifuge pastor Tom Richter and the Hope Community Church Band from Lawrenceburg, students will participate in local ministry projects. For more information, call Bill Houpt at (270) 886-6017.

■ **Impact**, Sept. 15 at Fairview Baptist Church in Ashland. Mark Helton and Coy Bacon will speak. Eternal Praise will lead worship. For more

information, call Phil Huffman at (606) 324-0669.

■ **Power Surge**, Sept. 20-22 at South Junior High School in Henderson. Centrifuge pastor Rob Turner will be the speaker, and Daniel and Bonnie Hoover will lead worship. For more information, call Andy McDonald at (270) 826-4952 or Glenn Riggs at (270) 826-9522.

■ **Power Surge**, Sept. 21-22 at the Frankfort Civic Center. David Nasser will be the worship speaker, and the Hope Community Church Band from Lawrenceburg will provide music. For more information, call Rick Long at (502) 695-2088.

■ **Rez**, Sept. 28-29 at Berea Baptist Church. Kevin Slemph will be the evangelist, and Billy Wayne will lead worship. Other participants will be the Darins and creative ministries artist Tommy Toombs. For more information, call (859) 986-9391.

■ **Quest**, Nov. 16-17 at Rollins Center at Cumberland College. Clayton King will be the speaker, and the event will include a concert by Caedmons Call. Registration for this event, which includes admission to the concert, costs \$12 per person before Nov. 2. For more information, call Rick Fleenor at (800) 343-1609.

Most of the events are free to students, but churches are asked to give a love offering. Youth ministers also are asked to register in advance. Registration is available online at www.kybaptist.org/yec.htm.

For more information, call (502) 244-6465 or toll-free in Kentucky (888) 254-5714.

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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: Three affordable brick ranches (Highview, St. Matthews, Jeffersontown); eligible for special funding programs: Flex 97 and American DREAM Home programs; zero down with good credit. Call Chuck, (502) 421-8987 or (800) 218-6747. Remax at the Lake.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth to assume leadership in established program. (270) 563-4011. Send resumes to: Oakland Baptist Church, PO Box 154, Oakland, KY 42159.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/resources for First Baptist, Frankfort. Must be an authentic Baptist supportive of CBF, KBF and KBC. Experienced, and masters degree in church music preferred. Please send resume to: Don Hines, chair, FBC, 201 St. Clair, Frankfort, KY 40601. All resumes must be received by Sept. 7.

SEEKING: Three part-time directors: children, youth, singles; 20-25 hours per week. Resumes to: Personnel Committee, Severns Valley Baptist Church, PO Box 130, Elizabethtown, KY 42702-0130.

SEEKING: Lucas Grove Baptist Church in Upton, Ky., is accepting resumes for pastor. Located in a rural area; averaging 60+ in Sunday worship; parsonage available. Candidates should send resumes to: Lucas Grove Baptist Church, PO Box 146, Upton, KY 42784.

SEEKING: Part-time minister to children, birth-5th grade. Approximately 20 hours/week. Advanced/seminary degree preferred or equivalent experience. All ages welcome to apply. Send resume to: Eileen Bartlett, Crescent Hill Baptist Church, 2800 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206.

SEEKING: Bayless Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking conservative full-time pastor. We're located in South County, St. Louis, Mo. Send resume to: Robert McManus, 9635 Radio Drive, St. Louis, MO 63123.

SEEKING: Full-time minister to youth and young adults to lead a dynamic program that helps our young people love and learn more about God. M.Div and/or ordination preferred. Founded in 1893, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., is a moderate, CBF-affiliated, "thinking, feeling and healing community of faith" with 400 active members. Visit us at www.hbclouky.org. Send resume and references to: Minister to Youth Search Committee, Highland Baptist Church, 1101 Cherokee Road, Louisville, KY 40204.

SEEKING: Minister of music/worship. CBF-affiliated 1,100-member congregation seeks individual called to music ministry for full-time position. Respond: First Baptist Church, Box 938, Lumberton, NC 28358. E-mail: office1@carolina.net.

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

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music (20-25 hours per week). Responsibilities include: Assisting in worship planning and leadership; planning a music program for all age groups; and training music leaders. Should be comfortable in a moderate congregation with a traditional/blended style of worship. Send resume to:

Music Search Committee, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Road, Louisville, KY 40222. (502) 425-7150. Dr. Jim Holladay, pastor.

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

TOUR: Hawaii next February. Adults from your church are invited to join the Young at Heart group from Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington on a 12-day tour of Hawaii. This professionally escorted tour includes all the major sights of the islands. Total cost of \$2,735 each includes round-trip air from Lexington or Louisville, sightseeing on each island, several meals and shows, and an unforgettable fun time with a group of Christians. Single or double occupancy available. For information or a brochure, call (859) 277-7391 or 278-7155.

TOUR: Charleston and Savannah. The Young at Heart group from Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington has several spaces available on a 6-day motorcoach tour departing Lexington Oct. 15. The cost for the tour is \$595 and includes transportation, hotels, several meals and admission to all sightseeing events. To make a reservation or for information, call (859) 277-7391 or 278-7155.

Most Protestant U.S. Air Force chaplains claim discrimination

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force is pledging to address discrimination in the military service's chaplain corps after a survey found that many chaplains experienced racial, gender or religious bias.

The "climate assessment study" found that 97 percent of African-American chaplains sensed or directly experienced racial discrimination. Ninety-one percent said they believed a "good-old-boy system" existed in the chaplain service that contributed to assignments and promotion possibilities.

Eighty percent of female chaplains reported sensing or directly experiencing gender discrimination. Eighty-seven percent said they agreed or strongly agreed that a "good-old-boy system" existed in the chaplain service.

Researchers concluded that 58 percent of Protestant chaplains sensed or directly experienced religious discrimination and 53 percent believed a "good-old-boy system" existed. Twenty-nine percent of all chaplains said they sensed or directly experienced religious discrimination by their leaders and 22 percent said they sensed or directly experienced such bias from their peers.

The study said evangelical Protestants "appear to continue to lag behind" mainline Protestants in promotion to senior ranks and significant leadership assignments.

Gen. Michael Ryan, the Air Force's chief of staff, said in a July 30 memo that he was concerned about the survey results and planned action to address them.

"There is no place in our Air Force for discrimination, preferential treatment or unfairness of any kind," he said. "Each of us has the obligation to address perceived injustice when it arises."

The assessment also said there were "a significant number" of references to reverse discrimination, in which chaplains perceive that Catholic, female and African-American chaplains get preferential treatment even when they seem to lack necessary skills for certain assignments.

Ryan ordered the assessment after an investigation into an alleged racist statement by the then-deputy chief of the chaplain service revealed perceptions of racial discrimination.

The Air Force determined that the complaint against Maj. Gen. Lorraine Potter was "unsubstantiated" and she became the first woman chief of chaplains in the U.S. military in April.

Some movies sanitized for family video

By Shelvia Dancy
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—If only. The words roll from the lips of dissatisfied movie-goers far too often for Dick Rolfe's taste.

"How many times have you heard someone leaving a movie say, 'That would be a great family film if only there wasn't so much violence,' or 'If only there wasn't so much sex it would have been a great movie?'" asked Rolfe, president of the Dove Foundation, a Christian nonprofit media watchdog. "We're trying to get rid of the 'if only.'"

In some cases, he already has.

Courtesy of a partnership between Rolfe's Michigan-based organization and New Line Cinema, four major studio movies have hit the video rental market in versions scrubbed free of profanity, violence and sex.

"There's a huge audience segment that is turned off by entertainment right now, so we're offering edited titles that the people can get for themselves," Rolfe said. "This is the first time the general public has been able to do that."

The first edited videos—"Lost in Space," "The Bachelor," "Blast from the Past" and "The Mask"—hit shelves in April in Target, Wal-Mart and Kmart stores, Rolfe said.

For years studios were lukewarm about re-issuing sanitized movies for the video rental market, Rolfe said, even though edited films routinely are aired on airline flights and TV networks.

"Now that the video industry has competition like DVDs, pay-per-view and satellites, studios are more interested in finding ways to keep earning as much revenue as possible," Rolfe said. "This is certainly one way to do that."

Mindful of disclosure agreements with the studio, Rolfe would say only that the first release ("The Mask") "did very well considering the little promotion put behind it."

"I would say that the evidence of the success is that (New Line Cinema) has come back to ask us to consider endorsing more titles," he said.

By the time edited titles wend their way from the studio to the family room VCR, the usual suspects have been left on the cutting room floor—"gratuitous violence, immorality and profanity," Rolfe said.

But "we're as interested in the context as we are in the content," he added.

"In some of these movies there are some mild, implied portrayals of immorality but these portrayals are neither glorified nor promoted nor condoned—there are appropriate consequences for the behavior," he said.

Some critics complain that the edited movies strangle artistic integrity, but Rolfe said that argument is "a pretty shallow protest."

"NBC paid \$30 million for the rights to show the movie 'Titanic' on television, and no one complained at all knowing full well that the television network would remove the nude scene and the other scene showing fornication in the car," Rolfe said. "It

seems to me that creative integrity is easily compromised in Hollywood if the dollars are there."

The sanitized movies arrive as Hollywood begins its own retreat from the screen fare whose heavy sprinklings of violence, profanity and sex earned the wrath of politicians and the Federal Trade Commission.

In a report released a year ago, the commission charged the movie, video game and music industries with routinely targeting R-rated material at children as young as 8 years old.

"That report blew the whistle on Hollywood, and now Hollywood has been forced to tone down its material somewhat," Rolfe said. "They can't get away with that sort of stuff anymore."

Nor will they want to if consumers start "putting their money where their values are," said Rolfe, advocating a national "buy-cott" of "family-friendly" entertainment.

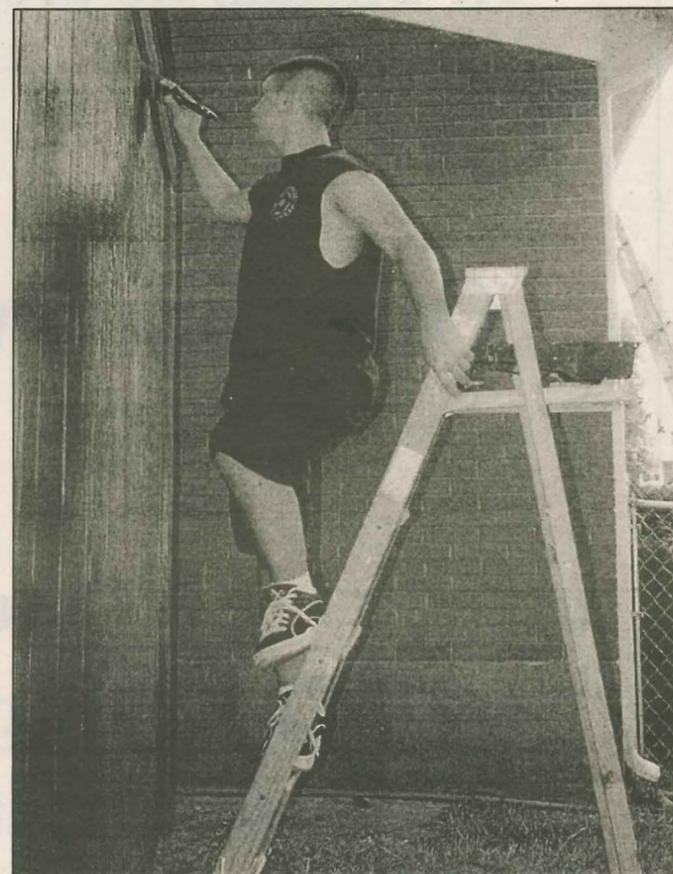
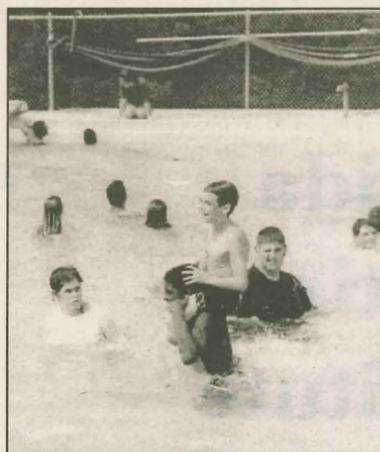
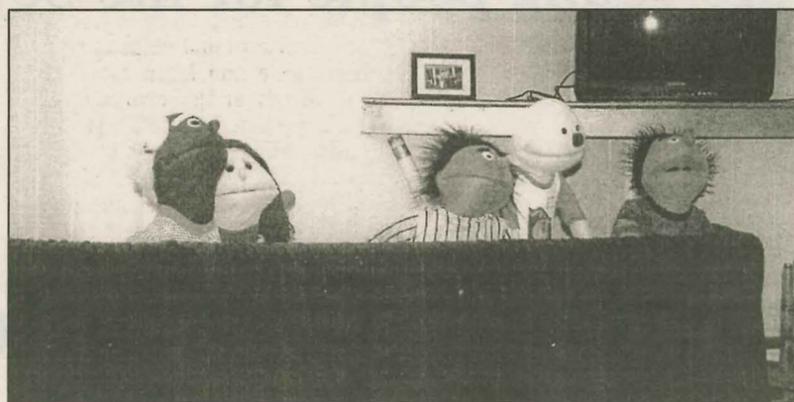
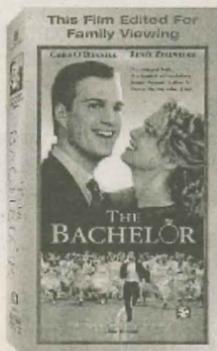
"Buy-cotts" send a clear message that studios can understand when they look at their balance sheets," Rolfe said. "The power of the purse is greater than the power of the pen when it comes to commercial entertainment. When consumers begin to exercise that power they will be amazed at how quickly Hollywood will respond."

An industry-wide change of heart may be slow in coming, but "we have to start by getting Hollywood pointed in the right direction," Rolfe said.

"Hollywood is constantly checking the bottom line to see what sells, so if the money trail is heading in one direction, then that's the direction Hollywood will follow," he said. "We just want to encourage them to move in this family-friendly direction."

"It seems to me that creative integrity is easily compromised in Hollywood if the dollars are there"

Dick Rolfe, president of the Dove Foundation, a Christian nonprofit media watchdog group.



SUMMER CAMP Kentucky Baptist teenagers participate in both missions and recreation activities during summer camp at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly. ■ Top Left: Teens perform a puppet show for an assisted-living center. ■ Right: Eric Davis of Louisville paints an elderly woman's shed in Shelbyville. ■ Bottom left: A camp counselor takes advantage of the camp's disc golf course. ■ Bottom middle: Campers spend free time in the pool after morning ministry activities. See story and more photos on page 10. (Photos by Christopher Hedglin)

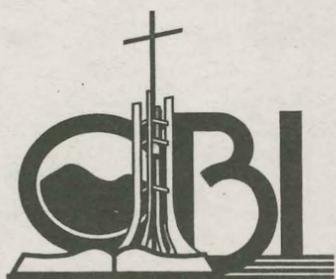
“Kids have to learn responsibility.”

--- Liz, OBI senior



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