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FOR THE RECORD



Baptists
Volunteers share light during blackout. *Page 2.*

Kentucky
Holistic approach urged for strengthening Kentucky marriages. *Page 3.*

Editorial
"100 Days of Prayer": Make the connection. *Page 5.*

Issues
What would Jesus eat? *Page 9.*

World
Looting hampers Liberia ministry efforts. *Page 10.*

Film
Mel Gibson movie about Jesus attracting debate. *Page 12.*

Books
Reviews include books about worship and church leadership. *Page 13.*

Poll: Americans divided on stem cell research

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Slightly more than half of Americans surveyed say they view stem cell research involving human embryos to be morally acceptable, a Gallup Poll has found.

Fifty-four percent of Americans surveyed in May said "medical research using stem cells obtained from human embryos" is morally acceptable while 38 percent said such studies are morally wrong.

Some scientists have said such research could lead to cures and treatments for such illnesses as Parkinson's disease and diabetes, but opponents to the research say human embryos should not be used for such purposes.

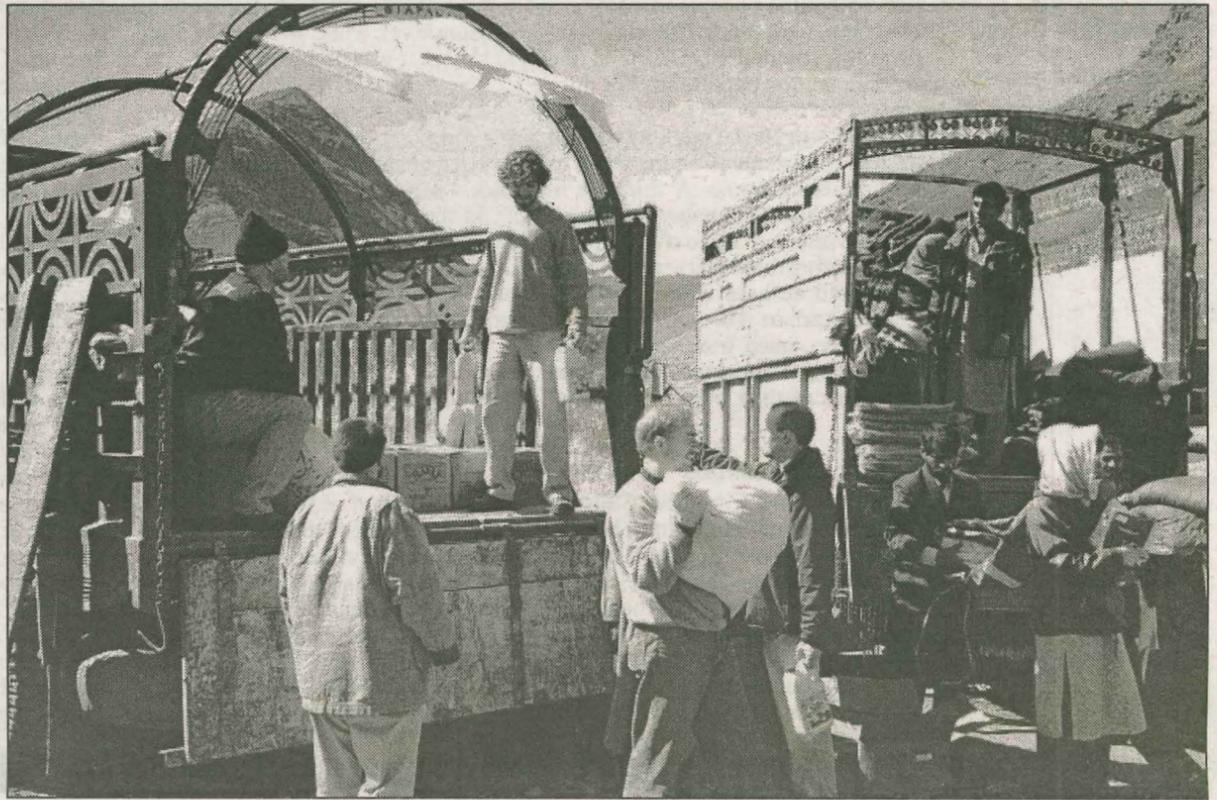
There are stronger divisions on the research depending on people's position on abortion.

Seventy-one percent of those who support abortion rights say such stem cell research is morally acceptable, while 38 percent of those who oppose abortion agree with that view.

Researchers also compared church attendance to viewpoints on stem cell research. Thirty-eight percent of those who attend church weekly said such research was morally acceptable, compared to 56 percent who attend church almost weekly and 67 percent of those who seldom or never attend.

The survey results are based on telephone interviews with 1,005 adults nationwide May 5-7. The results have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

To Afghans with love



A team of American medical volunteers will serve in Afghanistan in late August and early September in an effort to help address the nation's critical post-war medical needs. The team, based in Memphis, Tenn., is affiliated with International Friendship Summits. ■ Above: Medical equipment and supplies, including 2,000 birthing kits, were among healthcare items distributed in Afghan communities earlier this year. ■ Left: An 11-member medical team visited Afghanistan in March and early September as part of the Memphis-Afghanistan Friendship Summit. See story on page 7. (BP photos)

Allen urges churches to create, strengthen prayer ministries

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

LOUISVILLE—A church's prayer ministry should have an end in itself, insists Eric Allen. Rather, it should "undergird and cover every ministry of the church."

Allen, who leads the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Mission Service Corps workshop, was among dozens of workshop leaders at the KBC's Super Saturday church leadership conference Aug. 9 in Louisville. Super Saturday training also was held Aug. 16 in Lexington and is scheduled for Aug. 23 in Corbin and Madisonville and Sept. 6 in Ashland and Paducah.

Allen, leading a workshop on "Establishing Prayer Ministries in Your Church," urged prayer leaders to "be careful that everything you do is biblically based."

"A prayer ministry is not going to happen automatically," he added. "As

a prayer leader, you need to walk the walk. Be a person of prayer yourself; be real in what you do."

Noting that "a comprehensive prayer ministry will support the Great Commission," Allen told workshop participants, "A prayer ministry will be about reaching the lost and praying for the lost. We need to have prayer meetings for lost people and for renewal and revival in the church."

Three goals of an effective Great Commission prayer ministry, Allen said, involve personal prayer, corporate prayer and Kingdom prayer.

"Corporate prayer will not last unless you've got personal prayer going on at home," he said. "If we will raise up people with a passion for individual, personal prayer, corporate prayer will grow."

Emphasizing that "prayer is an important part of what God wants to happen in His Kingdom," Allen added, "We need to look outside the walls" □ See KBC churches ..., page 3

Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, August 20



PRAYER FOCUS Eric Allen, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Mission Service Corps, describes how churches can establish effective prayer ministries. The workshop was part of an Aug. 9 Super Saturday conference in Louisville, one of six regional training events across Kentucky in August and September.

"This is going to be a neat way to remind people of the need for the gospel and the light it brings into people's lives."

Chris Adams, church planter in Toronto

Baptists seek to share light amid blackout

NEW YORK CITY (BP)—As a blackout covered the Northeast United States and parts of Canada in darkness Aug. 14, Baptists throughout the region sought to shine the light of Christ.

The blackout that affected an estimated 50 million people in major cities such as New York, Cleveland and Toronto provided Christians in the region a unique opportunity for ministry.

Baptists in New York City handed out free refreshments on the street to those walking home. A minister in Cleveland used his battery-powered laptop to send e-mails to church members, assuring them that services Sunday would be held with or without power. And in Toronto, a church planter recounted how the blackout was proving a "neat way" to remind Canadians of their need for the gospel.

Ministry opportunities

In New York City, Lisa Chilson-Rose, director of volunteers at Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, said a mission team from Browncroft Baptist Church in Rochester, N.Y., was at the association office when the power went out.

"Part of our dilemma was that everything in our refrigerators was go-

ing to spoil, so they took icy pops from the freezer and gave them out to people on the street as they were going by," Chilson-Rose said. "People were very shocked and pleasantly surprised. They got a chance to share with the people as they were giving out the icy pops. So they were able to do a little mission work while we were waiting to see what was going on."

"Several staff people who were stuck here stayed overnight in the building," she added. "We prayed, talked and had some fellowship in the dark."

In the Toronto area, the blackout was among the inaugural experiences of church planter Chris Adams, who had moved there two weeks earlier from Georgia.

Once the blackout eases, Adams said, "We think this is going to be a neat way to remind people of the need for the gospel and the light it brings into people's lives."

The most densely populated unchurched region of North America is along the northern shore of Lake Ontario, a corridor stretching from Windsor, Ontario, near Detroit to Quebec City, east of Montreal, he said.

The blackout, he added, may be one additional way Christians learn about the efforts of The Sanctuary, a congregation founded two years ago

with the specific purpose of planting other churches—with four already established and two more on the way. Adams will be launching a congregation in the Toronto suburb of Brampton.

Random acts of kindness

In Cleveland, the power outage provided Christians with opportunities to minister through acts of kindness, said Bob Mackey, pastor of Parma Baptist Church.

Mackey lost power at both his church and his home shortly after 4 p.m., Aug. 14. By 6 a.m. the next day, the church had regained power and began to open its doors for Cleveland-area residents who were without air conditioning in their homes.

"The ministry opportunities really were just people helping people as normal Christians," Mackey said. "I think most people perceive this as a temporary 24-hour delay."

"We called our church family, and I sent an e-mail out and started all of our phone chains and encouraged everybody to call everybody and check on everybody, make sure everybody was OK," he said.

"I sent an e-mail out to our church family ... saying, power or not, we're having church Sunday," he said. "We'll figure something out."

Disaster relief teams mobilize after Ohio floods

NORTH CANTON, Ohio (BP)—Volunteer Southern Baptist "mud-out" specialists have been busy this summer, with back-to-back flood cleanup operations in Indiana and Ohio.

The latest Southern Baptist disaster relief effort in northeastern Ohio has resulted in nearly 60 homes cleared of mud and debris in mid-August, with several more weeks of work anticipated.

"Basically when we run out of volunteers is when we're going to finish," said Terry Henderson, national director for the Southern Baptist disaster relief network and incident commander for the Ohio response. "We're going into a long-term response."

Many of the jobs have involved cleaning out flooded basements, he said, with several crews often spend-

ing as much as a day on each house.

The average number of volunteers at any one time has been about 60, Henderson said, including an Ohio mobile kitchen crew and North Carolina mobile shower unit. Among the state conventions responding or scheduled to respond are Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Maryland/Delaware, North Carolina and Virginia.

Widespread flooding hit the area in late July, and the Southern Baptist disaster relief operation began in August.

The Ohio effort comes on the heels of July flood relief efforts in Indiana, which is now gearing up for a long-term rebuilding effort by Southern Baptist construction volunteers. The response will be similar to reconstruction in West Virginia over the past two

years and earlier in North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Floyd, said Randy Creamer, construction coordinator for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's volunteer mobilization team.

Sixty-four homes were cleaned during the initial Indiana flood response, which ended July 25. Many of the volunteers who worked during that response now are participating in the Ohio effort, Creamer said.

Contributions for national disaster relief responses may be sent to the North American Mission Board, 4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30022. Designated contributions for the Ohio response may also be sent to the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, 1680 East Broad St., Columbus, OH 43203.

IMB leaders seek ways to expand missions force

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptists need to increase their overseas missionary force by at least one-half to even begin engaging all the non-Christian people in the world, according to leaders of Southern Baptist International Mission Board efforts in 15 regions of the world.

The regional leaders and senior IMB administrators reached that conclusion during an Aug. 4-8 "Global Strategy Summit" at the IMB's Missionary Learning Center near Richmond, Va.

"We realize this is a tremendous challenge," said IMB President Jerry Rankin. "We have in recent months had to slow down the flow of missionaries going overseas so we can stay within the financial support provided by the churches. But our hearts are burdened by the overwhelming lostness of our world."

The slowdown in missionary appointments means attrition will take a higher toll than usual on the number of missionaries working overseas. While that number stands at a record 5,607 career and short-term workers, board leaders say retirements, resignations and the steady stream of short-term workers completing their assignments will push the total below 5,000 by the end of 2004.

On top of that, IMB leaders estimate that one-fourth of the world's population—1.5 billion people—have little or no prospect of hearing the gospel unless someone goes and tells them.

The regional leaders convened the summit to evaluate the impact of budget reductions and personnel limitations on the board's global strategy. Their purpose was to develop priorities that would guide board decisions in the immediate future.

The need for at least 8,500 missionaries to seriously engage the non-Christian people of urban centers and unreached peoples groups was one of the conclusions the group reached. The number was based on research conducted in each region prior to the meeting.

The group also decided to recommend that any funds above budgeted income that might become available in 2003 or 2004 be applied to sending more workers. They also agreed on how the limited number of positions for new workers available in 2004 will be divided among the 15 regions.

"While economics precipitated the discussions, it did not determine our decisions," said Phil Templin, who leads work in the IMB's Middle America region. "Our primary focus is establishing reproducing churches among unreached peoples and unreached megacities."



"Find another way to raise money!"

BAPTIST DIGEST

■ Brazilian Baptist leader dies.

David Gomes, former executive secretary of the Brazilian Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board, died Aug. 5 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at age 83. During 15 years with the Brazilian HMB, he opened 64 elementary schools and 17 first-aid medical assistance stations. He also established the "Bible School on the Air" radio program.

■ Golden Gate accreditation reaffirmed.

The Association of Theological Schools has reaffirmed fully accredited status to Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. During the association's 2001 visit, committee members expressed concern that

the seminary had sustained losses in its operating budget for several years. The recent affirmation commended the seminary "on its solid and significant progress on areas and concerns identified in past visits."

■ Bush reappoints Land to panel.

President Bush announced Aug. 13 that he will reappoint Richard Land to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Land is president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. New appointees are Khaled Abou El Fadl, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Charles Caput, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Denver.

Babb urges holistic approach to strengthen marriages

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—While most congregations profess strong support for marriage, that support often extends only to the wedding ceremony, said Karl Babb, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention family ministry department.

After the "I do's," he added, most couples are on their own.

Too many churches think they strengthen marriages, when in reality they rarely offer much teaching or other helps, Babb said during an Aug. 9 Super Saturday workshop in Louisville. Super Saturday is a church leadership conference coordinated by the Kentucky Baptist Convention church growth team.

"The last place people know there's a problem in a marriage is in the church," Babb said. "It's not a safe place to air problems."

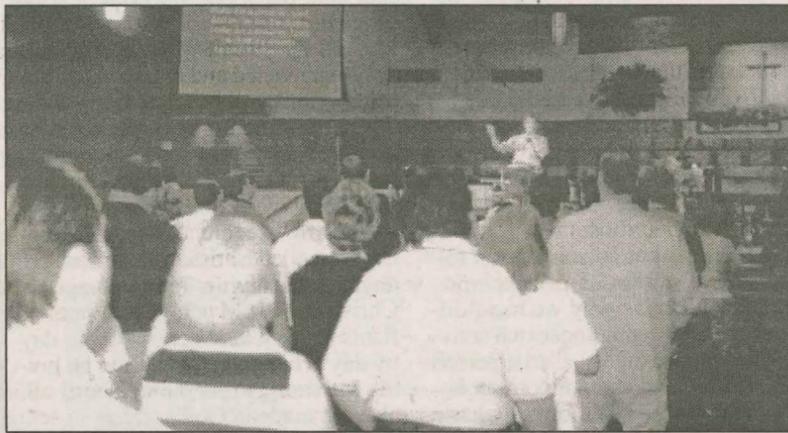
"We've not told people that bumps and bruises are part of marriage relationships, that they're going to have job losses, illness and kids come into the relationship. A lot of things happen."

Churches can make impact

Not only do most churches lack a comprehensive marriage policy, they largely are silent in areas where they could make a difference, Babb noted.

For example, he questioned what churches do to help middle school students think about healthy dating relationships. Waiting until they're in high school is too late, he warned.

"As a church, we're not thinking



SUPER SATURDAY More than 720 Kentucky Baptists took part in the Aug. 9 Super Saturday event in Louisville, the first of six regional conferences across the state.

ahead," Babb said. "We're in a society that says if it's broken, don't fix it, throw it away."

Babb said one major problem couples face today is communication skills. American culture emphasizes instant messaging and cell phones, promoting talks that are quick and short, he added.

Churches can play a vital role by helping couples build communication skills and helping prospective partners understand their spouse will change over the years, he suggested.

Babb advocates that congregations become "Covenant Marriage Churches," an emphasis promoted nationally by the Marriage Savers family ministry organization.

Rather than a formal membership program, the covenant marriage emphasis is a loose-knit affiliation in which churches use various marriage

enrichment resources and take steps to support marriage.

Steps to strong marriages

Babb said a holistic approach to helping build strong marriages includes:

■ **Preventing divorce.** The first step, Babb said, is helping couples understand whether they are compatible before they tie the knot. One tool from Marriage Savers is the FOCCUS inventory. Soon to be offered through the KBC, the survey includes counseling and discussion about the results.

■ **Marriage enrichment events.** Among available resources are a marriage kit by Focus on the Family, Marriage Savers "REFOCUS" survey and the "Healthy Marriage Handbook."

Such material can be covered in Sunday school, discipleship training

classes or other times that are convenient for couples, Babb noted.

He said some churches have used a Friday night-Saturday morning format for seminars, providing free childcare so young couples can devote their attention to working on their marriage.

■ **Intervention.** A church needs to step in during marital crisis situations, Babb said.

"Are we building an environment where couples who are having trouble can come to the pastor or a leader and say, 'We need help' and it not become the gossip of the community?" he asked.

Babb said intervention includes divorce recovery. If churches don't help people deal with the issues that caused their first marriage to fail, they likely will slide back into the same problems, he said.

■ **Outreach.** Churches need to help couples realize they are called to minister in unity, which provides a greater sense of peace and satisfaction, Babb said.

Often, church leaders think because both partners hold church offices they're ministering, Babb said. In fact, many people are so burdened down with responsibilities they are fragmented as a couple, he said.

Churches can help through such measures as marriage-oriented Bible studies for youth, premarital counseling, mentoring and prayer support, Babb said.

"The key word is intentionality," he said. "If it's not intentional, you won't do it. You can't start everything at once. Do one thing and develop it from there."

Marriage resources

■ "Preparing for Marriage" by Dennis Rainey.

■ "Before You Say I Do," "How to Counsel a Couple in Six Sessions or Less," "Marriage Checkup" and "After You Say I Do" workbook by H. Norman Wright.

■ "Sacred Marriage" by Gary Thomas.

■ "Marriage Series" resource kit, published by Focus on the Family.

■ "Healthy Marriage Handbook," published by Marriage Partnership magazine.

Tanner: Youth need mentors, not just pizza

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—Adults who want to help 13-year-olds grow into strong Christian witnesses by the time they graduate from high school need to invest in their lives.

That was the message by Tod Tanner, youth minister at First Baptist Church of Henderson, Tenn., during a recent Super Saturday workshop on training youth to be leaders.

After showing a brief clip from the movie, "Mr. Holland's Opus," Tanner recalled the young girl the teacher tutored who went on to become governor.

"It wasn't because he knew the latest trends in how to teach," Tanner said. "He took students and invested in them one at a time."

"It's not about having 5 million teenagers at the pizza blast; it's about developing some relationships. And when you do, you're going to have your opus. It won't be in an auditorium, it'll happen upstairs" in heaven.

Build strong relationships

The first step toward helping teens mature spiritually is to develop relationships with them, Tanner said.

Youth pastors and leaders can feed young people a ton of pizza and they will be hungry again two hours later, he said.

If that's all youth leaders are do-

ing, he added, Jesus isn't in that.

"That's all about programs," Tanner said. "Pizza isn't going to be there when the crisis hits."

He said developing effective relationships with teens involves three keys:

■ **Be willing to connect.** That means more than getting together on-line, Tanner said. "You take the Jesus who's in you and pour it into somebody else."

■ **Learn to listen.** That truth, he said, is found in James 1:19, which concludes, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

When a teenager says, "I don't know if I believe in God," a wise adult won't blurt out a question about whether the young person is having a daily quiet time, Tanner said.

Instead, he suggested taking time to listen to their reasons and discussing their doubts while introducing biblical concepts.

"If you can listen half the time, you're doing well," Tanner said. "We're often telling teenagers to sit down and shut up when they want to speak out."

■ **Get involved in their lives.** That doesn't mean trying to act like a teenager, the youth pastor said. He emphasized young people need a mentor, not another buddy.

However, he said, it does mean going to school to converse with them at lunch, ballgames and other events.

"Sunday school teachers can do it," he said. "I can only go to so many games. I can't do it all. I'm not supposed to do it all. Get involved with their lives and they're more willing to listen to what you say."

Follow Jesus' example

In addition to developing relationships, Tanner said another vital step in developing youth who are leaders is to share God's grace and love. He cited Jesus' examples of dealing with the woman caught in adultery (John 8:10-11) and with Zaccheus (Luke 19:5-6).

"He took the focus off her," Tanner said of Christ's actions toward the woman. "He told her to go and sin no more. He held on to the standard while He was reaching out in love and grace. When teenagers are feeling awkward, reach out in love and grace."

Adults also need to equip teens for the work of ministry, Tanner urged. He said that can involve such activities as taking them on mission trips and hospital visits and doing service projects together.

Tanner reminded youth leaders that while Jesus had 12 disciples, He spent most of His time with Peter, James and John.

"Find 12 students, invest in them, and then take three and invest heavily in them," he suggested. "You can't mentor 15 people at once; you can only do two or three."

KBC churches challenged to establish prayer ministries

Continued from page 1

of our church to people who need our prayers and people we can pray with."

Allen said initial steps in beginning a prayer ministry include recruiting a prayer coordinator and team members.

"Pray about who that leader is going to be," he urged. "Don't just fill a slot with someone to fill a slot. You can teach them the other stuff; you can't give them the passion."

Other steps Allen suggested include enlisting the pastor's support, encouraging individual prayer and refocusing the church's midweek service into a prayer meeting.

"We need to come together and pray," he explained.

"Help your people see the need for a real prayer time.

Educate yourself in how to lead a prayer meeting."

Other helpful elements include providing a prayer room and creating a prayer chain.

Noting that many churches' priorities fail to reflect a strong emphasis on prayer, he said, "I've never seen a church without a kitchen, but I've seen a lot of churches without prayer rooms."

A prayer room should not become the primary focus of a prayer ministry, however, Allen cautioned. "It is important," he said, "but it is not essential."

Prayerwalks, prayer training, prayer lists, special seasons of prayer and establishing new prayer groups are additional aspects of an effective prayer ministry, Allen noted.

"The world needs more believers to become prayer warriors," he declared. "You can become a prayer warrior by abiding in Christ, staying grounded in the Word and praying in truth."

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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Speak biblically, lovingly on homosexuality

By Marv Knox

Homosexuality has leaped out of the closet and landed in America's living rooms.

This summer, significant issues revolving around homosexuality have grabbed headlines in national media. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled Texas' sodomy law unconstitutional, President Bush affirmed legal restriction against homosexual marriage and the Episcopal Church confirmed the election of its first openly gay bishop.

Many Americans—especially traditional Christians—find discussion of homosexuality embarrassing. It's like when parents talk about sex and their children want to put their fingers in their ears and chant, "Too much information; too much information ..." until somebody changes the subject. But nobody's going to change this subject; not this time. Homosexuality is a fact of life in America, whether it's the orientation of the newest Episcopal bishop, the subject of constitutional amendments or a theme of seemingly every other TV program.

What's a Christian to do?

Baptists and other people of biblical faith begin with Scripture. The Bible is clear: Homosexual practice is sinful. From the early pages of the Old Testament, God commands: "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable" (Leviticus 18:22). Similar condemnation of homosexual acts can be found in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul includes "homosexual offenders" among the "wicked (who) will not inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Some advocates of homosexual practice try to interpret the Bible to their advantage. For example, they say the men of Sodom (Genesis 19) were guilty of "inhospitality." Homosexu-

al rape is rather inhospitable. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness. Elsewhere, the Bible unequivocally condemns homosexual activity. (See Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Deuteronomy 23:18; Romans 1:27, 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10.)

Careful Bible study reveals God specifically condemns homosexual practice, but condemnation follows sin, not temptation to sin. This is why we must differentiate between homosexual activity and homosexuality. Can a person be a homosexual and not commit homosexual sin? Absolutely. A chaste person resists temptation and does not sin sexually, whether that person is tempted to commit fornication, adultery or a homosexual act.

Earnest Christians debate whether homosexuals choose to be homosexual or have it thrust upon them by birth or traumatic circumstances. Some homosexuals, both practicing and non-practicing, testify they have not and would not choose their orientation. Others have adopted the lifestyle from among a rainbow of libidinous experiments. We will not resolve that debate.

However, the debate really is beside the point, because the Bible speaks to behavior, not desire or even inclination. And homosexual behavior is prohibited. Even if we grant that homosexual orientation is genetically derived, we must acknowledge that acting on those impulses is sinful, according to God's Word.

When heterosexual Christians think about homosexuality, we often misconstrue God's wrath and righteousness. It is true that God calls homosexual activity an abomination and detestable. More importantly, however, we must recognize God's response to all sin is indignation mixed with grief and alarm. Like a parent who responds swiftly and firmly when a

toddler strays into the street, God reacts to our sin out of concern for how the sin itself harms us and impacts others. God hates our sin because God loves us.

And that brings us to Christians' response to homosexuals. Almost without fail, we speak of "hating the sin but loving the sinner," and most homosexuals I've ever known don't buy it for a minute. For one, we say more than we realize when we speak of "hating" before "loving." Moreover, most of the time, our actions are anything but loving. The challenge for Christians in a world that seems to flaunt homosexual activity more day by day is to find ways we can be loving and caring to people who, after all, also are made in God's image.

Stand on moral principles

That doesn't mean we forfeit our right to stand on principles of sexual morality. Christians do well to support the biblical and traditional definition of marriage—one woman and one man united faithfully for life. We also do well to say we will not endorse practicing homosexuals in positions of religious leadership. Since homosexual activity is sinful, we should not promote unrepentant sinners as leaders. And we do well to address the media, who seem to have an agenda for making homosexual practice normative in America; we do not agree, and we will not enrich those who promote and sponsor such an agenda.

But we also should heed the biblical teaching, cited by President Bush: "We're all sinners." For 2,000 years, Christians have been advising others on how they can remove the splinters in their eyes while we're blinded by the logs in our own eyes.

Homosexual sin is not the unpardonable sin, nor the only sin. We must speak with biblical and moral clarity. We also must endeavor mightily to speak with love.

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

COMMENTARY

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Associational annual meetings under way

Fall is just around the corner, and associational annual meetings have begun.

These gatherings provide opportunities for fellowship among local churches and opportunities for Kentucky Baptists to celebrate what God is doing locally, across Kentucky and around the world. Programs include inspirational music, challenging messages, reports on missions and ministries, projections on plans for the future and great food.

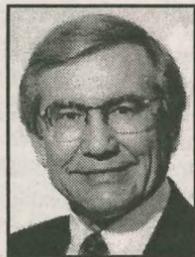
The associational meetings are wonderful opportunities for Kentucky Baptist Convention staff and representatives of KBC institutions and agencies to report to local churches. These annual meetings are open to all church members and visitors. I would like to encourage church members to take advantage of this opportunity to fellowship with fellow Baptists and learn about missions and ministries in Kentucky and beyond. I personally am looking for-

ward to being in a number of these gatherings and hope to see you.

I am grateful for the partnership between the KBC and local associations. The new mission statement for KBC places a strong focus on local associations. It is my prayer that every association will be a KBC partner in efforts to implement the objectives and goals of the Mission Study Report. It is the purpose of the KBC and associations to assist churches in fulfilling their God-given mission.

Nothing compares to the ministry of a local church where lives are transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is in the local church where disciples are developed, equipped and mobilized in missions and evangelism locally and around the world.

I am more excited about the future of Kentucky Baptist Convention churches than I have ever been. As I travel across the state and hear reports from staff, there seems to be more



Bill Mackey

CHURCH

Principles help churches develop biblical stewards

By Doug Strader

Many churches do not do a good job of developing stewards. As a result, it remains one of the most needed aspects of our churches.

■ *Why do we need to develop stewards?*

It is estimated that people over age 55 give 80 percent of church receipts.

Approximately 18 to 20 percent of church members give 80 percent of the money.

Southern Baptists give an average of 2.3 percent of their income to the Lord's work.

The average credit card debt is between \$8,000 and \$9,000.

There are more than 1 million personal bankruptcies per year.

■ *Why do some members not give?*

Many are over-extended with debt.

Many have never been taught biblical financial stewardship.

Some have lost confidence in the way the church handles their money.

■ *Why should the church teach financial stewardship?*

Financial stewardship is a major biblical doctrine.

Jesus taught about the dangers of wealth and possessions when viewed in ways other than a trust from God.

The Christian stewardship of wealth is the source of joy, love and growth for Christians.

■ *What are some ways to increase giving to the Lord's work?*

Match the church budget with the church's values and vision.

Establish a biblical foundation for financial stewardship.

Keep members informed about the church's financial activities.

Develop an ongoing stewardship education plan.

■ *How do you establish a biblical foundation for financial stewardship?*

Conduct Bible studies on financial stewardship for all ages.

Provide financial stewardship opportunities for new members.

Conduct a yearly biblically based budget adoption emphasis.

■ *How do you develop a continuing financial stewardship education plan?*

Develop a yearly calendar of financial stewardship activities.

Have financial stewardship testimonies and dramas as a part of the worship.

Conduct Christian money management seminars.

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



Realistic marital expectations could help curb divorce rate

Q: My grandparents have had a difficult time coping with my parents' divorce. I have a hard time understanding their feelings in these contemporary times. Why does their generation tend to view divorce as so devastating?

The phenomenon of divorce is a far more complex issue than generally believed. Furthermore, statistics pertaining to divorce frequently are misinterpreted. Overall, about one-third of all marriages in the United States end in divorce, and the rate is higher for remarriages and cohabitations. Currently, there are no solid predictions of either a sharp decline or a sharp rise in divorce rates in the near future.

Divorce and remarriage are adult institutions. That is, they were intended to separate couples who could no longer live together and to allow the ex-spouses to marry other partners. As institutions, divorce and remarriage are not necessarily in the best interest of the children and divorce is not necessarily good for adults either.

We have seen that divorce often is accompanied by poverty or a significant reduction in financial resources for single parents. This amplifies the negative effects of divorce on the mother-child family unit and on children's opportunities in life.

We also have seen that a significant proportion of marriages that end in divorce actually were salvageable and that many ex-spouses are no happier after the divorce. One helpful response is to encourage couples who marry to face the inevitability of ups and downs in relationships, especially since severe conflict typically affects only about one-third of divorcing couples.

After 25 years of studying divorce from a pastoral care position, I have come to conclude that there are far too many divorces that are unnecessary.—*Jon Rainbow*

Q: How does my attitude toward sex affect my children?

Our children need to know that, within the context of marriage, sex is one of God's greatest gifts—meant for pleasure as well as procreation. Your own attitude toward sex will serve as the beginning point for their understanding. In addition to frank and open conversations you hopefully will have with your children about sex, your attitude toward sex and your sex life will affect your children in ways you might not be fully aware of.

Like it or not, sexual needs are basic needs. In his best-selling book, "His Needs, Her Needs," Willard Harley writes that affection for a woman and sex for a man are absolutely foundational for a good marriage—an important key to building an affair-proof marriage. Consider that fact while you ponder how an affair would affect your family and your children. Harley challenges couples to overcome sexual ignorance and to meet each other's sexual needs.

Likewise, Dr. Kevin Leman emphasizes the important role sexual intimacy plays in making a marriage strong. In his excellent book "Sheet Music," Leman says couples who meet each other's sexual needs are better parents, more faithful believers and more productive community members. Because sex includes emotional as well as physical dimensions, it works like exercise, actually creating additional emotional and physical energy that can be invested in family.

So enjoy the benefits of a healthy sexual relationship with your spouse. Your kids will thank you—even if they don't know why you've got that smile on your face.—*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.



'100 Days of Prayer': Make the connection

For thousands of Kentucky Baptists who took part in last fall's "100 Days of Prayer" emphasis, this year's Kentucky Baptist Convention prayer focus likely will be a welcome spiritual sequel. For those who didn't participate in the KBC's previous statewide prayer initiative, this year's emphasis provides a fresh opportunity for focused prayer.

"If My People ... Connect through Prayer" will be the theme for the KBC's second 100 Days of Prayer set for Sept. 7 through Dec. 15. The "connect" theme plays off the KBC Mission Study Plan adopted earlier this year. The KBC mission statement adopted as part of the study emphasizes that "the mission of the Kentucky Baptist Convention is to assist Kentucky Baptist Convention churches and ministries and associations in connecting all people to Jesus Christ."

Prayer coordinator Eric Allen, director of the KBC's Mission Service Corps program, said the "connection" focus "says very well what prayer does; prayer connects us with the Father. Part of our goal is that through the 100 Days of Prayer emphasis, it also would connect us corporately as we pray in unison across the state."

KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey noted last year that a statewide call to prayer had been one of his long-term goals. "Historically there has been a sense of desperation that God has used to set His people to prayer," Mackey said. "I hope that we can learn from history."

During last year's inaugural call to prayer, convention leaders distributed 40,000 prayer guides to churches and individuals throughout the commonwealth. The material also was available on the KBC Web site, www.kybaptist.org.

Allen said the KBC has printed 40,000 prayer guides

again this year and will continue to make the resources available for download on the Internet.

Reflecting on last year's effort, Allen said, "We felt like it was a worthy thing for Kentucky Baptists to gather around. We saw specific prayers answered that we had been praying for corporately."

"We hope we will experience the same thing this year," he added. "I can't think of anything more worthy than praying as a corporate body."

The 12-page prayer guide includes Scripture passages and prayer requests for each day of the emphasis. The prayer initiative is scheduled to begin in conjunction with Kentucky Baptists' 2003 Season of Prayer for State Missions on Sept. 7-14 and conclude just after the Southern Baptist Week of Prayer for International Missions in December.

Kentucky Baptists who participate in the prayer emphasis will be invited on the first day to reflect on the words of Romans 12:11-12, "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in

prayer."

During the 100-day effort, individuals will be encouraged to pray for spiritual renewal and revival in Kentucky and beyond. Among specific prayer requests are that fellow Christians "will be challenged to a deeper walk with Christ" and that they "will be powerfully connected to the truth of God's Word, resulting in radical obedience."

Whether you choose to join 100 Days of Prayer as an individual, a family, a Sunday school class, a congregation or some other group, make a commitment to be an active part of this year's prayer focus.

What better priority can Kentucky Baptists have than to honor God by connecting through prayer?

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Fruit of the Spirit aids good health

By Branda Polk

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law" (*Galatians 5:22-23*).

After a lengthy conversation with Valerie about her increasing weight and overall decline in health, I began to process some of the motivations and requirements for a Christian to live a healthy, Christ-honoring lifestyle.

It seems that a deeper motivation for good health should exist for believers. As Christ-followers, we are given the mission of sharing the good news of Jesus with a lost world. While this requires spiritual, mental and emotional readiness, it also requires physical readiness.

To be fully ready to go about our mission, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul's encouragement to the Galatians to live lives full of the characteristics of the Spirit of God is a good measure not only for our spiritual and relational health but also our physical health.

Consider how three of these qualities directly impact the choices we make for good health:

■ **Love.** In Mark 12:31, Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." In

other words, love your neighbor to the level that you love and respect yourself.

This is not a proud, arrogant, self-focused love, but an appreciation for the gift God gave you in your body.

God specifically constructed the body He gave you with all its uniqueness.

Your body is a ministry tool that God works

through. God doesn't just love your soul; He loves your body as well. We are more motivated to properly care for what we love and respect. When you love and care for yourself, you also are better equipped to love and care for others.

■ **Patience.** In our fast-paced, instant society, we expect improvements in our health to happen quickly. Thus, the weight loss industry has grown into an approximately \$41 billion industry with more "magic cures" for weight loss popping up every day.

The bottom line is that weight gain occurred over a period of time and weight loss will also. It took my friend, Nancy, two years to safely lose 120 pounds. Nancy's secret was to patiently make the best food and exercise choices every day.

Do what you know is right and the results will take care of themselves, whether it's weight loss, lowering cholesterol or improving physical strength.

■ **Self-control.** "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour," 1 Peter 5:8 warns.

Self-control is the fruit of the Spirit that allows you to say "no" to foods that don't benefit your body and to eat foods that will improve your health. Self-control also can help you stop eating when you are full, go for a walk even when you really don't want to and go to the doctor for an annual checkup.

Effective self-control also can help you properly manage your stress, avoid "quick-fix" weight-loss gimmicks and follow your doctor's recommendations for better health.

Self-control also is called discipline. Both are painful at times, but the long-term rewards are worth the short-term discomfort.

I'm convinced that Satan slowly is eroding the impact of Christians on our world by keeping many of us sick, tired and apathetic. If Satan can reduce our effectiveness in the world through our ministry and missions, he can better advance his agenda.

To turn this tide, we must be aware of all the tactics Satan uses and prepare ourselves by being continually filled with the Holy Spirit and allowing the fruit of that filling to flow into every area of our lives, including our health.

Branda Polk is a fitness instructor and wellness coach in Memphis, Tenn.

Judge defies order to remove monument

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—Facing a federal court order and an approaching deadline, Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore said Aug. 14 he will not order the Ten Commandments display removed from the rotunda of the state's judicial building.

Moore said he will appeal the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson issued an order Aug. 5 to have the 5,280-pound display removed by Aug. 20, but Moore said last week in a news conference that to do so would be equal to denying God.

Media coverage of his legal battle to keep the monument in place has propelled Moore into one of the nation's highest-profile Southern Baptists.

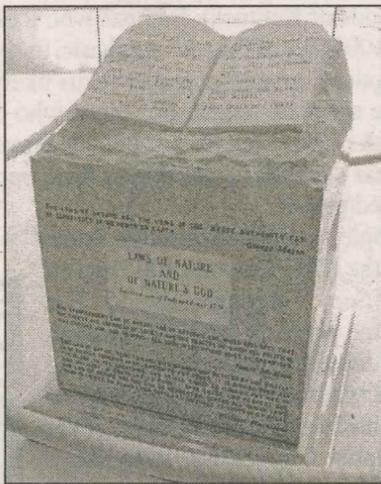
Moore, a Baptist layman, has hinted he might go to jail rather than obey the federal court order to remove the monument installed two years ago by his order.

"I have no intention of removing the monument of the Ten Commandments and the moral foundation of the law," Moore said. "To do so would in effect be a disestablishment of the justice system of this state. This I cannot and will not do."

Moore insisted he is not breaking the law but rather upholding Alabama's constitution, which references God.

"I intend to uphold my oath to the Constitution of the United States as well as the constitution of the State of Alabama," he said.

Moore first gained the attention of conservative religious leaders when, as a state court judge in Gadsden, Ala., he posted the Ten Commandments in his courtroom. After winning election as Alabama chief justice in November of 2000, he erected the Ten Commandments monument in the judicial



MONUMENT UNMOVED Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore announced last week he will defy a federal court order to remove a 5,280-pound Ten Commandments monument from the rotunda of the state's judicial building.

building on the evening of July 31, 2001, and officially unveiled it the next day.

Following a weeklong trial last year, Thompson ruled that Moore's monument violated the First Amendment, because it amounted to endorsement of a particular religion. Moore appealed to a federal appeals court and lost.

Thompson gave Moore until Aug. 20 to remove the monument, adding it is the responsibility of another state official to carry out the injunction if Moore refuses.

That set the stage for a confrontation between state and federal jurisdictions that some compare to the use of federal troops to enforce court-ordered desegregation in the 1950s.

Former Southern Baptist pastor Rick Scarborough, who resigned from

his church last year to give full attention to his Vision America organization, sponsored a "Restore the Commandments" rally Aug. 16 on the steps of the Alabama State Supreme Court building to show support for Moore.

Members of Vision America's advisory board include Southern Baptist pastors Adrian Rogers and Jerry Falwell as well as Judge Paul Pressler, an architect of the Southern Baptist Convention's conservative shift since 1979.

Other groups supporting Moore include Focus on the Family, Concerned Women of America and the American Family Association.

Some groups, such as the Alabama Christian Coalition, have called for civil disobedience, or physically blocking federal marshals if they intervene to remove the monument. Congress entered the controversy when the U.S. House of Representatives attached an amendment to an appropriations bill that would ban the use of federal funds to enforce the order to remove the monument.

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said in a statement that Moore "clearly wants to create a media circus."

"It's time to shut down the performance," Lynn said. "If Judge Moore can't in good conscience comply with a lawful federal court order, he ought to resign. We will take whatever steps are necessary to see that the federal court order is enforced."

The SBC passed a resolution in 1997 supporting public displays of the Ten Commandments, "including display in government offices and court-houses."

Based on reporting by Baptist Press and EthicsDaily.com

Poll shows strong backlash against same-sex unions

WASHINGTON (BP)—Most Americans disagree with the Episcopal Church's decision to allow the blessing of same-sex unions, according to a Washington Post poll that also shows a continuing backlash on the homosexual issue.

The poll of 1,003 Americans found that 60 percent of those surveyed disagree with the Episcopal Church's decision giving its local bishops the option of blessing same-sex relationships. The decision was made at the denomination's general convention in early August.

The poll also mirrored the findings of a July Gallup poll that showed a backlash against homosexual issues. The Post poll, released Aug. 13, found that by a 58-37 percent margin Americans are opposed to legalizing Vermont-type civil unions that would give homosexual couples some of the legal rights of married couples. The Gallup poll's margin was 57-40.

It is the first sign that the Gallup poll—widely touted as showing a backlash following the Supreme Court's Lawrence v. Texas decision on sodomy—was not a statistical glitch.

The Washington Post percentages on civil unions are both records for a Post or Gallup poll. While 58 percent is a record level of opposition to the legalization of civil unions, the level of support (37 percent) marks the first time that figure has dipped below 40 percent.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Hicks named Army chief of chaplains.** The U.S. Army has appointed Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) David Hicks as chief of chaplains. Hicks, 61, who previously was deputy chief of chaplains, has almost 30 years of Army chaplain service. He succeeds Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Gaylord Gunhus. Hicks, ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA), will oversee approximately 2,200 active duty, National Guard and Reserve chaplains from 120 faith groups serving worldwide.

■ **Family Research Council names president.** Tony Perkins, a Republican member of the Louisiana House of Representatives, has been named president of the Family Research Council. Perkins, 40, who is serving the final year of his second legislative term, will begin his work with the council Sept. 1. He succeeds Ken Conner, who resigned in July after three years of service. Perkins, a Southern Baptist, founded the Louisiana Family Forum in 1998.

■ **ACLU sues over Mormon land deal.** The American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal suit Aug. 7 seeking to overturn a land deal that gave the Mormon Church jurisdiction over a downtown Salt Lake City block. The ACLU's Utah chapter called the deal an assault on free speech, saying that city officials failed to respect a federal ruling that Salt Lake City's Main Street Plaza is a public forum. City officials sold the block to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1999 for \$8.1 million. Church leaders agreed to maintain public access to the block but asked that they be allowed to regulate behavior, restricting smoking, swearing and vulgar conduct.

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"... then all the people replied, 'Let us start rebuilding,' so they began this good work."
Nehemiah 2:18

Medical volunteers help Afghans rebuild war-torn lives

By Ashley Haygood
Baptist Press

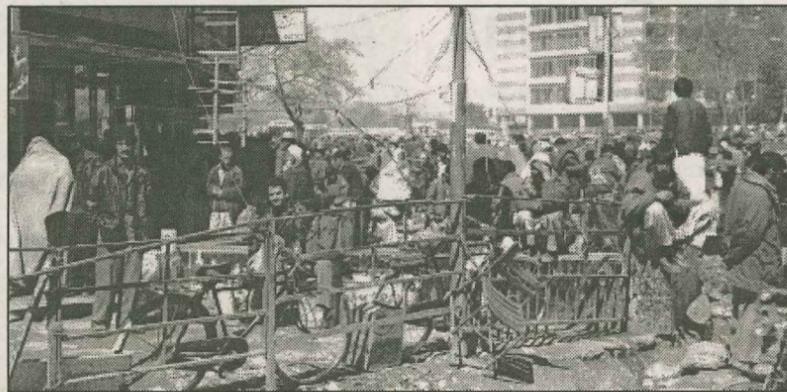
MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Iraq might dominate the headlines, but Afghanistan is very much on the hearts of one group of mission volunteers seeking to help Afghans create a new future for their country.

For two weeks in August and September, a team of medical volunteers from Memphis, Tenn., plans to teach in hospitals in Kabul and Herat and hold a clinic in a village without medical and dental care, said team member Cindy Taylor, a neonatal ICU nurse at Memphis' Methodist University Hospital.

The project is part of an ongoing partnership between medical, education, business, government and church leaders in Memphis and Afghanistan. The partnership was forged in October 2002, when seven officials of Afghanistan's interim government participated in meetings that focused on the country's post-war development needs.

The "Memphis-Afghan Friendship Summit" resulted in a list of specific ways the Americans plan to help the people of Afghanistan start rebuilding their lives.

"One of the greatest needs is for people who are willing to offer their expertise, skills and resources to come and invest in the lives of Afghans,"



ARRAY OF NEEDS While the streets of Kabul are busy, more than two decades of war have left Afghanistan with widespread redevelopment needs.

said Mark Morris, chairman of International Friendship Summits, the non-profit organization in Memphis that organized the meeting.

The MAFS group has sent medical equipment, textbooks and 2,000 birthing kits to Afghanistan, and an 11-member medical team visited the country in March.

'Peace be unto you'

Handing out food, clothing, quilts and mats to more than 300 families at a village called Tangi Saidan, team members greeted the villagers with the traditional greeting: "A Salaam ale kum"—"Peace be unto you."

The team conducted seminars for physicians at Malali Women's Hos-

pital, a facility in which the nursery had no electricity most of the day and no running water at all. Premature babies struggled to survive because the compressor that pumps oxygen to them rarely had electricity to operate.

Another doctor lectured and worked at Ali Abad and Jamhvrit hospitals. The dentist and dental assistant on the team lectured and worked at Stomatology Hospital.

On a visit to Herat, three of the team members visited the only hospital in that city, a facility designed for 250 patients that serves between 800 and 1,000 people per day.

St. Francis Hospital in Memphis sponsored three doctors from its family medicine program with a gift of

\$5,000. But instead of using that money for their own expenses, the doctors used the funds to purchase infant formula, bottles, a generator and fuel for the nursery at Malali Women's Hospital.

The St. Francis funds also were used to buy a generator for a community complex at Istalif, a village destroyed by the Taliban. The generator provides electricity, water filtration and heat for a clinic there.

The Memphis-Afghanistan partnership runs the other direction as well. An Afghan physician is planning to travel to Memphis for training. Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health is hoping to send another physician for training as well.

"We really want to build relationships over there," said Taylor, who was a member of the March team. "We want the project to be a people-to-people effort, not country-to-country."

In addition to financial support to purchase medicine and bring Afghan doctors, educators and other leaders to Memphis for training, the group is looking for a facility to store hospital beds, physical therapy machines and other equipment donated for Afghan hospitals.

For more information about the Memphis-Afghan Friendship Summit, call (901) 921-6118 or visit the Web site www.mafsummit.org.

Premature babies struggled to survive because the compressor that pumps oxygen to them rarely had electricity to operate.

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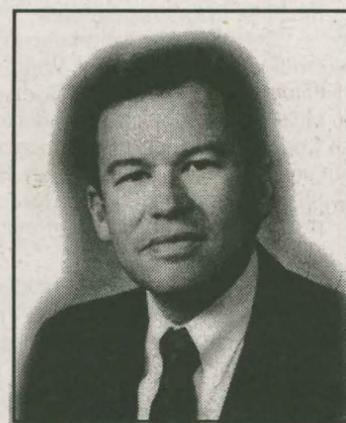
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GEORGETOWN

C O L L E G E

Sexual abstinence training crosses barriers in Guyana

By Barbara Brake
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE (BP)—United States Army Major Tyler Fitzgerald did what any good soldier does when faced with an aggressive enemy. He took the offensive.

Fitzgerald was about to finish his tour of duty as a military liaison in Guyana, a small Caribbean country, but he couldn't shake the feeling of desperation he had for the physical and spiritual condition of Guyana's people.

Guyana's HIV/AIDS crisis is second only to that of Haiti's in the Western Hemisphere. The government's attempt to combat the situation excluded any abstinence programs.

Fitzgerald found that conclusion unacceptable and in March turned to the Internet. His search landed at True Love Waits, the faith-based abstinence program produced by LifeWay Christian Resources that encourages students to be sexually abstinent until marriage. He'd heard of the success True Love Waits was having in curbing HIV/AIDS-related deaths in Africa. There has been more than a 30 percent decrease in Uganda in HIV/AIDS in the 10 years True Love Waits has been the officially recognized method of combating the epidemic.

Fitzgerald exchanged a flurry of e-mails with Ernest McAninch of LifeWay's international department. A solution was found that potentially could change the future of Guyana as much as Uganda's has been.

Cross-cultural pioneers

True Love Waits has no budget to send someone to a foreign country to teach. But the church where True Love Waits was pioneered more than a decade ago, Tulip Grove Baptist Church near Nashville, accepted a unique challenge: be pioneers again, this time in another culture.

"Tyler hoped government officials would use the True Love Waits model to promote abstinence," McAninch recalled. "When the group decided it would not adopt an abstinence approach, Tyler did not give up. He offered to organize church leaders to promote an abstinence-until-marriage

movement and received commitments of support from Baptists, Wesleyans, Methodists, Youth with a Mission and the Full Gospel church."

McAninch, a member of Tulip Grove, approached Ken Clayton, the church's pastor, with the challenge of helping. Clayton saw the opportunity for the church to support overseas missions and asked Alec Cort, the church's current youth minister, to consider going to Guyana to teach True Love Waits to the coalition Fitzgerald was building.

Cort had serious doubts. During his 10 years of vocational youth work, he never felt an overseas calling. "My wife, Allyson, and I prayed about the trip and sought God's guidance and decided we would go," Cort said.

Special offering funds trip

Cort has taught True Love Waits to Tulip Grove's youth for four years. Clayton told the church Cort and his wife were prepared to go to Guyana. The church's members responded by funding the April trip through a special offering. The Corts arrived in Guyana within six weeks of Fitzgerald's initial inquiry.

Cambelville Baptist Church hosted the training that drew nearly 300 people, including public school and government officials, representatives of non-Christian non-government organizations and churches and Christians from several denominations.

"I was amazed at how well we were received," Cort said. "Since there is very little to do in Guyana, the seminar was a major event."

"I had my doubts, but again God did His thing," Cort said. "At the end of the first day, young petty officer Jason Benjamin from the Guyana Defense Force stood up to give his testimony. The GDF is directed by the political authorities to help in HIV prevention."

"The information he took back to his superiors has led the GDF to change its entire stance on 'safe sex.' Prior to the seminar it had supported condom distribution and safe sex programs. Now, because of officer Benjamin's report, it has adopted 'abstinence' as their primary promotion in the prevention of HIV. God is good."

True Love Waits to tout pledges from 100 countries at Olympics

NASHVILLE (BP)—True Love Waits is going to the 2004 Summer Olympics.

When the world turns its attention next year to Athens, Greece, the birthplace of the Olympics, True Love Waits pledges to abstinence will be a part of the celebration.

Hundreds of thousands of signed pledges to sexual purity from youth in at least 100 nations are expected to be displayed in Athens Aug. 22, 2004, during the Olympics.

The international TLW display "will amplify the voices of the Christian students who are standing for purity—either by being physically present in Athens or by being represented there by their pledge card," said Jimmy Hester, senior director of student ministry publishing for LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. LifeWay produces True Love Waits which has been endorsed by 96 Christian entities.

"It's our prayer that as the world's attention is focused on Athens for the Olympic Games, people will become aware of the hundreds of thousands of youth who have made decisions to protect themselves physically and spiritually by living a life of purity," Hester said.

The Athens celebration will feature a display of True Love Waits promise cards from around the world and include an outdoor rally. Plans include inviting Olympic athletes who stand for sexual purity to challenge students to take a stand.

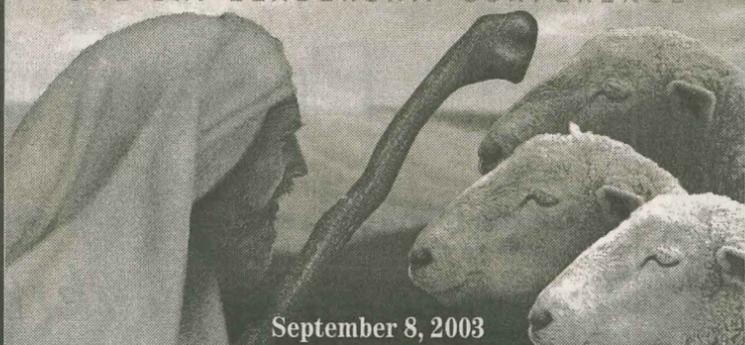
Other observances will take place around the world as students and churches commemorate the commitment to sexual purity to coincide with the Aug. 22 celebration in Athens.

More information about the emphasis is available on the Web site www.truelovewaits.com.

"The people are so hungry to hear about True Love Waits, and they are hungrier still for more biblical truth."

Alec Cort, volunteer True Love Waits trainer to Guyana

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What would Jesus eat?

Doctors, theologians debate biblical view of healthy diet

By Alexander Alter
Religion News Service

LONGWOOD, Fla. (RNS)—If doctors had to identify the deadliest sin affecting Americans today, they probably would name gluttony as the No. 1 killer.

As obesity in the United States reaches epidemic proportions, with more than 60 percent of adults weighing in as overweight or obese, public policy makers and health officials are scrambling over ways to improve the American diet.

But Don Colbert, a physician and nutritionist, thinks the obesity crisis could be solved if Americans would pause before inhaling a super-sized fast food meal and ask themselves a simple question: "Would Jesus eat this?"

If it's loaded with saturated fats, sugar or artificial ingredients, the answer is no, says Colbert, whose recent book "What Would Jesus Eat?," combines biblical scholarship with conventional dietary wisdom.

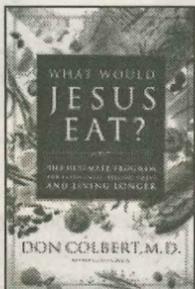
Go back to owner's manual

"The gluttonous spirit is deadly," he said. "I've seen so many diseases related to dietary excess, so why not go back to the owner's manual, the Bible, to see what Jesus ate?"

Jesus essentially ate a Mediterranean diet rich in whole grains, fish, fruit and vegetables and modest amounts of olive oil, meat and wine, Colbert says. Anything the Old Testament blacklists in its dietary prescriptions is out, including shellfish,

pork products, horses, camels, birds of prey and other carnivores.

Colbert said he wrote the book and its companion, "The What Would Jesus Eat Cook Book," both published by Thomas Nelson, after realizing that many of the fattest Americans are dedicated conservative Christians.



"Most people say, 'Hey, it's important that I live a Christian life, but my body's not that important,'" he said. "They'll go to heaven; the only problem is, if they neglect their bodies, they'll go to heaven a lot faster."

Colbert, who maintains a private practice at the Divine Wellness Center in Longwood, Fla., is not the only Christian diet guru urging people to ask what Jesus would eat.

Stephen Kaufman, co-chair of the Christian Vegetarian Association, said he hopes more Christians will start making faith-based choices about what they eat.

"There are a lot of people out there for whom diet is a reflection of their faith," he said. "We're taught to take care of our bodies, the temple of God's Spirit, as Paul said."

Kaufman disagrees with Colbert's claim that Jesus would eat meat, arguing that although lamb and red meat may have been acceptable fare in Jesus' time, modern agricultural practices make meat an unhealthy dietary choice.

In coining the phrase, "What Would Jesus Eat Today?" in 1999, the Christian Vegetarian Association put forth a Christian argument for abstaining from meat, urging compassion for

animals and citing Adam and Eve's vegetarian diet in Eden as proof that God intended humans to be vegetarian.

"We consider a plant-based diet to be a legitimate expression of Christ's witness," Kaufman said, adding that animal welfare is strongly emphasized in the Bible.

Don't blame diet on Jesus

Some, however, say it's impossible to extract a dietary ethic from the New Testament, citing a lack of scriptural evidence.

"No diet should invoke Jesus," says Russell Moore, assistant professor of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. "He nowhere universalizes His diet any more than He advocates wearing robes and sandals."

Calling the Christian vegetarian movement an "attempt to co-opt Jesus for left-wing animal rights propaganda," Moore cited Paul's letter to the Romans, which calls vegetarians weak, as proof that the Bible sanctions meat eating.

Although Jesus' eating habits may not offer up an obvious set of guidelines, any philosophy that will help Americans lose weight should be counted as a blessing, said Arthur Caplan, director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania.

"Putting aside theology, if you can motivate people to eat better by saying Jesus ate a moderate diet, that's not a bad thing, even if the textual support isn't there," he said. "Getting someone to drop 20 pounds in the name of Jesus is not the worst heresy."

Does the gay-marriage debate raise church-state concerns?

By Robert Marus
Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Is the raging debate over legalizing same-sex marriage at heart a church-state issue?

Recent court developments in the United States and Canada, as well as religious debates in the Episcopal Church, have raised the specter of same-sex marriage being legalized in the United States at some point in the not-too-distant future. In response, socially conservative politicians have clamored to propose laws—and even a constitutional amendment—that would ban marriage benefits from being extended to homosexual couples.

But President Bush and other leaders who have proposed those laws often have used religious terminology in explaining why the state must defend heterosexual-only marriage laws. Bush recently referred to the "sanctity of marriage." Republican Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee described marriage as a "sacrament." White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan called it a "sacred institution."

And a recent Vatican pronouncement instructs Catholic politicians that voting in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage would be "gravely immoral."

But some supporters of strict church-state separation say there is little reason for the government to give legal recognition to heterosexual marriage but not to homosexual unions.

Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), a presidential candidate and a Catholic, lambasted the Vatican on church-state grounds for its pronouncement about Catholic politicians and gay marriage.

"It is important not to have the church instructing politicians. That is an inappropriate crossing of the line in this country," Kerry said Aug. 1, according to the Boston Globe. "Our founding fathers separated church and state in America. It is an important separation."

Complicated legal issue

But according to some legal experts who study the issue, the question is more complicated than a simple establishment-of-religion issue.

Peter Sprigg of the Family Research Council said there are plenty of non-religious reasons to oppose gay marriage in civil society. "I don't think there's any establishment-clause violation in limiting the definition of marriage to a man and a woman," said Sprigg, director of the Center for Marriage and Family Studies at the Washington-based FRC.

Sprigg said that legally privileging heterosexual marriage over homosexual unions is no more of a First Amendment problem than banning bigamy. "If anything, imposing monogamy would be more likely to be considered a religious viewpoint, because there are other cultural and religious precedents for polygamy," he said. "But there is no religion or culture that has ever treated same-sex relationships" as equal with heterosexual relationships.

Pamela Karlan, Stanford University Law School professor and First Amendment expert, warned that politicians who use sacramental language to defend marriage as an institution only for heterosexuals are not helping their cause.

"The more they say that the reason they want to ban same-sex marriage is because it's a violation of a sacrament," she said, "then the harder it is to say that there is a secular purpose" behind the law.

Sprigg acknowledged that heterosexuals have done plenty to violate the sanctity of marriage themselves. But redefining the institution to include same-sex couples would be a death-blow to marriage, he said.

"Why would we want to do more to damage an already damaged and fragile institution?" he asked. "If you redefine marriage and you take out the necessity of a male and a female as part of the fundamental definition, essentially you've destroyed marriage. You've taken it out of existence. I think the people who think that same-sex marriage would not harm society are gravely mistaken."

FREE Belief Conference Coming Up!

MONDAY, September 8, 2003

7:00-9:15 p.m. (Central Time)

Mid-Continent College

99 Powell Road, Mayfield, Ky.

TUESDAY, September 9, 2003

7:00-9:15 p.m. (Central Time)

Second Baptist Church

720 W. 7th Street, Hopkinsville, Ky.

A Special Note to Acteen Leaders:

This is a possible MissionsQuest requirement for your Acteens.

"We are focusing awareness on the beliefs of major religious groups in America so that Kentucky Baptists will be informed witnesses (of their own faith)."

— Dan Garland, KBC Evangelism Growth Team leader

This is a FREE conference. No pre-registration required. Funded in part by

Eliza Broadus State Missions Offering and the Cooperative Program.

For further information on this conference go on line to:

www.kybaptist.org (Evangelism Growth Team Office)

Understanding Other Beliefs

Sharing the Biblical Jesus with People of Other Beliefs

Kentucky Baptists will be learning about a variety of other belief systems at an upcoming conference offered by the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

The conference will focus on the beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses, Islam, occultists and those involved in the New Age movement. All sessions are led by certified North American Mission Board trainers. Session leaders are:

Jehovah's Witnesses - Joe Kreisle, instructor

New Age Spirituality - Don Metcalf, instructor

Islam - Jim McKinley, instructor

Occult - Danny Zickefoose, instructor



Evangelism Growth Team
10701 Shelbyville Rd. Louisville, KY 40243
502-254-4737 or Toll Free 888-254-5722

Looting & attacks in Liberia hamper humanitarian efforts

MONROVIA, Liberia (RNS)—Days after Liberian President Charles Taylor ceded power, humanitarian efforts in the Liberian capital of Monrovia still are being impeded by fuel shortages and security problems, Christian aid organizations said.

As the city struggles to get back on its feet, new attacks by rebel groups have raised fears that insurgents may attempt to take power following Taylor's exile. Humanitarian agencies estimate that all of Liberia's 3 million people will need emergency assistance in coming months.

Baptist World Aid, the relief arm of Baptist World Alliance, has renewed its appeal for aid in Liberia after sending \$10,000 for food aid and ministry to people who sought shelter at the Baptist Seminary in Monrovia.

Other relief groups working in the

region include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Division for Global Mission and Church World Service, a humanitarian agency made up of 36 Anglican, Protestant and Orthodox denominations.

The struggle to distribute food and medical supplies to thousands of displaced Monroviens has been complicated by widespread looting and destruction. Several hospitals have been nearly destroyed, raising fears that the city's primary source of care for people suffering from malnutrition and cholera will be rendered useless.

Inflation has made scarce food and fuel prohibitively expensive.

Food aid has been cut off since roughly July 19, when Liberia's main rebel group took control of Monrovia's port. Warehouses have been ransacked, robbing the city's civilians and refugees of 10,000 tons of aid from the U.N. World Food Program, the Associated Press reported.

Minister faces smuggling charge

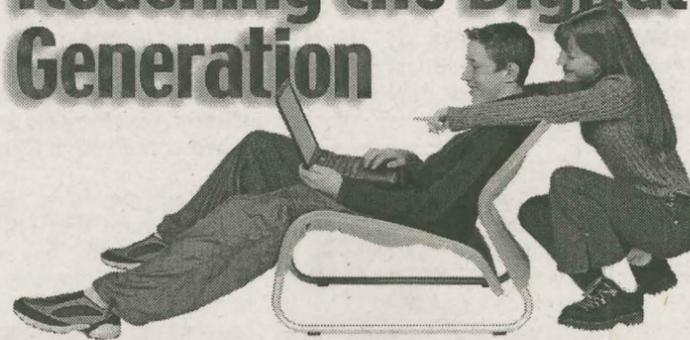
MOSCOW (RNS)—An American Baptist youth pastor facing up to five years behind bars on smuggling charges went on trial in Moscow Aug. 13 as scores of supporters across the United States fasted and prayed for his release.

Andrew Okhotin, a student at Harvard Divinity School, is accused of trying to bring \$48,000 in cash through Moscow's main international airport without declaring it to customs officials. Okhotin says he duly filled out a customs declaration, which customs inspectors ignored, choosing instead to demand bribes of first \$10,000 and then \$5,000.

At the four-hour proceeding in a Moscow court, two customs inspectors and an airport porter gave sometimes conflicting accounts of how Okhotin deliberately chose the "nothing-to-declare" corridor and what ensued in the 12 hours that Okhotin was held in the airport. Okhotin, who was taking the money to Russian Baptists, contradicted the Russian officials' account.

Evangelical Christians in the United States have organized letter-writing campaigns, prayer vigils and fasts, and have appealed to U.S. lawmakers and the White House for help.

VISION CONFERENCE V Saturday, September 20, 2003 Reaching the Digital Generation



A conference for those who work with
and care about teenagers.

Designed for anyone who works with young people in the church, the Vision Conference offers 40 breakout sessions. Topics include: effective youth ministry, counseling in youth ministry, parenting ministry, and much, much more. Guest speakers include acclaimed youth ministry professionals from across the United States including Jay Strack.



Featured Guest Speaker: Jay Strack

Jay Strack is an effective communicator, author and minister from Orlando, Florida, and the founder of Student Leadership University, which is a premier training center for Christian students.

Presented by the National Center for Youth at Boyce College on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky

Registration: Before Sept 1: \$55.00; After Sept 1: \$59.95

For more information, contact the National Center for Youth Ministry at (502)897-4207 or cym@sbts.edu

Six Anglican missionaries killed in Solomon Islands

HONAIIRA, Solomon Islands (RNS)—Six Anglican missionaries who were taken hostage four months ago in the Solomon Islands by warlord Harold Keke have been killed, a senior member of their Anglican order reported Aug. 11.

The deaths are the first known since an Australian-led force of 2,225 police and troops arrived in July to try to restore order.

The six missionaries set off from Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, last April to look for a colleague, Nathaniel Sado, who is now thought to have been murdered.

Keke reportedly seized the six men to use as human shields in case the peacekeepers attacked his forces. It is believed they were later killed by one of the warlord's lieutenants.

"These were six innocent brothers who went out in faith and love in search of their brother," said Richard Carter, chaplain to the Melanesian Brotherhood. "It seems too much to bear that they should have been murdered in cold blood."

The Melanesian Brotherhood is an order of evangelists founded by a Solomon Islander in 1925.

Seven other mission workers were taken hostage by Keke last June but later were released, Carter said.

Australian officials said Aug. 12 that Keke surrendered to Australian-led peacekeepers seeking to end a civil war in the South Pacific islands, according to Associated Press.

Hundreds have been killed since rival militias from Guadalcanal and Malaita islands began fighting in 1998.

RECOGNITION OF DECEASED KENTUCKY BAPTIST LEADERS

The 2003 KBC Obituaries Report will include information on deceased persons who have served our Lord and Kentucky Baptists in a noteworthy manner. We are including persons who died during the convention year, September 1, 2002 through August 31, 2003.

These persons would be Kentucky Baptist ministers, missionaries, educators, laypersons, institutional leaders and staff and others whose Christian service has significantly benefited our state convention fellowship and mission programs.

We need your help to gather the following information:

1. Full name of deceased
2. Date of birth
3. Date of death
4. Active or retired status in last position held in city, state where located
5. Name of church where member, association, state where located
6. Service or ministry worthy of recognition (briefly stated)

Please forward this information before September 2 to:

Executive Office
Kentucky Baptist Convention
PO Box 43433
Louisville KY 40253-0433
ATTN: Wanda Karolyi

e-mail address: Wanda_Karolyi@KYBaptist.org

These obituary entries will be reported to the 2003 KBC annual meeting in Lexington. You are an important part of our network to gather information on those servants who deserve to be remembered among Kentucky Baptists.

SMILE

Missed opportunity

Have you ever asked the question, "Why did more of our fellow church members who died not remember the church in their estate plans?"

In my experience in assisting individuals and couples in their estate and charitable gift planning, I have gleaned at least five reasons why church members do not include their church in their estate plans:

First, they were never asked to do it. Of course, not to ask is the unpardonable mistake of church leaders, which results in a huge missed opportunity in the realm of financial stewardship for the church and the individual.

Second, they lacked confidence in the church's ability to administer such a gift.

Third, they were not satisfied with the effectiveness of the church's ministry. Remember, the No. 1 reason people give is because they believe in the mission of the organization, and they are able to see how lives are being changed through the mission.

Fourth, they did not have the level of esteem for the church's leadership necessary to result in such a gift. Remember, legacy giving is a relationship-oriented kind of giving,

which is cultivated over long periods of time.

Fifth, they understood tithing as something they did during their lifetimes, but not at death.

Your Kentucky Baptist Foundation exists to help you and your church overcome these obstacles and to begin encouraging and educating you and your fellow members in why and how to make a difference in the world for the cause of Christ beyond your lifetime.

Have you included your church in your estate plan? Has your church taken advantage of the Foundation's Christian Estate Planning Basics seminar? Give us a toll-free call to schedule this one-hour seminar in your church, and to arrange a private consultation session with trust counsel Laurie Valentine.

The seminar fits nicely into a Sunday evening or Wednesday evening service or in a consolidated adult Sunday school session. There is no cost for the seminar or the consultation.

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

Labels of Love

The Women's Auxiliary of Spring Meadows Children's Home in Louisville and the KBHC Women's Advisory Board are continuing to collect labels from Campbell's products to be redeemed for much-needed educational equipment and materials!

Campbell's is not just soup anymore. Other products appropriate for this project are:

Casera frozen foods
Franco-American
LeMenu
Marie's
Mrs. Paul's
Pepperidge Farm
Prego
Swanson
Vlasic



Call KBHC at 1-800-456-1386 to find out more about how you can get involved!

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children
Find us on the Web at www.kbhc.org



Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crossword

Mary Louise DeMott

Across

- 1 This spiritual fruit means to bear provocation patiently
- 10 Diving bird with loud wild cry
- 11 White, foot-length robes worn by some Christian priests
- 12 Loose-fitting brightly colored shirt
- 13 Family doctor, for instance, abbr.
- 15 Rooms, abbr.
- 17 Philadelphia's state, abbr.
- 18 Do, _____, mi
- 19 This spiritual fruit means a deep emotion of pleasure
- 20 That is, Lat. abbr.
- 22 Young adults, abbr.
- 25 Either
- 26 Myself
- 27 Church, abbr.
- 29 An exclamation of surprise, delight, or pain
- 30 To perform or carry out
- 31 Juno's state, abbr.
- 32 Verity
- 33 Nautical mile, abbr.
- 34 Memphis' state, abbr.
- 35 Dorothy's state, abbr.
- 36 Beast of burden
- 38 Each, abbr.
- 39 Suffix that means "dear little one"
- 40 Girl Scouts of America, abbr.
- 42 Tin, chem. symbol
- 43 Osmium, chem. symbol
- 44 Miami's state, abbr.
- 45 Prosecuting officer, in other words, abbr.
- 47 Silicon, chem. symbol
- 48 Anne of Green Gables province, abbr.
- 49 Excessively submissive
- 51 A mark left where a wound has healed
- 52 Makes a living laboriously
- 54 "The kingdom of God is _____, and peace, and joy" (Romans 14:17)

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Last week's solution

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Gibson 'softens' film about Jesus; critics not satisfied

"The emphasis should be more on what killed Jesus, not who killed Him."

James Rudin, senior interreligious affairs adviser for the American Jewish Committee

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service

NEW YORK (RNS)—Film director Mel Gibson, under heavy fire from Jewish groups for his \$25 million movie about the death of Jesus, has "softened the story" to make it more palatable to critics, according to a spokesman.

Scheduled for release next year during Lent, "The Passion" has some Jewish groups nervous it will resurrect accusations that Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus.

Paul Lauer, marketing director for Gibson's Icon Productions company, said Gibson has edited the film to show more "sympathetic" Jewish characters who were not calling for Jesus to be crucified.

"We believe we have softened the story compared to the way the Gospel has told it," Lauer said. He pointed to Matthew 27:25, in which the Jewish mob calls for Jesus' blood "to be on us and on our children."

"That's in the Gospel," he said. "It's not in our film."

In addition, Lauer said the character of Simon of Cyrene, who was forced to carry the cross for Jesus, will be clearly labeled a Jew in the film. A shouting mob will include voices opposing the execution, Lauer added.

Public relations campaign

Faced with vocal Jewish opposition, Gibson is mounting a pre-emptive public relations offensive to

counter his critics—all for a film that still is being edited. After regional screenings, Gibson has lingered with his audiences to listen to their advice.

In an effort to soothe concerns, Gibson also is hoping to launch "The Jewish Initiative" to recruit Jewish and Christian leaders to discuss the film's effects on Christian-Jewish relations.

"We've gone out of our way to accommodate this process because we felt it was necessary and important, and to show that we care," Lauer said.

Jewish groups unconvinced

Jewish groups, however, remain unconvinced. Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said Gibson has been unwilling to preview his film for anyone but "pre-screened audiences."

"The fact that Mel Gibson says this is a work in progress is something we welcome. I don't make light of it," Foxman said. "We respect his creative rights, but we also believe that creative rights come with a certain responsibility."

Invited Christian leaders who have seen the film have voiced strong praise. Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals, told The New York Times that Gibson was "the Michelangelo of this generation."

Lauer agreed that screenings were for "people closer to our circle of contacts," but told the Times that "there is no way on God's green earth" that critics like Foxman will be invited to previews. Foxman and others, he said,



CRUCIFIXION In the movie "The Passion," Jesus, played by James Caviezel, is met by His mother, Mary, played by Maria Morgenstern, on the way to His crucifixion. Director Mel Gibson has come under fire for the film's alleged negative portrayal of Jews. (RNS photo courtesy of Icon Productions)

have been "dishonorable."

The ADL first raised concerns in June after a group of nine Christian and Jewish scholars reviewed a draft script and concluded the film portrayed Jews as "bloodthirsty, vengeful and money-hungry."

Gibson threatened to sue after he said the draft script used by the scholars was stolen. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops arranged for the script to be returned and apologized to Gibson.

Rabbis who have screened the film say it threatens to undue decades of progress between Christians and Jews.

Gibson, however, belongs to a conservative Catholic group that rejects the modern papacy and Vatican II, including its overtures to non-Catholics and Jews.

James Rudin, senior interreligious affairs adviser for the American Jewish Committee, emerged from a Houston screening "troubled" by what he saw as the film's suggestion that Roman authorities were powerless to stop the murderous rage of Jewish leaders.

"The emphasis should be more on what killed Jesus," Rudin said, "not who killed Him."

Like ants on an anthill

Like ants on an anthill—that is about the way our campus looks with students back for the fall term. Preparation for the first day of school began last spring when we started accepting applications from students who wanted to enroll this fall. Each year the mix of new students is different—one year more middle school students, the next year more high school students. It appears that our number of boarding school students is up by nearly 10 percent, and it looks like most of the increase came from middle school students.

I am not surprised, because we had a substantial increase in the number of middle school students in summer school. We hoped that would translate to more middle school students this fall and it did. There also is a modest increase in our high school.

Last year on the first day of school we still had three vacancies in our teaching staff. When the military reserves were called up in preparation for the Iraqi war, we lost one of our teachers, and we already were short two others. This year, all of our teaching vacancies were filled early in the summer.

Our students returned to campus last weekend. They are from many counties across Kentucky, several other states and overseas as well. One student from California arrived a day late because of traveling delays. And a student from Japan had a hard time getting here because of a typhoon. It is not uncommon to have one or more students arrive each day during the first week. We will be accepting new students every week throughout the year. Normally we see a 10 to 15 percent increase in enrollment during the school year.

One of our greatest challenges is finding ways to help our academically weakest students. This

year is no exception. We saw a substantial increase in the number of students in our tutoring lab this summer. Tutoring lab students can be middle school or high school students who are not achieving at a level consistent with their test scores.

There are many reasons for their poor academic performance. Teachers often have 22 to 28 students in a class. Some states have 30 to 38 students per teacher. These teachers cannot devote sufficient time to the underachievers. After months or years of falling behind, many students give up. They often become disruptive in the classroom and usually end up in an alternative school setting.

I never have heard a single academic success story about a student in alternative school. Alternative schools do serve a useful purpose, but for the student who is not motivated and is disruptive in the classroom, it can become a dead end. The majority of our tutoring lab students have been in an alternative school. While this may create a better environment for the teacher and students in the regular classroom, it does little to address the needs of the weak-

est students.

In our tutoring lab we provide on average one teacher or teacher's aide per two students. Those students have fewer opportunities to be distracted and the teacher can provide much more academic support. Each tutoring lab teacher can progress at a pace consistent with the student's ability to learn. It takes time but the rewards are wonderful. Our goal is to mainstream those students when they are prepared for that transition.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Ministering unto the least

If you call Clear Creek's phone in the afternoons, Donna Good will answer. She is a second-year student from Middlesboro who works the switchboard in a student workshop position. Her beautiful smile and outgoing personality come through in her voice.

Donna is a member of Faith Temple Church, a growing congregation between Pineville and Middlesboro. Donna sings in the church choir and is a nursery volunteer. Her pastor, Matthew Robbins, a Cumberland College graduate, has taken Greek classes at Clear Creek.

"My calling is evangelism and missions," Donna said. "I knew when I first came to campus, it was meant for me to be here. I had such a hunger; tears came in my eyes. When I stepped out of my car I said, 'Oh my gosh, this is it!' I continue to be very assured this is God's will."

How did her husband, Max, feel about the decision? "At first he had his opinions, but we women have our ways too," Donna said. "He's OK with it. It brings peace to the family. He's seen how I've grown in the Lord."

All students have a Christian

service assignment and Donna goes to the Bell County Detention Center in Pineville to teach inmates needing a GED.

"A partner and I work with them on reading and math skills and help prepare them for the test," Donna said. "It is a real honor and privilege. Matthew 25 teaches us when we do this unto

the least of these, we are doing it unto Christ. I think all things should be done for Christ. It helps me and helps my motive. I've had so many tell me they appreciate our giving time to help." After release from the local facility, inmates can continue study at The Learning Center in Middlesboro.

At Bell County Forestry Camp, a minimum-security facility about 10 miles from campus, Donna helps with a children's book project. "The prisoner reads a book (on tape) to his child and we mail it to them. The child can hear their daddy's voice; this is so important for maintaining family relationships," Donna said. "It's just a wonderful experience for me."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Author wants to help young men become mature Christians

By Mandy Crow
SBC Lifeway Christian Resources

NASHVILLE (BP)—For Patrick Morley, writing a book to help young men grow and mature as Christians wasn't just a job, but a calling.

"There is a battle of men's souls going on," said Morley, author of 10 books, including his latest, "The Young Man in the Mirror."

"This book is for young men in high school who want to do something with their lives," Morley said. "It is straight talk, not watered down and not hyped up. It's more than a book, it's a cause."

In 1989 Morley wrote "The Man in the Mirror," a best-selling book that developed from his search for meaning, purpose and a deeper relationship with God.

As a result, Morley sold his Florida real estate and investment business in 1991 and founded Man in the Mirror, a ministry designed to encourage and inspire men to become more like Christ.

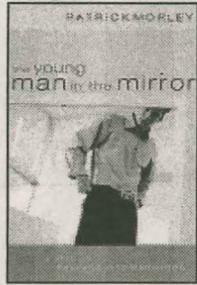
His great hope is to reach men early, preparing them for what they might face and what they are destined to be.

"A man's most intense need is his desire to do something with his life, to be significant, to make his life count," Morley said. "My feeling is that 12th grade is too late to begin teaching them that."

At the root of "virtually every problem in America today" is the failure of a man, he added. For example, Morley notes on his ministry's Web site that 93 percent of prisoners are men, and 85 percent of those had no fathers in their

homes.

"No man fails on purpose, but they do fail," he said. "My whole ministry is focused on helping men who really would do it right if someone would come alongside them and help them."



Before writing "The Young Man in the Mirror," Morley met with 15 teenagers to determine topics important to them. His chapters address dating, sex, family relationships, manhood, identity, purpose, independence, integrity, secret thoughts and suffering.

"This could be possibly the first book written to high school boys to solve the problems they want solved," he said. "Certainly a lot of dads who have read 'The Man in the Mirror' would like the same types of information for their sons, though this is by no means a rewrite of that book."

Many fathers today who profess to believe in Christ are a "generation of cultural Christians rather than biblical Christians," Morley observed. "Most men only know enough about God to be disappointed with Him. Their faith is lukewarm and their testimony should make them blush."

Of the 98 million men in America today, Morley contends that 63 million don't know Christ.

"Only 8 million are active in discipleship. This would be the equivalent of 12 guys playing on a football team and only one of them knowing how to play football."

But Morley said he hopes to see those numbers improve. "Ultimately, my dream is that churches will use the book as a rite of passage to initiate their high school boys into manhood."

Is Your Church Ready? Motivating Leaders to Live an Apologetic Life. Edited by Ravi Zacharias and Norman Geisler. Zondervan Press, 2003. 174 pages. \$22.95. ♦♦♦ (out of five)

To those who read and participate in Christian apologetics, Norman Geisler and Ravi Zacharias are well-known names. Both write and speak prolifically on the uniqueness, reasonableness and superiority of Christianity among world religions. In "Is Your Church Ready?" they argue that apologetics should not be limited to a special cadre of Christian thinkers. Every Christian should be acquainted with the basics of apologetics, they suggest, adding that it is the task of pastors and teachers to see that every believer can "share the gospel winsomely and effectively."

Geisler and Zacharias are joined by John Guest, Peter Grant, Judy Salisbury, J. Budziskewski and Dean Halverson as they explore the various arenas and dimensions of the apologetic task. As with most edited works, a certain unevenness exists in both style and content. Particularly frustrating was the lack of clear definition of apologetics. At times it seemed that the authors were arguing for more informed and sophisticated evangelism, while at other times they seemed to be making a distinction between apologetics and evangelism. Zacharias' chapter on "The Four Challenges for Church Leaders" comes closest to clarifying the issue.

This was not a book I couldn't put down. Most of its 174 pages were only marginally helpful. However, Budziskewski's chapter titled, "Off to College: Can We Keep Them?" is worth the price of the book.

Not only does he diagnose the mistakes churches and students make, he offers practical, yet challenging advice on how to counter them. As a part-time college teacher and a pastor, I found most of what he said to be right on target. *Jim Holladay*

Playing Together as a Worship Band. Maranatha! Praise Band with Angela Dean and Bobby Brock. Zondervan, 2003. 96 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦

For the past three decades Maranatha! Music has been at the forefront of the contemporary worship movement. During the last decade the company has held worship leader workshops all over the country. "Playing Together as a Worship Band" is a compilation of the teaching and demonstrations of these workshops. As a participant in a workshop a few years ago, I can vouch for the completeness of this book.

The book is designed to lead the novice worship band to avoid pitfalls and to help the more advanced worship band reach a new level. The book speaks to each participant in the band by dealing with everything from what a praise and worship service is to the technical aspects of designing and leading the service.

Of course, most of the book is directed to the musicians who form the

core of this type of worship. The book is not wordy but does cover the essentials. I will pass this book on to the worship leader in my church. Much of what I have heard him say to our praise band is reflected in this book.

I have another reason for recommending this book. Anyone who is curious about praise and worship services can get a real feel for the theology and the methodology by reading this book.

I used to be a skeptic and thought I would do P&W over my dead body. I went to the worship leader workshop out of curiosity and found my attitude began to change. I developed a respect for the people and their motivation. My church now does both traditional and P&W.

P&W is not for every church or everyone, but this book will provide a conversation with people who know how to do it and are teachers of hundreds of others. *Wayne Hager*

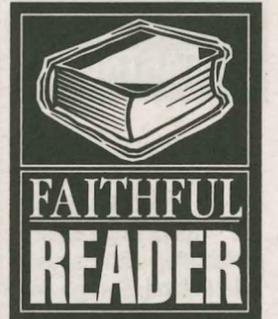
The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation. Jim Herrington, Robert Creech, Trisha Taylor. Jossey-Bass, 2003. 188 pages. \$23.95. ♦♦♦♦

Richard Foster defines the holy life as one that is ready and able to do what is necessary when it is necessary. If that is accurate, then Jim Herrington and his co-authors are calling for holy leaders. They define an effective leader as "a person who has the capacity to know and do the right things." Leadership, from their perspective, is not a natural capacity, but a learned skill. So, how does someone go about becoming a holy leader (my term, not theirs).

"The Leader's Journey" presents areas an individual must tend to if he or she hopes to develop into an effective leader: personal transformation, systems theory, family patterns/history and the spiritual disciplines. These four areas, which form the outline of the book, actually circle back on one another. The first section deals with "the call to personal transformation," while the final one deals with the need to practice the classic spiritual disciplines in the company of a learning community.

Between these two sections, the authors discuss the need to shift from seeing the congregation as a collection of isolated, individual needs and problems to the congregation as a living system. Change, whether good or bad, in one part of the community affects the whole and every other part, especially the leader. Readers can begin to see why an effective leader must tend to one's own spiritual transformation, while at the same time recognizing that this transformation develops within, because of and sometimes in spite of the family of faith. And by the way, the leader must tend to his or her own family system.

Herrington and company have put together a readable, yet useful guide to growing as a leader. The questions at the end of each chapter lead the reader to deeper reflection on the issues raised. *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: jcwhager@earthlink.net, or docholladay01@aol.com

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PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
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PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ A women's Bible study that recently began in northern Belgium and the translator, who is an unbeliever. Pray that her heart will be opened to the gospel.

■ The 70 Romanians enrolled in English as Foreign Language classes in a village in Romania. The students range from age 10 to 60 and their abilities range from little or no English skills to more advanced. Missionaries Floyd and Freda Angeletti lead the classes.

■ Eight Filipinos in Rome (Italy) Baptist Church who recently completed training in how to witness to the Bengali people, many of whom are refugees in Rome. Pray also for "W," who works with local and international believers in these efforts.

■ Baptist representatives in Sofia, Bulgaria. "Everyone is in a state of transition as they are beginning new ministries or finishing current assignments," one missionary writes.

■ Christians in Khabarovsk, Russia, whom missionaries are training in how to lead small seeker Bible studies.

■ European Baptist Convention churches in Germany that are seeking pastors: Berlin International Baptist Church; Charity Baptist Church, Vilseck; Faith Baptist Church, Kaiserslautern; and Immanuel Baptist Church, Wiesbaden.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **BEREA**—Galilee Church recently called **Larry Harris** as pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Pitman Valley Church recently called **Dannie Nelson** as pastor.

■ **COVINGTON**—Beechgrove Church recently called **Daniel Hilliard** as pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—**Dona McCurry** resigned as director of the school-age childcare program at Severns Valley Church, effective Aug. 15. **Billy Compton** is pastor.

■ **FARMINGTON**—Bethany Church will celebrate its 150th anniversary Aug. 31 with former pastor **Chris Beckham**, pastor of Flemingsburg Church, as guest speaker in the 11 a.m. service. Activities will include a noon meal and a concert by Southern gospel quartet "Direct Connection." For information, call (270) 435-4553. **Dale Sheridan** is pastor.

■ **FLEMINGSBURG**—Flemingsburg Church dedicated its new facility Aug. 10. **Christopher Beckham** is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Greensburg Church will host the Greensburg Community Choir and Orchestra presentation of "On the Road to Glory" Sept. 12, 8 p.m., and Sept. 14, 4 p.m. For information, contact **Tim Hooper**, minister of music, at (270) 465-5938.

■ **HENDERSON**—**Glen Morris**, pastor of Dupey Church, was ordained to the gospel ministry Aug. 10 at First Church, Henderson.

■ **LA CENTER**—Ohio Valley Church recently called **Tim Smith** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Auburndale

Church called **Michael Smith** as interim pastor.

Audubon Church called **Dan Cromer** as pastor effective Sept. 1. He previously was interim pastor.

Maple Grove Church will celebrate 50 years of ministry Sept. 20-21. **Ray Hayes** is pastor.

Meadow Hill Church ordained **Mitch Ashbrook**, **Chuck DeWitt**, **Haywood Marr**, **Daniel Mullins**, **Woodrow Tinnell** and **Greg Whitaker** as deacons July 13. **Ron Lasley** is pastor.

Parkland Hills Mission is hosting revival services through Aug. 20 with **David Livingston** as evangelist.

■ **MANCHESTER**—Horse Creek Church will host "Celebrate Jesus" services Aug. 25-27, 7 p.m. The celebration is dedicated to the memory of **Doug Smith**.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Walnut Memorial Church recently called **Gene O'Bryan** as minister to senior adults.

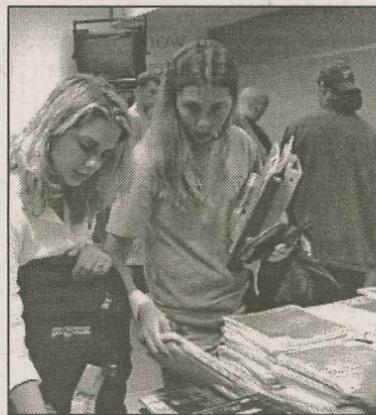
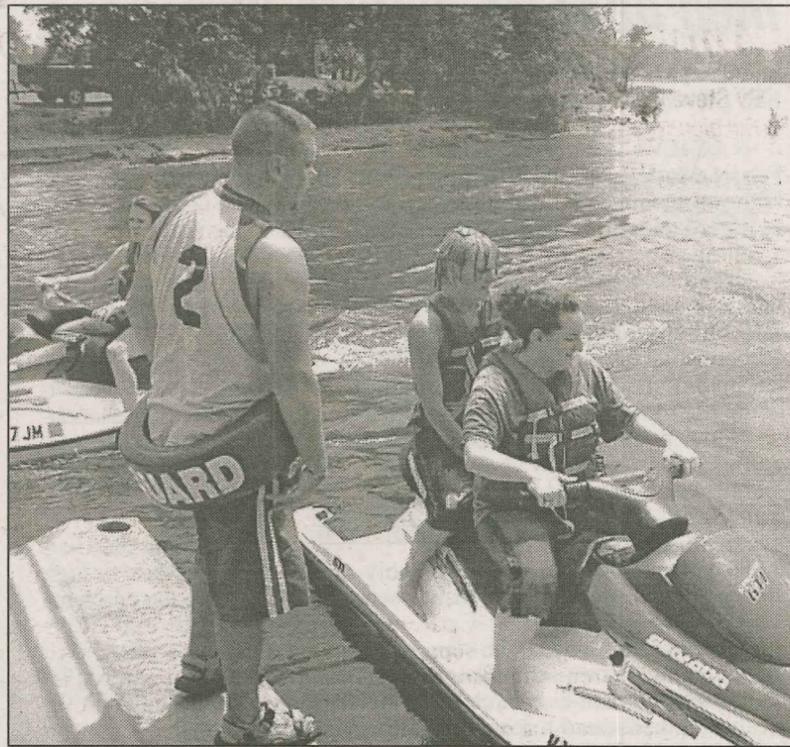
■ **RICHMOND**—Unity Church ordained **Fremon Saylor** as a deacon July 27. **D.L. Brewer** is pastor.

■ **WADDY**—Graefenburg Church celebrated its 135th anniversary Aug. 17. **Fred Moffatt** is pastor.

■ **WALTON**—First Church will host a "First Ladies" ministry Oct. 3-4. **Patricia Grable** of Danbury, Texas, will be the keynote speaker. For more information, call (859) 485-4191. **Sheldon Hale** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—First Church's sanctuary choir will present "The Art of the Hymn" during morning worship services Aug. 31. **Dick Ham** is interim minister of music.

Welcome home



Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union hosted the 2003 Missionary Kids' Re-entry Retreat Aug. 7-10 at Jonathan Creek Conference Center. The annual retreat, co-sponsored by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, helps orient MKs returning to the States to attend college. "We love MKs," noted Kentucky WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton. "To have that hands-on, tangible way to help them adjust back to life in the United States is very significant." ■ Above: Becky Robertson, praise and worship leader for the retreat, gives MK Tim Browning a jet ski ride. ■ Left: MKs gather school supplies donated by Kentucky WMU members.

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

FREE TICKETS: Broadway on Main Benefit Auction featuring diamond tennis bracelet, original works of art, valuable collectibles and antiques, hotel packages and much more. Aug. 23, 6 p.m. Call First Baptist Church for free tickets (limited quantities): (502) 245-7889. See list of items on www.middletonkentucky.com/festival.

SEEKING: Director of buildings and grounds. Requires minimum of B.S. in business administration and/or engineering, and 10-15 years experience—5 years of which must be in area of responsibility, preferably in college or university setting. Reports to associate vp for facilities planning and management. Responsibilities include: building maintenance trades, technical trades, custodial services, landscaping, grounds and vehicle maintenance for 78 acres of rolling hills and 25 buildings. Send resumé to: Personnel Services, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or personnel@sbts.edu.

SEEKING: Full-time youth pastor able to give creative leadership to a large middle/high school student ministry in the context of a contemporary/innovative church. Must be able to administrate a balanced ministry to students, their parents and youth workers. Substantive experience and education with a successful track record in youth ministry is required. Send resumé to: Bellevue Baptist Church, 519 W Byers Ave., Owensboro, KY 42303, or fax to (270) 685-5134.

SEEKING: Part-time interim minister of music. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, 230 South Fifth St., Williamsburg, KY 40769.

SEEKING: Positions for new, non-profit Berea (Ky.) Health Ministry Clinic: executive director, nurse practitioner, registered nurse. For information, call Dr. Ida Slusher, (859) 986-5898.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Ordination and some seminary training required; ministerial experience also necessary. Two Sunday morning services, one Sunday evening service and a Wednesday evening service. Sunday school average attendance: 250. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Cecilia Baptist Church, PO Box 73, Cecilia, KY 42724.

SEEKING: Watauga Baptist Association, Elizabethton, Tenn., receiving applications for a part-time management position at Watauga Lodge, Ridgecrest, N.C. Job includes: supervising staff, promotion, maintenance, ordering supplies, cooking, cleaning. Hospitality gift important. More information, call (423) 543-1451. Send resumé to: Watauga Baptist Association, 3871 Highway 19E, Elizabethton, TN 37643. Deadline: Sept. 15, 2003. watbassoc@preferred.com.

SEEKING: Full-time worship leader for Eastside Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky. Eastside averages 141 in Bible study, 221 in worship and 139 in New Community on Wednesday night. For more information, you may phone or e-mail Pastor Virgle Grant at (859) 624-9646, vgrant@eastsidebaptist.com.

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: Bilingual minister for Hispanic migrant ministry in Western Kentucky (Paducah area). Primary responsibility is to lead Sunday morning Bible study and worship service for 20-30 Spanish-speaking men. Ministry is seasonal (August to November). Pay based on experience and number of Sundays available. Week-end lodging available. Send resumé to: West Union Baptist Association, 2541 Olivet Church Road, Paducah, KY 42001. For more information, call Marty Brown at (270) 224-2465.

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: 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.

'From shame ... to joy'

Amy Grant's new CD explores ups & downs of life's spiritual journey

By Steve Rabey
Religion News Service

NASHVILLE (RNS)—For two decades Amy Grant was an icon for the contemporary Christian music industry, earning its first gold and platinum records and the mainstream credibility it craved.

Things weren't always easy. While progressive evangelicals hailed her as a winsome musical ambassador to those outside the Christian subculture, her conservative critics got upset when she wore a leopard-print jacket and danced barefoot on the 1985 Grammy telecast, when she performed in venues that sold beer and when she signed an endorsement deal with the Target retail chain. (Target's parent company, Dayton Hudson, supported Planned Parenthood, angering abortion foes.)

Grant kept churning out hits and breaking down barriers until she entered a dark period in the late 1990s. Her marriage to Christian singer Gary Chapman was disintegrating. Her somber 1997 album, "Behind the Eyes," lacked explicit references to Jesus. Then her 1999 divorce from Chapman and 2000 marriage to recently divorced country musician Vince Gill sealed her doom with many Christian radio stations and once-faithful fans.

Now "Simple Things," Grant's 18th album and first collection of original songs in six years, shows that resurrection is more than just a topic for Easter sermons. The album, scheduled

for release this week, offers up 10 songs about love, loss and an ever-changing but unshakable faith in God.

"I think this album is a record of my journey from shame to forgiveness to joy," Grant said during a phone interview from a Gulf Coast vacation retreat where she, Gill and assorted children and friends are enjoying the sun and the waves.

At 42, Grant is less perky than she was when she first emerged as a teen singing sensation in 1977 but happier than she's been in years.

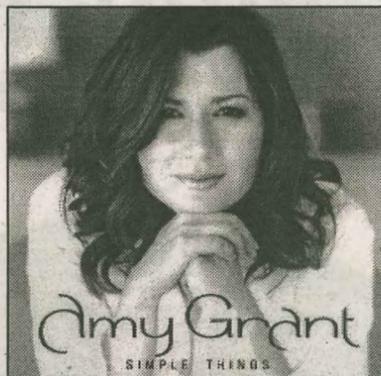
Grant's emotional struggles and crises of faith, along with the recent death of a friend and a family member, have taught her about the wisdom that lies on the other side of sorrow.

"One of the great things about living a long time is that you realize nothing stays the same. When it's bad, it's not going to stay that way. And when it's good, it's not going to stay that way, either."

Renegotiating priorities

Grant began working on "Simple Things" shortly after her March 2000 marriage to Gill, but her attention was divided. She and Gill were trying to make a family with her three children and his one. Then she discovered she was pregnant with Corrina, the couple's daughter.

"All my energy was going elsewhere," she recalled. "I had to renegotiate my sense of belonging. I wondered how the kids were doing. Farther down on the priority list was making a record, but fortunately I had a contract staring me in the face that



compelled me to get back to work."

On "Simple Things" Grant addresses the disappointments of her past, the love she feels for Gill and her growing confidence in God's compassion and care. The breadth of the album's emotional range is evident in song titles like "Happy," "Innocence Lost," "Every Time We Touch," "I Don't Know," "After the Fire" and "Beautiful," a romantic duet with Gill.

"Out in the Open," a moving song that teams Grant with longtime producer Brown Banister, describes spiritual rebirth as a process of warts-and-all disclosure to God:

"I will be a witness that
There's nothing in me dark enough
The power of forgiveness
Cannot rescue me from the deep."

"To me," Grant noted, "it's really a song about moving from shame to grace."

"Simple Things" is more radio-friendly than last year's "Legacy ... Hymns and Faith," but Grant likely will never dominate the Christian in-

dustry like she did in the 1980s and '90s.

"I've always been a big Amy supporter," said Jim Veldhuis, managing editor of Christian Radio Weekly, an industry trade publication. "But of the 50 reporting stations we use for our charts, more than 30 lean toward more traditional audiences and probably won't play her songs. Other artists aren't put under the same kind of scrutiny that Amy is, but that's what happens when you're an icon."

Grant, who has long sold more albums in mainstream markets than in Christian stores, will promote "Simple Things" with a music video and a 10-city promotional tour. She also may perform on some dates on Michael W. Smith's summer tour. Then she and Gill will team up for a Christmas tour that begins after Thanksgiving.

An ever-evolving faith

In her quieter moments Grant continues to reflect on her ever-evolving faith in God. The image that strikes her is that of a young child walking down a road with her father.

"I can feel the security of having my hand in His hand, but that doesn't mean there aren't going to be any potholes," she said. "And if there are potholes, you don't look up and blame it on the One whose hand you're holding."

"Instead, when you fall down, you're aware you're not alone. And when you encounter some of the great crises of life, you're not going to blame others or shrivel up but meet this opportunity with some growth."

"If there are potholes, you don't look up and blame it on the One whose hand you're holding."

Amy Grant

Big Daddy Weave making a mark on contemporary Christian music

By Leann Callaway
Texas Baptist Standard

MOBILE, Ala.—Before they became successful Christian recording artists, the musical group Big Daddy Weave grew accustomed to holding concerts at a variety of unique locations—ranging from used car lots to Chinese buffets.

With a surge in popularity, venues now include national tours, festivals and promotional appearances, such as at LifeWay Christian Store headquarters in Nashville.

Wherever they perform, group members said their focus remains directed toward Christ, who they consider their "audience of one."

These five musicians—brothers Mike and Jay Weaver, Jeff Jones, Joe Shirk and Jeremy Redmon—are based in Mobile, Ala., where they met while attending the University of Mobile.

"We started leading praise and worship at various events, and God really just took it from there," said lead vocalist Mike Weaver.

From the start, Big Daddy Weave felt led to share the message of Christ's love with songs of praise.

"We kind of use whatever means necessary to allow people to see God," Weaver noted. "Our music is a blend of what people find in con-

temporary Christian music and what crosses over into worship music.

"The spectrum of where we can wind up and where God can use us is fairly broad," he added. "We sing some worship songs that may be familiar to people in the church. We also sing hymns every now and again, and we use our own original songs."

"We constantly point people to Jesus through the music and through our words. Hopefully, an event with us is not so much a concert as much as it is a worship gathering."

In addition to receiving a New Artist of the Year Dove Award nomination, Big Daddy Weave has the distinction of releasing the highest charting single for a new artist in adult contemporary radio with the song "In Christ."

'Fields of Grace'

This fall, Big Daddy Weave will join the musical group FFH on tour. They also will release "Fields of Grace," the follow-up to last year's debut CD, "One and Only."

"We're really excited about the new album," Weaver said. "I think it's a good representation of what we perform live. It has the whole aspect of worship from a congregational side and testimonial-message songs. One song is a 'reverse-vertical' song, from

God to us, called, 'Let Me Be Your Everything.' The songs are a cross-section of what God's been doing in the life of Big Daddy Weave for the past two years."

Following God's plan

Their success, they contend, is due to following God's plan.

"Over the past two years, we've just continued to walk where God's led," Weaver said. "He's always confirmed what we were doing by the peace in our hearts. If we ever step out of that, He yanks the peace out from under us, and we have to come running back so fast. We've found that we can't really live without that peace; we shift into just existing. For us, it's all about following God's peace."

By performing in more than 200 events, Big Daddy Weave is making a growing impact in the field of contemporary Christian music. However, they believe this is God's work and not their own.

"We've had some times where we were certain in our minds that we were totally messing up, and no one was getting it," Weaver said. "Then, at the end, all these people come up and share all these different experiences. They've said, 'I was having a rough time, and the Lord really spoke to me through this.' That's so cool to see. ... God is not nearly as interested in our



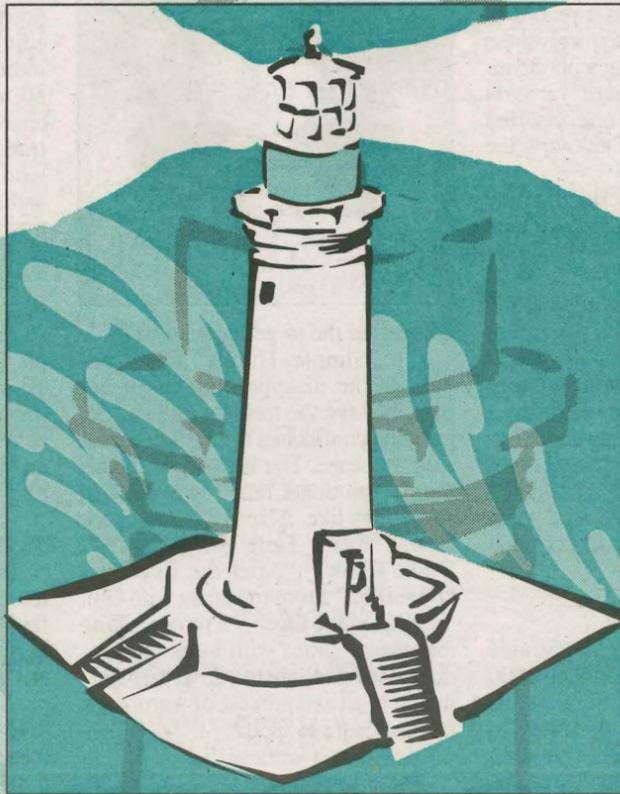
ability as much as He is in our availability.

"We have all wanted to play music for a long time," he explained. "It has been a dream of ours to do this full-time."

"I think my favorite part is doing something we've always dreamed about, but it also is being what God has called us to do. It's so cool to be doing something that is our job, but it's not just a 'job.' It's something that we would do even if we didn't get paid. We love doing what we do, and we feel like God has ordained it."

MAKING MUSIC Christian band Big Daddy Weave will release its second CD, "Fields of Grace," this fall.

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For more information, contact:

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Internet: www.kentuckyleague.org e-mail: hbeau@kentuckyleague.org

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