

July 30, 2002
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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, July 31

One 'crazy' assignment*Friends, family question sanity of volunteers to Gaza Strip***By Erich Bridges***SBC International Mission Board*

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (BP)—Only a few days after the Sept. 11 terror attacks, Bill Covington went to New York to serve meals to survivors and rescue workers near the smoking ruins of the World Trade Center.

That earned the Southern Baptist disaster relief veteran pats on the back from friends back home in Tennessee.

But when he announced he was heading to Israel in late June to deliver food to needy Palestinian families in bullet-riddled Gaza, some folks questioned his sanity.

"They said, 'You're crazy! I wouldn't go,'" Covington recalled as he loaded 70-pound food bags at the Baptist compound in Gaza City.

Concerned friends warned him about terrorists and suicide bombers, about getting caught in Israeli-Palestinian gun battles. A family member begged him to make "real sure" he heard the voice of God before going.

"I felt like God was leading me," Covington said. "When I feel He's leading me, I don't fear."

His story was echoed by several of the 19 Southern Baptist volunteers who crossed fortified borders and military checkpoints in June and July—under the intense gaze of Israeli soldiers wielding automatic weapons—to aid Palestinian families in Gaza and the West Bank.

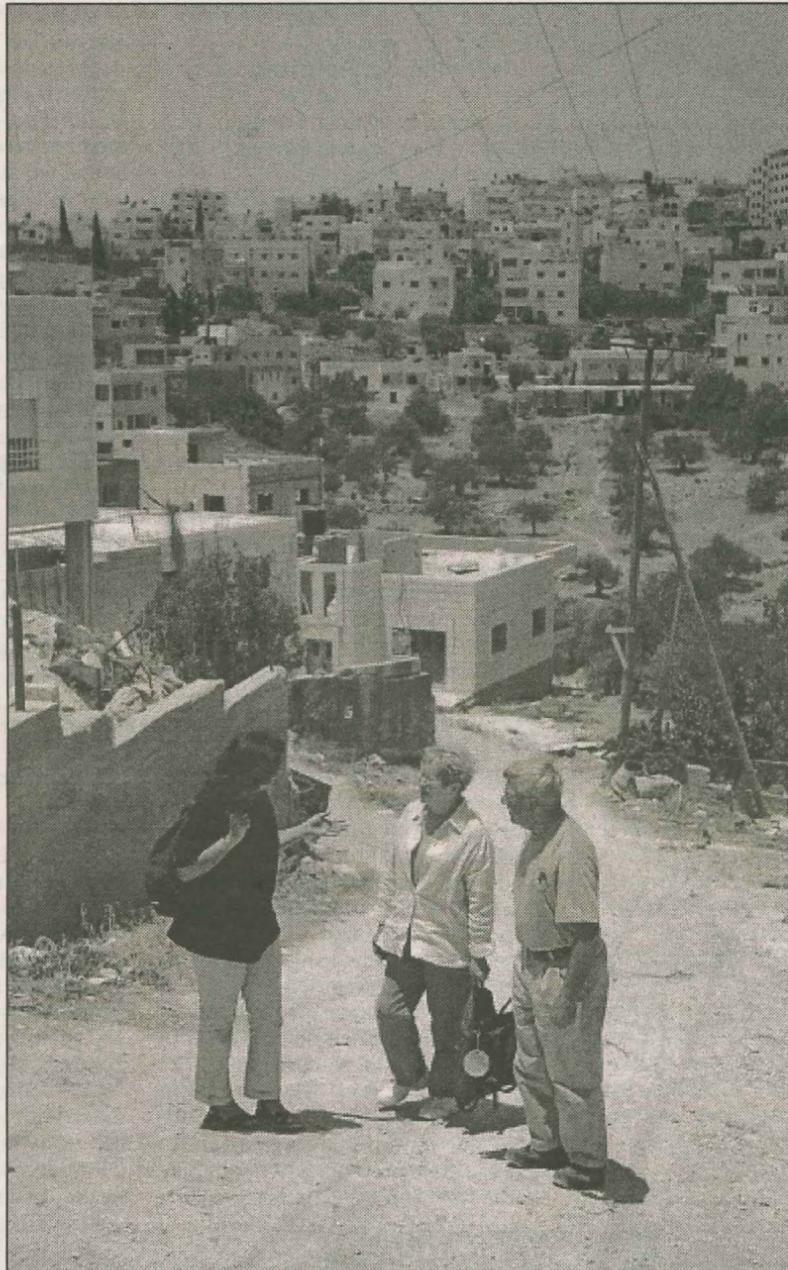
Some of their relatives, and even fellow church members, wondered out loud not only about their safety, but why they would want to help Palestinians in the first place.

"The real question is: Why wouldn't I help?" countered volunteer Alan Jones of North Carolina, who turned down the loan of a bullet-proof vest from a worried state trooper friend. "We need to share with those who are hurting and desperate. God opened a door. We felt we were called to come on a mission of hope—and there's not a lot of hope in these homes."

"Hope" was a key word for these volunteers, the second wave of U.S. helpers in "Project Future and Hope."

The project is a joint effort by Southern Baptists, Palestinian Baptists and other local Christians to aid families in Gaza, the West Bank and Palestinian areas of East Jerusalem. Southern Baptists are helping finance the project with \$325,000 in hunger and general relief funds.

An initial group of U.S. volun-



HOUSE TO HOUSE Volunteers Wes and Ruth Kinnamon (right) talk to a Palestinian Christian partner between home visits in the Palestinian village of Abu Dis. Like many of the volunteers participating this summer in Project Future and Hope, the Kinnamons were told by some friends back home that they were "crazy" to visit Palestinian areas during the current violence. But they said they encountered little hostility and many open doors. (BP photo by Roy Burroughs)

teers from Texas and North Carolina distributed food in Gaza, Ramallah, Bethlehem and other towns in early June.

The workers for the latest trip came from Tennessee, Alabama and North Carolina.

Additional teams from Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana are expected through the summer and into September—pending Israeli reaction to terrorist attacks in Israel.

If travel restrictions aren't too tight, volunteers will deliver more food, conduct five week-long camps for more than 300 Palestinian children and distribute 4,000 school uniforms to kids whose families can't afford them.

Volunteers already have visited approximately 1,800 Palestinian families in the territories. They hope to reach at least 1,000 more. Why?

"Our primary goal is to share God's love with these people, to tell them we love them and God loves them, to bring hope and encouragement," said Southern Baptist worker and project coordinator Paul Lawrence, who has worked among Palestinians for 17 years. "We also want to change Palestinians' attitudes toward evangelical Christians—and American evangelical attitudes toward Palestinians."

That's a tall order in today's bitter, blood-soaked atmosphere.

The renewal of Israeli-Palestinian violence in the fall of 2000, called the "Second Intifada" by Palestinians, has all but ended talks between the two sides. The appalling new phenomenon of Palestinian suicide bombings targeting Israeli civilians—coupled with Israeli military retaliation and region-wide curfews—has extinguished even

□ See Friends question sanity ..., page 6

Bowling Green speakers offer 'glue' to bond good marriages**By Brenda Smith***Kentucky Baptist Convention*

BOWLING GREEN—Most people put more time into their stocks than into their marriage, but they expect their marriages to present less risk and a higher yield, according to a Kentucky minister and marriage retreat speaker.

"In stocks, you see a downturn and you don't sweat it. Stocks are long-term. You don't watch the fluctuation," explained Ransom Bennett, a lay ministry and pastoral care minister at Living Hope Baptist Church in Bowling Green. He and his wife, Paula, will be keynote speakers at next month's MarriageFest couples retreat, Sept. 27-29 at The Center in Somerset.

"When we get married, there's a presumption that we are in it for the long haul, yet we focus on the bumps," he added.

Getting through those bumps, requires building up a good supply of "glue" that holds the marriage together, according to Mrs. Bennett.

The Bennetts have identified five "glues" that, in their words, help couples feel "bound" together, not "stuck" together. The five glues are:

■ **Perception.** Remember those things that first attracted you to your mate and nurture that attraction, the Bennetts said. As relationships grow, spouses are able to look even more deeply into each other, past the initial attraction to the essence of the person, Bennett said.

■ **Proximity.** All couples should spend time together, but needs differ from person to person, the Bennetts said. For some husbands, being in the same room at the same time or doing a project together may meet their needs; for some wives, deep conversation is important.

■ **Security.** A spouse needs to know that his or her partner is fully invested in the relationship, the Bennetts said. That means keeping promises made to a spouse, Bennett said. If you say you are going to be home for dinner, then be home for dinner, he explained. Ironically, keeping promises can be particularly tough for ministers and lay leaders because of time-consuming ministry demands, he added.

"If we're not careful, we create a history of broken promises," Bennett said. "We think we can get away with it if we are doing the Lord's work."

□ See Bowling Green ..., page 3

BAPTISTS

Panelists affirm need for Baptist identity

By Wendy Ryan
Baptist World Alliance

SEVILLE, Spain—Addressing a lack of historic Baptist identity in many Baptist churches, a panel of ministers and theologians agreed it is a growing concern in “post-denominational” cultures.

The panelists emphasized it is essential to distinguish who Baptists are while also being flexible enough to reach people for Christ where there are. They explored the topic “Why Baptist?” during a forum at the recent Baptist World Alliance General Council meeting in Seville, Spain.

“So much of Baptist worship is boring,” admitted Ian Chapman, former president of Northern Theological Seminary in Chicago. “We have not seized upon the opportunity to be our very best.

“This is our opportunity to redefine who we are in a post-modern world,” he added. “The important thing is not having the name ‘Baptist’ over the door. The important thing is: Is ‘Baptist’ in the reality of the church?”

“It’s the content more than the name,” he emphasized. “If you don’t have the content, the name becomes irrelevant.”

Clifford Jones, senior pastor of

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, an African-American congregation in Charlotte, N.C., said he believes it is important for Baptist churches to keep the word “Baptist” in their name.

“We are Christians first and then we’re Baptists by choice,” he said. “People need to know who we are and we need to affirm who we are.”

In the African-American community, Jones said, one concern is an overemphasis on social and political issues and “not enough strong doctrinal and biblical teaching.”

“The pluralism and independence in African-American churches makes it more imperative to affirm what we believe and especially practice that belief,” he said. “Jesus becomes alive in the practice of our faith in the larger community.

“We need to give people something to hold onto,” he added. “We need to hold our hope and our faith and to be faithful to what we believe and practice.”

In Brazil, Baptists face “worship wars” like many other churches today, said Fausto Vasconcelos, pastor of First Baptist Church in Rio de Janeiro.

Churches need to become more flexible in accepting varying worship styles, he said, distinguishing between

Baptist principles and worship practices.

Geoff Pound, president of Whitley College, a theological school for Baptists in Australia, said Baptists there are a minority group in a mostly secular society. Noting that Australia is home to more Buddhists than Baptists, he added, “We are grappling with our identity.”

Baptists are seeking to cope and grow in Australia, Pound said, by working to “hold up our heads, remember the story and talk about those things we stand for rather than what we stand against.”

James Leo Garrett, retired professor of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, said the formation of “mature members of Baptist churches” and the ability to dialogue with other faith groups requires a clear understanding of Baptist beliefs.

It is important for Baptists to have a clear grasp of “those Christian beliefs which Baptists share with other Christians,” he said, especially “at a time when dialogue with and confrontation with non-Christian religions, especially Islam, make such common beliefs even more important.”

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson

LifeWay team in Kenya leads 900 to Christ

KITHIMANI, Kenya (BP)—The words of the chorus—“Baba wa mbinguni, Hakuna kama wewe”—floated through the warm air as two African women sat waiting for the worship service to start.

They prayed together as other members trickled in, praising God for the hundreds of people who already had made professions of faith in Christ in their small Kenyan village.

The service was one of many led by a nine-member evangelism and church planting team from LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention that traveled to Kenya this summer.

The team helped start six new churches and led 917 Africans to faith in Christ.

“A large part of this trip also included some follow-up work,” said Jim Shamblin, who works in LifeWay’s information technology department. “We traveled one day to a church in Kithamani where (LifeWay President Jimmy) Draper evangelized last year. They now have 30 members and are preparing to purchase land for their church.

“We also received an update on the Bible school in Busia that LifeWay helped start,” he added. “They had their first graduating class in October and are now a seminary extension.”

Barbara Metcalf, who works in advertising and promotion, was making her fourth trip to Kenya. She said traveling to Africa had been a dream of hers since childhood.

Metcalf’s husband, Bob, works in LifeWay’s publishing and multimedia services. Joining his wife for his first trip to Kenya, he said the experience was like living in the 29th chapter of Acts.

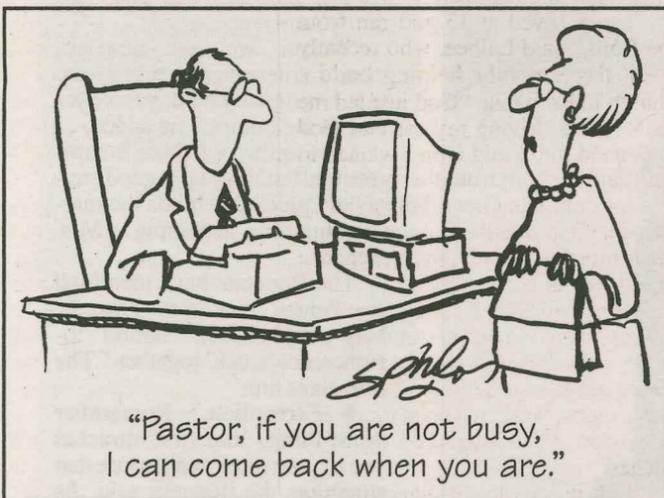
“If you look in your Bible, there is no 29th chapter, but the last verse of chapter 28 is about proclaiming the name of Christ, and that is what is happening in Kenya,” he said. “The people in those indigenous churches are just living that, and every day hundreds of people are coming to Christ.”

Shamblin also cited the passion of the Kenyan people.

“A lot of the time here (in America), our choruses are empty, and we’re just going through the motions,” he said. “These people were full of emotion through their praises.”

Mrs. Metcalf noted the positive impact provided by the trip’s cross-generational interaction.

“We had 20-year-olds and 80-year-olds working together,” she said. “That doesn’t happen often over here. The group just gets really close as we work together. It’s truly a learning experience.”



“Pastor, if you are not busy, I can come back when you are.”

Arizona Baptists oppose settlement

PHOENIX—Settlement of court cases related to Arthur Andersen’s auditing of the Baptist Foundation of Arizona could leave the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention exposed to unjust liability, a convention attorney claims.

At a July 12 hearing on Andersen’s \$217 million settlement with investors in the bankrupt foundation, the convention filed an objection to one aspect of the settlement.

“Simply stated, the settlement agreement would prevent the convention from bringing a claim against Arthur Andersen if someone sues the convention,” said Jeff

Schneck, legal counsel for the convention.

The BFA Liquidating Trust is charged with divesting the failed foundation’s assets and recouping as much of the \$570 million in lost investor money as possible. That group “continues to threaten to sue the convention, contending the convention was responsible for the losses suffered by the investors,” Schneck said.

Yet terms of the investors’ settlement with Andersen could prevent the convention from pressing its own claim against Andersen in the future, he added.

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Baptist leader dies in accident.** Rick Ferguson, former first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, died July 25 in an automobile accident near Hays, Kan. Ferguson, 47, was senior pastor of Riverside Baptist Church in Denver. A frequent speaker at Baptist conferences and conventions, he was a featured speaker at last year’s Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference. Ferguson, his wife, Kathy, and their 17-year-old son, Justin, were en route to a family reunion in Missouri when a tire blew out on the family’s vehicle. The vehicle, which was pulling a boat, went out of control and rolled over several times. Mrs. Ferguson and their son were treated for minor injuries at a local hospital and released.

■ **IMB videographer dies.** Lee Pursley, a Southern Baptist missionary videographer, died July 20 while traveling in South Asia. Pursley, 39, suffered a heart attack, according to a Southern Baptist International Mission Board spokesman. He had a history

of heart problems. His wife, Nancy, and their two children, Kathryn, 4, and Matthew, 10 months, are returning to the United States. Pursley was a graduate of West Georgia College in Carrollton and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He previously was a master control operator at the former Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

■ **Beth Moore to lead Web Bible study.** Author and Bible teacher Beth Moore will lead an Internet-only Bible study, “Believing God,” this fall. Based on the weekly Living Proof Bible studies Moore leads at First Baptist Church of Houston, the 10-session series will begin Sept. 26. Pre-registration for the study, sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources, begins Aug. 1. Registration is \$9.95 through the end of August. Those who register will receive an ID and password allowing them to log into the weekly sessions. For information, visit www.lifeway.com/BelievingGod.

■ **Southwestern launches worship degree.** Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, is launching a master of arts in worship degree. Benjamin Harlan, dean of the seminary’s church music school, said the degree will address changing worship trends as well as offering specialized training. The program will include an emphasis in contemporary worship as well as focusing on academic and traditional performance areas.

■ **Seminary receives \$2 million grant.** Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Va.) has received a \$2 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to fund a national program that encourages young people to consider careers in Christian ministry. The project will seek to identify youth who have the qualities and talent for ministry and provide opportunities for them to explore their vocational choices. The seminary will partner with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, American Baptist Churches and the Passport Christian camping organization.

Ky. Baptists plan events to mark Sept. 11

LOUISVILLE—As Americans prepare to mark the first anniversary of Sept. 11, Kentucky Baptist leaders are making plans to share words of comfort and hope during special memorial services.

Major events will be held Sept. 11 in Louisville and Campbellsville. The Louisville event, set for 7 p.m. at Walnut Street Baptist Church, will be hosted by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Long Run Baptist Association. A 10 a.m. service hosted by Campbellsville University will be held at Campbellsville Baptist Church.

In a letter from KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey and Long Run Association Executive Director Wesley Pitts, area pastors and laypeople were invited to attend the Louisville service to "remember our nation in prayer" and "celebrate our great God who is in control even in terrible times of tragedy."

The service will feature reflections from people directly impacted by the terrorist attacks, including comments from a Kentucky Baptist disaster relief worker. More than 300 Kentucky Baptist volunteers were involved in disaster relief ministry in New York after the attack.

Army Col. John Brinsfield will speak at the Campbellsville convocation. He is chief of chaplain staff operations for the U.S. Armed Forces Command at Fort McPherson, Ga.

Dave Walters, dean of student services at Campbellsville, said the program will feature a blend of prayer, music and patriotism.

Dedicated to "offering a message of hope" in the wake of Sept. 11, the Web site www.911remembrance.com features a list of churches scheduled to host Sept. 11-related remembrance services. Kentucky Baptist churches listed on the site include Clarkson Church; Freedom Church, Stanford; Greenwood Church, Bowling Green; Goshen Church, Lawrenceburg; First Church of Jackson; Ormsby Heights Church, Louisville; South Elkhorn Church, Lexington; and Versailles Church.

Several churches across the commonwealth will focus on the anniversary during regular Wednesday night services Sept. 11 or Sunday services Sept. 8.

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board has developed resource materials for churches interested in hosting a remembrance service. Available resources include a video, sermon outlines, a list of prayer needs and information about an intercessory prayer ministry for emergency personnel. More information is available on the Web site www.namb.net/911.

Partnership growing multiple fruit in Louisa

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISA—A five-year-old partnership between First Baptist Church of Louisa and a congregation in central Tennessee has shown a variety of dividends, according to Pastor Ric Frazier.

In addition to more than 20 conversions, the church and area missions have grown, and volunteers and recipients of ministry have felt called to greater participation in missions, Frazier said.

Sunday school attendance at the church and three missions has increased from about 200 to 360, while average worship attendance has risen from 260 to 375. First Baptist's youth group has mushroomed from about a dozen to between 65 and 70, Frazier added.

While 22 people have prayed to receive Jesus as their personal Savior—five during the most recent event in late June—other decisions have multiplied, the pastor added.

"Some of those saved through this ministry have become dedicated servants of our church and short-term missionaries here and abroad," Frazier said. "God would be the only One Who would know the lives that have been touched."

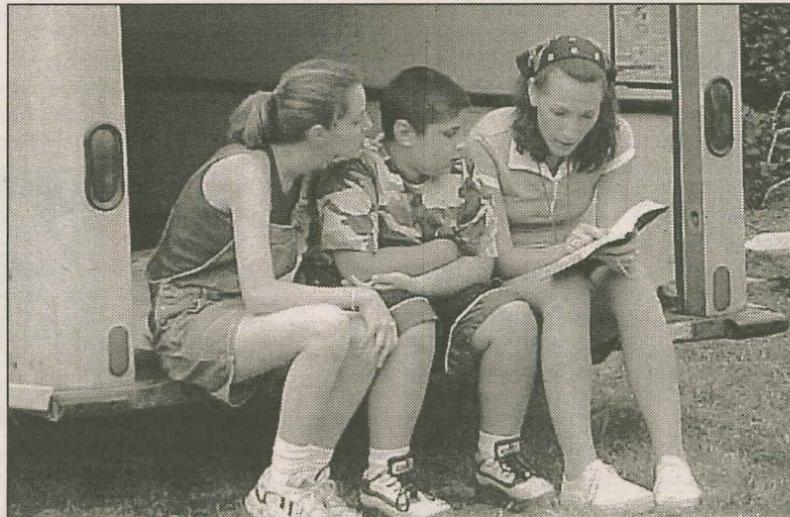
"We're seeing second and third generations of families touched by these backyard Bible clubs," he added. "We're going out to talk to kids and reaching their parents and even grandparents."

Forty teens and adults came from Green Hills Baptist Church in Mount Juliet, Tenn., the fifth consecutive summer the church has sent a team. Mars Hill Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, Tenn., also brought its second group of workers this summer.

Along with volunteers from First Baptist Church, they conducted 11 Bible clubs in Lawrence County and neighboring Fort Gay, W.Va.

During nightly rallies at a city park, the teams led praise and worship music, along with drama, interpretive movements and testimonies.

Some volunteers also worked on such construction projects as building



BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS Volunteers teach a boy during one of 11 backyard Bible clubs sponsored this summer by First Baptist Church of Louisa.

a handicapped access ramp for an elderly couple and erecting a roof over the porch of another home.

Many churches vary the destinations of their mission groups, but Green Hills youth pastor Jerry Williams said changing sites each year makes it harder to establish rapport with a community.

"We've built some trust here," Williams said. "Another reason we come back is we know the work isn't done, and that (First Baptist) will continue to follow up on children and adults."

"Every couple months Ric will call and say, 'We just baptized someone who came to the Lord as a result of the backyard Bible clubs.'"

The continuing mission has affected Green Hills Church dramatically, too, with its youth group averaging 100 a week, compared to 40 when it first came to Kentucky.

Jennifer Savley, a college sophomore who led one of the backyard Bible clubs this year, said she has grown spiritually on her three visits, learning how to love God and worship Him more deeply.

This year, she also prayed with a 12-year-old boy who accepted Jesus as his personal Savior.

"I've seen him every year and got to know him, so we had a relation-

ship," Savley said. "I felt overwhelming joy ... to see the child I've known for three years finally catch on and know what it means to be a Christian."

Those touched by the effort have included a number of adults, such as retired riverboat cook Paul Leibe.

The Chapman resident rededicated his life to Christ in 1999, nine months after his 37-year-old son accepted Jesus as Savior after hearing the gospel at a Bible club.

"I was saved at 13 and ran from the Lord," said Leibe, who recently spent three months helping build a church in Romania. "God just led me back. I was driving my car and God convicted me. I told Him I wanted to start serving Him from that point on."

Not only has Green Hills Church helped First Baptist Church accomplish more in the community than it could on its own, Frazier said, the group helped First Church members awaken their own vision for missions.

In early June, 34 people from the church traveled to Tulsa, Okla., to lead Bible clubs, work at a boys ranch and help residents at a battered women's shelter.

"I attribute a lot of our growth to missions-mindedness," Frazier said. "In the last five years we have taken the Great Commission more seriously. It has energized our church."

Bowling Green speakers offer 'glue' for marriage

Continued from page 1

By protecting family times and keeping commitments, ministers can model lessons for their congregations, he added.

■ **Intimacy.** Solid intimacy starts long before the bedroom, the Bennetts said. Intimacy is built primarily through an atmosphere of affection and genuine interest, and may be as simple as holding hands while walking through the mall.

■ **Self-esteem.** This is the most important of all the relationship "glues," the Bennetts said. Contrary to popular perception, self-esteem is not about feeling good about oneself; it's about feeling good about what Christ has done for you, they say.

"Because He values me, I can value my spouse and myself," Bennett explained.

Added Mrs. Bennett: "Self-es-

teem really comes down to a way of being appreciated. ... It helps to hear the words, 'I appreciate you.'"

The Bennetts, who have been married for 23 years, have been leading marriage enrichment workshops for Baptist agencies, state conventions and churches since 1989.

Through their ministry, they focus on teaching couples how to live intentionally.

Not living intentionally—just letting life "happen" without planning, focus or effort—is usually what gets marriages into trouble, they said.

The Bennetts said that as they lead retreats they try to help the learning continue after the couples return home.

"Aside from the keynoting, we try to let people know that we are available to them," Bennett explained. "We will try to connect with leaders and pastors and ask some probing ques-

tions about how they plan on utilizing the material once they get home. We encourage them to invite conference leaders to their churches for local marriage enrichment activities."

Added Mrs. Bennett: "We also try to direct couples (in need of additional help) to Christian counselors."

Bennett said he wasn't too surprised by the recent report of University of Chicago researchers that showed divorce doesn't necessarily make adults happier, but toughing out an unhappy marriage does.

"It's about time somebody figured out what God already said," Bennett said with a laugh.

For more information about MarriageFest, call the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department at (502) 254-4719 or toll free in Kentucky at (888) 254-5704, or visit the KBC Web site: www.kybaptist.org.

"We're seeing second and third generations of families touched by these backyard Bible clubs."

Ric Frazier, pastor of First Baptist Church of Louisa

WESTERN RECORDER

P.O. Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
(ISSN 0043-4132)

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

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 244-6470. Fax: (502) 244-6474. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

To subscribe: Send \$11.66 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$9.25 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax exemption number.

POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to: Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

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Avoid relativism

I would ask Roy Fuller ("Respect differences," July 16 issue) if a Muslim made "an intemperate statement" about Jesus Christ in the United States, do you think the Muslim practitioner would be in danger from Christians? His claim that such a remark as that made by a Florida pastor likely endangers our missionaries serving in a Muslim context seems to make the case for Jerry Vines.

Where I find more wince potential is in his statement: "To attack and inaccurately (his opinion) characterize another faith tradition is not in keeping with the message and actions of Jesus." Surely Fuller has read the 23rd chapter of Matthew. Jesus roughed up the Scribe and Pharisees—top leaders of Judaism—by calling them hypocrites, blind guides, fools, graves filled with dead men's bones, murderers, serpents and vipers, and then slammed down the lid on them with the question: "How can you escape the damnation of hell?" When addressing the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism as "O generation of snakes," John the Baptist is not for the finicky and fainthearted either.

Relativism despises particularity, singularity and exclusivism. I agree that Christians should be as winsome as possible when discussing distinct differences, but having said that, let me say I believe we are not all going up the same mountain to the same destination by different paths. Jesus said to Thomas: "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). I'm taking His word for it.

John C. Huffman
Louisville

Support amendment

God has laid it on my heart to write this letter. My name is Allen Johnson and I am a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Loyall. I can't walk, talk or move my arms, but God has blessed

me with a good heart and mind. I have Lou Gehrig's disease.

I believe it is time for Christians to be heard. Our Founding Fathers of the United States of America meant for the separation of church and state to mean that the government should not sponsor religion. In other words, the government should not tell you where to go to church.

I have written Congressman Hal Rogers and Sens. Mitch McConnell and Jim Bunning of Kentucky to address these concerns and to make whatever changes that need to be made to the Constitution of the United States in the form of an amendment to the Constitution.

I ask you to pray and write your congressmen and senators. You may think, "I am only one person. What can I do?" Only one woman got thrown out of public schools. The ACLU keeps the Ten Commandments out of public schools and courthouses. Now one man has gotten the Pledge of Allegiance thrown out of public schools in nine states.

You may think this is an impossible task, but with God's help nothing is impossible.

Allen Johnson
Harlan

Spiritual legacy

The July 16 article about the study Bible J.S. Bach used is most enlightening. This great man wrote above nearly every work he wrote for church, "Soli Deo Gloria."

The fact that Bach had more books on theology than on music in his personal library has been well known for many decades. But his own Bible with markings at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis is delightful to find out.

Bach was born the same year as G.F. Handel, the German musician who took Italian opera to England. Both of these men were wonderful

organists and composers. They admired each other's work, but never met. Handel had left upon his return to England from a visit to his mother's residence when Bach had walked 60 miles to meet Handel.

How significant that Bach's works intended for the church are now usually sung by professional choirs in theaters and concert halls, while Handel's works often are sung in churches today, though intended for theaters in the 1700s.

The music of that high baroque era is yet most expressive and touches people today. Boys from all over the former Soviet bloc became converted to Christendom simply from singing Bach's music. What a legacy!

Japanese listeners of music often buy the whole works of J.S. Bach and listen, then go to concerts to ask theologians, not musicians, to explain what they've heard. God has unique ways of preserving music that honors His dear name.

One who sings either Bach's or Handel's oratorio or cantata works usually will have high moments in worship. God has blessed the works of these two men because they have tried to bless His name and portray to mankind the beauty and even mystery of our faith. Selah!

Bill McGibney
Owenton

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

Super Saturday 2002

"Fruitbearing, Becoming Like Jesus" will be the theme of six outstanding Super Saturday conferences for Aug. 10, 17, 24 and Sept. 7. Leaders will explore practical ways to help new believers work like Jesus and develop the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23).

Super Saturday will help your church leaders:

- Learn what is working in other churches to reach people.
- Gain focus in ministry.
- Grow relationships as leaders work together.
- Build enthusiasm and focus for the coming church year.

Super Saturday will help your team:

- Learn new skills and techniques.
- Discover ways to mobilize leadership for ministry.
- Learn to express caring through teaching.
- Gain confidence in their gifts and abilities.

A total of 388 training conferenc-

es will be provided for an anticipated 3,000 church leaders representing 500 churches.

Perhaps you and your church have not participated in Super Saturday before but you do have interest. You can participate by contacting Cheryl Davis of the Kentucky Baptist church growth team at (888) 254-5710 to pre-register for \$10 or simply register at the door for \$14. Lunch is provided.



Bill Mackey

Leadership conferences will be offered for pastors and staff, Sunday school, discipleship, music, Women's Missionary Union and church library workers during the morning sessions. The afternoon sessions will feature more than 50 interest conferences. Each participant can select two.

Extended teaching care for preschoolers age 6 weeks through kindergarten will be provided with seven-day advance registration.

Special features this year include stewardship, singles ministry and mar-

keting conferences for your church. A special Hispanic conference will be offered Aug. 17 at Elizabethtown.

The Super Saturday conferences will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at each location. Locations and dates include:

■ Aug. 10, Erlanger Baptist Church and Second Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

■ Aug. 17, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

■ Aug. 24, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

■ Sept. 7, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah, and First Baptist Church, Somerset.

This is the only coordinated church leader training conference like this in the Southern Baptist Convention. Vernon Cole and his church growth team are to be commended for the vision and implementation of this conference.

Enlist a friend and call Cheryl today to let her know you will participate.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Basic safeguards can help protect church offerings

By Doug Strader

I receive a significant number of inquiries from churches about how to properly handle the money received from their members. I recently have met with committees from two

churches that have had someone misappropriate funds. These people were serving in positions where they handled the money received by the church, and they yielded to the temptation to abuse their position.

Consider these basic guidelines that can help prevent such situations from happening in your church:

■ Always have at least three people present when the tithes and offerings are being counted.

■ Have a rotating group of people to serve as counters. The counters must be people of integrity and people who keep confidential information.

■ Count the money in a safe place. Some churches take the money to a bank night depository in a locked bank bag and the committee counts the money at the bank on Monday morning. (If at all possible, the money never should be taken to a person's home to keep overnight.)

■ Record checks and arrange the offering envelopes sequentially and give to the treasurer and/or financial secretary for proper recording of gifts.

■ The treasurer or financial secretary should not count the money because that is a conflict of interest. There always should be a division of responsibility between people who count the money, write checks on the money and those who audit the process.

■ The finance committee should meet monthly and approve all expenditures. They should review every invoice, every receipt and if the church has a credit card, every item should be reviewed before the checks are written.

■ Every check should have two signatures. At no time should a blank check be signed.

■ Every church needs to have a church-approved purchase order system.

If these guidelines are approved by the church and put into practice, it can prevent problems from developing. For more information, contact me at (888) 254-5708 or (502) 254-4716.

Doug Strader is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department

Thought-provoking questions can help strengthen life goals

Q: I plan to spend some time this summer sitting down and evaluating my goals to see how my life is going. Any suggestions?

William Cook, author of "Success, Motivation and the Scriptures," offers a series of questions individuals should ask themselves as they look to the future. Key questions include:

- Do all of my goals fit within the written, stated purpose for my life?
- Have I been honest enough to set goals in every area of my life, believing that God is interested in the total me? Include spiritual, recreational, professional, social, educational/intellectual, family relationships and financial areas.

- Have I developed short-range and immediate goals that fit within my long-term goals?
- Can my goals glorify God?
- Did I ask God for wisdom and guidance?
- Would Jesus Christ be willing to be Lord of my life and preside over the reaching of these goals?
- If thoroughly convinced that these are God-given goals, can I expect His power in achieving these goals?

T.B. Maston, author of "Right or Wrong," also offers a list of questions to help evaluate major goals:

- How will it affect me?
- How will it affect others?
- How will it affect the cause of Christ?
- Is it all right if others know my goals?
- Would it be all right for everyone to have these goals?
- Were my goals born in prayer?

If you submit your goals to these questions, there's a good chance you will live a life worthy of Christ's commendation: "Well done, you good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:23).—James Stillwell

Q: I recently was visiting with some friends who joked a lot about my getting a part-time job as a greeter at a local discount store. Their negative kidding bothered me. As a retiree, I do a lot of volunteer work at church, and I just like being with people and keeping busy. How should I respond?

A growing number of senior citizens have re-entered the work force. Some do it to help pay bills; others to pay for travel or buy gifts for their grandchildren. Others aren't ready for the rocking chair and want to remain productive.

"Americans are living longer. What does a person do between 65 and 80?" asked Mike Foshau, field coordinator for a national non-profit agency that helps low-income people over age 55 find work.

"We all need meaning and purpose in our lives," he noted. "Getting up and going to work gives people more than a little extra money in their pocket; it gives them a purpose and a reason for living."

Many experts agree that one thing most senior workers have in common is a good work ethic. They typically are good workers, committed and conscientious.

Older workers also are good role models. They can teach the younger generation the skills of being reliable and dependable.

For those older adults who are healthy and want to work, there are lots of jobs available. Many senior citizens work as greeters, but they also work in a variety of other settings.

Keep those truths in mind and share them with your friends the next time they express negative views about your job choices.—Jon Rainbow

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



Does your church need a health check?

Renowned Christian pollster George Barna is blunt in his assessment of the Christian church.

"Nothing's changing, and the change that we see is not for the better," Barna says in the current issue of Christianity Today. Voicing concern that his effort to help reform church life has failed, he said many ministers who access his research through books, seminars and other sources "nod their heads approvingly and then they don't do anything with it."

In his new book, "The State of the Church: 2002," Barna laments "a noteworthy staleness to the faith experience of most Americans."

Barna's latest comments echo views he shared during a one-day seminar last year in Louisville. Insisting that most churches fail to take true discipleship seriously enough, he told conference participants last fall, "The difference between Christians and non-Christians is minimal because we act so much like the world."

Not a pretty picture.

What can Kentucky Baptist churches do to address such concerns? One significant step is to take advantage of cutting-edge training opportunities throughout the commonwealth—and then find ways to implement effective strategies that help promote church health and growth.

Fortunately for Kentucky Baptists, several resources are available to help strengthen, encourage and challenge church leaders. Among major events in the next few months are:

■ **Super Saturday 2002.** Highlighting the theme, "Fruitbearing: Becoming Like Jesus," this annual training conference offers resources for pastors and church staff, Sunday school teachers, discipleship leaders, church musicians and others. "If we get people to begin to think about the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit and incorporate that into their lives, that lifestyle will be expressed in their leadership orientation," explained

Vernon Cole, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church growth team. Super Saturday will be Aug. 10, 17 and 24 and Sept. 7 at six locations across the state.

■ **Youth Evangelism Conference.** Geared toward teens and their leaders, this year's "Deeper" conference will feature youth communicator David Nasser. "We believe growing deeper is the solvent for leading

churches out of decline and leading them into growth," said KBC youth evangelism strategist Randy Record. "We believe the result of going deeper is that our campuses will be reached by our Christian students." The one-day Deeper conferences will be Aug. 10 in Lexington and Aug. 17 in Bowling Green.

■ **Pastors and Church Leaders Conference.** Hosted by Campbellsville University, this first-time campus event will feature Leonard Sweet, author of "FaithQuakes" and "SoulTsunami." John Chowning, Campbellsville's vice president for church and external relations, said the Sept. 26-27 event is intended to "inspire, challenge and equip" leaders

to impact the church of the 21st century.

■ **Church Health Summit 2.** Exploring the theme, "Journey into Worship," the conference will be Oct. 11-12 at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green. "It isn't as much a preaching event as it is people connecting to God and connecting to each other," said Dan Garland, leader of the KBC evangelism growth team. Suggesting that "Barna has probably overstated the case" about the future of the church, Garland added, "Information and education are the keys to change. ... I think there are pockets of health out there with people doing positive, productive things."

Regardless of the current health of your church, these events are among numerous opportunities to expand your church's ministry vision and impact. It's a matter of learning—and applying—biblical principles for vibrant church health.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Coming to Christ 'inch by inch'

Editor's Note: Rick Ferguson, former first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, died July 25 in an automobile accident. Ferguson, pastor of Riverside Baptist Church in Denver, was a popular conference speaker who spoke at last year's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference. The following article by Ferguson about evangelism is reprinted from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's September-October 2000 issue of *On Mission* magazine.

It's wrong to sugarcoat God's truth to make it more appealing. In today's environment, we have to contextualize our ministry without compromising the gospel.

We can do this without offending our listeners, making them feel like a project, like a notch in our evangelistic belt. The goal is not to immediately give them a gospel presentation but to form a relationship with them and begin to build a bridge. That will lead to a comfortable but direct discussion of how Christ has worked in your life, how you have changed as a result of committing your life to the Lord. We can make more inroads by inviting non-believers to Starbucks and showing them who we are by our day-to-

day lifestyle than by in-your-face evangelism which can sometimes hurt the presentation of the gospel more than help it.

I see similarities between our culture today and the culture the apostle Paul was speaking to in Athens on Mars Hill in Acts 17. Today's culture is philosophically curious, especially

people like the Gen Xers and the Echo Boomers. They don't even know a society in which there are moral absolutes. They've never experienced that, and they don't have the same mental grid through which to process the concept of sin. Most postmoderns don't really see themselves as sinners, because they are functioning from a convoluted worldview.

Many will come to Christ inch by inch, not mile by mile. In other words, they have to process the gospel, and so while there will always be a place for confrontational evangelism, the best opportunity is for incremental movement in their understanding of the gospel through ongoing dialogue with Christians. Postmoderns are processors; they want interaction, which is why dialogue, at their own pace, is so effective.

So we have to form relationships and earn their trust and confidence.

And we have to be willing to answer their questions and be good apologists. Postmoderns are not won by emotion. They are attracted to reason and rational thinking. The good news is that the gospel makes sense. What doesn't make sense is the worldview that leaves out God, like the big bang theory. The mind of God, though hard to comprehend, certainly makes much more sense than the chaos that modern theories put forth. Our job is to articulate our worldview.

So, first, we have to learn to communicate. At Riverside we teach dialogue skills on how to get conversations going, how to maintain them, how to express your points in a personal and not argumentative way.

For example, you don't have to understand and articulate the intricacies of DNA to explain the concept that everything we know from science supports a cause-and-effect universe. So if you talk to a postmodern who believes in the big bang theory, then he or she is talking about an explosion that supposedly ignited from nothing—there was no cause for it, which makes no scientific sense. And this leads to God, the "uncaused first cause," which—though hard to comprehend—at least makes rational sense because God explains a mind and a meaning behind our existence.

These are hard truths, not soft, told in a contemporary way.

Friends question sanity of Baptist volunteers to Gaza Strip

Weeping with those who weep, where Jesus wept

AZERIYA, West Bank (BP)—Jesus wept in Bethany. Sam Gore did, too.

Gore, pastor of Collins Grove Baptist Church in Holly Springs, N.C., knows the meaning of deep grief. His 16-year-old son died seven years ago.

So he knew tears sometimes were the only appropriate response as he listened to the struggles of Palestinian families in Azeriya—the biblical town of Bethany, where Jesus raised His friend Lazarus from the dead after weeping with His grieving family.

"In one home, the woman couldn't even raise her head," said Gore, part of a volunteer team that delivered food coupons to needy families in Palestinian towns.

"Her husband divorced her, and only her neighbors are keeping her alive. I couldn't speak. It just broke my heart."

In community seminars around Gaza, Tennessee Baptist crisis counselors Dan and Barbara Clevenger met with many Palestinian parents. As violence continues, their children exhibit classic post-traumatic stress symptoms—hyperactivity, sleeplessness, nightmares, irrational terror of being alone.

"One mother told us, 'My daughter won't go to bed alone. She's frightened,'" Clevenger reported. More conversations revealed that an Israeli rocket had exploded 20 meters from the girl's room.

"We're not terrorists," said another woman, echoing many others. "We want peace. We want our children to live in security."

Erich Bridges

Continued from page 1

the dimmest hope of peace for many. Attitudes have hardened on all sides.

Many Palestinians also assume that Americans (particularly conservative evangelicals, who often support the state of Israel for theological reasons) hate them and regard them all as terrorists.

So a group of Americans attracted attention—and raised eyebrows—as they stood in line with Palestinians amid the barbed wire, sandbags and concrete barriers to enter Ramallah during a brief lifting of the Israeli curfew on the city.

"You are American," a curious Palestinian in line said to one of the volunteers. "Aren't you afraid?"

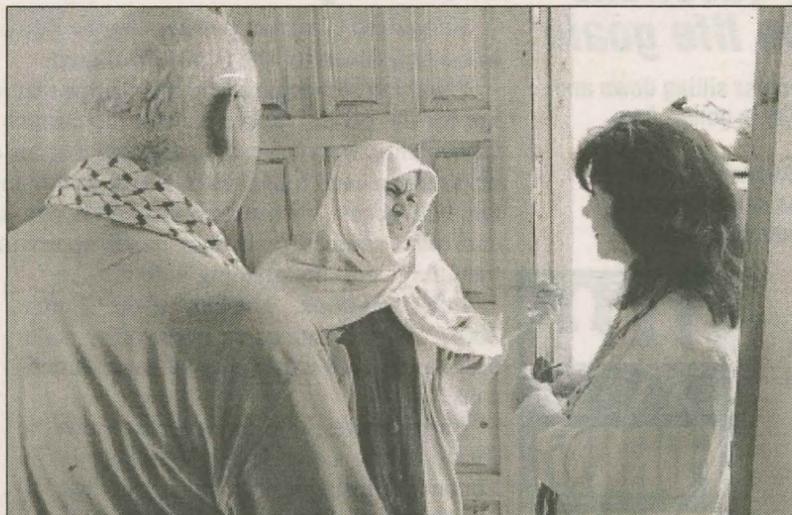
"No," the volunteer replied.

"Why not?"

"Because God is with us."

The volunteers got even more attention as they lugged food bags through the narrow lanes of Gaza's Jabalya refugee camp, trailed by mobs of excited kids. As many as 100,000 Palestinians are packed, 250 per acre, into the camp—actually a huge slum. Concrete-block, tin-roofed dwellings adorned with militant Arabic graffiti long ago replaced the tents refugees occupied after fleeing the new state of Israel in 1948.

Areas like Jabalya spawn plenty of recruits for Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other violent Palestinian factions. But the overwhelming majority of its residents, and of Gaza's 1.2 million Palestinians, are members



FAMILIES UNDER FIRE A Palestinian woman tells her troubles to Dan and Barbara Clevenger, Tennessee Baptist crisis counselors. Families in the Gaza refugee camp where she lives deal with violence, hunger, fear and hopelessness as conflict mounts between Israelis and Palestinians. (BP photo by Roy Burroughs)

only of families attempting to survive until better days—if better days ever come.

Many men in the camp haven't worked since the renewed conflict devastated the local economy and closed the border to jobs in Israel. The United Nations and other agencies provide periodic relief, but malnutrition is on the rise. Households in the area average seven children or more.

In each Gaza home visit, the Baptist groups delivered lentils, oil, rice, beans, tea—enough basic food for a few weeks, plus a toy for children. In

each home, they listened to the hardships the family is enduring, and asked permission to pray. When they asked what to pray for, the first answer—almost without exception—was "peace," followed by health and work.

In one home, a Muslim mother welcomed the visitors with a warm smile as her children gathered around.

Also: Palestinian Christians feel caught in the crossfire. Page 11.

Her eyes, however, spoke fear and anxiety. Her 16-year-old son looked 10. "He doesn't eat," she said.

Her 18-year-old son, Ahmed, head stooped, stared into space without speaking. His hands trembled. He couldn't walk, stand or sit without help from an older brother. He had been traumatized by Israeli military sweeps through the camp as soldiers search for militant fighters, his mother explained.

"When the (Israeli) planes and helicopters go over, the roof falls," she said, gripping her robe. "We are afraid at night, young and old. We have nothing."

For families facing such a life, a brief visit and a little food is "a drop in the bucket," admitted Young Khoury, a Palestinian Baptist coordinating the food distribution in Gaza. "But you put many drops together, and you make a difference."

For that, the Southern Baptist volunteers were happy to pay their own way to a war zone, to give up their July 4th holiday, to listen to sporadic machine-gun, tank and rocket fire and to have their sanity questioned by folks back home.

Camping: Light in the darkness

In my previous column, I wrote about the sense of celebration in a night during which eight youth came to know Jesus. Before that week was over, 23 students had accepted Christ as Savior! The scope of Christian camping continues to grow both in the U.S. as well as around the world. Bob Kobielush, president of Christian Camping International, recently wrote about the tremendous success of Christian camping to provide a place in which life change can occur.

How is it that such occurs week after week when kids are at camp?

Kobielush suggests four "power factors" unique to Christian camping. First is the physical setting. In our case, both Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek are settings given to us by God for the very purpose of ministering. Our mission statement, in fact, is "to provide an environment in which all our guests can come to know Christ or more fully experience Him."

The second power factor is the people. Our staffs at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek are led by people who have been set apart to point people to Jesus Christ. As Kobielush writes, "When these kids intermingle with camp staff who desire

to be salt and light, campers and guests glimpse the redemptive work of God, and their minds and hearts become fertile ground for new considerations."

Third, Kobielush notes that the message is a power factor. Camping is pervaded by the life-changing truths of the Scriptures. God's Word penetrates hearts and changes people. In a camp setting, day after day, night after night, students hear truth proclaimed.

The fourth factor is the program. You must come to our camps at Cedarmore or Jonathan Creek to understand how the entire program points toward Jesus. Point a student toward Jesus five days in a row and he or she might get the idea!

Musician Michael W. Smith wrote, "Camp, by its very nature, is a place apart from the everyday routines of our lives. It's a place to think, to grow up, to meet new friends and discover more of who we really are. Through camps in which God is honored in all activities, I've seen thousands of kids radically touched by the Lord and their lives changed forever."

Rusty Ellison is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, Box 43364, Louisville, KY 40253-0364. Call (502) 499-8655

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SMILE

Summer inspiration

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College held its annual Pastor/Staff and Family Conference July 15-17. All who attended enjoyed a time of rest, renewal and inspiration.

Willie Ailstock, pastor of Dry Ridge Baptist Church, served as conference pastor. His honest and encouraging words clearly indicated his loving and pastoral heart.

While understanding the challenges of ministry in the local church, Ailstock also reminded us of the joys of ministry and of our God who provides His strength and guidance.

Doug Miller, an associate in the Kentucky Baptist Convention Sunday school department, provided needed information regarding the different generations our churches seek to minister to today.

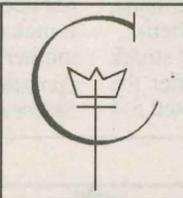
Miller aptly characterized each generation, focusing on the two youngest generations and leading us to discover ways to reach these individuals for Christ.

Mike Robinson, associate professor of philosophy at Cumberland, previewed the 2003 winter Bible study book of 1 Corinthians. He provided both thoughtful and

relevant commentary and led us in discussing some of the vital issues in the book. His Bible studies helped all of us understand and apply the guidance of 1 Corinthians in a greater way.

Emory Riley, minister of music at First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, led congregational singing and provided special music.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



He combined the best of classic and contemporary Christian music to lead us in times of praise, worship and reflection. Mrs. Lou Roy, pianist at Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg, accompanied Riley.

We at Cumberland College already look forward to next year's Pastor/Staff and Family Conference. The dates are Monday, July 21 through Wednesday, July 23. We hope you will set aside those dates and join us for a time of learning, inspiration and renewal.

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

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Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crossword

Across

- 1 Thrives
- 8 Boy's name, var. form
- 11 Played again
- 12 Set in
- 14 Two, Romans num.
- 15 God told Moses His name was _____
- 16 Overdose, abbr.
- 17 Milligram, abbr.
- 18 "Destroy ... the _____" (Deuteronomy 20:17)
- 20 Carrot family herb
- 23 Public transportation
- 24 Number of lepers that Christ healed
- 25 Charged particle
- 27 Christ is the Alpha and _____
- 29 And, Lat.
- 30 By the grace of God, Lat. abbr.
- 31 Preposition
- 32 Pull
- 33 Long walk
- 36 Tin container
- 37 Mr., Sp. abbr.
- 39 "The Lord will not _____ his people" (1 Samuel 12:22)
- 41 The self, according to Freud
- 43 "____, every one that thirsteth" (Isaiah 55:1)
- 45 Sixteenth letter of Greek alphabet (plural)
- 47 Preposition
- 48 Aaron's son (Exodus 6:25)
- 51 Childrens Bible club
- 53 Potato state
- 54 "____ my steps in thy word" (Psalms 119:133)

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43	44			45			46		47
48		49		50			51		52
53					54	55			
		56				57			58

- 56 Russian ruler
- 57 "Take up thy _____, and go" (Matthew 9:6)
- 58 Church education, abbr.

Down

- 1 Monkey, for example
- 2 "Thy God _____!" (Isaiah 52:7)
- 3 Either
- 4 Bags
- 5 IOU, in other words, abbr.
- 6 City in Zebulun (1 Chronicles 6:77)
- 7 Tin, chemical symbol
- 8 Middle
- 9 Preposition
- 10 Feline's foot (2 words)
- 13 Paris university
- 15 Support organization for addicts, abbr.
- 19 African fly that spreads disease
- 21 Not out
- 22 Sea duck with soft feathers
- 26 King of Bashan (1 Kings 4:19)
- 28 Mythological snake-haired woman
- 31 "Howl, O ye _____ of Bashan" (Zechariah 11:2)
- 34 "_____ it be thou, bid me come" (Matthew 14:28)
- 35 Belonging to the leader of a rebellion against Moses (Numbers 16)
- 36 Egyptian city
- 38 Arab chief
- 40 Fashionable resort
- 42 Belonging to one of the sons of Judah (Numbers 26:19)
- 44 "The dragon, that _____ serpent" (Revelation 20:2)
- 46 Filled with wonder
- 49 "Let us _____, and be merry" (Luke 15:23)
- 50 Animals, scientific suffix
- 51 Lemon beverage
- 52 President Clinton's state, abbr.
- 55 Rubidium, chem. Symbol

Last week's solution

1	C	H	U	R	C	H	6	M	O	R	8	S	E	L
11	R	A	R	E	I	12	W	I	13	M	N	D		
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NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Group blasts city's plan to aid Graham ministry.** A church-state separation group is criticizing plans by Charlotte, N.C., officials to spend \$325,000 to help the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association move to their city. "Government has no business subsidizing religion," said Barry Lynn, executive director of the Washington-based Americans United for Separation of Church and State, in a statement. The City Council in Charlotte voted unanimously July 15 to contribute money for road improvement and utilities for the project. The money will match expected funds from the state for a total of \$650,000, The Charlotte Observer reported.

■ **SEC accuses Church of God group of fraud.** The Securities and Exchange Commission has filed a complaint against the Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), accusing its fund-raising arm of defrauding investors out of \$85 million. The SEC filed documents July 22 in U.S. District Court in Indianapolis, detailing a preliminary settlement with Church Extension of the Church of God. The fund-raising entity is accused of artificially inflating income in correspondence with investors and misleading them about investment risk, Associated Press reported.

■ **Gracia Burnham satisfied with indictments.** Widowed New Tribes missionary Gracia Burnham said that she was satisfied with the July 23 federal indictment of five Abu Sayyaf terrorist group leaders charged with kidnapping her husband and others in the Philippines. "The men who abducted and held us, who murdered some and mistreated others, who kept us running and starving in the jungle, are criminals, and deserve to be punished," Burnham said at a news conference. She and her husband were taken hostage in May 2001. She was rescued June 7, after 376 days, but her husband was killed. The U.S. Justice Department issued indictments for the men, charging them with conspiracy and hostage-taking resulting in death.

House again passes 'partial-birth' abortion ban

WASHINGTON—The U.S. House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly last week to outlaw a late-term abortion procedure that opponents call "partial-birth abortion."

President Bush likely would sign the bill into law, but Associated Press reported the Democratic-controlled Senate is not likely to take up the bill any time soon.

Anti-abortion advocates applauded the vote as a move to condemn what they call a "barbaric" procedure.

"We're delighted that the House voted in an overwhelmingly bipartisan way to end this horrific procedure," said Shannon Royce, director for government relations at the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liber-

ty Commission. "We hope and pray the Senate will take up the bill and sign it before the August recess."

House Majority Leader Dick Armey said, "The House has acted in plenty of time for the Senate to do the same. No excuses, no delay. (This bill) must not become another tombstone in the Senate's legislative graveyard."

House legislators have spearheaded similar efforts to ban the procedure since Republicans took control of that body in 1995. Twice, when the Republicans also controlled the Senate, the whole Congress approved bans, but President Clinton vetoed them.

In 2000, the Supreme Court struck down a state law patterned after the federal ban. The high court voted 5-4

to strike down a Nebraska ban on partial-birth abortion in its Stenberg v. Carhart opinion.

The new House version seeks to address the court's contention the Nebraska law could have been interpreted to cover other abortion methods, as well as the justices' declaration the ban needed an exception for maternal health reasons.

H.R. 4965 provides more specific language on the procedure it seeks to prohibit. It also declares in its findings the method is neither safe for women nor necessary to preserve their health. It includes an exception to protect the mother's life.

Compiled from reporting by Religion News Service and Baptist Press

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Oneida Baptist Institute Publications

The Oneida Baptist Institute yearbook staff has been recognized by Taylor Publishing Co. with an Award of Excellence in cover design.

Taylor Publishing of Dallas is one of the nation's major yearbook publishing companies. Each year Taylor offers awards in three categories: theme development, cover design and page design. The award places the 2000-01 Oneidian in the top 5 percent of yearbooks published by Taylor, and it makes Oneida one of only seven high schools in Kentucky to be honored.

Laura and Dan Stockton have been OBI yearbook sponsors for 10 years. "We've never submitted an entry since we've been sponsoring the yearbook," Mrs. Stockton said, "but we felt really good about the cover last year."

The winning Oneidian cover was done in a magazine-style layout. Though the students had designed their own covers in the past, this was their first time to do a magazine layout. Each

year, one of the first tasks facing the yearbook staff is the selection of a theme. The theme for the 2000-01 book was, "It's All About You!"

The students then discuss cover ideas. They may either design their own or choose from one of Taylor's options. The magazine idea was a team effort. Once they decided on a basic layout, the Stocktons did the more complex computer work, asking the students to review proofs and continue to contribute ideas along the way. The students also came up with the headlines for the front cover.

Getting a cover photograph was a lengthy pro-

cess. "We took pictures all over the place," Mrs. Stockton said. "We wanted to see what would represent OBI and would be picturesque." A highlight of the 2000-01 yearbook was the back cover. Its humor is built on the fact that OBI accepts thousands of donated items each year. Many of our donations are food products, and for the past 12 years we have been the recipients of many pastries in general and honeybuns in particular. The back of the book shows a picture of a honeybun with a bite taken from it. The text reads:

OBI Special (burger, fries, soda): \$2.75

This yearbook: \$35
Lost textbook: \$62.50

One month's tuition: \$400

One fresh honeybun: **Priceless**

"The kids came up with the honeybun idea," Mrs. Stockton said. "At first I didn't like it. I was afraid the yearbook would go down in history as 'The honeybun book.'"

Of the front and back cover photographs, the honeybun picture was the most challenging. Mrs. Stockton took an entire roll of film containing nothing but honeybun photos. "When I went to pick them up, the WalMart workers wanted to know why I'd taken a whole roll of pictures of honeybuns." The back cover was such a success that donation coordinator Missy Nichols gave a yearbook to our honeybun donor as a keepsake.

The 2000-01 Oneidian is pictured in the 2002 Yearbook Yearbook, a Taylor publication that features all winners of its annual awards.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Louisiana mission team at Clear Creek

First Baptist Church of Vidalia, La., sent 41 volunteers to Clear Creek the week of July 7-12. The group did campus construction, two vacation Bible schools and a sports camp.

"When you mix 41 different personalities in these different projects and place them in a new environment, you never know what it will produce," Pastor Gary Nunn said. "Yet it brought a lasting bond. We hope the experience generates a new excitement and willingness to minister as a lifestyle in our own home area. We also have great needs around us." Nunn is a 1989 alumnus.

Youth minister Jason Wallsworth said he wanted the church youth to experience the trip as their ministry. "We made our plans, but when the unexpected came, such as no children on the first day of VBS at Wolfenbarger Chapel in Tennessee, the group went to Pineville and did door-to-door visitation. They experienced something that God planned. I also saw youth grow as they accepted responsible leadership positions," Wallsworth stated.

Each night, the team gathered for worship and heard a message from a Clear Creek student or fac-

ulty member. Student speaker Richard Fain made an impression on team member Mike Harrell. "With one married child and two teenagers at home, Mr. Fain yielded to God's will at age 48 and came to Clear Creek from Nebraska to prepare for ministry," Harrell said.

Rick Knapp observed, "I'm amazed at how God uses this school. From the air, one could hardly see these few buildings nestled in the mountains. But Clear Creek is fulfilling the Great Commission." Sue Wilson said, "Everyone at Clear Creek has been kind, friendly and appreciative, even though we came in and took over the dorm and the restrooms."

Senior adult Dorothy Dew said, "A few years ago I decided to participate in mission trips and pay back the Lord for all His many blessings. I've discovered you can't really do that. God just keeps on blessing like He did on this trip."

Ninth grade student Mark Welch will always remember the fun with other youth, but the greatest memory is of a boy named Hunter. "He gave his life to Jesus Christ in the Bible school where I worked," Mark said.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Faith factor hits real TV

Imagine MTV's 'Road Rules' meets 'Old Time Gospel Hour'

By Lacy Elwood
Associated Baptist Press

ST. LOUIS (ABP)—Take 12 good-looking teenagers. Load them onto a bus, drive them along the California coast and videotape them for 16 days. What do you get?

Some might imagine an MTV-style spectacle of young people competing for their 15 minutes of fame, featuring arguments, jealousy and kids gone wild.

But FamilyNet Television has a different concept of what a dozen teens on a road trip can produce: a deeper relationship with Christ.

"TruthQuest: California" is the latest entry in reality TV. A show that aims to help teenagers share their faith during unique mission activities, TruthQuest launched its first journey earlier this month when the young cast set off on the California coast.

A collaboration effort of FamilyNet and Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist Convention's official news service, TruthQuest was dreamed up after BP's assistant editor, Todd Starnes, watched a marathon of MTV's popular reality show, "Road Rules."

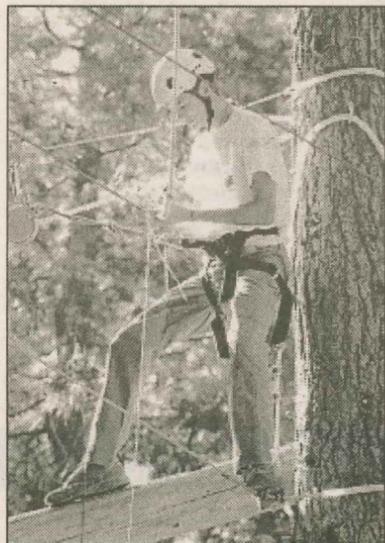
"Road Rules" sends six strangers in a Winnebago on a road trip to complete a series of "missions" throughout a specific location, be it the United States or abroad. Starnes' idea: incorporate missions with a Christian twist.

He pitched the idea to FamilyNet's vice president, Martin Coleman, and the series became reality.

"'TruthQuest: California' is our response to what many people believe is wrong with network television," Coleman said in a press release. "There is a deep public dissatisfaction with 'reality TV,' and people obviously want Christians to step up and provide an alternative."

But is it really an alternative to the already-alternative reality TV? FamilyNet thinks so.

Spouting that the show will be



ROPES COURSE TruthQuester David Hicks gets ready for a rope challenge at Yosemite National Park.

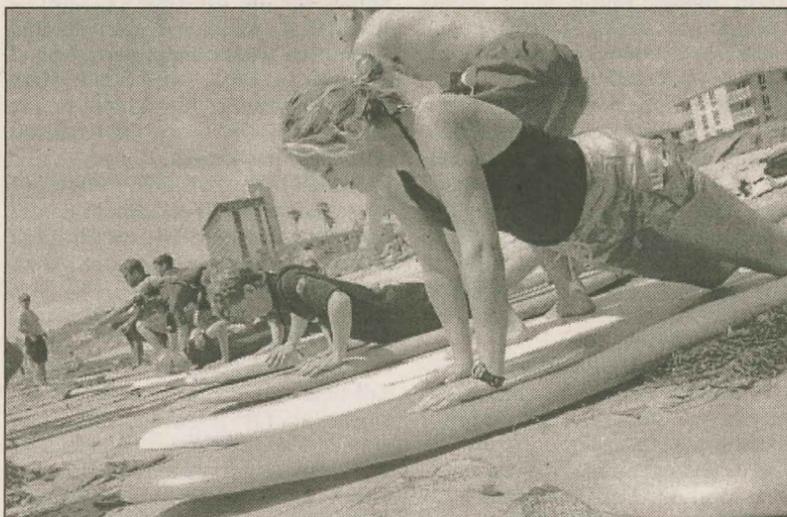
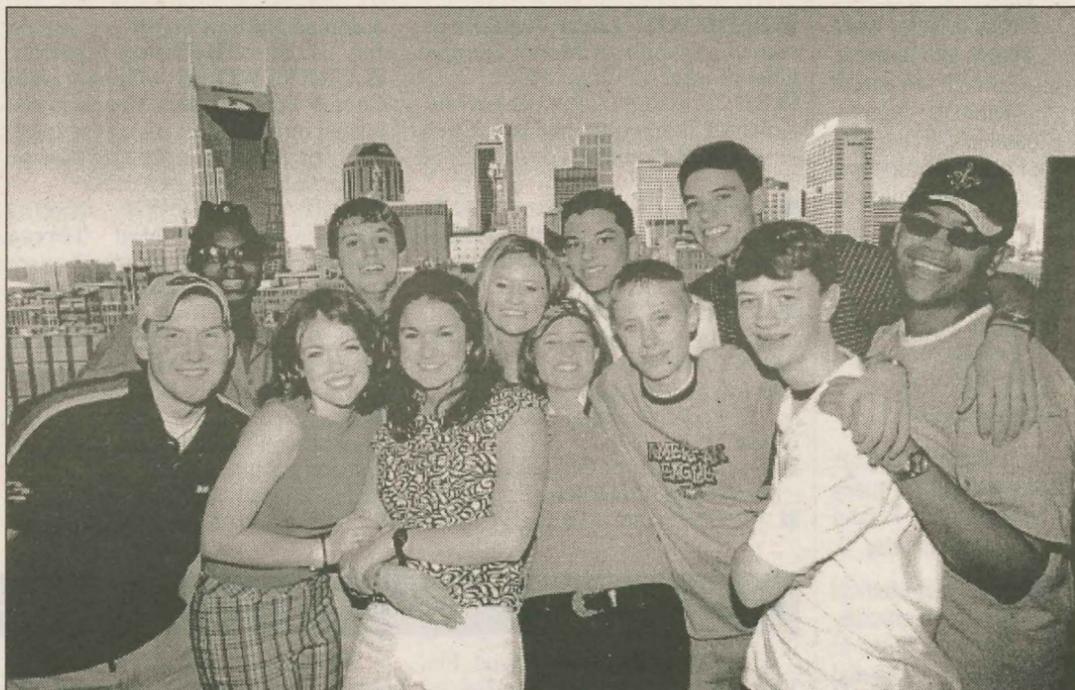
"true reality, not contrived reality," FamilyNet also says the show is different from others, because "events will be documented, not directed, cast members are not humiliated, nobody gets voted off and nobody has to eat worms."

July's documented results will be edited to 13 half-hour episodes to air in October on the Christian cable channel.

TruthQuest isn't just about sharing their faith on camera. The kids have some homework to do this summer in the form of journal-style stories written for and posted on Baptist Press' Web site.

"Whatever these kids experience, it's going to be shown," Coleman said during a June press conference. "At every stop along the way, we're going to test these kids. We're going to push them mentally, physically and spiritually."

The students are set to meet Christian celebrities, learn to surf in San Diego, scale the mountains of Yosemite National Park and hang out in a coffee shop in San Francisco. Their experiences will be a



TRUTHQUEST A dozen Baptist teenagers are spending this summer in front of TV cameras in California, learning about missions and participating in adventure sports.

■ **Above:** Members are, (front row, from left) Freeman Field, New York City; Cara Yates, Cleveland, Tenn.; Katie Royals, Jackson, Miss.; Shanna Hawkins, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Richard "Sparky" Sparkman, Nashville, Tenn.; Tim Harms, Nashville, Tenn.; Chip Luter, New Orleans; (back row, from left) Sarah Brown, Youngstown, Ohio; Andy Botts, Cleveland, Tenn.; Janie Jo Allen, Denver, Colo.; Josh Merritt, Atlanta; and David Hicks, Cleveland, Tenn. (BP photo by Jim Veneman) ■ **Left:** Team members learn about balancing on a surf board from Evan Lauer, pastor of Coastal Community Church in San Diego. (BP photos by Morris Abernathy)

little different than usual, as the activities all involve ministries, giving the kids an opportunity to share their faith.

Stars of the show read like a "Who's Who" among Southern Baptist teens. Included in the mix are the sons of two well-known SBC pastors, Josh Merritt, son of former SBC president James Merritt, and Chip Luter, son of New Orleans pastor Fred Luter, who preached the SBC annual sermon in 2001.

Joining Josh, 16, and Chip, 18, are teens from Mississippi, Colorado, Tennessee, Ohio, New York and North Carolina.

There's Katie, 17; Janie Jo, 18; Cara, 17; Sarah, 16; and Shanna, 17—a mix of young women whose accomplishments include leading their schools' Fellowship of Christian Athletes groups, serving on mission trips, singing in church choirs, and, for one, winning a local beauty pageant.

Add to the young ladies seven equally attractive young men like Freeman, 18; Tim, 14; Sparky, 14; David, 18; Andy, 18; Chip and Josh, and FamilyNet has a cast it hopes can draw their target youth audience.

The "TruthQuesters" didn't earn a spot on the show without first proving they were compatible with the

camera. Each participant submitted to a screen test on home video. FamilyNet execs based their selections on each student's "Christian faith, writing ability, overall personality" and the video.

One TruthQuester admitted he was nervous about the show's task at hand.

"We're going to be representing Christians all over the world," Chip said. "People tend to base their views of Christianity on one experience."

During their June press conference, the teens' different personalities shined through as they faced reporters, but several said that their faith allowed them to bond "immediately."

"We've only met once before, but it's amazing how we immediately bonded," Cara said. "It's just amazing how God has placed each person in the group for the same reason."

But even in sharing their faith together, do the TruthQuest kids think their unique personalities will clash? Chip and Shanna agreed that they would be able to handle any conflicts in the group.

"We all realize that there's going to be some conflict. We're not perfect, and we're not all going to get along," Shanna said. "But we'll handle it in a more mature, Christian way. We can show people that you can handle arguments in a different way."



FINDING FAITH Katie Royals and Cara Yates pray with a man as he makes a profession of faith during a TruthQuest beach outreach in San Diego.

PEOPLE

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ **Urgent need:** A pastor for Portuguese Baptist Church in Portimao, Portugal. For information, phone (351) 282-495234; e-mail: nilharrell@clix.pt.

■ Seven college students from Kentucky ministering in Poland through Aug. 9.

■ Open Door Medical Clinic, which officially opened in June in Bucharest, Romania; and Baptist representative Kara Kelley as she writes a procedure manual for the staff and trains two Romanian nurses to work in the clinic.

■ Follow-up to the work of a youth choir from Kentucky that sang in Spain in June.

■ One hundred youth from the States who are in Portugal this week to work in various ministries.

■ Evangelistic crusades this month led by Victor Gamm in four cities in Russia: Khabarovsk, Komsomolsk, Blagoveshensk and Vladivostok.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **BEDFORD**—Larry Franklin resigned as pastor of Mount Hermon Church effective June 30.

■ **BETHLEHEM**—Bethlehem Missionary Church ordained Bob Carter and Paul Rankin as deacons June 16.

■ **CADIZ**—Donaldson Creek Church will hold revival services Aug. 18-23 with Bob Martin as evangelist.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church called Claude "Skip" Alexander as pastor effective July 28. He previously was pastor of West Broadway Church, Louisville.

■ **CARROLLTON**—Cove Hill Church called Bern Kiser as pastor.

■ **COVINGTON**—Latoria Church

ordained Nathan Stroh as a deacon July 21. Steve Hollaway is pastor.

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Centerfield Church licensed Jeff Veech to the gospel ministry July 14. He is available for pulpit supply and can be contacted at (502) 243-1982.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church honored Teresa Mullins July 21 for five years as receptionist. Billy Compton is pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Immanuel Church called Charles Queen as pastor effective in August. He currently is serving in Waldorf, Md.

■ **HEIDELBERG**—Heidelberg Church will celebrate its 104th anniversary Sept. 1.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Immanuel Church called John Paul Bennett

as minister of children. He previously was minister of education at West Broadway Church, Louisville.

■ **LIBERTY**—Faith Church called John Routh as pastor effective July 21.

■ **LONDON**—David Slinker, minister of music and education at Corinth Church, resigned June 23.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Broadway Church called Chris Caldwell as pastor effective Sept. 8. He currently is pastor of Central Church in Daytona Beach, Fla.

John Hollins has resigned as minister of music and organist at Highland Church. Kathy Collier will serve as interim minister of music and Christine Brosend will serve as organist.

St. Matthews Church will conclude its 75th anniversary celebration with a homecoming weekend Aug. 16-18. For information, call (502) 896-8882. Leslie Hollon is pastor.

■ **MARION**—Sulphur Springs Church ordained Joe Baker to the gospel ministry July 28.

■ **MOUNT WASHINGTON**—First Church called Jennifer Ward as preschool and children's minister. She previously served at Central Church of Bearden in Knoxville, Tenn.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Sandy Camp resigned as church receptionist at Lewis Lane Church. Greg Huguley is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Williamstown Church called Tonya Fox as part-time director of music. Steve Rice is pastor.

What's going on?

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

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: 1974 GMC church bus, model 4905, in great condition. Reclining seats, 47-passenger, excellent AC, restroom and large luggage bays. The coach is very well maintained and inexpensive to operate, has new paint, is serviced and ready to drive anywhere. Price is only \$12,500. Call (859) 277-7391 (ask for Dale Hanson or David Dale).

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.

RETREAT: Detoxifying anger in personal and church relationships. Led by Dr. Walter Jackson, dean, Campbellsville University, Aug. 9-10 at cleftRock Retreat Center. Interested? Call (800) 719-0600.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church in downtown Ashland, Ky., is seeking an experienced associate to fill the position of minister of youth and children. The candidate should possess organizational and people skills, be energetic, self-motivated and will be responsible for the development, promotion and direction of programs for youth and children of all ages. Salary based on education and experience. Bachelor's degree preferred. Please forward resumé to: Minister of Youth and Children Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 787, Ashland, KY 41105-0787.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and youth for Calvary Baptist Church in Greenwood, Ind. We are a growing church in one of the fastest growing suburban areas of Indianapolis. Send resumé by Oct. 1, 2002, to: Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, 200 Sunset Blvd., Greenwood, IN 46142.

SEEKING: Teachers for Bluegrass Baptist School in Lexington: Middle school (7th and 8th) English and math teacher; high school English teacher; keyboarding and computer literacy teacher. Call: (859) 272-1217.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Ky., is accepting resumé for the full-time position of minister of education. Experience and a seminary degree are preferred. Send resumé to: FBC, 1400 South Main St., Hopkinsville, KY 42240, or fax to (270) 889-0324, or e-mail: bferrell@fbchopkinsville.net.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of preschool/child development center director for Fern Creek Baptist Church. Bachelor's degree required. Send resumé to: FCBC, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Mature Christian for full-time administrative assistant position at fast-growing, suburban church. Candidate must be proficient with office equipment and Microsoft Office suite, and be able to manage multiple projects while meeting deadlines. Hours for position are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday. Send resumé with salary requirements to: Personnel Committee, West Broadway Baptist Church, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40299, or fax to (502) 499-9882.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Georgetown Baptist Church, Georgetown, Ohio. We are an SBC church located in a small town about 35 miles east of Cincinnati, Ohio. Average attendance: 100 worship; 65 Sunday school. Send resumé to: Georgetown Baptist Search Committee, 513 Fulton Ave., Georgetown, OH 45121, or e-mail to philipshcraft@hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Salvisa Baptist Church, PO Box 75, Salvisa, KY 40372.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for First Baptist Church of Walton, Ky. If interested in this position, please send resumé to 47 S Main St., Walton, KY 41094, or e-mail us at FBCWalton@juno.com. Our Web site is www.FirstBaptistWalton.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor (SBC affiliation). Please send resumé and/or recommendations to: Pastor Search Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 96 Calvary Church Road, Corbin, KY 40701.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for High Street Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Search Committee, High Street Baptist Church, 02 E Pine Ave., Somerset, KY 42501.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Northside Baptist Church in Science Hill, Ky. The church averages 85 in Sunday school and 120 in worship. If interested, send resumé to PO Box 129, Science Hill, KY 42553.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Meta Baptist Church in Pikeville, Ky. Please send resumé to 8807 Meta Highway, Pikeville, KY 41501, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Trenton Baptist Church, located near Hopkinsville and Clarksville, Tenn., seeks a part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: Music Committee, Trenton Baptist Church, PO Box 191, Trenton, KY 42286.

SEEKING: Minister of youth and education for Victory Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky. Bachelor's degree required; seminary degree desired. Full-time position in a growing church (350-400 in worship) in a fast-growing area of Lexington. Interested applicants send resumé to: Search Committee, Victory Baptist Church, 2261 Armstrong Mill Road, Lexington, KY 40515.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church in downtown Ashland, Ky., is seeking an experienced associate to fill the position of minister of music and spiritual formation. The candidate should possess organizational and people skills, be energetic, self-motivated and will be responsible for the overall music ministry of the church along with the development, promotion and direction of church education programs for all ages. Salary based on education and experience. Please forward resumé to: Music and Spiritual Formation Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 787, Ashland, KY 41105-0787, or e-mail: fbcashla@fbcashlandky.com, or fax: (606) 324-4344.

SEEKING: Olivet Baptist Church is seeking a part-time youth minister. Send resumé to 13741 Palmyra Road, Herndon, KY 42236; e-mail: olivet@iolky.com.

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

SEEKING: Lewis Lane Baptist Church, Owensboro, Ky., is accepting resumé for the position of full-time minister of music with the additional ministry area of adult education. Lewis Lane is an evangelical church moving toward a blended style of worship (gospel, hymns, praise/worship, contemporary). Experience and a master's degree from an accredited graduate school or seminary are preferred. Please send resumé to: Sue Trautwein, chair, Minister of Music Search Committee, 2600 Lewis Lane, Owensboro, KY 42301.

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

WANTED: Used portable baptistry to purchase for new church start. Contact Larry Frisby, Freedom Church, (270) 789-2000.

African adventure

Duo spends five months studying Kenyan tribe for future workers

By Michael Foust
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE (BP)—They don't read or write, and there's a good reason why—they have no written language. Consequently, they have no Bible.

They are the Samburu people group, a semi-nomadic tribe in the African country of Kenya. For five months last year, two Southern Baptist Theological Seminary students, Jason Lee and Matthew DiCapua, lived and worked among the Samburu people, studying their culture and beliefs.

It was part of what the Southern Baptist International Mission Board calls an "unreached people group profile"—so named because less than 1 percent of the approximately 150,000 Samburu are Christians. By some estimates, fewer than a couple dozen tribe members are believers. Whatever the number, the tribe has too few Christians for them to reduplicate themselves through a church-planting movement.

"It's a huge task," said Lee, a student from Douglasville, Ga.

On paper, Lee and DiCapua's task was simple: Study the Samburu so future missionaries will have a head start before setting foot in the country, with the ultimate goal of starting a church-planting movement within the tribe.

"The whole key is to reach a central group of people who will reduplicate themselves," said DiCapua, a student from Cocoa, Fla. "We have not gotten to that point at all."

During their stay, Lee and DiCapua were to discover both "bridges" and "barriers" to the gospel. Bridges are those beliefs that can be used as a vehicle to spread the gospel—such as the Samburu belief in one god. Barriers are those practices that go against the teaching of Scripture—such as polygamy.

A sort of spiritual Lewis and Clark,



WITH THE SAMBURU Southern Seminary students Jason Lee (top left) and Matthew DiCapua (first row, second from left) pose for a picture with a group of Samburu people. The two Southern Seminary students studied the beliefs and customs of the Samburu people in Kenya as part of a project for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Lee and DiCapua were mapping pathways for future missionary work.

Through interpreters, Lee and DiCapua interviewed hundreds of Samburu of all ages. They also shared the gospel and saw 30 to 40 Samburu come to Christ.

As tempting as it was, their primary task was not to preach.

"We have to see the big picture," DiCapua said. "We're going to pass on the (information) to career missionaries who are coming in after us. We're going to save them six months of their life and a lot of heartache and trial."

DiCapua said he and Lee "could have gone and done evangelistic campaigns, and we could have seen maybe a couple of hundred people saved. But with this research, our goal is to see the whole tribe—those members who have been purchased with the blood of Christ—be evangelized and come to faith."

Although the Samburu have no written alphabet, attempts have been made to produce a Samburu Bible by borrowing another language's alphabet. By using phonics, a translator could use the Swahili alphabet—the dominant language in Kenya—and reproduce on paper the sound of a Samburu word.

But so far, all attempts have been unsuccessful. Some say it would be just as easy to teach the tribe Swahili, a language that already has a Bible translation. But in a tribe that sometimes frowns on public education,

teaching another language is a tall task.

For now, the gospel will have to be taught orally. DiCapua said the Samburu people have a great memory capacity.

"I can tell the story of Hosea, and they can all know it," he said. "If I tell it right, they can all repeat it."

Both men said the hearts of the Samburu are ready for the gospel. DiCapua helped lead one man to Christ who had killed several members of an opposing tribe—something considered heroic among the Samburu.

Music plays a large role among the Samburu. After learning the story of Daniel, tribal members came up with a song that included the line, "The God of Daniel is the one true God."

The Samburu lifestyle made for a challenging yet rewarding five months for Lee and DiCapua. The Samburu have no electricity, running water or permanent housing. The entire society revolves around cattle. When a drought hits, the tribe and the cattle move, searching for rain.

The differences between Americans and the Samburu might seem vast, but DiCapua said that they are actually few.

"We were once all formerly alienated from the truth apart from the children of Israel," he said. "There's no difference between a man in Africa and a white man in America, because (we) are all Gentile ... formerly alienated, without hope."

Investigation clears parents in sect that shuns medicine

ATTLEBORO, Mass. (RNS)—A grand jury in Massachusetts has ended its investigation into the death of a child born to members of an embattled religious sect that shuns modern medicine.

David and Rebecca Corneau, members of the Attleboro, Mass.-based group the Body, testified that the child was stillborn.

The state's Department of Social Services believed the child was born alive and was being hidden. Four of the Corneaus' children are in state custody, and a fifth, Jeremiah, suffocated during childbirth in 1999.

The Corneaus were jailed for contempt of court from Feb. 5 to June 18

for refusing to tell a juvenile court judge where the child's body was buried or to bring the child to court. They were released after the grand jury began its investigation.

According to a memo released July 15 by the office of Bristol County Prosecutor Paul Walsh, the Corneaus described the stillbirth to the grand jury with details of the delivery, including how the child's body looked and smelled. A medical expert told the grand jury that the Corneaus' testimony was "medically plausible."

That medical plausibility, and the testimony of the Corneaus and another witness to the birth, led the grand jury to conclude that "Rebecca Cor-

neau, did, in fact, have a stillbirth" in November 2001. The Corneaus and the other witness did not reveal where the child's body is buried.

The grand jury investigation does not end the group's legal troubles.

Last month, sect leader Jacques Rodiboux was convicted of first-degree murder in the death of his son Samuel, who starved to death in 1999.

Samuel's mother, Karen Robidoux, faces charges of second-degree murder.

A third sect member, who told the Robidoux that God wanted them to stop feeding Samuel solid food and only breast-feed him, has been charged as an accessory.

Palestinian Christians know what it's like to be in crossfire

By Erich Bridges
SBC International Mission Board

RAMALLAH, West Bank (BP)—To feel what it's like to be caught in a crossfire—literally and otherwise—try being a Christian in Ramallah.

While Palestinian chief Yasser Arafat sits in the rubble of his compound nearby, surrounded by Israeli tanks, the population of this West Bank flashpoint goes on with life under strict Israeli military curfews.

In the wake of new terror attacks in Israel, the restrictions likely won't be lifted anytime soon. And the Palestinian Christian minority is subject to the same harsh limits as the Muslim majority.

They can't leave Ramallah—or their own houses—unless the Israelis lift the curfew. That seldom lasts more than a few hours a day. When the shutdown is in effect, they can't work. Their children can't go to school. They can't go out to buy food—nor can the kids play outside—without the risk of being shot.

Dina Lada, a Palestinian Christian teacher in Ramallah, hasn't been paid in three months. Israeli tanks have been parked in front of her school for the entire period. Her husband, a dentist, has a clinic in Jerusalem—but can't get there. His office in Ramallah remains closed most days, but rent still must be paid.

"Yesterday my daughter asked me for trousers," Mrs. Lada said. "She needs them. But I told her we must wait."

Harder than going without new trousers is the fear of what her daughter Aseel, age 8, has experienced under military occupation. Caught playing outside after curfew, she has been terrorized by tanks—and the barrel of a machine gun jabbed into her back.

Aseel has a child's brutal honesty: "Jesus tells me to love" the Israeli soldiers, she said. "But I hate them."

Mrs. Lada is from Gaza and has family members there, but she hasn't been allowed to visit them for three years. She missed her father's funeral and her sister's wedding.

"It hurts," she admitted. "You always feel you are alone. They kill the hope—both sides, the Palestinians and the Jews. You want to live but you can't. It's crazy."

A few weeks ago, 25 Christians living in an apartment building across the street from a Ramallah church were herded into a single flat, with a single bathroom, while Israeli troops occupied the rest of the building for four days. Children, old men and women, infants—no one was allowed out until one of the elderly was taken to the hospital.

Though they endure the same restrictions, Palestinian Christians also are scorned and threatened by some Muslims in the city. Muslim militants accuse the Christians of not being true Palestinians because they have provided no so-called "martyrs" for suicide attacks against Israel.

"To the Jews, we are Arabs," a Palestinian Christian leader said. "To the Muslims, we are with the West."

Recently a youth from the church came to Mrs. Lada and said an angry Muslim had demanded to know if he is a Christian. "I took off my cross and said I am a Muslim," he confessed, with tears in his eyes. "I denied Jesus."

"What do I say to him?" Mrs. Lada asked.

Despite all this, Christians are reaching out to minister to desperate people in the city—including Muslims. For weeks, when the military curfew lifts, they have been distributing food coupons to families around town with the help of visiting Southern Baptist volunteers from the United States.

Mrs. Lada loves to help with the food distribution. "For me it is a picnic," she said.

It allows her to do something helpful and loving for her Christian and Muslim neighbors in the midst of a crossfire.

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