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Six safety tips offered for church vansBy June Mathews
Alabama Baptist

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (ABP)—As the use of church vans grow, so do the safety concerns, according to a church administration specialist.

Two fatal wrecks last year involving church vans has heightened concern about the vehicles being used when church groups find a bus is too big but a car is too small.

Jim Swedenburg, a church administration specialist for the Alabama Baptist State Convention, outlined a list of basic issues to consider in church transportation:

■ **Seat belts.** "Every person on the van should be wearing a seat belt," he said.

Some states, but not all, require that adult backseat passengers wear seat belts. Regardless, Swedenburg said, making sure all passengers use belts decreases the risk of injury if an accident occurs.

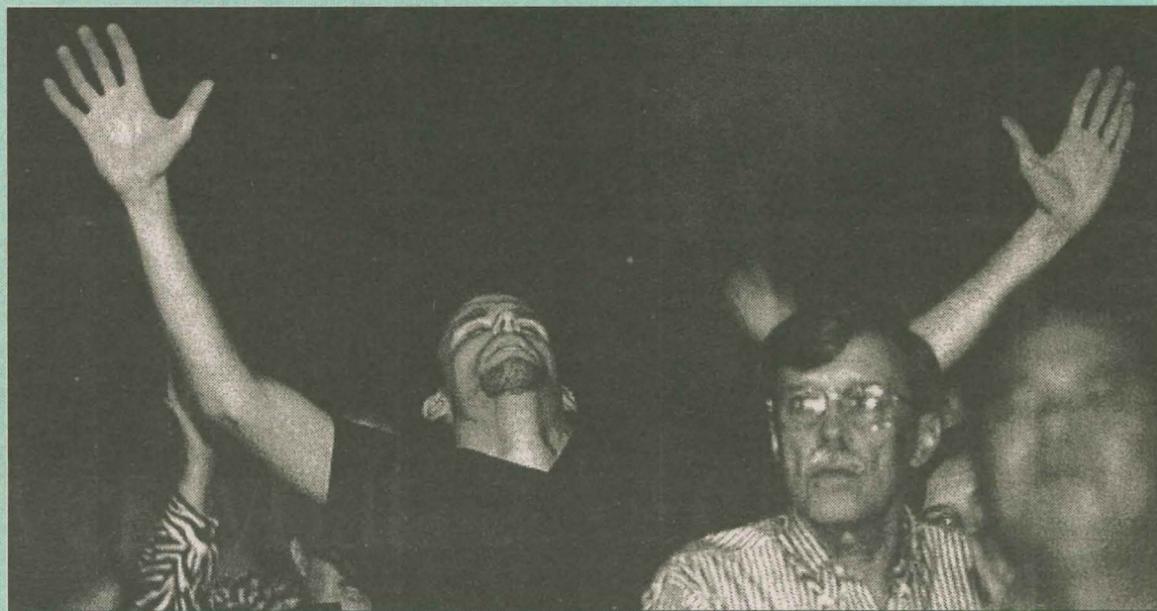
■ **Vehicle safety checks.** Regularly checking tires, brakes, lights, windshield wipers and seat belts for working condition and signs of wear might seem insignificant, but in some scenarios it could save lives, he said.■ **Drivers.** Swedenburg said churches have a responsibility to check and monitor all church van drivers. "Make sure drivers are licensed," he said. "It's a good idea to make a copy of the driver's license and keep it in the church office while he or she is driving the van."

Churches also should check driving records. No one with a drunk-driving arrest should be allowed to drive a church van, he said. Neither should anyone with a speeding ticket within the past year.

■ **Insurance.** Even though churches must carry insurance on their vehicles, drivers should be required to provide proof of personal liability insurance before being given the keys to a church van. A church's insurer should be contacted with any questions about driver guidelines and coverage.■ **License.** A commercial driver's license is required for a driver operating a vehicle with a gross weight rating of more than 26,000 pounds or one designed to transport 16 or more people, including the driver.■ **Vehicle design.** All the preparation in the world might not be enough if a van's design is dangerous.

Concerns about the safety of 15-passenger vans arose when the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a consumer advisory that warned these vans carry three times the rollover risk when fully loaded. A study found that the van's center of gravity shifts up and to the back, causing the vehicles to handle differently.

Panic maneuvers by drivers increase the risk, so the NHTSA also has recommended that only experienced drivers operate 15-passenger vans.

Praise hymns

An audience member at a recent "Songs 4 Worship" concert raises his arms in praise. A dozen Christian artists sang "praise and worship" music, showcasing a popular subgenre of contemporary Christian music. (RNS photo by Tyrone Turner)

Growing worship genre spanning CDs, concertsBy Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

FAIRFAX, Va. (RNS)—To see the strength of contemporary praise and worship music, look no further than last fall's 11-city "Songs 4 Worship" tour.

At the Patriot Center basketball arena in Fairfax, Va., 5,200 people—ranging from Presbyterian to Baptist to Pentecostal—raised their hands heavenward as they joined the singing and followed the words on a video screen. And deafening shouts of joy and praise followed the melodies.

"We were created to worship God," said Darlene Zschech, a worship leader from Sydney, Australia, known for the popular song "Shout

to the Lord" and one of the artists on the tour.

"I feel like it's doing so well because there is a real hunger in people for the presence of God."

The musical road trip was sponsored by Time-Life Music and a Christian music company who jointly produced recordings such as "Songs 4 Worship: Shout to the Lord," a two-CD pack that is the top-selling Christian album.

Michael W. Smith, the most celebrated artist on the tour, had just released a new CD, titled simply "Worship," which debuted on Billboard's chart of top 200 sellers at number 20.

"People are just searching for something and they find something in this music that they can connect

to on a personal level," said Gene Zacharewicz, vice president of new product development for Time-Life Music, which is spending tens of millions of dollars advertising this brand of Christian music.

Praise and worship music has existed for more than three decades but has grown in popularity in a wider circle of Christianity in recent years. Like some other Christian music, it has crossed over from its evangelical stronghold, reaching people with a variety of denominational and musical tastes.

Zschech (pronounced "Check") said she receives letters from missionaries in Africa and attendees at youth rallies at the Vatican who have sung her music.

□ See *Growing praise ...*, page 7**Can your Sunday school handle disruptive kids?**By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—After 26 years as a children's minister, Anne Smith has a wealth of experience teaching difficult youngsters in Sunday school.

The most troubled boy she worked with threw chairs. Twice the wounds he inflicted on other kids required stitches. He also upset teachers with constant mischief and snide remarks like, "That's boring."

But the former staff member at several Kentucky Baptist churches said blaming disruptive behavior on such well-known problems as attention-deficit or hyperactivity disorders ignores another shortcoming.

"A main reason for disruptive behavior is poor teaching," said Smith, the director of a community ministry in Louisville. "All children don't learn alike and a child who is disinterested or who finishes an exercise faster than

others is not going to sit quietly waiting for the rest."

Not that she discounts the reality of behavioral problems, particularly attention deficit or hyperactivity disorder, which affects between 5 and 10 percent of school-age children, according to a national advocacy organization.

Dr. Clare Jones of Phoenix, a specialist who treats special needs children, calls these "high stimulus" disorders.

Students with these problems need to touch something. Thus, teachers should refrain from removing things from their hands because they often use them for focus, she said.

"Instead, give them appropriate tools like Wikki Stix, which are available at teacher and craft stores," Jones said. "Allow them to hold something like this when they are working and it breaks down their distraction. They're great for church."

But today's Sunday school teachers are likely to encounter other sources of disruptive behavior, Smith said. The boy she encountered with violent outbursts later proved to have multiple problems, including fetal alcohol syndrome.

Some children struggle with emotional problems from such factors as parents divorcing or learning disabilities. Others don't understand proper behavior because they don't have a church background.

Sometimes, Smith said, harried teachers should enlist an extra helper to deal with a troubled youngster.

Still, Smith said teachers working with children need to go the extra mile. She suggests conferring with parents, counselors and the student's school teacher to learn more about the child. In-home visits also can build a relationship with the youngster, she said.

□ See *Specialists say ...*, page 3

"Those no longer at home or welcomed in the MBC can form a new Baptist state convention and continue our heritage."

Jim Hill, former Missouri Baptist Convention executive director

Moderates plan new convention in Missouri

SEDALIA, Mo. (BP)—People from more than 100 Missouri Baptist churches gathered last week to discuss plans to establish a separate state convention in the wake of the Missouri Baptist Convention's conservative shift of the past three years.

The first annual meeting of the proposed new convention, possibly to be named the Baptist Convention of Missouri, is tentatively set for April 18-19 at Fee Fee Baptist Church in St. Louis.

The meeting will focus on a convention name, constitution and bylaws and setting in place a leadership structure, organizers told about 350 people attending an information and planning meeting Jan. 17 at First Baptist Church of Sedalia. The church's pastor, Drew Hill, is one of the proposed convention's organizers.

"We are here today because these are difficult days for Missouri Baptists," Hill said. "These are days of uncertainty and strife. We are gathered here to share information and to discuss our concerns and then—under the leadership of God's Spirit—to do some planning to see how we can be about kingdom work in the days ahead."

Hill's brother Jim, who resigned last fall as MBC executive director, discussed why he favors forming a new convention. "The Baptist convention today is not the same one I have known all my life," he said. "The emphasis is on power and control;

there is more interest in exclusion than inclusion.

"However, I do not desire to give up my heritage as a Baptist," he added. "It is time to quit fighting with fellow Baptists and move forward with the kingdom work. Those no longer at home or welcomed in the MBC can form a new Baptist state convention and continue our heritage."

He and other organizers said a new convention would plan to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention. That raised some questions from participants, including Keith Herron, pastor of Holmeswood Baptist Church in Kansas City, which no longer affiliates with the SBC.

"Some of the churches represented here give to the CBF (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), but most are loyal to the SBC," Drew Hill responded. "We are going to be respectful of churches' decisions as to who they align with and where they choose to send their mission dollars."

Churches in the new convention could align with more than one national convention. This would allow predominantly black congregations to be dually aligned with the National Baptist Convention and the SBC—which, under current MBC requirements, they cannot be.

"This is not a fringe, radical movement by a bunch of wild-eyed people," Drew Hill emphasized. "It is a heartfelt concern on the part of solid, loyal Missouri Baptists."

Jim Hill said 104 churches, representing more than 107,000 members, received a mailing that invited members to attend the planning meeting. "That is one out of six Missouri Baptists," Hill said. "That would mean a new convention would be the 21st-largest of the 41 state Baptist conventions."

Those 104 churches also represent a total of \$4 million in giving to the Cooperative Program. He said that means a new convention eventually could "completely replace the funds that the five institutions (whose boards voted to go self-perpetuating) lost."

The five institutions whose boards of trustees voted to go self-perpetuating are the Baptist Home, Missouri Baptist College in St. Louis, Windermere Conference Center, Missouri Baptist Foundation and the Word & Way newsjournal. Messengers to the MBC annual meeting last fall voted to place more than \$2.2 million in CP funds to those entities in escrow until they rescind their actions. MBC leaders are considering legal action in an effort to reclaim the entities.

"We are not looking for personal gain," said MBC President Bob Curtis. "We want the five agencies restored and reconciled to the MBC, and a legal opinion may be the only way to do that. We are supportive of the five entities in question. We just disagree with the actions of their trustees. We want all five to come back home."

Georgia Baptist leaders defund Shorter College

ROME, Ga. (ABP)—Leaders of the Georgia Baptist Convention said Jan. 10 they will withhold \$9.6 million earmarked for Shorter College in response to a governance change removing the convention from direct control of the 128-year-old liberal-arts school.

College President Edward Schrader wrote a letter Jan. 8 to alumni and supporters announcing an agreement that shifts assets for the college in Rome, Ga., and responsibility for decision-making to the Shorter College Foundation.

The Georgia Baptist Convention previously had sole authority for electing or dismissing the college's board of trustees. Schrader said that arrangement raised concerns related to accreditation, because the college had no provision for dismissing trustees for cause.

He said the foundation board will be expanded to include the 30 current members of the board of trustees.

Georgia Baptist leaders, however, said the move caught them by surprise and conflicts with language in the GBC constitution specifying that institutions allow the convention to elect their leadership boards.

The GBC administration committee immediately voted to withdraw all funding for operations, capital improvement and endowment for Shorter College, a total of about \$9.6 million.

"I am deeply saddened by the actions of the college," Georgia Baptist Executive Director Robert White said. "When Shorter College trustees voted for this change, it raised legal and institutional issues relating to the relationship between Shorter and the GBC."

White said convention leaders have an "obligation to be certain" that funds are disbursed according to legal requirements.

Schrader said the move isn't intended to separate from Georgia Baptists but that the school wants to discuss a "new relationship" allowing it more self-regulation.

"The college doesn't seek to be independent in selecting trustees," said Schrader, who was elected president in 2000.

Schrader declined to comment on recent trustee selections but said the college's move wasn't motivated by politics.

He said he hopes "a new process" for electing trustees can be developed that involves both the convention and trustees to assure "that the board is always comprised of independent thinking persons."

WMU leaders: 'No affiliation' with new Global Women group

TALLADEGA, Ala.—The Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Executive Board responded last week to the formation of a new women's missions organization announced in December.

Global Women, a group with ties to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, announced its officers include a former national WMU president, executive director and staff member. Incorporators of the organization also included two former national WMU executives.

"Global Women has no affiliation with Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention," WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee said in a prepared statement. "While many of our former leaders are involved in the new organization, their participation is a personal decision and not one connected to national WMU."

Noting that she "was informed of their plans to launch Global Women two weeks prior to their formal announcement," Lee added that "the current leadership of Woman's Missionary Union has not been involved in the planning nor the incorporation of this agency."

Lee's statement was affirmed unanimously by the WMU Executive Board during its meeting Jan. 12-15 at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega, Ala.

Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky WMU, attended last week's meeting. She said board members "affirmed Wanda's statement," adding it is "an adequate statement" to address questions about WMU's response to Global Women.

"While there are commonalities between Woman's Missionary Union and Global Women, there are distinct differences in our purposes," Lee's statement noted. "WMU's desire for 113 years has been to create the kind of environment through missions education in the church that enables individuals to hear God's call to serve in whatever way He leads, and to support our missionaries."

"While the formation of Global Women has generated questions and concerns for many of our constituents, WMU's commitment is to remain true to our founding purpose," Lee said. "We will not become distracted from our calling to share Christ with a lost and hurting world."

Global Women Coordinator Suzannah Raffield said last month that one of the goals of the new organization will be to build an infrastructure for appointing women as missionaries.

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ Forum addresses ethics of war.

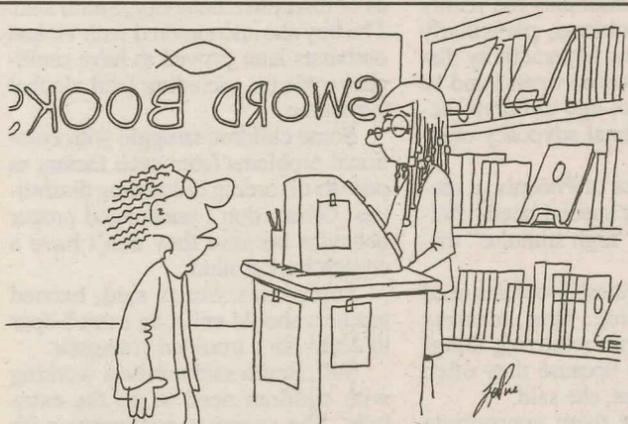
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will host a forum on the ethics of war Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. The forum, "Onward Christian Soldiers? Christian Witness in a Time of Terror," will be held in Heritage Hall on the school's Louisville campus. Speakers include Henlee Barnette, former professor of Christian ethics at Southern; Mark Coppenger, former president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.; and Al Mohler, president of Southern.

■ Mainstream group plans event.

The Mainstream Baptist Network will hold its first national convocation Feb. 15-16 in Charlotte, N.C. Speakers will include the group's two national co-chairman, Texas pastor Phil Lineberger and Virginia pastor Bill Wilson.

■ Alliance evaluates future goals.

The Alliance of Baptists, a moderate group formed in 1987, has formed a task force to reassess its role in Baptist life. The group will hold its annual convocation April 5-7 in Winston-Salem, N.C.



"What do you recommend for a congregation who has heard it all?"

KBHC helps teen mom place son with Christian couple

By Dannah Prather
Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

Editor's note: The last name of the adoptive parents was withheld and the first name of the birth mother was changed to protect the families' privacy.

Nancy didn't really know how much she wanted to be a mother, until her first miscarriage.

"It was like I really didn't care all that much about having kids until I found out there was a chance I couldn't," she explained.

Suddenly, having a baby was important to her and her husband, Dennis.

As the years passed, five pregnancies that began with hope and excitement ended painfully and prematurely. Nancy's doctor told the couple that for Nancy's sake, there could be no sixth pregnancy.

"That left us with in-vitro fertilization or adoption," Dennis said. For a while, he said, they didn't talk about how to proceed. Dennis said he could tell his wife was grieving. "Then one day we were at church and we looked in the pew and saw the envelope from Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children," Nancy said. "He looked at me and I looked at him and the next day, we called."

Residents of Western Kentucky, Dennis and Nancy drove to Louisville weekly for 10 weeks to attend adoption training and processing. There were classes, applications, background checks, home studies and the compilation of a book filled with facts and photos about themselves.

The books help birth parents make an adoption plan for their

baby. Dennis and Nancy shared their hearts on the pages and were giving much of their time and effort with no guarantees. "You pretty much have to give up on the idea of wanting a boy or a girl or this or that," Dennis said. The couple said they were preparing their home and hearts for whatever child the Lord might send their way.

After being approved as adoptive parents, the two watched as other couples in their group were selected as adoptive parents and met their babies. They celebrated with others and continued to wait. "Every couple in our class got a baby but us," Dennis recalled. "It wasn't easy."

While Dennis and Nancy waited, a young woman planning her first term of college was facing her own challenges and disappointments. One night Patti's life changed forever when she became a victim of date rape. Adding to that trauma, she was pregnant.

A Christian, Patti wanted to face her situation with God and her family by her side, according to Anne Foster, the KBHC staffer who worked with her.

As Patti looked at a family profile supplied by the adoption worker, she saw the photograph of Nancy and Dennis. She read that they were Christians, active in their local church, had a big yard and a dog. She wanted to meet them.

"There is no right or wrong regarding open versus closed adoptions," Foster said. "For some people it is easier to be able to see the adoptive parents and then be able to picture what your child might be doing with his family. It can be very comforting. For

others it isn't. In this case, the visual was very important to the birth mother." KBHC facilitates open, closed and international adoptions.

Foster arranged a meeting at a church in Patti's hometown. "We hit it off real well," Dennis said. "She had about 12 pages of questions. She liked the fact that I was tall. She figured the baby would be tall because of the birth father. And she liked that we had a dog."

There were other things Patti wanted to know. "She had some pretty intense questions," Foster said. "She had done some deep thinking about the future of her baby. She had pages of things she wanted in a family."

During a checkup, Patti had been told that her baby would be a boy. She named the child Elisha and asked Dennis and Nancy if they would want to rename the baby after the adoption.

"We said, no," Dennis said. "She'd already been calling him 'Eli' and that's the name that would be on all the papers and everything, so we said that would be fine with us."

As the delivery day approached, Dennis and Nancy made few preparations. They knew there was a possibility that Patti might change her mind once Eli was born. They made no changes to the bunk beds or seashell wallpaper.

"We didn't buy a baby bed," Nancy said. "We didn't even have a pack of diapers in the house," Dennis added. "I didn't want that here for (Nancy) to see if things didn't work out."

Patti had decided that she wanted Nancy and Dennis to be part of Eli's life right from the beginning. "That first 24 hours for the birth mother is like saying 'hello' and 'goodbye' at

the same time," Foster said. "It's important for the mother and baby to have that time together. Patti also wanted Nancy and Dennis there, too. She wanted them to meet the baby the day after his birth and accept him into their lives from her arms."

After more than a year, tears still come to Nancy's eyes when she recalls her time with Patti at the hospital. "There's no way to put it in words. I really felt like I got close to (Patti) and to her mom and dad. We all have a bond now."

When the moment came for Patti to leave the hospital, she did not waver in the decision to give Eli up for adoption. "She put him in my arms, said, 'God bless you' and walked out," Nancy said. "She did every bit of it because she loved him."

A few months later, the families met again. "I had told (Patti) at the hospital, 'This won't be the only time you see Eli,' and I was going to hold to that promise." Nancy said she left the visit at peace, and believed Patti did the same. "I think it gave her peace to know he is OK and loved and it gave me peace to know that she was at peace," Nancy said.

The miscarriages, long trips to Louisville and the waiting are not forgotten, but for Dennis and Nancy, those memories are fading and being replaced with new ones.

"We went from a couple to a family," Nancy said. "That's a transition, but it all seems to fit."

Patti "is grieving," Foster said, "but she always tells me, 'I know this was right.'"

For information on KBHC pregnancy and adoption services, call (800) 928-5242.

BLUEGRASS BURGEOO

■ A rally and dinner in honor of the more than 300 Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers who served in New York City and at other disaster sites last year is planned for Feb. 2 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. For more information, call the KBC Brotherhood department at (502) 244-6489 or toll-free in Kentucky at (888) 254-5720.

■ Church pianists and organists interested in developing their skills are invited to participate in one of the five Kentucky Baptist Keyboard Festivals offered throughout the state this spring. The festivals will be held in the following cities: Murray, Feb. 23; Ashland, March 16; Franklin, March 23; Louisville, April 20; and London, May 18. Registration costs \$12 per student. For more information, call the KBC church music department at (502) 254-4727 or (888) 254-5707.

■ The KBC preschool/children's ministry meeting will be Feb. 1-2 at Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington. Keynote speaker will be Scott Wigginton, director of Lifecare Counseling Center in Louisville. For more information, call the KBC Sunday school department at (502) 254-4730 or (888) 254-5709.

■ The KBC single adult ministry conference will be held Feb. 28 in Louisville at the Kentucky Baptist Building. Keynote speaker will be Ron Crouch, director of the Kentucky Data Center. For more information, call (502) 254-4719 or (888) 254-5704.

Specialists say disruptive kids don't have to ruin Sunday school

7 tips for teachers of disruptive kids

Here are some tips for teaching disruptive children in Sunday school:

■ Make the lesson interesting. Know it well enough so you don't have to read it.

■ Make opportunities for movement a part of the lesson.

■ Organize seating so when difficult children look up they can easily see the teacher.

■ Play off their interest areas. Include a silly remark or interesting fact in the middle of a lesson.

■ Pair repeated characters or words in the lesson with movements so students aren't always seated.

■ Use visual aids, such as a picture or word reminder of key points.

■ Use a page of pictured characters or items for an entire month or thematic unit. Have students circle those they hear in that day's lesson.

Sources: Elizabeth McFadden, special education consultant with Daviess County Schools and Dr. Clare Jones, author and private practitioner in Phoenix

Continued from page 1

"The average layperson needs to educate themselves," Smith said. "People want an answer to this problem and there's not an easy one. I don't have a magic pill. In order for that hour to be good, you have to have a relationship outside the classroom."

To improve lessons, Smith advocates creative teaching styles, such as interactive exercises that keep children busy and moving. Using Play-Doh or modeling clay can keep fidgety students occupied.

She also advocates a peaceful demeanor: "The calmer you are, the quieter you are and the slower you talk, the more he will respond. There's no reason for anybody to be screaming or yelling at a child."

A veteran special education teacher and consultant for the Daviess County school system also places responsibility on the instructor to keep classes interesting.

Elizabeth McFadden said a lot of disruptive behavior happens because of the environment and interplay with the teacher, which can be controlled.

Preparations go beyond a clean and welcoming environment, she said. For example, there should be a focal point for the lesson, including Bible verses, illustrations and other material.

Teachers should place all other items and potential distractions behind the children, and seat the children with

Resources:

■ "Driven to Distraction" by Dr. Edward Hallowell and Dr. John Ratey.

■ "Smart Kids with School Problems" by Priscilla Vail.

■ "Attention Deficit Disorders: Strategies for School Age Children" by Dr. Clare Jones. Also by Dr. Jones, "Sourcebook on ADHD for Early Childhood Teachers and Parents."

■ "Managing Attention Hyperactivity Disorder in Children" by Sam Goldstein.

■ ADDitude Magazine, www.additudemag.com.

their backs to the door, McFadden said.

Fidgety or disruptive members can be enlisted to help demonstrate the lesson, such as holding pictures or acting out a skit.

She also believes in minimizing time spent on housekeeping chores by having children help take attendance and hand out materials.

"If you have talkers, pass out gum," said McFadden, a member of Third Baptist Church in Owensboro. "Starbursts take a long time to chew," she added, but shouldn't be given to kids who are sugar sensitive.

Expectations should be clearly

spelled out, she said. Children should know when they will have individual work, group activities and how many people are allowed to talk at the same time.

McFadden suggests involving students in prayer asking for God's guidance in learning their lesson.

Most teachers should expect to encounter disruptive kids, given society's loosening of expectations and standards, she said. And it doesn't necessarily get any easier as the children get older.

"Kids that are hyperactive and distracted can be really hard to handle in youth and middle-school classes," McFadden said. "It would be nice to have 30 'Perfect Penneys,' but that's not the world we live in and that's not the people Jesus went to."

But she cautioned churches not to expect parents to automatically inform them that their child has problems. It is more likely they will observe the behavior first, she said.

While it would help the teacher to have advance warning, McFadden warns against stereotyping an unruly child.

"The church should be a place of refuge," she said. "If parents don't tell, we shouldn't ask for labels. It is acceptable and possible to talk about observable behaviors, such as disruptive or greatly inattentive actions, without using labels."

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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Tolerance vs. truth

All of us are familiar with the fact that biblical Christian viewpoints are being increasingly vilified in American culture in the name of tolerance. I would likewise suggest that there are those in our associations and our state convention who are preaching tolerance over biblical truth, only instead of the word "tolerance," they use the word "autonomy."

When should the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, International Mission Board or Kentucky Baptist Convention sever ties with a congregation or association? When their doctrinal beliefs contradict those of the convention agency? Evidently not. Perhaps when those congregations support homosexual agendas, like cases in Georgia we heard about several months ago? Wouldn't that be a violation of their autonomy? What if a congregation stopped baptizing by immersion? Would severing ties with them still be a violation of their Baptist autonomy?

My question to all of you who champion your god of autonomy is, "Where do you draw the line?" Or, "Do you draw a line at all?"

Conventions and associations are indeed voluntary cooperatives and such religious cooperatives have every right to define themselves theologically according to the beliefs of the majority. When a member congregation or association espouses beliefs contrary to the stated beliefs of the cooperative, they are, in effect, making their autonomous decision to disassociate.

NAMB is part of the Southern Baptist Convention. If District of Columbia Baptists don't like SBC beliefs, let them get funding from their other Baptist affiliates. The SBC doesn't need any more cheating spouses.

I find it comical and sad that many can uphold autonomy as "historic Baptist" doctrine, yet deny other, more important historic Baptist beliefs like biblical inerrancy, the sovereignty of God, the exclusivity of Jesus

Christ and belief in a literal hell. Really, where are your priorities?

Shawn Merithew
Louisville

Faithful preaching

Red River Association unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"Be it resolved that the Red River Association of Southern Baptists go on record as encouraging all pastors of the churches in the association to continue being faithful to the teaching and preaching of the truth in God's Word by handling accurately His Word through faithful study to promote sound biblical doctrine (2 Timothy 2:15) and to be faithful to the purpose of evangelism and discipleship for the equipping of the saints, to the building up of the body of Christ that is true and faithful to the Scriptures that are inerrant and infallible (Ephesians 4:12-16)."

We prayerfully encourage all associations and churches to consider this resolution as they continue to work for the glory of God.

Vaughn Rasor, clerk
Red River Association

Shoot for a 'par' round

By Herb Stoneman

This summer I decided my wife, Jeanette, needed to learn to play golf. Actually, I saw a set of women's clubs, complete with bag and balls, at a yard sale. I parted with five dollars, carted them home and presented them to her. I told her I thought it would be good if we spent some time playing this "gentleman's game" together. She agreed.

We selected a course near our home and began her first round. I showed her how to stand, how to swing and how to putt. At the first tee, she stepped up and hit the ball straight down the fairway. I searched for my tee shot out in the weeds. Her second stroke was just as straight. She beat

me by a stroke on the first hole!

Several holes later, we came to a short par three. She hit first. The ball sailed true and landed six inches from the pin. My ball landed in the trees behind the green. She calmly stepped up and dropped the ball in the cup. She had her first birdie.

As the round went on, she continued to hit the ball up the middle of the course. At the end, she had a birdie and three pars. I won't bother you with my score!

As we added up the scores she said, "I didn't do well, did I?" I corrected her, "Oh no, you were great!" She then astounded me by saying, "Isn't the object to make par on every hole?" I admitted that was indeed the goal, but that very few people attained it.

FIRST PERSON

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Dedicated people dedicate buildings

When we dedicate new buildings it is easy to focus more on what people have done than on what God has done. That wasn't the case, however, when Gasper River Association recently dedicated its new ministry center.

Director of Missions Dowling Runner certainly praised the many volunteers and church members who gave sacrificially to make the dream of this new associational ministry center a reality. He paid tribute to individuals and churches that had given so much time, effort and money. However, the highest praise was reserved for God who made it all possible.

The Gasper River Associational Ministry Center includes 5,000 square feet with a large conference room (50' x 50') that will seat 225 people. There are two lovely bedrooms for guests who provide ministry with the church. There also are offices, a workroom,

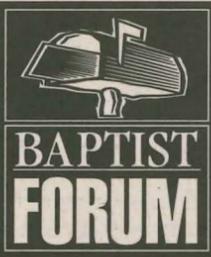
restrooms, reception desk, library and boardroom.

There are only 26 churches in the association. It is indeed a miracle how God brought the church members together in providing financial resources for the project.

The same day that facility was dedicated, I also spoke at Aberdeen Baptist Church in Morgantown, which has a relatively new sanctuary. It was filled!

Aberdeen Pastor Roger Taylor shared his experience as a chaplain for the Red Cross in New York after the Sept. 11 tragedy. It was his responsibility to take family members who had lost loved ones to "Ground Zero." Roger said his life will never be the same.

The next Sunday I spoke at Bloomfield Baptist Church, where Mark Terry is pastor, and participated in the dedication of that church's new educational wing and multi-purpose building. In a town of 1,000 people,



GIVING

Changes to 2002 gift tax enhance taxpayer benefits

By Laurie Valentine

The federal annual gift tax exclusion, which has been \$10,000 since 1982, increased to \$11,000 on Jan. 1, 2002.



This exclusion permits you to make gifts up to \$11,000 each year to

anyone without incurring any gift tax and without using up any of your unified credit amount (the amount you can either give during life or pass at death to anyone without any gift/estate tax liability).

You are not limited to a certain number of "annual exclusion" gifts each year. You can make them to one person, 10 people or more—and a couple can give a total of \$22,000 to one person each year.

The 2001 Tax Relief Act made big changes in the federal estate tax laws, including gradually increasing the estate tax unified credit from \$1 million beginning this year to \$3.5 million by 2009, repealing estate taxes for 2010 and gradually lowering the top federal estate tax rate.

However, most of these changes fall by the wayside on Dec. 31, 2010. In 2011, the 2001 top federal estate tax rate of 55 percent is reinstated and the estate tax exemption falls back to \$1 million.

The gift tax unified credit increases to \$1 million this year, but does not continue to increase like the estate tax exemption. Therefore, if your total cumulative lifetime taxable gifts (gifts in one year which exceed the annual exclusion amount) exceed \$1 million, you will owe gift tax, even if the estate tax exemption is higher at the time you exceed the limit. The annual gift tax exclusion will allow you to continue your lifetime giving, even if you have used up your \$1 million gift tax exemption.

The increase in the gift tax exclusion also is helpful for those funding 529 college savings plans and state prepaid tuition plans. Currently, you can put up to \$50,000 at one time in one of these plans with no gift tax consequences because the law permits you to count the addition as 5 years' worth of annual exclusion gifts. Now, you'll be able to contribute \$55,000.

The increase in the annual gift tax exclusion is good news for those wanting to reduce the size of their estate and for those funding high-cost college expenses.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

Parents and peers can help teens avoid drugs & alcohol

Q: How can I ensure that my teen stays drug and alcohol free?

I wish there was a sure-fire answer to your question. While there is no way to circumvent personal choice and responsibility, there are some things you can do to both monitor and encourage your young person.

First, let your life precede your lips. Teens need to catch you consistently living a clean and joyful life. Don't do what you tell them not to do—even if it's legal.

Remember that teenagers try on identities like they try on T-shirts. Work hard to encourage your teen to find a place that he or she can be successful. Whether this is academically, musically, athletically, interpersonally, through leadership in the youth group, participation at a part-time job, involvement in a club or something else, experiencing oneself as successful in the real world will make him or her less likely to need an altered state.

Give teens every chance to become a part of the fabric of a Christian subculture at school as well as church. This includes exposing them to Christian youth; it also should include having a strong parent group who will serve as "surrogates" and passionate bystanders in the event that the teen moves for a time to the "far country."

Talk with teens regularly about what their friends are doing. If their friends are using drugs or alcohol, it is likely they are too. While it might seem odd, a wise parent routinely stays up not only to converse with, but to smell, their teen after late-night outings.—*Scott Wigginton*

Q. My mother has been diagnosed with cognitive decline of the Alzheimer's type. This has been very hard on us but it has drawn us together as a family. As we cope with this situation, are there any current medical discoveries that can give us hope for improving treatments?

The National Institute on Aging and the Sanders-Brown Research Center have done studies that suggest treatment hope for Alzheimer's disease.

Telomerase, an enzyme believed to have a role in determining the life span of cells, also might protect nerve cells against decreased function and premature death caused by Alzheimer's disease and other age-related neurological disorders, according to Mark Mattson, chief of the Laboratory of Neurosciences at the National Institute on Aging Gerontology Research Center in Baltimore.

Mattson and his colleagues in Baltimore and at the Sanders-Brown Research Center on Aging at the University of Kentucky Medical Center in Lexington have found that nerve cells with low levels of telomerase are particularly vulnerable to being killed by a toxic protein that accumulates in the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease. In contrast, nerve cells with high levels of telomerase displayed a remarkable resistance to being damaged or killed in experimental models of Alzheimer's disease or stroke.

The researchers found that telomerase blocks a biochemical cascade of reactions called apoptosis, which causes nerve cells to self-destruct. Accumulating evidence implicates the process of apoptosis in the death of nerve cells that occurs in Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and stroke.

If scientists can develop methods to stimulate the production of telomerase in nerve cells, Mattson said, it might help fend off age-related neurological disorders when detected early enough.—*Jon Rainbow*

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



Ministry keys: inreach, outreach, upreach

A husband and father is diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor. A favorite aunt several states away dies after a lengthy illness. A family member faces surgery.

What kind of support system do people have when they face such crises in life? During the past week, all three of those situations became reality for members of my Sunday school class. And much of the emotional and spiritual support came from fellow class members as we mobilized to pray, visit and provide meals. We also shared hugs, words of encouragement and offered listening ears.

Whether your church calls it Sunday school, Bible study, small group or some other title, the time that Christians spend studying God's Word together on a regular basis also is a significant time of friendship and relationship-building. That becomes especially clear during times of personal or family crisis.

Many people in our communities, work settings and schools have no such support system. In addition to needing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, they need personal relationships with caring Christians. Tragically, many of them don't even realize what they are missing in their lives. Reaching out to those people and seeking to involve them in meaningful Bible study is another key role in an effective Sunday school ministry.

Fellowship, ministry and Bible study have been described as Sunday school's three-pronged mission of inreach, outreach and upreach. It involves reaching in to serve and encourage fellow members in times of need, reaching out to unsaved and unchurched people who need to hear the good news of the gospel and reaching up in our relationship to God through in-depth Bible study and prayer.

Specific ways to accomplish those goals vary from church to church and class to class. Some churches use the FAITH Sunday school evangelism strategy or similar ministry tool to evangelize their communities and impact people's lives with the gospel. Others have regular fellowship times, care groups or prayer chains to help meet the needs of current members. Some classes put the bulk of their energies into quality Bible study and discipleship growth.

The healthiest Sunday school classes find ways to incorporate all three emphases of inreach, outreach and upreach into their ongoing ministry efforts.

Of course, each of the three becomes the top priority at various times, depending on specific needs and opportunities. For my class, inreach was vital this past week.

In addition to the phone calls, hospital visits and meal deliveries, one of the most significant moments for our class was an informal memorial service in honor of a

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

member's elderly aunt who died in Florida.

Since the family members in Kentucky were unable to travel to the funeral in Florida, our class leaders organized a brief memorial service here. Fourteen class members and neighbors gathered in the family's home to share music, Scripture, personal reflections and prayer, giving family members an opportunity to voice their grief and memories in a loving, supportive environment.

While memorial services aren't a typical part of Sunday school's ministry agenda, I've seldom been more thankful to be part of such a caring, sensitive group of believers.

What kind of Sunday school class do you attend or lead? Make certain that it keeps inreach, outreach and upreach as top priorities.

Is this a turning point?

By Wayne Ward

God bless Charles Barnes and his committee on the Southern Baptist Convention's 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention, several other state conventions and Baptists around the world owe an everlasting debt of gratitude to this wise layman (and former KBC president) for his prophetic vision at our 2000 state convention in Bowling Green. From his Baptist experience Barnes knew that any confession or statement of faith is just that—a voluntary expression of commonly held beliefs by some Baptist body as a witness to the world outside and fellow believers inside, without one iota of authority over the Bible or the conscience of any congregation or individual believer.

If we had stumbled into our annual meeting in Murray in 2001 without giving serious prayer, thought and Bible study to the ultimatum we had been given to approve or reject the SBC's 2000 statement, we could have destroyed our convention. We certainly would have created more conflict in our Baptist family, with the attendant damage to our missionary and educational ministries. That has happened in many states. Instead, we left

Murray with more unity and Christian love than we have seen in years!

By anticipating this looming threat, Barnes and his committee were given the opportunity to spend hours and days in prayer, Bible study and intense preparation of their report to the convention.

Strongly supported by convention president Jim McKinley, a faithful missionary who spent a lifetime of sacrificial service in Bangladesh, the committee came up with a report that will go down as a watershed in Baptist history.

They reminded us that all confessions and theological statements must come from the heart, without the slightest coercion or threat. What we have been witnessing in Baptist life in recent years has been an attempt to impose creedal statements on other believers by threat of reprisals, loss of jobs, destruction of personal reputations or expulsion from the Baptist family. The Barnes Committee rightly affirmed the value of all our confessions and statements of faith in understanding our history, our interpretations of Scripture and our points of agreement and disagreement.

Baptists, until recently, always have resisted the effort of religious authorities to impose their creeds upon them by threat or intimidation. Far

from being a product of the Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation of the 16th century, Baptists have been the long-suffering victims of it. Historians tell us that Baptist dissenters by the tens of thousands were slain by the sword or burned at the stake because they would not submit to the creedal authority of the Reformers. They died with the words of Holy Scripture on their lips rather than bow down to the Reformation creeds.

Although we share many of the Reformers' theological convictions, Baptists and other dissenters are the only believers in the history of Christianity or any other world religion who consistently have repudiated the establishment of religion by governmental or religious authority. When conscientious faith and sacrificial service are usurped by human government or religious hierarchy, the greatest good on earth can become the greatest evil!

God bless the Barnes Committee for their report and Kentucky Baptists for overwhelmingly approving it. They reminded millions of believers around the world of this most precious of all theological truths: Each believer is free to follow the leading of God's Spirit and the light of Holy Scripture, joining with other like-minded believers to serve God "in spirit and in truth."

Wayne Ward is emeritus professor of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

WORSHIP

Will video become the stained glass of the 21st century?

Visual worship, in part, is about bringing art back into the church, according to Javad Shadzi.

By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

DENVER (ABP)—Sally Morgenthaler foresees a day when digital video will be used as frequently and naturally in worship services as the hymnal ever was.

Making the visual element an integral part of worship is a passion for Morgenthaler, a popular speaker and author on worship.

Visual worship isn't just about cool gadgets or being culturally relevant, she said in an interview with the Christian lifestyle magazine FaithWorks. It's about giving Christians full-sensory freedom to experience the presence of God, and for most congregations it's a long way off.

Many churches already use multimedia in worship, but it most often is used to support a verbal message. Sermon outlines, song texts and movie clips illustrate a spoken sermon, which still is the main focus of worship.

But that limits the power of visual technology as a vehicle for the gospel message in its own right, Morgenthaler contends.

Like other worship planners, Morgenthaler confessed that she is "guilty of using (visual) resources to support the idea of Christ and not the person."

Instead of using video "just to stuff more information into people's heads," she said, "I want to use video to help people experience the Person of God through Jesus Christ."

That distinction says volumes about a church's philosophy of worship, she said. A didactic, linear approach in worship is a "way to deliver a concept." A sensory, multimedia approach, in contrast, "invite(s) you into the Grand Story."

Western Christians are so conditioned to present the gospel as a rational argument that they view other elements of worship as supplementing the sermon, Morgenthaler said. But that ignores the powerful role the visual can play in transformation.

Pictures not only tell stories with incredible emotional power, but they can even serve a liturgical purpose, she said. For example, a scripture passage about the constancy of God could be paired with a video of waves continually crashing on the shore. If used without verbal commentary, she said, the video functions "parallel to the passage, and it's not didactic." By



VIDEO GENERATION Sally Morgenthaler, author of "Worship Evangelism," says video imagery could be the next main ingredient used to offer multi-sensory worship. A video image like the one above could be used to reinforce a concept like freedom or forgiveness. "I want to use video to help people experience the person of God through Jesus Christ," she said.

adding a visual experience of constancy, the video expands the message of the scripture.

Morgenthaler, whose 1996 book, "Worship Evangelism," is becoming a contemporary classic, is completing a new book, "The Uncharted Now," which explores worship in the emerging culture.

While examples are rare, Morgenthaler said a new visual-worship resource from Highway Video is the type that can make video an integral part of worship.

Highway, based in the Silicon Valley, Calif., recently released Vibe Videos, a collection of short generic videos for worship. They are more poetic than didactic, visually expounding broad themes like water, sunlight, the cross and worship symbols. They

come in DVD or VHS formats, with or without subtle text that supports the theme. They can stand alone to create "ambiance." Or they can accompany live music, serve as an offertory or enhance communion, all to add texture.

"They're more ethereal," said Joe Perez, a producer on Highway's three-man team. "They're kind of like visual wallpaper. The beauty is in the simplicity."

Javad Shadzi, Highway's marketing director, agrees with Morgenthaler about video's potential to be worship, not just support it. "The visual arts can communicate a point or the visual arts can be the experience," he said.

But Highway is not pushing the Vibe Videos as "liturgy" or stand-

alone experience. "We are all for video being the experience too, but it's hard to mass produce that," Shadzi admits. "The last thing we want to do is mass produce and sell spirituality."

"Generally, we have used video to supplement 'standard' teaching and worship, as opposed to Sally's approach of video being the content or teaching," he said. "Getting pastors to even supplement their teaching with a video is a big enough chore. . . . But as more and more worship leaders experiment with video, that could quickly change."

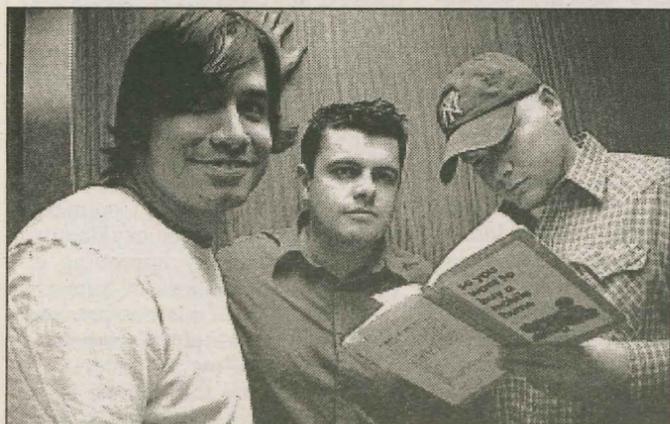
The Vibe Videos are a new direction for Highway Video, which also produces on-the-street interviews, short dramas, thematic commentaries and music videos, all for use in worship and other group settings.

Highway, which started as a video team at Highway Community Church in Palo Alto, Calif., is one of a very few companies that are producing original video for worship, and trying to make a living at it.

"I have no talent other than just seeing the world funky," said Travis Reed, founder, president and producer, whose offbeat humor has been part of Highway's trademark. While quality production is important, the guys say, telling stories is where the real power of video lies. "We try not to get hung up on the technology—it's storytelling," said Shadzi.

Church media ministries tend to attract the "techies," Shadzi added, but the storytellers are the ones who really should be involved.

"The (medieval) church used to commission the greatest artists to tell its story," he said. Visual worship in part is about bringing art back into the church, he added, "because God created it and it works. It gives people a deeper connection."



HIGHWAY A three-man team in Silicon Valley, Calif., has compiled Vibe Videos, a collection of short generic videos for worship. The images expound broad themes like water, sunlight, the cross and worship symbols. "They're kind of like visual wallpaper," said producer Joe Perez. "The beauty is in the simplicity."

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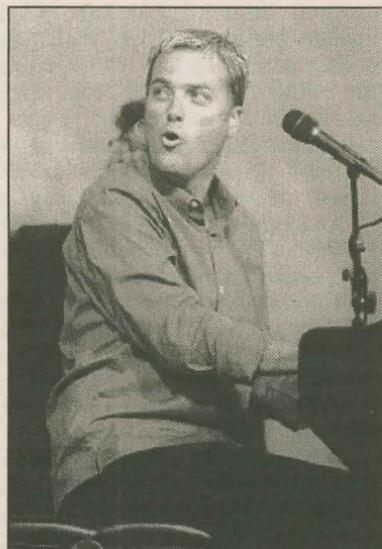
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WORSHIP

Growing praise and worship genre spawns CDs, concerts



MICHAEL W. SMITH The popular Christian artist performed several praise and worship songs during his appearance in Louisville last year at the Greater Louisville Billy Graham Crusade.

Continued from page 1

In the United States, it has entered such venerated venues as the Washington National Cathedral and the chapels of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y.

Smith mentioned at the concert that he chose the song "Above All" for a performance during President Bush's inaugural prayer service. The song speaks of Jesus being "above all powers, above all kings."

"I obviously couldn't come and rock the house, especially if it was in the Washington Cathedral," he said. "I'll just never forget it 'cause I thought it was so the right song for the occasion."

The song might have been unfamiliar to some people at last year's service, but it and others, such as "Awesome God," were known by many at last fall's concerts.

The concerts were a modern version of an old-fashioned hymn sing; but in this case, no hymnals were re-

quired. Instead of an organ, worshippers were accompanied by grand pianos, drums, guitars and a violin.

It's part of a movement that simultaneously has divided congregations and brought together people from a range of denominations, ages and racial and ethnic backgrounds for concerts of worship.

The Gospel Music Association's official definition of a praise and worship album states that most of it must include "participatory" music sung by artists known for leading worship in local or national settings.

"The audience is not a spectator," said Frank Breeden, president of the Nashville-based organization. "They're a participant."

Songs can range from contemplative to hard rock, but they are "vertical in nature," Breeden said, or aimed at God.

Don Moen, executive vice president of Integrity Music, said praise and worship music is intended to be inspirationally intimate.

"This music is a little bit more directed to encouraging people to have a personal relationship with God," said Moen, another worship leader on the tour. "Rather than 'Let's sing about God,' these are directed towards Him."

Nicole C. Mullen, whose worship song "Redeemer" won the Gospel Music Association's Dove Award for song of the year last year, said the music addresses God horizontally, too.

"While I am singing of His mercies and I'm thanking Him for being merciful to me, at the same time I'm having to tell everybody else about how good He's been," she said.

Though praise and worship music has its multitude of fans, it also has detractors, both musical and theological.

While the "Songs 4 Worship: Shout to the Lord" CDs have an "all-star lineup," wrote Washington Post critic Mike Joyce, "it doesn't take long for these often bland performances to

begin blurring into each other."

Carl Daw, executive director of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, does not completely reject the music, but advocates its inclusion along with more traditional music in what are now commonly known as services of "blended" worship.

He worries that the value of historic hymns in exploring theological issues in depth can be lost if they are rejected for praise and worship styles. Daw added that the modern choruses' focus on unison singing means the loss of harmony and, perhaps, voices of some congregational singers who cannot comfortably sing a melody line.

"Singing in harmony is really a theological statement about unity and diversity," he said.

Breeden, of the Gospel Music Association, sometimes is wistful about notes on a page when many praise choruses are sung using lyrics printed on a sheet or flashed on a screen. But he thinks that is a necessary trade-off.

"As a musician of over 30 years, I do miss some of the aesthetic qualities that occur with traditional hymnody," he said. "But I believe that the energy and the vitality of the worship experience that the modern music (forms) have brought more than make up for the loss of the aesthetics."

Concertgoers to the "Songs 4 Worship" tour said the music means more to them than just a time of celebration at church or in an arena.

Katie Ziselberger, a vocational counselor from Gaithersburg, Md., said the music from Smith's latest CD proved a comfort to her when she listened to it at home as she awaited word on the welfare of a cousin who works on Wall Street on Sept. 11—the day the CD was released to stores. The cousin was fine.

"I may not be blessed with the gift of song," said Ziselberger, who attends a Pentecostal church. "But I am totally blessed by God's music and I love to hear it all the time."

Praise and worship songs can range from contemplative to hard rock, but they are "vertical in nature," or aimed at God.

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"SONGS 4 WORSHIP" Worship leaders Nicole C. Mullen, second from left, and Darlene Zschech, center, perform with other Christian artists during a "Songs 4 Worship" tour in Fairfax, Va., last October. (RNS photo by Tyrone Turner)

Arizona Baptist Foundation collapse similar to Enron?

"There are no similarities between the Kentucky Baptist Foundation and the Baptist Foundation of Arizona."

Kentucky Baptist Foundation President Barry Allen

By Mark Wingfield
Texas Baptist Standard

PHOENIX (ABP)—Arizona's attorney general is asking the federal government to compare the recent collapse of Enron with the alleged swindling of \$600 million from investors in the Arizona Baptist Foundation to see if accounting giant Arthur Andersen is guilty of a pattern of deceptive auditing.

Andersen was auditor for both the Texas energy giant that recently filed for bankruptcy and the Arizona Baptist Foundation, which went bankrupt in 1999.

Arizona Attorney General Janet Napolitano said Andersen's role in the foundation collapse might shed light on what went wrong at Enron.

"I am very troubled by the similarities between the allegations against Andersen by Enron's investors and the facts our office has discovered in our various investigations of Andersen," Napolitano wrote in a Jan. 2 letter to three leaders in the U.S. Senate. "I am seriously concerned that Andersen has engaged in a pattern of deceptive auditing practices that have had the effect of defrauding the investing public, including the state of Arizona and the Arizona State Retirement Sys-

tem, out of hundreds of millions of dollars."

The Baptist Foundation of Arizona matter alone cost investors about \$590 million, Napolitano said. Investor losses in Enron are estimated in the billions of dollars.

Congress and federal law-enforcement officials are investigating what role the accounting giant might have played in hiding Enron's financial instability from investors. Andersen, meanwhile, currently is defending itself against allegations that its auditors were complicit in misleading investors about the true financial condition of the Arizona Baptist Foundation.

Pati Urias, public information officer for the Arizona attorney general, said Napolitano made the offer to Sens. Tom Daschle, John McCain and Ernest Hollings.

Andersen has denied any wrongdoing in the foundation collapse. Response to the Enron bankruptcy is still unfolding, with internal investigations under way, one key employee fired and others suspended.

In both the Enron and Baptist foundation cases, the auditing firm gave clients clean bills of financial health, despite the fact that huge losses were hidden from investors in a maze of

subsidiaries.

Barry Allen, president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, emphasized that the Kentucky foundation has no ties or similarities to the Arizona Baptist Foundation. He added that KBF officials "never have used Arthur Andersen as our auditor."

"Unlike the Baptist Foundation of Arizona and Enron, both of which had webs of subsidiary corporations that apparently were not audited, the KBF is one single entity with no subsidiary corporations," Allen explained.

The KBF's auditor selection and review process, "along with other internal control procedures, assures the relationship with our audit firm is totally independent," he added.

Enron's collapse is the largest bankruptcy of a publicly traded company in United States history. The Baptist Foundation of Arizona's collapse is the largest bankruptcy of a non-profit charity.

Andersen faces a series of legal actions and accusations related to the collapse of the Baptist foundation.

Criminal charges have been filed against eight people formerly associated with the foundation. Three of the former foundation officials have entered guilty pleas, while five others are awaiting trial.

Civil litigation has been filed against Arthur Andersen, including a class-action lawsuit. The Arizona State Board of Public Accountancy also has filed an administrative complaint against Arthur Andersen, seeking \$600 million in restitution to victims of the foundation bankruptcy.

Andersen is battling in court now to prevent the class-action suit from proceeding. The accounting firm contends foundation investors should be required to bring individual lawsuits rather than a class action.

Depositions on Andersen's claims should be completed by Jan. 25, and a hearing date is set for Feb. 25.

Meanwhile, the foundation's liquidation trust has distributed \$56 million to creditors of the foundation to date. The trust is charged with liquidating assets of the foundation, such as real estate, and distributing the proceeds among those who lost money in the bankruptcy.

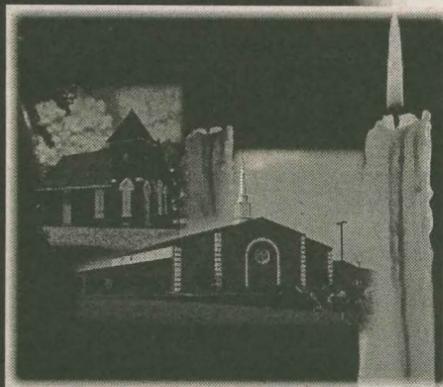
Foundation investors, many of whom are elderly Baptists who wanted their money to be invested in ministry causes, have their eyes on the Enron debacle now, according to individuals involved in litigating the class-action suit.

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson

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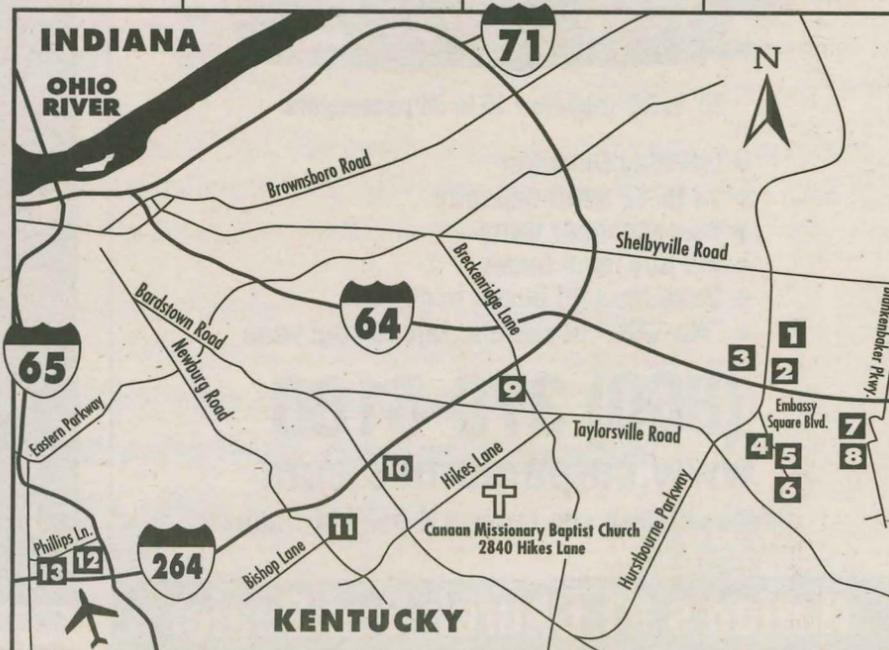
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| 3 Fairfield Inn by Marriott /CB I-64, Exit 15 9400 Blairwood Road 502.339.1900 \$59 Cut-off date: 1/25/02 | 6 Four Points Hotel & Suites by Sheraton 9802 Bunsen Way 502.499.0000 \$89 (1-4 people) | 10 Holiday Inn Southeast / R 3255 Bardstown Road 502.454.0451; 1.800.465.4329 \$79 Queen | 13 Best Western Ashton Inn Suites / CB, G 653 Phillips Lane 502.375.2233 \$89 Single/Double \$99 4 per room Cut-off date: 2/18/02 |
| 7 Microtel Inn / CB 1221 Kentucky Mills Dr. 502.266.6590; 502.499.6220 \$40.95 Single \$45.99 Double | | | |

Special rates, if provided, are listed. When making lodging reservations, please mention Kentucky Baptist Convention and verify rates.

Key to Amenities

- CB continental breakfast
- G garage
- K kitchenette
- R restaurant



MISSIONS

Baptists gear up for Olympic ministry in Salt Lake City

'Global Outreach' to have flavor of the Bluegrass

By James Dotson
SBC North American Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—The Winter Olympic Games are still weeks away, but the Southern Baptist ministry effort already has begun. And some of that ministry has a Bluegrass State flavor.

As the 2002 Winter Olympics Torch Relay winds its 13,500-mile journey to Salt Lake City, Baptist volunteers often are on the sidelines sharing their own source of hope and inspiration with the crowds.



Williams

In December, Atlanta was the first of 65 cities along the route where volunteers affiliated with Global Outreach 2002 will offer both hospitality ministries and free "More Than Gold" evangelistic trading pins and "Interactive Pocket Guides" that contain a presentation of the gospel.

Global Outreach 2002 is sponsored by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, churches of the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention and the Georgia Baptist Convention.

The torch relay, however, is just the beginning of Global Outreach's ministry. About 1,000 volunteers from 21 states will converge on Salt Lake City for the Feb. 8-24 games to participate in a broad range of activities.

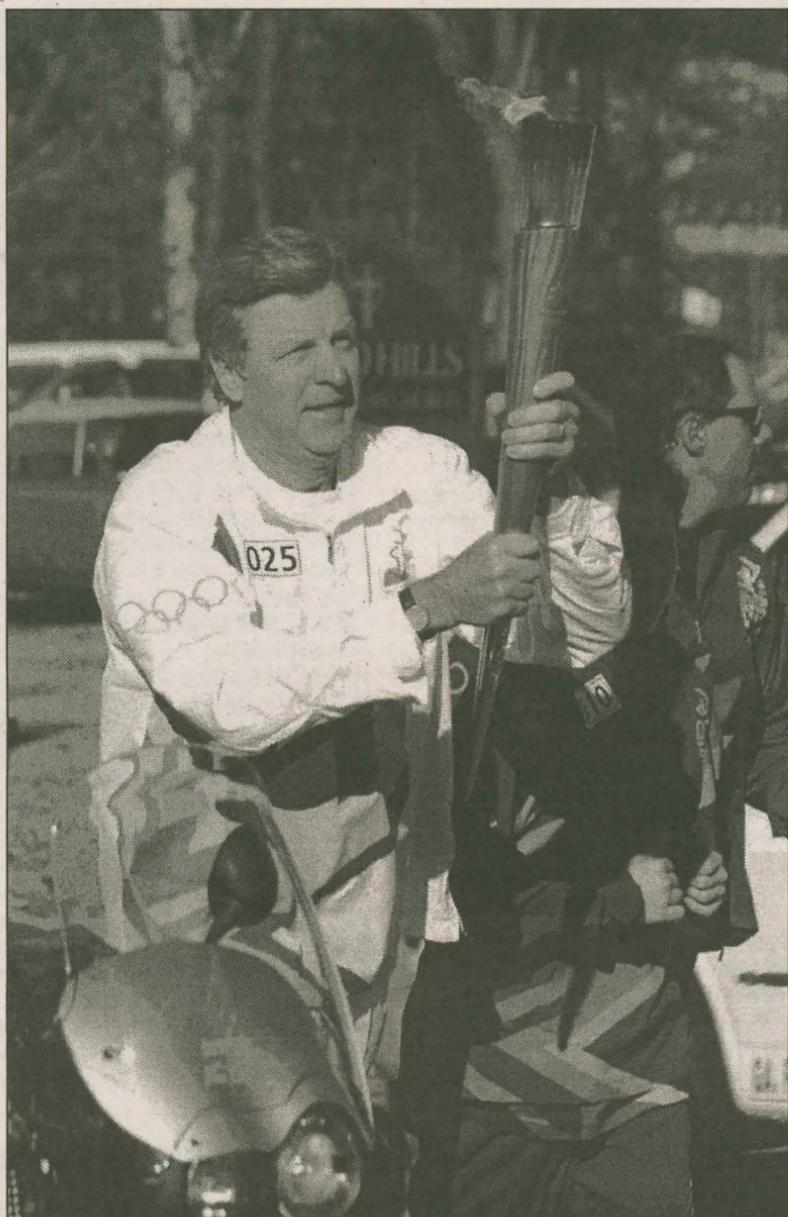
Kentuckians are well represented in this Olympic outreach, from Kentucky Baptist mission teams traveling to Salt Lake City to Global Outreach's coordinator Beth Ann Williams, a native of Williamsburg.

Williams has been in Utah two years helping local churches prepare for the ministry opportunity. She has experience in Olympic ministries, having helped coordinate Southern Baptist ministries for the Atlanta Summer Olympics in 1996.

Even before the Winter Games begin, 11 summer missionaries and 10 volunteer teams will have helped local churches provide ministries throughout the area in the past year.

One of those was SonLife, a Kentucky Baptist Student Union creative ministry team that performed this past summer in Salt Lake City.

That team will return to Utah for performances during the Olympics next month. A Woman's Missionary Union volunteer team also is scheduled to be in Salt Lake City for both



TORCH RUN A runner in the Olympic Torch Relay carries the flame in Atlanta. Baptists have organized outreach ministries in 65 cities along the 13,500-mile route before the torch reaches Salt Lake City for the games, Feb. 8-24. (BP photo by James Dotson)

the Olympics and the Paralympics after the games.

"I've really tried to focus on making this more than just 17 days of ministry," said Williams, a former Son team member. "People have a desire to come to Salt Lake City because it's an Olympic city, and so we've tried to harness some of that interest this summer with missions teams, a sports clinic and a creative arts team."



OLYMPIC FLAME Dwayne Doyle, mission education associate in the Kentucky Baptist Brotherhood department, was among those who carried the Olympic flame through Louisville last month.

Ministry during the Winter Games itself will focus on meeting physical needs of fans and sharing the gospel using the "More Than Gold" materials.

First used during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, the theme uses five colors—represented by "starflakes" in the GO-2002 logo—to share information about how to become a Christian.

The pins build on the popularity of pin trading among Olympic fans. The pocket guides offer several features

designed to encourage fans to hold onto them, including reference maps, a history of the Olympic games and athlete profiles.

Even before the start of the Olympic Games, the Global Outreach office has received more than a dozen responses to the pocket guides.

"Many of those people prayed to receive Christ, while others were interested in more information about a relationship with Christ," Williams said. "The responses have arrived from all over the country. ... I believe it is only the beginning of what is to come."

A coffee house ministry, including an Internet café, will be one of the primary ministry locations during the Winter Games. Located a block and a half from Temple Square, the storefront location is being leased by a new church called The Summit.

"Our hope is that this will be a springboard for them, and provide an awareness of their location," Williams said.

Another location will be operated in partnership with The Salvation Army in one of their facilities adjacent to the public transportation hub for the city. Included will be hospitality tents offering water and a warm spot to rest.

Other volunteers will travel public

Let the prayer begin

LOUISVILLE—As next month's Winter Olympic Games approach, participating athletes might be preparing "24-7," but in Kentucky, Baptist churches are preparing "24-17."

"24/17" is the name of the daily prayer guide we've produced in conjunction with Global Outreach 2002 and the KBC's missions growth team," said LaRaine Dail, youth and college consultant for Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

The guide reflects the goal to have Kentucky Baptist churches praying for 24 hours a day throughout the 17 days of the Winter Olympic Games, Feb. 8-24.



The 36-page guide has a list of Olympic medal events as well as information and specific prayer requests for various ministries of the Global Outreach 2002 mission team. The guide also features devotional messages from leaders in the local and national Baptist community.

For example, day nine, or Feb. 16, lists the times for that day's Olympic events—alpine skiing, biathlon, short track and speed skating—and a prayer focus for the effectiveness of evangelistic tools such as face painting, balloon sculpting, hospitality bags and a New Testament with Olympic athlete testimonies. Wanda Lee, executive director of national WMU, provides that day's devotional reading.

Dail said she hopes church leaders who requested the prayer guide will use it to pray every day of the Olympic events and their respective missions activities. But the larger goal is for church leaders to enlist members to pray continuously for 24 hours on a specific day of the games.

"We want this to be a special time when they pray earnestly for the athletes and the work of these mission teams," she said. "We want the GO 2002 staff and volunteers in Salt Lake to know our continual prayers are with them."

So far, 36 churches throughout Kentucky have agreed to pray 24 hours each on a specific day during the games.

"We've had 35 regular churches call us, and one group call us that is actually a Bible study that meets online—a cyber church that has members from all over the country," Dail said.

"This is the first time we've done a booklet like this," she added. "We printed about 4,000 booklets and mainly promoted the guide in Kentucky, although we are open to its use anywhere in the United States."

She said she anticipates distributing all the booklets by the start of the Olympics.

"The (KBC) missions growth team has distributed the booklets to all the directors of missions in Kentucky, and it's also being used in Utah by the GO-2002 volunteers and the local churches," she said.

"We're expecting a lot of last-minute calls for the books, too, so we're limiting our numbers to 50 booklets per church," she said. "It's been really great to see how this guide has been used."

For more information about the prayer guide, call Kentucky WMU at (502) 244-6485.—Victoria Moon

transportation and mingle with crowds at a variety of locations, including the three primary Olympic venues.

"It's going to be a good balance between what I call mobile ministries and these other locations," Williams said.

While most of the volunteers have been assigned, Williams said Southern Baptists still can help by lifting up everyone involved in prayer.

"We're really doing a big push on that," she said. "We will have a daily request on our Web site during the games where we will have specific requests that reflect the ministries that are happening."

More information about Global Outreach 2002 is available on the Web site www.go-2002.org.

Abortion opponents expect tough year for legislation

Pro-life members of Congress hope to adopt early in the year a comprehensive ban on human cloning.

By Tom Strode
SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

WASHINGTON (BP)—Abortion opponents appear to face an uphill battle this year for their federal legislation goals.

Entering the 30th year since abortion's legalization in the United States, opponents of the practice are seeking incremental victories in Congress while also following through on attempts to protect embryos from destructive experimentation.

Pro-life members of Congress hope to adopt early in the year a comprehensive ban on human cloning and to turn back an attempt to liberalize President Bush's policy on embryonic stem cell research. They also would like to complete adoption of two measures that would enhance legal protection for the unborn and for newborn babies.

Abortion opponents said there are several challenges this year, including: 2002 being a congressional election year, narrow majorities in both houses and a Senate majority normally adverse to pro-life proposals.

A bill on which pro-lifers have been promised a vote is a proposal to prohibit human cloning for both reproductive and research purposes. The House of Representatives approved the Human Cloning Prohibition Act in July by more than 100 votes, but the Senate failed to act. The president has endorsed the comprehensive ban.

In addition, some senators are

backing a bill that would prohibit only reproductive cloning. The measure still would allow cloning for research purposes, which results in the destruction of human embryos.

At the same time, Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., is expected to attempt to push a bill expanding federal funding to stem cell research requiring the destruction of human embryos. Such a measure would liberalize the policy announced in August by Bush. The president's position allows funding for research using colonies of stem cells already in existence but not for the creation of embryos from which to harvest stem cells, a process that results in the destruction of fetuses.

Pro-life advocates hope to complete passage of two bills that received partial approval last year.

Both houses approved the Born Alive Infants Protection Act as part of the Patients' Bill of Rights. A conference committee did not report out a final version of the patients' bill, however. The Born Alive Infants Protection Act would provide federal protection to a newborn fully outside the mother's womb. It is targeted primarily at a procedure known as live-birth abortion in which children who survive the method are allowed to die without medical care.

The House easily passed the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, but the Senate never acted on it. The measure would recognize an unborn baby as a crime victim when he is injured or slain during a federal offense against his mother. Bush supports the bill.

New ad targets abortion 'lies'

WASHINGTON (BP)—A television commercial featuring three important figures in the legalization of abortion is part of a renewed effort to reinvigorate the anti-abortion movement.

The TV ad, unveiled Jan. 14, features Norma McCorvey, the plaintiff in the Roe v. Wade case that resulted in legalized abortion; Sandra Cano, the plaintiff in the Doe v. Bolton opinion that permitted abortion at all stages of pregnancy; and Bernard Nathanson, co-founder of the National Abortion Rights Action League. All three say in the ad that they once were part of the "lie" of abortion but "will not be part of that lie anymore."

The ad began running Jan. 14 on CNN, Fox News and MSNBC and is expected to continue airing past Jan. 22, the 29th anniversary of the Roe and Doe decisions.

The commercial is the second spot in the "Shake the Nation Back to Life" campaign. The new ad and a Jan. 14 news conference were the latest parts of an effort that was in-

troduced a week before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The change of stance by the three once-leading advocates of abortion "illustrates that no one is immune to a guilty conscience," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "We are winning the battle of hearts and minds for the lives of the unborn."

The campaign's goal is not only to establish a culture that is more pro-life but to place more pro-life justices on the Supreme Court. More information is available at the Web site, www.shakethenation.org.

In addition to the ERLC, participating organizations include Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, Family Research Council, American Family Association, Prison Fellowship, Eagle Forum, Lutherans for Life and Traditional Values Coalition. The chief sponsor of the campaign is the Center for Reclaiming America, an outreach of Coral Ridge Ministries in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

In addition, abortion-rights advocates might attempt to overturn the revived "Mexico City policy." Last year, President Bush issued an order re-establishing a ban on funds to organizations that perform or promote abortions in foreign countries or lobby those governments to liberalize

their pro-life policies. President Clinton had rescinded the policy in 1993.

The fate of another attempt to prohibit partial-birth abortions does not appear hopeful this year. Clinton twice vetoed such a measure, and the Supreme Court struck down a similar state ban in 2000.

Polls: Americans willing to 'dig deeper' to help those in need

A survey from Indiana University found that nearly three-fourths of Americans had donated something to aid victims of the terrorist attacks.

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A new poll by the nation's Catholic bishops found that 48 percent of people are willing to do more to help the poor after last year's terrorist attacks, but an equal amount believe it is the government's responsibility to help those most in need.

The poll of 1,014 adults, commissioned by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the anti-poverty arm of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, found subtle shifts from a similar poll in 2000 as the economy turned sour and more Americans found themselves out of work.

The number of people who are concerned about poverty in America rose only slightly, from 87 percent to 90 percent. Among major social issues, poverty ranked fourth, behind education, health care and crime.

The poll detected a slight increase in concern that poverty might personally affect people, with 51 percent saying they are concerned that they might one day be poor. Seventy-one percent of low-income people were concerned, compared to 43 percent of higher-income people.

A greater shift was seen in what people see as the cause for poverty—in 2000, 32 percent thought personal laziness was a factor, but that figure dropped to 25 percent in 2001. The number of people who

blamed a lack of employment nearly tripled, jumping from 8 percent in 2000 to 21 percent last year.

The poll, taken three months after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, saw a greater willingness to help those most in need. Almost half—48 percent—of people said they were more likely to help the poor, but respondents were nearly evenly divided as to who should help—49 percent said the government, 48 percent said the general public and only 13 percent said the poor themselves.

The poll, conducted by the Market Research Bureau, has a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

Another survey of 1,304 adults by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University found that nearly three-fourths of Americans had donated something to aid victims of the terrorist attacks, ranging from money to clothing to their personal time.

The study showed that two-thirds of respondents had given money, an average of \$134 per household, according to the Associated Press.

"Even in a time of an economic downturn, the remarkable thing about giving in this country is that Americans dig deeper," said Walter Sczudlo, vice president and general counsel of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, which funded the survey.

Plan for spring retreats now

Although it may be cold as you read this edition of the Recorder, the time for planning spring retreats is now! In a short time, the early signs of spring will come to Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore.

We are blessed as Kentucky Baptists to have these two outstanding retreat and conference centers. In all likelihood, anyone who is a regular reader of the Recorder and this column knows the recent history of both Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore. But even though you may know the history, perhaps it has been years since you visited either place. Maybe you've never been to Jonathan Creek or Cedarmore.

We have been blessed to make many, many improvements over the last four years as we strive to put ourselves in a position to better serve you, our constituents and guests. If it has been a while since you've seen these properties, I can assure you that you wouldn't recognize either place. The improvements are dramatic.

Let me invite you to take a trip. Take a trip to Jonathan Creek, check it out. Drive out through Bagdad and onto the beautiful grounds that surround our facilities at Cedarmore. Take a tour with Jack Eller-

brook at Cedarmore or David Melber at Jonathan Creek or any other staff member. They'll show you around and they'll show you why your next retreat or conference ought to be at one of these centers. Our mission is "to provide an environment in which all our guests can come to know Christ or more fully experience Him." It is toward that end that we labor and build new facilities.

But we need you to come. You can best show your support for Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore by letting us have the opportunity to host your group. That's how we grow, improve and prepare for ministry in this new millennium. Our ministry has grown dramatically in the last four years, but we can accommodate far more guests than we are serving. With the new facilities nearing completion at Jonathan Creek, that number continues to grow.

So call us, check out the new, improved Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek, then come stay with us. We truly desire to serve you in a Christ-like manner. Bring your group to one of our Kentucky Baptist centers this spring (or fall).

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



Rusty Ellison

Diverse agencies seek faith-based unity

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A new independent report found broad support for expanding public and private aid to religious groups but no consensus on the thorny constitutional questions that have stalled President Bush's "faith-based initiative" on Capitol Hill.

The report, issued last week by the 33-member Working Group on Human Needs and Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, brought together representatives from the left, right and center to find "common ground" on the divisive issue of government funding for religious groups.

Organizers hope the report's 29 recommendations can serve as a starting point to revive a bipartisan push to help private groups address an array of social ills. The panel was sponsored by Search for Common Ground, a Washington-based consensus organization.

The panel, led by former Sen. Harris Wofford, D-Pa., called for expanding tax incentives for charitable giving and cutting red tape to allow religious groups to compete for government funds. It also invited the private sector to lend expertise in law and finance to help struggling charities.

"Sixty percent of the recommendations could be implemented tomorrow without enacting a single piece of legislation," said Barry Lynn, a panel member, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State and a frequent critic of the Bush plan.

A year after his inauguration, Bush

Where they agree

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A diverse panel of agencies agreed to 29 recommendations to help private groups address social ills. Among them:

■ A "major increase" in financial support for community and faith-based groups from the private sector.

■ Allowing nonitemizing taxpayers to deduct charitable donations. The House version passed last summer scaled back \$90 billion in incentives to just \$13 billion. The panel endorsed the original Bush proposal.

■ Asking religious groups to form separate, nonprofit organizations to deliver social services if government funds are involved.

■ Increasing "technical assistance" to faith-based groups to help them in structuring and operating their programs.

■ Testing and monitoring faith-based programs to determine their effectiveness in providing social services.

still does not have his faith-based initiative in place. The House narrowly passed the measure last summer on a nearly party line vote, but Senate Democrats have shelved the measure until concerns about possible government-funded discrimination are resolved.

The chief Senate sponsor, Republican Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, asked Wofford—whom he defeated in 1994—to chair the panel. Santorum currently is working on a compromise bill with Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn.

The panel was remarkable for the strange bedfellows it managed to keep at the table—everyone from Lynn on the left to Teen Challenge and the Southern Baptist Convention on the right, as well as Reform Jews, the American Muslim Council, American Civil Liberties Union and the National Council of Churches.

Left unanswered by the panel was whether religious groups should be able to discriminate in hiring, or whether the concept violates the separation of church and state.

Another major question is whether the 29 proposals—all agreed to only when consensus emerged—would do much to help the poor if enacted. Some panel members said divisive issues should be left off the table, while others said the report serves as a sort of foundation to be built on.

Panel members, painfully aware that the divisive issue is far from settled, said their report offers a new way of moving beyond political rhetoric to address real-life problems.

"Yes, there are still battles ahead ... but why not focus on where we agree and get something done for those most in need?" asked Charles Haynes, a senior scholar at the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center.

Judge allows lawsuit to continue for evangelical naval chaplains

WASHINGTON (BP)—A federal court judge has ruled that a two-year-old class-action lawsuit alleging discrimination by the U.S. Navy against evangelical chaplains can proceed. The case includes five current or former Southern Baptist chaplains.

In a lengthy ruling announced Jan. 10, U.S. District Court Judge Ricardo Urbina said the plaintiffs in the class action suit, and a second filed by the Chaplaincy of Full Gospel Churches, raise valid constitutional issues.

In a 62-page order, the judge denied the Navy's motion to dismiss the cases, saying the plaintiffs had successfully stated a claim that the military's policies violate the First Amendment.

He also applied a "strict scrutiny" standard to the cases, which refers to a prior Supreme Court ruling that the government cannot favor one religion over another.

"The court holds that the plaintiffs have stated a claim that the (Navy) defendants' policies and practices relating to the hiring and retention of its chaplains are not justified by a compelling government objective and are not narrowly tailored to accomplish that objective," Urbina wrote.

The lawsuits' allegations of First Amendment violations by the Navy include:

■ Forcing non-liturgical churches to hold services off base in inadequate, substandard facilities while Catholics and liturgical Protestants enjoyed spacious facilities on post.

■ Senior Catholic and liturgical chaplains intentionally giving non-liturgical chaplains lower ratings solely because of their religious identification.

■ Using a two-tiered system of discipline, with liturgical chaplains receiving lighter punishment than non-liturgicals for similar offenses.

No trial date or pre-trial hearings have been set.

Ministering through SonBurst

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College student Daniel McKee, son of Eddie and Sandra McKee of Richmond, spent his 2001 summer ministering through SonBurst. Team members spent two weeks in training, three weeks traveling and five weeks at Cedarmore.

During the two weeks of training, team members learned to use skits, puppets, interpretations and other means to communicate the gospel. McKee and fellow Cumberland College student Chuck Sumner developed a stomp routine. They dressed like janitors and used brooms to stomp out rhythms. Only at the end of their presentation did they speak, saying "Jesus ... loves ... you" between stomps. The stomp routine was a favorite every time they performed it.

During their weeks at Cedarmore, McKee, a member of Cumberland College's men's soccer team, taught soccer in the afternoons. He participated with other team members in leading Bible studies and helping with the evening worship services.

One week the team worked with Kentucky Changers in Hopkinsville. They put new roofs on hous-

es. McKee loved working alongside the high school youths.

McKee also enjoyed the team's week in Maine. All of the Kentucky Son teams met together there to lead a camp. Since the camp was small, he enjoyed having the opportunity to get to know the young people.

McKee remembers one camper at Cedarmore who had been sent

there as punishment. The young man's anger and resentment caused problems early in the week, but McKee prayed for him and began to witness to him. Thursday evening during the invitation time, the young man came to McKee stating he wanted to accept Christ as Savior.

McKee said he learned "God can change anyone's life and heart, and your spirituality is dependent on your focus." McKee hopes to go into youth ministry one day, perhaps working at a Christian radio station or as a youth evangelist.

We at Cumberland College thank McKee for using his gifts in ministering to young people by bringing them to Christ and helping them mature in faith.

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

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



How to celebrate the Sanctity of Human Life

If someone close to you is facing an unplanned pregnancy, be supportive, show compassion and direct them to a place that cares for them and their unborn baby. Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's Pregnancy and Adoption Services serves birth and adoptive parents across Kentucky. We're here to listen, here to help. Call today.



Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children
Pregnancy and Adoption Services

1-800-928-5242

Christians tortured, killed in China government crackdown

WASHINGTON (BP)—Two Christians have been killed in the Chinese government's crackdown on pastor Gong Shengliang and his South China Church in central Hubei Province, according to a letter from members of the underground church.

Gong was sentenced to death Dec. 5 on charges of operating an "evil cult" and on the seemingly trumped-up charges of rape and assault. The month-long period for deciding his appeal was extended Jan. 5 by a Hubei court following sharp international protest.

The letter, written by two underground Christian women, Li Ailian and Wang Yue, reports that in efforts to find and apprehend Gong and suppress the South China Church, police arrested and severely beat at least 25 Christians, killing two of them, while torturing others with electric prods.

The letter was dated Dec. 31 and smuggled to the New York-based Committee for Investigation on Persecution of Religion in China. It was released Jan. 11 by Freedom House in Washington.

The two victims who reportedly died were:

■ Yu Zhongju, a young mother from Zhongxiang who was arrested May 27 in a private house connected with Gong's congregation. She died in police custody in late July, allegedly as a result of torture.

■ Gu Xuegui, a Christian man also connected with Gong's church, who disappeared while in police custody, probably sometime in October. His family later received information that he had died under severe torture.

The letter also provides details about two women, Li Tongjin and Chi Tongyuan, from Shayang, who were arrested and tortured by police with electric prods, resulting in blisters and burns all over their bodies. The torture was reported to have been used to force them to testify that they had sexual relations with Gong.

Turkmenistan releases jailed Baptist leader

By Felix Corley
Keston News Service

LONDON (BP)—Baptist leader Shageldy Atakov, Turkmenistan's most prominent religious prisoner, has been freed before the end of his four-year sentence, Keston News Service reported Jan. 10.

Turkmenistan has the harshest religious policy of all the former Soviet republics. Only state-approved mosques and congregations of the Russian Orthodox Church have official registration. The government treats all other religious communities as illegal.

Believers of unregistered faiths have been beaten, fined, imprisoned and deported, and their places of worship have been confiscated and, in several cases, demolished. Private homes used for unsanctioned religious meetings also have been confiscated.

The 39-year-old Atakov, a convert to Christianity, was sentenced on charges of swindling and forging documents. Church members insist the charges were instigated to obstruct his church activities. He was arrested on Dec. 18, 1998, in Turkmenbashi, and was sentenced to two years in prison and fined on March 19, 1999. He was retried on Aug. 4-5, 1999, in the Turkmen capital of Ashgabad and given the increased sentence.

Both the U.S.-based Russian Evangelistic Ministries and the German-based Friedensstimme Mission, which maintain close ties with Baptists in the former Soviet republics, have con-

firmed that Atakov was released from prison in Turkmenbashi Jan. 8 and has been reunited with his wife, Artygul, and five children in the town of Kaa-khka close to Turkmenistan's southern border with Iran.

"Jesus has given me a Christmas gift," Atakov was quoted as saying. (Many Christians in the region celebrate Christmas on Jan. 7.)

However, many Baptists remain skeptical about the terms of the release. "There is unease because of the abnormal nature of the release," a spokesman for Russian Evangelistic Ministries told Keston, pointing out that Atakov was given no release certificate and has not yet recovered his identification papers. Prison officials told Atakov these would be delivered to him at his home within 10 days.

Some local Baptists believe Atakov was freed now to forestall any major gatherings by fellow Baptists on his scheduled release date next May, when his sentence expires.

Atakov's imprisonment has led to unprecedented pressure on Turkmen authorities, Keston reported. The labor camps and prisons where he was held received vast numbers of letters from supporters around the world, very few of which were given to him, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and foreign governments put pressure on the authorities to free him.

Last May, in a deal brokered by U.S. diplomats, Atakov was taken to Ashgabad, where he met the head of the political police, the KNB (former

KGB), and was pressured to emigrate with his family in return for his freedom. Atakov declined the offer and was returned to prison.

During his imprisonment, Atakov was forcibly treated with psychotropic drugs and his health was reported a year ago to be very poor. However, those who have spoken to him since his release say he is "doing well spiritually and physically."

Despite Atakov's release, the Turkmen authorities have continued their pressure on Baptist congregations, all of whose activity the government regards as illegal.

In specific instances involving Baptists:

■ Local Baptists report that all those who attended a religious service in a private home in the town of Khazar which was raided on Dec. 16 were summoned to appear before an administrative commission on Jan. 9. It is not yet known whether they were fined, or whether the threat to confiscate the home of the host, Mariya Zadorozhnaya, has been carried out.

■ The Baptist church in the town of Balkanabad was raided at the end of the Sunday service on Dec. 23. Passport information for all those present was recorded and five young men were taken for interrogation by the KNB. All five were ordered to write statements about their participation in the church and were told they would be summoned again. Officials said that because their church is not registered they are not allowed to meet.

Smaller than most ... but a big advantage

It is so easy in today's world to think that bigger is better. After giving that statement some thought, many would agree that it is not always true. However, ask the typical person if he or she would prefer a larger house or car to a smaller one. Most would choose the larger house or car.

Sometimes when I travel with our basketball team to other schools, I am a little envious of their large gymnasiums. They nearly always have much better lighting than ours does, and the seats usually are much nicer than our old seats given to us many years ago from an old theater that was being torn down. Those gyms usually are much larger than ours, with extra goals for practice.

But there is one thing I have never seen any of them match with our older and much smaller gym: school spirit. Most of the away ball games I attend have a relatively small number of students there, compared to the number of students enrolled in that school. It's true that other schools almost always have many more parents in attendance, because most of our parents live too far away to come. However, if you have never gone to a boys' home basketball game at Oneida, you have missed something!

Since our students are pretty much confined to our campus—a relatively small campus, mind you—they take advantage of an opportunity to whoop it up. There is nothing quite like putting 200 to 300 students with a mix of faculty, staff and parents who also suffer from "cabin fever" in a small gym. Many schools who play in our gym are a little intimidated by all the hoopla. Last Friday we hosted three games: freshman, junior var-

sity and varsity. You can make a whole lot more noise in a smaller gym, and our gym nearly always appears to be fuller than the larger gyms.

A few years ago we hosted the 13th district tournament. One evening every seat was filled in addition to about a hundred temporary seats. The crowds were understandably excited. A recently retired boys' basketball head coach was there to watch his old school play against us. He was obviously impressed with the noise and excitement of the crowd, because he was overheard saying, "Now this is the way to have a ball game!" We lost that night, but we had a great time just the same.

Our students not only have a lot of school spirit in our gym, but they take it with them to away games. A few years ago we were competing against a large school in their new gym. It seated several hundred more students than ours and it was a lot nicer. We nearly always lose to this school. That day we had been ahead the whole game. Our students were ecstatic.

At one point the cheerleaders from the host school (not accustomed to losing to anyone on their floor, especially not little ol' Oneida) confronted our students. Three cheerleaders, obviously annoyed with our enthusiasm, advised our students to "sit down and shut up. You're going to lose anyway!" Well, we did not lose that night, though we have several times since in that same gym.

No thanks. You can have your large gyms. We will take our smaller one, along with all the school spirit and noise we can make.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Alumni pastors fulfill the call

Rejoice with me in these three reports from alumni:

■ 1968 alumnus James Vandy, pastor of East Barbourville Baptist Church, declared 2001 as "the best, most enjoyable and productive year of my 39 years in the ministry. Our church received 59 new members; 23 by baptism and 36 by letter. The average age of those baptized was around 18. The number of new members has brought a tremendous increase in our Sunday school and worship service averages. It amazes me that God has permitted me to be here 18 years, and then send all these blessings during the 19th year."

■ The first phase of a growing congregation sits just off what is known as Southern Parkway in Somerset. The first service in the facility of Eagle Heights Church was held May 29, 2000. Plans for the 12-acre site include construction of a 12,000-square-foot multipurpose building and a larger sanctuary. The first worship service of Eagle Heights Church was Nov. 10, 1996.

Pastor David Bullock, a 1988 graduate, said, "While pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, I struggled with God's call to begin a new, more non-traditional church.

The vision came to me a few years ago through seminary and church experiences and a study of Rick Warren's purpose-driven church method developed in California. Others in Pulaski County also felt God's call and joined the effort. I had never started a church and sought the advice of trusted ministry friends. I then met with the

Pleasant Hill deacons to share the call and decision. Our fervent prayer is that Eagle Heights will always be known as a church that lives by the teachings of Jesus."

■ In July 1999, David Renfroe, a 1998 graduate, became pastor of Cloverport Baptist Church, a congregation "struggling spiritually, financially and numerically." In 1998 the church baptized four people and none in 1999. Bible study attendance has grown from 60 to 120. "We have seen more than 100 people saved and baptized over 80," Renfroe said. "We have adopted a saying over these last two years: 'Everybody is somebody, but nobody is more important than anybody else.' ... God has proved that a church can only move forward when He is in charge."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Anne Graham Lotz explores heaven in recent book

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, author Anne Graham Lotz had decided to address the topic of heaven in her next book.

But with the events of a few months ago, the Bible teacher and daughter of evangelist Billy Graham said she believes it was divine timing that led her to focus on eternal life in "Heaven: My Father's House"

Lotz, 53, is president of AnGeL Ministries, based in Raleigh, N.C. Recently, while in Washington, D.C., to speak at the Washington National Cathedral, she spoke with Religion News Service.

In your book, you mentioned the recent deaths of your brother-in-law and the associate of your father, T.W. Wilson. How did those losses affect your writing?

Graham-Lotz: When you lose somebody that's close to you, it makes eternity seem very near. You realize that eternity is just a breath away. And so to lose my brother-in-law and also T.W. Wilson, who was like a second father to me actually, ... in your own heart you're grieving and just thanking God for the hope of the resurrection.

You spoke about how you longed for your heavenly home as the nation dealt with the deep sadness of all the memorial services after Sept. 11. How did this larger tragedy affect you?

My daughter had called me ... and I turned on the TV in time to see the second plane and to see those buildings come down. ... Thousands of people at that moment as I was watching TV were stepping into eternity. And then I wondered how many of those people stepping into eternity weren't ready and they didn't even know that it was their choice as to whether to go to heaven or not.

And maybe they didn't know because they'd been too busy or maybe they didn't know because their friend was too politically correct to tell them that there is a heaven and how to get there. ...

Could you talk a little more about your concept of heaven and how it has changed from the time when you were a child to now?

When you're a child, ... heaven for me would be my family there, my grandparents there. ... I'm sure we would eat Chinese food, I would have a smaller nose, my dog would be there who just died. ...

Some of the principles that I clung to as a child are actually true, that heaven is going to be personally prepared for me and it's going to be a place where I am going to feel at home. ... So now, of course, I know we may not eat Chinese food and I may have the same size nose, but I know my grandparents are going to be there and I know my family will be there because they have placed their faith in Jesus.

I wonder if you could talk a little about the size of heaven. Do

you imagine that heaven can hold all those who deserve to go there, from the time of Adam and Eve until far into the future?

Absolutely. It's so interesting in Revelation 21, the Apostle John is describing what God revealed to him in a vision about heaven and John says that an angel came and showed him the heavenly city and then the angel took a measuring rod and actually measured the city off ... and the measurements that the angel gave John turned out to be 1,500 square miles cubed, so 1,500 miles wide and high and long. ... If you place it on top of the United States of America, it goes from Mexico to Canada, from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, but it is as wide as it is tall.

And if you had 20 billion residents of heaven, which is more than the entire population of the human race in all of human history as far as we know, ... everybody would have 75 acres for himself and ... still there's room left over for public buildings and parks and streets. ...

I don't know that we should take that literally. What I think the angel was telling John is that heaven is a great big place and there's room for everybody.

Can you talk a little about your perceptions of when people reach heaven? Do you think it's immediate for present-day folks?

Yes, and I think for Abraham, ... for Old Testament folks, there was a waiting period. ... They wouldn't have been ushered into my Father's house until Jesus came to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin and open the way into heaven. It's through the blood of Jesus that we enter heaven.

Is there anybody in particular that you look forward to seeing in heaven, someone well-known in American history?

Maybe people in early American history ... somebody like Jonathan Edwards. He gets a bad rap, but God used him to bring revival to our nation. ... I think some of the people that are going to be in a sense the most important in heaven are going to be ones that we don't know their names. ... God views things so differently than we do. ... For instance, today we would think the most important people are people who have made a name for themselves, or have written books or are on TV. And it may be that when we get to heaven it's going to be ... some missionary in some backwoods jungle or some believer in Afghanistan or the Sudan who was faithful to God ... who will be honored and be the ones that we'll be wanting to meet when we get to heaven.

You obviously didn't leave hell out of your book. And I wondered if you could talk about your mental picture of hell.

My mental picture of hell right now is that video (released Dec. 13 by the Bush administration) of Osama bin Laden sitting in that room discussing the trade towers. ... When I read the transcript it was like reading a transcript from a chat room in hell. And the Allah that Osama bin Laden worships has no relationship



to God at all. And the Bible would describe Osama bin Laden's Allah as the father of lies and the prince of darkness, and I think the devil himself is leading Osama bin Laden and his followers to destruction and a lot of people with them and so to me that was like a glimpse into hell. ...

In Revelation, chapter 21, God said in verse 7 that those who are His children will inherit all of this but ... then He lists the unbelievers, people who will be outside of heaven. There is an outside to heaven. There is an inside to my Father's house and there's an outside. Outside is outside, separated from God for eternity.

I need to clarify what you just said about Osama bin Laden's Allah not being like God. ... Do you think that the Allah that he's talking about is the same Allah that more mainstream Muslims talk about and if so, do you see that as not relating to God?

I don't know enough about mainstream Muslims. ... I've never read the Koran and I don't know enough about who they say Allah is and who they believe him to be and what he has instructed his people to do to make a statement on that. I just know from what bin Laden said, what his Allah has led him to do, that that is not the God of creation nor the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, nor the Father of Jesus Christ.

But as far as just simple relations, is there something that you think that Christians should be doing or not doing when they're in the same room as a Muslim?

Absolutely. I think we need to love them. We're commanded to go into all the world and share the gospel. Not

just in a sermon that we give from a pulpit but through our actions and our words. God sent His Son to die for Muslims just like He sent His Son to die for me. And Muslims need Jesus just like Baptists need Jesus.

And Jesus said they will know that we belong to Him by our love. So if we're shaking our finger or condemning them or blaming them—or whether it's them or anybody who's different from us—then how will they see our love and how will they know our Jesus?

Both of your parents are in their 80s and have had various medical challenges. In light of their circumstance, is there something about writing a book about heaven that gives you personal comfort in relation to them?

Absolutely. ... I think sometimes we're afraid of death for ourselves or for our loved ones because we don't exactly know what to expect in eternity and we don't know exactly who's going to meet us on the other side. ...

Right now we're so concerned about mother and daddy's welfare and their care. They have ... people around the clock. ...

And to think of stepping into eternity, you want somebody to be there to look after them and how precious to think that it will be God Himself Who will be there to look after them and Who understands their needs and their wants and loves them with an everlasting love, that He will be with open arms welcoming them to His home. ...

I can tell you when the day comes for them to step into eternity, the thoughts that I've written in this little book will be a personal comfort for me.

HEAVEN Anne Graham Lotz, the Raleigh, N.C.-based Bible teacher and the daughter of evangelist Billy Graham, has written a new book titled "Heaven: My Father's House." (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association photo by Russ Busby)

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Give thanks that "because you prayed," two members of International Baptist Church in Berlin have reconciled, missionaries write.

■ Missionary Carol Vaughan in Moscow asks prayer that God will help her with her Russian language studies. She specifically asks "for a strong desire to study, time management in order to have quality study time, abilities to retain what I am learning and to be able to speak with good grammar and pronunciation."

■ A Bible study group led by Sasha Shablign and Sasha Motigin in Moscow. The group formed last October after two showings of the "Jesus" film in Moscow. They met for two weeks in a museum, but then were asked to leave. The group disbanded for a couple of months, but started again in mid-December and now meets in an apartment. Pray for a permanent meeting site.

■ A pastor for International Baptist Church in Einhoven, The Netherlands. Contact: Huub Beeren; e-mail: Abeerer@hotmail.com.

■ Churches near military bases in New England as they reach out to families of soldiers serving in Afghanistan.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **ASHLAND**—Mike Rount resigned as pastor of Rose Hill Missionary Church to become senior pastor of Circle Drive Church in Colorado Springs, Colo.

■ **DANVILLE**—Retired Baptist pastor Lester Lee Nash died Nov. 30 at age 72. Nash, who served in the ministry 47 years, retired in 1991 as pastor of Airline Church in Henderson. He served on the Kentucky

Baptist Convention Executive Board and the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. He is survived by his wife, Idella Nash, and five children.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—The choirs of Tunnel Hill Church and Valley View Church will combine with choirs from other denominations to present the cantata "For the Healing of the Nations" Feb. 10,

4:30 p.m., at First Presbyterian Church. For information, call (270) 765-7663.

■ **GREENVILLE**—New Paradise Church will host "Youth Blast 2002" Jan. 26, 6 p.m., and Jan. 27, 2-4 p.m. The regional youth event will feature Jeremy Johnston as speaker and Blessed Hope will lead praise and worship. For information, call (270) 338-9780. Tim Adcock is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host "Saved by Grace" and Jason Brooks in concert Jan. 26, 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 367-0218. Geoffrey Lacefield is pastor.

Crescent Hill Church will host a four-session divorce recovery workshop each Sunday in February, 5 p.m. The workshop will feature panel discussions, resource sessions and small-group discussions. For information, call (502) 896-4425.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church will host the "Listening to Love" women's conference Feb. 16, 8 a.m. Author Debbie Morris will speak and Allison Durham Speer will lead worship. For information, call (270) 753-1854.

■ **PRINCETON**—Calvary Church called Todd Bauwin as youth pastor. Rodney Wallace is pastor.

Southern Seminary awards degrees to 11 Kentucky students

LOUISVILLE—Eleven students from Kentucky were among 105 students who received degrees Dec. 14 during commencement at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

The Kentucky graduates, their hometowns and degrees are:

■ Tomara Fox Brown of Beaver Dam, master of divinity in missions, evangelism and church growth.

■ Clayton Winston Beasley of Paducah, doctor of ministry.

■ Paul Harrison Chitwood of Somerset, doctor of philosophy.

■ Eric Fields of Louisville, master

of divinity.

■ Julie Heath of Mayfield, master of arts in Christian education.

■ David Melber of Paducah, master of divinity in missions, evangelism and church growth.

■ Calvin Naylor of Elkton, master of divinity.

■ David Prewitt of Lexington, master of arts in Christian education.

■ Richard Todd Sams of Paducah, doctor of ministry.

■ Charles Simmons of Glasgow, master of church music.

■ Thomas Weakley of Bowling Green, master of arts in missiology.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Ordained Southern Baptist minister seeks conservative, Spirit-led church to pastor—full-time or bivocational. Open to traditional, contemporary or blended worship. Some experience in leading worship as well as youth ministry. Requests for resumé or more information can be sent to: Rev. George M. Bryant, 390 Nottingham Road, Lexington, KY 40517; or call and leave a message: (859) 272-7156.

FOR SALE: New and used buses and vans. New 2001 Ford/Glaval 25-passenger demonstrator; new 2000 Dodge raised-roof van with wheelchair lift, \$28,200; 1996 Chev/Eldorado 30-passenger, low miles, loaded, \$34,900; 1995 Ford/MetroTrans Diesel 14-passenger, no CDL; 1993 Ford/Eldorado Diesel 25-passenger, high miles, \$5,900; 1988 Ford/Supreme 21-passenger with luggage rack, \$5,000. Call for details: (800) 582-7118.

FOR SALE: New steel building, 50x104, must sell, \$11,980. (800) 292-0111.

SEEKING: Audubon Baptist Church seeks full-time pastor and part-time music minister to lead a moderate church that has adopted the 1963 faith and message statement. Located at the edge of the Audubon Park area. Seeking an individual who will be a partner in defining God's direction for the church. Thankful for more than 50 years of service and excited about God's plan for the future. Currently 80 to 100 in Sunday school and 100 to 150 in Sunday morning worship service. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Audubon Baptist Church, 1046 Hess Lane, Louisville, KY 40217.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Ashby Lane Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Robert Marquess, c/o church, 6617 Ashby Lane, Louisville, KY 40272.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth for Simpsonville Baptist. Average worship attendance: 350. Submit resumé by Feb. 17 to: Personnel, Box 56, Simpsonville, KY 40067.

SEEKING: Director, Baptist Fellowship Center/superintendent of mission, Central District Baptist Association. Requirements: master's degree or equivalent in social work or theological studies; ordained Baptist minister; good oral and written communication skills; computer literate; able to function in a multi-cultural, multi-level environment; report-writing skills; ability to manage a large facility—budget, finance, human resources; and develop programs. Travel required. Certain of these requirements may be waived. Responsibilities: Administer a large, inner-city Baptist center with 15 operating programs, 12-16 workers, volunteers, working relations with social welfare agencies, community businesses, educational and religious organizations. Send resumé to: Baptist Fellowship Center Joint Committee, 1351 Catalpa St., Louisville, KY 40211. Deadline: Jan. 27, 2002.

SEEKING: Full-time, experienced pastor for a well-established Southern Baptist-affiliated church with a membership of approximately 300. The successful candidate will have graduated from a theological seminary, supports the basic belief of the Southern Baptist association, be willing to relocate and be able to furnish references upon request. Send resumé with work history to: Highlands Baptist Church, 2032 Parallel Road, Lexington, KY 40511, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Calvary Baptist Church, Danville, Ky., is seeking a church pianist to play for two Sunday morning services and for Wednesday evening choir rehearsals. Qualifications include: ability to play standard anthem arrangements, open to learning new styles that may require improvisation and be someone of good Christian character. Contact Jimbo Stevens, minister of music, (859) 236-5350.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Highland Park First Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky. Please submit resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 7321 Billtown Road, Louisville, KY 40299.

SEEKING: Rineyville Baptist Church is seeking a full-time pastor. Located in a growing community near Elizabethtown, Ky., the church averages 230 in Sunday school attendance. About 300 in two morning worship services, and has a full-time director of children and youth ministries and a worship planning committee. See our Web page at www.homestead.com/Rineyville-Baptist. Please send resumé or questions to: Pastor Search Committee, Box 197, Rineyville, KY 40162.

SEEKING: Organist for mid-sized, dynamic, growing church, Sunday morning worship services. For more information, please call Cedar Creek Baptist Church, (502) 239-2129.

SEEKING: Jamestown First Baptist Church, Jamestown, Ky., is presently seeking a full-time minister of students and associate pastor. This dual position emphasizing student ministry (1st-college) is a great opportunity for God's chosen one—competitive salary and benefits. Ministry experience and seminary education preferred. Send resumé with cover letter before March 10 to: JFB, PO Box 308, Jamestown, KY 42629, Attn: Associate Search.

SEEKING: Ministry Assistant. Calvary Baptist Church in Danville is seeking a warm, friendly, Christian individual proficient in desktop publishing, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Good writing and organizational skills also are a must. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 214 Lincoln Ave., Danville, KY 40422.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth for Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, Hodgenville, Ky. Salary negotiable. Currently the church has 100 to 125 in Sunday school and 150 to 175 in Sunday morning worship. We have 10 to 15 in our youth program and are expecting a large increase in the next several years as young people come out of our AWANA into the youth program. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, PO Box 253, Hodgenville, KY 42748-0253.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music for Simpsonville Baptist. Average worship attendance: 350. Submit resumé by Feb. 17 to: Personnel, Box 56, Simpsonville, KY 40067.

SEEKING: Children/family minister; individual who is passionate about relational ministry with children (birth through 6th grade) and their families. Minister will develop, coordinate and implement a dynamic in-reach/outreach program for children and families. Seminary degree strongly preferred. Send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 612 E 12th Ave., Bowling Green, KY 42101.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for Thornhill Baptist Church in Frankfort. All communications should be directed to the Pastor Search Committee, Thornhill Baptist Church, 1142 Holmes St., Frankfort, KY 40601. (502) 223-7303. E-mail: thbchurch@dcr.net.

SEEKING: Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., is receiving resumé for the position of minister of music. This position is full time with the possible addition of a second ministry area (education, missions, administration, etc.) to be determined by the candidate's interests, experience and skills. Ormsby Heights is a conservative church with a blended style of worship (gospel, hymns, praise/worship, contemporary) and a very strong interest in developing contemporary worship opportunities targeting young adults. Please send resumé to: Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, 2120 Lower Hunters Trace, Louisville, KY 40216.

SEEKING: Liberty Baptist Church in Leitchfield, Ky., is seeking a part-time youth minister. Interested candidates may submit resumé to: Gladys Duvall, PO Box 88, Millwood, KY 42762-0088.

SEEKING: Perryville Baptist Church is eagerly seeking God's man for the position of full-time pastor. Membership: 540. Church has begun a building program. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 26, Perryville, KY 40468, or fax to (859) 332-8729. Church phone: (859) 332-8721.

Bowers continues witness after family tragedy in Peru

By Ted Parks
Religion News Service

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (RNS) —“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Quoting evangelical Christian missionary Jim Elliot, martyred in Ecuador in 1956, Scott McCurdy, assistant pastor of Highland Park Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., now applies the phrase to another Jim—Jim Bowers.

In Ecuador's neighbor, Peru, and almost 50 years later, Bowers paid an almost equally high price to follow the missionary call—he didn't lose his own life, but that of his wife, Roni, and baby daughter, Charity. Bowers and his family were flying to the city of Iquitos in northern Peru on April 20, 2001, when their plane was mistakenly identified as a flight of drug traffickers.

Fire from a Peruvian Air Force jet pursuing the civilian missionary pontoon plane killed Bowers' wife and daughter and wounded pilot Kevin Donaldson, who managed to land in the Amazon River. Donaldson, Bowers and Bowers' young son, Cory, survived the attack that was part of an antidrug program supported by the CIA.

Bowers is in big demand these days at evangelical Christian colleges to talk about the incident and its implications for faith. He is scheduled to participate in a missions conference this month at Highland Park Baptist organized by McCurdy. The independent church is affiliated with Chattanooga's Tennessee Temple University.

But before the conference, Bowers is making his third trip to Peru since the April tragedy—and the first with his 7-year-old son.

Before the April 2001 accident, Bowers taught and encouraged local church leaders along a 150-mile stretch of the Amazon. To carry out their river ministry, Bowers and his family lived aboard a 60-by-16-foot houseboat. Complete with solar power, a satellite phone, air condi-

tioning and a microwave, the boat was “a real comfortable home,” Bowers said.

While Bowers has been back on the boat since the accident, Cory has not. “I'm hoping this return will be good for Cory to think through ... what happened to his mom and sister as he boards our floating home and spends a week there without his mom's constant presence—the only thing he knows of life there,” Bowers said. “I think it will be good for him, but quite emotional to be certain.”

With his mother serving as teacher as well as mom, Cory was “boat-schooled,” said David Southwell, executive administrator for South America for the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, the Pennsylvania-based missions agency that sponsored Bowers in Peru.

During the trip, Bowers will meet with church leaders, host a crew shooting a docudrama and documentary, and speak in the city of Iquitos. He will also attend a conference in Lima for regional ABWE missionaries.

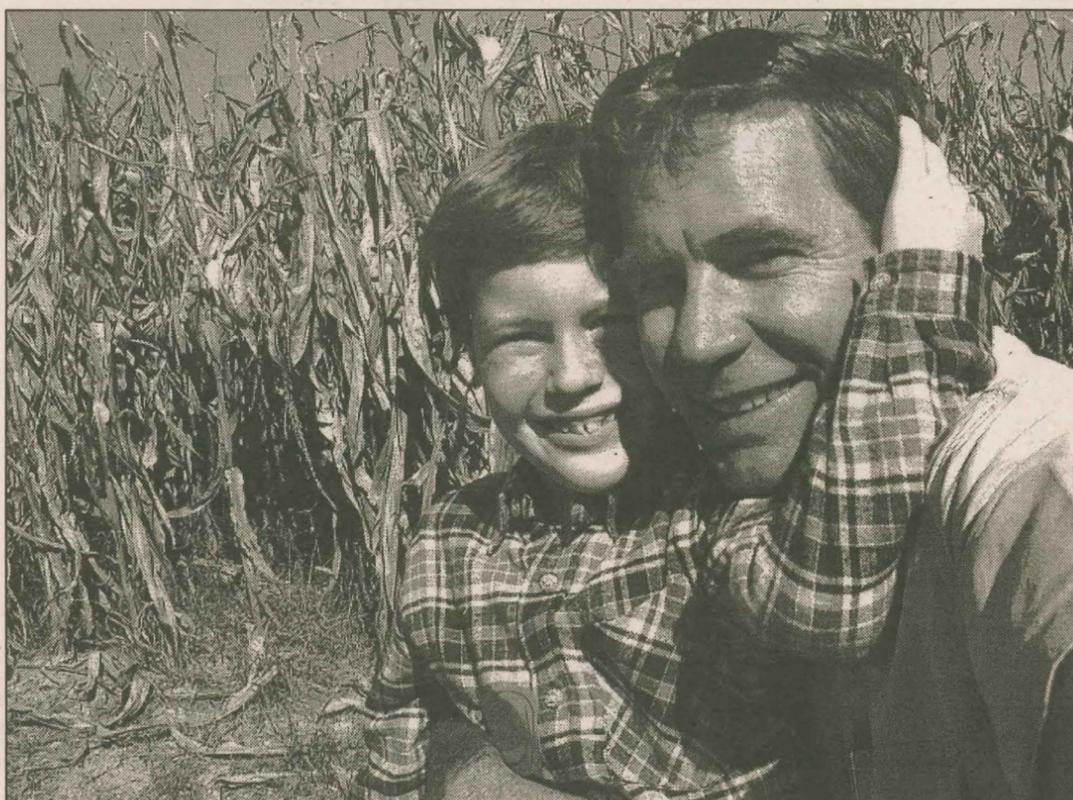
Though Bowers currently is involved in a ministry in Raleigh, N.C., he tries to stay involved in the Peru work by e-mail and short trips back.

ABWE's Southwell said the shoot-down radically altered the mission agency's Amazon River outreach. “Basically ... our future was wiped out in a lot of ways,” he said. “We have confidence God's in charge, mind you. And we believe He knows what's going on. We don't.”

Bowers minces no words when talking about who's to blame for the incident.

“It was completely, 100 percent the fault of the Peruvian Air Force and the CIA,” he said, adding that a subsequent investigation had cleared pilot Donaldson of any responsibility in causing the accident.

The missionary and others are frustrated by what they see as a stubborn refusal by American and Peruvian officials to admit error. While both Peruvian officials and President Bush offered condolences, neither government acknowledged guilt in shooting



down the plane, Bowers said.

“Both the CIA and the Peruvian government have done their best to hide and to be quiet as much as possible,” he said. “Especially our government shouldn't be in the business of helping foreign soldiers shoot at innocent civilians.”

“To my knowledge there has been no public statement, by either the Peruvian Air Force, their national government, or the CIA or U.S. State Department, to acknowledge ... any wrongdoing in this event,” he said.

Bowers also noted that “not one penny has been given” to pay for the damages of property, expenses or loss of productivity by the missionaries.

Southwell said ABWE still has not replaced the downed aircraft, despite other missionaries already waiting to resume flying.

The Embassy of Peru in Washington, D.C., insisted Peruvian officials expressed sympathy after the event, including sending two consuls gener-

al to the funerals for Bowers' wife and daughter.

Asked to respond to the criticism that the CIA neither took responsibility for its actions nor offered compensation to the victims, agency spokesman Tom Crispell declined comment.

But amid the frustration, faith seems to eclipse Bowers' pain.

“When I mourn, I think about how much I miss them,” Bowers said. Thoughts of loss, however, rest on a confidence that the death of his wife and daughter are in no sense the end of a tragic story, but the start of a happier one.

“All that happened to them is ... they went on to heaven sooner.”

Soon after the incident, Bowers said he began searching for something positive. “I switched gears basically and started thinking about the good that could come out of this.”

That something good, he said, will include a sports complex to minister to the youth of Iquitos.

RETURN VISIT Missionary Jim Bowers and his son, Cory, will visit Peru this month where Bowers' wife and infant daughter were killed last year when the Peruvian military shot down the plane the family was riding in. (RNS photo)

Baptist relief work opens doors for the gospel in South Asia

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—People in a remote village in South Asia have heard the gospel—and seen it in action—because of Southern Baptist contributions after natural disaster struck the area a year ago, leaving thousands of people dead and 1 million homeless.

Southern Baptist workers in the region gained access to a village that lost 99 percent of its houses and seven of its 2,500 residents. They partnered with villagers and short-term Southern Baptist volunteer teams in a food-for-work program, allowing locals to help with home construction in exchange for meals.

A total of \$326,000 from world hunger and general relief funds made it possible for the workers to help build 200 houses there.

“Having financial resources available helped us respond immediately to many of the needs in South Asia,” noted Jim Brown, human needs con-

sultant for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Villagers who worked side by side with Southern Baptists understood the Christians were motivated by faith. As personal relationships developed, people heard the gospel.

Though none of the villagers has made public decisions for Jesus, the workers saw significant change in the spiritual climate of the village, a Christian worker said.

“They began to listen carefully to the things we were saying,” said the worker, whose identity was withheld for security reasons.

He credited much of their success to the prayers of Southern Baptists. “We saw the Lord take the prayers of people who were interested in what was going on in that village and make a way for us through the wilderness,” he noted.

While many non-governmental organizations were struggling to gain

access to the country, Southern Baptist workers were granted permission to contact villagers.

“They understood we were motivated by our faith in God and Jesus Christ, and we responded in love to their need,” the worker said. “We feel like even the attitude they had from the outset is going to make it possible for people who are doing follow-up to share the gospel with them.”

A South Asian Christian pastor served as translator for the Southern Baptists and also found opportunities to share his faith with fellow South Asians.

“We shared our faith, but he did more openly,” the worker said. “He knew how far he could go in certain directions in opening a door in sharing the gospel with those people.”

The South Asian pastor has stayed in the village, serving with two other South Asian men as church planters.

Workers continued to see villagers

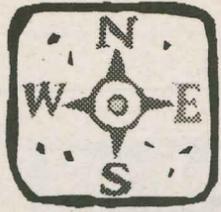
become more open to the gospel. Near the end of the workers' time, one side of the village was raising funds for a religious festival. The South Asian man leading construction work told him, “We will not be doing anything like that.”

Other people wanted to erect an idol, but the majority refused. One woman cross-stitched crosses for all the Southern Baptist workers.

“It's just one of the little things that indicates the gospel will be preached effectively in that village. They are aware of it,” the worker said.

When 15 Christian day laborers arrived, local villagers encouraged them to hold Christian worship services, and many villagers attended. Workers prayed for villagers openly in their homes, and villagers with sick family members asked for prayer.

“God was behind this project,” the worker said. “He had a message that is being given to those folks.”



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