



# WESTERN RECORDER

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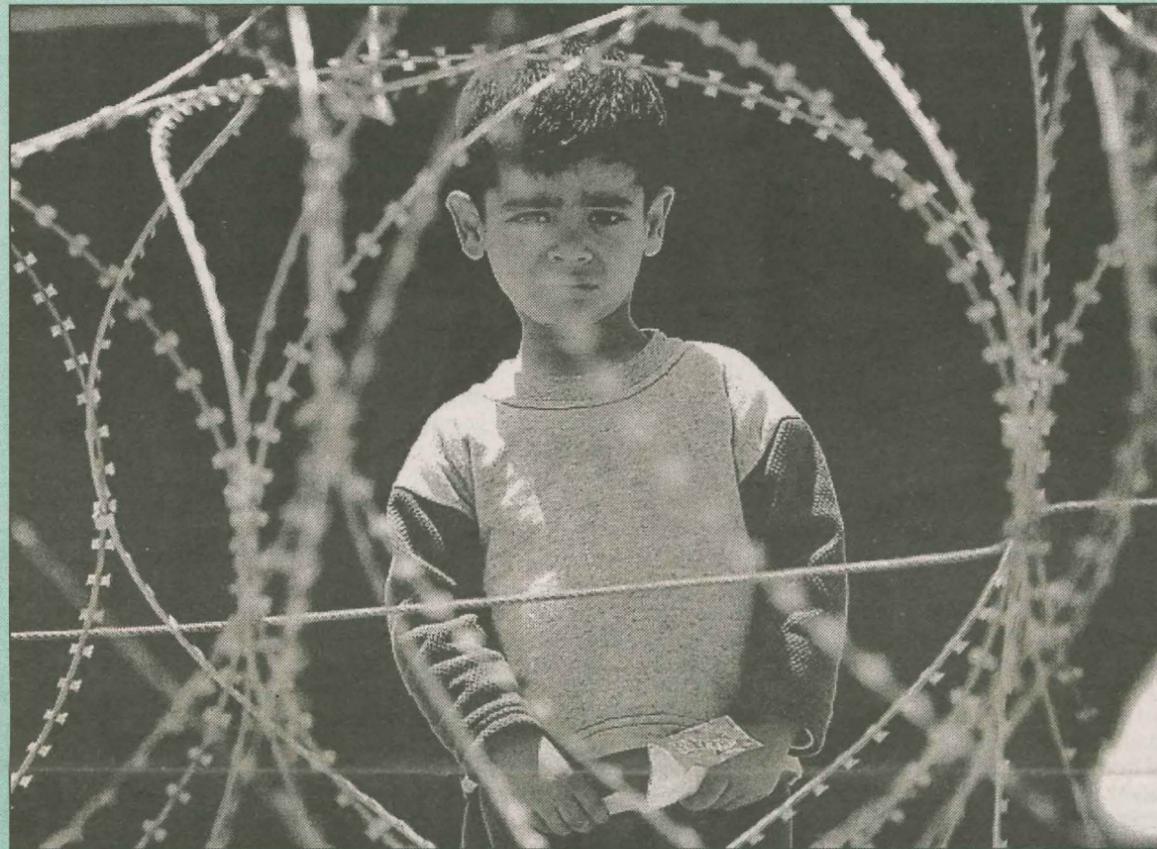
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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, June 5

## Project Future & Hope



**MIDEAST FENCE** A Palestinian boy watches his relatives through a barb wired fence erected by Israeli soldiers around the West Bank city of Bethlehem May 23. Southern Baptists will send approximately 20 teams of volunteers into Palestinian regions this summer to take food and a message of love. (RNS/Reuters photo by Goran Tomasevic)

## Baptist volunteers taking food, love to Palestinians

By Erich Bridges  
SBC International Mission Board

JERUSALEM (BP)—With anger, despair and hunger soaring among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, Southern Baptist volunteers are bringing food and hope.

"Project Future and Hope" will send up to 20 Southern Baptist volunteer teams into Palestinian towns and refugee camps through the summer months to work alongside Arab Baptists.

Volunteers and Arab Baptists will distribute food and minister to families and children traumatized by the increasingly bloody street battles between Palestinian and Israeli forces.

"People are in need, and we want to share God's love in a concrete way," said Paul Lawrence, a Southern Baptist worker among Palestinian Arabs who is coordinating the project. "There is a real feeling of hopelessness among the Palestinians. They don't see their lives going anywhere. There's no future in their dreams."

Months of attacks and counterattacks by Israelis and Palestinians have only worsened an already-grim economic situation. Half a million Palestinians need immediate food aid, according to the United Nations' World Food Program. Half of the population in Palestinian territories struggle to exist on less than \$2 per

person per day, the program stated.

Fragile local economies that had begun to grow with international aid and investment have been crushed by the collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, curfews, border closures and constant armed clashes. Even before the major escalation of fighting this spring, the overall Palestinian economy had sustained an estimated \$2.2 billion in lost production during the previous 15 months of skirmishes.

"The situation is very bad, because (average Palestinians) have not been able to work, some of them for years," Lawrence said. "With the latest escalation, many more cannot work, and many more are under curfew. There's food here, but people can't afford it."

Arab Baptists in local churches and other evangelical Christians already have begun food distribution, sometimes walking from town to town because of travel restrictions. Southern Baptist volunteer teams are scheduled to arrive beginning in early June to assist the relief efforts in Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and other parts of the West Bank, as well as in Gaza. Southern Baptists have earmarked \$350,000 in hunger and relief funds for the project.

In addition to food aid, Baptists plan to conduct several week-long camps for Christian and Muslim children, counsel children and families terrorized by the fighting, paint classrooms in a Hebron Christian

school and work with some of the estimated 15,000 deaf Palestinians in Gaza.

Aiding Palestinian children is a major priority, Lawrence stressed.

"Children frequently hear machine-gun fire and see the aftermath of war, and they've been under curfew for more than a month," he explained. "They're experiencing the kind of post-traumatic stress that kids anywhere would. We just want to bring a little joy into their lives. There are big needs we can't meet, but we can help some families. The goal of Project Future and Hope is to demonstrate God's love to hurting people. We want to demonstrate in a tangible way that not only does God love them, but we as His followers do also."

Lawrence added that the risk of violence to Americans is not as great as some people might expect.

"It's not realistic to say there's no risk, but we feel good about it," Lawrence said. "The Palestinians seem to be able to distinguish between individuals and government policy. They may be very hostile toward the American government, but at the same time they'll welcome you into their homes for tea."

Contributions for relief ministries in Palestinian towns and refugee centers can be sent to: General Relief Fund—Baptist, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. All money donated to this project will be used exclusively for Palestinian relief.



**NEW MISSIONARY** Barbara Greenfield serves as a Mission Service Corps volunteer that assists mentally and developmentally challenged adults. "God has opened the doors when it was necessary," she said.

## Missionary leads Princeton farm for challenged residents to grow

By Jackie Bishop  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

PRINCETON—A 27-year career in special education might be considered a ministry in itself but for Barbara Greenfield, Kentucky's newest Mission Service Corps missionary, it was just the preparation stage for a greater calling.

Greenfield is president of Bright Life Farms in Princeton, a ministry that works to give hope, purpose and freedom to mentally and developmentally challenged adults.

"God has special times and special places where He makes you aware of needs," Greenfield said. "The Lord impressed on me, through friends and people within the church, of the need for mentally and developmentally challenged adults to have a right to be somewhere following their primary education."

Bright Life Farms has its origins in a 1998 phone call from a former student's mother, Greenfield explained. The woman explained that her mentally challenged adult child wanted to live away from home, but no places offered the necessary 24-hour care and supervision.

Shortly afterward, Greenfield again was confronted with the same concern, this time by a female friend with a mentally challenged adult son. This mother's health was declining, and she realized her time to care for her son was limited.

Calling herself a "built-in rescuer," Greenfield said she began to research this area of need and found out about a farm called "Quest" located in Georgetown. The farm offers mentally and developmentally challenged adults a home atmosphere and a rewarding work lifestyle. She was impressed with the farm concept, but the facility had no room for new residents, a waiting list of 2,000 applicants and a steep enrollment cost.

"This was the typical reply for these mothers," Greenfield said. "They have to fight for a place for them (their children) all their lives. Some of the things we take for granted, such as sending our children to school and there always being a place, may not be at all what these parents have experienced."

□ See Missionary started ..., page 3

## Missionary's e-mail linked to Rankin's BF&M mandate

By Mark Wingfield  
Texas Baptist Standard

**"It's a tough decision. I know some who haven't signed (the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message affirmation) yet."**

Former IMB missionary  
Scott McIntosh

AUSTIN, Texas—When one Southern Baptist missionary received the January mandate from International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin to affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message, he felt a burden for pain he might have brought to his fellow missionaries.

Just a few months earlier, Scott McIntosh had a telephone conversation with Rankin that foreshadowed what was to come.

McIntosh and his wife, D'Lisa, had served with the IMB since 1993, first in Africa and then in Scotland. Most recently, he was team leader/strategy coordinator for IMB work in Scotland.

In recent years, McIntosh said, he had grown concerned about the content of SBC Life, a publication of the SBC Executive Committee that is mailed free to pastors, church leaders and missionaries. "It got to where I couldn't open one of them without some kind of sly remark or moderate-bashing going on in the articles," he explained.

Acknowledging now that he was naïve about denominational politics, he wrote an e-mail last spring to Life-Way Christian Resources, the SBC agency he thought published the magazine. In the e-mail, he asked that his name be removed from the mailing list "due to the constant focus on issues regarding the Baptist Faith & Message and disparaging remarks in article after article about those who hold, incorrectly, a 'low view' of Scripture simply because they do not agree with the changes in the current Baptist Faith & Message."

Although McIntosh addressed the e-mail to the wrong entity, it made its way to SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman.

The next thing McIntosh knew, his phone was ringing in Scotland, and Rankin was on the other end of the line.

According to McIntosh's recollection, Rankin told him Chapman had asked Rankin to call McIntosh and find out why he had written the e-mail about SBC Life and where he stood on denominational matters.

A year later, McIntosh still holds no ill will toward Rankin for the call. "Jerry Rankin in my opinion is an honest, fair-minded person. I have never had any bone to pick with Jerry," he explained.

### 'Overwhelming majority' of missionaries affirm BF&M

RICHMOND, Va.—The "overwhelming majority" of Southern Baptist international missionaries will affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message as requested, International Mission Board Vice President Avery Willis told IMB trustees May 22.

To date, 10 missionaries who have resigned specifically cited concern with the mandate to sign an affirmation of the SBC's faith statement as a reason, Willis said. Eight of those resignations were processed at the May trustee meeting among a total of 55 resignations. IMB regional leaders reportedly still are collecting responses and "dialoging" with missionaries who have questions.

IMB President Jerry Rankin in January asked missionaries to sign a two-part statement that says they agree with the content of the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message and agree to work "in accordance with" the

teachings of the document.

While the IMB reports only 10 resignations over the administrative mandate, a missionary transition task force established by the Baptist General Convention of Texas reports it has received inquiries from 69 IMB missionary units, meaning either a couple or a single adult.

As of June, the BGCT transition fund is assisting three missionary couples who have left the IMB over the new doctrinal requirement. The Kentucky Baptist Fellowship and other groups also have established funds to assist missionaries who resign or are fired.

Determining how many missionaries may resign or take early retirement rather than sign the affirmation is not a clear-cut proposition. In some cases, missionaries have explained, their colleagues may resign or retire for a mixture of reasons,

including concern about the 2000 faith statement. In other cases, missionaries reportedly are delaying making a decision at all, hoping to buy time to finish current projects or get children through school.

The number of missionaries resigning from the IMB reportedly is up nearly 20 percent this year over the same period two years ago. According to published reports from January through June of 2002, 136 missionaries have resigned, excluding those who resigned to assume administrative positions in Richmond. That compares to 114 resignations reported in the same six-month period for 2000.

Meanwhile, the IMB continues to appoint new missionaries in large numbers. In the same week the IMB honored 60 retiring missionaries, it appointed 67 new workers for overseas service.

The only concern he had was Rankin's closing statement on the phone call: "Now we have to do some damage control, and this might cause the missionaries to have to sign the Baptist Faith & Message."

Fast-forward to January of this year, when Rankin sent out a notice to IMB missionaries urging them to sign an affirmation of the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message. Such administrative action was necessary, Rankin explained, because unnamed people were questioning the doctrinal integrity of IMB missionaries and he wanted to lay the matter to rest.

"Imagine the pressure on me when I get the letter in January saying all missionaries have to sign the Baptist Faith & Message," McIntosh said. "I couldn't sleep for three days. I thought, not only have I lost my job, but my actions have caused irreparable damage to the missionaries who felt like I felt and couldn't sign that piece of paper."

An IMB spokesman confirmed that Rankin called McIntosh over the matter, but noted that it is not uncommon for Rankin to call missionaries overseas. "He does it all the time, but not for 'damage control,'" said spokesman Mark Kelly.

By Rankin's recollection, he called McIntosh on his own accord, not because he was asked to do so by Chapman, Kelly reported.

Rankin's spokesman also confirmed that "this is one of the incidents that precipitated the request for missionaries to affirm the Baptist Faith & Message." However, he added, there was "no reason" for the McIntoshes to resign over it.

"Scott and D'Lisa McIntosh were good missionaries, and in fact their resignation letter did not even mention the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message as any part of the reason for their decision."

McIntosh insists he has no animosity toward Rankin or other IMB administrators. But he does have a bone to pick with Chapman.

"As far as Morris Chapman is concerned, that was a cowardly act," McIntosh said. "I grew up in Texas, where men act like men. If you've got something to say, you go straight to that person. You don't go around them to someone else."

Chapman, asked for a response by the Baptist Standard, explained that he did not believe any direct response to McIntosh was required. "I did not reply to Scott's e-mail because he did not inquire about anything. He expressed an opinion and made a request, which I honored."

Chapman said he forwarded the e-mail to Rankin because it had been written by an IMB missionary and he felt Rankin could "relate to Scott personally about the e-mail" and would

be "in much better position to respond" to McIntosh's concerns.

"In forwarding the e-mail to Dr. Rankin, I inquired if he thought the type of concern expressed in Scott's e-mail was indicative of how a large number of international missionaries felt."

The call from Rankin, however, was the next-to-last straw for the McIntoshes staying on as IMB missionaries, McIntosh said. The final straw was the mandate to sign an affirmation of the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message, which the McIntoshes would not do.

This year they confirmed their decision to resign as IMB missionaries and return to a stateside pastorate. McIntosh is completing his first month as pastor of Westoak Woods Baptist Church in Austin, Texas.

There are missionary colleagues who have felt forced into other choices, he said.

"Most of the ones I was close to signed it for any number of reasons," McIntosh reported. "The majority I know were very uncomfortable with it but indicated they would not sign the first part (Do you agree with the Baptist Faith & Message?) but would sign the second part (Will you act in accordance with the Baptist Faith & Message?). It's a tough decision. I know some who haven't signed it yet."

## Registration secretary predicts 10,000 messengers at SBC

LAWRENCEVILLE, Ga. (ABP)—About 10,000 Southern Baptists are expected to register as messengers at next week's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, according to Lee Porter, the SBC's longtime registration secretary.

That total at the June 11-12 meeting in St. Louis would be a far cry from the 25,607 who registered in 1987, the last time the convention met there. That year's meeting—held at the zenith of the SBC conflict between conservative and moderate leadership factions—featured the much-anticipated report on a two-year study by a

"Peace Committee" formed to address issues at the heart of the controversy.

Since 1990, the last year moderates mounted a major challenge for the convention presidency, the size of the annual meeting has been greatly diminished. Recent conventions have drawn only a fraction of the all-time record of 45,519 messengers set in 1985 in Dallas.

Porter, a retired Baptist Sunday School Board official who lives in Lawrenceville, Ga., has been forecasting SBC registration totals since his election as registration secretary in 1978.

He said he believes a trend toward

smaller conventions is going to continue for the immediate future. Last year, in New Orleans, registration reached 9,584. More than 13,000 had registered when the SBC met in New Orleans just five years earlier, in 1996.

Not only are recent meetings smaller than conventions during the height of the controversy, they are smaller than typical conventions during the 1960s and 1970s. When the convention met in St. Louis in 1971 and again in 1980, registration topped 13,700 and 13,800, respectively.

Perhaps more significantly, Porter said, in the last two or three years he

has seen a substantial drop in the number of churches that send messengers to the convention.

Throughout the 1980s and most of the 1990s, between 8,000 and 9,000 churches were represented at the SBC in a typical year, he said. Last year the number of churches represented was 3,829, down from 4,830 in 2000.

Porter said he believes the smaller numbers are cause for concern.

"I think ultimately this has to hurt," he said. "I worry about the number who attend, because I don't think they really feel like they're a part of what's happening."

**Porter said he has seen a substantial drop in the number of churches sending messengers to the convention.**

## 100 Kentuckians now involved in Mission Service Corps

By Jackie Bishop  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

PRINCETON—When Barbara Greenfield became a Mission Service Corps volunteer, she became the 100th Kentucky MSC missionary to be assigned.

Greenfield, the wife of Kentucky Baptist Convention President Harold Greenfield, is president of Bright Life Farms in Princeton, a ministry for mentally and developmentally challenged adults.

In April she was assigned by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board to be the latest in what has been a rapidly growing group of Kentucky missionaries, said Eric Allen, director of the KBC's Mission Service Corps program.

The number of Kentucky MSC missionaries has more than doubled since 2000 when 43 people from the commonwealth were participating in the program.

Allen added that Kentucky played a significant role in the overall increase in NAMB missionaries for 2001 and has been recognized by NAMB for its contribution. There are more than 2,400 MSC missionaries assigned by NAMB nationwide.

Mission Service Corps missionaries give full- or part-time service for four months or more. They provide their own support in an assigned ministry.

Greenfield said becoming an MSC missionary is a natural extension of her ministry.

"The neat thing about MSC is that they match a volunteer's interests with the need," she said. Through MSC she will fulfill a minimum of four months of volunteer service (20 hours per week). Her service will be a continuation of her role at the farm.

Allen said Greenfield is an exam-

ple of what Mission Service Corps is all about because she feels called to the farm ministry and her heart desires to serve.

"If people are plugged into places where they have a desire to be, they will be more fulfilled," Allen said. "The goal of MSC is to help put an individual's calling, desires and skills to use in an area of service where they will find fulfillment."

Allen noted that many MSC missionaries, like Greenfield, say they felt a call to missions earlier in life but for various reasons were unable to answer that call. MSC offers people the opportunity to fulfill their call, whether that opportunity comes after high school, college or retirement.

"The awareness is growing and more people are becoming involved," he said.

Greenfield said the prayer sup-

port provided through MSC and the NAMB is especially important to her and the farm ministry.

Prayerwalks have been held at the farm, and the ministry can benefit by being a part of the NAMB Prayer Line. The birthdays of MSC missionaries also are listed each month in the Open Windows devotional guide and the NAMB magazine, *On Mission*.

Allen said missionaries are assigned a supervisor and offered an orientation to gain direction and information to help them in their mission work. He said the MSC program allows every Baptist to be directly involved in evangelism and church planting in North America through volunteering or supporting others through prayer or financial sponsorship.

For more information about the Mission Service Corps program, contact Eric Allen at (502) 245-4101, ext. 397 or visit the Web site [www.kybaptist.org/msc](http://www.kybaptist.org/msc).



Allen

## Missionary started Princeton farm for challenged residents to grow

Continued from page 1

Greenfield said the director of Quest shared his story of getting started 17 years ago and the necessary steps to start a new farm. In a matter of months Bright Life Farms was created.

In March 1999, nine board members were selected and Bright Life Farms was incorporated as a non-profit corporation. The board voted to plant the first crop in the spring of 2000 even though the organization did not yet own any land.

"God has opened the doors when it was necessary," Greenfield said. "Churches got the word out (about the farm), and in March of 2000 the board received an anonymous gift and purchased 27 acres of land with a pond, two barns and a line for city water.

"God has allowed us to go forward in spite of the fact that banks would not loan us money," she added. "With cash crops of tomatoes and field corn, the farm cleared \$4,000 from the first crop produced."

The money from the crops and several grants made it possible to begin a mentoring program that would help future residents transition from their home to the farm. Cash flow developed quickly as many churches (Baptist and other denominations) began to include farm support in their budgets.

Applications for residents came in quickly after an ad appeared in a local newspaper. Soon after, the board approved five men and five women to become the future "farmers" of Bright Life Farms. The board also selected two individuals to begin training to be house managers.

"We decided to call the residents 'farmers' because we thought that they would feel the rewards of a work lifestyle where they would be able to see things grow and develop," said Greenfield. "Here they can have a sense of belonging and acceptance."

While the farmers are not required to work more than four hours per day or beyond their skill and interest level, they are responsible for participating as members of a house family.



**RESIDENT FARMERS** Residents at Bright Life Farms in Princeton work on 27 acres, gaining a degree of freedom and education. The farm, which was launched in 1999, earned \$4,000 from its first crop a year later. Money raised at the farm and grants fund a mentoring program that will help future residents transition from their home to the farm. (Princeton Times Leader photo by Stacey McCaslin)

That involves taking care of their rooms, laundry and personal hygiene.

Greenfield recalls explaining the farm concept to a family whose daughter was being considered as a resident. "I told them that it would be kind of like going to college—a time to learn new things and experience independence from home. The daughter, who did not get the opportunity to attend school growing up, became very excited. She asked with enthusiasm, 'I can learn?' And I reassured her, 'Oh, yes you can!'"

Today Bright Life Farms continues to move forward. The organization has purchased a van to transport the farmers and with the help of volunteers has constructed the first of two houses planned for the approved residents.

Construction of the second home is expected to be completed in the fall. The farmers also are beginning to see their work pay off as 136 fruit trees, donated by friends and family, bear fruit to be sold to produce stands and

area restaurants.

Greenfield said the organization plans to have a total of four homes on the campus, but the corporation status does not limit Bright Life Farms to one site. She notes the state does not offer 24-hour care in a "home environment" in any part of rural Kentucky. Only eight other farms of its kind exist in the United States, and Quest is the only other one like it in Kentucky.

The farm not only makes a difference for the farmers, it also affects their parents and other community volunteers, Greenfield said.

Parents are given a chance to experience a lifestyle that is not driven by the demands of caring for their adult children 24 hours a day.

Greenfield said one family moved from Florida to Kentucky just so they could allow their daughter to be part of the farm, but not too far away from home. They have become involved and have formed a parents group to support the work at the farm.

Volunteers in the community view the farm as a mission, Greenfield said. The goal at the farm is to provide a Christian atmosphere that fosters love for people and training to serve.

Greenfield said it hasn't always been easy to accept her calling, noting that over the years it has been difficult to meet the demands of being a mother of four children, finishing her education, teaching full-time and trying to support her husband, Harold, during his ministry as director of missions for Caldwell-Lyon Baptist Association and now as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

She said there have been times when she thought she would not be involved in teaching or special education, but God continues to bring her back. "Every time I've tried to turn loose of this and (thought) that I didn't belong or that I needed to spend more time with Harold, I am reminded of my calling."

For more information on Bright Life Farms, call (270) 365-0830.

### BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Training for certification** to be a Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteer will be held June 15 at the Green Valley Baptist Association office in Henderson. The training will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon, and registration costs \$15. To register or get more information, contact the association office at (270) 827-9867.

■ **Michael Collins**, 53, children's choir director and music intern at Ballardsville Baptist Church, died May 19 of injuries from an automobile accident. Collins, former minister of music at First Baptist Church of Leitchfield, was scheduled to graduate from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville May 17 with a degree in church music. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, and daughter, Melodie.

■ **Don Wilson**, 62, minister of recreation at Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood, died May 25. Wilson, a member of Crestwood Church since 1964, had served on the church staff since 1995. He previously was principal of the Oldham County Career Center, industrial coordinator for the Vocational Bureau of Jefferson County and a teacher at Oldham County High School. He is survived by his wife, Gwen, and two adult children, Scott Wilson and Amy Fuhrer.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Seek worship unity

It seems ironic that the church, which purports to have the answer to every conceivable problem of mankind, is unable to resolve the problem of worship. The culprit in the problem seems to be music. Some Christian music I find entertaining, but it is not what I look for when I go to worship God.

One of the legacies I feel has been left to my generation are the great hymns of the church. I wonder if those who advocate the music we have in so many churches today feel they are leaving a legacy to this generation.

Paul tells us in Ephesians that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. He also admonishes us in 1 Corinthians 1 that we agree with one another so there is no division and that we be perfectly united in mind and thought.

I have an open mind to what reaches people for Jesus Christ. That is behind all we do and I certainly do not fault those who believe a different style of worship will be more effective in reaching people. However, I do not believe there is any valid evidence that justifies believing what we call contemporary worship is the only answer. The only valid answer I see is the wooing of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit working through the lives of those who lead and those who attend worship services.

I honestly believe God can bring churches together for worship as we seek to understand what we are trying to do. Some believe that when my generation dies out there won't be any differences. That is a naïve assumption. Especially is it true if we cannot set an example of unity in worship for the children and youth of our day.

Bob Lawrence  
Hopkinsville

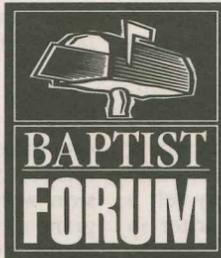
## Time to wake up

Hurray for Richard Land's affirmation of the right of individuals to keep and bear arms as a protection against a tyrannical government.

However, Land makes the common mistake of referring to this as a "constitutional right." This gives the impression that the constitution grants us that right. The founders understood that all rights come from God as clearly expressed in the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are ... endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

Until we regain the concept that the constitution sets severe limits on the power of government to intrude into our private lives, our rights will continue to be destroyed. Nowhere does the constitution say, "This constitution grants to the people the right to \_\_\_\_." What it does say is, "The right to \_\_\_\_ will not be infringed or shall not be violated." This acknowledges the preexistence of the right.

The constitution is a limit upon the government, not upon the people. The most important limit set upon the government in the constitution is the 9th amendment: "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." You only can retain something you already have. This clarified that there are other rights God gave us that we did not agree to allow government to mess with.



It is time we got tough on our servant government and made it live within the boundaries of the constitution. But we can only do that if we know what the constitution says and means.

Churches are failing terribly by allowing government schools to teach our children about the role of government and the nature of the constitution. That is like allowing a pedophile to teach your children about sex. It is time to wake up.

Tim Kendrick  
Buckner

## Pursue just peace

Commendations to the Western Recorder for publishing the May 14 article about Ken Sehested, head of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, and his trip to Israel/Palestine.

Many Baptists are not even aware of the Peace Fellowship, made up of Baptists from 14 groups. Sehested says the fellowship is the best-kept secret among Baptists.

More important is the firsthand view that there are two sides to the vexing and complicated problems of Israel/Palestine. America's views are one-sided due to right-wing Christian beliefs that connect Israel with Bible prophecy. Many Bible scholars, including some conservatives, disagree totally with those views.

With almost one-third of all our foreign aid going to Israel, America certainly needs to exert more influence for a just peace.

Bill Moore  
Owensboro

## What are you thinking?

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

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

### Southern Baptist Convention preview

Messengers to the June 11-12 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in St. Louis will be introduced to a special initiative that could have a far-reaching impact on Southern and Kentucky Baptists. "Empowering Kingdom Growth" will be launched as a special long-term emphasis for the denomination.

Empowering Kingdom Growth or "EKG" is designed to call individual Southern Baptists to renew their passion for the Lord Jesus and the reign of His Kingdom in their hearts, families and churches. Its purpose is to forge a spiritual movement marked by holy living, sacrificial giving and global witness.

Is it needed? Ask yourself the following questions to measure your own Kingdom health:

■ Is relationship with Christ my first priority?

■ Is obedience to Christ's kingly rule evident in my conduct and lifestyle?

■ Are the principles of Christ lived out in my home?

■ Do I have an understanding of the comprehensive nature of the Kingdom of God?

■ Do I labor with a sense of urgency?

■ Do I help my church keep the "big picture" in mind, recognizing the gravity and the urgency of Kingdom business as we plan and execute our ministry?

The two-page recommendation for Empowering Kingdom Growth concludes: "We are asking God to renew us from the inside

out—first our hearts, then our families, then our churches, then our convention, then our world. Pray with us, 'Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' (Matthew 6:10)."

It is an excellent statement and I pray that God will use the Empowering Kingdom Growth initiative to usher in a new day of heartfelt relationship and obedience to Jesus Christ. If



Bill Mackey

we take it seriously, it will impact all that we are and all that we do.

In addition to the main Southern Baptist Convention meetings on June 11-12, Kentucky Baptists also should note the Pastors' Conference that will be held June 9-10. One of our own—Kevin Cosby, pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church in Louisville—will be one of the main speakers June 10.

The St. Stephen choir also will help lead in worship that day. Please pray for their safety in travel and for the special anointing of the Holy Spirit upon their music and the preaching of their pastor.

The convention is a time of inspiration, informative reports, renewing acquaintances and attending meetings as well as doing convention business. My schedule will include three luncheon meetings, one dinner meeting with other state executive directors, a breakfast meeting sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance and attending sessions of the convention. Pray that God will be honored through all Southern Baptist Convention actions.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## FAMILY

### How do you make major decisions about finances?

By Jeremy White

When making a major financial decision such as buying a new house, leasing a vehicle, opening a new business, beginning an investment program or purchasing a boat, who do



you consult?

Though I am a professional "advice-giver," I recognize that individuals can't make every financial decision by setting an appointment and consulting a professional.

Proverbs 15:22 tells us that seeking the advice of many counselors helps bring success. However, getting advice from peers might not be the wisest option.

Here are some suggestions about whom to consult for major financial decisions:

■ **Seek God's guidance through prayer.** If God numbers the hairs on our heads, then He certainly is interested in our financial decisions.

■ **Consult your spouse.** Many people have made poor decisions by going opposite of their spouse's feelings. Though your spouse might not know as much about your business or financial matters, God often gives them unique insight.

■ **Consult with those who are successful with their finances.** Seek out mentors for advice who perhaps have been in similar situations and have managed money successfully. Unfortunately, we often use the advice of peers who know little more than ourselves or have limited experience.

■ **Ask your children—adults or older children.** Because your children know you and care for you, they might have a unique perspective. Though they might not be as experienced, it also can strengthen your relationship if you ask their advice for a change.

■ **Ask your parents.** Your parents likely have been in a similar situation and, like your children, they know you and love you and often have caring insight.

■ **Seek the services of a professional.** Though this might cost something, a lawyer or accountant can provide objective advice, unlike your family, and can warn you of errors in your strategy.

Too often we think we have to "go it alone" lest others think we can't handle it ourselves. But using available resources can help you make better financial decisions.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. He presents financial seminars and workshops at churches and conferences.

## Plan creative options to help teens beat summer boredom

**Q: "I'm bored. There's nothing to do." How can I eliminate these words from the summer vocabulary of my middle schooler?**

Moving from a programmed, ordered schedule that is full of people, responsibilities and deadlines to an open summer schedule can be a challenge. For a young teen not yet old enough to drive, familiar activities around the home can quickly become too familiar and even humdrum.

Ideas to help infuse some structure and life into the lazy days of summer include:

- Designate two days out of the week for "field trips."
- Make a list with your teen of the "top 25" things he or she would like to do this summer. (At least half of these should cost nothing.)
- Schedule summer opportunities such as camps and vacations early so that teens have something to which they can look forward.
- Make swimming, a bicycle ride or a walk a regular part of every day.
- Make a weekly trip to the library.
- Clearly define responsibilities around the home for which the teen is responsible.
- Use a part of Sunday evening as a brief family time to map out the week.
- Encourage the teen to invite a friend each week or so for a sleepover.
- Plug your teen into summer church youth activities.
- Ask your teen to help you with special projects at your home and work and be willing to pay them for these "extras."
- Initiate a family pizza and movie night.
- Learn a new sport or activity together.

Summer can be a time of building relationships, setting and meeting new goals, getting in touch with one's body, increasing self-esteem, stimulating fresh interests and facilitating spiritual growth. I'm talking about the adults! My guess is that the teens will join in the experience.—*Scott Wigginton*

**Q: Why do some Christian authors and teachers recommend "group dating" rather than one-on-one dates for someone looking for a potential spouse?**

One aspect of group activities is that you have the advantage of built-in similar interests. When you do things with people who have similar interests such as service projects, leisure activities, political activities or church functions, you already know you have something in common that is fun or important to you.

Another reason for group dating is to see how your potential dating partner treats other people. There are "wolves in sheep's clothing" who pretend to be something they're not in one-on-one situations. When individuals primarily are looking for sexual conquest, monetary assistance or even marriage, they might say what they think you want to hear, rather than sincerely being interested in you as a person.

A better clue to someone's true character is to observe how they treat those who have little to offer them. How do they treat the waiter or waitress? How do they respond to a person in need?

When a potential dating partner is in a group situation, you will observe situations where individuals are not constantly on their guard. Over a period of time, you can gauge whether there is a strong foundation for friendship. As a natural friendship develops, there is more basis for moving forward in a dating relationship.—*James Stillwell*

*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.*



## In honor of the absolute love of my life

In nearly 10 years as an editor of state Baptist newspapers, I've written columns about my parents, my children and other individuals who have influenced my life in various ways. During that time, however, the single most significant person in my life—my wife, Pam—never has been the primary subject of my published musings. Until now.

June 5 marks the 20th anniversary of our shared life as husband and wife. It's hard to believe that two decades have flown by since we stood before family and friends and pledged our love and commitment to each other "as long as we both shall live."

It seems just a few short years ago when our love story began the summer we worked together as camp counselors. That was followed three years later by Pam's college graduation, our marriage, my seminary graduation and my first full-time position in Christian journalism—quite an eventful year.

Through all those transitions, as well as the joys and challenges of parenthood and the countless ups and downs of life, Pam consistently has remained my dearest friend, confidant and encourager. She is, for me, the living example of "an excellent wife" eloquently described in Proverbs; a priceless treasure whose "worth is far above jewels." Whether she is chauffeuring our kids from activity to activity, hosting guests in our home, assuming leadership roles at church and school or helping maintain the romance in our marriage, she does so with the strength, dignity and kindness highlighted in Proverbs 31.

That's not to say we haven't had our struggles along the way. What couple hasn't? But our shared Chris-

tian faith, our lifelong commitment to each other and our mutual love have given us the tools to build a strong, secure relationship that grows deeper with each passing day and year.

Marrying Pam was one of the best decisions of my life, second only to my Christian conversion. But these words aren't simply a tribute to my wonderful wife. Our life together is one among millions of Christian couples who have taken to heart the "one flesh" commitment, joyfully pledging for life: "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." This also is a tribute to each of you.

That's not to ignore or trivialize the pain, heartache and divorce that rupture many marriages in our society today. But it is a reminder that God desires marriage to mirror His unending love and faithfulness toward us.

During our dating years, I frequently expressed my love to Pam through mushy, romantic cards, letters and phone calls. One such letter, written shortly after we became

engaged, noted, "Nothing fancy or original, just 'I love you.' ... I've often searched for words that could more fully describe my feelings and commitment to you, Pam, but I always come back to 'I love you.'"

Twenty years later, those sentiments still hold true. I thank God for the precious gift of a godly wife. My daily goal is to reflect my deep love for Pam by making her desires and needs my personal priority through words, actions and attitudes "just as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself up for her."

Thank you, Pam, for 20 wonderful years of marriage and the anticipation of many more years to come. I love you—forever.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## The least I can do is read it

By Joe McKeever

KENNER, La. (BP)—When we lived in North Carolina, it seemed that every other car carried a personalized license plate. Occasionally, I would ask people at the traffic light what their tag meant. One fellow's tag read "WHUUT?" When the red light caught us, I called over to him, "What does your tag mean?" He said, "Whuut?" I said, "Never mind."

One day I noticed a tag which said simply, "PSALM 18". I decided if it meant 20 bucks a year for the driver to put that message there, the least I could do was go read it. I'm sure I had read that psalm before and probably preached it, but that day I rediscovered one of the great chapters in the Bible. It contains 50 verses and every one is a keeper.

In December of 1995, Elle fashion magazine editor Jean-Dominique Bauby suffered a stroke and lay in a coma for weeks. Finally, Bauby awakened only to find that he was completely paralyzed with the exception of his left eye muscles. He could blink his left eye.

Bauby's innovative wife set an eye chart before him, with the letters of the alphabet listed according to their frequency of use. She would point to letters and he would blink at the appropriate one. In this way, he would spell out words and so communicate with the world. In the summer of 1996

she hired secretaries to work with her husband in daily three-hour sessions. The paralyzed editor was thus able to dictate the text of a 137-page book, "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly," which told his story. In March of 1997, one week after the book was completed, Bauby died. Someone estimated he had blinked his left eye more than 200,000 times to write this book.

I found this little volume in our local public library and checked it out.

### FIRST PERSON

I figured the least I could do was read it.

The Bible sitting on my desk was written in several languages over a period of 1,000 years in locations ranging from Rome to Egypt to Israel. Scribes copied and recopied it by hand countless times, taking extraordinary care to be faithful. Kings and tyrants worked overtime to destroy this book, while religious leaders fought to keep it out of the hands of the common people.

Over the centuries, many faithful believers gave their life-blood to protect this book, to translate it into the language of the people and to deliver it to our generation intact. In many cases, the very church that had preserved this book down through the centuries became the tormentor and murderer of the Bible translators. Names like William Tyndale, John Wyclif and John Huss will live in the history of the Christian church as those who paid an incredible price for

the Bible on my shelf. The least I can do is read it.

When people ask me where to start, I tell them not to do what I did. As an 8-year-old child with my first Bible, I started logically enough on page one. But page one of the Bible starts us off at Genesis, hundreds of chapters away from the New Testament where we begin to learn of Jesus and His earthly ministry.

I suggest you start at Matthew and read through all four of the Gospels. When you finish, start over. Read the accounts of the life of Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John until you practically know the story by heart. Then, you're ready to read the rest of the New Testament, and eventually, to drop back and enjoy the Old Testament. By then, you will have proper framework to understand many of the stories and the typology and prophecies. It's a fascinating book.

As a young pastor, I dropped in on Dixie one day. She was a senior adult from another denomination who came to some of our church functions with a neighbor. She was sitting in a rocker on the little porch at the entrance to her apartment holding the Bible in her lap. She looked up and said, "Oh, Joe, when I think that I lived over 50 years of my life before I discovered this precious book, I could just cry."

Think of the millions of people who will never discover the joys of God's Word. It's enough to make a grown man weep.

*Joe McKeever, a Christian cartoonist, is pastor of First Baptist Church, Kenner, La.*

# KENTUCKY

## Graham mission to Cincinnati/N. Kentucky 'on target'

### Billy Graham mission schedule

■ **June 22, 10 a.m.**  
"Surround the Stadium" student prayer event

■ **June 27, 7 p.m.**  
Musical guests: Michael W. Smith and Diann McMillian; testimony: Mission chairman Anthony Munoz, NFL Hall of Fame member

■ **June 28, 7 p.m.**  
Musical guest: Nicole C. Mullen

■ **June 29, 10:30 a.m.**  
Kidz Gig with Psalty the Singing Songbook

■ **June 29, 6:30 p.m.**  
Concert for the Next Generation with Kirk Franklin and dc Talk

■ **June 30, 7 p.m.**  
Musical guests: Third Day and the Bill Gaither Vocal Band; testimony: Shaun Alexander, Seattle Seahawks running back

CINCINNATI—It started as a plan for an area revival among several Baptist churches in Northern Kentucky. It has mushroomed into a major evangelistic event featuring Billy Graham and involving almost 1,000 churches from more than 65 denominations.

The Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Billy Graham Mission will be June 27-30 in Cincinnati's Paul Brown Stadium. Organizers anticipate an attendance of up to 70,000 people per night and as many as 15,000 to 20,000 public spiritual decisions.

During initial planning, "one thing led to another," recalled Rick Robbins, director of missions for Northern Kentucky Baptist Association. Once Graham expressed an interest in leading an evangelistic emphasis in the area, "we saw it was an event bigger than we are," Robbins added.

Noting that "there's a great deal of racial strife in Cincinnati right now," he said, "I think the timing is good because that needs to be addressed and eased. Dr. Graham has assured us he will address that issue."

In a message on the event Web site, [www.cincymission.org](http://www.cincymission.org), Gra-



**GOSPEL MESSAGE** Last year's Greater Louisville Billy Graham Crusade attracted more than 190,000 people and recorded more than 10,000 public decisions. The famed 83-year-old evangelist will preach June 27-30 at Paul Brown Stadium in Cincinnati.

ham wrote, "It has been nearly 25 years since we last held a campaign in the Greater Cincinnati area, and I have for more than a year now been feeling a spiritual burden for this great city.

"I sense that the time is now right to once again bring the gospel message of love and reconciliation to this community," he added. "I pray

God's forgiveness and healing will touch the hearts of many, bringing them to faith in Christ and unity with brothers and sisters of all races, creeds and denominations."

Graham spokesperson Melany Ethridge said plans are "on target" for this month's event.

Though Graham has faced ongoing health problems in recent years,

Ethridge said he is "doing fine." She said the 83-year-old evangelist is focusing the bulk of his time and attention on the Cincinnati event "so he can build up energy and get plenty of rest."

Robbins said organizers "are praying for dry weather, his good health and, of course, for many decisions as well."

Graham's previous evangelistic event in Cincinnati was in October 1977. Total attendance topped 160,000, with more than 7,000 public decisions.

In recent years, Graham has held several events in the region, including crusades in Indianapolis in 1999, Nashville in 2000 and Louisville in 2001. During last summer's Greater Louisville crusade, more than 190,000 people attended and 10,000-plus decisions were recorded.

In addition to musical guests each evening, the program will feature soloist George Beverly Shea, music director Cliff Barrows and a 4,000-voice choir.

Public transportation will be available to and from the stadium at two pickup points in Northern Kentucky: the campus of Northern Kentucky University and Turfway Park.

### WILLIAMSBURG/CORBIN AREA ACCOMMODATIONS

Rates do not include tax. Taxes vary between 9.2%-10.25%. Messengers are responsible for making their own reservations. Kentucky Baptist Convention must be mentioned and reservation deadlines met to receive blocked room rates. Most blocked rooms are non-smoking.

#### Williamsburg

A few vacancies remain at each of the following facilities. The Cumberland Inn is full.

**Days Inn**  
I-75 and Highway 92  
**606.549.1500**  
\$44 (doubles & kings/1-4 persons)  
Continental breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 10/25

**Super 8 Motel** (nearly full)  
(formerly Holiday Inn Express)  
30 Highway 92 West  
**606.549.3450**  
\$57.50 (1-4 persons)  
Children under 18 stay free  
Breakfast bar  
Reservation deadline: 10/25

**Williamsburg Motel**  
50 Balltown Road  
**606.549.2300**  
\$43.15 (1-4 persons)  
Coffee and donuts  
Reservation deadline: 11/1

**Williamsburg Restaurants**  
Wendy's Burger King Krystal's  
Sonic Pizza Hut McDonald's  
Arby's Hardee's Subway  
KFC Long John Silver's  
B&J Restaurant

**Corbin - Exit 25**  
(16 miles from Williamsburg)  
**Best Western Corbin Inn**  
2360 Cumberland Falls Highway  
**606.528.2100**  
\$36 (1-4 persons)  
Continental breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 10/25

**Country Inn & Suites**  
1888 Cumberland Falls Highway  
**606.526.1400**  
\$59 (2 queen beds/1-4 persons)  
Breakfast bar  
Reservation deadline: 10/20

#### Corbin - Exit 25, continued

**Days Inn**  
I-75 and U.S. Highway 25W  
**606.528.8150**  
\$35.98 (singles & doubles/1-4 persons)  
Continental breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 10/11

**Holiday Inn Express**  
1973 Cumberland Falls Highway  
**606.523.4000**  
\$64 (queens & kings/1-4 persons)  
Continental breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 10/31

**Regency Inn & Suites**  
2615 Cumberland Falls Highway  
**606.528.6301**  
\$29 (doubles)  
Continental breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 11/1

**Corbin Exit 25 Restaurants**  
Arby's Reno's  
McDonald's Jerry's  
Burger King

#### Corbin - Exit 29

(19 miles from Williamsburg)

**Baymont Inn & Suites**  
174 Adams Road  
**606.523.9040**  
\$55 (1-2 beds)  
Continental breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 10/18

**Hampton Inn**  
125 Adams Road  
**606.523.5696**  
\$55 (1-4 people)  
Deluxe breakfast  
Reservation deadline: 10/11

**Corbin Exit 29 Restaurants**  
Cracker Barrel Sonny's Barbecue  
Western Sizzler Western Steer

**Cumberland Falls State Resort Park**  
(26 miles from campus)  
7351 Highway 90  
**606.528.4121**  
\$63 (1-4 persons/Cabins available)  
On-site restaurant  
Reservation deadline: 10/11



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# PASTOR ...

*Would you read this from a layman who could help you be a more effective soul winner in your church?*

When you share the plan of salvation in a one-on-one witness, do you pray the sinner's repentant prayer? Thereby, should you not do this in your invitation at the end of your message, which is:

**"Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that You died on the cross and shed Your blood for my sins. You were buried, You rose again, You have ascended back into heaven. I invite You to come into my heart, forgive my sins and save my soul. I believe by faith You can and will save me as I ask You to."**

When you finish, start singing your invitation hymn. Do not continue talking when you finish. If you want to extend the invitation to transfer membership, do this after the first stanza of the song. Try for one year.

# LAYMAN ...

*Let me challenge you.*

Have you ever shared the plan of salvation with anyone? When I was 18 years old, a dentist named Dr. Sandusky shared with me how to be saved. I prayed in that dental chair to receive Christ. Where would I be today if he had not shared this with me?

I had the good fortune to lead several hundred people to the Lord. This is what I enjoy doing. I never get down when someone does not accept the Lord. This is a rejection of the Lord, not me. I am not a preacher, nor do I like to speak to large groups. I like one-on-one.

Would you be willing to be trained to lead people to the Lord? You will never be the same if you do. Let me challenge you to ask your pastor to train you. Better yet, go with him and watch him witness.

If one out of 15 Southern Baptists would witness and lead one to the Lord each year, we would see 1,000,000 come to know the Lord. This is three times as many as we do now.

*You should use the prayer listed above which is for pastors.*

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# KENTUCKY

## Lexington lawyer builds career on defending Christians

**The problem Christian groups face, French says, is that they want to "live out their religious principles, making religion-based choices," which can put them into "conflict with choices the state would like you to make."**

By Art Jester  
*Lexington Herald-Leader*

LEXINGTON—David French wants his fellow Christian conservatives to stop trying to make the United States a Christian nation by law, and thus stop insisting that government should sanction prayer and the posting of the Ten Commandments in public schools.

The Lexington lawyer is convinced that the government should remain neutral on religion and that Christian conservatives should embrace the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech and expression.

"The message for Christians is this: If we truly believe that our beliefs are grounded in ultimate truth, then we have nothing to fear from the free exchange of ideas—and no need for explicit government sanction of our speech," French says.

The Harvard-educated lawyer with a lifelong evangelical affiliation grins somewhat sheepishly at the suggestion that some fellow Christian conservatives might not like what he says.

But then they probably haven't read his new book, "A Season for Justice: Defending the Rights of the Christian Home, Church and School." The book is released by Broadman & Holman, the publishing arm of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

As a specialist in litigation involving the First Amendment's religion clause, and more specifically as legal counsel for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship's Religious Freedom Crisis Team, French has had several opportunities under pressure to test his beliefs about the free exercise of religion.

Defending the right to practice one's religion, French says, often flies in the face of attempts to stifle religion all together.

In Central Kentucky, he is best known for a Scott County case in 1997-98 that he won while representing his church, Trinity Assembly of God. (French, a Georgetown native, grew up in the Church of Christ.)

The church was having a youth revival when neighbors complained to the Board of Adjustment about the noise. "The Board of Adjustment said turn down the noise until you couldn't hear it outside," French says. "There's no way to conduct a service and comply with that order."

He recalls that a board member said, "If you spent more time on your knees and not playing music, this would never have happened."

But French and the church won the case before U.S. District Judge Karl Forester, whose ruling invalidated the Scott County zoning ordinance.

Without that ruling, the Board of Adjustment could set any limits it chose, and "there would be no part of the county where a church can be," French says.

On the national level, French's most-celebrated case occurred during winter 2000, while he was teaching at Cornell Law School in Ithaca, N.Y.

He was asked to represent Tufts Christian Fellowship, an evangelical

student group at Tufts University, a highly regarded private institution in suburban Boston.

The case arose when a lesbian student who was a member of the Tufts Christian Fellowship applied to be part of the group's senior leadership.

The fellowship said that she could continue to be a member but that she could not be one of the leaders. The dispute hinged on conflicting scriptural interpretations: The fellowship said that the Bible prohibits homosexuality and lesbianism; the woman said that the Bible does not contain such a prohibition.

Tufts' campus judiciary voted to ban the fellowship for discriminating against gays.

But, French says, Tufts advocated diversity and prohibited discrimination because of religion.

Eventually, the fellowship won a reversal of the judiciary's decision, which acknowledged that the group had a right to exist and that it added value to the campus.

This came only after an incredibly intense battle during which critics compared the fellowship to Nazis.

French says that a religious group was being told, in effect, that it had to abandon its religious beliefs if it wanted to remain on campus.

"Our response to this argument was simple," French writes in his book. "If you banned the Tufts Christian Fellowship for applying religious principles to religious decisions, then you destroyed freedom for everyone—not just TCF. ... If every group must include everyone and be led by everyone, then there is no true diversity."

Looking ahead, French says that the "primary threat to freedom of religion is the cultural momentum that anti-discrimination statutes and other statutes are gaining."

"I think First Amendment freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of religion should trump any local rule of non-discrimination," he says. "It's the difference between the Constitution and a statute."

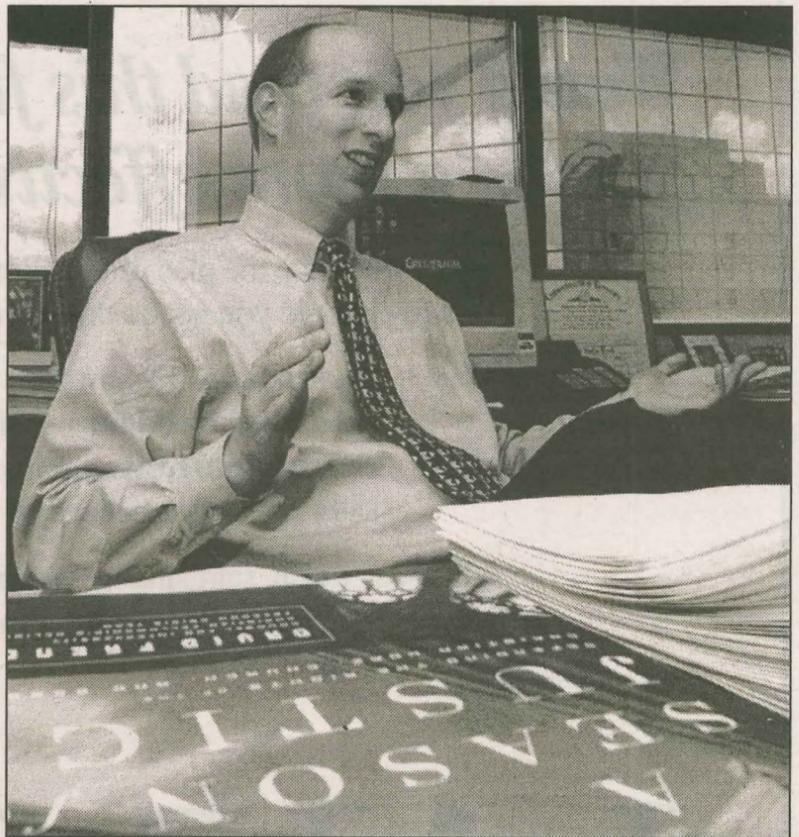
French adds that only certain fringe groups who claim they are Christian, such as the Ku Klux Klan, would use the Bible to support racism.

"It's ludicrous to say that the Bible endorses racial discrimination. It does not. But the Bible clearly states that homosexual practice, as distinct from orientation, is sinful."

The problem Christian groups face, he says, is that they want to "live out their religious principles, making religion-based choices," which can put them into "conflict with choices the state would like you to make."

It is all right, he says, to speak about "burning moral issues of the day," such as cloning and abortion, as long as the opinions are secular, "because the state can speak with secular force." But when someone wants to address these issues from a religious standpoint and is told that cannot be allowed, "it delegitimizes the opinions people hold. It delegitimizes their religion," he says.

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**FIRST AMENDMENT FIGHTER** David French of Lexington is a lawyer who specializes in litigation involving the First Amendment's religion clause. (Photo by Joseph Au)

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## 'No religion' population doubled in '90s

BERKELEY, Calif. (RNS)—The proportion of Americans who say they have no religious preference doubled in the 1990s, but most of them maintained their belief in God while avoiding organized religion, two sociologists have found.

The percentage of adults who preferred no religion in 1991 was 7 percent and that figure doubled to 14 percent in 1998, said Michael Hout and Claude Fischer, professors of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, in an article in the April 2002 edition of the American Sociological Review.

"The key fact ... about people who express no religious preference is that most are believers of some sort, and many are quite conventional," the au-

thors wrote. "Relatively few are secular, agnostic or atheist; most actually pray. Their most distinguishing feature is their avoidance of churches."

These "unchurched believers" often described themselves as spiritual rather than religious.

"Their quarrel was not with God but with people running organized religion," the authors said. "They expressed little or no confidence in religious leaders and churches, and many saw them as the source of conflict and intolerance."

The scholars interpret data on religious preference as showing that the emergence of the religious right prompted some religious people to become less apathetic about politics but also caused some Americans who

were moderate and liberal politically to move away from religion.

The authors said the continuation of these trends in religious preference is open to question.

"Historical events, such as the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and new cultural movements may reverse these trends," they wrote. "On the other hand, if the identification of religious affiliation with political conservatism strengthens, then liberals' alienation from organized religion may become, as it has in many other nations, fully institutionalized."

The research, which interprets data principally from the General Social Survey, is part of the "USA: A Century of Difference" project funded by the Russell Sage Foundation.

## Church-politicking bills have supporters & critics

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Two separate bills have been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives to repeal a portion of tax law that prohibits churches, which are exempt from paying taxes, from electioneering.

Supporters say removing the ban would uphold the free-speech rights of ministers and churches. Opponents say it would divide churches and turn pulpits into partisan shells.

The bills are the "Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act," sponsored by Rep. Walter Jones (R-N.C.) and the "Bright-Line Act of 2001," sponsored by Rep. Phil Crane (R-Ill.).

Both would revise Internal Revenue Service codes so churches and other religious organizations could endorse or oppose candidates and parties in elections while maintaining their tax-exempt status.

The bills address only churches

and other religious organizations. Other non-profits incorporated as 501(c)(3) organizations still would be banned from partisan politics.

At a hearing for a subgroup of the House Ways and Means Committee last month, James Kennedy, prominent television preacher and pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., said that the legislation "is a vitally important step in reversing a long-standing injustice whereby free speech seems to be protected everywhere except in the pulpits of our churches."

But Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said that supporters of the bills are addressing a problem that doesn't exist.

"Religious leaders are as free today as any time in American history to expose moral evils, propose ethical solutions and hold our leaders to the highest standards," Lynn told the pan-

el. "In fact, the only thing that our tax laws prohibit is use of resources or personnel of a tax-exempt group to promote the campaigns of candidates for public office."

Questions also arose over whether the bills would allow large donors to circumvent new campaign finance laws by "laundering" their contributions through churches or other houses of worship.

The IRS executive who oversees the handling of 501(c)(3) organizations testified that it would be difficult to enforce campaign-finance laws in the nation's 300,000-plus churches.

Other opponents of the bill claimed it would reduce churches to political-action committees. Churches already are free to endorse candidates, said Welton Gaddy, executive director of The Interfaith Alliance. "However, such politicking cannot be done with funding that is tax deductible."

### NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Cloning ban supporters waiting on vote.** Advocates of a comprehensive ban on human cloning continue to work for votes after another deadline passed without action in the U.S. Senate. Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., had said the Senate would vote on cloning legislation before the Memorial Day recess. No vote occurred, and senators are scheduled to meet again this week. The Human Cloning Prohibition Act, which has the support of President Bush, would bar both reproductive and research cloning. Four alternatives would permit the cloning of embryos in order to obtain stem cells for research into finding cures for a variety of diseases.

■ **American Baptists to focus on clergy wellness.** In response to reports of clergy burnout, the American Baptist Churches USA will make wellness a priority issue for its ministerial leadership during the next five years. "We concluded that often ministerial leaders do not seek their own wellness because the community expects them to do many other things," said Ivan George, executive director of the denomination's Ministerial Leadership Commission. The commission has defined "clergy health" to include balanced nutrition, emotional well-being, periods of spiritual reflection and a sense of fulfillment with one's job.

■ **Salvation Army Sept. 11 work helps 110,000 people.** The Salvation Army has helped more than 110,000 people with services ranging from grief counseling to financial aid as a result of the Sept. 11 attacks. As of mid-April, staff and more than 55,000 volunteers had served more than 4 million meals to victims and relief workers at disaster sites in New York and Washington. Southern Baptists, including a team of Kentucky Baptists, have worked on those teams. The charity received almost \$85 million in donations to meet physical, emotional and financial needs after the attacks.

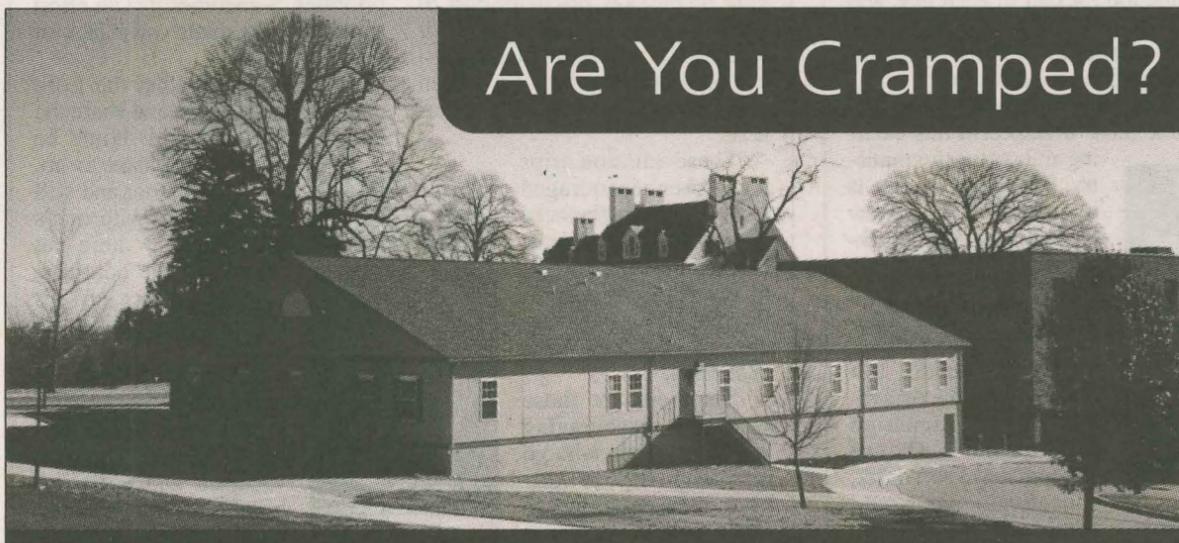
■ **Suspect found guilty in Birmingham church bombing.** The case of a 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Ala., in which four black girls died came to a close May 22 with a guilty verdict for the last living suspect. A racially mixed jury found Bobby Frank Cherry, 71, guilty of first-degree murder for helping set the bomb at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. The crime galvanized the civil rights movement, shocking the nation and spurring efforts to end segregation laws. Cherry, a former Ku Klux Klansman, was automatically sentenced to life in prison, Associated Press reported. Two other former Klansmen were convicted earlier and sent to prison. A fourth suspect died without being charged.

■ **EEOC files religious conviction lawsuit.** The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has filed a lawsuit against a Tampa company on behalf of a woman who claims she was fired because of her Christian beliefs. Frances Wagner, 51, began work in 1996 as a technical support telephone operator for the Tampa-based Sykes Enterprises at a message center in Sterling, Colo. About a year later, she was fired after objecting, based on her faith, to being transferred to a call center department that specialized in solving problems for such violent computer software games as "Doom" and "Duke Nukem." The lawsuit seeks unspecified monetary damages and policies at Sykes to prevent religious discrimination.

■ **New network seeks to bolster evangelism.** A group of national and international evangelistic leaders have formed Proclamation Evangelism Network to pool resources and mentor young evangelists. Organizers also have challenged pastors in communities with 1,000 or more people to hold a major evangelistic event by 2015. Network supporters include the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, Youth With A Mission and Luis Palau Evangelistic Association.

■ **Supreme Court accepts cross-burning case.** The U.S. Supreme Court agreed May 28 to review a ruling by Virginia's top court finding unconstitutional the state's 50-year-old ban on cross burning intended to frighten or intimidate. The Virginia court cited a 1992 U.S. Supreme Court decision that struck down a law in Minnesota that banned cross burning carried out "on the basis of race, color, creed, religion or gender."

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## Reward offered for information about missionaries' kidnapers

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The State Department has offered a reward of as much as \$5 million for information that would aid in the capture of leaders of a Muslim rebel group that took a still-missing American missionary couple hostage a year ago in the Philippines.

The reward, announced May 29, would be for information regarding all or any of five top leaders of Abu Sayyaf, including its leader Abu Sabaya, the Associated Press reported.

Last week, Sabaya said he would release the remaining Filipino hostage but he made no mention of Martin and Gracia Burnham of Wichita, Kan., who are affiliated with the Florida-based New Tribes Mission. They were among a group of people abducted on May 27, 2001.

Sabaya, who has been known to make taunting remarks, belittled the U.S. plans regarding the reward, saying it demonstrates the importance of Abu Sayyaf leaders like him. "That's OK," he said. "It's a nice offer."

## Congress lobbies for Baptists, others in E. European country

By Frank Brown  
Religious News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A group of 15 members of Congress are appealing to the president of Georgia to protect the rights of religious minorities in the mostly Orthodox Christian former Soviet nation.

Citing repeated attacks on Baptists, Pentecostals and others since 1999, the lawmakers chided Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze in a May 15 letter for "not taking effective steps to deter individuals and groups from employing violence against minority faith communities."

The bipartisan appeal from mem-

bers of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe comes at a time when the United States is boosting its role in Georgia by sending military aid and advisers to help root out reported terrorists in the country's lawless Pankisi Gorge.

Basili Mkalavishvili, a Tbilisi priest aligned with a schismatic Orthodox group, and his followers are blamed for dozens of physical attacks across Georgia on Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses, including a March 2001 assault with sticks and brooms on a group of nine visiting American Pentecostal pastors.

More recently, human rights moni-

tors and local television documented Mkalavishvili's February warehouse burning of thousands of Baptist-owned Bibles and a January attack on Charismatic Protestants worshipping in a rented movie theater.

Georgian prosecutors took Mkalavishvili to court in January on charges connected with an attack on Jehovah's Witnesses. Despite six attempts, the trial has yet to begin in part because of disruptive and threatening behavior by Mkalavishvili's followers inside and outside the courtroom.

According to the Baptist World Alliance, Malkhaz Songulashvili, president of the Union of Evangelical Baptists of Georgia, has been the subject of recent attacks by the fundamen-

talist newspaper under the control of Mkalavashvili's followers.

"We want to continue to pray for our Christian brothers and sisters in Georgia," said Theo Angelov, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation. "Our friends are very peaceful and are only trying to protect themselves from unnecessary persecution. We will pray for a quick end to this situation."

Responding to the letter from five House members and 10 senators, Shevardnadze pledged in a May 20 radio interview to push through legislation aimed at curbing religious bias.

With additional reporting by Wendy Ryan of Baptist World Alliance

## Poll finds pastors' average salary tops \$40,000

VENTURA, Calif. (ABP)—For the first time, the average compensation for Protestant pastors is above \$40,000 a year, according to a survey by the Barna Research Group.

Median pastoral incomes have grown 25 percent over the last decade, to \$40,077, about keeping pace with inflation, Barna said.

The pastoral compensation package represents 31 percent of the average Protestant church's annual operating budget, a proportion that has remained relatively constant since the mid-1990s.

Seminary-educated pastors on the average receive 38 percent more than senior pastors without seminary.

Baptist churches—which include

more than 20 different groups and constitute about a fourth of all U.S. Protestants—pay their pastors \$300 a year more than the national average.

Charismatic and Pentecostal churches, meanwhile, pay their churches the least, about 16 percent below the national norm.

The largest gap exists between pastors of urban and suburban churches and those in rural congregations. City and suburban pastors earn \$45,000 annually, compared to \$33,000 for their rural peers.

A study by the Kentucky Baptist Convention of pastors' salaries in the commonwealth is scheduled to be completed later this summer.

Church size is another factor, the

Barna study found. Churches with average weekly attendance under 100—the group that represents most Protestant congregations—pay their pastors \$31,613 annually. Pastors of churches attracting between 100 and 250 adults get 50 percent more, \$47,368. Churches with 251 or more in attendance pay an average of \$58,333.

Barna said pastors are paid less than other well-educated professionals. "Like most professionals, pastors work long hours, carry heavy responsibility and have extensive education," he said. Given the compensation levels received by other professionals, we owe pastors a special word of gratitude for their sacrificial lifestyle."

## A four-fold ministry

Among the things Father's Day means each year to us Kentucky Baptists is an appreciation of the "one-of-a-kind" ministry we share through Oneida Baptist Institute. OBI is our fully accredited Christian boarding school for grades six through 12.

Since its founding 103 years ago, OBI has been fulfilling faithfully the four-fold ministry envisioned by its founder, the late James Anderson Burns. That ministry includes academics, worship, work and cocurricular. Two years prior to his death in 1943, Burns stated, "This school exists for the purpose of training young people to work with their hands; understand with their minds, love with their hearts and worship with their souls. In these four departments of service, God must be first."

President Bud Underwood and those who serve with him at OBI are extending daily in the name of Jesus your hands and feet and the hands and feet of your church in touching and changing the lives of the young people entrusted to them. Young people from all over the world attend this special place. Many of them are not Christians when they enroll, but many make

professions of faith while there. Every student is involved daily in chapel and other campus ministry activities. Every student works in some job for part of each day, and OBI is well-known for its variety and excellence in sports, academics and fine arts activities.

Let me encourage you to become more involved in this exciting and successful ministry. The place to start is by contributing generously to this year's Barkley Moore Father's Day Offering for the benefit of OBI. If every Kentucky Baptist who attended Sunday school last Sunday gave the equivalent of the admission price to a movie, a box of popcorn and a soft drink, collectively we would contribute \$2 million.

My wife and I are going to do our part, and I trust you will do the same.

Perhaps you also are interested in including OBI in your estate plan, or you may prefer to go ahead and establish during your lifetime an endowment for the perpetual benefit of OBI. Call Laurie Valentine or me toll-free for assistance.

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

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

## Go share the gospel

Volunteer mission trips have been one of the greatest movements in the history of Baptists. Thousands of Kentucky Baptists have gone on mission trips in the past 20 years. There is no way to know for sure how many people have been involved because there have been spin-offs by churches and associations.

These mission trips have been encouraged and many times financed by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The benefits to the whole family of Baptists and to the Kingdom of God have been enormous.

Yet there are those who give discouraging words to people who go on mission trips to other parts of the country or to other countries. These discouraging words sometimes come from people you typically would expect to be supportive—family, friends and fellow Baptists. They say:

■ "Why go so far and spend so much when there is so much to be done right here at home?"

■ "There are lost people you could witness to here."

■ "There are needs you could better spend that money for right here."

■ "Let's just send the money."

Why go?"

Such arguments are designed to make participants feel guilty and to call into question their motives and priorities. Sometimes it is an effort to cover individuals' own lack of commitment.

Simply the fact that the Lord commanded us to go and share the gospel with the world should be sufficient reason to go.

Going does not and will not interfere with one's commitment here at home. To the contrary, mission service always increases commitments at home.

Many people who so readily throw obstacles at mission trips think nothing of taking their own vacation and spending hundreds of dollars to travel and indulge themselves in all sorts of personal pleasures and toys. Baptists go on missions trips to win the lost, to encourage Christians there (many times who are in a small minority), to build needed church houses, to broaden mission vision and because the Lord commanded them to go.

Harold Greenfield is president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention which sponsors this column. Contact the KBC at Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433; (800) 266-6477; www.kybaptist.org

### PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



Harold Greenfield

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# SMILE

## Amy Stroud receives service award

By Robert Dunston

Each year during Cumberland College's honors day convocation, two juniors are recognized for outstanding service to and through Cumberland College.

Amy Rebecca Stroud received this year's A.T. Siler Service Award.

Stroud, the daughter of Floyd and Geri Stroud of Williamsburg, is pursuing a double major in communication arts and political science with a minor in English.

Stroud has served on the Cumberland campus in a variety of ways. For the past three years she has volunteered at Channel 19, Cumberland College's cable television station. She has worked both behind and before the camera, demonstrating a professional demeanor and commitment to excellence.

Stroud has worked in Cumberland's freshmen orientation program and as an ambassador for the admissions office, introducing prospective students and their families to Cumberland's family. She also has ministered through the Campus Activity Board and Baptist Student Union.

During her time at Cumberland, Stroud has been inducted into Pi

Kappa Delta, the communication arts honor society. Recently, she presented a research paper in the field of communication arts at the Blue Ridge Undergraduate Research Center. Stroud was Cumberland College's representative at the Kentucky Mountain Laurel Festival this May.

**CUMBERLAND COLLEGE**



Stroud is a member of Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg, where she teaches in the TeamKid program and in the fourth grade Sunday school class.

After graduation from Cumberland College, Stroud plans to attend Columbia University to pursue a master of arts degree in television broadcasting. Her future goal is to anchor a network news program and be a political correspondent for a television network.

As anchor for our Channel 19 news, Stroud demonstrates knowledge, professionalism and poise. She brings the same commitment and enthusiasm to every area of life and service. We congratulate her and pray God's blessing upon her.

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

## Oops!

The May 28th Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children column asking for cereal, peanut butter and jelly was written by Vice President Tom Townsend, not KBHC President Bill Smithwick. We apologize for the confusion.



Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has an immediate need for breakfast cereal, peanut butter and jelly on our campuses. Call us at 1-800-456-1386 to find out where you can make a donation. Thank you for your assistance!



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## Kudzu

Doug Marlette



## Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



## Bible Crossword

### Across

- 1 "Blessed is the man that \_\_\_ not in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psalms 1:1)
- 7 "The ungodly shall not \_\_\_ in the judgment" (Psalms 1:5)
- 11 "Christ is the \_\_\_ of the church" (Ephesians 5:23)
- 12 "Be like a tree planted by the \_\_\_ of water" (Psalms 1:3)
- 13 "A word spoken in \_\_\_ season, how good is it!" (Proverbs 15:23)
- 14 Nest of an eagle or hawk
- 15 Preposition: toward
- 17 "Eyes have they, but they \_\_\_ not" (Psalms 115:5)
- 18 Took food
- 19 "All we like \_\_\_ have gone astray" (Isaiah 53:6)
- 21 William, abbr.
- 22 Church, abbr.
- 23 Californian city, abbr.
- 24 "Nor \_\_\_ in the seat of the scornful" (Psalms 1:1)
- 27 Revise
- 29 It's capital is Indianapolis, abbr.
- 30 English Version, abbr.
- 31 Morning, abbr.
- 32 Vesicular exanthema, abbr.
- 33 Conjunction
- 34 "His \_\_\_ also shall not wither" (Psalms 1:3)
- 35 Elevated railroad
- 37 Alvin and Alan
- 38 Material at the bottom of the page, abbr.
- 40 "The Lord knoweth the way of the \_\_\_" (Psalms 1:6)
- 44 A cart for hire in India
- 45 National Guard, abbr.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11				12					
			13			14			
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35			36			37			38 39
40		41		42		43			
		44						45 46	
47				48		49			50
51						52			

- 47 Word to begin a question
- 48 To begin on a journey (2 words)
- 51 A telephone company, abbr.
- 52 "A tree ... that bringeth forth his \_\_\_ in his season" (Psalms 1:3)

### Down

- 1 "\_\_\_ he doeth shall prosper" (Psalms 1:3)
- 2 Initials of the man who wrote the equation E=MC<sup>2</sup>
- 3 "His delight is in the \_\_\_ of the Lord" (Psalms 1:2)
- 4 Boxing term, knocked down, abbr.
- 5 "I am the \_\_\_ vine" (John 15:1)
- 6 Go quickly
- 7 "Nor sitteth in the \_\_\_ of the scornful" (Psalms 1:1)
- 8 "And he shall be like a \_\_\_" (Psalms 1:3)
- 9 Airport surveillance radar, abbr.
- 10 "Whatsoever he \_\_\_ shall prosper" (Psalms 1:3)
- 13 Department, abbr.
- 16 Exclamation of surprise
- 17 "We shall all stand before the judgment \_\_\_ of Christ" (Romans 14:10)

- 18 Amount, abbr.
- 20 "Therefore, \_\_\_ said unto Samuel, Go, lie down" (1 Samuel 3:9)
- 21 "The \_\_\_ driveth away" (Psalms 1:4)
- 22 "The godly are not so: but are like the \_\_\_" (Psalms 1:4)
- 24 "Nor standeth in the way of \_\_\_" (Psalms 1:1)
- 25 Gives a report
- 26 The nights before
- 28 "His \_\_\_ is in the law of the Lord" (Psalms 1:2)
- 36 Cozy talk
- 37 Gold, chemical symbol
- 39 "In his law doth he meditate day and \_\_\_" (Psalms 1:2)
- 41 Indian riverbank steps
- 42 Translation, abbr.
- 43 Public crier's word
- 45 Neither
- 46 Russian chief intelligence directorate, abbr.
- 47 Northwestern state, abbr.
- 49 Following, abbr.
- 50 Seventh note on the musical scale

## Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
P	R	E	A	R	S	H	E	B	O	N		
11												
I	R	E		14	15	O	N	A	T			
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35	C	36	S	L	I	N	G	39	A	M	T	
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# RESOURCES

## Churches should be focusing on health instead of growth

**"All living things grow if they're healthy."**

Rick Warren

LAKE FOREST, Calif. (BP)—A decade ago, when I wrote "The Purpose Driven Church," I predicted church health, not church growth, would be the primary concern of the 21st-century church. I believe that prediction is proving itself true.

The New Testament says a lot about the health of the church. Consider just a few verses:

"As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing..." (Ephesians 4:16b, New Living Translation).

"The focus of my letter wasn't on punishing the offender but on getting you to take responsibility for the health of the church" (2 Corinthians 2:9, The Message).

"You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results only if you do the hard work of getting along with each other..." (James 3:18, The Message).

Church health is the key to church growth. All living things grow if they're healthy. You don't have to make them grow—it's just natural for living organisms. As a parent, I didn't have to force my three children to grow. They naturally grew up. As long as I removed the hindrances, such as poor nutrition or an unsafe environment, their growth was automatic.

If my children had not grown up, something would have been terribly

wrong. I would have done whatever it took to discover the disease and correct it. I wouldn't have remained passive, spouting clichés about faithfulness or wanting "quality, not quantity" in my children.

The same principle is true for the church. Since the church is a living organism, it's natural for it to grow if it's healthy. The church is a body, not a business—an organism, not an organization. It's alive. If a church is not growing, it is dying.

What, then, is the secret of church health?

In a word, it's balance!

Your body has nine different systems (circulatory, respiratory, digestive, skeletal, etc.). When these systems are all in balance, it produces health. But when your body gets out of balance, we call that "disease."

Likewise, when the body of Christ becomes unbalanced, disease occurs. Health and growth can occur only when everything is brought into balance.

Our entire world is based on this principle of balance. Our planet was perfectly balanced by God, at just the right angle on its axis to support life. It rotates at a speed that minimizes vibration.

Nature is a collection of ecosystems that live in balance with each other. We now know that even the tiniest variation in the ecosystem creates a chain reaction.

### FIRST PERSON



Rick Warren

## Graduation 2002

I am sure most high school graduates think, "It took a long time, but it happened so quickly!" It takes so long to get to graduation and then it is over. At Oneida, we do just about everything differently from anyone else. Graduation is no exception.

I confess that there is some temptation to have a commencement service like most schools. We could have the students line up starting with the top 10, followed by those who have achieved above-average success academically. We could have a prominent person give the commencement address, reminding the students of how far they have come, where they are today and the challenges of the future. We could just call the students by name, have them walk across the stage and present them with their diplomas.

Every graduate of this school for the past 30 years knows it is not quite that simple. Yes, we line the students up, recognizing those who have earned advanced diplomas and those who have the highest grade point averages. But that is where the similarities end. We believe our graduation service is uniquely Oneida's. Often guests tell us they have never been to a graduation like ours. This year a grandparent told me she felt like she had been to a "worship service."

The thing that makes our graduation different is the amount of time we spend talking about each student. We relate their activities and their accomplishments. Then we share excerpts from their senior essays, "My Oneida Experience." You may have read portions of several of these essays in this column during the past two months or so.

All parents and grandparents are happy to hear

about the accomplishments of their children in academics and co-curriculars. But the greatest sense of pride may come when they hear their child tell about his or her Oneida experience.

Nearly every essay recalls that first trip to Oneida. "Dad, Mom, are you sure this place even exists? We're going farther into the mountains; do you think they'll have electricity?" Coming to OBI can be a real culture shock for students. No malls, no cinemas—no nothin'! There is a post office, a car wash and a gas station/convenience store.

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

The second concern most students share is whether or not they will like the school and the other students. Most are surprised to discover that they will have three roommates. "How can I get along with three other girls when I can't even get along with my sister?"

Then the mood of the essay changes. "When I came to OBI I was making D's and F's. Now I'm on the honor roll." That is usually followed by an overview of the activities that helped the student become an honors student.

The rest of the essay is a tribute to our faculty and staff for the influence and interest they have had. Normally, the final thoughts are for the parents. "I was angry with you for bringing me to Oneida, but Oneida has been the greatest thing that has ever happened to me. Thanks, Mom and Dad, for hanging tough and for never losing your confidence in me."

Three-plus hours later, graduation is over. Three hours to give 56 students their diplomas. We wouldn't have it any other way!

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

## Alumnus an Arizona 'Living Treasure'

Mt. Baldy, the highest point on the White Mountain Apache homeland in eastern Arizona, looms above the home of 1963 Clear Creek graduate Edgar Perry. From the peak of Baldy, Perry breathes the clean air of a world he has worked hard to preserve. Arizona Gov. Jane Hall recognized his efforts with the presentation of the Arizona Living Treasure Award. "I just love life," Perry said. "Life has been beautiful. You live just once and do the best you can with it."

Edgar grew up in McNary, Ariz., and married at age 16; his bride, Corrine, was 15. He came to Christ through the influence of a Lutheran pastor and Southern Baptist missionaries. Committed to support his wife, he also was determined to complete high school. He attended school in the mornings and worked at the sawmill from 5 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Weighing only 135 pounds, he still lettered in football, basketball, track and baseball.

After Clear Creek the Perrys returned to White Mountain, where he became active in the Baptist church and tribal affairs. He translated many hymns and the New Testament into Apache. Most people knew him through his rendition

of the National Anthem in Apache, which he performed thousands of times.

In 1969 the Perrys started a small museum at Fort Apache. He began to tape interviews of tribal elders. Since the 1980s, Perry has taught Apache language, culture, music, art and dance for the Whiteriver School District. In 1985 he was named Arizona Indian of the Year. His Crown Dancer group has performed across America and in Germany, France and England. "The greatest thrill was dancing for the Heyes Foundation in New York in 1992 at the Native American Museum," Perry said. "I took Corrine and our five grandsons." Mrs. Perry died the following year. The five girls they reared are college graduates; one holds a master's degree.

Perry worries about the negative influence on youth from television, computer games and music. He tells kids who get involved in drugs and violence, "When you aim at nothing, you'll hit it all the time. You've got to shoot at something." The life of this Arizona Living Treasure aimed at something worthwhile and hit the target.

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## Interfaith TV group launches inspirational morning show

NEW YORK (RNS)—America's competitive early-morning television landscape has become even more crowded, with a new program with an inspirational flavor that began this week.

"New Morning" debuted on the Hallmark Channel June 3 and will air for a half-hour at 7 a.m. Eastern and Pacific time. The show is produced by Faith & Values Media and hopes to find a niche among viewers who want "an inspirational start" to their day, the producers said in announcing the new program.

"In both tone and content, 'New Morning' is a unique entry in the morning lineup," said Edward Murray, president of New York-based Faith & Values Media. "Given the changes in the world around us, we believe there is a place for programming that celebrates what is good in the world, and that helps viewers start the day in touch with God; something to enrich their faith."

"'New Morning' is designed to leave viewers feeling uplifted, spiritually renewed and in a positive frame of mind as they go about their daily lives," he said.

Among the regularly scheduled segments on the program's lineup are "Spiritual Journey," a profile of individuals whose lives have led them on journeys of spiritual awakening; "Questions of Faith," a segment in which well-known authors and theologians offer their perspectives on daily programming themes; and "Common Ground," portraits of ordinary people working to build, heal and reconcile relationships, communities and the larger society.

Timberly Whitfield will host the program. The daughter of United Methodist missionaries, she has worked as an on-air reporter in New York City and as a producer and host on a number of cable networks, including A&E and the History Channel.

Prior to joining "New Morning," Whitfield was an on-air interviewer for "Live Your Best Life," a workshop hosted by Oprah Winfrey for O, the Oprah Magazine.

Faith & Values Media is a service of the National Interfaith Cable Coalition (NICC), a 31-member broadcast organization that represents 70 U.S. faith groups and is the nation's largest coalition of Jewish and Christian organizations dedicated to media production, distribution and promotion.

## Book on eulogies tells of both dead and living

By Mark Wingfield  
Texas Baptist Standard

LOS ANGELES (ABP)—Some are long, and some are short. Some are deeply theological; others scarcely mention the name of God.

They are the final words of tribute spoken about people upon their death—the eulogies of the famous and beloved.

Author Ted Tobias has collected some of them in a new book as a lesson to all about both death and life.

Tobias, who lives in the Los Angeles area, was inspired to tackle the project upon hearing the eulogy of Bobby Kennedy given by his brother Ted Kennedy in 1968. As a remembrance, Edward Kennedy spoke the words of his deceased brother: "Some men see things as they are and say, 'Why?' I dream of things that never were and say, 'Why not?'"

Quotes like that are published in newspapers and repeated through the years, but the context in which they were spoken often is lost, Tobias realized. So after stewing on the lack of access to the full text of famous eulogies, Tobias determined to tackle the project himself.

He pulled together the eulogies of 42 prominent Americans from the latter half of the 20th century. The book is titled "In Tribute: Eulogies of Famous People." He plans to release a second volume this year.

In reality, eulogies of the dead must help the living, according to the daughter of Norman Vincent Peale, the minister of positive thinking.

"Funerals are not for the deceased, who have already been released from

the limitations of this world," Margaret Peale Everett said at her father's 1993 funeral. "Funerals are for the rest of us—those family and friends and admirers who are left behind. We grieve; we feel loss; we have to adjust to a new reality."

The best eulogists, Tobias' research highlights, capture the essence of a person's inner being. For example, President Richard Nixon spoke of President Dwight Eisenhower by recalling Eisenhower's own words in a speech shortly after V-E Day: "I come from the heart of America..."

Nixon added: "Perhaps no one sentence could better sum up what Dwight Eisenhower meant to a whole generation of Americans. He did come from the heart of America, not only from its geographical heart but from its spiritual heart."

Other eulogists lay down historical markers of the contributions made by the deceased. Such is the case with Martin Luther King Jr.'s eulogy by Benjamin Mays, president of Morehouse College.

Mays said of King: "He died striving to desegregate and integrate America to the end that this great nation of ours, born in revolution and blood, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created free and equal, will truly become the lighthouse of freedom where none will be denied because his skin is black and none favored because his eyes are blue; where our nation will be militarily strong but perpetually at peace; economically secure but just; learned but wise; where the poorest—the garbage collectors—will have bread enough and to spare; where no one will be poorly housed; each educated up to his ca-



## Parting thoughts

"No! He was not ahead of his time. No man is ahead of his time. Every man is within his star, each in his time. Each man must respond to the call of God in his lifetime and not in somebody else's time." *Benjamin Mays, president of Morehouse College in Atlanta, at the funeral of Martin Luther King Jr.*

"You lived as a soldier. You died as a soldier for peace, and I believe it is time for all of us to come out openly and to speak to the camp of peace." *King Hussein of Jordan at the 1995 funeral of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin*

capacity; and where the richest will understand the meaning of empathy. This was his dream, and the end toward which he strove."

Tobias' research found creative adaptations of the gospel message, as in the testimony of Cardinal Roger Mahoney about farm-labor activist Cesar Chavez. Mahoney adapted Jesus' Sermon on the Mount to say, in part: "Blessed are those who toil daily in the fields, but who are slow to anger, gentle with others and patient in hardship. God will reward them with the hills, the fields and the lands of the earth."

And sometimes, Tobias shows, eulogists best express the character of their subject by saying what the deceased might have said about themselves.

Of the comedian George Burns, movie executive Irving Fein noted: "As he often said, he knew entrances and exits. And last Saturday, he knew it was time to go."

## Author explores how faithful respond when God chooses not to heal

By Kristen Campbell  
Religion News Service

PINOLE, Calif. (RNS)—Sometimes the lame don't walk.

Nor do the blind see. The deaf do not hear. And the dead do not rise.

Kimberly Winston said she has to believe there's a reason bad things happen.

"If I couldn't," she said, "I think I'd feel lost."

Winston, author of "Faith Beyond Faith Healing," said the people she interviewed for her recently released book voiced a similar faith.

"The thing that I need to learn from the people in the book is when you don't think (God) is there, He is there," said Winston, who works as a freelance journalist and lives in Pinole, Calif. "Across the board, every single person who is still alive told me, 'My faith has grown deeper. I have a deeper, better relationship with God because of my illness.'"

The experience isn't unique to Winston or to the men and women she interviewed.

Everywhere, it seems, those who don't get what they prayed for discover they've received something else instead: reserves of faith they might never have imagined.

"I have seen people, I have experienced people praying for miracles in the face of terminal diagnosis, and I have seen how their faith has sustained them through the crisis of illness," said Patricia Kucharski, director of pastoral care at Providence Hospital in Mobile, Ala. "Prayer is never wasted. Sometimes things do not turn out the way we would wish."

"I have seen how the grace of that prayer brought a sense of spiritual peace to these people if their loved one did not continue to live but did die. I think what they found in the midst of that intense prayer is that God is in control."

Some researchers report that there's scientific evidence to confirm such thinking.

Dozens of scientific studies about the relationship of prayer to physical well-being repeatedly show that those who pray—or, for that matter, those who unknowingly are the subject of prayers—generally fare

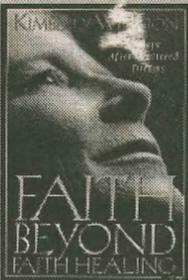
somewhat better than those who do not.

Still, there are those who continue to preach and believe that a connection should be made between one's level of faithfulness and one's degree of physical health.

"There is a strain, especially in Pentecostalism, that if a person is not healed, he has some 'secret sin.' There's something he's not confessing," Winston noted. "That is so terrible for any sick person to have thrust upon him because he's sick. ... When he most needs his faith, and someone tells him, 'Well, you're not going to get your healing.'"

Christopher Viscardi, chairman of the theology department at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Ala. calls such thinking "a kind of superstition."

"People who move into this desire for healing through spiritual (means) can fall into a trap or temptation of looking for a kind of divine magic, rather than surrender to the power of God, forgetting that even Jesus did not heal every blind person He ran across," Viscardi said. "Healings are real and they're many times an opening to God, but we don't have a kind of supernatural, magical power that we can have whatever we ask for whenever we seek it."



# PEOPLE

## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Dean Whitaker

What are your plans for summer? I am ready to live! After a near-death, emergency open-heart surgery this spring, I am letting Christ open and transform my heart anew spiritually; Christ is freeing me to live the abundant Christian life that I first received 16 years ago.

Our hearts must be cleaned and set right to live the life Jesus offers. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

Becoming a Christian is a process that begins with seeking forgiveness and cleansing from sin and continues as we daily obey Christ. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Jesus offers a love relationship with us that can result in cleansing and life for all. Despite the hatred and jealousy that Jesus' worst skeptics and enemies felt for Him, He still taught them with love and expectancy. "I have come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

As Jesus offers full life, let's accept His love and the challenge to have our hearts and minds set free. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Cleansing, healing and hope are ours for the taking. Seek Christ and live.

Dean Whitaker is campus minister at Cumberland College in Williamsburg

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **BARDWELL**—Bardwell Church called **Bryan Ray** as pastor effective May 26.

■ **BREMEN**—New Harmony Church dedicated its new sanctuary June 2.

■ **FANCY FARM**—**Don Farmer** resigned as pastor of Beulah Church.

■ **GREENVILLE**—Carter Creek Church will host **Mike Speck** in concert with the community choir June 22, 6:30 p.m.

Roland Memorial Church called **L.C. Gray** as interim pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Hillcrest Church called **Donavan Burton** as minister

of education and **Roger Garrison** as interim minister of music.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Broadway Church honored **Roger Lamb** May 12 for 20 years as minister of music.

■ **MARION**—Emmanuel Church called **Wayne Carter** as pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Highview Church honored **Harold Ross** on his 80th birthday. He has served 40 years as church treasurer.

■ **RUSSELL SPRINGS**—Clearfork Church ordained **Ronnie McGaha** as

a deacon. **Joe Sullivan** is pastor.

■ **SALEM**—**Dennis Winn**, pastor of Old Salem Church, was ordained to the gospel ministry June 2 by Walnut Grove Church, Fredonia.

■ **WESTPORT**—**Mike Royal**, youth and children's minister at Westport Church, resigned to attend Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. **Lynn Traylor** is pastor.

■ **WICKLIFFE**—Faith Church ordained **Bill Polley** to the gospel ministry. **Don Presley** is pastor.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FARMERS:** Sell locally-grown produce at Wednesday afternoon freshmarket hosted by Walnut Street Baptist Church in historic Old Louisville. Send inquire to FarmWorks Market, WSBC, 1143 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40203.

**FOR RENT:** Perfect efficiency apartment, small office, artist studio. Sunny room. Charming Victorian. Private kitchen, bath. Highlands/Mid City Mall (Louisville). All bus routes including seminary, universities. Walk to shops, dining, grocery. Laundry, maid service, meal plan, catering available. Call (502) 485-1174.

**FOR RENT:** Sanibel Island, Fla. Two-bedroom, 2-bath condo for vacation rental. Large pool, tennis courts, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely beach. www.sanibelcondo.net. Call Pat, (502) 895-8752.

**FOR SALE:** New and used buses and shuttle vans. Call American Bus and Accessories, Inc., (800) 582-7118.

**HEALTH:** Affordable healthcare. Pre-existing conditions accepted. Only \$54.95/month, entire family. Doctors, hospitals, prescriptions, vision, dental and more. The non-insurance solution. Call toll-free: (877) 889-8844. www.healthcaredeal.net.

**HEALTH:** Great news for people with diabetes. Medicare pays for diabetes testing supplies. Liberty Medical Supply (you've seen us on TV). Satisfaction guaranteed. Call toll-free: (800) 301-6497.

**NEEDED:** First Baptist Church of Prospect is searching for 400 linear feet of pews (to seat at least 250 people) to be used in a new sanctuary. Please leave a message: (502) 228-3286.

**SEEKING:** Part-time church musicians. Immediate opening for qualified choir director/musician. Responsibilities include providing choral and keyboard music for weekly Sunday morning worship services and other occasional special services (Maundy Thursday, Christmas Eve), directing and accompanying choir during weekly rehearsals. Excellent piano and directing skills required as well as good interpersonal and communication skills. Organ and/or bell choir skills a plus. Competitive salary offered based on qualifications, experience and potential level of involvement in church music program (approximately 20 hours per week; open to shared positions). Interested applicants should contact: Buechel Presbyterian Church, 4032 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40218; (502) 499-0977, Laverne or Carol.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister. Send resumé to: St. John Baptist, 1775 St. John Road, Frankfort, KY 40601, or e-mail: sjb@fewpb.net.

**SEEKING:** McLean Baptist Church, McLean, Va., seeks experienced candidate for full-time minister to children and youth. MBC is an inclusive community that celebrates Christ by serving our world with a dynamic local and global mission vision. For more information, visit www.mcleanbaptist.org. E-mail resumé to resume@mcleanbaptist.org. Interviews to be completed by July 31, 2002.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church, Vandalia, Ill., is looking to follow God's leadership in growth and outreach to our community. We are seeking a minister of music and/or education to join our ministry team. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 395, Vandalia, IL 62471. To inquire, call (618) 283-0313.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Ky., is seeking a full-time music associate/organist. These positions currently are combined but may be separated in the future. Please send a resumé to: Richard Suggs, minister of music, First Baptist Church, 621 E 12th Ave., Bowling Green, KY 42101, or call the church music office: (270) 842-0331, ext. 104. Experience required; at least a bachelor's degree (music/arts) is preferred.

**SEEKING:** Church pianist; ability to play keyboard and other instruments a plus. Salary negotiable with experience. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Bethlehem Baptist Church, 5708 Preston Highway, Louisville, KY 40219, or fax to (502) 964-9678.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth for active, growing church affiliated with SBC, CBF. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, 600 N Fort Thomas Ave., Fort Thomas, KY 4075.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth/recreation minister. Resumés may be sent to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 213 N Main St., Owenton, KY 40359. (502) 484-2430.

**SEEKING:** Centerfield Church, a Southern Baptist congregation that also is a member of the Willow Creek Association, seeks a senior pastor. We are a growing church with a casual atmosphere, contemporary worship, uncompromising with the inspired and inerrant Word of God. Our vision is to be a church that reaches up to God in worship, out to the community and the world with the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ, around to each other in fellowship, and in through discipleship. Interested candidates should contact: Pastor Search Team, Centerfield Church, 4200 S Highway 393, Crestwood, KY 40014. www.clik.to/centerfieldchurch.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of Owensboro, Ky., announces a new combined position available for an assistant worship minister who also will serve as minister to singles. In conjunction with this, there will be opportunities for this person to assist with college students. Experience in music ministry is required, while experience with a singles ministry is highly desirable. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required; a master's degree from an accredited graduate school or seminary would be desirable. This will be a full-time position with full benefits. Please submit resumé to: George Thacker, chairman, Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 904, Owensboro, KY 42302.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church, downtown Bowling Green, is seeking a full-time youth minister. The minister is to provide leadership and guidance to students (grade 7-12) and their parents, and assist the pastor in the development and coordination of a comprehensive education, activity and outreach program for youth. A seminary degree and three to five years youth ministry experience is desired. Salary open with benefits. For additional information, contact Steve Snodgrass, Youth Search Committee Chair, (270) 781-2718, ext. 221. Church Web site is www.firstbaptistbg.org.

**SEEKING:** Grace Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister of education. College degree required; seminary training preferred. Please send resumé and cover letter to: Grace Baptist Church, 811 Bryan Ave., Lexington, KY 40505, Attn: Education Minister Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., is receiving resumés 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 resumés to: Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, 2120 Lower Hunters Trace, Louisville, KY 40216.

**SEEKING:** Buena Vista Baptist Church is seeking a strong Southern Baptist, solid Bible preaching and teaching mission-oriented pastor. Please send all correspondence and/or recommendations to: Pastoral Search Committee, 324 Clifty St., Somerset, KY 42501. (606) 679-1686.

**SEEKING:** Dynamic and diverse congregation seeks skilled and experienced minister of music and worship to oversee a comprehensive music and worship program designed to develop each member to participate in worship, including direct responsibility for congregational praise and worship, adult and youth choirs. Would work in concert with team of ministers, including senior pastor, minister of youth, musicians and other church members. Resumés accepted until position is filled. Video tape examples demonstrating skills and proficiencies welcomed. Send to: First Baptist Church, 101 West Church St., Smithville, TN 37166, Attn: Music Search Committee. No phone inquiries, please. Tapes cannot be returned.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church, Pineville, Ky., is accepting resumés for full-time pastor with a degree from an accredited seminary. Please send to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 405 Kentucky Ave., Pineville, KY 40977.

**SEEKING:** West Broadway Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of music for a medium-sized, rapidly growing congregation. The candidate should be a person called to ministry using gifts of worship and music. Ideally, the candidate will have a seminary degree in church music. The successful candidate must be able to plan and lead multiple worship services incorporating traditional and contemporary music selections. The successful candidate will have the ability to work in a team setting with multiple staff. Candidates should consider music as a ministry built upon their own spiritual relationship with God. Submit resumés to: Minister of Music Search Committee, West Broadway Baptist Church, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40220. Phone: (502) 491-1920. Fax: (502) 499-9882.

**SEEKING:** The bivocational pastor God has selected for us, a Southern Baptist church in south-central Kentucky. Need someone devoted to God's work and interested in church growth; willing to actively participate in all facets of church work, including outreach, visitation, counseling, fellowship, discipleship and stewardship. Please send resumé/profile to: Pastor Search Committee, Jackson Grove Baptist Church, c/o Lyndell Graven, 6299 Louisville Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101-8409.

**SEEKING:** Mature, attractive, outgoing non-smoker to show patio homes to Louisville seniors on Saturdays and Sundays, from 1-5 p.m. Computer skills a plus. Fax resumé with cover letter to (502) 966-0819.

## Amnesia pastor fighting child support claim, seeks estate

DALLAS (BP)—A legal battle has erupted between a homosexual minister who has claimed he has amnesia and the wife and daughter who were left behind in 1984.

The homosexual minister, James Simmons, has balked at paying back child support, an attorney for his former wife, Beth Cox, told the Abilene Reporter-News.

Simmons, after child support proceedings began against him, filed court papers to have his death certificate reversed and his estate returned to him.

If Simmons regains his estate, Beth Cox said she will face "total bankruptcy," the Abilene paper reported. After her husband, who grew up as Wesley Barrett "Barre" Cox, was declared legally dead in 1991, she received part of the proceeds of the sale of a ranch owned by the Cox family, the Reporter-News recounted.

Barre Cox was identified in December 2000 as James Simmons after he preached a trial sermon at a predominantly homosexual church in Dallas. Simmons had just left Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., where he had earned two degrees. Seminary officials said Simmons never indicated he is a homosexual during his 10-year stay at the seminary.

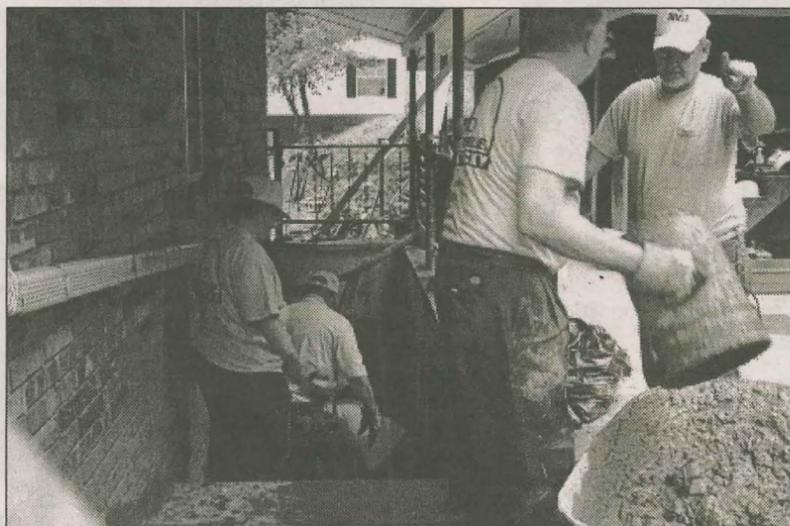
The Abilene newspaper reported that a hearing for Beth Cox's case for back child support is slated June 7 in Dallas.

The Dallas Morning News reported that Cox, who started a homosexual-oriented church in Garland, Texas, is under the care of a neuropsychologist and beginning to recall "bits and pieces," as he put it, about his former life.

Beth Cox, who now lives in Franklin, Tenn., had believed her husband to be dead after his disappearance on July 12, 1984. At that time he was a youth minister at MacArthur Park Church of Christ in San Antonio and was working on a doctoral degree in art at Texas Tech University. He was on his way home from the Lubbock campus when he disappeared. His ransacked car was found on a rural road outside Abilene. Cox's daughter, Talitha, was six months old at the time.

Cox has told of being beaten to unconsciousness in 1984 and found in the truck of a car. He said he awoke from a coma with amnesia in a Memphis, Tenn., hospital. Police there have no record of Simmons' account. He said he chose his last name after moving to Virginia, but the name, birth date and Social Security number he was using match those of a Texas rancher.

## Recent disaster relief



■ **Left middle:** Students from Campbellsville University assemble a tent in Harlan for the mobile kitchen where volunteers prepared meals for area flooding victims. ■ **Bottom left:** Dovie Smallwood, a member of Frenchburg Baptist Church, sits in a swing above 24 inches of mud in the basement of a home in Kimber. ■ **Bottom right:** Paul Dunnington, a member of Monticello Baptist Church, dumps one of the hundreds of bucket of mud removed from the Kimber house basement. Volunteers worked nine days to remove more than 116 cubic yards of mud and rock from the basement, according to Larry Koch, disaster relief coordinator for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Brotherhood department.

Kentucky disaster relief volunteers recently were in Western Kentucky and Eastern Kentucky, responding to tornado damage and floods, respectively. Above: More than 30 trees blew down in the yard of Debra Withers in Providence. Volunteers helped clean up the site. (Photos by Larry Koch)

## Has preaching changed after Sept. 11? Should it?

By Jeffrey MacDonald  
Religion News Service

ACTON, Mass. (RNS)—According to Ed Schroeder, Sept. 11 left all Christian preachers with an enduring message to deliver: Repent, one and all, for God is clearly angry with America.

"The only way to fight when God is your enemy is to repent," said Schroeder, a Lutheran theologian. "God is merciful to those who repent. It says so through the whole Bible. But if the imperial injustice persists, God finally presses the button: out."

That might be true, says Pastor Paul Sangree, but he's not about to preach it from his pulpit at Bethany Congregational Church in Foxboro, Mass. That's because the tragedy hit close to home when hijackers took the life of the church's head deacon.

"I think of what Ed said about this being God's judgment, but if you've lost someone beloved of the church, a very strong Christian, on Sept. 11,

then it's a little bit harder to preach that," Sangree said. "Would you say to the widow, 'God took your husband as a wakeup call to America?' It's possible that this was God's wakeup call to America, but I don't feel comfortable saying that to the family."

This exchange reflects one of many struggles Christian preachers face in 2002. With so many questions lingering from Sept. 11, three denominations brought 70 preachers together earlier this spring to examine what they can—or must—say when the faithful gather in the long shadow of that fateful day.

What emerged from liberals and conservatives in Lutheran, Roman Catholic and United Church of Christ traditions was agreement that America has ample cause to repent for sins ranging from pleasure-worship to exploitation of Third World nations.

But preachers also agreed that preaching repentance will surely face the people's wrath for allegedly blaming the victim or lacking patriotism.

"All we hear from Washington is, 'We're good. They're bad. Case closed,'" said Warren Geier, pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Wilbraham, Mass. "It's hard to get that message (of repentance) out without people saying you're un-American. It's tough."

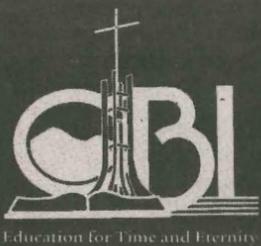
Now, nearly nine months after the tragedy, church attendance has leveled off, and preachers see their people living at times "as if nothing ever happened." Such normalcy among the flock is disconcerting to shepherds, they say, because it seems no incident of any magnitude can cause Americans to turn from their ways of overconsumption, indifference to poverty or unfettered self-indulgence.

"What we are to quicken in the hearts of people is the giving of their gifts to one another," said Tom O'Malley, a Boston College theologian. "I'm afraid an awful lot of people have no knowledge of the human condition or their need for being saved."



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