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**ELIZA BROADUS  
OFFERING FOR  
STATE MISSIONS**

See insert

## FOR THE RECORD

**Baptists**  
Missouri Baptist College becomes the third entity to distance itself from that state's Baptist convention. *Page 2.*

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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, September 5

## Survey: Church attendance boosts youths' self-esteem

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

SAN FRANCISCO (ABP)—Eighth graders who participate in religious activities tend to have higher self-esteem than their peers, according to a national survey.

Religious involvement appears to be one of the largest factors influencing young adolescents' self-esteem, according to a study by three psychologists.

A survey asked 1,261 eighth graders to react to positive statements like "I take a positive attitude toward myself" and negative questions like "I feel I do not have much to be proud of" to measure their self-esteem.

The adolescents also were asked how involved they were in religious activities.

The study found that youth who were active in church viewed themselves more positively than other youth. Non-religious youth, meanwhile, were more likely to identify with negative assessments of themselves.

The study "revealed a statistically very significant overall effect of religious involvement on self-esteem," according to a report to the American Psychological Association.

"This finding seems to indicate that most churches teach people to have positive images of themselves, and thus positive teaching may be able to influence early adolescents' self-evaluations in a positive way," the report states.

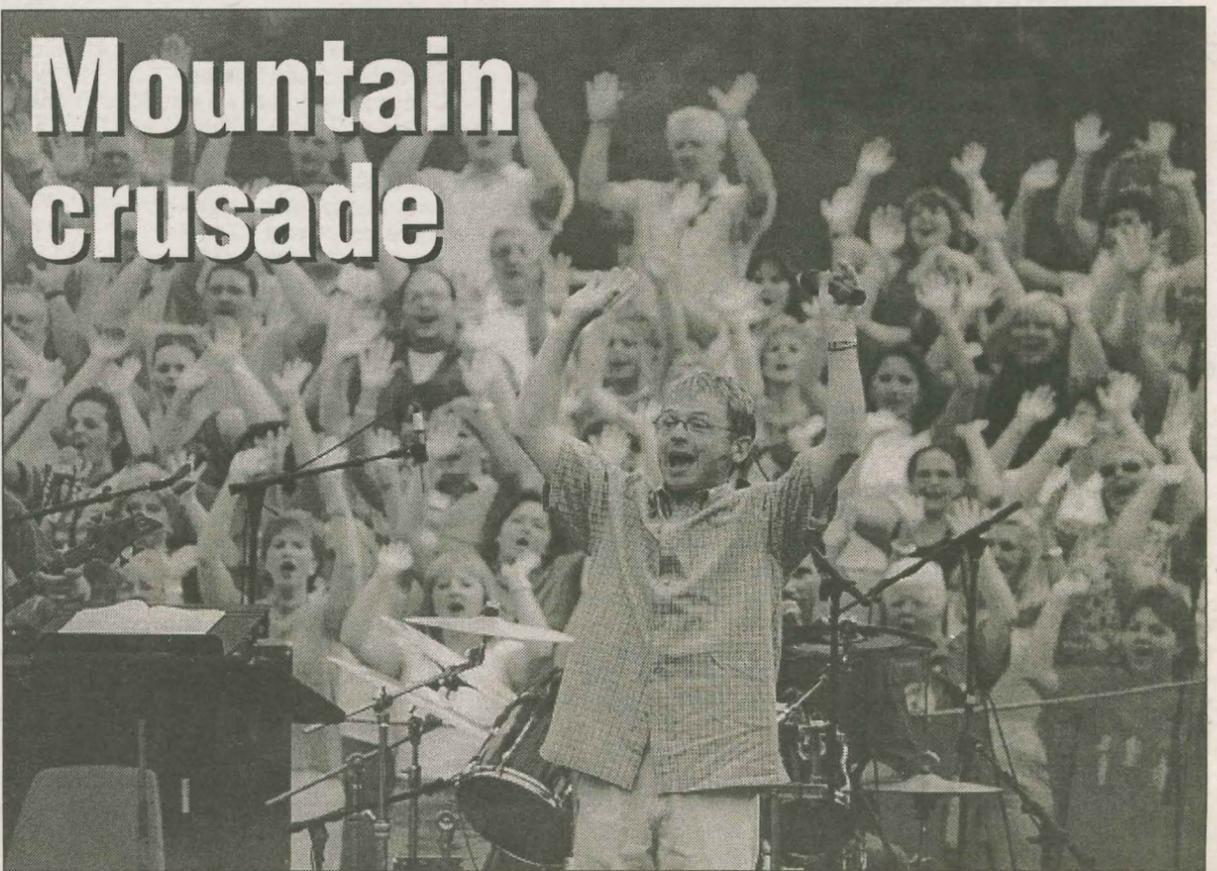
Researchers also surmised that religious activities are something that a family does together, which also might play a role in self-esteem.

"Relationship with parents is still strong in the younger adolescent's life in spite of increasing importance of peer relationships," the authors wrote. "Family influence may also have an effect on an adolescent's religious involvement, which leads to more chances to receive positive teaching."

Race and gender also influenced self-esteem, according to the study. African-American girls had the most positive opinion of themselves, while African-American boys had the lowest.

The study, conducted by psychologists Yong Dai and Rebecca Nolan of Louisiana State University and Qing Zeng of Wells College, was based on results of a 1999 survey by the University of Michigan titled, "Monitoring the Future, a Continuing Study of American Youth."

## Mountain crusade



Approximately 450 people reported making professions of faith during the "Mountain Crusade for Christ" last week in Pikeville. The four-night event, featuring Atlanta evangelist Rick Gage, attracted more than 40 churches of various denominations to work together, organizers said. In addition to preaching at the Pikeville High School stadium, Gage spoke about life choices in area schools. ■ **Above:** Music Evangelist Chuck Sullivan of Atlanta leads the audience in hand gestures to accompany a praise hymn. ■ **Right:** Gage preaches, pointing out a recent article about a young musician who admitted alcoholism.



## Investor outlines path to trust God, not money

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—An investment adviser who makes his living managing millions of dollars says that too many Christians put their faith in money instead of God.

Recalling a person who placed her wallet on a river bank before getting baptized, Mark Minnella said that act illustrates how reluctant people are to yield their finances to God.

"Few people give with joy," said Minnella, president of the National Association of Christian Financial Consultants. "We put our faith in the material world. Every (spending) decision you make is a spiritual decision."

An investment advisor from St. Louis, Minnella spoke Aug. 27 in Louisville at a promotional luncheon for the association.

The group, which now has more than 300 members nationwide, promotes incorporating biblical principles with money management and camaraderie among Christian financial planners.

Minnella said he's learned that his job is not solely to make more money for his clients.

"I realized my goal was not to create more wealth, but to get my clients peace," he said of his early years in the industry. "It's easy to make a million dollars more for someone who has 15 to 20 million (dollars), but do they sleep any better?"

But few Christians understand that money is simply a tool, he added.

Income can serve three purposes, he said: to provide for daily needs, for enjoyment and to bless others.

But many people, failing to understand money's purpose or value, struggle with extremes, he said.

For example, some people feel guilty for receiving blessings when others are hungry, in poverty or suffering, he said. But Minnella said God doesn't expect one person to feed the world, but rather help those whom God brings across his or her path.

Realistically, at the root of people's desires to save for retirement, their children's education or other purposes are heartfelt needs, Minnella said.

For many, he said, retirement sav-

ings is a desire to avoid being a burden to others, while a college fund reflects the hope of providing children better educational opportunities than the investor enjoyed.

Minnella emphasized that financial planning is an individual pursuit. People and families should tailor a financial program to their lives, not follow a set outline, he said.

Minnella outlined seven spiritually-based philosophies of good fiscal management. He said these philosophies apply to both professional investors and Christians managing their household income:

■ **Develop a desire to be a good steward of God's provision.** Along with this have a desire to achieve peace. There are numerous Bible verses commanding people to seek peace: "If you don't have that desire, nothing else matters."

■ **Awareness.** Many people don't know what they spend on groceries or credit-card bills, or where their latest pay raise went. Awareness develops better stewardship, he explained.

■ **Know yourself.** A realistic self-  
□ See *Investor: Trust God ...*, page 7

# BAPTISTS

## Third Missouri Baptist entity loosens ties

By Bill Webb  
Missouri Word & Way

ST. LOUIS (ABP)—The Missouri Baptist College board of trustees voted Aug. 23 to amend the school's charter to give final approval of trustee elections to the board itself. The decision was made on a 16-10 vote in a closed session.

The college becomes the third Missouri Baptist Convention agency to switch to a self-perpetuating board, taking the decision to elect trustees out of the hands of the state convention. The Baptist Home took similar action nearly a year ago, and the trustees of Windermere Baptist Conference Center did the same recently.

College president Alton Lacey said trustees took three other actions during the closed session. They:

- Revised the covenant statement the college already has with the state convention, changing language that deals with trustee election.

- Re-elected the nine trustees eligible for re-election this year and elected three more to fill vacant seats on the board.

- Asked Lacey "to convene a committee of the board to work with the appropriate state convention committees, expressing our desire to negotiate alternatives that would assure our continued relationship to the convention" in the wake of the

board's decision to become self-perpetuating.

"All of our trustees expressed a strong desire to continue to be a part of and work with the Missouri Baptist Convention," Lacey said after the meeting. "The only change will be in how our trustees are selected."

Prior to the meeting, Lacey gave two reasons for the college executive board's recommendations.

One is concern that the close relationship between the college and state convention could make both liable should either be sued. "The only way to limit this ascending or descending liability is to make these changes in the trustee selection process," he wrote in a letter to the Missouri Baptist Word & Way.

The second is uncertainty about political activity in the state convention. Some fear the climate could affect the college's ability to "continue to serve all Missouri Baptists and remain responsive to the convention's wishes that the college be sound academically, fully accredited and aware of the need to place Christian emphasis at the center of educational life."

After winning presidential elections three years in a row, conservatives gained control last year of the state convention nominating committee.

Now, they are moving to fill those

boards with members sympathetic to conservative causes. In the process they are bypassing current trustees who traditionally would be offered a second term and tightening qualifications for all nominees.

After the called meeting, board chairman Randy Fullerton said the executive committee "became concerned when the (state convention) nominating committee came out with their guidelines."

In July, the nominating committee declined to re-nominate at least 24 people eligible for second terms on convention boards and agencies. That followed an earlier announcement that the committee would impose additional criteria to those stated in convention bylaws. They included requiring that all nominees be "personally supportive of both the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention."

Lacey said the closeness of the trustees' vote indicates the college has a "very balanced" board.

He said the board had discussed the possibility that the college could lose \$950,000 annually in funding through the state convention's Cooperative Program budget.

If that happens, the college will have to go directly to the churches to make up the loss, he said. "We desire the Cooperative Program method, though."

## Alaska Baptists affirm revised faith statement

SOLDOTNA, Alaska (BP)—Messengers to the Alaska Baptist Convention's 2001 annual meeting approved a resolution endorsing the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message and affirming the convention's relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The proposal, presented by the state convention's resolutions committee, was approved without opposition. The Aug. 7-8 meeting attracted 133 messengers.

The resolution noted that the Baptist Faith and Message has been "an integral part of the fiber and theological life of Alaska Baptists (and) is accepted and used by the SBC and our partner entities such as the North American Mission Board, LifeWay Christian Resources and others."

The statement affirmed the state convention's relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention as "historic, God-led and productive in the cause of reaching Alaska and the

world for Jesus Christ." It added that Alaska Baptists "endorse the Baptist Faith and Message 2000," and expressed appreciation to the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message committee which "worked diligently, carefully and prayerfully."

The resolution encouraged "every autonomous Alaska Baptist congregation to study the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 and incorporate it into its life and organization as the congregation sees fit."

## Atlanta church faces ouster over stance on gays

ATLANTA (ABP)—The executive committee of Atlanta Baptist Association has asked Oakhurst Baptist Church of Decatur, Ga., to reverse its welcoming-and-affirming stance toward homosexuals or leave the association.

Oakhurst is one of two churches in the association to survive earlier ouster votes for including known homosexuals in all areas of church life.

The other church, Virginia-Highland Baptist Church in Atlanta, voted May 20 to withdraw from the association.

Meeting Aug. 26, the executive committee voted 44-20 to ask Oakhurst to comply with the association's bylaws or withdraw voluntarily. That includes a recently added bylaw banning churches that "affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior." If the church doesn't leave the association by Oct. 31, it will be dismissed.

The executive committee defeated a motion by Robert Walker, pastor of Peachtree Baptist Church, to postpone the action.

A staff member at Oakhurst said the church desired to remain a part of the association but hasn't yet met to consider a response to the most recent vote.

"We were saddened by the decision and hoped we would be able to work together," said Melanie Vaughan-West, interim minister at the church.

The executive committee vote reverses decisions at two associational meetings earlier this year. In January, the association voted 253-164 in favor of keeping the two churches in membership. The action said the association did not "support or condone homosexual activity," but respected the autonomy of the local church.

In March the association approved a new bylaw against full inclusion of gays, but a subsequent vote to expel the two churches didn't receive a required two-thirds vote.

Joel Harrison, director of missions, said the association's finances have suffered since the votes sustaining the two churches. He said income from the association's churches is down \$140,000 this year.

After the January vote, the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and Georgia Baptist Convention both announced plans to defund the Atlanta Association.

Fifteen churches formed an alternative Atlanta-area Baptist association in protest of the vote sustaining the churches.

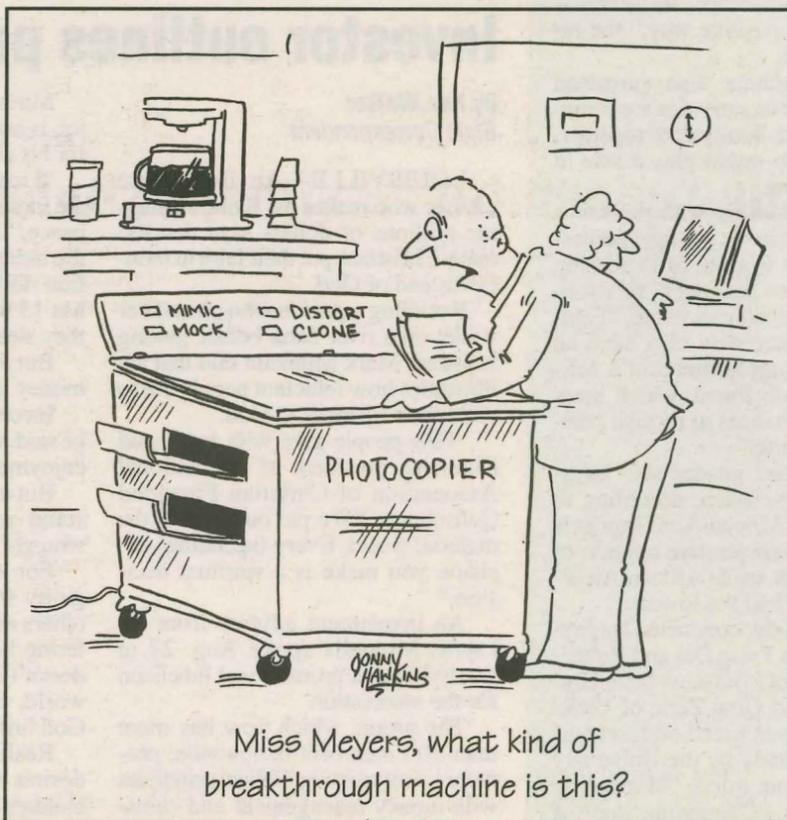
Another 27 churches were said to be waiting on the sidelines to see how the association dealt with the bylaw issue before deciding whether to defect.

### BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Annuity Board launches investment plan.** The Southern Baptist Annuity Board launched its AB Funds Trust mutual funds Aug. 27. The new service will allow Annuity Board participants and other eligible investors to open IRAs and personal investment accounts through a registered broker working in cooperation with the Annuity Board.

■ **Glitches hit LifeWayonline.** LifeWayonline, the filtered Internet service offered by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, continues to experience technical difficulties in its transition to a new service provider. LifeWay officials signed an agreement in July with IntegrityOnline. Glitches by one of the company's service providers, along with billing errors from the former vendor, left some customers without service and others dealing with billing disputes. A LifeWay spokesman said the agency is "working day by day, customer by customer to address remaining problems."

■ **Mississippi CBF names coordinator.** The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Mississippi has hired its first full-time coordinator. Steve Street, co-pastor of Rivercrest Baptist Fellowship in Jackson, Miss., for the past eight years, takes the post effective Sept. 1. Street, 40, will succeed Bradley Pope who plans to retire after serving as part-time coordinator the past four years.



## Pikeville crusade heralded for decisions, cooperation

By David Winfrey  
News Director

PIKEVILLE—More than 1,100 people reported making spiritual decisions during the "Mountain Crusade for Christ" last week in Pikeville.

Organizers are heralding the four-night event as a model of what can happen when more than 40 churches of various denominations cooperate on a common goal to impact their town.

"It's having a profound effect on the whole community," said Paul Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville. "The Lord's just doing something right now."

Of the spiritual decisions recorded, approximately 450 were by people making first-time professions of faith in Jesus as their personal Savior. Approximately 650 were rededications, organizers said.

Atlanta evangelist Rick Gage said he was impressed by the four-night attendance of approximately 10,000 as well as the decisions.

"It became very obvious to our team that this area is very hungry for God," he said. "And the response and the turnout has been tremendous."

Gage and crusade chairman Billy Joe Justice said the crusade could have been extended, but that would have conflicted with a football game at the crusade's venue, Pikeville High School's stadium.

In addition to the nightly services, Gage spoke in local schools throughout the county, delivering a non-religious, motivational address.

"It's a 30-minute address that deals with drug abuse, alcohol abuse, teen suicide, premarital sex, gang violence, just all the hot buttons that are prevalent among teenagers today," he said. "It really grabs the minds of these kids and causes them to evaluate the direction of their lives."

The son of evangelist Freddie Gage, Rick Gage was an assistant college football coach in Texas five years before he felt led to become an evangelist in 1986.

On Sunday night, Gage invited teenagers to the front of the audience before starting his sermon. He asked students if they knew someone who was involved in drugs or alcohol, and



**PIKEVILLE CRUSADE** The Mountain Crusade for Christ had an estimated four-night attendance of 10,000 people, according to organizers. ■ Above: Rick Gage leads people who responded to the invitation in prayer. Approximately 1,100 people made spiritual decisions. ■ Above right: The event was held at the Pikeville High School Stadium except for one night when rain forced the crowd inside. (Photos by David Winfrey)

many of the students raised their hands.

"You know what that tells me, moms and dads?" he asked. "The church has a lot of work to do."

Preaching from Matthew 17, Gage noted that Jesus compared following Him to entering a narrow gate, while a wide road leads to destruction.

"Young people, in your opinion, are most of your friends in school going to heaven?" he asked. "Jesus Christ said there will be more people in hell than in heaven. . . . I ask you tonight, what group are you in?"

He encouraged both teens and adults to consider whether they simply believe in Jesus or whether they have allowed Jesus to change their lives.

"Any gospel that does not change your life is not the gospel of Jesus," he said. "Churches are full of people

who claim to profess God, but their hearts don't possess God."

Gage, who estimates he has spoken to more than 2 million students, said students are craving honesty.

"They're looking for people who are real and who will tell it like it is," he said.

"There are some today who say that you can't preach hard to kids," he said. "I don't buy that one bit. These kids want to be challenged."

Badgett said First Baptist's youth and teens from other churches took a lead in making the crusade a success. "They really became evangelists, and they were recruiting youth and getting them out to hear the gospel."

An evangelist with Gage's team led students to witness in downtown Pikeville on the Saturday before the crusade, Badgett added.

"They were out on the streets 'till



about one o'clock in the morning," he said. "He (the evangelist) said, 'This is the first time that kids are going to get in trouble with mom and dad getting home too late on a Saturday night because they've been out witnessing for Jesus.'"

Badgett said the plan to host a crusade started last year when First Baptist hosted Gage and invited area leaders to consider sponsoring a regional event.

Local businesses and churches raised approximately \$56,000 to sponsor the crusade, including a \$2,000 contribution from the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Badgett said.

But leaders said prayer, not dollars, was a key to the success. Local prayer meetings have been held weekly since January, Justice said.

The crusade had a similar strategy to those by Billy Graham and other evangelists. In addition to four nights of preaching, more than 100 people were trained in evangelism to serve as decision counselors for people who responded to Gage's invitation.

Now that it's over, leaders are working on follow-up, to make sure that people who made decisions are involved in a local church.

Justice said he hopes the churches that came together for this crusade will continue to find ways to work together to reach Pikeville.

Hosting a crusade might sound expensive, he said, but the cost per decision is better than taking the churches' cumulative budgets and dividing it by the decisions they all see in a year.

"If they'll put the pencil to the numbers, they'll really be making a serious mistake not to invest in their community," he said.

Gage agreed. "The old-time gospel still works," he said. "Evangelism still works. The days of evangelistic crusades and evangelistic revivals are not over with."

□ More crusade photos on page 10

### BLUEGRASS BURG00

■ The Focus 2001 student conference in Owensboro will focus on living a Christian lifestyle on a college campus. The Kentucky Baptist Convention-sponsored event, for high school juniors and seniors and college students, will be Sept. 28-30 at the Executive Inn in Owensboro. Seminar topics will include dating, money matters, God's will, purposeful living and dealing with forgiveness. Registration costs \$20 per person. For more information, visit the KBC Web site, [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org) or call (888) 254-5723.

■ A literacy missions conference will be held Sept. 21-22 in Louisville. The annual event is sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's extension-ministries department. It is open to literacy missions volunteer tutors, trainers, coordinators and supporters. For more information, call Becky Carnell at (888) 254-5725.

■ Chaplains are invited to a retreat Sept. 21-22 at Campbellsville University. The event, which is open to all full-time, bivocational and volunteer chaplains, will feature training led by Kentucky Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist North American Mission Board leaders. For more information, call David Sandifer at (270) 789-5081.

## KBC administrative committee upgrades student, archives posts

LOUISVILLE—The Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board's administrative committee approved upgrades in two staff positions last week.

Brian Combs, an intern in the collegiate ministry department since 1998, was elected to the newly created position of collegiate ministry specialist. Cheryl Doty, the Executive Board staff's part-time archivist since 1996, was named to an expanded full-time role.

Combs will assist department director Keith Inman in leading collegiate ministry events, programs and student missions efforts. He also will be involved in communications, promotion and technological support.



Combs

Combs is a graduate of the University of Kentucky and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He currently is pursuing a doctorate in education at the University of Louisville. He previously served as a campus minister intern at Spalding University and a sales associate at Life-Way Christian Store in Lexington.

As a Baptist Student Union member in college, Combs said he "started discovering the spiritual gifts God had given me." Affirming God's call to collegiate ministry, he added, "God impressed on my heart that this is where I needed to be."

Doty's responsibilities as full-time archivist will include developing and

maintaining a library for the Executive Board staff and working with the communications/media department to house, catalog and check out videos.

Steve Thompson, the KBC's associate to the executive director, noted that moving the archivist position to full-time has been a long-term goal. He said the change will allow the archives to be open and available whenever the Baptist Building is open.

Noting that Doty is a trained librarian, he said her expanded responsibilities "will more fully use her skills."

Prior to her work in archives, Doty was an intern and news specialist for the KBC. She previously held several librarian positions, including the University of Kentucky Medical Center Library in Lexington. She is a graduate of the University of Kentucky and the College of Library and Informa-

tion Sciences at Rutgers University.

In other business, administrative committee members heard a report from a Baptist Building renovation work group established in December.

Work group member Travis Collins, also a member of the administrative committee, said the group is studying the facility's current space, functionality and future needs. The Baptist Building was constructed in 1956 with a major addition in 1978.

Collins, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Washington, said the committee is compiling costs from architects and engineers as well as a survey and appraisal to determine renovation options.

He said the committee is continuing its work to evaluate the extent of needed renovation, repairs and maintenance.

## 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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## Study 2000 BF&M

I would like to make a few observations regarding the recent "Open Letter from St. Matthews Baptist Church." The letter claimed to be free from infection by "the germs of political division and animosity." However it opened with the inference that the committee that produced the 1963 revision of the Baptist Faith and Message was "truly a committee of the people" whereas the committee that produced the 2000 version was not.

Both committees were appointed by convention presidents who were authorized to do so by a majority of messengers voting.

The letter claims that the 2000 revisions result in a "diminished emphasis upon priesthood of the believer and soul competency before God." I recommend that you compare the relevant statements on page 6 of the 1963 version and page 5 of the 2000 version. Then decide for yourself.

The letter states that the new statement on the church "imposes upon local congregations a particular view of the Bible." In the 2000 version, Article VI, The Church, plainly states, "A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers. ..." Article XIV, Cooperation, speaking of cooperating through associations and conventions, states, "Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches."

The letter states that the 2000 version "denotes that the scriptural offices of pastor and deacon are to exclude women." Actually, Article VI in the 2000 version states, "While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by the Scripture."

I urge everyone who is genuinely

interested in knowing the truth to get a copy of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, read it carefully and draw your own conclusions.

R.C. Day  
Owensboro

## Baptist martyrs

Throughout history Baptists have paid high prices for following Jesus. Baptists have been drowned for advocating believers baptism. They have been burned at the stake for teaching salvation in Christ alone.

Historically, Baptists faithfully have opposed imposing any human creed. The Bible has been our guide for faith and practice. Three courageous Baptists are among many being martyred for this stand.

Three administrators of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, when facing the inquisition of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, refused to sign on to that manmade creed (see Western Recorder, Aug. 14 issue).

I am fortunate to have worked with two of those martyrs. I have witnessed Gerry Hutchinson's skills in a retreat setting and as a supervisor of missionaries. Gerry is both a man of spiritual depth and a competent administrator. Donoso Escobar's department worked with my church when we sponsored a refugee family 18 months ago. I also know his sincerity as a seminary professor.

I applaud Trennis Henderson for calling us to guard against Baptist connectionalism which threatens to snuff out the Spirit among us. Kentucky Baptists, the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message is being used as a creed. In the words of former presidential candidate Bob Dole, "Where's the outrage?"

Jay Robison  
Lexington

## Basis of belief

On a recent Sunday in the church I attend, the presiding minister led us in the call to worship by bolding proclaiming that "Jesus died on the cross as Savior of the world."

As I listened to those words, I wondered where he—or everyone else who repeats those words—gets such a notion. My mind didn't drag it out. I am sure the idea originated in the Bible, the same Scriptures that instruct us about salvation, honesty, divorce, sexual perversion and women's role of leadership in the churches, among other things.

But I do wonder why some people can be so unequivocal about what the Bible says about Jesus Christ Savior, about honesty, salvation, divorce and so forth, then dubious about what the same Bible says about sexual deviancy and about the leadership of women in the churches. Of course, there is no unanimity regarding Jesus Christ, Son of God; this daunts the credulity of some also.

How can I know what to take seriously and what to take with a grain of salt? A culture that is inimical to the gospel of Jesus Christ is always asking "how much am I willing to give up" to relieve the offensive starkness of the Christian message? The Bible is being subjected to this or that world standard and rarely does the reverse occur. The "wisdom of the world" is the standard by which a pluralistic culture would modify the Christian tradition.

Don't patronize me with theories of interpretation. Up to now, I've operated on the apostle's other words: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16). It's the only document the Christian has. So, as I near the end of my row, I've got to decide how much of what I believe I'm willing to keep in the face of an antagonistic culture.

John C. Huffman  
Louisville

## STEWARDSHIP

### How responsible is your church to its employees?

By Don Spencer

Many churches begin budget planning this time of year. This includes looking at compensation for church employees.

Thus, this is a good time of year to ask,

"Is your church a responsible employer?" One key is properly structuring a minister's financial support.

Some churches look at the total cost of a "lump-sum package" and ask the minister to divide it up. Several problems exist with this approach:

■ **False perception.** It creates an inaccurate understanding of true compensation. Most ministers with a lump-sum pay package are getting 30 to 40 percent less real pay than church members think they are getting.

■ **False expectation.** It is unrealistic for a church to assume ministers can correctly structure their financial support.

■ **Increased risk.** Unless adequate life and disability insurance is included, there is an increased financial risk for the minister, the minister's family and for the church.

■ **Higher taxes.** Ministers with a lump sum pay package often end up having to pay more taxes.

Instead of a lump-sum package, each church should structure the financial support as a responsible employer using a simple four-step process:

■ Set adequate amounts to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses incurred to do ministry.

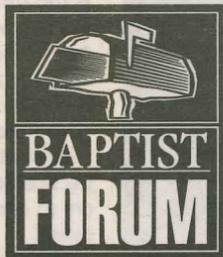
■ Provide appropriate protection coverages. These should include adequate contributions toward retirement and adequate insurance. Also include a Social Security equivalent for ministers who must pay the higher self-employment Social Security even though they are employees for income tax purposes.

■ Set compensation appropriate for the church and community. Experience, training and congregational expectations should be considered. If a minister is full-time, make sure the real compensation (salary plus housing) is adequate to meet basic family needs.

■ Total amounts and re-evaluate as needed.

Does your church structure its minister's financial support? If you're not sure, find out. Your Kentucky Baptist Convention annuity department can provide tools to help your church correctly structure financial support.

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



## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

### God is at work among Kentucky Baptists

During the month of August, I conducted 28 listening sessions with Kentucky Baptists. One of the questions was: "What are the strong signs of God at work in the churches?" I am sharing some of these responses with you so you can rejoice and praise God for His work.

The report has not been completed, but here are the top 10 signs of God at work mentioned by Kentucky Baptists:

■ **Church growth.** This was the most frequently mentioned sign. Church growth is being evidenced by increased attendance in Sunday school and worship as well as by churches trying new things with a positive attitude.

■ **Strength in discipleship ministries.** Signs include increased giving, spiritual growth, an apparent hunger for God and successful programs such as TeamKid.

■ **Outreach ministries.** Strong FAITH Sunday school evangelism programs and efforts to reach young

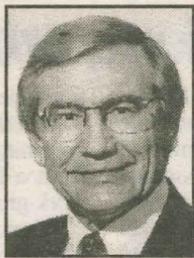
families, bridge cultural gaps, host crusades and provide a strong witness in the community were mentioned repeatedly.

■ **Prayer.** The level of prayer commitment was significant. Individuals shared about vital prayer movements, the influence of the book, "The Prayer of Jabez," praying with other denominational pastors, seeing the results of prayer and strong Wednesday night prayer focuses.

■ **Professions of faith and baptisms.** Every group mentioned the number of people being saved and baptized as a strong sign of God at work. Baptisms seem to be up among all age groups—especially adults.

■ **Worship.** Participants spoke of worship being revitalized with increased attendance, joy and anticipation. Options are being offered in schedule and style, but the focus is on being relevant and connecting people with God.

■ **Unity and cooperation.** Many participants mentioned unity and co-



Bill Mackey

operation as strong signs of God at work. Diversity was acknowledged, but participants recognized groups are working together. References were made to denominations and churches working together in area crusades and in local ministries.

■ **Creative ministries.** Signs include the development of ministry teams, the involvement of volunteers, new ministry organizations and churches getting involved in projects like block parties, servant evangelism, antique car shows and a variety of benevolent ministries.

■ **Missions.** A strong emphasis on missions is another sign of God at work. Participants mentioned missions education, partnership missions, youth mission trips, language missions and cross-cultural witness.

■ **Youth ministries.** A significant shift has taken place from youth receiving ministry to youth leading and being involved in witness and ministry. Significant numbers of youth also are responding to the call to vocational Christian service. Senior adults are appreciating and respecting this new level of involvement.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## It's never too early for teens to learn how to prepare for a healthy marriage

**Q: I am a big proponent of pre-marital preparation. How can I encourage my teenager to start well before engagement to develop attitudes and disciplines that will prepare her for a healthy marriage?**

You are right on target. While the popularity of pre-marital education continues to grow, we need to keep moving the age back. By the time individuals are engaged to be married, it is almost too late to emphasize some things. Here are some ideas I would suggest that parents highlight with teenagers:

- Work with teens in setting standards for the individuals they will consider dating.

- Pray early and often about their dating choices.

- Encourage them to join you in compiling a list of "relational red flags" so that they can spot danger signs early in any new relationship.

- Discourage teens from dating anyone who is not a Christian or who seems to demonstrate a level of commitment that is significantly less than their own.

- Encourage teens to differentiate between the concept of emotional, romantic love and mature love.

- Expose teens to Christian books and programs about dating, courtship and sexuality (such as "True Love Waits") that will help them to think carefully instead of reacting impulsively to feelings.

Parents, encourage church leaders to offer programs to teens, students and singles that will help them make sound relational choices. I recently developed and taught a program at our church that I titled "In The Love Lab: Relationships 101." In it we explored a number of important areas that teenagers would do well to consider.

Teens need to heed the words of the apostle Paul in Philippians 1:9-10: "Learn to love appropriately. You need to use your head and test your feelings so that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush." (The Message paraphrase)—*Scott Wigginton*

**Q: How important is it for parents to guard their words when their children are around?**

During World War II, the phrase "Loose lips sink ships" reminded Americans that careless words could cause problems. Parents would do well to remember and practice a similar philosophy.

Children, especially younger children, usually follow your opinion as they shape their own. Be careful with negative comments about others, especially teachers, leaders and other authority figures. Something you say might come back to haunt you in an embarrassing way. Perhaps even worse, careless words could cause your child to lose respect for another person in ways you did not intend.

Parents must be constantly conscious of what they say directly to children, as well as alert to what children might overhear. Appropriate conversations between adults can become inappropriate when children are within earshot.

Strive to keep your words positive. Consistently negative or cutting comments can encourage a critical, complaining attitude and outlook in your child. The old adage, "If you don't have something good to say ..." comes into play here. Your ability to look for and accentuate the positive in people, places and circumstances will be a good influence on your children.

The apostle Paul challenged the believers at Ephesus to let only words that were helpful for building others up come out of their mouths (Ephesians 4:29). Paul's words are good advice for all, especially parents.—*David Garrard*

*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](mailto:wesrec@ntr.net).



## What's your connection to state missions?

Being "connected" is a popular buzzword in 21st century life. Whether people are connected in business ventures, community activities, personal relationships or through electronic communications, most folks seek to experience meaningful connections in daily life.

Even more significant for Kentucky Baptists is the opportunity to be connected to spiritual ministry efforts that produce an eternal impact. And that's what this year's Week of Prayer for State Missions is all about.

The Sept. 9-16 week of prayer and the accompanying Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions will highlight the theme, "What's Your Connection?" The 2001 offering goal of \$1 million includes a basic goal of \$850,000 plus a challenge goal of \$150,000 for new work efforts across the state.

Kentucky Baptists can connect with diverse mission needs through financial support of the annual offering. Major allocations include \$301,000 for state missions support of associational missions, mountain missions and assistance to key churches in Eastern Kentucky; \$120,000 for church and community missions projects such as literacy training and missions personnel; and \$76,625 for missions education camping.

In addition to financial support, a crucial way for church members to connect to state missions is through personal involvement in the week of prayer. Along with praying for specific needs highlighted through week of prayer programs and promotional material, individuals can become ongoing prayer supporters of Kentucky Baptist mission work. Pastors, Woman's Missionary Union leaders and directors of missions can help interested individuals stay informed about pressing prayer needs related to new work areas, language ministries, disaster relief efforts and other ministry projects.

Even more personal than financial gifts and prayer

support, however, is the opportunity for hands-on involvement in mission projects in one's local community and beyond. The real connection to state missions is when it becomes personal enough to impact your life.

Ministry opportunities featured in this week's state missions offering insert include literacy missions, resort and leisure ministry, church planting and Mission Service Corps. Each of those ministry emphases offer ample opportunities for Kentucky Baptists to connect with life-changing ministry projects for the sake of the gospel.

According to statistics highlighted in this year's week of prayer materials:

- The adult illiteracy rate in Kentucky is more than 40 percent. That means thousands of adults in our state can't read and write well enough to fill out a job application, read a medical prescription or read the Bible.

- More than 18 million vacationers enjoy Kentucky's parks and recreation sites each year. Resort/leisure ministries provide chaplaincy, worship services, clowning, trail rides and other activities that can help connect people to the gospel.

- According to Alan Witham, church planting strategist for the KBC, "Only about 4 percent of young people age 6-23 and 15 percent of people age 24-35 attend church, compared to about 65 percent of people 54 and older." One of the goals of church planting efforts is to reach younger generations with the gospel.

- Mission Service Corps provides hundreds of volunteers the opportunity to use their gifts and skills in short-term projects ranging from clothes distribution and construction projects to job training and personal witnessing.

State missions offers every Kentucky Baptist the opportunity to be personally involved through giving, praying and going. What's your connection?

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## Western Recorder chronicles Graham crusades in 1956, 2001

By Duane Bolin

The recent Billy Graham crusade in Louisville continues to influence the lives of Kentuckians and residents of surrounding states. Graham's simple yet profound message of hope and assurance through Christ alone has not changed in the 45 years since the evangelist's last Louisville crusade in 1956. In both the 2001 and the 1956 crusades the *Western Recorder* played an important—albeit different—role in promotion and in reporting crusade results.

This year the *Recorder* included reflections by Kentucky Baptists who had attended the earlier meetings. These testimonies attested to the lingering impact of the 1956 crusade. Fifty years from now some writer likely will relate the story of the lingering impact of the 2001 crusade on some man, woman, boy or girl.

In 1956, the month-long Graham crusade began on September 30 at the Kentucky State Fair Grounds. The evangelist had conducted a crusade in India earlier in the year, and had returned to the States in time to preach at the Southern Baptist Con-

vention in Kansas City in the summer. Despite the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky's emphasis on evangelism under the leadership of W.C. Boone, the *Western Recorder* at first remained oddly silent about the crusade in the weeks leading up to the event. Perhaps the ecumenical nature of the Graham meetings contributed to the state paper's reluctance to push the crusade.

In 1951, Editor R.T. Skinner had written that while "Graham is Baptist," he "inclines, almost altogether, to give himself to interdenominational evangelism, or, as most of us put it, union meetings."

Skinner regretted that the evangelist "does not give himself entirely to revivals either in Baptist churches or for groups of Baptist churches."

The crusade itself was mentioned only in passing in the September issues of the state paper. Once the meetings began, however, writers praised the sincerity and humility of the dynamic evangelist.

More than 300 Kentuckiana churches reportedly cooperated with the crusade, providing choir members, ushers and counselors to supplement the Graham team, which

included soloist George Beverly Shea and choir director Cliff Barrows.

Well over half a million people attended the 1956 meetings, and thousands of individuals made decisions for Christ. Crusade officials worked closely with local pastors, and Skinner, the one-time reluctant editor, praised Graham's methods, concluding that "in every case those expressing a church preference have been turned over to the pastor."

The impact of the Graham crusade added to Boone's decade of emphasis on evangelism. Gov. A.B. Chandler invited Graham to speak on the Capitol steps in Frankfort and welcomed the evangelist to the podium during the crusade's opening service.

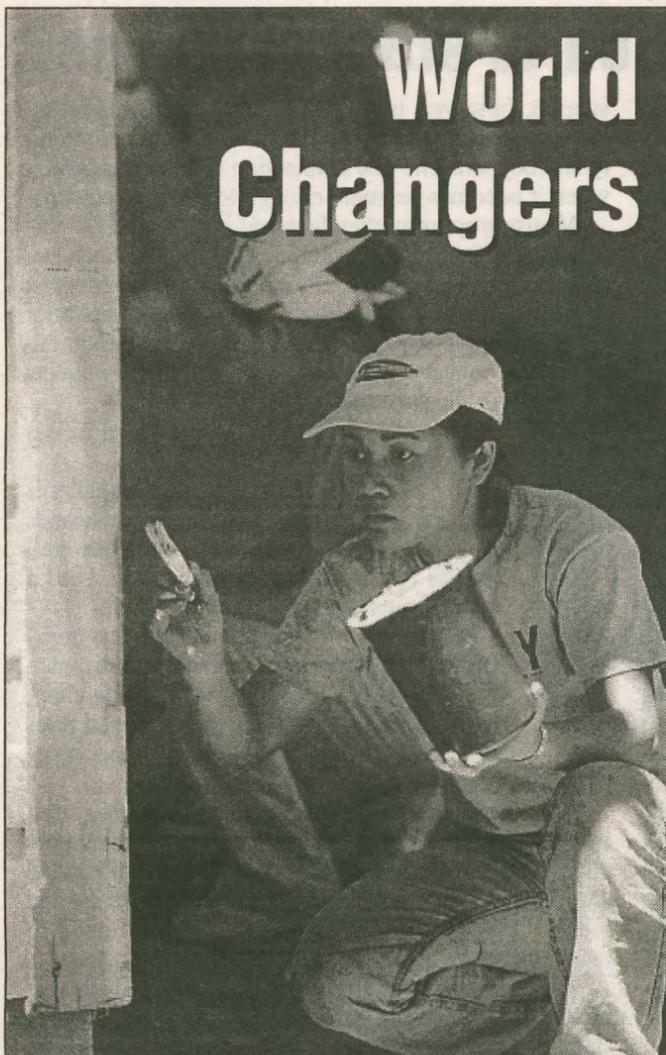
The governor described Graham as "the most dynamic and the most forceful young man who has come across my path. I want to pledge to him our confidence and our good will, and ask that he show us the way and bring about a spirit of good will in the hearts of all our people."

Billy Graham is no longer a young man, but he continues to show people the way. Unlike the paper's initial reluctance in 1956, in 2001 the *Western Recorder* gave extensive coverage to Billy Graham's last Kentucky crusade.

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



## World Changers



**MAKING A DIFFERENCE** World Changers volunteer Komang Rismayanti paints a house in Beaumont, Calif. She was among the more than 19,000 World Changers this summer. (BP photo by Greg Schneider)

## Southern Baptist summer missions program gets record participation

By James Dotson  
Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—A record 19,245 individuals participated in World Changers missions projects in North America during the summer of 2001, an increase of nearly 14 percent over last year's total.

Since 1990 the World Changers program has allowed students to actively live out their faith through rehabilitating substandard housing and participating in other community missions efforts.

Most of this year's 66 projects in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico involved roofing, painting and other home repairs—a total of 1,365 work sites. Other projects included a broad array of ministry efforts at 190 sites in association with local churches and other ministry groups.

Additionally, 14 International World Changers projects in 10 countries were conducted in association with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

A total of 1,596 professions of faith were recorded during the summer, including 224 World Changers participants. The others resulted as volunteers interacted casually with neighborhood residents and through non-construction ministry efforts.

In Nashville, one man approached a residential work site looking for construction work. After talking with him for some time, students learned the

man had lost his job, his family had left him and he had contemplated suicide the night before in a nearby park. By the end of the week, the man had accepted Christ, gotten a job and begun work on restoring his family.

Nearly 13,000 local volunteers, in addition to the 19,245 participants, also were involved in the projects.

The housing rehabilitation efforts usually are conducted in partnership with local governments, which provide the materials and homes in need of repairs for volunteers. But World Changers is geared toward making an impact even beyond the neighborhoods they touch during the summer.

"We have said since the beginning of World Changers that the world we seek to change is the world of the participant," said Keith Loomis, a student volunteer mobilization specialist for the North American Mission Board. "And when the world of the participant is changed, then lots of other worlds get changed."

Loomis said NAMB increasingly is stressing with students the importance of using World Changers as a stepping-stone to longer-term missions service.

This year 504 students made commitments to service as a summer or semester missionary. Almost that many, 498, made commitments to vocational ministry. "I think the week opens their eyes to possibilities," he said. "They are exposed to what it means to be on mission."

## Survey: Faith often impacts investors' financial decisions

WASHINGTON (RNS)—More than half of the nation's investors are influenced by their religious beliefs when they make financial choices, a survey released by Mennonite Mutual Aid shows.

Fifty-six percent of all U.S. investors said they include their faith or other personal ethical values in financial decisions.

Among religious investors, 62 percent said their faith or personal ethical values play a role in the financial decisions they make.

Women were more inclined to mix religion and investing, with 63 percent saying they would do so, compared to 49 percent of men.

The poll also found that religious and nonreligious investors are concerned about the same kinds of corporate ethical issues, with each group naming the same top five issues: product safety, involvement in sweatshops, environmental impact, labor relations and equal employment opportunity.

Religious investors are somewhat more likely to avoid investments in industries dealing with gambling, alcohol and tobacco as well as companies involved with abortion-related products.

## NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Most Presbyterian pastors predict split.** Seventy-three percent of Presbyterian Church (USA) pastors said they foresee a split in the 2.5 million-member denomination by 2050, according to a poll conducted by the church. Elders were about evenly split on the issue, but most church members said a split is "unlikely." The church is firmly but politely divided on such issues as homosexuality and the nature of Scripture and salvation. At the church's annual meeting in June, delegates voted to launch a four-year study on doctrinal divisions and possible ways to resolve them. The poll also found that most Presbyterian pastors feel religion's influence on American life is declining.

■ **Study finds spanking doesn't harm children.** The philosophy of "spare the rod and spoil the child" found a rare ally in modern psychology recently. Diana Baumrind, a psychologist at the University of California at Berkeley, reported her findings Aug. 24 at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association. While she doesn't personally support spanking, Baumrind said there is no proof that it causes psychological harm. She said there is no association between infrequent spanking and social or emotional development problems, at least through early adolescence. "A blanket injunction against disciplinary spanking is not warranted by the evidence," she said.

## Chevy and Ford

I was reared in Grenada, Miss., where I graduated from high school in 1966. My father was the Chevrolet dealer. He had two other Chevrolet dealerships in other Mississippi towns. His parents were also in the Chevrolet business before he got into it. So, I truly have an automobile dealer family heritage. Had my father not died the summer following my graduation from high school, I would likely be in the automobile business in Mississippi.

For some of my early years we lived next door to the Ford dealer. In fact, the Ford dealer had a son one year older than I, and we were really good friends. We played together and spent the night with each other all of the time. His parents treated me like family, and my parents treated him like family. Although our fathers were fierce competitors in the automobile business, I do not recall being aware of any unpleasant experience between them. They got along with each other very well. Today I have two very good friends, one of whom is a Chevrolet dealer and the other a Ford dealer. We all get along very well. Of course, my Ford dealer friend understands why I still drive a Chevrolet.

I have been giving a lot of

thought lately to the issue of "competition and cooperation." When you put \$47 trillion on the table, which is the amount of wealth that will pass from one generation to the next, every charity in the United States wants to get its share. As a result, the more than 1.2 million charities, large and small, are gearing up to go after the \$47 trillion.

New charitable organizations are born practically every day, which simply heightens the competition.

What about our larger Baptist family of churches, associations, institutions and agencies, who are increasingly more and more dependent on private gifts? This includes local, state and national Baptist organizations. Cooperation has been the Baptist way to a lost world. Can we continue to cooperate in a worldwide missionary, educational and benevolent effort, and at the same time compete for charitable gifts from among the same constituents? We can, and we must!

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223; (888) 254-5701; [www.kybaptistfoundation.org](http://www.kybaptistfoundation.org)

## KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION

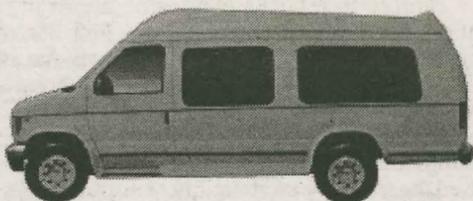


Barry Allen

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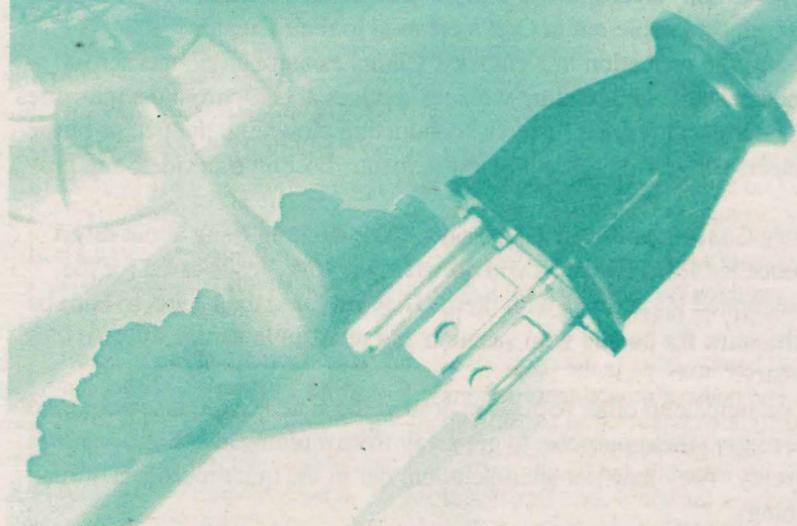
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# what's your connection?



By Kristen White

Have you ever had that sinking feeling? You missed your flight. Your wife's birthday. A final exam. An important call. Nothing knots the stomach faster than missing an important connection. But flights can be booked again. Your wife's birthday will roll around again (whether she wants it to or not!). No one will remember your college GPA when you're 30. If it's really important, they'll call back. So many connections we miss in life are very temporary. But if we and those around us miss connecting with Jesus Christ, there are eternal consequences.

This year we're focusing on four growing ways Kentucky Baptists are reaching our communities for Jesus Christ. Through your gifts to the Eliza Broadus Offering, your prayers for state missions, and through personal involvement in ministry, you can make a connection to lost people every day here in the Commonwealth.

## Connect Them to the Book: Literacy Missions Ministry

Imagine for a moment not being able to read. You could look at pictures in a magazine but not read an article. You could recognize food items at a store because of the packaging but not know how to prepare them. You could work at a job and earn money but writing a check would be difficult. You would live in a world where reading was expected and valued, and some days you may not feel valuable because you are illiterate.

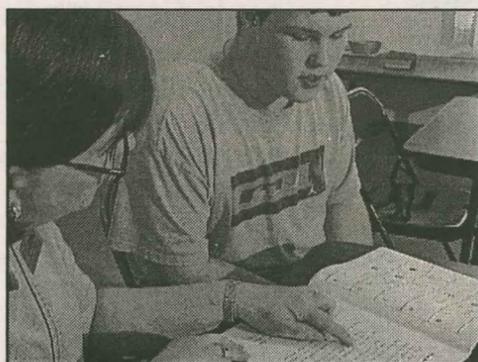
According to the 1997 Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey, the adult illiteracy rate in Kentucky is more than 40%. This astounding number of adults cannot read, or read at a very low grade level. They have a much greater chance of struggling to find and keep a job. They have a higher risk of serious health problems because they cannot read about prevention and treatment of disease. They have a higher risk of ending up in jail. Their children are also likely to struggle with reading and with esteem associated with academic success.

Through Literacy Missions Ministry (LMM), Kentucky Baptists are doing something to stop adult illiteracy and its alarming effects. LMM is in place to encourage and educate people about literacy ministry. Through the help of your gifts to the Eliza Broadus Offering, LMM also organizes new literacy ministries and provides training for those who feel a call to this important ministry. Literacy ministries across the state provide tutoring services to three focus groups: adults, children and youth, and non-English speakers (internationals).

LMM connects non-readers with the two things they need most: assistance with learning to read and the message of Jesus Christ. "People who can't read are not going to be found in our churches. They cannot read the Bible, the hymnal, the bulletin, or even the directional signs," says Becky Carnell, Literacy Consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC). "We can connect them to the Bible, to church, to a whole new life by teaching them to read."

Danny was far from church when a literacy ministry volunteer began tutoring him. Just released for parole, Danny had no place to go, no transportation, and no reading skills though he had been to school through the tenth grade. Danny's tutor traveled to his residence and taught him to read. His confidence soared as he eagerly learned. The friendship that grew between Danny and his tutor showed him that Christians really care and led to many opportunities to explain the gospel.

"Church should be where people look for help. Often they don't because we're not ready to meet their practical and social needs. Offering free, one-on-one tutoring immediately helps non-readers see a difference in us. They want to know why we do it," Carnell says. The trust built in teaching reading opens the door for a strong witness that lasts as long as the tutoring continues and beyond.



Becky Carnell trains tutors to share the gift of literacy with non-readers.

Continued on page 2

# 2001 Week of Prayer for State Missions and Eliza Broadus Offering September 9-16

Offering Goal:

**\$850,000**

Challenge Goal for

New Work:

**\$150,000**

**TOTAL GOAL:**

**\$1,000,000**



Kentucky  
WMU

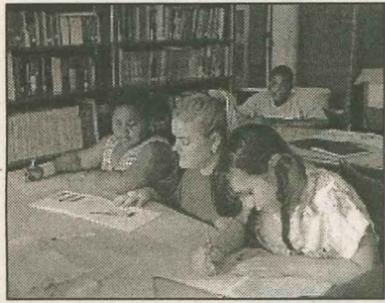


A packet of materials has been sent to the WMU director or contact person in every KBC church. It includes State Missions teaching plans for all ages and suggestions for churchwide promotion of the Week of Prayer for State Missions and the Eliza Broadus Offering. Each church will also receive a free NEW state missions video with their order of additional posters, prayer guides, and offering envelopes. You may request this packet by calling Kentucky WMU, (toll free) 1-888-254-5726 or (502) 244-6485; or by email: [kywmu@kybaptist.org](mailto:kywmu@kybaptist.org)

Contributions to the Eliza Broadus Offering should be mailed to: Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions, Kentucky Baptist Convention, PO Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433. Checks should be made payable to Kentucky Baptist Convention and designated "EBO."

Contributions for the 2001-2002 Eliza Broadus Offering will be received from September 1, 2001 through August 31, 2002.

On a typical afternoon at the Baptist Fellowship Center in Louisville, you can see the power of literacy ministry changing not just individuals, but whole families. Jammie Effler, Director of Weekday Ministries, explains that through the Center's summer camp program, they discovered vast educational needs in their community. In the fall of 2000, they added after-school tutoring to their list of other services, such as providing food, clothing, school supplies, and emergency assistance.



Jamie Elder directs the tutoring ministry of Baptist Fellowship Center.

Three days a week, 11 children participate in 2 hours of tutoring, which includes a devotion and prayer time. "We are having a long-term affect on families, instilling early that education is important, developing healthy lifelong habits like reading and

prayer, and teaching parents how to nurture and interact with their children through field trips and family activities. In our 11 students, there has been definite progress in grades and behavior, and the families are full of hope," says Effler. After-school tutoring is not a new idea, Effler says, and she encourages, "You can do the same thing in your community!"

Primarily, one-on-one tutoring is used with adults and children and youth. Tutors work with one or more students found through local government programs, church literacy ministries, community social ministries, or word-of-mouth. Tutors may work with students at church or community buildings. Sometimes they travel to the student's home.

Small-group settings work well for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) with internationals. With 70,000 migrants alone in Kentucky, not including the hundreds of internationals who come to attend universities or work, the need for ESL ministries is growing. And the need is everywhere-in farm towns and factory towns, in rural areas and in cities.

Rene' Bibb, Coordinator of the ESL Ministry at Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, and Pat Howard, ESL volunteer in Bowling Green, agree that teaching conversational English is a wonderful ministry opportunity. Teaching English to people who need language skills and friendship easily brings opportunities to talk about Jesus Christ. "We talk about the holidays and about our faith on a regular basis in our classes," says Bibb.

Howard says, "Sometimes you're just planting seeds. But we never know how far-reaching those seeds may go when students take their Bibles, JESUS films, and the message of Jesus back to their families."

LMM is growing in Kentucky. As government assistance declines, we as churches have a prime opportunity to reach people through literacy ministries. Carnell says, "We are excited about partnering with WMU for a special emphasis called Project HELPSm: Literacy, which calls us to literacy awareness, involvement, and advocacy. But help is not just needed from women. Men can be tutors, too. We need anyone who feels a call to minister and witness through literacy avenues," Carnell says.



If you would like more information about Project HELP: Literacy, or if you feel God prompting you to become a tutor or organize a literacy ministry, Becky Carnell would like to hear from you. Call her at 1-888-254-5725 for more information.

## Connect Them to the Creator: Resort / Leisure Ministry



From peaceful rivers and streams to the pounding of horses' hooves on a dirt track, from mountains to rolling hills of bluegrass, Kentucky is a state of diverse beauty and recreation. Wherever you go in Kentucky, you can find people at play. In fact, according to the KY Department of Travel, \$8.2 billion is spent on tourism annually and 18.6 million vacationers enjoy Kentucky's parks and travel spots. Through Resort/Leisure Ministry, we as Kentucky Baptists have the opportunity to connect people out in God's creation to their Creator.

Resort/Leisure Ministry is as varied as the recreation in Kentucky. Churches and individuals across Kentucky are providing chaplaincy, medical care, and holding worship services at campgrounds; ministries to racetrack workers and fans; hosting booths at fairs and festivals; conducting clowning, puppet, or music shows at state parks; organizing volunteers for golfing or fishing tournaments; hosting trail rides; and providing chaplaincy at airports.

Mike Watts, Resort/Leisure Ministry Consultant for the KBC, says, "The exciting thing about resort ministry is that you can make a difference for Jesus Christ as you do what you love. Jesus cared for the crowds. He hung out with them and celebrated good times with them. They revealed their hurts to Him because He was with them. We can do the same for people who vacation and recreate in Kentucky. Just look at everything you do as a form of ministry."

People who visit campgrounds or participate in other recreation around the state are often searching for something to fill them with happiness, to give them purpose, to get away from circumstances and routines in their lives that leave them feeling empty. They may not attend church, but in the quiet moments of recreation may begin pondering lasting things.

Sincere, caring Christians who are interested in their sport and in their lives must meet them in these opportune moments. "Many people will not open their home to you, but if you get them on their turf and talk to them about what they like, they'll listen to you. They'll see you as a real person," says Gary King, pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Lincoln County.

His church began an equestrian ministry several years ago for the purpose of Christian fellowship, developing horseback riding skills, and organizing trail rides with a Christian emphasis, such as a devotion, testimony, or singing time around a meal or campfire. "Many unchurched people will come to a trail ride who would never attend a revival service. We've seen many salvations during trail rides," says King.

Not only do people pay attention when you play with them, but when you serve them. Ken Curry has been involved with Campers on Mission (COM) for many years. COM share a love of traveling and camping, but they also share the message of Christ wherever they go. When he and other COM were helping build a church in Butler County, an unsaved farmer named Charlie loaned them some machinery for their building project.

Charlie became intrigued that the COM would give so much time and labor for free. During the project, this demonstration of love penetrated Charlie's heart and he accepted Christ. He told Curry, "You are so different than other religious people I've met. You came to give to my community, not to preach to me. I couldn't help wondering, 'Why would you do this?'"

That was the same question left in the mind of a young man who attended Camp RABRO. His mom was in jail. He never knew his father. But through the love of COM, who organized the crafts for the camp, this young man was exposed to genuine care and patience for the first time in his life. He shared at the closing campfire, "This is the first time in weeks nobody has yelled at me."

Campers on Mission meet at campgrounds, churches, fairs, wherever they are invited or see a need. Their projects vary, from construction to giving balloons at parades to partnering with other ministries such as Disaster Relief. "It is not just hammering and painting," Curry says. "We need people with gifts in every area, because we want to expand into different types of ministry."

You don't have to have a rig or even like camping to be part of Campers on Mission. Some participants stay in hotels in the city where ministry is being done. You also don't have to participate in every project; some people do just one or two a year. Rallies, weekend planning and fellowship times, are held three times a year.



Volunteers set up for a campground worship service.

Resort ministry affects more than vacationers. The tourism industry is Kentucky's second largest employer, boasting close to 150,000 workers. When warm relationships are established with management and workers, when their personal or business-related needs are being met, they are much more trusting and open to groups using their property to minister. Charlie Simmons, chaplain at Wrangler Campground in Land Between the Lakes, says, "Park employees and management come to expect our services."

Wrangler is the largest campground in the United States where you can bring horses. People enjoy horse trails, bike trails, four-wheeler ATVs, swimming, hiking, and boating. "Some weekends we have 10,000 people," says Simmons. During the summer weeks, Simmons organizes church services (with average attendance of 100), special speakers and musical groups, and youth outreach teams. "One time a handbell group from Murray came and played. That was a funny sight-handbells in the middle of a horse campground. The people loved it. We could use any group who'd want to come, because there is so much to do and so many people to reach."

That's why KBC Resort/Leisure Ministries is here. "We want to get churches and individuals connected to resort ministry in their communities. The possibilities are endless. We are here to train, provide resources, and encourage you. Call me and we will look together to see where God is working and wants to use you," says Watts.

For more information on how you can be connected with Resort/Leisure Ministries in your area, contact Mike Watts at 1-888-266-6477, ext. 256, or (606) 387-0902.

## Connect Them to the Family of God: Church Planting

The phone rang. It was Cindy, one of Phil and Kathryn Marie Bruce's friends. Her father had just passed away, and she wanted them to come be with her. She had gotten to know them through a new church in her community, and she knew they really cared about her.

"We take bread to our neighbors as a way of getting to know them," says Kathryn. "We want to present Christ in a non-threatening way, because most of the people in our neighborhood are not interested in Christianity. They are very private and recreation oriented." Bread-baking is just one innovative way the Bruce's have used to build relationships, share the gospel, and begin Cumberland Community Church in a resort community in Somerset.

"Many of our neighbors come and go throughout the year, because it is a resort. In fact, we only have nine year-round residents. We can't always minister in usual ways," says Phil. That hasn't stopped the church from growing to average 20 people from its inception in July 2000.

Shortly after Cindy's father died, she and her husband and three boys made professions of faith. In a letter to Kentucky Baptists, Cindy writes, "We know in our hearts that the Lord sent them to us. ... Thank you so much."

"Church planting through the KBC focuses on reaching the unchurched," says Alan Witham, Church Planter Strategist for the KBC, who expresses concern about younger generations. He says, "Only about 4% of young people age 6-23 and 15% of people age 24-35 attend church, compared to about 65% of people 54 and older. New churches are reaching these younger generations with the truth of Jesus Christ and getting them involved in long-term discipleship. Statistically, new churches reach two-and-a-half times the number of people per member. That's exciting."

Kevin Whitt, a church planter in Henry County, agrees. He is pastor of Harvest Community Church, which grew from 12 to 90 attenders in its first year, with 24 professions of faith. Whitt says, "God is blessing new churches and using them to reach unchurched people. New churches reach a segment of the population that for some reason, established churches don't reach whether that be due to socioeconomic factors, worship styles, or location. I've had a lot of new Christians in my church tell me they

probably wouldn't have come to Christ if we hadn't been here, because they never would have gone to a traditional church."

Jack Fletcher, Director of Missions (DOM) for Red River Association, says we not only need churches to target specific population groups, but we also need to begin ministries for small pockets of people. Fletcher works in a large geographic area of 6 counties, but the counties are sparsely populated.

God has given him ideas to team churches in his association with new ministries.

These ministries meet needs and spread the gospel to people who may never have a church, because of the small size of their community. Hazel Green is one of those communities. The ministry there incorporates Bible study, job training in food service and restaurant management, and basic computer classes. The association has renovated a restaurant as a way of meeting practical, then spiritual, needs.

Local and out-of-region churches have donated time, labor, and goods to make this ministry a reality. "Our churches are catching the vision for ministry. They started with small projects, and for the first time there's a light in their eyes. They're seeing what God can do, and they're ready for bigger projects. But we need help from people outside the association, too."

"We believe that God is giving us a blueprint that will impact our whole region for Jesus Christ," Fletcher says. He stresses the importance of involvement in new church and ministry plants: "When lay leaders get involved in missions, churches will grow and the message will get out."

Brad Henson, lead pastor of a church plant in Farley, near Paducah, describes his passion and goal of church planting: "Every person with a heartbeat needs Jesus Christ," he says. Since their opening on Easter Sunday, 2000, Four Rivers Church has been meeting at a local elementary school and now ranges in attendance from 45 to 90.

Henson's church communicates the message about Jesus and their church through block parties fea-

turing Christian bands and hot dogs. At Christmas, they gave out Bibles wrapped like gifts. They've done prayer walking. Henson envisions using youth mission groups who visit their area to do free car washes and give lemonade-any way they can reach people along the highways and byways of life.

"Don't mistake it," Henson says, "Church planting takes money. It takes a positive attitude from surrounding churches." Whitt explains how it is easy to have a positive attitude about new churches springing up close to yours: "Church planting is not a competition, but a cooperation between churches for building the kingdom." In fact, often established churches experience growth when a new church is planted in their area.



Kevin Whitt baptizes a new believer in a swimming pool.

Church planting also takes time and a core of lay leaders committed to the vision. Both Harvest Community Church and Four Rivers Church use a missions motto, which they developed after much prayer and thought, to direct their work.

It takes prayer. For Witham, prayer is the key to church planting. "Prayer is the foundation for all we do in church planting. As a layperson, please don't minimize that. We need prayer support for wisdom in our ministry, for specific new churches, and for our church planting pastors. We also need encouragement and help."

Phil Bruce says, "We have three great sponsoring churches. They provide us encouragement, lay leadership, even their copier when we need it. They give validity to what we're trying to do. We couldn't do it without the support of our churches and Director of Missions," says Phil.

Church planters are connected to training, mentors, and support networks, all of which are provided through the KBC and your gifts to the Eliza Broadus Offering. "God can use your unique strengths and spiritual gifts in a church start," says Witham.

To get connected to church planting in your area, contact Alan Witham at 1-888-254-5725 or (502) 245-4101.

## Connect Them to Care: Mission Service Corps

When "Joe" came to the Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center in Morganfield, he didn't know what a turn his life would take. The Job Corps Center promised Joe the opportunity of getting away from his old friends and getting a GED and job training. But God had more promises awaiting him.

One day, Jerrell White, a Mission Service Corps (MSC) volunteer working as Community Relations and Chapel Volunteer at the Job Corps Center, invited Joe to attend a local church with him. Reluctantly, Joe agreed. He had only been to church twice in his life. But by the end of the service, he realized his need for Christ and was saved.

"Many students have similar stories," says White, who served most of his 38 years as pastor in Murray and Fredonia, Kentucky, before retiring. "Music concerts, one-to-one witnessing, special programs, and lo-

cal church involvement has turned this into a great harvest for Christ."

Job Corps Centers, funded through federal tax dollars, offer young people, age 16-24, education and job training in many areas such as electrical, auto body, carpentry, and culinary arts. White says, "Many are from troubled backgrounds, some are sent by the courts, some just want the outstanding training provided. Our Job Corps has 1,600 students who come from all over the USA and even the world. Eighty new students arrive weekly. It is a mission field at our doorstep."



MSC Chaplain Jerrell White speaks to a group of students with the assistance of a MSC musician from Texas.

White saw the opportunity listed in the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) On-Site magazine. He felt the Lord's leading for mission service in Western Kentucky. "God opened the doors for me to serve through the leadership of Pastor Bill Henderson and DOM

Royce Pile and the Job Corps administration. God has provided the funds needed for the ministry. He has opened the hearts of the churches in the Ohio Valley Association to be partners in this ministry."

Lonnie Riley agrees that God will open doors as you step out in faith. He and his wife Belinda moved to Lynch in 1999. In just two short years, God has opened doors for ministry buildings, warehouses of goods, and armies of volunteers to minister with powerful results in this poverty-stricken area of the state. But warehouses and volunteers are a far cry from the humble beginnings of this ministry.

When Lonnie resigned from pastoring a large church in Mississippi to come to Lynch, they weren't sure how to get started, and had no salary or budget. So how did they begin? "I bought a pair of hedge trimmers. The people needed help cleaning up their homes. So I just used my time to trim hedges and mow yards," says Lonnie. After months of serving and after holding an Experiencing God weekend for area churches, the ministry was ready to be launched.

Continued on page 4



Lonnie and Belinda Riley at Manna House

**Continued from page 3**

Now they distribute clothing through the Freedom Center and food through the Manna House. "Many children lose 15 pounds in the summer months, because school food is not provided. There's a great need just for food," Belinda says. Their ministry provides used furniture and appliances. They have seen hundreds come to faith in Jesus Christ. They have distributed over \$600,000 in goods and services.

Some of their services include repairing and restoring homes, parks, city halls, and other downtown buildings in Lynch, Cumberland, and Benham. These services were provided in part by church mission groups coming to help. In 2000 alone, 42 groups and over 700 volunteers helped with summer projects. "The Eliza Broadus Offering also reaches far beyond Kentucky. Through the offering, you help support this ministry, but groups from many other states come here to work. When they see what we're doing, they go back to their states and start similar missions activities. Wow!" says Lonnie.

You can't help saying "Wow!" at how the Riley's get the supplies they need to serve the 10,000 needy people in their area, either. "We don't solicit items we need. We just ask the Father. Our warehouse fills up and empties out on a continual basis. Just at the right time when we need lumber and shingles, it is provided. When we need clothes, they are there. At Christmas, four semi-trailers delivered goods and supplies to our ministry. It's the same with monetary funds. We ask, and He provides," says Lonnie.

Where do they go from here? The Rileys envision spiritual awakening in the region. "I always tell the people, 'God is here. He wants to work in your lives now, not just when you get to heaven.' The people are saying, 'There is something to this "God is here" business. That's what I want, for these people to depend on God more than the system, for them to see Him at work,'" Lonnie says.

Also, the Riley's ministry has grown to the point where they need more MSC volunteers to help coordinate the different facets of their work, such as the Freedom Center, Manna House, and summer projects.

Mission Service Corps is a NAMB-coordinated ministry providing placement, training, credibility, supervision, and encouragement for self-supported volunteers. The volunteers serve full-time for four months or more. MSC is a crucial part of our missions strategy as Southern Baptists, as it allows "missionaries" to be placed where funds are limited. A person of any age or gifting can find a place to serve through MSC.

If you would like more information on becoming a MSC volunteer, call Eric Allen, MSC Coordinator at the KBC, (800) 266-6477 or (502) 245-4101, ext. 397.

**How About You?**

Where does God want you to get connected? God has a unique role for you (I Cor. 12:12). Whether it be through giving, praying, or volunteering, get connected to state missions. You'll be glad you did!

**ELIZA BROADUS OFFERING**  
2001-2002 Offering Allocations

**Kentucky Baptist Convention**

**State Missions & Evangelism..... \$620,000**

**State Missions ..... 301,000**

Includes funds to assist KBC in providing salaries and benefits for 29 associational directors of missions, funding for a mountain missionary, and assistance to four key churches in eastern Kentucky; Freeda Harris Baptist Center van

**Language Missions ..... 72,000**

Eastern Kentucky Regional Deaf Ministry; Hispanic ministry; ministries to other language/ethnic groups in Kentucky.

**Church & Community Missions ..... 120,000**

Includes funds for appointed missionary personnel; literacy; new Church and Community ministries, Baptist Fellowship Center personnel and office expense

**Evangelism ..... 10,000**

Understanding Other Beliefs Conferences, Discover Missions Week at Cedarmore

**Student Work ..... 87,000**

Includes International Student Ministry, Reach Out Campus Revivals, Student Mission Action Projects, Kentucky Student Summer Missions

**Brotherhood Special Projects ..... 30,000**

Includes Volunteers on Mission, Angel Tree Camp for boys whose parents are incarcerated, Disaster Relief training and supplies, Eastern Son Rise project to provide assistance in Eastern Kentucky, and Missions Adventure Camp Scholarships

**Kentucky Special Ministries..... \$50,000**

Requests for Special Ministries Funds are made through an application process.

The deadline for submitting an EBO allocation request from the 2001-2002 offering is Dec. 31, 2001.

Contact the state WMU office for an allocation request form.

**Kentucky WMU: Missions Education**

**& Ministries to Missionaries..... \$180,000**

**Missions Education Leadership Development..... 23,700**

Includes training events for church & associational missions leaders, Resource Team training, leadership materials for new missions organizations, associational leadership materials

**Missions Education Events and Materials ..... 34,275**

Includes State Acteens Conference, Youth on Mission Night, Women on Mission Retreats, Christian Women's Job Corps, Baptist Nursing Fellowship, Children's missions event at the Annual Meeting, Collegiate missions education; Associational, age-level, language and general missions education development

**Missions Education Camping ..... 76,625**

Includes Staff and materials for Girls in Action, Acteens camps, Mother/Daughter Overnights at Cedar Crest; Mother/Daughter Overnight and Acteens Splash at Jonathan Creek, Love in Action Camp Scholarships

**Missions Education Promotion ..... 37,800**

Includes State Missions Week of Prayer Materials and Video, *Kentucky Notes*, *Associational Newsletter*

**Missions Education Scholarships ..... 2,500**

Seminary Field Education, Simmons Bible College, Campus Women on Mission Facilitator Scholarships

**Ministries to Kentucky Missionaries..... 5,100**

Includes MK Re-entry retreat, Missionary Dinner during the KBC, subscriptions to the *Western Recorder* for international missionaries, Missionary Parents Fellowship

**Eliza Broadus Offering Goal ..... \$850,000**

**Challenge Goal for New Work in Kentucky ..... \$150,000**

**TOTAL ELIZA BROADUS OFFERING GOAL ..... \$1,000,000**

Church contributions to this offering should be made payable to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and designated Eliza Broadus Offering



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Attention Pastors

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### Technology and faith

By Robert Dunston

Garland Young and I stayed busy this summer working on projects to help teach biblical courses using technology both in and out of the classroom. As classes begin, we are putting our materials to work at Cumberland College.

The Appalachian College Association sponsored our major project. Five other professors worked with us to create a Web site for teaching biblical Greek and Hebrew.

The other professors were Dwayne Howell and John Hurtgen from Campbellsville University; Tim Crawford and Ken Lyle from Bluefield College in Bluefield, Va.; and Wade Bibb from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn.

The completed Web site features reviews of important grammatical principles, exercises, quizzes, vocabulary drills, helps and other resources. We all look forward to using the site in class to help our students learn biblical languages.

Young also worked on a Web site for Mayfield Publishing to support its introductory New Testament textbook. He created chap-

ter outlines, PowerPoint presentations, lists of terms, review questions, links to other sites and other helps for students studying the New Testament.

Additionally, Young serves as coordinator of the Religion and Philosophy Virtual Center sponsored by the Appalachian College Association. The site helps faculty

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



from many institutions stay in contact and share ideas.

As an enrichment tool to my teaching, I also created a site to be used in conjunction with the Old Testament survey course I teach. The site provides PowerPoint presentations, review questions and multimedia assignments

to help students understand the theology of the Old Testament.

We use technology as a way to help students learn, but we remain committed to being personally available to them in and out of the classroom. All of us at Cumberland College endeavor to give the personal touch Jesus gave to individuals.

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

## Investor: Trust God, not money

Continued from page 1

appraisal of personal strengths, weaknesses and gifts can guide handling of money. "The best way to know ourselves is to ask our spouse," Minnella said. "Or go to church. Ask your pastor or elders."

■ **Know God.** The three primary ways to have a better relationship with God are by spending time in prayer, reading the Bible and Christian fellowship, he said.

■ **Trust God and accept His will in your life.** Most people know about God but don't trust Him, Minnella said, which makes it difficult for them to move forward with their finances.

■ **Embrace God's blessings.** Minnella said if God gave him a million dollars, he would have a hard time handling it, for fear he would use it wrong or make a mistake. But praising God helps develop a grateful spirit that can accept His provision, he said.

■ **Live the joy.** That might sound trite, but adults can be like the child who pouts over not getting the right kinds of toys, Minnella said. While God showers blessings on people, they often complain because their house isn't large enough or they didn't get new drapes when a neighbor did.

The key to each step of wise fiscal management is prayer, he added.

"If you're going to know God's will in your life, you have to pray," he said. "If we were aware of His presence, we'd spend ... more money on saving souls and feeding the hungry."

### Do you have a plan?

LOUISVILLE—Mark Minnella, president of the National Association of Christian Financial Consultants, suggests the following five practical steps to establishing a good financial plan.

■ **Spend less than you make.**

■ **Know who you are.** What is unique about your life and goals? A lot of Christian financial planners suggest allocating certain percentages of income to household expenditures, but Minnella said a budget should be tailored to a person's identity and tastes.

■ **Establish a financial "buffer zone."** List occasional expenditures such as auto repairs, taxes, birthdays and Christmas gifts. After figuring the annual total, put one-twelfth of that sum in a savings account each month and continually replenish it.

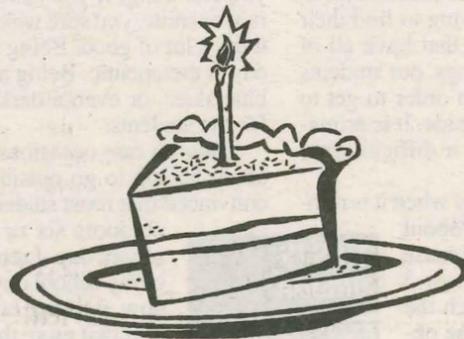
■ **Build an emergency reserve.** While many people suggest having three to six months' income in savings, Minnella said he believes in setting aside one year's worth of overhead. This creates family peace and more assurance in case of a job layoff or other crisis, he said.

■ **Set up a long-term investment account.** Minnella said he doesn't believe in long-term investing without an emergency reserve.

"I believe in never contributing to an IRA or 401-K until you have buffer zones built up," Minnella said. "If you're living on credit cards each month while contributing to a 401-K, you shouldn't be contributing to a 401-K. People can get to 65 and have as many debts as assets."

## Kentucky Baptists

You Take The Cake!



### September is Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children Food Roundup

Every year Kentucky Baptists take the cake, the spaghetti sauce, the peanut butter, the toothpaste and more and give them to kids and families in need through KBHC's Food Roundup. Thanks to all the churches and associations who give so freely!

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# KENTUCKY



Chaplain Phil Bruce  
& Wife Kathryn



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### It's official, they're back!

You know for certain that summer is over and the students are back when you see students looking at their printed schedules, trying to find their next class. Unlike most schools that have all of their classes in one or two buildings, our students attend classes in 11 buildings. In order to get to these buildings, they must go outside. It is primarily the new students who have a difficult time finding their classes.

Visitors to our campus on a day when it is raining or snowing often comment about feeling sorry for our students because they have to walk in the rain or snow. I know it must seem cruel to watch the students walk in the rain, but close observation will reveal that is exactly what they do, walk. I confess that there have been times when it was raining hard and I felt a little sorry for them, too. On the other hand, I have noticed that, rain, sleet or snow, they walk! They will wait for that special person, join hands and walk no faster in the rain or snow than they would on a sunny day.

There have been more than a few times when I have wondered if they even knew it was raining. The same visitors who feel sorry for our students when it is raining are nearly in tears when they see them having to walk in the snow on a cold winter day. Now we all have heard about the stories of the old days. You know, they had to walk five miles to school. It was uphill in both directions. They had to ford swollen streams, and they didn't even have shoes to wear.

Well, it is not really that bad. Yes, they do get a little wet, sometimes real wet. They do get a little cold, and on hot days they even get a little warm. But frankly, I think it is good for students to get out in the fresh air. Sure, I wish they did not

THIS IS  
ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

have to contend with rain and snow, but I will tell you one thing: If you have walked to class in the rain or snow, you sure wake up. The fresh air does them a lot of good. Being outside several times a day is therapeutic. Being able to see the beautiful blue skies, or even a dark thundercloud is good for the students.

Only on rare occasions do students complain about having to go outside to get to class. I am convinced that most students really enjoy getting outdoors six or seven times during a school day. I remember spending most of my school days looking out the window, wishing I could be outside. I suspect that more than a few of my readers have had the same experience. I also am sure that students today are not much different—they long to be outside too.

So, with schedules in hand new students anxiously ask other students, or any adults they can find, where S5, or G6 or CMC1 is. It is a little intimidating to be a new student anyhow, and they especially don't want to be laughed at for being late to class. Normally it takes only a day or two to understand

fully our numbering system and to learn where the classrooms are.

The one room they do not have any trouble finding is the chapel. Every day, about 10 minutes 'till 11, students and faculty make their way to the chapel. All students go through the chapel on their orientation tour. Having chapel in the middle of the school day is a little odd to most new students, but in a very short time most come to appreciate this special time of the academic day.

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

### He still enables the blind to see

One of the joys of serving as interim pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin is the opportunity to share in life commitments individuals make in the worship services.

Earlier in the summer, Travis Freeman stepped out, accompanied by his father, and told me God had called him to preach. As the youth say, "It was an awesome moment."

The son of Corbin natives Larry and Mary Freeman, Travis lost his sight at age 12 as the result of illness. With a foundation of faith in Christ and the encouragement of family and friends, he has refused to let blindness keep him from a full life.

Travis played center for the Corbin High School football team. Associated Press distributed a story about him nationally that was printed in the New York Times. Travis appeared for interviews on Dateline NBC, the Today Show and Robert Schuller's Hour of Power.

"The Lord provided some wonderful opportunities to share my testimony," Travis said. He is a junior at the University of Kentucky and equipment manager for the UK football team. He is vice president of the campus Fellowship of Chris-

tian Athletes.

Central Baptist had another awesome experience and one of our biggest Sunday night crowds on Aug. 26, when Travis preached his first sermon, "Praying With Power." He read the text, Acts 4:23-31 from his Braille Bible and challenged the church and individual Christians to have a desire to pray, to put ourselves in a position for God to answer and to remain dedicated to a life of prayer.

He illustrated the message with examples from Scripture and his leadership role with Fellowship of Christian Athletes. The sermon demonstrated faith in an all-sufficient God, and God's faithfulness to use those who surrender to His will. The invitation brought many people to the altar.

"I prayed for eight years to regain my sight. I don't know if I really want to see again," Travis proclaimed. "This life is so temporary; I know I'll have all eternity to gaze upon Jesus. I just want to be faithful to do whatever He asks now."

CLEAR CREEK  
CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

# BOOKS

## Reporter finds faith permeates 'The Simpsons'

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—Don't have a cow, man, but Bart Simpson just hit bookstores nationwide as a poster child for American religion.

"The Gospel According to the Simpsons" examines the spiritual lessons from the long-running animated TV series.

The show, once branded sacrilegious by many conservative Christians, offers a unique look at how the average American lives out a religious faith, claims author Mark Pinsky.

Watching the show with his children to make sure it was appropriate for their viewing brought an epiphany for the religion reporter for the Orlando Sentinel. He was surprised by "the favorable way religion, in its broadest sense, was presented in the series," he wrote.

More than any other television series (except maybe "Touched by an Angel" or "Seventh Heaven"), "The Simpsons" presents an American family that experiences religious faith like many real American families, Pinsky wrote.

The Simpsons attend church every week. They pray. They seek God's help in times of crisis. They believe in a literal heaven and hell. Try finding any of that in "Friends."

"The Simpsons are more like what most Americans do with their lives," Pinsky said in an interview.

And although it is just a TV show, its impact on how people think about religion may be more significant than most Christians would suspect, Pinsky argues.

"For all those folks who have argued that repeated exposure to sex and violence on the screen has a coarsening effect on more impressionable viewers, those folks ought to look at the corollary offered by the Simpsons," he said. "If repeated exposure to a family that believes and prays, ... if you watch them week in and week out, might that not have a salutary effect in the same way?"

It's not that the Simpsons are ideal Christians, Pinsky acknowledges. Their failings, in fact, are part of what makes their religious experiences so real, he suggests.

Pinsky, a self-described "middle-aged Jew," is an unlikely candidate to connect the Simpsons and Christianity. He said he's already been getting calls from youth ministers who want to use the book to create opportunities for reaching young adults.

**The Gospel According to The Simpsons: The Spiritual Life of the World's Most Animated Family.** Mark Pinsky. Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 164 pages. ◆◆◆ (out of five)

What is Mark Pinsky trying to say? That "The Simpsons" is a Christian-friendly presentation of family and community life?

That "The Simpsons" can help us enrich our spiritual life, by helping us reflect on what we share with the dysfunctional Simpson family and neighbors?

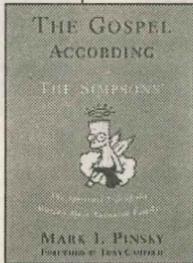
That "The Simpsons" generally misses, if not avoids, the point of genuine religious experience, while nonetheless affirming the role of religion in helping people cope with a meaningless existence? All of the above, I suppose.

On one level, Pinsky does an excellent job of depicting Bart, Homer, Lisa and the rest of the family as icons of the postmodern mindset. Their understanding of God reflects the nebulous, often syncretistic thinking of many postmoderns. Spirituality often is self-serving and fluid. Pinsky shows us how a cultural phenomenon can teach us about ourselves.

On another level, Pinsky's description of the Simpsons' spiritual life suffers from the same fuzzy definitions and images reflected in the program. He seems to jump from the observation that the show affirms religion as an integral part of life to the conclusion that it is Christian-friendly.

At the same time he acknowledges that most of the major components of Christianity (specifically Jesus Christ) largely are absent or ignored, while the faith of the Simpson family is largely Old Testament based.

"The Gospel According to The Simpsons" is far from an explication of good news. It is a fascinating look at the disconnectedness of American life. *Jim Holladay*



**Christian Witness in a Postmodern World.** Hal Poe. Abingdon Press, 2001. 182 pages. \$16. ◆◆◆◆

"Not another book on postmodernism and ministry," I protested while perusing a shipment of books for review.

Far too many books on the postmodern context either are a simplistic celebration of postmodernism (put up the screens, strike up the praise band and show the videos), or they are defensive attacks on the perceived threat to orthodox theology.

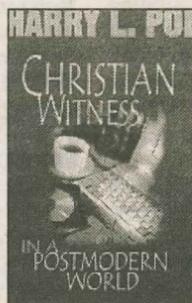
Given that "Christian Witness in a Postmodern World" was written by a friend, I felt I needed to give it a chance. I'm glad I did.

Harry (Hal) Poe has written a lucid, balanced description of where the church finds itself at the beginning of the 21st century, as well as how it should respond. He critiques both the modern and postmodern mindset, all the while presenting the postmodern context as an opportunity for a more authentic witness.

Poe seems to believe the postmodern context might free the gospel of a lot of the rationalistic baggage of the modern era, so that truth now can be proclaimed for what it is, a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Poe's survey of the church's captivity to modernism spares neither liberals nor conservatives in the church. He points out that our wholesale adoption of modernism's basic assumptions might be a greater threat to Christian witness than we realized.

The examination of the postmodern mind and the issues it raises for the church's ministry is the most thorough and helpful I have read. It was hard to put this book down, because it is engaging, thought provoking and practical. I came away from the reading excited about the possibility of ministry in our postmodern, post-Christian world. *Jim Holladay*



**A Brief Guide to Beliefs: Ideas, Theologies, Mysteries and Movements.** Linda Edwards. Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 578 pages. \$19.95 ◆◆◆◆

Linda Edwards has chosen approximately 60 religions and spiritual movements to highlight in this highly readable introduction to the world of religious belief and practice.

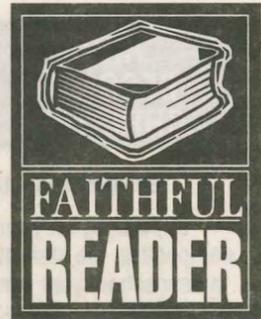
All of the major religious faiths are discussed, along with new faiths, which include well-defined religions and some not so well-defined spiritual movements.

Before she ever gets to describing specific religions and movements, Edwards offers a wonderful five-chapter introduction. In these, she lays the foundation for her later examination of the various faiths by discussing "the key philosophical ideas and issues that permeate popular views about religion and morality, due to the influential role that the Judeo-Christian tradition has played in framing Western thought over two thousand years."

She then lays out the framework for her analysis, exploring eight aspects of each religion she examines. Her categories break the usual mold for such examinations by also including the aspects of gender and religion, prayer/worship and moral action.

The rest of the book is devoted to the examination of the 12 world faiths she defines and other faith movements. The defining word for Edwards' examination is "brief." She does not answer all questions nor does she attempt to. For further examination, she refers the reader to other dictionaries and encyclopedias.

What she has done is gather an incredible amount of information in one useable resource that will, at least, begin to clarify the primary defining elements of each religion, faith or movement. *Wayne Hager*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C., and Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville. They welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: [jwhager@surry.net](mailto:jwhager@surry.net) or [docholladay01@aol.com](mailto:docholladay01@aol.com)

## Jars of Clay works on multimedia project to honor 'God's Smuggler'

By Cecile Holmes  
Religion News Service

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (RNS)—Thirty-five ago this fall "God's Smuggler," the moving book of a young missionary who smuggled Bibles into Eastern Europe, captured the attention of a global Christian audience.

The book, the true story of Brother Andrew, a young college student, related his amazing efforts to smuggle Bibles to Christians across the Iron Curtain into nations where owning or distributing Bibles was strictly forbidden.

Now Brother Andrew's story is being retold in a multimedia project including a new book and CD—"The Narrow Road." The special project brings together Brother Andrew, who co-authored his story with well-known husband-and-wife writing team John and Elizabeth Sherrill, and Jars of Clay, the Grammy and Dove Awards-winning Christian band.

The book and CD will be released this fall

simultaneously with a 35th anniversary edition of "God's Smuggler." That book, said to have been required reading at one time for the infamous KGB, has sold more than 10 million copies worldwide.



Brother Andrew

The book's publisher chose Jars of Clay for the partnership because of the band's commitment to persecuted Christians and its ability to connect with a cross section of youth. That commitment began following the group's trip last year to Vietnam and China.

According to a 1997 U.S. State Department report, an estimated 200 million Christians in more than

60 countries face imprisonment, slavery, torture, family division, discrimination in education and employment, and even death.

In "The Narrow Road," a reference to the biblical text that says following Jesus requires taking a "narrow" road, audiences will find a challenge to greater personal understanding and concern for the suffering of persecuted Christians. And a new generation of young people will know the

story of Brother Andrew.

In addition to telling the story of his work as a missionary behind the Iron Curtain, the book underscores the bravery of the Christians he encountered. And it includes real-life accounts of Christian persecution told through the eyes of teenagers today who live in such nations as Vietnam, China and Ethiopia. The teenagers' stories were provided through Brother Andrew's ministry, Open Doors, based in Santa Ana, Calif.

A portion of proceeds from the project will be donated to Prayer for the Persecuted Church, an international organization also based in Santa Ana.

Brother Andrew, who now lives in Holland and has worked with persecuted Christians for almost half a century, began his work in Eastern Europe in 1955. At that time, churches had been closed, most missionaries were gone and Bibles had been banned. Distributing suitcases of Bibles and Christian literature, he began work that was the beginning of Open Doors International. That ministry continues to persecuted believers around the world.

# PEOPLE

## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Mark Howell

Depending on your perspective, the start of a new school year can be a blessing or a curse.

For the student who has spent most of the summer staying up until midnight, sleeping until 10 a.m. and spending the afternoon at the pool, the prospects of returning to school do not promote pleasant thoughts. Conversely, for those parents who have spent most of their summer hearing the incessant cries of "I'm bored!" or who have spent far too many afternoons cleaning up the messes of their mischievous teenagers with too much time on their hands, the advent of the new school year is greeted with cries of joy.

Whatever your perspective might be, the end of summer and the beginning of a new academic year bring with them the promise of new beginnings.

The Bible also makes that same promise to us.

The apostle Paul reminds us that anyone who comes to Christ is a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The good news of the gospel is that through a personal commitment to Jesus we can claim God's complete forgiveness and we can be assured of His promise for a new life.

The promise of the gospel is a promise for a new beginning. Yet the best news of all is that through Jesus Christ you also can claim the promise of a happy ending. If you long for such peace in your life why not turn from your sin and turn to Jesus right now? He loves you and wants the absolute best for your life.

Mark Howell is assistant professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **FRANKFORT**—Crestwood Church will host **David Livingston** in concert Sept. 9 at 6 p.m. **Wallace Kent** is pastor.

■ **HENDERSON**—Bethel Church will celebrate its 190th anniversary and homecoming Oct. 28 with an 11 a.m. service and a noon potluck dinner. **Joel Breidenbaugh** is pastor.

Spottsville Missionary Church will host a homecoming and building dedication Sept. 9. Events begin with the morning worship and includes lunch. **Steve Thompson**, KBC associate to the executive director, will be guest speaker. For information, call (270) 827-9072.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Boone's Creek Church will celebrate its 216th anniversary Sept. 9. Former pastor **Wendell Romans** will be the guest speaker in the 11 a.m. service. Activities will

include a noon potluck lunch and an afternoon service of skits and music. **Don Embry** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Gethsemane Church will hold homecoming services Sept. 16 at 10:55 a.m. Activities will include a fellowship meal and music by the **Gethsemane Baptist Quartet**. **Robert Wright** is pastor.

Valley View Church will host **Ray Boltz** in concert Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 935-5142. **Tog Goodson** is worship pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Third Church recently honored **Edith Bennett** for 20 years of service as secretary.

■ **PADUCAH**—Immanuel Church called **Chris Cash** as minister of youth. He previously was associate pastor of youth and discipleship at Cambridge Baptist Church in Richmond, Va. **Jamie Broome** is pastor.

## Mr. Rogers airs final 'Neighborhood' visit

**PITTSBURGH (RNS)**—The neighborhood of make-believe lost its most famous resident Aug. 31 when Mr. Rogers tossed his loafers aside and hung up his sweater for the last time.

The last original episode of "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" aired last week, although the show will continue in reruns. Rogers taped his last show in December, but he is far from retiring.

Every weekday since 1968, children have been able to join Mr. Rogers and his menagerie of friends for 30 minutes of values lessons and make-believe. Rogers told ABC's "Nightline" in July that children appreciated the fact that he spoke to them as children, but treated them as adults.

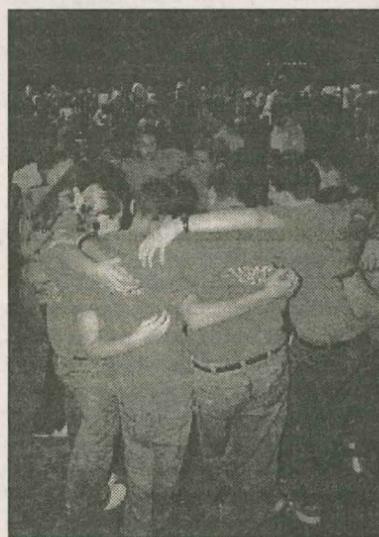
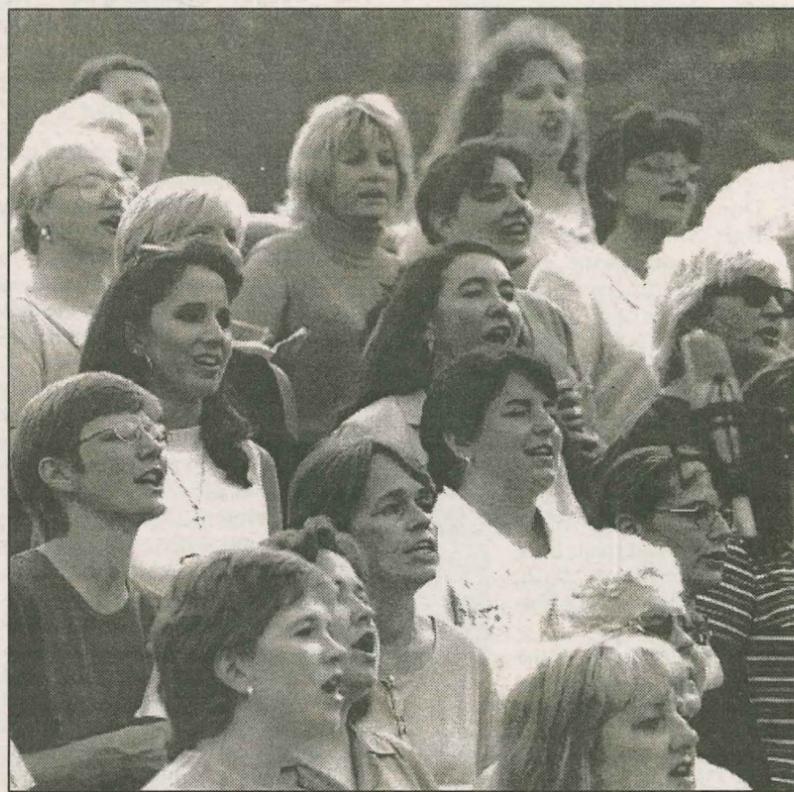
"We're not going to fudge stuff,"

he said. "We're going to tell them the truth. And we're not going to dance around and say how happy things are when they're not."

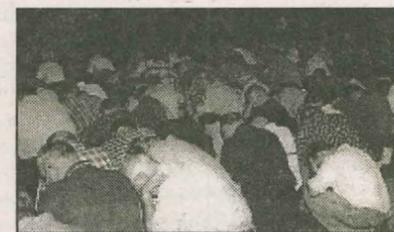
An ordained Presbyterian minister, Rogers has spent his entire career in television. On the "Nightline" special, Rogers recalled the story of a young girl who told him the show provided an escape each day from her abusive home.

"That's a holy enterprise," he said. "That the space between the television set and that little girl who was in such desperate need, the space there was holy ground."

Rogers, 73, will continue working with his company, Family Communications, and would like to harness the power of the Internet to continue with work, such as reading on-line books and stories to children.



**PIKEVILLE CRUSADE** More than 1,100 decisions were recorded during the Mountain Crusade for Christ. ■ **Above:** Singers from throughout the area made up a 200-voice choir. ■ **Left:** Members of the youth group at First Baptist Church of Belfry meet after a crusade meeting to pray and talk. ■ **Bottom:** Men respond to an invitation to pray for revival in the community. Story on page 3. (Photos by David Winfrey)



## CLASSIFIED ADS

**AVAILABLE:** Experienced pastor seeking interim position. Excellent references. Available after July 15, 2001. (859) 238-9398; e-mail: mickey@eaglecarriers.com.

**FOR SALE:** Antique walnut corner cupboard (1820s). Kentucky or Virginia origin. Solid lower doors with original glass in upper doors. Beautiful rare cabinet. \$4,500. Call (502) 608-7706 for questions or appointment.

**FOR SALE:** 650 picturesque wooded acres—great for church camp or retreat. Near Lake Malone in Logan County, Ky. Call (270) 657-8880.

**FOR SALE:** Classic 2-story; 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths; approx. 2,360 square feet; convenient location; 8901 Shelbyville Road. \$193,900. Contact: Tony Wheatley, Paul Semonin Realtors, (502) 493-6507.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth. Send resumé to: Cornerstone Baptist Church, 4451 Winchester Road, Lexington, KY 40509, Attn: Personnel Committee.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist, London, is accepting resúmes for a minister of youth and recreation. Please send to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 804 West Fifth St., London, KY 40741, or fax to (606) 864-4195.

**SEEKING:** Perryville Baptist Church in Boyle County, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor for a congregation of 450 members. Average worship attendance will exceed 200. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Perryville Baptist Church, PO Box 26, Perryville, KY 40468. Fax to: (859) 332-8729.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music and youth for FBC, Salem, Ill. Send resumé to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 721 W Main St., Salem, IL 62881, or contact fbc1@midwest.net.

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

**SEEKING:** Ridgewood Baptist Church, a CBF-affiliated congregation located in a growing suburb of southwest Louisville, is seeking a pastor. Our diverse, mission-minded congregation is committed to historic Baptist principles and freedoms, and is praying for God's leadership in this process. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Ridgewood Baptist Church, 6209 Greenwood Road, Louisville, KY 40258.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor. Located in rural area, seven miles south of Kentucky Dam; parsonage available. Send resumé to: Bethel Baptist Church, 2603 Tatumsville Highway, Gilbertsville, KY 42044, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music for Southern Baptist church, willing to work with preschool, children and adult choirs, lead congregation on Sunday mornings and evenings. Seasonal cantatas. Send resumé to: Greenwood Baptist Church, 5165 Scottsville Road, Bowling Green, KY 42104.

**SEEKING:** Youth minister/director with recreation oversight responsibilities. Moderate church with mid-size, active youth program. Send resumé to: Rosemont Baptist Church, 556 Rosemont Garden, Lexington, KY 40503, Attn: Personnel Committee. Fax: (859) 276-1545; e-mail: rosemontbc@aol.com.

**SEEKING:** One part-time music minister and one part-time youth minister. Will also consider one part-time minister for both. Send resumé to: West Hickman Baptist Church, 1003 Broadway, Hickman, KY 42050; call: (270) 236-0046; or e-mail: Olliet@apex.net.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth minister/director for growing rural church. Large, active youth group, children and youth. Send resumé to: Search Committee, New Salem Baptist Church, PO Box 275, London, KY 40743.

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

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

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of education and youth. May's Lick Baptist Church, Maysville area. Contact: Ron Reule: (606) 763-6869; or church office: (606) 763-6585, or fax: (606) 763-6355.

# MISSIONS

## Baptists trek 400 miles to pray throughout African nation

By Sue Sprenkle  
SBC International Mission Board

THE GAMBIA (BP)—From the top of the tree, a young man scanned the mud flats.

He spied what he was looking for—four men dressed in long, flowing robes and matching trousers, walking down the path. He smiled when he noticed the foursome carrying prayer mats—as every good Muslim does in Gambia.

The Koranic teacher scrambled down from the tree and sprinted to the men. "I've been looking for you everywhere," he said. "I climbed a tree over there to find you. You need to come back to my village and talk with me."

The young teacher began asking questions about the Koran, Islam's most holy book, when one of the older men held up his hands and said, "We are not Muslim. We are followers of the prophet Jesus and we have come to pray for your village."

The two Southern Baptist representatives explained that they and their friends were walking the length of the country and praying for the people they met along the way.

The teacher stared in disbelief at the two bearded men who spoke his Mandinka language. In this part of the world, Christians are not known as people of prayer—let alone people who would inconvenience themselves by walking nearly 400 miles in temperatures reaching more than 100 degrees.

After recovering from the initial shock of the news, the young teacher asked the men to come and pray for his village, noting that before now no one had ever come to pray for them.

In early August, a worldwide concerted prayer effort focused on the continent of Africa. Christians throughout the United States joined others around the world by interceding for the "dark continent" as part of a yearlong emphasis, 2001PRAY, an acronym for "Pray 'Round Africa, Yes."

In an effort to prepare the hearts of the Mandinka for this special day of prayer, one of the Southern Baptists decided to prayerwalk the entire country. There are more than 1.3 million Mandinka in West Africa with little or no access to the Christian message of God's love.

Only a small strip of Atlantic coastline keeps the Republic of the Gambia from being completely surrounded by its larger neighbor, Senegal. Never more than 30 miles wide, Gambia stretches for more than 300 miles, along both banks of the Gambia River and into the center of Senegal.

The 400-mile trek was divided into five different legs, each lasting six days. One leg was walked each month, beginning in January. Two Southern Baptist volunteers from Alaska and two from Texas joined the Southern Baptist International Mission Board workers.

The men walked three to four hours every morning before spreading their mats in some shade to rest in the heat of the day. After another two-hour walk in the late afternoon, they finally rested in whatever village welcomed them and offered lodging for the night.

The men walked with only day-packs, mats and water purification tablets. They depended on villages for food and water.

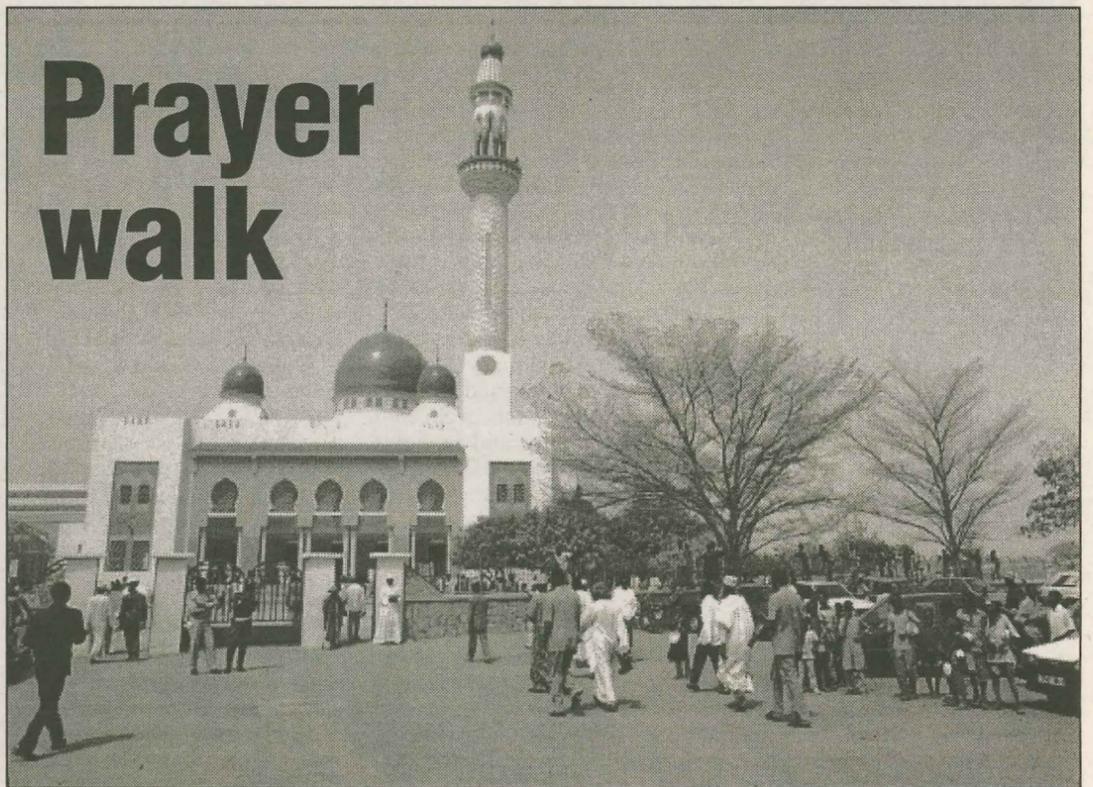
The team prayed for more than 50,000 Mandinka on each leg of the walk. After 40 years of evangelical witness, the Mandinka remain untouched by the gospel.

Steeped in Islamic traditions, the Muslim call to prayer echoes through the land five times a day, prompting the masses to bow toward the holy city of Mecca, thousands of miles away on a different continent.

Ritual prayers are recited in Arabic, a language most Gambians don't understand.

"We walked in some very desolate areas, but what made it desolate was not the lack of trees but the darkness of Islam," one of the representatives said. Due to security concerns, IMB officials asked that

## Prayer walk



neither the representatives nor the volunteers be identified.

"These are areas with absolutely no gospel witness," he said. "By walking into villages, we were attempting to break down walls and misconceptions of the western missionary—that we typically drive in and deliver a program and then drive out. Don't eat the food or water and don't pray."

Without direct contact with God, prayer is not personal to Muslims, he said. Yet, in this culture it is important to be a man of prayer because the Koran commands one to pray five times a day, he added.

"Prayer is the only way to open the door to the gospel," he said.

One Alaska volunteer said the prayerwalking experience changed how he thinks about prayer. One evening after a long, hot walk, the men sat praying and reading Scripture together as the village men gathered at the mosque.

"I felt impressed to pray for the salvation of the village chief," the volunteer said. "The realization hit me very hard that quite likely we were the only people who had ever lifted this man by name before God's throne."

"I realized then that even in a small village in a country that is 99

percent Muslim, God does not overlook individuals," he added.

Nearly 30 villages offered a place of rest to the trekkers. With each stop, the two Southern Baptist representatives gave copies of the Sermon on the Mount in Mandinka and Arabic script to the village chief and Islamic leader. They encountered resistance and indifference, as well as hospitality and a hunger for the Scripture, from those they met.

In one village, the representatives told the people they came only to pray for them. When it was time for the elders to go for evening prayers at the mosque, the missionaries were invited to join them. Simmons responded that they would pray in the compound.

After a while, one representative said he felt impressed to go to the mosque to pray. They took up their mats and sat outside, praying for those inside. When the village elders finished praying, they brought their mats outside and sat around the two representatives, expecting to be taught.

"In so many places, we were invited to come back and teach in the mosque, the place of important religious teaching," one representative said. "I already see a need for another walk. The next one will be a 'teaching walk.'"

**ISLAM'S GRIP** Throughout West Africa, mosques such as this one in Niamey, Niger, are visible symbols of Islam's sway. A 400-mile prayerwalking initiative among Gambia's Mandinka people included a time of Christian-Muslim exchange outside one such mosque. (BP photo)

## Missionary, volunteers use bike race to reach out in Tanzania



**TANZANIA TREK** Vic Almen, right, and Phil Harris helped Southern Baptist missionary Terry Jones organize a bicycle race in Maswa, Tanzania. Jones said the event helped further his ministry in the area. (BP photo)

By Stacey Hamby  
Missouri Word & Way

MASWA, Tanzania (BP)—It was a first for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board—using a bike race as an outreach strategy in Tanzania.

The 44-mile race—which drew 95 competitors and thousands of onlookers in the city of Maswa—was spearheaded by Southern Baptist missionary Terry Jones in conjunction with Second Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo.

Second Baptist minister of communications Vic Almen and member Phil Harris coordinated and participated in the July 4 bike race,

which covered rough terrain with large holes and dry riverbeds.

Jones, knowing that Almen and Harris were avid cyclists, asked them to organize and ride in the event as the culmination of six weeks of mission work in Maswa by members of the Missouri church.

"I saw the majority of people riding bicycles and saw the opportunity to use a bike race as a means to open doors to the gospel," Jones said.

Second Baptist funded the race and provided prizes of two new bicycles, a camera and cash. Seventy-one people finished the race, including Almen and Harris, who rode with the Tanzanians as encouragers and not as competitors.

The race made national headlines in Tanzania, Almen said. People in the villages recognized Almen and Harris from the promotional race posters. "The people opened their hearts in friendship and encouragement," Almen said.

Six college students from Second Baptist spent six weeks teaching English to Maswa high school students. Twelve schoolteachers and medical professionals from the church also spent two weeks in the city.

"The work of the people from Second Baptist has moved my work two years ahead of schedule," Jones said. "The people now know who I am and know that I am here to help meet their physical and spiritual needs."

# what's your connection?



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2001 Week of Prayer  
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September 9-16, 2001

Offering Goal: \$850,000

New Work Challenge Goal: \$150,000

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