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## Poll: Americans pessimistic on ethics, morality

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—More than three-quarters of Americans have a pessimistic view of the current state of ethics and morality, and even fewer see it getting better, according to a new Gallup Poll.

Seventy-seven percent of Americans rated current ethics and morality as "fair" or "poor," while 22 percent rated them "good" or "excellent." The ratings are nearly identical to a poll taken in May 2002.

George Gallup Jr., the firm's chairman, said women, older people and churchgoers are the most critical of the country's ethical climate. Gallup said there was little difference between the opinions of conservatives, moderates and liberals.

Gallup said "ethics and morality" usually ranks high on the list of American concerns. This year the category was statistically tied with terrorism, education, health care, fear of war and dissatisfaction with the government.

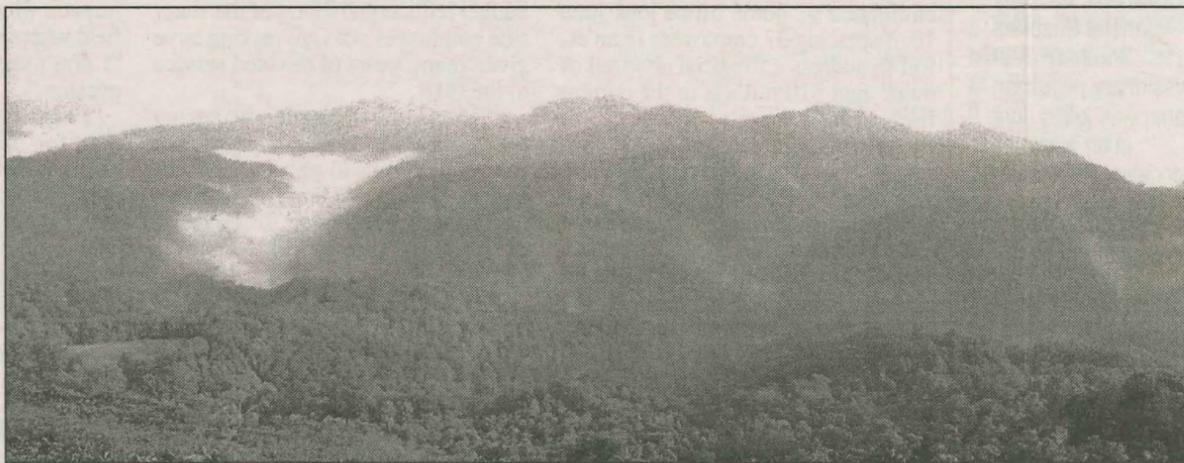
"Immorality was splashed across the headlines as scandals rocked corporate boardrooms, Wall Street, accounting firms, the Catholic Church and even major league baseball," Gallup said. "Given all the high-profile malfeasance, it may surprise some that Americans' perceptions of the moral state of the country have not grown more negative since May 2002."

Two-thirds of Americans said the moral and ethical climate is getting worse, and 24 percent said it was getting better—the same ratings as last year. Only 13 percent said the country was doing well and getting better.

Meanwhile, another poll found that almost half of American adults surveyed say they discuss moral issues with others in a typical week, while 42 percent say they discuss spiritual topics.

The Barna Research Group found that 49 percent of Americans said they discuss moral issues or situations with others each week. A slightly lower percentage said they talked about spiritual issues and beliefs. The most popular of seven topics evaluated was the content of movies or television programs (66 percent).

Researchers found that the people most likely to talk about religious issues included women, those with college degrees and above-average household incomes, blacks, residents of the South, Republicans, conservatives, attendees of churches with more than 100 people and Texas residents.



## 'Miracle in the mountains'

### Couple says God's growing Eastern Kentucky ministry

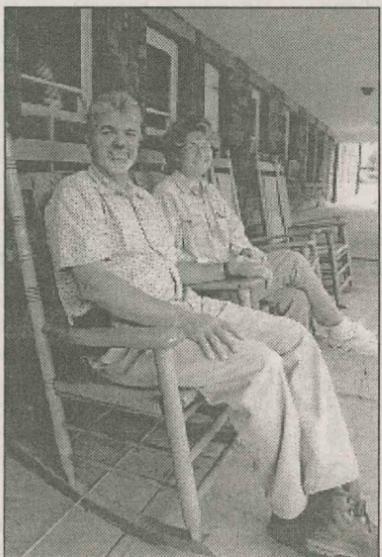
By David Winfrey  
News Director

LYNCH—Many Christians talk about living by faith, but few ever experience it at the level that Lonnie and Belinda Riley have.

Four years ago, the couple moved back home to Lynch from Southaven, Miss., where he was a pastor. With no job and no clue how they would support themselves, the Rileys said they arrived in the former coal mining town with the simple conviction that Lynch was where God wanted them and He would take care of the details.

Since then, the two have developed more than a half-dozen ministries, held prayer meetings and Bible studies, shared hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of supplies that have come their way, linked thousands of volunteers with residents in need and held firm to the conviction that God will supply all their needs.

"You can never tell what's going to happen tomorrow," Riley said earlier this month. "So you can't



**BACK HOME** Lonnie and Belinda Riley returned to Eastern Kentucky four years ago and began linking volunteers and resources with needs.



**MANNA HOUSE** Billie Ruth Steele, a member of Cumberland Baptist Church, prepares a box of groceries at Manna House, a food pantry in Harlan County that distributes \$25,000 worth of groceries each month. (Photos by David Winfrey)

wait to get up to see what God's going to do."

Last year, 2,000 volunteers from 24 states traveled to participate in the ministry they are leading. This year, Riley estimates, the number will climb to 3,000 volunteers.

"I call it 'the miracle in the mountain.' ... We're bringing a whole new message: Where there is Jesus, there is hope," he said. "Four years ago, no one knew where Lynch, Ky., was, and now it's all over the country."

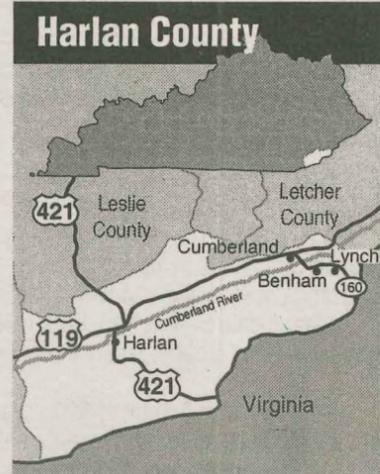
Four years ago, the two had no idea what was in store for them when they moved from their five-bedroom home in Mississippi to a four-room house in Kentucky.

Just months earlier, the two had visited Lynch to handle the property of Mrs. Riley's mother, who had recently died. Back home in Mississippi, both became convinced God was calling them to leave their church and return to Kentucky to start ministering to the numerous needs they saw.

"Our response was this: 'Lord, as long as we have You, You are all that we need.'" Riley recalled.

With no job and no clear sense of what to do next, the two began praying and taking on odd jobs to help their neighbors.

About six months after the move, they attended a regional conference for Baptist ministries in the Appalachian Mountains. There, they began building a network of contacts in oth-



er states who could help. Steadily, the Rileys' ability to help grew.

From roofing shingles and paint to windows and air conditioners, the Rileys were offered housing supplies that they could give to residents.

Volunteers from churches around the country began showing up to help with housing repairs, vacation Bible schools or other projects.

The Rileys' reputation in the community grew. They became known as "the people who'll help people," and began getting calls asking for specific items.

"If I don't have it, I'll say, 'Well, I don't have it right now, but if God gives it to me I'll give it to you,'" □ See Multiple ministries ..., page 6

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, June 18

## Missionary doctor to Ghana dies in car accident

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Janette Shackles, a Southern Baptist missionary physician in Ghana, was killed June 9 in an automobile accident. She was 47.

Shackles, who was appointed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in November 2001, died while she was traveling from the capital, Accra, to Nalerigu, where she served at Baptist Medical Center and worked among the Mamprusi people group.

A native of Austin, Texas, Shackles worked as a staff physician and medical director of Maniilaq Health Center in Kotzebue, Alaska, prior to missionary appointment.

She was a graduate of Colorado State University in Fort Collins and Howard University in Washington, D.C. She worked as a family practice resident at Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Ore.

## IMB cuts 61 stateside jobs in wake of budget shortfall

RICHMOND, Va.—The Southern Baptist International Mission Board eliminated 61 home office jobs June 10, displacing 37 employees in an effort to address a financial shortfall of more than \$10 million in the current fiscal year.

Both management and support positions were affected by the reduction. The cuts, which involved full-time and part-time positions, included 24 vacant positions that will not be filled. The 61 positions eliminated represent approximately 12 percent of the board's 500 Richmond, Va., employees.

IMB spokesman Mark Kelly said the IMB will not release the names of the individuals who lost their jobs "to respect their privacy." The employees will receive outplacement assistance and severance packages.

The staff reduction was the second step taken by IMB leaders to reduce expenses and prevent deficit spending. On June 5, IMB leaders announced limits on the number of new workers that will be sent overseas in 2003 and 2004. That marks the first time since the Great Depression of the 1930s that the IMB has restricted the number of new missionaries.

### Rankin: 'Painful process'

IMB leaders announced the latest steps after the 2002 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering fell almost \$10 million short of its \$125 million goal, complicating a financial situation already stressed by declining investment income and a rapidly increasing missionary force.

"The decisions to reduce staff and hold back new missionaries were extremely difficult to make," said IMB President Jerry Rankin. "This has been

a painful process, and every effort had been made to minimize the impact of budget reductions. Many of the stateside employees who are leaving have given many years of devoted service to the IMB.

"It hurts to lose people who are not only colleagues and co-workers, but friends with bills to pay and families to feed. We are like family, every one passionately committed to the cause of reaching our world for Jesus Christ."

Since 78 percent of the IMB's \$268.8 million basic operating budget provides support and benefits for missionaries and staff, there was no way to avoid an impact on stateside staffing in reducing expenses, Rankin said.

In each of the past two years, the IMB has sent out more than 1,000 new missionaries. The board currently has 5,545 workers serving worldwide, including 3,407 career missionaries.

While the board's missionary count grew 8.7 percent from 2000 to 2002, combined income from the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon offering increased only 1.5 percent during the same period.

Despite the Lottie Moon shortfall and other economic woes, Kentucky IMB trustee Steven Hill said the greatest concern is long-term Cooperative Program support from local churches.

"I think most of us would agree that the shortfall would be addressed if churches would respond in their Cooperative Program giving," said Hill, pastor of New Horizon Baptist Fellowship in Elizabethtown. When churches fail to maintain strong CP support, he added, "missions suffers."

Though the staff reductions will

impact the work of the IMB's home office, "I don't think it will have any impact whatsoever on the mission field where it really counts," Hill said. "I don't see it hindering the overall mission."

Lloyd Atkinson, IMB vice president for missionary personnel, announced earlier that new long-term missionary appointments will be limited to 400 this year and 300 in 2004. That compares to 412 long-term workers appointed in 2002 and 387 appointed in 2001.

IMB officials also said the number of short-term personnel appointed this year will be reduced by 30 percent.

### Deficit expected to increase

While the Lottie Moon Offering's \$10 million shortfall is the only figure so far released by the IMB, the total deficit is expected to be considerably larger. Like many Baptist agencies and institutions during the stock market's boom years, the IMB relied heavily on investment income and was hit hard by the downturn in the economy.

"The \$10 million figure is the one we're working on because the books are closed on the offering and that's a hard figure," Rankin said. "We won't know until the end of the fiscal year how much investments will bring us." The IMB's fiscal year ends Dec. 31.

Rankin said the board does not anticipate a second round of layoffs in what he called a "strategic realignment." But he added, "You can never absolutely eliminate that possibility for the future. We're doing what we have to do to be fiscally accountable."

"Just as with the Baptist Faith and Message statement we had to be doctrinally accountable to Southern Baptists, so we have to be financially accountable with Southern Baptists," he said.

In April, the IMB fired 13 missionaries who refused to sign the Southern Baptist Convention's revised faith statement. At least 64 other missionaries resigned or took early retirement rather than sign the statement.

All the employees who lost their jobs in the fiscal cuts were employed in the board's Richmond headquarters, and Rankin said he couldn't imagine a financial crisis of such magnitude that would require eliminating the jobs of overseas personnel.

### Commission magazine suspended

In order to continue to give priority to the IMB's overseas ministries, a number of products, resources and services also are being suspended.

One of the most significant cuts will be suspending publication of the IMB's flagship magazine, *The Commission*. Printing and postage costs for the publication totaled \$800,000 in the 2003 budget. The board will continue to publish the online version of the magazine.

"We will seek to use this challenge to assess those ministries and services that are most essential to our task," he added. "Lack of funding will help us refine overseas strategies and methodologies, practice better stewardship and give more emphasis to ensuring that new missionaries are going to the most strategic assignments."

"But we also are praying this will be a wake-up call to Southern Baptists to give a higher priority to our missions task and impact a world beyond our local budgeted programs," he said. "This should challenge us to rethink our church budgets, evaluate our lifestyles and give more sacrificially to things of eternal value."

*Based on reporting by Baptist Press, Associated Baptist Press and Editor Trennis Henderson*



Rankin

## Missions volunteers getting home base in New York, Canada, Puerto Rico

By James Dotson  
SBC North American Mission Board

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Southern Baptists' ambitious plans for sending thousands of volunteers to work with new and existing churches in New York next year once faced a harsh reality of life in the city.

With hotel rooms running \$200 or more a night and local churches far too small to serve as overnight hosts, housing was a problem.

The solution: a corner building in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn that once housed a funeral home, dentist's office and a drugstore. It is now being converted into living space for up to 50 volunteers at a time who will work with churches throughout the metropolitan area.

The New York effort is an example of an emerging trend for buildings dedicated to housing mission volunteers—particularly in areas where the needs are great but the facilities of existing churches are small.

Two similar buildings also are in the works. One will be a major addition to the main office of the Canadian Southern

Baptist Convention in Cochrane, Alberta, and another will be built beginning later this year at the Puerto Rico Baptist Seminary near San Juan.

### Kentucky connection

The first such facility in Southern Baptist life has links to Kentucky Baptists. Larry Martin, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions growth team, was director of the Greater Boston Baptist Association when the first volunteer house was dedicated there 15 years ago.

Named the Craft House after missions leaders Ira and Betty Craft, the facility houses up to seven long-term volunteers at a time.

A second volunteer house was dedicated in 1997 by New Colony Baptist Church in Boston. It was named the Martin Volunteer House in honor of Martin and his wife, Joyce, who served several years as editor of the *New England Baptist* state paper and now is partnership editions editor for the *Western Recorder*.

Calling their recognition "a very humbling experience," Martin said such

volunteer facilities "provide for a real prayer base and a base of encouragement" for volunteers as well as meeting a critical need for low-cost lodging.

The latest projects in New York, Canada and Puerto Rico are themselves dependent on volunteers, with aggressive efforts under way to enlist construction teams.

"These projects won't work without a commitment of volunteers," said Jim Burton, director of volunteer mobilization for the North American Mission Board. "We're hoping to have teams of 10-12 volunteers per week at each work site until they're done."

"This also goes well with Strategic Focus Cities," added Randy Creamer, who coordinates volunteer construction projects for NAMB. "We've had success with mobilizing volunteers, but to be able to build a mobilization center in the city positions them well for becoming a popular destination point."

The Brooklyn effort was made possible through *Enduring Hope*, a comprehensive plan of immediate and long-term relief efforts funded by about \$3.5 million contributed through Southern Baptist

entities in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"New York Baptists believe relationships as much as anything will help them recover and heal from that experience, so they wanted a place to house volunteers," Burton said. "With this building we're talking about individuals being able to go and volunteer in New York and stay for \$100 for a week—which is unheard of."

In Canada, the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists is building a two-story 50-by-110-foot addition to its Cochrane, Alberta, offices that will house a total of 36 people in beds—50 if sleeping-bag space is included.

The Puerto Rico project has similar goals, lodging about 50 people in a 40-by-80-foot concrete block building on the campus of the Puerto Rico Baptist Theological Seminary. The project is made possible by an offering from *World Changers*, a NAMB-sponsored student ministry.

Construction volunteers interested in assisting with the projects may call (800) 462-8657.

*With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson*

## Siler to be nominated for Kentucky Baptist presidency

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

WILLIAMSBURG—Judge Eugene Siler, first vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has agreed to be nominated this fall as KBC president.

A.B. Colvin, who served as KBC president in 1986-87, will nominate Siler during the KBC annual meeting Nov. 11-12 in Lexington.

"I'm not sure if there's anybody else in the state that I would have been willing to nominate. I doubt it," said Colvin, who served 28 years in leadership roles on the KBC Executive Board staff.

Citing Siler's commitment and involvement in KBC life over the years, Colvin added, "I can't think of anybody we would be better off with than him" as KBC president.

Siler, a member of First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, is a federal judge with the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. In addition to his current role as KBC first vice president, he held the same position during Colvin's presidency in the 1980s.

Noting that he is "honored and humbled" to be nominated by Colvin, Siler added, "I have said I am willing if it is God's will and the will of the convention."

If elected, Siler would become only the second layman to serve as KBC president in more than 25 years. He would, however, continue a family tradition of KBC lay leadership. Both his father, Eugene Siler Sr., and his grandfather, A.T. Siler, were elected mod-

erators of the former General Association of Baptists in Kentucky.

Siler describes himself as "a Baptist traditionalist on all of the basic Baptist principles like the priesthood of the believer, the separation of church and state, and the autonomy of the local church."

If elected in November, he said he will seek to lead the state convention to "continue what we have of reaching out to people" as well as "looking in the long-term to reaching out to minorities, including blacks, Hispanics and Asiatics because that is the wave of the future in this country."

Explaining that he believes the KBC "is going in the right direction," Siler added that the state con-

vention's focus on "reaching people who haven't been reached is very important."

Siler is a graduate of Vanderbilt University in Nashville and the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He currently is board chairman of Baptist Healthcare System and a trustee of Baptist Seminary of Kentucky. He is a former member of the KBC Mission Board and former chairman of Cumberland College's board of trustees.

He also is a deacon, Sunday school teacher and trustee at First Church, Williamsburg. The congregation, which has an average worship attendance of 300, reported 12 baptisms and gave 8.4 percent of undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program last year, according to the church's 2002 Annual Church Profile report.



Siler

**"Reaching people who haven't been reached is very important."**

Eugene Siler

## 'Sticky' singers

Kentucky choir to debut new LifeWay musical next week

By Brenda Smith  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

SHEPHERDSVILLE—A Kentucky Baptist children's choir has been tapped to debut a new children's musical at an upcoming national music festival.

The Young Musicians choir of Little Flock Baptist Church in Shepherdsville will debut the new musical "Sticky Notes and Bible Quotes: Godly Answers for Sticky Situations" at the Church Music Leadership Conference, June 23-28 at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina. More than 1,000 music ministry leaders are expected to attend the event.

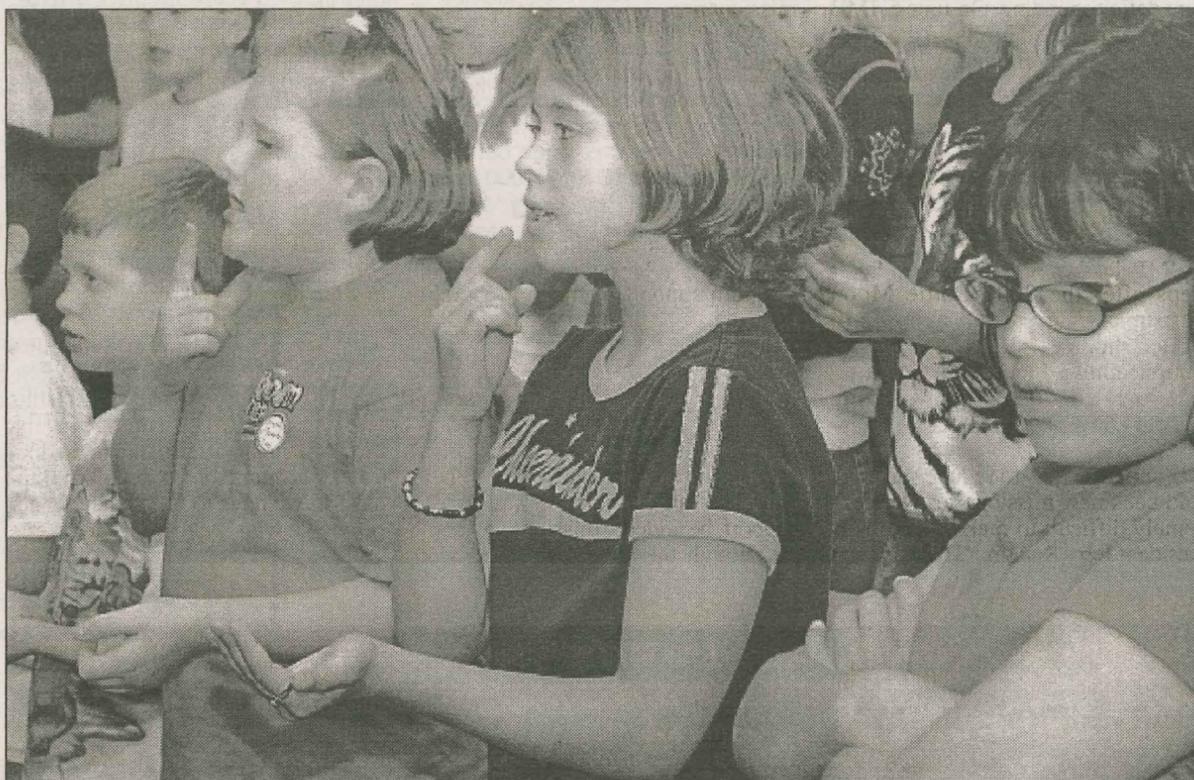
The choir includes 50 third through sixth graders who will travel to North Carolina for the debut, plus 22 adult chaperones.

"This is a special group of kids and I'm honored to take them," said Paula Kornegay, associate minister of music at Little Flock. "They are talented and they have the right heart."

Kornegay received a call in March inviting the young choir to debut the musical. The Little Flock choir was recommended by Martha Kirkland, a LifeWay music ministry specialist who became familiar with the choir during her participation in the 2002 Young Musicians Festival organized by the Kentucky Baptist Convention church music department and hosted by Little Flock.

"Paula's choir sang so well. They were a very enthusiastic group and they worked so great with the other children," Kirkland said.

Kirkland also was impressed with the leadership and support of Mark Swadley, Little Flock's minister of music. When it came time to select a



**INTERPRETIVE MOVEMENT** Andrew Hornbeck (from left), Christina Swadley, Melanie Zierten and Alycia Arellano rehearse words and actions for a song from "Sticky Notes and Bible Quotes," a new musical from LifeWay Christian Resources. Because the musical is so new, few production notes were available and director Paula Kornegay choreographed much of the action. (Photos by Brenda Smith)

children's choir to debut "Sticky Notes and Bible Quotes," Little Flock was at the top of Kirkland's list.

"Sticky Notes and Bible Quotes" was created by popular authors Dennis and Nan Allen. The musical doesn't follow a traditional story line. The collection of short skits and songs takes on difficult situations that children often face—including fear, materialism and temptation—and presents Scripture and songs as solutions.

"It's extremely grounded in the Word," Kornegay said.

The songs apparently are striking a chord with the young musicians.

"I like the words because they actually mean something," Ben Creswell, 11, said of his favorite song



**PRACTICE** Robin Lanke watches Stephen Hornbeck work on a scene in the new children's musical "Sticky Notes and Bible Quotes."

"Treasures."

Becca Cash, 10, agreed. "I like the beat and the words."

For brothers Christian Mann, 10, and Adam Mann, 9, the most exciting part of the experience will be traveling outside the Louisville area for the

first time ever.

As excited as the choir members are, the blessings of such a ministry opportunity are sure to go beyond their expectations, Kornegay said. "I don't think they'll understand the magnitude of this until they get back."

The choir will give a sneak preview of the musical on June 22 at 7 p.m. at Little Flock Ministry Center in Shepherdsville.

Information about "Sticky Notes and Bible Quotes" is available from LifeWay Christian Resources, online at [www.lifewaystores.com](http://www.lifewaystores.com) or by phone at (800) 448-8032.

For more information from the Kentucky Baptist Convention's music department about leading effective children's choir programs, contact consultant Roxanne Nanney at (502) 254-4727 or toll free in Kentucky at (888) 254-5707. Information is available online at [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org).

**"I like the words because they actually mean something."**

Little Flock young musicians choir member Ben Creswell, 11

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## No videos needed

I have enjoyed reading the Western Recorder—until today! When I read the June 3 article, "The Wave of the Future?" by James Dotson, I couldn't believe that I was actually reading this from a Southern Baptist Christian living newspaper.

On the Opinion page of the Western Recorder, it states that letters to the editor could be published provided they do not make a personal attack on anyone. Many people in my congregation took this article as a personal attack on our congregation and our pastor.

I am a member of Summit Hills Baptist Church and have been a member of this "small" congregation since its beginning. We have never had a preacher at Summit Hills that a video preacher from a "mega" church could replace; and we are so fortunate and honored to have a minister at the present time who is so obviously a true servant of God and is following God's will by remaining our preacher/pastor for many, many years. I am confident that he has been offered "mega" churches to pastor, but God has left him with us, much to our pleasure and gratitude.

Dotson's article quotes Lyle Schaller as saying that "the pastoral skills involved in a small church ... are different from the strong leadership and administrative skills required for a larger congregation." Well, I can just say that he does not know our pastor and many others who pastor small churches.

I believe that our pastor was called by God to serve here and he serves our "small" church because of that reason; and I don't believe that anyone should say that a pastor should not answer God's call by not serving where He leads them. I would like to invite Dotson or anyone to come to Summit Hills and hear our preacher relate God's message any Sunday.

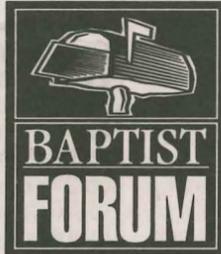
Jo Ann Johnson  
Shepherdsville

## 'Rebellious' attitude

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 26:14).

"Rebellious" or "in denial" is how I would describe the general attitude of the Western Recorder staff. Editorial direction and content slant makes the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship appear positive and the Southern Baptist Convention look negative.

I wonder, will you ever mention that for over 150 years SBC missionaries have had to make some pledge that they accept the basic tenets of the SBC and 5,437 missionaries accepted the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message while 26 or 0.5 percent refused? I wonder, will you ever point out less than 500 churches out of 42,000 have joined the CBF and only 1,700 churches fund the CBF? I wonder, will there be an editorial about the hundreds of churches that have rejoined the denomination because of the corrective actions within the denomination?



## What are you thinking?

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

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

### Mount Carmel church celebrates growth

Pastor Ronnie Angell and his wife, Becky, have been used by God to provide outstanding growth leadership at Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Crittenden Association.

Angell grew up in the area and was not called to preach until he already was a successful businessman. A natural salesman, he led his company in sales for three consecutive years.

He has now been a pastor for 30 years although only in recent years has he been fulltime. He spent summer sessions at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in order to get formal training.

Angell has the zeal of an evangelist and the heart of a pastor. He spent 14 years at Mason Baptist Church, also in Crittenden Association. During that time, the Mason congregation grew from nine to more than 200 people in average attendance. New facilities were constructed to accommodate the growth.

Angell has been pastor of Mount

Carmel Church for 11 years. The church has grown from 28 to more than 200 people in worship attendance and to more than 150 in Sunday school. There are 52 young couples in the church. Consequently, there were 20-plus children in the children's choir Sunday morning.

In order to accommodate the growth, a fellowship hall has been added with classrooms. The church currently is considering a two-story addition to the 1920 sanctuary. The lower level will serve as a fellowship hall and the current fellowship hall will be converted to additional Sunday school classrooms.

It was my privilege to speak during revival services at Mount Carmel recently. Here are some observations regarding the growth of the church:

■ The pastor evangelist is a visionary leader who knows how to involve others in reaching big goals. His vision is that the church will average 350

I do not want to hear about the rebellious acts of the few—26 out of 5,437 or 500 out of 42,000. You have forced me to do my own research and gather the details to determine if your editorials and articles have weight or substance. I for one stopped taking your editorials and articles at face value long ago.

It is my opinion you write for the CBF and not for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Do the CBF churches of Kentucky pay for the Western Recorder expenses or the churches of the KBC? Each of you should think long and hard about what you do with the sacrificial gifts given to the KBC.

Scott Eckstein  
Utica

**Editor's Note:** Yes, in years past, missionaries have affirmed their willingness to work in accordance with basic Baptist beliefs at the time of their appointment. However, this is the first time in denominational history that missionaries already on the field have been required to endorse a revised faith statement or be fired. Also, according to Southern Baptist International Mission Board statistics, at least 77 career missionaries have resigned, retired or been fired for refusing to endorse the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. Those 77 equal 2.3 percent of the 3,407 career missionaries under IMB appointment.

## Wrong ones fired

The wrong persons were fired. I simply can't accept the suggestion that we "accept the International Mission Board's action and move on."

I have been praying for our missionaries since the beginning of the published controversy in the Western Recorder. How can a small group of supposedly Christians live with themselves? I shall continue to pray that it will be possible for the work of our devout missionaries to continue.

L. Bea Simms  
New Albany, Ind.

in attendance.

■ The members extend a sincere welcome to everyone. The way the men greeted me was an experience of personal warmth and welcoming that I have rarely felt.

■ The members have a strong commitment to personal and group prayer.

■ About 50 percent of the church's growth has been through baptisms with a significant number of adult conversions.

■ Young adults are demonstrating significant leadership in all areas of church life.

■ The church is strong in support of missions and gives 22 percent of its undesignated gifts through the Cooperative Program.

■ There is a family caring atmosphere.

■ Outreach has become a strong value for the church.

■ The music is lively and inspiring, led by a number of talented musicians.

It's wonderful to see what God is doing at Mount Carmel and at other growing churches in our state!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## CHURCH

### Teaching couples financial skills helps marriages

By Doug Strader

I recently came across a book by Julie Ann Barnhill titled "Til Debt Do Us Part." The subtitle is "Answers and Healing for Money Conflicts in Your Marriage."

The book is a true story about the author and her family in their struggles of dealing with the issues of everyday family life, work, church and all the issues that go into one's earthly existence. I was intrigued by the openness and honesty of the author in telling her story. And it reminded me that there are millions of families in the world today who can identify with her story. Many of them are in our churches and they are wrestling with the same issues Barnhill describes in the book.

Sociologists tell us that of all the marriages entered into today, one half will end in divorce and about one half of the divorces will be caused by financial stress. Many financial counselors attest to the fact that financial stress causes marital stress, which leads to divorce if the couple does not seek help.

While I was leading a money management workshop in a church, one man sought my counsel during one of the breaks. His family was deeply in debt and just about to go under financially. I asked him how the debt was affecting his marriage. He tearfully responded that it had just about ruined his marriage. I share that story to undergird the statistics quoted above. In her book, Barnhill explains how the stress of debt affected her marriage and family life.

Churches have a responsibility to help families and individuals with money management skills. We cannot afford to do nothing when many of our good people are drowning in debt. Some of them have resigned themselves to the fact that there is no way to get their finances under control. But the truth is we can help them get control of their finances, and we can help them know how to get out of debt.

Kentucky Baptists have some tools that can be helpful in dealing with these issues. If you are interested in helping people who are having financial difficulties, call our office at (502) 254-4716 or toll-free at (888) 254-5708. You also can e-mail me at douglas.strader@kybaptist.org.

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



## Helpful hints often indicate level of dating relationship

**Q: I've been dating someone for a few months. I am moving toward middle age. I wonder sometimes if I'm clueless about when a man really is interested in me. How do I know if he is falling for me?**

Tom Blake, author of "Middle Aged and Dating Again," offers the following clues about dating relationships:

■ Are there little signs of affection that go beyond everyday interaction? If he holds your hand to help you step off a curb, that moves a little beyond everyday courtesies.

■ Notice if he seems to be making an extra, consistent effort to do things he knows please you (sending flowers, a card, treating you to a night out, etc.)

■ This relationship has potential if it is clear he is not "playing games." Instead of trying to keep you guessing, he really is "up front" with you about his feelings. One example is if he calls when he promises to do so, and doesn't wait a week or more.

■ Thoughtfulness and consistent good manners are positive signs. Even more so, if he makes little sacrifices in response to your needs, you are on his mind.

■ Communication is a big deal. Can he look you in the eye when he is talking to you? Openness and honesty are crucial.

■ If he is ready to introduce you to his family and friends, that may mean he thinks your relationship is getting serious. If he's not willing to do so, be very careful about the pace of the relationship.

■ If he is observant and comments in a timely way on things you've done to your appearance (hair, clothes, etc.), he is at least paying attention.

■ R-E-S-P-E-C-T. Aretha Franklin sang about it, and it's still a bottom-line attribute in any relationship. Does he show appreciation for the things you do for him? Or is he judgmental and critical? Does he accept you the way you are or is he trying to change you?

■ If he offers to help when you have a need, but not in an overly aggressive way, there is a possibility of sincere interest (examples: checking the oil, fixing some plumbing problem, doing some chore for you that needs to be done).

■ Is he willing to occasionally give up his recreational interests (watching "Monday Night Football" with the guys, for example) just to be with you? Recreational flexibility and compatibility can be good tests of a positive relationship.

■ Has he gone the extra mile in meeting your needs (for example, loaning you something very important or valuable to him)?

Scale: If he does a half dozen of these things, he cares about you. If he does them all, he is definitely experiencing major feelings of attachment and possibly is hoping to have some sort of future with you.

If that is the case, and you remain interested, the two of you should talk about this. It might be time for the relationship to move beyond friendship to a more formal courtship. You could find that you are blissfully in the midst of the attraction phase of what could be a positive long-term relationship. Realize the need for accountability and a time for testing the relationship in its spiritual and psychological dimensions before moving toward permanent commitment. But celebrate what you have.

Scripture offers Ruth and Boaz as an example of the initial test of what became an important relationship. Dedicate to God all the possibilities, and begin to surround yourself with the accountability structures to keep things on the right track.—James Stillwell

*Family Forum writers are Suzanne Coyle, director of Cornerstone Counseling for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children; David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Campbellsville University; 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.*



## Budget woes hamper IMB's global impact

As Southern Baptist Convention messengers gather this week in Phoenix for business, inspiration and fellowship, the SBC International Mission Board is once again in the news. The driving force this time is neither doctrinal nor political but financial.

IMB President Jerry Rankin announced last week that the Southern Baptist missions agency had eliminated more than 60 stateside staff positions in the IMB's Richmond, Va., headquarters. Reports indicate the cuts affected 37 full-time and part-time employees as well as two dozen vacant positions that will remain unfilled.

The culprit this time around is a growing budget deficit sparked by a number of factors. For starters, the IMB—like other Baptist entities on the state and national levels—has been hard-hit the past few years by a stagnant economy, investment losses and decreased reserve funds. With significant investment income being built into recent budget goals, the shortfall has left the IMB and other organizations strapped for cash.

Further complicating the IMB's financial situation is its historic reliance on the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. While the past year's offering set a giving record, exceeding the previous year's gifts by \$1.3 million, the \$115 million income still fell \$10 million short of the offering goal.

Another complicating factor is the slow pace of Cooperative Program growth. CP gifts are channeled from local churches to state conventions with a portion of those funds forwarded to the SBC Executive Committee for distribution to the IMB and other Southern Baptist entities.

The drawback is that while the IMB's missionary count increased 8.7 percent from 2000 to 2002, combined income from the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon offering during the same time grew only 1.5 percent.

The IMB isn't the only Baptist organization facing

such struggles. The Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board recently adopted a zero-growth CP budget for the 2003-2004 fiscal year. That action came after last year's KBC income fell short of the budget goal for the first time in six years. KBC officials anticipate a budget shortfall this year of up to \$1 million.

Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC business services team, said part of the reason for the budget shortfall

here in Kentucky has been a steady decline in the percentage of churches' undesignated receipts being earmarked for CP. Since 2000, churches' giving percentage to CP has dipped from 9.255 percent to 8.278 percent last year. Over the past 15 years, that proportion has dropped by more than 3.6 percentage points from a 1987 high of 11.884 percent.

Such giving trends affect not only KBC ministries, but the work of the IMB and other CP-supported ministries as well.

Kentucky IMB trustee Steven Hill, pastor of New Horizon Baptist Fellowship in Elizabethtown, said he believes the IMB's budget shortfall could be eliminated "if churches would respond in their Cooperative Program giving."

While that is only one piece of the IMB's financial puzzle, it is a crucial part that every Kentucky Baptist congregation can help address.

With the recent firings, resignations and retirement of 77 veteran missionaries; eliminating 61 home office positions; and likely putting the appointment of 100-plus future missionaries on hold, the greatest tragedy involves the eternal destiny of countless people around the world who will remain untouched by the gospel.

"It is painful to be reducing staff and holding back missionaries when there are so many missions opportunities around the world and God is moving in such dramatic ways," Rankin lamented last week.

Painful but preventable—or at least reversible—if Southern Baptists choose to fully support the missionaries God has called to carry His message of redemption around the globe.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## An absolute Kingdom in a postmodern culture

By James Draper

NASHVILLE (BP)—King George III was just 22 years old in 1751 when he rose to the throne of England and assumed leadership of the most powerful kingdom on earth. It stretched westward and controlled the American colonies and dominated trade eastward through India as far as Hong Kong. However, just a little more than 250 years later, the United Kingdom once ruled by George III now is a fraction of the size and no longer a dominant world power.

But George's kingdom is not alone in its faded glory. The Roman Empire encompassed nearly all of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa for nearly 1,000 years. The Ming Dynasty in China governed a sizeable portion of the world's landmass. Persia and Syria were both aggressive kingdoms with far-flung influence. All of them failed to survive despite seemingly endless resources and the bold predictions of their respective rulers.

Enter Jesus. He was born in a manger to working parents. He grew up the son of a tradesman in a house that most likely had dirt floors. His robes were not the purples of royalty but the browns prominent among the common people whose livelihoods were

found working fields, fishing or selling goods in a crowded market. Imagine being in the crowd and hearing a man like this shout above the noise, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven has come near!" I'm certain most of us would huff and ask, "By whose authority is this carpenter heralding a kingdom?"

Jesus couldn't be any more different from the rulers of history's various kingdoms. What matters obviously isn't what the messenger looks like but who the messenger is.

It makes no difference that people then—and now—deny or discredit Jesus' statements that the Kingdom is here (Matthew 4:17) and that He is the exclusive way to it (John 14:4). Disputing these facts is the same as rejecting the idea that man landed on the moon. Regardless of how passionately someone may deny either doesn't change the actuality of both. Our postmodern culture emphasizes the relative and is offended by the absoluteness of God's Kingdom and the singular entrance into that Kingdom through Jesus.

But the Kingdom is confrontational. Jesus states the fact it is here and gives the option: repent or reject. Repentance requires that we make a moral commitment and willingly sub-

mit ourselves to His reign, making ourselves loyal subjects of His Kingdom. In fact, the Kingdom of God is the rule of God in the lives of believers and in the world. This is not an idea that Jesus introduced with the New Testament. God carved out of His infinite dominion a place called earth. Here He set time in motion and has been intimately involved with its operation ever since. He does as He pleases; earth is a part of His Kingdom. The Old Testament clearly indicates this as well as the New.

It is worth noting that a distinctive difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of humanity's most powerful rulers is that God's Kingdom is expanding while the others are relegated to history books. Every time someone asks Jesus to be his or her Savior, God's Kingdom expands. This irreversible tide is rising among every tribe and nation.

As Christians, Jesus has commanded us to go. He refers to us as "the good seed" He sows in the field of the world (Matthew 13:37-45). Seed produces a crop that is harvested. The Kingdom of God is going to grow because He has determined it will. He expects believers to be part of that Kingdom growth. It also is an opportunity to serve a King whose Kingdom will have no end.

James Draper is president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

### COMMENTARY

## Multiple ministries springing up in Harlan County

**"Everything we are is staked upon what God said to us before we could see it."**

Lonnie Riley

*Continued from page 1*

Riley said. "God doesn't give things to you accidentally. He gives it to you on purpose."

Take the theater seats, for example.

When a man bought a run-down theater in Cumberland and began renovating it to host Christian concerts and events, he asked Riley if he knew where he could get new seats. Riley didn't know of any seats but promised to let the owner know if he learned of any.

Within a short time, a friend in Mt. Vernon, Ill., called to say a local college had a new shipment of seats for a theater but they were the wrong kind. They needed to get rid of them.

Back in Cumberland, Riley told the local theater owner he might have the seats he needed.

Although thankful, the owner said he needed seats that would fit a sloped floor and that were light blue to fit the renovation.

"I said, 'Surely God wouldn't give us some theater seats and them be the wrong kind,'" Riley recalled, laughing.

A call back to Illinois confirmed the seats were light blue and would fit a sloped floor.

At other times, the ministry gets supplies before the need appears.

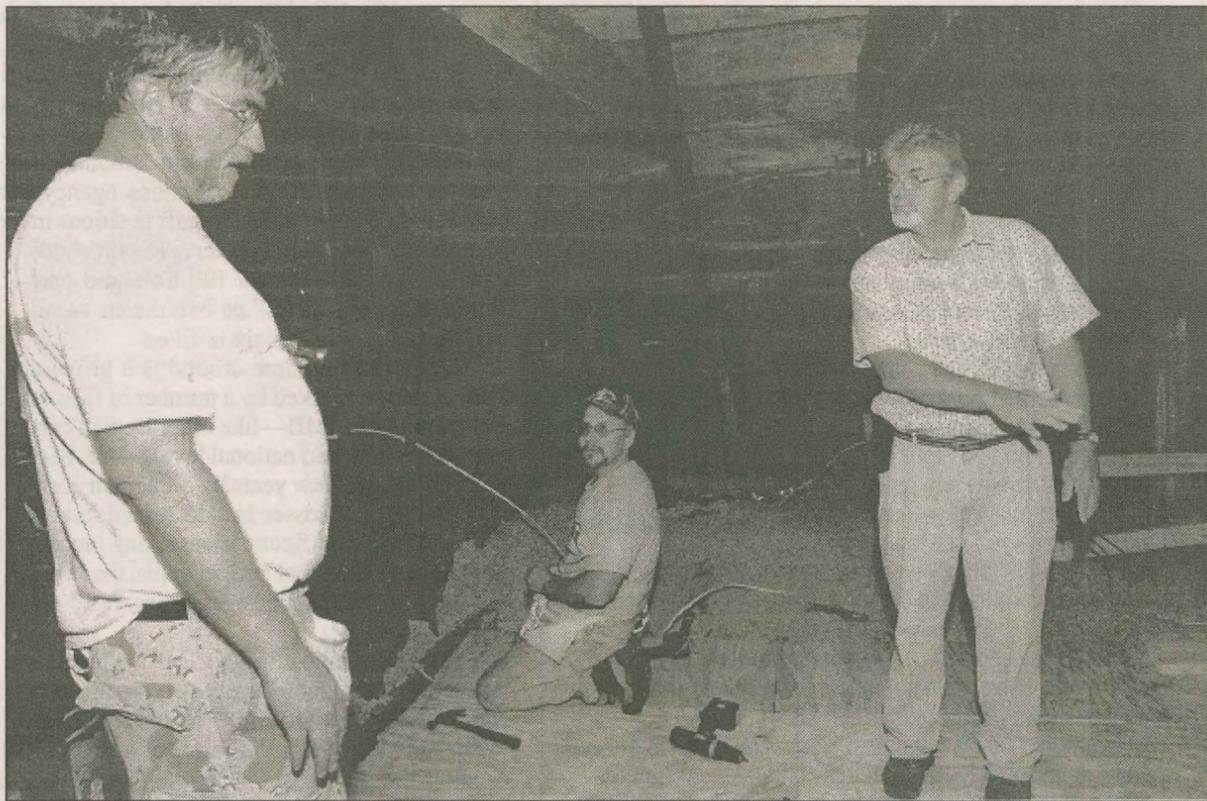
"We'll say, 'There must be a need or God wouldn't give it to us,'" Riley said. "Sooner or later it fits right into the need we see in the community."

"God knows both ends, and if we'll let Him use us as a conduit, He'll get it from point A to point B with no problem. That's all we do," he added. "Everything we have, everything we are is staked upon what God said to us before we could see it."

### Variety of ministries

Today their Meridzo ministry, named after the Greek word for "care," involves several components in the three towns of Cumberland, Benham and Lynch, including:

■ **Manna House.** The ministry's food pantry distributes \$25,000 worth



**HOUSE REPAIRS** Home repair is just one of many ministries led by Lonnie Riley (right) and his wife, Belinda, in the three towns of Cumberland, Benham and Lynch in Harlan County. Riley estimates volunteers have worked on more than 100 houses in the past three years. (Photo by David Winfrey)

of food each month to 200 families in need.

■ **Freedom Center.** A storefront building in Cumberland offers clothing, toys and household items for a minimal donation, or free to those who can't pay.

■ **Housing renovations.** Volunteers have made a variety of repairs to more than 100 houses in the past three years, Riley said. "We did 47 last year."

■ **Job training.** Riley estimates that 30 percent of Harlan County's 32,000 residents are unemployed or underemployed. A sewing class is already under way with more job training efforts in the works.

■ **Lynch Baptist Church.** When

they arrived four years ago, the Rileys found that Lynch Baptist Church, where they both became Christians and where they were married, had closed down.

Earlier this year, the ministry received the deed to the building. The Rileys plan to equip its classrooms to double as offices for dentists and optometrists.

Riley already leads Wednesday evening prayer services and Bible studies. He plans to start preaching on Sunday mornings this fall if the ministry can get heating and air conditioning installed.

■ **Equestrian ministry.** Just beginning, Riley hopes to begin trail rides and teach children to ride.

■ **Calvary Campus.** The ministry recently received the former Stewart Robinson school in neighboring Letcher County. Plans call for the renamed Calvary Campus to be used as a summer camp for low-income kids and possibly a ministry point for the large number of hearing-impaired residents in the area.

### 'Connecting' with others

In Louisville, Larry Martin praises the Rileys for the impact they're having on the region and beyond.

"What impresses me is the way they give themselves away so totally," said Martin, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions growth team. "They have no other agenda than to find where God is working and joining Him."

He points to Meridzo as a prime example of the types of ministries the Kentucky Baptist Convention hopes to promote and link with other churches as part of the "Connections" emphasis, promoted in the recent mission study committee plan.

"One of the most effective methods of ministry is to pray that God will raise up local models and then help

people connect to those models and learn from them."

As they operate on faith, Riley said he and his wife don't consider themselves more faithful than most Christians. "But we just believe God is true and our lifestyle reflects that," he said. "It's not a one-time event, but it's a process of deepening (faith)."

He traces this attitude to 1991, when they were living in Ohio. There, he was a reasonably successful pastor, but Riley said he was ready to give up. "There was an emptiness inside," he recalled. "There just had to be something better."

That year the couple met Henry Blackaby, author of the "Experiencing God" Bible study. As a result, they began to explore what it meant to look for where God is at work and to begin connecting with Him there.

Many times Christians "pray and pray and pray but we never connect what happens next," Riley said. "Your expectation is determined by how much you look for the answer."

Now he continually looks to God for the answers, and he maintains that God remains faithful.

As the ministry grows, Riley said its influence is extending beyond the local community to the areas where volunteers are coming from. "Now they're starting ministries in their home(towns)."

Riley tells local residents that for two generations people relied on the gods of coal and government help and it has gotten them deeper and deeper in poverty and despair. "Why don't we trust God and see where it gets us?" he asks.

"No man can rebuild a town, but God's rebuilt many," he adds. "What's coming is spiritual awakening. It's God ruling the mountains again."

For more information on Manna House and related ministries, visit [www.meridzo.org](http://www.meridzo.org).

## Headquarters building bought with cash and faith

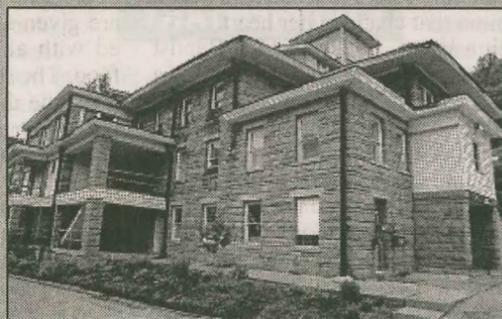
LYNCH—One example of how the Rileys are operating on faith is Solomon's Porch.

The Rileys operate Meridzo Center Ministries from a four-story building that years ago was the hospital in Lynch.

Last year, it was an abandoned office building when Riley contacted the owner to see about buying it as a headquarters for the ministry and a place to house the hundreds of volunteers coming each year.

With a selling price of \$85,000, Riley agreed to buy the building in 30 days. Asked by the owner's representative how much money he had, he replied, "I don't have any money, but my Heavenly Father's rich, and 30 days should be plenty of time for Him to have the money together."

Three weeks later, Riley had \$25,000 in hand, trusting God to provide the rest as he set up the closing date for the following week. Later that week, a man familiar with the ministry contacted the Rileys and wired \$65,000 in time for the closing.



**MINISTRY HEADQUARTERS** The former hospital building was purchased with \$85,000, donated in just 30 days.

Various churches have renovated 30 of the building's 69 rooms. Someone has donated \$20,000 toward a badly needed new roof, and an out-of-state architect has volunteered to design the trusses to support it.

"Things like that happen all the time," Riley said. "It's just amazing how the Lord does that kind of stuff."

## Floridian moves to Appalachia

*'Stupid article' spurs woman to volunteer work*

By Brenda Smith  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

LYNCH—Pauline White thought she was just going to do a little light reading before bed.

Instead the 72-year-old retiree opened the door to a call to missions that took her from her Florida home to the mountains of Eastern Kentucky.

White was living a happy, active life in Sebring, Fla., when she picked up her issue of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's On-Site magazine and read an article about Lonnie and Belinda Riley.

The Rileys are Mission Service Corps volunteers who gave up their home and jobs in Southaven, Miss., to live and serve in Lynch, a small town tucked in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky.

White was touched by the Rileys' story, in part because of her own tenuous connection to Eastern Kentucky. Her father had been a regional supervisor for the U.S. Bureau of Mines. Just before Pauline was born, her father was temporarily transferred to Harlan. Five days after her birth, her mother boarded a train for Harlan, where little Pauline spent the first two months of her life.

"I started reading the article and I thought 'Wow! Lonnie and Belinda Riley in Harlan County. My goodness, that's where I went when I was just a teeny baby. And these people have given up everything to serve. Isn't that wonderful?'" White recalls.

She finished the article, dropped the magazine in her recycling bin and went to bed.

That's when the trouble started. White lay awake for hours.

"I couldn't go to sleep. All I could think about was that 'stupid article,'" White says with a wry laugh. She finally got up, fished the magazine out of the recycling bin and went back to bed. After her fitful night, she got up the next morning and reread the article. Throughout the day, she found herself drawn back to the article, reading it again and again. Finally, she put the magazine in the recycling bin once again and went to bed.

"That night it was the same story," White says. "I was wide awake."

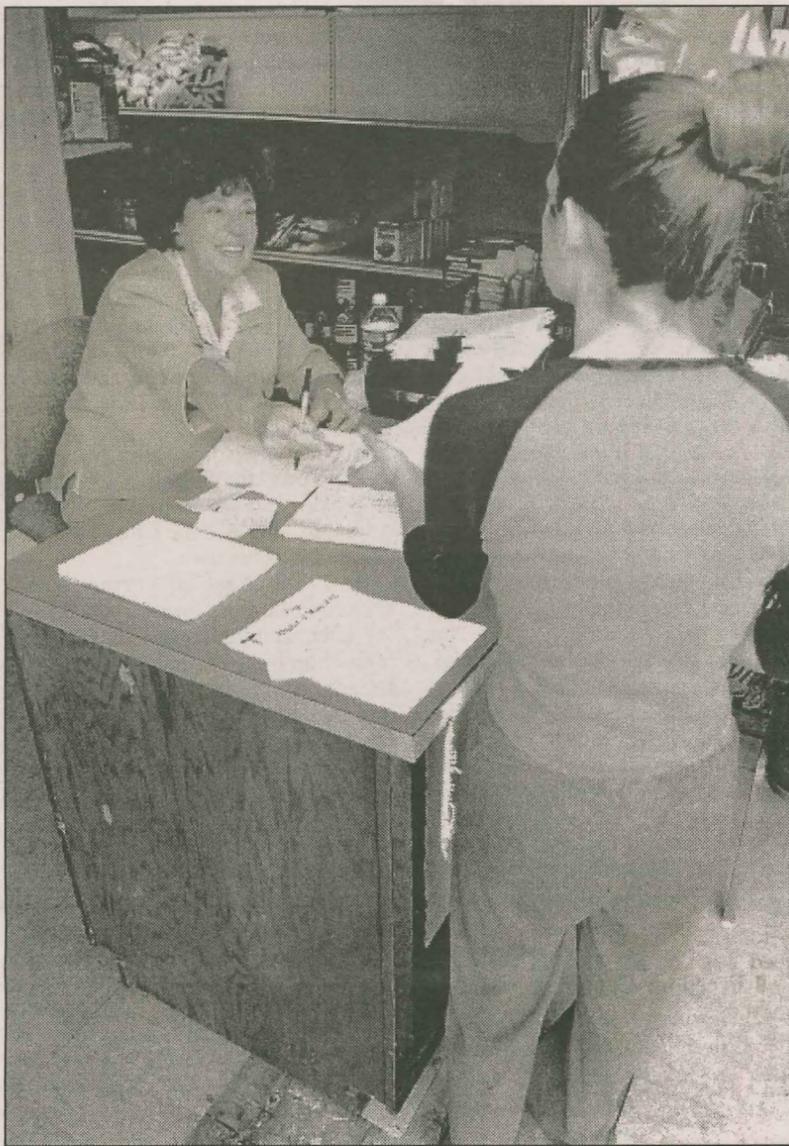
### The invitation

The pattern repeated for several more nights until, exasperated, White finally decided to send the Rileys some money to help with their work. She wrote the Rileys a letter, asking them what they needed.

Within a month, White had a reply. The Rileys said that what they really needed more than anything was her.

White was having none of it. She made her argument to the Rileys and to God.

"Now, Lord, we've had this discussion before, and you don't need me in Harlan, Ky.," White argued. She



**MANNA HOUSE** Pauline White, left, talks to a client at Manna House, the food pantry of Meridzo Center Ministries in Harlan County. White moved to Eastern Kentucky earlier this year to direct the pantry, which distributes \$25,000 worth of food every month. (Photos by David Winfrey)

ticked off her points one by one: She didn't like cold weather. She didn't like to drive on mountain roads. And she couldn't possibly leave behind her friends and all her volunteer obligations.

And last but certainly not least, there was the small matter of White's age.

"When the Lord called me to Lynch, Ky., I told him that I would be 72 in January, and 72 is much too old to be doing something like this," she says.

It wasn't that White hadn't been active in missions, or didn't feel called to missions. She was an active short-term mission trip volunteer and has visited 26 countries. She also volunteered for a number of local groups.

Then another letter came from the Rileys. They offered her three jobs, one of which was director of Manna House, a food distribution ministry.

For the Rileys, White's initial interest in their ministry appeared to be an answer to prayer.

"(We) had been praying for three years for God to send someone to do Manna House. We're always in awe with our mouths hanging open when God responds," Mrs. Riley says. They didn't have time to open Manna House for more than a few hours on a few days each month, making it diffi-

cult for people to get help.

Still, White resisted. She made up her mind to write the Rileys and refuse their offer.

### The sermon that changed her mind

But before White had the chance to put pen to paper and end the whole affair, her pastor preached a powerful sermon that changed her heart.

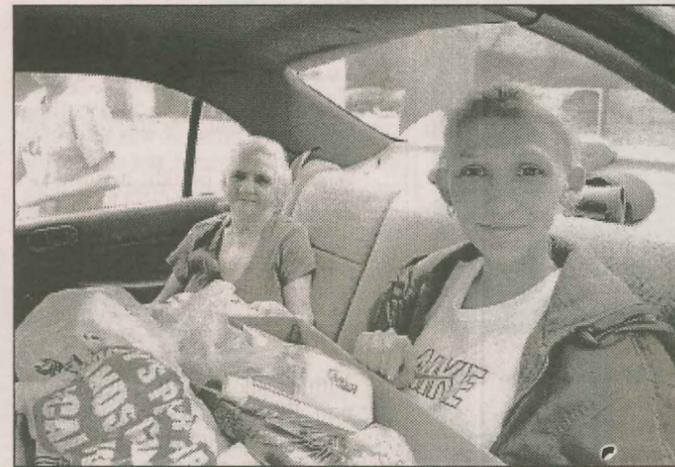
Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Sebring, told the story of a woman in Texas who was forced to retire from her health-care job at the age of 65.

"I don't think I'm going to like this very much," White thought, sensing already that this sermon was going to hit a little too close to home. She, too, had been forced to retire at the age of 65 from her job as a federal administrator when her office was closed.

The Texas woman realized that elderly, infirm people needed health-care services like those she was trained to provide. She knew she had the skills to help, and years later at the age of 84 continued to travel around the state, serving as many as 60 patients a week.

"No one is too old to do what God calls them to do," Henry preached.

His words sunk into White's heart. As she contemplated the message, she was sure she heard another voice speaking just to her.



"See, you've got at least 12 years to go," said the voice. White glanced about for a moment, before concluding that the voice she heard was the voice of God. White says she knew what she had to do.

"I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ," White says, her usually hearty, animated voice breaking with emotion. "What else could I do?"

She immediately began the work of resigning from her many clubs and volunteer organizations. Just as soon as she had resolved the last of her obligations, she put a sign in her front yard offering her house for sale. By 1 p.m. that afternoon, the house sold.

### The move to Kentucky

She purchased a home in Eastern Kentucky, sight unseen, and set out for Kentucky in early March. Though her new home is just one-fifth the size of her Florida home, White says she has peace and contentment.

"We just praise God," Mrs. Riley says. "You just never know where He's going to pull people from. I admire her so much to leave her home at her age and where she's lived all her life and come to where it's so different. She's just a jewel."

White's enthusiasm and organizational skills already are transforming Manna House. The ministry is now open the first through fourth Wednesdays and Thursdays and third Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Rather than line up at the door, people seeking food assistance are given appointments and presented with already-prepared boxes of food. The streamlined process recognizes the dignity of the people seeking assistance from Manna House.

"There's no judgmental attitude. I don't know whether people are entitled or not and I don't care. The Lord didn't appoint me judge," White says.

While she's had to adjust to a rural culture, White says she's been well accepted, thanks, in part, to her native Alabama accent.

And age hasn't been a barrier, she adds. In fact her life experiences have prepared her well for her new career as a Mission Service Corps missionary.

"And apparently, I have 12 years to go!" she says with a laugh.

For more information about Mission Service Corps volunteer opportunities in Kentucky, call the Kentucky Baptist Convention toll free at (800) 266-6477 or visit [www.ky.baptist.org/msc](http://www.ky.baptist.org/msc).

**SUPPLIES** Local residents show off food and other supplies received from Manna House.

# CHURCHES

## 300 years after birth, Wesley still shaping churches

By Kevin Eckstrom  
Religion News Service



For someone who spent only 18 months in the American Colonies, Wesley's theological DNA is still deeply imprinted on American religion.

WASHINGTON (RNS)—When he started preaching in 1739, John Wesley's only mission was to revive the Church of England, not start a new one. But on the family tree of American churches, several major branches find their roots in Wesley's 18th century movement.

Wesley's most direct descendants are the 10 million members of the United Methodist Church. That's not counting nearly 4 million members of churches like the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the 70 million members of the World Methodist Council or still millions more in the Salvation Army, the Wesleyan churches, the Church of the Nazarene or countless Holiness churches.

Add to that the 625 million Pentecostals around the world who claim Wesley as a spiritual forbear and you have the second largest Christian movement in the world.

### From revivals to social holiness

Now, 300 years after his birth (on June 17, 1703), perhaps no one would be more surprised by Wesley's enduring influence—and the host of churches he fathered—than Wesley himself.

For someone who spent only 18 months in the American Colonies, Wesley's theological DNA is still deeply imprinted on American religion, from Billy Graham revivals and the 41 percent of Americans who claim to be "born again" to the hospitals, universities and social movements that were founded to usher in Wesley's era of social holiness.

By the mid-1800s, fueled by frontier conversions, the Methodists were the largest Christian group in the United States. Methodists pioneered circuit riders and a sophisticated "class meeting" system that relied on lay leaders rather than ordained professionals. Wesley's gospel found particular appeal among the poor, illiterate and uneducated.

"The fact that Wesley didn't assume that what you were born into was what you had to be is really a new patent on religion that people take for granted today," said Martin Marty, the dean of American church historians, at the University of Chicago.

Toward the end of the 19th century some of Wesley's followers left to form Holiness churches in an effort to recover the old-time religion of emotional conversion. That split gave birth to the Nazarenes and the Salvation Army, who shed some of Wesley's

cherished sacramental worship.

Then, between 1900 and 1920, another split gave birth to the Pentecostals, who wanted still more emotion and spirit-filled worship. "The thing is, (Wesley) would be surprised to find so many separate churches claiming him, and probably a little disappointed," said Brooks Holifield, a church historian at Emory's Candler School of Theology.

Wesley was born the 15th of 19 children in 1703 to an Anglican clergyman. He entered Oxford at 17 and with his brother, Charles, founded a Bible club in 1729 that was derided by classmates.

Critics labeled the club members "Methodists" for their strict adherence to prayer and pious living. Wesley originally shunned the name but later adopted it as his own.

In 1735, he set off to convert the Indians in Georgia, an effort that Wesley later admitted was a failure. His high-church Anglicanism found few friends in Savannah, and he was run out of town in 1738 after an unsuccessful attempt to woo young Sophy Hopkey.

### Heart 'strangely warmed'

Back in England, Wesley began to attend Moravian meetings. Within

three months, Wesley had his most important conversion experience during a meeting in London.

"I felt my heart strangely warmed," he wrote in his journals. "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

The strange warming of Wesley's heart convinced him of the need for a personal conversion, an impulse that still defines evangelical Christianity. From there, he developed doctrines of lives "perfected in love" that were defined by piety and good works.

Wesley launched a major tour of England, rising every day at 4 a.m. to preach to workers at 5 a.m. in fields and factories. Riding mostly on horseback, he preached 40,000 sermons and logged nearly 250,000 miles around Britain. Since his death at age 88 in 1791, Wesley's ties with his churches have become blurred.

"If you went into First Methodist Church in X town in Ohio and you said to anyone there, 'Say three things about John Wesley,' I don't think you'd hear very much," said Marty, adding that the congregation's strength—not its size or ties to Wesley—is what matters most.

missions  
beyond  
the edge

2003 KBC Annual Meeting

November 11-12, 2003

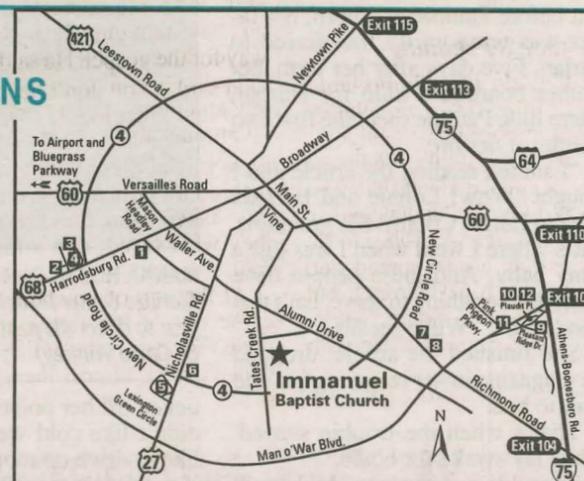
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Lexington, Kentucky

### AREA ACCOMMODATIONS

Rates do not include the 12.3% hotel tax. All accommodations are within a 7.5 mile radius of the church. Messengers are responsible for making their own reservations. Kentucky Baptist Convention must be mentioned and reservation deadlines met to receive blocked room rates. Most blocked rooms are non-smoking.

Need a more detailed map and directions to Immanuel? Visit [www.ibt-lex.org](http://www.ibt-lex.org).

Need additional information about Lexington? Visit [www.visitlex.com](http://www.visitlex.com).



#### Harrodsburg Road Area

- 1 Springs Inn**  
2020 Harrodsburg Road  
859.277.5751 or 800.354.9503  
\$55 (doubles/1-4 people)  
On-site restaurant  
Reservation deadline: 10/20

In Beaumont Center, near New Circle Road

- 2 Comfort Suites Beaumont Center**  
3060 Fieldstone Way  
859.296.4446  
\$85 (queens, kings/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/20

- 3 Lexington Fairfield Inn**  
3050 Lakecrest Circle  
859.224.3338  
\$75 (doubles, kings/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/27

- 4 Lexington Hampton Inn South**  
3060 Lakecrest Circle  
859.223.0088  
\$79 (doubles/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/10

#### Nicholasville Road/New Circle Rd.

- 5 Hilton Suites Lexington Green**  
245 Lexington Green Circle  
859.271.4000  
\$109 (1 suite room)  
On-site restaurant  
Reservation deadline: 11/7

- 6 Red Roof Inn South**  
2651 Wilhite Drive  
859.277.9400  
\$61.99-\$76.99 (doubles/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/10

#### Richmond Road/New Circle Road

- 7 Sheraton Suites Lexington**  
2601 Richmond Road  
859.268.0060 or 800.262.3774  
\$89 (1-4 people per suite)  
On-site restaurant  
Reservation deadline: 10/13

- 8 Shoney's Inn-Lexington**  
2753 Richmond Road  
859.269.4999  
\$50 (doubles/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/27

#### I-75 (Exit 108) / Man O' War Blvd.

- 9 Courtyard Lexington South**  
1951 Pleasant Ridge Drive  
859.263.9090  
\$85 (kings, doubles/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/1

- 10 Hilton Garden Inn-Lexington**  
1973 Plaudit Place  
859.543.8300  
\$89 (1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/10

- 11 Residence Inn South/Hamburg**  
2688 Pink Pigeon Parkway  
859.263.9979  
\$109 (studios, 1 bedroom suites)  
\$149 (2 bedroom suites)  
Reservation deadline: 10/1

- 12 Sleep Inn**  
1920 Plaudit Place  
859.543.8400  
\$72 (singles, doubles/1-4 people)  
Reservation deadline: 10/10



For more information, contact Denise Withers by phone: 502.254.4731 or 888.254.5713 or e-mail: [Denise.Withers@kybaptist.org](mailto:Denise.Withers@kybaptist.org)

## Hiking China for Jesus

*Trekkers blaze trail to help spread gospel in remote Chinese villages*

RURAL CHINA (BP)—Wearing the same pair of socks for a week, dining on soupy Chinese noodles and veggies for breakfast, shampooing in a creek and snacking on energy bars are only a few of the many unique aspects of hiking through China's countryside.

Doug and Stephen know this firsthand.

Doug, 24, and Stephen, 30, are not on an expedition but a two-year assignment to share the gospel of Christ. (Their real names are not being used to protect them and those with whom they interact.)

They are part of a team of six backpackers who trek cattle paths looking for the isolated villages of the people group among whom they work.

The team pinpoints locations on handheld global positioning systems, takes pictures, counts houses and draws maps of communities. All the information is eventually coordinated into trekking routes and compiled into notebooks for use by future prayer-walking, evangelism and ministry teams.

### Strategic ministry venture

"What they do is so important," according to the worker who supervises them and coordinates strategy. "I feel it is my responsibility that these people have a chance to hear the gospel in a way they can understand it. I thought, 'How are we going to do that?' The people are so spread out. The task appears overwhelming, but we decided that if we knew where they were, we could reach them with the gospel."

The process of locating villages

often provides humorous antidotes to very strenuous travel. For instance, Doug shared about the time they were invited to eat with one family.

"Dude, she pulled out a hog's head—everything from the ears forward—and put it on the fire, turned to us and asked, 'Can you stay for supper?' We figured a way to gracefully get out of that one."

The people who they encounter are traditionally animistic—worshiping trees, rivers and mountains—but openness to the gospel continues to grow.

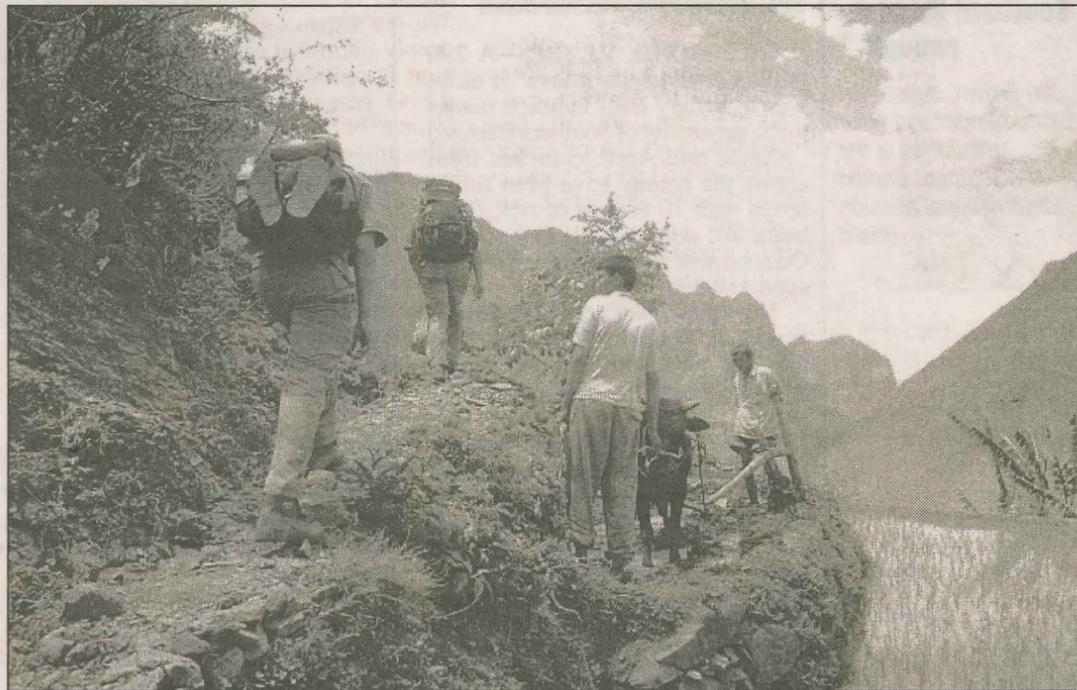
When they enter a community, Doug and Stephen regularly have their own followers as children gather in their wake. Spontaneous games of soccer or basketball often endear the two to villagers. Both are mildly conversant in the Mandarin language.

"We take very seriously the idea of being salt and light wherever we go," Stephen said. "We know others will be coming behind us with the gospel."

Stephen said he felt compelled to build God's Kingdom instead of his own by anonymously preparing the way for the gospel. He said he felt that God said, "You don't need Mountain Dew and Papa John's to survive."

Circumstances during their travels have forced these young men to lean on God for direction. Once, they literally asked God for direction when they were faced with a fork on their trail.

"Like, out of nowhere these guys came out of the fields and told us which direction the village was and that we were almost there," Stephen said.



"All this changes your perspective," Doug said. "When we come to an isolated village and I pray for some guy who is 80 years old, and then I know that I am probably the first Christian to ever pray for him, that is a pretty awesome thought."

### Fellowship fuels friendship

A byproduct of surviving the smell of five-day-old socks has also been an immense friendship. "We are with each other 24/7," Stephen says. "We even hang out together when we don't have to. Our interests are so similar that—from the very start—we got along well."

Doug and Stephen recount the story of how God might be preparing a man to receive Christ.

"This guy on a tractor was pulling a trailer with a bunch of logs on it, but

they'd all fallen off down a slope," Doug recalls. "We dropped our packs and helped him load them all back on his trailer."

"He went on ahead, but later we caught up to him. He was trying to get up a muddy slope but couldn't because of the weight of the logs. We unloaded all the logs, carried them up the hill then loaded them back on the trailer."

The grunt work garnered an invitation to supper and a place to stay that night.

"That guy's wife hooked us up with some serious good food that night," Doug recalled. "He also told us we had a place to stay anytime we came back."

Doug and Stephen hope the next time they go back supper will precede a worship service with that family.

**TREKKERS** Sore legs and majestic vistas are the bane and blessing of backpackers following mountain trails through remote regions of China. (BP photo)

## Restrictive visa policies hamper religious workers in Israel

By Elaine Ruth Fletcher  
Religion News Service

JERUSALEM (RNS)—The police van pulled up alongside the three foreign-born women, volunteers at the Christian charity Bridges for Peace, as they strolled along a quiet street on their way to work.

Before they knew what was happening, the women—from Papua New Guinea, Japan and South Africa—had been swooped up and were being taken to a detention cell, bound for deportation.

Only later, the police discovered one of the women had a valid visa in a passport in her pocketbook. She was dumped, disoriented, in a busy marketplace.

Eight hours later, Bridges for Peace officials won the release of the others, but only after posting a \$12,000 bond guaranteeing the immediate departure of the South African from the country. Unbeknownst to her or to Bridges for Peace, her visa extension request filed some months before in the Ministry of Interior had been denied.

While Israel suffers the biggest

tourist slump in its history, the Christians who still dare to come for prolonged stays and visits, including ministers, volunteers and students, are having greater problems than ever in obtaining legal permission to remain in the country.

The visa policies have affected a cross-section of church institutions—from ardently pro-Israeli organizations like Bridges for Peace to Catholic churches that serve a primarily Arab and Palestinian laity.

### High unemployment a factor

Israel's high unemployment rate, a new police crackdown on illegal foreign workers and the hostile attitude of Jewish ultra-Orthodox Interior Ministry officials toward non-Jews and even secular Jews all are factors that have played a role in the current visa logjam. In cases like the arrest of the three Bridges for Peace volunteers, the police and the authorities did not make a distinction between religious pilgrims and illegal foreign workers.

Hopes for a change in the visa policies initially rose following Israel's January parliamentary elections, when

the secular-minded Shinui Party gained significant political clout, wresting control of the Interior Ministry portfolio from longtime ultra-Orthodox domination.

Separation of religion and state has long been a pillar of the Shinui Party. Israel's new interior minister, Avraham Poraz, a leader of the Shinui Party, pledged to forge a more tolerant policy toward non-Jewish citizens and residents—an attitude that would presumably extend to Christian clergy, students and volunteers.

Yet the churches and charities are still waiting for a sign of real change.

"Israel has something like 300,000 illegal workers, and they have about 250,000 people out of work, so I understand their problem," said Tony Higon, director of the Israel Trust of the Anglican Church, which manages institutions such as Jerusalem's historic Christ Church and Guesthouse and its Anglican School.

"But it is also important for the authorities to realize that many Christian ministries like our own cannot afford to maintain our institutions only with paid staff," Higon added. "In addition, while we try to hire local

people in paid positions, in many cases the people working in our institutions also have to have Christian convictions in order to do the job."

Many of the institutions impacted by the visa situation are prominent landmarks visited by countless Holy Land pilgrims and tourists. The Anglican Christ Church in Jerusalem's Old City, established in the 1820s, is the oldest Protestant church in the Middle East.

In the case of clergy, the Ministry of Interior canceled an old policy under which a fixed quota of visas, which could be automatically renewed, were made available to every church and charitable institution. Instead, the visa of each pastor or priest has to be subjected to a lengthy review process every year.

"We have been promised by the new government that they will return to the previous status quo, under which seminarians and clergy and volunteers could obtain visas upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs," said Abu Sahelia, a spokesman for Jerusalem's Latin (Catholic) Patriarchate. "But up until now, nothing has changed."

## Baptists collect 35,000 food boxes for hungry Iraqis

**"I can't thank Southern Baptists enough."**

*Jim Brown, director of world hunger and relief ministries at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board*

By Ricky Hardison  
SBC International Mission Board

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—A 2.4-million-pound "gift of love" is on its way to hungry Iraqi families, thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptists. Since mid-April, churches from across the county have been filling boxes with 70 pounds of rice, flour, beans and other Middle East staples. One box will feed a family of five for approximately one month.

Now these packages have arrived at ports in Houston, Texas; and Norfolk, Va., where they have been loaded into containers to be shipped overseas.

"I can't thank Southern Baptists enough—individuals, Sunday school classes, churches, state conventions and numerous disaster relief teams," said Jim Brown, director of world hunger and relief ministries at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. "Everyone pitched in to physically help needy Iraqis.

"We could not have done it without the involvement of our Southern Baptist family. I will be forever grateful for the love and concern expressed through their involvement."

Donors spent approximately \$2 million filling an estimated 35,000 boxes, creating a mass of food exceeding the weight of more than 590 full-size trucks.

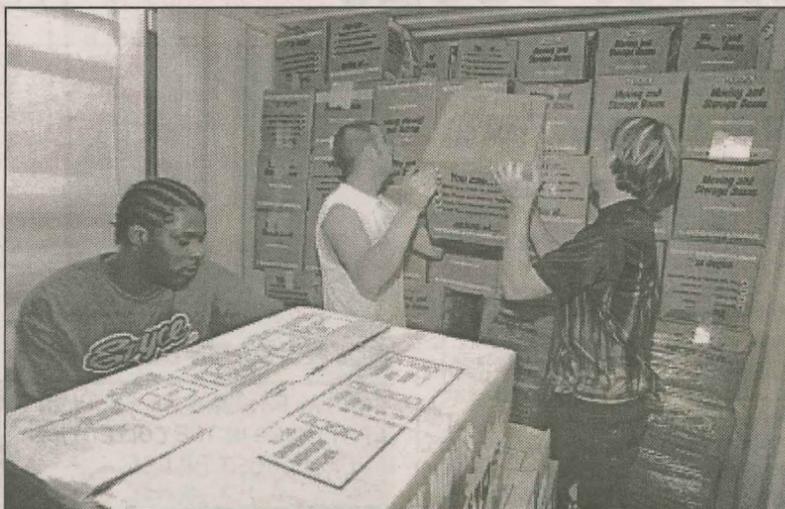
Earlier, IMB officials projected the number of boxes could reach as high as 95,000 boxes, based on the number of labels requested by disaster relief offices at state Baptist conventions.

In Kentucky, congregations collected more than 1,500 boxes of food and another \$13,000 to buy food to be shipped.

North Carolina Baptists, who produced 6,500 boxes for Iraq, gave more than any other state, reported Jean McDaniel Renfrow, the IMB transportation freight specialist who is largely responsible for collecting and shipping the boxes.

Missouri Baptists, themselves recovering from a series of tornadoes that struck in early May, amassed 2,000 food boxes and donated \$26,000.

"The people of Missouri are still giving even though they have personally been affected by disaster," said



**PACKING UP** Workers tightly pack boxes of food into a shipping container for delivery to hungry families in Iraq. Approximately 35,000 boxes of food were collected for distribution, to be coordinated by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. (IMB photo by Roy Burroughs)

Gary Morrow, volunteer director of disaster relief operations for the Missouri Baptist Convention.

In addition, one Christian truck driver from southeastern Missouri saw the need to transport the goods and volunteered his time and his 18-wheeler to haul a load halfway across the country to a collection center in Richmond, Va.

Stories like these illustrate how Southern Baptists sacrificially and creatively went the extra mile for people they likely will never see, Brown said.

### 45-day overseas journey

The containers soon will be ready to leave the ports in Houston and Norfolk for the 45-day journey at sea. Some containers will arrive in Jordan, but it is anticipated that most will come through the southern Iraqi port at Um Qsar.

The food packages originally were supposed to depart on June 1, but the Um Qsar site is not scheduled to open officially until June 15, Brown said.

"The situation is still fluid, and the specific distribution plan has not been totally finalized," he said, but the food likely will be in the hands of needy Iraqi families as soon as early August.

God's provision in providing the boxes will be as providential as His timing over their distribution, Brown added.

"Relief efforts generally push for

great assistance in large cities immediately following a disaster, but humanitarian aid tends typically to die out after a few months," he said. "That's exactly when regional workers will team with local officials to supply isolated, needy areas in southern Iraq with assistance."

The food boxes, stamped with John 1:17 and a greeting from Southern Baptists in Arabic, "will be specifically delivered to hungry families rather than being mass-distributed at a refugee camp," he said. "This project will help aid workers build and sustain credible relationships with new

Iraqi friends, relationships I believe God will honor and bless in His way and His time."

### Increasing missions awareness

Not only will the project meet needs overseas, but the hands-on effort also has served to increase awareness of missions in ways that simple appeals for money often do not.

"I am floored at what the box-to-Iraq project has done for our people," said Nan Sugg, a former missionary to Taiwan now serving with First Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss. "We've had people who have never before had anything to do with missions bring a bag of flour or a sack of beans to add to their Sunday school class' box."

Newspapers throughout the country ran ads letting readers know about the food collection. Grocery stores donated large volumes of goods, and a Richmond truck-loading company opened its docks to speed the collection process.

The total estimated freight cost of the project is \$325,000, according to IMB personnel. Those costs will be paid out of the IMB's World Hunger Fund.

Although deadlines for assembling food boxes have passed, individuals and churches still can contribute by sending a donation. Checks should be designated to the "World Hunger Fund" and should be made payable to the International Mission Board, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. All donations will be used 100 percent for Iraq relief.

## Attacking illiteracy

It amazes me and frustrates me to realize how many adult Kentuckians are considered illiterate. Approximately 40 percent of the working-age population either has low levels or virtually no literacy skills. Approximately half of the least educated counties in the U.S. are in Kentucky. In the late 1990s a task force on adult education in Kentucky reported, "Adult literacy is perhaps the most serious pervasive disease that threatens the Commonwealth's capacity to reach its goals for the 21st century."

I have been inspired by what a couple did about this in Mississippi. They concluded the best way to attack such a tremendous problem was to attack it at the source. Research revealed that if

someone was not a reader by the third grade, there was a good chance he or she never would become a reader. So, they donated \$100 million to create a Reading Institute that bears their name. It is designed to improve dramatically the reading skills of children through a systematic and direct implementation of a research-based reading reform model. Recognizing that every child needs to be able to read proficiently to be both an economically and socially productive

member of society, this couple made this most significant gift.

Kentucky Baptists have been involved in attacking this disease since 1959, when the first adult reading and writing workshop was held at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. The need for tutors for adult non-readers in Eastern Kentucky resulted in the beginning of literacy missions for Southern Baptists throughout the nation. Becky Carnell is the literacy consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board. Call her toll-free at (888) 254-5725, ext. 264 to discover how you or your church can be part of the solution to this problem.

Also, pray the Lord will convict someone to step forward like this Mississippi couple to provide significant financial resources so Kentucky Baptists can do more in attacking the problem of illiteracy for the sake of Christ and for the sake of those who need such help.

Please call toll-free Laurie Valentine or me to assist you in making a legacy gift that will perpetually attack illiteracy.

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

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

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# SMILE

## Honoring two juniors

By Robert Dunston

Each year at Cumberland College's annual Honors Day program, we honor two juniors who have demonstrated a commitment to serving Christ by serving others. This year our recipients were Sara Hunley and Woods Nash.

Sara Hunley, the daughter of Paul and Myrtle Hunley of Lake City, Tenn., received the A.T. Siler Service Award. Hunley is a member of the Cumberland College Chorale. She also has assisted our youth chorale and directed the handbell choir. Last summer, Hunley started a youth choir at her home church. She continues to work with that choir throughout the academic year and during the summer.

Hunley, a music major with a minor in French, is a member of Pi Delta Phi, the French honor society. This summer, she hopes to travel abroad to enhance her knowledge of the French language. Upon graduating next year, she plans to teach high school music and French.

Woods Nash, the son of Mike and Mary Nash of Glasgow, received the T.E. Mahan Service Award. Nash is a member of the national religion honor society Theta Alpha Kappa and was Novice

National Parliamentary Debate Champion at Purdue and Transylvania University competitions in the fall of 2001.

At Cumberland College, Nash is a member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Baptist Student Union (vice president for the past two years). He serves as chaplain to the Minority Alliance Council and as a worker and tour guide in our admissions office.

### CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



Last fall, Nash began a weekly Bible study. As the semester progressed, he led the members to see the need for more Bible studies for students. He encouraged his group to establish four or five new Bible studies in the spring semester and they did.

Nash also served as a student missionary in Paris, France, in summer 2002 and in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, for a week in January 2003.

Selecting the junior service awards always presents a challenge because Cumberland College is blessed with many fine young people dedicated to serving others in Christ's name. Hunley and Nash represent our college and our Savior well.

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

## Kudzu

Doug Marlette



## For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



## Bible Crossword

Beverly Barnes

### Across

- 1 "The \_\_\_ is unto you, and to your children" (Acts 2:39)
- 8 "\_\_\_ loves me, this I know"
- 12 "\_\_\_ and perfume rejoice the heart" (Proverbs 27:9)
- 14 Mississippi's neighbor, abbr.
- 15 "\_\_\_ unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:25)
- 16 "When they had ... gone six \_\_\_, he sacrificed oxen" (2 Samuel 6:13)
- 18 Personal smell, in other words, for short
- 19 Extra-terrestrials, abbr.
- 20 Central state, abbr.
- 21 Craggy hill
- 22 "\_\_\_ and outs" (Psalm 119:8)
- 24 "Forsake me not \_\_\_" (Psalm 119:8)
- 25 The book between Joel and Obadiah
- 26 Garment belted at the waist
- 28 "\_\_\_ Shaddai"
- 29 Single
- 31 Bachelor of Education degrees, abbr.
- 32 "The Spirit and the \_\_\_ say, Come" (Revelation 22:17)
- 34 Beverly, for short
- 35 Road, abbr.
- 36 "\_\_\_ your enemies" (Matthew 5:44)
- 37 Compass point
- 38 Charges
- 40 Birds build these
- 44 Need this to solve a mystery
- 46 Compass point
- 48 Vowels: \_\_\_, \_\_\_, \_\_\_, o, u and sometimes y
- 50 Bends
- 52 Pluck guitar strings
- 54 Doctor of Divinity, abbr.
- 55 "Ye are not your \_\_\_" (1 Corinthians 6:19)
- 56 "One of the least of \_\_\_" (Matthew 25:40)

- 6 "Even the wind and the \_\_\_ obey him" (Mark 4:41)
- 7 Enclosure, abbr.
- 9 Spanish article
- 10 Southern continent, abbr.
- 11 "I love to tell the \_\_\_ of Jesus and His love"
- 13 "Aquila ... with his wife Priscilla ... were \_\_\_-makers" (Acts 18:2-3)
- 17 "Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, \_\_\_ you" (1 Peter 5:10)
- 18 "In whom we have \_\_\_ and access with confidence" (Ephesians 3:12)
- 21 Transmit/receive, abbr.
- 23 Not, prefix
- 24 Biblical land: \_\_\_ of the Chaldees
- 25 Having, suffix
- 27 Jesus died on the \_\_\_
- 28 Garden of \_\_\_
- 29 Pregnancy doctor, abbr.
- 30 The first woman
- 31 The Israelites needed straw to make this (Exodus 5:7)
- 33 4, Romans num.
- 38 Money supply

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### Last week's solution

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| 15 | R | U | E | B | E | R | B | I | N |   |   |   |   |
| 18 | A | T | E | S | E | T | N | E | T |   |   |   |   |
| 21 | H | W | A | S | H | T | E | Y | E |   |   |   |   |
| 25 | P | L | E | S | H | T | B | E | A | M | L |   |   |
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| 38 | L | E | A | F | N | U | M | B | E | R |   |   |   |
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| 43 | G | I | R | T |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

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## Adoption an option?



### International Adoption Meeting

10:30 a.m. - Noon, Saturday, June 21

Families interested in international adoptions are invited to attend a June 21 meeting hosted by Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children and presented by America World Adoption Association.

Call (800) 928-5242

to make reservations and for more information.

KBHC's Pregnancy and Adoption Services offers information and emotional support to birth parents facing unplanned pregnancy and to couples interested in adoption. The office in Louisville works with individuals and families throughout Kentucky.



## NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Labor Department, ministry to help child soldiers.** The U.S. Department of Labor is teaming with Christian aid agency World Vision to combat the plight of child soldiers. Labor Secretary Elaine Chao unveiled a \$13 million initiative to offer education and rehabilitation for former child soldiers. World Vision estimates 300,000 children currently are fighting in more than 34 conflicts around the world.

■ **Poll: Bush's, Lieberman's faiths don't affect voters.** Wide majorities of American voters said the well-known faiths of both President Bush and Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Joseph Lieberman are not reasons to vote for either man, according to a recent poll. The survey, by Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn., found 69 percent of voters said Bush's "born again" Christian faith would not affect their vote, and 85 percent said Lieberman's Orthodox Jewish faith makes no difference in their voting.

■ **Trinity Broadcasting co-founder battling cancer.** Jan Crouch, the co-founder of the Trinity Broadcasting Network with her husband, Paul, is recovering from colon cancer surgery. She had the operation May 21, two days after being taken to an emergency room, reported Charisma News Service. "They were able to examine five of her lymph nodes and two showed signs of cancer," said Paul Crouch Jr., vice president of program development.

■ **TV editors split on importance of religion news.** Television news editors cover religious holidays and other local faith-related events, but half of them do not believe religion is as important as health, science or business news, a new survey shows. The survey, released by the Interreligious Information Center, found that all 41 news editors responding said their stations cover religious holidays and local events of faith groups in their community. Forty-nine percent of the news editors said religion is not as important as health, science or business news.



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### How does the Father's Day offering really help?

It should come as no surprise that in the day-to-day operations of this and other KBC-supported ministries, frustrating decisions must be made.

Hopefully we have surrounded ourselves with dedicated and qualified people who help us as we seek to use that which has been entrusted to us.

One potentially difficult decision I never have had to make is whether or not we can accept a student because he or she cannot afford to pay. Sometimes parents with average or above-average incomes do ask for reduced fees.

The reality is that often our wants outweigh our needs and income. While I might feel sorry for folks who have burdened themselves with excessive debt, I do not feel compelled to extend additional scholarship funds to families who simply need to eliminate some of their "toys."

On the other hand, it is never a difficult decision to provide extra scholarship dollars to the truly needy. Recently, a family of six visited my office to consider enrolling the four children in summer school. Like many of the families we work with, the father was not in the picture. There was just an aunt and a mom with her four middle-school children.

The oldest of the four was showing the effects of not having a male role model in his life. Academically challenged, he was not only doing very poorly in his schoolwork; he also disrupted the class and frustrated his teachers. We were not sure if he was appropriate for our school, so the visit was mostly directed at getting to know him. His sister also was interested in enrolling, and the two youngest siblings had just passed the fifth grade. The aunt is the one who realized that these children needed to be in a different environment. The

children's mother has a part-time job working evenings in a restaurant. When these four children came home from school each day, mom was leaving for work. The oldest of the four was left to care for the younger siblings and himself.

The aunt was also the one who had gotten the admissions process started. After interviewing each child separately, I invited the mother and aunt to join them in my office. After discussing the needs of the children, the question came down to

finances. It was obvious the mother had little or nothing to offer. In those situations, all we ask from the parents is daily spending money, normally a dollar a day per child. That may sound like a lot of money for a low-income family, but we think it is a reasonable request. When the mother asked about the cost for her children to attend, I told her they would be on a full scholarship. She did not understand how I could accept all four children without asking her to pay something. On an annual salary of about \$6,000 and some food stamps, she could not afford to pay. However, the aunt agreed to supply the \$1 per day

spending allowance for each of the children.

You, other Kentucky Baptists, and many other wonderful friends made it possible for me to make these scholarships available. Without your help and the support of the Father's Day Offering, it would have been a painful decision to tell the mother we could not help. Thanks for making my job easier!

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

### Reaching people in Stony Fork Hollow

Eight years ago, 1993 graduate Cecil Morgan left a ministry position needing some time to heal. He and his wife, Donna, participated in a Kentucky Baptist Convention stress management conference.

"The classes, counseling and fellowship with other couples met our need," Cecil said. "While there I was asked about the church in Big Leatherwood. They had also gone through some pain. The Lord brought us together, and all of us experienced healing."

Can a church grow and baptize people in an isolated, less metropolitan area? In his seven years at First Baptist Church of Big Leatherwood, Cecil has baptized 100 people. "I feel like Nehemiah, I am doing a great work. Wherever a person serves, if you are doing God's work, it is a great work," he said.

First Baptist sits at the mouth of Stony Fork Hollow in Perry County. The church ministers to many coal miners, with an attendance of 65-70 people. About 30 months ago, the church experienced a revival that brought 32 baptisms in one month.

"Experiencing God" Bible study groups followed, and more than 50 members completed the course,

with Cecil teaching classes in the morning, afternoon and evening. He then led members through "Share Jesus Without Fear."

"We've grown along with them," Cecil stated. "We're not without our struggles, but this is a good church. They love us." The sanctuary was remodeled, and the church has a bus ministry.

Morgan's bivocational ministry includes driving a school bus and substitute teaching. "I baptized 10 youth from my first bus route," Cecil said. "One 17-year-old wouldn't speak to me when he started riding. Now he moves to the front seat and talks to me." Donna is a supervisor with James Steel Learning Center, helping children with learning disabilities.

"My first calling is preaching the Word. I am committed to study and be prepared to preach," Cecil stated. "But relationships and ministry are so important. I visit the hospitals and nursing homes and coach a baseball team."

In the middle of the mountains, Cecil Morgan fulfills the Scripture, "That I may by all means save some."

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

#### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## In the beginning

### New book explores history behind work on King James Bible

By Kevin Eckstrom  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Their names are mostly lost to history now—Geoffrey King, Lancelot Andrewes, Miles Smith and dozens more—but the book that brought them all together, the King James Bible, remains “the greatest work of English prose” ever written.

So says British author Adam Nicolson, whose new book, “God’s Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible” explores the committee of about 50 scholars whose 1611 Bible remains one of the world’s most authoritative religious texts.

With its “thees” and “thous,” the King James Bible has an immediate, almost impenetrable, air of authority and seriousness. If we could hear God talk, it’s almost as if He would surely sound as He does in the King James Bible.

But Nicolson argues that it is the translators’ poetry—that kind of language that touches the heart as well as the head—that is its greatest strength. It’s a type of divine discourse that has been lost in newer, more popular translations, he says.

“What people think they need now is hard, reliable information,” Nicolson said in an interview. “There’s a concentration on the identifiable substance of the thing. Whereas these people (translators)

think that what really matters is the mythos, the surrounding atmosphere of beauty and mystery and musicality.

“If religion loses all of those things, then it loses what actually matters about it.”

In other words, Nicholson claims, while the King James language may seem intimidating or even inaccessible, its 20th century competition is, in a word, boring.

According to a 2000 Gallup Poll for the American Bible Society, 41 percent of Americans who own a Bible have a King James Version. But 88 percent of Bible shoppers said they want something “easy to understand,” making the 1978 New International Version the No. 1 seller.

“If you read these 20th century translations, there is this tremendous sense of ordinariness,” Nicolson said. “The ordinary is not the Bible’s subject. It is this very, very odd thing of a God being involved in the world.”

#### A short history lesson

When King James I summoned the scholars from Oxford and Cambridge in 1604, he had political as well as divine intentions. James, a Scotsman who was new to the throne, wanted desperately to unite his kingdom by bringing together the high-church

Anglicans who were loyal to the king and the Puritans who were suspicious of the monarchy and had “flirted” with Presbyterianism.

The loyalists embraced the 1568 Bishops’ Bible, which was popular among the hierarchy but was never accepted by the people. The Puritans favored the Geneva Bible, produced in the 1550s by Calvinists who translated “king” as “tyrant.” The book’s notations were brimming with anti-royalist sentiment.

The translators were divided into six “companies” of eight members, each with a supervising director. Each company was assigned a different portion of the Bible, relying heavily on William Tyndale’s translation from 1526.

#### The importance of flow

Interestingly, the final revisions were done orally, to make sure the text has a consistent, almost musical, flow to it.

What emerged, Nicolson said, was a “kind of language that can reach up and down at the same time.”

Take, for example, the Bible’s opening verse in which God famously creates heaven and earth. Tyndale’s version said “the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the deep, and the spirit of God moved

upon the water.”

In the King James Version, “the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

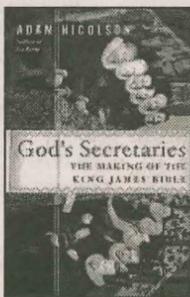
Nicolson concedes the difference is subtle, slight and easily overlooked. But he says the use of the word “face” is a stroke of genius.

“The spirit of God moving on the face of the waters has a mysterious and ghostly humanity to it which neither the modern translations nor Tyndale’s blankness can match,” Nicolson wrote. “The face of the waters’ carries a subliminal suggestion that the face of God is reflected in them.”

Nicolson argues the language of 1611 has become the rhetorical benchmark for everything from the Gettysburg Address to Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech. What Shakespeare did for drama, the King James Bible did for the spoken word.

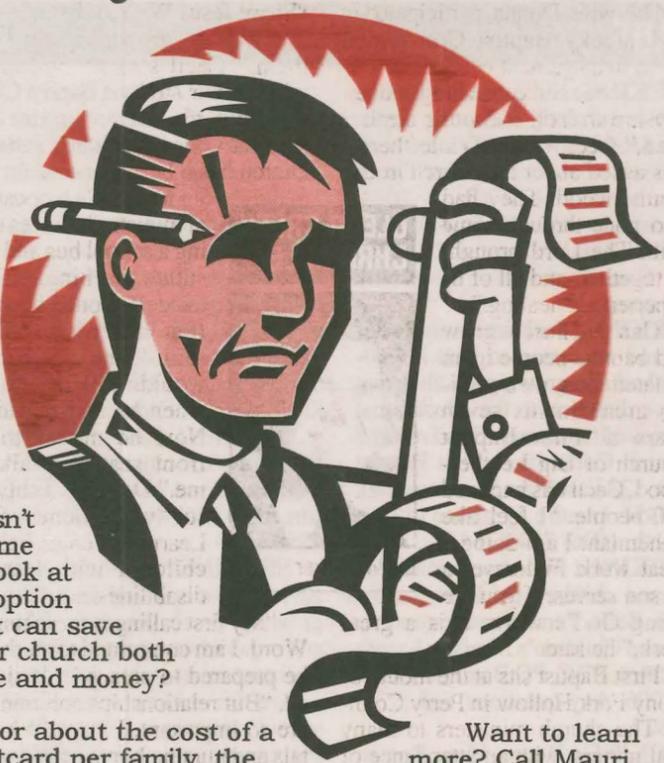
“For generation after generation, it gave the English, and the English in America, a template against which to measure their own utterances,” he writes.

“The King James Bible ... gave the English, more than any other book, a sense of the possibilities of language, an extraordinary range of richness, more approachable than Shakespeare, more populist than Milton, a common text against which life itself could be read.”



**In other words, Nicholson claims, while the King James language might seem intimidating, its 20th century competition is, in a word, boring.**

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WESTERNRECORDER

## Southern Seminary dean writes about 'God on Sex'

By Jeff Robinson  
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Song of Solomon can serve as a healthy foundation for understanding God’s intentions for sex, according to a new book on the subject by Daniel Akin.

“God on Sex: The Creator’s Ideas About Love, Intimacy and Marriage,” seeks to unpack for Christians insights from the Scripture on the physical relationship within marriage, according to Akin, dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary’s school of theology.

“When sex and marriage are experienced and enjoyed together as God intended, the joys and blessings that are ours are seldom, if ever, surpassed in this life,” Akin writes in the introduction.

The book examines the Old Testament’s Song of Solomon, which Akin calls “God’s instruction manual for sex and marriage.” He argues that the Song of Solomon gives God’s design for the intimate aspects of marriage and family.

The casual way in which modern culture approaches sex is nowhere found in Scripture, he writes.

“God knows nothing of casual sex, because in reality there is no such thing. What is often called sex is always costly. Sexually transmitted diseases, unexpected pregnancy and psychological and spiritual scars are some of the results, and the price paid, because we have approached God’s good gift of sex all too

casually.”

In the early chapters of the book, Akin brings the Song of Solomon to bear on such topics as beginning a relationship, proper praise and encouragement between marital partners, and fanning the flames of romantic love.

Akin also tackles a notion that John Gray popularized in his best-seller “Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus.” He writes that Gray’s understanding of the obvious differences between men and women is partly correct, but that Gray fails to account for the fact that both sexes are



from the same planet and must deal with their differences in God’s way to make marriage and romance work.

Playing off the foxes written of in Song of Solomon 2:15, Akin identifies seven “foxes” that may easily sneak in and destroy a marriage: role reversal, intimacy stagnation, stonewalling, time ill spent, outside interference, fatigue and misunderstanding.

Of the “fox of role reversal,” Akin warns, “God made men to be men, husbands and fathers. A man should never apologize for being a man, for being a masculine human being. God made women to be women, wives and mothers. No woman should ever apologize for being a feminine person.”

In other chapters, Akin examines preparation for marriage, argues the biblical case for traditional marriage, underscores the biblical definition of love that is to last a lifetime and discusses “the beauty and blessings of sex as God planned it.”

## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Needed: A team of Kentucky women to lead a women's conference in Warsaw, Poland, Sept. 24-Oct. 7. Contact KBC partnership office.

■ Give thanks for what missionaries are calling "a great movement of the Spirit" when they showed the film "The Miracle Worker" to students in the English Language School in Olawa, Poland, last month. "God surprised us with a great response to the gospel," they write.

■ A team of volunteers from the States who are in Sofia, Bulgaria, this month, building a playground in a communist neighborhood. Missionaries request prayer that this project in the area where Sofia's mayor lives will have a strong, positive influence and build lasting bridges with the local Baptist congregation.

■ Kentucky natives Doyle and Arlee Searcy in Frankfurt, Germany. Searcy is pastor of Bethel International Baptist Church there. Mrs. Searcy is battling cancer.

■ Jim Erwin and his wife, Heike. Erwin recently became pastor of International Baptist Church in Bremen, Germany.

■ Several "Alpha" seeker Bible studies that are beginning this month in Spain. Missionaries request that they will "invite the right people to attend and that God will use this study to draw these people to Himself."

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ ALEXANDRIA—Pleasant Ridge Church recently called **Paul Coleman** as pastor. He previously was associate pastor and minister of education at Beechwood Church in Louisville.

■ BOWLING GREEN—First Church will host homecoming weekend June 28-29. Activities on Saturday include a 4 p.m. picnic at Covington Woods Park, with a 5 p.m. concert by **Bill and Anna Keith**. Sunday activities include 11 a.m. worship celebrating 185 years of ministry. **Mark Hopper** is pastor.

■ CADIZ—Cadiz Church will sponsor a community sing in the church parking lot June 21, 6 p.m. **Kevin**

**Roberts** is pastor.

■ DIXON—First Church recently called **Randall Hurt** as pastor. He previously was pastor of Dupey Church in Henderson.

■ EUBANK—Oak Grove Church #2 recently ordained **Ronnie Haste** as a deacon.

■ FANCY FARM—**Jason Porter**, pastor of Beulah Church, was ordained to the gospel ministry June 7 at Farmington Church.

■ HENDERSON—Bellfield Church recently called **David Simpson** as pastor.

Immanuel Church recently honored **Hugh and Pat Ligon** on their

50th wedding anniversary. **Joseph Tricquet** is pastor.

■ LA CENTER—Mount Pleasant Church called **Chris Cooper** as pastor. He previously was interim pastor.

■ LEWISBURG—Elk Lick Church recently called **Troy Luttrell** as pastor.

■ LEXINGTON—**Brandy Albritton** recently resigned as minister of youth at Grace Church.

■ LOUISVILLE—Broadway Church will host a children's music camp July 14-18, 9 a.m. For information, call (502) 895-2459.

Ormsby Heights Church recently honored **Aylene Buchanan** on her 90th birthday. **Rick Bowden** is pastor.

■ NANCY—Piney Grove Church #2 recently called **Roger Weddle** as pastor.

## Boyce's bilingual Vietnamese program gains first graduates

By David Roach  
*Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*

LOUISVILLE (BP)—Twenty-one Vietnamese students recently graduated from Boyce College as the inaugural class in a bilingual education program at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's undergraduate college.

An Van Pham, the program's founder, said the students—60 percent of whom are from Georgia—will play a vital role in taking theological education to ethnic congregations in the United States.

As director of language missions for Atlanta Baptist Association, Pham conducted a survey 10 years ago that discovered 75 percent of ethnic pastors in the Atlanta area had no seminary background. A full 50 percent had not even completed a four-year college degree.

So motivated by the need to educate pastors of non-English-speaking

churches, Pham contacted Bob Johnson, then the dean of Boyce College, about starting a bilingual education program for Vietnamese ministers.

In the fall of 1993, 42 Vietnamese students began working toward an associate of arts degree in biblical studies. By 1999, the program had been modified to permit the students to earn a bachelor of science degree. Last month, the first 21 students received their bachelor's degrees.

### 12-hour days in class

Students attended weeklong classes at the Louisville campus several times a year for more than 12 hours a day to complete the program. Classes typically involved an English-speaking professor lecturing for much of the class time, Pham said, followed by an additional seven hours of Pham reviewing the material in Vietnamese.

Despite the language barrier between professors and students, the

Vietnamese students managed to perform at a comparable level to native English-speaking students on exams, Pham said.

The success of the bachelor's degree program led administrators at Southern's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth to inaugurate a bilingual master of divinity program this year.

And the Vietnamese students have wasted no time in taking advantage of the opportunity to earn a master's degree. In fact, Pham said, several of them began work on their first master's level class just hours after their Boyce graduation.

The early success of bilingual education at Southern Seminary makes Pham optimistic about the future of the Vietnamese degree program. Currently, 33 students are enrolled.

By January 2004, "my goal is that the enrollment will increase to 40," he said. "By May of next year, my goal is to have up to 45 or 50 students in

■ PADUCAH—Twelve Oaks Church called **Todd Dowdy** as minister of music. **Jim Holloway** is pastor.

■ SOMERSET—Mount Victory Church recently ordained **Rusty Mounce, Ralph Shope** and **James Taylor** as deacons.

New Enterprise Church ordained **Jamie Lockard** as a deacon May 18.

■ STAMPING GROUND—Stamping Ground Church recently called **Alex Parrish** as youth minister.

■ SUMMERSVILLE—Summersville Church will host gospel recording artist **Lois Jane** in concert June 22, 11 a.m. For information, call (270) 932-3451.

■ WILLIAMSTOWN—Williams-town Church recently called **Becky Parker** as communications assistant. **Steve Rice** is senior pastor.

this class."

Charles Lawless, senior associate dean of the Graham School, said seminary officials also have begun preliminary discussions about adding a Spanish language master of divinity program.

In the final analysis, Pham said, bilingual theological education for church leaders is vitally important because it provides local leadership for the increasing number of ethnic-language congregations in the United States.

"In 1987, I started to work in Georgia, and anytime we wanted to start a Vietnamese or a Korean or a Chinese church, we looked to move someone from California or Texas or New York to Georgia," he said. "Now after 10 years we have strong education and we don't need to move anyone from other states to Georgia." He said Asian church leaders are now "training and preaching to and teaching their own people."

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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

**SEEKING:** Jamestown First Baptist is seeking a full-time students pastor. Undergraduate education required. Forward to: Youth Search, JFB, PO Box 308, Jamestown, KY 42629; jfb@duo-county.com.

**SEEKING:** Associate pastor of education and administration for growing church in western Kentucky. Please send resumé with references to: Personnel Committee, Zion Baptist Church, 8158 Highway 351, Henderson, KY 42420.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of children for Tunnel Hill Baptist Church. Please send resumé to: Tunnel Hill Baptist Church, 734 Tunnel Hill Church Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, Attn: Terry Caudoin.

**SEEKING:** Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, Ky., is seeking a full-time minister to children. Please send resumé to Belinda Berry, PO Box 130, Elizabethtown, KY 42702, or call (270) 765-7822 for more information.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music and worship. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Woodland Baptist Church, 809 N Pope Lick Road, Middletown, KY 40243.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth for Tunnel Hill Baptist Church. Please send resumé to: Tunnel Hill Baptist Church, 734 Tunnel Hill Church Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, Attn: Terry Caudoin.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to Trinity Southern Baptist Church, 309 E Shelby St., Falmouth, KY 41040.

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

**SEEKING:** Simpsonville Baptist Church is currently accepting applications for the position of music minister. This is a 3/4-time position. Deadline for application is July 4, 2003. Send resumé to: PO Box 56, Simpsonville, KY 40061. Phone: (502) 722-5246. E-mail: fran@simpsonvillebaptist.com.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and education to lead a well-established and growing youth group and give direction to the educational ministries of the church. Send resumé to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 123 East Main St., Morehead, KY 40351. Inquire by phone to Don Mantooh, (606) 784-5768.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and children for First Baptist Church, Bells, Tenn. Send resúmes to Youth and Children's Minister Search Committee, FBC, PO Box 206, Bells, TN 38006. Any questions, call (731) 784-3807.

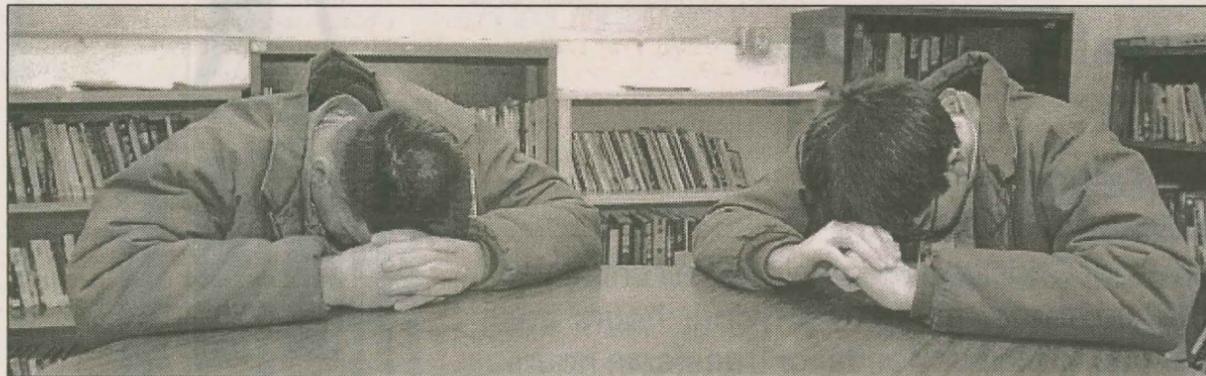
**SEEKING:** Buena Vista Baptist Church has an immediate opening for an associate pastor with primary responsibilities over the youth department. All interested applicants please send resúmes to: Associate Pastor/Youth Search Committee at 324 Clifty St., Somerset, KY 42501.

**SEEKING:** Olivet Baptist Church in Paducah, Ky., is searching for a full-time minister of youth and activities. Individual will be responsible for leading the church in planning, coordinating and directing the youth program and a program of Christian activities for all ages. College graduate is preferred. Baptist training and/or experience is desired. Olivet is a suburban church with an average of 228 in S.S. Send a resumé to OBC, 5186 Hinkleville Road, Paducah, KY 42001.

**SEEKING:** Pastor for Bethel Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. (Pulaski County). Send resumé to: Ed Epperson, 8955 Highway 39, Somerset, KY 42503.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister to give spiritual leadership to a growing youth program. Education and experience are a plus, but calling, a vibrant relationship with Jesus, and a love for middle school and high school students is a must. We are a purpose-driven, seeker-sensitive, decidedly contemporary church located in Owensboro. If interested in this position, please send your resumé, references and a brief description of your conversion, calling and interest in this position to: Youth Minister, PO Box 22302, Owensboro, KY 42304.

## Prison ministry under fire



**INNERCHANGE** Two inmates in the InnerChange Freedom Initiative at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Lino Lakes, join in prayer as part of the Christian-based program in their medium-security unit. The program, developed by Prison Fellowship, aims to reduce the chances they'll return behind bars, but has been labeled unconstitutional in a lawsuit. (RNS photos by Steve Wewerka)

### Suit claims program unfair, unconstitutional

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

LINO LAKES, Minn. (RNS)—Inside Bishop Cottage at this Minnesota Correctional Facility, a small choir of men harmonize in one corner. "Change my heart, oh God," the octet sings. "Make it ever true. Change my heart, oh God, may I be like you."

In the library next door, two men's heads are bowed over a table as they pray together. Minutes later, they'll all be in a classroom to continue a Bible-based education aiming to transform them.

This is life in prison at the InnerChange Freedom Initiative, a Christian-infused program seeking to change men inside prison in hopes they won't return once they've been released.

"It really is a two-pronged effect," said Dan Kingery, director of the program located in a suburb north of Minneapolis. "Certainly you want men to leave prison and stay out, but you also want the experience in prison to be different."

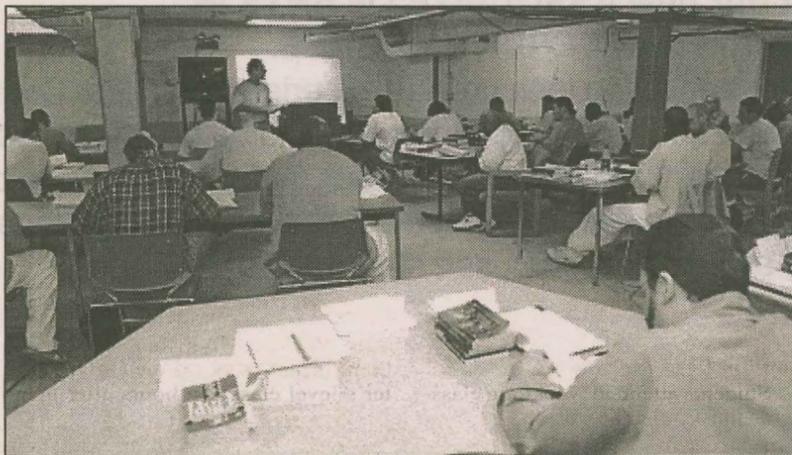
The program sponsored by Prison Fellowship, the ministry founded by ex-convict and ex-Nixon aide Chuck Colson, also is the subject of a lawsuit. The Iowa version of the program has been charged with being unconstitutional.

In that state, alleges Americans United for Separation of Church and State, inmates in the program have privileges the rest of the prison population does not. The watchdog group says the combination of preferential treatment and prayer-filled sessions in a government facility violate the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

The program in dispute is open to inmates who have 18 months or more left in prison. They spend a year in intensive study followed by six months of preparation for the outside world with emphasis on job-seeking and budgeting skills. After release, a mentor continues to work with him for at least six months, helping him connect with a church and a job.

Inmates like Eric Dahlvang of International Falls, Minn., said it's the fellowship with other inmates that's making a difference for him.

"I need other Christian people to be able to stay near to God," said Dahlvang, 31, who has 4 1/2 years left on the sentence he received at age 20



**BIBLE STUDY** Inmates attend an InnerChange Bible study.

for killing a friend.

The Lino Lakes, Minn., program began in July with 37 inmates. The state legislature appropriated \$200,000 for its first two years. Prison Fellowship President Mark Earley said he expects ongoing annual funding of the program to consist of \$100,000 from the state and \$600,000 from private funds.

Prison Fellowship and government officials say church and state are kept separate in the billing process, with government money used for nonsectarian purposes such as furnishings or equipment.

"There is a staff person assigned to review any bills submitted to maintain that separation," said Shari Burt, spokeswoman for the Minnesota Department of Corrections.

#### Faith focused, but not required

Kingery said the majority of inmates in the program at the medium-security facility are Christians, but faith is not a requirement for participation.

"I go, of course, and interview them and tell them up front that this is a Christ-centered, Bible-based program and everyone is welcome," he said of the screening process. "I just want to be clear that they understand the paradigm that we come from. And so you'll see people of all faiths, of no faith."

While the lawsuit against the Iowa program focuses on the potential privileges it can provide, Prison Fellowship officials say the intense, busy days of participants mean they have to meet higher standards.

In the four programs, inmates are not allowed to watch television and lose some time for work, recreation and sleep that others may have. They rise by 6 a.m. for devotional readings and spend much of the afternoon and evening in required activities.

"Far from privileges, there are a lot more responsibilities and duties in this program and higher expectations," he said.

He believes the program is constitutional because it is voluntary and because prisoners have the right to religious freedom.

The Texas program, which began with then-Gov. George W. Bush's approval, has proven effective, according to a report from the state's Criminal Justice Policy Council. It found that 8 percent of the participants who completed the program returned to prison within two years of their release, compared to 22 percent of offenders who were screened for the program but did not enter it. National recidivism rates tend to range between 60 percent and 70 percent.

The recidivism statistics are noticed by inmates in the Minnesota program, too.

"I like my chances of never coming back," said Virgil Henderson, a 35-year-old Chicagoan serving 15 years for murder. He said inmates outside the program have their doubts and have criticized his faith walk.

They tell him he'll be "back to the old ways." But despite the fact that he will probably return full time to the general population before his release, he thinks they're wrong. "I think we all will make it."

## War over, church still feel absence of on-duty pastors

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Since he got called up from the National Guard and sent to Iraq, Army Chaplain (Maj.) Jeff Jencks has anointed a soldier in an operating room, provided a listening ear for other military members far from home and befriended Iraqi children.

But he has children back home in Rhode Island who miss him—the Sunday school class at St. John's Episcopal Church in Cumberland, who sent their pastor a long banner with tracings of their hands on it.

"It's intended for him to wrap around like he's getting hugs from all the kids," explained Paul Bousquet, senior warden of the church and the lay leader who's helping run the congregation in Jencks' absence.

Multitudes of military members serving in reserve units have been deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom, leaving jobs and families behind. But some of them also have left the leadership of their congregations—temporarily or permanently—to answer the call to military service.

Fifty-two of the Navy's 315 reserve chaplains were called up for Operation Iraqi Freedom. At the height of the operation, there were about 550 reserve and active Navy chaplains involved in the region. Of the 400 or so Army chaplains involved in the Iraqi war, about 60 percent were active duty and 40 percent were from reserve components of the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard.

"The last 10 years have seen a very large increase in the utilization ... of the reserve components in all kinds of military operations from war fighting to humanitarian relief operations," said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Eric Wester, spokesman for the Army Office of the Chief of Chaplains. "So clergy have been called on much more frequently in the last 10 years than they have, really, since World War II."

Each congregation manages in its own way with new arrangements during the absence of a military-affiliated spiritual leader.

Vicar Jim Eggert, who is a pastor in training in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, has taken on more responsibility at a Zanesville, Ohio, church since its pastor, Chaplain (Capt.) Keith Lingsch, was called up from the Air National Guard for Operation Iraqi Freedom in April.

"Certainly our congregation members have stepped up what they've done as well," he said. "More of them are visiting shut-ins, for example. We've had laypeople take over leadership of the teen Bible class and ... one of the adult Bible classes."

#### Keeps contact by e-mail

Eggert e-mails the pastor minutes of elders' meetings and is grateful for Lingsch's ability to respond quickly to questions via the Internet.

Lingsch appreciates the ability to still communicate with his congregation, even through the pastor's letter in the monthly newsletter. "E-mail, what a blessing!" he said in response to questions sent to him by Religion News Service.

Like other chaplains he sees the similarities and the differences in ministry at home and in the desert.

"In Zanesville I cared for people in life and prepared people for death," he wrote. "I do the same here, but maybe the reality of death is a little more in the front of our minds in this place."

Every Sunday, the 520 or so people who attend Trinity pause to pray for Lingsch and about half that number have signed up to pray for him on a particular day each week.

At St. John's in Cumberland, R.I., which has an interim rector, lay leader Bousquet gives a "Father Jeff" report, reading e-mails from Jencks in the preceding week.

Through Bousquet, Jencks has told congregants about scorpions in the sand and the "Easter miracle" of a soldier who was resuscitated twice in the operating room.

"There's been an impact emotionally and so forth but these people, they're not letting it stand in the way of worshipping their God," Bousquet said.

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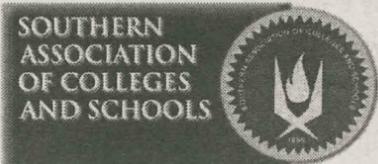
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