

January 21, 2003  
Vol. 177, No. 3

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**Gallup: Opinion of organized religion at new low in America**

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—The Gallup Index of Leading Religious Indicators has reached its lowest level ever, demonstrating the public's most negative overall rating for organized religion since the index began in 1940.

The index, a broad assessment of the religiosity of Americans, is based on eight measurements of religious beliefs and practices. A "perfect score" would be 1,000. The 2002 figure is 641, a 30-point drop from the 2001 figure of 671, the Gallup Organization announced Jan. 7.

Researchers attribute the decrease to the influence of the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandal.

In 2002, 52 percent of Americans gave very high or high ratings to ethical standards of clergy, compared to 64 percent in 2001.

Confidence in organized religion also declined sharply. In 2002, 45 percent of Americans said they had "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of organized religion, compared to 60 percent in 2001.

Those two questions resulted in most of the decrease in the index.

Last year's responses to questions about belief in God (95 percent said they do) and whether religion is important in life (60 percent said "very important") had little variance compared to 2001.

The index reached its peak of 746 in 1956. From that date, there was a gradual trend downward until 1989, when the figure reached 651. The score began a slow climb to 678 in 1998.

**Price shock**

*Health insurance squeezing many Kentucky Baptist churches, pastors*

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

BURLINGTON—Pastor Terry Wilder's compensation increased \$5,520 this year, but he will never see a dime of the money.

That's because the pastor of Burlington Baptist Church and two staff members accepted continued medical coverage in lieu of raises. With their premiums rising about 60 percent, it represented a substantial offer.

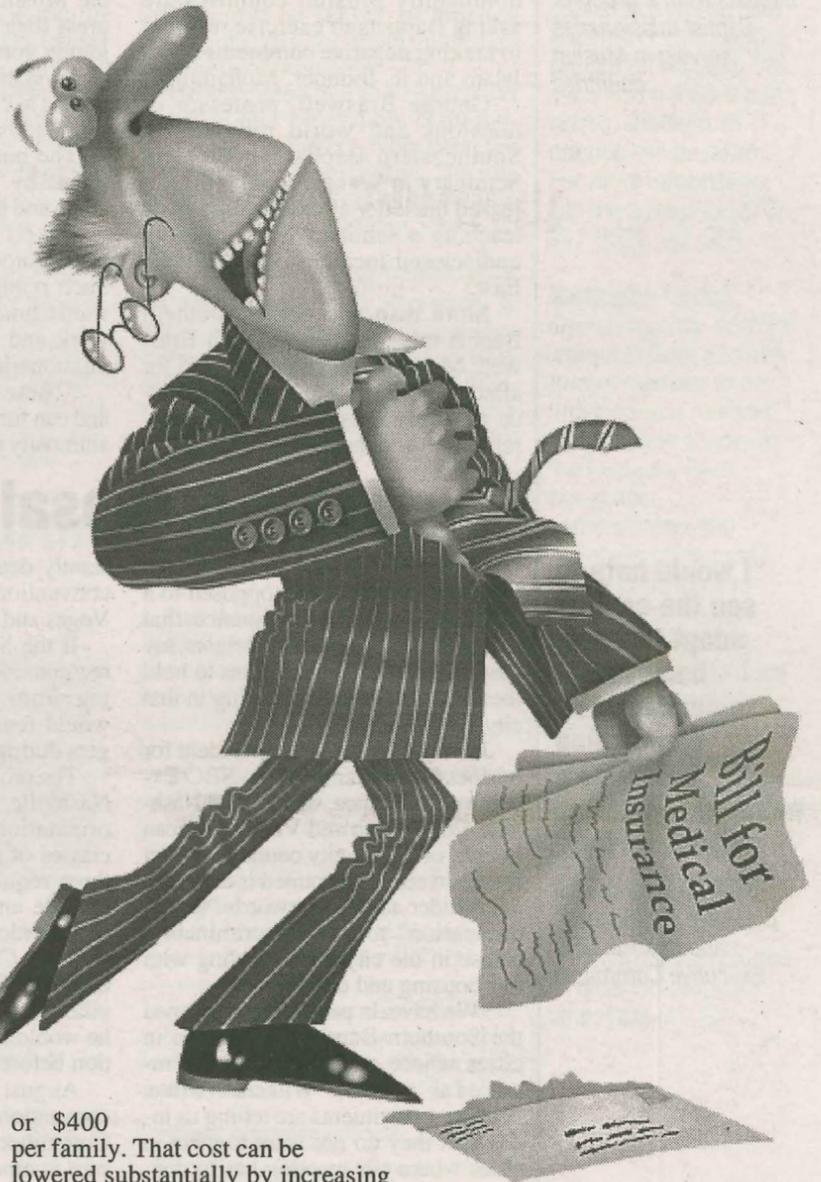
"We recognized the demand it (higher premiums) puts on our budget," Wilder said. "It's quite a strain. But we're in the same boat as other people."

Still, the latest round of health insurance premium hikes has many Kentucky Baptist pastors, churches and agencies wondering what they will do if costs go higher in the future.

"Everything we see says that this is a trend that will continue over the next three to five years," said Lowell Ashby, director of business services for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The KBC, which offers full medical benefits to staff members, saw its 2003 premiums increase 27.5 percent.

That medical coverage is obtained through the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

Around the commonwealth, the Annuity Board's best family coverage for a 50-year-old pastor costs between \$13,437 and \$16,620. That includes a \$200 annual deductible,



or \$400 per family. That cost can be lowered substantially by increasing the deductible.

Regardless of the plan, most pastors realize the Annuity Board isn't unique, said Don Spencer, director of the KBC's annuity department.

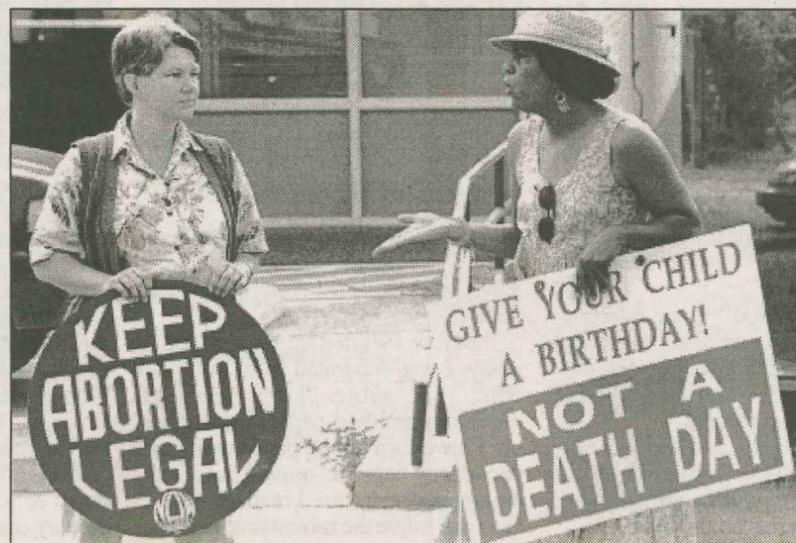
Spencer said he knows a dozen pastors who continue driving school buses because the job includes in-

urance benefits.

Others obtain coverage through their spouse's employment. Some have dropped it altogether, he said, a risky proposition. "It's definitely a crisis situation," Spencer said.

□ See Health insurance ..., page 3

**At Roe vs. Wade's 30th anniversary, abortion returns to spotlight**



30TH ANNIVERSARY Jan. 22 marks the 30th year since the Supreme Court's Roe vs. Wade decision legalized abortion. (File photo)

By Barbara Neff  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—As a variety of groups mark the 30th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade this week, the future of legalized abortion is poised to regain the national spotlight.

Although the Supreme Court's decision upholding abortion in certain circumstances still stands, abortion opponents expect the new Republican-controlled Congress and President Bush to lead the fight to substantially restrict access to abortion.

Last week, Bush declared Sunday, Jan. 19, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day and underscored the administration's championing of "compassionate alternatives" to abortion.

"Abortion is one of the areas most seriously impacted by the (November 2002) elections," said Peter Rubin,

professor of constitutional law at the Georgetown University Law Center.

While few observers believe enough votes can be found in Congress to pass an outright ban on abortion, significant inroads could be made over the next two years to restrict abortion.

"There's a lot of hope in the movement right now," said Cathy Cleaver, director of planning and information for the Pro-Life Secretariat of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"The optimism of the pro-life side," said Elizabeth Cavendish, legal director of NARAL Pro-Choice America, "is exactly why we are conducting a major mobilization campaign."

Advocates on both sides of the most contentious social issues of the □ See Several abortion bills ..., page 8

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, January 22

## Missionaries urge restraint in comments about Islam

By Tony Cartledge  
North Carolina Biblical Recorder

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (ABP)—A group of missionaries working through the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in 10 predominantly Muslim countries are asking Baptists to exercise restraint in making negative comments about Islam and its founder, Mohammed. George Braswell, professor of missions and world religions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., released the letter after returning from teaching a seminar on Islam at an undisclosed location in the Middle East.

More than two dozen Southern Baptist missionaries met with Braswell. Most have been on the field for almost two years and hope to continue as career missionaries. They currently serve in the Middle East, North

Africa, East Africa and South Asia. Because of security concerns, the missionaries were not identified by name.

Negative statements about Islam by high-profile Southern Baptists Jerry Vines, Jerry Falwell and Franklin Graham made headlines throughout the Muslim world last year. To express their concern, the missionaries jointly composed a letter. The group voted unanimously to affirm the letter and ask Braswell to help distribute it in Baptist circles.

The missionaries write that comments by Western Christians about Islam and Mohammed are highly publicized on local radio, television and print sources in their places of service. Such publicity increases enmity toward Christians and impacts both their work and their personal safety, the missionaries said.

"These types of comments have and can further the already heightened animosity toward Christians, more so

toward evangelicals, and even more so toward Baptists," the missionaries wrote. "We are not sure if you are aware of the ramifications that comments that malign Islam and Mohammed have not only on the message of the gospel but also upon the lives of our families as we are living in the midst of already tense times."

The missionaries said they have found it more beneficial to focus on sharing Christ in love and concentrating on the message of the gospel with their Muslim friends, rather than speaking in a degrading manner about their religion or prophet. They appeal to other Baptists to do the same.

"We prayerfully ask you, as brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, to focus public comments about Muslims on their need for salvation that is found only by faith in Jesus Christ. We encourage you to make comments and to live your lives in a way that will contribute positively toward the

preaching of the gospel in the lives of over a billion people who hold the religion of Islam and its prophet dearly."

Calling upon the example of Christ, the missionaries concluded, "We encourage you all to reach out to the people of Islam in love and in a fashion that is consistent with the life of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The letter is signed "A Group of Southern Baptists serving in the Muslim World."

Avery Willis, the IMB's senior vice president of overseas operations, responded, "These IMB workers wanted to emphasize a focus on bearing witness for Christ as a blessing to Muslims, rather than arguing Islam versus Christianity. I believe what they were trying to say is that their concern is communicating the gospel to lost persons without having to defend what someone in America said about Islam."

**"We encourage you all to reach out to the people of Islam in love."**

*A statement to Southern Baptists from a group of Baptist missionaries serving in Muslim countries*

**"I would hate to see the council adopt this pro-homosexual amendment ... diminishing Nashville's national reputation as pro-family."**

*Jack Wilkerson, vice president for business and finance, SBC Executive Committee*

## Gay rights proposal could derail Nashville hosting 2005 SBC

NASHVILLE—Southern Baptist Convention executives, opposed to a proposed Nashville ordinance that would increase homosexual rights, say they could change their plans to hold the 2005 SBC annual meeting in that city.

Jack Wilkerson, vice president for business and finance of the SBC Executive Committee, wrote to the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau in light of a final city council vote set for this week. The council is expected to consider adding the words "sexual orientation" to a nondiscrimination clause in the city's law dealing with fair housing and employment.

"We have, in past years, convened the Southern Baptist Convention in cities where every lifestyle is embraced as 'normal,'" Wilkerson wrote, "but our constituents are telling us today that they do not want to meet in cities where our meeting has to con-

stantly deal with these issues." Past convention sites have included Las Vegas and New Orleans.

If the SBC Executive Committee recommends moving the 2005 meeting from Nashville, the proposal would require approval by messengers during an SBC annual meeting.

The proposed ordinance change in Nashville, which would add sexual orientation to the list of protected classes of people, has passed two of three required readings. It does not include an exemption for religious organizations—such as the SBC Executive Committee and LifeWay Christian Resources based in Nashville—but a council member has said he would like to add such an exemption before the final vote.

August Boto, vice president for convention policy with the Executive Committee, said that even if the measure is amended to exempt religious

organizations, the ordinance still would be objectionable.

"I am not certain of how the other cities have limited the terms 'sexual orientation' or 'gender,'" Boto said. "What I do know is that these terms are without definition in the proposal before Nashville's city council."

"Does the council really want to protect the right of a man who prefers to dress as a woman to apply for and obtain a job as a girls' gym coach in a local junior high school?" he asked. "I don't think so, and this is just one illustration of how awful the consequences could be even if it had a religious institution exemption."

SBC leaders previously canceled a contract with a Howard Johnson hotel in St. Louis—the city where its annual meeting was held last June—when the hotel planned to host a "Beat Me in St. Louis" conference sponsored by a group that endorses sado-

masochism.

"I have personally worked to convey my belief that Nashville is a family friendly community and one which would provide a welcoming environment for our messengers and families attending the SBC annual meeting scheduled for Nashville in 2005," Wilkerson said. "I would hate to see the council adopt this pro-homosexual amendment undercutting our team effort and diminishing Nashville's national reputation as pro-family."

SBC leaders are very careful in selecting convention sites and hotels that compliment a family friendly environment, he added.

"It has and will continue to be our policy to express displeasure with activities that violate biblical principles or which have a negative impact on the fabric of family life."

*Based on reporting by Baptist Press and Religion News Service*

### BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Texas Baptist group opposes death penalty.** The Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission has joined the call for a moratorium on the death penalty. Since 1976, Texas has carried out about one third of the executions in the United States. The way Texas applies the death penalty is unjust in terms of its impact on racial minorities, the poor, juvenile offenders and inmates who mistakenly are convicted, according to the commission's report.

■ **Southern hosts intelligent design proponent.** William Dembski, a leading proponent of intelligent design, will be the guest lecturer for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Norton Lectures Feb. 11-12. Dembski is an associate research professor at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and a senior fellow with Discovery Institute's Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture in Seattle. He will speak on the seminary's Louisville campus Feb. 11 at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. and Feb. 12 at 10 a.m.

■ **Southwestern professor dies at age 38.** Raymond Spencer, assistant professor of preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, died unexpectedly of natural causes Jan. 10. Spencer, 38, was the seminary's first full-time African-American faculty member. His funeral service was Jan. 15 at Rising Star Baptist Church in Fort Worth, where he was assistant pastor.

## Moore's online study offers women encouragement

By Terri Lackey  
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

NASHVILLE (BP)—They've never met each other, but thousands of women who have joined LifeWay Christian Resources' online Bible study with Beth Moore share a common purpose.

Through laughter, tears, encouragement and sympathy, participants are seeking the strength to believe God's promises for their lives, and they're chatting about it online.

"There are all sorts of people who have the same struggles you do," Moore, author and Bible teacher, said during her sixth videotaped session of "Believing God." "These needs are very real."

"Believing God" is an Internet-driven study that combines streaming video/audio, weekly homework, online study guides and community-based discussion forums.

In a merging of faith and technology, about 26,000 women in all 50 states and 52 countries are studying the Bible together on the Web.

With passion difficult to mute even online, Moore challenges women to have faith that "God is who He says He is, and He can do what He says He can do."

In video messages on the Internet, Moore told stories about women who had shared with others in the forum. One was a 32-year old mother of two who is going through chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

"I just wanted to share with all of you that I have my eyes fixed on God through 'Believing God,'" the woman wrote in the community forum. "God has blessed me so richly through all of this."

The second story Moore shared was of a woman who was ready to leave her husband before she began the Believing God study.

"Before I signed up for this Bible study, I was separated from my husband," she wrote. "I was ready to move out and had paperwork drawn up. I have torn up the paperwork, unpacked my bags and moved out of my daughter's bedroom. I realized that if God can move the mountains, part the

seas and raise the dead, then saving this marriage is a walk in the park as far as He is concerned."

About 250 women are posting to the forum daily.

Moore is a best-selling author who speaks to more than 65,000 women a year through live Bible study conferences across the country. More than 3 million copies of her seven Bible studies for women have been sold. LifeWay released her latest Bible study in December, "Beloved Disciple."

Those who join the 10-week online course for about \$14 have no books or resources to buy, said Bill Seaver, project coordinator for the study sponsored by the Southern Baptist entity. "This course offers value and convenience—two key elements in reaching women who are stretched for time and budget-conscious."

The Bible study was taped at Moore's home church, First Baptist in Houston, Texas, and then placed on the Internet.

For information about the Bible study or to enroll, visit <http://www.lifeway.com/believinggod>.

## KBC Evangelism Conference next month seeks to 'Unleash Power'

LOUISVILLE—Helping churches identify practical ways to reach people in their communities with a positive message about Jesus Christ will be the focus of the 2003 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Feb. 24-25 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

"Unleash the Power" will be the theme for the annual event sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. More than 1,800 pastors and church members are expected to attend.

Featured program personalities include:

■ Erwin McManus, the lead pastor of Mosaic Church in Los Angeles and a staff member at Bethel Theological Seminary.

■ David Fleming, co-pastor of First Baptist Church, Daytona Beach, Fla.

■ Walt Mueller, founder of the Center for Parent and Youth Understanding in Elizabethtown, Pa.

■ Frank Harber, an evangelist and apologist from Colleyville, Texas.

■ Joe Brown, senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.

■ David Nasser, a youth evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

■ Louis Patterson, senior pastor of Sims Chapel Baptist Church in Garland, Texas.

■ Paul Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville and current Kentucky Baptist Convention president.

Kentucky vocalist Alma Randolph also will perform, as will choirs from Immanuel and Imani Baptist churches in Lexington.

This year's conference begins with a Monday afternoon session at 1:30 p.m., Feb. 24. The event will offer more than 25 workshops as well as dialogue luncheons with workshop leaders. It concludes with an evening session Feb. 25.

Three parallel events will also be held during the Evangelism Conference:

■ The convention's first Hispanic Evangelism Conference (in Spanish) will be held Feb. 24, 2-8 p.m. at Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington.

■ Baptist youth leaders can attend a dinner Feb. 24 at Immanuel with Mueller.

■ The Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference is scheduled at Centenary United Methodist Church in Lexington on Tuesday, Feb. 25. (Centenary is next to Immanuel Baptist Church.)

More information is available online at [www.kybaptist.org/evangelism-conference](http://www.kybaptist.org/evangelism-conference) or by calling (888) 254-5722 or (502) 254-4737.

## Churches appear to be financially steady

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—There is no shortage of bleak economic news of late.

In their current session, Kentucky legislators are grappling with proposed tax hikes to cover a projected \$509 million revenue shortfall for 2003-04.

Nationally, President George Bush has proposed a \$674 billion economic stimulus package.

And the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee recently reported a 14.8 percent decline in Cooperative Program gifts for December, compared to the same month the previous year.

But if Cooperative Program giving is any indication, Kentucky Baptist churches appear to be holding their own. This comes despite a challenging financial climate that includes steeper medical insurance

costs for pastors and staff.

Lowell Ashby, director of business services for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said CP gifts from Kentucky Baptist Convention churches were 3.3 percent higher for the first three months of the 2003 fiscal year that began Sept. 1.

Total gifts for the three-month period were \$5,146,358, compared to \$4,981,541 for the first quarter of fiscal 2002. Contributions for all of 2002 were just over \$22.1 million, a decrease of \$32,954 over 2001.

"We're pleased to be running ahead of last year, since for 2002 we were flat over the previous year," Ashby said. "I think we'll see the same thing that we have year after year. The undesignated giving people are doing keeps going up."

Doug Strader, director of the state convention's stewardship department, said he's finding a mixed bag among churches he has contacted about 2002 financial results.

"A lot of churches I see are reaching their budgets for the year," Strader said. "That's strange with the stock market and unemployment the way it has been, but Kentucky usually lags behind the country in other trends."

Despite this optimistic picture, Strader said he senses an urgency among pastors for more materials regarding stewardship.

He attributed that to a realization that the older generation, commonly labeled "builders," have been the leading financial supporters. But this aging group isn't able to contribute as much in their twilight years, he said.

"When pastors and leaders keep the message in front of people, it helps," Strader said. "This includes bulletin inserts, preaching, dramas and emphasizing all aspects of stewardship, not just financial. These things are real helpful in growing good stewards."

## Pastors, churches get insurance price shock

Continued from page 1

"What concerns me is churches that are doing lump sum payments," he added.

### The problem with lump sums

"They'll tell the pastor, 'We'll give you \$1,000 more,'" Spencer explained. "But if a pastor is looking at a \$1,500 increase in medical insurance, he's really losing. Or, a church may be providing it, but it comes out of what otherwise would be given in salary."

At Providence Knob Baptist Church in Bowling Green, a 23 percent increase in Joe Causey's Blue Cross coverage since 2001 has him eyeing an alternative.

Recently hired as a part-time hospital chaplain, Causey is checking to see whether those benefits will allow him to drop his church-provided policy. That would save him nearly \$10,000, since he receives a lump sum for salary and benefits.

"The church is not in a position where we can do other things," Causey said. "I'm fortunate that I can do some things on a part-time basis. And I'm the only staff member. For churches that have several, it really hurts."

### Alternative plans

First Baptist Church of Bowling Green has turned to a form of partial self-insurance to limit insurance increases.

First Baptist is paying the first \$60,000 of claims before its Cincinnati-based underwriter begins paying medical expenses, according to Rodney Vincent, minister of education and administration.

With this approach, coverage for 25 people—including day care center staff—only increased between 10 and 24 percent this year.

But to hold the line, the church switched from 100 percent coverage to employees paying 20 percent of hospitalization costs and \$10 for each doctor's visit.

"Because of the projected



increase, we had to look at ways of cutting costs," Vincent said. "There is a risk in doing what we're doing. But so far, it has been prudent for the church to go this way."

Spencer said many pastors and churches are considering federal medical savings accounts. Such accounts allow people to put dollars aside tax-free for medical uses. "I think we'll see more churches looking at that."

Such "out of the box" thinking is necessary, say pastors and other leaders. Rick Robbins, director of missions for Northern Kentucky Baptist Association, said his association has discussed establishing an emergency fund to help churches meet high medical premiums.

### Young pastors look elsewhere

Robbins, who served on an Annuity Board study committee a few years ago, predicted costs might some day force the board to drop insurance.

Many younger pastors are obtaining cheaper coverage elsewhere, and that further handicaps the agency, he noted.

"In the state, if 75 percent of ministers subscribed to the (Annuity Board's) health insurance plan, it would be cheaper," Robbins said. "But there's no way we can require that. If costs keep going up and a 32-year-old pastor can get it elsewhere for 60 percent the cost of the Annuity Board, he'll be tempted to do

that."

But the Annuity Board's director of insurance marketing said it has no plans to get out of the business. Tom Jones said the board has made a commitment of continuing coverage to retirees and other constituents.

"We have a huge project we started the last quarter to roll out plans for 2004," Jones said. "It's a tough market and has been for three years. But we're in this with both feet and eyes wide open."

Health insurance is expensive, he agreed, but the problem affects everyone.

Jones pointed out that treatment and prescription costs have seen double-digit increases for the past three years.

### Keeping churches aware

Because of this reality, the board advises churches against using a lump sum payment system. Jones advises churches to separate a pastor's salary from insurance, supplies, gasoline and housing. Churches should then keep up with insurance hikes, he said.

More congregations need to be aware of the high price of health insurance for church staff, observers said.

At least one pastor, who asked to be anonymous, said he probably lost a church position in another state when the congregation recognized it would have to pay \$10,000 in insurance benefits. The previous pastor had received insurance through his wife's employer.

Wilder said he doesn't foresee any premium decreases in the future, but churches shouldn't panic.

Looking back over his 29 years in ministry, the Burlington pastor said things were equally tough when he was raising a family and working at smaller churches in the 1970s and '80s.

"Yet God always provided for our needs," Wilder said. "I have absolute confidence and faith He will continue to do that."

## BLUEGRASS BURGEO

Mid-Continent College's annual evangelism conference in March will feature Atlanta evangelist Bailey Smith and Louisville pastor Lincoln Bingham. The conference will be held March 4 at First Baptist Church of Mayfield. The event, from 1:50-9 p.m., is free, although an offering will be taken. For more information, call the college at (270) 247-8521, ext. 269.

Burlington Baptist Church recently declined a request from a female former member to be ordained as a minister. According to a story in the Kentucky Post newspaper, approximately 200 members came to the business meeting to consider the matter. Ultimately, members declined to consider the ordination request of Lynn Smith, who now is a Disciples of Christ minister, because it did not meet the church's guidelines for ordination. The guidelines require that an ordination request come from a Southern Baptist church or other "appropriate organization."

## WESTERN RECORDER

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Louisville, KY 40253  
(USPS 679-380)

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

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

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## Why do missionaries risk death?

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—After the Dec. 30 killings of three Southern Baptist medical workers by a Muslim gunman in Yemen, the tributes and condolences poured into the Southern Baptist International Mission Board from around the world.

Hundreds of calls, letters and e-mails came from friends of the victims, churches, Christian and Muslim religious leaders—and regular people—moved by the lives and deaths of physician Martha Myers, hospital administrator William Koehn and purchasing manager Kathleen Gariety. A tiny sampling:

■ “This was not only a loss to the Baptist community but also to the Muslim community,” said Muhammad Sahli of the Islamic Center of Virginia, who personally visited IMB leaders to express his sympathy. “We were extremely saddened and angered by what happened in Yemen. ... It is our profound hope that Almighty God will shower the families with His mercy and compassion during their bereavement.”

■ “My husband Bob and I were privileged to be (at the Jibla hospital) as volunteers in 1988 and 1989,” reflected Nancy Dillard. “We grew to love Martha in a very special way. I remember her with some cold pancakes in her skirt pocket (to eat on the run), because once Martha started working for the day she never stopped. I remember her sleeping on the floor on a mat under the crib of a very sick child. I feel so blessed to have known her and I know she, Bill and Kathleen are in heaven with our Lord Jesus Christ.”

■ “As an (emergency medical) worker in the U.S., I see senseless tragedies and death occur on a daily basis,” wrote Heather Brewster. “As

an MK (missionary kid), I try to explain to my co-workers what would have called these people to go a country like Yemen and what compelled them to serve a people ‘not their own,’ far from their own families and the ‘safety’ of the U.S. This incident has challenged me personally to make my life not just one of transporting people to the ER during times of crisis, but to boldly share with people in their darkest moments the love of Christ. Your loved ones have not given their lives in vain.”

### COMMENTARY



Erich Bridges

■ “I am writing you as a Yemeni living in Saudi Arabia to express condolence on the cruel slayings,” e-mailed one heartbroken man. “It hurts a lot when these martyrs come thousands of miles, leave their homes and beloved ones to help my poor relatives and get brutally assassinated. By who? None but one of our people. It hurts badly.

As I write you (my) eyes are uncontrollably crying. ... May their souls rest in peace and God give you strength.”

### No good reason?

But not everyone was so sympathetic.

“You Christian missionaries are nuts!” said one irate message. “You go to Muslim countries and get kidnapped, shot and killed by people who don’t want you (there), and then cry the blues that you are being persecuted! Get out of their countries and this won’t happen!”

A somewhat calmer correspondent criticized American missionary presence anywhere abroad.

“The question that immediately comes to mind is ‘why?’” he asked. “Not why did the murderer shoot these people, but why were the missionaries there in the first place? ... There is a critical shortage of doctors and nurs-

es in this country, yet three medical professionals’ lives have been forfeited for no good reason.”

No good reason? Tell that to the thousands of people whose lives were saved, whose children were delivered and cared for, whose suffering was relieved by these three. Tell it to the thousands who crowded around the gates of the hospital for days after the shootings and cried for the loss of three people who loved them.

### ‘Love is the reason’

Why did they go, and ultimately die?

“The answer is love,” IMB staff member Mike Edens said at one of the memorial services for the slain trio. “Love is the reason they went. Love is the reason their colleagues are there. Love is the reason Jesus came. And love requires us to go to those who have never heard, those who live in darkness.”

It isn’t just the world that sees such love as foolishness, however. There’s a strong and increasingly vocal faction within our comfortable American churches that says stay at home, serve our own and to hell with the rest—literally.

This is an appropriate moment for such Christians to ask themselves whether they serve the God who revealed Himself in Scripture and in our suffering servant savior, Jesus Christ.

The day of the killings, someone sent Avery Willis, IMB chief of overseas operations, a plea to “bring the missionaries home” once and for all.

“Instead of asking us to bring them home, why not pray that more will go?” Willis responded. “We will not bring them home, but we will send thousands more.”

Citing Jesus’ example of sacrificial ministry, Willis said, “Only with God’s perspective can we see what He sees.” So did Martha Myers, Bill Koehn and Kathy Gariety.

*Erich Bridges is a senior writer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board*

## STEWARDSHIP

### Ministers should know & avoid tax filing mistakes

By Don Spencer

It’s not a favorite topic for most people but tax filing season is approaching. Tax law complexity sometimes makes total compliance difficult. Unique tax laws for ministers add to the complexity. A first step in compliance is to know what issues have been targeted by the IRS. Common tax mistakes made by ministers include:

■ **Failure to report housing for Social Security.** Housing for ministers includes the value of a church-provided home, utilities paid directly by a church for a minister and housing allowance within allowable limits. However, all housing elements are to be included when computing self-employment Social Security. This includes the fair rental value of a parsonage.

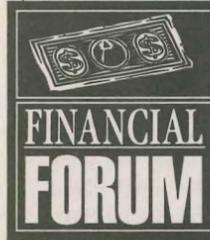
■ **Failure to report income tax as an employee.** While a few ministers are considered self-employed for income tax purposes, most Southern Baptist ministers serving a local church should receive a W-2 form from their church and report that income as an employee. However, for Social Security purposes, ministers always are self-employed.

■ **Failure to report self-employment income.** Ministers who receive honoraria for weddings, funerals, revivals, etc., must report that income on Schedule C as self-employment income.

■ **Using fair rental value only to justify housing.** A misperception continues that ministers always can claim the fair rental value of their house as a tax-free housing allowance. This is incorrect. The amount must be properly designated by the church (or Southern Baptist Annuity Board for retired ministers) and the minister must spend the amount on housing. A minister can never claim more for tax-free housing than actual housing expenditures.

■ **New ministers opting out of Social Security for financial reasons.** The only legal reason for a minister to opt out of Social Security is based on conscientious objection on religious grounds to receiving government insurance benefits based on ministerial income. Southern Baptist beliefs generally do not support that view. In the past, some ministers opted out for financial reasons. Current laws make it very clear this is not a valid reason.

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



## Inspiring evangelism

An inspiring learning experience has been planned for pastors, church staff and laypeople who attend this year’s Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference Feb. 24-25 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

Participants will experience outstanding biblical preaching, great music and worship, informative workshops and prayer for revival and spiritual awakening.

The conference begins at 1:45 p.m. on Monday afternoon and will feature David Fleming, co-pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla.;

Walter Mueller, founder of the Center for Parents and Youth in Elizabethtown, Pa.; and Joe Brown, an outstanding church development leader who is senior pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C. Music will be provided by the Immanuel Baptist Church Praise Team.

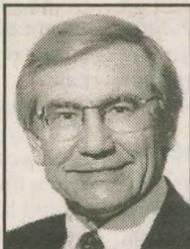
The combined choirs of Imani and Immanuel Baptist churches will lead a great worship time Monday night. Futurist Erwin McManus, lead pastor

of Mosaic Church in Los Angeles, and A.L. Patterson III, pastor of Sims Chapel Baptist Church in Garland, Texas, will preach.

Tuesday morning will begin with a prayer breakfast for revival and spiritual awakening led by Chris Schofield of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. That will be followed by more than 25 workshops led by conference speakers and other leaders. Participants also will be able to attend dialogue luncheons with a number of the workshop leaders.

Inspirational speakers on Tuesday afternoon include evangelist and missions innovator David Ring and youth evangelist David Nasser.

Craig Cagle, minister of music at First Baptist Church of Pikeville, and the church’s choir will lead worship Tuesday night. Biblical truth will be proclaimed by Paul Badgett, pastor of the Pikeville church and president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention; and by Frank Harber, an evangelist and



Bill Mackey

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

apologist from Colleyville, Texas.

The very first Kentucky Baptist Hispanic Evangelism Conference will parallel the Monday afternoon session. That meeting and an evening meal will be held at Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington.

An excellent conference designed especially for women also will parallel part of the Evangelism Conference on Feb. 25. Using the theme “Unleash the Power: Set Free to Soar,” the Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Centenary United Methodist Church, which is next door to Immanuel.

Dan Garland, leader of the KBC’s evangelism growth team, has planned an outstanding experience of inspiring worship, biblical proclamation and informative workshops that will enrich personal and church ministries. The conference will be an ideal time to hear from God and experience revival in your faith journey and ministry.

I look forward to seeing you at Immanuel!

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

## Teenagers can help parents 'loosen up' & enjoy relaxing

**Q: I come from a serious family and so does my spouse. Our teenagers frequently compare us to our overly serious, hard-working parents and tell us to "loosen up." I think they are right, but I don't know how. Any suggestions?**

"Thou shalt not commit fun" is an all-too-familiar "11th commandment" for some families. For some adults, relaxing is the hardest work they can imagine.

Tim Hansel wrote a book several years ago titled "When I Relax I Feel Guilty." While play and fun come naturally to children, unfortunately this is not always the case when they grow up.

Perhaps you received and believed messages like the following when you were growing up:

- I should be productive every moment.
- My worth depends on my performance and production.
- I'll get into trouble if I relax.
- Play is a waste of time.
- Christians are supposed to be serious all the time.

Keep in mind that the God we know personally in Jesus Christ is not portrayed only in starkly serious images. In fact, the scriptures instruct us that Jesus went to weddings, took time to be with children and enjoyed the companionship of meals with friends who were not a part of the overly serious religious establishment.

How can you loosen up? Begin with your thoughts. Perhaps you should "take captive" some of the above thoughts and replace them with the following:

- It is not God's intent that I be productive every moment.
- My worth depends solely on God's grace and love, not my performance and production.
- If I don't relax, I'll be less like Christ.
- Rest, play and Sabbath are the pursuits of serious disciples.
- Christians who have the deepest roots have the most obvious fruits, and one of these is joy.

Invite your teens to be your teachers. Ask them to imagine what they might see you doing regularly a year from now if you were to heed their concerns.—*Scott Wigginton*

### Q: Is it better for churches to provide separate children's worship or include children in corporate worship?

Separate worship experiences for children certainly make corporate worship easier and more enjoyable for parents. However, as Dan Aleshire says in his excellent book "FaithCare": "The teachings of Jesus, the mission of the church and the nature of a community of faith all argue more for the effort required for including children in corporate worship rather than for the convenience provided by excluding them."

When Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me," He modeled inclusion for His followers. He welcomed boys and girls into His presence. Children learn best when they are involved and when they can participate, and so we need to put them right in the middle of the action. The church is a family of faith, and families need to spend time together.

Church leaders might need to ask themselves, "Who are we really doing children's worship for?" Many of the reasons given for excluding children from corporate worship relate to the convenience of adults more than the worship needs of children.

Because the benefits of including children in worship far outweigh the interruptions and inconveniences that often result, many churches are directing their energy and imagination to speaking God's word to children rather than offering substitutes for corporate worship.—*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.*



## Abortion battle requires practical approach

Where were you on Jan. 22, 1973, when the landmark Roe vs. Wade abortion ruling was handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court?

While people vividly recall where they were and what they were doing on Dec. 7, 1941, or Sept. 11, 2001, the ruling that legalized abortion throughout the nation had a more gradual impact on society.

Yet three decades later, on the 30th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, that action continues to claim the lives of innocent victims. During the past 30 years, an estimated 40 million legal abortions have been performed in the U.S., dwarfing the number of casualties suffered during Pearl Harbor and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Perhaps a more significant question is not where you were on Jan. 22, 1973, but where you are now in your stand on the issue of abortion.

Kentucky Baptists historically have expressed strong opposition to abortion on demand. In November 1973, just months after the Supreme Court ruling, Kentucky Baptist Convention messengers adopted a resolution emphasizing that "any move toward what is generally called 'abortion on demand' is not consistent with traditionally held Christian morality." The measure urged support for passage of a Kentucky statute to "prohibit the wanton waste of human life in the practice of abortion."

Kentucky Baptist messengers have continued to speak out on the issue, adopting a 1996 resolution declaring that "Kentucky Baptists continually affirm the sanctity of life." Noting that "there are extenuating circumstance that impact a family's decision about abortion such as the pregnancy being a threat to the mother's life," the resolution added that KBC messengers "reaffirm the sanctity of life and register our opposition to abortion on demand in general and partial-birth abortion in particular."

The resolution concluded by urging Kentucky Baptists to "lead our nation to value the lives of the unborn and acknowledge our responsibilities to them."

During last year's KBC annual meeting, the resolutions committee declined to recommend a resolution against partial-birth abortion because of concerns over the proposal's partisan political tone. Yet messengers still chose to voice their views on the issue, adopting a substitute motion endorsed by the committee to reaffirm the convention's 1996 resolution.

As our nation marks the 30th anniversary of legalized abortion, the challenge for Kentucky Baptists is how to "lead our nation to value the lives of the unborn and acknowledge our responsibilities to them" in practical ways.

It's one thing to express opposition to abortion; it's quite another to actively become part of the solution.

The abortion battle has grown more complex over the years with the introduction of partial-birth abortion techniques, distribution of the RU-486 abortion pill and efforts to transport minors across state lines to seek abortions without parental consent. Several legislative efforts are under way in Congress to address a number of abortion-related

issues, including the Child Custody Protection Act, the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act and the Unborn Victims of Violence Act.

Regardless of legislative or judicial action, how can individual Christians impact our nation's abortion crisis? As Kentucky Baptists "acknowledge our responsibilities" for the unborn, practical responses range from modeling a moral lifestyle that reduces the risk of an unwanted pregnancy to personally ministering to a young woman facing the heartrending crisis of coping with an unplanned pregnancy. The Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's pregnancy counseling and adoption services are excellent resources Kentucky Baptists can recommend to young women in need.

When we value the lives of women who desperately need compassion rather than condemnation and help them make positive life choices, Kentucky Baptists can truly begin to help "lead our nation to value the lives of the unborn."

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

### 'Go, and sin no more'

By Charles McGuire

How do we define grace? Many books, sermons and dissertations have been written in an effort to use simple, easy-to-understand words to explain this vital gift of God. We struggle to bring forth adequate phrases, such as "unmerited favor."

In thinking about this thing we treasure so much as Christians—this quality of God our Father called grace, I recalled an incident when I was 11 years old that I think gives a clue to the idea of grace.

It was a cloudy Saturday in March 1942 in Chester, Pa. Mario Russo, Frank Warner, another boy whose name escapes me and I were playing with a baseball and bat on a wide dead-end street. We were taking turns hitting and catching the ball, having a great time daydreaming about playing with the Phillies or the Athletics.

It was my turn to catch and I waited as the ball flew toward me and way over my head. As I turned to chase the ball I heard the sound of breaking glass. A car on Crosby Street had en-

tered the intersection at the same time the baseball arrived. It shattered the passenger window. Tires squealed as the car skidded to an abrupt stop.

I looked around and I was alone. The other boys had disappeared. My heart grew to the size of a basketball in my chest. My stomach seemed to shrink to nothing. I was alone with no place to run or disappear.

"You, boy," the man growled at me through the broken car window. "Get up here

now!" My legs were moving even though I couldn't seem to feel them.

"Get in the car!" he ordered. I got in. "This your ball?"

"No, sir," I said.

"You were playing with it though, weren't you?" the hard voice hissed.

"Yes sir," I whispered. My heart rate would have blown out a monitor.

"Where do you live, boy?" he asked.

This was it! The final judgment! My mind's eye flew to our kitchen and focused on the paddle on the wall with the words, "I need thee every hour" written on it.

"1212 Crosby Street, sir, up at the

corner."

The car began to move and I pictured myself in the back of a hearse.

We stopped in front of the house and sat there for hours, or so it seemed. "What do you think I should do about this window?" he asked. Tears slipped out of my eyes and down my cheeks. The man's face and voice softened.

"Boy, I'm going to keep this baseball," he said. "Now, get out of my car; and be more careful, kid!"

To this day, I don't know who he was.

Amazing grace. How sweet the sound.

Many times I have recalled that incident and thought of how God's grace is like that. We find ourselves in sin, sometimes without realizing it until the "window breaks." We know we are guilty with no place to hide. God calls us to Himself. He confronts us. We confess that we are guilty, and because of our relationship with our Lord Jesus, God looks at us in our guilt and sees us in the light of His Son. Even though we were "playing with that ball," He says, "You are forgiven. Go, and sin no more."

*Charles McGuire is volunteer coordinator for chaplains for the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey*

## Church van in fatal wreck

MOUNT VERNON—The driver of a Kentucky Baptist church van was killed Jan. 15 in a two-vehicle accident that killed both drivers, according to a story by Associated Press.

Kentucky State Police said a van owned by Northside Baptist Church in Mount Vernon crested a hill on U.S. 150 when another vehicle driving in the wrong lane hit the van head-on.

Van driver Jackie Dixon, 68, of Brodhead died at the scene, according to the AP story.

The driver of the other vehicle was Stacy Nicely, 29, of Mount Vernon, investigators said.

Rockcastle County Coroner Billy Dowell said both Nicely and Dixon died at the scene. Officials said neither driver was wearing a seat belt.

Three passengers in the church van were treated for minor injuries at the Rockcastle County Hospital, AP reported.

## Church Growth Tour focuses on evangelism, discipleship

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

LONDON—Chris White believes church leaders won't get more serious about the Great Commission until they realize the stark situation facing their congregations.

Speaking at the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Small Church Growth Tour, White noted that 41 percent of Kentucky's population has no affiliation with a major religious group.

"That is why the life you think your church lives in the community and the life it really lives may not be the same," said White, pastor of First Baptist Church of Carrollton, a once-small church that has grown to weekly attendance of 150.

"The challenge for pastors is telling (members) that people can grow up in the shadow of a church and not be touched by it."

### Intentional planning & execution

At the tour's first stop at Corinth Baptist Church in London Jan. 14, White emphasized the need to strengthen evangelism and discipleship efforts.

Both take intentional planning and execution, not just praying that God will send the Holy Spirit to touch their area, White said.

That means getting out into the community, said White, who leads a weekly mentoring session for 15 teenagers. The church also conducts an after-school program and works with youngsters in a housing project.

### Other dates

The Small Church Growth Tour, which also met at Cane Run Baptist Church in Lexington Feb. 16, resumes next week in the following cities:

■ **Elizabethtown**, Jan. 27 at Immanuel Baptist Church.

■ **Bowling Green**, Jan. 28 at the Warren Baptist Association office.

■ **Corydon**, Feb. 10 at First Baptist Church of Corydon.

■ **Hickory**, Feb. 17 at Liberty Baptist Church.

"What I see happening is people catching what we're about," White said. "If what they see in your life is a good tradeoff for them, maybe they're interested."

The pastor suggested small churches form an outreach team. At First Baptist, six to eight people visit shut-ins, nursing home residents and others, and call and write members and prospects.

Last year this team contacted 2,500 people, or 25 percent of the county's population.

Prayer is another key. After teaching on the need for prayer and not seeing much of a response, White said God showed him a new method.

Instead of insisting everyone gather in the same place for prayer, he asked members to pray—on their own timetable—for a year for a loved one who was not a Christian.

## Pastors of growing churches unite to discuss what's working

For Greg Faulls at Bellvue Baptist Church in Owensboro, it's creative sermon illustrations and seeker-driven special events.

For Kevin Hamm at Valley View Baptist Church in Louisville, it's "fast-food friends," an invitation to church that accompanies buying the meal for the driver behind you in line at the drive-through.

For Mark Galloway at First Baptist Church of Morganfield, it's FAITH, a Sunday school-based visitation and outreach strategy from LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"It" is what's working, and these pastors and others recently assembled in Louisville to share stories so others can benefit from their experiences.

The meeting was a new venture for

the Kentucky Baptist Convention, according to KBC evangelism director Dan Garland.

"In the past, the convention has been more into, 'We hold meetings ... and we'll teach you stuff,'" he explained. "The paradigm shift was these guys came and taught us what's working."

Garland said he hopes to involve these pastors to train other church leaders in their area and be a catalyst to help other churches grow. "The only people that can effectively teach the stuff are those that are doing it."

Approximately 45 pastors and seven directors of missions attended the all-day meeting Jan. 14. A secondary purpose was to build a network for pastors who might be too busy to build new relationships with peers throughout the commonwealth.

"The guys in the large churches are the ones that have the hardest time," Garland said. "For one thing they're so busy and they very seldom intentionally get together."

During a roundup session, pastors presented a variety of programs they had found to help with outreach and evangelism. But Garland said attitude, not a specific program was key for church leaders seeing growth.

"There's a number of things that are working. But the key to it is that they're tailoring it to their church; they're getting buy-in from their people; and they're touching peoples lives in a way that's building momentum."

**PASTOR RAP** (From left) Mark Galloway, pastor of First Baptist Church of Morganfield; Skip Alexander, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church; and Ronnie Sivells, pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Princeton visit together at the start of a day-long summit of Kentucky Baptist church leaders at the Baptist Building in Louisville. The leaders discussed their best practices in evangelism and other aspects of church life.



Sixty-five members signed up to pray for more than 100 people. A year later, the church baptized 20 converts from that group.

### Making disciples, not decisions

Discipleship is the other component of following Christ, White said. But too many churches are getting decisions but not disciples, he said.

White admitted failure in this area, recalling that the first convert he welcomed in Carrollton stopped coming to church a long time ago.

"I baptized him, celebrated and got busy doing something else," he said. "I used to think that if my boat is in order, all would float well. But I need to get more people on the boat."

"Are the leaders of your church leading others into leadership?" he asked. "How are they at leading new leaders and developing leaders for the future?"

Pastors can start by developing deacons. The pastor said when he first met with his deacons, he advised the group his primary interest was making a covenant to work together.

Every six months he and the deacons meet at a nearby state park lodge for dinner, a teaching session and to discuss mutual concerns.

Gradually, the deacons grew tired of those deacons who rarely attended meetings or services, and raised their own standards, he said.

In the past two years, these leaders have spurred moves to expand First Baptist's building, start a Hispanic congregation and purchase a building

across the street.

Two other steps have developed disciples at First Baptist:

■ In the fall of 1999, White started a weekly breakfast meeting with seven non-members or men who didn't hold a church office. Since then, two became deacons and three have been baptized.

■ Not allowing anyone to join the church until they meet with the pastor, study the church's basic beliefs and draw up a spiritual development plan. Last year, of 37 transfers and converts, 32 are still in church, an 86 percent retention rate.

### Church is hard work

"Do you think this is easy to pull off?" White asked. "No. It's tough. But you can do it. You can go back and say, 'We can live a higher level. This guy in Carrollton is thinking up stuff and so can we.'"

Two men who attended the session lauded the speaker, saying he had challenged them and given them new ideas.

"Chris has shown us a way to use existing energy to reach people for Christ," said Craig Morgan, a deacon at Laurel River Missionary Baptist Church near London.

Bennie Bush, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Corbin, said he can foresee using the one-on-one prayer effort as the first step toward increasing evangelistic outreach. "I think (White's) finger is on the pulse of the church's need to be intentional, focused and aggressive with the gospel."

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## Poll: Teen drug use, smoking & drinking decline

NASHVILLE (BP)—Fewer teenagers are choosing to use illegal drugs, drink alcohol and smoke, according to an annual survey conducted for the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The survey for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, known as "Monitoring the Future," is conducted by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and tracks substance abuse among eighth-, 10th- and 12th-graders using a randomly selected sample of 44,000 students in 400 schools, according to The New York Times.

The study, reported as being the most reliable indicator of teenage substance abuse, found:

- For eighth-graders, the annual prevalence of marijuana use in 2002 of 14.6 percent is down from the recent peak of 18.3 percent in 1996. At 30.3 percent in 2002, annual marijuana use for 10th-graders is now somewhat below the recent 1997 peak of 34.8 percent, and 12th-graders are down slightly from the 1997 peak of 38.5 percent to 36.2 percent in 2002.

- Eighth-graders who said they had consumed alcohol in the previous year declined 3.2 percent; the decline was 3.5 percent among 10th-graders.

- Eighth-graders who had a drink in the previous year fell to 38.7 percent this year from 45.5 percent in 1996.

- Use of any drug other than marijuana in the previous year dropped 2 percentage points among eighth-graders, 2.1 percentage points among 10th-graders and 0.7 percentage points among 12th-graders.

- Among eighth-graders, the use of drugs other than marijuana is one-third lower than it was in 1996, and annual use is down about 15 percent among 10th-graders since its peak in 1996.

- Among eighth-graders, the proportion who have ever smoked tobacco, has dropped by half since 1996, to 10.7 percent from 21 percent.

- Also among eighth-graders, 81 percent said they prefer to date nonsmokers, up from 71 percent in 1996. Among 12th graders, 72 percent said they prefer to date nonsmokers, up from 64 percent in 1996.

Greater anti-drug media messages and the aftereffects of Sept. 11 are probably contributing to the decrease in teen drug use, according to Barrett Duke, vice president of research for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

"Perhaps, not since World War II have our young people been so deeply affected," Duke said. "They have come to understand in very brutal terms that all of life is not fun and games."

## 'Souper' Sunday

*Project hopes to collect \$4 million for local charities before big game*

By Cecile Holmes  
Religion News Service

COLUMBIA, S.C. (RNS)—As the Oakland Raiders and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers square off this Sunday in San Diego, a church-based, youth-led campaign of compassion will be under way in 15,000 congregations across the nation.

The day of the big game, the nation's youth will be promoting giving, not the gridiron, in the Souper Bowl of Caring, now in its 13th season.

The premise is simple; the results worth noting.

On Jan. 26, church members will be urged to drop a dollar in a soup pot to help the hungry and hurting in their own communities and sometimes beyond. Each participating congregation then reports its collection to the international Souper Bowl of Caring, which started at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C., and still operates from that city in donated office space.

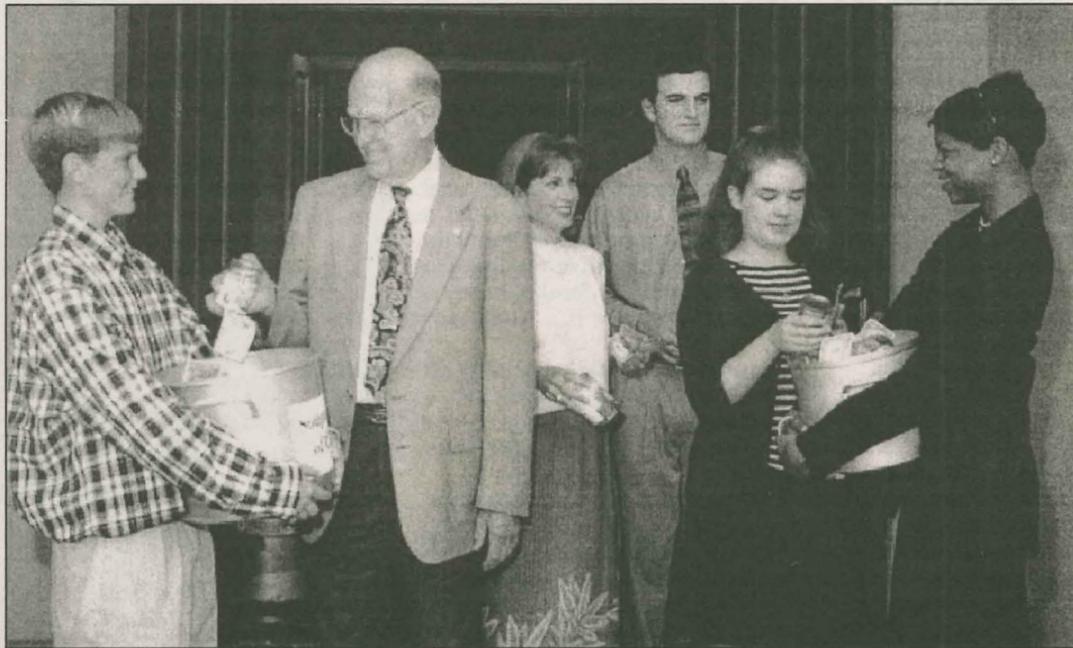
Last year, youth at Spring Valley joined thousands of young people in all 50 states and a number of other countries—Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Puerto Rico and the Marshall Islands, among others—to raise \$3.1 million for charity.

The funds raised went directly to soup kitchens, food banks, the home-building ministry of Habitat for Humanity and some locally sponsored international missions programs.

### Kentucky churches take part

In Kentucky last year, youth from 143 churches collected \$47,488, a drop from 2001 when 197 churches collected \$50,706, according to Diane Berry of the national headquarters.

To offer young people hands-on experience, churches now sponsor a "Service Blitz" on the Saturday before the big game. Young people planning to collect donations in soup pots on



Sunday are urged to work the day before at the charities that will benefit from their fund raising.

The aim is to galvanize the next generation, a group which research suggests is particularly interested in service and outreach.

"A project like the Souper Bowl of Caring nurtures and encourages those youth," said Brad Smith, founder and executive director. "It helps them see they can make a difference in the world and that they have a positive impact on the lives of others."

Stephanie Douppnik, 17, a high school senior and a member of Spring Valley Presbyterian, has worked with the project since she was in middle school. She now is the youth representative on the project's Council of Stewards, a volunteer oversight group.

Work for the Souper Bowl of Caring goes on year round, Douppnik said. She has done everything from stuffing envelopes with promotional fliers to working the phone bank on Super Bowl Sunday when groups nationwide call in their totals.

Douppnik said her generation is drawn to service because it offers lasting satisfaction.

"Once you try serving, the reward and the feeling you get from it is so good. Once you do it once or twice, it's something that keeps pulling you

back," she said. "It's something that chooses you. You don't really have to choose it."

### Stories from Wyoming to Georgia

Stories about the impact of last year's Souper Bowl of Caring are promising, even poignant.

In the heart of Cincinnati where many homeless people pass the day in a park, youth from Cherry Grove United Methodist Church used the money they raised to make 120 lunches including homemade vegetable soup.

In Casper, Wyo., young people from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church split their money between a rescue mission and a denominational development project.

In Atlanta, John Wesley United Methodist Church reached deep into its pockets, even though many members had little to give. "This was our first year," Ellen Queen said. "Our population is largely immigrant."

"Also, a number of members are out of work; others work multiple minimum wage jobs. Many live two and three families to an apartment. We asked our youth to circulate with soup bowls. We collected \$81; mostly \$1's and change. Given our circumstances, the offering showed the generosity of the hearts of our people. All we could think about was Jesus' story of the widow's mite."

This year, Souper Bowl organizers hope to raise \$4 million nationwide. Funds go directly to the projects targeted by local congregations. All each church is asked to do is call in its reports on game day so that national totals can be determined and announced.

In its first year, the effort attracted 22 young people in Columbia, who raised \$5,700. The call to action came in the form of a pastoral prayer from Brad Smith. He prayed: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat."

Since the project went national in 1993, the Souper Bowl of Caring has generated more than \$16 million.

More information is available on the organization's Web site, [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org) or by calling (800) 358-7687.

**COLLECTION TIME**  
*Youth from Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C., collect \$1 donations and canned goods from fellow church members exiting Sunday services last year. The Souper Bowl of Caring mobilizes youth to fight hunger and poverty by raising money for local community services.*



**SERVICE BLITZ** Youth sort clothes at a clothing pantry as part of the Souper Bowl of Caring. The "service blitz" was added to the 13-year-old program in 2000.

## Several abortion bills expected after Congress' shift

**"Changing the law isn't the goal of the pro-life movement. The goal is ending abortion."**

Cathy Cleaver, of the Pro-Life Secretariat of the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops

*Continued from page 1*

past three decades are focusing on several bills passed by the Republican-led House of Representatives in the last two years that stalled in the Democrat-controlled Senate. Among them:

■ The Unborn Victims of Violence Act, which passed the House in April 2001, would recognize a fetus as a crime victim, separate from the mother. Rubin said the bill is "designed to place in federal law for the first time the idea that a fetus is a whole person."

The law wouldn't immediately affect the Roe ruling, he said, but it could have some implications in the long term for how courts define abortion rights.

■ The Child Custody Protection Act, passed by the House last April, would generally make it illegal to transport a minor seeking an abortion across state lines to avoid parental notification or consent provisions.

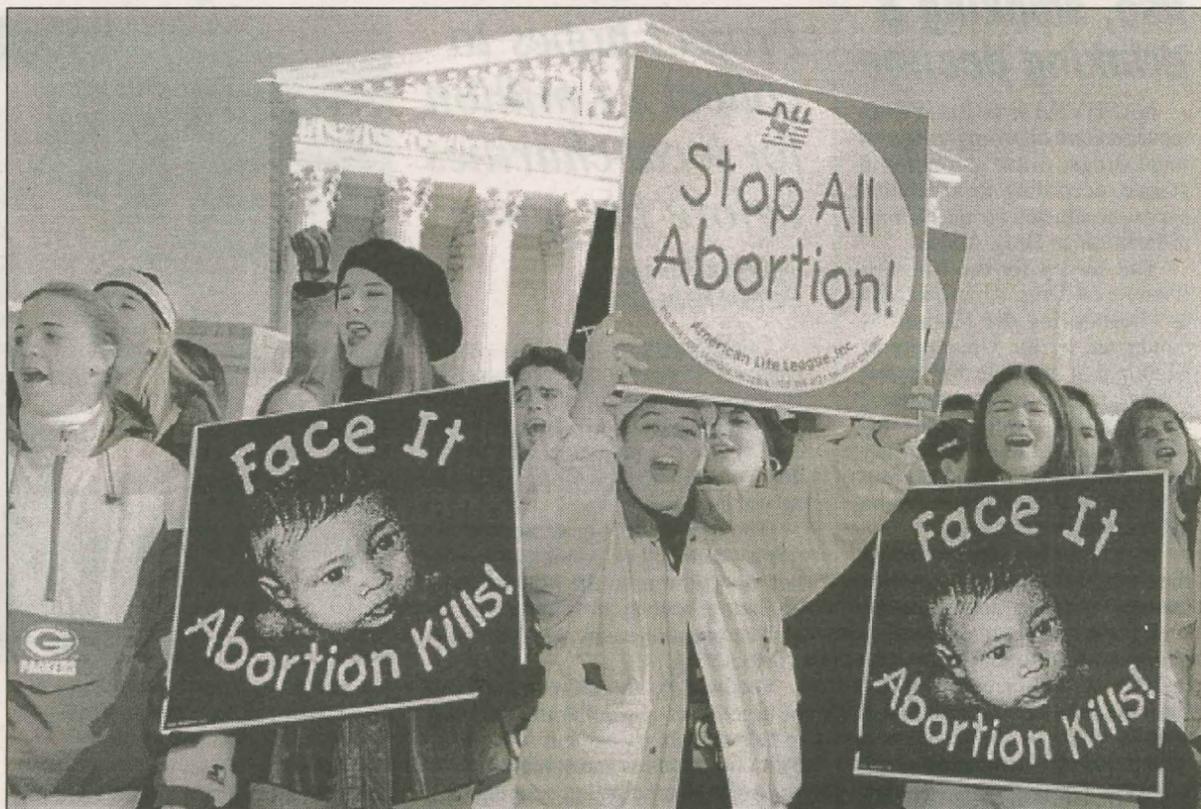
■ The Abortion Non-Discrimination Act, passed in the House last fall, would allow health care providers to refuse to perform or participate in abortions without losing government funding. Many states have passed similar laws.

■ A bill to ban a late-term abortion procedure known as "partial-birth" abortions. The House passed such a bill last summer 274-151. Similar bills were twice vetoed by former President Clinton, and the Supreme Court has ruled a Nebraska statute banning the procedure was unconstitutional.

### Optimism & pessimism

Rubin predicted all of these proposals now would be passed by Congress and signed into law by Bush, but others were not as convinced. Cleaver said the "partial-birth" abortion ban "is the only abortion legislation we can be comfortable we have the votes for."

Cleaver said the proposed bill is different from the Nebraska ban the Supreme Court invalidated. In its 2000 decision in *Stenberg vs. Carhart*, the Supreme Court found that statute



**ANNIVERSARY DEMONSTRATION** Several demonstrations for and against the legality of abortion are expected in Washington this week as Jan. 22 marks the 30th anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe vs. Wade* decision. (File photo)

placed an undue burden on a woman's right to make an abortion decision because its language was so vague it could possibly prohibit additional procedures. The court also said such a statute must include an exception from the ban if the woman's health would otherwise be jeopardized.

"The (proposed federal) ban has been modified to try to meet the objections of the court," said David O'Steen, executive director of the National Right to Life Committee. "If it's not upheld, the court is saying that Roe allows partial-birth abortions. That would lead to an even larger opposition to Roe."

Federal and state governments can pass any restrictions on abortion they desire, but they know those statutes

will face constitutional challenges in court.

### Key judge appointments

Rubin said the outcome of the 2002 elections may have its most long-lasting effects in the area of federal judicial appointments by Bush; nominees who were blocked by the Democratic-majority Senate now are likely to be confirmed.

"I think there's likely to be a substantial change in the makeup of the federal courts of appeals and the Supreme Court," he said.

Three of the justices are more than 70 years old — Chief Justice William Rehnquist, 78, and Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, 72, and John Paul Stevens, 82. The high court's position on abortion could change if either

O'Connor or Stevens, who both voted with the majority in a 1992 ruling reaffirming a woman's right to an abortion, were replaced. Rehnquist has said that *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned.

"Stenberg (the Nebraska law) was a 5-4 decision, with Rehnquist in the dissent, and the swing vote in the majority (was) O'Connor," Rubin said. With a single different vote, many states' bans on the late-term procedure could have been upheld.

O'Steen is confident the decision in *Roe* eventually will be overturned because he believes it is constitutionally unsound, but Cleaver said she didn't expect that to happen any time soon. "But changing the law isn't the goal of the pro-life movement," she said. "The goal is ending abortion."

### Abortion polls get varying answers

WASHINGTON (RNS)— They say numbers don't lie. Maybe not. But when it comes to Americans' opinions on abortion, polling numbers certainly can confound those trying to draw some solid conclusions. Consider:

■ A December poll in the *Los Angeles Times* said 46 percent of respondents favored permitting a woman to get an abortion from a doctor at any time.

■ A CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll in February of last year found only 26 percent of those surveyed said abortion should always be legal.

■ And a CNN/Time magazine poll in July 2001 showed 39 percent said a woman should be able to get an abortion if she wants one, regardless of the reason.

So which is it?

Frank Newport, editor in chief of the Gallup Poll, said polls are best used when responses are looked at over time using the same wording. Since 1975, Gallup has asked respondents whether abortion should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances or illegal under all circumstances.

The results haven't changed much over that period, he added. "The majority of Americans over the last 10 years put themselves into the middle category."

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# ISSUES



**AD CAMPAIGN** An advertisement for the "Women Deserve Better" campaign by opponents of legal abortion. The campaign argues that abortion is a reflection that women's needs are not being met. (RNS photo)

## New advertising campaign takes feminist angle against abortion

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Several anti-abortion groups have launched a public education campaign they say is intended to take the abortion debate in another direction by showing abortion has failed to meet women's needs.

Their efforts, part of the "Women Deserve Better" campaign, include advertisements on the Washington area transit system, as well as ads in The Washington Post and national policy publications, to attract the attention of members of Congress, administration officials and the thousands expected for rallies on the 30th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade this week.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Knights of Columbus, a major Roman Catholic lay group, paid for the ads.

The groups, spearheaded by Feminists for Life, said the primary reasons women seek abortions are

inadequate financial resources and lack of emotional support. They said abortion impedes the development of solutions that truly address women's needs and concerns.

Abortion "is not an act of freedom or empowerment," said Cathy Cleaver, director of planning and information for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pro-Life Secretariat.

"It's an act of last resort (by women who) feel they have no other choice," she said. "It's time to get beyond the rhetoric and scrutinize the assumption that abortion is good for women. It's not good for women."

Serrin Foster, president of Feminists for Life, said the campaign partners agreed it was time to redirect the debate: "We've been talking about the rights of the child for 30 years, but we haven't had a discussion about the needs of the woman."

## Foes: 'No practical limits' to abortion in U.S. today

By Barbara Neff  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Although 30 years have passed since the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Roe vs. Wade decision, confusion remains about just how legal abortion really is today.

"Year after year, polls show there's a general misunderstanding about the breadth of abortion law," said Cathy Cleaver, director of planning and information for the Pro-Life Secretariat of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"There's a perception that there are limits to abortion, but there are no practical limits to abortion in this country today as long as a woman can cite a health reason," she said.

Abortion rights supporters disagree. "The states have been passing legislation to restrict abortion fast and furious," said Louise Melling, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Reproductive Rights Project.

Both sides are preparing for the next battles in the war over legalized abortion. Abortion opponents are optimistic about imposing further abortion restrictions in light of the new Republican-majority political landscape in Washington.

### A short history

The Supreme Court first granted women a qualified right to terminate their pregnancies in its 1973 decision in Roe vs. Wade.

The court established the trimester framework, ruling states couldn't interfere with a woman's right to abortion in the first three months of

her pregnancy. After that period, states could regulate abortion only in ways reasonably related to protecting the woman's health until the fetus was determined to be viable, or having the potential to survive outside the womb. After viability, which the court placed at about 24 to 28 weeks, a state could prohibit abortion.

In a companion decision issued the same day, Doe vs. Bolton, the court laid out a "health exception" limiting a state's right to restrict abortion: Abortion must be allowed at any stage if necessary for the woman's health "in light of all factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial and the woman's age."

Cleaver said that exception legalizes abortion regardless of the trimester. "No one can tell me a circumstance that won't fit under that exception."

Nineteen years later, in Planned Parenthood vs. Casey, the court affirmed a woman's right to abortion but threw out Roe's trimester system, adopting the "undue burden" test for state restrictions on abortion prior to viability.

"The court held it was unconstitutional to place a substantial obstacle in the path of a woman who had decided to terminate her pregnancy," said Peter Rubin, professor of constitutional law at the Georgetown University Law Center.

"It also permitted some restrictions that had been held invalid under Roe," he said, including a 24-hour waiting period and parental consent for minors.

"As a result," Rubin said, "abortion cannot be completely prohibited during the first and second trimesters, (but) states may outlaw abortion altogether at the point of fetal viability. At that point, abortion may be made illegal, but a woman always has to be able to obtain an abortion to protect her life or health."

### States attempt to limit abortion

State restrictions have generated extensive litigation over the years.

"The states weren't really sure what these cases meant," Cleaver said. "They didn't know how far they could go, so they passed various laws testing the limits."

States have attempted to ban a late-term abortion procedure that opponents call "partial-birth abortions." Although the Supreme Court struck down the Nebraska version of the ban in 2000, a federal ban passed in the House of Representatives and is expected to be reintroduced this year.

"One of the reasons (the Nebraska ban) failed was because it wasn't limited to post-viability," said Jon Merz, assistant professor of bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Defining viability has been one of the thornier issues in the abortion debate.

Merz said Justice Sandra Day O'Connor "has pointed out that the idea of viability will run into our technical abilities to move back in time the stage at which we can sustain a fetus."

## Abortion rate down, study shows

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Both the numbers and the rate of abortions are down, with the abortion rate at its lowest level since 1974, according to a new study in the journal Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health.

According to the study, 1.31 million abortions were performed in the United States in 2000.

That's a rate of 21.3 abortions per 1,000 women between the ages of 15 and 24.

At its peak, in 1980 and 1981, the abortion rate was 29.3.



## Understanding Other Beliefs

Associates Training Workshop

February 11, 2003, Kentucky Baptist Building

Are Mormons Christians?

Do Muslims Worship the Same God as Christians?

These and other issues will be addressed at the **Interfaith Evangelism Volunteer Training Workshops** at the Kentucky Baptist Convention building in Louisville.

**Dr. Cky Carrigan**, NAMB Interfaith Evangelism National Missionary will lead the eight-hour study on *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*.

**Dr. Tal Davis**, NAMB Interfaith Evangelism Manager, will lead the conference on Islam.

The workshops will begin with registration at 8:00 a.m. and will adjourn at 5:30 p.m.

**Cost is \$15 for individuals or \$20 for married couples.**

This includes training materials and lunch. Registration deadline is February 7, 2003.

For more information or to pre-register, contact **Margie Oliver** at the **KBC Evangelism** office or email: [Margie.Oliver@kybaptist.org](mailto:Margie.Oliver@kybaptist.org).



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## Ancient Solomon-era tablet discovered in Jerusalem

**If authentic, the tablet is the first extra-biblical reference to the building of the first Solomonic Temple in Jerusalem.**

By Elaine Ruth Fletcher  
Religion News Service

JERUSALEM (RNS)—A 2,800-year-old stone tablet inscribed with a passage describing the renovation of Solomon's Temple has been discovered in Jerusalem.

The find might be the first bit of archaeological evidence to confirm biblical descriptions of Solomon's dynasty and the elaborate house of sacrifice and worship he is said to have constructed.

Some experts have cast doubts as to the authenticity of the artifact, partly because it surfaced recently in a Jerusalem antiquities dealer's shop rather than as part of an organized archaeological excavation.

But Shimon Ilan and Amnon Rosenfeld, geologists at the respected Israel Geological Survey, say scientific tests of the inscription's "patina" indicate the crust of age over the script is at least 2,300 years old.

### Potential "sensational find"

An analysis of the Phoenician-Hebrew script by Hebrew University scholar Ada Yardeni adds another 500 years to the age of the tablet, since the script resembles the kind of handwriting that was common around 800 B.C., during the 9th century B.C. rule of Judah's King Joash.

"If it is authentic, it is a sensational find, no doubt," said Gabriel Barkai, a biblical archaeologist with Bar Ilan University who has exam-

### Tablet's recovery site could be significant

JERUSALEM (RNS)—Because it came from an antiques shop and not a geographical dig, there is no precise information on where a 2,800-year-old tablet related to Solomon's Temple was obtained.

But a report in the Israeli daily Ha'aretz cited unnamed sources as saying the artifact was uncovered during recent construction work underneath Al Aksa Mosque, the Muslim shrine which now sits atop the ancient Temple Mount.

According to some theories, the tablet may have surfaced amid tons of debris carted away from the site when a number of ancient underground chambers beneath the

ined high-quality photographs of the item.

"It is the first royal inscription of one of the kings of Judah or Israel written in the name of the monarch himself. It is the first extra-biblical reference to the building of the first Solomonic Temple in Jerusalem, which is known only through the Bible."

The inscription on the tablet, the size of a legal pad, describes temple renovations undertaken by Joash, a descendant of the Davidic dynasty, in language remarkably similar to passages in II Kings 12:1-6, 11-17.

In the Hebrew inscription, the king describes how his priests collected money from the public "to

buy quarry stones and timber and copper" and asks that following the renovation work, "the Lord will protect His people with blessing."

mosque were converted into auxiliary prayer rooms. From there, it somehow made its way to an antiquities dealer.

If the tablet is indeed authenticated and linked to the Temple site, it would have widespread political, as well as religious and archaeological ramifications, serving to strengthen longstanding Jewish claims to the disputed area.

Muslim authorities have been adamant that no Jewish temple ever rested on the Temple Mount, site of the Al Aksa Mosque, despite the generally accepted fact the retaining walls of the Second Temple from the time of King Herod remain.

### Microscopes & script history

During a Scanning Electron Microscope test performed by Ilan and Rosenfeld, specks of carbon and microscopic globules of gold were discovered in the patina overlaying the inscription.

"From a scientific point of view, it's almost impossible to forge such a thing," Rosenfeld said of the tests.

According to Yardeni's analysis, the script used in the inscription gives the tablet an even older date than the carbon tests. The script resembles the Phoenician-Hebrew style of script that was used during the 9th century B.C., and has been found on two other rare inscriptions from the period.

Following the First Temple's destruction in 586 B.C., Jews were exiled to Babylon. After the Jews returned from exile, around 538 B.C., they brought with them a more square-style script reflecting a more Hellenistic influence.

Rosenfeld and Ilan see the script style and the nature of the inscription as convincing evidence the tablet was originally produced in the First Temple period around 800 B.C. and not in the later Hellenistic period of the Second Temple.

"In addition to the style of script, there is the nature of the inscription itself," said Ilan. "The biblical idiom used recalls the house of Joash, and logically, it doesn't make sense that a king (who) reigned in the Hellenistic period would make such a tablet to glorify a king that reigned 400 years earlier."

### One Lord, one faith, one baptism

Ephesians 4:4 states "There is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism ..."

You and I are part of a huge worldwide Baptist family, through the Baptist World Alliance, all of whom believe in one Lord, one faith and one baptism. This fellowship of 206 Baptist unions and conventions comprise a membership of more than 44 million baptized believers and represent approximately 110 million Baptists in more than 200 countries.

Through the BWA, you and I are having a part in empowering and enabling the Baptist leaders of these nations more effectively to witness and minister in the name of Jesus Christ and to represent and support Baptists throughout the world in defending human rights and religious freedom.

The BWA exists to unite us Baptists worldwide, to lead in world evangelization, to respond to people in need and to defend human rights. As we hold hands with one another across continents and cultures, we strengthen one another to do the work God has called Baptists to do around the world.

Sunday, Feb. 2, is BWA Day in our churches. Let me urge you on this day to join BWA General Sec-

retary Denton Lotz in remembering we belong together because we belong to Jesus Christ. Also, pray for those who are being persecuted, for freedom to distribute Bibles, for those who are suffering from hunger and poverty and AIDS, that Baptists will be peacemakers, for a new commitment to evangelism, that young people will deepen their faith in Christ and for unity of the church.

I do not know anyone who demonstrates more than Denton Lotz compassion for the peoples of the world and a passion to change their lives with the power of the gospel.

I am pleased to inform you he will be speaking in the 10 a.m. convocation at Campbellsville University on Feb 19. Not only will your heart be blessed by hearing him, but also by experiencing the Campbellsville University family.

I do not know anyone who demonstrates more than Denton Lotz compassion for the peoples of the world and a passion to change their lives with the power of the gospel.

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

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Barry Allen

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# SMILE

## What it's all about

There is a regular feature in the Western Recorder called Mountains to the Mississippi. I like the title of the column because it is so visual. It immediately brings to mind the map of the commonwealth and that naturally brings to my mind the location of all of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's programs.

But, as I've said many times in this space, KBHC is much more than dots on the map. This ministry is about John. When he came to Spring Meadows, his guardian told us, "He can never live with us again." Guess what? Because of John's hard work under the guidance of our staff, he is back home again.

KBHC is about helping Kenny and Vicki, who lost their jobs when the factory where they both worked closed. They were struggling to provide for their three children and themselves, then Kenny had a heart attack. The financial drain of paying the medical bills forced them to move to substandard housing that eventually was condemned. The family was at risk of being homeless. KBHC was there to get the family back on their feet, established in a new home and connected with community resources. This ministry is about Jennifer,

a resident of one of our homes who accepted Christ at camp last summer. It's about Bradley, the young man working fulltime and taking college courses while living and receiving support through our Center for Independence apartment program. It's about the new mother in foster care with her baby, taking parenting classes and finishing high school—and making it—because of the commitment of her foster parents and the KBHC staff supporting her.

KBHC is about the couple who, after waiting and praying for years, welcome their adoptive daughter from Ukraine. It's about being there for the birth mother who bravely makes the difficult decision to form an adoption plan for her baby.

And it's about you and the support you provide. As you equip the ministry, the ministry equips the children and the families. From the mountains to the Mississippi it happens every day. Thank you for being part of it.

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)

## HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Bill Smithwick

## Ministering in Paris

By Robert Dunston

Woods Nash, son of Mike and Mary Nash of Glasgow, spent 11 weeks in Paris this past summer as part of a five-member mission team working in Algerian and Moroccan neighborhoods. The team's goal was to build relationships and help career missionaries "till the soil."

Part of Nash's work involved serving in a children's club for six weeks. For three weeks team members based their Bible studies and activities around the story of Joseph, and for three weeks they used the story of Moses.

Nash also worked with youth groups and church groups that came during the summer to help in the ministry. He led a variety of groups on prayer walks through neighborhoods as they distributed children's books and prayed for the people.

The book distribution was particularly effective, reaching both children and adults. Individuals often stopped team members to ask for copies of the books. During the summer more than 24,000 books were distributed.

One day Nash visited a North African man whom he had gotten to know. The man was in his shop with his family, stocking the

shelves. Nash worked with them and was asked to stay for lunch. The lunch was a traditional Moroccan meal, and Nash was able to meet and enjoy fellowship with the man's family and friends.

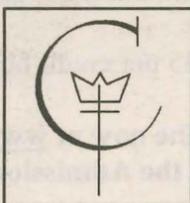
As the only man on the team, Nash lived alone the entire summer. He enjoyed nurturing relationships with people in the mission field and with his fellow team members.

Nash said that the absence of television and radio also helped him learn to be quiet and adopt a lifestyle that focused more on God. He spent much time reading and praying and discovered that preparation for ministry required far more time than actually ministering.

Nash, a junior majoring in philosophy and religion, plans to attend seminary and continue to serve Christ. We thank him for his commitment to Christ and his desire to live and share the good news.

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

## CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



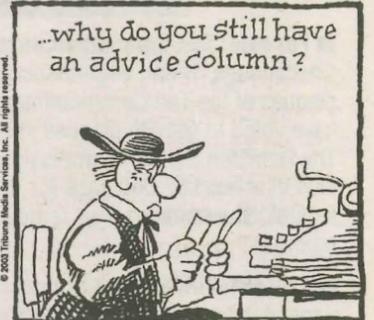
## Kudzu



If God is Just and Merciful...



Doug Marlette



## For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

## Bible Crossword

### Across

- 1 "the \_\_\_ above the liver, with the kidneys" (stomach part mentioned in Leviticus 3:15 for an offering)
- 5 Gasp
- 9 Mordecai the \_\_\_
- 12 A king of Israel (1 Kings 16)
- 13 West African tribe
- 14 Japanese apricot
- 15 Disfigure
- 16 "We spend our years as a \_\_\_ that is told" (Psalm 90:9)
- 17 Uproar
- 18 Make possible
- 20 Aka Araunah the Jebusite
- 22 "Do not \_\_\_ because ye know not the scriptures" (Mark 12:24)
- 24 Makes less difficult
- 26 Summer drink
- 28 Actor Robert
- 30 Ancient Thebes (Jeremiah 46)
- 31 Mid. East. country
- 32 \_\_\_ Grande
- 33 Witty remark
- 35 I \_\_\_ (God)
- 36 "shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching \_\_\_" (2 Timothy 4:3)
- 39 Judah's daughter-in-law (Genesis 38)
- 41 Compass dir.
- 43 Hosea's wife
- 45 Area of Judea that included Beer-sheba
- 50 "all they are brass, and \_\_\_, and iron" (Ezekiel 22:18)
- 51 Appear indistinctly
- 53 Kaiser \_\_\_
- 54 Chemical suffix

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			53		
54					55					56		
57					58					59		

- 55 "God \_\_\_ respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34)
- 56 Duke \_\_\_ (Genesis 46)
- 57 Cruise the \_\_\_ (pastime for the 90s)
- 58 "justified in the Spirit, \_\_\_ of angels" (1 Timothy 3:16)
- 59 \_\_\_ room
- 25 Egyptian king (2 Kings 17)
- 26 Preposition
- 27 "Your old men shall \_\_\_" (Acts 2:17)
- 29 Biblical interjection
- 31 "the people \_\_\_ a vain thing" (Psalm 2:1)
- 32 B & O, e.g.
- 34 \_\_\_ a roll
- 35 Preposition
- 37 Belonging to the son of Gad (Numbers 26)
- 38 "Take up thy \_\_\_, and go unto thine house" (Matthew 9:6)
- 40 French impressionist
- 42 "\_\_\_, called Peter" (Matthew 4:18)
- 44 \_\_\_ of Sharon (Song of Solomon 2)
- 46 "the breastplate of judgment the \_\_\_" (Exodus 28:30)
- 47 Less is \_\_\_ (fashion dictum)
- 48 Zeal
- 49 "that thine \_\_\_ may be in secret" (Matthew 6:4)
- 50 Mus. part
- 52 Chemical (suffix)

## Last week's solution

1	C	A	P		B	O	R	E	D		S	T	A	M	
12	U	L			13	O	R	A	T	E			R	I	A
15	P	E	R	S	I	A		17	A	S	S		U	R	E
22	H	A	L	L	S		24	P	I	R	A	T	E	D	
28	A	N	E	T		29	E	Y	R	E		S	T	R	
31	T	A		32	S	U	N		34	A	S	E		H	E
37	E	N	A		38	P	O	E	M		41	M	B	A	S
45	D	I	V	E	R	S	E		45	W	O	R	M	S	
49	B	R	I	N	G	S		51	L	I	E	T	O		
55	A	I	D		56	H	I	R	E		58	E	R	A	
59	Y	E	S		60	T	A	R	E	S		61	N	E	W

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## NATIONAL NOTES

■ **For sale: Ten Commandments.** County commissioners in Chattanooga, Tenn., who unsuccessfully worked to display plaques of the Ten Commandments in local court buildings have voted to sell the plaques in order to pay their lawyers. The Hamilton County commissioners decided Jan. 8 to seek bids of at least \$2,000 each for the three brass plaques after a federal judge ordered their removal, Associated Press reported.

■ **Ashcroft: Faith-based groups face "bigotry."** Attorney General John Ashcroft has weighed in on the Bush administration's efforts to increase government funding of religious social services, saying "occasional bigotry" has prevented some faith-based groups from competing for funding. "Out of fear, ignorance and occasional bigotry, faith-based groups have been prohibited from competing for federal funding on a level playing field with secular groups," he said in a Jan. 13 speech.

■ **Supreme Court declines Columbine memorial case.** The Supreme Court has declined to hear a thorny First Amendment case that pitted two groups of survivors of the Columbine High School shooting against each other. On Jan. 13, the high court denied, without comment, an appeal from two victims' families of the 1999 shootings. They had asked the court to overturn a decision against them when they sued their school district for the right to include Christian messages on special decorative tiles they had been asked to paint.

■ **Congress members support Internet law.** Ten members of Congress have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to declare the Children's Internet Protection Act constitutional in a friend-of-the-court brief filed Jan. 10. A U.S. appeals court ruled last year that the act violated the First Amendment because it required filters used by libraries and schools that also might block Web sites on health, science and politics. The court is scheduled to hear the case in March.

February 15 & 22  
March 1 & 15



## All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra Auditions

**Saturday, February 15**

Rich Pond Baptist Church,  
Bowling Green  
2:00-4:00 PM (CST)

**Saturday, February 22**

First Baptist Church,  
Shelbyville  
2:00-4:00 PM (EST)

**Saturday, March 1**

Southern Baptist Theological  
Seminary, Louisville  
2:00-4:00 PM (EST)

**Saturday, March 15**

First Baptist Church,  
Hopkinsville  
2:00-4:00 PM (CST)

Kentucky Baptist high school students (grades 9 - 12) are invited to audition for a spot in the eighty-voice choir or forty-piece orchestra. Those selected will hit the road this summer (June 22 - 29) for a retreat and concert tour under the direction of outstanding conductors. The cost to audition is just \$10; download an audition registration form and check out other details at

[www.kybaptist.org/allstate](http://www.kybaptist.org/allstate).



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## What can you do?

It was Sunday morning and the temperature was 11 degrees. The choir was supposed to sing in a rural church in Leslie County. Though this was going to be a relatively short trip for the choir, it also was going to involve traveling the most difficult mountain roads our choir had been on for several years. However, our major problem was not the steep, winding roads or the cold; it was the flu.

Any parent who has cared for a sick child knows how difficult it can be. Your child does not feel well and you want to ease the pain. You want to make him as comfortable as possible. You are tempted to take your child to the doctor, but you are not sure the doctor can do anything to help. So you do all you can to meet the needs of your child, especially to provide that tender loving care that best comes from a parent.

Now, take that problem and multiply it by 50! Yes, 50! That is the average number of students who have been on bed rest daily for the past several days. The choir director could see the effects of the flu on the faces of the choir members during practice. The question was how many would be able to make the choir trip Sunday.

The average waiting time for a church that schedules the choir is nine to 12 months. If we have to cancel a trip, that church will have to wait many more months before we can reschedule. But should we take the choir when many members are ill and will not be able to sing as well as they normally do?

On top of all of this, it was very cold and we had to travel over narrow, crooked mountain roads, which causes some choir members to be-

come even more ill! We felt we had little choice; we had to go. We would take choir members who were not on bed rest and hope for the best.

The trip was as challenging as I had expected. The last 18 miles could only be traveled at an average speed of 25 mph. That was a relief to those who normally get carsick, but it considerably increased our traveling time. As I looked in the rear view mirror, I could tell by the expressions on the students' faces that they would rather be in bed. I knew the coughing would get worse when they began to sing.

We finally arrived, nearly 15 minutes later than we had planned. The main entrance to the parking lot was too steep for the bus, so I unloaded the choir and turned around.

The folks were happy to see us, and they seemed to be relieved that we had arrived. There was little time for anything except a stop at the restrooms. The choir sounded better than I had expected, but certainly not as good as they normally do. The coughing was noticeable, but not so bad that it greatly detracted from the message of the songs.

After the service, the choir was treated to a delicious potluck dinner. There was more than enough to satisfy a choir that ate less than they normally do.

The trip home was welcomed by all. Most students were anxious to get back to campus so they could get to bed. I always appreciate the effort our choir members put forth each Sunday, but I was especially grateful for their commitment this week.

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)

THIS IS  
ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## Clear Creek Baptist Bible College Now Offering Internet Classes

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606-337-3196

Donnie Fox

Dean of Institutional Advancement

E-mail: [dfox@ccbbc.edu](mailto:dfox@ccbbc.edu)

# MUSIC/BOOKS

## Likely suspects get multiple nominations for Doves

NASHVILLE (RNS)—Christian artists Toby McKeehan, Michael W. Smith and Kirk Franklin were among the top nominees for the 34th Annual Dove Awards, the Gospel Music Association announced Jan. 14.

McKeehan, who uses the name tobyMac in performances, and Smith each received nine nominations and Franklin earned eight.

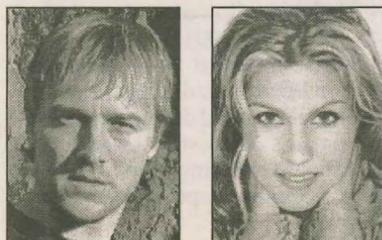
"Toby, Michael and Kirk truly represent the depth and breadth of Christian and gospel music today," said Frank Breedon, outgoing president of the Gospel Music Association.

Other artists with multiple nominations included Nichole Nordeman and Bebo Norman, with seven each, and Third Day, with five.

The Dove Awards will be held in Nashville on April 10. Nominations include:

**Artist of the Year:**  
Steven Curtis Chapman.  
MercyMe.  
Michael W. Smith.  
Third Day.  
tobyMac.

**New Artist of the Year:**  
Big Daddy Weave.  
Daily Planet.  
Jeff Deyo.  
Paul Colman Trio.  
The Rock 'n' Roll Worship Circus.  
Souljahz.



**DOVE AWARDS** *The Crabb Family (top), a Southern gospel music group from Beaver Dam, was nominated for two Dove Awards while Bebo Norman (left) and Nichole Nordeman received seven nominations each.*

**Female Vocalist of the Year:**  
Natalie Grant.  
Nicole C. Mullen.  
Nichole Nordeman.  
Rebecca St. James.  
Joy Williams.

**Male Vocalist of the Year:**  
Steven Curtis Chapman.  
Bebo Norman.  
Mac Powell.  
Mark Schultz.  
Michael W. Smith.

**Group of the Year:**  
Audio Adrenaline.  
MercyMe.  
Selah.  
Sixpence None the Richer.  
Third Day.

**Song of the Year:**  
*Above All* by Lenny LeBlanc and Paul Baloche.  
*Back in His Arms Again* by Mark Schultz.  
*Breathe* by Marie Barnett.  
*Come Unto Me* by Nicole C. Mullen.  
*Great Light of the World* by Bebo Norman.  
*Here I Am to Worship* by Tim Hughes.  
*Holy* by Nichole Nordeman and Mark Hammond.  
*Ocean Floor* by Audio Adrenaline.  
*Spoken For* by Mercy Me.  
*Yes, I Believe* by Joel Lindsey and Tony Wood.  
*Youth of the Nation* by P.O.D.

**Country Song of the Year:**  
*God Is Good All the Time* by Dave Moody.  
*Leave Here Empty Handed* by The Hoskins Family.  
*Standing on the Promises* by The Martins.  
*The Most Inconvenient Christmas* by The Oak Ridge Boys.  
*The River's Gonna Keep on Rolling* by Amy Grant.

**Southern Gospel Song of the Year:**  
*Don't You Wanna Go?* by The Crabb Family.  
*I Rest My Case at the Cross* by The Perrys.  
*I Wanna Know How It Feels* by Karen Peck and New River.  
*I'm Gonna Sing* by Gaither Vocal Band.  
*More Than Ever* by Gaither Vocal Band.

**Bluegrass Song of the Year:**  
*I Sure Miss You* by The Crabb Family.  
*I've Come to Take You Home* by The Crabb Family.  
*Me and Jesus* by Charlie Sizemore.  
*The Devil Can't Touch Your Soul* by Rick Hendrix.  
*Walkin' and Talkin'* by The Lewis Family.  
*You Must Be Born Again* by Jeff and Sheri Easter.

**Pop/Contemporary Song of the Year:**  
*Back in His Arms Again* by Mark Schultz.  
*Great Light of the World* by Bebo Norman.  
*Holy* by Nichole Nordeman.  
*Love Someone Like Me* by Patty Cabrera.  
*Ocean Floor* by Audio Adrenaline.

## Avalon wins at American Music Awards

LOS ANGELES (RNS)—The Christian vocal group Avalon was named favorite artist in the contemporary inspirational music category at the American Music Awards Jan. 13.

The four members of the group accepted their honor onstage during the three-hour program that aired live on ABC.

"Three months ago, we didn't know there was an award for our kind of music here at the AMAs and here we are," said group member Michael Passons.

Their win marked the second year that Christian music was recognized in a category of the awards ceremony.

The other two nominees for the honor were Jars of Clay and P.O.D.

## Houston Baptist pastor explores Enron's lessons on greed, integrity

By Mark Wingfield  
*Texas Baptist Standard*

HOUSTON (ABP)—Enron—the "poster child for a capitalism run amok"—is full of lessons for America in general and Christians in particular, according to Houston pastor and author Chris Seay.

"When affluence and material prosperity become our all-consuming goal, greed takes the wheel and drives the whole speeding convoy over a cliff," Seay writes in his new book, "The Tao of Enron: Spiritual Lessons from a Fortune 500 Fallout."

The book features a rare interview with former Enron CEO and President Kenneth Lay as well as insight from whistleblower Sherron Watkins.

With help from contributing author Chris Bryan, a former Enron VP, Seay paints a picture of the corporate culture that led Enron to the height of envy and the depth of shame. Seay offers prophetic warnings from Scripture about morality, integrity and greed.

Seay is pastor of Ecclesia, an innovative congregation that combines art, music and film in its expressions of worship and Bible study. He was founding pastor of University Baptist Church in Waco and is a frequent conference speaker.

Bryan, interim administrator for Baptist Mission Centers in Houston, is a Truett Seminary graduate who previously was vice president of administration and human

resources for Enron Oil and Gas Co.

### Bizarre encounter led to book

Seay knew he had to write the book, he said, after witnessing a bizarre encounter at his neighborhood gas station in Houston that illustrated the fallout from Enron's demise.

A homeless man who frequently solicits money from drivers of luxury cars one day approached a solemn man at the gas station. Seay heard the well-dressed man berate the beggar: "You want to take something from me? They have already taken everything. I have nothing left. Soon they will take my car. So back ... up!"

What Seay noticed about his hometown was that "everybody was flippin' out around here." In

this moment, the pastor saw an opportunity to connect the spiritual and cultural landscape into one portrait.

He also was fascinated because Lay, like Seay, had grown up the son of a Baptist pastor. "I wondered, 'What's gone awry here that the son of a Baptist pastor has come to be in this place, is at the center of this scandal?'"

Seay spent about two months interviewing sources for the book and met several times with Lay, also a member of a Baptist church. Then he wrote the book in about two months to get it to market in a timely fashion.

Alternating between a feature interview style and sermonizing, Seay repeatedly

draws spiritual lessons from Enron.

"The catastrophe of Enron shows that it is past time for America to examine the motives behind its unyielding quest for wealth," he writes. "Our frenzy to accumulate money and power harms not only the poor of America and the rest of the world's underprivileged, but also the very ones who get trapped in a never-ending thirst for more."

"The ultimate lesson of Enron," he concludes, "is this: Wealth can never satisfy."

### Ken Lay's 'schizophrenic' faith

While not condemning Lay as an intentional perpetrator of evil, Seay does ponder the contrast between what Enron became and the public face of Christian piety Lay wore.

"It doesn't take a master theologian to notice the obvious disconnect between the massive harm inflicted on others for selfish gain and the serve-others-first message of Christ. ... Can anyone live a genuine faith without that faith guiding and coloring everything one does, including one's activities in the business world?"

In critiquing the so-called "rank and yank" system of cut-throat personnel evaluation employed at Enron, Seay finds a culture that bred untruth as a means of survival. The irony, he adds, is that "integrity" was listed as one of Enron's four core beliefs.

But he adds that all humans "have a frightening ability to declare our belief in one thing while simultaneously acting in a

manner 180 degrees in opposition to it."

He quotes a longtime friend and coworker of Lay describing Lay's own faith as "schizophrenic."

"Take heed, lest we share the same indictment," Seay warns. "At Enron, many workers found their Monday selves in desperate conflict with the selves they had taken to church only a day before. In fact, the culture at Enron encouraged many employees to leave their moral compasses at the front security desk and embrace the Enron way."

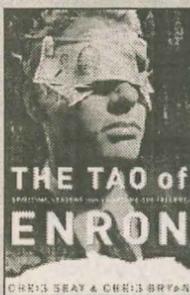
### Whistleblower's 'acted-out faith'

In Sherron Watkins, former Enron vice president for corporate development, Seay finds a rare example of courage and integrity stirred by Christian faith. "Sherron Watkins' behavior—her acted-out faith—represents a refreshing change from today's widespread corporate culture of greed and irresponsibility," he concludes.

Seay encourages Christians to live more like Watkins and less like other Enron executives and executive-wannabes.

"Until we Americans re-envision the role of business and wealth, we are doomed to repeat a series of disasters like what happened at Enron," he writes.

"And the fallout for most of us will not come in the form of the collapse of the seventh-largest company in the United States of America. It will take shape in the collapse of marriages, families and communities, and the suffering of children and other helpless victims across the planet—all because of our selfish choices."



## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ "You prayed for the Lord to send workers into the harvest, and He has answered," write missionaries in Bulgaria. Pray for the missionary journeyman who is in training in Virginia to move to Bulgaria in March.

■ Praise God for a pastor who has come to serve a deaf congregation in Oradea, Romania. The church had been without a pastor for 10 years.

■ Evangelical churches in Italy to catch a vision for reaching people for Christ by using a variety of methods.

■ Four students in Oradea, Romania, who are studying "Experiencing God" with Baptist representative Richard Mauney.

■ An English class recently begun by Baptists in an outreach center in a large city in Belgium. Pray that leaders will recognize and use every opportunity to show God's love.

■ The ministry of the "Messiah Singers" from the United States this week in Khabarovsk, Russia. The 35-member group will sing in public settings, in a local college and a university, and in a combined worship service for all Baptist churches in the area. The Far East Symphony Orchestra will accompany the choir in the worship service.

■ Inmates in a prison in Caceres, Spain, who are taking a discipleship course.

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host Campbellsville University Night Jan. 29 with a 6 p.m. fellowship meal and 7 p.m. worship. For information, call (270) 789-0082. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **CLERMONT**—Clermont Church will host **David Livingston** in concert Jan. 26, 7 p.m. **Ken Lawson** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Blue Ball Church recently called **Jeremy Bass** as minister of music and youth.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—Casky Church called **Bo Bailey** as youth director. **Will Stone** is pastor.

■ **LEWISBURG**—Mount Pleasant Church ordained **Eddie Schweers** as a deacon Dec. 29.

Guptons Grove Church will host a men's rally Jan. 25, 5 p.m., with **Hal Carter** as guest speaker.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Highland Church called **Jonathan Crutchfield** as minister of music and worship. **Joe Phelps** is pastor.

St. Stephens Church will host the third annual reconciliation celebration service Feb. 9, 6 p.m., sponsored by the Greater Louisville Christian Reconciliation Ministries.

■ **MONTICELLO**—**Kenneth Dick** has resigned as director of missions for Freedom and Wayne County associations effective Jan. 31.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—**Jay Hardwick**, minister to students at First Church, has resigned to accept a call to Edwards Road Church in Greenville, S.C.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—First Church called **Dick Ham** as interim minister of music. **Kevin Roberts** 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.

## 2002 Annie Armstrong Offering sets record giving mark of \$49.25 million

SHOCCO SPRINGS, Ala. (BP)—Southern Baptists contributed a record \$49.25 million to North American missions through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in 2002.

The total is a 2 percent increase over the amount contributed the previous year. The 2002 offering of \$49,245,244 followed total receipts of \$48,300,018 in 2001.

Southern Baptist North American Mission Board President Bob Reccord announced the total during the national Woman's Missionary Union executive board meeting, Jan. 11-14 at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly in Alabama.

"With the drop in income last year from our reserves and FamilyNet television ad sales, it was only the faithfulness of Southern Baptists through the (Annie Armstrong) offering and the Cooperative Program that kept missions viable in the economic challenges which we still face," Reccord said.

The volunteer effort of thousands of pastors, WMU workers and other local church volunteers keep the promotional costs to only 1 percent of the total amount raised, Reccord reported. Even that amount, however, is paid for by other sources; 100 percent of Annie Armstrong receipts directly support North American missionaries and their work.

The 2003 offering will be promoted this spring between the March 2-9 Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Easter on April 20. The 2003 national goal is \$53 million.

The offering supplies more than 40 percent of NAMB's annual budget. The mission board cooperates with state Baptist conventions in supporting 5,204 missionaries in the United States and Canada.

For more information about the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, visit the Web site [www.anniearmstrong.com](http://www.anniearmstrong.com).

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR SALE:** 1995 GMC 29-passenger bus. Low miles; \$23,000. Call Richard, First Baptist, Richmond, (859) 623-4028.

**HEALTHCARE:** Pre-existing conditions accepted. Non-insurance solution. Hospitals, doctors, dentists, prescriptions, accidental injury, vision, hearing, etc. \$64.95/month per family. Representatives needed; unlimited income. (866) 524-7685; (502) 493-1383; [steph@metrol.org](mailto:steph@metrol.org). ceo8761

**SEEKING:** Associate pastor for progressive Southern Baptist church with average attendance of 500. Primary responsibilities include education and administration. Seminary training and/or experience preferred. Send resumé to: Berea Baptist Church, 310 Chestnut St., Berea, KY 40403; (859) 986-9391.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music to lead blended worship and fully-graded choirs for Oakland Baptist Church (12 miles north of Bowling Green). PO Box 154, Oakland, KY 42159; (270) 563-4011. Dr. Tom Stokes, pastor.

**SEEKING:** Westwood Baptist Church, a CBF-affiliated church in Springfield, Va., seeks applicants for the position of associate pastor/minister with youth and children. Candidates should have a degree from an accredited seminary, relevant experience in this ministry field and a genuine love for youth and children. Resumes should be submitted to: PSC, Westwood Baptist Church, 8200 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, VA 22152.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for Gate City Baptist Church, Pocatello, Id. We are a church averaging 75-100 attendance in a city of approximately 50,000. Our staff consists of a full-time pastor, a part-time youth minister, a Baptist campus minister, a secretary and a custodian. If interested, please forward your resumé to: Ritchie Weers, 294 Valley View, Pocatello, ID 83204-4711, or by e-mail to [Ritchie@nicoh.com](mailto:Ritchie@nicoh.com).

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister for Palomar Baptist, Lexington, Ky. Send resumé to: Melvin Kirkpatrick, 1817 Yorktown Road, Lexington, KY 40504.

**SEEKING:** Hartford Baptist Church in Hartford, Ky., prayerfully seeks a full-time pastor. Please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 415 Liberty St., Hartford, KY 42347.

**SEEKING:** Meta Baptist Church, located in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky, is seeking God's guidance in searching for a pastor. MBC is actively involved in missions, presently supporting two mission churches; has a full-time staff, minister of music and youth, secretary and custodian; a growing children's program through Sunday school, TeamKids and children's choir; an active youth program and an outreach program for the elderly who may be shut-ins or in nursing homes. If led by God to seek this position, please forward a resumé to: Meta Baptist Church, 8807 Meta Highway, Pikeville, KY 41501.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for church located in a growing community. Send resumé to: Fairlane Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 5913 Herring Road, Alexandria, KY 41001.

**SEEKING:** Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, a Tennessee Baptist Convention facility, is searching for a ministry-minded individual to fill a year-round full-time foodservice supervisor's position offering generous benefits package. Experience in menu planning, staff supervision, meal preparation and purchasing required. If interested, contact (877) 354-6336 or [thughes@tnbaptist.org](mailto:thughes@tnbaptist.org).

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of Coeburn, Va., is seeking a full-time pastor. First Baptist Church of Coeburn is a Southern Baptist church; a Southern Baptist seminary degree is required. Please send resumé and video or audio tape if possible to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 336, Coeburn, VA 24230.

**SEEKING:** Highlawn Baptist Church, Huntington, W.Va., is currently receiving resumé for the full-time position of minister to students. Interested applicants may review information on this position by going to [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) and clicking on "Job Search." Send resumé to: pastor@highlawnbaptist.org; or Highlawn Baptist Church, 2788 Collis Ave., Huntington, WV 25702, Attn: Pastor.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Growing church; blended worship style; Gene Snyder and Dixie Highway; \$150-\$200/week. Southminster Baptist Church, 11780 Tierney Drive, Louisville, KY 40272. Send resumé or contact office for appointment: (502) 933-2761.

**SEEKING:** Pianist/accompanist for Wednesday praise choir practice and Sunday morning worship services (blended service). Salary negotiable on experience. Southminster Baptist Church, 11780 Tierney Drive, Louisville, KY 40272, (502) 933-2761.

**SEEKING:** Office secretary for the Kentucky Convention, Church Music department. Position requires secretarial experience and computer application skills. The full-time position offers competitive salary and benefit package. Contact the Administrative Services department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Louisville, Ky. (502) 244-6468.

**SEEKING:** Leonardtown Baptist Church in southern Maryland is accepting resumé for a full-time youth pastor. Ministry description available at [www.leonardtownbaptist.org](http://www.leonardtownbaptist.org). Send resumé to: Leonardtown Baptist Church, PO Box 1757, Leonardtown, MD 20650, Attn: Youth Pastor Search Committee, or e-mail to: [search@leonardtownbaptist.org](mailto:search@leonardtownbaptist.org).

**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 resumé to Ricky Holloway, 12978 Orndorff Mill Road, Olmstead, KY 42265.

**SEEKING:** Accepting resumé for the position of director of missions. All resumé should be sent to Giles Baptist Association, PO Box 404, Pulaski, TN 38478. The deadline for receiving resumé is Feb. 21, 2003.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Petrey Memorial Baptist Church. Send resumé and video/audio tape to: Pastor Search Committee, Petrey Memorial Baptist Church, 141 Alto St., Hazard, KY 41701. Resumé welcome until April 27, 2003. Call (606) 436-4716 or 439-3928 for more information.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and education for Scottsville Baptist Church, Scottsville, Ky. Send resumé to the church at PO Box 392, Scottsville, KY 42164, Attn: Sharon Davis; or e-mail to [mail@scottsvillebaptist.org](mailto:mail@scottsvillebaptist.org). Call (270) 237-3451 for more information.

**SEEKING:** Two positions: part-time minister of music and part-time youth director. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Parksville Baptist Church, 6610 Alum Springs Road, Danville, KY 40422; or e-mail: [pkbaptist@kih.net](mailto:pkbaptist@kih.net).

**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 resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40220.

**SEEKING:** Pastor for rural church (SBC affiliation). Send resumé and references to: Search Committee, 425 Pope Ave., Harrodsburg, KY 40330.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music/youth. Please send resumé to: Otter Creek First Baptist Church, 13000 Quail Run Drive, Little Rock, AR 72210, Attn: Martha Owens.

**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](http://www.talklongdistance.net), (888) 645-4559.

## Roadside religion

*Professor finds expressions of faith along U.S. rural highways*

By Brian Albrecht  
Religion News Service

CLEVELAND (RNS)—Some folks get religion in church; others find it after a near-death or seemingly miraculous experience. And there are no atheists in foxholes, as the old soldiers' saying goes.

Timothy Beal found religion on a miniature-golf fairway of the Golgotha Fun Park in Cave City, where visitors can sink a putt as Jesus ascends to heaven on the 18th hole.

He also found it in thousands of scrap-wood crosses planted across 11 acres of Alabama farmland, bearing such messages as, "Hell is hot, hot, hot."

And it was there in the skeletal steel shell of a life-size replica of Noah's ark, sailing the seas of possibility off Interstate 68 in Frostburg, Md.

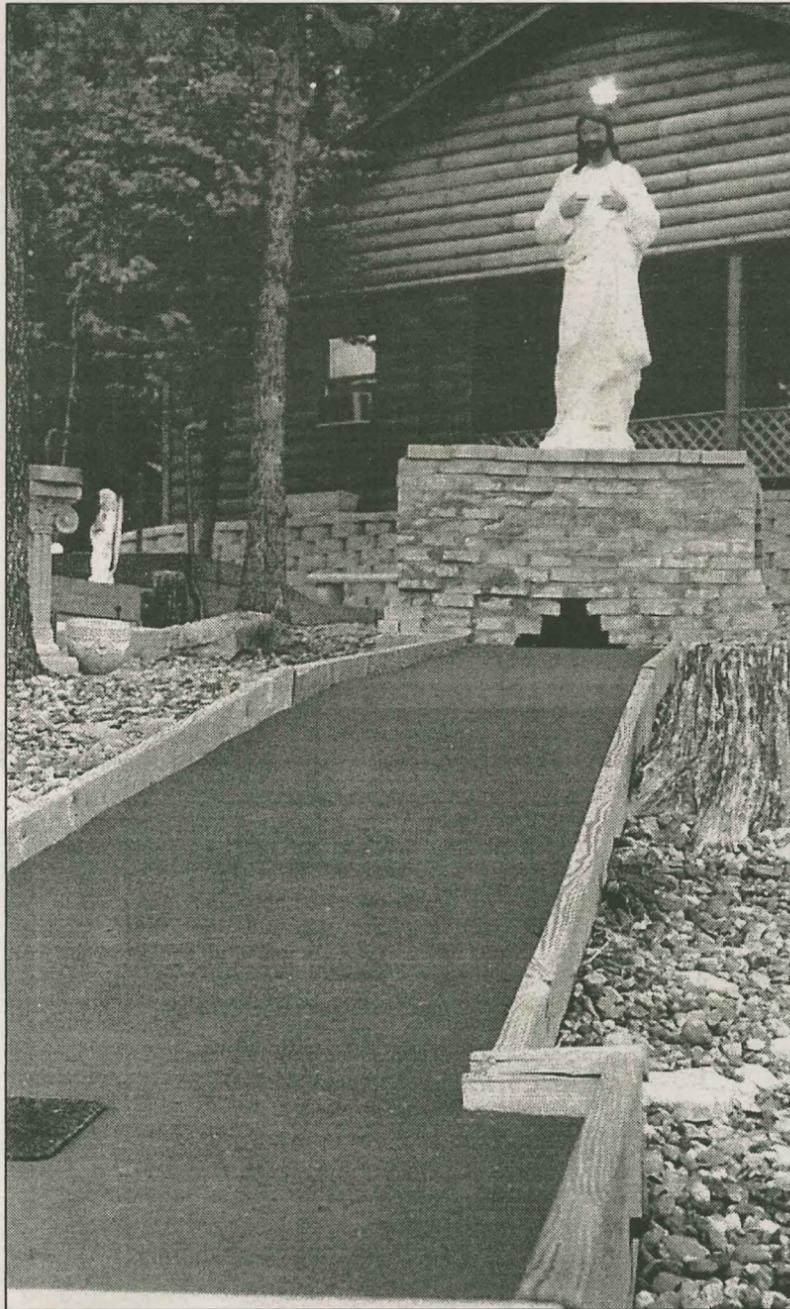
It was the ark that prompted this professor of biblical literature at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland to load up his family in a motor home last summer and spend three weeks touring rural highways in six states from New York to Alabama in search of material for a book he will title "Roadside Religion."

### "Make creepy things interesting"

Faith is where you find it, and for the really home-grown stuff, you've got to hit the roads less traveled, according to Beal, 39. "Religion is at its most interesting, and most telling, where it's least expected."

Roadside religion also might mesh with the personality of an author whose previous book examined supernatural creatures in "Religion and Its Monsters," and whose own daughter once noted that Daddy, who keeps a Jesus "action figure" in his office, "likes to make creepy things interesting."

Beal's book will provide a glimpse of about 20 religious-



**THE 18TH HOLE** Jesus' Ascension frames the 18th hole at Golgotha Fun Park in Cave City. The miniature golf park was among the sites featured in a book called "Roadside Religion." (Photo by Patsy DuBos)

themed parks or attractions around the country that he has visited or plans to see in the coming year.

These include:

- The Holyland USA Nature Sanctuary in Virginia with its scaled-down version of biblical Israel on the site of a former government whiskey distillery.

- Ohio's Living Bible museum.
- The world's largest rosary collection, in Oregon.

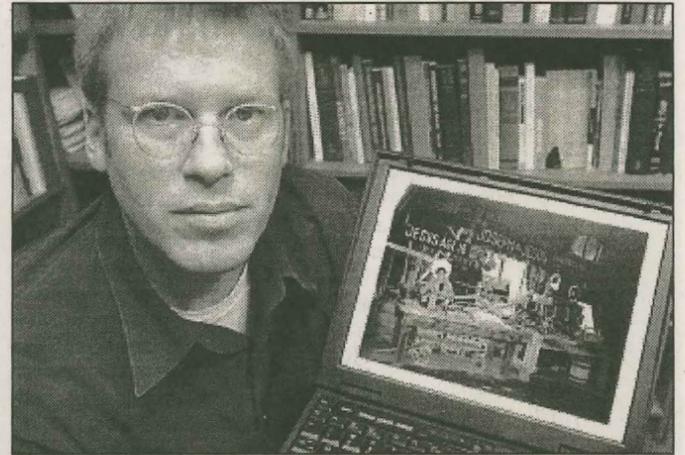
- Biblical minigolf in Kentucky.

Beal said he had been interested in these sorts of attractions for years, and decided last year to take a personal look after spotting the partially constructed Noah's ark replica—intended as a conference center for evangelical Christians. (Beal said the ark has run aground on the rocks of financial uncertainty in recent years.)

### Answering "Why?"

"Your first question has to be, 'What is that?'" he said. "But that's quickly followed by 'Who did it?' and 'Why?' What is driving these kind of things? What kind of demons or visions or whatever?"

Beal said he was impressed by the sheer scale of such efforts as "The World's Largest Ten Commandments" in giant letters laid on the side of a mountain in North Carolina, supposedly visible from outer space.



Beal speculates that the size of such attractions—beyond catching a passing traveler's eye—also may be intended as a shortcut to some sublime religious experience, "meant to inspire some kind of awe ... or maybe dread."

Other roadside religion sites go to the opposite extreme. Joseph Zoetl, a Benedictine monk in Alabama, spent a lifetime crafting meticulously detailed miniature cityscapes of the Vatican, Jerusalem and other religious locales—using broken plates and other throwaways, guided by postcards and photos, to create the Ave Maria Grotto.

"It was a way for him to dwell or meditate on these holy places," Beal said of Zoetl.

### Divine missions

Some creators of roadside religion sites see their work as a divinely inspired ministry or a mission, Beal added.

"Many identify themselves with Noah," he said. "They see themselves as being called on by God to build something that may look absurd to everybody else, but ultimately will make sense and they'll be vindicated."

Thusly, Alabama evangelical preacher Bill Rice said he was told in a vision from God to raise a bountiful crop of thousands in the Cross Gardens—a jumble of crude messages ("In hell for sex, sex") slapped on crosses, old refrigerators and air-conditioner crates ("No ice water in hell!").

Rice's world initially can seem a little scary, "but he's really kind of a sweet guy who's genuinely concerned for people," Beal said.

Beal said his wife, Clover Reuter Beal, a Presbyterian minister, was enthusiastic about the project, and the kids—daughter, Sophie, 11, and son, Seth, 8—enjoyed such sites as Paradise Gardens in Georgia, which features found-object religious folk art.

First impressions of roadside religious sites can include a chuckle, which operators of these attractions seem to expect and good-naturedly accept, Beal said.

But he doesn't plan to ridicule their motives or creations in his book. "One of the real keys is to avoid any kind of condescension and sarcasm. It's important to move beyond that."

"For me," he added, "the book is all about discovering some of the diversity and wonderful strangeness of religion in America."

**ROAD WARRIOR** Timothy Beal shows a computer screen picture of Holyland USA Nature Sanctuary in Bedford, Va. It was among the many sites Beal visited to gather material for a book about roadside religious attractions. (RNS photo by David Andersen)



**BROKEN PLATE VILLAGE** Joseph Zoetl, a Benedictine monk, crafted miniature cityscapes of the Vatican and other religious locales from broken plates and other throwaways in Cullman, Ala. (RNS photo by Timothy Beal)



# Can you afford to throw this away?

## Didn't think so.

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