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**First century bone box cites link to Jesus, scholars report**

WASHINGTON (BP)—A limestone bone box dating to approximately A.D. 63 is being heralded as "the only New Testament-era mention of the central figure of Christianity," according to Biblical Archaeology Review.

It is "the first-ever archaeological discovery to corroborate biblical references to Jesus," the journal states.

The existence of the box, roughly 20 inches long, 10 inches wide and 12 inches high, was announced at a news conference Oct. 21.

The box, called an ossuary, apparently once contained the bones of James, the brother of Jesus. An inscription on the box reads, "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus."

An extensive article about the ossuary appears in the November-December issue of Biblical Archaeology Review, published by the Washington-based Biblical Archaeology Society. The journal's Web site (www.bib-arch.org) notes in part:

"The family relationships contained on the new find helped experts ascertain that the inscription very likely refers to the biblical James, brother of Jesus. ... Although all three names were common in ancient times, the statistical probability of their appearing in that combination is extremely slim. In addition, the mention of a brother is unusual—indicating that this Jesus must have been a well-known figure."

Concerning the ossuary's authenticity, the Web site notes:

"Laboratory tests performed by the Geological Survey of Israel found that the 'thin sheen ... that forms on stone and other materials over time ... shows no trace of modern elements.' As stated in a letter from the Israeli agency, 'No signs of the use of a modern tool or instrument was (sic) found. No evidence that might detract from the authenticity of the (covering residue) and the inscription was found.'"

James has been widely regarded in Christian history not only as Jesus' brother, but as the leader of the church at Jerusalem once he became a believer in one of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. James also is widely regarded as the author of the New Testament Book of James. According to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, James was killed by Jewish authorities around A.D. 62.

The burial box of James was purchased about 15 years ago for \$700 or less by a private collector in Jerusalem who wishes to remain anonymous, according to news reports. The collector was told at the time it had been unearthed near the Mount of Olives. The collector had no idea of its significance until a conversation last spring with Andre Lemaire, a specialist in ancient inscriptions at the Sorbonne University in Paris, who wrote the Biblical Archaeology □ See *Inscription on ancient ...*, page 8

**Mountain ministry**



**INVITATION** Evangelist Rick Gage challenges crusade participants to "leave your seat, leave your sin and come to the cross of Jesus Christ." More than 540 people made public decisions during the Oct. 20-23 regional crusade in Hazard.

**'Go Tell' crusade makes spiritual impact in Hazard**

By **Trennis Henderson**  
Editor

HAZARD—It was the first interdenominational evangelistic event in Hazard in four decades, according to crusade organizers. Based on the results, it likely won't be the last.

The Oct. 20-23 area-wide crusade at Perry Central High School attracted several thousand participants, including support from approximately 60 churches in a five-county region. The crusade resulted in more than 540 people making public spiritual decisions.

Highlighting the theme, "Go Tell

the Coalfields," the nightly services featured messages by evangelist Rick Gage. The Wednesday night youth service, which began with a free pizza party, included a testimony by Sujo John, a survivor of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Crusade chairman Paul Collins, a member of First Baptist Church of Hazard, said the primary purpose of the event was "to save souls and bring the lost to Christ."

The crusade also was designed "to energize Christians, particularly lay Christians, to take on roles of responsibility in effective Christian

witness in this community and in the region," Collins said.

Alan Dodson, pastor of First Baptist, Hazard, said civic and religious leaders also were seeking an effective way to address widespread drug problems in the region.

"The answer to the drug epidemic is people giving their hearts to Jesus Christ," Dodson emphasized. "Hopefully, we've seen some people involved in the drug scene give their hearts and lives to Christ."

Dodson said he approached several community leaders last year about hosting a regional evangelistic □ See *'Go Tell' crusade ...*, page 6

**Billy Graham wraps up final scheduled mission**

IRVING, Texas—Legendary evangelist Billy Graham completed his final scheduled mission last week at Texas Stadium in Irving.

While it seemed the final night of Graham Mission No. 412 might be playing toward career closure and farewell, those words were never spoken.

"People ask me, 'Isn't this your last crusade?'" Graham said. "They say it very hopefully, some of them," he said to the audience's laughter. "I say I don't know. That's in God's hands. I never want to say never because we don't know."

Longtime Graham spokesman Larry Ross said the evangelist and his son Franklin would be meeting in the next few days to discuss opportunities available for missions, and then "Mr. Graham would prayerfully consider commitments."

In the final two days of the Oct. 17-20 Metroplex Mission, Graham broke attendance records for the

venue he opened with a 1971 crusade. The Saturday night youth emphasis attracted a record 82,000 people. That record was broken the next night with a crowd of 83,500.

Estimated four-night attendance totaled 255,000 and involved more than 25,000 volunteers from more than 1,000 churches representing nearly 40 denominations. Mission organizers reported more than 11,000 spiritual decisions.

Graham, who will be 84 next month, preached every night of the mission, each night talking longer with a stronger voice and steadier countenance. His 45-minute message the closing night jumped from somber and nostalgic to comedic as he discussed his own mortality.

"I have a doctor out there waiting for me to fall over," Graham joked. "I'm looking forward to going to heaven. I think there'll be a hole up there," he said as he laughingly gestured toward the opening in the stadi-

um ceiling, "and I'll go right up."

Directing attention to the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, Graham said, "There's a loneliness, a certainty that in this life not many more days lie ahead, or months. I'd like to have nothing more than to go to heaven," he said confidently. "I'm looking forward to it."

In an interview after the message, Ross said, "I think what Mr. Graham said tonight was significant." He added that Graham's strength and stamina throughout the Texas mission had been encouraging.

Graham, who is battling Parkinson's disease, has been in declining health for several years. Despite his health problems, Ross said Graham's voice had remained so strong each night that the sound technicians adjusted the soundboard volume down to the settings they used five years ago.

Based on reporting by Religion News Service and Baptist Press

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, October 30

## Southwestern statement affirms accountability to SBC

By Gregory Tomlin  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

**DECLARATION** Craig Blaising, provost at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, presents a declaration to the trustees as Chairman Michael Dean (left) and President Ken Hemphill listen. (BP photo by Richard McCormack)

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary unanimously approved a "Declaration on Academic and Theological Integrity" at their semiannual meeting Oct. 21-22 in Fort Worth, Texas.

The three-page declaration notes the trustees' "firm and resolute" commitment to the seminary's "Christian and denominational distinctions" and affirms the institution's accountability to the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We affirm the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 because we believe it expresses a faithful and foundational interpretation of God's Word, which we seek to promote and extend in faithfulness to the calling of Jesus Christ," the document reads.

Trustee Chairman Michael Dean, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, called the passage of the document "an historic opportunity for the board to affirm the passion and direction of our president and the seminary. I praise the Lord for this. This is a document that will serve us well in the future."

Trustees voiced in the declaration their commitment to biblical authority, academic excellence, the pre-eminence of biblical exposition for all ministry and fostering a passion for global evangelism and missions.

Trustees also issued a list of affirmations and denials to clarify their "mandate from the Lord and our common denominational confession."

Among the affirmations is a declaration of biblical inerrancy and the Bible's "sufficient authority in all that it affirms." While affirming the authority of God's Word "written as Scripture and incarnate as Jesus Christ," the declaration denies any difference between the authority of Scripture and Jesus Christ.

Trustees also affirmed that "the Lord has appointed the pastoral office to men ... and many ministry positions to women." They denied that biblical limitations of the pastoral office to men were "culturally limited and that role distinctions are no longer valid."

Seminary President Ken Hemphill said the declaration is necessary because "various entities make declarations about what we teach or don't teach that are inaccurate."

Insisting, however, that the document "is proactive, and not reactive in any way," Hemphill added, "This is

who we are, this is what we believe, this is what we teach and this is what we affirm."

Trustee Dan Nelson of California said the declaration is intended to show "that we cooperate with the SBC as an entity of it."

Seminary faculty members agree to teach in accordance with the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message upon employment at the seminary. Faculty will not be required to sign the declaration of academic and theological integrity, seminary officials said.

"This is not a new statement of faith," said Craig Blaising, Southwestern's executive vice president and provost. "The faculty will not be required to sign this. This is a leadership statement. The leadership is speaking to who we are and to what our mission is."

The declaration "is a fresh and direct statement of who we are," Blaising said. "We are the Southwestern that Southern Baptists know. Our educational mission comes out of the Great Commission, and we affirm the Baptist Faith and Message."



## CBF leaders endorse identity 'fully independent of the SBC'

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

ATLANTA (ABP)—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is a "Baptist association of churches and individuals" separate from the Southern Baptist Convention but declines to define itself as a convention or denomination, according to a statement by CBF leadership.

The statement, adopted Oct. 19 by the CBF Coordinating Council, responds to a request by a Baptist World Alliance membership committee that the moderate Baptist group affirm publicly that it is not an "integral part" of any current BWA member—specifically the SBC.

The CBF, which formed in 1991 as a result of SBC controversy, first voted to apply for membership in the BWA, a worldwide fellowship of Baptists, in 2000. A BWA membership committee denied the group's first application last year, saying the Fellowship did not appear to qualify as a traditional Baptist convention.

A second application this year, however, got a more favorable hear-

ing when the BWA General Council met in Seville, Spain, in July. The group overwhelmingly approved a report that the CBF could qualify for membership by next year if its leaders would "affirm publicly ... that they have separated themselves from the structures and organization of the SBC, and have a distinctively diverse understanding to the SBC of what it means to be an organized body of Baptist churches and individuals in covenant relationship."

The CBF council responded with a statement listing 20 indicators that the Fellowship is "no longer integral" to the SBC, including the fact that the SBC has in effect recognized CBF as a separate entity by refusing to accept funding from the Fellowship for the past seven years.

The CBF also has its own organizational structure, missionaries, foundation and benefits board and endorses chaplains, according to the statement. Additionally, several Baptist state conventions allow churches to give to CBF through their budgets.

Consistent with earlier statements, however, leaders of the Fellowship

insisted the group is not a denomination.

"Though fully independent of the SBC or any other union, we do not declare that we are a denomination or convention," the statement says. "Rather, we are Baptist by conviction and we are a partnership of churches and individuals by philosophy. We have chosen instead to define ourselves as a 'fellowship,' which means that we are a 'Baptist association of churches and individuals' in partnership for the advancement of God's Kingdom."

CBF leaders believe membership in the BWA would expand opportunities for ministry through overseas partnerships and add legitimacy to the CBF by affirming it is more than a "splinter group."

Leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention oppose the CBF's membership application. Members of the SBC delegation voted against the BWA membership committee report in Spain, stating that the Fellowship should first declare itself a new convention in order to sufficiently separate from the SBC.

"I think there are some people who desperately want us to declare ourselves a convention of churches rather than a fellowship of individuals and churches," said CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal. "I don't think we want to go down that road."

CBF leaders said the new identity statement doesn't so much break new ground for the CBF as accurately describe present realities.

"I don't think we're making a significant statement that changes who we are," said CBF moderator Phill Martin. "We're just clarifying our identity."

SBC leaders have indicated they might leave the BWA or reduce funding if the CBF is allowed to join. The SBC is the largest BWA member, with 16 million members, and provides funding for about 20 percent of the BWA's \$2.1 million annual budget.

BWA leaders have urged healing in the rift separating the SBC and CBF. The groups differ over a variety of theological and social issues, including women's roles in the family and church.

### BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Agencies seek to dismiss suit.** Attorneys for five Missouri Baptist agencies will argue for dismissal of a lawsuit filed by the Missouri Baptist Convention in a hearing set for Nov. 19. Convention leaders filed a petition in August against the five agencies, seeking to force them to rescind new charters that allow the entities to elect their own trustees. The motion for dismissal cites the convention's lack of standing as a member of those entities, said attorney Kurt Odenwald, who represents three of the agencies.

■ **Southeastern plans new campus center.** Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's board of trustees voted Oct. 15 to approve construction of a new campus center on the

school's Wake Forest, N.C., campus. The 59,000-square-foot center will include classrooms, a bookstore and food/fellowship areas. Construction is scheduled to begin next summer.

■ **Corts named assistant attorney general.** Paul Corts, president of Palm Beach Atlantic University since 1991, has been appointed U.S. assistant attorney general for administration. He will leave the Florida Baptist school Nov. 15 to begin his new position in Washington, D.C. He previously was president of Wingate University in Wingate, N.C.; executive vice president of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee; and served on the faculty and administration of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.



**CONFERENCE CENTER** Southern Baptist Theological Seminary recently opened a conference center on the school's Louisville campus. The \$7 million facility includes 70 guest rooms and four conference rooms. The project included renovating Rice and Judson Halls, former student housing facilities. (BP photo by David Merrifield)

## Summer mission trip to Lynch makes long-term impact

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LYNCH—Yellow Creek Baptist Church members originally intended to visit Puerto Rico this summer, but wound up renovating buildings and leading a vacation Bible school at an African-American church in south-eastern Kentucky.

The change of plans occurred last December after the Owensboro congregation delivered a truckload of clothing, toys and household goods to a ministry center operated by Fleming Baptist Church.

"When we got there, it was amazing to see the needs they have," said Tom Crusenberry, Yellow Creek's minister of students. "You don't think about needs in your own state."

Yellow Creek members had learned about needs in the region during an "Experiencing God" weekend retreat last fall. The course emphasizes discerning where God is at work in order to join Him.

As Crusenberry helped unload the truck, he asked about the possibility of bringing the youth group and Brotherhood members to paint, repair and put roofs on homes there.

"The sky's the limit," replied Pastor Winston McCarty. "There's as much work as you want to do."

"I most definitely saw God at work in Fleming-Neon," Crusenberry recalled. "I don't know how to describe what I felt when we pulled up there and saw the people's hearts to help each other. I told one of our members that's where we needed to be."

But McCarty already had scheduled several mission teams for the same time Yellow Creek members wanted to return this summer. He suggested contacting Lonnie Riley, a coordinator for the Appalachian Regional Ministry in Lynch.

While the location changed, much of the activity that Yellow Creek's



**HOMEWORK PROJECT** Youth and adults from Yellow Creek Baptist Church in Owensboro put the finishing touches on a roofing project in Lynch. The team gave up a trip to Puerto Rico in order to help people in Eastern Kentucky.

youth pastor envisioned still took place. Nearly 60 adults, teens and college students traveled to Lynch in early July.

Dividing into four teams, they repaired roofs on two widows' homes and did other renovations, painted a horse barn at a facility for at-risk youth, and repaired equipment that will be used at a new playground.

Another team led a vacation Bible school at Macedonia Baptist Church in Cumberland. The small church had only nine members at Sunday services that week, but 13 people attended the vacation Bible school. Three children accepted Jesus as their personal Savior.

"The majority of us had never been to a black church and seen them worship the Lord," Crusenberry said. "They created a fire in my youth group, and they received fire from us."

Not only did members of Macedonia Church draw inspiration from the event, he added, Yellow Creek members hope to arrange a visit by members to Owensboro next Easter.

The trip has made a lasting impact at Yellow Creek, Crusenberry said.

While the youth had participated in several World Changers projects, more than three-fourths said they prefer to return to Eastern Kentucky next year.

Although it's been more than three months since the team's visit, Riley said the impact still continues.

Not only did the vacation Bible school help cross racial barriers, he said, one woman whose roof was repaired called him, crying because she couldn't believe someone would help her for free.

"Our ultimate goal is spiritual awakening," said Riley, who has hosted 67 mission teams in 2002, compared to 42 last year. "What we're seeing right now is the foundation of that. There was no hope before and now there is a glimmer of hope. Word is getting around that God is doing something through His people."

In addition to the possibility of another summer trip, Yellow Creek leaders hope to take a small team to Lynch next month to work on a room at an old hospital that is being converted into a retreat center.

The four-story building was closed



**ROOF REPAIR** Volunteers from Owensboro help repair a roof as part of a summer mission project in Lynch.

four years ago and the regional ministry raised funds to purchase it last November. So far, 24 of the 69 rooms have been painted and refurbished, with sponsoring groups leaving a plaque behind denoting their contribution.

## Corbin pastor to be nominated for KBC second vice president

WILLIAMSBURG—Darren Gaddis, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin, is the latest announced candidate for state convention office.

Gaddis will be nominated for Kentucky Baptist Convention second vice president during the KBC annual meeting Nov. 12-13 at Cumberland College in Williamsburg.

He is one of three announced nominees for KBC office. Other nominees are Paul Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville, president; and Eugene Siler, a federal judge and member of First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, first vice president.

Gaddis will be nominated by Tom Dowling, a deacon at Central Church who recently retired as commissioner of the Mid-South Conference. Dowling previously was a football coach at Georgetown College; Liberty Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va.; and Cumberland College.

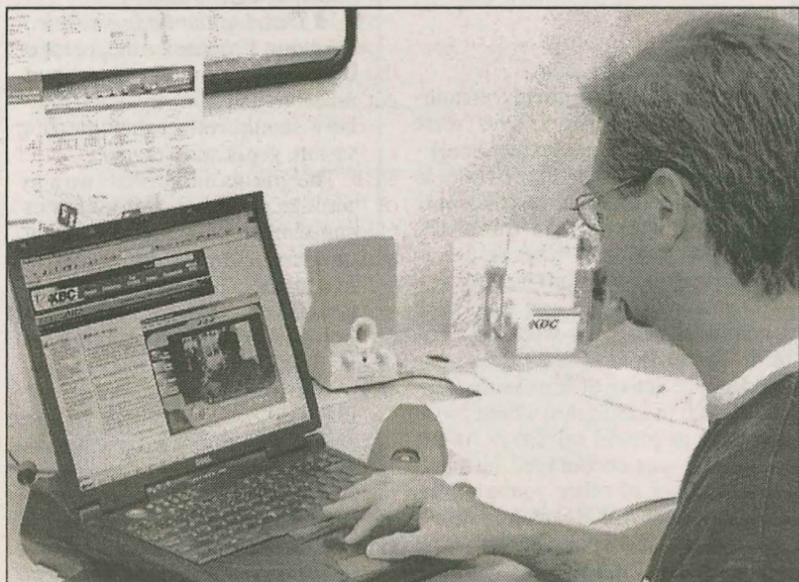
Dowling said Gaddis, pastor of Central Church since January, "has great leadership skills and a dynamic preacher of the gospel."

Gaddis, who describes himself as theologically conservative, noted, "My desire is for Kentucky Baptists to come together on things we have historically come together on."

Calling last year's report of the KBC Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee a "genius decision," Gaddis said that action is an example of the state convention "getting back to where it needs to be; getting together as one people."

Gaddis previously was pastor of Liberty Point Baptist Church in Cadiz. A native of Owensboro, he considers Yellow Creek Baptist Church his home church.

A graduate of the University of West Florida in Pensacola and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, he also served as a research intern at First Baptist Church of Dallas.



**CONVENTION BROADCAST** Troy Fulkerson, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's information services department, works on preparations for an Internet broadcast of next month's KBC annual meeting. The broadcast will be available through the convention's Web site, [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org). Up to 100 computers can be logged onto the live simulcast, Fulkerson said. A link to the streaming broadcast will be posted on [www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting](http://www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting) prior to the first session. To view the broadcast, users must have Windows Media Player installed on their computers. For optimal viewing, a 56K or faster modem connection speed also will be needed. The convention first offered the service during last year's convention, although it was not advertised in advance. "Now Kentucky Baptists can see and hear for themselves the reports, sermons, business and special music that are all part of the annual meeting," said Brenda Smith, KBC news and web specialist.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Williamsburg welcome

The first meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention ever to be held in our association will meet on the campus of Cumberland College Nov. 12-13. Pre-convention activities will be held from Mount Vernon to Jellico.

I am hearing that there are folks who are not planning to come to the convention because they think there will be limited parking. If you have visited the Cumberland College campus lately, you already know there is plenty of parking close to the Rollins Center. If you should be forced to park in a distant lot, plenty of shuttle buses are available. Parking is no problem.

I am also hearing that some people are not planning to come because housing is limited. There is plenty of housing available in Jellico, Tenn., Corbin and London. Even if you should have to stay in London, you are only 30 minutes away from the convention site. When we come to conventions in the larger cities, we often have a 45-minute drive to the convention site. Here you can enjoy a 30-minute drive in the country on the way to the convention. In the unlikely event that you do not find housing in the above cities, there also are motel rooms available to the west in Stearns.

There will be no problem with food, either. Food will be available at the college cafeteria. You can leave your car parked and walk to the dining hall. You also can drive to fast-food restaurants that are nearby. And there is family dining at the interstate exchange. Some of the finest food in the area can be found in the nearby Cumberland Regional Mall.

We are looking forward to hav-

ing our fellow Kentucky Baptists visit our area. South Union-Mount Zion Baptist Association welcomes you.

*Janus Jones, director of missions  
South Union-Mount Zion  
Baptist Association  
Williamsburg*

## Kids come first

A recent article in the Paducah Sun referenced Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's decision to relocate Spring Meadows and Glen Dale. Because certain details were lacking, some Kentucky Baptists in the western part of the state might be confused about upcoming changes in these KBHC programs.

Spring Meadows and Glen Dale are not closing, they are relocating. This distinction is critical. We serve children in these programs now and will continue to serve children in these programs in the future with no interruption of services.

Spring Meadows and Glen Dale are not becoming "mental health facilities," as the article referenced. The type of care provided will not change, only the setting in which the care occurs.

Neither the board nor myself has said that these programs are not needed. A tremendous need exists to care for young victims of physical and sexual abuse and neglect. Many children are served in foster care. Others need residential care. New facilities made possible through the sale of these two properties will be better equipped, more efficient and safer for children and staff. These current campuses have more acres and buildings than are needed and the overhead is draining our resources.

Since we announced our intention to sell the properties, the re-

sponse from Kentucky Baptists has been overwhelmingly positive. Of course, people are sad to see these properties leave the Kentucky Baptist family. But in 1869, Kentucky Baptists began a ministry to children, not buildings or property. Should we permit ourselves to be drained financially and distracted from our mission simply to support the aging tools of our ministry? How many children and families should we turn away from foster care or other programs because our resources are held hostage to the past? The vast majority of Baptist leaders, laypeople and even former residents of Glen Dale and Spring Meadows agree with us that the kids must continue to come first.

*William K. Smithwick, president  
Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children*

## 'Above and beyond'

I want to say "thank you" to the communications and media department of our Kentucky Baptist Convention.

On several occasions our church has utilized the video study resources that the communications and media department provides. Through their work and ministry, our church has been able to minister in ways we could not have done on our own.

Every time I have spoken to someone in that department by phone or have stopped by to pick up or drop off any material, I have been served graciously and with a Christ-like attitude. They always go "above and beyond" to help.

The people of the communications and media department, along with the helpful service they provide, is another reason it is a blessing to be a part of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and to give to the Cooperative Program.

*Aaron Robb, pastor  
Yorktown Baptist Church  
Louisville*

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

## Eight inspiring days

Kentucky Baptist churches are preparing for significant growth. Let me share with you just a little of what I observed over eight inspiring days of travel across Kentucky Oct. 13-20.

My first stop, on Sunday, Oct. 13, was at First Baptist Church of Somerset, which has just completed a 40,000-square-foot facility that includes classrooms, a youth area, a full gym and a large fellowship hall. The new minister of activities is excited about the potential to reach new people for Christ. Pastor Paul Chitwood has provided godly and visionary leadership in this journey.

On Monday, I was greatly encouraged by the facilities and vision at Valley View Baptist Church in Vine Grove. Under the leadership of Christian Burton, the church has added a full gym, kitchen and classrooms to complement the lovely sanctuary. The church has a striking location on a hill that can be easily seen. The church was hosting the Severns Valley Bap-

tist Association meeting where I was privileged to speak.

On Monday and Tuesday, KBC staff members met with five representatives from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in order for them to be better informed about work in Kentucky. I listened for four hours as our staff shared about the excellent ministries among KBC churches, associations and various ministries. Once again, I saw evidence that God is at work among Kentucky Baptists.

On Wednesday, I experienced the exciting growth that is taking place at Highland Baptist Church in Shelbyville, led by pastor Gary Ellcessor. This church has experienced 18 percent growth in 18 months.

On Thursday, I attended and spoke at the Pulaski County Baptist Association meeting at Buena Vista Baptist Church in Somerset. Beautiful facilities and the calling of a growth pastor, Michael Stacey, have demonstrat-

ed the vision of this church.

On Friday, I was greatly encouraged by the ministers who were present for the Joshua Project leadership conference at the Plaza Hotel in Bowling Green. God already is doing an exciting work in their ministries, but they were present to become even more effective Kingdom leaders.

On Saturday, Kay and I attended a beautiful Christian wedding. The bride, Laura Bevins, and groom, Jon Wilson, are active at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington where Jon is involved in prison ministry. At the wedding I was encouraged in meeting a number of other young adults who are active in KBC churches.

On Sunday, I spoke at the 100th anniversary of First Baptist Church in Olive Hill. The church has expanded and completely remodeled the sanctuary. Under the effective leadership of Pastor Mike Blankenship, the church has grown significantly and continues to prepare for the future.

Please join me in prayer that God empowers all KBC churches with Kingdom growth!

*Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention*

## CHURCH

## Budget process can aid members' stewardship level

By Doug Strader

It is the time of the year when most churches are involved in budget planning for the next year.

This is one of the most important times in the life of the church. Many church

members have been robbed of the blessings of being good stewards because their church never challenged them to develop good stewardship habits. Consider the following suggestions that could be used to challenge your members to grow in their stewardship development:

■ **Begin with prayer.** Prayer is the first and most important strategy for church budgeting and promotion. When we do only what we can do with our resources, we achieve only what we can do. However, when we let God do what only He can do working in and through us, then we are successful.

■ **Teach biblical stewardship principles to your members.** Teach such things as: What is biblical stewardship? How do you begin to tithe? Stewardship involve more than money and possessions. Stewardship is a process.

■ **Listen to the people.** Have a Sunday evening dinner and listen as the people share their vision for the church. Let the people buy into the budget process so that it becomes their budget.

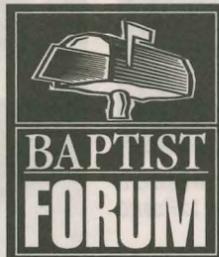
■ **Develop the budget around missions.** Emphasize the fact that they are giving money to support missions and ministry. Each ministry should reflect the church's vision, goals and dreams.

■ **Find an innovative way to present the budget.** Sometimes churches do an excellent job of developing the budget, but fail to excite the people when the budget is submitted for church approval. Find a way to be creative with your presentation.

■ **Promote the budget.** After you present the budget to the church for approval, have a budget promotion to seek to enlist the commitment of the members to support the budget.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention stewardship department has all the materials you need should you choose to use the budget promotion program, "Encouraging the Heart." It is a three-Sunday emphasis including Sunday school lessons. We also have bulletin inserts and other materials without cost to you.

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



Bill Mackey

## Divorce recovery takes time, even for the spouse who left

**Q: I recently got divorced. Since I was the one who left, I don't have as many grief issues. I assume I can date again as soon as the opportunity presents itself, right?**

Wrong. While those who are left by their spouse often deal with raw, devastating emotions obvious to others, those who choose to leave are not given a "pass" on those emotions. The emotions simply might be delayed.

Dating during a divorce is not wise, and dating soon after can lead to all kinds of problems. In a "rebound" relationship, there is a high likelihood of a breakup. When that happens, the parties ultimately are left to face why the previous marriage failed. This can lead to a difficult period of facing how one's own choices were a part of the dissolution of the marriage. And that is the best outcome! A worse outcome would be to continue the cycle again and again without evaluating the reasons for it.

Those who divorce only to practice "grief lite" followed by a too-soon relationship are headed for trouble. Whether you were the "leaver" or the "leavee," there is the crucial work of forgiveness to be done. Buried grief will not allow itself to be long ignored by the fires of a too-quick relationship.

The emotions that need to be expressed often come back to haunt those who try to skip the grieving of a broken marriage. Just as acknowledging one's responsibility is a key ingredient in marital reconciliation, taking responsibility for your past also is a key part of healing—even when reconciliation is not a realistic option.

Give yourself accountability with Christians who will be honest with you about blind spots you may have in this area. Actively investigate divorce recovery programs offered by churches in your area.

Until individuals deal honestly with the dysfunctions, compulsions and codependencies of their past, they likely will be condemned to repeat them. The "leaver" who jumps too soon into relationship might soon find the "leaver" shoe soon on someone else's foot.—James Stillwell

**Q: How can I teach my children good phone manners?**

With a little training, children can learn to answer and talk on the phone politely, take messages and relay calls to parents or siblings.

Phone manners can be practiced with play-acting. When answering the phone, tell children to say hello and identify themselves. If the call is for someone else, teach them to say, "Just a minute, please," or "Please wait while I get them for you." Remind them not to yell when calling others to the phone.

Young children will especially enjoy practicing taking messages. Make an answering pad with blanks for important information and let them pretend taking calls. Emphasize that both parties are depending on them to take accurate messages. Remind them of the importance of writing clearly.

Remind children to speak slowly and clearly when leaving a message. If they receive a call that is a wrong number, teach children to say, "What number were you calling?"

Good phone manners include not talking too long when someone else needs to use the phone, saying "thank you" when someone hands you the phone, taking messages carefully and not listening in on other calls.

Post emergency numbers near your phone and talk to children about how to use them. Caution children against telling an unknown caller that no one is at home, or giving their name and number to a stranger.—David Garrard

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



## 24/7: 168 reasons to seek rest with God

24/7: Our culture has made "twenty-four/seven" the mantra for productivity, efficiency, service. Computer salespeople top their competitors by providing 24/7 technical support. Corner stores and even banks offer the convenience of 24/7 shopping. A consultant reassures his client, "You can reach me 24/7."

We live in a 24/7 world. Non-stop. One hundred sixty-eight hours a week. 'Round-the-clock business, activity, opportunity.

Don't you just wish it were 24/6?

By now, you know where this is headed: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."

Raise your hand if you find the Fourth Commandment hardest to keep. If you grew up Baptist, you probably thought it was the weirdest.

"Keeping the Sabbath" for a Baptist kid meant no shopping, no swimming, no yard-work and, for goodness' sake, no going to the movies. Is it any wonder hardly anyone shed a tear, or noticed, when we went from "keeping the Sabbath" to living 24/7? What good was it anyway? In a non-grammatical word, alot.

Think about some of society's trends that bother us, and trace them back to their roots. The business failures that have plagued America this year and have undermined economic vitality can be traced back to 24/7, non-stop aggressive behavior—in this case, to rack up ever-increasing profits. Doctors and other health-care workers report alarming declines in Americans' health, partly because (over)eating reflects our can't-get-enough consumer attitude and partly because our fixation on 24/7 pushes us to go, go, go, whether it's registering our children for three sports plus art and music lessons or enlisting ourselves in every "opportunity" that comes along.

Unfortunately, 24/7 is a cultural phenomenon about which the church is no different than anyone else. We don't slow down in our busyness, in our consumption, in our over-extension any better than our neighbors.

Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann points to the church's absolute acceptance of consumer culture. "Christians in the United States now live in an economic rat race of the endless pursuit of more goods that promise to make us both happier and safer," he writes in the Lord's Day Alliance's Sunday Magazine. "Sabbath in such an environment can be a visible, disciplined, public assertion of a different identity. On Sabbath, men and women of faith distinguish not only from coerced production, but also from mindless unreflective consumption."

He makes a terrific point, but we will miss it entirely if we only see it as a call for reinstating a set of do's and don'ts.

First, it's not just about buying things. The retail manifestation of our consumer illness is no more the cause of our disease than is a fever the cause of pneumonia. It's a symptom, and we can neither buy nor stop buying our way out of it. After six days of creation, God saw all that had been made and pronounced it good and rested. We come near to "keeping

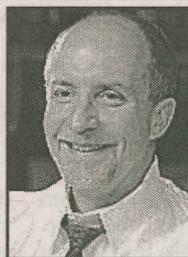
the Sabbath" when we join God in peace with God's creation, including ourselves, our lives, our families and our circumstances.

Second, it's not just about one day of the week. Most Christians acknowledge the Sabbath on Sunday. That's a great place to start. We would do well to set aside a day for reflection, appreciation and serenity with God in gratitude for God's blessing. As Brueggemann notes, respectful practice of Sabbath can be a significant witness of our understanding of God and God's plans for all of creation.

But the spirit of Sabbath-keeping should be reflected in our lives day by day. When we rejoice with God and find tranquility and serenity in our role as God's created ones, we will go far toward ridding ourselves and our culture of the driving, consumptive disease that inflicts our society 24/7.

Marv Knox, editor of the Texas Baptist Standard, is a former editor of the Western Recorder

GUEST EDITORIAL



Marv Knox

## Life in a complicated world

By Glen Land

I am a dedicated coffee drinker. In fact, I am something of a coffee snob. I admit it. I have some very definite ideas about what constitutes a good cup of coffee. I love good coffee and cringe when, trapped in some social setting, I find myself forced out of politeness to drink bad coffee.

My worst coffee-drinking experiences are in the homes of people who do not drink coffee themselves. The first clue of impending trouble is when they trot out some ancient, dusty, avocado-green electric percolator and then start digging through the back of their pantry mumbling, "Now I know there was some coffee left over after Aunt Grace's visit back in '99 ... where in the world did I put that half-full can ...?" Before the pot is even plugged in, the bitter taste of rancid coffee already is on my tongue.

I am old enough to remember a day when a trip to the average grocery store for coffee provided you with three basic choices: a can of Maxwell House, a can of Folger or (if you were recovering from an ulcer or were highly excitable) a glass jar of instant Sanka. If it was a large store you could choose from one-, two- and three-

pound cans and between large and small jars of Sanka. That was about it.

How the coffee has changed. A trip down the coffee aisle of a big supermarket confronts the shopper with a bewildering array of coffee brands, styles and flavors. You can get whole bean or ground, freeze-dried or instant, regular or decaf. Coffee comes in cans, in jars, in bags and shrink-wrapped. You can get dozens of flavors or you can buy the flavoring concentrate and add your own to taste. Send someone to the store to buy coffee and you had better be specific.

Coffee is but one little everyday reminder of how complicated life has become. Some have said that with the advent of modern electronic communications and high-speed jet travel the world has gotten smaller. But, in reality, just the reverse has happened.

In his book "Cities in a Global Society," urban sociologist J. Gottman got it right when he wrote: "It is a poetic illusion to assume that the world is shrinking because the communication improves. In reality the world of each of us constantly expands because, as we carry on, we find it necessary to deal with more and more people, in more and more places, with a greater number and diversity of

problems."

We can view this as a problem and complain about it. Or we can see it as an opportunity given us by God. We live in a highly complex multicultural society. A hundred years ago if you wanted to serve as a cross-cultural missionary, unless you worked in a handful of big East Coast cities or Chicago, you had to get on a boat and cross an ocean. Not any more. God has brought the world to us, giving us the greatest opportunity in history to win the world for Christ without even leaving our neighborhoods. But, to be effective, we have to learn about doing ministry across cultures.

Let me recommend a new book that will help you in that task. Patty Lane, director of the office of intercultural initiatives for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has written a marvelous guide to those who would like to learn about working across cultures: "A Beginner's Guide to Crossing Cultures: Making Friends in a Multi-cultural World." It is available on the Web at [www.gospelcom.net/ivpress/](http://www.gospelcom.net/ivpress/). In this easy-to-read and informative book you will learn the basics of cross-cultural ministry. It will not tell you everything you will ever need to know; that is a lifelong learning process. But it will help you avoid some of the most common mistakes.

Glen Land is missions director for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention

# KENTUCKY

## 'Go Tell' crusade: 9/11 survivor recounts sense of God's peace



**"I learned you never know what a day can have in store for you."**

*Sujo John, survivor of World Trade Center attacks*

*Continued from page 1*  
event. Noting that Gage had led crusades in recent years in London and Pikeville, he added, "Rick seemed to be the logical evangelist."

Dodson said crusade organizers spent the past several months in prayer, fundraising, counselor training and other behind-the-scenes details.

Gage said he was "very pleased" with the response. "We've been in all the schools in the area" discussing drug and alcohol abuse, teen sex and other "hot-button issues" young people are facing.

"Our message is a secular message" in the schools, Gage explained. "We're here to remind them they can be winners in this game called life. We're here to give them a message of hope, encouragement and challenge."

Recounting his Sept. 11 escape from the World Trade Center, John said he worked on the 81st floor of the North Tower and his wife, Mary, worked on the 71st floor of the South Tower. The Johns, natives of India, had moved to the United States less than seven months before the terrorist attacks.

Recalling the sound of a "thunderous explosion" the morning of Sept. 11, John said, "The wing of the plane came into our floor. The ceiling started going down; the walls were breaking. I said, 'God, this is it. This building might actually go down.'"

With "balls of fire coming out of the elevator shaft," John and other

workers made it to a stairwell and started their slow, chaotic descent.

"Many who worked in the building with us didn't have an opportunity to leave the building," he recalled. Amid the confusion, however, "I felt God's peace coming upon my life."

As he made his way to the ground floor, John said he huddled and prayed with several people. "They called upon the name of Jesus," he said, "the one name given by which people can be saved." Minutes after he moved away from the huddle, he added, a wall collapsed and most of the people he had prayed with were crushed.

Assuming that his wife was dead, John asked God, "Why have you kept me alive?" But his wife also survived and they were reunited hours later.

"That night after Sept. 11, I said, 'God, I learned you never know what a day can have in store for you,'" he said. "I want to stand behind the greatest cause and the greatest story ever told—the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Gage followed John's testimony with a 30-minute invitation time as dozens of young people made their way to the front of the arena.

"Where will you spend eternity when you die?" Gage asked. "Where would your soul be tonight if you had been in one of the towers and your life had been taken? Tonight could be your last opportunity to have your name written in the Book of Life. Leave your seat, leave your sin and come to the cross of Jesus Christ."

## Conquest of things

Because of pest control advances, I don't see as many ants as I used to see. I remember watching an ant pushing a seed many times its weight and size over the ground toward its hole. Its progress was awkward tumbling and rolling. Finally, it won the battle over the material and disappeared into its hole a creature of persistence and wonder.

The animal instinct for things pervades all of nature. Squirrels harbor nuts; bees fly homeward with nectar for honey; whales plunder schools of fish for food; and birds gather grass and twigs for their nests.

With most animals the instinct for things is a desire for food and shelter. With people the instinct reaches far beyond body comfort and self-preservation. People seem to be the only ones of God's creatures who gather things for the purpose of just gathering things. We like to own and to contemplate what we own. Our pleasure is our hoarding. The value of what we hoard is sometimes beside the point. Regardless of our financial stations in life, we all betray a deep inner yearning for things, and like the ant, we go to great lengths to hide our things

where the world cannot take them away from us.

This instinct is not altogether bad. God planted it deep into our beings as a challenge and a tool. The conquest of things is a mountain to be conquered. The yearning for things is a tool by which to conquer the mountain. God gave us the instinct, but He means for us to control it.

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

There are a couple of biblical principles we need to keep in mind to assure we are the master of things, and that things do not master us. First, we must remember God is the owner of all things (Psalm 24:1). Second, we are responsible stewards of all God has entrusted to us (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Pride is the power that makes us greedy. It is only when pride leaves us that we awaken to our trusteeship, and we begin to see things as tools which God has given to be used in re-making the world.

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



**SONGS OF PRAISE** A 150-voice choir provides special music during the recent "Go Tell the Coalfields" crusade at Perry Central High School in Hazard.

## 15-Passenger Van Safety is Big News these Days!

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# SMILE

## Blessings that travel well

Kentucky Baptists, you did it again and not in the usual way!

There are many words that can be used to describe the annual Food Roundup to support Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children: big, ambitious, important.

Each year Kentucky Baptists generously provide thousands of pounds of food and personal care items to our children and families. A lot of hard work goes into the promotion and collection of the donations, and it is done faithfully year after year. The Food Roundup is sort of an institution within an institution, and just as Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has changed, Food Roundup has needed a few adjustments too.

The first change occurred in what we asked for. Back in the early days of the children's homes, food of any and all types was needed because there were sometimes hundreds of mouths to feed. As the number of kids in need declined, we started asking just for pantry staples and for more things like soap, shampoo and toothpaste. Kentucky Baptists made the change.

Now, KBHC serves as many children through foster care and non-residential services as on our

campuses. We also are working with families who need assistance.

How do we get donations from a campus in Louisville to a foster family in Salyersville? How does the mother-to-be in Western Kentucky who could use a helping hand benefit from donations on a campus in Central Kentucky? Logistically it's a problem. The solution:

### HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

Food Roundup donations of cash and gift cards to grocery stores and general merchandise stores such as Wal-Mart. They meet the need exactly where it is and storage is never an issue.

This year we got the word to Kentucky Baptists through our newsletter and the Western Recorder and you responded in an incredible way. As of this writing the children and families

served by KBHC have received more than \$32,000 in gift cards and cash from you. Those gifts will travel Kentucky to meet all kinds of needs for the glory of God.

Thank you, Kentucky Baptists, for making this small but vitally important adjustment. What a blessing it is to witness such a positive response.

Bill Smithwick is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Contact KBHC at (800) 456-1386 or at [www.kbhc.org](http://www.kbhc.org)

## Honoring LaTisha Brown

By Robert Dunston

Last year Cumberland College had the distinct honor of becoming a member of a national program that honors Christian service. Recipients of the Servant Leadership Award receive a cash award and a desktop replica of the Divine Servant statue that graces Cumberland College's campus.

Cumberland College junior LaTisha Brown, daughter of Ernest and Sharon Brown of Stockbridge, Ga., received one of the awards. Brown was born in England and moved several times during her childhood. She graduated from high school in Panama City, Fla.

Brown traces her desire to serve to her relationship with Christ. She wants to share with others the love she has found in Christ.

Brown also credits her father as an inspiration to her. Her father has provided her with a Christlike example of service throughout her life. He continues to volunteer time to help others.

During her time at Cumberland College, Brown has volunteered more than 200 hours to Cumberland's Appalachian Ministry pro-

gram that works with children in our area. She has volunteered additional time with Cumberland's Mountain Outreach program.

Brown is actively involved in First Baptist Church of Williamsburg. She volunteers time in the nursery and participates in the college Sunday school class.

Brown donated part of the cash award she received to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Her donation indicates her stewardship of what God has provided to her.

Brown, who has a major in psychology and a minor in biology, provides an excellent example of Christian service. We congratulate her and know God

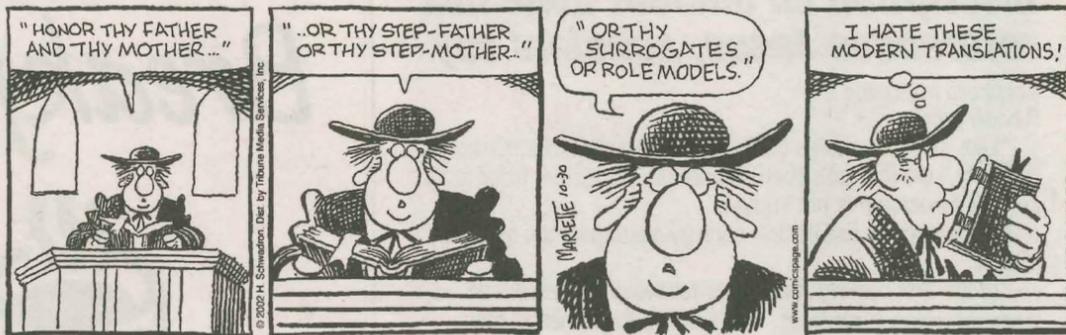
will continue to use her to minister to others.

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

### CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



## Kudzu



Doug Marlette

## For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

## Bible Crossword

### Across

- 1 Rhine tributary
- 4 "all the trees of the field shall \_\_\_ their hands" (Isaiah 55:12)
- 8 Man in a kilt
- 12 Swimsuit top
- 13 South American capital
- 14 Declaration
- 15 Sack
- 16 Masculine name
- 17 More (comb. form, var.)
- 18 One of David's wives
- 20 "lest any man should \_\_\_" (Ephesians 2:9)
- 21 Omega
- 22 "And there was no \_\_\_ in the pot" (2 Kings 4:41)
- 23 So be it! (pl.)
- 26 "I will \_\_\_ the pride of Jerusalem" (Jeremiah 13:9)
- 27 Comparative adjective ending
- 30 Ebb
- 31 Old Testament offering
- 32 "\_\_\_, Brute!" (J. Caesar reproach)
- 33 Beseech
- 35 Synthetic fabric
- 36 Proportion
- 37 Ever (poet.)
- 38 "Have the gates of \_\_\_ been opened" (Job 38:17)
- 40 "And \_\_\_ hearing these words fell down" (Acts 5:5)
- 44 Indian princess
- 45 Auto pioneer
- 46 Presidential nickname
- 47 Gasoline brand

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13					14		
15			16					17		
18			19				20			
			21			22				
23	24	25			26			27	28	29
30				31			32			
33			34				35			
		36				37				
38	39				40			41	42	43
44				45				46		
47				48				49		
50				51				52		

- 48 Melville character
- 49 "shew yourselves \_\_\_" (Isaiah 46:8)
- 50 Valley
- 51 Mountain lake
- 52 Sandwich order (abbr.)

### Down

- 1 Father (Aram.)
- 2 Bedouin
- 3 East Indian cereal grass
- 4 Tidies
- 5 Pale from anger
- 6 A son of Helem (1 Chronicles 7:35)
- 7 Temple vessel: fire \_\_\_
- 8 Sleep (Lat.)
- 9 "I also will laugh at your \_\_\_" (Proverbs 1:26)
- 10 Elevator inventor
- 11 Thought (phonetic spelling)
- 19 "But ye are a chosen \_\_\_" (1 Peter 2:9)
- 20 Sand \_\_\_
- 22 "and Noah begat Shem, \_\_\_ and Japheth" (Genesis 5:32)
- 23 "Stand in \_\_\_, and sin not" (Psalm 4:4)
- 24 Isle of \_\_\_
- 25 Admission
- 26 Pad
- 28 WWII arena
- 29 Flow
- 31 Feminine name
- 32 Deserve
- 34 Biblical verb ending
- 35 "Come, let us \_\_\_ together" (Isaiah 1:18)
- 37 "a woman that hath a familiar spirit at \_\_\_" (1 Samuel 28:7)
- 38 Pull behind
- 39 Nobleman
- 40 Egyptian dancing girl
- 41 Poetic foot
- 42 "\_\_\_ offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice" (Hebrews 11:4)
- 43 "the Father which hath \_\_\_ him" (John 5:23)
- 45 Out (Scot.)

## Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
E	R	E	M	A	U	L	P	A	S	S
N	A	P	A	B	D	A	R	A	R	A
O	N	E	R	O	O	M	R	A	K	E
S	I	E	S	T	A	E	S	C	H	E
			22	Y	R	N	E	E		
24	25	26					28	29	30	
U	P	W	A	R	D	T	A	L	E	N
31							32			
A	U	I	R	A	O	M	C	A	S	T
R	A	N	S	O	M					
			40	I	R	A	O	R	A	
42	43	44					46	47	48	
V	E	S	S	E	L	M	E	D	D	L
49	O	S	E	E	L	I	E	N	O	I
53	T	E	R	O	L	L	A	N	O	B
56	D	E	K	A	W	A	Y	S	E	N

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## Inscription on ancient bone box references Jesus, scholars say

Continued from page 1  
Review article.

"Like many ossuaries obtained on the antiquities market, it is empty," the journal's Web site notes. "Its history prior to its current ownership is not known."

Describing the use of first-century ossuaries, the article states:

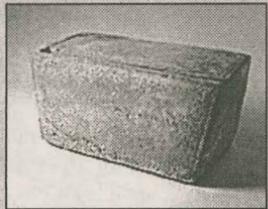
"In the first century A.D., Jews followed the custom of transferring the bones of their deceased from burial caves to ossuaries. The practice was largely abandoned after the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. No one knows for certain why the practice started or stopped, but it provides a rare period of self-documentation in which commoners as well as leaders left their names carved in stone."

The Web site also notes that the inscription on the ossuary is in Aramaic, the common language among Jews of the first century.

Steven Ortiz, assistant professor of archaeology at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, told Baptist Press, "Based on initial reports, the find appears to be authentic. Dr. Lemaire is a noted paleographer of distinction and is familiar with authenticating actual epigraphic finds and possible forgeries."

Prior to the Oct. 21 announcement of the ossuary, the earliest historical mention of Jesus was in a papyrus fragment from the Gospel of John, written in Greek in about A.D. 125.

"The James ossuary may be the most important find in the history of New Testament archaeology," said Hershel Shanks, editor of Biblical Archaeology Review. "It has implications not just for scholarship, but for the world's understanding of the Bible."



## Breakfast



The breakfast is free, but reservations are required and may be made by calling Joseph Foster at (270) 789-5211, or via e-mail at [development@campbellsville.edu](mailto:development@campbellsville.edu).

In support of Campbellsville University, alumni and friends are cordially invited to attend the Annual Convention Breakfast Wednesday, Nov. 13, 7 a.m. at the Cumberland Inn in Williamsburg.



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## 'Houston, we have a problem!'

Thoughts of Apollo 13 were going through my mind early Sunday morning. The new choir season has just gotten under way, which means our choir will be traveling nearly every Sunday from now until early May. Often those trips begin with an early morning departure from our campus.

Last Sunday in the early morning darkness, 30 sleepy-eyed students made their way to the bus for the three-plus hour ride to a small, rural Northern Kentucky church. Rounding a sharp curve just 20 minutes into our trip, a red warning light on the instrument panel of the bus began to flash. A second later, a loud warning buzzer began to sound, and then the engine stopped. I had to let the bus coast a quarter of a mile to a pull-off along the side of the road. Except for the emergency flashers, everything was shut off, which gave little comfort to my passengers, who were wondering why we had stopped.

"Now let's see, where did I put the flashlight?" was my first thought. Since I am the bus driver, it is my responsibility to bring a flashlight, cell phone and other emergency items. I quickly realized that I had forgotten the flashlight.

It had been drizzling all night and a light mist was still falling as I got off the bus. When I came to the rear of the bus the problem was evident. One of the large, new belts which had just been installed the week before had come off and was trailing on the ground behind the bus. While I was surveying the damage, my wife flagged down a passing motorist who pulled over and loaned me his flashlight. I was able to reinstall the belt, but I could not restart the engine until the motor cooled down. If I couldn't get back on the road soon, we would not make it to our destination on time.

### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

My wife suggested that she call the school to have another bus take us to the church or return us to the campus ... but I had forgotten the phone too. I usually am much more organized, but I had not gotten back into the routine of including all the items we normally take. After about five minutes, the engine cooled enough to restart. With the added morning light, I saw that the belt was still too loose. I could see that a special valve that releases the tension on the belt was not in the proper position. With a turn of the valve the belt tightened so, "Houston, we are on our way again!"

I knew there were not many opportunities to make up any of the lost time. When we stopped at the rest area the choir was instructed to get back on the bus as quickly as possible. In near record time we were on our way and arrived just in time for the service.

After the service we were served a potluck lunch and then headed to London to sing in an evening service. Only now we had a different problem: We had nearly two extra hours before the service. We decided to stop at a bowling alley and let the choir bowl.

Since our last visit to this church they had moved to a new location and had constructed a beautiful new sanctuary. Best of all, they had a very large parking lot—something only a bus driver can appreciate.

The service over, we made the 70-minute trip back to Oneida. While not quite as epic as the real Apollo 13 trip, after 14 hours on the road it was good to be safely back home.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. [www.oneidaschool.org](http://www.oneidaschool.org); e-mail: [president@oneidaschool.org](mailto:president@oneidaschool.org)

## Out on a limb

The heavy winds of a summer storm knocked a 50-foot branch from a great elm tree onto the roof of Connie Amburgy's mobile home. Thankfully, the branch reached across the trailer, so there was no damage to the roof. But the branch still posed a dangerous problem. Pineville police evacuated Connie and her 20-year-old handicapped sister, Kay. The next day, Kentucky Utilities sent a team to cut branches that interfered with electrical lines. Insurance regulations prohibited the crew from removing the largest branch across the trailer.

Lack of rain brought dry conditions and posed a fire hazard from the dry leaves, branches and debris left in the yard. Connie feared that a passerby with a careless toss of a cigarette would ignite her front yard. She diligently searched for some way to solve the problem. Out of ideas, Connie spoke with Social Services worker Laverna Bowman, who went "out on a limb" and called Clear Creek Baptist Bible College with the opportunity to help.

Dean of Students David Wade, also pastor of West Cumberland Baptist Church in Middlesboro, and campus Brotherhood President Ja-

son Poe visited with Connie. They recruited Pastor Jeff Green of West Pineville Baptist Church. Members of the two churches and Clear Creek students met Sept. 21 for a clean-up day.

The volunteers were greeted with the aftermath of heavy rains—wet and stagnate debris infested with flies, mosquitoes and bees. As the team worked, the drizzle turned to an overcast day. The spirits of the crew were bright and cheerful as they cut, hauled away and cleaned away the remnants of the last three weeks. By noon, Connie's house was visible, the dangerous limb was gone and someone offered her money for a load of firewood!

"This has been a life-altering experience for me spiritually," Connie said. "This is such a relief and blessing."

The day ended with a prayer of thankfulness and praise. It is amazing what the Lord will accomplish through us, if only we will set aside the norm and go out on a limb.

Adapted from an article by Tara Brocker of the Pineville Sun

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

## Countering 'Left Behind,' author proposes 'theology of weakness'

By Jeffrey MacDonald  
Religion News Service

CRAIGVILLE, Mass. (RNS)—She can't drive a car or climb a set of stairs by herself, but theologian Marva Dawn has never been one to back down from a challenge.

Since growing up in the farmland of Ohio, she has battled back from intestinal cancer, blindness in one eye, deafness in one ear and a misdiagnosis that left one leg crippled for life.

Now, this 54-year-old author of 16 church-niche books is taking on the big boys of pop Christian literature: Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye, whose "Left Behind" book series has sold a whopping 32 million copies. In "Joy in Our Weakness: A Gift of Hope from the Book of Revelation"

—a book re-released with new marketing muscle this summer—Dawn re-interprets the Bible's final book to answer the wildly popular "misinterpretation" that she says indulges sadism, indifference to suffering and "our lust for power."

"When we get all this gruesome stuff, we miss the point," Dawn says. Revelation tells "how God has conquered the powers of evil. The author wrote it to comfort those persecuted by their neighbors. It's an incredibly comforting book. But we get so carried away trying to figure out how it will all end that we don't work for the healing of creation."

By all accounts, Dawn is onto a hot topic. In July, a Time magazine cover story told how Americans since Sept. 11 have taken serious interest in biblical predictions for how the world will end. According to that report, a Time/CNN poll said 59 percent expect the events in Revelation to come true, while more than 33 percent are paying more attention now to possible connections between world events and the end of time.

Cataclysmic events from the attacks of Sept. 11 to bloodshed in the Holy Land have fueled "Left Behind" sales, giving Christian book publisher Tyndale House reason to hope it will be "the best-selling series of all time" in any publishing sector. And church groups are helping.

Enter the Regent College theologian who lectures in tennis shoes. Too many get duped, Dawn says, when "Left Behind" books take Scripture verses out of context and string them together with imagination for an electrifying effect. Dawn knows she won't reach the full audience of "Left Behind," but she hopes to reach pastors and inquisitive laity who can make the case to others that "Left Behind" represents religious titillation rather than religious education.

"We love to see those (unsaved) people writhe," Dawn told an as-

sembly of United Church of Christ pastors and laity recently. "But the whole tribulation is something we have to caution people against because they bring it to every issue."

"Left Behind" readers "are getting fiction," said Michael Thompson, sales director for Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. "It's some playful ideas worked out, and they tend to shape world views. To this, a balanced and responsible study can be a bit of a corrective."



Unlike the page-turning narrative in "Left Behind," "Joy in Our Weakness" reads as a personalized study companion for the Bible's final book. Dawn addresses Revelation chapter by chapter, aiming to plant each verse in a multilayered context consisting of her own experience with

physical suffering, the historical context for the apocalypse of John and the biblical canon of Scripture.

"The Revelation invites us to learn a theology of weakness," Dawn writes in the preface. "My desire is that all of us in Christ's body could learn that theology better by receiving the wisdom that our suffering brings us and by valuing more thoroughly the contributions that those who suffer bring to our communities."

One of Eerdmans' most popular authors in terms of sales, Dawn has built her career as a free-lance teacher and writer by positioning herself as a corrective for a Christian world she sees as too often beholden to idols of power and money. Worship, for instance, is too often presented as "an easy commodity," meant to please the assembly's tastes rather than please God "through the discipline of worship as work."

At home in Vancouver, Wash., Dawn strives for that countercultural lifestyle she wishes were more emblematic of today's church. She carries no debt, grows much of her own food in a vegetable garden, drives a 1968 Volkswagen Beetle and strives to live with her husband, Myron, on \$1,400 per month. Host institutions pay travel costs for a schedule that can include eight or more trips in one month. Book royalties support a network of ministries, such as Christian inner city schools.

"Too many Christians persist in using power," Dawn writes in "Joy in Our Weakness." "We try to force Christianity on others and make them buy our values. We try to win the success race with other churches."

"The Revelation will teach us another way," she adds. "It will help us discover and understand the victory of weakness, a discipline of willingness to suffer. We can live out the gospel in peaceful, caring ways that manifest the alternative way of life of those who follow Jesus Christ."

**Judas: Images of the Lost Disciple.** Kim Paffenroth. Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. 207 pages. \$24.95. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

The subtitle of the book is the guiding factor in this work. Kim Paffenroth's goal is not to present a definitive "life of Judas" (in the tradition of all the "lives of Jesus" available) but rather he presents the various ways in which Judas has been portrayed through the ages.

In order to do this, he explores biblical and extra-biblical sources for perspectives on the "lost disciple." Paffenroth's sources include the synoptic and apocryphal gospels through medieval legends to post-modern reinvention. This is a serious scholarly work (the 144 pages of text are accompanied by 63 pages of notes and bibliography) which walks the reader through the literature and depictions of 2000 years.

The surprise for me is that the subject matter is more fascinating than I ever imagined.

The really interesting aspect of the work is the way Paffenroth sets a literary reference to Judas in the social and religious context of that time. To a great degree, images of Judas are shown to be good barometers of the religious imagination of every time. Judas has meant as many different things to people throughout history as has Jesus.

Even though he did not set out to do so, Paffenroth concludes the book with a two-page epilogue which offers a version of Judas' life that will give biblical literalists a real problem—Judas did not really kill himself but rather found forgiveness from the resurrected Jesus, kept in contact with only one of the disciples (Matthew), and led a normal, albeit, uneventful life with his wife—Martha.

Paffenroth does what anyone will do when they finish his book—try to sort out their own "life of Judas," something I never even considered before reading this book. *Wayne Hager*

**The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching—Augustine to the Present.** Edited by Richard Lischer. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002. 478 pages. \$29. ♦♦♦♦

My first inclination was to set this book aside, leaving it unreviewed. Books that are a collection of essays, sermons, etc., on preaching from a variety of authors generally neither engage nor stimulate my thinking. I am glad I gave Richard Lischer's collection a second chance.

For 2000 years preaching has been the focal point, not only of Christian worship, but of the church's mission in the world. Neither time nor culture has diminished the mystery that "faith comes by hearing." As unusual as we might want to believe our time is, preachers throughout the history of the church have struggled with the same issues: language, content, style, context, the interplay between message and messenger, etc. One

haunting impression I took away from "The Company of Preachers" is that truly "there is nothing new under the sun."

The opening series of essays under the heading "What is Preaching?" are worth the price of the book. From Alan of Lille's (c. 1128-1202) warning against theatrical preaching that only tickles the ear, but does not convict the soul, to Barbara Brown Taylor's reminder that "no other modern public speaker does what the preacher tries to do"—speak to people "who are used to being communicated with in very different ways"—we are confronted with the peculiarity of the preaching task. C.H. Dodd's (1884-1973) essay

on kerygmatic preaching, combined with Carl Michalson's (1915-1965) remind us of the centrality of the content of preaching.

Two essays by women on their call to preach are powerful counterpoints to those who would argue that God does not call women to preach, nor does the Bible sanction it.

Lischer has done all of us who preach a favor in this volume. The words of preachers past and present both inspire and challenge those of us who dare to step into the pulpit to proclaim the Word of God. *Jim Holladay*

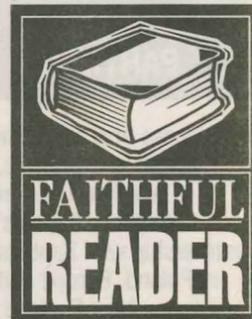
**As a Man Thinketh.** James Allen. Barnes and Noble Books, 1992. 52 pages. \$4.98 ♦♦♦♦

The King James Version renders Proverbs 23:7a this way: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."

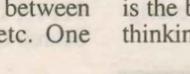
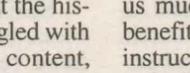
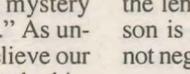
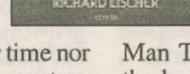
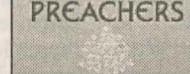
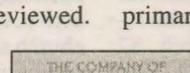
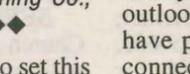
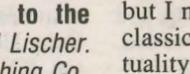
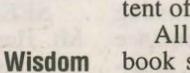
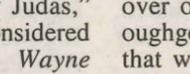
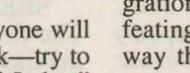
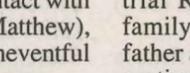
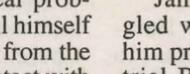
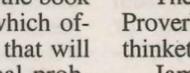
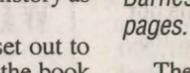
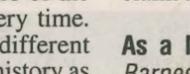
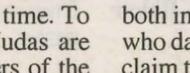
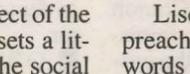
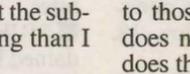
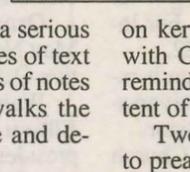
James Allen (1864-1912) struggled with the upheaval all around him produced by the English Industrial Revolution. The failure of a family business, the murder of his father and Allen's subsequent immigration to America, rather than defeating him, led him to explore the way the human spirit can triumph over one's circumstances. A thoroughgoing humanist, Allen believed that we shape our destiny by content of our mind.

All my growing up years, this book sat on our family bookshelf, but I never read it until recently. A classic work within humanist spirituality, it has nonetheless shaped the outlook of countless Christian who have picked it up due to the title's connection with Proverbs. Allen's primary message is that we are what we set our minds on and our circumstances, to a large degree, are shaped by the commitments that occupy our thinking. In an age that eschews ideas, commitments and critical thinking, Allen's call to a focused, self-disciplined mind is almost prophetic.

While not a specifically Christian message, "As a Man Thinketh" can be read through the lens of the gospel. If Carl Michalson is right that Christian truth does not negate other truth, then Allen gives us much to ponder. He would have benefited from the writer of Proverbs instruction that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (or, right thinking)." *Jim Holladay*



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



## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ **Bill Thompson**, a retired U.S. law enforcement officer who is ministering to law enforcement personnel in Khabarovsk, Russia, recently had his passport, visa and cell phone stolen. Pray that all the necessary replacement documents can be secured in time for his scheduled return to the States on Nov. 6. Pray also for the person who stole the items.

■ The 162 residents of the Canary Islands who recently requested copies of the "Jesus" video. About 100 copies have been delivered.

Some people now are open to a second home visit by a believer to discuss the video, missionaries write.

■ The ministry of Baptist representatives Dudley and Janet Graves in Viterbo, Italy. Their work was featured in the October Start magazine for Mission Friends.

■ The increasing difficulty missionaries are having gaining access to refugee camps in The Netherlands. Workers are allowed in only if they have a person of contact in a center. Pray that these contacts will become available.

■ Baptist representatives in France as they minister following a fire in a Romanian refugee camp that left more than half of the 200 families without a place to live. Because of the fire, one Baptist representative has had the opportunity to meet the leader of the camp. Pray that this will open doors to the gospel.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **BEREA**—Silver Creek Church called **Drew Dukes** as youth minister Oct. 6. **Bruce Rendleman** is pastor.

■ **CLERMONT**—Vine Hill Church will host **David Livingston and Friends** in an evening of gospel music Nov. 2, 7 p.m. **Terry Stamps** is minister of music.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Dry Ridge Church will hold revival services Nov. 3, 6 p.m., and Nov. 4-6, 7 p.m., with **Harold Pike** as evangelist. **Willie Ailstock** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church singles ministry will host "Down Home Country Gathering" featuring singer and songwriter **Stephen Hill** Nov. 9, 6 p.m. For information, call (270) 765-7822.

■ **HENDERSON**—Zion Church recently celebrated its 150th anniversary. **James Jones** is interim pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—First Church called **Andy Buckingham** as minister of education, effective Nov. 18. **Rodney Travis** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Calvary Church ordained **Carrie Beth Tonks**, minister of childhood education, to the gospel ministry Oct. 20. **Robert Baker** is pastor.

Grace Church called **Brandy Albritton** as minister of youth. **Terry Freeman** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bashford Manor Church called **Darrell Schoppa** as minister of music, effective Oct. 13. **Ty Raver** is pastor.

Bethany Church will host **Greg Buchanan** in concert Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m. For information, call Marilyn Anderson at (502) 452-2681.

Davis Memorial Church held groundbreaking service Oct. 20 for its new facility. **Wes Brockway** is pastor.

Gethsemane Church will host **The Nelsons** in concert Nov. 24, 6 p.m.

Ormsby Heights Church called **Matt Noll** as minister of music, effective Oct. 28.

Walnut Street Church called **Rusty Ellison** as interim pastor. Ellison is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies.

■ **MURRAY**—Westside Church ordained **Paul Rister** and **Bob Wallace** as deacons Oct. 13. **Glynn Orr** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Southeast Church called **David Atherton** as pastor.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—First Church ordained **Will Bevins** and **Virgil Osborne** as deacons Oct. 13. **Paul Badgett** is pastor.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—**William Moore** resigned as pastor of Dover Church to serve in Clinton, S.C.

Salem Church called **Michael Lawrence** as minister of youth and children.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Little Flock Church honored two members Oct. 20 for years of perfect attendance in Sunday school. **Edith Rodgers** has 51 years of perfect attendance and **Millie Blair**, 34 years.

**Jack Johnson** resigned as pastor of New Heights Church to become pastor of First Church of Milan, Mo., effective Nov. 17.

■ **SMITHLAND**—Good Hope Church called **Gary Murray** as pastor.

■ **WALTON**—First Church called **Nathaniel Bordeaux** as minister of music. **J. Sheldon Hale** 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.

## Sandifer to lead Campbellsville ministry center

CAMPBELLSVILLE (BP)—David Sandifer has been named coordinator of Campbellsville University's Center for Bivocational Christian Ministry. He will work with Campbellsville's school of theology in planning and arranging courses for associate degree programs in Christian ministries.

Sandifer has served since 1993 as pastor of Mountain Creek Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn. He previously was pastor of churches in Louisiana, Mississippi and New York. He also served as senior staff chaplain for the U.S. Army and as an instructor for the Army Chaplain Center and School.

John Chowning, Campbellsville's vice president of church and external relations, noted that Sandifer's "years as chaplain, work as a local church pastor and commitment to enabling the large number of bivocational ministers are among the reasons that he has been asked to assume this important role."

Sandifer's wife, Jacquelyn, is assistant professor of criminal justice at Campbellsville.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR SALE:** Two organs. Conn with 25-note pedal board, \$1,000. Also, Hammond spinet, \$500. Both in excellent condition and ideal for church or home. Call (859) 296-4673 or (502) 839-2432.

**FOR SALE:** Full-size Hammond electric organ. \$500 to church; \$700 to other. Contact (270) 351-6710.

**FOR SALE:** Like-new fitness equipment. Four Cybex 410T treadmills. Light commercial grade; only two years old. \$1,500 each. Contact Jeff Story, Calvary Baptist Church, (859) 232-8955, or e-mail jeff@calvaryroc.com.

**HEALTHCARE:** Pre-existing conditions accepted. Non-insurance solution for hospitals, doctors, medications, vision, dental, hearing and more. Representatives needed. \$54.95/month per family. (888) 645-4559. www.healthplanprovider.net; www.braxtonenterprises.net ceo6660.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for Cadiz Baptist Church. Please send resumés to Cadiz Baptist Church, 82 Main St., Cadiz, KY 42211. Call (270) 522-6002 for more information.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor. West Broadway Baptist Church is seeking God's anointed to lead our church. WBBC is a growing, loving church averaging 275 in worship and 200 in Sunday school. Please send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40220.

**SEEKING:** Northside Baptist Church, a steadily growing church, is seeking a full-time minister of students (K through HS). Salary plus benefits package. Leadership skills required. If interested, please send resumés to: Northside Baptist Church, 1800 Pear Orchard Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701. For a job description, call (270) 765-6424.

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

**SEEKING:** Permanent, part-time minister of music for First Baptist Church, Russellville, Ky. Send resumés to: FBC, PO Box 838, Russellville, KY 42276-0838, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** South Fork Baptist Church is seeking a part-time youth minister. Send resumés to: South Fork Baptist Church, 4915 New Jackson Highway, Hodgenville, KY 42748, Attn: Personnel Committee.

**SEEKING:** Part-time pastor for Mt. Herman Baptist Church. Rural community, Bible/vocational. Send resumés to: Search Committee, c/o Betty Heaton, 45 Leepport Road, Milton, KY 40045.

**SEEKING:** Jeffersonville Baptist Church is accepting resumés for the position of senior pastor. We are an active, conservative Southern Baptist church seeking to grow along with the community. The pastor must have a Spirit-led vision to lead a midsize church forward. Send resumés to: Jeffersonville Baptist Church, 145 Highway 599, Jeffersonville, KY 40337, Attn: Pulpit Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Associate pastor of education and administration for Rich Pond Baptist Church, Bowling Green. Rich Pond is a growing church in a growing community. Send resumés and references to: Personnel Committee, Rich Pond Baptist Church, 200 Brad Ave., Bowling Green, KY 42104.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music for Fern Creek Baptist Church. Send resumés to: FCBC, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church, Williamsburg, Ky., seeks a seminary-trained minister of music and worship. The successful candidate will be comfortable with both traditional and contemporary music styles. Pastor and staff share a team approach to ministry. Send resumés to: Search Committee, 230 S 5th St., Williamsburg, KY 40769. No e-mail submissions, please.

**SEEKING:** Pastor. Union Baptist Church, located 25 minutes south of Cincinnati, Ohio, in Northern Kentucky, offers the best of both worlds: the city with its culture and professional sports, and the rural/suburban lifestyle surrounded by rolling hills and pasturelands. UBC is looking for a pastor to take care of its flock of 265 in Sunday school attendance (high Sundays—more than 400). This 100-plus-year-old Southern Baptist church has a new (2-year) 500-seat sanctuary ready for its next pastor. Please send resumés and tape to: Union Baptist Church, U.S. 42 and Mt. Zion Road, PO Box 194, Union, KY 41091.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Dripping Spring Baptist Church in Olmstead, Ky. The church averages 125 in Sunday school and 160 in worship. If interested, send resumés to Ricky Holloway, 12978 Orndorff Mill Road, Olmstead, KY 42265.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for First Twelve Mile Baptist Church. Send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, First Twelve Mile Baptist Church, Box 131, California, KY 41007.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor/minister for Grant's Lick Baptist Church, Campbell County, Ky. Send resumés to: Robert Miller (search committee chairman), 6098 Hissem Ave., Alexandria, KY 41001. Phone: (606) 635-7420.

**SEEKING:** Full-time children's minister (grades 1-6). Great benefits package. Experience and seminary a plus. Council Road Baptist Church, Bethany, OK (suburb of Oklahoma City). Over 5,000 membership. E-mail resumés to: rushing@councilroad.org. Visit Web site at www.councilroad.org for additional church information.

**SEEKING:** Glen's Creek Baptist Church in Versailles, Ky., is seeking a bivocational (part-time) or full-time minister. College/seminary degree a plus. Salary based on education and experience; parsonage available. Interested candidates should submit resumés and references to: Search Committee, Glen's Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 543, Versailles, KY 40383. Resumés will be accepted until 10-31-2002.

**SEEKING:** Jamestown First Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of students and associate pastor. Nestled on Lake Cumberland, JFB is seeking a minister who is called to reach students. Undergraduate degree a minimum. Exceptional financial package available. Serious inquiries only. Send resumés to: MSAP Search Committee, Jamestown First Baptist Church, PO Box 308, Jamestown, KY 42629, or e-mail: jfb-mdm@duocounty.com.

**SERVICE:** America's fastest growing Christian long distance company. No monthly service charge; 4.9 cents per minute; 6-second billing. Toll-free: (866) 587-8346. www.covenantphoneservice.com. Agent opportunity available.

**SERVICE:** America's Christian long distance. Free toll-free number; 4.9 cents/minute; 6-second increment billing; no contracts; online sign-up. www.talklongdistance.net, (888) 645-4559.

## Halloween 2002: Tricks, treats & tracts

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

GARLAND, Texas (RNS)—Halloween—a time for candy, costumes and ... conversion?

As an alternative to traditional observances of the Oct. 31 holiday, some Christian groups are using this time of year to foster evangelism.

The American Tract Society, for example, which has long produced evangelistic tracts for a variety of occasions, has introduced the "Halloween Rescue Kit" featuring tracts and treats. Churches across the country mark the holiday in a variety of ways, but some are hosting festivals in hopes that they will attract future members, or at least people who will have a more positive image of a congregation in their community.

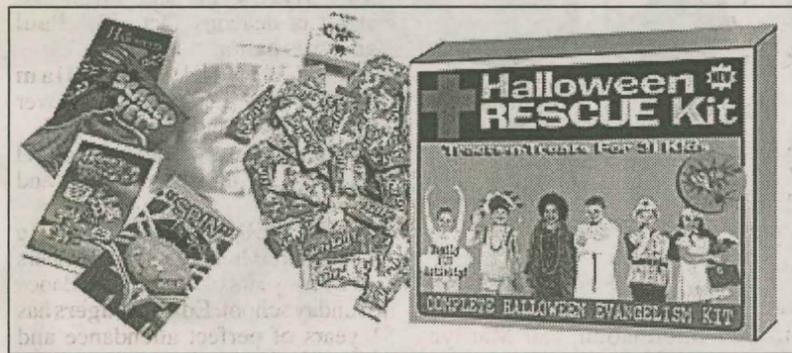
"People this one time of year are going to come up to your door willingly and freely ask for something," said Mark Brown, marketing director of the tract society. "It doesn't get any easier to evangelize than this time, to be able to hand something to somebody."

Last year at Monaghan Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C., people attending a fall festival were invited to first watch the Crucifixion and Resurrection portions of the "Jesus" film before being given a "Jesus Loves Me" sticker and moving on to fun and games. This year there will be a music video of "The Courtroom," featuring a song by Christian artist Carman and a scene about the judgment of God.

"Just having an alternative to what's out there, to me, the church is called to do that," said Scott Fitzsimmons, minister of students. "But then making it more than just a fun night, putting the gospel message in it, I think is what the church also has to do."

The tract society, based in the Dallas suburb of Garland, has produced Halloween tracts for at least three decades and the weeks ahead of the holiday have become the ministry's busiest time of year.

The society expects to sell twice as many Halloween tracts in 2002 as the 3 million it sold last year because of its new product. The Hal-



**TRACT TREATS** The "Halloween Rescue Kit" offers a way for Christians to mix evangelism into the Oct. 31 holiday. (RNS photo courtesy of the American Tract Society)

loween Rescue Kit is billed as an opportunity to "reach 31 kids with 31 tracts on 10/31."

The orange and black box contains tracts, stickers, two pieces of candy per kid and treat bags to put all the items in before handing them out at the door.

"People are very enthused about the concept of having candy and tracts together so they don't have to go to the store and get the candy and run over to the Christian store to get their tracts," Brown said. "They can just get them in one place."

The one-stop shopping idea will lead to sales of between 10,000 and 15,000 kits this year through Family Christian Stores, predicted Kirk Persson, vice president of general merchandise for the Grand Rapids, Mich.-based chain.

Tract evangelism at this time of year also occurs in places outside festivals and front doors. At some airport chapels, Halloween tracts geared toward children attract attention, said Tim Tatum, director of ministries for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Interfaith Chapels.

"We get a lot of children traveling with their parents that come by and visit and they're always looking for something to read when they come through," he said.

Some ministries opt for more subtle evangelism.

Southpointe Baptist Fellowship in Leesburg, Fla., held its first fall festival last year, featuring a cook-out, face painting and games based on the Bible.

"As Christians, we just don't be-

lieve that this is a holiday that we should celebrate," said Mike Matheny, minister for children and youth. "On the other hand, realizing that this has pulled in kids and families because of the candy and the fun, we felt as a church we needed to provide something that was an alternative."

Although there is no gospel presentation at the fellowship's festivities, people attending are asked to sign up at a registration table and Matheny follows up with a call to families who are not already in his database. While he expects many tracts "end up in the garbage," he hopes the "relational evangelism" that comes with a festival might have more long-term influence.

"I want the people to come in and just experience people that are joyful, that welcome them in no matter who they are or what they look like ... to come to church and know that this place is OK," Matheny said.

Other congregations view Halloween as a time for community more than commitment.

The United Covenant Church of Wilton, Conn., does a "trunk or treat" event on the Sunday before Halloween. In the afternoon, people gather and sing "Halloween songs" adapted from Christmas carols—like "The 12 Houses on Halloween" instead of "The 12 Days of Christmas." Then there's a costume parade and children go outside to get treats from adults who have decorated their car trunks.

"It's like going trick-or-treating in a neighborhood except you go from car to car and ooh and aah over the costumes," said Pastor Eric Hillbrant.

## Halloween activities vary from macabre to ministry

NASHVILLE (BP)—Gone are the days of carefree, fun trick-or-treating around the neighborhood and donning superhero costumes for elementary school Halloween parties, according to some observers.

Halloween has evolved from a day for candy and costumes to a day that sparks debate about whether the holiday promotes evil and should be allowed in public schools, according to ReligionLink, an e-newsletter published by the Religion Newswriters Association.

Among recent debate related to Halloween:

■ For a significant number of people, it represents the full expression of an occultic viewpoint," Robert Knight, director of cultural studies for the Family Research Council, wrote in an article on "Banning Halloween" posted on beliefnet.com. "If you're going to kick Christian celebrations like Christmas out of the schools and leave Halloween in, you're going to have a reaction."

■ Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary in California, in a beliefnet.com column titled, "Making Real Decisions about Halloween," is sympathetic to the trend of evangelicals getting stricter on the issue of Halloween. Christians should be "increasingly nervous about Halloween practices in light of new developments in our culture," he wrote, particularly that the focus of Halloween is no longer primarily on children.

"Certainly, the costume displays I have been seeing in southern California since mid-September are not dominated by Casper the Friendly Ghost outfits and pint-size witch's hats for kids," he wrote. "Most of the stuff is meant for raucous parties for big people."

In light of such changes, the Religion Newswriters Association newsletter notes that religious concerns have altered Halloween celebrations in some public schools and neighborhoods. A growing number of churches are responding to Halloween these days by offering alternatives such as "Hell Houses" and "Judgment Houses" instead of the common haunted houses. More than 800 resource kits for the two Halloween alternatives have been purchased by churches across the country, the RNA newsletter reported.

Hell Houses and Judgment Houses show the potential consequences of abortion, homosexuality, drug and alcohol abuse and sexual promiscuity. Like haunted houses, they are frightening and highly decorated although culminating with an offer to guests to accept Jesus as their Savior.

In some public schools, administrators are choosing to celebrate the harvest instead of the traditional Halloween. They decorate with pumpkins and fodder shocks but leave out the ghosts and goblins.

"We can no longer take 'innocent' Halloweens for granted," Mouw wrote. "At the very least, it means that Christian families and churches need to do some serious instructing about what Halloween means to many people."

## Pastor: Fear often limits needed ministry to 'special friends'

By John Hall  
Associated Baptist Press

MIDLAND, Texas (ABP)—Fear hinders many churches from reaching out to people with disabilities, a Baptist pastor said at a retreat for "special friends."

James Aldridge, pastor of Northwestern Baptist Church in Midland, Texas, said many church members are afraid of what they don't know about people with disabilities. They are particularly reluctant to approach people with mental disabilities, because they don't know how to act around them.

Aldridge, the father of two mentally challenged children, said those attitudes often cause churches to alienate both disabled persons and the parents who care for them.

"Non-mentally challenged people need to realize mentally challenged people are more like them than they are different," Aldridge said. "The differences just stand out more."

People with disabilities ranging from blindness to varying degrees of mental impairment came together for Bible study and fellowship at a recent Special Friends Retreat funded partially by the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Diane Lane, a preschool consultant for the BGCT, said churches that don't reach out to the disabled ignore Christ's command to take the gospel to all people.

The mentally challenged "may not have a full understanding of Christianity," she said, "but they have a right to know God."

According to the U.S. census, more than 52.6 million Americans live with some disability. Thirty-three million are severely disabled.

Despite the vast numbers of people with disabilities, many churches are not reaching out to that segment of the population.

Aldridge said ministry to "special friends" brings unique challenges to a church. His congregation includes them in their own age group until they can no longer function there. They then move on to a special-needs class where they can discuss the Bible and connect with other church members with disabilities.

Aldridge said disabled members sit in the sanctuary at his church without disturbing the worship services.

He has experienced some behav-

ior problems, but has found that explaining to the individual that the action is inappropriate usually resolves the situation. In cases where behavior problems persist, the person is paired with a "partner" who helps him or her behave properly in Bible study and worship.

Lane said parents who care for children with special needs face constant stress throughout the week. She suggested that churches offer those parents an occasional break.

She said churches not only have a duty to reach out to disabled people, but can learn from them as well.

"They have no pretense," Lane said. "They don't have that façade to keep up. Because they're innocent and have a childlike faith, they believe in God as we teach them."

# A Future And A Hope

*For I know the plans I  
have for you, says the  
Lord, plans for welfare  
and not for evil, to  
give you a future and  
a hope.*

*— Jeremiah 29:11*



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*Dr. William K. Smithwick  
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