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**Acts of kindness not so random, study concludes**

CHICAGO (ABP)—Good deeds might not get you into heaven, but they are a pretty good indication of who is faithful among us, a recent study found.

Scientists at the National Opinion Research Center have determined that when it comes to inspiring altruism, nothing matters more than faith—not gender, race, social class, political affiliation or locale.

According to the study, "Altruism in Contemporary America," Americans on average do 109 altruistic acts each year. But those who attend a place of worship weekly report doing an average of 128 good deeds a year. People who never attend perform only 96 acts of kindness on average.

In addition to those who attend, people who pray reportedly show more kindness than those who don't. The report said those who pray did three times as many acts of kindness as those who never pray.

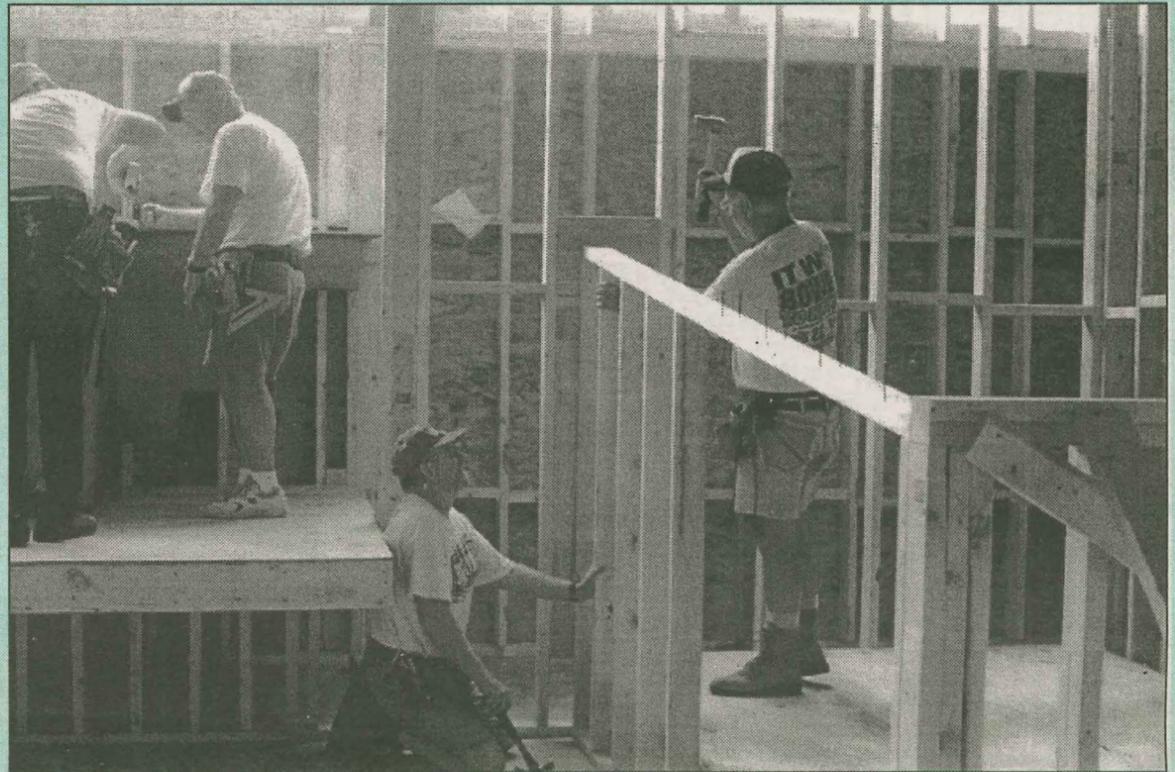
Tom Smith, director of the two-year study, said one reason why faith-based acts of kindness proliferate is that the core values of all major world religions incorporate charity-related deeds in their beliefs.

"What made a difference was attending church and praying more often," he said. "If we're actively engaged, we're a part of a religious community, and opportunities to help others come up more often as a member of a congregation."

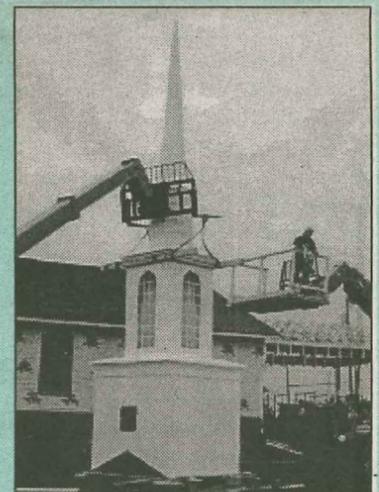
The research team began the study looking for predictors of altruistic acts, such as activity in social services, gender or rural values, he noted.

"We expected people in rural areas to have higher values, be more altruistic, but that was not the case," Smith said. "If you live in a city, opportunities to do good deeds are more likely to turn up."

**Summer construction**



Four volunteer teams from Alabama and Arkansas have helped Buena Vista Baptist Church in Lancaster get a new building this summer. "If we would have had it contracted out, it would have cost us over \$1 million," Pastor Keith Weldon said. The volunteer labor cut their actual costs in half, he added. "It saves us money to do evangelism and missions work ourselves." The church building sits in an area where a lot of new housing is being built, he noted. Garrard County is the third-fastest growing county in the commonwealth, Weldon said. "People are coming from Lexington and Nicholasville and building out in the country." Above: Carpenters for Christ from Valley, Ala., frame part of the building earlier this summer. Right: Workers prepare to lift the building steeple into place. The new sanctuary will seat 400 people, and the building will include 11 Sunday school rooms, a nursery, a kitchen and a fellowship center that will seat 120 people. The former church building will be used as a youth center. Members hope to have the building finished in early October, Weldon added. The church has adopted a motto for the project: "We're not just building a building. We're building lives." (Photos by Pat Hayden)



**Cancelled mission trip leads to mountain ministry involvement**



**MOUNTAIN MISSIONS** Linda Otterback plays with a child during a party at Fleming-Neon Baptist Church. "They have become very close and dear to my heart."

By Shirley Cox  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

LOUISVILLE—A pair of boots with the price tag still attached hangs somewhere in the back of Linda Otterback's closet. She purchased them for a medical mission trip to El Salvador planned for August 2000.

But she never made that trip to El Salvador. God, she said, had a different plan for her.

The day Mrs. Otterback received her boots via mail order, she got a call from Marilyn Johnson, then-assistant in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Brotherhood department. The trip to El Salvador was cancelled, she reported.

Mrs. Otterback was crushed. Standing there in her new boots, she wept, and Johnson wept along with her. She was sure God had called her to El Salvador, and she wanted to serve Him.

Then, a week before the trip was scheduled, Johnson called Mrs. Otterback again and asked if she would like to go to a place called Fleming-Neon instead.

"What country is that in?" she asked. She had never heard of Fleming-Neon, a small community in Eastern Kentucky. Winston McCarty, pastor of Fleming-Neon Baptist Church, organizes food distribution each month and uses volunteers to help with the project.

The call started Mrs. Otterback, 58, on a challenging and rewarding journey deep in the mountains. Every month, she packs clothing, diapers and household furnishings into her car and drives four-and-a-half hours from her home in Louisville to Fleming-Neon to help with a food and clothing distribution to hundreds of families.

She stays for three or four days at a time, offering a message of hope and encouragement. The visits offer

many opportunities to share the gospel as she leads devotionals and services of praise, prayer and Scripture.

"They have become very close and dear to my heart," she said of the people she ministers to. "We have prayed and cried, laughed, worshiped and rejoiced together."

To provide focused prayer support for God's work in Appalachia, Mrs. Otterback organized Eastern Kentucky SonRise Prayer Partners, a women's prayer group that meets two or three times each year. She also has tapped women from the group as leaders for women's retreats around the state.

Her husband, Larry, 60, led a men's retreat in Fleming-Neon in March based on the book "If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat," by John Ortberg.

"Sometimes we have to find out just what our boat is," he said. □ See *Cancelled mission trip ...*, page 3

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, August 6

## Bennett, longtime SBC leader, remembered for integrity

NASHVILLE (BP)—Harold Bennett, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee from 1979-92, died July 27 after a brief bout with pancreatic cancer.

Bennett, 78, was remembered for his Christian leadership, fairness and graciousness during challenging years of turmoil and transition in the SBC.

Integrity "was the defining word in the life and ministry of Harold Bennett," James Griffith said during Bennett's memorial service July 30 at First Baptist Church of Nashville.

### Kentucky connections

A graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Bennett's early years of ministry included serving as pastor of West Point Baptist Church in West Point and chaplain at the Kentucky State Reformatory in La Grange and the Kentucky Woman's Prison in Pewee Valley.

Bennett's "reputation for fairness

and graciousness to all was honestly earned," said Griffith, retired executive director of the Georgia Baptist Convention. He noted that Bennett sought "always to be fair to all, whatever the circumstances might be."

Describing the 1980s and early 1990s as "the most hectic, troubled and turbulent times in the history of our convention," Griffith said, "At no time did I observe him losing his temper, speaking in a negative way about anyone or failing to show Christian grace toward everyone. He somehow rose above the discord, rose above the littleness into bigness and never let his Christian testimony fall below the high standard of our Lord for his most faithful and dedicated servants.

"Selfishness and self-centeredness did not occupy places in his life," he added. "With heart and hands, he forged tools that would build lasting

support through our state conventions for national and world mission causes of Southern Baptists."

In addition to Griffith, the memorial service included remarks by Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance; Eugene Habacker, president of the American Bible Society; and Brad Smith, executive director of the Souper Bowl of Caring.

Lotz, describing Bennett as a statesman, said, "Whether meeting with world leaders or poor peasants, Harold saw them as individuals for whom Christ died."

Noting that Bennett was "a world Baptist," Lotz added, "He knew that when we sang that song, 'In Christ there is no East or West,' we're all one because we're one in Jesus Christ."

Habacker of the American Bible Society noted that Bennett had served on the organization's board for more than 20 years.

"Dr. Bennett truly loved people. His smile and warm greeting have made many a cold room warm—quickly," Habacker said. "He lived the words of Romans 12:10, 'Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.'"

Bennett also was "a person of tremendous focus," Habacker said. "Harold was not lukewarm on issues, yet he always reflected a charitable attitude in the way he expressed his point of view. His views were always accompanied with the kind of integrity that marks godly leaders: Both his actions and his words gave evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in his life. Yet he kept his eye on the goal. He completed whatever he was assigned."

Describing Bennett as a peacemaker, Habacker added, "He always sought to find the common ground,

without compromising on principle. I never saw him eager to pursue division in order to win the argument. Rather, he always sought to bring people together.

Bennett was "truly a man of God," Habacker continued. "I don't know of a higher tribute I could give than this: To serve his Lord well, fully, without reservation was his sole purpose in living. In Harold's words and in his life, this one desire was always at the top of his agenda and evident to everyone he worked with."

### A willing servant & leader

Brad Smith of the Souper Bowl of Caring, a yearly emphasis to raise funds for soup kitchens and other ministries to the needy, recalled that when Bennett attended the organization's inaugural council of stewards meeting, he was nominated as chairman. Smith said Bennett responded, "I didn't come anticipating being elected the chair of this, but if you need me I'll be glad to" serve.

Countless lives of young people have since been touched, Smith said, and more than \$20 million has been raised for local ministries.

"Harold had a way of lifting us up, encouraging us," Smith said, "so that we might reach for being who God has in mind for us to be."

In addition to his role as president-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, Bennett was executive secretary-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention from 1967-79. He previously held leadership positions with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Bennett is survived by his wife, Phyllis, two sons, a daughter and five grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to the American Bible Society or Baptist World Alliance.



Bennett

## Baptist leaders affirm Bennett's legacy

"We are shocked and saddened by the passing of Dr. Bennett. ... He knew Southern Baptist Convention and Executive Committee work as well as anyone in the convention. ... He was a devoted Christian, a loyal Southern Baptist and a dear friend."

*Morris Chapman, Bennett's successor as president of the SBC Executive Committee*

"I counted Harold Bennett as a very close personal friend. ... In Baptist life, he tried desperately and effectively to be fair to the whole family and to keep us moving together in missions. ... We will miss him as one of our very able leaders over a difficult period of time in Baptist life."

*Lloyd Elder, retired president of the Baptist Sunday School Board*

"He was a man of faith and conviction. His ability to treat a person fairly during a difficult situation was a centerpiece of his ministry."

*John Sullivan, executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention*

"He was willing to put his own personal needs and ideas aside because he felt very strongly that he was elected to serve all Southern Baptists."

*Reggie McDonough, retired executive director of the Baptist General Association of Virginia*

"Harold Bennett has been a dear friend to me for the last 30 years and to Southern Baptists for even longer. ... He was an outstanding denominational leader and statesman."

*Jimmy Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources*

## Retired missionaries urge convention leaders to stop anti-Muslim rhetoric

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—Ninety-five retired Southern Baptist missionaries who served in the Middle East and North Africa have signed a resolution calling for Christian leaders in America to refrain from making inflammatory statements about the faith of the people in the predominantly Muslim region.

The admonition was sent in a letter addressed to former Southern Baptist Convention President Jerry Vines and Richard Land, president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

The letter charged that Vines used "very strong language to deprecate the founder of Islam" and cited Land's endorsement of President Bush's pro-Israel policies.

"Because of the deep and continued concern for all the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa," the resolution said, "we, the retired missionaries of this area, urge Christian leaders in America to respect the faith, values and aspirations of all the peoples of the entire area, and to reflect this respect in their public and private statements."

The retirees, representing more than 1,625 years of combined experience with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, sent the letter after Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., told a group of pastors this summer that he stands by his June 2002 comment that Mohammed was a "demon-possessed pedophile."

A similar call for restraint was issued last January by a group of current IMB mission workers in Muslim countries.

The retirees drafted the latest statement last month during a reunion of IMB missionaries in Atlanta. David King, the retired missionary who sent the statement to Vines and Land, called the resolution "brief, but strong."

King served as a missionary in Lebanon and Northern Africa from 1960 to 1989. In his letter accompanying the statement, he told the two leaders, "The lack of such respect in your statements has done more harm to missions and the cause of Christ among the peoples of our area than you will ever know."

## BAPTIST DIGEST

### World Changers workers die.

Two adult volunteers on separate World Changers projects died recently. Susan Adams, 52, of South Carolina, died on a work site July 18 in Savannah, Ga. Barbara Pace, 66, of Georgia, was found dead the morning of July 22 during a World Changers project in Trenton, Mo. Both deaths were ruled to be from natural causes. Adams died of an apparent heart attack during a lunch break after working on a roofing project that week. Pace, a project chaperone, died of an apparent heart attack in her sleep. "Both of these ladies had a heart for service," said John Bailey, manager of student volunteer mobilization for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. "They died doing what they wanted to do."

### Cobb leaves CBF post.

Reba Cobb, chief operating officer of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, will leave CBF Sept. 1 to become religious action director for the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C. Cobb, 60,

has been with CBF since 2001. A founder of Baptist Women in Ministry, she previously held several positions in Louisville, including executive director for Kentuckiana Interfaith Community, president of the Center for Women and Families, executive director of the Louisville Free Public Library Foundation and youth minister at Crescent Hill Baptist Church.

### Southwestern dean resigns.

Daryl Eldridge, dean of the educational ministries school at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, has resigned to pursue the development of an international university based in Springfield, Mo. He will be president of Rockbridge University, an interdenominational school that will provide ministerial education exclusively via the Internet to non-traditional students. Eldridge, who served 19 years at Southwestern, has been dean of the educational ministries school since 1996.

## Hopkinsville churches minister to military families

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

HOPKINSVILLE—Trinity Baptist Church averages 125 people in Sunday worship, but to Kelly Wallace, the congregation's love makes it feel like thousands.

A native of upstate New York, Mrs. Wallace lives for four children, ages 2 to 13, while her husband is in Iraq with the Army's 101st Airborne Division.

Recently the Wallaces moved to a new home three blocks away from their old one. Alarmed at the moving cost of more than \$500 despite the short distance, she found relief when 15 Trinity members showed up and took care of the job in two hours.

For the next week, various members brought dinner every day, a welcome gesture amid the hectic nature of getting settled, she said.

"I tell my mother, 'You don't have to worry,'" said Mrs. Wallace, a Presbyterian who has been attending the church since her husband transferred to Fort Campbell more than five years ago.

"If she could see what this church does for me—mentally, emotionally and spiritually. ... I call Trinity my extended family."

This kind of ministry isn't unique in Christian County Baptist Association, according to Director of Missions Larry Baker.

To encourage its 41 churches to help military families, the association launched "Operation Eagle Care" last March when the United States went to war with Iraq.

### 'Strengthening our churches'

Since then, Kentucky Baptists across the county have been faithfully praying for and serving soldiers' spouses and families, Baker said.

Numerous prayer efforts, including bulletins and special services, are common. So are outreaches such as repairing appliances, mowing grass and shipping care packages to soldiers, he said.

"This has strengthened our churches as a whole," Baker said.



**FAMILY NIGHT** Roy and Mary Callahan help lead a church-sponsored meal and entertainment July 25 for Fort Campbell families. Hopkinsville area churches launched "Operation Eagle Care" last March when the United States went to war with Iraq.

"It's taken a negative and made it into something positive. Around here, the war isn't over. We know how much it costs."

Although much activity is carried out by member churches, Christian County Baptist Association is helping sponsor a new missionary to Fort Campbell.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention and First Baptist Church of Oak Grove also are supporting Roy Callahan, a naval veteran who came to Oak Grove in mid-May.

Callahan most recently worked for the Veterans Administration while helping the singles ministry at Gardendale First Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.

Thus far, Callahan has spent most of his time seeking to build one-on-one relationships with soldiers. In early July, his wife, Mary, started a weekly support group for military wives at First Baptist Church of Oak Grove.

The couple helped organize a "Family Night" July 25 and are participating in a military appreciation day Aug. 15-16 at a Wal-Mart adjacent to Fort Campbell. First Baptist will give away water, cookies and assorted prizes, and do face painting for children.

Callahan said they decided to come to Kentucky after a visit last January. He said they knew there was a great need to share the gospel with young soldiers, many of whom never have attended church.

"The main thing I long to see is military people growing in their relationship with the Lord," he said. "Then, to see them go back and start reaching their fellow soldiers."

Callahan also is directing a weekly witnessing and visitation program with eight members.

Although the church has discontinued its weekly mothers' day out program for the summer, Pastor Todd Gray said the church might resume it in the fall—depending on what happens with the 101st division.

The congregation also meets needs as they arise, Gray said.

"One thing I've seen is the difficulty of the military," Gray said. "It's sure not all glory. To stay in the military a family certainly has to feel called."

### Care packages & free meals

Lillie Dearman knows that feeling. The church secretary at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Hopkinsville recently welcomed her husband, Carl, home from Iraq.

Originally scheduled to retire this fall, he will leave the Army next winter after more than 20 years of duty.

Mrs. Dearman will forever be grateful for the ministry their church has delivered in recent months, including several overseas shipments to two dozen soldiers.

The packages have included a variety of items, including devotional magazines, cards and letters, and photos of the church's new sanctuary and education wing.

"Some of these soldiers don't even go to church but their wives are feeling the love of a church," Mrs. Dearman said. "It's neat to see how God connects us through the miles."

The personal ministry at Hillcrest has included monthly dinners for soldiers' spouses with a deacon's family and a second "adoptive" family. The latter sends birthday cards, stays in touch by phone and sometimes offers financial gifts.

First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville has sent shoebox-sized packages of food to 18 soldiers. Eleven attend the church and the others have children in its preschool program.

The church also has a weekly prayer time devoted to soldiers and their families.

It recently started an "adopt a soldier" program. Besides dinners for military spouses, members offer help with childcare and appointments.

"I think our people have gotten excited about doing something," Pastor Rodney Travis said. "They feel like they're supporting our men and our military. I think they have learned to pray more effectively, too. This has brought people closer together."

At Trinity Baptist, members have sent several shipments including food, personal notes and baby wipes—used for cleaning up in boiling desert conditions—to 15 soldiers.

Several have donated Gideon Bibles in their honor, and many members have cut grass, painted and performed other chores to help military spouses, according to Pastor Danny Belcher.

"We do what we can," Belcher said. "The little things often mean more than the big things."

## Cancelled mission trip leads to mountain ministry involvement

Continued from page 1

"When we do, God is the One who can lead us and guide our actions if we will just get out of the way."

Mrs. Otterback also works to meet the needs of the Appalachian people by serving as a board member for Mountain Missions Development Corporation. The non-profit corporation was formed in 2001 to receive donations of assets and property in Eastern Kentucky. The corporation, which owns 11 holdings, recently purchased the Berea Attic property that includes 15 housing units, a discount clothing store and a 6,700-square-foot warehouse that will be used for food distribution throughout Eastern Kentucky.

The Otterbacks are members of Woodland Baptist Church in Louisville where Larry serves as a dea-



**WOMEN'S RETREAT** Linda Otterback (standing) helps lead a women's retreat at the Wendell Belew Training Center in Stanton. "Larry (her husband) and I feel it is truly a joy to be doing what we do."

con and facilitates two Bible studies and a prayer group each week. As prison ministry coordinator for the church, he has participated in several prison Emmaus walks and a

program called Residents Encountering Christ.

"I find that the inmates are a blessing to those of us who go," he said. "I tell the men (who lead activities) to be prepared as the residents know the Scriptures extremely well."

Active participants in the Emmaus Community in Louisville, the Otterbacks serve as sponsors in four to six spiritual sojourns each year.

"We pray, serve meals, attend functions and many other things as sponsors," said Mrs. Otterback, who also works part-time at the Veterans' Hospital as a radiological technologist. Additionally, she coordinates Friend-

ship Bible Coffee, a subsidiary of Stonecroft, a Christian women's club.

The Otterbacks speak about their ministry in churches throughout Kentucky and coordinate groups to do mission work in Eastern Kentucky.

"Larry and I feel it is truly a joy to be doing what we do," Mrs. Otterback said. "God has blessed us abundantly throughout our lives and we feel we are returning a very small portion back to Him. Bringing others to Christ and telling about what He means in our lives is a special reward that we hope continues until we meet our Master face-to-face."



The Otterbacks

## BLUEGRASS BURGEO

### ■ The Kentucky

International Missions Fellowship will hold its annual meeting Aug. 23 at noon at Northside Elizabeth Church in Elizabethtown. Terry Sharp of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board will be the guest speaker. Retired and former IMB missionaries as well as former journeymen and International Service Corps workers may make lunch reservations until Aug. 14 by sending a \$10 check to Clara Matthews, 5810 Prince William St., Louisville, KY 40207. For information, contact event coordinator Jim McKinley at (502) 423-9116.

### ■ Campbellsville

University will host a pastors' and church leaders' conference Sept. 25-26, featuring Stuart Briscoe, senior pastor of Elmbrook Church in Brookfield, Wis. Briscoe is the author of 40 books, including "Vital Truths to Change Your Life." Registration before Sept. 1 is \$30 per person. For more information, call (270) 789-5520.

### ■ Disaster relief

volunteer training will be held Aug. 23 in Monticello at Oak Grove Baptist Church. Prospective volunteers can call the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Brotherhood department toll-free at (888) 254-5720 for more information. Disaster relief volunteers recently completed "mud-out" work in central Indiana after flooding there.

### ■ Clear Creek Baptist

Bible College recently hired Robert Hughes, a former missionary to Nigeria and West Africa, as professor of missions and evangelism.

## 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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## 'JesUSAves': Blurring patriotism & faith?

By Todd Brady

JACKSON, Tenn. (BP)—America's awareness of world events certainly is heightened as many people have watched family members and close friends ship out for military service overseas.

In many church and civic gatherings, mention often is made of soldiers or their families who are being remembered in prayer. A Sunday afternoon drive through most any town will reveal patriotic banners, waving flags and yellow ribbon-wrapped oak trees—all of which serve as reminders of those who are serving so sacrificially. The groundswell of American patriotism among young and old alike is encouraging.

Christians in America have every reason to be patriotic. The United States of America is a wonderful nation that undoubtedly has experienced the providential blessings of God.

One danger that American Christians face in times of international conflict is the blurring of boundaries between nationalistic patriotism and Christian faith. Along a country road

in Tennessee, this blurring is evident on a sign picturing an American flag-filled ichthys (the Christian fish symbol) and creatively emblazoned underneath with the phrase "JesUSAves."

At the very least it is catchy, and most people likely experience positive emotional responses. But it causes one to question whether those good feelings are related to the fact that one lives in the USA or to the fact that Jesus saves.

The difficulty with "JesUSAves" lies not in the truth of its declaration, but in the message of its implication. Indeed, Jesus saves. Christians agree here. However, red, white and blue letters that include the capitalization of USA within "JesUSAves" seem to imply that the United States is in some way central to or at least a fundamental part of God's salvation plan.

Certainly Christians are thankful for the USA. Of course, believers hold firmly to the conviction that Jesus saves. However, when patriotic passion becomes synonymous with the understanding of and love for God, Christians are tempted to think that God's working is in some way relat-

ed to or dependent on the USA.

Do Christians see this sign and think that America is God's favorite country and that they have preferred status in His Kingdom family? Do those Americans who are not Christians pass by thinking that by right of their national citizenship they also are entitled to heavenly citizenship? A sign like this seems to communicate more than its painter might have intended.

While readily acknowledging that America has and continues to experience God's blessings, it is important for Christians to understand that history one day will come to a halt and eternity will roll on around a throne and not a nation.

An American will not be sitting on that throne. Neither will there be only Americans around that throne. People from every nation, tribe, people and language will join together worshipping God forever.

Until then, American Christians can be thankful for our earthly citizenship. But Christians everywhere can be even more thankful that God's saving work through Christ does not hinge upon national identity.

Todd Brady is minister to the university at Union University in Jackson, Tenn.

## FIRST PERSON

## Where are shepherds?

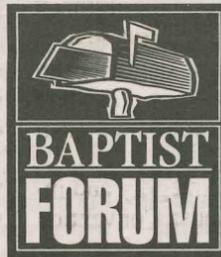
Biblical teaching, preaching, tithing and personal discipline in managing finances are essential to the financial health of church budgets as was accurately stated in the reporting of "Offering plate blues" in the July 22 issue of the Western Recorder.

However, another ingredient is pastoral shepherding. When the pastor is available to hurting families dealing with terminal diseases, the nursing home issue, death and the multitude of personal crises that

cry out for the touch of a caring pastor, the church will not go begging.

The preacher CEO mentality does not motivate sacrificial giving. Where are the shepherds?

Helen Stanfill  
Fort Campbell



## Role models

Thank you so much for publishing an article about the Son Team members.

I have been going to Cedarmore Camp for five years. These five summers have been the best summers I have ever had because

of the wonderful Son Teamers.

Each and every member is a role model to us teens. They have changed, inspired and encouraged me and many other campers through their testimonies and just always being available to talk during camp.

These people give up their summers to show us that God is the only thing that we need in this world. I encourage everyone to pray for them that they will be safe on their journeys to share Christ with others.

Please keep us updated on the Son Teamers throughout the summer. Thanks again!

Brittany Harris  
Louisville

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

## Vernon Cole's ministry legacy

Vernon Cole, our Kentucky Baptist convention church growth team leader, recently has announced that he will be retiring at the end of the year. Vernon has made a significant impact on the life of Kentucky Baptist churches during a ministry that has spanned 34 years as a member of the KBC staff.

His signature event has been the Super Saturday training event for church leaders. His vision to provide such an event for all workers at area locations started when he was a pastor in Ohio. He felt that this would be a tremendous benefit to the local church. Formerly, there were multiple training events that had to be scheduled by the local church, with promotion, enlistment and transportation planned separately for each one.

Today, Super Saturday has become the premier training event for KBC church leaders. It has grown in popularity to include more than 500 churches and more than 3,000 church leaders annually.

The events are held in six areas of the state on four Saturdays in August and early September. It takes much advanced planning by the church growth team for these events to be effective. Evaluations are conducted each year to discover ways to be more effective in serving church leaders.

Vernon also has been known for providing the creative leadership for the KBC's Church Health Summits I and II. Vernon conducted extensive research to bring the best in church practices to these events, customized to Kentucky. Church Health Summit I focused on developing and growing healthy congregations. Church Health Summit II focused on authentic worship. Recently a church reported five adult professions of faith and baptisms due to an additional worship service started as a result of nine laypeople attending Church Health Summit II.

Vernon's passion to assist local congregations has put him on a jour-



Bill Mackey

ney to discover the best ways for a congregation to experience intentional development and growth. He has used the best-known resources, such as "Twelve Keys to an Effective Church" by Kennon Callahan and "Redreaming the Dream" by Bob Dale. He adapted these authors' approaches for KBC churches.

He also began helping churches use the principles outlined in "Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches" by Christian Schwarz. The appeal of this tool is a diagnostic survey that a church can use to discover healthy development needs. More than 100 Kentucky churches have participated.

In addition, Vernon has assisted the KBC staff in the planning processes that resulted in a KBC staff vision statement, values statements and priority concerns.

The Super Saturday schedule begins Aug. 9 at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville. Plan to come learn and help celebrate a significant ministry!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## STEWARDSHIP

## Six proven steps can help enhance financial security

By Don Spencer

Consider the following steps to help achieve financial security:



■ **Step 1: Invest in yourself.** Your earning power is an important asset. Seek opportunities to develop skills that

will increase your earning power. These new skills might be related to another job, but often they simply are improving the skills required of your current work.

■ **Step 2: Protect your loved ones and your assets.** Have adequate insurance to cover possible major expenses due to illness, disability, liability and death. Without adequate insurance, you are betting your financial security that nothing bad will happen.

■ **Step 3: Control the use of debt.** This is a major problem for many people today. If debt is a problem, then it controls your life. You will never have financial freedom as long as debt controls you. If debt is a problem, get rid of the credit cards.

■ **Step 4: Pay God and yourself first.** As a Christian, contribute your tithe and set aside a specific amount for savings. Do this first. Do not wait to see if there is money left at the end of the month. Discretionary expenses always seem to expand to consume all available funds.

■ **Step 5: Don't go for the home runs. Invest regularly and wisely.** Use time, not timing in investing. In baseball, those who go for the home runs also strike out frequently. Most successful investors aim for lots of singles and doubles. Invest in high quality. Diversify your investments. At any given time, some types of investments will be up and others will be down. No one can consistently predict with accuracy which ones will be up in the near future. Diversifying into different investments reduces your risk.

■ **Step 6: Reduce expenses now to fund a more comfortable future.** Take steps now to make it comfortable for you and your heirs. Take advantage of tax-deferred retirement plans. Reduce and avoid debt. Use a budget to help prioritize your expenses.

Address all six of these steps in the context of a biblically-based perspective and your financial security will improve dramatically. Jonathan Swift reminded us, "Every man ought to have money on his mind. No man ought to have money on his heart."

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

## How can parents help teens balance work & relaxation?

**Q: My 16-year-old daughter is an excellent student, a good athlete, a hard worker in her part-time job and a leader in the youth group at church. My concern is that she is always so busy and stressed that she seldom has time to just relax. What can I do to help her?**

Talk with your daughter and ask her if she is enjoying her life. Different people have varying levels of tolerance for stress and activity.

In today's society it certainly is easy to be lulled into living life without "margins" and to fill every waking moment with what might be called "productive activity." It is possible that your daughter enjoys many of the things she is doing but would like to have permission to consider making some changes. It could be that some of the things she is doing have more to do with what she considers obligations; she might feel that she must do these things to please you or someone else.

Teaching your daughter to set boundaries will help her take control of her life. Henry Cloud and John Townsend describe boundaries as a "property line," explaining that "their purpose is to help us know what we are responsible for and what we are not responsible for."

As a young person with a lot of energy and talent, it sounds as if your daughter might get called on for leadership and involvement in a number of areas. It may be helpful to remind her that even Jesus chose at times to draw aside from His caring for people to withdraw to the mountain to be with His Heavenly Father.—*Scott Wigginton*

## Q: What's the latest on the Harry Potter books, movies and the response of Christian parents?

Many Christian parents continue to be concerned about the Harry Potter phenomenon. Since the last time I addressed the issue in this column, two Harry Potter movies have been released—both blockbusters. Two additional books also have been published, including the latest 870-page tome, "The Order of the Phoenix." Various Harry Potter merchandise also has appeared in stores.

Author J.K. Rowling said the books would get darker as the series progressed. Christian critics have been watching closely to see what she meant. There are several story lines in the latest book that will no doubt cause concern, including an important prophecy and the evil Lord Voldemort's attempt to possess Harry.

Boy/girl relationships continue to develop, but not in any form that could be considered objectionable. The children in the book are struggling with many of the same developmental issues that all children and adolescents face, including self-esteem, authority, fears, peer pressure and even death. For the most part, Rowland handles these even-handedly.

From the beginning, some parents have found Rowling's use of occult themes troubling. The Harry Potter stories are stories about wizards and witches and magic and spells and incantations—subjects that can make Christians very nervous. Parents who protect their children from Potter are concerned that exposing their children to these themes will lead them into occult involvement. While I respect the position, I have yet to meet a child who thinks of the Harry Potter stories as anything other than fantasy.

I found the movies enchanting and full of the kind of magic and make-believe that makes childhood such a wonderful time.—*David Garrard*

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



## What legacy are you building day by day?

Bob Hope, Bill Bright, Larry Burkett, Harold Bennett, Wendell Rone, Susan Adams, Barbara Pace. The number of influential individuals who have died in the past few weeks is lengthy. Some, of course, were famous while others lived and worked in comparative obscurity.

Bob Hope, who died July 27 at age 100, leads the list as an international celebrity and humanitarian. Along with his entertainment career that spanned more than six decades, Hope's lasting legacy will be his 50-plus year relationship with the USO, entertaining and encouraging American troops during wars and conflicts around the globe.

While the world remembers Hope for his lighthearted, often corny wisecracks, one of his joke writers recalled his personal faith. "He was a very religious man but privately religious," said Martha Bolton. "God held a special place in his heart."

Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, lived his personal faith quite publicly. While often content to work behind the scenes, his Christian witness influenced millions of people through such projects as the "Jesus" film and "The Four Spiritual Laws" witnessing tract. Bright, who died July 19 at age 81, guided Campus Crusade to become the largest evangelical ministry in the world.

Larry Burkett, one of the leading experts in the field of Christian financial stewardship, died July 4 at age 64. Western Recorder "Financial Forum" columnist Jeremy White, who worked with Burkett on several writing projects, noted that even with his failing health in recent years, Burkett remained focused on "finishing a book to help people over age 50, his peer group, manage God's money wisely."

Harold Bennett was known for his integrity and insight while leading the Southern Baptist Convention

through challenging years of transition in the 1980s and early '90s. Bennett, who retired in 1992 as president of the SBC Executive Committee, also held leadership positions with the Baptist World Alliance and American Bible Society. He died July 27 at age 78.

Wendell Rone, though not as well known on the national level, was an influential leader in Kentucky Baptist life. A former president of Mid-Continent College in Mayfield, he also was pastor of more than a dozen Kentucky Baptist congregations. Reflecting on Rone's death July 29 at age 89, Laverne Butler, also a former Mid-Continent president, described Rone as a man of "conviction, consistency and courage."

Susan Adams and Barbara Pace were individuals few Kentucky Baptists had ever heard of. Both of them, however, were representative of thousands of Baptists and others who donate their time each year to valuable ministry projects. Adams, who was from South Carolina, died July 18 at age 52, while working on a World Changers construction project in Georgia. Pace, age 66, was from Georgia. She died in her sleep July 22 while serving as

a World Changers chaperone in Missouri.

"Both of these ladies had a heart for, and answered a call to serve Him, wherever," said World Changers coordinator John Bailey. "They died doing what they wanted to do."

As the world moves on without Hope, Bright, Burkett and others, it is a stark reminder about the frailty of life. Ecclesiastes 3:2 declares that there is "a time to be born and a time to die." And none of us knows when that time will come in our lives or the lives of loved ones.

Death also is a reminder that our personal legacies will outlive each of us. As you live, work and minister, what legacy will you leave for future generations?

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## Should Christians seek to convert Muslims?

By Dwight Moody

Lawyers and doctors, detectives and journalists are some of the professional whose success hinges upon the proper use of questions. Knowing what to ask (and when and how) often is the difference between winning and losing, between life and death, between true and false.

From that perspective, I ask: Will the question recently posed on the front cover of a national news magazine help the public understand the issues?

"Should Christians Seek to Convert Muslims?" the headline blared.

### Asking the wrong question

It is the wrong question, I contend. It is a religious question rightly debated among ministers and theologians of a given faith.

It is wrong, also, because it is framed too narrowly. There is a better way to present the issue: Should any religion seek converts from any other religious group?

After all, many religions are missionary; that is, they seek to secure the conversion of unbelievers and those of other faiths.

But most importantly, the front-cover question is wrong because it avoids a far more fundamental issue, one that is at the heart of civil society,

political science and religious life: Should every person be free to change his or her religion?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in December of 1948. In 30 articles it summarizes the basic and inalienable rights of people everywhere.

Among these rights are life, liberty and security; national identity; legal remedies for wrongs; the presumption of innocence; ownership of property; work for just and equitable pay (to name just a few).

Some rights have to do with change. A person has the right to change residence, nationality, marital status, employment and, most importantly, religion.

Article 18 reads: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

The freedom to change religious allegiance is a fundamental human right. It is not granted by any government or authority, but rather is the possession of every human being by virtue of existence itself.

I believe this right is rooted in the

freedom of our Creator, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; Maker of heaven and earth; Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is free, and God has bestowed this quality upon each person.

### Tackling religious freedom

The freedom to worship and believe is first. The freedom to change religious affiliation is second. The freedom to speak and declare your faith is third. And finally comes the freedom to seek the conversion of another.

Thus, the most fundamental questions are these: Are people free to worship? Are they free to convert?

In vast stretches of human society this freedom is restricted: by Orthodox Christians in Russia, by Orthodox Jews in Israel, by Muslims in numerous states of the Middle East.

All of these authorities fear that religious freedom (including the right to convert) will entail a loss of political power and cultural influence for the established faith. It is, then, a political rather than a religious issue.

Journalists should join with diplomats and theologians around the world to ask the questions that matter most: Are the people in our jurisdiction free to pursue the faith of their choice? Or do religious and political leaders put up barriers of fear, danger and even death?

*Dwight Moody is dean of the chapel at Georgetown College.*

## NATIONAL NOTES

■ **"Ten Commandments judge" to appeal.** Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore has decided to appeal his Ten Commandments monument case to the U.S. Supreme Court. On July 1, the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the 5,280-pound monument he placed in the lobby of the state judicial building violates the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

■ **New abstinence grants total \$15.2 million.** Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson has announced \$15.2 million in new grants to support abstinence education for teens, some of which have been given to faith-based groups.

■ **Lutheran youth vote to become gay-friendly.** The official youth office of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America voted overwhelmingly to accept gay and lesbian members. More than 300 delegates to the Lutheran Youth Organization voted by a 91 percent margin on July 23 to welcome people of all sexual orientations and to be listed as a "Reconciling in Christ" organization with Lutherans Concerned, an independent group of gay Lutherans.

■ **House condemns slavery in Sudan.** The U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution July 16 condemning slavery in Sudan and urging the Bush administration to impose sanctions. The resolution says the United States should encourage the United Nations to require annual investigations of abuses in Sudan. Since 1983, about 2 million people have died in Sudan's civil war, according to Associated Press.

## Bush voices opposition to same-sex unions

WASHINGTON—President Bush and the Pope both voiced statements last week aimed at discouraging same-sex marriage.

Addressing a growing movement for same-sex "marriage," President Bush said July 30 he believes in the "sanctity" of traditional marriage and that government lawyers are studying ways to protect that definition by law.

Speaking to reporters at a Rose Garden news conference, Bush was asked his views on homosexuality in light of the fact that many of his supporters, as the reporter said, "believe that homosexuality is immoral."

The president said he is "mindful that we're all sinners" and then cautioned "those who may try to take a speck out of their neighbor's eye when they have a log in their own."

Bush then turned to the issue of same-sex marriage.

"I believe that marriage is between a man and a woman," he said. "And I think we ought to codify that one way or the other, and we've got lawyers looking at the best way to do that."

### Respect but no compromise

Bush did not address and was not asked about a proposed Federal Marriage Amendment, which would add language to the U.S. Constitution ban-

ning same-sex marriage. In early July Bush said he was unsure if such an amendment was "necessary yet."

But speaking July 30, Bush went a step further in explaining his views: "It's very important for our society to respect each individual" and for America to be "a welcoming country."

"On the other hand, that does not mean that somebody like me needs to compromise on an issue such as marriage," the president said.

The next day, the Vatican condemned attempts to legalize gay marriage, calling it an "immoral" threat to families and "harmful to the proper development of human society."

The 12-page statement issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith warned Catholic politicians that a vote in favor of same-sex marriage would be "gravely immoral."

While the statement did not introduce new church teaching on homosexuality, it nonetheless reflected the growing concern among many Christian leaders that gay marriage—which seemed laughable a decade ago—could soon become a civil reality.

The U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Texas anti-sodomy law on June 26, and Justice Antonin Scalia warned the high court had left the traditional definition of marriage "on

pretty shaky grounds."

Canada already has announced plans to sanction gay marriage and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court is expected to rule soon on whether homosexuals are legally entitled to marriage rights.

### Gallup poll reversal?

Meanwhile, a new Gallup poll released July 28 seems to show a dramatic reversal in a longstanding trend toward greater public acceptance of homosexuality.

While gay-rights supporters celebrated the June Supreme Court ruling that overturned state laws against gay sex, conservative observers say the new polling data show a backlash to the ruling from the American public.

The Gallup poll of 1,006 adults, conducted in mid-July, revealed that 48 percent of Americans believe sexual relations between consenting adults of the same gender should be legal, while 46 percent believe it should be illegal. That is a dramatic turnaround from a Gallup poll May 7, when 60 percent of respondents said gay sex should be legal and only 35 percent said it should be illegal.

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press, Associated Baptist Press and Religion News Service

## missions beyond the edge

2003 KBC Annual Meeting  
November 11-12, 2003

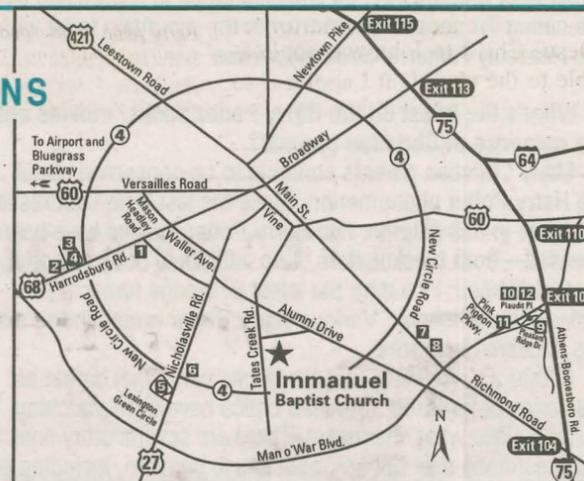
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Lexington, Kentucky

### 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.abc-lex.org](http://www.abc-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)

# SMILE

## It's not 'what' you know but 'who' you know

Whether we like it or not, the truism "it's not what you know but who you know" applies to most aspects of our lives.

It's certainly applicable in the economic and social aspects of our lives. Just ask someone who is seeking a job.

However, I would submit to you this truism is even more appropriately applicable in our spiritual lives. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he encouraged Timothy, and us, with these words, "I know Whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard that which I have entrusted to Him for that day." We are all familiar with the chorus of the hymn based upon that passage of Scripture, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

Furthermore, we are reminded in that very personal section of I John 4:7-8, 15, that to know God-in-Jesus Christ is to love Him and one another, and living in love is to live in God and God to live in us. Just as the revelation of Jesus Christ to John was applicable to the church at Laodicea, so is it applicable today to your

church and mine. Revelation 3:15-20 records perhaps the strongest words in the Bible against the "lukewarm" church.

When we get to the point in our lives where we will let the risen Christ take hold of our lives; when we get to the point we will let Him become the Lord of our lives; and when our churches will open the door and let Christ in (He's knocking, but the lock is on the inside), then and only then will we no longer be preoccupied with "inside concerns," and then and only then will our collective financial stewardship be what it ought to be.

For you see, the matter of individual and church financial stewardship is not a money matter, it's a spiritual matter. And, in spiritual matters, it's not what you know, it's Who you know.

### KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

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

## Kudzu



Doug Marlette

## For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

## Bible Crossword

### Across

- 1 "Ye who \_\_\_\_\_ were far off are made nigh" (Ephesians 2:13)
- 9 Car manufacturing union, abbr.
- 12 Removal of a mistake
- 13 Book that follows Daniel
- 15 Electrical engineer, abbr.
- 16 Memphis' state, abbr.
- 17 Not here
- 19 "\_\_\_\_\_, and ye shall find," (Matthew 7:7)
- 21 Contraction for I have
- 23 "I \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord, and he heard me" (Psalm 34:4)
- 27 West Indies, abbr.
- 28 "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no \_\_\_\_\_ of thee" (1 Corinthians 12:21)
- 29 Article
- 30 A long, low soft couch or sofa
- 31 Geomagnetic electrokinetograph, abbr.
- 32 Book, abbr.
- 34 Inspector General, abbr.
- 35 Letter of the alphabet before "en"
- 37 "Jesus saith unto her, ... whom \_\_\_\_\_ thou?" (John 20:15)
- 39 "Like the \_\_\_\_\_ birth of a woman" (Psalm 58:8)
- 40 Foot, suffix
- 41 Mercury, chem. symbol
- 42 "And Joshua sent men from Jericho to \_\_\_\_\_" (Joshua 7:2)
- 43 "But \_\_\_\_\_ for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4)
- 44 "My heart is like wax; \_\_\_\_\_ is melted" (Psalm 22:14)
- 46 "Make me as one of thy \_\_\_\_\_ servants" (Luke 15:19)
- 47 Royal Horse Guard, abbr.
- 49 "(Abram) sat in the \_\_\_\_\_ door" (Genesis 18:1)
- 51 Center fielder (baseball), abbr.
- 52 "\_\_\_\_\_ said unto Samuel, ... say, speak, Lord" (1 Samuel 3:9)
- 54 "For my yoke is \_\_\_\_\_, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30)
- 55 "And the people \_\_\_\_\_ for Zacharias" (Luke 1:21)

### Down

- 1 "As a roaring lion ... \_\_\_\_\_ whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8)
- 2 A rock or soil containing some metal
- 3 Mother
- 4 This, Sp.
- 5 Musical ditties

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49		50				51		52	53	
54							55			

- 6 Iridium, chem. symbol
- 7 Encountered
- 8 "... and \_\_\_\_\_ besought (Jesus) that he would cast forth the devil" (Mark 7:26)
- 9 Took advantage of
- 10 First 2 vowels
- 11 "\_\_\_\_\_ for the coming of our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:7)
- 14 Either

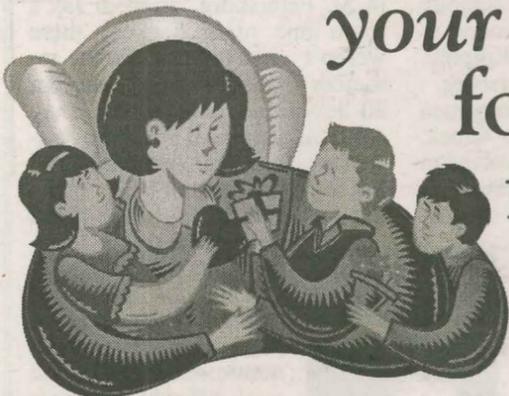
- 18 To squeeze with the arms
- 19 "There is none that \_\_\_\_\_ after God" (Romans 3:11)
- 20 A valuable tree of Hawaii
- 22 Symbol of victory
- 24 "Lord I believe; help thou mine \_\_\_\_\_" (Mark 9:24)
- 25 Hand, abbr.
- 26 "No man hath seen God at any \_\_\_\_\_" (John 1:18)
- 27 "Our soul \_\_\_\_\_ for the Lord; he is our help" (Psalm 33:20)
- 33 "They took a \_\_\_\_\_, and opened them" (Judges 3:25)
- 36 "A sound from heaven as of a rushing \_\_\_\_\_ wind" (Acts 2:2)
- 37 "Find me, when ye shall \_\_\_\_\_ for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13)
- 38 "I will pour out of my \_\_\_\_\_ upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17)
- 39 Bring together into one
- 45 A hot or cold beverage
- 48 "In the beginning \_\_\_\_\_ created ..." (Genesis 1:1)
- 50 Maritime province, abbr.
- 52 Apiece, in other words, abbr.
- 53 51, Roman numeral

### Last week's solution

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
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P	S																						

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## Is there room in your heart for one more?



### Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

needs caring foster families to provide safe and loving homes for children and teens. The young people come from backgrounds of abuse and neglect. They desperately need your love.

## Is there room in your heart and home for just one more?

Training, financial assistance and around-the-clock support are provided. Foster parents can be single or married and can foster full- or part-time.

To find out more about foster parenting in your area, visit [www.kbhc.org](http://www.kbhc.org) and click on Foster Care or call:



Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

1-800-456-1386 or (502) 245-2101

[www.kbhc.org](http://www.kbhc.org) E-mail: [info@kbhc.org](mailto:info@kbhc.org)

## Former Mid-Continent head remembered for 'conviction'

LIVERMORE—Wendell Rone Sr., former president of Mid-Continent College in Mayfield, died July 29 at age 89.

Rone, who served more than 60 years in ministry, was pastor of several Kentucky Baptist churches, including 13 years as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro.

Rone was known throughout Western Kentucky for his Landmark theology, his passion for church history and his 1952 book, "The Baptist Faith and Roman Catholicism." He also was the author of dozens of local church and associational histories.

Laverne Butler, also a former president at Mid-Continent, described Rone as a man of "conviction, consistency and courage."

"He was always congenial, open and a good thinker," said Butler, who spoke at Rone's funeral service Aug. 2 at Livermore Baptist Church.

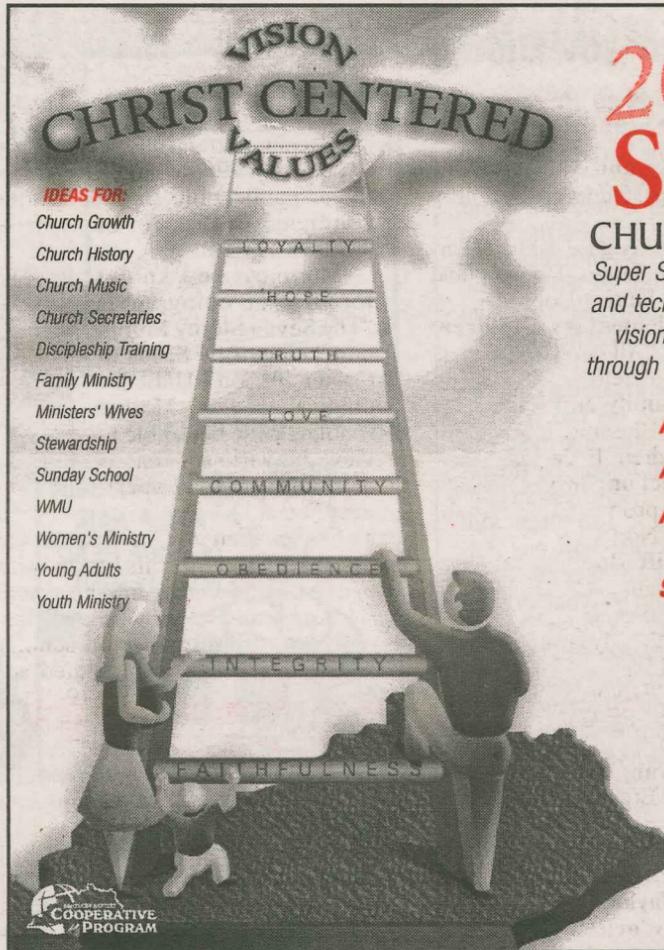
Noting that Rone "has probably written more histories of churches than any other man in the state," he added, "He's been 'Mr. Kentucky Baptist' for a long time."

Bob Imhoff, current president of Mid-Continent, said Rone "was pivotal in Mid-Continent's short history."

"Under his presidency, the campus moved to its current location and they built many of the existing structures," Imhoff said. "He just had a passion for Christian higher education."

Rone was a graduate of Murray State University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. In addition to serving as president of Mid-Continent in 1977-80, he served eight years as dean of graduate studies.

He is survived by his wife, Beulah; his sister, Edith Bennett; three children and 23 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to Mid-Continent College's Wendell Rone chair of history.



## 2003 SUPER SATURDAY

### CHURCH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Super Saturday will help your leadership team learn new skills and techniques to discover ways to implement Christ-centered vision and values in your church. Learn to express caring through teaching and gain confidence in your gifts and abilities.

**August 9** Louisville, Highview Baptist Church

**August 16** Lexington, Immanuel Baptist Church

**August 23** Corbin, Central Baptist Church  
Madisonville, First Baptist Church

**Sept. 6** Ashland, Unity Baptist Church  
Paducah, First Baptist Church



KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

Church Growth Team

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## Ready ... set ...

We are in the final days of preparation for the beginning of the fall term. Our summer school students have gone home, and the countdown has begun for students to return. About 30 students will remain on campus for the next several days to paint, clean, wax, mow and help in the kitchen and on the farm. Most of these students are recipients of substantial scholarships, and are asked to help a few weeks each summer. We are grateful to be able to provide the necessary scholarships, and we are equally thankful these students will be here to help us prepare for the new school year.

Last week two new staff members moved from Michigan to begin their ministry here. The husband will assist in our student work program, helping teach students how to clean the buildings and maintain our beautiful campus. The wife will be helping in our food service. There are always day-to-day things that must be done in any school cafeteria, but we have the added responsibility of serving meals to our 150 faculty and staff two or three times each day. It is also a challenge to feed the thousands of guests and volunteers who visit us each year. Many guests find it difficult to believe that there is no charge for eating in our dining room. We always have considered it a privilege to have people visit our campus, and you just do not charge guests to relax and enjoy a meal. This couple had been searching for some time to find a ministry that would allow them to serve and use the gifts God has given them. This new assistant to the food service director will help us use our food resources wisely, including the tons of donated food items we receive each year.

Another family is moving from Kansas to be-

gin their ministries here. Both the husband and wife are teachers and will fill some vacancies in our academic staff. They wanted to join us several months ago, but we had no available housing. We provide housing for nearly 120 of our 150 faculty and staff. When this family interviewed, they had three children with another to be born in July. The new housing for them was finished this week, and they will arrive only a few days after the completion of the new duplex.

A third family will move here next week from Florida. They also visited several months ago, seeking an opportunity in full-time ministry. At the time of the interview I didn't have any openings, but I knew I could use them this fall. He will teach in our middle school, and she will help in another area.

A fourth family visited last week from the state of Washington. This young couple has been married less than a year and they have a great desire to serve the Lord. They had just completed a mission trip to Peru and had been back in the States less than 24 hours when they boarded a plane and

headed for Kentucky. The wife will teach English in our middle school, and the husband will be helping as one of our substitute teachers.

All four of these families are entering full-time ministry for the first time. Nearly 80 percent of our faculty and staff came to Oneida Baptist Institute never having ministered full-time before. There are many unique things about Oneida, and one is the number of people who are serving for the first time in full-time ministry positions.

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

## Registrar fulfills the Great Commission

Registrar Jay Barnett made his second trip to Russia this summer to teach a world religion course to 29 pastors at Pskof and Kolpino, cities located near St. Petersburg.

"I found them to be young men like our students at Clear Creek. Typically, we had men involved in church starts, but some of them already were in established churches. The pastors' school offers crucial training to help them," Jay said.

A treasured memory of his trip occurred on a Tuesday evening in the church at Pskof. "I had three hours with 20 young people from the local college," Jay recalled. "They were taking English classes to become translators. Only one of them was a Christian, and I had the opportunity to give my testimony. They were very much influenced by Western culture, watching the same television by satellite that Americans receive."

Volunteers from Clear Creek previously had taught at Kolpino. "The church has a very fine pastor who uses his church as a mentoring location," Barnett said. "It is incredible the number of lives we've touched in Russia through salvation and in teaching pastors."

Nicholai Syrovatko, education

minister at Central Baptist Church in St. Petersburg, cried in Jay's room one night because there weren't enough educational resources for the churches. "I sent him 30 how-to resource books. They can translate part of them into Russian to help develop adult leaders," Jay said. "Most adult believers do not attend Sunday school, and Nicholai is trying to expand this ministry."

Only 0.4 percent of 200 million Russians are Protestant believers. Economic need makes the work difficult; 26 percent of adults earn \$65 a month, and 40 percent of the believers in St. Petersburg are pensioners. Shelbyville First Baptist and Taylor County Baptist Association assist the St. Petersburg Baptist Learning Center.

This fall Jay will teach a ministry of leadership course at Clear Creek's Abingdon, Va., center, located in Highlands Fellowship Church. More than 100 members have indicated a desire to take classes. Through faculty and staff like Jay Barnett, Clear Creek fulfills the commission of Christ to make disciples at home and around the world.

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## 'Purpose-Driven Life' named evangelical Book of the Year

ORLANDO (RNS)—"The Purpose-Driven Life" by Rick Warren has been named the 2003 Jordon Christian Book of the Year by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association.

The book, which offers advice on spiritual transformation and Christian living, was honored last month during the 26th annual Gold Medallion Book Awards banquet at the CBA International Convention in Orlando, Fla., an annual gathering of members of the Christian retailing industry.

At the same ceremony, evangelical leader Joni Eareckson Tada was honored with a lifetime achievement award.

Gold Medallion winners were:  
**Bibles:** "The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language" by Eugene Peterson.

**Bible Study:** "My Heart's Cry" by Anne Graham Lotz.

**Biography/Autobiography:** "Let's Roll!" by Lisa Beamer with Ken Abraham.

**Christian Education:** "When God Weeps Groupware" by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Estes.

**Christian Living:** "Authentic Faith" by Gary Thomas.

**Christian Ministry:** "Experiencing God Together" by Henry Blackaby and Melvin Blackaby.

**Christianity and Society:** "The Next Christendom" by Philip Jenkins.

**Devotional:** "Night Light for Parents" by James Dobson and Shirley Dobson.

**Elementary Children:** "All Is Well" by Frank Peretti.

**Family and Parenting:** "Blessing Your Children" by Jack Hayford.

**Fiction:** "Mission Compromised" by Oliver North.

**Gift Book/Poetry:** "A Family Christmas" by James Dobson and G. Harvey.

**Inspirational:** "My Heart's Desire" by David Jeremiah.

**Marriage:** "Divorce-Proof Your Marriage" by Gary and Barb Rosberg.

**Missions/Evangelism:** "Unveiling Islam" by Ergun Caner and Emir Caner.

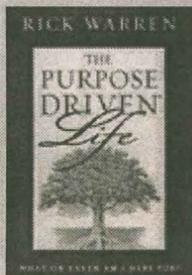
**Preschool Children:** "The New Bible in Pictures for Little Eyes" by Ken Taylor.

**Reference Works/Commentaries:** "Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary," General Editor Clinton Arnold.

**Spanish:** "Cristo Rey de reyes" by E.L. Carballosa.

**Theology/Doctrine:** "The Doctrine of God" by John Frame.

**Youth:** "Every Young Man's Battle" by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker with Mike Yorkey.



**The Inner Experience: Notes on Contemplation.** Thomas Merton. Harper San Francisco, 2003. \$22.95 ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

It seems extraordinary that a man who died in 1968 would have a new major publication. But such is the continued influence of Thomas Merton.

Merton is best known for his autobiography, "The Seven Storey Mountain," and "New Seeds of Contemplation." Until this publication, only Merton scholars have been able to view the various versions of "The Inner Experience."

First written in 1959, Merton did not publish it during his life and was making a revision up until his death. Through negotiation with the Merton Legacy Trust, Merton scholar William Shannon incorporated additional Merton notes from 1968 and presents this last work of Merton.

As a product of 1959, "The Inner Experience" stands as a bridge between Merton's early and late thought on contemplation. Basically, Merton moved in his spiritual development from viewing contemplation as one part of life to seeing contemplation as the way to integrate one's life into a single whole work.

In addition, "The Inner Experience" marks Merton's first real connection to Eastern religious thought, which would occupy a more and more prominent place over the next decade of his writing.

"The Inner Experience" is a good introductory work on Merton. It is a must for those who have had their own spirituality shaped by this monk who lived at the Abbey of Gethsemani in Bardstown. *Wayne Hager*

**A Simple Way to Pray.** Martin Luther. Westminster John Knox Press, 2000. 62 pages. \$9.95. ♦♦♦♦

In 1535, Martin Luther's barber asked him for "some practical advice on how to compose oneself for prayer."

"A Simple Way to Pray" was Luther's response. In our day and time, it might be considered a long answer to a brief question. After all, the poor barber just wanted some "practical advice," but what he gets is counsel on prayer that begins with the Lord's Prayer and continues "as time and inclination allow" through the Ten Commandments to the Apostle's Creed.

Whoa. All the poor man wanted was some quick help on improving his prayer life, or perhaps a quick mantra like "The Prayer of Jabez" that would provide smooth sailing into God's storehouse of blessings. Or maybe not.

At any rate, Luther takes his request seriously and offers some "practical advice" that he thought even his barber could use and profit from. To the modern, quick-fix mind, Luther's advice might seem impossible. He encourages his

friend to not simply repeat the words of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostle's Creed, but to meditate on each phrase and then form a prayer of confession, intercession and petition. To take Luther's advice would mean simply getting through the

Lord's Prayer could take a while. For many of us, Luther's pattern would seem anything but simple; but then by simple Luther did not mean quick and easy. He meant unadorned, straightforward and honest.

For anyone interested in digging deep into that kind of prayer, "A Simple Way to Pray" will prove a sound and practical guide. After reading this brief treatise, I can understand why Luther needed three hours to pray. This simple praying is nothing less than a daily orienting of one's life to God's person and will. *Jim Holladay*

**Family, The Forming Center: A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation.** Marjorie Thompson. Upper Room Books, 2002. 158 pages. \$12. ♦♦♦♦♦

Marjorie Thompson, director of Pathways Center for Christian Spirituality at The Upper Room, writes in the introduction to "Family, The Forming Center":

"For better or worse, family life is inevitably formative in a spiritual, as well as physical and emotional sense. ... Families of committed faith are the initial and most natural context for the positive spiritual formation of children."

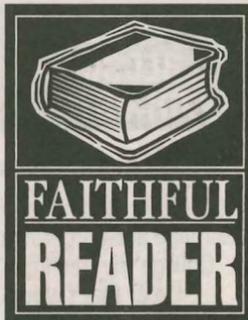
Given this insight, she argues that the church should pay attention to the ability of families to provide guidance and help at every stage of a child's life, as well as create an atmosphere where a child is free to experience the "growing life of God's spirit in us."

The unfortunate separation of the sacred and the secular has hindered the church from focusing on the family as the basic building block of Christian faith, Thompson writes.

This has led to the misguided belief that the church is the only place where spiritual formation occurs. The family's primary responsibility, therefore, is seen as getting children to church. Thompson believes we should recover the biblical pattern of the family as the crucible of faith formation.

After discussing the dynamics of family life, Thompson moves to practical suggestions for equipping families to fulfill their role as the church in the world. These suggestions move far beyond simply re-instituting a "family altar."

I found Thompson's arguments compelling, challenging and convicting. If the church is going to reach children, we must start with newlyweds, the engaged, new parents, in fact all adults. Those closest to children on a daily basis should be challenged to grow spiritually and then be given the tools to affect their children's growth. *Jim Holladay*



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

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PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING  
**WESTERNRECORDER**

## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Eric Fruge

Little did I realize when I enrolled at Georgetown College my freshman year that I would become one of millions of people to be touched by the ministry of Bill Bright and Campus Crusade for Christ.

Through Campus Crusade I learned how to share my faith in Jesus Christ with others. "When someone asks God for an opportunity to share their faith, God loves to answer that prayer," a Crusade staffer once told me.

When I heard of Bright's recent death, I reflected upon the things I learned from him, and in my office that morning I prayed for such an opportunity. A few hours later, Western Recorder Editor Trennis Henderson called and invited me to write this column.

How can you experience answered prayer? The first step is to personally know God, who is eager to answer prayer. If you don't know Him, here's how you can:

■ Believe that God loves you dearly and has a wonderful plan for your life. (John 3:16, 10:10).

■ Understand that sin separates you from God and His plan for your life, and that the consequence of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

■ Believe that Christ died on the cross in your place to forgive your sin, and that God brought Him back to life for you to live in eternal fellowship with Him (Romans 5:8, 10:9-10).

■ Right now invite Christ into your heart. Yield the personal direction of your life to Him as your Savior and Lord (Revelation 3:20).

*Eric Fruge is director of church relations for Georgetown College*

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Highland Church ordained **David Crown** and **Kermit Morris** as deacons July 20.

Jackson Grove Church recently called **Tim Sweatman** as pastor.

■ **COVINGTON**—Latonia Church will host **Rodger Bingham**, known as "Kentucky Joe" on the CBS-TV show "Survivor." Bingham will speak in both morning services Aug. 24.

■ **FORT THOMAS**—**Bryan Cobb** resigned as associate pastor/minister of youth at First Church to become pastor of youth and family ministries at Simpson Creek Church in Bridgeport, W. Va.

■ **HORSE CAVE**—Horse Cave Church will celebrate its 135th anniversary Aug. 10 with former pastor **Harold Barnes** as guest speaker. **Kevin Denton** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Palomar Church recently called **David Meade** as minister of music and **John Smoot** as minister of children and youth.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Kenneth Anderson**, a charter member of Audubon Church, died July 15 at age 89. **Dan Cromer** is interim pastor.

Broadway Church will host "Ladies of Broadway," a mother/daughter tea Sept. 27, 2-4 p.m.

Fern Creek Church called **Daniel Gilliam** as part-time minister of music effective July 20. **Linda Barnes Popham** is pastor.

Kosmosdale Church called **George Martin** as interim pastor.

Lakewood Church called **Scott Hughes** as interim pastor.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church ordained **Bobby McDowell** and **Rick Melton**

as deacons July 20. **Wendell Ray** is pastor.

■ **NANCY**—Windsor First Church will celebrate its 20th anniversary Aug. 10 and will hold revival services Aug. 17-20 with **Dale Rose** as evangelist. **Gary Morris** is pastor.

■ **ROCKFIELD**—Clear Fork Church ordained **Barry Stahl**, **Chris Vaughn** and **Don Vincent** as deacons July 27.

■ **RUSSELL SPRINGS**—First Church called **Joe Allen Jr.** as pastor effective Aug. 17.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—First Church recently honored **Betty Jean Chatman** for 50 years of music ministry. **Ed Erwin** is pastor.

Highland Church ordained Youth Minister **Ricky Simpson** to the gospel ministry July 20.

■ **WADDY**—**Bret Champion** recently resigned as pastor of Waddy Church.

■ **WARSAW**—First Church celebrated its 160th anniversary Aug. 2-3. **Tim Estes** is pastor.

## Bennett: Gambling was sin, but I'm no hypocrite

**NASHVILLE (BP)**—Giving his first interviews since promising to quit gambling, cultural commentator **William Bennett** says that he's not a hypocrite, that gambling for him was a sin and that he regrets his behavior "given who I am and what I do."

Appearing on CNBC's "Tim Russert" July 26, Bennett reiterated what he had said before—that his religion, Catholicism, permits gambling. But he also told World magazine in its Aug. 9 issue that while he does not consider all gambling a sin, for him, it is one.

"It was a sin because it was a bad use of time and resources," he told

World. "Mortal sin? Venial sin? Something in the middle? I have no idea. But excess, for sure."

Bennett said on CNBC that he "way overdid it. I gambled too much, and I think I gambled too much given who I am and what I do."

World reported that Bennett granted the evangelical newsmagazine an interview because its readers were disappointed in his behavior.

"I let people down," he told World. "I let people down who were looking to me, whether I wanted to be looked to or not, who were taking me and my counsel seriously, and who just felt disappointed in me."

"The validity of the message doesn't depend on the messenger. But, the better the messenger, the more plausible the message can be to the listener—not the more accurate or more correct, but more plausible," he said.

Bennett said on CNBC that he is "not a hypocrite" because he "never said gambling is a terrible thing (or that) people should stop gambling."

Bennett noted that some critics took delight in seeing "me getting whacked." He called it a "perverse kind of reaction."

He told Russert that he has remained positive throughout the ordeal. "I'm up, and I'm back, and nobody's going to drive me out of public life."

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**FOR SALE:** Religious books (thousands). Send e-mail for list: [dudley@dam.net](mailto:dudley@dam.net). Evangelist **Bill Dudley**, 1116 Lacy Drive, Lebanon, MO 65536. (417) 532-2665.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music to lead blended style of worship (praise and worship and traditional hymns) for Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Please send resumé to: Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 350 Mt. Zion Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, Attn: Grady Buchanan.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth pastor for Canton Baptist Church. We are located on Lake Barkley near Murray University and Mid-Continent College. Please send resumé to: Canton Baptist Church, 423 Boyd's Landing Road, Cadiz, KY 42211. No unmarried candidates please.

**SEEKING:** Full- or part-time pastor to care for a flock of 70-80 average Sunday morning attendance. This seeker-sensitive, mission-minded church (affiliated with SBC and Enterprise Association) is calling a flexible, versatile individual who loves the Lord and is prayerfully seeking a way to serve God in a growing church. If interested, please send resumé to: Search Committee, Fitzpatrick Baptist Church, PO Box 410, Prestonsburg, KY 41653.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Locust Grove Baptist Church, located in Trigg County, KY. New, 10,000-square-foot facility just built after fire; rural area, but potential growth in area from unchurched. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Locust Grove Baptist Church, 73 Locust Grove Church Road, Cadiz, KY 42211.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music for Broadway Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, BBC, 2500 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington, KY 40503.

**SEEKING:** Interim, part-time youth minister for Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Experience not essential, but individual must have a love to work with middle and high school students. Please send resumé to: Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 350 Mt. Zion Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, Attn: Grady Buchanan.

**SEEKING:** Minister of recreation and outreach for Harrodsburg Baptist Church. Manage and expand Christian activities ministry, designed to reach people for Christ; minister to people in His name; and provide opportunities for fellowship and service. New gymnasium available Dec. 1. Contact **Bob DeFoor** at (859) 734-2339, or send resumé to: PO Box 286, Harrodsburg, KY 40330.

**SEEKING:** Two positions: Pastor and part-time youth minister (paid position; grades 6-12) for Mexico Baptist Church in rural western Kentucky. Average Sunday school attendance: 135. Send resumé to MBC Pulpit Committee or Youth Council, 175 Mexico Road, Marion, KY 42064, Attn: James Penn (pastor) or Brent Highfil (youth minister), or call (270) 965-2149. [turnerchandler@hotmail.com](mailto:turnerchandler@hotmail.com).

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

**SEEKING:** Fairlane Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister. Please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Fairlane Baptist Church, 5913 South Herring Road, Alexandria, KY 41001.

## Seminary hosts conference for Hispanic leaders

**LOUISVILLE (BP)**—More than 175 Hispanic Christians from several states gathered for a recent Hispanic Leadership Conference at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

The two-day conference, a grassroots event built on relationships, attracted participants from as far away as New York, Michigan and South Carolina.

"This conference is about methods and strategies, but most of all, it's about learning to be like Christ," said **Twyla Fagan**, a former Southern Baptist two-year "journeyman" missionary to Argentina.

"This conference is to help everyone participate in the Great Commission," she said.

**Jason Carlisle**, who works with Hispanics at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, noted that the number of people of Hispanic heritage serving through the IMB has grown from 29 workers in 1999 to 80 today.

"Now is the time for the Hispanic people," Carlisle said. "Where is God in the midst of all these Hispanics coming to the United States? As He did with Israel in Egypt, God is preparing Hispanics to reach the nations. He brought you here to bless the nations."

## Bob Hope a man of private faith, joke writer says

NASHVILLE (BP)—When Bob Hope died July 27 at the age of 100, the world remembered him as a legendary comedian, a Hollywood star, an avid supporter of the American military and simply a great man.



Hope

But Martha Bolton adds that there was an element of faith in Hope's life.

"He was a very religious man but privately religious," said Bolton, who was a staff comedy writer for Hope for more than 15 years. "He had a definite respect (for spiritual things), and God held a special place in his heart."

The Washington Post noted that Hope was baptized in later years as a Catholic, but he did not limit himself to Catholic charities.

"I do benefits for all religions," he once quipped. "I'd hate to blow the hereafter on a technicality."

Bolton said one thing she learned from Hope was how to write fast.

"He was the king of topical humor. Whatever was happening in the news or in politics he would be on top of it so we had to write really fast," she said. "I remember one incident in particular. We were writing for a psychiatrist convention he was going to be performing at, so we wrote psychiatrist jokes. But when he got to the venue he discovered that it wasn't a psychiatrist convention, it was a chiropractor convention, so we had to write all new material in about 15 or 20 minutes."

Bolton, who now lives just outside Nashville, began writing comedy as a church secretary.

She wrote material for Phyllis Diller before being recommended to Hope.

The first time Hope called Bolton, she recalled, it was about 11:30 p.m.

"There was a deacon in our church who did voices, so for the first part of the conversation I was saying, 'OK, I know it's you, Frank, and you're not even that good.' But it was Bob Hope, of course."

Bolton said the joke she wrote for Hope that stands out the most to her is one she wrote after a significant earthquake shook California. She said the assignment to write jokes about it came in "as we were still having the aftershocks."

The joke: "I don't mind earthquakes. I just figure they're God's way of letting me get a hole in one."

## Hardshell Christianity

### Amateur painter's seashell art helps share faith in God

By Leslie Palma-Simoncek  
Religion News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—Peter Demonte never goes anywhere without a few shells in his pockets.

"I call them the keys," Demonte says, adding that he uses them to break the ice so he can talk to strangers about his favorite subject: "I speak about how good God is."

If you don't quite get the link between shells and evangelism, then you haven't seen Demonte's shells. They are intricate, spiritual, breathtaking paintings of religious subjects brushed in such painstaking detail it's hard to imagine they've been done by human hands.

"God gives me the power," the 82-year-old retired Staten Island longshoreman says.

Demonte, a father of two and grandfather of four, is a self-taught artist who has been painting, with some proficiency, for years.

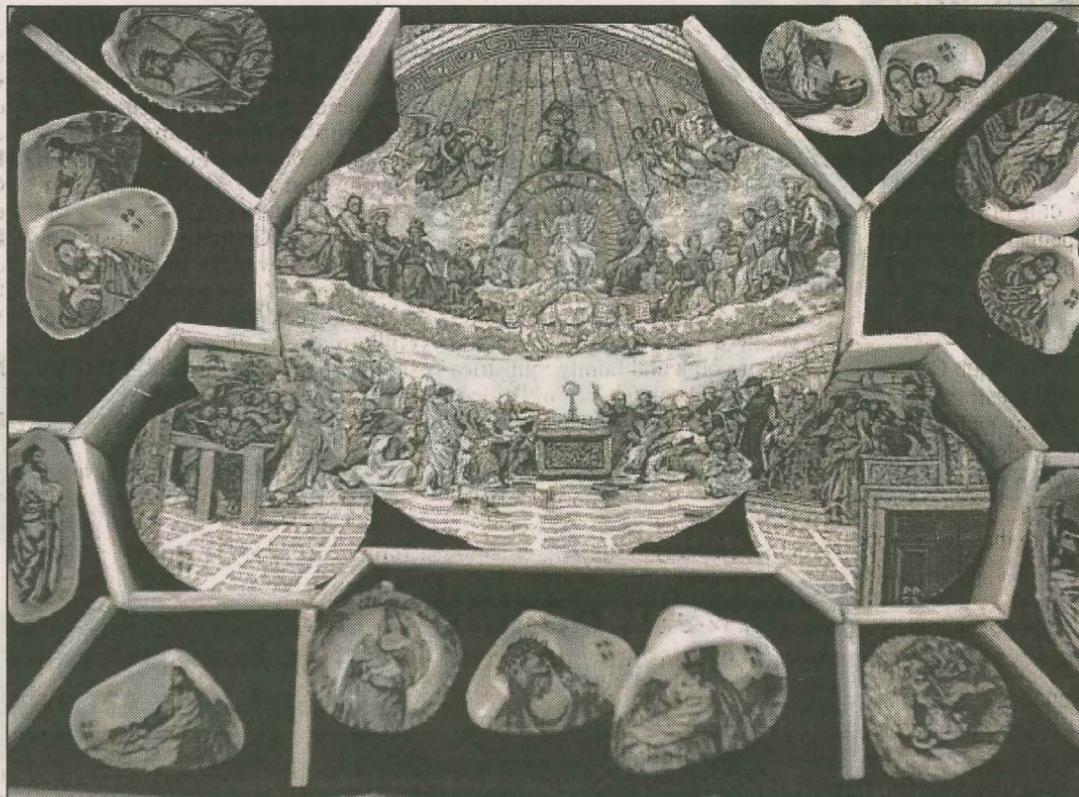
"I'm a challenger," Demonte says. "I pushed myself to learn to paint."

But it wasn't until he was vacationing in Aruba with his wife, Caroline, and three other couples in 1990 that his shell ministry was born.

A deeply religious man, Demonte decided one day on the beach to break away from his group to pray. He saw a boy of 12 or 13 collecting shells as he began his prayers. "When I was praying, a strong feeling built within me, like somebody was telling (me), 'Why don't you pick up the shells?'"

He ran back to his wife, got a bag and filled it about three-quarters full with shells.

Back home about two weeks later—the shells still in the bag, all but forgotten—Demonte says he experienced another feeling: "More strong



than the one in Aruba," he says. He was led to choose the deepest of the shells he had collected and in its grooved concavity he painted Christ on the cross.

"I was all goose pimples just to look at it," he says.

He's not the only one who reacts that way.

#### Details and devotion

"I was blown away by it," says Tom Devery, pastor of Holy Child Roman Catholic Church. On Pentecost Sunday Devery invited Demonte to exhibit his shells after Mass.

"Oh my gosh, people were breathless," Devery recalls. "The detail, and just the love in those shells."

Demonte copies most of his pictures from art books containing reproductions of sacred paintings. Most often he uses acrylic paint, although

he describes it as "the worst paint you could use."

His shell paintings depict the stoning of Stephen; Noah's ark; Jesus with Elijah and Moses; the Last Supper; Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well; countless examples of Mary with baby Jesus and many more scenes.

He believes he has painted more than 200 shells since he began collecting them in Aruba.

Demonte never sells his work, but he does sometimes give the shells away to family members and friends.

Some of the scenes incorporate modern themes. Two shells show Mother Teresa and Princess Diana together.

"It took me three hours just to do her shoes," he said of the late princess.

A series of shells completed after the World Trade Center attacks includes the famous photo of three firefighters raising the flag amid the rubble. Another shows a uniformed police officer and firefighter standing in front of the steel I-beam that formed a cross at ground zero. The Twin Towers are reflected in the water of the Hudson River.

#### "Doorway" to witness

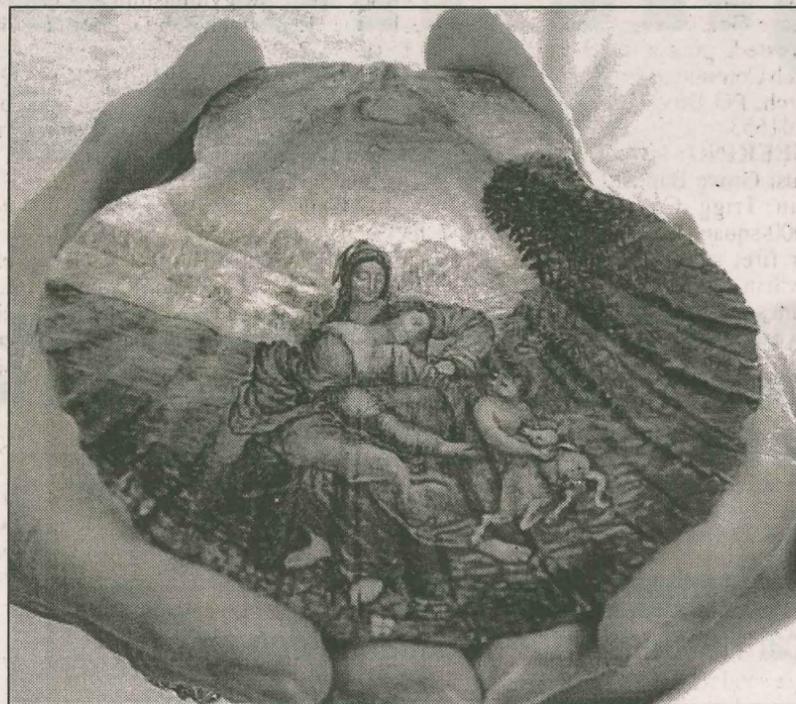
Devery described Demonte's shells as "the doorway into his whole sense of wonder." Demonte sees the shells as the key to that doorway.

They prove useful even in awkward social situations, Demonte says. Once, at a wedding with his wife, seated at a table full of silent strangers, someone who knew about his talent crossed the room to ask about the shells. Of course there were shells in his pocket. In no time the reticent strangers had become fast friends, and the woman sitting next to him even planted a kiss on Demonte's cheek.

"No matter where you are, you have to speak about how good God is," Demonte says. "What the Lord is doing within me, I can't stop talking about that. That's the story of the shells."

#### SHELL EVANGELISM

Using acrylic paint and tiny brushes, Peter Demonte transforms ordinary shells into religious masterpieces. The 82-year-old retired Staten Island longshoreman uses the shells to talk to friends, family and strangers about God. (RNS photo)



INTRICATE DETAILS Demonte holds one of his religious shell paintings. "God gives me the power" to paint the tiny, intricate scenes, he said. (RNS photo)

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